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July 1953
Josephine Baker
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the **CALVIN** **Orum**

Reformed Ecumenical Exploration

Making the Labor Unions Obsolete

In a College Chapel

**A Notice About Hungarian
Calvinism in Captivity**

**News from Canada and
North Ireland**

**Calvinistic Literature in Modern
Netherlands: A Book Review**

VOL. XVIII, NO. X

**TWO DOLLARS
A YEAR**

MAY, 1953

THE CALVIN FORUM

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EDITORIALS

Reformed Ecumenical Exploration

ECUMENICITY is one of the church's greatest explorations. In the main there are three types of ecumenicity. The Eastern Orthodox Church represents traditional and *creedal ecumenicity*. There can be no true ecumenicity unless their traditions and their creeds are adopted. The Roman Catholic Church is the exponent of *legal ecumenicity*. This legal ecumenicity implies the acceptance of the pope as the legal and *ex cathedra*, infallible head of the church, and also of the doctrine which he promulgated recently, Mariology. When approached by representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC) to participate in that movement, the pope logically replied that the Roman Catholic Church was deeply interested in ecumenicity, but since the Roman Church was the true church, true ecumenicity demanded only one thing: return to the church. Mother Mary is weeping for her erring children. The Protestant type of ecumenicity may be designated as *functional*. In spite of creedal differences there may be large areas Protestants hold in common. Protestants are functionally united in such movements as the YMCA, or the YWCA, or the Student Volunteer Movement. The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC) also operate with that type of ecumenicity. These three general characteristics, the traditional, the legal, the functional, are definitive of different theologies, philosophies, histories, and cultures. The WCC simply recognizes this fact, and has instituted many studies, for which it has been criticized, to cultivate one mind upon which to build a comprehensive ecumenicity. It hopes that this educative road will lead to the unity of theology and function. It feels that functional ecumenicity, that is unity in joint projects, ultimately is dissatisfactory.

We must evaluate Reformed Ecumenicity in the light of this background. Will the Synod of the Reformed Churches, required to convene in Edinburgh, Scotland, this summer, demonstrate an idiomatic type of ecumenicity, native to the genius of the Reformed faith? Will this Synod be only a deliberative body, an assembly entirely devoted to discussions? Will it venture into the functional? Will it prove its right to an independent existence? Will it be only Reformed-centered or will it also be Christendom-centered?

An encouraging characteristic of our age is a *renewed* interest in ecumenicity. Relief work, immigration, persecution and wars have enlarged our

world. Perhaps it is better to say that these have shrunk our world by bringing our distant brethren in misery close to our hearts. Korea and Japan do not seem far away from us any more. Hungary is only next door—so near, yet so far! There is a sound-proof wall in between, and the only power that can puncture it today is the power of prayer to a throne higher than any demonically constructed wall. Without this Synod there is and there will be ecumenicity. Christian love is nervous until it finds relief in helping the distressed.

There is a certain principle upon which the Reformed Ecumenical Synod is constructed that will not meet the eye immediately, nor seem to warrant the expense and trouble involved. This principle is Biblical. What is *invisibly* one must seek to express itself in this world as *visibly* one. God demands of us more than an invisible unity. It is the church that appears visibly in history that is persecuted, that carries on mission work, and that is a public testimony to the world. It is the hour of competitive voices, and shall our Reformed soul broadcast or no? Our soul seeks global *visibility* of the invisible Reformed faith that is the same fundamentally no matter where it is found.

Perhaps our conception of the local autonomy of churches may have impoverished our way of thinking about the first Council at Jerusalem. We believe that the Gentile Christians were thrilled at the thought of representatives of two such divergent classes of people, Jew and Gentile, sitting together in an outward unity. At any rate, Jew and Gentile were engaged in a joint project, theologically and functionally. Perhaps to them it may have been a concrete answer to the very prayer of our Lord that all his flock be one. Historically considered, Christ alone achieved what no one, nor anything else, could achieve.

* * * * *

This Reformed Synod will have a twofold responsibility in particular. It must help its membership first of all. Its reports must clarify the theological, even scientific atmosphere for its members. According to the genius of the Reformed faith it must satisfy the mind. We must know. The new issues are so momentous that no nation has a monopoly on answers. It must, further, warm the heart. This can be attained not through emotionalism but through the deep movements of truth. Its second

responsibility is toward those who are without. In that sense it must be a witness. It must be missionary. It must feel itself a servant of Christendom. Its work must be so thorough that no one dare to neglect it in any council. If modern ecumenicity has done anything, it has at least done this: *It has made us see that all gifts of God to any denomination or section of Christendom are ecumenical property.*

Said the Christian Reformed Church (*Acts of Synod, 1944*, p. 348): "And the Christian Reformed Church surely is not of Cain's mind. It does not insinuate that it is not its sister's keeper. It yields to the divine injunction of Galatians 6:1: 'Brethren, if a man (or a church) be overtaken in a fault, ye (true and faithful church) which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.'" *The principle of service to others is an ecumenical obligation.*

* * * * *

Is this Ecumenical Synod not, perhaps, superfluous since there is already a *World Presbyterian Alliance*? This Alliance has no super-Reformed-Presbyterian bureaucratic ambitions. It seeks to unite all of the Reformed faith and to encourage our brethren in Latin America to stand firm in their overthrow of clericalism, perhaps of the most demonic type. If we knew how Rome treats our brethren in Mexico, Latin America, we would be as fearful of Rome as we are of Communism.

Leaders in this Alliance, both in the Eastern and in the Western Sections, cherish the aim of having in Geneva a complete Reformed library that will assemble all Reformed contributions throughout the world, which will be at the disposal of its entire constituency. Leaders desire to keep the presbyterial consciousness alive, a consciousness which would impoverish the world should it be lost. They also suggest that the Alliance serve as a consultative body for its constituent members.

We gain from their organ, *The Presbyterian World*, the impression that everything is not peaceful within the walls of the WCC. There is no doubt a race for supremacy between the Anglican and the Presbyterian in the WCC. If there is no voice to oppose, the episcopal conception of ordination will control the future. Most Anglicans are unbending on that score, since it involves their entire conception of grace. From press reports from the Netherlands we learn that a few pastors of the Hervormde Kerk are also enamoured of the idea of episcopal ordination. What has happened to our Reformed consciousness! Our church polity is also definitive of our conception of the assurance of grace, the Kingship of our Lord, the sovereign grace of our God. We deeply appreciate any attempt to guard the presbyterial, representative conception within the framework of the WCC. On that score leaders in the Alliance are doing a praiseworthy work.

Would it not be encouraging if the Alliance were a consultative body for the Reformed faith, even for Christendom, interested in the Reformed answers to current questions? There are two great difficulties. The basic difficulty is the conflict between current conceptions of the Bible. It is a well-known fact that outstanding leaders in this movement consider our conception of the Bible as idolatry. What has been precious to the saints of all ages is now daubed Bibliolatry. How can they wish to sit with idolaters? Never may they take an idol into their fellowship, for the sake of unity? Their sincere defense of certain "Reformed insights," however, cannot hide the fact that in their conception of the Bible they—consequential leaders—have repudiated the position of the Reformation and have distanced themselves from the basis of fellowship adopted by the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

In spite of our appreciation for the maintenance of the Reformed "insights," we can understand the fear of some that this Alliance will be favorably inclined to the WCC. There are many within the Reformed family who because of deep conviction are not. Will their voice be heard or will their suggestions be politely pigeon-holed? "To be or not to be" in the WCC is definitive of deeply-rooted divergencies which color all activities, even those within the Alliance.

* * * * *

This coming Reformed Synod at Edinburgh will consider many reports. One may criticize this Synod (as has been done against the WCC) for being too discursive, but the fact remains that we must transcend current Protestant functional ecumenicity. John Calvin, the top-ranking ecumenist of the Reformation, pointed out a long time ago that there is no true ecumenicity unless people learn to sit down together to read God's Word. This is the long road to obtain our objectives, but the only road. This road precludes the danger of ecumenicity from the top-down, and guarantees ecumenicity from the bottom up, from the Word of God as revealed and studied, to the Word of God applied. Whether this Synod will suggest common functions, time alone can tell. The Reformed Missionary Council could combine plan and action. This Synod could witness against the injustices in Latin countries against our brethren. Perhaps some machinery could be planned to help our brethren behind the iron curtain to get a square deal at the UNO when communism will be defeated.

We hope that this Synod will waste no time as to its name. No matter what name this Synod would receive, it would have to give its own definition of the name. It does not add to the prestige of a Synod to spend too much time on a matter like that. People must begin to see accomplishments. The interpretation of the name "Synod" will be forged through experience and achievements. The use of

the name will naturally develop from what has been done.

* * * * *

There are two especially knotty problems which this Ecumenical Synod will have to face, directly or indirectly. The first one is the relationship of the ICCC to the WEF, and the second is that of its relationship to the Reformed churches. When facing such problems one is envious that Solomon received such wisdom. We all wish that there had been a distribution that would include us.

Should Synod suggest or recommend an amalgamation, it should remember that such a recommendation is not new. Dr. S. W. Paine in his pamphlet, *Separation is Separating Evangelicals*, has made a strong appeal for unity. The question is whether or no one of the bodies is willing to give up its principle of membership. Both have for their basis the Word of God as classically understood. The ICCC, however, insists upon membership by denominations only—and such as are opposed to the WCC. It has associate members of churches who do belong to the WCC, and also "Members by Petition" of NCCC churches who became members, although they as presbyteries or councils are officially in the present NCCC. All that such members had to do was to petition free time for the ACCC sponsored radio programs. (Cf. Dr. Stephen W. Paine, *Separation is Separating Evangelicals*, p. 20). If local churches whose denomination belongs to the WCC cannot join the ICCC, how can there be an associate membership plan? Should these associates not also witness by forsaking the church in the WCC? Besides, what constitutes a denomination? Is a "Fellowship of Fundamentalists" a denomination? Are fellowship and denomination the same thing? Suppose that these fundamentalists are undenominational? Suppose that fellowship and denomination are the same thing. Then what follows is this: a denomination of undenominationalists—and such would be a travesty upon consistency. Dr. Paine also lists a Baptist denomination as belonging to the ICCC, with a goodly share of the members not belonging to this organization. And this fact is completely silenced.

On the other side of the ledger is the NAE and the WEF. These organizations do not set up a requirement of separation from the WCC. They encourage those within the orbit of the WCC churches to remain true to their faith. Whether the NAE or the WEF becomes a substitute for initiating a rigid protest in their own churches we cannot tell. Its mode of representation would allow theoretically a minister of a lone dispensational church to represent a large denomination's interest—most likely amillennial. It is a question of honesty whether distant Christian cousins as Pentecostals and Christian Reformed are on such good terms.

If there is to be an amalgamation, there must be a surrender of basic principle which will determine whether the future organization will be a fellowship or a council. Suppose that the Ecumenical Synod could effect a union, what then? The Christian Reformed Church stepped out of the NAE, and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church stepped out of the ICCC. On the other hand, the Christian Reformed Church of the Netherlands is a member of the ICCC and sends auditors to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Perhaps these organizations have much more liberty to do as they please, since we do not curtail their preaching activities, and according to their point of view, are more successful. This we do hope: that Synod will inform these organizations *why* decisions were taken. Synod owes this to these organizations. In so doing Synod has reached a certain area in its ecumenical exploration. This will give these organizations opportunity to react to what Synod has spoken. And *then we too must consider what these organizations tell us*. In this way we shall satisfy the principle of being our brother's keeper, and the principle of denominational gifts being ecumenical property. We shall honor *a principle of equal moment to be willing to receive criticism in love*. But it regrettably must refrain from complete fellowship with Reformed brethren, not because the new church is un-Reformed, but because this new denomination has affiliated with the composite WCC.

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Directly or indirectly the question of the WCC may reach the podium of the Synod. The Christian Reformed Church of the Netherlands sends auditors to the Synod, if we are correctly informed, because the new Reformed Churches in Indonesia are affiliated with the WCC. It is not a stranger among Arminian-dispensational theologies.

One can appreciate the position of the churches of Indonesia. They were assisted by the WCC immediately after their liberation from Japanese power. They did not know all that the WCC stood for, especially that it was a roof that covered many antithetical theologies rather than a tree with many branches. What can Synod do about it?

We who live on this side of the ocean cannot appreciate the tender spot in the heart of some of the brethren for the WCC as now constituted. It does seem strange—and we write with all charity—that some can warn against the fundamentalism in the ICCC and swallow many a defect in the WCC. In America we are alarmed about both.

To understand some of the men who advocate membership in the WCC we must bear in mind that they possess a certain confidence based upon conviction that they can be a witness in the WCC. They feel a God-given responsibility to witness. These gentlemen seem to operate with the idea that the WCC is a deliberative body only. This is not the

case. O. Tomkins, secretary of "Faith and Order" asserts that the churches in session at Amsterdam have virtually signed the death certificate of denominations. He claims that the churches have said they are one, and then he deduces from that acclamation the obsolescence of denominations. If American leadership can serve as a gauge at all, we can honestly say that the WCC is in the hands of an undiluted modernism against which a champion as Dr. A. Kuyper directed his finest efforts.

This position includes two errors, at least. The first error, and the basic one, is to join the organization we intend to condemn. By joining it we forfeit the right to condemn it, for if it merits condemnation why join it in the first place? Is it not perhaps the old fallacy, as old as the hills: Let us do evil that good may come? We are like a preacher who marries a couple divorced on unbiblical grounds on the supposition that after they are married he has an opportunity to tell them of their sin. If we were such a person, we would wonder about the consistency of such a preacher.

The second error is one of method. The strongest witness against error is our refusal to join. This strong, negative, unmistakable reply is better understood than anything else. Besides, there are many avenues open to us. We have our religious press. Our own ecumenical synods can address communications to the WCC in the defense of the Word of God.

This brings us back to the question of the Indonesian Churches' membership in the WCC. In how far may ecumenical synods prescribe as a condition of membership to which organizations a denomination may belong to? Should there be only legislation or room for persuasion? There is no creedal denial of the Reformed faith. In fact, there is a definite affirmation. No stipulation of non-membership in both organizations is compatible. No one can straddle two horses not running parallel.

What shall Synod do about it? If Synod declares this to be incompatible, Synod automatically sets up another norm. If Synod does not, it exposes itself to the charge that it fails to be a clearcut witness against modernism. At the same time we believe our brethren in Indonesia are and intend to be sound in the Reformed faith. And these churches are sister churches of both the Christian Reformed Church in America and of the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands.

Irrespective of membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synods we feel that Reformed churches should not be members of the WCC. Is there only one way of inclusion or exclusion? Cannot this Synod face the question by persuasion and recommendation to these churches?

* * * * *

This Synod without aping the WCC could put itself at the disposal of newly organized denominations in the world to bring them into our Reformed orbit. If need be, it could encourage the older members to grant material and "spiritual" support. Considering the splendid fruits of the Calvin Foundation's international lectureship at Calvin College, one is tempted to suggest something of this sort on a larger scale for the spreading of the Reformed faith and the quickening of mutual love for the brethren. In other words, why cannot some leader be delegated by Synod to encourage the new churches in Japan, Korea, and Indonesia?

Synod could also show its ecumenical spirit and Christendom-mindedness by informing the WEF and the ICCU that it will cooperate in any adoptable action within its province as an independent Synod. This is an area of functional ecumenicity—which is an approximation to the ideal—that will disclose a deeper unity of love for the brethren.

JACOB T. HOOGSTRA

Eggheads

THE late political campaign brought it out. It was applied to Adlai Stevenson. Egghead, they called him, and it stuck, partly it is said because the fierce lights of Video played tricks with his bald head and gave it the appearance, indeed, of the top of an egg. But that was merely accidental. What the word was intended to mean, and what it now means in its general application to an intellectual, is that the man is addled. It is the new word for pinks. It is the new word for pundits. It is the new word for brain trust. It is the going term for highbrow. With this term our good old average citizen, our John Q. Public, our common man, the man in the street, John Doe, that is, discredits the thoughtful man.

It is a curious circumstance, one worth a little reflection, that the intellectual in our country should be such a *persona non grata*, a man suspect. Idealist will not do. Visionary will not do. It's Egghead now. James Truslow Adams attempted an analysis of this phenomenon once in a piece called "The Mucker Pose." A mucker is a man who rakes muck. This is dirty work for rough hands to do, a far cry from white collar work. And what Adams said was that in equalitarian and vulgarian America, anybody who wants to get ahead must assume the "mucker" pose. That is to say he must put on the manner of the vulgar in order to succeed with the vulgar. He must make it a point to be a little slovenly in speech. He must adopt colloquialism and

slang. He must give off-hand, spur of the moment, judgments, vague, vigorous, and affective. He must cater to the lowest common denominator of the people. He must take the average as the norm, and in doing so he is best informed if he assume that the average mentality is that of a twelve-year-old comic book addict. He must hide his education. He must cover up his manners. He may be one, but he must not betray that he is a gentleman. He must exude "commonness." If he has high academic degrees and goes into politics, he must clip the degrees off in favor of a ten-gallon hat, and he must stick a piece of hay in his mouth. He must have his picture taken with a hog cuddling up to his knee, and he must hold a bucket of swill in his hand. Unless he do this, the people, instead of fixing the egg on his shoulders as they did for Stevenson, will hurl it at him as they did at Woodrow Wilson in California, back in the old days.

Now it may well be that thoughtful people as often as not are a sort of nuisance. They do not fit nicely into the organization, as we say in regimented business, and as they say also, one fears, in totalitarian systems of society. The thoughtful man's ragged edges are always causing friction in the machine. Then he needs filing down again in order to follow smoothly the well-worn groove of the typical product. Moreover, thoughtful people do have an irritating way of fulminating against the inevitable. They hesitate to knuckle under to the trend. They keep on espousing lost or impossible causes, and they keep talking principle.

Caesar, who understood administration, would have none of them in his cabinet. He said,

Let me have men about me that are fat
Sleek-headed men and such as sleep o' nights.
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look—
He thinks too much . . . such men are dangerous.

Cassius is a great observer, he reads much, and he looks quite through the deeds of men. Administratively speaking, Caesar was right. Such a man is dangerous. But Caesar was running a dictatorship. In a democracy, we should be more inclined to say with Hotspur: "Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety."

There have been times, there have been societies, in which the Egghead fared better in the public estimate. Then he was called sage, savant, or prophet. Joseph served Pharaoh well in this capacity, as did Daniel that other king. Even Caesar, who figured he had his rationalistic regimen pretty air tight,

feared that he had missed something, and had an ear for the Soothsayer's words. One guesses, further, that even the Founding Fathers, projecting their daring new Democracy, wanted government not quite entirely by count of noses. Their Electoral College had in it the element of judgment by the best minds that could be assembled by popular consent.

It is lamentable, of course, that the plain man, the common man of our democratic, humanitarian ideal, should be fostering this continual resentment against the intellectual. And it is lamentable, too, that the intellectual should be peering down, with the unwarranted detachment of his larger view, upon the underdeveloped many. As for that plain man, that common man, one wonders sometimes whether he stems from the humility of the fishermen in Christ's company, or from the unspoiled natural man of Rousseau. What, apparently, in America this natural man must do, like Twain's Connecticut Yankee, is to spit tobacco juice in King Arthur's court, and to stop the sun in its tracks with a mechanical gadget, preferably mass produced.

"Today," says Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in the *Partisan Review* for March-April of this year, "the American intellectual finds himself in a situation he has not known for a generation. . . . For twenty years, the government of the United States, while often one which the intellectual has found confused or mistaken, has nevertheless been one which has basically understood, respected and protected intellectual purposes. Now business is in power again; and with it will inevitably come the vulgarization which has been the almost invariable consequence of business supremacy."

What happens to thoughtful people under such circumstances as Schlesinger hints at is that they tend to withdraw from participation in affairs. Schlesinger rightly fears such a development. "We hear," he says, "that the new intellectual is entering into a phase of contemplation and withdrawal. But, if he decides to flee it all and become a Yogi, he will have no one else to blame if Senator McCarthy becomes the Commissar."

One watches the developing schizophrenia between the thoughtful and the busy people with trepidation. Toynbee had warned of it in his histories. We shall have to make it possible for the thoughtful and the busy, the distinterested and the interested, the hick and the Egghead to live together. Both have their uses.

H. Z.



Labor, the Union, and Industrial Democracy

Cecil De Boer
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AS THE result of a normal historical development of the distinction between the things that are Caesar's and the things that are God's, modern political society has achieved a structure characterized by secular autonomy, so that the idea of the state as the secular arm of the church is no longer relevant. Analogously, as the result of the normal historical development of the Christian teaching that master and servant are brothers in the Lord, modern industrial society has achieved a structure characterized by collective bargaining and, perhaps ultimately, industrial democracy, a structure in which the distinction of master and servant is no longer relevant. The human relationships involved in collective bargaining more adequately reflect the image of God in men than those involved in the master and servant economy, since it makes at least for the possibility of men freely and co-operatively engaged in exercising dominion over things. The Christian cannot but think of the labor problem in terms of the dignity of labor, the human worth of the laborer, his calling and responsibilities in relation to God, family, and country and, consequently, his rights in regard to a standard of living, conditions of work, unemployment, health, old age, and so on. Unfortunately, it has taken the churches a long while to see this, and their almost incredible lack of social understanding during the worst phases of the Industrial Revolution is nothing to be proud of.

I

We no longer believe that the "lord of the vineyard" has the right to make decisions in complete disregard of his responsibilities to the husbandman and to society in general. Right human relationships in modern industry demand a consciousness of responsibility on the part of both owner and worker. At least without it there will be no sense in talking about co-operation between capital and labor. However, responsibility requires for its proper exercise a degree of control over the social and economic aspects of one's own life. Accordingly, adequate recognition of the rights of the worker seems today to call for something in the nature of a partnership between capital and labor, a partnership beginning at the local level of the factory and extending to the broader economic relations within a given industry and, if possible, to the whole field of national eco-

nomic policy. Here the main problem is that of combining the rights of individual ownership with the responsibilities of co-operative ownership, thus preserving private initiative while at the same time directing it to the common good. Responsibility and property are natural to man and both today involve at least some degree of control of the means of production.

That man has the right of property and that this right carries with it the exacting obligations of stewardship is a proposition basic to any conception of the economic problem that pretends to be Christian. From God, the creator and giver, man has received mastery over things as a privilege to be exercised intelligently and morally, the precise form of this exercise to be determined by such factors as political and social conditions, the rights of the community, and the demand of justice and charity. Governing the exercise of the right of property is the principle of the ascendancy of human rights over property rights.¹ This means that the idea of private property as an absolute and inalienable possession without corresponding social and moral obligations is out of the picture. In fact, the notion of property as an absolute private possession led, during the nineteenth century and part of the twentieth, to the very negation of private property. Because of unlimited competition in the contest for economic goods, the increased opportunities for large scale investments and the concentration of wealth in the hands of monopolies, holding companies, and banking concerns—all of which permitted the manipulation of money and goods by relatively few individuals at the top—the titles to individual ownership virtually disappeared. The meaning of private property became almost hopelessly obscure, and the moral claims and responsibilities of persons were nullified by the impersonal character of "big business."

The result of all this upon the status of the individual worker is not hard to visualize. Since wages were regarded as a cost of production, a cost to be reduced as much as possible, the human dignity of the individual laborer was simply ignored and he was consigned to the "lower classes," to the subsoil of the system, a system to which considerations of

(1) St. Thomas Aquinas believed that extreme need made all property common; that taking another's property when human life was at stake and no other remedy existed was not a violation of the moral law.

the common good were quite foreign. The worker, no longer permitted a consciousness of personal worth, became the victim of a class-consciousness so divisive as to remove from him any significant sense of responsibility to the corporation, to the community in which it was located, and, ultimately, to the nation and its government. And, of course the notion of a good day's work for a day's pay became entirely irrelevant.

Vestiges of this situation still exist and can be seen in the fact that until quite recently labor-management relations were universally conceived as a running battle between labor and industry. In fact, there is still enough of this to constitute a real danger, and its resurgence may mean the end of free unions and free management. Having become a power in the land, American labor naturally tends to interpret the events of the last few decades as a march of progress. Capital and management, on the other hand, will tend to read into these same events not only a group defeat but also something in the nature of the breakdown of the moral and social structure of our civilization. Inasmuch as each party to the conflict pictures the future in terms of an altered balance between industry and labor, each will attempt somehow to swing that balance in its own favor, with the result that the immediate issue tends to become a matter of holding out in a war of attrition. Under such conditions good sense and largeness of mind seem ineffectual, and there is probably little use in reminding the opponents that a peaceful solution is better than war and that the really important question concerns the good of society as it will probably be structured in the future. Yet the fact remains that the success of collective bargaining depends upon character and broadness of view, upon leaders on both sides who are bigger than their jobs and bigger than the groups to which they happen to belong. In the absence of such leaders each party to a conflict eventually develops a kind of fanaticism under the sway of which its objectives become the only good, and its opponent's, the only evil. And that, naturally, means the end of collective bargaining. The labor-management problem becomes a political one with the almost inevitable result of government dictation in some direction or other, the ultimate victim being of course, the general public.

II

For the time being the outlook in America for stability under the system of collective bargaining seems at least fair. One reason for this is the fact that the laborer's view of things has changed somewhat because unemployment is not at present a significant factor in his calculations. His well-being is not immediately threatened by the spectre of idleness—or so he thinks. Furthermore, although the purchasing value of the dollar is really down, he is

more impressed by the fact that, owing to a fuller work week, an increased hourly rate with extra pay for overtime, and the progressive elimination of seasonal fluctuations, his immediate purchasing power seems greatly increased, i.e., it is simply a fact that he takes home more dollars. Accordingly, he really believes the life of "middle class culture" to be within his reach. Social security, the fringe benefits involved in labor contracts (vacations, sick benefits, retirement, etc.), and the fact that he rarely bothers to put aside anything for the higher education of his children enable him to spend his entire "take-home" pay.

Furthermore, he need no longer identify himself with the nature of his work, it being merely the source of his income and, therefore, of diminishing relevance to his sense of status. Inasmuch as his work requires fewer and fewer hours a week and only a nominal proportion of his energy and attention, the worker's real life, the life from which he derives his major satisfactions, begins when his work is done. Today, at least for the time being, the nature of a man's work no longer determines the nature of his life outside his work. He is no longer confined to that more or less submerged social world in which expenditures are largely for food, shelter, and clothing—where food is largely a matter of bread and potatoes and where shelter and clothing are largely a matter of keeping warm. Entertainment, the cut of his clothes, and automobiles have enhanced both his self-esteem and his sense of having a stake in things as they are. Obviously if a man can be a member of the upper "four hundred" despite the fact that all he does and apparently knows is how to buy and sell lumber, why should any one feel inferior because he tends a machine, especially if the income derived therefrom enables him to purchase a car in which he may outspeed anything he happens to consider a challenge? Finally, inasmuch as the assembly line has replaced special skills, he has the psychological security that comes from a sense of the entire country being his to move about in quite as he pleases. If he does not happen to like his boss in Detroit, he can move to Los Angeles and begin a new life.

However, political and economic observers point out that there are at least two flies in the American worker's ointment, one of which is the fact that, owing in part to liberal credit terms, his purchases have for some time been beyond his income. The other is the fact that the worker, like the rest of us, is concerned with inflation, as a result of which his attitude toward the economic conditions of his life has undergone a curious change. He is not today as strongly inclined to blame his employer and his job ("capitalism") for his worries and discomforts as he once was. He is apparently beginning to look beyond his job to those conditions from which we all suffer, namely, the late war, our armaments program, inflation, and the strains of the international

situation, for most of which he blames Russian communism. Recognizing that he has a stake in the good things of our society, he naturally looks forward to the stability that will enable him to enjoy them. Accordingly, he is looking for a leadership which the labor union, concerned primarily with jobs and wages and not with the stresses of the world situation, is apparently unable to supply. Fears and frustrations arising out of job insecurity have been replaced by anxieties connected with inflation and the atomic bomb, so that the worker is beginning to realize that jobs constitute only the beginning of personal and family security. In other words, American labor seems on the whole to incline toward the middle class rather than the proletarian point of view. Unless aroused by fear of unemployment, the worker does not, for example, permit the labor leader to dictate his politics. On the other hand, inasmuch as his middle class democratic sentiment seems largely to depend upon a relatively high degree of job security, just what will happen with the loss of that security will depend almost entirely upon the nature of his convictions, if any, regarding the principle of free enterprise. Does he believe in its essential soundness and rightness irrespective of whether it can guarantee an uninterrupted flow of easy jobs and high wages? We in America may be skating on thin ice unless we succeed somehow in re-educating both the employer-manager and labor classes.

III

We are repeatedly told nowadays that the solution of the labor problem lies in the direction of a greater concern on the part of labor for the economic health of the local enterprise. Instead of drives for power there should be accommodation of differences. Labor should allow management a free hand in running the factory, while management should listen to labor on matters of policy relating to jobs. Furthermore, labor discipline should be considered a union obligation, first, because it is morally a union responsibility and, second, because for obvious psychological reasons the union and its leaders will be more successful than management in dealing with a disaffected minority within labor's own ranks. In addition there should be ease of access between labor and management in order that the steady flow of grievances and suggestions may lead to industrial relations characterized by mutual honesty and frankness. In fact the labor leader might eventually rise to the eminence of an ambassador, a kind of labor relations middle man whose function it would be to induce management to appreciate the laborer's point of view, and labor to see the company's problems regarding policy, new machines and processes, competition, and so on.

Admitting the truth contained in these doctrines, it should, however, be noted that they seem to pre-

suppose a considerable amount of sweet reasonableness on the part of the worker. A much better solution would seem to be the one recently reported in the *United Nations World*, a solution involving an attempt on the part of some twenty-five hundred French industrialists to be not only open and above board but also *generous* in their labor relations. The companies concerned operated on either of two plans both of which amounted to a partnership between capital and labor. According to one plan a company's income above fixed charges and the cost of material would go, first, to paying the basic hourly wage of the workers, second, to paying the salaries of management (these to follow the ups and downs of wages), third, to paying the four percent dividend of the capital associates, and fourth, to paying five percent of the amount remaining to the fund for reserves. Whatever remained was to be divided between capital, management, and labor in accordance with a fixed ratio determined by an executive committee representing workers, management, and stockholders, the workers conferring with management on how the bonus should be divided among the several categories of workers. Incidentally, this same committee would study and discuss the facts and figures of the business concerned.

As a result of this arrangement, the workers became acquainted with the problems and headaches of the employers, suggested improvements, and worked with greatly increased zeal and efficiency, one company reporting a ninefold production increase, an expansion of plant, and an increase in reserves. The workers in another plant voluntarily accepted longer hours in order to accommodate the management in handling an unusually large order. In still another company the workers actually loaned money to the corporation up to a certain percent of their bonus in order to help it out of a slump and to enable it to put enough away for reserves. In most of these companies there were no strikes despite the fact that strikes were ordered in the industry. Obviously, a strike would have gone counter to the workers' interests. One company with a housing problem on its hands solved it in part by offering to sell lots to its employees at the rate of so many square feet of land for so many hours of work, a form of payment more solid than currency since the value of land does not shift downward as easily as that of the franc. Most of these companies have managed to organize an almost complete welfare program for employees in the form of medical services, accident insurance, and recreational and cultural facilities, the cost being borne by employer and employees in accordance with a fixed ratio.

Another plan is the so-called proportional wage plan the general principle of which is that wages shall amount to a fixed percentage of either the gross sales of a company or of its profit, this per-

centage to be increased whenever the conditions of business warrant. In one of the experimenting companies this percentage was recently increased from thirty percent to thirty-five percent of the gross sales, with the result that the workers, by eliminating wastes in material and labor, increased production by forty-two percent. This eventually resulted in the workers earning a wage amounting to forty percent above the legal basic wage. Naturally, this all but eliminated such industrial headaches as absenteeism and labor turnover.

The French employers experimenting with these schemes and others like them take the view that government guarantees and regulations merely relieve the symptoms of an inequitable labor situation, and that a real cure is impossible until employers and employees learn to work together, thus bringing about something like mutual understanding, mutual confidence, and a common desire to achieve justice. Anyway, the fact is that plans of this kind almost automatically take care of those factors which determine the natural limits of wage increases, namely, the health and productivity of both the industry and particular plants within the industry, the prevailing standard of living in a given economic area, and the demands of the common good. Although not a perfect cure for all the economic ills of the worker, they obviously eliminate much of the original antagonism between capital and labor and, by recognizing the importance of human relations, tend to give the labor class a stake in the community and the nation. Naturally, there is some opposition to these plans, opposition coming, as one would expect, from those who stand to lose or think they stand to lose by the elimination of friction between employer and employee classes, viz., the communists, the labor bosses, suspicious employers, and those politicians who believe in a system of automatic security guaranteed by the government.

IV

These experiments and others like them may presage a restructuring of contemporary society, a process in which the distinction of master and servant is gradually transformed into the more Christian and more ethical distinction illustrated by Jesus in the parable of the talents. Scripture tells us that the believing master and the believing servant share in the equality of a brotherhood. St. Paul speaks of the believing servant as "the Lord's freeman," and he urges Philemon to consider the runaway slave, Onesimus, "above a servant," and to treat him as a brother "both in the flesh and in the Lord." Accordingly, one would suppose the normal historical development of the Christian conception of man as a being whose normal needs include property, work, and responsibility eventually to result in a society in which the worker is given at least a *chance* to acquire some degree of ownership in the

business in which he is employed. Responsibility as the mark of man presupposes some control of himself and of the conditions of his temporal existence. In an industrial society this would seem to involve some degree of control over production, which in turn means some degree of ownership of the means of production. In other words, the sharing of ownership (not equality in things owned) to the point where actual responsibility is really possible for the majority would seem to be a minimum requirement of the right of a society to call itself Christian. And it is in some such direction as this that Christian social thinking and social action should seek to anticipate the future structure of a free enterprise industrial order.

The success of the co-operative movement in Europe before the last war, especially in England and the Scandinavian countries is indicative of what can be done in the way of voluntarily widening the base of ownership under the free enterprise system. Perhaps the most equitable scheme within the range of practicality is one which is today being tried by some of the smaller companies in which roughly fifty percent of the stock is owned by the owner-management group and fifty percent by the labor group. Whether this can be applied to industry indiscriminately—for example, steel and automobiles—may be debatable, although it would seem that the selfishness of the owner class rather than technical difficulties in economics stand in the way of its application. Let it be remembered that the corporate society of the Middle Ages broke down not so much because of changing conditions as because of a selfish refusal to extend the system so as to include a larger number of individuals.² In all this the emphasis must, of course, be on the word "voluntary." This means that the development of our society into a genuine industrial democracy will require on the part of both labor and management a leadership superior in both character and brains.

Eventually we may face the choice between extension of ownership and the end of the free enterprise system. Industrial democracy seems morally and economically superior not only to the socialization of industry but also to the taxation of concentrated wealth for the purpose of distributing doles. And it would in no sense involve anything like a weakening of the values and liberties which men now enjoy as the result of political democracy. Many of the larger corporations have for some time practiced profit sharing in the form of bonuses to managers and technical experts. This practice could profitably be extended to at least certain categories of workers, who as a result might be somewhat more inclined to think about the safety and welfare of the nation as a whole. The international situation being what it is today, the harmony of labor and industry is of utmost importance. Now

² No one is suggesting, of course, that labor be made a present of fifty percent of the corporate wealth of the nation.

a system in which free unions and free management engage in collective bargaining is doubtless superior to government control and dictation, but it is not the best guarantee against industrial war. Anyway, a widening of the base of ownership would almost automatically eliminate at least the worst obstacles to industrial peace.

Of course, no amount of industrial democracy will by itself cure all the ills of an industrial society. Justice, peace, and benevolence depend upon just, wise, and benevolent men; and the problem of getting more of them is one that goes far beyond the question of dividends, bonuses, and take-home pay. Nevertheless, inasmuch as a widening of the base of ownership would tend in the long run to eliminate the necessity of militant labor unionism, one would suppose it—or something like it—to figure rather prominently as an ideal in any program of social and economic justice pretending to be Christian. The union as we know it and as it now functions may largely have served its purpose, and the larger justice served by industrial democracy could eventually lead to its obsolescence.³

V

A post script. The Christian laborer in accepting the advantages of industrial society as it is now structured must in fairness assume the correlated responsibilities—unless he can show that this society practically amounts to unequivocal evil, to something going fundamentally counter to the revealed will of God. If, on the other hand, he accepts the present structure of society with its necessities and human relations, it becomes his duty to make up his mind as to how the Christian witness is to be maintained. Being inevitably entangled in American industrial life with its labor unions, manufacturers associations, bankers associations, and so on, he may conceivably maintain this witness in a variety of ways, provided he does not permit loyalty to a labor union or a manufacturers association to pre-empt his loyalty to Christ. In the language popular with certain good Christian people nowadays, he should “uphold the antithesis.”⁴

There are those who hold that in the case of unionism loyalty to Christ is possible only by means of independent Christian labor organizations. Here we can say only this. If a man's conscience dictates that keeping himself separate from the world necessarily involves physical apartness, his conscience should be respected, provided it is not rooted in a kind of congenital separatism which refuses to ac-

cept the normal historical development of things. Collective bargaining, for instance, would appear to be a normal development of the Industrial Revolution, just as free churches independent of both Rome and the local sovereign are a normal development of the Reformation. Nevertheless, the fact remains that any historical development, however normal, is always infected by sin. Wherever this results in a distinct perversion, the Christian is in duty bound to wash his hands of it. If membership in so-called neutral unions or, for that matter, so-called neutral business associations, professional associations, associations for the advancement of science, political parties, and so on becomes intolerable in the sense of precluding the Christian witness, the antithesis would seem to involve at least some measure of physical separation. If it can be shown that organized labor has become definitely anti-Christian, the only answer to the question of membership in so-called neutral unions is that “we should obey God rather than men,” whatever the consequences. Should society as a whole become anti-Christian there might be but one way out, namely, the way to the catacombs.

On the other hand, one should realize, too, that it is not quite sensible to go running ahead of the Lord, so to speak, by forcing an issue where it does not yet exist. There are those who believe that being separate from the world does not necessarily involve physical apartness, and that membership in a neutral union does not constitute disloyalty to the Christian faith. That such membership makes loyalty somewhat more difficult is to them beside the point, for the Christian is nowhere counseled to find the easiest way out. Obviously, no worker of Reformed persuasion feels particularly at home within the ranks of, say, the CIO any more than a teacher of Reformed persuasions feels altogether at home within the ranks of the AAUP, or is entirely happy in his job in a state university. For that matter, any Christian who feels entirely happy and at home as a citizen of the United States or any other state ought certainly to engage in some serious self-examination. Of course, the world is evil, but it is nevertheless the kind of world in which we have to make a living, so that the question of just how one must conduct oneself in the details of life is frequently a matter of the individual conscience. Although one should act with charity toward the conscience of any one convinced of the necessity of physical separation, the Christian, after all, stands or falls to his own master and not to somebody else's conscience.

What must be our final judgment in regard to this point of view? Those of our number who are convinced of the necessity of physical separation will do well to remember that once a man has solved a problem of this sort to the satisfaction of his own conscience, his solution may still be for himself, and himself only. It is simply one of the brute facts of

³ Of course, in the light of the mental and moral infirmities of human nature, and in the light of the probability of another war in the near future with its liberal sprinkling of atomic bombs on both sides of the Atlantic, this pleasant dream may seem a bit out of place.

⁴ There is nothing wrong with this language provided it does not covertly involve a prescription as to just how in detail the antithesis is to be upheld, and provided the word “antithesis” does not degenerate, as such words easily do, into a blanket term for certain pet dogmas.

life that its problems occasionally call for solutions which can bind only the conscience of the individual who proposes them. Meanwhile it would seem to be the part of both wisdom and charity to refrain from dictating to a fellow Christian just how in detail he should keep himself unspotted from the world. From Jesus we hear that "two women shall be grinding together," and two men "in the field, the one taken and the other left." On the other hand, those among us who feel no qualms of conscience about membership in a neutral union may wish to emphasize the words of Paul when he said, "He that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God; happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."⁵ If so, it will devolve upon them to manifest the same zeal and conviction in regard to the Christian witness as is shown by our enemies, the communists, whenever they infiltrate neutral labor organizations and form their so-called cells. One supposes that a man of Reformed persuasion who joins the CIO or the AFL *merely* because these organizations command jobs and get results will feel a bit reserved about quoting Scripture.

Of course, Christian members of a neutral union could take an attitude such as this. To us, so they might argue, neutral unions are only mutual insurance associations having to do with jobs and wages. As such they naturally fit into the peculiar structure of contemporary industrial society and are, therefore, legitimate business institutions. One avails oneself of their services in much the same spirit in which one contributes to a mutual fire or accident association. As is customary in the case of such associations, one is expected to vote on policy and on office holders, a privilege one usually takes about as casually as voting to continue in office, say, a proved and able executive of some teachers annuity association. Naturally, we disapprove of unethical practices and, should the organization degenerate into

a racket, we would expect the government to expose this and, if necessary, clean house. In other words, our membership in a neutral union is simply a means to the end of supporting our families, contributing to the work of the Kingdom, and so on, things which we really value. In fact, if we took as little interest in our church as we do in our union (absences from meetings, indifference toward fellow members, dues grudgingly paid as a necessary evil, etc.,) our church would probably have removed our names from its roll long ago. As for the direct influence of the union upon our personal lives—we don't permit it to dictate our politics, as the recent election amply proved and we certainly don't let it tell us anything about our morals and about where to go to church.

It is a bit difficult to see that by taking this view of his membership in a neutral union the worker has virtually severed his connection with the Kingdom of Heaven. He may, of course, be charged with short-sightedness, inconsistency, and, perhaps, this or that theological blind spot, matters calling for sympathetic understanding, education, and the art of persuasion. They hardly call for high a priori pontificating—and no good can come of it. The immediate question before us is not whether he is right or wrong. Assuming him to be wrong, the question is whether he is sufficiently wrong to justify, say, disciplinary action on the part of organized religion.⁶ To answer this question sensibly and in the spirit of Christ would seem to require charity, perspective, and some theological poise—the greatest of them being, of course, charity. After all, union and unionism may eventually prove to have been a passing phase in the evolution of industrial democracy.

⁽⁵⁾ Admittedly texts such as these can be horribly abused.

⁽⁶⁾ Obviously, there is considerable opportunity here for the loveless bickering in which small bore theological sophistries assume the proportions of eternal cosmic verities—with the possible result that, with fur and feathers flying, another spitting and clawing young wildcat denomination is suddenly and unhappily born to us.



"Thou Shouldest Take Hold of This"*

Henry Van Zyl
Professor of Education
Calvin College

Scripture passage: Ecclesiastes 7:16-17. "Be not righteous overmuch; neither make thyself overwise. Why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish; why shouldest thou die before thy time? It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this;

FEW things reveal more about a person's character than his prevailing or rather persistent scale of values. To know what a man considers most important and most basic and vital in life is to know at least in one central area of his life what kind of a person he is.

When the prophet Amos observed the startling fact that in the sick social structure of his time the poor were bought for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes, he proclaimed as from the housetops: "Let justice run down as waters and righteousness as an everflowing mighty stream."

This classic expression all genuine leaders in religion and culture have always hailed as a high and noble goal for all men. Even Shakespeare, who often showed a deep insight into spiritual truths, according to the July issue of *Theology Today*, warns his readers in the play *Macbeth* to banish the idolatry of worshipping security which he labels their "chiefest" enemy and instead to strive with might and main after righteousness—one of the strategic ideals in the realm of national and personal aspirations.

The unfortunate part about the application of this ideal to human life is that this noble goal is so often, so generally, so widely, and so sadly set aside, and selfish ends are substituted. St. Augustine would say that this abuse of righteousness is characterized by both inevitability and evilness, because it is but a manifestation of the ever-present lust for power among human beings, even among Christians in their relations one to another.

The wise king Solomon, by divine inspiration, clearly spotted this human frailty and in no uncertain terms twice warns man against the evilness of it; viz., not to be overmuch righteous nor to be overwise or what amounts to the same failure, not to be overmuch wicked, nor foolish. The extremes meet each other so that to be overmuch righteous is actually overmuch wicked, and to be wise overmuch is ultimately the same as being overmuch foolish.

The evilness of the vanity characterized here by Solomon is seen more clearly if we recall Paul's declaration that Christ Jesus as Redeemer is made of God unto His children wisdom and righteousness.

If then wisdom and righteousness occupy places of highest honor in the plan of redemption, we can readily grasp the thrust of the words of both Solomon and Amos: Don't under any circumstance obstruct righteousness and wisdom in your national or personal life.

If by being overrighteous, or overwise, or overwicked, or foolish we do obstruct these high ideals, we are simply destroying ourselves by flying into the face of four immovable, relentless, inexorable, and unyielding laws of God.

Man simply cannot even attempt to be righteous in a vacuum. Righteousness both in its use and abuse has to take place in a social setting. Hence any person overly righteous is overly righteous precisely in demanding too much in the conduct of others. He habitually or otherwise "lays it on thick" for the other person. He wants to lord it over his fellow being. He demands perfection of them.

The first error then lies in the unreasonableness of his overmuch righteousness. The norm he sets up in a spirit of arrogance for others he himself can never attain, nor, what is his fatal mistake, does he himself intend to reach for it. Solomon's ringing warning is against the irrationality of it all. The law of reasonableness is proudly and cruelly set aside.

Furthermore, this unreasonable demand banishes the human touch out into the cold. No human being should expect from a fellow human being to do what is impossible for either. The overrighteous and overwise person has sacrificed the sacred essence of the law of communion and fellowship with his neighbor by violation of the human touch.

In the third place the overrighteous person by insisting that his neighbor meet impossible standards is clearly unrealistic and militates against the divine order of things. He makes demands that go beyond what is laid down by the Sovereign Ruler of the universe. In all these four vanities the law of creatureliness is set aside; viz., the law to be wise and not foolish, and to be righteous and not wicked for God's sake—and never for the purpose of nourishing one's own ego.

When the divine command "Be ye righteous even as your Father in heaven is righteous," is given to us as a pattern to follow, it is incumbent upon all Christians to want to grow in the direction of this self-same righteousness. Now this desire so to grow can be materialized only in the atmosphere of a God

* A Spiritual Meditation as presented in the faculty-conducted daily chapel hour at Calvin College.

given freedom. But when the overrighteous and overwise person comes along with his irrational, dehuman, and unrealistic demands as a standard, he denies his fellow Christian's freedom to grow after the divine pattern.

And the tragedy of violating these four laws is that love—the greatest of all Christian virtues—is completely out of the picture.

* * * * *

We at Calvin College do well to think soberly about Solomon's pertinent warning—pertinent particularly for all orthodox circles, where Pharisees love to dwell always busy binding heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. This practice may be found right here in Calvin College. Some may think that we can safely be complacent in our ivory towers of self-sufficiency and others may just as comfortably think that it is their duty to be engaged in heresy hunting.

We should never forget that eight woes were spoken by Him who is made of God wisdom and righteous for us when he symbolized the destruction of these Pharisees in the words, "O, ye whited sepulchres" and when he expressed their cruelty by the verdict, "Ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men."

Let's be reasonable in our demands upon others.

Let's perserve and exercise the human touch.

Let's honor nothing but the priority of the divine pattern.

Let's not deny others spiritual freedom toward growth in sanctification. Let love always prevail.

Let's pray for a closer walk with God and plead most submissively in the words of St. Augustine, "Lord, command what Thou wilt and grant what Thou commandest."

* * * * *

Two people went up to the temple to pray, the one was Mr. Bobbitt and the other a school teacher.

Mr. Bobitt, the prosperous business executive, looking with his eyes to heaven said, "Lord, I thank Thee that I am not like this poor school teacher. My money built this church. From the tenth of my income, I pay for the missions. Lord, I thank Thee."

The school teacher hearing this overrighteous and overwise prayer dared not look up, but cast eyes down, smote her breast, and said,

"Lord, have mercy on me, for I was this man's teacher."

* * * * *

Let us not forget here at Calvin College that cultivating this vanity is never conducive to constructive activities in the Kingdom of God.

The sum of the whole matter may well be to rivet heart and mind on the advice given by the Church father Augustine.

In his old age a friend asked him what the first need of a Christian should be and his answer was, "Humility is his first need."

The visitor wanted to know about the second greatest requisite. And the reply was, "More humility."

For the third time the question was asked regarding a Christian's third greatest need. And the final answer was, "Still more humility."



Announcement

Montpellier, France, July 23-31, 1953 International Congress for Reformed Faith and Action

This Congress will be a continuation of similar congresses held in *London* in 1932, in *Amsterdam* in 1934, in *Geneva* in 1936, in *Edinburgh* in 1938, and in *Amsterdam* in 1948, though on a wider international scale.

The *Free Faculty of Protestant Theology of Montpellier* in France has generously offered hospitality to the Congress.

DOCTRINAL BASIS

The Congress welcomes the attendance of all those who submit unconditionally to the authority of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God—and therefore the sole principle of Reformation in this and every age of the Church—as interpreted by the Reformed Confessions of Faith of the different countries¹⁾;

who in consequence confess the eternal Trinity of the Godhead and acknowledge Jesus Christ as the very Son of God, truly God and truly Man, and as the only Lord and Saviour of mankind and the world;

and who accept, as being consonant with the Holy Scriptures, and as an expression of their personal faith, the ecumenical symbols of the ancient Church, namely, the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed.

Thus as Reformed Christians we recognize and assert our true succession in faith and doctrine from the Apostles, through the ancient Church and down through the Reformers, to the present day.

OBJECT

The object of the Congress will be to proclaim and reaffirm the absolute sovereignty of Almighty God over His world in every department of human activity, with a view to:

promoting fellowship between Reformed Christians of every land;

facilitating the interchange of Reformed thought and experience;

strengthening and advancing the Reformed cause throughout the world.

PROGRAMME

The Congress will commence on Thursday evening, July 23rd, with a *Service of Dedication*, conducted by Rev. Alexander Macdonald, Minister of the Free Church of Glasgow, Scotland.

¹⁾ e.g. Westminster Confession, XXXIX Articles of the Church of England, Confession of La Rochelle, Calvin's Catechism, Heidelberg Catechism, Canons of Dordt, Belgic Confession, 2nd Helvetic Confession.

The general theme of the Congress will be:

The Secularization of Modern Life: the Reformer Answer

The *Opening Address* on the general theme will be delivered by Dr. Jean Cadier, Professor of Systematic Theology at the Free Faculty of Protestant Theology, Montpellier, France.

In addition the following subjects will be dealt with:

The Reformed Answer to the Secularization of:

- I *The Liberty of Man* by Dr. H. J. Stob, Professor of Apologetics at Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.
- II *The Concept of Work* by Mr. Gerhard Wienands, Manufacturer, Rheydt, Germany.
- III *The Concept of Property* by Mr. D. W. Ormel, Secretary of the (national) Social Economic Council, The Hague, The Netherlands.
- IV *Scientific Thought* by Dr. H. Dooyeweerd, Professor of Philosophy of Law at the Free Reformed University, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- V *Charity* by Rev. R. Grob, Director of "Schweizerische Anstalt für Epileptische," Zurich, Switzerland.
- VI *The Cure of Souls* by Dr. André Schlemmer, Doctor of Medicine, Paris, France.
- VII *Family Life* by Dr. W. Stanford Reid, Associate Professor of History at the McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

Each day will start with a *Service of Worship and Ministry of the Word*, to be conducted in turn by delegates from the various countries.

The Sunday will be free for worship and rest, with a special devotional *Congress Service* in the evening at which Dr. D. M. Lloyd-Jones, Minister of Westminster Chapel, London, England, will preach.

A full Congress-day will be reserved for the discussion of the project of an *International Reformed Centre*.

The International Executive Committee will present a report to the members of the Congress.

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For further information write to J. T. Hoogstra, 6 E. 24th St., Holland, Michigan.

A Memorandum*

To the February 24-26, 1953 Meeting at Buck Hill Falls, Pa., of the Western Section of the Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System.

FATHERS AND BRETHREN IN THE LORD:

THE present world situation confronts us, Magyar-Hungarian Reformed Christians in America, with some vexing problems. We wish to call your attention to these problems and to state our position in reference to them.

1. When and wherever the state-backed but popularly unheartily supported representatives of the Reformed Church in Hungary, our one time spiritual Mother, appear in ecumenical circles, they are hard at work trying to make the world believe that all is well with the Reformed Church and with Protestantism at large in present day Hungary, which as we all know, is under a Moscow-dictated communist regime. In fact, conditions are represented to be so good that the Soviet inspired "peace" propaganda—success of which would of course make Hungary's present status permanent—is held in the forefront of the Church's activities and is the main article of export by its emissaries to ecumenical gatherings.

To the best of our knowledge and belief this picture of the Church in Hungary is false. The Reformed Church in Hungary is a whittled down, captive church. Its post-war strivings toward development into a self-supporting church, with the Lord Jesus Christ for its sole head, has been thwarted, and—for services to be rendered and for the sake of a more justifiable control—it was transformed into a largely state-supported institution. It has been divested of its entire and one-time flourishing educational system, with almost negligible exceptions. Ancient institutions of higher learning and ministerial training, like those at Sarospatak and Papa, both in existence since 1531, were forced into self-liquidation. In the studied process of centralizing the Church into a more easily controllable organization by those subservient to the regime, just recently an old historical diocese, the Cis-Tibiscan, was cornered into applying for absorption by the dioceses of the two bishops most agreeable to the regime. There are indications according to which the days of a still existing third diocese, the Trans-Danubian, are also numbered. All church periodicals ceased publication, with only one official monthly and a weekly to take their place.

Constitutional meetings of all ranks and degrees are "packed" and reduced to mere rubber stamps. Men of moral and spiritual stature are removed, transferred to insignificant posts, or otherwise silenced. The relentless policy of an all-around retrenchment must not only be meekly submitted to, but must also be declared, both at home and abroad, as beneficial and progressive. Fear rules over the Church more than Christ, the Head of the Church. Thus, contrary to what is publicized, the Reformed Church in Hungary is a cross-burdened branch of Reformed Christen-

dom, and it should be known as such by all Brethren who care. No one should be lulled either into more love for communism, or into less love for Hungarian Reformed Christianity in the wake of the ecumenical comings and goings of the present day leaders of the Reformed Church in Hungary.

2. These same leaders, in accord with a few non-Hungarian ecumenical figures from behind the "Iron Curtain," are also hard at work in finding theological sanction for their stand taken and the course pursued, whether by force or conviction—we do not know. At the beginning they were content to be regarded as mere officials, but lately they are delighted by being taken for theologians of exceptional talent. They pretend to have discovered hitherto hidden elements of Christian Theology allegedly favorable to their views and course. With increasing boldness they take recourse to the traditional method of all false prophets: under the theory of continued revelation they claim to have received a new light, a new understanding and new insights into the nature of the Christian Church and Religion. They identify Christian peace with the politically inspired "peace program" of the Cominform. They seem to believe themselves as being far ahead of anyone else in wisdom and foresight, and love to pose for a predestined vanguard for all Christendom toward undiscovered blessings of a "new age."

This tendency of making the Reformed Religion appear as inherently more favorable and congenial to communism, than other manifestations of the Faith of Christ, we condemn. We hold it even more dangerous than outward yielding, catering—for the sake of conscience or survival—to the powers that are. It cannot but lead to a confessional rift within the Reformed Family, with the Church in Hungary in the focus.

We, American Hungarian Reformed Christians and all those free from the yoke of communism, are especially alarmed at this prospect. Throughout the hard decades of establishing ourselves in America it was our pride and sustaining strength that even if we had to leave everything else behind, "the faith of our fathers" was still intact, still ours. Doctrinally, theologically and confessionally we remained identical with that venerable member of the Reformed Family, the Reformed Church in Hungary. Any change, any shift in the spiritual makeup of our ancient spiritual seat of authority would strike us as both embarrassing and painful.

Consequently, we are most determined, not to let go unchallenged, any tampering with our sacred heritage. We know in Whom we believe and what we believe, and we stand resolved to hold on to what we have, even if we must gainsay our former spiritual Mother. But it is not the Mother, just her present day leaders, immediate and remote rulers! Hungarian Reformed Christianity did not change. As there never has been, so there is not now anything in it inherently, theologically congenial to atheistic, materialistic

* THE CALVIN FORUM has been asked to publish this memorandum and to omit names of authors and signers. (Editors)

communism. This we wish the Brethren and the world to know.

3. The few most lime-lighted leaders of the Church in Hungary contend that the course they follow and are at pains in forcing the rest of the Church to follow, is the only one conducive to not just the present but also the future welfare of Evangelical Christianity in Hungary. This contention, of course, rests upon the belief that communism is here to stay.

We refuse to share this belief, and we fail to see any future-securing benefit in making ideological sacrifices on the idolatrous altar of communism. On the contrary, we can see but a distinct danger to the Reformed cause in case of a change, both in Hungary and in the neighboring regions, if not all over the world. Political Roman Catholicism is ready and eager to make capital out of its vaunted opposition to communism. It is within the realm of possibility that this would be the case in Hungary, where Roman Catholicism is, since the Counter-Reformation, in the majority and the restitution of the Habsburg Dynasty is a persistently pursued goal of its hierarchy. We wish to stress that we have no quarrels with the rank and file of Hungarian Roman Catholicism. Their patriotism and humaneness has made them brotherly sharers of much of our affliction in the past and has tempered the pressure of their own hierarchy and that of a dynasty renowned for its bigotry. It is the hierarchy fired by a rekindled flame for an all domineering position that we frankly distrust.

Now, what could be the lot of a Hungarian Reformed Church branded with the stigma of pro-communism and that on Christian principle, in the event of a restitution and at the hands of such a hierarchy? Disgrace and redress in a re-established Middle Age. Although a seasoned, deep-seated evangelical faith and outlook at life is keeping the rank and file of the Reformed clergy and lay-believers in a wonderful state of immunity and passive resistance, in a state in no way inferior to that of the rank and file of

Roman Catholicism, yet its quiet restraint weighed down with the behavior of a few leaders, is liable to become damaging if inconsiderately pitched against the more spectacular and better advertized opposition by a few noted members of the higher hierarchy of the Roman Church.

This is one reason for our questioning the wisdom of the course of action and the line of thinking so ostentatiously displayed by the present leaders of the Reformed Church in Hungary. In their constant harangues we see the undermining of international sympathy and the risking of an unshackled future on Hungarian soil for our one time Mother. Nor do their propagandistic representations do proper justice to the remarkable storm-weathering stand of the general constituency of the Church, the inward sufferings of which can only be felt as intensified by the necessity of accepting them for its spokesmen.

It is also a reason for our pleading with the Brethren to take interest and to use their good offices in whatever manner they can for the prevention of a free rein to political Roman Catholicism, and for a sure guarantee that democratic ideals shall prevail in the event of the world's longed-for liberation from the tyranny of communism. It was tragic to bring sacrifices resulting only in the enlargement of the horns of communism. It would be no less tragic for Reformed Christendom, for Protestantism at large, and for the democratic way of life, to bring new sacrifices culminating only in placing political Roman Catholicism in the saddle.

Brethren, we stated our problems and our position. Do not deny us the comfort that comes from sharing our woes. Have an understanding heart when, after and under the Sovereign Lord of history, we place the Reformed Church in Hungary, a charter member of our Alliance, under your protection also. Receive our Memorandum, forward it to our Geneva Headquarters, and to all member bodies both in the East and in the West; and pray for a cross-bearing member of our Family, and for all exposed brethren in the common Faith.

From Our Correspondents

FROM NORTH IRELAND

15, College Sq., Belfast, East,
North Ireland
March 5, 1953

Dr. Cecil DeBoer
Editor, *The Calvin Forum*

Dear Dr. DeBoer:

AS I write to you, the main points of interest in Britain are Stalin's grave illness and President Tito's forthcoming visit. There is, of course, a lively interest in the plans for the Coronation.

YUGOSLAVIA

Roman Catholic reaction to the proposed visit of President Tito was violent. This was not a surprise. We hear a great deal about Tito's Communism, his tolerance of religion in Yugoslavia and the sin of bringing him into our midst. The same people, less than a year ago, urged us to co-operate with General Franco, and there was no publicity given to the

pressure—and that is putting it very mildly indeed—being brought to bear upon Protestants in Spain daily and hourly! Religious commentators were quick to remind the representatives of the Vatican in this land that it was ill-becoming to lament alleged persecution in Yugoslavia, if the objecting party was itself responsible for persecution in other parts of the earth. But Rome would not take the hint. Her propaganda machine worked at white heat, and produced an embarrassing boomerang effect. So much publicity was given to Tito's alleged intolerance, and so great was the controversy that reporters went to Yugoslavia. They interviewed Tito and Stepinac, and leaders of Moslem, Lutheran and Orthodox groups. They reported what Tito said about Stepinac and what Stepinac had to say about persecution. They unearthed ugly details of the 1941-3 Croatian massacres carried out by Pavelic, the Ustashi leader—which Stepinac did little or nothing to stop and possibly encouraged.

Leaders of all religious groups, except the extreme Romanist party, were content with the state of things, denying the existence of persecution. If Rome was firmly handled—well, had she not herself to blame? Had she not instigated forced “conversions,” massacres, and torture? Had her prelates, including Stepinac, not been photographed in company with Nazi leaders?

Gradually the details trickled back to England. For the first time another side to the story—so far as the majority was concerned—was read. A measure of balance and sanity was attained. The popular weekly, *Illustrated* carried two revealing articles, written by George Bilainkin in Yugoslavia and endorsed by telling pictures. According to this writer, persecution is almost non-existent; public feeling, especially in Croatia, is against the Roman Church and only the strict Vatican party in Yugoslavia is non-co-operative with the authorities. Many are now asking why Britain should not receive Tito when she already recognizes Communist China? It is urged that Tito should be encouraged in his stand against Russian imperialism, and perhaps he may be influenced for good by the visit? On the same view, we do not endorse Tito's pattern of government or persecution, if it exists at all, when we welcome him to our shores. If Stalin had expressed a desire to come here, the Romanist section of the people would have behaved as it is now behaving towards Tito, only with even greater hysteria. But would a visit from Stalin have done him or us any harm? or have compromised our position? These are some of the points being freely discussed here at the moment, and your correspondent does not pretend to have all the answers! He does admit, however, a certain satisfaction in seeing two sides to the Yugoslav scene being presented to the public, and although the bulk of propaganda has been anti-Tito, enough has been said on the other side to restore balance. Rome is suffering from the first real publicity given in this country to the 1941-43 Croatian massacres. Perhaps it would have been better for her, had she said less about persecution in Yugoslavia.

CHINA AND FORMOSA

Before leaving matters concerning foreign policy, may I insert some comments on British reaction to recent American decisions on China and Formosa? There was a certain amount of irritation because of the way British advice was lightly regarded—so it seemed to many—by your government. Radio commentators described the new policy as “daft” and so it seems to the man in the street here. And I am only being a faithful reporter in this. There was some speculation, too, as to the practical results of the clash between the foreign policies of the two powers. Some commentators openly declared that America did not care what Britain thought about anything,

and that the sooner we realized that the better; others were more cautious. This feeling of chagrin may do much to put Britain on her mettle and so prove itself a national tonic. Be that as it may, one thing does seem certain, and that is a greater co-ordination of the Commonwealth countries, with an even greater co-operation which will result in an almost spontaneous expression of opinion when similar circumstances arise in future. It is felt that America would have to listen to the voice of the Commonwealth and that it would be her duty to do so. It remains to be seen if Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden pursue a policy conducive to such Commonwealth co-ordination. It is good to know that petty irritations on either side of the Atlantic do not really affect the basic good-will that links our Kingdom and your Republic together.

CORONATION

This year will see tremendous activity in connection with the crowning of our youthful Queen. Commercially it will be a boon to Britain. Religiously it gives us an opportunity to re-assert the Sovereignty of God, the Reformed doctrines concerning church and state, and to point to some of our national sins and inconsistencies. Our Queen enjoys immense popularity, and the help of a devoted husband and good mother. The memory of a wonderful father should encourage her at this great hour of her life. Once again the people will show their loyalty to our family of nations and to a nation which is a family—and this the Crown symbolizes. While the British people respect the Family, they will love their Royal Family.

I have said nothing about Calvinism. And therefore I conclude this letter by assuring you that the doctrines of Grace are still proclaimed by the few, and I believe by more than in the immediate past. I am indebted to your Calvinistic Action Committee for sending their valuable symposium, “God-Centred Living,” to me. I take this opportunity of thanking them, which I should have done some months ago, and assuring them that it is being circulated with profit. Many, too, are turning away from Dispensationalism as a result of recent publications and discussion groups. This is so especially at University level. Modernism prevails in the larger denominations, and, humanly speaking, will do so for some time, but it is not so confident as before. We must guard against pessimism when viewing the ecclesiastical scene. God alone can turn the tide, and prosper again the work of Reformation in the Emerald Isle.

With Greetings from Irish Calvinists,

Yours in His Service
FRED S. LEAHY

HOLLAND IN CANADA

Editor of the *Calvin Forum*
Grand Rapids, Michigan

DEAR DR. DEBOER:

THE title of this letter is perhaps a bit pretentious, although it will do in several respects. Holland has come to Canada by its thousands of recent immigrants. They present a good cross-section of Hollanders, or even better than that. These immigrants have not only been screened for physical health and good social habits, but many of them are also of the old-time orthodox faith. These Netherlands are here, and more of them are coming, even in increased tempo, because of the recent disastrous flood in the Southwest of that country.

Naturally, we take direct interest in those among them who are of the household of the faith—especially in those of the Reformed persuasion. And these also present a true-to-life picture of Old Holland, even in their divisiveness. Whatever be their essential unity in faith and practice, whatever be the painful lesson of endless splittings-up, and whatever was the initial challenge, opportunity and realization in Canada, by this time unity among the Reformed believers seems to be more of vice than of virtue.

Your correspondent came to Edmonton in early 1945, just before the new immigration waves struck Canada land. He joined with those who committed themselves to the cause of unity among those of orthodox principles, those from different denominations in Holland but devoted to the principles of the Reformation, the Gereformeerden, Christelijk Gereformeerden, Rechtzinnig Hervormden, including also "those of Art. 31." There was hope that unity might be effected around the nucleus of our Christian Reformed churches of which there were some 13 in Canada at that time. Even their small numerical strength was greater than that of any other Holland-Canadian Protestant denomination. Their church was most aggressive in receiving and aiding immigrants. Its position could be honestly presented as more sound in faith and practice than others on the scene. Its struggle for Orthodoxy had shown that our church meant to be and remain truly Reformed. Whatever there had been of "narrowness" was disappearing through the Americanization process of which there was the Canadian counterpart. Sad experiences with church schisms had shown the need of truth in controversy, and warned against rash action based on questionable propaganda rather than on deep conviction and honest truth. Our church's vigorous program in missions and Christian education was evidence of Christian vitality, so attractive to the more solid Hollanders from across. Even though it was not all gold that glittered among us, and even though we must as of today struggle to maintain an unadulterated Reformed position, we could honestly and

enthusiastically recommend our church as a desirable denominational haven for the newcomers.

The response to this expressed hope and invitation was at first surprisingly good. A large percentage of immigrants from the denominations mentioned above joined our fellowship. Perhaps this was not so surprising after all, because we reached out to those who were basically of the same faith we hold dear, and because so many of the immigrants were sick and tired of the quarrels and bickerings in their own country. These people longed for new church life in a fellowship sound but not narrow, intelligent but not cold. They were also committed to Christian schools and all kinds of Christian social activity. The discovery that these things were ours or at least the goal for which we were striving, made it comparatively easy to cast their lot with us. To this may be added that they must have felt that by the very size of their numbers they would be able to make their influence felt in the new churches to be established. They might expect to contribute materially to the molding of the pattern of the fast-growing Christian Reformed Church in Canada. Many of our nearly 100 congregations stand witness to the success of these first mutual ideals and undertakings.

This is, however, only part of the picture of Holland in Canada.

In spite of initial unification of Reformed believers of the new immigration in Canada, or because of it, leaders from various Dutch churches soon made the rounds to persuade "their" people to come out of the Christian Reformed Church or to keep clear of it. Some must have done so in good faith, believing that it would please the Lord that all the denominational walls of Holland would be reared in Canada also. There was, however, sometimes rather plain evidence of bad faith. It is astounding how truth was twisted to serve divisive ends. The Christian Reformed Church has been pictured as not believing in the need of regeneration, but also as holding that all children of believers are reborn by virtue of their baptism. We are narrow and iconoclastic but also liberal. We are Arminian and modernistic, but also too orthodox. We believe in total depravity, but with us that is not the real thing. When we say that, we do not mean what we say or do not say what we mean. Even my own private prayer, presented upon request in a ministerial home, at the occasion of a visit of good-will, and decidedly non-controversial, has been reportedly used as propaganda material against our faith. While I thanked the Lord for common blessings received as children of God, this was supposed to be evidence that I pretended to know that all the children of the family present were already reborn. Presumptive regeneration bursting at the seams! What further proof is needed for the necessity of building next to the Christian Reformed Church, one true to the Word of God! And so supposedly

sounder churches are established after the pattern of the Netherlands. Thus divided Holland is reflected in Canada. Even though very few of those who "came over to us" have left us (for they soon discovered that much of the propaganda is not true) there are now congregations representing practically all the divergent Reformed Churches of Holland, and their present new membership, directly funneled into the corresponding Canadian fellowships, have little chance to come and see for themselves what sort of a church ours is. They see us almost exclusively through the spectacles fitted them by their own leadership. So here we are! If division of churches is the essence of truth, we are making real progress in Canada! In spite of Christ's challenging prayer for the unity of His own, the initial response thereto in Canada is condemned, or, according to some, it can only be answered in fellowship with their own denomination which has exclusive title to the name of THE church of Christ in Canada.

Happily, not all leaders of "other" Reformed Churches want things this way. Even in Holland there is, for instance, a decided difference of opinion among the clergy of the Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken regarding the propriety of starting Christelijk Gereformeerde churches next to our Christian Reformed churches. Leading men there definitely counsel against it. One of them, the Rev. B. Nederlof, of Dokkum, accepted the call extended to him by our Christian Reformed Church of Houston, B. C. He is a man of considerable stature in his church, and we welcome him not only because of his own person, but also because of what he represents. It is my humble opinion that we can afford to have some Christelijk Gereformeerde ministers in our churches. There is among us room for their somewhat more subjective emphasis than is sometimes found among us, and some of the Christelijk Gereformeerde folk among us can benefit by the somewhat more objective touch of our "own" men. And, speaking in terms of the Dutch churches, we shall benefit by absorbing the good of both the Gereformeerde (from where several ministers have come to us of late) and the Christelijk Gereformeerde kerken of the Netherlands.

And how about the Hervormden? The Reformed Church (U.S.A.) naturally addresses itself especially to them. It has the claim to more direct historical connections with the Hervormde Kerk, for our people were originally largely of the "Seceders." Moreover, the Reformed Church, U.S.A., as now is, is also more like the Hervormde Kerk than the Christian Reformed Church. There is more of "leervrijheid" there than among us. "Open Communion" and local admittance of lodge members is also more like that which is permitted in the Hervormde Kerk. In both churches Orthodoxy and Modernism live in one house. That's why in our counselling with orthodox Hervormde brethren we admit their

closer connection with the Reformed Church but cannot help advising them to cast their lot with our more consistently Reformed denomination. Why should they who have tasted of the soul-troubling dualism in the Hervormde Kerk take to it on this side of the ocean when they have an opportunity to make a new and more consistent start? This dualism and the known denominational opposition of the Reformed Church to Christian instruction cannot give lasting satisfaction to people Reformed at heart, however personally Reformed the present Reformed Church ministry in Canada may be. That's why not only the Hervormde *immigrant* is on the spot—but also the sound Reformed minister of the Reformed Church in Canada. Especially the latter, for denominational loyalty would suggest that the dualism in the bosom of the Reformed Church be soft-peddled or otherwise he should royally advise new immigrants from the Hervormde Kerk to keep away from his dualistic fellowship and join there where one can fellowship more consistently and with a conscience more clear. The Rev. Gerrit H. Rientjes, once placed before this choice as minister of the Reformed Church, took to the latter course, and went all the way. He accepted a call from one of our churches to work as minister to the immigrants in the service of our Christian Reformed denomination. He, and the Rev. Nederlof, with the several ministers from the Gereformeerde Kerken, are symbolic (and I hope, prophetic) of this wholesome fraternization of Reformed brethren in Canada. Who knows but it may do some good across our borders also.

Sincerely yours,
(REV.) PAUL DE KOEKKOEK

FROM THE GORDON DIVINITY SCHOOL

Dr. Cecil DeBoer
The Calvin Forum
Calvin College
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Beverly Farms, Mass.
February 4, 1953

DEAR MR. DEBOER:

I AM afraid that I am a very irregular correspondent. We do, however, appreciate the ministry of the *Forum* and enjoy the contact through it with other men of Reformed persuasion.

We here at the Divinity School are happy to report a recent addition to the faculty in the person of Rev. David W. Kerr, who comes to us from the pastorate of the Presbyterian Church in Banff, Alberta. Professor Kerr received his theological training at Westminster Theological Seminary, earning both the Th.B and Th.M degrees, and served as a teacher in the Old Testament Department for several years before entering the pastoral ministry. He took some advanced work at the Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, and as opportunity allows expects to do further study at Harvard. He will be Chairman of the Old Testament Department here at Gordon.

Most of the Divinity faculty are Calvinistic in viewpoint and are doing good work in this area.

Dr. Roger R. Nicole, Professor of Theology, is scheduled to deliver the midyear lectures at the Western Baptist Theological Seminary in Portland, Oregon, dealing with the Atonement. His lectures deal with the centrality of the doctrine, the centrality of substitution within the doctrine, and with the views on the atonement held by Vincent Taylor and Jean Riviere. It is customary for the lectures to be published in book form, and so the public will doubtless have access to the materials before long.

In connection with the current emphasis on Neo-orthodoxy, it will be of interest to readers to know that *Revelation and History*, a treatise on the theology of Emil Brunner, has been completed by our professor of the Philosophy of Religion, Dr. Paul K. Jewett, and will probably be published at an early date. Dr. Jewett studied not only at Westminster and Harvard, but was privileged to study under Dr. Brunner and others in Switzerland.

Those who have long been interested in the work of the National Union of Christian Schools and aware of the growth of the Christian School Movement both in Reformed and non-Reformed circles, will be interested to know that the movement continues to grow here in New England. Whereas only eight or ten years ago the only Christian School in New England was the one supported by the members of the Christian Reformed Church in Whitinsville, Massachusetts, there is now a Christian High School with more than 160 pupils in the Boston area. Also there are elementary schools in several communities in Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, most of which are operated by the New England Association of Christian Schools. The Boston Christian High School was begun only six or seven years ago, but has its own building situated adjacent to Harvard and Radcliffe, in a very strategic location. The building is a three-story brick one. It was built and operated as a private school until the time of its purchase for the present use. The annual banquet of the New England Association was held on January 26 in the new John Hancock building in Boston, with an attendance of about 500, including many leaders from the business and professional world as well as from the clergy. We are greatly encouraged with the growth of the Christian Schools in this area, and with the stabilization of their curricula and standards. The Association employs a trained educator to visit the elementary

schools periodically and work with the principals, teachers, and local board members toward standardization and general improvement.

I wonder if you have had any report on the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, which met at Wheaton College shortly after Christmas. Since Dr. Bouma served as first president of the organization and the *Forum* carried several articles about the Society, it might be well, I think, to bring readers up-to-date on the developments within the organization.

Membership in the Society is limited to those who have education comparable to that represented by the Th.M degree and the Society now has more than 170 members, the larger percentage of whom serve as teachers in Conservative seminaries, colleges, and Bible institutes across the country. A bound volume is now in preparation and will probably appear under the title *Men and Scripture*. It will consist of studies of such men as Irenaeus, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Sanday, Brunner, Niebuhr, and Rowley, analyzing their view of Scripture and their interpretation of the Word.

At the Wheaton meeting, action was taken to have duplicated and made available for distribution the papers read at each annual meeting. This is now being done by the Editorial Committee, of which I serve as Chairman. Attendance at the Wheaton meetings reached a high of about 100. Special interest was manifested in the papers and panel discussion concerned with the Revised Standard Version. Those who participated in the discussion were for the most part greatly disturbed by the liberties taken by the translators and their many departures from the Hebrew text. The need for a new translation prepared by conservatives was acknowledged, and a committee was appointed to explore the possibilities and report back at the next annual meeting. The committee is to be headed by Dr. J. R. Mantey, well-known Greek scholar and author. Those who are interested in applying for membership, and who have the requisite educational qualifications for membership, should communicate with Dr. R. Laird Harris, Faith Theological Seminary, Elkins Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

With cordial greetings, I am

Sincerely in Christ,

BURTON L. GOODARD

Book Reviews

CALVINISTIC LITERATURE IN MODERN HOLLAND

IN DRIE ETAPPEN. By C. Rijnsdorp. Baarn, The Netherlands: Bosch en Keuning, N.V. 195 pages. 10 Florins.

FEW people in America are aware of the rich harvest of Christian literature, mostly Calvinistic, gathered in The Netherlands in the last fifty years. For our

Orthodox Protestant believers Holland is the land of a revived Calvinistic dogmatics under such eminent leaders as Kuyper, Bavinck, Berkouwer, and Schilder. For a few Holland is also the land of a new Calvinistic philosophy which seems to be foreign to most students and laymen but which is gaining in influence nevertheless, and even demanding the attention of Liberals and Catholics in many parts of the

world. But in regard to Christian Dutch literature in the Netherlands, the only books known are a few translations, for instance, *Idylls of a Dutch Village* by S. Ulfers, an ethicalist minister, and *Talks with Gabriel* by A. Miedema, a Calvinist teacher. However, several thousands of Calvinistic immigrants of Dutch descent have an inkling of the fact that in Holland there have been since 1900 more than 200 Christian novelists and short story writers, more than a hundred Christian poets, and more than fifty Christian essayists and critics, of whom a great percentage has the right to be considered literary authors, and of whom the overwhelming majority are Calvinists. They are not Calvinists of one and the same basic type, but of all the historical varieties found in the Netherlands—Revival of 1821, Separation of 1834, "Doleantie" of 1886, "Schilder" of the 1940s, Law Idea Philosophy of 1926, and even some smaller church groups, not to mention the few Barthians in the Big Church (Netherlands Reformed) who have left the Calvinistic fold of organized authors in 1945 because they realized that they did not belong to the company of the orthodox. Most of the Calvinistic authors publish their products from time to time in *Ontmoeting*, a monthly born shortly after the Second World War. They meet with many minor authors once a year in the spring in the woods of Utrecht or Gelderland. Recently some of the Schilder groups have organized the little but pointed magazine *Stijl* which, however, has a different purpose than *Ontmoeting*, the purpose to stimulate the people at large and to guide the young Reformed authors. In The Netherlands, then, there is besides a momentous interest in Calvinistic theology a respectable interest in Calvinistic philosophy, literature, and culture which ought to have the thorough attention of all Calvinists in the English-speaking world, for they ought to be, and many of them really are, convinced that a Calvinistic theology without a Calvinistic philosophy and a Calvinistic education, literature and art, besides at least a Calvinistic side-interest in politics, economics, and social life, is bound to peter out, and even to go on the rocks. Especially education, philosophy, and literature of a Calvinistic vintage are necessary to give the Calvinists wherever they may live: rootage, momentum, and influence. The story of Calvinistic Dutch literature is a warning and an inspiration at the same time. Literature as a record of the joys and sorrows of life shows how people, and in this case the Calvinists, have lived, fought and conquered. If Calvinism is livable, it has great possibilities. If not, it will vanish.

The origin of Rijnsdorp's study of the development of Dutch Calvinistic literature is remarkable. This branch of culture had, of course, its small beginnings, though almost from the start there was Geerten Gossaert (penname for Prof. F. C. Gerretson), poet and essayist, recognized by humanist and Calvinist alike. For a long time textbooks and handbooks and anthologies mentioned only half a dozen Christian Protestant authors, and even in 1951 in the magazine of the United Nations in an article on contemporary Dutch authors not one evangelical protestant was mentioned. But in the same year the Dutch government, though in the hands of Socialists and Catholics, gave a mandate (with a considerable remuneration) to C. Rijnsdorp, the "uncrowned King" of the Calvinistic men of letters, to write an essay in which the present day Calvinistic Dutch literature and literary criticism had to be weighed in the balance of the

"aesthetic" principles of Calvin. Rijnsdorp is a first class critic, novel writer, and poet, an autodidact with an excellent schooling in music and literature (Dutch and German), a thoroughgoing but tolerant Calvinist who caught his spark from Bilderdijk, Bavinck, and Kuyper, especially from the latter "because he was a many-sided genius." Rijnsdorp is a bighearted Christian who, notwithstanding his own pronounced principles about the intimate relation of religion and literature, can appreciate the true, the good, and the beautiful wherever he finds it, but certainly in his fellow Christian authors. No better guide for the difficult task of estimating contemporary Dutch Calvinistic literature in the light of Calvin's "aesthetic" principles could have been found. And Rijnsdorp certainly did justice to his name and fame in this fascinating volume. In his synthesis of Calvin's "aesthetic" principles Rijnsdorp chose to be guided by our American Calvinist, Leon Georges Wencelius, a Frenchman by birth and a Huguenot by extraction. Wencelius acquired a doctor's degree in the Science of Religions in New York, and in literature in Paris. He wrote several smaller works on Calvinism and Art, but a rather sizeable thesis on the Art theory of Calvin which volume has been the indirect cause of a revised estimate of Calvin's aesthetic ideas and influence in Catholic and Liberal circles in Europe. This book is not well-known in America because it was written in French, but just for this fact it made an impression on art critics in France and The Netherlands. At one of our American Calvinistic conferences at Calvin College, Wencelius gave a review of his opinions and had his paper duly published (in 1943) so that we can also reap the benefit of his research work. Rijnsdorp took Wencelius as his guide because the latter has been generally recognized as a reliable and honest critic whose product could hardly have been improved, as "research," by others.

Wencelius' program of principles is quoted in French on p. 20 of Rijnsdorp's book. It runs as follows:

1. A sense or correct idea of the object.
2. An invitation to the writer to efface himself when he is confronted with the greatness of his task.
3. An appeal to simplicity and sobriety.
4. An appeal to a well-balanced view of reality.
5. And, finally, a desire for clarity and purity.

From a letter which Calvin wrote to his friend Grynaeus at Strassburg (to whom he dedicated his commentary on the epistle to the Romans in 1539) Wencelius borrowed the three principles of clarity and conciseness (See Rijnsdorp, p. 187) and of zeal or passion (p. 190). These three principles were adopted by Calvin for his scientific work, but Wencelius lined them up with the other five and came to the conclusion that Calvin saw their value also for art.

These three or five ideas of Calvin were really "cultural," and even moral principles of action. In any given work not only a Christian, but every human being, should not waste his time or effort, should plainly and purely show to his fellowmen what he means, and should exhibit a zeal and passion, an all-absorbing interest, the fruit of a sincere and consistent religion, which principles are in this case rather Paulinic and Solomonic than Calvinian. Wencelius seems to be aware that these ideas are in their very nature not so much "aesthetic," as ethical, for they are actually applications of the eighth and of the first commandments to all walks of life. (Compare *Heidelberg Catechism*, Lord's

Days 34 and 42). No one should waste his own or someone else's time, and no one should think of anything else as basic but that the cosmos with all its treasures belongs to the triune God. The same three principles are beautifully explained in the first and last chapters of Calvin's *Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life*. The three principles of the last chapter especially: moderation, contentment, and faithfulness in every sphere of life because we should walk *Coram Deo*, before the face of God, might have served Wencelius even better than the letter to Grynaeus. However this may be, these norms of Calvin are truly Biblical, and truly practical, but they are not strictly speaking "aesthetic" principles. The secrets of beauty and harmony are not in the Scriptures, but they can be found in nature and art, and they were perhaps first pointed out by Plato in his *Phaedrus* and in his *Symposium*: Beauty and order consists in balance, dominance, and synthesis. But, of course, no Christian will deny that the ethical ideas of moderation, love for our fellowman, and zeal in our labor for the sake of our neighbor, but above all for God's sake, should find extensive and even universal application in all of life, and certainly in art, because there is the *conscious* effort to be orderly and moderate. And so, Rijnsdorp is on the right track when he follows Wencelius. His task was to find out whether the modern Calvinists had been faithful to Calvin, not to measure them according to the technical principles of classical philosophy.

It is of importance to notice how Rijnsdorp applies Calvin's principles. Some Calvinists have suggested that Calvin because of his admiration for Greek and Renaissance art condemned all romanticism and all realism. This would lead to a golden mean which in the hands of most modern artists, except the very greatest, would result in a mechanical balance. Formalism and legalism would so triumph and the end would sound the death knell of all personal emotion, liberty, and group instinct. But Calvin was one of the greatest champions of democracy and individuality in church, state, and society. He really pleaded for "sphere sovereignty," for a free church and a free culture in a free state under the immediate authority of Christ and his Word. (Cf. *Institutes*, III Ch. 19.) Rijnsdorp, an ardent follower of Kuyper, has caught the latter's spark, and interprets Calvin accordingly. Rijnsdorp has no objection to period style, to romantic and realistic temperaments, nor to the equanimity of the classics, but he rejects onesidedness and exaggeration, obscurity and slovenliness, worldly-mindedness as well as pietism, baroque farce as well as romantic sentimentalism. He does not advocate a so-called "Calvinistic technique," but he believes warmly in self-control, in system, in unity, in dignity, in spirited enthusiasm, in respect for the leader and for the common people, in respect for the past and for decency. Catholic art finally developed pomp and circumstance; humanism and wild anabaptism went to moral extremes in word and deed; but Calvinistic art in seventeenth century Holland (painting, music, architecture, literature) was at once restrained and sparkling: restrained because it believed in the basic principles of clarity, sobriety, exactness; sparkling because it was full of life, individuality, variety, action, and love of liberty.

With such an interpretation of Calvin one can imagine what Rijnsdorp has to say about the word-artistry, the Neosymbolism, and the extreme naturalism of the first period

from 1900 up to the first World War when the Kuyper group under Anema's leadership appropriated the reverence for word music, and the Anti-Kuyper group lost its way in hyper-romantic poetry and ultra-realistic novels, and only the poet Gossaert—the man of the "Reveil" who kept apart from either side—and Haspels, the novelist, who leaned towards the ethicalists, escaped the revolutionary spirit of the times.

In the second period, however, there was more balance, but on the one hand the influence of the German Rilke in poetry made for a great amount of "sensitivism" and culture of personality, and on the other hand the mania for problem novels under the pressure of Barth and the existentialists made for a surplus of tragedy which was, however, counteracted by a sane display of humor especially among the Calvinists. The great poet of this period was Willem Keuning, alias Willem de Merode. The great novelist was Wilma Vermaat. The great essayist was Heeroma.

In the third period (after the Second World War) the Calvinists have shown their old caliber. The misery and the trials during the German occupation became the catharsis not only of the Dutch nation, but also and especially of the Dutch Calvinists, and had a wonderful influence on the prose and poetry of the now middle-aged second generation. The old monthlies had disappeared one by one, and the old organizations had also gone the way of all flesh. But a new type of organization was initiated and a new periodical, *Ontmoeting*, divulged a new spirit and a renewed faith. Under the leadership of P. Risseuw (the right hand of Rijnsdorp), D. Van der Stoep, Koos Van Doorne, (and Rijnsdorp himself) novels and essays have been written which show vitality, elasticity, and a balance of the *eris* and the *eros*, of conflict and harmony, which went beyond the efforts of the liberals and the Catholics. Miedema surpassed himself in his *Talks with Gabriel*, and though somewhat uneven, made a lifelike picture of the struggling and grumbling Calvinist who at last sees the light. And among the poets there were Lidy Van Eysselsteyn, Anna Mertens, and (Professor) Anthonie Stolk who astonished even outsiders with their profound poetry. And those are only a few of the many excellent writers who do not have to make their bow to the now crestfallen liberals. It is indeed a feast to be in the company of the sons and daughters of the once despised "imitators of the humanists," for the Evangelicals no longer follows, but march ahead of the others in the pageant of Dutch culture. The government's invitation to Rijnsdorp to give an account of the struggle of the Dutch Calvinistic authors during the last half century is a silent but eloquent homage to a patriotic and devout group that once led the nation to victory in the Eighty Years' War, and outshone the rest of the world in painting, architecture, and music under such illustrious names as Rembrandt, Jacob Van Campen, and Jan Pieter Sweelinck. Rijnsdorp's own volume is a monument for himself. It is one of the most charming books any Dutch Calvinist may ever enjoy. The present reviewer read it three times in succession, and hopes to peruse it at several more occasions. God has given grace and glory to a people that were disdained and abused for more than a hundred years, but have finally emerged to scientific and artistic significance.

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