

the **CALVIN** **orum**

Four R. C. A. Voices
Food for Thought

Stigmatization
An Indictment

Westminster Standards
A Comparison

Naziism and Liberalism
Unacknowledged Affinity

Amillennialism
An Open Letter

Readers Voices

News and Letters

Verse

VOL. IX, NO. 9

**TWO DOLLARS
A YEAR**

APRIL, 1944

THE CALVIN FORUM

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

CLARENCE BOUMA.....*Managing Editor*
HENRY J. RYSKAMP HENRY J. VAN ANDEL
HENRY SCHULTZE JACOB G. VANDEN BOSCH

CALVIN FORUM CORRESPONDENTS

ARTHUR ALLEN.....*Australia*
STUART BERGSMAN.....*Northern India*
LOUIS J. BOLT.....*Christian Education*
ALLEN CABANISS.....*The South*
R. J. COBB.....*Britain*
J. CHR. COETZEE.....*South Africa*
SAMUEL G. CRAIG.....*Presb. Church, U. S. A.*
FRANK DE JONG.....*California*
CH. DE WIT.....*Holland in Britain*
EZRA P. GIBONEY.....*Seattle*
LEONARD GREENWAY.....*Ref. Church in America*
EDWARD HEEREMA.....*The East*
JACOB T. HOOGSTRA.....*Ecumenical Calvinism*
S. LEIGH HUNT.....*London*
W. MARCINKOWSKI.....*Palestine*
WILLIAM V. MULLER.....*South America*
P. PRINS.....*Netherlands*
ARTHUR V. RAMIAH.....*South India*
W. STANFORD REID.....*Montreal*
WM. CHILDS ROBINSON.....*Atlanta*
JENO SEBESTYEN.....*Budapest*
EGBERT H. SMITH.....*West Africa*
JOHN N. SMITH.....*New Zealand*
JOHN G. VAN DYKE.....*Religious News*
LEONARD VERDUIN.....*Ann Arbor*
CHARLES VINCZE.....*Magyar News*

Address all editorial correspondence to
Managing Editor, THE CALVIN FORUM, Frank-
lin Street and Benjamin Avenue, S.E., Grand
Rapids, Michigan.

Address all subscription and circulation cor-
respondence to: THE CALVIN FORUM, Business
Office, at the same address.

THE CALVIN FORUM is published monthly, ex-
cept from June to September, when it appears
bi-monthly. Subscription price: Two Dollars
per year.

Entered as second-class matter October 3,
1935, at the Post Office at Grand Rapids,
Michigan, under the Act of March 3, 1897.

The CALVIN FORUM

Published by the Calvin Forum Board of Publication

VOLUME IX, NO. 9

April, 1944

Contents

Editorial

Four R. C. A. Voices..... 179

Articles

The Stigma of Stigmatization.....*Henry Verduin* 182

The Westminster Standards and the Formulas of
Unity.....*D. H. Kromminga* 183

"The New Minister".....*Leonard Verduin* 188

Amillennialism—An Open Letter.....*Albertus Pieters* 192

The Voice of Our Readers

As to President Roosevelt..... 195

Amillennialism 196

A Contagious Enthusiasm..... 196

From Our Correspondents

The Jackson Calvinistic Conference..... 196

From New Zealand..... 198

News and Comments..... 200

Verse

Easter 181

Four R. C. A. Voices

An Editorial

IT IS not a common experience for the Editor to receive no less than four letters in a little over two weeks from leaders (or prospective leaders) in the Reformed Church in America. Three of these four were occasioned by our editorial, "What Our Seminaries Desperately Need," which appeared in the February issue. All four shed a most revealing light upon some trends in the Reformed Church in America. It is our hope and prayer that this great communion with its long history and its many fine traditions may increasingly recognize, appreciate, and champion the glory and the power of the God-centered Faith that has ever been the strength of those communions that were Reformed in fact as well as in name, and cast out all flirtations and compromisings with the insidious modernistic influences of our day that strike at the very heart of the Reformed Faith. We feel no need to add any further comment. If any reader is of the opinion that Dr. Hoffman's article does call for a reply, we would suggest that those interested read once more the editorial which occasioned this communication. The editorial is found on page 131 of the February issue of THE CALVIN FORUM. For the rest, these four voices speak for themselves. We only add that we are glad to honor the wishes of three of these four correspondents that their names be not published. For possible later identification, if needed, we have given them, respectively, the initials X, Y, and Z.—Editor.

Voice No. 1

New Brunswick, New Jersey,
March 3, 1944.

My dear Dr. Bouma:

I REGRET that on numerous occasions I have failed to send in a word of appreciation both to the editor and the contributors to THE CALVIN FORUM for many understanding and helpful articles. Had I done so, I would now feel a little freer in the way of commenting upon your editorial under the caption, "What Our Seminaries Desperately Need", written in my judgment without full knowledge of the situation. I am sure that you did not intend to belittle the work of a fellow-minister, but none the less you did so. I must take issue with your editorial on two counts. You say that in his rural ministry Mr. Calvin Schnucker "donned overalls, worked at threshing with his parishioners, gave the farmers a course in refinancing their mortgages, made a practical study of enriching the soil, acquainted them with the available scientific means of improving the yield of certain crops, and made them proud to improve the outward appearance of their farm houses and barns. He organized clubs for this purpose among the youth and in an all-around way helped them to become better farmers in the most literal sense of the word." And then you add, "We would like to ask in all seriousness what

all this has to do with the task of the minister of the Gospel." In my judgment it has everything to do with a Christian ministry, not in the sense that it is the whole of the minister's work, but that the ministry is related to the whole of life. If such activity in a rural area has nothing to do with the Christian gospel, then the Communion to which I belong has poured out money and life in at least four distant missionary areas to no purpose whatsoever. In India, for example, we have and are still spending life and money in the development of a better type of agriculture, and a wiser kind of industrial leadership. We support schools and colleges, hospitals and clinics, in the firm conviction that this is part of our work in the way of advancing the interests of the Kingdom of God. You cannot deny that even our rural churches depend for their life to a certain extent upon economic conditions. If you have ever taken a trip, especially through some of our southern states, you must have noticed what I mean. There you find pitifully neglected rural churches at country crossroads standing in the midst of land that has been terribly eroded and which from the point of view of agriculture is practically worthless. With wise leadership that land could have been saved. I venture to say that in another fifty years the land around Titonka, Iowa, and other rural areas would go the same way were it not for wise government policies which are encouraging farmers to fight soil erosion and to conserve our top soil, so that future generations may be able to live. A minister who shows an intelligent interest in that kind of progress is indeed coöperating with Almighty God in conserving what He so lavishly gave to His children, and what we His children have, with equally lavish hands, so stupidly destroyed. It seems to me that rather than condemning Mr. Schnucker you ought to write an editorial in praise of him.

Secondly, your editorial is unfair because it leaves the impression (whether you intended to do so or not is beside the point), that all that Mr. Schnucker did was to be a sort of agricultural promoter and that he neglected the special privileges and responsibilities to which every minister is, or at least should be, dedicated. This again is untrue. I have known Mr. Schnucker for at least twenty years. I visited him in his home and church at Titonka. I know the area where he worked rather intimately. I know the type of sermon he preached and Gospel which he glorified. Had he been nothing but an agent of some county extension service, a congregation under such leadership could never have doubled the way his church has. The church under his leadership was completely rebuilt, doubling its size, and what is more, that church was filled with worshippers. People do not come to church, not even farmers, Sunday after Sunday, to hear lectures on how to deal with corn borers. They do come to church Sunday after Sunday because the Gospel in all its richness is preached to them.

I felt that I had to write this letter, which I trust you will publish, because unintentionally you have done a friend of mine and a minister of Christ a very great disservice. I am happy that Mr. Schnucker is now in the theological department of the University of Dubuque where his special work is to train ministers who will be competent to meet the problems in our rural areas, problems, which, unless solved, will find our rural churches continually and increasingly on the decline. The history of our country shows that the strength of our churches has always been in our rural areas. Our Roman Catholic brethren know this full well, and today are undertaking a pro-

gram of rural work which is heartening from their point of view, and tremendously challenging as we face it. For that reason the more, I deplore the kind of editorial you wrote.

With personal regards, I remain,

Most sincerely yours,

M. J. HOFFMAN.

Department of Church History,
Theological Seminary,
New Brunswick, N. J.

Voice No. 2

February 17, 1944.

Dr. Clarence Bouma,
THE CALVIN FORUM,
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

I wish to thank you for your editorial, "What Our Seminaries Desperately Need", in the last edition of THE CALVIN FORUM. It is excellent.

I have appreciated many of your editorials, but this one scored a home-run with me because I have been thinking of the suggestion made by the editor of our Reformed Church weekly. I have also heard the Rev. C—— S—— lecture on his rural work and I was not impressed favorably.

Respectfully,

X.

Voice No. 3

February 16, 1944.

THE CALVIN FORUM,
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

In the last issue of THE CALVIN FORUM, in the second article from your pen, entitled, "What Our Seminaries Need", you obviously have borrowed that from our *Intelligencer-Leader* of that time, and bearing that caption. As I recall it, it was published at a time when I was experiencing considerable of physical discomfort, which made it difficult to give much of thought to any matter. Be that as it may, let me assure you that I support your position 100%. It grieves me beyond the power of words to express that some of our leadership has lost its ability, if not its desire, to discern what is truly vital, scriptural, and by that token also Reformed. I wish that your article could be given wider circulation. My prayer is that many of our Reformed brethren, and others, too, may read it very carefully and ponder the excellent analysis and counsel it contains. For your position is, in my humble judgment, basic and thoroughly scriptural.

To me it is usually very refreshing, and helpful, to receive THE CALVIN FORUM. One issue means more to me than another. Perhaps those few instances when it does not challenge my thinking, faith, emotion, and will, as others do, I may be, and probably am, at fault. Those times are rare, and far between. Usually I am already pleased when I glance at the subjects, either written by the Editor or by others, or by both of them. Reading oftentimes heightens the pleasure and brings its rewards of enlightenment, or/and confirmation of convictions cherished and clearly perceived.

What I especially enjoy about THE CALVIN FORUM is its consistent and faithful presentation of truth in keeping with our Calvinistic faith—the "Faith of our Fathers". Articles are usually written so that the reader is not left guessing as to what the writer really has in mind, or what he believes. The middle-of-the-road fellows may still be true to the faith of the fathers, in so far as their own personal faith goes; they may appreciate that faith, though they know not why, but they are not champions, expounders and defenders of it. The results

are that those who come under their influence have no clear conception as to what is true or false. Much of the preaching approaches the middle of the road position, with more or less of Arminianism, Modernism, and Dispensationalism underlying it, depending upon the whims, reading and associations of the individual people. They fail to appreciate the rich heritage we have in our glorious Reformed Faith. They have never yet understood that it has been very carefully and prayerfully derived from the Scriptures. They have failed to grasp either the fact, or the necessity for it, that it is a system of truth consistent with itself, because it is based upon the teaching of the Scriptures as a whole, and not upon fragments, or isolated portions of the Holy Bible. Failing in this regard, they readily become victims of those teachings which are really incidental, but have been made chief in their emphases. That is one possibility. These for the most part are so-called "fundamentalists". They love the Bible, and many of them are ardent Christian workers. But they unwittingly subordinate that which has, and should receive, priority, as given in the Scriptures. (You can readily gather that I have thoroughly read your editorial on "Calvinistic Conferences"). Others, never having understood the thrust and content of our glorious Faith, are impressed by the reasonings and beautiful, apparently humane, teachings of modernism. And so we have a synthetic faith which can never be consistent with itself, or with the teachings of the Word of God, if that Word is accepted as the Word of God.

I often wish that the Lord would give to me greater courage to voice my convictions. I am not ashamed of this Faith of the Fathers. To me it is the most precious legacy and personal possession. I believe honestly that it is the purest faith and honors God supremely. When it is personally believed and faithfully proclaimed, it produces, under the guiding and sanctifying influences of God the Holy Spirit, the finest type of Christian faith, life, education, life and world view, democracy, social relations and missionary endeavor. Believing this so cordially, it may seem strange that we remain so silent, even in our Reformed Church circles. The answer is this, brother Bouma, that I have disciplined myself, unfortunately for many years, in self-repression. I have suffered greatly, and do still to some extent, from an "inferiority complex." I am always afraid that I cannot express myself clearly enough, so that others are able to understand what I am striving to say. I fear then that the cause is jeopardized, if I state it inadequately. All thru the years I have appreciated the writings of Dr. Kuyper and Dr. Bavinck of the Netherlands, of Dr. Charles Hodge of Princeton, not to speak of my contemporaries. Just now I am reading one of the volumes of *Menigerlei Genade*. Such sermons are to my liking. My only regret is that I do not seem to be able to do nearly so well. My regret is not born of pride, but love for the truth. I sincerely hope and pray that you will remember me in your intercessions "for the brethren."

May God bless you, and all the brethren who "Contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). May God bless all of you in the Regional Calvinistic Conference to be held in Jackson, Mississippi.

Sincerely yours,

Y.

Voice No. 4

February 29, 1944.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

Just a line, an unofficial letter if you will, to express my appreciation for the glorious influence that, by the grace of God, THE CALVIN FORUM and Calvinism has had upon my life. I could sing ten thousands doxologies to God for His sovereign grace toward me in Christ Jesus. Some years ago I confessed Christ as personal Redeemer. However, only in the past three or four years—through the influence of THE CALVIN FORUM,

a pair of Calvinistic professors down here at ———, and many good sound Calvinistic sermons—have I come to a deeper and more profound appreciation of Calvary and the atonement, and what it means to have Christ as Savior and Lord.

I am now almost at the end of a four-year trek through the labyrinth of a college curriculum. It has been a long hard struggle against my own perverse self and the adverse and unbiblical influences in the world, even the so-called Christian world of today. By holy persistence and a complete reliance upon the grace of God, however, I have succeeded—to the glory of God. Now here is the point I wish to make. Through this struggle “against the prince of the power of the air,” personified in half-hearted Christianity and adverse and unbiblical influences, it has been the power of the Holy Spirit working providentially through THE CALVIN FORUM, my Calvinistic professors, and Calvinistic sermons that has established me and constructed the foundation upon which, by the grace of God, I hope to build to the glory of God in my future life. (Of course, the influence of a praying Mother and a devoted Father is presupposed). I am now in the camp of the Calvinists and hope some day to preach the full-orbed Gospel of God’s sovereign grace in Christ Jesus toward sinful, depraved man. The day has come when I can wholeheartedly sing “Soli Deo Gloria”, instead of half-heartedly mumbling with the world and Swinburne, “Glory to man in the highest, for man is the master of things.” I am now a “One-Holy-Passion-Christian”, a “Totalitarian Christian”, if you will.

I might say a bit about the atmosphere and my associates here at ———. There is much at ——— that I cannot “stomach”. It is too wishy-washy and half-hearted. But there are many fine Christians here at ———, although not “totalitarian-Christians”. There are even some Calvinists, but they are passive Calvinists, not active Calvinists, if there be such a distinction. There is much missionary work to be done here

to gather converts and to strengthen the convictions of us who dare to call ourselves Calvinists. I am not an “Elijah” here. I am sure there are more “who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” There is one thing, however, that I have learned, namely, that you can’t effectively use the word Calvinism or Calvinist around here, even amongst those who in faith and practice are Calvinists. The term is anathema.

That leads me to express an observation that I have made in the short span of my association and contact with orthodoxy and Calvinism. There is much pseudo-Calvinism abroad, Calvinism in word and confession but not in deed and practice. Even amongst us Calvinists there are those who seem to be carrying on the fight for an old rubric instead of for the soul, the content, being not especially particular about the rubric. God grant that our Calvinism may not only be thoroughly biblical and exclusive (for that it must be in a certain sense if it is to be true Calvinism), but that it may also be the salt of the earth, the salt that has not lost its savor. What we need today are Calvinists who do not throw up their hands in horror at the sign of falsehood, error, or unbelief, and withdraw from the world, but Calvinists who through whatever means available combat these forces, and give of their life’s blood if need be to be an influence in every sphere of human activity.

May I make a suggestion in the form of a wish? Would that THE CALVIN FORUM could appear not once a month, but twice or even four times a month! I realize that I am not aware of the obstacles to be overcome in the editing of such a paper, especially in these war-days, but that is my wish at least.

May God continue to bless your efforts, and use them further to turn us, the church, and the world, back to the Word and an acknowledgement of Him in all our ways.

Yours in Christ,

Z.

Easter

Man lives,
Man ever lives:
Man was not made to die.

Man dies:
A child of death is he.
Life’s certain issue—Death!

One lived.
He ever lived:
The Prince, the Source, of Life.

He died
Who knew not death.
He died—the Prince of Life!

He drinks
The very dregs
From Calvary’s bitter cup of death:

The paradox of Golgotha!



He lives!
The risen Lord:
Lord of the keys of Death.

I live:
I shall not die!
In Him, the Lord of life, I live.

Come, Death!
Thou art not death:
I sleep in death to wake in Life—

With Him forevermore!

—J’AIME DIEU.

The Stigma of Stigmatization

Henry Verduin

Minister Creston Chr. Ref. Church
Grand Rapids, Michigan

THE Passion season is a high-spot in the life of the church. Its emphasis on the sacrifice of Christ for our sins is refreshing.

The divine drama of the atonement has un-failing fascination for the pious soul. Its mystery invites meditation; its pathos deeply stirs sympathetic imagination. Naturally, man's inclination to sin causes him to err in his contemplation of and dealing with even so holy a subject as the sufferings of the Savior. To our mind a most amazing case in point is the allegedly miraculous phenomenon of stigmatization. This is defined by *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* thus, "the spontaneous formation of wounds on the persons of Christians similar to those received by Christ from the crown of thorns, the crucifixion and the spear."

That this phenomenon has actually occurred, from the case of St. Francis of Assisi in 1224 to that of Marie Von Mörl (1812-1868), whose wounds in hands, side and feet were viewed by forty thousand people, cannot well be denied. The Roman Catholic church claims, on plausible grounds, that no less than eighty cases of authentic stigmatization, either in whole or in part, can be cited as historical facts. Some of these are of even more recent date. Again quoting the above mentioned *Encyclopedia*, we agree that "stigmatization may, therefore, be accepted as a fact, but its explanation is to be sought."

The Roman Catholic explanation is that persons of unusual piety have been divinely favored, for their intense sympathetic contemplation of the Savior's wounds, with the miraculous reproduction of those wounds in their own bodies. Thus stigmatization is accepted as the mark of divine endorsement. It was cherished as the mark of special sainthood. The church hailed it with enthusiasm, while the laity gloried in it as a most precious divine gift.

With this favorable view we cannot agree. Although we believe in all the miracles of the inspired record of Scripture and in the sovereign power of the Almighty to perform miracles at all times, we are not ready to accept stigmatization as a miracle. Moreover, we object to the unquestioning glorification of the amazing phenomenon. We hold that there is nothing supernatural about it, and that a purely natural explanation is most worthy of consideration. It may well be considered

as a striking example of the mysterious power of mind over matter.

It is a matter of common knowledge that it is possible to become really sick because one thinks that he is sick; that it is sometimes possible to effect cures by hypnotism; that there is no hope of recovery for a patient who has lost the will to live. Why then should not morbid, fanatical, hysterical imagination be able, in extreme cases, to produce the marks and bleeding of stigmatization?

A very interesting phenomenon from animal life may serve as a kind of parallel. There is among rabbits an abnormality called false pregnancy. It occurs when females are segregated from males when the natural time for mating has come. The females then, under the strong urge of nature, may together go through the motions of mating. Subsequently, in some cases all the marks of pregnancy appear. When the time of normal gestation has elapsed, the victim of this false pregnancy makes a nest, lining it with fur plucked from her breast. She has labor pains and passes blood, and there the farce ends. If imagination can do that in a rabbit, what may it not do in a human being?

Apart from all explanation of the phenomenon, stigmatization viewed from a religious and spiritual point of view certainly has some highly suspicious angles.

First, there is the extreme concentration on the pain and blood of the crucifixion of Christ. The Bible favors no such emphasis. It is amazingly sober and—to the glorifier of stigmatization—painfully brief on those particulars. Of all writers on the Passion the Evangelists are least willing to dwell at length on the blood and pain of the cross. How can we expect God to reward with a miracle an emphasis which is the direct opposite of that of His inspired Gospels?

Second, there is the fanatical zeal to reproduce the agonies of Christ in one's own body and soul. This is a bold and improper desire. It is nowhere authorized in Scripture. When we are said to be crucified with Christ, our justification by His sacrifice is meant or our separation from sin is taught. But no one may reproduce the suffering of Christ. It was unique. It cannot be repeated. He said, "It is finished". When Paul wrote in Galatians 6:17 of bearing the *stigmata*, the marks of Christ, in his body, he spoke of the scars of battle as proof of

apostleship. He got them from enemies while witnessing for Christ. They were normal. Stigmatization is accomplished in self-appointed, morbid concentration, in the cloister, on the gore of Calvary. It is abnormal from every point of view and, by that token, suggests the suspicion of stigma in stigmatization.

Third, there is the practical issue of stigmatization. "By their fruits ye shall know them" applies here. What was the message of the bearers of those weird marks? What was their witness? What purpose did they serve? Tens of thousands of pilgrims came to see. But what did they see? Not the wounds of Christ. In the excitement they were forgotten. All the attention was for these bearers of marvelous marks. There was no preaching of the gospel of salvation through Christ's blood in those marks. It is hard to see how they could promote the glory of God. They fascinated with the drawing power of the strange, the mysterious, and the grotesque. The impression they made had nothing particularly religious about it. Strong sensation was

its mark rather than high spirituality. There was nothing delicate nor dignified about the display of the marks to the public. There was something cheap and unworthy about the gaping of those tens of thousands who eagerly came to stare. We Protestant and Reformed Christians are frankly suspicious of such ado about persons. Our motto is, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord". Right at this point stigmatization is most vulnerable. The center of attention is found in the wrong place. People went away impressed by the greatness of these saints rather than by the greatness of the Savior. The centering of attention upon self and away from the Savior was, to put it bluntly, nothing less than "stealing the show". We readily admit the probability that it was not so intended. Nevertheless the despicable fact remains.

If you find merit in these observations on this interesting subject then you will also find sense in the suggestion that there is a stigma upon stigmatization.

The Westminster Standards and the Formulas of Unity

D. H. Kromminga

Professor of Church History,
Calvin Seminary

A Comparison

THE historical kinship between the Reformed Churches of the European Continent and the Presbyterian Churches of the British Isles is universally recognized. By reason of that kinship loyal descendants of the former have an interest in the tercentenary of the creedal standards of the latter. It is, alas, true that defections from those standards impede our fellowshiping with large sections of the Presbyterian Churches in our age; but this is also true as to our fellowshiping with large sections of the Reformed Churches of our times. In our present situation we appreciate the times when the fathers of both groups of Churches in different formulations professed the same faith which still holds the affection of our hearts. The occasion is opportune for a brief comparison of the Westminster Standards and the Forms of Unity.

Extensiveness and Background

We may begin with the external though not insignificant point of their relative extensiveness. Niemeyer's *Collectio Confessionum* brings the Westminster Standards on a total of 113 pages, while

the Forms of Unity in the same collection of creeds occupy 87 pages. The greater length of the Westminster Standards could be fully used for greater fulness of detail, especially since the authors studied precision, simplicity, and clarity of statement. Perhaps this advantage is somewhat offset by a slight toning down of the warmth and fervor of the statements as compared with the Heidelberg Catechism and the Belgic Confession and also the Canons of Dort. But it is not easy to make a fair comparison on this point, since the maker of it is usually one who has been reared on either the one or the other of the two sets of formularies.

Leaving out of consideration for the moment the Canons of Dort, the two sets of formularies are separated by a long period of time. The more than eighty years which elapsed between the drafting of the Belgic Confession and of the Heidelberg Catechism and the composition of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms were of great significance for Protestantism. Those years saw the attempts to force the Protestant world into conformity with Rome, and saw the failure of those attempts. The brunt of the attack had been borne by the Reformed Churches in distinction from the Lutheran; but, though danger still threatened, the fires of persecution had died down. The Belgic Confession espe-

cially was born in the crucible of persecution and it bears the unmistakable marks thereof. But the Westminster divines could survey the preceding one hundred and twenty-five years of surprisingly rich development of theological thought in comparative peace and safety and calmly garner its best and maturest fruits into their Standards.

It may strike one, that both the Westminster Standards and the Forms of Unity come in sets of three. It will also be observed, that the members of the two sets of documents do not quite correspond. Both sets take care of a twofold need of the Church: of a declaration of faith whereby it may be known to the world, and of an exposition of the same faith which can be taught to its members, especially its youth. But while the Westminster Standards comprise one creed and two catechisms, the Forms of Unity comprise one creed, one catechism, and one exposition of a particular segment of the truth. From this one might argue, that the Westminster Standards attach far greater importance to the indoctrination of the membership and the children of the Church than the Forms of Unity. In fact, the appearance of such greater emphasis becomes still stronger upon a comparison of the proportion which the catechisms bear to the whole in each set. Likewise, one might argue from the presence of a distinct document on predestination and related truths in the Forms of Unity and the absence of any such document from the Westminster Standards, that here lies a point of divergence between the two sets of creedal writings.

Catechetical Manuals

The fact that neither of these two inferences would be true underscores the essential agreement which marks the two sets of doctrinal standards. It is true, that of the 113 pages which the Westminster Standards fill in Niemeyer's *Collectio* the Confession of Faith occupies only 46, while the Larger Catechism alone occupies 51. The total number of pages filled with catechetical material, is moreover, raised to 67 by the presence of the Shorter Catechism which occupies an additional sixteen pages. In other words, the catechetical element stands to the confessional element in the proportion of almost 3 to 2. With this proportion the Forms of Unity contrast sharply. Of the 87 pages on which the *Collectio* of Niemeyer brings the Forms of Unity, not counting the additions, such as signatures, the Belgic Confession fills 30 and the Heidelberg Catechism 32. The Canons of Dort, which serve to refute slanders that were circulated against the Reformed doctrine, account for the remaining twenty-five pages. From their nature the Canons can not be reckoned with the catechetical material but must be counted with the confessional element, raising the number of pages devoted to it to 55 over against 32 bringing catechetical material.

This reverses the proportion: in the Forms of Unity the creedal part stands to the catechetical part in the proportion of over three to a scant two.

But there are other facts which must also be considered. The Presbyterian Churches have two authoritative catechisms, while the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands have only one such; but that does not mean, that the latter were limited in their use to the Heidelberg Catechism. By the side of the Heidelberg these Churches received two other catechisms, which, though not authoritative were synodically approved. The older of the two had been drawn up and published by the consistory of Middelburg and its minister, Faukelius, in 1611, and received the approval of the Synod of Dort in 1619, when that Synod also approved of a new draft presented by a committee of its own. The Compendium of Faukelius has been in use ever since in the catechetical instruction of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and in the Churches which have sprung from them. In pedagogical skill and precision of statement Faukelius' production does not equal the Westminster Shorter Catechism, which latter takes care that the respondent repeats in each answer the gist of the question to which he replies. But the proportion between the catechetical material and the confessional material in the Forms of Unity does not correctly reflect the proportion as it appears in the usage of the Churches, and the latter is quite comparable to the proportion between the two elements in the Westminster Standards.

Doctrinal Similarity

Nor does the inclusion of the Canons of Dort in the Forms of Unity indicate any essential divergence between these and the Westminster Standards on the subject of predestination and the related doctrines of total depravity, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and the perseverance of the saints. The same pelagianizing tendencies, which appeared in the Netherlands under the name of Arminianism and were there repudiated in the Canons of Dort, had even earlier troubled the Anglican Church and were known in England as Baronianism, and had been rejected by the adoption of the Lambeth Articles in 1595 under the auspices of archbishop Whitgift. Meanwhile the growing tension between Anglicans and Puritans made Baronianism acceptable with the former and identified the Lambeth Articles with the latter. In 1615 the substance of the Lambeth Articles had been incorporated into the Irish Articles, and the same doctrine reappears in the Westminster Confession. Though far shorter, the Lambeth Articles agree with the Canons of Dort, and the incorporation of their doctrine at greater length into the Westminster Confession partly accounts for its greater length as compared with the Belgic Confession. The Canons of Dort were drafted by a committee of

which the Anglican bishop, Dr. George Carleton, was a member. Their agreement with the Westminster Confession will appear from a comparison of their first head of doctrine, on election and reprobation, with the third chapter of the Westminster Confession, on God's eternal decree; and, further, of the second head of doctrine with W. C. chapt. VIII, on Christ, the Mediator; of the third and fourth heads of doctrine with W. C. chapt. VI, on the fall of man, sin, and the punishment thereof, chapt. IX, on free will, and chapt. X, on effectual calling; while with the last head of doctrine W. C. chapt. XVII, on the perseverance of the saints, and chapt. XVIII, on the assurance of grace and salvation, should be compared.

The doctrinal harmony between the Westminster Standards and the Forms of Unity does not, however, preclude the existence of rather marked divergences between them. Speaking more specifically of the two Confessions, I shall proceed to discuss briefly three such divergences between the Belgic and the Westminster Confession. It will appear, that they do not constitute doctrinal contradictions but rather reflect the different doctrinal and historical situations out of which these two creeds respectively arose. These divergences concern the three doctrines of the Covenant, the Church, and the Magistrate.

On the Covenant

On the doctrine of the Covenant the Belgic Confession is almost silent. True, the doctrine is traceable in a way in what the Confession has to say on the subjects of sin and redemption, but it takes a discerning eye to trace it there, and actual mention of the Covenant is rare. The article on Baptism, Art. XXXIV, makes formal mention of it in the statement that children of believers ought to be baptized and sealed with the sign of the covenant, and thus reveals the author's knowledge and recognition of the doctrine. But nowhere is there any express and formal statement of the doctrine that is in any way comparable with the statement which the Westminster Confession gives in chapter VII and the first section of chapter VIII. Here we find first of all the recognition of the Covenant as a gracious addition given by God to man in his natural or creaturely relation as an intelligent and responsible creature to God on Whom he depends and Whom he must serve. Here we find also a clear differentiation between the Covenant of Works which man broke in the Fall, and the Covenant of Grace which God put in its place for man's salvation in Jesus Christ. Also the two dispensations of the Covenant of Grace are recognized as two different administrations of the one Covenant. And in what the Confession says of the constitution of the Son of God as Mediator of the Covenant, the Covenant of Redemption finds recognition as an inner-

divine arrangement in distinction from the Covenant of Works and that of Grace.

For anything like this clear and concise formulation we look in vain in the Belgic Confession and even in the Heidelberg Catechism, but have to go to the Canons of Dort. And there we find the Covenant doctrine in all its elements, it is true, but not in one compact statement, but have to collect it from various places. The Covenant of Works is implied rather than named in the first paragraph of the first head of doctrine and, again, in the second paragraph of the third and fourth heads of doctrine, and in the first paragraph of the rejection of errors under these heads. The Covenant of Grace is expressly mentioned in the seventeenth paragraph of the first head of doctrine, in paragraphs two, four, and five of the rejection of errors under the second head of doctrine, and in the first paragraph of the rejection of errors under the last head of doctrine. For the Covenant of Redemption we must look in the second head of doctrine, the eighth paragraph, and the first paragraph of the rejection of errors. And the two dispensations are explained in the seventh paragraph of the third and fourth heads of doctrine. This suffices to establish the complete harmony between the Forms of Unity and the Westminster Confession on the subject of the Covenants, but it gives the advantage of clarity and compactness of statement entirely to the Westminster Confession.

This difference without doubt is due to the fact, that both the Heidelberg Catechism and the Belgic Confession were written in the early stages of the development of the doctrine of the Covenant, while the Westminster Confession was composed at the very close of the development. In the Canons of Dort a fuller statement of this doctrine could find only such a place, of course, as their proper subject would allow for it. One should, however, guard against the mistaken notion as though Cocceius had contributed anything to the Westminster formulation of the doctrine of the Covenants. To the contrary: his tendency to break up the unity of the Covenant of Grace and to substitute for it a succession of materially different dispensations of grace is quite completely repudiated in what the Westminster Confession teaches in section VII of chapter XXI concerning the institution of the Sabbath in paradise and its continued obligatoriness, together with its transfer from the last to the first day of the week, under the new dispensation.

Concerning the Church

Another divergence appears when the two Confessions are compared on the point of their teachings concerning the Church. The Belgic Confession has much to say on this subject to which it devotes all of Articles XXVII to XXXII. With this should be compared what the Westminster Confession says in

chapter XXV, on the Church, chapter XXVI, on the Communion of Saints, chapter XXX, on Church Censures, and chapter XXXI, on Synods and Councils. While there is general agreement, the Belgic Confession has one element, in Article XXIX, on the difference between and the marks of the true and the false Church, which finds no duplicate in the Westminster Confession. This Article recognizes the presence of hypocrites in the true Church and also the imperfection and continued sinfulness of its true members, but discriminates nevertheless between the true and the false Church. The former is known by its conformity to the Word of God in the pure preaching of the Gospel, the administration of the sacraments according to Christ's institution of the same, and the exercise of church discipline. But the false church is described as exalting its own authority above that of the Word of God, as refusing to submit to the yoke of Christ, as changing the sacraments of Christ by addition and subtraction according to its own notion, as basing itself on men rather than on Christ, and as persecuting such as live holily according to the Word of God and rebuke it for its imperfections, greed, and idolatry. The fact can hardly fail of recognition, that here we have an attempt to picture the contrast between the Reformation Churches and the old Roman communion.

The Westminster Confession no longer makes such an attempt. Instead, it draws the distinction between the visible and the invisible Church universal, states that to the visible Church the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God for the salvation of the saints have been given, as also the presence of Christ and His Spirit, and adds, in sections IV and V of chapter XXV, some declarations which deviate markedly from what is peculiar to the Belgic Confession. The visible catholic Church is said to vary in its visibility, and particular churches which are members thereof are said to be more or less pure according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them. Moreover, it is added, that the purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error, and some have degenerated so as to become synagogues of Satan instead of churches of Christ, although there always shall be a Church on earth to worship God according to His will. There is no immediate juxtaposition here of the sharply antithetical true and false churches, but, though both are still in the picture, the antithesis is mediated by all kinds of gradations in purity or impurity that make their appearance between the two extremes.

This difference between the two Confessions plainly reflects the change that had come over the visible Church in the course of the years which intervened between the appearance of the two creeds. In 1560 there was still a hope that all Protestant believers might become united in one church organization; but by 1640 that hope had vanished.

In 1560 the Romish Church was still trying to coerce its wandering sheep back into its own fold by means of persecution; by 1640 such attempts had been proven unfruitful and disastrous and were rapidly becoming impossible. Instead of the old external unity of the Church and the fond hopes of establishing it within Protestantism there were appearing more and more signs of the modern plurality of the Church and plurality of churches. Anglicans and Independentists had been summoned to the Westminster Assembly as well as Presbyterians. As the Belgic Confession had been adapted to the times in which it was written, so the Westminster divines adapted their creedal statements to the changes which they saw going on round about them.

Remarkable is the fact, that it is not the Belgic Confession, but the Westminster, that delivers some telling blows against the Pope. It expressly rejects the claim of the Pope to be in any sense the head of the Church, but declares him to be "that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ and all that is called God," XXV, VI. This identification of the Pope with antichrist is not paralleled in the entire Forms of Unity. The American revision of the Westminster Confession has eliminated it.

On the Civil Magistrate

Finally, there is the divergence between the Westminster and the Belgic Confession on the subject of the civil magistrate. In its thirty-sixth Article the Belgic Confession has the declaration, that next to its task of maintaining order and decency in human affairs, which task God has given the magistrate together with the power of the sword, the magistrate has also the task "to maintain the sacred ministry, to avert and destroy all idolatry and false worship, to overthrow the realm of antichrist and to advance the kingdom of Christ, to cause the word of the gospel to be preached everywhere, in order that God may be honored and served by everybody, as He commands in His Word." These are the words which have given later descendants of the old Belgic Churches such difficulty in understanding them and have led to various alterations.

The Westminster Confession has no such declaration. This does not mean, however, that it ascribes less power in and over the Church to the civil magistrate than the Belgic Confession. In the third section of its twenty-third chapter the Westminster Confession expressly declares, that the magistrate "has authority, and it is his duty, to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline pre-

vented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof he has power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God." This is another utterance which the American revision of the Westminster Confession has altered. But its original version plainly ascribes to the civil authorities not less but more powers in ecclesiastical affairs than the Belgic Confession, and it does so with far greater explicitness.

This is not at all surprising. The Westminster Assembly was convoked by the English parliament, and to that parliament it presented the Confession as its humble advice. The Confession could not do otherwise than recognize as right and proper the prerogatives which the political body which had convoked its authors was thereby arrogating to itself. In fairness to the Confession and its authors it should not be overlooked, that they did not intend to surrender the Church helpless into the hands of the civil rulers. Chapter XXXI, on Synods and Councils, contains in its second section the express reservation that, "if magistrates be open enemies to the Church, the ministers of Christ, of themselves, by virtue of their office, or they with other fit persons, upon delegation from their churches, may meet together in such assemblies." Thus it

agrees with Article XXVIII of the Belgic Confession, which likewise asserts the "duty of all believers, according to the Word of God, to separate themselves from those who do not belong to the Church, and to join themselves to this congregation where-soever God has established it, even though the magistrates and edicts of princes be against it; yea, though they should suffer death or bodily punishment."

However highly we may esteem these old formularies of our Reformed faith, it is quite evident that they have not escaped the imperfection which marks all such declarations of merely human origin. The centuries which have elapsed since the close of the period of Reformed creedmaking have brought development which make two things increasingly clearer. One is the fact, that a country and government which does not acknowledge God and His Christ is bound to go wrong. The other is, that over against an inimical government the Church can do little with its inherent right to carry on of its own accord. In its present predicament the Church can only do what our martyrs did around 1560; to wit, look up to its exalted Head for deliverance from all its enemies; we have Christ's assurance, that the deliverance will come so as to prevent the extinction of His Church on the earth.



"The New Minister"

Leonard Verduin

Pastor Students Evangelical Chapel
Ann Arbor, Michigan

UNDER this caption some of our dailies carried a very lurid advertisement of late. In it was pictured "The New Minister," a monacled Nazi as proud as contemptuous. In the distance you see a garroted figure. It is the village pastor hanged by the Nazis. And "The New Minister" is already busily engaged in indoctrinating the children with a hateful ideology that cuts across everything that used to be taught in the quiet little church.

The Storm Troopers and Liberalism

Aside from the fact that the ad undoubtedly sold many War Bonds, its patent purpose, it represents a way of thinking so one-sided as to be actually false. It encourages the naive opinion of the average man in the street that Hitler and his gang have forced a pagan doctrine upon an unwilling church. And it tends to close the minds of our people to an aspect of the development in modern Germany, an aspect that should be brought out into the open. For this aspect may prove to be the most significant of all. For the record shows that a goodly element in the church, call it the extreme left, played hand in glove with the Party all the time, was more than ready to go along with it, and has continued in step with it to this day. The Storm Troopers of the paganization process came from within the church. And what is more they were already in uniform in the days when Hitler was still mixing wall paper paste. And it may be well to know, even if not pleasant to know, that we have our own version of these Storm Troopers in our own land. What they could do or would do in case of a social emergency is hard to predict—as it was hard to foresee in modern Germany! Let it be said at the outset and without the slightest equivocation that this article is not intended to gloss over the sins of Hitler and his fellow fiends. Their sins are many and these sins will find them out. Hitler is a pagan and the Nazi ideology cannot be harmonized with historic Christianity. The spirit of Antichrist is present in the movement and right thinking men are longing for the day when divine justice takes the guilty ones in hand.

No, what we want to do is to show that the liberal church has taken an active part in issuing the pagan manifesto that has startled the whole Christian world, that it prepared the way for just such

a course of events, that "The New Minister" was sent with the approval of the liberal church, trained in its liberal seminaries.

And we do this not because we rejoice to relate other men's sins. Nor are we led by a holier than thou spirit that rejoices in another man's faults. Our one and only purpose is to be fair to history and in so doing to point out a source of danger that is cleverly camouflaging itself in our own land.

Two Churches Under One Roof

For in America as in Germany, to use the language of Karl Barth, there are two churches until now under one roof, two churches that can never be harmonized with one another. In Germany "many who formerly thought of one another not only as friends but also as brothers had to discover that they stood on opposite sides of a precipice, a precipice deeper than all the crevices which had been visible before . . . And one may well consider whether the peace which the other churches in the world are permitted to enjoy is more than a temporary covering over of a cleft, a precipice that has perhaps long been traversing their midst, deep and appalling." (Cf. Barth: *The Struggle of the Church in Germany*.)

And if we speak sternly to and of those who are still marching under the same Christian banner with us let it be remembered that true love sometimes requires sternness in its last appeal to a brother in gross sin!

Let us first of all bring together some of the highly objectionable declarations, in the realm of religion, that have issued from modern Germany, indicating their source. We are startled to discover that they were made under church rather than party auspices! Here is a much publicized one: "Christ has come to us in Adolf Hitler . . . We have properly but one task: it is not 'become Christian' but 'become German.'" That same year (1933) there was printed, not in the "Voelkische Beobachter" but in "Die Junge Kirche": "We must free religious services from everything un-German, by eliminating the Old Testament with its Jewish retribution morality . . . This book has rightly been criticized as one of the most objectionable books of all history . . . It will be necessary however to eliminate also all reports in the New Testament which are obviously misrepresentative and super-

stitious, also to get rid of the whole scapegoat and inferiority theology of the Rabbi Paul, which was the beginning of the whole falsification. Christianity has ever sought to separate God and man, always attempting to prove its own right of existence by viewing man as laden with original sin, fallen, and therefore to be saved. . . . We acknowledge no such separation of God and man." Or, listen to this blasphemy resounding through the spacious Sportspalast, a favorite stamping place of the Party. But this time the occasion was not political but rather ecclesiastical. The speaker is one Dr. Krause. "We must get rid of the Old Testament. It does not fit in with a radically correct Christianity. A radical revision must also be made of the whole theology of the Rabbi Paul. We need no God on a distant throne but a fighting hero-Jesus. The places in Germany which have been drenched with holy blood (the reference is to the various Party Putsches. L.V.) mean more to us than does distant Palestine." If we want to know what type of theology is here reflected we will know if we listen to Dr. Kerrl; he is a churchman and no one needs to be in the dark as to what type of theology he represents. Says he "Von Galen and Zoeller wanted to inform me as to what Christianity really is, namely, that it is a question of the acknowledgment that Jesus is the Son of God. This is ridiculous! And quite non-essential! The Apostles Creed is no longer the statement of Christianity." And then follows a lengthy statement as to what Christianity is now to be, an expression of the religious intuition of the German mind!

The Third Reich and the Third Church

Many other quotations could be typed. And each time it is the apostate church that is speaking. Whether or not its speaking resulted from a period of coaching by the Party is neither here nor there, for our present purpose, i. e., to indicate that "the New Minister" was produced by the church itself, and that he was forced upon the church only in its orthodox expression. He was unwelcome only among the "Confessionals," men who under the brave leadership of Martin Niemoeller stood for unsullied historic Christianity. Only the latter kind of Christians are today in concentration camps; the former kind are wearing the party colors!

Just what part did the Nazis play in the paganization of the German church? The record shows that there was a Third Church before there was a Third Reich. This Third Church called itself the "Deutsche Christen." It has gained public recognition already in the days before the Nazis burned the Reichstag. And a counter activity had already begun, the "Notpfarrerbund" and the "Bekennnisfront," largely under the leadership of Niemoeller. And these two were already going at each other when the party came to full power. At first

the Party leaders, honestly or in subtlety, (for these Nazis are not always easy to see through) tried to pour oil on the troubled waters: repeatedly both parties were told to quit scrapping and to iron out their frictions.

The Deutsche Christen

(One of the most interesting revelations that will be made whenever we have access to the records in the matter will be in regard to the question: Just what did the Nazis have to do with the rise of the "Deutsche Christen?" We know that Ludwig Mueller, the man who played such an important part in the development of the "Deutsche Christen" later on, had a long three hour visit with Hitler already back in 1926. What they talked about we do not now know and may never know. You may be sure they didn't spend that much time talking about the weather. Just what passed between them is a highly interesting matter. But it is not necessary to our present purpose. For whatever may have been the nature of the conversation it is abundantly plain that flocks of liberal churchmen stood ready to play ball with the Party.)

It is part of the record too that in the late twenties already the "Deutsche Christen" group had written a severely anti-semitic plank into its platform, demanding that all who were not 100 per cent Aryans should be barred from the church. It is also a part of the record that the Nazis encouraged the parodies of the Christian Sacraments but that these parodies were invented under auspices more ecclesiastical than political. All along we see the Beast (the anti-Christian State) and the False Prophet (the anti-Christian Church) in alignment with each other exactly as the Apocalypse predicts they shall be.

Needless to say, the Party's attempt to allay the storm by pouring oil upon the troubled waters didn't work. They might have known it wouldn't: religious convictions can't be liquidated so easily. As soon as it had been demonstrated that it wouldn't work the Party volunteered to umpire the contest. And in that function it soon revealed that its sympathies were with the liberal church and definitely against the Confessionals. This need not surprise us seeing that both go back to the same basic ideology: an anti-Christian State will invariably be partial to an anti-Christian Church! From here on the story is quite well known. It's a tale of a very unfair umpire.

If it be true that the already apostate Church was so ready to serve as a tool in the hand of the Nazis perverters, we may well ask ourselves how this could be. How could the Church in the land of Luther stoop so low as to furnish the hateful pattern and supply the leaders of the dreadful paganization which even if stopped by the victory of our arms—may God speed the day!—will take

generations to eradicate? Can we profit from a candid examination of the defection that has startled the whole Christian world?

The Higher Criticism

It all began, we are seriously convinced, with the triumph of Higher Criticism in the Germany of a century ago. Higher Criticism may be defined for our present purpose as that historic movement in modern times which substituted for the then current conviction that the Bible is God's Word to man the theory that the Bible is a collection of human opinions about God. It became a veritable "cliche" that the Bible in both its Testaments represents the expression of the semitic Volksgeist of the people among which it came up. Isaiah had his religious opinions (some of them not half bad) and Amos had his. All these opinions were but relatively true. One writer contradicted the other. And the notions of each could, and would, be superseded. And, it was usually said at the end, Jesus came with the best religious opinions of all. It is true even of Him that some of His ideas are no longer acceptable to us. Even though the Sermon on the Mount was for a time given a sort of timeless validity really consistent thinkers of this school pointed out that certain ideas undeniably inextricable from that Sermon were not quite "kosher" either—the idea of Christ's sitting to judge the whole world, for example.

In passing it should be noted that Higher Criticism was highly uncritical of itself. Otherwise it would have noticed that far from being the expression of the semitic Volksgeist the Bible is from cover to cover an attack upon that very Volksgeist. Among no people did the Bible have so hard a time as among the very people among whom it was given. Jerusalem, far from being a prophet-producing city was first and last a prophet-stoning city. To be specific, the Cross far from being the outcome of Jewish ways of thinking has ever been a great stumbling block to those very Jews! All this Higher Criticism was pleased conveniently to ignore. For to face the facts at this point might indicate that the Bible was "from heaven" rather than "from men"; and that would upset the Higher Critical appletart and open the way again for the outmoded idea of revelation.

The Semitic Volksgeist and the German Volksgeist

And so a generation, nay generations, were produced who uncritically but honestly held that the Bible is an expression of the Volksgeist of the Semitic people, no more. But then it soon became evident that we owe some very humilitating ideas to that Volksgeist, that the Bible contains some

very hateful things, that its pivotal thought is everywhere hateful—to unreconstructed man that is. The idea of the Fall and of man's consequent moral predicament was blamed to Jewish inferiority complexes. The idea of grace grew from a deep-grained mendicancy inherent in the Jewish spirit. And the idea of an atonement was plainly put forward by some relative of Shylock who couldn't think of God doing a paying business unless he got his pound of flesh.

And after a generation of theologians had pointed out the many defects of this product of the Jewish Volksgeist it was but natural that some bold spirit should suggest we substitute the expression of our own Volksgeist in a book from which the "unworthy" elements had been carefully eliminated. And the market for Rosenberg's "Myth of the Twentieth Century" was ready. Here we have a German Bible, for German people; it has no cringing Christ and no angry deity. It is for heroes, not for saints, for strong men with a passion not for righteousness but for power!

Be it noted that from the Higher Critical point of view all this was quite innocent. Who can raise serious objection against the proposal to substitute for an expression of the Semitic Volksgeist an expression of the modern Teutonic mind? Only the Confessionals, men who had continued to confess that the Bible is first of all an expression to the Jewish people had an argument. And they withstood the perversion in a glorious way. May God reward them for their faithfulness to His cause!

Paul vs. Rosenberg and Coffin

From all this it is evident that the liberal churchman in our own land may not deck himself with the martyr's cloth that the world has learned to respect Niemoeller and his fellows for! No indeed! This liberal churchman belongs in the company of those who have allowed the Nazis to pin swastikas upon their cloth. He is not fighting the fight that landed the German faithfuls in concentration camps.

Or is it unfair to say these things? Is the basic assumption of our liberal theologian actually so closely akin to that of the "Deutsche Christen"? Anyone at all acquainted with the literature will know that Pauline theology is not any more welcome with them than it was with the religious Storm Troopers. They too proceed everywhere upon the assumption that the Bible is a collection of ancient human opinions, no more. And by that token our "Myth of the Twentieth Century" is due to be written.

A few examples? Here are the latest two that have passed over my desk. "The New Testament contains various doctrinal interpretations of the faith—half a dozen views of the atonement, and several explanations of the origin of person of

Christ." What is this but the plainest statement that the Bible is human opinion? Nor are our fears allayed when we remember that the words just quoted are by the present Moderator of a one time faithful denomination, Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin. Or take this one: "The New Testament has commonly been regarded as a uniform book, made up of a number of writings which are yet in full agreement . . . Any suggestion that there might be inconsistencies and contradictions in this fundamental book was construed as an attack on the Christian faith. This attitude has now been abandoned." The author of this prolix statement that the Bible is but the expression of a Volksgeist is Dr. Ernest F. Scott. He adds, to make his meaning doubly clear "It (the Bible, L.V.) is full of inconsistencies and lends its support to almost every shade of opinion." And what do these liberal theologians think of the atonement theory that has made the "Deutsche Christen" so impatient with Niemöller and the rest of the faithfuls? Permit me to quote Coffin again. "The revolt from various theories of the atonement had been due to their unchristian view of God. A father who had to be reconciled to his children, whose wrath could be appeased or whose forgiveness could be purchased, is not the Father of Jesus Christ—the God in whom He believed and whose character He revealed in His teachings and whose nature He embodied in Himself . . . Such a God freely forgives. Certain wide-

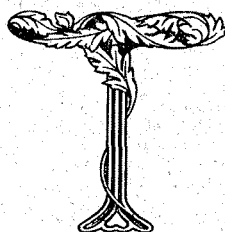
ly used hymns still perpetuate the theory that God pardons sinners because Christ purchased that pardon by His obedience and suffering. The God of the Psalmists, the God and the Father of Jesus' own teaching forgives graciously . . ."

Our Own Danger

Let it be said again that the theology of our liberal theologians is closely akin to that of the Storm Troopers who for their essential paganism have been petted by the foul Nazi paws. None of them have gone to their death for the faith, a faith "radically correct" in the eyes of the Dritte Reich. Nearly enough without exception those who are lying in anguish today are there because of a faith the Nazis hate. It is the same faith that our liberal theologians would fain consign to oblivion!

The "New Minister" is with us already. With a subtlety as great as that of the Nazi Party he is indoctrinating our youth in season and out of season. He is in control of all the really important agencies. And the Confessionals who oppose are as a voice crying in the wilderness!

The "New Minister," promoter of a "radically correct Christianity," the man from whose theology the "unworthy" ideas have been carefully excised, is in uniform among us. Will it need a social revolution to make us see him for what he is?



Amillennialism--- An Open Letter

Albertus Pieters

Western Seminary
Holland, Michigan

Mr. R. J. Reid,
11 Henderson Street,
Passaic, N. J.

Dear brother Reid:—

You will remember I promised to finish my letter to you in this issue. The next subject that must be touched upon is Principles of Interpretation.

VII. *Principles of Interpretation.*

Like all millenarians, you lay stress on the literal interpretation, but I notice with pleasure certain points in which you seem to me more reasonable and scriptural than others. Thus your exegesis of Galatians 6:16. You understand "The Israel of God" to mean those Israelites by birth who have accepted Christ. You may be right here. It turns on the translation of "and." If this is intended to add a distinct class to "as many as shall walk by this rule," your explanation is, I think, the best that can be given. On the other hand the Greek conjunction "kai" often introduces something in apposition with what goes before, and is then to be translated "even," or "that is." So it is rendered by Moffatt, and I think correctly, but either translation is possible.

I am also pleased to see that you reject Dr. Scofield's very artificial distinction between the "Kingdom of God" and the "Kingdom of Heaven"—a very indefensible piece of exegesis. (p. 40.) You see the present existence and glory of the Kingdom more clearly than Dr. Haldeman, who says there is no such thing as the Kingdom of God in existence at the present time.

I am also very glad that you recognize the "remnant" doctrine of Isaiah and St. Paul. That is very important and constitutes a real lessening of the breach between us. On p. 10 you say that in the future restoration of Israel "a remnant refusing to submit will be manifested as a regenerated and redeemed people, comprising the all Israel that will be saved."

This is excellent. You see that when a promise is given to "Israel" this is genuinely and adequately fulfilled, and the faithfulness of God is fully vindicated, when it is fulfilled to the believing portion of the people, however many or few they may be, for this remnant is, for prophetic purposes, "all Israel." This is exactly St. Paul's doctrine in Romans 3:3, and in chapters 9-10.

Now then, why not apply this principle to the first coming of Christ? He came and was rejected by the mass of the people, but a remnant, according to the election of grace, accepted Him. This remnant were Israelites, and to them the promise of the New Covenant was fulfilled, as we learn from the epistle to the Hebrews, from II Corinthians 3, and from the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper. These first disciples, then, according to your own principles, being Israelites by birth and also believing in Christ, constituted "all Israel" for prophetic purposes, and become, by virtue of the covenant, the "New Covenant Israel."

Later, Gentiles came in and eventually they outnumbered those from Israel after the flesh, but these also were "Israelites," becoming such by spiritual naturalization; just as now in this country those who trace their descent to the inhabitants of the original thirteen colonies are but few, in comparison with the many whose parents were naturalized later, but they are all Americans, all have the same history and claim the same political ancestry, although not the same ancestry by blood.

On this basis I reply to your question on p. 24: "Was it then *our* fathers with whom the old covenant was made?" Yes, it was, not biologically but in a covenant sense. Some time ago I heard a lecturer say: "We should be grateful to the Netherlands for the sympathy and help they gave us at the time of the Revolution." It thrilled me to hear him say that, for I knew the speaker to have been born in the Netherlands himself, and to be a naturalized American; but he had become so really and truly an American that he felt the America of Revolutionary days to have been his own country!

Of this truth the early Christians, like Justin Martyr, were fully convinced. He says boldly that Christians are "Jacob and Israel" and therefore applies to himself and others the promises of God to Israel. In this he was in line with Paul, who affirms that the believing Gentiles are "fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 3:6). Also, in II Cor. 1:20 he says that "how many soever are the promises of God, in Him is the yea," thus claiming for believers of Christ every divine promise, without exception. (Am. Rev. Version)

Thus the remnant, which constitutes "all Israel", inherits all the promises, bar none, and the natur-

alized Israelites from among the Gentiles, although coming in later, are not step-sons in that family, but fully on an equality with the others, "fellow-heirs," with a full title to everything God has promised to Israel. Thus, if you could make good the contention that the promise of the land must some day be fulfilled, I should claim my share in that inheritance. I can not concede that there is any promise of God at all that can be claimed by an unbelieving Israelite, or any for a believing Israelite that is not equally the inheritance of every one who is in Christ.

VIII. *The Impossibility of the Literal Interpretation.*

People who insist upon the literal interpretation commonly think that by so doing they honor God's faithfulness to His word, but to me, on the contrary, they by so doing render faith in the prophecies impossible.

Take Jeremiah 33:17. Here it is emphatically said that the service of the Levites in the temple shall suffer no interruption. Since Jeremiah himself foretold the Babylonian captivity, we understand that this does not conflict with his prediction, as the Levites continued in existence and resumed their work. It was only a slight and temporary interruption, which is passed over in the prophecy.

Since 70 A.D., however, the case is different. For nearly 1,900 years there have been no Levites sacrificing in the temple or elsewhere. How, then, if the literal sense be adhered to, can one avoid saying that the promise has failed? It is vain here to appeal to the expected restoration of sacrifices in the millennial age, for two reasons.

(1) The prophecy does not say that in spite of a long cessation the Levites shall resume their work. No, it says clearly that there never will be a time when they do not minister to the Lord. Yet they have not so ministered for nearly 1,900 years! Not only so, suppose the millennium to begin tomorrow, and the Levites to resume their work, they would then have ministered from 536 B.C. to 70 A.D., a period of 605 years, plus 1,000 years for the millenium, 1,605 years in all, as against 1,873 years of cessation. Can you call that a fulfilment of a solemn promise?

(2) There are now no more Levites, any more than any of all the other tribes. All tribal distinctions are gone, and the genealogies are lost. By intermarriage among themselves, and by the loss of genealogies, no Jew can now tell to what tribe he belongs. How, then, can the Levites be restored to their service? It will not do to say, with Joseph Smith in the Book of Mormon: "God knows where they are and can find them." Not even God can find what does not exist, and the tribe of Levi has simply passed out of existence.

If we recognize this very clear fact, that the promise in question has not been fulfilled, and now

can not be fulfilled, we must either fall back on the principle of Jeremiah 18:10 and say the promise was voided by disobedience and unbelief (which would not suit you at all) or we must find another meaning in the prophecy.

This I do by the following principle of interpretation; which I commend to your consideration:

The promises of God to His people are always stated in terms of their religious situation at the time when the promises are given; but they are fulfilled in terms of their condition and needs when the time of fulfilment has arrived.

Thus, if no fundamental change has taken place, the fulfilment will be literal, but if such a change is present it will determine the form of fulfilment. Apply this principle to the promise in question. The acceptable worship of the true God was then bound up with Levitical sacrifices and offerings. Hence the assurance that this worship would never be lost to the world is stated as it is; but the time came when the Lord Jesus could say: "Neither on this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem." That rendered the Levitical ceremonies superfluous, and even a hindrance to such worship as must now be offered; but the worship of the true God continues, and every true minister, standing before his people, is a New Covenant Levite, fulfilling this great promise.

In the above argument I incidentally referred to Jeremiah 18:10. Let me commend a study of that text to you also. I have never yet met a millenarian who seemed to be aware of its existence. Does it not completely destroy any confidence in any earthly promise of God to Israel, seeing that people proved itself unworthy?

IX. *Who Are the Present Day Jews?*

Probably the widest cleavage between your views and mine is with regard to the people whom we now call, and who call themselves "The Jews", who worship in the synagogue and adhere to the Talmud.

To you as to all premillenarians, these people are still in a sense the people of God, set aside, to be sure, for a time, because of unbelief, but certain at some time in the future to be restored to their status of privilege, in a national relation to God, and in that capacity to be the heirs of a great prophetic future.

In my view, on the contrary, they are simply fellow human beings, to whom the gospel should be preached, and who can be saved by repentance and faith in Christ, one by one, as individuals, but for whom there is no future as a group, either outside of or inside of the Christian church. They may at any time be re-ingrafted, as individuals, into the Christian Church, which is the Israel from which they have been cut off, but such re-ingrafting must be by faith, and since faith can be exercised only by persons, not by groups or nations, this offers

them no corporate future. Upon such conversion they cease to be Jews and become Christians. As Jews, even converted Jews, I believe that they have no separate position in the purposes of God, and no prophetic future of any kind. As I say in my "Ten Tribes": "THE CLOSED BOOK OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY WILL NOT BE RE-OPENED."

On what ground could such a prophetic future be expected for them? I know what your reply will be: "Because of the unfulfilled promises of God to Israel." But so far as their spiritual content is concerned, these promises have been fulfilled and are continually being fulfilled to the believing remnant, which, as you yourself say, is, for prophetic purposes "all Israel." So far as their earthly content is concerned, these promises were long ago forfeited, under Jeremiah 18:10, and are moreover not applicable since the national situation, to which they were addressed, came to an end, 70 A.D.

That it would so come to an end had been abundantly predicted. It came to an end inwardly and essentially when our Lord instituted the feast of the New Covenant (Luke 22:20; I Cor. 11:25, American Revised Version). It came to an end outwardly and politically when the Romans destroyed the Israelitish state. Of these two events (which are fundamentally one) Jeremiah had foretold the first, in 31:31, and Daniel the second, in 9:24-27. Of course, in citing Daniel, I set aside, as untenable exegesis, the idea that the 70th week can be separated by a long interval from the other 69 weeks. This is a very old idea. To my surprise I found it in the Church Fathers, but it seems to me that there is nothing to support it in the text or context, and that it is directly excluded by the fact that our Lord warned the people of his generation that some of them would see the "abomination of desolation" of Daniel 9:27 standing in the holy place. (Matt. 24:15.)

This prediction of the end of the Israelitish national order was renewed by John the Baptist, when he warned his hearers that the axe already lay at the root of the tree, indicating that it would soon be cut down. It was foretold by our Lord in the Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen, in Matthew 21, especially in vs. 43. He showed that this would definitely be the end in 23:36, where He said that all the accumulated guilt of Israel's long and wicked history would come upon that generation. Why that generation, unless because it was to be the last? Symbolically He pronounced the same doom when He said to the barren fig tree (representing Israel) "Let there be no fruit from thee henceforth forever." This can not mean that there was to be no spiritual fruit from individual converted Israelites, for there has been much, but that the Israelitish nation, as such, should yield no fruit. And so it has been, but the millennial teaching requires us boldly to amend the Lord's words, to read not "forever," but "for a long time"!

The apostle Paul confirms these predictions when he says of the Jews that "wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." The "uttermost" allows of nothing beyond what came upon them at that time. This could not be true of individual Jews, but only if he here contemplates a national judgment wiping out the guilty nation, and therefore permitting nothing further. If, now, according to the holy apostle, the wrath of God against Israel was exhausted in the events of that generation, "how say some among you" that there is to be a future and even greater tribulation for them? If you ask, "Have not the Jews suffered since that time?" I say, "They have not, as a nation, for there has been no Jewish nation from that day to this, which could suffer."

What shall we say, then, of those who call themselves, and whom the world calls, "The Jews?" This: that they are a new group, of which the Bible knows nothing, except in Rev. 2:9 and 3:9, and whom God does not acknowledge. They began with the work of Rabbi Johanan Ben Zakkai, who escaped from the siege of Jerusalem in a coffin (a most symbolical action!) and made a new beginning at Jabneh, or Jamnia. He, his associates and successors, preserved the separate existence of his people as a religious group by building again, against the will of God, therefore most wickedly, the "middle wall of partition," which Christ had broken down. Through their Talmud, they built up that wall higher and stronger than it had ever been before. By this impious process they kept themselves again a separate nation. They assumed to call themselves Jews, and to be zealous for the Law, but they threw overboard the religious heart of the Law, the law of sacrifices; and this lack at once disqualifies them from any title to be the continuation of Old Testament Israel. The word of God has pronounced upon them the final word, if we will but listen:

"The synagogue of Satan—they that say they are Jews, and they are not, but do lie" (Rev. 3:9.)

I may fairly expect from you, as an advocate of the literal sense, no effort to soften or evade this verdict.

Upon what ground, now, can a Christian think or speak of these people as the "Seed of Abraham" and therefore in some sense heirs of the promises? Upon that of blood? It is vain to appeal to it. They are an exceedingly mixed race. Very few of them can have any Abrahamic blood in their veins, and none can prove it. That was true even in biblical Israel, and how much the more now. By intermarriage, sometimes voluntary, often not, by the coming in of proselytes, etc., etc., the Abrahamic blood has been watered down until now it is as good as gone.

Not that it makes much difference, for this thing does not go by blood. It did not, even in Bible times. Often those who had the blood lost the suc-

cession, and those who had not the blood obtained citizenship in Israel. Ishmael was of Abrahamic blood, but he was cast out. So was Esau, but he became a "profane person," and the Edomites were not reckoned in Israel until the time of John Hyrcanus. What counts is not blood but continuity of covenant relation, and this is precisely what those who now falsely call themselves "Jews" do not have and cannot regain except by conversion to Christ, in which case they will be absorbed in the New Covenant Israel, the Christian Church. When that happens they will cease to be a Synagogue of Satan, and will cease to call themselves Jews.

Thus it seems to me crystal clear, upon the basis of the scriptures, that there can be no separate

future for this group in the Kingdom of God. Many years ago a brother learned in the scriptures said, in a conference I attended: "God is through with the Jews." At the time this remark startled me, for I was not then prepared for so bold a statement; but I have studied the scriptures much since that time, along this line, and now I am fully convinced that he was right.

With cordial Christian greetings,

Very sincerely and fraternally yours,

ALBERTUS PIETERS

[Footnote by Editor: To encourage study and discussion of this problem, we shall be glad to publish a rejoinder to this letter from Mr. Reid or any other premillenarian student of the subject.]

The Voice of our Readers

AS TO PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

1929 Collins Ave., S.E., 7, City.
March 20, 1944.

Dr. Clarence Bouma,
THE CALVIN FORUM,
City.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

BY accident I saw a copy of THE CALVIN FORUM, January issue. One article's title hit me between the eyes. Really, I saw Wilson and Roosevelt Vindicated, as headlined. I blinked. I turned to the article—read it. Was it possible? To me it is a miracle that it passed the censors.

I must say you've got nerve. Anybody who dares to slash his way through the armed traditions of Calvin's fortress to hang his "theses" on the FORUM isn't ready for a life of tea and toast—not yet, anyway. I'll bet you live to be a hundred. At least you ought to. There is still a grand circulation going on through your system. The vigor of your language proves your mind is far from a state of atrophy; and your stance clearly shows your swings have not hit only pure air. In this article you have unequivocally demonstrated to be one who will *not* do anything for the sake of "deah old Hahvahd."

Perhaps you've made known your sentiments in previous articles. I wonder. I am also wondering if you've ever committed yourself editorially on the administration's domestic policy. Even so, your latest utterance indicates you are not stamped, if you know what I mean.

America's depression has definitely marked two distinct classes of people. I don't mean in the qualifying sense: Liberal and Conservative. The matter goes deeper. Those with The Mark have shown in essence their real make-ups. You are a student of human nature. I trust you know the set I allude to. The leaders of France, The Netherlands, and other rocking-chair statesmen, were content to let their bodies fatten while less-fed wolves bayed in the distant caverns. For this indifference the world got war. Likewise the smirking frumps of this country, immensely "grateful" for their full larder, licked their chops while the dizzy many groaned in want. In a measure the favored few enjoyed the fruit of sins which others have committed. I say this because I believe millionaires are made by fools—relatively so. In fine, the musty class sat in their

dens to gloat over their trophies, little realizing the woods were still full of wild animals.

We got the New Deal. To help the hand-wringing victims, Roosevelt dared to chase out the money-changers and use some of their ill-gotten gains for some sort of distribution. Then the howls rose in unison to decry the waste. But from whose throats did come these howlings? From the steel-brained business hounds. Their precious heritage was being tapped. In a parallel case I am reminded of Lincoln. He reached out for the unjust heritage of another more presumptuous society. But he had to split the country to right the wrong. Roosevelt, no less, divided America in his efforts to set matters aright. Finally the reactionaries (a floppy term) spread their gospel of "encroachment", "regimentation", "waste", and what-not. Came the war. I am sure that if the president had had his way there would have been none. He knew what was coming; he heard the rumblings—the martial tom-toms. But the old boy was smart. By subtle means he tried to force the issue, for he was aware of the striking power of his political enemies. Not alone that, but the minds of the American people were hardly ready to listen to war's possibilities. The flimsy evidence wasn't convincing enough for preparedness talk. We had to have a Pearl Harbor to realize it. Well, we got it—and Guam was left unfortified.

Willkie in an article in the *American Magazine* some time ago pearled a truth when he said that the peoples' hatred for Roosevelt wasn't normal but psychopathic. It is. Those of your own circle: Relatives, friends, and acquaintances, are fevered with their own venom. They'd as soon see Roosevelt shot, then thank God for their deliverance.

Therefore it is indeed exciting to see a man of learned caliber, like yourself, and amid fusty and frothy die-hards, declare himself for the other side. More power to you.

I am enclosing two dollars for a year's subscription to THE FORUM, a paper headed by a courageous man.

No, I'm not a Democrat, as such. I simply have judged a great leader by the only known standard: his works; and it makes me happy to think that there are a few stalwarts, who are in a better position, doing the same thing.

Yours very sincerely,

EDWARD RODENHOUSE.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

AMILLENNIALISM

Philadelphia, Pa.,
March 20, 1944.

Dr. Clarence Bouma,
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

PLEASE enter a year's subscription to THE CALVIN FORUM, to begin with the March, 1944 issue.

Albertus Pieters' article on Amillennialism was very interesting, and I am desirous of keeping these two articles for reference.

Recently, I wrote a booklet on the Millennium, What it is and what it is not. In it I have presented the Amillennial viewpoint. I am having difficulty getting it printed; the printer has had it since December; shortage of metal the cause. When it is finished, I shall send you a copy, and if the Lord so leads, I should like to have you review it in THE FORUM.

Most cordially yours,

GEORGE B. FLETCHER,
Pastor, Faith Baptist Church,
Philadelphia, Pa.

A CONTAGIOUS ENTHUSIASM

Dr. Clarence Bouma,
Editor THE CALVIN FORUM,
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Louisville, Ky.,
March 16, 1944.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

I AM certain that you are interested in these excerpts from a letter written to me by a Mississippi Junior College teacher. She is a member of one of the four churches which I have been serving there. I urged her to attend the regional Calvinistic conference when it appeared impossible for me to attend.

"I went, I heard, I believed! Why, Calvinism is God living here on earth within the hearts of true Christians! It's a challenge of Right to Wrong, and as for me, I came away from the Conference last night with the determination to learn more about this great awakening. The speakers were superior . . . messages stood the test in every way . . . would have given heaps and heaps to have stayed . . . also can you tell me more about 'The Calvin Forum'? . . . tell me, are Christianity and Calvinism synonymous . . . I thank you lots and lots for telling me about the Conference."

And that, Dr. Bouma, should illustrate the great need for excellent popular literature on Calvinism. Could not Warfield's article on Calvinism be reprinted in pamphlet form?

With warm greetings,

Sincerely yours in Christ,
RAY W. TEEUWISSEN.

From Our Correspondents

THE JACKSON CALVINISTIC CONFERENCE

Dear Dr. Bouma:

THROUGH you as well as to you, the Committee for the Jackson Regional Calvinistic Conference sends greetings, hoping that they will be conveyed to the American Calvinistic Congress Committee and our fellow-Calvinists reached by THE CALVIN FORUM. When you were here, I promised you that I would send you a report on the Conference to the National Committee and would provide you with a personal impression of the Conference that FORUM readers might find interesting. It is not easy to combine the two messages; but this letter is an attempt to do so. Without a secretarial assistant, and burdened by innumerable local duties that have given me no respite since our Conference, I have not been able to attempt two separate reports—and I am oppressed with concern that this may come to your hands too late to serve its purpose effectively. Use what you will of this in the FORUM. I am aware that it is possibly too long for your columns as it stands; but I could not say less and give you as complete a report as I desired you to have.

The Work of God

The heart of what I wish to share with you and our fellow-servants of Christ may be summed in saying, "All glory to our Sovereign God for the Jackson Calvinistic Conference!"

That God was working in us and through us was manifest in the beginning; for I trace our part in the beginnings of the Conference back to the early months of 1943, when some of us here, ministers and laymen alike, began to remark among ourselves that we needed more spiritual fellowship among the churches of the city and the Synod of Mississippi than we had been enjoying, and ought to plan some way of developing it. Our first thought, then, was for a meeting of Presbyters; we had not conceived of a regional Calvinistic Conference. It is now evident that God was preparing our hearts to receive the correspondence that came soon from the national Committee

commending such a program to us. We praise God with thanksgiving for His handiwork in us!

It was on March 8, 1943, that the Reverend L. Oostendorp wrote first to me inquiring about the possibility of holding the next American Calvinistic Conference in the South after the war. Recalling the recent expressions I had heard locally, I felt justified in suggesting to him that the Conference be held within the year. From that time on, it was increasingly evident that God was leading our way. A wider group became increasingly interested, and correspondence steadily clarified the possibilities.

All of us here, though deeply interested in such a program, were heavily burdened with a multitude of duties, and frankly admitted fearing to undertake the project of a regional conference of Calvinists because of the demands upon our time that preparation for it would necessarily impose; but the vision of what such a conference would mean and the encouragement we received from the sub-committee of the American Calvinistic Conference Committee through your correspondence, Dr. Bouma, were instruments in the hand of the Holy Spirit to erase every doubt.

While I had been corresponding with you, Dr. R. E. Hough of Central Presbyterian Church had been receiving encouragement along the same way from Dr. William Childs Robinson as Commissioner of the Edinburg Congress—a fact of which I was completely unaware until near the end of October.

Support from Clergy and Laymen

On October 19, 1943, Dr. G. T. Gillespie, Dr. Hough, and I brought the matter officially to the attention of the Central Mississippi Presbytery, and Dr. Gillespie and Dr. Hough were appointed a committee of the Presbytery "to consider, and to report at an adjourned meeting their findings, as to the advisability of holding a Conference on Calvinism during the winter." The three of us met in Dr. Hough's study about a week later

and agreed that we would work for such a Conference, would invite the other ministers of the Presbyterian churches of Jackson, Dr. Girard Lowe of the First Presbyterian Church and Rev. W. A. Hall of Power Memorial Presbyterian Church to work with us, and set our first meeting to organize as a working Committee for the following Tuesday in Dr. Lowe's study, which, because of its central location for all of us, served as meeting place for our Committee thereafter.

Rev. Hall had recently suffered the loss of his wife, and felt himself unable to participate actively in our efforts, but assured us of his prayers, interest, and desire to cooperate with whatever we decided to do. Dr. Gillespie moderated the meeting we then held according to plan; and Dr. Lowe's additional presence was a vital part of our committee of four. That first meeting so engrossed our hearts that we worked through the morning and into the afternoon without taking time for our mid-day meal. The net results were the election of myself as the Chairman of a committee to be composed of those present which would press the Conference forward; the selection of a date—February 20-21; the determination of a Conference theme—"The Challenge of Calvinism In Our Day"; the preparation of a tentative program of subjects and speakers; the setting up of a plan to call a meeting of the laymen of our respective churches to enlist their interest and support; the determination of the regional extent of our invitations to attend the Conference; and the purposing to make the program as popular in the plane of its appeal as we could make it.

Our meeting with the laymen fell on a cold and dismal afternoon the second Sunday in November, rain-drenched and wintry enough to discourage the hardiest. I recall well how full of gloomy foreboding I was as I drove to the meeting, thinking we could scarcely have picked a more inauspicious day. How God put to shame my weak faith!

Approximately forty staunch servants of God were present, and more—the Spirit of God was present with power. We opened with a Scripture reading and prayer. I explained the purpose of the meeting and outlined our program as planned. The other members of the Committee supplemented my remarks one by one. Then there was a brief silence.

"What do you want us to do?" one of the elders ventured.

"We want you to back us. This will cost money. We want you to make it your Conference."

There was no further pause. Man after man they arose to express appreciation for the plans and devotion to our efforts, saying, "You go ahead and lead us. We'll see that every penny you need is supplied." I shall never forget that meeting nor cease to cherish its memory. The Spirit of God was a living fire in each heart and the glow of our fellowship dispelled all darkness of the day.

Obstacles Overcome

We needed that endowment with power from on high which we received that day; for ahead lay obstacles we could not then foresee that threatened to forestall all of our planning.

Our correspondence to obtain speakers started at once. We wanted six men; and the first three we wrote accepted enthusiastically. They were you, Dr. Bouma, Dr. Edwin Rian, and Dr. William Childs Robinson. But the others were already engaged for the dates we had selected. Every man we wrote thereafter seemed to be unquestionably enthusiastic for such a Conference; but we had set our ambitions high, feeling that we would need men of wide reputation to attract attendance to the Conference despite the handicap of restrictions upon war-time travel; and such men are in so great a demand that their calendars of activity had been filled for the dates we had chosen before we could contact them. There were others we might have asked; but the time involved in our correspondence with those we did ask to come passed by swiftly and we found ourselves in January of 1944 with only half of our program of speakers complete, each passing day reducing our chances of securing a speaker of prominence who could find the time to

prepare his part upon the program in the short weeks that remained. Our spirits were at low ebb then. Influenza was epidemic in our congregations. All of us on the Committee were sick with bad colds ourselves and worn almost to exhaustion with the tension of our pastoral work, the strain of the influence of war upon our congregations and ourselves. My secretary fell sick and I was deluged with the minutiae of records and correspondence. During the last week of January, our Conference a bare month away, I called a meeting of our Committee to consider postponing the Conference, possibly for a full year; but I think all of us were aware that postponement would probably mean the end of the Conference. Looking back over the way we had come, we felt that we might never again be able to bring sufficient enthusiasm and interest to a head to be assured of the general support we needed.

Just before I left to go to the Committee meeting, I received a letter from you, Dr. Bouma, dated January 20, stating that Rev. Jacob T. Hoogstra and Rev. John F. Schuurmann had arranged to come with you. The arrival of that letter, timed by the providence of God, saved us from postponing our Conference. Our Father had tried our faith but had not forsaken us.

Your letter suggested an alternative decision. We would curtail our Conference plans and revise them, asking all participants to take additional parts and requesting Rev. Schuurmann and Dr. Hoogstra to participate.

In His inscrutable but wise and merciful providence, God prevented Rev. Schuurmann from coming. Our hearts shared with him the sudden passing of his mother. But all other participants gallantly assumed the burden of additional preparation on the short notice and our last hurdles were cleared.

Publicity and Response

Relieved and heartened we turned our full energies to the remaining tasks of publicizing the Conference, printing our programs, sending out personal letters of invitation, and planning our arrangements for entertainment. All of these details had been held up by our delay in completing the Conference program; and we were now under tremendous pressure in order to complete what was necessary. Most of the monthly publications that might have given us publicity were already in the presses. We hastily prepared news releases and sent them to all the leading newspapers of Mississippi, to selected papers covering Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, and Tennessee, and to every religious periodical which we thought might be interested, including *The Presbyterian Herald*, *The Baptist Record*, *The Southern Christian Courier*, *The Christian Beacon*, *The Christian Century*, *United Evangelical Action*, *The Protestant Voice*, *Presbyterian of the South*, *The Presbyterian Guardian*, *The Southern Presbyterian Journal*, *The Christian Observer*, *The Associate Reformed Presbyterian*, and as a last broadside shot, "Religious News Service".

It was THE CALVIN FORUM, however, that gave us the fullest support and the widest publicity. We shall ever be grateful for its splendid cooperation. At its request we supplied long lists of ministers and laymen in the region, who were sent copies of THE FORUM announcing our conference; and many were doubtless reached in that way as they could not have been otherwise.

Dr. Gillespie prepared a letter enclosing a prepaid postage return card which was sent directly to every likely delegate, inviting attendance and offering our services in making arrangements for meals and lodging provided that we were given notice of attendance.

I haunted the printing office to snatch the programs wet from the press and rush copies of them to every Calvinist whose name I could find outside of Dr. Gillespie's list.

The response to this concentrated effort was fascinating. Since we had been delayed in extending our invitations, it was to be expected that a number could not make plans to attend at the late date. But of the refusals, only one—a Presbyterian

minister in Louisiana—showed any disfavor toward the Conference. In marked contrast were the many letters of warm praise, some of which enclosed unsolicited contributions toward the expense, that came from those who could not be present.

The Conference and Its Blessings

Suddenly, it seemed, the Conference date was at hand; and we were warm with the joy of welcoming our first guests, who happened to be you and Dr. Hoogstra, who slipped into Jackson first, unannounced, and explored the highways and byways of our city thoroughly before revealing his presence at the station where we had gone to receive you.

How shall I put the next days into words? Time and space do not suffice. Your readers have our program from THE CALVIN FORUM pages; but that reveals nothing of the rich blessing we knew together. Oh, the richness of the covenant fellowship of God's sons which our Gracious Lord poured forth until there was no longer room to receive further joy! Surely none of us will forget the rapt faces of our congregations drinking in the fervent pulpit appeals to faith in the time-tried doctrines so beautifully formulated by Calvin—the enthusiastic discussions at the luncheons, Dr. Robinson pounding the table with his fist in the fervor of his spirit—the thunder of mighty arguments for the Word of God against the doctrines and traditions of men with their falsehood and error—the keen thrust and parry of argumentative discussion—the prolonging of the day over cups of hot chocolate at the Edwards hotel late at night—the smiles at the cloudy disfavor of our not-so-sunny Southland—the firm and silent grip of the hands of friends long separated by time and space—the intense fellowship of prayer, reaching across the sea in intercession for brethren battling for the faith in bomb-battered Netherlands, England, Hungary, France, and wherever else the fire of the Reformed Faith blazed unquenched by the foul instruments of the powers and principalities of evil—the tense bodies of devout men and women leaning forward to miss no precious word of practicable doctrine which would help them meet the racking demands of our day—the overwhelming sense of spontaneous overflowing of devotion to the glory of God that locked heart with heart—these things and more I would convey, but words lack the power of experience. How I covet a continuation of such experiences! How I long to share them with others! All the cost of preparation could not appraise the value of those days. We were rewarded a thousandfold. Our cup of blessing filled to the brim and overflowed. Time was no longer tense about us; we were participants of the glory that shall be revealed and the veil of eternity was very thin. Heaven was manifest in history.

Are these but sole personal effusions? I think one vignette will answer that. On the last evening one faithful layman who had borne a large part of the expenses caught my arm and with shining face said, "When we have this Conference again next year, I have a plan for the publicity I want to try so that more can share this thing with us." He was not thinking in terms of anything but the vital values which so filled his soul that he must share them to the fulness of his powers. There was no "If we can afford to have such a Conference again." There was evident in his heart but one thought—"More, more, more to the glory of our Lord God!"

Future Conferences

I must close and get this into your hands. There is much—so very much more—that I should like to say; but I am constrained by the length of what I have written. Let me close, then, briefly with a few concrete suggestions which may be of interest or value to any other regional group whom God gives the grace to enjoy a similar blessing.

Our total expense for the Conference amounted to \$333.22. This covered the travel expense of our participants on the program and a small honorarium, our postage for correspondence

and our telegrams, the hotel bills of our guests, and the printing of our programs. I am attaching an itemization for your Committee, as I presume the details will be of no particular interest to your readers. Of this expense, \$219.86 was supplied by freewill offerings collected during the Conference. The remainder of \$113.36 was met by the laymen in our churches promptly according to promise.

We estimate that between 300 and 400 different people attended some part of the program, of whom some 30 or more were guests from out of town who were entertained by Belhaven College.

All of us are agreed that the Conference was an unqualified success, and that we are eager to do what we can to stimulate others. Our Committee has already begun correspondence with Calvinist friends in the Carolinas to urge such a Conference there; and we ask the uniting of your prayers to that end.

It is our faith that the first regional calvinistic conference here in Jackson is but a relatively small beginning of the fellowship in sound doctrine that we shall see catching fire from heart to heart wherever in our nation the Sovereign God is adored in sincerity and truth. And we look forward with fervent anticipation to increasing repetitions of its manifestation of His power. Thanks be unto God for the contribution of time and interest and prayer which each of you, beloved brethren in the American Calvinistic Conference Committee, and all who are and have been concerned with us in this undertaking, have made.

Faithfully yours in Christ Jesus,

J. MOODY McDILL,

Pastor Fondren Presbyterian Church.

Jackson, Miss.

FROM NEW ZEALAND

Maori Mission Language School,
Waishau, via Whakatane,
New Zealand,
January 10, 1944.

The Editor,

THE CALVIN FORUM,

Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

I HAVE received three issues lately of THE CALVIN FORUM, but in none of them have two of my letters despatched to you, appeared. One can only draw an obvious conclusion in war-time—lost in transit. I trust that this one will arrive safely.

In November of last year I travelled to Dunedin in the South Island, the home of Presbyterianism, in order to attend the General Assembly meetings of our Church. These meetings were held in the historic First Church, a building which is said to be the finest illustration of Gothic architecture in the Southern Hemisphere. The retiring Moderator was the Very Rev. J. G. Laughton, Superintendent of Maori Missions, and the new Moderator who presided over the Assembly meetings was the Rt. Rev. D. C. Herron, M.C., M.A., of Knox Church, Dunedin. Mr. Herron is a New Zealander, and a graduate of Otago University, of which institution he is now Vice-Chancellor. His theological training was undertaken in Scotland where he proved himself to be a scholar of no mean ability. At the beginning of his second, third, and fourth sessions he won the Roxburgh Scripture Prize open to all the United Free Colleges in Scotland. At the close of his second, third, and fourth years he won the Miller-Pitcairn Frame Scholarship, as first student of his year, and at the beginning of his third year the much-coveted George-Scott-Freeland Scholarship in Hebrew. In his fourth year Mr. Herron carried off the Brown-Downie Scholarship in Church History open to all the Free Church Colleges. He finished his course top for Scotland and was awarded the

Duncan Thomson Fellowship for two years. His service as a Chaplain in the 1914-'18 War was recognized in the award of the M.C. for bravery. The new Moderator is minister of a Church with a communicant membership just over one thousand.

The Moderatorial address was on "The Need for a Prophetic Ministry". It was a call to the members of the ministry to exercise its prophetic function. Here are a few quotations from the address: "What we are most in need of in the Church today is new life—and first of all a new note of Divine authority in preaching". "It is that vivid compelling sense of the presence of God in the words of the preacher that gives his message the note of authority and makes him a disturbing element in the community". "If our preaching evokes neither devotion nor opposition it has lost the prophetic quality". In a passing reference to servicemen who will be returning to our shores at the close of the war, the Moderator said, "They will be drawn back into the Church if in the meantime the note of Divine authority—the Word of God which came to John in the wilderness—has reappeared among us also". "We must learn to compel ourselves to be still before God until we know the Word which He would have us speak". He concluded, "The need of the world is God. The Church is in the world to remind mankind of that need".

Synodical Reports

The business meetings were most interesting and the work of the various committees which came before the Assembly for review and discussion was not passed over lightly. I will just mention some of the more important ones, and that briefly. The main items of interest in the Public Questions Committee's Report were the three following, viz., Bible in Schools, the Government Plan for Physical Welfare and Youth, and the question of the marriage of United States Servicemen and New Zealand girls. All the Protestant Churches in N. Z. are co-operating to bring pressure to bear upon the Government to introduce religious education into the curriculum. There is every indication that in this year (1944) the matter will be brought up for debate in Parliament. The Convener of the P.Q.C., when referring to the Government Physical Welfare Plan, said they had the authority of the Hon. W. E. Parry, Minister in Charge of the Scheme, in saying that the Government welcomed any existing youth movements within the Church and that these would not be superseded in any way. The question of marriage of U. S. Servicemen to N. Z. young women arose because of the desire of the authorities of your country and ours to see that both parties to the contract were fully aware of the civil and legal repercussions. The United States and New Zealand have entirely different backgrounds and this is an honest endeavour to mark down to a minimum the number of ill-fated marriages which occur in any country of the world at a time of tension and war.

In war-time the Report of the Chaplain's Committee naturally assumes a size which would not be so in times of peace. We are proud to report that in the Middle East and the Pacific, in the Army and the Air Force, no less than twenty-seven chaplains are in service, whilst during the year a further twenty-seven have served in various capacities in New Zealand. Four of our chaplains are still prisoners of war, and splendid accounts reach our shores through various channels, of the fine work these padres are doing among the prisoners of war.

A Professorial Appointment

Perhaps the most important decision of all was the appointment of the new Professor of Theology and Church History, a vacancy occasioned by the death of Very Rev. Principal John Dickie, D.D. Six applicants were received but only three nominations were made on the floor of the Assembly. There were two New Zealanders, both with excellent records, the Rev. J. M. Bates, M.A., and the Rev. I. W. Fraser, Th.D., and the Rev. John Henderson, M.A., Ph.D., of Scotland. The voting resulted in the appointment of Dr. Henderson, a decision which was

subsequently made unanimous. Although this was the appointment for which many of us were longing and praying, we were more than surprised at the result. Dr. Henderson was unknown to the majority of the Assembly, but his testimonials were from three outstanding men, and thoroughly evangelical at that. They were from the pens of Professor G. T. Thomson, Professor of Christian Dogmatics at the University of Edinburgh, Professor Daniel Lamont, Professor of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology of Edinburgh University, and from Professor Hugh Watt, Professor of Church History in the same University. Surely these three eminent men cannot be wrong! So, many of us thought, and on the weight of their testimonials and Dr. Henderson's own statement, "In religion I am an evangelical", we feel that our ministry in the future will be richly blessed by the sanctified scholarship which Dr. Henderson will bring to his task. For the past twelve years he has been minister of St. Margaret's, Juniper Green, Edinburgh. We are looking forward to Dr. Henderson's arrival and many of us younger men, not long out of the Halls of Learning, are somewhat envious of the present students.

The Mission Committee Report, as always, evinced keen interest. A further appointment to our New Hebrides Mission Staff was made in the person of the Rev. Ivan Muir, B.A. This fills a long-felt want in that sphere. In China, all our Mission Staff with the exception of our veteran "Mary Slessor of China", Miss Annie James, M.B.E., are in internment. Miss James carried on her heroic work in Free China. Many and many a Chinese will rise up and call her "blessed". India, that land of many political and social problems, is still receiving earnest and devoted attention from our missionaries. After 21 years' service as a missionary in that land, the Rev. J. L. Gray has returned to New Zealand. Incidentally, his wife and he have written an excellent study book entitled, "India's New Day".

A courageous proposal has been adopted by the Assembly in order to provide for reconstruction in our Mission Fields after the war. It is called "A Memorial and Thanksgiving Fund" aiming at the raising of £55,000. It is a big sum, we admit, but not beyond the capacity of a Church with a record membership this year (in spite of war) of 56,978.

The Moderator-designate of the Church is a layman, Mr. T. C. Brash, the only other occasion on which such a step was taken being in 1917. For forty years he has been an elder of the Church, and on two occasions has occupied the position of President of the Bible Class Union of N. Z. (a young people's movement). He has been associated with Assembly Committees for many years. In accepting the nomination to the high office Mr. Brash stated that the world could not be saved by the clergy alone—the witness and the help of men and women in every walk of life was necessary.

"Jesus Shall Reign"

Then there was People's Night, when the Dunedin Town Hall was filled with an audience of approximately 2,800 people. And what a night we had! That Hall resounded to the words of the 124th Psalm, "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord", and "Jesus shall reign". Nor were we permitted to forget the debt we owed to our spiritual forefathers, the Covenanters of Scotland. The Rev. C. J. Tocker thrilled his audience with a convincing and compelling address on "The Struggle for Freedom and the Expansion of the Church". The Covenanters were made to live for us and we were challenged to follow the example of their faith. That same evening we had brief addresses from the Rev. D. N. McDiarmid, B.A., M.B.E., the Director of Missions, and Major R. T. Dodds, C.F., recently returned after three years abroad. The latter spoke on "With the N. Z. Division in North Africa". The whole tenor of that wonderful meeting was summed up for us by the singing of a combined choir of 300 voices, of the "Hallelujah Chorus"—aye, *the Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth*.

In conclusion, let me say how much I value THE CALVIN FORUM, and particularly your Australian Correspondent's let-

ters, the Rev. Arthur Allen. The small publication of which he is editor, *The Reformed Theological Review*, was very favorably commented upon in a "review" in our Church paper recently. May God continue to own and bless all efforts put forth in His name. "Unto Him be glory in the Church".

Yours sincerely,

JOHN N. SMITH.

[Thank you, Mr. Smith, for your informative letter. We regret that some of your letters were lost in transit. The last preceding this coming to hand was dated April 30, 1943, and appeared promptly upon its arrival in the June-July, 1943, issue. We fear that some Australian letters also are missing as war casualties.—EDITOR.]

NEWS AND COMMENTS

Major Bible Ignorance

In a "Letter to the Editor" in *Time* (March 6, 1944) Major Robert V. Ely of Camp Hood, Texas, writes about a puzzling matter. The magazine had written something anent wrestling and so forth, and mentioned "the most famous athlete in history: wrestling Jacob". Major Ely's question: I have followed sports all my life, but never heard of Jacob. Can you tell me something about him? In answer the *Time* editor quotes Genesis 32:24-28. We are considered to be a Christian nation, but it looks like some of us know precious little about and of the Bible.

News of the Nation

"News of the Nation" is a new book, just out. The news it conveys deals with the discovery of America, the Civil War, etc. Of course, these historic facts are not considered 'news' today. But the title of the book is quite right none the less. It is a book written like a newspaper. The pages also look like newspaper front-pages. The essential facts of a certain period are headlined and 'Bulletined'. Whether or not this method of imparting history to pupils will be revolutionary or not, fact is that this method makes a terrific impact upon the mind of the student. And—textbooks *could* be made easier for students!

The Sunday School Menace

For a long time there has been in the mind of Protestant people a measure of dissatisfaction with the Sunday School 'as is'. This dissatisfaction came to expression in an unusually vehement fashion in an article by Lockhart Amerman written for and published in *The Christian Century* (2/9/44). Rev. Amerman is Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Sewickley, Pa. (a suburb of Pittsburgh). The two things which Mr. Amerman finds very hard to love in the Sunday School are: (1) The S. S. is a caste or secret fraternity. "They look with veiled eyes upon all lesser breeds, though it is a point of honor with them to be kind and patient toward lay people and tolerant of ministers. Their membership in the caste is usually certified by academic documents which attest a profound ignorance concerning the content of Christianity and a thorough knowledge of the manner in which it should be taught." (2) Jargon. "And with the jargon I cannot away. 'Projects' I cannot stomach. 'Child Integration' I cannot bear . . . 'slogans: 'Living and Doing in a World at War', or 'Toward a Broader Horizon'—these things leave me unmoved."

In times past "The church was the mother of learning. For good or evil, learning could scarce exist outside of ecclesiastical control. The Church set the tone of education, and what the Church considered worth learning was learned. During the XIXth Century . . . this was completely altered. The ideal of tolerance . . . fathered the fact of secularism. Because it was considered wise to take the schools out of the churches, it followed that the Church must be kept out of the school. And as secular public education in America moved

away from Christian influence, it became increasingly poorer, increasingly undisciplined, increasing utilitarian. . . . We have isolated Christianity in a pigeonhole marked 'Devotions only' and 'Once a week'. As our sole approach to growing boys and girls we, who once claimed the whole of life, now offer the Sunday School."

I wish I could quote more of the article. Mr. Amerman has dared to expose the "Menace of the Sunday School" as it is today in the United States. And he has shown the cause of it. In our circles we speak frequently of a "Free School". Historically this meant Free from the State. But many seem to mean today Free-from-the-Church.

The articles of Rev. Amerman aroused wide reaction. Let us think about these matters too. War times are times of changes. Attitudes and actions today will determine future currents.

The 'Underground Sermons'

Kaj Munk, the great Danish poet-author-preacher-patriot-martyr wrote three, now famous 'underground sermons'. I have just finished reading them and find that they are newsworthy sermons. These sermons have shocked Denmark out of its quivering conditions into revolt against the Nazis. If Niemöller is a great man, Munk is greater than he by far.

Munk preached these sermons, published them, and distributed them via the underground. A copy found its way to England and the U.S.A. The Nazis confiscated every copy they could discover. Munk was put in prison. Christmas 1943 he was released. But on January 4, 1944 he was taken from his home and murdered. In spite of dangers involved in attending his funeral more than four thousand people came to see and hear.

Wrote Munk: "Many Christians will say: We thank God that we were kept out of the war the past year.—Certainly, I too love my home, my house, . . . my wife and children. I too would almost despair to see my home in ruin and my children lying about maimed in the midst of dust and debris. Yet there are two things which I, God help me, would even less like to see: truth betrayed and my country without honor. I cannot thank God that we have been kept out of the war. . . . Our country suffered occupation. . . . You can't thank God that He helped you cheat in a horse trade. God demanded that we fight. We failed to obey His command. . . . You must not mock God by thanking Him that the devil takes care of his own."

"The youths of other lands—well, their bodies rot on the battle fields; but the souls of our young people rot in the dance halls". Writing about God and Caesar he says: "The emperor may ask much of us . . . but if he demanded that we should call black white, tyranny liberty, violence justice, we should answer, 'It is written thou shalt have none other gods but me' . . . Let him come with his lions and his tigers, with his gallows and his stakes . . . We conquer by our death. We must obey God before man." "Caesar, too, must be considered in Church, and Caesar in relation to God".

Christ speaks tender words, in the Bible, to His people. But He speaks bluntly to those who oppose His Word. Munk was an imitator of Christ. Results: Denmark in revolt against the powers of darkness. Martyred Munk a symbol of power infinite.

Henry Hekman

March 23, Henry Hekman of Grand Rapids, quite unexpectedly went to his long home. Mr. Hekman was a leader of unusual ability. The Christian Reformed Church lost an able member, and the city of Grand Rapids a valuable citizen. In the economy of God no one is indispensable, but every Christian, great or small, is irreplaceable. Never again will there be another Henry Hekman.

JOHN G. VAN DYKE.

Grand Rapids, Mich.