



# *the* **CALVIN** **orum**

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**Atheism**  
and the U. N. O.

**Theological Liberalism**  
New Trends

**Education for Veterans**  
An Open Letter

**Religious Toleration**  
in the Low Countries

**Social Realism**  
and the Social Gospel

**Letters**

**Reviews**

**Verse**

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A YEAR**

**FEBRUARY, 1947**

## THE CALVIN FORUM

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# The CALVIN FORUM

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# EDITORIALS

## The Fade-Out of God

IT IS not generally realized to what extent God has faded out of the consciousness of the modern man—the typical man of the twentieth century.

We Americans especially have a way of taking our religiosity for granted. Are we not a Christian nation, according to an explicit deliverance of the United States Supreme Court? Atheism—at least the blatant, outspoken kind—is not popular in the United States, whatever may be the case in many Continental countries. Our legislative assemblies go through the formality of having an official prayer offered at the opening of their sessions. The movement for released time for religious instruction, if not in, then in close conjunction with, the public schools is gaining headway of late. And so one could continue. But in reality the spirit of a cultured paganism is creeping upon us as a nation. We do not hold God in remembrance.

What does it mean to hold God in remembrance?

Does it mean simply to offer an occasional prayer? To say: So help me God! in front of the witness stand in our courts? To sing also the last stanza of *America*? To have the Lord's Prayer recited in our public school rooms? To have public officials take their oath of office with their hand resting on a Bible? One cannot escape the feeling that many people think these belong to the essence of honoring and recognizing God. But much of this may continue for a long time without being backed by any spiritually vital religion, without any real religious conviction that touches life. To mention the name of God on occasion is one thing, to know and recognize the living God is quite a different matter.

The modern man has made the transition from the fear and love of the living God to the cultivation of a certain humanistic religiosity. There are many anemic forms of "religion" into which the reality of the living God simply does not enter. In that sense many people are still "religious," and they are pagans at the same time. What Hendrik Kraemer has said of many false religions, viz., that they are simply forms of unbridled self-assertion, might with propriety be said of the religiosity of many modern "Christians." God does not matter in such a humanistic "religion." Man is sufficient unto himself. His religion is a mere idealization of himself, of humanity, of the complex of the higher ideals of human society. He is not necessarily an outspoken denier of God. He prefers to be called an Agnostic rather than an Atheist. But by making the living God a problem, or treating His exist-

ence as an hypothesis that is not pertinent to modern life and its problems, he has declared himself autonomous and has ruled God out of his daily thinking and living.

C. B.

## An Atheist Heads UNESCO

UNESCO stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Called into existence by the UNO it is intended to be an international agency to educate humanity into the ways of peace. Fichte's ideal of the education of the human race is to be achieved through this new agency. Peace and security will be the inevitable product of education, science and culture. Here we have the typically modern belief that the enlightenment of the mind, furnishing man informational knowledge about the universe in which he lives, will inevitably make man good. Education, science and culture are an omnipotent trio of forces to banish evil and bring in happiness. It is the old liberal humanist dream of improving the race by class room lectures and moral (perhaps more correctly: unmoral) pep talks. The man who has been selected to head up this organization is none other than Professor Julian Huxley, the well-known British Zoologist.

The religious views held by this scholar can be found in his book, *Religion Without Revelation*. In this book, written already back in 1927, he advances a consistent scientific naturalism. There is no supernatural. All is Nature, and that Nature is unified and continuous reality. There is no personal God. There is no revelation. Science is the ultimate source of knowledge. God is a word that has meaning only when we use it as a symbol of the ultimate unity of Nature. Religion is reduced to a sense of reverence for this ultimate unity of Nature. Here are Huxley's own words: "Had the word God not come, almost universally, to have the connotation of supernatural personality, it could be properly employed to denote this unity . . . What has been called God by men has been precisely this reality, or various aspects of it, but obscured by symbolic vestures." What estimate this naturalistic Pantheist places upon the Word of God and the Christian Faith will be clear from the following paragraph taken from the same work. Says he:

"The *Origin of Species* is to-day a good deal more profitable as theology than the first chapter of Genesis, and William James' *Principles of Psychology* will be a better commentary on the Decalogue than any hortatory sermon. The Poetry of Herbert or

Donne or Vaughan, of Francis Thompson or Walt Whitman, will introduce you to new ways of mystic feeling; Trevelyan's *History of England* is likely to be a more salutary history lesson, because nearer home, than the historical books of the Old Testament; Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* is more likely to help the perplexed mind of a twentieth-century Englishman than the apocalyptic visions of Revelation or the Neo-Platonic philosophy of the Fourth Gospel; to sacrifice a score of Sundays to making acquaintance with the ideas of other great religions like Buddhism would be very much preferable, even from the purely religious point of view, to continuance in the familiar round and the familiar narrowness of one's own church."

A man of such views is the newly designated head of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization!

C. B.

## Our Godless Education

IT IS well to recognize that the main drift in the stream of modern education still is a scientific naturalism with its atheistic implications. It is true that certain outstanding educators from time to time raise their voices in protest. It is refreshing in this connection to listen to such men as Chancellor Hutchins of the University of Chicago. But he certainly cannot be said to speak for the majority of educators in our universities. Whatever may have happened to the former popularity of Dewey's educational philosophy, let us not deceive ourselves into thinking that in its main philosophical and religious (better irreligious) thrust it is outmoded. We still worship the bitch-god Science. Our public educational system is still controlled by the philosophy of the unity and continuity of Nature, from the kindergarten to the university. Our text-books in public institutions glorify and presuppose an autonomous man who is part of a self-sufficient Nature.

But you ask what outlook does this sort of philosophy have? What becomes of man's ideals? Is life worth living on this basis? The answer is that many of these atheists attempt to cultivate a bit of humanistic idealism and would make this their religion. Live for the betterment of humanity through the exploitation of the forces resident in nature—this is their religion. The scientist becomes the real priest in this temple of Humanity. But in reality this is the utmost in spiritual bankruptcy. Though for a while one may seem to succeed in keeping up his idealism on the basis of this atheistic humanism, he cannot keep on whistling in the dark forever. Besides, many of his spiritual confreres are more honest than he and discount all this religious idealism on a naturalistic basis. Julian Huxley may still find some "religion" in this naturalism of his,

others holding to the identical philosophy speak in quite different terms. Perhaps they have travelled a bit farther on the road to spiritual disillusionment than had Huxley—at least in 1927.

Let me but cite two testimonies that would seem to be pertinent in this connection. Herbert G. Wells, a seasoned writer, and an atheist of the same type as Huxley, has recently told us in his *Mind at the End of Its Tether* that he saw no hope for the world and that humanity is like a "convoy lost in darkness on an unknown rocky coast, with quarrelling pilots in the chart room and savages clambering up the sides of the ship to plunder and do evil as the whim may take them." And in moving language the tragic pessimism of the ultimate issue of life has been written up by that other great scientific naturalistic humanist who—to the best of my knowledge—is still teaching at America's oldest university: Bertrand Russell. Here are the unforgettable words which he wrote toward the close of *A Free Man's Worship*: "The life of Man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, towards a goal that few can hope to reach, and where none may tarry long. One by one, as they march, our comrades vanish from our sight, seized by the silent orders of omnipotent Death . . . Brief and powerless is Man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for Man, condemned today to lose his dearest, to-morrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day . . ."

When I read these words, by contrast there come to mind those exalted words from the Book which Julian Huxley considers quite antiquated: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And then I am reminded that this man's philosophy of education is summarized not in naturalistic but in theocentric language—"that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good work."

C. B.

## Theological Liberalism Bethinks Itself

A FEW months ago Dean Loomer of the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago gave a significant talk to a group of alumni of his institution. He pointed out that the men who had been his own teachers at the Chicago Divinity School and the teachers of many of the men he was addressing were retiring fast from the scene to be displaced by an entirely new group of younger men. Of such re-

tiring theologians he mentioned by name: Aubrey, Baker, Bower, Case, Garrison, Goodspeed, Graham, Haydon, McNeill, Riddle, and Spinka. He observed that in a short time the Federated Faculty would probably be the youngest graduate faculty in the country. All this is interesting, but not particularly significant. However, toward the close of this talk the new Dean, who himself is a recent youthful successor to Dean Colwell, made this illuminating statement.

"But I would be less than just to you if I did not communicate to you the underlying conviction of the faculty that the day of a merely tolerant and negative sort of liberalism is dead. The liberalism which can be described as anti-fundamentalism or anti-traditionalism or anti-something else and which lacks a positive content itself is no longer adequate. A liberalism which assumes that tolerance is the fundamental virtue and which lacks a criterion of true and false, better and worse, is deadening, thin, and academic in the worst sense. Believing this, we question the advisability, yes, the fundamental honesty, of giving a man a Ph.D. regardless of his basis for determining what is evidence in matters religious. One of the faculty's greatest concerns is to discover a Protestant conception of authority which is constructive, democratic, disciplined, and adequate. It is this problem which makes us see that the intellectual struggle is a necessary aspect of the religious quest."

Every sentence in this paragraph is loaded with meaning. We may be permitted to make a few observations.

1. Apparently the days of the glorification of "the open mind," of pursuing theological study without any "prepossessions" are past at the U. of C. Divinity School. This appears to be a repudiation of the pragmatistic spirit and methods that have prevailed for some years in every department of the University on the Midway, the Divinity School not excepted.

2. Is this an admission of the inherent weakness of the theological liberalism that stands for nothing positive and has entrenched itself for attack on the conservative position without having a solution of its own? Is this the effect, however indirect, of the new spirit that is abroad which recognizes strength in the assertions of "Neo-Orthodoxy," Neo-Thomism, and possibly even of certain forms of Fundamentalism? Is this the further permeation of the new spirit of Chancellor Hutchins and President Colwell—the former Divinity Dean—into the theological precincts of the institution where such theological pragmatism as that of Matthews, Haydon, and Baker once held sway? And does this also mean a turning away from the theological pragmatism of such a man as Wieman?

3. It is heartening to hear that it is one of the faculty's greatest concerns "to discover a Protestant conception of authority." This is a tremendous admission as coming from the Dean of the Divinity School on the Midway. William Cleaver Wilkin-

son, the author of *Paul and the Revolt Against Him*, a man who was teaching in the Baptist Seminary which through the millions of John D. Rockefeller was incorporated into the then new University, would be deeply interested to hear of this today if he were still living. The "Baptist" members of the present Federated Faculty may or may not remember that this Baptist, who soon was shelved by the liberals after the merger, in his book advanced the authority of the Word of God as expressed in Christ and His Apostles and then, speaking of the present-day revolt against this authority, included a chapter entitled significantly: "Is the University of Chicago Such a Voice of Revolt?"

4. If Dean Loomer and the Faculty for which he claimed to be speaking are in real earnest about discovering a Protestant conception of authority, may we be permitted to suggest that such a conception does not need to be discovered any more, though no doubt it needs to be rediscovered at the University of Chicago. We suggest that he make a careful study of the work of Abraham Kuyper entitled *Encyclopaedia of Sacred Theology: Its Principles*. Perhaps Dean Loomer also recalls an address delivered in his presence, and—for that matter—in the presence of Professor Wieman and many other scholars, last May under the title: "Calvinism and American Theology Today." If he does he will remember the plea for the restoration of God-centered thinking and the revival of Theological Science with which that address closed. Now that the scholars of Dean Loomer's faculty are ready to consider a "Protestant conception of authority" we know no better source material for their study and research than the classic works of the great Reformed theologians.

5. Dean Loomer is very much to the point when he observes that "it is this problem which makes us see that the intellectual struggle is a necessary aspect of the religious quest." This is a recognition of the fact that liberal theology has lost contact with the pulpit and the pew. It is an admission that personal piety and the fear of God are—or should be—inseparable from theological study. It is a confession that a philosophy of religion does not touch the real needs of the human heart, and, likewise, that a theology must be vital, touching life, must be preachable, and that no great preaching can be carried on without the authority of God and His Word behind it. Dean Loomer will not accept all these inferences. If he did, he would become a Reformed theologian and would devoutly bow before the authority of the Word of God. But we may be pardoned for pointing out that the admissions made in the Dean's address confirm the correctness of these great historic positions and are an indictment of the pragmatistic, humanistic assumptions that have held sway at the University of Chicago for the last three decades.

For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. C. B.

# What Kind of Education?

## (AN OPEN LETTER TO VETERANS)

Henry Zylstra  
Associate Professor of English  
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THIS is written on the assumption that you have decided to take advantage of the educational benefits of the GI Bill of Rights, but that you have not yet determined what kind of schooling to get. You know that several kinds are available to you. Thus you have heard of general education, of vocational, professional, and pre-professional training, of commercial and business courses, of trade schools, and the like. And you understand that, irrespective of what level of training you had reached when you entered the service, you will have to select one or some combination of these, now that you mean to continue at school.

You may care, consequently, to take a full look at each of these kinds of training. It will simplify matters a little and do no important injury to the truth to say that three kinds of schooling are available to you: vocational training, a general education, and professional training. Unless you have already completed college, the alternatives for you will be to pursue vocational training or a general education. Inasmuch, however, as your choice of one of these affects the possibility of your entering a profession later, it will be well to consider the implications of professional training also.

### Vocational Training

Vocational training is job training. It aims to help make you a skilled worker. It teaches you a trade. Obviously, training for skill, for competence, at a job is desirable. Much of what used to be "common labor" has in the world of your time become skilled labor. The intense development of the natural sciences, particularly as applied to invention, and the highly departmentalized division of the world's work which has resulted, have created thousands of jobs for which a degree of specialized skill is necessary. Lathe-operating, tool-making, book-binding, copy-editing, electric welding, pipe-fitting, and piston-drilling are a few of these "jobs" for which some technical skill is required and for which courses are offered in schools. You have only to look at the curriculum announced in the catalogue of any large school of applied science to be impressed and perhaps a little appalled by the number and variety of job skills which have developed in our highly industrialized society. And it is technical competence in one of these skills that vocational training can give you.

You may want to acquire one of these skills. You may feel that you have been set back by the war years, that the time you might otherwise have had for a general education has been sacrificed to the service, and that you now have no choice but to hurry up and make some money. For it is true that vocational training bears more directly upon making a living than any other kind. Before you settle upon this, however, consider the alternatives, and remember that vocational training is only job training. All kinds of influences are at work trying to convince you that it is something more than that. A business establishment which teaches sign painting will call itself a University or perhaps an Institute of Arts and Crafts. A school whose specialty is electric welding will recommend itself to you in its catalogue as a College of Applied Science. Besides, many educational institutions, eager to please, will offer courses as directly limited by considerations of vocational utility as those given in trade schools, and yet describe and reward them as parts of a liberal arts and sciences program. Such confusion of means and ends is likely to give you the impression that acquiring a job skill is tantamount to becoming educated. It is not.

### Professional Training

Now professional training has this in common with vocational training that it also aims at competence in the performance of work. The differences are, however, more important. The training differs because the work differs, and a profession differs from a job in that it requires a greater caliber of ability, a different kind of preparation, and a nobler motivation.

Surely it is simply being clear-headed, and not undemocratic or snobbish, to say that the work of doctors, lawyers, teachers, ministers, nurses, engineers, architects, scientists, and business administrators on the higher levels of policy presupposes a caliber of ability greater than is needed by barbers, bank tellers, or stenographers. Removing brain tumors, determining the constitutionality of laws, planning the Stilwell road, or projecting the national census requires gifts of mind and imagination which are not essential to cutting hair, making change, or doing 130 words flawlessly a minute. This is a qualitative distinction between the profession and the job, and you will do best to acknowledge it.

As for the second difference, it is clear that professional training differs in kind from the vocational. The competence aimed at is more difficult to achieve. Accordingly, professional schools, schools of medicine, law, engineering, and the like, usually do not give degrees short of the completion of at least three or four years of work. Consider the doctor of medicine, for instance: he goes through high school, through college, through three or four years of medical school, follows that by a year of internship, and that very often by two years of residency in a hospital. So, he finally dares to begin his practice. Most teachers, the best taught lawyers, architects and engineers, and the learned clergy graduate from similar programs of sustained study. Moreover, this study is not merely "vocational," not wholly limited by the considerations of the use to which it will be specifically applied. It is disinterestedly broad, scientific, objective. Because professional training is thus exhaustive, it is usually preceded, not by pre-professional training, but by a general education. In this sense, it is the absence of the preceding general education in the training of the West Point cadet which keeps him from quite making good his claim to being a "professional" soldier. His work has all the earmarks of a profession except this, that his professional specialization is not preceded by a disinterestedly broad and objective course of study. And it is this broadness of background and exhaustiveness of preparation which causes the work of a doctor, lawyer, or teacher to differ in quality of competence from that of a plumber, shipfitter or linotype operator. In fact, in this sense, it is possible to say that a profession is the "job" which an educated person does.

### **Nobler Motivation**

That leaves the third difference—nobler motivation. *Nobler* sounds out of key in this matter of fact context and in a world which has come to prefer competence to motive as the hope of peace and progress. But *nobler* is the word. A man is not a professional man unless he is motivated by something besides the need for making a living and the love of making money. He must be motivated by the love of the truth, the love of the work, and the love of the service. Read the oath of Hippocrates to which doctors subscribe, and you will catch this note at once. Consider that as a professional man, Einstein earns less than a draftsman in an aircraft plant. The professional man is not in business. He does not get wages: he gets a salary, a fee, or an honorarium. Although he sometimes publishes a professional card because he has services to offer, he does not advertise, he does not hawk his wares. But for the usual exceptions, he does not go on strike. And although some may advise you to take up law or medicine or preaching because "there is more money in it" than there is in a job, do not, if

that is what motivates you, plan to enter upon professional training. For without this element of noble motivation, the job, unfortunately, may still be a job (something to get away from after 32 hours a week, according to the latest ideal of organized labor), but the profession is not a profession.

Such distinctions between the profession and the job are not the less real because they are often confused. We are all democratic and properly hesitant to point out difference in kind among us. So we tell each other that it is all a matter of skill, aptitude, or interest, and if your aptitude is for brain surgery and mine is for well-drilling, who has the right to be haughty? This commendable eagerness to be democratic explains some of the confusions in education among us, but it does not excuse them. We cannot ignore the differences between the profession and the job unless we are willing to pay the scientists who achieved the atomic bomb the billions in war costs which the early capitulation of Japan saved the country. We cannot ignore them unless we want doctors to look into our bill folds before they look into our throats, and unless we want nurses to be as gentle as their fees are high. We cannot ignore those differences unless we want scholars to withhold their monographs until arrangements with the manufacturers for royalties have been completed. The fact is, you see, that the world cannot wag without the professions as professions; and until we are ready to welcome the sight of teachers conducting picket lines in front of the schools, and biochemists hoarding their vaccines against a price, we shall have to acknowledge the qualitative differences both in the practice of and the training for the professions as distinguished from jobs.

Most janitors, then, are not plant superintendents, garage mechanics are not engineers, and certified public accountants are not business consultants, though it usually does no harm to think of them that way. Pharmacists who after a six-weeks' course in filling prescriptions proceed to sell hot water bottles and ice-cream are not professional men, any more than those who can whirl the acids and test cream in the country towns after a week-end at school. Nor, for the matter of that, are the lawyers who dash through a year or two of law after high school, "cram" for conventionalized bar examinations, and hang out a shingle. But worse, much worse, in promoting the confusion of the profession with the job is the attitude often of those who practise the professions. There are doctors, lawyers, engineers, and others who suppose that competence in one art or craft confers upon them wisdom in all matters, but who at their conventions talk politics in the same kind of lobbyist fashion as Legionnaires in the last hours of a smoker. Thus these all encourage the muddle-headed notion that education might as well be vocational training and nothing else.



## The Meaning of a General Education

You may care, next, to consider the meaning of a general education, for it is between that and vocational training that you will be concerned to choose immediately. The phrase "general education" is not altogether satisfactory, but it is perhaps better than any other. It is general not as opposed to intensive, for an education must be intensive if it is to be an education: it is general as opposed to vocational. And it is general in that it comprehends everything that concerns everyone most. Accordingly, the content of a general education comprises studies in the liberal arts and sciences, commonly but not necessarily divided into three groups: the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences. To say that these are the subjects which concern everyone most is simply to say that they comprehend one's relations to God, to one's self, to others, and to nature.

It is an earmark of such a general education that it is vocationally disinterested, that it is ideal, that it is normative. A general education does not aim at competence. Competence is not now the word. It aims at developing your capability for responsible living. The responsibility it helps to develop is not the responsibility for doing a job well, for that is competence, but responsibility for human living under God in a human society and a natural environment. Plainly such an education addresses itself to you as something more than bread-winner, wage-earner, worker, or professional man.

It is precisely over against this that the whole matter of whether or not you feel skeptical about the value of an education comes in. You may even agree that the whole of your spiritual, intellectual, moral, emotional and physical life is very important, and yet not choose to get a general education. Convinced as you may be of the worth of vocational, applied scientific, or professional training, you then feel that in what you probably call your "personal" life you can rely on your self, shaped as it has been by instincts and habits, by home and church, by natural sagacity and "experience," and by reading the news magazines and hearing the commentators.

## Education for Larger Responsibility

However, if you rely on such resources for the values and virtues, the judgments and decisions, and the thought and action of your life, wishing school only to help you make a living, you miss, without even touching on it, what is at bottom the main purpose of a universal education in a democracy. A democratic society is not something you can be thus skeptical or cynical about, for it is not something that goes on in spite of you. You have not the detachment to be cynical; you are too involved to be skeptical. You cannot say that what

is wrong is the Communists, or the Jews, or the Catholics, or the Negroes, or the Administration, or the labor unions, or They, or Them, or It. You are not looking on at an experiment. You are in control, and your thinking, choosing, and acting make democratic society what it is.

In the Army and the Navy, the word *responsibility* was also used. But military responsibility is of another kind than this at which a general education aims. It is so different in character that it can almost be called a formal, conventional, or artificial responsibility. In the military you were irresponsible in every creative sense, even though you had to be prompt and punctual and competent in the performance of stipulated duty. You worked on order, did what you were told to do, and did it in the prescribed way. Such responsibility was comfortable. The military world was a world in which competence was enough. You did your job and were through.

It might be pleasant to think that democratic society is the same kind of world the military was—that it is simply the sum of thousands and thousands of workers, each competent in his work, of millions of experts, each doing his job expertly, of a fool-proof organization made flawless by volumes of regulations, and the whole held together by a General. In the fascistic world which you have just pulverized there were such workers, so organized, under such totalitarian control. That is why you destroyed it. But democratic society is not so. There are no expert thinkers to do the thinking, expert voters to do the voting, expert governors to do the governing. Public life is not a matter of prescription, civil service, and police. And you are the General. You must do more than your job. You must determine policy.

You know how it is said that the tendency of the returning veteran, what with his long independence from civil obligations, is to be skeptical about the reality of human purposes and the progress of human society. You may share this skepticism to some extent, even though it is no more perceptible than the absence of this sense of the worth of a general education. This skepticism may be no more evident than the longing to "get into business for yourself," or to build a home and let the rest of the world go by. You may feel as though the world and its perennial problems are past finding out, that you want to plunge into some job, any job that pays and offers some security and a little time for a hobby. You may, speaking figuratively, want to give your wife the pay-check on Saturday evenings, and then, your whole duty done, hide your head behind the comics and not be bothered with family affairs. You will remember, however, that such skepticism is fundamentally irresponsible.

For responsibility in this larger sense, vocational and even professional training have only a little to offer, but a general education has much. A general education can not give you good will, for that



is the gift of God. But it can cultivate the feelings, enlarge and exercise the imagination, discipline the mind, train the judgment, provide historical perspectives, and shed light on the nature of every reality. Such an education is an invaluable aid

and corrective to the instincts and habits and the natural sagacity which experience without school can give you. You ought not to forego it, for freedom depends upon it, and freedom is more than security.

# Early Dutch Protestantism and Toleration

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**M**ODERN man conveniently forgets what John Calvin said, and quite as conveniently remembers one thing he did—burn Servetus. Not much is said in the average University lecture room about Calvin, not much good at any rate; but this one thing will quite certainly be mentioned, whether in season or out.

Admirers of Calvin will inform you very quickly that in consenting to Servetus' death Calvin was but acting on the prevailing philosophy of the 16th Century and that for that reason we ought not to be severe with him. There is an element of truth in this apology for Calvin; but Calvinists ought to handle it with discretion, for it is a tool with which they can very easily cut their own fingers. For if we say that early Protestantism failed to come clear of the error then current we prepare the way for the notion that toleration, blessed thing, was born of the French Revolution and its attending philosophy, in a word, that toleration was born in the left wing. Against this representation we do well to protest. For there were apostles of toleration, and that very early, who were definitely right wing.

## Toleration Born of Indifference

The philosophy of toleration in America is composite. It has a bifurcated root. On the one hand were advocates of toleration who pleaded for religious liberty seeing that religion and religious conviction are quite dispensable. This was toleration born of indifference. And as such it was very certainly born of left wing philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A very good example of this kind of toleration philosophy, born of nonchalance, may be had in one of the earliest left wing publications. We refer to the broadside hurled at Calvin by 'Martin Bellius' (a pseudonym) and bearing the title: *De Haereticis an sint persequendi* . . . It was occasioned by the Servetus execution. Its dedication to Duke Christoph of Württemberg translates as follows: "Most illustrious Prince, suppose you had told your subjects that you would come to them at some uncertain time and had commanded them to get ready, dressed in white, to meet you when you came. What would you do if on returning you discovered that men had taken no thought of the white clothes but instead were bickering among themselves about your person. Some said you were in Spain, others, in France. Some held that you would arrive on horseback, others

This left wing philosophy of toleration was deposited liberally upon the shores of the New World. Toleration born of indifference may by now have become the prevailing type. And this would be cause for alarm, for nonchalance is an attitude that cannot perpetuate itself; it is transitional. And that implies that this type of thought cannot insure us a perpetually tolerant society. We are already hearing it said that it is not good Americanism to insist upon holding convictions not shared by the mass. As though the best in the American tradition were not the spectacle of differing and even disagreeing factions living together without smashing windows! But we must return to our story.

There is a second root upon which our freedom grew. It too was very early carried to these shores. There were apostles of toleration who had deep religious conviction of unquestionably evangelical tone, men of the right wing. This fact, so commonly forgotten, this article would set forth. And we shall do so with special reference to that laboratory test of toleration—the burning of Servetus. And we shall give special attention to the Low Countries, not because there were no kindred spirits in other parts—for there were—but because our study happens to have concentrated on this area. Moreover, we do believe that the Low Countries were outstanding in this sort of thing.

## That Servetus Affair!

Before we proceed with this assignment we wish to point out that many modern historians seem to

insisted it would be by chariot. Some were sure you would come with large retinue, others were as sure you would travel alone. Would that please you? And suppose that the controversy were being waged not by words merely but also by blows and sword thrusts, and that this group was killing the other for not agreeing. 'He will come on horseback' says one. 'No, in a chariot,' another retorts. 'You're a liar!' 'No, you're the liar, and take that.' He strikes him. 'And you take that in the belly!' He stabs. Would you, dear Prince, praise such subjects?"

Here is the indifferentists' argument, of purest water! As though the difference between Calvin and Servetus had been over such bagatelles!

fair comes up. One would almost get the impression that Calvin stood out from the men of his times in this evident intolerance. Why do men play this matter up so? Is there any good reason for failing to add that Thomas Aquinas taught, and that the Catholic Church has not to this day repudiated his teaching at the point—as have the Calvinists, ‘*mutatis mutandis*’—that the heretics’ sin is one “for which they merit not merely to be separated from the Church by excommunication but also to be barred from the earth by death.”<sup>2</sup>

And should not historical fairness lead men to relate that even the mild Melancthon wrote consolingly to Calvin: “to you the Church both now and in times to come owes and will owe its gratitude. I agree wholly with your judgment. And I say also that the magistrates acted correctly when after solemn trial they put the blasphemer to death”<sup>3</sup>?

Why neglect to say that when Geldenhauer, an early Dutch Protestant, contemporary of Luther, bolstered his argument against the killing of heretics (in a remarkably bold piece, addressed to the Emperor, Charles V), with quotations from Erasmus, the latter, no doubt for fear of his skin, wrote reproachingly to Geldenhauer: “I never teach that heretics are not to be killed . . . To kill blasphemous and seditious heretics is necessary for the maintenance of the State”<sup>4</sup>? But then, Erasmus is congenial to our left wingers: but when Calvin, who is ‘*persona non grata*,’ acts on this philosophy, that cries to high heaven.

## Toleration Born of Religious Conviction

We turn now to our assignment to show that there were right wing people who thought in terms of toleration and therefore denounced the Servetus affair and its philosophy.

There were such in Geneva itself. In fact the Church there was pretty much upset by the matter. Once and possibly twice the Lord’s Supper had to be postponed because of estrangement. Calvin burned more than his usual quota of midnight oil to get his defence before the people.<sup>5</sup> It was off the presses in a matter of weeks. In it Calvin had gone to the unusual length of getting endorsements for his argument—strange procedure for a man who was usually quite sure of himself. Jean Bonneau, a minister of the Geneva congregation, had refused to sign and asserted in words of one syllable that Calvin and Beza had the Gospels lose all sense of proportion when the Servetus af-

against them in their argument.<sup>6</sup> It seems that this irenic soul lay down presently, and that the Consistory rewarded him for being a good fellow, giving him a desirable appointment to Bretagne.<sup>7</sup>

## Toleration in the Low Countries

We have Dr. Bainton’s word for it that when Bellius’ book came out it was read with greatest avidity in the Low Countries. It is not at all impossible that Calvin had this part of “our own flock” in mind when he complained that they of the Protestant fold were even more severe in their criticism than were they of the papal camp. The complaint occurs in a letter dated October 15, 1554, and is addressed to a minister friend of whose integrity and faithfulness to the evangelical faith Calvin speaks warmly. This man had not written to Calvin since the deplorable deed, a year ago now. And Calvin knows the reason: it is because his friend is disgusted with him. Calvin makes it plain that the views of his friend anent the killing of heretics is not unknown to him: but he asserts that his friend judges without sufficient understanding. Then he adds “If you knew but a tenth part how I have been hurt by these shameful calumnies you would, in kindness, groan beneath the burden of grief by which I am being tried. Dogs bark at me from every side. Repeatedly I am called a heretic. Whatever slander they can invent is hurled at me. Actually the unfriendly and critical ones in our own flock are attacking me even more viciously than the outspoken foes from the papal camp. Verily I have not deserved this at the hand of the Church nor at their hand that they should repay me thus.”<sup>8</sup>

Calvin jostles his now unfriendly friend who he suggests is somewhat of a disciple of Servetus. This technique of name-calling was employed by Beza especially. He termed all those who deny that the magistrates should put heretics to death “Castellionists” (The name was invented because Calvin and Beza surmised that ‘Bellius’ was in reality Sebastian Castellio). All who would share liberty with such *maudite* sects as the Anabaptists are in reality disciples of Castellio.

In a letter to Jean Taffin, native son and surprisingly tolerant,<sup>9</sup> Beza complains that some in the

<sup>6</sup> Theodore Beza had come to Calvin’s assistance with a large work entitled *De Haereticis a civili magistratu puniendis libellus*. . . . The author went to great lengths attempting to defend the philosophy by which Servetus had been put out of the way. It is a book of which modern Calvinists are not proud, nor of the fact that Johannes Bogerman, later president of the Great Synod, reprinted it shortly before that great gathering, adding a hearty endorsement. By this work, as a recent Dutch scholar has said, Beza succeeded if not to convince the opposition at least to prevent the defection of the support.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Haag, *France Protestant*, sub Bonneau.

<sup>8</sup> I translate from the *Epistolae et Responsa* as printed in the edition of 1667, Vol. IX.

<sup>9</sup> When a certain civil ruler contemplating rigorous measures against Catholics sought Taffin’s approval he replied, showing the soundness of this earlier school of Protestant thought, saying: “The business of secular powers is not to establish religion; their business is to protect religion”, a very useful distinction.

<sup>2</sup> *Summa* II, 2, Q. 11, Art. 3 (Translation mine).

<sup>3</sup> *Corpus Reform.* Vol. VIII, p. 362 (Translation mine).

<sup>4</sup> *Opera* X, 1575f. (Translation mine).

<sup>5</sup> The “*Fidelis expositio errorum M. Serveti . . . ubi docetur jure gladii coercendos esse hereticos*”.

Netherlands combatting the edicts against heretics, i.e. Protestants, were using illegitimate arguments drawn directly, word for word, from Castellio.<sup>10</sup> Just what defence . . . *imprimee contre les placards* Beza has in mind cannot be said with certainty. Dr. A. A. Van Schelven, who has given the matter much attention, is of the opinion that most probably the reference is to the *Brief Discours envoye au Roy Philippe*, one of the finest arguments for toleration ever printed, and certainly from the right wing.<sup>11</sup>

Finally we shall let a few of the native sons speak. We say native sons; for they must not be thought of as in any sense importations. The true dimensions of earliest Dutch Protestantism will never be known as long as men proceed upon the unwarranted assumption that Protestantism was imported, whether from Wittenberg or Geneva. The true state of affairs begins to dawn on us as we read the *Sermoenen* published at Antwerp in 1520 by Nicolaes Peters. They contain a fully crystallized Protestant theology, in which all essentially Catholic excrescences are repudiated and all specifically Protestant ideas are embraced. We are led to exclaim, with De Hoop Scheffer, "surely there is no one not amazed as he reads these sermons that as early as 1520, when Luther and Zwingli were still hesitant in regard to many a crucial issue, the Gospel was preached among our forebears so clearly and firmly, so convincingly and positively."

Nor was this a sporadic manifestation. When Chas. V published his first rigorous edict against the Protestants he hesitated to turn on the full voltage "aenmerckende de menichte" (considering the great number); and this was before the works of Luther could possibly have made men heretical. When Jakob Spreng (Praepositus) was apprehended for heresy an eye-witness relates "*yst die gemeyn afgewest ym sulchs mit gewaelt zu weren, darfor der prior sie gebeten sie solten seyn Gefengknis und der willen Gotts nicht hyndern*" (the populace arose to prevent him [the magistrate] by force; hereupon the prior prayed them not to ob-

<sup>10</sup> The letters, which give very succinctly Beza's position, may be read in *Bulletin de la Societe pour l'histoire du Protestantisme France*, Vol. XXII (1873), p. 113 et suiv. Beza termed the idea of plurality of beliefs all equally legitimate at law a "dogma diabolicum".

<sup>11</sup> The *Brief Discours* is available in America, in the *Memoires de Conde*. It came out anonymously. Contemporaries considered Francois Baudouin to have been the author; but everybody has long since agreed that he cannot possibly have written it. Since it has been assigned to Franciscus Junius. But this theory as to authorship is quite unlikely also. The work is not that of a young man, but Junius was barely twenty-one when it appeared. It is surely not the work of a foreigner, a Frenchman least of all; Junius had just arrived in the Netherlands when it appeared. A deep patriotism runs through it all. And it was done by an eye witness. One can agree with the Belgian scholar, Charles Rahlenbeck, when he says, "*Nous avons lu et relu ce pamphlet faussement attribue au jurisconsulte Baudouin . . . et apres longtemps cherche nous avons fini par acquerir la conviction qu'il emane du synode des eglises wallonnes.*" If it did there are not many persons who can qualify as authors of this noteworthy production, probably only three, Charles Niëlles, Jean Taffin, and Guido de Brès. It matters not which it was, all were native sons, Protestants in their own right, and strikingly tolerant.

struct his arrest and the will of God). In 1522 the women of Antwerp ganged up and forced the prison to release certain Protestants held there. Already at this time the Inquisitor Van der Hulst, of cursed memory, did not dare to show up in the vicinity of Antwerp for fear of his hide. This was not a country side still waiting to be turned out of the Catholic orbit by a distant German monk! We know from his own admission that Zwingli owed his view of the Sacrament to the Dutchman Hoen. And Luther himself acknowledged that Wessel had anticipated him in detail. Fact is that Luther said nothing new in his theses; all had been said before in a story written in blood.<sup>12</sup>

The native sons are still waiting. We must not revert to Geldenhauer although his spirited address to the Emperor remains forever a landmark in the history of the rise of toleration. Let us proceed to Anastasius Veluanus, a native son, and one whose evangelical piety cannot be called in question. He wrote, in 1554, "Christ forbade His disciples to burn unbelievers or to pray God that it be done or to advise men to do so . . . True Christians have always dealt mercifully with heretics, without tyranny and bloodshed . . . Oh, if these early Christians could return what would they say of such tyranny and bloodshed?"<sup>13</sup> Although this was written in the year following the burning of Servetus it does not appear that Anastasius had Calvin's deed in mind when he wrote of "such tyranny and bloodshed."

Not so when we come to Peter Bloccius, another native son, and one whose Protestantism was not

<sup>12</sup> What was new in Luther's movement was the concomitant of a changed political climate; there were secular rulers behind whom he could shelter, a benefit earlier anti-Rome eruptions had not been privileged to enjoy. It is a serious mistake to think that the change of climate was the Reformation, a mistake that has led many Dutch historians to begin their story at 1560, the date of the first signs of a change of climate in the Low Countries. This change of climate, everywhere attending the Reformation, was perhaps historically necessary; without it this particular anti-Catholic eruption might very well have been choked in its own blood as so many earlier ones had been. Yet it was an unmixed blessing. With it came intermeddling by the secular powers in the things of the Church, a thing that had become quite irksome already at the time of the Synod of Dordt. With it came intolerance too, and the setting back of the clock at this point. It is significant that Article 36 of the Belgic Confession, which deals with the duties of the magistrate was revised in 1566 at a semi-political Synod, and given a sense that has plagued the cause of toleration ever since. And men have read the post-1566 complexion of Dutch Protestantism back into the earlier period. An excellent reference work informs us, for example, of Guido de Brès that he wrote in favor of the killing of heretics. But one fails to find proof for such assertion in the writings of de Brès. Presumably the author referred to is thinking of the heading of a chapter in de Brès' book *Baston de la Foy* which asserts "*que . . . les heretiques doyvent estre punis par le magistrat civil, voire, iusques a la mort, si le cas le requiert*". But de Brès' ideas at this point are made plain by his own refinement, namely, *Il y a deux sortes de faux prophetes, les uns simplement preschent ce qu'ils ont songé, sans aucune tumulte ne sedition, et de tels parlent Jesus Christ et Saint Paul, commandans qu'on les laisse, seulement qu'on les evite. D'autres en y a qui estant non seulement conduits d'un esprit de mensonge mais aussi de rage meslee d'ambition et indiscretion tout, et suscitent sedition et scandales. . . . Tels doyvent estre exterminés et mis a mort pour le repos publique et paix commune . . .*" Surely that changes matters!

<sup>13</sup> I translate from *der Leken Wechwijzer*, Bibl. Ref. Neerl., IV, 336f.

geared to patronage by the State, a concomitant of the change of climate referred to above. He wrote, "that we should kill heretics Christ has nowhere commanded, as Martin Bellius has assembled a book from various authors, which little book has been translated into many languages so that people might seek to make alive, for it is so that almost all persons kill. And so beside themselves are many people these days that they call Christians "Castellionists" when they admonish, with Christ, to let the tares grow, Matthew 13; so Matthew who wrote that must also have been a Castellionist! They who advocate the killing of heretics show that they are not truly regenerate . . . Greek and Latin poets and orators have inveighed against the blood-guzzlers as Pharaoh, Nero, Caligula . . . and they wish to pass for Christian who in our day vomit out books declaring that heretics should be put to death. But you have not learned this from Christ, who rebuked His vengeful disciples."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis*, 1842, p. 85. (Translation mine.)

Brave words those. And this Bloccius was no left winger, no forerunner of Coornhert for example.

We think to have shown that the execution of Servetus met with plenty of opposition from the right wing. And to that extent it is not true that the world owes the idea of toleration to the Castellio's, the Encyclopedists, the French Revolution, the left wing.

The First Southwest Regional Calvinistic Conference is scheduled to meet on Thursday evening and all day Friday, February 20 and 21, at the Second Christian Reformed Church of Bellflower, California. This is a conference for the deepening of the Calvinistic Faith. There will be an Inspirational Meeting on Thursday evening. On Friday morning and Friday afternoon each a scholarly address followed by discussion. And on Friday evening a Banquet with Inspirational Address. Professor Louis Berkhof of Calvin Seminary will be one of the speakers. Pastors, teachers, church leaders, laymen, and all interested in the principles of Calvinism and living within traveling distance are invited to attend.

## The Key to My Heart

Am I the forger of my fate,  
The sovereign of my soul?  
If naught but self unbar the gate,  
Can I achieve the goal?

The Holy Spirit has the key  
To this proud heart of mine;  
He soon would come and set me free  
From every sordid line.

God grant I open now the door  
To greet the regnant guest.  
O come, abide forevermore,  
And count me with the blessed.

THEODORE T. SNELL

# Changing Emphases in the Social Gospel

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## II. The Period of Social Realism

**I**N OUR previous article we gave a brief sketch of the early, optimistic phase of the social gospel, covering the years from 1890 to 1920, and represented by such men as Samuel Z. Batten and Walter Rauschenbusch. We observed, however, that Rauschenbusch was in many ways a transitional figure, transcending some of the easy optimism of his predecessors, and preparing the way for the change which marked the social gospel movement after the first World War—a change in the direction of greater social realism.

### Factors which Brought About This Change

Various factors brought about this change. The war, of course, came as a tremendous shock. It shattered over-optimistic hopes; it revealed the brutalities of which human nature was capable; it confronted thinking men with hard, implacable facts about social collectives. After the war came a wave of moral callousness, of intellectual skepticism, of emotional bitterness. Soon the depression arrived and ushered in a period of economic want and spiritual lassitude. All of these made an impact on the social thinking of men.

But the most important influence was a theological movement, which was born in the midst of the turmoil of war. I refer to the Barthian movement, which gave rise to what has been called neo-orthodoxy in this country. Barth, who had himself begun as a Ritschlian liberal, thundered against the shallow humanism of the social gospel. Far from putting his stamp of approval on human amelioristic movements, Barth exclaimed, God condemns all purely human projects. His judgment rests upon them. They are shot through with sin. God must be recognized again as the transcendent God, who calls us to repent and to seek salvation.

The Barthian movement affected American thought partly through the writings of such men as Barth and Brunner, partly through their students, but more especially through American thinkers who had been influenced by Barthianism. The most significant medium through which the Barthian emphasis reached American social theology was Reinhold Niebuhr, professor of Applied Christianity in Union Theological Seminary. Niebuhr

abandoned his early liberalism partly through the influence of Marxism, partly on account of Barth and his associates, and partly through his own hard-headed, realistic thinking. Since he is of such crucial importance in the transition between the early and later period of the social gospel, I shall reproduce his views in some detail.

### The Views of Reinhold Niebuhr

In a sense it may be said that Niebuhr lives by battling, the opponent in his case being chiefly the liberal movement. Since the social gospel was one of the most outspoken pronouncements of liberal theology, we may consider him as attacking precisely the position which has been set forth in the early part of this paper. Yet, since he is himself a theologian with a life interest in social problems, we may likewise consider his approach to these problems a new chapter in the history of the social gospel.

"Liberalism," wrote Niebuhr in 1939, "has not seen the problem of mankind in sufficient depth to understand its own history. Its too simple moralism has confused issues at almost every turn."<sup>11</sup> He continues by declaring, "The ultimate religious problem of evil in man does not arise for it (liberal moralism), because it is always waiting for the perfect education or perfect social order which will make man moral."<sup>12</sup> Niebuhr thus repudiates the easy optimism and bland environmentalism of the early social gospel. The perfect social order will not make the perfect man—in fact, the perfect social order will never come. There are stubborn streaks of selfishness in man which no amount of education will eradicate, and which no new social order can wipe out.

### Niebuhr on the Kingdom of God

This leads him to make a further observation about the Kingdom of God. "The simple reinterpretation of the Kingdom of God into the law of

<sup>11</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, "Ten Years that Shook My World", *Christian Century*, April 26, 1939, p. 542.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 544.

progress, in the thought of liberal Christianity, is a betrayal of essential insights of the Christian faith to the prejudices of modern culture."<sup>13</sup> He shows that whatever progress there has been has been progress in skills, but not progress in morality. "But there is not a single bit of evidence to prove that good triumphs over evil in this constant development of history. History points to a goal beyond itself . . ."<sup>13</sup> Here Niebuhr blasts the naive faith of the liberal gospel in the gradual evolution of the race, by showing that it has consistently mistaken advances in speed for advances in spirit.

Yet he does not lapse into an other-worldly defeatism. "Any new orthodoxy which seeks to persuade men that because all men must finally be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, they are not to regard the momentary judgments, the proximate goals and the relative values of history seriously, must be regarded as a heresy as dangerous as any simple optimism."<sup>14</sup> Perhaps he has Barth in mind here, in distinction from Brunner; or perhaps he is thinking of apocalyptical Fundamentalism. At any rate, his realistic appraisal of social evil does not force him to retreat into ascetic pessimism. We must be concerned about social change. We must strive for the proximate goals of history. Only we must do so realistically.

### Moral Man and Immoral Society

In 1932 Niebuhr wrote his *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, which caused tremendous repercussions in the American world. Its main thesis is that collectives are, by their very nature, less moral than individuals. Perfect love, or near-perfect love may occasionally be attained by an individual, but it can never be attained by a social group. Social collectives are always seething centers of clashing interest. Their moral standard is that of the lowest common denominator. Over against other collectives, they must battle for their own interests or go out of existence. One who has a responsible position in such a collective, though he might be willing to be altruistic in a certain situation as a person, may not and cannot be altruistic for the entire group, because he must remain faithful to the interests of that group. "If nations and other social groups find it difficult to approximate the principles of justice, as we have previously noted, they are naturally even less capable of achieving the principle of love, which demands more than justice. The demand of religious moralists that nations subject themselves to 'the law of Christ' is an unrealistic demand, and the hope that they will do so is a sentimental one."<sup>15</sup>

In general, Niebuhr repudiates the ideal of love as a possible goal for relations within and between secular social groups, and substitutes the goal of justice. Yet even this goal can only be approximated. In paradoxical fashion, he puts it this way: "The vision of a just society is an impossible one, which can be approximated only by those who do not regard it as impossible. The truest visions of religion are illusions, which may be partially realized by being resolutely believed."<sup>16</sup>

Even justice, however, can only be attained by methods considerably more earthy than social liberalism would approve. "Society must strive for justice even if it is forced to use means, such as self-assertion, resistance, coercion and perhaps resentment, which cannot gain the moral sanction of the most sensitive moral spirit."<sup>17</sup> The opposition of unscrupulous enemies may at times force society to employ self-assertion and restraint, even social conflict and violence, to maintain justice—as witness the present war. Mere education, enlightenment, or persuasion will never bring in social change; some form of coercion is unavoidable.

### Reflections on the End of an Era

Two years later, Niebuhr wrote his *Reflections on the End of an Era*. This book, too, contained important implications for social theology. In the Preface he stated, "In my opinion adequate spiritual guidance can come only through a more radical political orientation and more conservative religious convictions than are comprehended in the culture of our era."<sup>18</sup> In the book he proceeds in much the same vein as before. He scores the easy superficiality of modern culture, which thought that reason could check the anarchic impulses in man, but failed to realize that reason "may be used much more easily to justify impulse and to invent instruments for its efficacious expression than to check and restrain impulse."<sup>19</sup> With prophetic foresight he writes, "Every social system, faced by the peril of death, is bound to make one final and ruthless effort to avert its doom by destroying or suppressing competing forms of life."<sup>20</sup>

Niebuhr distinguishes the idealism of classical Christianity from that of romantic utopianism by observing that in the visions of Christianity it is always a redeemed humanity which establishes the perfect society.<sup>21</sup> "The Christian religion," he continues, "is thus an ethical religion in which the optimism necessary for the ethical enterprise, and the pessimism consequent upon profound religious insights, never achieve a perfect equilibrium or harmony."<sup>22</sup> A consequence of this is that the

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 544.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 545.

<sup>15</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, p. 75.

<sup>16</sup> Niebuhr, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.

<sup>18</sup> Niebuhr, *Reflections on the End of an Era*, p. ix.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.



apocalyptic hope is indispensable to the Christian. He knows that the perfect society will only be reached in the life to come, and yet he does not abandon the struggle for a better world here below; and in that tension he lives.

## Niebuhr's Influence

That Niebuhr profoundly influenced American theological thinking goes without saying. Even those who disagreed with him had to reckon with him. To give some indication of the altered theological climate which Niebuhr brought about, I should like to quote from two men who wrote at the end of what I have called the period of social realism. Surely no one would accuse Henry Sloane Coffin of being a full-fledged Barthian; yet he writes in chastened vein: "A liberal today is not less a liberal if he does not share the boundless confidence in man, or in his science, or in his inevitable progress, or in the power of reason, to solve all problems."<sup>23</sup> His view of the kingdom of God is a far cry from that of the early romanticists: "The consecration of religious people to a more just society remains, although the more pessimistic outlook of our time sees the kingdom of God lying beyond human history and to be achieved by Him. It rightly insists that any social order of man's devising will bear the marks of his ignorance and sin; it cannot be the kingdom of God."<sup>24</sup>

A similar note is sounded by H. Shelton Smith. Significantly, the second chapter of his *Faith and Nurture*, written in 1941, is entitled, "Beyond the Social-Gospel Idea of the Kingdom of God." He criticizes those who call the Kingdom "the democracy of God." He charges that the social gospel conception of the kingdom has laid more stress on man than on God, and has impugned God's sovereignty. Over against a this-worldly kingdom Smith stresses that "Jesus' kingdom will always be a transcendent reality, never to be fully realized in the relative forms of human culture." He further suggests that the growth-concept will have to be abandoned for the catastrophic concept of social change in the present seething world.<sup>25</sup>

## A New Emphasis in Recent Theology

These quotations are enough to show that a new ferment is at work in social thinking today. To what extent has this new ferment penetrated recent theological thought? On the basis of a survey of the "testimonials" in the *Christian Century* of 1939 entitled "How My Mind Has Changed in This Decade," I have come to a number of conclu-

sions.<sup>26</sup> Limiting myself to men who have a vigorous interest in social problems, I have attempted to classify them into three groups: those who were influenced very little by recent theological trends, those who were radically changed, and those who were influenced appreciably but whose basic convictions were not altered. I realize that such a classification is difficult to make, and therefore offer it with hesitation. The general conclusions, however, which can be drawn from this attempt are, to my mind, reasonably reliable.

Some minds were changed very little by the recent theological trends. Among these may be mentioned Edward Scribner Ames, who is still an unrepentant humanist, and whose article in the series was entitled, "Liberalism Confirmed"; and Paul B. Kern, who calls the crisis theology a "storm cellar," and who has emerged from the past decade with an incorrigible optimism, announcing as his farewell note, "And so I fare forth to a better world."

Some men were influenced radically, undergoing a basic change in their outlook on life. In this group I would include such men as Elmer G. Homrighausen, who traveled all the way from legal conservatism and logical intellectualism, through liberalism, to neo-orthodox evangelicalism; Walter Marshall Horton, who has veered from liberalism to "realistic theology"; and Reinhold Niebuhr, who similarly pilgrimaged from liberalism to neo-orthodoxy, though his views not only reflected but helped to bring about the shift to social realism.

## The Most Typical Change

Most of the men studied were influenced appreciably by the new orthodoxy, although their fundamental assumptions were not altered. They might be called "chastened liberals." Among these I would class Frederick D. Kershner, who claims to have been influenced by Barth and Kierkegaard and whose expectation of social progress has been considerably dampened; John C. Bennett, who has come to a more sober, realistic view of human nature than he once held, and has become more skeptical concerning specific social programs; Georgia Harkness, who calls herself still a liberal but now considerably chastened and deepened, having had her liberal utopianism challenged, and having come to the realization that life is always a sphere of conflict; Robert L. Calhoun, who ranks himself with Bennett and Aubrey as a liberal "bandaged but unbowed"; Ernest Fremont Tittle, who has turned against moralistic preaching and come to see that the Kingdom of God is never fully realizable in history and is not to be identified with any human social programs; Walter Russel Bowie, by no means an avowed Barthian, although now recognizing the hollowness of the humanistic opti-

<sup>23</sup> Henry Sloane Coffin, *Religion Yesterday and Today*, 1940, p. 143.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>25</sup> H. Shelton Smith, *Faith and Nurture*, 1941, pp. 33ff.

<sup>26</sup> *The Christian Century*, January to November, 1939 (volume 56).



mism of former days. Also in this group may be included John C. Schroeder, whose confidence in the social gospel has been deflated, although he has his doubts about the ultimacy of Barthianism; Edwin E. Aubrey, who, while still fundamentally committed to the social imperative of Christianity, would accept much of Niebuhr's anthropology; and F. Ernest Johnson, who, while unwilling to retreat from the social faith inspired by Rauschenbusch and Strong, yet admits that "Its (the social gospel's) conspicuous weakness has been its failure to recognize the tragic conflict that goes on in the will of men, and the personal ground of social redemption."<sup>27</sup>

It will be seen that the last-named group is the most numerous. The precise classification of these men is, of course, problematic; others would probably arrange them differently. Yet my conviction grows that the third class represents most typically the change that has come over the social gospel in America. A few men have made a full U-turn in their theology; but by and large, the majority of social thinkers have veered without altering their general direction.

We have already considered Niebuhr's point of view, which may be taken as representative of those who underwent radical change. I should like, finally, to sketch briefly the position of John Coleman Bennett, as an example of the more typical type of transformation which the social gospel has undergone since 1920.

### **The Position of John C. Bennett**

Bennett's position is well expressed in two articles which appeared in the *Christian Century*, one in 1933, and the other in 1939. The 1933 article, entitled "After Liberalism—What?" was hailed at the time as one of the best statements of the altering social theology that was made. He begins by saying, "The most important fact about contemporary American theology is the disintegration of liberalism."<sup>28</sup> He finds the essence of liberalism in the assumption of continuity between revelation and natural religion, Christianity and other religions, the saved and the lost, Christ and other men, man and God. He names as the permanent contributions of liberalism the following: (1) A wholesome purification of Christianity from "much that our age rightly counts as incredible"; (2) a clear realization that there is a sense in which the ultimate authority in religion must rest with the insight of the individual; (3) a needed stress on the Jesus of history, as a "guarantee of the continuity between our highest humanity and the divine"; and (4) the assumption of the continuity of the Christian revela-

tion with reason or with natural religion. It will be seen from these that Professor Bennett has not forsaken his fundamental liberal assumptions, even though he has come to see things in a different perspective. His change has been basically one of emphasis rather than conviction.

### **Four Emphases**

The direction of this change is indicated by the four "emphases" which he suggests liberalism should incorporate into its theology, though they have originated in opposing schools: (1) A more realistic view of human nature, to replace the sentimental view of optimistic utopianism; (2) the realization that man is responsible not merely to the historical process, but above all to God, the highest reality, transcendent as well as immanent; (3) the insight that there is an inexorable process in the world which makes an unjust economic system destroy itself—a salutary antidote to the optimistic faith in gradual progress; and (4) a new allegiance to the historic Christian tradition, especially as regards its view of man, and a new hope that an ecumenical Christian movement may yet "say a decisive word to the spiritual confusion of the world."

### **"A Changed Liberal — But Still a Liberal"**

The other article by Professor Bennett, written in 1939, is one of the "How My Mind has Changed" series, bearing the significant title, "A Changed Liberal—But Still a Liberal." His opening sentence confirms the judgment we have been making about him: "The events and the stirring of thought of the past decade have led to important shifts of emphasis and interest in my thinking, but the shifts have been within a general framework which is still closer to theological liberalism than to any other system."<sup>29</sup> He goes on to declare that he does not wish to cut loose his idea of God from the highest human moral standards, nor allow dogmatic pessimism to replace discredited dogmatic optimism about the possibilities of human progress. Yet his mind has been haunted, of late, by the feeling that "there is no social choice, especially in international relations, which is not intolerably evil." Three shifts in emphasis are clear to him as he reviews his past thinking: (1) A shift from a tendency to individualism and contemporaneity in thought to a recognition of the importance of the Christian tradition. Yet, while recognizing the corrective value in Barthianism, he criticises its restriction of revelation to the Bible, and wishes to leave room for many points of contact between reason and faith. (2) His second shift has been

<sup>27</sup> F. Ernest Johnson, *The Social Gospel Reexamined*, p. 26.

<sup>28</sup> John C. Bennett, "After Liberalism—What?" (*Christian Century*, Nov. 8, 1933, p. 1403).

<sup>29</sup> John C. Bennett, "A Changed Liberal—But Still a Liberal", *Christian Century*, Feb. 8, 1939, p. 179.

from a naive optimism about man and his possibilities in the world to a sober and chastened view of the human problem. Sin is a hard and stubborn fact. Yet there are degrees of sin and degrees of moral achievement. We may and should believe that by grace men can approximate the highest in personal life. No reform will be safe against backsliding; yet we must keep struggling. The chastened realism of the newer social gospel is well expressed in these words: "I believe in no Utopias, but I do believe that it is possible on this earth to have a structure of society within which men can live together in an interdependent world without destroying each other, within which individuals and groups can rise to high levels and within which they can live without intolerable compromise."<sup>30</sup> Compare this with the rhapsodic utterances of early social romanticism!

(3) The third change in emphasis which Professor Bennett reports is that he has become more skeptical concerning particular social programs and panaceas. He feels that opinions on technical issues and political questions are always precarious, and that we should strive to make the Christian insight into human nature so real to people that they will become a leaven in society, rather than to indulge in futile speculations about future turns of history. If the church can become more influential among all social classes, it may in time considerably moderate the inevitable conflict between the haves and the have-nots. He hopes, too, that the message of the church may keep both the pacifists and those who favor armament from going to undesirable extremes.

It is plain from this survey of recent theological thought that there is no one position which can be pointed to as the new social gospel. There are various shades of thought, ranging all the way from unaltered liberalism to transcendental Barthianism. Among those that have been influenced at all by the new orthodoxy, two groups are prominent: those that have been forced to abandon their basic liberal assumptions; and those whose liberalism has undergone considerable chastisement, but who have not forsaken their fundamental convictions. The latter class is probably the largest. We must

read the utterances of social theologians today with great caution, asking ourselves whether their positions have really undergone fundamental change, or whether their present writings merely reflect a change in emphasis, terminology, and temper. A Ritschlian liberal is not ordinarily cured in a decade—not even by two world wars and a Barthian movement.

### Summarizing the Main Changes in the Social Gospel

By way of general characterization of the social thought of the day, we may, however, summarize the main changes in emphasis which the social gospel has undergone in the last two decades. (1) There has come a new realism about man and his possibilities. (2) Along with this has come a new conception of social change. The stubbornness of social evil has been more clearly recognized, as well as the importance for social change of sub-Christian social and political forces, and the inevitability of social conflict. (3) Even liberal theologians today have a new conception of the Kingdom of God as a transcendent ideal which can never be identified with any social order, and will never be completely realized within human history. (4) There is a growing emphasis on the transcendence of God (although for many this is merely a matter of emphasis which does not alter their basic commitment to the theology of immanentism). (5) God is recognized as the Judge of society as well as its Redeemer. (6) Need is felt for a gospel for periods of social frustration. (7) Finally, there has come a fresh emphasis on the importance of the Church in an increasingly secularized world.<sup>31</sup>

The social-gospel movement has been a stimulus for serious-minded Christians. It has shaken a complacent Church into a new awakening to its social obligations. And yet it is significant that the most recent trends in the social interpretation of the gospel have all been in the direction of the social theory of historic Calvinism! Perhaps one day men will realize that they do not need to mutilate theology in order to make it a social force.

<sup>31</sup> See Bennett, "Christianity's Social Interpretation", in *The Church Through Half a Century*, pp. 128 and 129.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.



# From Our Correspondents

## A LETTER FROM FRANCE

Coudekerque-Branche, Nord,  
France,

December 13, 1946.

Dear Dr. Bouma and FORUM-Readers:

HERE is, of course, no apparent reason for which I should suddenly, after so many months of silence now send you a news-letter from France. It's not even the fact that less than two weeks separate us from Christmas, for I well realize that this letter upon publication will be too late to wish all readers even a happy and blessed New Year.

It is true, however, that the November FORUM arrived yesterday and that I read it, especially the letters, during the wee hours of the morning. And it may be that I have a secret fear that as your unfaithful correspondent for France and Belgium I may one day discover that another has taken my place.

There is little real defense for my long silence, but there are two things I'd like to mention and which in a measure may explain. The first is that an American living in a country like France which seems in no way to be recovering from her war-fostered miseries is at times most despairingly limited in carrying out certain projects. Suddenly there is something wrong with the lights. You try to repair it yourself, but there are no tools. You fetch, ah no! you implore an electrician to come, but he simply doesn't show up. So many other people are waiting, and he has no materials. Last summer we decided that next to our barrack we needed our wooden shed enlarged. Finally, just three weeks ago, we got the job done. In order to do so we had to wrangle the military officials into giving us a German POW, but every AM and PM the German must either be gotten or escorted back to his camp. When the bikes break down that's forty minutes walking twice a day for two of us!

Moreover, when one is engaged in spiritual work among spiritual illiterates there is so much to explain, and one feels the burden of having to explain with one's *life* as well as by word, and by the Word. This evening a dozen or more boys will be in my room for the weekly Bible study . . . so little time for preparation, for study. There are children with sore ears that come to be looked after. Others who come to do their home work here, because it's too cold at home, and another who even now has entered and needs to be fitted a pair of used trousers. His father and three others of their family died within the past eight months. The boy has been coming to our Foyer ever since we opened up last summer. I met his mother on the street the other day, said she, well-knowing I'm a *pasteur*, "I don't know what we've done that God is punishing us in this way." Taking that as a lead I hope soon to visit her. It may be given me to bring her the Gospel. Said another woman recently to one of my fellow-workers, "It helps me more to talk with you than to go to confession!" That family, too, we learned to know through the young people who come to our Foyer. But I must stop, for here's a kid who can't get his jacket off. A jarred zipper . . . interferes with your correspondent in France. And yet, one learns even to unjar zippers to the Glory of God, for what we want is little André's soul somewhere beneath that jacket. . . .

The second reason why my silence has been so prolonged is due to the fact that I was primarily seeking news that might be interesting from the primarily Calvinistic viewpoint. Now do not imagine that I am writing this letter at this time because suddenly some Calvinistic news has turned up. Rather, I have decided that I shall wait no longer but shall send you some general church news. As you can already understand

then I have discovered very little or practically no Calvinistic movement so far. Professor LeCerf, the great Calvinist who used to write for THE FORUM is dead, and no one seems to have replaced him.

Another Calvinist, the historian Pannier, also died some months ago. I believe he was the last active member of a Calvinistic study group.

Let me, however, also add at once that I have been unable to get around as much as I had hoped and there may be certain things which have escaped me. I am happy to announce that D. V. I shall be taking a full month's rest for the first time in over 18 months in France early next year. I intend to go down to Southern France into the old Huguenot country. I am looking forward to meeting with a number of Pastors belonging to the small group of churches who refused to enter the merger of several churches into the *Église Réformée de France* a few years before the war. I at one time met the professor of Doctrinal Theology of their very small seminary, Prof. Bruston, and I am expecting some information from him that will be interesting to pass on to you in future letters, which there is real possibility will be reaching you regularly from now on.

The fact that I mention that there is no particular Calvinistic movement does not mean that the figure of John Calvin is in disrepute. Not at all. The interest in Calvin and the Reformation is channeled through the Barthian emphasis which is very strong among the younger pastors and students. The worst thing one can say of a preacher today is that he's a liberal. This does not so much mean a person who follows higher criticism or permits his young people to dance, as it would in the States, but rather, a minister belonging to the old non-Barthian school of moralists and "social Christians". Young Barthians glory in their freedom from moral Christianity and nearly become antinomian.

The two French persons whom I have met after their return from visits to the States have been quite shocked by the liberalism and moralism they ran into over there.

Two general remarks about the Church in France. On the whole the Gospel is being preached, but from the organizational viewpoint and as regards active church-life, such as giving, etc., there is much to be desired.

Yours in His Service,

RAY W. TEEUWISSEN.

## EASTERN CANADA

410 Stanstead Ave.,  
Town of Mount Royal, P. Q.,  
January 5, 1947.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

ALTHOUGH it is now some time since I wrote you, as this is the beginning of a new year, I thought that there could be no more opportune time than the present to send you a report on Eastern Canada happenings. But first of all let me wish you God's blessings in the New Year which is now upon us.

The biggest problem which has occupied our attention in the Presbyterian Church in Canada this year has been the noticeable drift towards church union. After the debacle of 1925 one would have thought that the damage done to our church when the Methodists, Congregationalists and a little over half the Presbyterians went together, would have been a warning. That this is not so, is only too apparent. A number of men in official positions have inveigled us into all sorts and kinds of compromising coöperative ventures. Our denomination is, for

instance, linked to the Canadian Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches (in process of formation), the North American Missionary Council, and the Church of Christ in China. About the only body with which we do not have a connection is that whirlpool of heterodoxy, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

At the present time, of course, we are being told that all we are doing is "coöperating" with these bodies and with the various churches involved. It is destined to be, however, the same sort of coöperation which Jonah had with the whale. The attempt is going to be made to swallow us up when the right moment comes.

As a consequence of this situation, there has been a growing and increasingly insistent demand that our church break its connections with these crypto-church union movements. This led to some notable passages in our General Assembly last June; and while in some things those standing faithfully to the Reformed position were successful, on other occasions they were defeated. The end is not yet. If God in His grace grants us the ability and the strength we hope to so rouse the people of our church that they shall realize much more clearly the nature of the present attempts to destroy our church by enveloping or sublimating in a church unionist's theological Nirvana.

Other problems are also occupying our attention. There is, for instance, the problem of staffing one of our theological seminaries. That is no easy nut to crack. Then, too, we have a committee working on "Articles of Faith" in the hope that some really vital doctrinal statement can be produced by our church on the basis of our Reformed confession. Here again, the signs are none too good.

You have probably all heard of the most recent events in connection with Jehovah's Witnesses up here. The provincial government, composed largely of Roman Catholics and actively supported by the Roman Church, has been arresting the Witnesses wholesale for distributing a pamphlet entitled "Quebec's burning hatred for Christ and His church." While, as you can see, this is hardly the tactful approach, it has so exposed the curtailment of religious liberty as far as the Witnesses are concerned in this province, that the government has clamped down with charges of "seditious libel", etc. While individuals have voiced their protests, the churches as a whole have as yet taken no action. It is possible that they are a little afraid. But there are apparently legal difficulties even for the government. The result is that the trials are going slowly. One judge, however, has stated that if it were in his power, he would put them all in jail for life. From this one can see how far religious liberty will go, if certain elements gain complete control. Romanism disavows toleration officially and works against it actively when it has the upper hand. My own feeling is that unless the Protestants soon awake to the situation, they, too, may feel the heavy hand of the Union National's Attorney General upon their shoulders.

Now I must close. I shall endeavour to send you further news of events up here in the lands of snow, at an early date.

Yours sincerely,  
W. STANFORD REID.

## FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETS AT SEATTLE

Lynden, Washington,  
December 26, 1946.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

IN the Northwest the outstanding religious event of the month was the biennial convention of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, held at Seattle, December 3-6. It was my privilege to attend some of the sessions and therefore I shall attempt a report of this important convention.

In reporting upon the state of the Churches in America during the Biennium 1945-1946, Dr. E. Ernest Johnson spoke with a note of optimism about the spiritual and institutional vitality of the church and among the indications of such vitality he mentioned the increase at a mighty pace of the released time

for religious education with week-day religious training in over 2,000 counties in all but two states. Charles P. Taft, the new president of the council, expressed surprise that the state of Washington has no legislation encouraging the release of children from the public schools for periodic religious study, for, as he put it, "the study of religion is not extra-curricular; it is a basic part of our living and education". However, that this is not the solution to the problem of religious education of our American youth was also indicated in the report of Dr. Johnson, for he pointed out that there is a large amount of non-religious indoctrination in the public schools to keep religion out. It is encouraging to find the leaders of this influential organization recognizing the importance of religious training and acknowledging the problem. However, it is sad when released time is set forth as the solution. Nothing short of Christian day schools can be considered adequate.

## What is Effective Evangelism?

The Council of Churches has in late years talked much about Evangelism and, as is well known, has conducted evangelistic campaigns especially in the form of preaching missions. Therefore it was not at all surprising to hear an address on "The Evangelization of America", but the treatment of the subject was a surprise indeed. In his address Dr. Eugene Blake, of the Presbyterian Church of Pasadena, Calif., exposed the failure of the Council and the Churches in their task of evangelizing humanistic America. To him the churches failed to meet the challenge of pagan America because too many in pew and pulpit do not know what they believe and are only half converted themselves. If the churches are to be a cutting edge which can make a dent into American humanism, they, according to Dr. Blake, must first satisfy three theological necessities, namely: 1) Recapture the sense of our duty to God, recovering the simple faith that God made us and that we have the duty of obedience and worship of Him; 2) have the assurance that we are saved by Jesus Christ, who through His death and resurrection is the all-sufficient Saviour; 3) recover the love of all men, setting aside the false aristocracy of class, creed, color and race. The second necessity for effective evangelism is true ecumenicity, the lack of which is represented, among other things, in that there is not a Christian University worthy of the name in our country, with the consequence that the higher leadership of our land is either anemically Christian or blatantly secular. In his final appeal the speaker sounded the warning that unless we act sharply to purify our churches of theological vagueness and argument and of infiltrated humanistic liberalism we are more likely to be evangelized by humanistic and secular America than vice-versa. It would seem that Dr. Blake is of the opinion that the ecumenicity as expressed in the Council of Churches is able to and must meet this challenge. True, he severely criticized the council, yet he did not suggest that the council under its modernistic and liberal leadership cannot but fail in meeting this great challenge.

## Miss Schokking and Pastor Niemoeller

There was much interest in the addresses by Miss Hanna Schokking of Holland and Pastor Martin Niemoeller of Germany, which were given on the same evening at the First Presbyterian Church, whose capacity of 4,000 was filled almost an hour before the meeting. Miss Schokking, a daughter of a minister in the Hervormde Kerk and director of the Social Division of the Netherlands Red Cross, spoke on "Christian Youth and the Ecumenical Church" and pointed out that the church which was almost dead and which had lost her hold upon youth suddenly became alive and regained the respect and allegiance of youth when, after the invasion, it was the only institution where free speech was still to be found and in which full responsibility was taken for saying "no" to the Nazi overlords. She pled for a fighting spirit in the battle against subversive forces with Jesus as Saviour and Guide.

Pastor Niemoeller, Vice-president of the Evangelical Church in Germany, addressed the council on "The Faith That Sus-

tains Me". His weak and frail body revealed that he had suffered much in the eight years in concentration camp, yet he spoke with an enthusiasm born of deep conviction and called our attention to three lessons that he had learned during these eight years.

First, God has a remnant. Hitler was not able to subdue the Gideon's band of a few thousand faithful ministers and congregations. No church body was honored by being altogether true, and the ones who remained joined together in the confessing church, called thus because confession was first in mind. "Thus we learned the lesson that we are not to think in terms of numbers nor to measure success by figures".

Secondly, God bestows life where He will. That which we could not do God did. "Through centuries we lived in the solitary confinement of our denominational seclusion, not believing that the barriers could be cast down, not even allowing God to do so. But God does not heed our allowing or forbidding; for He Himself is the Lord and does what is pleasing unto Him." It is He who regenerated the churches into one living church, the real body of Christ.

Thirdly, God gives power. That was the decisive lesson. Hitler wanted all; he was the god of the nation. Why did the small minority not fall in step with the impressive majority which shouted, "We are nothing, Hitler is everything", "Fuehrer befiehlt, wir folgen"? Because we were faced with the first commandment, and "we learned that God has a word for us which is able to renew courage and strength every single day and which proves even more powerful than the order and will of a tyrant. We knew this word quite well, we thought, and had known it for a long time. But we came to learn it and understand it quite anew—the word 'Jesus Christ'".

Pastor Niemoeller pointed out that the confessing church is facing a new problem: what must we preach now? The great temptation is to preach comfort in order to win the whole nation, but there is no comfort except for those who enter through the straight gate of repentance. Therefore we need to preach repentance. The only hope of the church and the world is in the crucified and resurrected Christ and let the church preach nothing else, even in the face of death.

In both this address and the one given at the banquet on the last evening of the conference Pastor Niemoeller revealed that the experiences of the years of suffering had taught him the desperate need of ecumenicity. However, to him this ecumenicity means more than outward federation and union, for it demands, as he put it, "readjustment of the inner life of the church".

No doubt it puzzles many that a man like Niemoeller is in fellowship with the Federal Council of Churches which is no longer evangelical, but has departed from the faith. I believe the answer to this difficulty was given by the pastor himself, for he spoke of the churches of Germany with their leaders as looking upon themselves as outcasts, since they, too, were responsible for the Germany of Hitler. But the World Council of Churches came as a Good Samaritan and invited the German Churches. Their being received with open arms by the World Council of Churches at such a critical time moved the Evangelical Churches of Germany to affiliate with that body.

### Universalists Not Welcome?

As for matters of business that came before the council, the Universalist Church again applied for membership, and was rejected for the second time, because that church does not believe in the divinity of Christ. However, this rejection was preceded by a spirited debate and was followed with a unanimous decision that a committee of seven persons from the council confer with the heads of the Universalist denomination "and offer it the council's affectionate Christian greetings" and report at the next biennial meeting. It appeared from the discussion that the Universalist Church was not rejected because of her failure to believe in the divinity of Christ, but because such bodies as the United Lutherans (Consultative), the Reformed Church of America, and three or four others might then withdraw. With its spirit of inclusiveness the council is try-

ing to hold on to these and also desires to admit the Universalist Church which according to one of the prominent members of the council "is also a Christian body".

As might be expected, the council dealt mostly with matters social and political. It expressed itself on such matters as reduction of armaments, abolishing military conscription, outlawing the use of the atomic bomb, adoption of the trusteeship provision of the United Nations Charter, investigating of charges against Senator Bilbo, and appointed its Department of Christian Social Relations to study the housing problem, including proposals for legislation.

This convention at Seattle has again revealed that the Council of Churches is primarily a social and political organization with high idealism and a real concern for civil righteousness and social justice, but that it cannot be considered as either truly Christian or truly evangelical.

With Christian Greetings,

J. F. SCHUURMANN.

### EAST FRIESLAND AND DUTCH CALVINISM

NEDERLANDSCH as a name for the Dutch language occurs for the first time in a Brussels book title of 1518. It was an innovation that must have seemed pretentious to the writer's contemporaries. The scholar who invented it wanted a name that denoted the linguistic unity of the inhabitants of the "*Neder Landen*", the Low Countries, and the word that he coined was the best he could have chosen. He did not apply it, though, to the speech of all the provinces now forming the Kingdom of the Netherlands. For him the Netherlands language was restricted to the provinces of Flanders, Brabant, Limburg, Zeeland, Holland, and Utrecht. In these, in the course of the late Middle Ages, a literary standard had developed, for which the modern philologist has invented the convenient name of Middle Dutch. This Middle Dutch was not in use in Gelderland, Overijssel, Drente, and Groningen. These provinces were inclined to face east rather than west. They could not help being drawn into the German orbit, for geographically they were part of the Low German plain. The IJssel river and the Zuiderzee divided them from Holland and Utrecht, whereas no such natural boundaries hemmed them in on the German side. Gelderland, moreover, maintained its independence from Burgundian rule long after the Dukes of Burgundy had gained a firm foothold in Holland, Zeeland, Brabant, and Flanders. Hence, the Duke of Gelderland, seeing in the power of Burgundy a menace to his own, looked east for support. The provinces where Middle Dutch was spoken were culturally a colony of France, but French culture had not spread beyond the IJssel and the Zuiderzee. That difference, perhaps, caused a cleavage more profound than the estrangement due to geographical and political circumstances. To Flemings and Hollanders the inhabitants of the eastern provinces were barbarians. Jacob van Maerlant, the leading poet of Flanders in the late thirteenth century, referred to them as "wild Saxons". Knowing themselves despised by their neighbors on the west, they felt naturally drawn towards their Low German neighbors, whose language was similar to theirs and whose culture was not any higher than their own.

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Such was the state of affairs in the early sixteenth century. But in the revolutionary period that followed these Saxon frontier provinces were drawn into the vortex of the Netherlands war for freedom, and when the Dutch Republic emerged from the welter and developed into one of the great Powers of Western Europe, the Saxon frontier dwellers who had taken part in the struggle were not averse to sharing the fruits of Holland's triumph. They turned away from Germany and began to face west. Dutch Calvinism, which had been the mainstay of the resistance against Spain, was also the most effective agent of Holland's eastward expansion. The town of Emden, in East

Friesland, was a haven of refuge for the Calvinists from the sea provinces who had fled the persecutions of the Spanish inquisition. There the first national synod was held in 1575; there early Dutch Bible translations and psalmbooks were printed; there Calvinism organized the apostates from the Church of Rome into a democratic and defiant church which dared challenge the power of the Spanish empire. The native population of East Friesland was first inclined to follow Zwingli; then they deserted Zwingli for Menno, the Frisian leader of the moderate Anabaptists; but finally, impressed by the growing power and prestige of the Dutch Reformed Church, they joined the church of the exiles living among them. Political events promoted this development. The county of East Friesland was ruled by the noble house of Sirksena. After the death of Countess Anne in 1575 her two sons chose different sides. Edzard remained true to the Lutheran faith of his mother; Johan declared himself in favor of the Dutch Reformed Church. Civil war ensued, in which Edzard sought support from the Emperor and Spain, and Johan from the Dutch States General. The latter, who since 1594 were in control of nearby Groningen, intervened and dictated to both parties a treaty which was drawn up in Holland Dutch. Under this treaty, signed at Delfzijl in 1595, only the Reformed confession was admitted in Emden, and the States General obtained the right of laying garrisons in Emden and Leeroort.

\* \* \*

Since High German was the language of Lutheranism, the Calvinists of East Friesland cut all ties with the Empire. They sent their sons to the Dutch universities of Groningen, Franeker, Leyden, Utrecht. These boys brought the language of Holland back with them to their native country and preached in it rather than in Low Saxon, which they felt to be a coarse and vulgar idiom. The minister who led the congregation at Jemgum from 1650 to 1674 was the last to use the native speech in the pulpit. East Friesland, by the end of the seventeenth century, had to all intents and purposes become an ecclesiastical province of the Dutch Republic.

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In the year 1744 the house of Sirksena became extinct and East Friesland was incorporated with Prussia, whose king received the right of succession from the Empire. It remained Prussian till 1807. In that year it was united with the Kingdom of Holland under Napoleon's brother Louis Bonaparte; and as a part of that kingdom it was annexed by the Napoleonic empire in 1810. It regained its liberty from French domination in 1813, became incorporated with Hanover in the following year and became Prussian again in 1866 with the establishment of the North German Federation under the King of Prussia as hereditary president. The influence of Holland on East Friesland declined, in consequence, after 1744. The town council of Emden demanded that the consistory of the Reformed Church, now that the city was subject to a German king, should cease appointing ministers who spoke Hollandish. The consistory retorted that the minister, if he spoke High German in the pulpit, would not be understood by the congregation. But the recalcitrant consistory had finally to yield to a peremptory command from the Prussian king himself, and its obstinacy was punished by a ban on the study at Dutch universities. Thenceforth East Frisians were forced to go to Lingen for their education. Dutch, nevertheless, remained in use among the educated classes of East Friesland until the early nineteenth century. In 1751 Frederick the Great visited Emden and was welcomed with inscriptions that were all in Holland Dutch. It never was spoken, though, by the common people, among whom Lower Saxon remained in use. But thanks to the esteem in which it was held it strongly influenced the Low Saxon speech of every day.

East Friesland was not the only county where High German and Holland Dutch made inroads into Saxon territory and vied with each other in annexing it linguistically. The Lutheran Count of Bentheim turned Calvinist at the close of the sixteenth century, and this change entailed orientation towards Holland. In 1668, however, the ruling house rejoined the Church of Rome, whereupon the States General obtained a protectorate over the Reformed Church of Bentheim. Dutch became the language of church, school, and commerce. As late as 1820 the village pastor Visch wrote a history of the county in impeccable Dutch. In some Christian Reformed and Mennonite communities the Dutch language was still in use at the beginning of this century. In the county of Lingen, east of Bentheim, the Reformed faith was favored by the Count, who happened to be the Prince of Orange. Prince William III, the King-Stadtholder, founded a Reformed Academy at Lingen, where many students were trained who later held professorships in universities of the Dutch Republic. Further south, in the Rhine Province, the Dutch language was predominant on the German side of the present frontier from the late Middle Ages down to the nineteenth century. A striking proof of this is a publication of 1763 celebrating the peace of Hubertusburg and praising the King of Prussia, Frederick the Great, as the national German hero, who had vanquished the French and saved the German Fatherland. In spite of this patriotic Prussian slant, and in spite of its claim that it voices the joy of the loyal citizens of Emmerich, the book is Dutch from title-page to colophon. Until the second half of the past century Dutch was spoken at Cleve among the upper classes, Dutch books were printed at Wesel, Gelder, and Emmerich, Dutch folksongs were sung along the Lower Rhine.

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It is in this border region for which the Dutch and German languages have contended with each other since the late Middle Ages that the Netherlands Government hopes to annex tracts of productive land that must compensate Holland for the damage done her by the Nazis. The Dutch are not taking this step from any desire for territorial expansion. They find no pleasure in claiming what belongs to others. But so much that belongs to them was taken from them or wantonly destroyed by Hitler's hordes that they feel entitled to restitution. The value of large areas of land was impaired by inundation, and it seems only just that the losses incurred be made good by the cession of productive German soil. The Dutch Government's claims are extremely modest. They cannot be construed as having been prompted by a lust for revenge; they amount to little more than a rectification of the frontier. Even the town of Emden, that ancient stronghold of the Dutch Reformed Church, is not included. The present frontier runs an erratic course across the map resulting in a design that could be used in Rohrshach tests. I see all sorts of faces in it, some of which peep into Holland, others into Germany. The Dutch proposals will cut off the noses and in some places, more drastically, cut off whole heads, creating a less capricious boundary line that will be shorter by a hundred miles. Historic ties bind these border regions to the Netherlands, and the speech of the rural population is not much different from the dialects that are spoken on the Dutch side of the frontier. The High German Nazis who invaded the Netherlands were foreign barbarians to the Dutch; the Low German peasantry of the border tracts in dispute will find the Dutch to be neither strangers nor barbarians.

A. J. BARNOUW.

Circular Letter  
Netherland-America Foundation  
New York, N. Y.



# Book Reviews

## A NEW CHURCH HISTORY

THE STORY OF THE FAITH. By William Alva Gifford. New York: the Macmillan Co., 1946. 611 pages. \$5.00.

UNABASHEDLY liberal is this superbly written work from the facile pen of Dr. Gifford, Professor of Church History and the History of Religions in the United Theological College, Montreal, and in the Coöperating Theological College affiliated with McGill University. The book under present consideration, according to the title page, purports to be a "survey of Christian history for the undogmatic". It has a specified clientèle. Is it designed primarily for the man in the street who has no settled religious convictions? If it is, this book is but another piece of propaganda promoting the liberal, higher critical views of the Bible and of Christian history, and seeking to enlist others under its nefarious banner. If, on the other hand, the author is assuming or pretending that no dogmatic assumptions underlie this work, he is either self-deluded or wilfully deceptive. He stands foursquare upon the presuppositions of higher Biblical criticism and from them he does not budge an inch. To his way of thinking there are, beyond the possibility of a doubt, "contradictory traditions" within the Bible; the writers of the Bible did not have supernatural endowment but natural insight, developed to a high degree by quiet nights under the stars; and the religion of Israel, which begins this Story of the Faith, is a precipitate of evolutionary development in the religious sphere. He takes the "findings" of liberal scholarship as his point of departure throughout. That is dogmatism of the first water. Gifford, with his presuppositions and despite his protestations, is not a whit less prejudiced or biased than those whom he chides, albeit gently, as constricted in their thinking and cemented in the mold of traditionalism. Consequently, to my mind, the specification on the title page needs revision. This is a book, not for the ungrounded and unsuspecting, but for the thoughtful and discerning, those who will "try the spirits, to see whether they be of God".

The title of the work deserves a word of comment. A Story it is, told interestingly and well, but is it a story of the Faith? If the preparatory movement in Israel was a purely evolutionary one and if Christianity, as we know it, is a conglomeration of Greek philosophy, Roman law, Oriental mysticism, and Jewish fantasy, as the author maintains, is this a record of the Faith? Does not Christian faith, subjectively considered, imply an object who is supreme and who directs the course of history to his own predetermined end? Or faith, objectively considered, is it not the set of basic Christian convictions "once for all delivered to the saints", revealed in the Word and implanted in the heart by the Holy Spirit; convictions for which men have bled and died and which, through God's gracious hand in history, have come down to us today? Not so to Mr. Gifford. He has no interest in the historic faith; faith to him epitomizes the church, the church as a human institution which had a deposit of truth but which absorbed much from its environment and presents a hybrid character today. It goes without saying that the church which flies the Christian banner is not *ipso facto* synonymous with the Christian faith.

It is no mean task to compress so much history within the compass of one compact volume. "The story opens", says the jacketeer, "with Hebrew tribes, migrating from the deserts of Arabia to a new home in Palestine and . . . continues until Benito Mussolini dies meanly before a firing squad and Adolph Hitler disappears in the flames of his chancellor's office". Adequate treatment of so extensive a span of history demands a rich measure of historical discretion and a keen eye for connections

and trends. Gifford appears to possess both. He has succeeded right well in a most difficult task. No significant man or movement escapes his purview. Nor are there yawning gaps. The bulkiness of the subject has not made for historical discontinuity.

There are further merits. The language is fresh and choice. Unhackneyed are the chapter headings: "The Church Leaves Home" for the spread of the gospel; "The Church Come to Terms with the World" for the infiltration of worldliness after Constantine; "The Adolescence of Europe" for the Renaissance; and "Mother Church Awakes" for the Counter-reformation. The analysis of Calvinism (18 pages) is fair and just. There is a fine sketch of the contrast between Judaism and Christianity and between Catholicism and Protestantism. Worthy of commendation is the explanation of the rise of episcopacy and its later development into the papal hierarchical system. So, too, is the honest confession with respect to the modern minister who has to forage far and wide for the preachable, "Sometimes he is a poor gleaner; sometimes there is little to glean" (p. 581).

This work is up-to-date—it records history into 1945—but what of the future? Gifford turns prophet in the final chapter which he calls "The Valley of Decision". He is somewhat enamored of Catholicism, since it affords a quiet retreat amid the religious confusion of the day, but it has a fatal defect, namely, it will not come to terms with progress. Fundamentalism, says he, is characterized by divisive tendencies and 'hide-bound' conservatism and will be a curio candidate for the religious museum of the future. The only hope lies in Christian Liberalism. What we need, says Gifford, is a return to Christ; particularly a return to His parables and His Sermon on the Mount. They constitute an adequate philosophy of life. Protestantism is approaching exhaustion, he avers, due to the complexities that have developed from the original simplicity, and the great need of the day is a return to the rudiments of the teachings of Christ. The diagnosis of the good doctor is correct—Protestantism is anemic and ineffectual—but why prescribe an old remedy that has been tried and found wanting? When will men see that modernism is but religious quackery and that man's only hope lies in the real Word of God, adequate not only for personal redemption but for the redemption of the world?

JOHN H. BRATT.

## THE BIBLICAL IDEA OF MISSIONS

THE BIBLE BASIS OF MISSIONS. By Robert Hall Glover. Los Angeles: Bible House of Los Angeles. 1946. \$1.75

THIS is a good book; which is another way of saying that it measurably fulfills the purpose for which it was written. If any one should be in doubt concerning the biblical basis of missions, he could not possibly rise from the careful reading of this excellent treatise without being perfectly persuaded that the will of God as revealed in Holy Scriptures calls for what customarily is called missions.

In all likelihood there are very few people, if any at all, who, if fairly well acquainted with the Bible, do not recognize that the missionary work of the Church of Christ rests squarely upon that historic Book. What they perhaps might learn from Dr. Glover's book is that missions are bottomed not only on the so-called fourfold Missionary Manifesto of the New Testament, but upon the entire Word of God. It is not fantastic to believe that many advocates of missions are not as well-informed on



the score of the consistently missionary tenor of all of Scripture as they should be.

Dr. Glover does not devote as much attention as one could wish to the Old Testament basis of missions. Of course, the New Testament is clearer on the subject of missions than the Old Testament. But it is indisputable that the foundations of the doctrine of missions are laid solidly in the Old Testament. And it is nothing strange that this should prove to be the case. For in the last analysis this is true of all biblical doctrines. Foundations may, from the nature of the case, not be particularly conspicuous. But they are not for that reason absent in fact.

If the present reviewer may be permitted to offer a suggestion, it is that the esteemed author of this truly excellent book enlarge, and by that token improve, the volume by bringing into the readers' field of vision the contributions to the biblical doctrine of missions which the Old Testament makes progressively. The more one recognizes and appreciates the Old Testament revelation of God's missionary purposes and activities, the more and better will he understand the New Testament deliverances on the interesting subject of missions.

It is the present reviewer's definite opinion that there is, proverbially speaking, a *crying* need of a full-orbed biblical doctrine of missions. The place of missions in the world- and time-embracing plan of God as related, in respect to its central purpose, to the eternal order of the world to come, and the function of ecclesiastical missions in the realization of that eternity-centered temporal process, have not yet been singled out for *sustained* theological study. In consequence, missionary theology is very much of a side-issue in divinity, and more particularly an appendix of ecclesiology.

But if the sub-title of Dr. Glover's second chapter, viz., "World Evangelization the Church's Supreme Aim and Task" is a true dictum, then it may be necessary to rearrange the traditional section on the church in our dogmatics and so to do more justice to the scriptural dogma of the church than it has hitherto received, in the premises. What is sorely needed assuredly is a vast amount of research in the field of the biblical idea of missions. And it is safe to say, that, on the assumption that the researcher truly trembles at God's Word, its results will demonstrate that the work of missions is based squarely on Scripture. The idea of missions, once its full-orbed theology has been elaborated, will set the whole missionary movement, centering as it does in Christ, God's Arch-Missionary, in a clearer light than it has ever yet been seen.

Meanwhile, Dr. Glover's book is a fine contribution to the biblical study of missions. It aims particularly at showing that missions is fundamentally not a humanitarian undertaking reflecting credit upon would-be sympathetic man, but a divine project calculated to bring God the praise of the glory of His grace. It is written warmly in plain language. Every page of the book gives clear evidence that the author is deeply versed both in Scripture revelation and in missionary lore. It is eminently deserving of wide reading, in spite of a few things on which at least some of his sympathetic readers do not see eye to eye with him.

S. VOLBEDA.

### THE REVEREND VAN WYK'S NOTES

MY NOTES FOR ADDRESSES AT FUNERAL OCCASIONS. By W. P. Van Wyk. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. 1945. 140 pages. \$1.50.

THESE "Notes" betray the master. Those who were once the parishioners (the present reviewer was among them) of their author well remember and will never forget the exegetical excellence, the applicatory fitness and the delightful crispness of the language, of his weekly sermons. These "Notes" run true to type, as even a hasty perusal will clearly show.

What use is to be made of these "Notes"? As the very title indicates we are not offered Funeral Addresses in the volume in hand, but only "Notes" for the same, in spite of the fact

that these "Notes" are called "Thirty-six Funeral Sermons and Outlines" (Italics are mine, S.V.) on one of the fly-leaves. As one reads these "Notes", one could wish that the lamented author had expanded them into full-orbed funeral orations. Then the general public would buy them and avidly read them with spiritual delight and profit. Upon reading that the volume offers "Notes for Funeral Addresses" (Italics are mine, S. V.), the average layman will not unlikely be deterred from purchasing it. For there is no indication in the title of the book that the "Notes" are not skeleton-like but quite elaborate, and can very well be read in consecution, if one will simply disregard the technical traces of outlines as here employed and furnish connecting links here and there. It should be added, however, that even so the "Notes" are only summaries, seed-thoughts, if you will.

Naturally those among us whose office is to conduct funerals will be interested in these "Notes", in *first* order. But, one queries, what use will they make of them? Hopefully they will not use them over *mit Haupt und Haar*, that is, reproduce them, when they officiate at funerals, pretty much as they are, in the bland confidence that only ministers are acquainted with them. Plagiarism is a bad business, and it least of all befits men who have been trained for their work, and can therefore very well stand on their own feet, if they have the will to do so.

To what, if any, use, then, can a minister put such fine "Notes" as these? The answer is not far to seek, and it is by no means negative. He can with full propriety employ them as models after which to fashion the funeral addresses which he fathers quite independently. These "Notes" are excellent models; they are, indeed, shining examples of the holy art of speaking to the living when they have assembled at the bier of the dead, in the spirit of the Word of Him who is the God of life and death. If those who are called upon to officiate upon the solemn occasion of the interment of the departed will seriously study the method, material and tenor of these "Notes", they will be receiving valuable help from a master-minister, and yet not copy him slavishly. It is well that those who will use these "Notes" professionally should remember or know that the late Reverend William P. Van Wyk was nothing, if he was not a busily independent thinker. May they be used in his *manly* spirit.

S. VOLBEDA.

### CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING

MANUAL OF GOSPEL BROADCASTING. By Wendell P. Loveless. Chicago: Moody Press, 1946. 350 pages. \$3.50.

THE author has been director of WMBI, radio voice of the Moody Bible Institute, since its infancy in 1926. In these twenty years the staff has been increased from two to one hundred and fifty, the wattage from 500 to 5000, and the broadcast time from a few hours to the full daytime period. This is a notable achievement of faith and hard work, and reflects no small credit on Mr. Loveless.

It is unfortunate that this book does not more adequately present the real fruits of such an extended and successful experience in Christian radio. The author intends his work to be "a textbook in gospel broadcasting" for seminaries and Bible institutes, "interesting reading" for laymen, and a help to those presently engaged in religious broadcasting. It best realizes the second purpose, and measurably serves the latter. However, it is not of textbook caliber, and is hardly what the title itself claims.

There is a rather indiscriminating combination of material distinctively pertaining to gospel broadcasting and that which is common to all radio. Of the latter there is much which one might consider unnecessary under a title of this kind, such as the speaking voice and miscellaneous technical data on radio, which may at any rate be studied equally well in standard works on speech and radio. What is more regrettable, it often results in a neglect of the former. It is a disproportion when more space is devoted to microphones than to some forty program-

ming ideas or the problems of public relations in religious broadcasting.

One feels that the author has not come to grips with the real issues of his subject. He disposes of the question of ethics in gospel broadcasting with a scant five pages of platitudes and truisms. "Broadcasting the Church Service" and "Mistakes of Gospel Broadcasters" receive only cursory treatment. Furthermore, there are many indications that WMBI's programs are extensively imitative and adaptive of prevailing techniques and production standards in secular radio. Moody and its capable director have not yet made a fundamentally and distinctively Christian orientation of radio broadcasting.

The organization of this book leaves much to be desired. The twenty-five chapters are far from coördinate. There is one chapter of two pages dealing with radio personnel and physical fitness. Paragraphs are arbitrarily and often uselessly numbered, with little attempt to form an outline. With many vague chapter headings, few sectional or paragraph headings, and an inadequate index, this is not the ready reference work which it was probably intended to be.

Its chief value lies in the fact that it is what the publisher calls a "first in its field". It is significantly informative. It has many fine suggestions, particularly on program building. It contains about a hundred and fifty pages of typical monologues, dialogues, and dramatic sketches, which incidentally might better have been reduced in extent and subjected to analysis and interpretation. It raises problems of consequence, though sometimes by indirection. It merits reading and thoughtful consideration by all those interested in radio as an effective means for the Christian witness.

Mr. Loveless and his associates continue to pioneer in the field of Christian broadcasting. It behooves us who still think in terms of short weekly programs, and who write only an occasional article on this subject, to be more respectful and appreciative than critical. When will we seriously consider owning and operating radio stations? When will our colleges and seminaries have a radio voice? When will our vaunted world and life view be truly aired? Where is our Manual of Gospel Broadcasting?

HAROLD DEKKER.

## CONCERNING MINORITY GROUPS

CIVILIZATION AND GROUP RELATIONS. Edited by R. M. MacIver. Published by the Institute for Religious Studies. Distributed by Harper and Brothers, New York, 1945. 177 pages. \$2.00.

THIS publication is a series of addresses and discussions sponsored by the Institute for Religious Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Members of various minorities consider the minority problem from two general viewpoints: the national welfare and the effects within the minorities themselves.

The institute setting forth this work should not be confused with the Institute of Social and Religious Research whose publications generally have been of a much more scholarly nature.

Eleven men of various degrees of competence and, yes, incompetence, besides the editor, have contributed chapters and one cannot refrain from feeling sympathetic for Editor MacIver, professor of political philosophy and sociology, Barnard College and Columbia University, who must draw together this hodgepodge into some form of unity. In fact, the contribution by MacIver is well worth reading, and justifies the review.

One hopefully turns to Chapter 10 on Religion and Minority Groups by Bishop H. St. George Tucker, D.D., but soon becomes disillusioned. Not only is it practically devoid of religious considerations, but it contains much muddled thinking and contradiction. On page 140 Tucker says, "I do not think there is a tremendous amount of race antagonism in the South" (he lives in the South). On page 142 he writes, "I think it is because of the political leaders of the South . . . that there

is so much prejudice and antagonism to the Negro". That his views of the minority problem are of the traditional southern type is evident when he says that the right of minorities to their own views will be recognized as long as they confine themselves to their own special lines of interest. And, again, "If the Negroes wish to have a fair opportunity here in America, they must think of themselves first of all as Americans and secondly as Negroes", as if the problem really rested in the mental set of the Negro.

Tucker does say that in so far as a "group develops a group loyalty among its members wider than loyalty to their own personal interests it performs a very wonderful service to society", but he does not link this with the contribution that religion can and does make.

Fr. John LaFarge, S.J., in a chapter on Religion and Group Tensions, parries the thrust that religious people are often found among those who most readily yield to prejudice with the assertion that where this phenomenon is found, it is due not to a lack of vitality in religion itself, but to its imperfect assimilation, its faulty application.

MacIver stresses the vicious circle aspect of group discrimination which finds the stronger groups preventing the weaker from sharing the benefits and opportunities of the community, by reason of which the stronger grow proud and intolerant of undesirable characteristics in the minority group which can be removed only by sharing in these opportunities.

The consensus of the editor and the contributors is that the trouble roots in the indoctrinated attitudes of group to group and social education is the way out. "We need a great continuous campaign against the forces of darkness", according to MacIver. As generally is the case, the "forces" are darker than these men have painted them, the "roots" go much deeper, the campaign is more vital. Also, one sickens at the constant cry of "Education" as the magic solution to all of our social problems, education *per se*, education without content, yet withal having the driving power to propel us to newer, better ways.

DONALD H. BOUMA.

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## FIRST REGIONAL CALVINISTIC CONFERENCE OF CALIFORNIA

A regional Calvinistic Conference will be held on Thursday, February 20, and Friday, February 21, at the Second Christian Reformed Church of Bellflower, California.

The scheduled program follows:

Thursday evening. Public Lecture. Speaker: Professor Louis Berkhof, President-Emeritus of Calvin Seminary. Subject: "The Future of the Conservative Church in the Post-War World."

Friday morning. Devotionals. Address: "Calvinistic Apologetics." Speaker: Rev. Robert K. Churchill of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, Calif. This address will be followed by discussion.

Friday afternoon. Devotionals. Address: "Calvinistic Steadfastness Amid the Present Confusion in the Religious World." Speaker: Professor Berkhof. Followed by discussion.

Friday evening. Banquet. Followed by a Public Address by Rev. Robert K. Churchill. Subject: "Yet Forty Days and America Will be Destroyed."

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