

# An EXPERT visits the CALVIN LIBRARY

Enter now Dr. Carnovsky.

WHO?

Why, Dr. Carnovsky, of course.

And WHO is Dr. Carnovsky?

Ah, my friend, Dr. Carnovsky is a formidable man, pince-nez and all, with a fearsome title: an EXPERT!

And so enter Dr. Carnovsky, the expert; whose services we shall for this occasion borrow free of charge. What will he think of the Calvin Library?

We invite him in. He enters. And adjusts his pince-nez, cleans his magnifying glass with immaculate tissue, sniffs the air and goes at it. Shall we peer over his bent shoulders — oh so quietly, lest we detour a thought?

No one, including Dr. Carnovsky, is certain where the probing will begin. Twenty years ago there was a formula. Dr. Charles B. Shaw was responsible for it. Under a Carnegie grant, Dr. Shaw, the distinguished librarian of Swarthmore College, got some 200 college and university faculty members to join him in compiling a basic list of 4,000 books which should be found in every liberal arts college library. The list was published in 1931, with a supplement in 1940 which added 3,600 more titles published between 1931 and 1938.

Knowing that the Calvin Library combines the resources which serve both a seminary and a college, the collections mutually enriching each other, Dr. Carnovsky would hardly have expected the "Shaw List" to gauge too adequately the strength he wanted to measure. But, I dare say, in 1939 he would have started with it anyway; and with an air of scientific detachment he would have selected at random some dozen or 20 pages of Shaw and slipped into the card catalog alive to see how many of the listed titles we held.

And from our own checking of the list, we know that Dr. Carnovsky would have been more than satisfied. In fact, had he alighted on some pages which list books for courses long taught at Calvin, Dr. C. would have been amazed to find almost all of the titles

listed were available to him in our stacks. Knowing as he would that a library which held even one half of "Shaw" was exceptional, Dr. Carnovsky would, I think, have given us an *A plus* in some areas, and a "good" in others.

But this would have been 20 years ago, because the "Shaw List" is out of date. And Dr. Carnovsky would not have reached for it now, except out of curiosity perhaps.

What then?

Well, Mr. Thomas Lamont was for many years a close friend and associate of J. P. Morgan. It was a profitable association. One of the beneficiaries of Mr. Lamont's profits was Harvard University, and in 1949 there was opened on the Harvard Campus the Lamont Library. It is a plush building for the use of Harvard Col-



Calvin Library

lege students. The Harvard faculties joined with their Widener Library staff in selecting 40,000 titles for the undergraduate disciplines taught at Harvard. These books became the collection of the Lamont Library. Then the University, with the aid of the same Carnegie Corporation, published the catalog of the Lamont collection, in 1953.

So Dr. Carnovsky's hand automatically reaches for that catalog. Because it would take a long time, and because time is scarce and expensive in a college and seminary library, we have never tried to check the 40,000 titles of the Lamont Catalog against the Calvin Library holdings. We have, as Dr. Carnovsky might, simply sampled. And again, in the fields which our faculties teach, our good Dr. Carnovsky would be pleasantly surprised. In at least some, he would find more and better things at Calvin than Harvard put into Lamont . . . because, of course, the greatest university library in this country, the Widener, stands just next door to the Lamont building.

But this indicates a defect in the Lamont Catalog as a check-list. And the compilers of that Catalog point it out. These 40,000 volumes serve Harvard undergrads just because around the corner are the six million others,

College and Seminary

SYDNEY T. YOUNGSMA, Editor

some of them too specialized and some of them too rare for use at Lamont.

And so Dr. Carnovsky might not reach for Lamont's Catalog after all. He might just head for the reference and periodical rooms. And in the reference room he might start to check with the old work horse, bought first and used most often, the encyclopedia. What would he find?

If Dr. Carnovsky's check list is like the one used at the University of Michigan for courses in reference books, it would list 13 English language encyclopedias as the best. Dr. Carnovsky would find 12 of these, in current editions, on our reference room shelves; and the missing one — Chamber's — is in the stacks in an old edition, and a new edition is on order. So we score 100%. Dr. Carnovsky beams, fingers his glasses, thinks of his check, and proceeds.

There will be five English language dictionaries on his list, including the great *Oxford English Dictionary* in 13 massive volumes. All five separate titles grace our shelves. Another 100%.

Of the foreign language encyclopedias, in the languages taught on the campus, Dr. Carnovsky will find the two best Dutch and the two best German encyclopedias. He will miss the best current French, but will chance upon the famous *Diderot* in its 39 volumes. There are five first-class foreign language dictionaries on his list, including those in French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Russian. All five are on our shelves. There will be four small foreign language dictionaries which the reference list includes among those of first quality; and all four are here. And though he may not check them, Dr. Carnovsky could find the best lexicons in the classical languages taught in both college and seminary, including the four folio volumes of the famous Latin lexicon published by Robert Stephanus, the scholarly printer associated with John Calvin.

He would find the scholarly and scarce three volume *Dictionary* of Robert Bayle, and all of the editions of the great German Harzog *Realencyklopadie* which became the famous English Schaff-Herzog *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* and which, of course, is also here. And next to it he would find the *Christelijke Encyclopedie* in both its current and newly appearing editions, rubbing elbows with the fifteen volume *Dictionnaire de Theologie Cath-*

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## STROMATA AND INFALLIBILITY

John H. Kromminga, Th.D., President of Calvin Seminary

article is written at the initiative of the editor of The Banner. I thought opportunity to have been placed because I did not have space on the pages of The Banner to give my place to debate the debated subject of the infallibility of Scripture. Nor do I think so will therefore not attempt to give a solution to a very complex problem. But now that the editor has extended this opportunity to me, I wish to avail myself of it in response to two related questions, which are quite important in themselves. A good deal of confusion has been created by what the original article in The Banner asserted concerning infallibility. This is the first question. The second question has arisen lately, is how the editor permitted the publication of the article. These two questions are related to each other, and the answer to the first will provide the answer to the second.

This is a student paper founded many years ago as an organ for the expression of student opinion. It is not a paper, nor is it designed for the purposes of a student paper. It is an extension of those student discussions which are a very important element in the training of a theologian. The article does not necessarily reflect class instruction or instruction given by the professors. The article of Mr. Hoogland, a first-year student, does not reflect or reproduce such an opinion, but was a student opinion on a theological question.

Members of the Christian Reformed Church ought to be made aware of the very limited area of discussion touched on in Mr. Hoogland's article. He did not deny the inspiration of Scripture, but affirmed it plainly and fully. He did not deny that there is any such thing as infallibility, but he led into the implications of the word and the advisability of using it. This is evident from the following quotation from his article: "Any attempt of stating the problem is to overstate the word 'infallible,' with its connotations, is really the right way in describing the Reformed view of the Scriptural revelation. That is, the church really mean to assert that the word 'infallible' means that it is perhaps possible that contemporary theology has been so diligent in maintaining the use of a traditional characterization of Scripture which has been neglected to ask whether it is really applicable?"

In pursuing this subject, Mr. Hoogland stated clearly that the Bible is authoritative for life and doctrine. Nowhere did he question this authority, but rather sought a definition which would recognize Biblical authority while dealing realistically with Biblical phenomena. He did not adopt the position that the Bible is merely a fallible human witness to divine revelation, but stated that "it is objectively (not merely subjectively or psychologically) the Word of God . . ." He acknowledged, on the basis of the Bible's own testimony, that the Holy Spirit had so guided the writers as to produce infallibly the message He wished to convey.

The limited area to which Mr. Hoogland confined himself was that of geographical locations, sequences of events, numbers, grammatical constructions, scientific references, and the like. These are the very questions with which ministers are frequently confronted in the making of sermons. The answers they give do not always agree in every detail; but various answers can be given which are within the circle of the Christian faith and the Reformed tradition. Mr. Hoogland was aware that these questions are very important to some individuals, and asked what was the best answer which could be given to them. In doing so he sought to let Scripture

speak for itself in defining its own infallibility.

In view of this very limited area of discussion I judged that the article was not in conflict with any teaching of the Reformed Confession Standards. It was on the basis of that judgment that I permitted the article to be published.

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*olique*, the latest and most comprehensive of its kind.

Perhaps Dr. Carnovsky has now seen enough in our reference department to get some measure of its quality. But were he to go on, he would find that in relation to the courses offered by college and seminary, the reference collection is strong also in handbooks, yearbooks, biography, statistics, directories, and bibliography. And had he the time, our guest would score the reference collection in each division as altogether a powerful tool for the instruction carried on by the faculties of Calvin College and Seminary. He would, I am sure, be pleased with what he has seen so far. And so, I know, would you be, friend and supporter of Calvin; not only because our library is equipped to meet the demands of today, but also because it is building carefully for tomorrow.

## Willowdale Christian School TORONTO, ONTARIO

Needs \$35,000 to construct a new 3-classroom school by Sept. 1959. Promissory notes are being offered at 6% interest, payable semi-annually over 10 or 15-year period. The society, whose members are living in one of Canada's most rapidly growing communities, already have \$35,000 in cash and pledges. Total value of school and land will be about \$70,000.

6%      \$35,000      6%

If you can help, contact Gerrit Broos, 99 Center Ave., Willowdale, Ont., Canada

## Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Calvin Christian School Association

### Urgently Needs \$25,000

School Association owns free and clear a 5-acre tract and solicits funds for construction of a school building for grades 1 through 8.

Debenture Bonds available in denominations \$100 - \$500 - \$1,000

4%

interest paid annually  
Repayable in 10 years

Write J. Vander Plate Jr., Secretary to the Board  
170 NW 31st Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida