Religion "Useful" in Education

What is CHRISTIAN Higher Education

A Calvinist Views the Welfare State

A Modernist View of the Reformation

The Place of the Lay Missionary Correspondence

Book Reviews

VOL. XVII, NO. VIII TWO DOLLARS A YEAR MARCH, 1952
The CALVIN FORUM
Published by the Calvin Forum Board of Publication

VOLUME XVII, NO. VIII. MARCH, 1952

Contents

Editorials

Religion “Useful” in Education..............Cecil De Boer 143

Some TV Problems................................Henry Schultze 144

All in All.............................................Ralph Stob 146

Articles

Christian Doctrine in Higher Education...Jesse De Boer 147

The Pressure of Pan-Statism.................Jan Schouten 151

The Modernist and the Reformation.....W. Stanford Reid 154

“Go Ye” . . . Who?..............................Edward Postma 157

Correspondence

From Charles Vincze

Book Reviews

On Christian Ethics............................J. K. Van Baalen 163

Helps to Bible Study............................H. H. Meeter 164

Chalk Artistry.................................Helen Van Laar 164

THE CALVIN FORUM * * * MARCH, 1952
Religion “Useful” in Education

Since approximately 1930 certain educators and journalists have been viewing the situation in higher education with mounting dissatisfaction and alarm. The universities, so they say, have simply failed to educate, with the result that four years of college apparently leave the student about where he was when he entered. Just what, according to these critics, are supposed to be the ends toward which higher education should strive? A brief enumeration of the proposed objectives will suffice to show how confused and how “neutral” their counsel has been—and still is.

As might have been expected, at the head of the list was the blanket term leadership. Again, many demanded such things as the “general diffusion of knowledge,” “genuine intellectual interest,” the “desire for a fuller and richer personal life,” the “desire to be useful to one’s fellows,” and so on. In a democracy, it was argued, higher education should result in “some working ideas of nature and society,” a sense of the national tradition and “an appreciation of intellectual and aesthetic pleasure.” Many took the position that a liberal education concerned primarily the problem of how best to use one’s leisure time. Others again, demanded results such as “an intelligent understanding of the problems confronting democracy,” the control of the machine so as to make for human progress, and the ability to run the government with a view to making society “better behaved and more wholesome.” Finally here and there a voice was heard in defence of “a sense of comparative values and a sense of the importance of moral distinctions.” Morals, so we were told, could best be taught by representing them as experimental conclusions, thus enlisting the scientific interest of the up-to-date student. All this accomplished, we could confidently expect to see intelligent self-government, successful democracy, and a peaceful world replete with social honor and public spirit.

Today many are beginning to see the futility of these high-sounding phrases, and they realize that probably little can be done in the absence of a point of view that involves something like moral absolutes, and that a firm belief in moral absolutes is perhaps the only lasting basis for that desperately needed thing called character. Unfortunately, there appears just now to be little if any agreement on just what these absolutes are, and there is downright confusion about how to train for character—assuming agreement on the meaning of that term. Fortunately, it seems to be realized that a society disintegrates whenever it lacks basic loyalties and definite frames of reference; that these loyalties cannot be won except in terms of a fundamental spirit based upon a definite philosophy of life; and that without these loyalties all institutions, whether of government or of education, lack real authority. And, finally, it seems to be realized that the attempt to attain such a fundamental spirit without inculcating basic religious convictions and thereby ignoring man’s essential religious nature, is largely futile.

Accordingly, many today are proposing the introduction of religion into the educational process on the college level, for we must, so they say, have a character-building program. And they believe that such a program will get results only “by tying our education to a religious philosophy.” Morality, they argue, becomes significant only where men believe it to enjoy cosmic support, since only then may we expect it to have “a bracing effect on character.” Religion, in short, invests life with a kind of cosmic significance, and this enhances our feeling of worth, improves mental health, and “is instrumental in preventing nervous breakdowns.” Furthermore, once we believe ourselves to be related to the cosmos as sons of God we cannot but stress man’s intrinsic worth and thus more easily transcend the accidents of birth, wealth and social position—in other words, religion tends to make men more democratic. In brief, in order to save the democratic way of life we must have “social integration on a high spiritual level,” and to ignore this in our educational program is to deprive society of an indispensable character-building influence.

Admitting the element of truth in all this, the trouble with it seems obvious. Religion-in-general as a means to saving the democratic way of life would seem to be about as efficacious as patriotism-in-general as a means to saving a particular nation. No more than you can have the high feeling of patriotism unless you love a particular country can you have the assurance of faith unless you implicitly believe a particular religion. And both patriotism and religion will in the end prove worthless if deliberately used as a means to something else. Naturally, few people in America would be opposed to introducing religion—perhaps not even the Christian religion—if it could be shown to be of use in preserving and promoting objectives most people...
Some T V Problems

For some time men have begun to realize the far-reaching effects of mass media, particularly that of television. It has brought the children back into the home. The movies are having hard sledding, it is reported. The attendance at public programs has fallen sharply. The manager of the Grand Rapids Civic Auditorium predicted on the basis of the shrinking crowds attending public presentations that the attendance at Calvin's rendition of The Messiah would be greatly reduced. He was wrong in his prediction but the grounds upon which he prophesied were significant. He declared that the TV is chiefly responsible for this. It is but an illustration of the kind of observation made by students of public interests throughout the land. TV is indeed a revolutionary force. Public spirited individuals such as spiritual and cultural leaders must not be guilty of letting it develop without wholesome guidance. Not much has been done about it. The objectors have done little beyond withdrawal, even if they have gone that far. Those entertained have been satisfied to let it develop as the public mind dictates and the TV itself in turn has been developing the public mind along lines that seemed most profitable commercially.

It is well to determine what gives it its appeal. It is not simply its novelty. If that were all, the problems would soon vanish. We have an amazing ability of tiring rapidly of things that are merely new. There is here something far more potent than that.

The Urge Toward "Omnipresence"

God has equipped man with certain urges the development of which enable him to exercise more fully the task to which he was divinely assigned, to wit that of exercising dominion over the creation. Among these urges may be mentioned inquisitive-ness, curiosity, desire for knowledge, power, and omnipresence. None of these stand alone. They are interrelated. The development of the one is dependent upon the progress made among others. One may misdirect any one of these urges. Indeed, man may and does use them to promote his own selfish interests and thus manifests his enmity against God. But the urge itself untouched by human perversity is wholesome. And since the urges are innate, any development that gives satisfaction to them is liable to abide. They are not of a passing character as are so many of the fads that cross the path along which humanity travels. The latter serve their temporary purpose and are then cast off as so much useless baggage. The judgments that move in the direction of their elimination are not always infallible. Many of the things that
can be of service to man are cast off, and many that constitute a hazard are retained or retained too long.

Among the many urges to which the television has made a very pressing appeal is the human urge toward, what I call for the want of a better term, omnipresence. Man justifiably refuses to be confined to the space occupied by his body. He roams the world while he occupies his bed by night. He refuses to be limited by time or space. He covers the centuries in the space of a few moments while he dreams, reflects, and recalls at home. He can do this on the basis of reports, oral and written, that he has received. And he can by this process learn more about them than if he has himself been the eyewitness. He uses methods of amplification to transmit and to receive sounds from an ever widening circle. He uses microscopic and telescopic devices to bring into his presence things miles away and things so minute that they refuse to reveal themselves to the naked eye.

The radio has done much toward the elimination of space. A person can sit in his room and be present, as it were, on the battle fields of Korea and hear the boom of cannon, the orders of the officers, and the groans of the wounded and the despairing. Indeed television bids fair to transport one to a ringside seat in Korea where one can watch the ebb and flow of a battle. This has already been done to an amazing degree of perfection in the area of sport and in the deliberative assemblies throughout the world.

This same urge to be everywhere present may in part account for the tremendous appeal of the increasing rapidity of transportation. One can, as it were, be transported almost anywhere on this planet in a few minutes. All this is in response to a fundamental yearning on the part of man. The novelty aspect of television is therefore not likely to wear off shortly unless it be replaced by something that more adequately meets this deep and basic urge of man.

Far be it from me to suggest that it be an unmilitated good. But I do suggest that it is folly to attempt to eradicate TV from human life, as some conscious of its evils have vainly tried to do. It may be an obligation to attempt some control of the type of materials to which we or/and the public are exposed.

It is difficult to control the motives of those that present the programs and of those who look and listen. They are not however beyond the possibility of being educated. They can be harnessed to causes eminently worthwhile such as cultural and spiritual values.

Man’s Media Tends To Fictionalize

One of the charges that I would like to place against the television as it manifests itself today is its conscienceless fictionalization. This form of public service is chiefly a commercial enterprise. Its selections and presentations are made to serve some money-making concern. It will distort the truth to prey upon the weaknesses of man. Like other forms of mass-media it is not interested primarily in the unadulterated truth, nor in the morals, manners, and art it may develop. It is interested in a material harvest. The commercial is the main thing. That is the reason that one cannot be hopeful of an early improvement. The public by its reaction determines what it wants. The material is selected with a view to the public’s taste. The television authorities watch the response meter very carefully. They even solicit responses by some sort of poll to determine what the lookers and hearers want and adjust their selections and presentations accordingly even though it leaves a corrupt and false conception of reality.

Intruders Into the Privacy of the Home

There is another charge to which attention must be called. Students of the problem of television have also called attention to it. Mass media such as the radio and television are in effect intruders on the privacy of the home. Bishop Haas of Grand Rapids 1, writing in a Catholic weekly last fall presented a scathing editorial against the TV forces. He asks: "What right has a telecaster to invade your homes with his indecencies—in plain language he is an intruder and should be treated as an intruder." The bishop continues to reprimand severely the advertisers who back the presentations. Says he: "It is not purely a matter of dollars and cents but a matter of right. People have a right to have their rights protected."

Now it could be argued that no one is compelled to secure a TV set. And having secured one he can use it or not as he sees fit. He may select his own type of program. He can assume the policy of isolation. This argument is increasingly losing its cogency because of the growing complexity of our civilization. Not only is it well-nigh impossible to withdraw from the world because we are in it, but such withdrawal also means that the subject by such a policy will be deprived of much good to which he is entitled. It is like refusing to buy a newspaper or a magazine or a radio because these have many objectionable features. Such isolation cannot be effected except in rare cases and at too great a cost. It is like saying one may not secure a car because the physical and even moral dangers

---

1) Wm. S. Schlamm, one-time assistant to the editor-in-chief of Time, Life, and Fortune, stresses the unreality of TV programs in the Dec. 31, '51 issue of The Freeman.

2) Bishop Francis J. Haas wrote editorials in the Western Michigan Catholic, diocesan weekly of Aug. 30, Nov. 8, and Dec. 10, 1961, in which he charged among other things "that obscenity is bootlegged into homes."
Infringement of Rights

That individuals have some ground to list their grievance against the intrusion-character of both the radio and the television is increasingly felt. Last summer the patrons of the street cars in the city of Washington protested at being made unwilling audiences of the blaring radios that had been installed in these public means of conveyance. They felt that their right to be free from pressure while being thumped along in the street cars was being invaded. Newspapers editorialized that these people had a just point, and as far as I know, no one suggested that the passengers merely had to select other means of transportation for relief. It may be difficult to determine just where the line of unjust infringement upon the rights of another begins. But it is there. No one has the right to deprive a TV audience of much valuable material by forcing upon him the policy of withdrawal because of the unpalatable coloring in the programs.

In all joint or social enterprises there are individual and social responsibility. Love for one's self and for his neighbor are basic Christian requirements. One must insist upon the elimination of all ingredients from a program for his own sake and for that of his neighbor. That is in full accord with ethics of Jesus. I can detach myself from much of the smut of mass media and may be obligated to do so even at the cost of valuable material to which I have a right. Judging from the reports of the kind of television programs now available, a Christian may under the circumstance have for the present no other alternative. But I do not thereby dispense with my duty to my neighbor. I am in a sense his keeper. Isolation is therefore not the solution.

Certainly one can adopt a program of education to develop the powers of discernment and of fortitude so as to be guided by a sanctified conscience. It must not be forgotten that it is after all the public tastes that determine the type of intrusions we experience in our homes via the radio and TV. The authorities in the area of the TV give the public what it wants. They watch the Hooper rating with eager eyes. They adopt all sorts of devices that constitute a sort of a Gallup poll. They reflect the public's desires. If you want to know what America's tastes are in the fields of morals and culture, study what is presented to the program that go into our homes.

Besides the programs of withdrawal, which is virtually boycotting when such withdrawal becomes quite general, and that of cultivation which may bring about a change in our taste, there is the method of utilization. Here we have before us a tremendous educational force that could be utilized for nobler purposes, such as has been done and is being done with the radio and the cinema.

H. S.

All in All

CALVINISM is a system of thought. More than that, it is a system of thought which embraces all. Further, it is a system based upon a pivotal point of view. That pivotal point of view is not man-centered. It seeks to begin and end with God. That first beginning in its outlook and that final end in its comprehension is based on the givens of special revelation. It neither starts nor ends with man or the world. There is then totality of perspective, in depth, in breadth, in length. All is taken up into it.

All, however, is not merely thrown together, but all is interrelated and integrated. What does that mean but that there are big and little items, some of primary importance, some of secondary or tertiary and so on. Every item is significant but not all are equally significant. There are fundamental truths; there are basic positions; there are cardinal principles. And systematization not only takes all bits of truth into consideration, but links up all to all, and the goal is to see God as All in All.

Too Little

What dangers then confront us? That with our sadly benighted intelligence we shall not truly systematize. Some things may be left out of the picture entirely; they apparently have no significance for us. But others we do see, and alas, we see them wrongly. Thus the insignificant assumes enormous proportions; molehills become mountains. What is lesser becomes primary and becomes a fundamental principle. And reversely the all-important may become tertiary. It is admitted and given a place but not the real place. Or it finds a place in isolation. It is not vitally connected with others but stands alone; or if linked up, it is not harnessed to the really important and fundamental. Or if it is recognized as a real and true, fundamental, proper conclusions, deductions and applications are not made. Theoretically it is admitted to be significant; practically it is insignificant because it stands in splendid isolation.
Systematization is demanded of us. Rather than a hopeless confusion in the midst of an unnumbered mass of particular insights, points of view, bits of truth, there must be in one's soul a clear insight into and grasp of what is basic and important. But the attempt itself may be a partial failure because all has not been considered, or having been considered it is not correctly evaluated and therefore is not given its rightful place of importance. All this, and its like can be described as a failure to systematize properly, as a lack of systematization.

And if our own thinking, our own systematizing has such defects, naturally these will manifest themselves when we present our views to others. There is no emphasis where there ought to be real emphasis; there is overemphasis on a minor and almost irrelevant point. Details are talked about; much time is spent on them; and unintentionally the fundamentals are slighted or not emphasized as they should be. And the more we ourselves fail to see things aright or in their right perspective, the more glaring will be our defects in passing the torch on to others. They then will get a partial, an unbalanced, and distorted view and will not really see the All in All.

Too Much

But have you ever thought of its opposite? That possibly too there could be oversystematization? Or rather too much effort at systematization? For we can hardly defend the thesis that one can oversystematize. Given the goal of seeing the truth, the whole truth with all its branches and twigs and leaves, all in a totality view of correct interrelations one is driven to strive toward that goal. But do not dangers arise immediately? What are they? That we lose ourselves in systematization for systematization's sake, so that the total effort is spent in fitting each little, minutest part in the system and the main lines no longer stand out. More and more specialized points require consideration and evaluation. And then when one looks at the heritage from the fathers, rich and full as it is, readily the idea can creep in that there one has it completely worked out for all time. It can escape us that their truth was hammered out on the anvil of their times with its problems, its struggles, its antagonists, but that our time, although it may have the same foes, may have others in addition, and that therefore the battle lines are drawn differently. Thus the system becomes too much of an abstraction, is drawn away from the present, actual world, and thus is without full and real meaning to the present generation. Again, if one does not lose himself in the total system of the past, he may spend his time and energies in showing minutely how some individual in that past has a slightly defective or erroneous view on some particular. But all that may be somewhat or entirely irrelevant now.

Somehow the eternal truth must be shown to have meaning and significance for the now. Present time and eternal truth must be brought together. If not, to the rising generation it leaves the impression of that which is far away, hazy and hoary, fine but a meaningless abstraction. It does not grip their lives. To pass on the torch is truly a most difficult task. For it requires that one himself see things clearly, steadily, fundamentally; and that he makes fundamentals stand out as really fundamentals with clarity and force, and that as applicable here and now. It means that he shall know the past, shall learn from it, but just as surely he must know the present.

Ralph Stob.

Christian Doctrine in Higher Education

Some problems are temporary; others are always with us and always demand renewed consideration. Conditions surrounding the ongoing process of education are in flux, and therefore, even if we always had clearly formulated aims for education and a satisfactory set of teaching methods, we should always need to think anew on how to apply the methods and to achieve the aims. This is true at every level of education; it is especially true in the college and the university. For at this stage the young person comes into possession of the power to understand for himself the matter in which he was trained earlier and to make up his mind on the issues which determine his general philosophy, his convictions about right conduct, and the calling which he ought to pursue as a man. At the college age, in short, it is presumed that a man or woman becomes a responsible agent in matters intellectual and practical and that he ought to be so treated. How he may be aided to achieve maturity wisely is the problem par excellence of all thinking about higher education.

Necessity of Reassessing Education

The recent great war has occasioned new thought about the nature of education, its aims, and the
present conditions in which it has to be carried on. It has reminded us of the fragility of culture and has helped us see that our age is an age of decay in standards and therefore in performance also. It is clear today that the West stands on the brink of cultural disaster, and that to speak of education it is necessary to make clear again the aims that can reconstitute a spiritual pattern for Western culture and to define the means by which they may be realized, if only in part, in our deteriorating time. Great nations can sink into barbarism; total war occurs when there is no solid agreement among nations and classes about the nature of God and man and how men should conduct their lives. To talk of education from understanding of its direct effect on the structure of a culture and on the ends and means present in the conduct of people, on what they demand of themselves and on how they deal with their fellows, is to talk about it fundamentally.

Such fundamental discussion of education is being offered by a number of the best minds in the West. Among them are such as Ortega y Gasset, Jacques Maritain, and T. S. Eliot. The last has presented several penetrating essays and lectures which reached a climax in four lectures delivered in Chicago and published in the four numbers of Measure for 1951. Valuable, though less satisfactory, discussion appears in a new book, The Teaching of Religion in American Higher Education (Ronald Press Company, New York, 1951), which comprises five essays written by eminent American educators and planned to fit together in a connected analysis and argument. I wish to call attention to this book because it deals directly with higher education in this country and with the possibilities for good which are present in it. It is an American counterpart to the recent and obviously superior study of British university education, Sir Walter Moberly’s The Crisis in the University (Student Christian Movement Press, London, 1949; purchasable from the Macmillan Company). These two books merit joint but not equal consideration. The argument common to them is stated so much more thoroughly and vividly by Sir Walter that I shall limit myself, in discussing the American book, to only a few of its observations about peculiarities in the American scene and to what I consider its chief defects.

Opinions of Prominent American Educators

The five collaborating Americans know the situation in this country first hand. Christian Gauss is Dean Emeritus of Princeton University, Howard B. Jefferson is President of Clark University, J. Hillis Miller is President of the University of Florida, Kenneth W. Morgan is Chaplain at Colgate University and Robert Ulich is Professor of Education at Harvard. In the first chapter Mr. Gauss provides a brief summary of the role that religious teaching has played in American colleges from the founding of Harvard to the present time; he makes the useful point that the recent Supreme Court ruling in the McCollum case rests on an interpretation of the Constitution which was almost never held prior to the First World War. In the third chapter Mr. Jefferson ably points out the failure of the Harvard Report, General Education in a Free Society, to come to grips with the problem whether such practical agreement as exists between the movements associated with John Dewey and Robert M. Hutchins can persist or be justified in the absence of agreement in metaphysics or theology. One member of the Harvard Committee, Professor Raphael Demos, has stated independently that in his judgment the former agreement requires the latter. (See his two fascinating discussions in Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, Vol. VII, No. 2 [December, 1946]). Both Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Ulich analyze the meaning and deficiencies of the naturalist philosophy which underlies the hostility of such men as Sydney Hook and John Dewey to orthodox Christian teaching. Two of the chapters provide interesting material on what can be done and is being done in non-church-related institutions of higher learning in the way of making religious teaching a genuine and honorable division of the curriculum. Mr. Morgan speaks judiciously of the means to effect the introduction of religious courses into the curriculum and of specific types of courses which are suitable for the purposes of higher education. Mr. Miller describes the way in which the University of Florida has actually organized a curriculum within which religion is an ordering factor.

Only a few snippets from this book have been given, but they suffice to indicate that despair over American public higher education is unnecessary and to arouse a sense of gratitude. It is possible to do much within the present system if we have the energy to act against the pressure of bad habit.

Criticism

The defects of this book, which should not prevent our recognizing its value, are two. One is vagueness in the use of terms and in statement of positions. Reading this book will give one a sample of what careful writers speak of as the deterioration of the English language, which is primarily a matter of substance, not of style merely. While Sir Walter Moberly is always clear, penetrating, and specific, the American writers frequently make do with a vague term when, as I judge, they mean something definite; they speak of values when they mean Christian values, they are vague on the nature of God and man though intending to refer to a very definite notion, whether Greek or Hebrew-Christian. Their argument is weakened, though perhaps it is made less offensive to men who do not prefer clear thinking, when they speak of religion and mean Christianity. It is true to say that demo-
cracy was formed on the basis of religious belief, but it is not true that democracy consorts with any religion or theology whatever. When they speak of standards essential to the West the authors of this book usually refer to the doctrines and standards affirmed by such writers as Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas and Calvin; but they do not take pains to make this clear. A second and grave defect appears in Mr. Ulich’s chapter on liberal education. While his argument, if stated precisely, would show only that a liberal education cannot be complete unless it discusses human life with the help of philosophy and religious ethics, it is stated in a loose language which succeeds only in suggesting pantheist notions of God and man’s relation to God. Mr. Ulich tells us that such terms as Brahma, the Infinite, the Logos, or God, are all “dim reflections” of a Whole or Universal Reason, that man’s existence is “imbedded” in this Whole, and that man’s a priori forms of ordering experience are somehow copies of a transcendent reason. Here are a set of indefinite metaphors doing service where it is not impossible to be precise; what is more, the idealist implications of these metaphors, if worked out rigorously as they have been in Absolutism and Pantheism, would be seen to be hostile to that framework of Western culture which Mr. Ulich wishes to see preserved.

Sir Walter Moberly is never indefinite in his use of terms or analogies, and he writes explicitly from a Christian standpoint. His book is the result of his being deputed to write a statement of the joint work and reflections of two British societies which attacked the question of what Christian faith means for the Christian who is active in one or another profession. Holding a combined meeting at Cambridge in 1946 the Student Christian Movement and the Christian Frontier Council considered twelve pamphlets published by the former, found a wide area of agreement, and appointed Sir Walter as their spokesman. The argument presented in the book was made possible by the joint achievement, but it is his own argument. Because of their importance I shall try to state in outline the steps it traces.

What is Wrong
With the Universities

(1) A basic assumption is this: there is much wrong with universities today, for the world is in disorder. Power to control and to destroy men has increased enormously, but we often disagree on the ends of human life. The West has a tradition which is able to reveal a right direction, and at this point Christianity is vital. Certain factors in this tradition need to be discarded and we are obliged to sift and reformulate aims and methods in the context of a complex and mechanical civilization. Universities lead the way in techniques. But they do not understand ideals; on aims they are divided; and they neglect the basic questions. Hence they do not attain clarity on policy, on organization, on teaching methods, or on their relation to government and the world and the welfare of students.

(2) Confusion about ends is due partly to the presence of jarring patterns for the university: the Classical-Christian, the Liberal, and the Technological-Democratic. It has produced a departmentalism which isolates fragmentary branches of knowledge from one another and the student from reality; in sum, it induces irresponsibility. Also, the universities have accepted the dissolve policy of ignoring issues about ends, on which philosophy and theology bear, and of cultivating an impossible neutrality. Neutrality is either irresponsible or prejudiced; in pursuing it the university fails to be the university.

(3) Three ideals are now being offered to remove confusion; none of them satisfies. (a) Scientific humanism, which has confidence in planning human life, fails to appreciate the depth of man’s capacity for evil and is vague on ends and on how to prevent the planner’s making an evil use of means. (b) The Classical ideal does not reckon with changed conditions in modern society; it is unjust to those people who in earlier and more aristocratic times performed the menial services. (c) The ideal of an all-Christian university also is defective, for (1) men do not agree sufficiently on Christianity for its imposition to be anything but a flagrant act of violence and a source of hypocrisy; (2) the older Christian universities were unjust and self-satisfied; (3) the Christian of today has not all knowledge—in the interest of teaching universal knowledge the Christian must welcome the aid of non-Christians.

Recommendations

(4) Positive steps can now be recommended. (a) The university’s business is to facilitate thorough and fearless discussion of all “burning questions of the day.” In order to expel from students the sense that these questions are unimportant, the university must first of all abandon its current habit of neglecting them. (b) To this end communications must be reopened between men who now work in isolated mental worlds. The degree to which professors today have no common interests but trivial ones is shocking. (c) On fundamental issues neutrality is indefensible. The university has guild rules (such as commitment to truth, to painstaking analysis and thorough discussion, to free utterance and readiness to learn) which predetermine its stand on such fateful questions as whether or not there are objective truth and right. (d) Choice of these broad values must be pushed back to doctrine. This point is controversial and many protest it, claiming that practical agreement on values is compatible
with divergence on principles (cf. the Harvard Report). In a time when "daemonic new faiths" shake the foundations of life the practical agreement is not viable in the absence of open and thorough discussion of principles. For the West, the principles are Christian. (e) Christians in the university should regard themselves not as a small minority in a pagan enclave but as a "creative minority" in a society where their efforts may count. Mr. T. S. Eliot has said that the positive elements of our culture are Christian, the Christian character of our culture is steadily vanishing, and yet men would choose Christianity if they saw clearly what alternatives remain. The Christian may not in conscience excuse himself from participating in university affairs. Vivid discussion of the dependence of Western standards on Christian belief can do good. Making the university more Christian means to Western standards on Christian belief can do good.

American universities are Christian, the Christian character of our culture is steadily vanishing, and yet men would choose Christianity if they saw clearly what alternatives remain. The Christian may not in conscience excuse himself from participating in university affairs. Vivid discussion of the dependence of Western standards on Christian belief can do good. Making the university more Christian means to Western standards on Christian belief can do good.

One of the great tasks of our day is the reconstruction of our culture's sense of the divine. The West is still a Christian culture, and it does not debar fair study of difficulties and objections. What are the duties of the theologian and of any Christian teacher in the university? The theologian must learn (this is difficult) how to serve the whole academic community, not merely prospective clergymen. He must learn to understand and to speak to engineers and biologists. The Christian teacher must take steps (this is a staggering task) to think out and to apply the meaning of Christian faith for his own activities and for the work of men in every occupation. He evades his tasks if he cultivates personal Christian virtues but does not reform the secularist routine of medicine, law, teaching, commerce, etc. If he supposes that his personal efforts are bound to go without effect he is a fatalist, bowing down to the idol of society. Christian teachers can take immediate practical steps: they can identify one another (rarely is this done) ; they can discuss together how their beliefs bear on their work and on the policies of their universities; they can seek out men who, while not sharing the full Christian faith, do assent to some important Christian aims, and join forces with them to increase the "Christianization" of the university. Reform can be only gradual and incomplete, of course, but no one ever fails to have the duty of preferring the fifth-best to the sixth-best when no better is possible.

Concluding Remarks

I beg the reader to permit me a few pointed remarks in closing. We Christians profess to live by faith in God's saving grace; and some of us can profit from private Christian institutions of learning. These facts are sometimes used as an occasion for neglect of our duty to know about and to improve the state of education in our society as a whole. In my judgment, the Christian who succumbs to this temptation is seriously at fault; here is another form of the "holier than thou" perversion. The argument for the improvement of higher education by "Christianizing" it is just and valid. It serves to define our Christian and human duty toward a legitimate and important function of society. The fact that today the private institutions do a better job of education per se does not diminish our responsibility for the working of public institutions or for their further deterioration in the future. In the interest of education per se, of the doing well of something that is eminently worth doing, Christians are obliged to work toward such ends as are espoused in the two books before us. And finally, the Christian may be
warned, chiefly by Sir Walter, to be circumspect about his ability to found an all-Christian university which is qualified to perform as well as possible the proper work of the university. In the nature of the case Christians may have faults which work to the detriment of university education. They themselves would suffer in respect of the manner in which they hold and understand the faith if they did not protect and welcome statements of their belief by non-Christians. The Christian has an especially heavy debt of justice to non-Christians; he cannot violate their claim to freedom of belief and expression. Also he is interested in promoting the maturity of the Christian believer; just as it is neither possible nor desirable to remove temptation from human life, so it is not right to diminish the maturity of the Christian by an undue restriction of his opportunity to choose his philosophy and his faith. The best university will promote the free and competent expression of conflicting doctrines and an intelligent, responsible choice among them. He who insists that only Christian teachers are safe for advanced students ought to ask himself whether he is not afflicted with fear that his faith is really unable to compete—that truth is bound to lose out even under conditions of fair and complete discussion. At this point the question in hand touches upon the issues on which we claim to differ from the totalitarians.

**The Pressure of Pan-Statism**

Dr. Jan Schouten
Leader of the Anti-Revolutionary Party in the Netherlands

**One of the most pressing political problems of time, whether from a theoretical or practical point of view, is the problem of State and Society, or more exactly, the problem of Government and Economic life. The relation between them, as compared with an earlier day, has undergone a clearly observable shift; and not one of us escaped the effects of this shift. Rightly to evaluate the causes and significance of this shift calls for analysis and discernment.**

**Analysis of the Problem**

The vandalism of the Occupation, the destruction of war, the chaotic conditions and scarcity of goods which followed immediately after World War II—all these paved the way for unusual government intervention in social and economic life. International relations both in Europe and abroad, as well as international monetary problems, called likewise for increased government regulation. Cooperation in economic affairs between different countries—if not permanent, such cooperation is at least indispensable for a long time to come—contributed further to the expansion of government control over, and in the interest of, the adjustment and development of the national economy. People will have to accustomed themselves to the idea, if they are not already used to it, that government activity in economic affairs will continue on a much larger scale than was formerly the case. Larger unities of a federal nature, political, military, and economic, have made their debut. They have come and are coming into existence out of necessity; viewed even apart from the expansive ambitions of Russia, they are necessary both to the preservation of small countries and the fortification of their position over against the big powers of the world—particularly, of course, over against Russia—as well as to the recoupment of their internal strength. I have in mind the Benelux,1 the Treaty of Five States,2 of which our country is a signatory, and the cooperation between the sixteen countries benefitting from the Marshall plan.3 These roughly enumerated causes, which though related are none-theless distinguishable, have to a large extent modified the relation between government and economic life. This change has in turn given rise to numerous dangers and difficulties involved in the scope and organization of government administration, the organization of business and industry, and the coordination between them.

**The Solution Proposed by Socialism**

This analysis of the problem is not, however, adequate. Until now we have left untouched another very important aspect of the problem. The implementation of justice, the acknowledgement of the value of the human personality, as well as current national and international conditions, it is said, all demand that the government assume permanent control over economic life—demand, in other words, a government-controlled economy. Objections have

---

1 An alliance in the interest of economic, political, and cultural cooperation between Belgium, Luxemburg, and Holland. Their efforts were at the time of the speech directed toward the realization of an economic union.

2 On March 17, 1948, France, Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg, and England, concluded the so-called Treaty of Brussels, in which these nations promised each other assistance in the event of an attack upon one of the signatories.

3 The Marshall Plan aims to promote the financial and economic rehabilitation of Western Europe. Participating countries have formed an organization to implement the plan.
been raised against the use of this term, however, on the ground that opinions differ widely as to the scope and meaning of the expression "government-controlled economy." For this reason the present Minister of Economic Affairs avoids the term.

Under consideration then is the socialist idea that the government should give general direction to economic life, that to reach this goal, private ownership of land and other means of production should be suspended, and that business and industry should be re-organized preparatory to complete socialization. This platform insists not that the relation between government and economic life be modified for urgent practical reasons but that step-by-step the ideal of Socialism be put into operation—the ideal, namely, that the State should have the management of a country's economy in its own jurisdictional hands.

We should go too far afield if we were to discuss this important subject at any length. We shall limit ourselves therefore to one point: the question whether the implementation of this ideal is compatible with spiritual and moral freedom and the social freedom required for their exercise; or whether the implementation of this ideal does not require the introduction of a communistic system. Socialists are quick to say No to this second question: they abhor the Russian system, they hate a dictatorship, they want a Socialism which recognizes and respects democracy. To the first question they say Yes: they believe their ideal can be realized without violence to these freedoms. We believe they are mistaken. We believe that their plan put into practice means the concentration of power in the hands of the government—hence, a combination and commingling of political with economic power—means, further, an increased application of that power by officialdom, with all the attendant dangers of retardation, congestion, and the bureaucratic and subjective use of authority, etc., and an ever stronger grip on economic life lest its development get out of control.

Dangers of Power

Power is indispensable to the maintenance of authority. This fact is particularly true of government. Without the instruments of power it could not in many instances exercise its authority. The power which sustains the authority of government is of a peculiar type. It is the power of the sword. The government can enforce obedience with a strong arm. Hence power is the servant of authority. Since the use of power, however, is subject to the influence of sin, the proper relationship between power and authority is often broken; it is broken whenever power is used for the sake of power or from a lust for power; and the abuse of power is a commonplace occurrence in this world. The danger of abuse in government is great particularly because the power of government is that of force. The more the power the greater is the danger of abuse; and it is hard to provide satisfactory guarantees against the abuse of political power. The objections against concentrating that power in the hands of the few are therefore by no means slight. When the expansion of power is necessary to preserve and maintain justice we must accept such expansion. If this increase is accompanied by an increase in economic power we must accede and accommodate ourselves to this increase. But to yield economic powers to the dispensers of political power in the absence of judicial necessity is a wrong and precarious undertaking—particularly in a time when government powers are already exorbitant. To mingle or combine political and economic power is not the most suitable safeguard against the abuse of political power. These and other considerations prompt us to reject Socialism. This point of view requires further elucidation. We talked a moment ago about preserving the integrity of political power. But one should say that both the integrity of political power and the integrity of economic power must be preserved in the sphere of government. When political power is applied in the interest of a particular economic view, which has not or not sufficiently been tested, confusion results when economic power is applied in the interest of a particular political view, of which the same can be said, confusion results again. Moreover, certain political and economic views may often, not to say will often, be a part of the religious convictions of the current dispenser of power. Is it not possible then that power will be used with a bias in the service of these convictions? One's view as to the desirability of a given economic development and as to the scope of particular provisions within the total setting of the economy, determined as such views are by a given economic ideal, may play a decisive role in the weal or woe of persons and groups. Let us not press the matter any further. The accumulation of political and economic power in the hands of the few is fraught with danger. The counter-balancing effect of a richly differentiated economy is certainly reduced when the economic powers of government are preponderant. And when economic freedom is put through a wringer can the violation of spiritual and moral freedom be far behind? Palpable, also, is the danger of violation to moral and spiritual freedom when, through whatever causes or circumstances, a spiritual climate more or less hostile to these freedom should predominate in government. All the more reason for us to reject the ideal of Socialism.

The Anti-Revolutionary Party on Industrial Organization

Fortunately we do not have to choose between Socialism and Laissez-faire. The term "laissez-
“Fair” is no longer applicable to our country; extensive government legislation and the growing organization of labor have made important contributions to the rise and expansion of organized justice for the laboring class. The idea of industrial organization is not novel in our party. It arose for us from Christian sources and was developed by such men as Kuyper, Talma, Sikkel, Diemer, Smeenk, Gerbrandy, and Amelink. By this time it should be common property among us. We may not be agreed all along the line; but there is certainly enough unanimity for us to take a common decision which, apart from its principal value, is practically significant in the social, economic, and political sectors.

Permit me to add a few remarks on the subject of organizing industrial life. This organization is necessary. It will have to be pursued with care so that all things may proceed with good order. It will cover a broad field: the social and economic aspects of life have become an increasingly comprehensive and integral part of human existence. But let us not forget that such organization, however indispensable, is a means and not an end. Its purpose is to serve the cause of justice in the sphere of labor. Not things but people are involved first of all. He who has accepted the Biblical definition of man will realize the danger, the delicacy, and the difficulty, of the task of the industrial organizer. That task cannot and may not, however, be neglected. With the exertion of all our efforts we must work toward its fulfilment. The conditions for its fulfilment, and at the same time the spur to an assumption of the task, are compassion and a sense of justice. Everything depends on the spirit in which it is undertaken. The spirit of Revolution infects and destroys; the spirit of the Gospel ennobles, restores, and renews. Guided by that spirit we shall give ourselves with devotion, conviction, and faith to our endeavor in the social and economic spheres, to the work of Christian organization in those spheres—hence to the organization of labor—in order that justice be done to the value of human beings, whether singly or collectively, that the fruits of labor may be enjoyed and distributed, and that justice may be the lodestar in the regulation of human relations in business and industry. A sense of justice and the service of love are both pre-requisite. One the basis of justice and love we shall be able to work steadfastly and with a compassionate heart in pursuit of the calling to which God calls us and to which the confession of the Kingship of Christ constrains us. Be a blessing in word and deed: then we may look for the favor of God upon the work of organization.

The Strongest Guarantee Against the Abuse of Economic Power

There is still one more point to which I must draw your attention. Just as the strongest guarantee against the abuse of political power lies, humanly speaking, in popular interest in the affairs of the government, in the conviction of a people that a government's business is their business, and in the conscious exercise of their rights and privileges as living forces at their command—so the strongest guarantee against the abuse of economic power lies in the development of the self-activation of society. Society has the task to organize and regulate.

It should, by means of its organization, be active in the establishment, increase, and preservation, of justice for labor. The more justly and efficiently this organization takes place, the more society becomes society, the more it promotes, on the one hand, the maturation of human personality in the sphere of labor and, on the other, cooperation and mutual consultation between groups. To the extent that it guides this work in the right direction it will contribute to the growth and manifestation of a national force which will stimulate society and command the respect and appreciation of the government.

We detest State-omnipotence and State-guardianship. We loathe and set ourselves against a strangling bureaucracy. In the situation of today we regard State-domination as a black menace. Opposition, especially by positive measures, must be our watchword! We have indicated the way: let us proceed. Let us work with devotion for the increased self-activation of society, for industrial organization on behalf of the individual man and the nation, and for the realization of justice for labor. Obedience to God and love for Christ Jesus should move our hearts. Words are not enough: deeds are required!

*This article is a translation — prepared by Mr. John Vriend — of an excerpt taken from a speech delivered by Dr. Jan Schouten on May 12, 1948, at the 33rd regular party meeting.
The Modernist and the Reformation

W. Stanford Reid
McGill University
Montreal

IN a former article a beginning was made in the review of Professor Wilhelm Pauck's book, The Heritage of the Reformation. In that it was pointed out that Professor Pauck adopted certain basic views concerning the Protestant revolt. One was that the Reformation really opened up the way for freedom in religion, freedom not only from ecclesiastical tradition, but also from Biblical authority. The other was that because of this freedom which was introduced, albeit without the reformers' realization, the true heirs of the Reformation are not orthodox Lutherans or Calvinists, but rather the so-called theological Liberals or "Modernists" of our own day. Not much criticism was levelled against this thesis at the time, for it was felt that the rest of the book is the best refutation of its basic pre-suppositions.

Reformation Protest vs. Modernist Protest

The second and third sections of The Heritage of the Reformation deal with Protestantism and Liberalism respectively. Actually why Professor Pauck made a differentiation between these two is hard to discern for it looks very much as though he regards the so-called Liberal as the only true Protestant. The Liberal is the one who has carried on the "protest" down to the present time. The trouble is, however, that he is protesting against something altogether different from that against which Luther and Calvin made their fight. The Liberal is protesting not against the clutterings of the church, imposed upon the Gospel of Sovereign Grace, but he is opposing the Gospel of Sovereign Grace, with all its emphasis upon supernaturalism and God's redeeming power.

This can perhaps be best seen in Professor Pauck's continuous barrage against the belief in the Scriptures as the Word of God. He rejects the authority of Roman Catholic tradition. That is possessed of no validity. At the same time, however, he turns against Protestant ecclesiastical creeds. They also have no authority or objective validity. Even as the confession of the Church, they simply represent the thought of a day, little systems which have had their day and cease to be. This attitude, of course is not new even amongst some evangelicals, but the latter usually go back to the Scriptures. Not so Professor Pauck. He rejects the Scriptural claims to final authority. True, he speaks of the Scriptures very reverently, as the basis of the Christian faith, but when one gets down to the foundation, it is a little hard to realize what view of the Scriptures he does hold. One thing is certain, however, the Scriptures are not the same thing for Pauck as they were for Luther and Calvin. Man would now seem to be in direct contact with God without any need for written revelation. Here is the kernel of the whole matter.

At the same time Pauck accepts neither the "inner experience" views of such people as the pietists nor the rationalistic optimism of nineteenth century modernism. He criticizes both. Quite rightly he points out that piety with its stress upon subjectivity of religion helped to break down orthodoxy by removing objectivity from its purview. At the same time the work of men such as Locke, Hume and Kant on the outside moved in the same direction by saying that man could know nothing except that which they knew from their senses. The result was that as these ideas permeated the church, the supernatural was ejected from Christianity, leaving it as merely a series of moral precepts. As Pauck points, however, this also was inadequate under the pressure of the twentieth century. The result has been the rise of such men as Barth, Brunner, Niebuhr, and others. They have appeared largely because the older movements have had no real final authority, but neither they nor Pauck seem to offer anything better.

Pauck's Doctrine of Revelation

The closest that we can get to Pauck's rather nebulous doctrine of revelation is in Chapter Nine. There he deals with "Protestantism in the Light of the Idea of Revelation." As can be seen in one of his later chapters, Pauck has been considerably influenced by the thought of Barth. He accepts the idea that God has revealed Himself not in Scripture but in Jesus of Nazareth. That Jesus is the incarnate Son of God, however, would seem to be in considerable doubt. At the same time we are told that when the Early Church thought in terms of the Holy Spirit, "it referred to man's participation in God's revelation and denoted that which man has received from the divine act of self-disclosure" (p.133). The idea that the Scriptures, the church, and the creeds were part of God's revelation was a later product of an institutionalized church developed out of a combination of Jewish-Hellenistic ideologies.
The Old Modernistic "Double-Talk"

To Pauck, however, such a criticism would hardly be devastating. In his chapter on "The Dynamics of Protestantism" this is made very clear. Rejecting the idea of an hierarchical church with divine authority, the author holds that the basic dynamic of Protestantism is that it accepts nothing as final. True he talks about the sovereignty of God, salvation by faith, the priesthood of believers, etc., but as one examines these ideas expressed in the book one finds the old modernistic "double-talk." These terms do not really mean what they used to mean. They are all different, and will presumably continue to change "world without end." Thus true Protestantism is always prepared to be modernized, to accept the new views of man current amongst social scientists, and apparently the new views of God. Since Protestantism "can never rest with anything that has been attained" (p.155), Protestantism can never have any really immovable foundation. Protestantism to be true to its nature must be ever flowing.

In order to drive home this point Professor Pauck compares Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, the comparison being very necessary in this our own day. His critique of Romanism position is very able. He shows clearly the defects of the Roman position with regard to worship, the mass, prayers to the Virgin Mary, and other teachings. But when he comes down to setting forth the Protestant position he gives as a basis a human Bible which talks about God's revelation in Jesus Christ: "For the Bible is not the Word itself—it merely bears witness to it through its own frail words which can always be subjected to the critical questions of historical

uncertainty" (p.167). He specifically rejects the Bible as the written Word of God. The Word of God is "accessible only in and through the insecure testimony of historical men, first the writers of the New Testament and then all those who stand in their succession" (p.173). On the basis of such an insecure testimony he is prepared to criticize anyone, forgetting that like Rome itself he is claiming a monopoly of the truth.

Christianity, Tolerance, and Democracy

The ineffectiveness of Pauck's position would seem to become clear in the chapters in which he deals with tolerance and democracy. With regard to tolerance he holds that the origin of tolerance is to be found in eighteenth century rationalism and doubt. In other words, tolerance is the practical result of indifference. It might be pointed out as a demurrer in this matter that toleration was in effect in Holland long before the eighteenth century. Indifference has undoubtedly done much, but the true principles of the Reformation bring true toleration. But be that as it may, the author laments that tolerance has resulted in indifference generally. People have lost their real interest in Christianity. What is needed is a revival of Christian belief. But the question which immediately arises is: What Christian belief? Is it the Christianity which is dictated by some school of sociology, psychology or biology; or is it the Christianity of the Old and New Testaments which speaks of a God "Who changeth not"? One of the big reasons for the indifference and lethargy of men today about Christian things is the sort of "Protestantism" which is carried about by every pseudo-scientific wind which blows.

Much the same type of question is posed as a reaction to the chapter dealing with democracy. While admitting that Calvinism has had some influence upon democratic thought, its real origins are to be found in the eighteenth century Enlightenment. He then sets forth what he holds to be the basic tenets of true "Americanism," ending with the somewhat unhistorical statement that freedom was "by divine providence . . . first planted on the American continent" (p.218). Quite rightly he points out, however, that democracy and Christianity are not the same. Instead democracy is really in the same position as the law is to grace. What democracy needs is the impact of Christianity and Christian ideals upon it, before it can really meet the world's needs. But here again comes that recurring question: What is this Christianity and where is it found?

Pauck's Call for a Contemporaneous Religion

The response to this query comes in the third division of his work. Pauck points out that the
church in our own day has been losing its influence. It has lost the adherence of many intellectuals and many intelligent people, largely because it is not really contemporary in its outlook. The trouble with the church is that it has clung to old outmoded doctrines, such as the Virgin Birth of Christ, which must be thrown overboard before the church can really become modern. The only hope for Christianity is, that it shall recast the Christian tradition in terms and forms which will conform to modern knowledge no matter, apparently, how uncertain and temporary that knowledge may be. He points out how such movements as Nazism have tended to dehumanize human life, and how in our own society mechanization has had much the same effect. This is what has led to our cultural crisis out of which Christianity can indeed deliver us, but only if it is brought up to date. The Gospel based upon historical events is no longer sufficient. Something contemporaneous must be created.

This contemporaneous religion which will meet the needs of today, according to Pauck is Modernism. Orthodoxy, whether of the Reformed, Lutheran, or Fundamentalist type (and he lumps them all together) is hopeless for it is reactionary. Even Barthianism is of the same type. True, in one way these views of Christianity have retained more of the religious attitude than have more modern interpretations, but they are not really contemporaneous. Modernism, on the other hand, has opened a new and freer way to God, having made the way to God natural. It has also stressed faith as action in the world in the spirit of freedom. "We are then co-operators with God in eliciting from life what it is by God's grace and in bringing it to full expression" (p.253). Thus we have a religion offered to us which is primarily subjective, without any authority "but in living itself." This is the religion which will meet modern man's need. Saintliness of life is all that is needed.

**Pauck's Basic Liberalism**

It is at this point that Pauck both accepts and rejects the interpretation of theological liberalism. He explains that this phenomenon is part of the present day culture in which man has come to regard himself as autonomous. From the eighteenth century on, man has developed increasingly the idea that he can do as he pleases. Consequently he has come to regard theological doctrine as something not to be accepted but to be judged and rejected if it does not meet his standards. He can do this because he believes that there is continuity between God and man. Thus in practical terms the sermon is not the exposition of the word of God, but rather the explanation of one's own belief. Pauck would not accept this religious philosophy in all its baldness for he makes various detailed criticisms of the position with regard to sin and similar ideas. Yet he does lean very strongly to the basic ideas and concepts. Liberalism is to his mind a "good thing" because of its willingness to change and because of its rejection of the metaphysics of a revelation which implies miracle. Basically he is prepared to accept the Liberals' point of view.

This position comes out most clearly in his structures on Professor Clarence Bouma's "Calvinism in American Theology Today." His position is that historic Calvinism can never make a "come back" because it is primarily a seventeenth century phenomenon and it is untrue in its most basic aspects. It has bound God in an infallible book and in quasi-infallible creeds. True Calvinism, however, was much more prophetic, i.e., given to complete freedom from controls. This true freedom is now being brought into existence through Liberalism. This so-called theology has completed its critical and destructive works on the Bible and the creeds. It is now prepared to advance into the realm of positive and constructive theology. In this the reformers are important for they speak not in creedalism, but bid us remember that even they were mere creatures of their own times and historical circumstances. Each age must make its own theology in its own freedom.

The present age, in the optimistic view of Pauck, is going to produce something very new and special in terms of theology. Old denominational alignments and doctrines are breaking down which means that the old creedal doctrines and theologies will soon disappear, except in out of the way corners. The new theology which will be a radical religious ideology based upon super-religious thinking. This will be true neo-orthodoxy for it will come out of the true spirit of the Reformation, where man will submit to God alone, not even to a pretended God-in-breathed Bible.

This new theology will be truly ecumenical. It will be the product of religious cooperation and ecumenical thought. The source will be, so Pauck holds, the churches which are involved in the World Council of Churches. By their mutual thinking, living, and worship, they will produce on the basis of Liberalism a new ecumenical Christian religion which will answer most modern religious problems. Here is the solution: a religious which attempts to answer the dynamic call in Jesus Christ through many forms of thought and worship. This is the goal to which modern theological thinking is now heading. This is the true heritage of the Reformation.

**Final Assessment**

_The Heritage of the Reformation_ is an interesting, a stimulating, and an annoying book. There
are many good points to it. Professor Pauck has some interesting ideas about Luther and Calvin which would bear further study and elaboration. He has also stated very succinctly many of the arguments against the idea that the Reformation was merely part of the Renaissance, and the idea that it was either the product or the origin of modern capitalism. There are many other good and valuable historical insights, as one would expect in a work by so eminent a church historian. In this he is not only informative but is also stimulating, for he gives one the desire to delve more fully and completely into the sources and the history of the Reformation period. His critiques of Roman Catholicism are also extremely useful and very much to the point.

On the other hand there is the resulting annoyance felt by one who has a Reformed point of view. This arises not so much from one's disagreement with Pauck, as from the dogmatic way in which he so buoyantly rejects the orthodox position. He is always ready to down both Romanist and Calvinist because of their authoritarianism. His only authority, on the other hand, is the weakest of all: the ever changing ideas of philosophy, psychology, and science along with what looks suspiciously like subjective mysticism. Then to add insult to injury he takes many of the old doctrines, turns them inside out producing something quite new, while implying that it is really the old model all the time. One cannot help feeling that this latter practice is very bad history, and that the former is very poor philosophy. Nowhere does he give us any justification of his reason or proof for his own position. It is merely assumed that he is right on the basis of modern thought whatever, with all its chaotic and contradictory voices, that may be. If this be the heritage of the Reformation and the promise of modern Liberalism, let us continue to hold fast to the Reformed as it has been given to us.

"Go Ye" .... Who?

As a lay mission worker who for a number of years has been employed full time at the request of and under the supervision of various of our Christian Reformed Churches, I have been much interested in the current discussion regarding the proper relationship between such mission workers as myself and our ecclesiastical institutions.

The Professor of Missions at Calvin Seminary, the Reverend H. Boer, writing under the title, "Men for Missions," in The Reformed Journal of August, 1951, says that the various aspects of this matter "are becoming crucial problems."

Current Ecclesiastical Opinion

That he should be concerned about this is readily understood. On the one hand there is an increasing number of people in our denomination who, although not being officers in the church, nevertheless are bringing the Gospel to their fellow men, and are also assuming some measure of leadership in the Gospel Chapels. On the other hand, judging from the general tenor of his above mentioned article, Professor Boer seems to agree with the opinion expressed by the Reverend R. DeRidder at our Annual Mission Workers' Conference last summer, where the latter said that evangelization work "can best be done by ordained men." I assume that by "ordained men" the clergy is meant.

This is essentially the same thought expressed by the late Dr. DeKorne in the Banner of November 30, 1951, where under the title, "Who is Sent?" he wrote, "Who does the Church send to mission fields? Primarily the ordained missionary." Professor Boer says that the "basic missionary task of the Church falls upon her ministry" and feels that the Christian Reformed Church should send out unordained missionaries "only as a last resort."

Today there is an increasing insistence that this same rule be applied to our church's entire program of missions, even in neighborhood evangelization. In his Banner editorial of November 23, 1951, the Reverend H. J. Kuiper complains that as an instituted church "we are still making little use of lay talents, except in some of our missions. In fact, there seems to be a trend right now to restrict their activity even there."

Reasons for Concern

This gives reason for grave concern. It means that only officers in the church, and specifically members of the clergy, could make a career of responding to the call, "Go ye." The reasons adduced by those who favor such an arrangement have produced dismay and confusion in the heart and mind of more than one lay missionary. If these reasons revealed mainly a concern about necessary preparation for the mission task, such as education, proper standards and procedure for examining prospective missionaries, etc., the matter would not be so disturbing. That these requirements should
be placed upon a definite and uniform basis all will agree. Neither will any sensible mission worker disparage college and seminary training. I have frequently said, “If a church had to choose between two men, one of whom had college and seminary training, and the other had neither, would not the church be stupid not to choose the man with the training, unless there was something else very objectional about him.”

Since the Word of God suggests very little or nothing with respect to educational requirements for God’s servants beyond knowing His Word and being capable of communicating it to others, these requirements will vary greatly among the different church communions and also with times and circumstances. If we can find a sufficient number of men who can meet the requirements we demand for attaining to ministerial status in our churches, we are justified in maintaining that standard. Surely no lay worker ought to favor lowering the standard of educational requirements for ministers in our denomination, nor any system that readily results in some sort of dual standard of ministry for the membership of the church. If for no other reason, it wouldn’t be fair to the men who are compelled to take seven years of college and seminary in order to qualify.

It should be born in mind, however, that the mission field is immeasurably more extensive than the church field. Vast inhabited areas of the world have gone unevangelized for centuries for lack of personnel. Ignorance concerning the Gospel is rapidly increasing in the so-called Christian nations. It is evident that only a limited number of men avail themselves of seminary training. Many do not catch the vision until it is too late to acquire such training. If the lessons of history mean anything, it is safe to say that there never will be a full quota of missionaries for the world’s great mission field. Under these circumstances, is it not mocking the Lord of the Harvest when we pray that He thrust laborers into the field, and then insist, as far as our church is concerned, that He must not give gifts for, nor call men to such work, except through the channels of our college and seminary? Does not the great demand of the field dictate that we may not refuse available messengers only because they have not met the educational requirements for the ministry in our churches? Since it is left to the judgment of the Churches just where to draw the line, there always can and will be room for honest differences of opinion at this point. However, the insistence that the mission program of the church is “primarily” in a “basic” sense the task of officers in the church, and that unordained men should be used only as a sort of “last ditch” stand to keep our mission program from collapsing, (as implied by Professor Boer’s article) is much more serious.

I had always thought that it was occasion for rejoicing, and an evidence of the Spirit’s operation and blessing in the church, when men and women out of the common ranks of the church volunteered to become missionaries. Judging from what we are being told now, my joy was not properly occasioned. If I am not mistaken, some of our leaders contend that a normal and ideal situation would obtain if only ministers, in sufficient numbers of course, would volunteer for this work.

Reason for Approval of “Lay Activity”

Undoubtedly, my approval of such “lay activity” resulted from my early training at home and in catechism class. From the Scriptures it was pointed out to us that there are two aspects to the Church of Christ here on earth, namely, the organic and the institutional. We learned that the church in essence is an invisible, spiritual entity, and consequently an organic body, manifesting itself in institutional form. We were definitely told that Roman Catholicism identifies the external, organizational, with the spiritual, organic character of the church, and consequently sees the essential, primary factor of the church in her offices. Thus we can understand that when Rome speaks of church she always means in the first place the hierarchy, and also that the task of the church is always primarily the task of her officials. (See Professor L. Berkhof’s Manual of Reformed Doctrine, p.280, and also his Systematic Theology, p.564).

Because of the primal character of the believer’s living union with Christ, the Protestant revolt against the claims of the Roman Catholic hierarchy implied that the thing primary and essential in the church is common to all believers, viz., the office of believer, functioning as prophet, priest and king. The offices in the church exist for the sake of promoting this primary activity, and not vice versa. “... en de Kerk ontvangt van Hem de grondlijnen eener inrichting, die aan het wezen der Kerk, als Lichaan onder haar Hoofd, beantwoorden moet” (Dr. P. A. E. Sillevis Smitt in De Organisatie Der Christelijke Kerk, p.32). “The Church as an institution or organization is a means to an end, and this is found in the Church as an organism, the community of believers” (Prof. L. Berkhof in his Systematic Theology, p.567).

Reading Paul’s description of the Body of Christ in I Corinthians 12 and in Ephesians 4, one is impressed by the picture of organic unity that forms the background out of which all the church’s activity is explained. All are responsible for the great task of the church, namely, to grow. The main functioning of the Body of Christ is the spiritual life pulsation, the believing, loving and obeying of every member working as prophet, priest, and king. That which is basic and essential in the offices of prophet, priest, and king is found in every believer. There under her living Head and in di-
rect relationship to Him, that is, without any mediating office, is found the basic, primary officialdom in the church. This Biblical concept of the believer's office should not be relegated to the realm of the purely spiritual, leaving it without practical reference to the mechanism of organization.

"Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ . . . Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a people for God's own possession; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (I Peter 2:5 and 9).

Church history exhibits an ever present tendency to identify the form with the essence; the external with the spiritual; the organic with the organization. Can that be the reason why the church's theologians have put forth but comparatively little effort to develop the Biblical concept of office of believer? It is significant that in treatises dealing with the church as institute, much importance is attached to such texts as Matthew 18:17-18: "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." There is also Matthew 16:19, where we read: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Tireless effort is put forth to discover the implications of these Scripture passages for the officials of the church. Very little is said in this connection, about such texts as I Peter 2:5 and 9, and others like them where there is also reference to office.

Importance of the Believing Membership

There is much discussion about the dignity and authority of the offices in the church. What authority is that with which a believer can refuse to subordinate his conscience to the authority of any office or church council? "We must obey God rather than men" has Divine sanction. If we still believe that only the infallible Word of God, and no creedal utterances or official formulations and interpretations of this Word are binding upon the conscience of the believer, what is the relationship of this evident authority of the believer to the offices in the church? In seeking an answer to these questions, let us remember that when we minimize the basic and the permanent, and over emphasize that which is provisional, we sooner or later become guilty of "manufacturing" principles.

A minister desiring to preach in our small church must subscribe to our forms of unity. He promises to preach in keeping with the creeds of the church. In so doing he submits himself to some kind of authority. The creed is evidently the expression of some kind of authority. It is false to say that he is simply submitting himself to God's Word. Then let him just subscribe to the Bible. The creed is not God's Word. The creed is an interpretation of God's Word. The creed is the expression of the conscientious convictions, or the faith of the believing membership. It is "the fruit of the age-long reflections of the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, on the truth as found in the Word of God" (Prof. L. Berkhof in the Banner of Dec. 21, 1951, in an article entitled, "The Authority of Creeds and Confessions"). When inquiry is made regarding who determines what the minister must preach, and how the elders must rule, the question is only too often summarily dismissed by saying that in all these things the officers must submit to God's Word. By identifying the creed with the Word, no further question arises. However, since we agree that the creeds are not infallible, the question persists, whose authority decides whether any specific creed, or any particular part thereof is in keeping with the sacred Scriptures? Do the believers accept any particular "summary of the doctrines of the Bible" to be correct because the church officially declares them to be so, or do the believers, simply by virtue of their right as believers, either accept or reject the same? In a chapter on "The Ministry of the Word" in his book, The Work of the Holy Spirit, Dr. A. Kuyper says, "Rome puts men between us and the Scriptures." If the believers accept an interpretation because it has official approval, wherein do we differ from Rome? Is it not much more correct to say that the officials must subscribe to the forms of unity acceptable to the believing membership? Because every believer has a God ordained freedom of conscience subject only to the Word, our creedal utterances must always in the first place be the expression of the faith of the membership. This is what gives them their primary binding power, under God's Word. The issue involved is whether Christ speaks primarily through the office of believer, or through the other offices in the church. This again has bearing on the position that mission work is primarily the task of the clergy, and that the church should use laymen only as a last resort.

Are We Overemphasizing the Institutional?

Recently a minister said to a colleague at the latter's installation ceremony, "Others can only speak about Christ; you now can say, 'thus saith the Lord.'" If in the promulgation of the Gospel there is the same difference between the word of a church official and the word of a lay member that there is
between the word of an ambassador communicating a message to a foreign government and what his secretary may happen to say (even though, because she typed out his message, she knows the facts), then the world need pay no attention except when a minister speaks.

Overemphasis upon the significance of the external, institutional church leads to questionable conclusions. In the Banner of August 11, 1951, the Reverend A. Brink raised the question whether it is proper to preach the Catechism. He feels that the answer is “No.” God’s Word is that which we must preach, that is, expound and proclaim. But in the same Banner issue Dr. J. Daane insists that the answer is “Yes.” He even implies that unless we say “Yes,” we are not soundly Reformed. Where the Reverend Brink, speaking from the background of his Protestant consciousness, does not want to identify a creed with the Word of God, Dr. Daane asserts that this distinction can be obliterated (at least the possibility is there), since such creeds are not private interpretations, but official utterance of the instituted church. He speaks of the difference between a Sunday sermon and a Bible class; between a Bible institute and a seminary.

I like to recall what we were required to memorize from that good old study book, Bosma’s Exposition of Reformed Doctrine, relative to our evaluation of the Scriptures. We recited, “Because they are God’s Word, the Scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and life.” To designate as God’s Word any fallible formulation of Biblical truth is dealing too lightly with the Scriptures themselves. Our creeds are always more than a mere reformulation of the Truth. They are always at the same time expositions, interpretations. Let us not wipe out the distinction between interpretation and translation. To do so will inevitably lead to unscriptural conclusions with regard to the nature of the Word of God, and also with respect to the authority of the church. The fact that the Catechism has the official approval of the church, or a sermon is presented by a licensed minister, by no means makes them God’s Word, even though the thoughts therein are consistent with the Sacred Scriptures. Many formulations of the same truth are possible. There is only one formulation of the Truth which may not be called into question. Its absolute authority make it alone the Word of God.

When I imply that the church’s creedal statements can be challenged, this is not to condone any refusal to recognize the Spirit’s leading in the church’s historic struggle to interpret the Word and defend the Truth. Certainly the historic creeds of the church are more than just somebody’s private opinions. However, when we refer to the Spirit’s guidance, we are compelled to think of the Church Universal, perhaps including also Rome. In the various creeds upheld by the dissenting sectors of the church, we observe a certain basic agreement, but also a serious divergence of interpretation. Shall we begin again by saying that these creedal utterances are authoritative in as far as they are true to the infallible Scriptures? Who determines in how far they are sound? Are we not always compelled to go back to the offices of the believer as the basic determining factor, under Christ, in the church? Just as it is a serious error to say that the ordained man has the primary authority to preach the Word of God, and therefore is primarily the “sent” one, so it is also wrong to say that the ordained man is primarily qualified to serve as a messenger of the Lord. The anointing of the Spirit is primarily that which is given to all believers. “I shall pour of My Spirit upon all flesh . . . . Ye are My witnesses . . . . Ye are the light of the world . . . . Ye are the salt of the earth” was spoken to the church. I am thinking of the church in the Protestant and not in the Roman Catholic sense of the term. We know that the Lutheran interpretation of the relationship between the ecclesiastical office and the means of grace, theoretically at least, makes even the existence of faith dependent upon the office, since the Word and Sacrament become effective means of grace when officially administered. Can it be that also some of us have compromised with the basic error that characterized the thinking of the medieval church with respect to these matters? The more we err in our views with respect to the nature of the offices in the church, the more serious will be our misconception of what is involved in “ordination.”

Does Ordination Have Sacramental Efficacy?

The objection raised against the church’s use of unordained men as missionaries seems to be motivated in some quarters by the belief that ordination endows men with some sort of sacramental efficacy. If there are any such supernatural qualifications given by virtue of ordination, then these offices occupy an indispensable position between Christ and the believers. We believe that there is “one Mediator between God and men Christ Jesus” (I Timothy 2:5). “They (the ministers) do not mediate between God and man . . . . They have no power as intercessors which does not belong to every believer.” “It is false that the ministry are a distinct class from the people, distinguished from them by supernatural gifts, conveyed by the sacrament of orders” (C. S. Hodge, Systematic Theology, II, pp. 467-468).

“‘This distinction (between clergy and laity) really is a natural one, but it could and did take a hurtful turn, when ordination was thought to impart in some mysterious way the gifts qualifying for office” (D. H. Kromminga, A History of the Christian Church, p.36).
Any sacerdotal concept of the office and ordination, any tendency to make the laity dependent upon the clergy is inconsistent with the freedom of the sons of God, whereby they stand directly before the face of the King. If, as Professor Boer and Dr. De Korne reasoned in their above-mentioned articles, we need ordained men on the mission field, because the church as Institute can not come into existence on the mission field except by the authority of the existing offices (the old theory of succession of office?), pray tell me by what authority did our Protestant institutions come into existence? If the office of believer does not have in it all the potentialities necessary to organize the believers, then our Protestant organizations are bastard institutions. If “ordination” means that a believer can become an “ordained” man only through the authoritative action of other “ordained” men, then every Protestant church official is an imposter. Is there not something of the irony of history in the fact that Rome points an accusing finger at our clergy, and says in effect, “You are not ordained.” And now would these same clergymen turn upon “lay” missionaries, appointed by consistories and laboring under their supervision, and say, “You have no right to do that work; you are not ordained”?

Conclusion

The foregoing criticism of what appears to me to be a tint of clericalism in our church does not mean that we should not have a high regard for the church as institute. There should be no question among us that Christ is not only the living Head but also the “Organisator” of His Church. It is self-evident that in any organization there must be a “division of labors,” and that the resulting appointments involve the exercise of certain rights and authority not shared by all. Various aspects of the general task must be reserved for representative individuals, for regulative purposes, designed to maintain order and control. Since Christ has decreed the order and control of organization for the functioning of His Body, and can do this because He is her Lord and Master, the offices are valuable for the welfare of the Church. It is not a question of “function . . . or . . . office,” but a functioning body under the regulating solicitude of the offices.

This is a far cry from the idea that the task of the Church, which in the unity of all its phases is the prophetic, priestly and kingly program, is primarily the task of its officers, in distinction from the laity. I remember well how one of our Christian Reformed members was severely reprimanded by an elder in his congregation for agreeing with two or three other neighbors to provide financial aid for an ailing neighbor. The elder told him that such charity work was the task of the deacons. Poor, foolish elder! He did not even know where the primary responsibility lay, and had no practical view of that which is essential in the church. This is also true of discipline. It is primarily the responsibility of the members as believers, and not as officers. This is so little realized in our circles that if some members would begin to act according to this truth, much of the reaction would be, “What is this of your business?” Certainly this is also true of our great task to evangelize the world. We feel but too little where the basic responsibility rests. Then when we see men and women awakening, and desiring to shoulder a larger portion of the task, let us find for them a place to labor.

**From Our Correspondents**

Hungarian Letter

Dear Brother Editor:

Judging by the decreasing number of letters from the correspondents of The Calvin Forum, we correspondents including myself seem to need an occasional prodding from you. Not being in the habit of bearing any title without the fulfilment of the obligations attached to it, I make haste to relieve my already burdened conscience as one of your correspondents by sending you this Hungarian Letter.

As a result of the Calvinistic Re-settlement Program of the Christian Reformed Church you must have some Hungarian Reformed people in a number of your congregations. Several inquiries reached me as to their Christian standing, their admisibility into membership or into the fellowship of the Lord’s Table. To throw light upon the question I repeat here the essence of the answers given whenever asked.

Creedally and historically hardly any branch of the Calvinistic Reformation can be any closer to you than the Hungarian branch. Both the Old and the New Testaments constitute the Word of God for us. All our preachers, teachers, and professors are under oath to proclaim it in harmony with the Second Helvetic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism. This fact places the whole Hungarian family of the Calvinistic Reformation squarely within the larger Reformed family. The sole representative, on a denominational level and in the capacity of an autonomous church, of this Hungarian family, is the Free Magyar Reformed Church in America. It exchanges synodical fraternal delegates with the Christian Reformed Church, is also a member of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod along...
with your Church, and is using your official Psalter Hymnal in connection with its English services. Some of our congregations are regular users now for years of your Sunday School material, subscribers for our youth to your Young Calvinist, and we unhesitatingly extend the fellowship of the Lord's Table to your members whenever or wherever they give us the opportunity to do so, although we do not practice wide open administration of the Lord's Supper either. This status of things would leave but one question for your local congregations to decide in the Spirit of the Lord: Whether the beliefs and conduct of the individuals turning to you for spiritual succor and fellowship are in harmony with his Hungarian Reformed commitments or not. If so, I would unhesitatingly recommend him into your trust and confidence. On a wider than just a denominational level he must be regarded as a member of the universal Reformed family. Assuming it as a matter of course that this is the way they would be regarded, we waived even the thought of extending our organized care over them. I am confident that these few lines shall set the picture in the proper frame.

The much waited for synodical meeting of our Free Magyar Reformed Church in America was held here in Perth Amboy on the 11th and 12th days of December last year. The heartily appreciated greetings and message of the Christian Reformed Church were conveyed by your Rev. H. Bouma. Even his name sounded pleasant as it was his brother, Dr. Clarence Bouma, who helped us first to lift ourselves out of the cage of a choking anonymity and isolation through the pages of the Calvin Forum and in many other ways. Not only do we but also the whole Hungarian Reformed branch of Christendom were the care of Dr. Bouma. We are grateful to the Lord that the token of appreciation for these of his services, the honorary professorship of the now dormant venerable Sarospatak Seminary, could reach him in the days of his health, and we surely wish to God that he would be well again.

Our synodical meeting was characterized chiefly by two things. First, it re-affirmed our separate denominational stand and extended and applied the natural and logical inferences of that stand to the whole structure and to the whole range of activities of our church. No hesitation, no ambiguity, was left at any immediately known point for anyone that this is a church, which wills to be known and respected by insiders and outsiders alike as a church in its own right under Christ, the divine Head of God's whole household. The second characteristics of the synodical meeting was a direct consequence of the first one, that of the church rediscovering and re-acknowledging its own soul, mission, and vocation. It was a determination to humble, but nevertheless confidently, step out from under the weight of our remaining isolationism and to occupy a place as a church among the churches. In the spirit of this mood the policy of remaining in continued fraternal relationship with the Christian Reformed Church was re-affirmed, along with membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of Amsterdam. Not to shun any organization which at least officially and historically is committed to the heritage of the Calvinistic Reformation, and also to belong at least to one organization through which we can maintain spiritual contact with the original mother church in Hungary, and also to come into contact as equal and independent brethren with those American denominations which hold large contingents of Hungarian Reformed believers, the meeting also resolved to accept the invitation to constituent membership in the Alliance of the Reformed Churches Throughout the World Holding the Presbyterian System.

The big question, however, was whether or not to join the International Council of Christian Churches. As there was some feeling afloat against it, there was a wholesome debate which brought out every one of the revelant points of choosing an international alignment congenial to a church of our size and character. The result was a unanimous vote in favor of joining the I. C. C. C. The clarity and the impeccable harmony of the I. C. C. C's confessed position with that of our church made its proper impact. Its determination to steer its course within the spirit of the Reformation, and its youthful vigor and zeal to extend the influence of the same to the uttermost parts of the world carried the day. Its insistence on the purity of the churches appealed to the Magyar sons of Calvin. Its rich blend in old and new testimonies caught the imagination. All in all, it was as clear a victory for the I. C. C. C. as our little-big synod was able to give.

The decision rendered was the synod's crowning act of lifting out our church from under the final shreds of isolationistic thinking and acting. From now on all of us know that we can never allow ourselves to be caught in a spiritually unshaved, undressed condition, but regardless of size we must be a true part and a true sentinel in our allotted place of Christ's Universal Church. Knowing the down-drag of the flesh, we consciously made these ecumenical commitments as standing safeguards against any spiritual snugness; we consciously created a situation for ourselves which always forces us to be at our best. Every one of these commitments was made with the thought of committing ourselves to the Lord, deeper and deeper. These international and interdenominational connections are to mean to us what the larger units and the whole of larger churches are to mean to the smaller component parts and units. We want to be seen, we want to be known, we want to be judged or corrected, and we want to learn by the comparison the Lord's Spirit makes in the believer's heart when
meeting with other brethren equally bent on being true to the one and only Lord.

In this spirit of unreserved self-dedication a number of other resolutions went through unanimously at the meeting, one of them being a protest against creating even the appearance of an ideological alliance with the Church of Rome by sending an official United States ambassador to the Vatican. We took a very serious view of this issue, because we are familiar with the ways of political Roman Catholicism in Europe, and we most assuredly do not wish for Europe’s importation after us right by the President of these United States. We want America to be herself both within and outside of her boundaries. In this we see her salvation and not in grasping for new-fangled “patent medicines,” regardless by whom recommended. We simply cannot imagine any Calvinist to think otherwise in this matter. If we are wrong, we stand to be corrected.

Yours in Christ,

Dr. Charles Vincze,

Archdean,

January 31, 1952.

Perth Amboy, N. J.

A Letter

485 College Ave.

Holland, Michigan

Jan. 16, 1952

Dr. Cecil De Boer

Editor, The Calvin Forum

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Dear Dr. De Boer:

I always enjoyed your article in the Calvin Forum, but your editorial in the January, 1952, issue made me feel sad, to say the least. It does not give us wise leadership.

You may argue theoretically that there is a difference between Vatican City and the Pope, but in reality they function as one.

To my mind the weakest statement in your editorial is this sentence:

“The Pope whether we like it or not, is an important figure in world affairs; hence there is no good reason why governments should not acknowledge it and take advantage of it.”

I ask you: WHAT advantage?

I would challenge you to answer that question. If you think the Roman Catholic church will help Vatican City and us to fight communism, you are sadly mistaken. Communism has taken over not only Greek Catholic countries but also Roman Catholic countries. One of the strongest communist parties in western Europe is found in Italy, near the Pope, and if it were not for the material help we gave Italy, that country would be in communist hands today.

You also mention the lobbying done by the National Council of churches of Christ. Must Protestant groups do nothing to counterbalance the still more powerful lobby of the Roman Catholic church in Washington and the political machines in other large cities? Think of the machines of Tammany Hall, of Hague, Curley, Kelly-Nash, and Pendergast.

In order to save valuable space in the Forum you need not print this letter, but I would beg of you to answer my question: What really practical advantage is there for our Country in sending an ambassador to Vatican City?

Sincerely yours,

Gerrit J. Vande Riet

An article in THE ATLANTIC for January, 1952, called “Relations With the Vatican: Why Not?” by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., seems to be an answer to your main question.

—Editor.

ON CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Het Christelijk Leven in de Maatschappij by C. Bril- lenburg Wurth, J. H. Kok, Kampen, 1951, 300 pages, Pi. 8.90.

This is Volume Three of the Kampen professor’s work on Christian Ethics. It is not a book offering concrete solutions of practical problems, but a “contribution to theological social ethics” for Scripture does not give a detailed social program but principles (15; 48). The gospel is the message of God meeting man: God in his mercy and grace, man in his misery and guilt. This message cannot be understood individually alone, and then conceived as dealing with the individual’s “inner,” “spiritual” life; the prophets made a deep study of social conditions. It was Pietism that understood the gospel as a message concerning eternal life only; the Barthian critique of this one-sided Pietism should be appreciated. Sin is anti-natural, but very real; hence the Christian must react against it everywhere, also in society. Marx saw the crying injustice that prevailed in social life, but failed to recognize underlying sin. He turned matters topsy-turvy, blaming sin to bad social conditions rather than social evil to sin. Here Niebuhr and Bennett’s views are discussed according to whom, too, sin in inevitable. Bennett speaks of sin and social disease; Wurth prefers to refer to the solidarity of sin (65). Our author then warns against the popular idea that social plans and regulations can remove sin (utopianism); all such theories aim too much at removing sin by means of a new order of society (71). Dr. Wurth then comes to a discussion of the meaning of grace for Christian life and society. Here various questions are dealt with, such as Kuyper’s common grace and culture views, and the scriptural relation between grace and justice.

All of the foregoing covers the first two chapters of the book in which general principles are laid down. In Chapter...
3, *Man and Society*, we come down to practical problems, pp. 105 to 175. The gospel is said to deal with three leading themes: (a) man (b) his goods (c) his labor. On each of these, both Old and New Testament contain "a treasure of most valuable data."

(a) Anthropology is today in the center of controversy. The discussion is primarily philosophico-theological, but sociology and economics cannot escape from the problem of man. Indeed, the present social problem is first of all a question of the proper evaluation of man (107). The hard view of man (massa mensa) is discussed as we find it in Marxist socialism (109-118). Over against this man is evaluated in the light of Scripture; man as individual and as component part of society. The problem of (un) equality is discussed; the "superman"; the gospel and class struggle; the question of authority in society.

(b) *Man and his Goods* form the topic of Chapter Four. Kant, Wünsch, and others are discussed briefly; possessions in relation to need; paragraph 2 speaks of property in Roman jurisprudence; in Mosaic law; mammonism is taken up; and the eighth commandment briefly touched upon. Then follow paragraphs on the acquisition of property, and on limiting property in regard to the Kingdom of God and of well trained ministers from Europe into Canada will probably serve as an aid to make us realize that Reformed theology is indeed marching on in the Netherlands. There are at present no men in America who can begin to compare with such works as this; or, for that matter, Dr. Berkouwer's monographs on dogmatic subjects. Yet all the topics discussed in the work before us are of vital and great contemporaneous importance. It may be earnestly hoped that our men will take cognizance of such a major work as this, be it only lest our entire denomination should become lost in the waters of theological and economic backwardness. In the midst of the fundamentalist type of what passes for orthodoxy in America that danger is by no means excluded! An influx of well trained ministers from Europe into Canada will probably serve as an aid to make us realize that Reformed theology is indeed marching on in the Netherlands.

(c) Then follows a chapter on *Man and his Labor* in eight paragraphs or different headings. And then there is a brief paragraph on Calvinism and capitalism.

(d) Then follows a chapter on Calvinism and New Testament jurisprudence; in Mosaic law; mammonism is taken up; and all these points the newer views of Brunner, and many others are taken into consideration. There is a brief paragraph on Calvinism and capitalism.

(e) Then follows a chapter on *Man and his Labor* in eight paragraphs or different headings. And then there is a brief paragraph on Calvinism and capitalism.

(f) Then follows a chapter on Calvinism and New Testament jurisprudence; in Mosaic law; mammonism is taken up; and all these points the newer views of Brunner, and many others are taken into consideration. There is a brief paragraph on Calvinism and capitalism.

The brief outline, taken in part from the detailed table of contents, should convince readers that here indeed is an important work. The Dutch theologians of Reformed stock are still in the lead. There are at present no men in America or elsewhere who can begin to compare with such works as this; or, for that matter, Dr. Berkouwer's monographs on dogmatic subjects. Yet all the topics discussed in the work before us are of vital and great contemporaneous importance. It may be earnestly hoped that our men will take cognizance of such a major work as this, be it only lest our entire denomination should become lost in the waters of theological and economic backwardness. In the midst of the fundamentalist type of what passes for orthodoxy in America that danger is by no means excluded! An influx of well trained ministers from Europe into Canada will probably serve as an aid to make us realize that Reformed theology is indeed marching on in the Netherlands.

When I compare the present book with some that were published in Holland a generation or more ago, I conclude that our men over there are improving. In those days most of available space was often wasted on detailed historical descriptions of what everybody had ever said on the subject; and when the learned author came to saying something himself, he quit. Dr. Brillenburg Warth is not guilty in this respect. Yet we would have liked to see a little more positive material in proportion to the amount of polemics. Another objection we have is the difficulty all Dutch theologians seem to have in getting away from Germany: they ought to have learned of late years not to think so highly of what is produced in "Moffrika." And that the enormous labors of Kagawa are simply passed by is indefensible in view of the importance of his work exactly in this field, and of the detailed attention given to whatever hails from Germany. Such pamphlets as *Christian Brotherhood in Theory and Practice, The Philosophy of the Co-Operative Movement, The Economic Foundation of World Peace*, and others published by the Friends of Jesus Movement in Japan cannot be ignored in a scientific and scholarly book such as this or brushed aside as is done here on pages 235 and 236. But that is "the Dutch of it": too limited a view!

These few remarks, however, should not serve to detract attention from the value of this work, or discourage any one to study a book so comprehensive, clearcut and solid.

J. K. VAN BAALEN.

**HELPs To BIBLE STUDY**


Rev. F. B. Meyer is the well-known London pulpiteer. *The Way Into the Holiest* is not a word-for-word exposition of Hebrews, nor a paragraph-by-paragraph interpretation of it. If it were, this review should read differently. It is rather a devotional volume treating selected topics taken from successive paragraphs of the book of Hebrews. A choice of subject is made and around it is woven a general view of the surrounding context.

The author combines the art of careful exposition of Scripture with the homiletical ability to express collected thought in sermonic values fruitful for daily life. Rev. Meyer is clear in his thinking, has a good grasp of Hebrews, and presents his material in a vivid and often pictorial style. In this manner he proceeds through the entire book. At the close the reader will find himself in possession of a reliable conception of the thought of Hebrews without having made a word-for-word study of it.

The book forms excellent reading for the layman and a fertile reference work on Hebrews for the minister. Each of the thirty-five topics in this volume constitutes a unity while at the same time it forms a constituent part of the larger whole of the great Epistle to the Hebrews.

*The Way Into the Holiest* is a gem well worth possessing.

H. HENRY MEETER.

**POtENTIAL CHALK ARTISTS: ATTENTION**


This is a helpful book for anyone interested in becoming a "chalk artist." The directions for enlarging and coloring each one of the twenty-one pictures imprinted upon the pages are so clear and simple that it, followed sincerely, even a ten or eleven year old child could achieve effective results.

A devotional accompanies each print. These talks are religious in content but touched with Arminian color, and a few are even Humanistic in hue.

The book can be of value to higher elementary and junior high school pupils if they master the instructions given and then use the acquired knowledge and skill as a springboard to launch into limitless possibilities of producing original illustrated talks for social or educational purposes.

HELEN VAN LAAR.

THE CALVIN FORUM • • • MARCH, 1952