Music Education and Responsibilities

A New Synthesis-Philosophy

The Doleantie: A Progressive Influence

Chapel Talk

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Music Education and the Joint Responsibilities of the Home, School and Church

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I am happy that we have such a varied group here tonight—school teachers, ministers, and interested parents—for it makes it easier for me to talk about a very difficult and a very complicated problem, the joint responsibility of each of us in the musical education of the child. Each of the great influences upon the child, the home, the school, and the church, is so important that I find it difficult to know where to begin. But since all of us are parents first, and since the education of the child begins in the home, I would like to begin there.

In considering the place of music education at home, I am reminded of our experience with our older son, Bruce. We had cajoled him into studying the piano with a fine, sympathetic teacher. For two years he continued the study, never complaining too much, but never too happy about it either. A year ago, however, he returned from his first lesson in September rather quiet in spirit. When asked how his first lesson had been, he at first said little. However, that evening he said to my wife: "Mother, let's not have a scene about this now; I don't want to argue about it any more. I just want you to know that I had my last piano lesson today!"

In the face of such an ultimatum there was little we could do but acquiesce. That experience taught me much. I would like to pass on some of that lesson to you.

In the first place, I have come anew to the realization that music study is, for the child, basically a social experience. It is true that most children go through the stage of enjoying tones for their own sakes; but, as the child enters the adolescent period, such a sheer individual enjoyment of music as music becomes secondary to the social factor. To the very talented student, the practice of the piano alone in an empty room may not be too trying an experience. To the average child with a normal interest in music, however, music can be one of the most effective means of satisfying his desire to play and work with others, of satisfying his sense of competition as well as his sense of co-

operation. We must remember that without the proper motivation, without the exercise by ourselves, as parents, of reason, balance, and justice in the musical education of our children, we may come dangerously close to killing the natural love for music which lies in each child.

And still, each child must learn something of music—something of its power, its magnificence, its usefulness, and the joys of performing or listening. Whether or not your child will be happy in the study of the piano, the voice, or other instruments later on, can depend to a great extent on the kind of conditioning which he receives at home. The family which allows the radio to stay tuned to one station all day long, with an indiscriminating blasting of symphonies one hour, dance orchestras another hour, accordion bands another, hillbilly music another, and so on, will discover that the child in the home has grown up with no discrimination in music. To him, music in general is one of those noises which are as much a part of life as the whirring of wheels, the shrieking of band saws, the squealing of rip saws, and the buzzing of Sanders in a furniture factory. One half hour per week of appreciative listening under the guidance of a parent who knows just how much to say and when to say it, is worth far more to the child than a week-long misuse of the wonderful means of communication we have in the radio, television, and phonograph.

I cannot impress strongly enough on you the importance of this musical climate of the home. The encouragement of hearing the finest music, religious and secular, on the radio, television, and phonograph; the encouragement of family musical sessions at home; singing and playing after dinner or on a Sunday afternoon; the encouragement of the formation of small ensembles by your child and neighboring children, either for their own amusement or for the purpose of playing at school and community parties, or in the Sunday School or for other church social functions. John Philip Sousa once said: "I'd rather have my child blow a horn than blow a safe!" Whether or not your child continues to blow his horn in his leisure time will largely depend upon the encouragement which you give him as a youngster.

And now I would like to move on into the school. From the standpoint of the teachers here that is a
technical problem which we shall save for our later discussions. I do feel, however, that there are some things which we can speak of here with profit. The school is a project of the parents for the children. Schools cost money, teachers cost money, and frankly, music costs money too.

For many of you the idea of organized music education in the school is a fairly new one. The problems which our Christian schools are facing today, however, have been faced by educators for many years past. Some school systems have been able to integrate satisfactorily a program of music education into their curriculum. Other systems have not been so successful. In still others the music program has just “grown” like Topsy, with varying degrees of success.

II

It might be wise for us to look at this problem from the standpoint of the school superintendent, or the principal, or the school board. When these overworked and little-appreciated people are pressed to introduce a music education program in the school they must evaluate it along one of several lines of reasoning, using one or more of several criteria in determining the direction which the new course of study shall take.

The first of these criteria is that of tradition. Most schools are a product of tradition, and the curriculum of most schools is a product of tradition. Many subjects now in the course of study are there because they have been there long enough to establish a traditional place in the curriculum. I do not mean to imply that there is anything wrong with the criterion of tradition. Certainly the subjects which have stood the test of time and have become traditions are entitled to a place in the curriculum. A superintendent, however, finds it difficult to make place for the newer subjects, those dealing with aesthetics or beauty in the modern world, and he finds it difficult to make changes in the methods of teaching the traditional subjects because of their long and sometimes fixed backgrounds. Methods of teaching, as well as subjects, often become crystallized by tradition. But music has hardly established for itself a traditional position in the Christian School curriculum. It is a newer subject trying its best to gain a foothold in the already crowded curriculum.

A second criterion which is called upon to determine the placement of a subject in the curriculum is the value of its contribution to the growth of the individual. Education, as an aid in development and growth, is, after all, an individual matter. It is the individual who must first profit by the process of education. Therefore, subjects in the curriculum must be those which will produce desirable growth and advancement on the part of the individual. The American philosophy is equal opportunity for all, according to their abilities, interests, and desires. We have come to learn that there are individual differences not only in size and physical appearance, but also in mental capacities, feelings, interests, and desires. There are some individuals who receive the greatest educational experience from the study of mathematics, foreign languages, science, English literature, etc. But there are others so constituted that prolonged work, intensive work, in only these fields may actually hinder their educational growth and progress. Some may find the greatest stimulation for their advancement in the study of geography or history; others find it in art or athletics; and still others may receive their greatest stimulant in the educational process through music. From the standpoint of the emotional needs of some students as over against those of some others, it would seem desirable to include music as a respectable member of the curricular family.

A third criterion for inclusion of a subject in the school curriculum is the value of the subject to society. In other words, in addition to the value which the subject may have for the individual, is there a value of that subject for society? That surely is a valid criterion, for we have accepted it when we introduced the study of Civics, Government, and American History. As a socializing agency there can be no denying the superiority of the field of music. What can be of greater social benefit to the child than the experience of participating in a chorus of a hundred voices singing as one, or in an orchestra playing as a group of individuals fused into one? An American general, at the time of our entrance into the first World War, having watched the rehearsal of a well-known Symphony Orchestra, prophesied that if our fighting men could learn to work together as those players did, no enemy could withstand our armies. Music is the vehicle in the school curriculum through which youngsters may have the supreme experience of working together as a social unit for the advancement of worthwhile ends.

III

A fourth criterion in considering a new subject in the school’s curriculum is that of pure enjoyment. Now when I mention enjoyment as a criterion you undoubtedly are ready to place me in the same category as those who believe in free expression for children in the school, a follower of the “new” philosophy of education. I assure you that I have something entirely different in mind. While we like to say that the benefits of the Christian school lie in such things as Christian teachers, Christian fellow-students, and a half-hour of Bible study per day, I am afraid that only too often our curriculum, and indeed even our textbooks, merely duplicates rather closely that of the secular public school system. While this cannot be avoided in what some folk like to call the “neutral” areas of education, we do have the possibility of developing a peculiarly Christian, a truly Calvinistic attitude
in the student in the field of music. In speaking of “pure joy” I would refer you to the Heidelberg Catechism’s first question and answer. And I would like to read what John Calvin himself has to say about “pure joy” in the introduction to his Psalter published in 1543:

In the first place, it is not without reason that the Holy Spirit exhorts us so carefully by means of the Holy Scripture to rejoice in God and that all our joy is there reduced to its true end. . . .

Now among the other things proper to recreate man and give him pleasure, music is either the first or one of the principal, and we must think that it is a gift of God, devoted to that purpose. For which reason we must be the more careful not to abuse it, for fear of soiling and contaminating it, converting it to our condemnation when it has been dedicated to our profit and welfare. . . . For there is hardly anything in the world with more power to turn or bend, this way and that, the morals of men. . . .

Calvin so firmly believed in music as the fitting vehicle for the praise of God, for the purest expression of holy joy, that he insisted not only on the introduction of congregational singing in his church but hired the finest musician available to teach music to the children in his Christian school in Geneva. And it always warms my heart when I recall that one year the city fathers of Geneva even gave the music teacher a bonus for the excellent work he did in teaching the fine art of music to the school children.

But to get back to our curriculum problem: this criterion of “pure joy” entails certain responsibilities for the teacher, the student, the administrator, and the parent. Whether the musical activity is the choir, the band, the orchestra, or simply a music appreciation class, we must remember that this gift of music is a gift of God, and must be used to the glory of God. Of course, there is a place for learning how to appreciate the beauty of harmony and form in a symphony; there must be time and facilities available for learning how to play or sing in tune; how to keep time; how to follow the conductor; these are all highly important, but they are not ends in themselves. I am sure we all would be very proud if we could see a fine 100-piece Band representing our school and community in a great patriotic parade; or a balanced youth symphony orchestra giving a concert of great music; or our choir singing in Carnegie Hall with the New York Philharmonic. Of course, you would say, “What wonderful public relations! What good advertising for our school!” But as soon as such things become ends in themselves you may be sure that you will have lost your music education program, for the by-products will have become end-products. The joy of playing together, or performing and recreating great works of art together, the study of great literature in the universal language of music—all the gift of God and to be used to His glory—these are lost in the exhibitionism which has become the plague of music education in our American school system. I hope that we Christian school educators may keep our sense of balance.

A fifth criterion which determines the presence of a subject in the school curriculum is its carry-over into adult life. I would almost say that for us this criterion should be bracketed with the previous one, the criterion of “pure joy,” for only in the organized training of our children in the field of music can music be used in adult life for the expression of joy and praise. We teach reading because it is a necessary life activity; arithmetic, too, is valuable throughout life; health education is valuable to us as long as we live; science is important for each of us. But what subject can have a greater carry-over into the important realm of worship, of church life, of praise to God both in the church and in the home, than music?

And here I think I should digress a little and say something about what I think is a real responsibility for all of us interested in perpetuating something of the great cultural contribution which Calvinism has made. Of course, the music education program of our schools is going to be concerned with many of the same things we find in the other schools of our land. Our choirs are going to sing and study folk music of all nations, great works by Beethoven, etc. The same thing is true of our bands and our orchestras. There is a great store of musical literature which any well-educated person should know. However, one of the great challenges which comes to us now in the Reformed tradition is that of recognizing and accepting and performing the great music which has come down to us since the days of John Calvin, music which was written for the Reformed Church service and music which was inspired in the hearts of Reformed musicians. I suppose one reason for our neglect of these great products of the Reformed musical tradition is the fact that when you are too close to a thing, when you see so many wonderful things in the neighbor’s back yard, you are tempted to discredit the value of those things which are peculiarly yours.

I wonder how many of our Christian High School or Church Choirs have ever performed some of the beautiful four and five-part settings of the Genevan Psalm tunes as they were written by Claude Le Jeune, Goudimel, and Louis Bourgeois in Calvin’s day; or the choral settings by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, the first great Dutch Calvinist organist and choirmaster in Amsterdam in 1600; or by the English and Scotch composers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; or by some of our leading American composers who are just beginning to discover the musical value of these great Psalm tunes? I would never say that we should bar the great hymn tunes, which belong to all Christianity, from our church services or from the chapel services in our High Schools. But how much more rewarding musically would it not be if we could also sing more of the great music of our own heritage in our worship services, and leave the singing of the Lorelei, Londonderry Air, Finnish Military March, the love-
songs of Rousseau, and the operatic arias of von Weber, to the uses for which those songs were originally intended, in the home, the opera house, the Paris streets, and the pub? Then our organists can forget about playing Narcissus, Gluck's Dance of the Happy Spirits, and other entertaining music, beautiful as it may be. Our church services can become enriched when we use the great organ and choral music which was conceived for use in the church service. Such great composers as Sweelinck and Reinken and Bach can be heard once more in our schools and churches, and it will no longer be necessary for us to go to the history books to learn about Reformed church music. It will become a living thing for us once more.

That is where the school comes into the picture too. The development of an appreciation for our distinctive, great music is also the task of the teacher. Children in the formative stage are easily led and their minds and attitudes are easily molded. I hope that the time is not far off when our High School choirs will be performing the psalm-settings of Goudimel, Sweelinck, and Le Jeune, as beautifully as they do the beautiful music of the Catholic Church tradition—the Adoramus Te Christe of Palestrina or a Penitential Psalm of Orlando di Lasso. Unless our children learn the beauties of the Reformed musical tradition in school they will never appreciate the singing of such music in the church.

Here is a multiple challenge: we must present in our balanced program of music education the best musical products of several different cultures, of course; secondly, we must not ignore that great product of our own religious culture; thirdly, we must teach our children to respect and to love that music which is of our own heritage to the same extent that the Catholic Church school teaches its children to love the Gregorian Chant or the Lutheran School the Lutheran Chorale. As a result of this process of education we will not only have enriched the child for the present, but will also have given him something to carry on into his life of worship and service in the church.

V

The last criterion I would like to mention in our evaluation of music education is the value of the subject itself.

In many respects the study of music is like the study of literature. Actually, music is literature. There is no other language in existence today which has been and still is so universally understood as the musical language. Essentially our musical language is the same as it was several thousand years ago. The same raw material is there, we just use it differently. But we can still understand the music of Plato's time; of ancient China; of the pre-Christian Jews; of the Moors; of the early Church; of the Reformation; and so on. On the shelves of the Calvin College Library Fine Arts Room, in the great Cayvan Collection of Recordings, there are over 10,000 musical recordings which tell of the musical expressions of all these ages. It is the only language which can be understood by everyone, even though he may not be able to read and write any language but English. These great works of art are the truly popular music, for that which is truly popular is that which lives. The so-called popular music of today is not truly popular, for most of it lives for only a month or two. Once it has arrived on the Hit-Parade you may be sure that it will be dead within a short time! This literature which we call great music is a great literature, typical of peoples, of cultures, of civilizations, and without knowing the music of a people a student cannot really know the people.

But, you say, that is all very well for courses in music appreciation. How about the Band, Orchestra, and the Choir: They play on the football field and they give concerts for entertainment. Is that education? Once more I must emphasize that such entertainment is actually a by-product, a wonderful by-product, to be sure, which we would not want to discourage. But I would like to have you think of such work in musical performance in the same light as the laboratory work of the science student. You can't become a chemist by reading about test tubes. The practical application proves the reading. Neither can you really know Shakespeare well unless you have actually had a chance at reading the play aloud. In the science of music, as in the exact sciences, the doing proves the knowing. And again, I must emphasize that a program of instrumental and vocal applied music in the school is worthy of consideration only if the objective is to bring the child to a love and appreciation of great musical literature, a desire to perform it properly, to the glory of God.

An honest effort to achieve the goal of music education, however limited it may be, is worthwhile. A slipshod attempt, however, with an overworked staff, poor facilities, little administrative support or encouragement, and apathy in the home, is worse than no music program at all. Of all people, surely the Christian has the most reason to want to sing and to play, and to want to sing and to play well, for anything less than a desire for human perfection in this art makes a travesty of one of the greatest gifts which God has given us.
and then to make use of his Christian principles and his knowledge in his daily living as he prepares for eternity. The Church, on the other hand, while it too is concerned with teaching the principles for daily living, is more directly concerned with the primary function of worship in its worship services. While music in everyday life may be a source of esthetic pleasure, music has an entirely different purpose in the Church. Music is functional in the Church. It is useful. Unless music can fulfill its function as a vehicle for the Word or as a carrier of man’s thought heavenward, it is out of place in the Church.

The intelligent church organist or choir member knows he has a function to perform in worship, and that function is not the entertainment of the individual in the pew. Since group worship, and the teaching of principles of worship, is the function of the Church rather than of the school, it is essential that the proper place of music in worship should also be taught to the worshipper. We teach him how to pray; we teach him how to reason and to evaluate on doctrinal points. We insist upon reverence. Let our ministers, our consistory members, with the aid of our parents and school teachers, also teach and insist upon a proper evaluation of the function of music in the service.*

Because of the historical and educational significance of the music of the Reformed tradition, the University of Michigan

Many churches have choirs participating in the worship services. Good choir members are made, not born, and the time must come when our churches will have to face the problem of effective training for musical participation in the service. Unless a churchly attitude towards church music is instilled in the child he will have little conception of what appropriate church music really is when he reaches maturity. This, for many of us, is an untapped field, and an unthought-of field. There, too, lies enough material for another lecture, if not for a whole book!

In closing, I would like to quote a few lines from a rather famous old book, *The Compleat Gentleman*, written by Henry Peacham in 1622. Speaking of music, he says: “It is a principal means of glorifying our merciful Creator, it heightens our devotion, it gives delight and ease to our travail. It expelleth sadness and heaviness of spirit, preserveth people in concord and amity, allayeth fierceness and anger. . . . Whom God loves not, that man loves not music.”

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*A New Synthesis-Philosophy: III.*

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W E HAVE previously shown why in our opinion the philosophy of Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd (VAD) is to be regarded as a synthesis between Christian (more particularly Calvinistic) thought and Phenomenology, a contemporary post-Neo-Kantian philosophy. Further investigation would doubtless bring forth further evidence for this assertion. But what we wish to do in this concluding article is to make some further remarks on the philosophy of VAD as a new synthesis-philosophy, and indeed an often interesting and fruitful synthesis-philosophy.*

*Forum* readers can do some investigation on their own by watching for reviews of the English translation of the first volume of Dooyeweerd’s *Wijzegeesters der Wetwetek*, recently issued as *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing House; 1955). We understand that the *Review of Metaphysics* will shortly carry a favorable review written by the noted Neo-Orthodox theologian Richard Kroner. The *Christian Century* for June 2, 1954, has a favorable notice, from a Phenomenological point of view, by Prof. Natanson of the University of Houston. The *Calvin Forum* also has a review of the translation coming up.

The term synthesis-philosophy does not of course imply that VAD have adopted uncritically all of Phenomenology, any more than to call Woltjer’s philosophy a Calvinistic Platonism means that Woltjer adopted all of Plato’s ideas uncritically. Dooyeweerd is critical of some elements in Phenomenology, just as Woltjer was critical of some elements in Platonism. 3

I

It should be realized that VAD have not made the only attempt to work out a synthesis between Christian thought and Phenomenology. Catholic philosophers such as Brentano and Hildebrand, and Protestants like Kohnstamm, have been interested in such an attempt. The founder of Phenomenology, Husserl, had a brilliant Catholic pupil named Edith Stein, and she has worked out in some detail a synthesis between Catholic thought and Phenomenology.

Another famous Phenomenologist, Max Scheler, had a brilliant Calvinist protegé, H. C. Stoker of South Africa, who worked out independently a Christian Phenomenology and who now is counted as a VAD adherent. Stoker’s emphases appeal to us more than VAD’s (just as Scheler appeals more to us than does Hartmann): he stresses Creation rather

3Ph. Kohnstamm, *Schepper en Schepping* (3 vol., 1928-1931), who announced his adherence to VAD recently, has in his trilogy many of the same ideas that were developed at greater length by VAD.

than Law as the boundary between God and the Cosmos, for example.5

More generally, there have been many attempts to synthesize Christianity and current philosophy. Another important development in post-1914 philosophy has been Existentialism, and attempts like those of Gabriel Marcel in France to work out a Christian Existentialism are fairly well known. All of these attempts, including VAD's, have some fruitful insights; and these attempts (along with the appearance of older syntheses in modern form, such as Neo-Thomism, or indeed Woltjer's Neo-Augustinianism in Calvinist circles) are all evidence of the revived interest after 1900 in the problem of working out a Christian philosophy.

II

Many things in VAD are also things present in Phenomenology; and much of the evaluation we would give VAD would apply also to Phenomenology. Phenomenology faces this problem, broadly speaking: granted that the Medieval-Reformation syntheses have been proved to be inadequate by post-1650 philosophy culminating in Kant, and granted also that Kant and Neo-Kantianism have been found to be inadequate, how can we build a philosophy which will keep what is good in post-1650 philosophy, while avoiding its weaknesses? And VAD's problem is much the same: granted that these things are true, and that Medieval-Reformation syntheses are no longer tenable, and that Phenomenology is the best way out of the impasse in which contemporary philosophy finds itself, how can we harness Phenomenology to the service of Calvinism —how can we synthesize Calvinism and this very promising type of contemporary philosophy?

Once it is granted that the basic problem is such, then it follows that VAD's approach to the problem is a good one. But it may be questioned whether Medieval-Reformation syntheses are really outmoded; whether post-1650 philosophy really has disposed of them; whether modern philosophy's analyses and approaches to the problems of philosophy must be accepted. It may be, for example, that Woltjer was correct in his insistence on a Calvinistic Platonism as the most fruitful answer to the problems of philosophy; that is, on a revival of one type of Medieval-Reformation synthesis.6 If that be so, then VAD have adopted many conclusions of post-1650 philosophy too uncritically, just as Phenomenology has done.

VAD's strident call for a new philosophy, a new approach, a new methodology, sounds much the same as the similar strident calls of Husserl, Hartmann, and others. This feeling that philosophy must break with its past is not found, for example, in Kuyper, and, of course, not in Calvin either. There is in VAD, as in Husserl, a lack of that feeling of standing in a tradition which is so noticeable in Kuyper.

It may also be suspected that this lack is partially due to lack of historical background. Both Hartmann and VAD are fine in their discussion of contemporary philosophers: their arguments against Neo-Kantianism are first-rate: and their knowledge of Kant and his followers is excellent. As they go further back, however, both Hartmann and VAD lose their sureness of touch somewhat. And if they go further back than 1650, their treatment is weak.

In other words, their knowledge of modern philosophy is excellent: their ideas on Medieval-Reformation philosophy are not so, but are, rather, spotty and often open to serious question. Phenomenology, and VAD, seem to assume that modern philosophy has shown that Medieval-Reformation syntheses were inadequate: and since modern philosophy also has shown grave weaknesses, both Hartmann and VAD call for a new approach, a new philosophy. Once again, a man like Woltjer or Kuyper would question the assumption made. And one's evaluation of the fruitfulness of VAD's approach depends in large measure on one's attitude toward this assumption: and so too does one's evaluation of Phenomenology.

Phenomenologists (and VAD), to use an analogy, feel that Medieval-Reformation syntheses (Christian Platonism, Thomism and the rest) such as those of Aquinas and Bonaventura and Calvin and Voetius, have been knocked out of the ring long ago, and that to count on them to solve the problems of philosophy in the 20th century is folly.

Hence too the curious historical perspective which Forum readers will find if they read Dooyeweerd's New Critique of Theoretical Thought. They will find page after page after page devoted to a critique (and an excellent one) of Neo-Kantians such as Rickert and Litt; and they will find St. Augustine covered in a paragraph. Medieval-Reformation syntheses are covered in ten pages, Calvin is given a few lines, Voetius a sentence. From VAD's point of view, such people are fighters who long ago have been sent down for the long count, and in the 20th century battles we must fight they can do us little good.

This view of things, whether found in Husserl and Hartmann or in VAD, is open to question.

III

The synthesis between Calvinism and Phenomenology worked out by VAD, then, is a noteworthy
thing, and a good synthesis, and an interesting attempt at a Christian philosophy. It is an example of the intellectual ferment in Europe, the break with the cultural past, the search for new answers, which has also produced such men as Marcel, Sartre, Barth, and others. And VAD stand with those who seek solutions in new approaches rather than in revision of old approaches. Not by a renaissance of Calvinistic Platonism, as Woltjer wanted, but by a new approach, can the problems of the Christian philosopher in the 20th century be solved. The old approaches have failed: new ones must be worked out. And the most fruitful approach is that of Phenomenology, which must be taken over and improved by Calvinistic philosophers (and Christian philosophers generally). Hence what VAD have is a synthesis between Calvinism and Phenomenology, a synthesis-philosophy, a synthesis between Calvinism and one of the more promising varieties of contemporary philosophy.

But it may be that VAD are over-impressed by contemporary philosophy.

IV

VAD do not have “the first Christian philosophy,” as a somewhat fanatical disciple has claimed, nor the only Christian philosophy, nor indeed necessarily the most promising Christian philosophy, nor

1 J. M. Spier, What is Calvinistic Philosophy (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; 1953), p.13. It is puzzling that W. Young and D. Frooman, the translators of Dooyeweerd, did not see fit in their translators' preface to distinguish between VAD and some of their disciples: Spier's enthusiasm will hardly win thoughtful readers.

Indeed necessarily the most promising Calvinistic philosophy. But they do have a noteworthy and serious effort at getting at the problem, which deserves appreciation and applause as well as criticism.

Such appreciation and applause have been hindered by some of VAD's own disciples, who have made wild claims for VAD's philosophy, and have presented it as a semi-magic guaranteed purified philosophy which is free from worldly influence and which can solve all philosophical questions, antinomies, conundrums and problems in the twinkling of an eye. Such a presentation is, needless to say, rather sanguine. It is regrettable that some have been taken in by this balderdash.

It is not to the credit of VAD that they have remained silent while the fanatic fringe of their disciples have made wild and ridiculous claims.

This should not deter Forum readers from a lively appreciation for the Christian Phenomenology of VAD, an able synthesis-philosophy with many fruitful insights. Particularly in its critical treatment and understanding of post-Cartesian modern philosophy is this new synthesis-philosophy valuable.

Whether this new synthesis-philosophy is better than the Calvinistic Platonism of Woltjer and Kuyper, or the Calvinistic Aristotelianism of Voetius, or a Calvinistic Existentialism, if someone develops that, is a question which can be decided only by Calvinistic philosophers and only on the basis of careful evaluation and criticism extending over a period of years.

The Effect of the Doleantie on the Christian Reformed Church*: II.

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The theological influence of the Doleantie, as represented largely in Dr. A. Kuyper's teachings, made an early impact, resulting in doctrinal disputes in the Netherlands as well as in America. The direct descendants of the Afscheidings, on both continents, having been closer to the Confessions in doctrine and life than those in the Hervormde Kerk before the Doleantie, took serious objection to some of Dr. Kuyper's basic presuppositions and their implications. Dr. Kuyper taught that the important aspects of the confessions were the germinal truths, which had been variously expressed. Our duty therefore as a church is to study and develop these basic germinal Scriptural truths and, if need be, reinterpret or, if absolutely necessary, reformulate some parts of the confessions. Remembering Dr. Kuyper's strong emphasis on the Sovereignty of God and his approach to the confessions, we can more easily understand his Supralapsarian position in his discussion on the doctrine of Predestination. But the Christian Reformed church in America had adhered closely to the confessions which are Infralapsarian, and thus a sharp difference of opinion was soon evident on the doctrine of Predestination, its implications and related doctrines. Professor F. M. Ten Hoor stated the differences in this form:

“If the Covenant is eternal, then it is not established in time. If the elect are justified from eternity, then they are not justified in time. If regeneration is presupposed before baptism, then there will be no regeneration after baptism. If subjective regeneration is the basis of baptism, then the objective promise cannot be. If regeneration is immediate then it is not mediate.”

2 Ibid, Vol. VIII, p.56 (De Gereformeerde Amerikaan)

*This concludes a discussion begun in the June-July number of the Forum.
The struggle raged. Dr. A. Kuyper and his followers contended that the Infralapsarian position led directly into Methodism, Spiritualism and Anabaptism. The opposition maintained that a strong Supralapsarian position induced a neglect of the inner spiritual life, cold intellectualism and a one-sided interpretation of Scripture. Often the voice of reconciliation was heard; a plea for harmonious discussion was repeatedly voiced. These did not go unheeded. Both claimed to be Reformed; both appealed to the Confessions; both found evidence for their position in the analogy of Scripture. We can be thankful to God that He by His Spirit led the Utrechtse Synod of 1906. The four Utrechtse conclusions were adopted in the Netherlands. A few years later they were adopted by the Christian Reformed church, not as a confession, but as the official position of the church regarding these issues on which there were differences of opinion. The conclusions stated — 1) The Creeds are Infralapsarian but they do not bar Supralapsarianism, 2) Justification from eternity is not mentioned in Scripture but they do speak of an objective justification from eternity sealed by Christ’s resurrection next to the justification by faith. Neither the suretyship of Christ for the elect nor the demand of faith may be slighted. 3) Regeneration is immediate in the sense that the Spirit works it, but this must never be separated from the power of the Gospel unto salvation. The Confessions are silent on how infants are regenerated and on the regeneration of pagans aside from the Word. 4) Covenant children are considered regenerate until the contrary appears. Baptism is based on God’s command and not on regeneration. Children are regenerated before, during or after baptism.

Professor F. M. Ten Hoor, the American spokesman, said “I agree with them wholeheartedly.” Though some more discussion followed, the breach threatening to develop into a schism in the Christian Reformed church was healed. In a very real sense the Doleantie moldered this struggle. Though the Doleantie occasioned many hot heads and cold hearts, antipathy and suspicions among Reformed brethren, it had some very wholesome effects. Professor F. M. Ten Hoor stated one: “there is a more fervent study of the Scriptures and Confessions now than ever before, that can never do any harm.” This resulted in a deeper and fuller understanding of both as the Utrechtse conclusions also indicate.

There was also another happy result. With the discussion of the doctrine of predestination, the doctrine of the Covenant could not be ignored. The renewed attention to the Covenant soon resulted in a positive decision pertaining to the problem of Doopledenstelsel that had long vexed the Christian Reformed church in America. In 1902 the synod declared that to have non-confessing members have their children baptized was in conflict with the sanctity of the church and the sacredness of baptism, and relegated baptism to a lower level than the Lord’s Supper.

Mention should be made of the fact that the central doctrine of the Sovereignty of God became more meaningful to the church in general and a more consistent attempt was made to apply this to everyday activities. So also the doctrine of the Covenant came into focus, which developed into the central point of difference between the followers of Dr. A. Kuyper’s theology and those who retained the former Afgescheidene position.

The adoption of the Utrechtse conclusions healed the breach in the Christian Reformed church to the extent that a schism was prevented, but the Infrasupralapsarian dispute was by no means ended. It took a slightly different course. The points of difference on which Utrecht had spoken were no longer focal, but the center of attention from 1906-1914 was on the Covenant, dealing with such aspects as: when it was established, how it was established, and the members of the Covenant. The heat in the discussion and debate which followed was not as intense as before, but differences were sharp, feelings tense, name-calling frequent. The dispute became more an American Reformed dispute, though the difference was due to the Doleantie teachings concerning the Covenant.

Dr. A. Kuyper held to the Besluits Verbond, i.e., that from eternity, in God’s counsel, all things were planned and determined pertaining to man. This was all done outside of man. Thus the covenant with the elect was there in eternity in God’s counsel. When God established His counsel with Abraham, God really only revealed that to him which had been a reality from all eternity. This differed from the conception of the Covenant held in the days of the Afscheiding in that then it was held that the Covenant of God was made only with the elect, and did not say as Dr. Kuyper did that the Covenant was made in eternity with Christ as representative of the elect. Dr. Kuyper thus went one step further back into the unrevealed.

The interesting factor in this dispute is that the men who disagreed with Dr. Kuyper found they had to reject the position held in the days of the Afscheiding. The opponents realized that Dr. Kuyper only took a logical step forward when he posited his tenets. Thus men such as Professor Beuker, Rev. L. J. Hulst and Professor G. Hempkes went back to the times of the Synod of Dort, and attempted to indicate how a deviation developed from the true Scriptural teaching and the Confession.

Revelation 11:1-6

Rev. L. J. Hulst and Professor G. Hempkes set forth the doctrine thus. The Covenant of Grace is rooted in the decree of God and in the Counsel of

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\[^{31}\text{Ibid, Vol. IX, p.297}\]

\[^{32}\text{Ibid, Vol. IX, p.441}\]

\[^{33}\text{Ibid, Vol. VIII, p.56}\]

\[^{34}\text{De Gereformeerde Amerikaan, Vol. I, p.429}\]

Hulst, L. J., "Kentering in de Verbonds Leer"
Peace, but it was established materially immediately after the fall and formally in the days of Abraham. Thus the Covenant was not established in eternity with the elect (Afscheiding) or in eternity with Christ as representative of the elect (Doleantie) but in time with Abraham and his seed. Furthermore, since Scripture teaches that Ishmael and Esau were of the seed, and thus in the Covenant, it is not only made with the elect. The Covenant of Grace was made with the seed, but they would not have any of the Covenant blessings unless they fulfilled the condition — obedience to, and faith in, God.

That the influence of the Doleantie Covenant teaching had an effect in our Christian Reformed church is obvious. Rev. H. Hoeksema carried the absoluteness of the Covenant from eternity to its rigid logical conclusions. Furthermore, Professor G. Hempkes, aware of the danger of slighting the conditionality of the Covenant, began to call the attention of the young people to their responsibility in honoring and realizing the implications of the "condition" of the Covenant. Worldliness among the young people was increasing, thus a rather effective method of calling their attention to their calling and responsibility was discovered in presenting the conditionality of the Covenant.

Some happy effects of this discussion, ultimately due to the Doleantie, are evident. Our Christian Reformed church is known as the most Covenant-conscious denomination. This is directly due to the discussions of the past. The doctrine of the Covenant has been accordingly developed, the legal and life relationships of the children of believers set forth more lucidly. Another happy result was that preaching became more earnest, directed and practical after discussions had taken place on the Walgemeenheid van het Aanbod der Evangelie in preaching.

VI

After the first World War another effect of the Doleantie became more apparent: the development of the doctrine of Common Grace in its ramifications and implications. First of all it should be pointed out that it was not Dr. A. Kuyper who first discovered, taught and applied this doctrine. Few will dare to say that Calvin did not teach it. Furthermore it should be realized that the doctrine of Common Grace was taught before 1890. This is very evident from some statements made by Professor H. Bavinck when he delivered his lecture, "De Algemene Genade," in 1894. He maintained that, because the Reformed have held to and have taught Common Grace, they alone have been able to maintain the absoluteness of the Christian Religion. So also he stated that the Christian religion does not have the task to build a new supernatural world order, but to make this a new one. Christianity heals, renews, and restores this world. This was said in the context of what the Reformed had been teaching and should continue to teach and practise.

This Reformed doctrine thus was not original with Dr. A. Kuyper or the Doleantie, but what the Doleantie, with its strong emphasis on God's Sovereignty, did was to work this doctrine out in greater detail and apply it to all of life. Thus the Doleantie brought this doctrine into focus, and after two decades the impact of it began to be very apparent in America. Worldliness increased greatly immediately after the World War. In strong reaction to it many looked about for a cause or for the roots of the malady. Because the term Common Grace was often used by some as a justification for "worldly" deeds, others became convinced that Common Grace should be denied to deal worldliness a death-blow. Thus it can be said that the Doleantie was an important factor in the Common Grace struggle of 1923-1924. And here we see that appealing to an alleged view by some, as referred to above, led to unjustified conclusions and action on the part of others. Here also one may see a broader outlook on the material world and the enjoyment thereof by some who were conscientious in their attempt to be followers of the Doleantie.

Another sad instance of appealing to an alleged view can be seen in the so-called Jansen case. Though this case dealt mostly with the influence of Modern Theology upon our church, some Doleantie effects were present. Some leaders were most zealous in defending Dr. Jansen; but the grounds of the defense of some of these were ofttimes erroneous. Accusations were made that Dr. Jansen's accusers denied Common Grace, for in their position they clearly indicated that they did not desire to take the good that the Higher Critics had to offer. That such a position is based on an alleged view is most obvious to one who has read Dr. A. Kuyper's "Hedendagsche Schrift Critiek." Dr. Kuyper emphatically states that the higher critics are most destructive, setting forth their own theology to rob us of the Bible and destroy our freedom in Christ. As Reformed we must entirely and totally reject the School of Higher Criticism. In the Jansen case, the Doleanties' influence is seen in that its relation to the doctrine of Common Grace was appealed to erroneously by some, and that what could have been used beneficially, was abused. It is also obvious that a confusion of issues — denial of Common Grace and the problem of the Higher Criticism — did not aid the church.

Dr. A. Kuyper, soon after 1924, wrote in De Heraut concerning the misuse of the doctrine of

35De cit.
36De Gereformeerde Amerikaan — Series of articles to the Youth in the last number of volumes
37Beets, H., op cit, p.239
38Hulst, L. J., "Kentering in de Verbonds Leer"

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38Bavinck, H., "De Algemene Genade"
39Kromminga, D. H., op cit, pp.145-146
41Kuyper, A., "De Hedendagsche Schrift Critiek," pp.1, 12, 21
Common Grace. Those who made it their chief court of appeal for Christian liberty and those who denied it or said that Common Grace was the cause and source of worldliness gave evidence that they did not begin to comprehend the meaning and implications of Common Grace. In other words, both were one-sided and erroneously influenced. This statement of Dr. A. Kuyper should have spurred the Christian Reformed Church on to a more intensified study of Common Grace. Here is a case where the influence of Dr. Kuyper should have been stronger. In the period between 1924-1928 there was some discussion, but some of it induced to further strife rather than to an understanding, as, e.g., the following statement, “Common Grace can be called the fountain head of Reformed thought.” This statement is modified and qualified. It is this if Common Grace is identified with God’s sovereignty. This should be seen thus; before the fall, God’s sovereignty and love was over all, after the fall God’s sovereignty and love continues over the sinful and this can be construed to mean Common Grace. How this then, and not Special Grace, is the fountain head of Reformed Theology is not explained. Another statement, indicating an over-emphasis on Common Grace, minimizing Special Grace by ignoring it, is evident in an article pleading for a greater degree of amalgamation of the church and the American world by way of the road of progress and development, the road of Common Grace. These voices soon diminished and the sane and sensible call remained: permit the Doleantie to influence one properly if he was to be influenced by it at all. One must have a proper conception of Common Grace, and then this doctrine will be a great aid in achieving a sound, full-orbed Reformed Theology.

That the Doleantie has influenced our Christian Reformed church in its thinking on Common Grace is a fact. That this influence has not always been wholesome must be admitted. That a greater influence is desirable will not be denied; but if it is to have a greater influence on us, we must continue to see it in its proper setting in Scripture and in its proper relationship to Special Grace as Dr. A. Kuyper also did. Our mandate is to subdue and cultivate the earth. This is to be done first of all in humble subjection to Christ Jesus, the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. If our Lord thus governs us, a greater knowledge of and usefulness of the doctrine of Common Grace will certainly aid us in subduing and cultivating the earth Pro Rege.

In concluding this section under theology it may not be out of place to notice that the Doleantie could influence us in another profitable manner, in which it does not seem to have been too successful heretofore. When there are differences of opinion or serious disagreements within the church, the usual sentiment has been “keep it quiet, do not let the public know.” This was frequently voiced in 1920-1922. Dr. A. Kuyper expressed his opinion on this. In a Reformed church every believer must have his spiritual judgment and permit it to operate freely, always subjecting it to the proper understanding of God’s Word. Therefore, all that transpires in the church must be known to the members so that the support of the spiritually enlightened conscience of all the believers will be present in dealing with the problems.” If we took this advice, would not discontent, anxious queries and disturbing rumors due to enforced ignorance also be obviated in our Christian Reformed circles?

VII

The Doleantie also soon influenced the thinking of the Christian Reformed church in the field of church polity. As explained above, Dr. A. Kuyper, and especially Professor Rutgers, emphasized the autonomy of the local congregation. Dr. Kuyper stated “all authority is in Jesus, it is given through Him to the entire church, but that the church may function properly, the authority is bound to the official organs, the elders. The church does not create officials, but receives them. These officials are the direct representatives of Christ.” Building on this groundwork, Dr. Kuyper insisted that each local congregation is separately organized directly by the representatives of Christ as an institution, and that the local congregations are not parts of the institute conceived of as the church or denomination as a whole. Rather the local congregations, as institutions, are to be considered part of the organism, the church, the spiritual body of Christ. Before, the emphasis was that the church as a whole was the institution of Christ, and each congregation a part of the institution. Dr. A. Kuyper’s emphasis naturally led to a less authoritative position of the Classis and Synods.

The new emphasis of the Doleantie can be ascertained in a number of ways. Rev. I. Van Dellen, in his discussion on the question, “Should the local congregation, (as he insisted) or should the Synod, call and send out missionaries?”, stated, “it gives me great comfort to know that I’m in line with the Gereformeerde Kerk in the Netherlands.” Rev. Van Dellen quoted Dr. A. Kuyper frequently to bolster his position when Professor W. Heyns opposed him. In actuality there was some vacillation in who should call and send missionaries. In 1906 Synod decided to have the local churches call. In 1908 the decision was made to have Classis or Synod call anyone working for these assemblies. This was opposed on the grounds that this instituted offices not warranted by Scripture. In 1910 the decision was

45De Hervout is quoted in The Witness, Vol. IV, pp. 35-38
48Religion and Culture, Vol. III, p.51
49The Witness, Vol. IV, pp.51-53
50Kuyper, A., "Tractaat Van de Reformatie der Kerken"
51Kuyper, A., "Doleantie en Separatie"
52De Gereformeerd Amerikaan, Vol. XII, p.131

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Another indication of the Doleanties' influence is seen in the discussions on the functions and value of the Preadisory members or committees of a Synod. In determining this, Dr. A. Kuyper is quoted to clarify the issues.

A last indication pertains to the Hoeksema case. Our church leaders felt that Dr. A. Kuyper and Professor Rutgers had much to offer in Reformed polity, but that they inclined too far toward Independentism. A reading of the “Taatstaat on de Reformatie der Kerken” gives one that impression. A close follower of Dr. Kuyper and Professor Rutgers, in the Christian Reformed ministry, wrote that he championed a church polity that would satisfy an avowed Independent. On this basis he also indicated that Rev. H. Hoeksema had every right to demand the Eastern Ave. church property. The two men were basing their position on their interpretation of the Doleantie church polity.

The influence of the Doleantie on philosophy is not too definite; however, there certainly are some basic teachings of the Doleantie which have a bearing. The development and application of Common Grace led to a study of the basic Scriptural presuppositions of the studies of sociology, psychology, medicine and philosophy itself. In De Heraut, Feb. 1, 1914, Dr. A. Kuyper develops a few basic ideas that deal with a Christian Psychology. He speaks of the body and soul as a living soul, inextricably bound together, which is not a union but an unity, it is one. Even death does not break this oneness; the body, the exterior of the living soul is cast off. These ideas are seen in the New Calvinistic Psychology, developed in the Netherlands and now beginning to enter into our thinking.

Dr. A. Kuyper's development of the doctrine of the antithesis in connection with the doctrine of Common Grace has been evident to a certain extent in the thinking of the Christian Reformed church. He stressed the absolute cleavage between the Christian and the non-Christian, in all aspects of life; e.g., he makes it abundantly clear that basically a Christian's science is altogether different from that of the non-Christian. At times it seems as if the full implication of this great truth is not sufficiently grasped or carried out in our circles. Due to added study and development of the doctrine of the antithesis in recent years however, there is a fond hope on the part of some that this Scriptural truth will be more consistently applied in all fields of thought and endeavor.

Our thinking on Epistemology has also been influenced. Dr. A. Kuyper was the first Reformed thinker to formulate some of the basic presuppositions of a Christian epistemology. Outstanding is his work on the noetic effect of sin which was quite heartily received. His work is basic to the present day efforts in the Netherlands and in America to develop a consistent Scripturally oriented Epistemology. It is to be regretted that the full impact of the basic ground work of Dr. Kuyper and subsequent development of it has not been fully realized and appreciated by the Christian Reformed church constituency. We hope and pray for better days in the future.

The doctrine of greatest importance for a Calvinistic philosophy produced by the Doleantie is “Sphere Sovereignty.” This was and is a great contribution and has made the greatest impact upon the American Christian Reformed church in its ecclesiastical and social activities. It is directly related to the central doctrine of Reformed theology: God's sovereignty. The sovereign God has instituted specific spheres in life which are subordinately sovereign to Him. Each sphere receives its sovereignty and authority from God. Cooperation between the spheres is a necessity, encroachment of the one upon another is a sin. Each sphere must carry out its God-given duties without hindrance from the others. The importance of this teaching will be brought out a bit more in detail in the following section.

VIII

About the turn of the century Professor F. M. Ten Hoor called attention to the importance of heeding God's General Revelation. He stressed the need of obeying the cultural mandate, thus honoring God, seeing Him in His handiwork and enriching our own life. To enforce his argument he quotes from Dr. A. Kuyper. However, some years before this Professor Ten Hoor struck another note. He referred to the Afkscheidij as being practical, the Doleantie as too intellectual and cold. The result was that the influence of the Doleantie became apparent in the loss of practicality and actual practice of the faith. Thus, due to the Doleantie, there was less of an attempt at real consistent Christian living, the Americanization of the church was impeded, and men were not taking the cultural mandate seriously. It may well be that God providentially brought the Afscheiding and Doleerende together so that, complementing each other, the Gereformeerde Kerk might carry out its mandate. Furthermore it cannot be said that all sons of the Doleantie were inactive and too intellectual. The result was that their faith made it imperative. That idea was the need of heeding the cultural mandate. They felt that their faith made it imperative. That idea moti-
vated the appearance of the journal Religion and Culture. An editorial, quoting freely from Professor H. Bavinck and Dr. A. Kuyper, stresses that culture is not neutral, either it is Christian or non-Christian. Furthermore, Christian Culture is not Common Grace, but it is the product of a ripe regenerated personality.

Another voice was heard, quoting Dr. V. Hepp as to the desirability of building up a unique Culture. The warning was against the strong tendency to coordinate religion and culture. The attention should be centered on a strong powerful Christianity which would be the predominating influence in culture.

Progress in developing a Christian culture in America is slow. All too often the Reformed do not seem to realize the import of the mandate from their Sovereign God. We must be spurred on. But, unless we are spurred and motivated by a genuine love for God, a love wrought by divine love and grace in our hearts we cannot produce the Christian culture which only can come from the ripe mature energetic Christian personality. The Doleantie has developed and articulated basic guiding principles but these are meaningless except to a truly regenerate heart.

Dr. A. Kuyper in his discussion of the encyclopedic place of theology in the sciences maintained that it was not the church's business to provide and maintain a seminary for the training of her ministry. He maintained that Theology has an interrelated position among the various sciences, and therefore it should not be taken from the university. The Afgescheidene had had their own Seminary in Kampen before 1892. Thus a difference of opinion arose — should Kampen Seminary be maintained or should the Free University in Amsterdam be the education center of the ministry? Both continued but Kampen Seminary was considered the least of the two. The Free University could give a doctor's degree for its relation to the state permitted it to do so, whereas the church, now separate from the state, could not. The entire situation caused much hard feeling. One wonders if the result of this situation in the Netherlands has in any way effected the retardation of Calvin Seminary giving doctor's degrees.

Since the differences and the struggles of the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands usually had a way of breezing over into America, the leaders in the Christian Reformed church felt they should act before the difference of opinion became deeply rooted here. Accordingly a minister's conference was called for the purpose of discussing this problem. In March, 1907, the conference released its report which seems to have become the guiding policy of the Christian Reformed church. The conference addressed itself to two questions. (1) What is Theology? answer: it is the teaching, or doctrine of the knowledge of God and His work, received through Special Revelation by the Holy Spirit. (2) What is the church? answer: it is the communion of believers which has Christ as her head and recognizes Him as such, a communion which, as a temple, is the Holy Spirit's dwelling and wherein He works. The conclusion was: since the church is the pillar and ground of truth, having Special Revelation entrusted to her, and since the church always heretofore taught Theology, considering it a part of the command: preach the gospel to all men, therefore it is the task of the church to prepare men for the proclamation of the gospel. Though this conclusion was not unanimously accepted by all and murmurings were heard against it, the Doleantie idea could not gain a foothold here. Today it is accepted that the Seminary should be maintained by the church. The fact that Calvin College is still a church controlled and maintained college indicates that the Doleantie has not influenced the thinking and action of the Christian Reformed church to any considerable extent on the problem of higher education.

As to lower education the story is different. The Doleantie principle of Sphere Sovereignty has been a constructive guide. In 1886 the Christian Reformed church Synod decided to favor church schools for daily Christian education. However, six years later the Synod indicated a different trend of thought in that the ministers and elders were advised to support parent controlled schools. How are we to account for this change? Nothing too definite can be pointed to as authoritative sources, but the general idea is that, as the public schools were becoming increasingly non-Christian, the fathers and mothers felt constrained to become more responsible for the education of their children and as mentioned before, the two main channels, (literature and immigrants, which conducted the Doleantie ideals from the Netherlands) were wide open at the turn of the century. The Doleantie ideals were the answer to the American Reformed educational problems. But it was obvious that the Dutch educational system could not be taken over in its entirety due to the American financial problem. In America there was no state aid for parochial or parent controlled schools, thus the problem of financing the Christian day schools added to the difficulty of promoting and establishing the schools. This factor, and that the Christian Reformed people were scattered so widely in America, rendering a society for higher education well nigh impossible, may account for Calvin College developing into a parochial institution.

We as a church should be deeply grateful to the Doleantie fathers who developed and promoted the ideals of parent controlled Christian day schools. These schools have proven a blessing to the church;
they may well be considered one of the main factors in preserving and defending the Christian Reformed church from the insidious forces and influence of Modern American thought.

IX

Prof. D. H. Kromminga states that the study of Sphere Sovereignty in America led to the establishment of institutions of mercy where mental and tubercular patients could be treated. However, one must not therefore think that before the Doleantie the Reformed did not participate in the philanthropic endeavors. In 1860, the Synod at Hoogeveen, the Netherlands, heartily encouraged a congregation which had erected an orphanage. From 1860 to 1884 the work of mercy among the Afgescheiden received increased attention. In 1884 an official decision was published, declaring the organization of a society for the Christian care of mental patients.

After the union of 1892 the work of mercy was under church supervision for a short period, reverting to society supervision again by the turn of the century.

Another interesting factor is that the Christian Reformed church instituted a hospital, Bethesda, for the care of tubercular patients in Maxwell, N.M. in 1888. This does give an indication that the Reformed were conscious of their responsibility in regard to the work of mercy before the Doleantie principles were fully developed and established. This factor makes it difficult to ascertain the extent of the influence of the Doleantie. However, in the earlier issues of the Gereformeerde Amerrkaan Rev. I. Van Dellen wrote a long series, "The Work of Mercy." In his development of the subject he clearly indicates the influence of the Doleantie. Undoubtedly this discussion, and probably other similar ones, stimulated the thinking and action of the people in regard to the establishment of society sponsored institutions of mercy.

An interesting item, though probably not too weighty as evidence, is the statement made in a conversation, by a son of an immigrant from the Netherlands, heartily encouraged a congregation which had erected an orphanage. From 1860 to 1884 the work of mercy among the Afgescheiden received increased attention. In 1884 an official decision was published, declaring the organization of a society for the Christian care of mental patients.

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The Doleantie has been described at times as an ecclesiastical organizational and political movement. The Doleantie was that, but more also. The fact that Dr. A. Kuyper was prime minister of the Netherlands a number of years, and that the Gereformeerd organized the Anti-Revolutionary Party, does indicate their great interest in state and local government. In this sphere the Doleantie has not begun to have the influence upon the Christian Reformed laity that it should have had. The difficulties confronting the American Reformed, re: political participation, are numerous and stupendous, but would any one dare to contend that even with the Lord's help and strength they are insurmountable? It seems that an appeal to an alleged view re: Common Grace has often done much to retard the proper action in politics that is required of regenerate Christians. If, as Dr. Kuyper contended, there is a basic cleavage between the regenerate and unregenerate in all aspects of life, how can cooperation and compromise with organizations that will not honor Christ as king be possible by the regenerate if they are consistent? The Doleantie has not influenced us as it should have in the political sphere. But it should; it can if we are determined to subdue and renew all of life Pro Rege.

One of the most influential means of propagating the Doleantie news and views was Dr. A. Kuyper's personal mouthpiece, De Heraut. Other journals and newspapers or magazines also added their influence. Dr. Kuyper postulated that open discussions and an informed laity were necessities for a virile Christian community and witness. The American Reformed were not too hesitant to recognize the advantages of open discussions. Thus in 1897 De Gereformeerde Amerikaan made its debut. It continued until the beginning of the first World War. After the war, the necessity of the public expression of views and open discussion was felt keenly. Hence the appearance of The Witness, Religion and Culture, Onze Toekomst and The Reformed Herald. These later ones did not enjoy a prolonged existence. Now that two recent journals have appeared again we hope and pray that their usefulness may long continue.

The experiment of producing a Christian weekly newspaper failed. That there is a need which such a journalistic production would fill all will grant. The fact that the paper failed gives strong evidence that it is not too easy to transplant all the activities among the Netherlands' Reformed to America.

The problem of the laboring man extends back far beyond the Doleantie; so do many of the various answers suggested and actually attempted. From 1887-1890 the American Christian Reformed church's working class was increasingly harassed by the various difficulties that the labor unions presented. In 1880 the Christian Reformed Synod studied the labor unions and warned against them. However in 1892 there was a certain release of the

68 loc cit
69Comite Tot Herdenking van de Afscheiding van 1834, Van's Heren Wegen, pp.190-192

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pressure upon the union members, Synod ruling that each individual union should be judged according to its status. In 1902 a positive influence of the Doleantie was present. Positive advice was given. Part of the advice included judging between the tolerable and degenerate unions; workmen should consider membership only in the former and there exert a positive Christian influence in it. Another note in the advice was the encouragement to the Christian laboring groups that were organizing independently.

During that period that followed, up to 1914, the Doleantie principles were honored and an attempt was made to adhere to these. Discussion on the topic was not lacking; the discussions supporting the organization of the Christian labor unions found strong support in Dr. A. Kuyper.

However, the work done in the direction of a Christian labor movement received a set back in the Synods of 1914 and 1916 when it was decided that Church membership and so-called neutral union membership was not incompatible. In 1920 the decision for the Christian labor movement was as disheartening as in 1914 and 1916 in that the decision was “belong where you have to for your job’s sake but be sure you witness there.”

The question we face is: how should we account for this disappointing turn in Synodical decisions regarding the labor question? One is inclined to ask: was the Scriptural interpretation of the Chris-

12 Kromminga, D. H., op cit, p.131

Calvin College Chapel Talk

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We would all, I suppose, given the opportunity, like to put some questions to the authors of the books of the Bible. There are, it seems, many passages which require explanation, and were we given further light we would, we think, be able to conduct ourselves with greater propriety. One of my questions I should direct to St. Paul, and it would be addressed to the passage before us. The question might be something like this: “Sir, what you say about love is fine indeed. Your point is well-taken, and I cannot but agree wholeheartedly with you. I wonder, though, whether you are not giving the wrong impression in this chapter. Why, some conclude from a reading of this passage that love is the only thing that matters; given love, they say, all the other virtues will find their right place. One man, I remember reading, went so far as to say: Love God, and do as you please. Surely, this is a misreading of the passage, and obviously not what you mean. I think I know what you do mean, and I find it regrettable that you didn’t introduce a distinction which would bring out what you really meant to say. With this distinction you would be far more relevant, and would therefore render greater aid in a problem which perhaps you did not recognize, but one which you must admit is of the greatest importance. Today, sir, we see that it is not enough merely to love, but also to know what sort of love we ought to show in any given case. Incidentally, you could have cleared up a problem which Christ left unsolved in his parable of the Good Samaritan: He gave us an example of how to act toward our neighbor, but said nothing about our duty to-

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ward our brother. We are much more exact and precise in these matters today and the occasional imprecisions in the Bible lead at times to no end of difficulty. You see, our problem today, especially in my church, is not the presence of love, but its practice; not the fact, but the manner. The question which exercises us is this—you will see at once its significance—should we or can we love our neighbor and our brother with one and the same kind of love? It is generally agreed, at least by the right-thinking people among us, that this is impossible. In the first place, God surely does not have the same attitude toward the elect and the reprobate. How then can we love our brother and our neighbor with the same kind of love? Just as God’s attitude is determined by its object, so ought ours to be. In the second place, there is plenty of scriptural evidence to warrant this distinction; if I mistake not, sir, you yourself say in one of your epistles that we ought to love especially those who are of the household of faith; and this is surely more than a matter of degree. I want to repeat, sir, it is not that we do not love our neighbor or brother—indeed, it is the very abundance of our love that embarrasses us; we are becoming lax, failing to distinguish properly between neighbor and brother, and consequently confusing the two types of love we should operate with. Now, it is this distinction that you seem to gloss over in this chapter. Our problem, basically, is that we love not wisely but too well. FURTHERMORE, it is only by the standard of faith, truth, right belief, that we can judge what we ought to love, and how we ought to love. Our doctrinal purity is not the product of love, sir, but of faith. In view of the problem which, if I may say so, we with our greater insight today have uncovered, may I suggest a slight change in this last verse; the rest of the chapter can stand as written: Now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three; and the greatest of these is FAITH. You see, sir, how we can now be guided in our love, if we substitute faith for love. We shall merely have to determine the presence or absence of faith in a given person, and we shall know immediately the kind, the manner, and the measure of love to show him. Understand, I have nothing against love, but I do wonder whether your emphasis on it is not a bit misplaced.”

What the apostle would reply we cannot tell; perhaps he would, like Christ, turn sorrowfully away. For you see what I have done: I have inverted the order of the virtues. St. Paul tells us that there are three virtues, faith, hope and love. He tells us more: each virtue has its rank and status; and love, he says, is first in the order of importance.

Hence, love, as he has so beautifully described it, is the necessary and absolute pre-condition of the other virtues; it is the sine qua non. Without it, they are not; with it they are. It is self-existent, but the ground of existence for the others. It is in the presence of love that the virtues grow and flourish; it is in the absence of love that they die. Love is soil which nourishes them, the air they breathe, the light they absorb. It is their final flowering.

Love is the architectonic virtue. It is at once the architect of the soul, the master-plan and the finished edifice, the corner-stone and the cap-stone, the foundation and the pinnacle. Like Aristotle’s Final Cause, it is the beginning and the end, the Idea and the Reality. Love gives form and final shape to the virtues, disposes them in their proper order, and insures their proper function. And, since it is the bond of perfectness, it binds everything together in perfect harmony. It is faith and hope at their highest pitch.

Love is the supreme virtue; it is the superior, to which faith and hope are inferior. It is for the sake of love that faith and hope exist; it is the end they subserve. Love sets the conditions, but is itself unconditioned; submits to no demands but its own; sets standards, but meets none, and is accountable to nothing but itself. Faith and hope find their fulfillment in love, but love is fulfilled in itself. It is the final justification of all the other virtues.

St. Paul writes the Colossians: “Put on, therefore, as God’s elect, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving each other. ... and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.” “And now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three, but the greatest of these is love.”
LIBERALIST DOGMA


THERE is that story of the emperor who was praised by all and sundry for his fine apparel until a mere child spoke up in the candor of his innocence and reported that the emperor really had nothing on. Kathleen Nott means to say by her title that what people profess to see in the Anglican and Roman writers of contemporary England simply is not there.

Kathleen Nott's book is, in the language of the sub-title on its jacket, "An attack on the dogmatic orthodoxy of T. S. Eliot, Graham Greene, Dorothy Sayers, C. S. Lewis, and others." Chief among these "others" are T. E. Hulme, the philosopher-critic whose work was published after his death in World War I under the title Speculations, and Basil Willey, the literary historian, author of The Seventeenth Century Background and of other books similar in kind. Norman Nicholson, who wrote Man and Literature, and the novelist Evelyn Waugh also fall within the pale of Miss Nott's indictments.

The Emperor's Clothes proves to be a book in which an opponent of dogma undertakes dogmatically to attack dogmatism. Speaking in the name of what she calls the "liberal and humanistic tradition of free inquiry," Miss Nott lays about her with such Schaltwörter as "neo-scholastic" and "anti-Pelagian," and with these terms she bludgeons those in contemporary England who are writing out of a theologically informed Christian consciousness.

The focus of Miss Nott's attack is on church authority, theology, and dogma. Indeed, she goes so far as to suggest that there is something insidious in these writers in that they take advantage of literature to import Augustinian, medieval, and Calvinist notions into our thinking. You may suppose that they offer you hay, she says in effect, but when you put your nose into their provender, you get it nipped by the dogma in the manger. Or, to use another figure, also hers, you will find that such intolerable ornaments as Original Sin, the Incarnation, and the Virgin Birth, which the stuffy old landlady had left on the mantelpiece and which the guests had removed, are now being restored.

Because of all this, Kathleen Nott fetches a deep sigh and warns us that "... we may find ourselves back in the Dark Ages sooner than even those who hanker for them, as the source of all light, may like." She apparently takes it for granted that her readers will all long ago have graduated beyond "such dogmas as the Fall, the Incarnation, the Virgin Birth, and ... Original Sin." There is, at least, something both amusing and pathetic about her remark: "One should keep it constantly before one's eyes that when the neo-scholastics talk about these dogmas they are not speaking symbolically. In general they mean exactly what they say ... ."

What irks Miss Nott most is that the writers she is discussing put up theology alongside of science as a rival way of arriving at the truth. She roundly declares that the position of theologians is "by definition hypothetical." The truth is, she says, "that a philosophy which bases itself on scientific thinking must challenge this right" of theologians to regard theology "as a special discipline with an existent subject matter ... ."

No, according to Miss Nott, there is but one way ("We know in one way or not at all. . . .") to get at the truth and that is the scientific way of the post-Kantian critical philosophy. Concerning that way the author enters the old disclaimer: "sciences do not depend ultimately on any sort of dogma. . . . Their criterion is an ultimate verifiability and their capacity to repeat their results." Once dogma has thus been barked out of existence, Miss Nott can proceed to dogmatize:

"We know nothing of the supernatural. . . ."

"All dogma divorces us from real and natural morality. . . ."

"... orthodoxy is of its nature a bar to creative and critical development. . . ."

"Free Will, if it means human free will, is a psychological concept. . . ."

"... the teachings of Christ, the bulk of which consists of remarkably exact and vivid statements about human psychological laws. . . ."

Such is the line of argument which Kathleen Nott directs against some of the English representatives of what is coming to be known as the Christian Renaissance in modern European letters. She thinks of all their works and ways as an attempt to reassert a world view, that of theological scholasticism, which is in absolute contradiction to the philosophy, the implications, and the practice which derive inevitably from the scientific approach to the world.

The thing for us to do, says Miss Nott, is to look "into ourselves and at each other" rather than "at the sky or into the dusty works of the Church Fathers, or even into the sibylline leaves of Mr. Eliot." She may, of course, give what advice she wants to give. But there is something of dogmatic impurity in her book, something less than the clear white light of her alleged scientific outlook. One notices it, for instance, in such a remark as the following: "... the B.B.C. . . . is very niggardly in the time it allows to convinced and competent scientific agnostics who may wish to present a considered attack on theological pretensions."

The Emperor's Clothes has little if any value for understanding the work of the writers discussed. There is no critical analysis of their works. These writers are simply the occasion for pressing the attack on the returning religious consciousness of the modern mind. Miss Nott's book is interesting mainly as an example of liberalist dogma at work.

Henry Zylstra

Dr. A. Sizzo, CHRISTENEN IN DE ANTIÈKE WERELD (Christians in the Ancient World). (Kampen: Kok; 1953). 204 pages.

THIS is a very interesting and valuable book. It concerns Christians in the Ancient World, the "ancient world" being the Greco-Roman world of the first four centuries after the birth of Christ, and chiefly the latter part of that period, the days of Jerome and Augustine.
The purpose of the author is to give an insight into the everyday life of Christian people in those centuries, their martyrdom, church life, family life, the relation between bishops and people, correspondence between eminent men, experiences in travel, the training of children, etc. This purpose he seeks to achieve by presenting extracts from narratives, sermons, letters, and travel diaries written at that time. He justly observes that if we are to understand the people of ancient times it is better to let those people speak to us for themselves and to listen to what they say, than to talk about them ourselves.

This is not a church history of the period under review, but it is a very valuable supplement to such history. If we were conducting a class in early church history, and if our students could read the Dutch language, we should make this work required reading, for the author’s purpose is very well attained. One does really understand the people and conditions of that remote period the better for having perused it.

St. Augustine is the compiler’s great hero. It is constantly manifest how great an admirer he is of that distinguished church father. Indeed, a great part of this book consists of extracts from his writings, sermons, and his correspondence with St. Jerome, who also plays a great part in the book.

Especially interesting is the speech made by Augustine on his retirement from the active duties of his office as bishop. He had wished simply to resign that office and have a successor elected, but the rules of the Council of Nice forbade it. So he nominated a certain man as his successor, got him elected as such by the people, and then made him his deputy. Augustine knew how to get around the law!

Jerome, in this book tells how little girls should be brought up, especially one dedicated by her mother to become a nun, even before she was born. It is devoutly to be hoped, for the poor child’s sake, that his instructions were not carried out.

One of the most interesting chapters is the journal kept by a lady from France or Spain, who made a pilgrimage to the holy places in Palestine and the peninsula of Sinai about the year 400 A.D. She writes her account to be sent back to the nuns over whom she was probably abbes. This lady was evidently a person of great mental and physical vigor, well provided with means, and of high standing, for the government officers everywhere were eager to render her all possible assistance. Her description of her visits to the holy places is fascinating and the trip was made all the more interesting to the lady herself by her naive and childlike habit of believing everything that was told her! She evidently never for a moment thought that the monks whom she met everywhere would tell a lie, or could possibly be mistaken in what they told her about the places they pointed out as sites of Scriptural events. She found still living and growing the very bush that burned but was not consumed, from which the Lord spoke to Moses!

ALBERTUS PIETERS


After reading this critique of the recently published RSV by Allis I find myself in the somewhat anomalous position of rushing to the defense of the version. I hold no brief for this new version at all; it has a number of weaknesses which should be indicated. One dislikes the fairly excessive and at times incorrect use of the ancient versions for improving the Hebrew text. Even more distasteful to me are the ingenious emendations of the text, most of which are the brilliant but unsupported creations of numerous textual scholars of the past generation. These weaknesses are emphatically pointed out by Allis; any O.T. scholar could probably add quite a few more. Nonetheless one deplores the manner in which the RSV has been attacked by this author. It is obvious that he has proceeded with a chip on his shoulder, which has led him at times to extravagant and uncharitable assertions that are most unfortunate.

That the AV of 1611 was written in the language of Shakespeare is obvious to anyone remotely familiar with it. This in no way denies its literary qualities. Neither would one deny the beauty of Hamlet or Macbeth. But the fact of the matter is that most people need a glossary to read Shakespeare intelligently—at least I do. Far from deploiring drastic changes in the diction and style of the AV, the Christian should welcome any attempt at putting the Scriptures into the speech of our times. Only in this way can the Bible again occupy a meaningful place in the life of our generation. With the Apostle Paul “I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.”

But Allis makes a far more serious charge against the translators than the foregoing, namely, that they “tend quite definitely to undermine the confidence in the authority and trustworthiness of the Bible.” If this charge is true, then the integrity of the translators as scholars is of course questioned, since it is the task of the translator to attempt as best he can to render the exact meaning of the text of one language into the idiom of another. He has no right to impose upon the text his own prejudices and convictions. Allis has impugned their integrity in a serious way, since he implies that their product is a “modernist translation,” “the consensus of scholars” as to what they think the Bible “ought to say.”

Though it would be impertinent to attempt discussion of every instance discussed in the book under review, it is necessary in view of the fact that this critique has been widely circulated by its publication to examine at least some of these with some care.

Unfortunately the book is full of unproven assertions and irrelevant half-truths. E.g., the translators refer to the obvious fact that our knowledge of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic is far greater than in 1611; Allis accuses them of failing to mention the far more obvious fact—these are his words, not mine—that many, perhaps most, of the changes which it has made were known centuries ago. This is mere assertion which Allis does not and cannot prove, nor would anyone upon reflection believe it. But what is far more irritating is the flagrant ascribing of motives to the translators. That is unfair and unworthy of a Christian scholar. At Ps. 85:8 he objects to the translators’ adoption of the Greek text—with good reason—and says there is no sufficient reason for this “unless it be found in the desire to keep constantly before the reader the thought that the Hebrew text is frequently in need of ‘reconstruction’.” That is an uncharitable statement indeed. But more remarkable is the unwarranted attack on Prof. Orlinsky, one of the finest Hebraists of our times. In connection with the old problem of the origin of the Septuagint rendering of Isa. 7:14, Allis believes that the usual position of almost all Septuagint scholars that the Septuagint of Isaiah suffered a great deal of revision by Christians—and I might add,
by Jews as well—is an old Jewish calumny and utterly false. The usual position has been exhaustively, and I believe convincingly, argued in Seeligmann's splendid work on The Septuagint Version of Isaiah: A Discussion of its Problems. Allis is, however, entitled to his minority opinion. But to say that "it is not surprising that Professor Orlinsky, having been asked to serve on the RSV committee, which entitled him to contribute an article to the Introduc
tion, should regard this as giving him an unprecedented and unparalleled opportunity to state and defend this distinctly Jewish claim in the forum of Christian opinion" is unfair, since it impugns false motives to an upright scholar. Having known Orlinsky for years I know that such propaganda motives are entirely beneath him. He was merely stating a well-known historical judgment, which ought to be seriously considered in view of the fact that he is one of the ablest Septuagint scholars of today.

Furthermore, the author makes a number of dubious criticisms of actual passages. I shall mention only a few.

Gen. 1:1. The marginal reading is given as "Or When God began to create." This is a well-known rendering of the opening words of Genesis, and is grammatically accurate. The first word lacks the definite article and is thus apparently in construct with the succeeding phrase. The conservatism of the translators is shown by their adoption in the text of the more usual rendering. That it suggests the pre­

existence of matter is not a valid objection. The business of the translator is to take the text for what it says, not for what he thinks it ought to say.

Deut. 18:8. The marginal note says that the Hebrew is obscure, which is true. The fact that AV and ARV give practically the same rendering "without considering it necessary to comment on the Hebrew text" is irrelevant and misleading, since the AV never makes comments on the Hebrew text. RSV merely felt that it could do no better than adopt the guess of the AV, but felt it only right to apprise the reader of the fact that it was merely surmise.

That Allis did not find a "single case (i.e., in the Psalms) where it is indicated that the Hebrew is to be preferred to the reading of the versions" is fortunate, since that would have been completely inane procedure. Obviously it is al­
ways preferred except for the 70 or more instances where another reading is adopted. To say that "this is very signi­
ficant in view of the dogmatic way in which another reading is adopted. To say that here the Greek has a Cainan link in the genealogy as in Luke 3:36. Why should they do such a thing? The Hebrew is

perfectly intelligible and it was not their business to adopt the policy of ignoring "all variant readings of the versions except those which it uses to 'correct' the Hebrew text." Of course, it has done this. What else could it possibly have done? It is not a commentary but a translation. This review is already overly long, so I shall only deal with the highly publicized rendering of Isa. 7:14. After all the dust has settled and the Bible-burning crackpots have quitted down it is time to look at the Hebrew calmly and ask what it says. The fact that the Septuagint rendering of the Hebrew word 'alma' is quoted in Matt. 1:16 is completely irrelevant to the discussion, since it is not the Greek of Matthew but the Hebrew of Isaiah that is being translated. The Hebrew word etymologically means "a woman who has attained puberty." Whether such a woman was also a virgin is not implicit in the word, but neither is it denied. It would be dishonest to limit the word in Isaiah by using the more restrictive term in view of our modern lexical knowledge. The Septuagint's rendering of our word by "virgin" is interpretation, not translation. The recent Dutch translation, the joint product of Gereformeerde en Hervormde scholars, has also rightly adopted the reading of "young woman." Surely Allis would hardly call such a man as Aalders a "modernist" because of it.

With Allis I regret the commercial character of the pre­
publishation blurbs. With him I feel that some stylistic change is infelicitous. I must, however, register an emphatic protest against the tone and large portions of the content of his critique, and warn the non-Hebraist against much of what it says.

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ECONOMICS AND RELIGION


This volume is one of a series of social and eco­

nomical works by Christian Protestant authors. This particular one is written by Dr. T. P. Van der Kooy, Professor of Economics at the Free University of Amsterdam. It is a companion of Professor R. Van Dyk's Mens en Medemens, Man and Fellowman, an introduction to soci­

ology. Studies of this character should be very welcome to American Calvinists, because they help us to orient our­

selves in the Reformed direction, and because mankind is undergoing in this part of the world the same process of secularization as in Europe. The recent publication of Stephen P. Bayne, Jr., The Optional God (Oxford University Press), though of Episcopalian vintage, is a similar warning against the dechristianizing of social, educational, economical, political and, finally, religious life, and a chal­

lenge to return to the basic convictions of our pilgrim fathers and to reestablish liberty on Biblical foundations. If we want to hold on to the good features of our society in all its aspects, we shall have to give ourselves a new account of our basic and all-embracing Christian faith. Our Chris­

rian traditions are being engulphed by a maestrom of false religion, materialistic economical and social life, and one­sided and secularistic education. This flood of anti-Chris­

tian ideas springs from the source of a neutralistic philo­

sophy which wants to cut our cultural life loose from its his­

torical Christian roots, and ends up with proclaiming an "Optional God" even within the walls of the church. But morality, decency and order, without the old-fashioned Trin­

itarianism, are doomed to failure and the utter ruination of all of life.

Professor Van der Kooy wants to make a thorough in­

vestigation of the "borderland" between economical and re­

ligious life because he is also convinced that the present trend of thought is to exclude Christianity from scientific and cultural activities. He realizes fully that there are all kinds of technical problems in our civilization, especially in our industries and in education, which have to be decided
on the basis of experience and moderation, but he warns us not to forget that all these problems have religious and ethical root principles which are deeply imbedded in our present culture because of the rise of Christianity in Western civilization, and that there are also some fundamental Christian principles for philosophy, and for every area of human activity which cannot be denied with impunity. In economical matters three theories have developed in the last two centuries which have each absolutized one aspect of life, and thereby endangered the unity and harmony of the whole fabric. There is the Manchester school of "free enterprise," which wants to limit the task of the government to the protection of life and property, and to leave the development of social and economic factors to fate. This is the school of laissez faire, which has brought about the French and Russian revolutions. Then there is the movement of Socialism, which advocates the welfare of the majority by nationalization of all the spiritual and physical resources, but which ends up in tyranny and persecution. There is finally the modern tendency to speak of economical principles not as norms but as hypotheses, or as theories, which may be tried out one by one to prove or disprove their workability. This is the adventurous method of trial and error which refuses to recognize the difference between basic ideas of a religious, moral and philosophical nature and the circumferential speculations about technical details. Statism or totalitarianism is, after all, not a question of more or less, but a problem of to be, or not to be. All three theories have caused ruin and despair, and are in conflict with the eternal principles of Scripture for State, Church, and Society.

Professor Van der Kooy then goes on to lay down the demands of Christian liberty according to the Bible. He does not quote a number of Bible texts, though he says he is tempted to do so. He reasons from some general Scriptural propositions to prove that our cultural life was originally a beautiful unit, and that because of sin its function was infected. God has given to State, Church, and Society each their own foundation, character, and destination, for He made everything according to its kind. The State is there not only to protect life and property, but also to protect the liberty of the other spheres and to assist the poor, the miserable, and the oppressed (Psalm 72). The Church should not only preach the gospel and promote the communion of the saints, but it should also witness through individuals and through organizations (of some kind or other) to promote the development of a Christian Society. Social life, however, should neither be controlled nor regulated by State or Church. Statism and Churchism, i.e., Totalitarianism of State or Church, are not in harmony with Scripture. God calls every one and every sphere of life to liberty, by obeying the laws of liberty, which to a great extent are revealed in nature, but the bases of which are only revealed in Scripture (In Thy Light we shall see light. Psalm 36:96). Reason and intuition can discover the basic laws of society to some extent by studying that Society, but we need the Bible in the borderland between natural and spiritual life for the correction, supplementation, and rooting of these fundamentals in the Christian religion (Psalm 119:105). In other words, our Christian Life and World view must rest on the two revelations, general and particular (pp. 50, 63, 74). Only Scriptural appeal, however, can give clarity, satisfaction and confidence.

The term, "borderland," for the basic or primary principles of philosophy and of any realm of science and art (fine and practical art), is being used by other Reformed scholars in the Netherlands, but the idea is also found in America in books like Bayne's, and even of humanists like Meland in his recent work Faith and Culture. The Reformed view is advocated by Professor Berkouwer in his respectable volume on General Revelation. The latter draws the attention to the insufficiency of the two comparatives in Article two of our Belge Confession, more clearly and more completely (seen in Scripture), and points out that all Reformed scholars of reputation have subscribed to Calvin's idea that the Bible is like a pair of glasses needed to understand the general revelation in history and nature. The Bible is not only needed for clearer and completer knowledge of God (and His laws), but absolutely necessary for foundation, anchorage, rootage. It is impossible for the natural man to understand the spiritual realm (1 Cor. 2:15 and 16), i.e., to know fully, truly or really. Calvin develops these ideas in Books I, Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of the Institutes. The Catholics believe that faith and Scripture are a bonum addendum, an added good, and therefore that the Bible is only a corrective and a supplement for natural revelation. But Calvin and his followers made a plea for the more basic principle, that all primary principles are rooted in the Bible, or to use a term of Abraham Kuyper, can be "inferred" from Scripture. This idea, however, should not be confused with Biblicism, by which we understand that purely technical or secondary principles should be inferred from God's Word, Calvin's point of view might be called: the idea of a philosophy of two revelations (with the infallible Word dominating), or the idea of a philosophy of two graces, with the particular one of a decisive character (Heb. 11:3). For how can we really speak of a Christian philosophy, if the primary or proper philosophical principles are not found in Christianity?

Professor Van der Kooy finishes his study by showing how the old or Marxist Socialism, and its two daughters, the tame or revisionistic Socialism as well as the bold and revolutionary communism, are built on unChristian premises because they believe in the false theory of the totalitarian state, in a fantastic notion of a future with a perfect society, and in compulsion and tyranny to reach the goal of a just distribution of cultural and economic goods. He is of the opinion that these theories will come to an ignominious end, but he warns his readers that the downfall of these philosophies may be preceded by a Satanic rule for some time which may be more terrible than what we have seen yet. We must then study economic problems with this also in mind, and not despair of God's mercy, which may keep us from the loss of liberty, if we follow leaders who believe in the eternal principles of His Word.

This volume is rich in thought and in suggestions for study and action. It is not only a book for college students, but for the general intelligent "layman" who wants advice for social and economic betterment and reform that is in harmony with orthodox Christianity. It is not fit only for Dutch readers, but it should be made available in English because then it may serve other nationalities. Its clarity and appeal are universal. Its problems are the problems of the whole world, East and West. Its remedy, return to the Scriptures, even for the alleviation of our physical needs, should be a slogan for all believers. And in a time in which there is despair in the hearts of millions all over the globe, religious, philosophical and psychological despair, this study might be a comfort to many who have never seen the inside of a church. We believe that this is an exceptional book.

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This is a scholarly treatise on an important subject which should have a place in the library of all ministers who wish to preach on the words of the Lord Jesus. As one reads this volume one is bound to receive illuminating insights into many texts which had baffled him heretofore. I am thinking for instance of passages like Mark 13:30, "This generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished." Meanwhile the chief value of this book is to be sought in the comprehensive oversight which it gives of Jesus' teaching rather than in its keen analysis of certain texts.

To begin, the author reviews the various conceptions of Jesus' preaching on the Kingdom which have been propagated of late. He takes issue both with those who over-emphasize the eschatological element in Jesus' teaching and with those who take it that Jesus' Kingdom ideal is already realized of late. He takes issue both with those who over-emphasize the eschatological element in Jesus' teaching and with those who take it that Jesus' Kingdom ideal is already realized in a spiritual fashion and who therefore do not look for any cataclysmal events in the future as necessary to usher in the Kingdom of glory. And Ridderbos likewise rejects the views of existentialist theologians like Bultmann and Karl Barth who propagate an "übergeschichtliche" eschatology, rather than an "eindgeschichtliche" eschatology. According to Ridderbos Jesus proclaimed both a kingdom that became a present reality by His own advent and a kingdom that will attain its final fulfillment through the catastrophic events which will accompany His return upon the clouds of heaven.

Having shown that the background of Jesus' preaching is to be found in the Old Testament, and having set forth the relation between Jesus' preaching and that of John the Baptist, the author shows the intimate connection between Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom with His victory over Satan in the wilderness, with the miracles which He performed and His seeking the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Especially striking is his treatment of the forgiveness of sins and of the Fatherhood of God as essential elements of the Kingdom conception.

In closing this brief review I cannot refrain from citing some of the many excellent statements in which this book abounds, statements which should whet the appetite for a closer acquaintance with this volume. "The question as to the significance of the Kingdom in Jesus' preaching is bound up with the conception which one has of the person of Jesus. It is the question as to the Christological content of the Gospels." p.18. "In Christ the Kingdom of God breaks in upon this world." p.20. "The proclamation of the Gospel is itself a guarantee of the final coming of the Kingdom," p.137. "The forgiveness of sins is the central aim of Jesus' advent," p.191. "The forgiveness of sins is forgiveness in Christ. This is the heart of the original, unadulterated Gospel," p.208. "The gift of the Holy Spirit accompanies the coming of the Kingdom, the gift to do the will of God and thus to prove that one is a child of God," p.232. "The authority of the Son of Man rests on the self-sacrifice of the servant of the Lord. The parousia is impossible apart from the resurrection of Jesus and it is realized in a preliminary way in the resurrection." p.394. "The abomination of desolation is not confined to the destruction of the temple but points forward to the Antichrist," p.419.

Herman Kuiper


Herman Witsius (1636-1708), was one of the foremost theologians of the Dutch Reformed Church during the second half of the 17th century. Dr. Van Genderen has rendered the cause of Reformed Theology a distinct service by giving us this scholarly evaluation of the significance of Witsius as a Reformed theologian. The work under review gives evidence of careful and thorough scholarship. There is nothing second-hand about this book: Dr. Van Genderen gives evidence of having carefully read and digested not only Witsius' own writings, but also whatever can be found about him in the Archives of Consistories, Classes and Universities. And yet for all its scholarly excellence the book is far from a dry-as-dust treatise. Parts of it are as interesting as a novel. For Witsius lived a full and interesting life and in the biographical section Dr. Van Genderen tells the story well.

As a theologian Witsius is perhaps not as well known as his teachers Voetius, Hoornbeek and Mareriaus, nor as his contemporary Cocceius. Avoiding both the scholasticism of Voetius and others and the extravagances of the Covenant theology of Cocceius, Witsius stands out as a biblical theologian. To quote Dr. Van Genderen: "He followed Holy Scripture as closely as possible and always pleaded for scriptural thinking. In his inauguration-speech at Franeker he declared: 'The true theologian is a humble disciple of Holy Scripture.' In an age when scholasticism reigned supreme and Cartesianism and Rationalism influenced many, he wished to adhere to the simplicity of the Bible. In this lies the enduring value of his theology. . . . From 1680 to 1689 Witsius was attached as professor to the University of Utrecht. At his inauguration he spoke about the eminence of evangelical truth. In this oration we hear his famous motto: 'In necessariis unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in omnibus prudentia et charitas.'"

Though not a follower of Cocceius, Witsius nevertheless did follow the covenantal method in constructing his theology. It is interesting to note in this connection that he was inclined to limit the covenant of grace to the elect. To quote Van Genderen once more: "The subjective strain is much stronger here than in Calvin. Witsius holds a place between John Calvin and Abraham Kuyper." Dr. Van Genderen shows that Witsius, though he founded no school of theology, yet exercised great influence, not only in Holland on such men as Vitringa Senior, Smytegelt, Schortinghuis and Professor Kuypers, but also in Germany and England and especially in Scotland. "English and especially Scottish theology were also influenced by Witsius. A proof of this influence is the translation of some of his works in English. The Scottish theologians who were interested in the circulation of Witsius' work, belonged for the greater part to the Secession church. Still more remarkable is, that they can all be considered as followers of the Marrowmen. This is the case with Thomas Bell, Donald Fraser of Kenoway, John Brown of Whithurn, John Colquhoun, Thomas McCrie and James Hervey. . . ." Fraser wrote at the end of his "Memoir of Herman Witsius," that "the works of Witsius are immortal and that they will never cease to be admired."

A valuable twelve-page bibliography of the works of Witsius and an extensive list of sources make this book of Dr. Van Genderen all the more worth having. The work

THE CALVIN FORUM * * * OCTOBER, 1954
DISEASES MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE


THE author of this survey of health and healing in the Old and New Testament is a teacher and practitioner of medicine and surgery. The dust cover notes and the text explain the need for this book: "It is published because neither the author nor publisher has been able to find anything covering the same ground. Attempts to explain the diseases of the Bible, including leprosy and demon possession, are mostly to be found in scattered form in dictionaries and encyclopaedias at least fifty years old." I would estimate this an overstatement. The author's own bibliography includes titles as recent as 1950 and 1951. Our own Calvin Forum covered some of the same ground in articles by the present reviewer in March 1947 (Medical Lore in the Bible) and March 1948 (Did Jesus Die of a Broken Heart?) and August 1946 (A Physician Meditates on Human Suffering).

Dr. Short has given us the most complete and up-to-date presentation of all the medical lore to be found in the Bible. He begins with ancient non-Biblical lore, reviewing medical ideas in primitive times from early Mesopotamian and ancient Egyptian history, through Greek and Roman medical practice, to primitive modern tribes. Early Jewish medicine was in the hands of priests and physicians and the intimate relation of Jehovah to Israel is stressed.

The book leaps forward in interest value with Chapter IV as the "Diseases of the Bible" are considered. I do not favor the chapter heading. The Bible has no diseases. The author, on the basis of Deuteronomy 28:27 concludes that six diseases were common among the Israelites: Consumption, the burning ague, itch, scab, boils and botch. The consumption he considers any wasting disease such as pulmonary tuberculosis, chronic dysentery and perhaps cancer. The burning ague, a fever disease, would usually be malaria or typhoid fever. The itch is most likely scabies, still a fashionable disease for approximately one hundred years until he died unrelied by the skill of an orthopedic surgeon.

There are many other interesting instances of diseases or sudden afflictions and I can only mention a few treated in detail by the author. Sury Nabal? Could it be a cerebral hemorrhage, a stroke? King Saul's disease? A typical example of manic-depressive psychosis, says the author. Intense gloom, then homicidal violence, delusions of David plotting against him, and his final suicide — what else can it be but manic depressive psychosis, Dr. Watson? Have you considered involutional melancholia (change-of-life psychosis), Sherlock Holmes?

King Nebuchadnezzar's madness, becoming like a beast, eating grass like an ox, Dr. Short diagnoses as paranoia, a fixed delusion. What caused Herod Agrippa's horrid death, "eaten by worms" (Acts 12:21-23)? What was Paul's "thorn in the flesh"? Read the book to see if the author's argument is convincing that it was trachoma, a chronic eye inflammation. Paul's coupling of his "infirmity of the flesh" with "ye would have plucked out your own eyes"; his mentioning writing "in large letters" (Gal. 6:11) (R.S.V.) seem to point to an irritating, incapacitating eye disease. I myself felt convinced when I looked up the Greek and found the plural GRAMMASI used, seemingly indicating individual letters of the alphabet instead of letters as 'epistles.' A man with bad eyes, squinting with lids half closed, would write in big characters. The same Greek word occurs in Luke 23:38.

Would you like to know more about the leprosy mentioned in the scriptures? Is it one disease or manifold? Can houses have leprosy? Does clothing become infected with leprosy? Is it valid to use leprosy as a picture of sin? The author has some interesting paragraphs on these questions, and also on Luke, the beloved physician.

In a chapter dealing with the physical cause of Christ's death the author reviews the various theories concerning this mysterious event: the theory that our Lord was really not dead, and that what the early Christians took to be a resurrection was only a resuscitation from a fainting condition; the theory of acute dilatation of the stomach followed by actual death on the cross, followed in turn by the spear thrust through stomach, heart and great vessels giving the "blood and water"; and finally the "ruptured heart" theory first advocated by Dr. Stroud a century ago. Dr. Short does
not agree with any of these. The "broken heart" theory especially he considers unacceptable.

Dr. Short's chief argument against the ruptured heart theory is that rupture of the heart "apart from a penetrating wound, is not at all common, and when it does occur, the patient is nearly always a very sick man — with some disease that weakens the heart muscle such as infective myocarditis or it may be that a clot of blood has blocked the arteries." Dr. Short does not take into account that the profound bodily agony producing the blood sweat in Gethsemane by the infiltrating hemorrhages into inner tissues, including heart muscle (as the bloody sweat in the few cases on record is only an external symptom) may have wrought changes in the body equal to years of suffering. He thinks the "sweat was blood-tinged" whereas the original Greek uses the word "thromboi," meaning "great clots of blood" falling to the ground. We have entered into a defense of the ruptured heart theory in our Calvin Forum article mentioned earlier, suggesting that such clots could have been in the myocardium also since Gethsemane, there could have been bloody-weeping into the pericardial sac hours before the crucifixion and the spear thrust; such a heart weakened by agony could break literally and vicariously ("Grief hath broken my heart") and thus explain the "blood and water" by a longer-standing blood clot and a renewed outpouring on Calvary. Jesus began to shed His blood for us in Gethsemane. Your reviewer can only conclude: "No one knows what occurred in that matchless body of our Lord. No one can ever prove or disprove the broken heart theory. Nor is it necessary. We simply stand in adoration as we see the atoning blood shed for the sin of the world."

In his chapter on the Miracles of Healing the author concludes that they were manifestly supernatural, "they show that God was at work." In his chapter on Demon Possession the author notes that at times "the speech was that of the demon, and not that of the patient. This is unusual in insanity. Christ recognized the demons, spoke to them, and expelled the demons. Only in that feature do these cases differ from well known forms of insanity today." He concludes that demon possession was a distinct entity in Christ's day. Is there demon possession today? Read his testimony from foreign missionaries that seem to substantiate this. Your reviewer has not seen any case he would diagnose as demon possession in the sixteen years he has spent as medical missionary in Africa and India.

A chapter on Faith Healing and a chapter on the Biblical conception of suffering in a world ruled by a loving God conclude the book. Recent books by men in our own circles, and also the Calvin Forum article mentioned, cover the same ground more adequately than this chapter.

Dr. Short has produced a book on health and healing based on the Bible that is very rewarding to the reader. His treatment is in the main conservative, Biblical and humble as if recognizing he is often in the state of Moses at the burning bush, a treading on holy ground. It deserves a place on the shelves of the library of clergymen, physicians, church libraries, Bible-studying laymen. The six shillings represent less than one dollar, purchased in London; obtained through your bookdealer from England the book should still remain inexpensive even with postage, duty and other charges added. The review copy has been placed in Calvin College library for your perusal.

Stuart Bergsma, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Annie Oosterbroek-Dutchun, Hart tegen hard (Kampen: Kok; 1953). 175 pages.

ELISABETH, only daughter of a wealthy, materialistic, self-centered father and a delicate, humble, godfearing mother; musically inclined from her childhood days, meets a talented violinist at a classical concert. Her affection for the young man presents almost unsurmountable obstacles to her father, who has strictly rural interests, is averse to music and culture, and amenable only to a worthy successor and manager of the homestead. His possessions and physical labors completely dominate his thoughts and plans and he has gradually crowded out the unseen and eternal. Peter, the youthful virtuoso, graduating from the conservatory, upon his return from a brief, but successful visit overseas, gathers laurels at a recital given by himself in the city. Encouraged by enthusiastic applause, and their assured future, Elisabeth vainly seeks to conquer the stubbornly resisting soul of her father. Days of continual mental torture follow. The pendulum keeps swinging between hope and fear. Reluctantly she is compelled to leave home. The reaction on the immovable father, the sympathetic mother, the warm reception at Peter's home, are all realistically portrayed, in some passages touching.

Their wedding-day, Mother's presence, Father's absence, and his subsequent utter loneliness, are masterfully depicted. Then the life of the famous artist away from home; the wife left behind with her growing family, her disappointment, due to the sickness of a child—what transformations and adjustments! The tender-hearted mother, after a brief visit to her unforgettable daughter, contracts heart-trouble. Her temporary recovery only registers her weakness, and ends in her calm and quiet departure from this life. Elisabeth and Peter pay the last respects and after a cold reception return home. The sexton's widow becomes mistress of the estate. The abandonment of its owner is dramatically described, in his irresistible self-justification—a neighbor tells of his reverses, of his intention to sell out; he buys his property, improves it, and settles there. While his daughter, married against his will, and now without his knowledge, buys her former pretentious home and all its belongings, thus finding an outlet to dispense her loneliness. Peter's reaction after his return from a concert; the Father's rebuke, ordered off the premises by his own daughter, who has taken over; her growing interest in material things; conflicting ideas struggling for mastery within—all these witness to the author's intimate knowledge of the human heart, and urban as well as rural life. A little granddaughter, unaware of the strained relations between father and child, artistically serves to merge these conflicting ideologies. The favor of her grandfather, the pride and jealousy of her mother, the accident, almost fatal to the child, the sudden return of her father, the complete recovery of the darling—all work together, in the inscrutable Providence of God, to arrive at the true evaluation of things earthly and heavenly, to reconcile what had become estranged, to unify what had drifted apart —the book is well written, with a moving plot, a good moral, keeping up the interest of the discerning reader from beginning to end. Highly recommended.

Richard Veltman

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