the CALVIN Forum

Higher Education
And the Creed

The Indonesia Issue
Proper Orientation

Philosophy of History
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Symposium
On Calvin

Letters

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Verse

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Verse

The Creeds, the Bible, and Higher Education

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MOST people think of church creeds as museum pieces, relics of a by-gone age, alive perhaps long ago in less important times but today deader than the dodo. In fact, when you begin to reflect on the matter you must conclude that creeds have very few friends in our modern world.

I

That the modernistic or liberal church is contemptuous of creeds is understandable. A creed in the historical, ecclesiastical sense, being a brief, authoritative formula of religious belief—such as the Apostles' or Nicene Creeds—presupposes an infallible Bible which constitutes the objective basis of the formulation. If the Bible is not literally *God's* word to man and hence is only a collection of what religious thinkers from Moses to Paul thought about religion, it is hardly worth the effort to try to extract from the Biblical writings a formal statement of the teachings. The Bible then serves only as a convenient starting point (perhaps along with the sacred books of other religions) for my own religious reflections and I may very well end up with some such opinion as, "I believe in the goodness of God and the dignity of man."

That is to say, the truth about God and the truth about man turns out to be nothing else than what I subjectively hold to be true concerning these matters. And then if I have any logic in my head I must allow my neighbor in the pew to reach his own conclusions too, and furthermore, I must admit that neither he nor I have any right to dignify what we believe by the word truth. And then if I keep thinking about this matter I will decide that there is no very compelling reason why I should be in the pew at all. The Church is an assembly of believers, but if each member b e l i e v e s what he chooses, it will not be long before they cease to assemble.

Of course, many church members would utterly reject the above l o g i c a l "straight-jacket." They would reply that I have completely failed to sense the true inwardness of the Christian religion and that as for them Christianity means Christ, not a creed. They may at times even recite in unison the Apostles' Creed but it is a lip service which is rooted in formalism and antiquarianism. Practically they are not only creedless but anti-creedal. Practically, I say; so far as their self-consciousness and inner convictions are concerned, they may be followers of Christ. But it is well to remember that most religious experience, Christian or otherwise, is identical, tested from the psychological approach. Unless you apply to it the objective test of comparison with something outside yourself, the Bible as interpreted by the creeds, you have no way of knowing what Christ you are following.

But it happens upon occasion that Bible-believing Christians, too, take up the slogan, "No creed but Christ," or at least, its virtual equivalent. It is these people whom I am addressing at present. I have heard some of them express themselves quite indignantly about the catechism preaching that goes on Sunday after Sunday in my own denomination. The way they see it, we are putting something between ourselves and the Bible in much the same way that Catholics approach Scripture through the mediation of Papal authority. To hear them talk you would conclude that they think we have completely forgotten the great accomplishment of the Reformation and that we have only substituted one authority for another authority, the Bible being amongst us only a convenient arsenal of texts to demonstrate our creeds. Now I am very ready to admit that a casual observer may at times be left with that impression, and when faced with the charge we shall be quick to reply that if we do this it is a fault in execution, not of intention. The Bible for us, too, is the only authority, but we are also convinced that creeds are indispensable.

II

Why is not the Bible itself a sufficient guide? Why must we add: the Bible as interpreted by the creeds? That is an excellent question and the very one we must face if this little discourse is to mean anything.

To make out a case for the necessity of creeds you must first be convinced (here we drop the liberal churches) that Scripture is the Word of God. That is to say, two things must be kept in mind. The Bible is a piece of writing and God is the author of this writing. No real case can be made for a creed apart from its relation to the Bible. The creed as creed hasn't a leg to stand on, so that I would say that the very common statement that the authority of the creeds is just below the author-

ity of the Bible is the weakest possible argument for the creed. To put the matter that way only serves to darken counsel. Our faith does not rest on a series of graded authorities. There is only one rule of faith and life from the standpoint of authority and that is Holy Writ. No other writing can be spoken of as "just below" or "second to" God's writing. The creedal formulations of church councils are nothing more than serious efforts to say what its members think the Bible means. It follows that while the Bible remains forever complete and perfect, creeds may in the course of time need revision. However, having said that, let us not think lightly of creeds but let us add at once that creeds are an absolute necessity. Why?

The Bible is a piece of writing. The whole matter is just as simple and just as complex as that. God might have revealed Himself in some other way but as it is, He chose language as His medium of revelation. Now whatever is written, no matter how carefully, is subject to various interpretations, if not of actual facts then at least of emphasis and relative importance. This ought to be perfectly obvious to anyone who considers the matter. Sincere and intelligent Christians, devout and careful students of the Bible, come to different conclusions when they read the Book.

Hence it comes about that among Bible-believing Christians there are scores of denominations. One concludes that the Bible teaches infant baptism, another cannot see it there at all. And so, too, one man sees certain events in a certain order bringing on the end of this age, the other man equally competent and equally eager to know the mind of God reads His eschatology quite otherwise. This is a feature of all writing and should be no surprise in the Bible.

Now let no one draw the hasty and mistaken inference that, inasmuch as Scripture is variously interpreted, all interpretations must be equally valid, or again, that none are valid. The laws of the state, too, can be variously interpreted. The whole legal profession rests on this fact. The legislature enacts a law, a core of legal specialists write it up as precisely as they can, but not until a case under the law comes before a court do we know what the law means. Even then a higher court may dissent. The Supreme Court has recently said what it thinks our Constitution means by the separation of Church and State. The court, we say, "hands down an opinion" concerning the law. Likewise creeds set forth an opinion concerning the meaning of the Bible.

Creeds formulating the teachings of the Bible are a practical necessity for those who believe in a divinely inspired and hence infallible Bible. No church community and hence no communion is possible without creeds. No state can exist in which each man makes his own interpretation of the law. A high degree of uniformity of belief is needed for union of action. The slogan, "No creed but Christ", is a specious oversimplification which makes a strong appeal to those who do not understand the nature of the written word. It is an unfair attack on creeds because it sets over against each other things which cannot be compared. It is unfair also because it challenges the loyalty to Christ of the man who believes in creeds. One's personal relation to Christ is the very thing the creed would define. Without such definition—who is Christ? who am I?—our religious experience would be limited by the above-mentioned psychological subjectivity.

III

I have discharged two parts of my title. It remains to say something about the relation of higher education to these matters. From time to time it is asked whether a church may properly engage in the business of higher education to the extent of operating a college. All sorts of answers are given, carrying varying degrees of conviction. Would it not be best to rest the case ultimately on the very nature of divine revelation itself? The Bible must be read, it must be interpreted, a decision must be reached as to what it means, this decision must be formulated into writing which we call a creed, and then, upon occasion, it will also be necessary to say what the creed means. Do you think that this is a job for untrained minds? If the proper interpretation of the laws of the land requires professional legal education it does not seem unreasonable to demand equally severe and advanced education of those who are to interpret the laws of the Kingdom.

Here two objections must be faced. First, as regards the necessity of h i g h e r education for the interpretation of the Bible, it may be argued that it is required only of those destined for the ministry, and second, that this is properly the work of the theological school rather than of the college.

If the integrity of the church is to be preserved no absolute distinction may be made b e t w e e n preachers and hearers in intellectual equipment. It is *lay* elders who upon entry into their office are pledged to maintain purity of d o c t r i n e in the church. They rule and instruct the church all the way from their local sessions up through the broadest ecclesiastical council. The Presbyterian government of the church is an illusion when lay elders are not competent to judge of the Biblical soundness of the preaching and teaching.

On the second point, it should be emphasized that it is in the college that a man learns to read and if he hasn't learned it there he has no place in the theological seminary. The proper business of the college is to teach people how to read. To some this may seem unbelievably naive. They suppose that a college is busy with something or other far more significant! Here I can say no more than to r e p e a t for the skeptical what I often heard my teacher, Professor Paul Shorey, remark, "Critical judgment of the meaning of books, documents, the

written word, is one of the latest, rarest, and most easily lost of human attainments." That is a text which we in the schools ought to ponder long and often.

Columbia University was founded "to bequeath to the Churches a learned clergy." If you move in the Reformation tradition there is no room in the church for any other sort of clergy. And the ultimate reason why this is so rests on no snobbish notions of hierarchical superiority of the clergy to the laity but on the nature of language, whether written or spoken. And if the work of the clergy is to be effective there must be widespread literacy throughout the church of the highest possible order, of the sort that is involved in "critical judgment of the meaning . . . of the written word."

The Netherlands and Indonesia

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WORLD WAR II was a catastrophe for all of the countries actively involved in it. Among the countries on the victorious side few fared worse than the Netherlands. Much of the country was badly damaged during the invasion, and much of what was left of the national wealth was drained off by the Germans during five years of occupation. A similar fate befell Indonesia at the hands of the Japanese. The Dutch fleet, an important factor in Dutch economy, was sadly reduced by enemy action while employed in the United Nations' cause. The postwar events in Indonesia have been a severe blow to the Dutch psychologically and economically, aside from the drain on a weakened national economy which the costs of maintaining a considerable army thousands of miles from home entails. Moreover, the transit traffic over the Rhine with the German industrial hinterland, another important factor in pre-war Dutch prosperity, cannot substantially revive so long as Germany remains prostrate. To overcome these accumulated difficulties the Dutch will need all of the great qualities generally ascribed to them.

The Picture as of Today

The postwar developments in the East Indies have attracted a great deal of attention in the American press; yet Americans generally are poorly informed on the basic problems and issues involved. An understandable sympathy with dependent peoples struggling for independence and exaggerated ideas about American policies and administration in the neighboring Philippines tend to distort the picture. Now American policy in the Philippines has not been as good as Americans like to think, and Dutch policy in Indonesia was considerably better than is generally assumed. Only a careful examination of the factors involved and the issues which have developed can give us a balanced picture of the unfortunate affair.

It should first of all be remembered that the Dutch have been in the East Indies for nearly 350 years, which is a much longer time than the Americans, British or French have been in their dependencies in Southeast Asia. Naturally, a large number of associations have developed and accumulated over this long period. Furthermore, the Netherlands in area and population is small, especially as compared with the East Indies, whereas in the case of the United States and the Philippines these relations were exactly the reverse. Because of the limited opportunities at home and the abundant opportunities in the Indies, the Dutch had invested large amounts of capital in the dependency, far more, for example than had Americans in the Philippines, not only in proportion to population but in absolute amounts. Before World War II American investments in the Philippines did not exceed $250,000,000 while Dutch investments in Indonesia totalled between $1,500,000,000 to $2,000,000,000. The Philippines never came to mean as much to America as the Indies to the Dutch.

Moreover, population pressure at home induced Dutchmen in increasing numbers to migrate to the Indies. Dutchmen more and more began to look up the Indies as a place for permanent settlement. Many Netherlanders who went to the Indies regarded it as their home. One cannot, for example, understand the role and attitude of Van Mook unless one takes into account, the fact that he was born in the Indies of parents who had spent their lives there, and that he himself has lived in the Indies nearly all of his life and regarded it as his native land, as it literally is. There had also been considerable intermarriage between Dutch and Indonesians, and the large Indo-European, or Eurasian group, was assimilated to the Dutch community. Another bond between the Dutch and Indonesia was formed by the extensive Christian missionary activities over many years. There are naturally many ties between the Christian churches in the Netherlands and the relatively small but growing Christian community in Indonesia. Thus the

Dutch had not only a large economic stake in Indonesia but many sentimental attachments as well. As a result of all of these ties the Dutch were very conscious of their relations with their Asiatic dependency; few Dutchmen could reconcile themselves to an eventual loss of the East Indies. They cherished the hope that Indonesia would remain united with the Netherlands in a union or confederation, and this was the goal of Dutch policy. They were leisurely moving in the direction of that goal when the Germans invaded the Netherlands, and in the short period of grace before the Japanese invasion of the Indies they continued planning along these lines. An imperial conference to draft an imperial constitution was to be convened as soon as possible after the liberation of both countries.

A number of factors with respect to Indonesia must also be kept in mind. Composed of half a dozen large and countless small islands, Indonesia covers an area four times as great as its actual land area of 733,000 square miles. The indigenous population is broadly classified as Indonesian, but it is composed of peoples or tribes differing widely in language, customs, and cultural development. On Java alone there are three ethnic groups, and on the other islands there are even more. Among the non-indigenous population groups the million and a half Chinese constitute an important racial minority. The Chinese community in Indonesia, as in other countries of this region, was finding itself in an increasingly awkward, if not yet difficult, position. Since the end of the war the lot of the Chinese has frequently been tragic, whole villages having been wiped out by hostile Indonesian hands. The distribution of the population over numerous islands, many of them small and widely separated from each other, retarded cultural unification. It is important to note the peculiar geographic distribution of the population among the islands. On Java alone are concentrated two-thirds of the total population of the country. This island of 50,000 square miles now supports nearly 50,000,000 people. Partly because of this population pressure the standards of living are low, and considerably lower than in many areas of the Outer Islands. Religiously the country is fairly homogeneous, nearly nine-tenths of the population adhering to the Moslem faith, but there are important religious minorities. Social and cultural integration was also retarded by a notable feature of Dutch policy, namely, differentiation based upon race, a principle which was applied to the legal, educational, political and administrative system of the East Indies. Each racial group, and, among the Indonesians each ethnic group, had its own legal system. There was communal representation in the various representative bodies, and the administrative personnel was divided into an European and an Indonesian corps. This policy of differentiation in accordance with race was not based upon racial prejudice, as the Dutch in the Indies as a whole were peculiarly free of racial animosity.

As a consequence of all of these factors there was no strong sense of unity among the peoples of Indonesia. Raymond Kennedy, the foremost American authority on the peoples of Indonesia in his book, *The Ageless Indies,* concludes that "There was no sentiment of Indonesian Nationality. The Javanese had a rudimentary sense of unity among themselves and so did the Sumatran Malays; but between the two groups there was hardly a trace of a common bond. Even within Java itself, the Sudanese of the western districts considered themselves quite separate from the Javanese of the center and east. The Indonesian population was split up by a great number of these divisions, with a wide variety of mutually unintelligible languages and an extensive range of cultural differences." In the interest of obtaining a balanced picture I wish to add the conclusion of an outstanding Dutch official in the Indies, the late Mr. G. H. C. Hart. Writing in 1942 Hart stated, "The national consciousness is by no means formed and mature, but while for forty years it was chiefly the Government which had been endeavoring to forge the entity, there are now at last mighty and active forces, which will in the future be the decisive power in shaping the destiny of the archipelago."

Extent of Self-Government

Though much progress in the direction of self-government had been made since 1918, when the Volksraad, the central representative body, was established, Dutch control in 1941 was still decisive at nearly every point. After 1927 the Volksraad shared legislative power with the Governor-General, but the latter had extensive emergency powers. Of the 60 seats in the Volksraad, 30 were reserved for the Indonesians, 25 for the Dutch and Indo-Europeans, and 5 for the Chinese and Arabs. Members of the Volksraad were elected by separate racial electorates and a system of indirect election. A number were appointed by the Governor-General. With the exception of the semi-hereditary office of the regent and the rulers of the larger native states, few Indonesians held position in the higher levels of government. An Indonesian was director of the Department of Education and two of the five members of the Council of the Indies had come to be filled by Indonesians, but the Council had ceased to be much more than an ornament.

With the nationalist movement the Netherlands Indies government proposed to be sympathetic, so long as it remained in evolutionary channels. Revolutionary nationalism was severely repressed, but the term revolutionary was frequently given a very broad definition.

The two weakest points in Dutch policy were in education and politics. Compared with the Ameri-

can policy in the Philippines, and with British policy in Burma and Malaya, the Dutch lagged in providing educational facilities for the masses. The Philippine Government could afford to spend a larger percentage of its income on schools because the United States Government bore practically all of the defense costs, and furthermore American commercial policy resulted in an indirect subsidy for the islands' economy. The Dutch were likewise slow in extending self-government to Indonesia and in bringing Indonesians into the higher governmental positions. They can plead that circumstances in the Indies made it unwise to move much faster than they did, but it remains a fact nevertheless.

There were, however, three features of Dutch policy in Indonesia which were praiseworthy and of which the Dutch have every reason to be proud. First of all, the Dutch maintained an open door for the commerce of all countries. Goods coming into the Indies from the Netherlands paid the same duty as goods imported from the United States. Until 1933 Dutch goods received no advantage through tariff preferences. During the storms of economic nationalism brought on by the depression the Netherlands Indies Government was forced to recede somewhat from adhering completely to the policy of the open door, but compared with the policy followed in other dependencies, the Dutch record is remarkable, and was in sharp contrast with the policy of France in Indo-China and of the United States in the Philippines, where imports from the metropolitan countries received 100 per cent preference. Goods from the United States entering the Philippines paid no duty at all, whereas goods from all other countries had to pay the full tariff rate. This closed door policy gave to American producers practically a monopoly of the Philippine market and made the economy of the islands highly dependent on the United States.

Secondly, the Netherlands Indies Organic Act restricted land ownership, except for very small urban tracts, to the indigenous population. A major problem in all backward areas is the loss of the land by the natives to the economically stronger Westerners. But in the Indies the land was reserved for the Indonesians. Not even Netherlanders born in the Indies could own land, nor even Eurasians. many of whom are as much Indonesian as Dutch. The only way non-Indonesians could get control of land for agricultural enterprises was by leasing it from the government or renting it from the native owner. This Dutch policy was unique; had it been adopted by other colonial countries much misery would have been prevented.

Thirdly, Indonesians were Dutch subjects, they could freely migrate to other parts of the Kingdom and in the Netherlands had all the rights, including political rights, of the Dutch themselves. They could become members of the States General, and did. During the war an Indonesian was a member of the cabinet of the Dutch Government in London. Contrast this with our own policy which denied American citizenship to Filipinos unless they were born in continental United States or were members of our armed forces. The disabilities which our naturalization laws applied to Asiatics also held for Filipinos. The Dutch on the whole were remarkably free of race prejudice. This cannot be said of all Americans; racial discrimination in American society in the Philippines was by no means unknown.

Effect of the War

With the German occupation of Holland nearly every aspect of life in the Indies became more autonomous and the leaders of all population groups more assertive. Among all groups there was much sympathy for the Dutch in their plight, and all but the extreme nationalists were ready to cooperate actively with the Dutch, but on the basis of equality, in the creation of a Netherlands-Indonesian Union. The eager advances of the moderate nationalists were, however, coldly received by the East Indian Government on the ground that nothing definite could be proposed so long as the people of the Netherlands could not be consulted. Tardily and without enthusiasm it made only general promises. It is true that the Dutch Government-in-exile could not, without violating democratic principles, commit the Dutch nation to a specific policy, which it might in any case repudiate. But the times called for imagination and boldness. A commission, composed of three Dutchmen, three Indonesians and one Chinese, with Mr. F. H. Visman, a member of the Council of the Indies as chairman, was appointed in September, 1940, to ascertain what political reforms the various elements of the population desired, but no one took this commission seriously, since it had power to make recommendations only on minor matters. Indonesian leaders had long expressed the desire for the establishment of an Indonesian militia, but the Indies Government had steadily turned a deaf ear to this request. Suddenly in July, 1941, it introduced in the Volksraad a measure to create such a militia, but of only a few thousand, and withholding from the Volksraad any participation in determining how this militia was to be recruited. This act alienated most of the Indonesian nationalists.

One wonders if subsequent events might not have been somewhat different if the Dutch authorities had followed a more generous, imaginative, and cooperative policy during this period, but judging from what happened in the Philippines it must be doubted. While the masses were loyal to this coun-

try, a very large percentage of the political leaders collaborated with the invaders and set up a puppet government which declared war on the United States. Roxes, widely accused of having a collaborationist record, was elected president of the Republic after the war.

With the fall of the East Indies to the Japanese the fortunes of the Dutch had indeed reached a low ebb. Overrun by the Germans at home and by the Japanese in the Indies, it had only Surinam and Curacao in the Western Hemisphere as an economic and military base. A large part of its merchant fleet had fortunately escaped and was in the service of the Allies. In the Indies the Dutch had insisted upon keeping the defense of the Indies their sole right and responsibility,—and they had been utterly defeated. In this titanic struggle of armed power the prestige of the Netherlands was extremely low. It had practically nothing with which to carry on the struggle against the enemy. Both the Dutch and the Indonesians had to look to others for liberation. Moreover, the Indies stood low in the list of Allied military priority, which undoubtedly had an influence on events in Indonesia. And last, unlike the United States with respect to the Philippines, the Netherlands after the war would not be able to give the Indies much economic help in rehabilitating the country or in restoring its economic life.

Dutch prestige already low, was further systematically undermined by the Japanese. Japanese propaganda during the occupation was aimed at rooting out of the Indies everything which was Dutch or lent prestige to the Netherlands or the Dutch. Practically the whole Dutch population was interned in camps, and likewise a large number of Indo-Europeans and a few Chinese, Amboneses, Menadonese and Timorese, ethnic groups most loyal to the Dutch. The Dutch were humiliated in every way possible, and young Indonesians, members of military and semi-military organizations, were used for this purpose. Rumors were spread that Queen Wilhelmina had died; the Dutch Government in London was killed with silence. Whenever references were made to the Allies, Great Britain and the United States were mentioned, the Netherlands never. Much of the propaganda was aimed at leading the Indonesians to despise and hate all Westerners but especially the Dutch.

[Dr. Vanden Bosch is an authority on the subject of Indonesia and has served on a government mission to that country during the recent war. He is also the author of *The Dutch East Indies* (University of California Press, 1942) and, together with S. J. Eldersveld, of *The Government of the Netherlands* (Lexington, Ky.: University of Kentucky Press, Bureau of Government Research, 1947). The above article is the first in a series of two on the subject. The concluding article follows next month.—EDITOR.]

SPRING WALK

I

Mayflowers we found and could not speak
For break of breath, for sudden tramp of heart
We could not move lest we disturb the wonder.

Then over all the blue skies turned to mauve
And to our ears as yet unused to Spring
There came the thickening notes of thunder.

II

Our running feet were soundless in the grass
Of quiet hills gouged out by Autumn storm
And on the fields with somber furrows traced.

Then far beyond the purple shadowed dunes
The roughening lake flung its remembered roar.
Into the same wet wind we raced.

MARIE J. POST

Grand Rapids

TRIO OF TRIOLETS

First Miracle

He changed the water into wine
One day in Galilee;
And when He touched this life of mine
He changed the water into wine—
It was a miracle divine
That Jesus wrought in me.
He changed the water into wine
One day in Galilee.

Satisfaction

I met the Saviour at the well;
He bid me thirst no more.
I ran in haste and joy to tell
I met the Saviour at the well—
He made the living fountains swell
Where dwelt despair before.
I met the Saviour at the well;
He bid me thirst no more.

Appropriation

The Master offered living bread;
I claimed it evermore.
When this lean soul would fain be fed,
The Master offered living bread—
I went to Him, and hunger fled
Before His boundless store.
The Master offered living bread;
I claimed it evermore.

VERNA SMITH TEEUWISSEN

Drayton Plains, Mich.

Concerning a Philosophy of History

James Daane
Lafayette, Indiana

ONCE history was regarded as a moving stream of human affairs in which man met various problems. Since it was a benevolent stream placidly moving into broader regions of cultural refinement and social good, man was not dismayed by the problem of maneuvering around an occasional jagged rock or treacherous shoal. Journey's end was sure to be a haven of rest.

Today, however, history is not regarded as a continuum containing various problems. History itself is now regarded as man's greatest problem. It is a turbulent stream, running strong tides, carrying man toward rocky shores, or into ports which he has no desire to enter. The optimism that regarded the historical process as a Savior, is now being replaced by an uneasy fear that History may be our destroyer. In recent years history has shed those garments of salvation with which an easy optimism had so blithely adorned it. History has revealed its true nature through precipitating crisis after crisis in increasing crescendo.

The Urgency of the Problem of History

By throwing the affairs of men and nations into increasingly acute crises, history has forced itself upon the attention of men. This forcing of attention has been necessary because men of philosophy and men of science have always preferred to ignore it. The initial premise of classical philosophy and of modern science precluded a serious consideration of history, because the unique individuality of historical persons and events could not be given a place in the systems they built upon their initial presuppositions. Classical thought declared that the truth about man is to be found in his thought, not in his history. When Kant announced that the philosophic quest for the truth about man was a hopeless search, and that we would have to be satisfied with descriptions of phenomena whose ultimate validity could not be assured, modern science took Kant's cue. It continued its disdain for history, and adopting an attitude of indifference toward the truth about man, became positivistic and pragmatic.

It is true that after Kant, such men as Schelling, Fichte, and especially Hegel, turned their thought toward the phenomenal world of history vitalities and human experience, yet they never seriously believed that the truth about man is to be found in his history. On the contrary, man's history is to be interpreted in terms of his thought. In the end this absorption of the irrational elements of history in this more inclusive rationalism became that greater irrationalism which finds expression in modern Existentialism, modern art and fiction, and in the uneasy feeling of twentieth century man that nothingness is the ultimate truth about existence.

It is also true that modern science turned its consideration to the historical process, but while philosophy had subordinated history to thought, modern science through its new nineteenth century physics subordinated history to nature. History, interpreted in terms of Nature, became a purely natural process that moves inevitably toward human perfection. Since history in its approximations toward ever greater good is only doing what comes naturally, the scientist can assume an attitude of indifference toward the whole historical process. The historical crisis of our age has shattered the illusion that history can be denied serious consideration. Two world wars in one generation separated only by a great economic upheaval, and the spectre of a third world war sketched in terms of an agitated atom and chemical-weapons hurled upon our planet from an Archimedean point in interplanetary space, have filled men with a fear of history. This fear has served to thrust modern man out of the realms of abstract thought, out of the seclusion of laboratories, to measure the full dimension of history.

The Historical Problem Inescapable

A mistake in abstract thinking has no historical consequences as long as the mistake remains with the ivory towers of abstract thought. A miscalculation in the laboratory produces no crisis in history as long as the miscalculation remains within the laboratory. A historical crisis, however, reveals that the mistake has been made within the realm of history and calls men to face this dimension of history. A crisis cannot take place in the realm of rationalistic thinking because the presuppositions of thought preclude the possibility of crisis. A crisis is an event, as such it takes place within the dimension of historical existence. A

crisis, therefore, is a disclosure that the "mistake" has been made *in the realm of the historical.* When the consequence of some past mistake presses its way into the present, the present is in crisis. Every c r i s i s is produced by those consequences which flow into the present from the mistaken initial premise. When the mistakes implicit in the initial historical departure become explicit in the subsequent history which is determined and conditioned by it, a crisis ensues. Thus the truth or untruth about man is revealed in a crisis to lie not in his thought but in his history.

For so long a time as possible, man evades the claims of history. The evasion is regarded as dignified because it is an intellectual evasion. But a serious historical crisis thrusts men out of their proud evasions into the realm of history and compels them to take history seriously. Thus, for example, Einstein, an atheist on his own avowal, felt compelled last summer to leave Fuld Hall to admonish Christian ministers in Princeton Chapel of the need of awakening their people to the urgency of the times. This development of a "social conscience" in modern scientists is something new. It indicates that history is asserting its claims in terms that cannot be ignored. The detached scientific attitude which the scientists have so proudly claimed to be the only effective instrument for the discovery of truth, is being displaced by a sense of responsibility and guilt, foisted upon them by the pressure of history.

When the contradictions and tensions inherent in history can no longer be suppressed, they break forth in an historical upheaval that threatens to destroy the civilization and culture in which they are resident. We live today in such a crisis. Our crisis bears the marks of being a total crisis. In times past men have frequently doubted the validity and worth of this or that segment of life; today a growing number of people doubt the value of historical existence itself. Modern man does not merely doubt the value of some fragment of existence, but he doubts whether existence as a whole has any meaning whatsoever. He fears that the purpose (telos) of history may be synonymous with its ends (finis). Perhaps the only goal of history is a cosmic ruin covered with atomic dust?

History is pressing for an answer. Because of the total dimension of our crisis, an answer to the question of the nature and goal of history was never more urgent. Evidence of the relevancy of the question is seen in the large number of philosophies of history on the market; evidence of the interest in the answer is seen in the fact that in spite of our television-mentalities, "philosophies of history" are "best sellers."

The Fall and Common Grace in History

What is the Christian answer to the question of the nature and goal of secular history? It must be understood that the "answer" suggested below is only a partial answer to one aspect of the total problem. It should be further understood that it makes no pretensions to finality, but on the contrary, invites any intelligent criticisms and suggestions. Dr. George Murray's warnings about pretensions to finality with respect to m i l l e n n i a l theories is also relevant here. Murray writes: "Any discussion of millennial theories inevitably leads to a theological battleground on which one has to risk the sacrifice of reputation and popularity. This is a s u b j e c t on which many Christians have no opinion, but on which others have formed such definite conclusions that they can hardly be induced to read or consider anything at variance with their present theories. This latter position is a rather precarious one. When anyone comes to the conclusion that his theory is absolutely right and every opinion to the contrary wrong, he is either assuming an unwarranted infallibility, or he must be absolutely certain that the Bible in its entirety supports his point of view. While few, if any, possess this assurance, it cannot be denied that many people are as dogmatic as though they did possess it. They are so sure of their eschatological point of view that they make it the yardstick of orthodoxy . . . "[1] Nevertheless, I am still willing to be the humble helper of anyone who is willing to think constructively to advance this part of theological thought.

History, as we know it, is a matter of conflicts, tensions, and contradictions. It is a striving from the real toward the ideal, or an attempt to demonstrate that the real is the ideal. This quality of history flows from that first h i s t o r i c a l act of man which conditioned all his subsequent historical activity. This act is the Fall. This act was not man's first act, *but the first act that possessed decisive determination over all man's subsequent history.* This act of sin had as its punishment d e a t h , i.e., the divine withdrawal. "To live apart from God is death." Death means to be forsaken by God. This "being forsaken by God" in history is not absolute —no more so than is the divine withdrawal in hell absolute. In history it is even less so, the "less" constituting the difference between being "without God in the world" and "without God in hell."

This "difference" is an element of common grace. Because of this "difference," human secular finite possibilities are not wholly impotent. This "difference" makes it possible for history to continue with at least a temporary semblance of success. It prevents our time from being wholly a dead time. Without this "difference" everything conceived in history would mis-carry at once; history would be completely abortive at the moment of the Fall. History would have ended in the same instance in which it began.

[1] *Millennial Studies,* Baker Book House, 1948, p. 83.

Sinful Experiments in Finite Possibilities

Yet the withdrawal of God from our purely secular history is as real as sin itself is real. Sin means that the God-relationship has been broken. Man is truly without God and without hope in the world. God indeed re-establishes the relationship with man through the covenant. Since, however, the covenant is made with a select, peculiar people and not with all peoples, there lies outside this divine-human re-creative history, an area of history with all its purely human finite possibilities and vitalities which is without God and therefore without ultimate hope. Since this secular history is not absolutely without God, it is also not without its "semblance" of hope. This appearance of possible success provides the motif required by every sinful secular experiment in finite possibilities.

What is the result which these experiments in finite possibilities hope to attain? The answer is found in the nature of Adam's first sin. Adam's first sin was a declaration that man could very well do without God. It was a defiant announcement that finiteness is enough, that the temporal is the eternal, that earth is heaven, that man is God. Satan declares that if man will sin he shall be like God; by his sin man declares that he is God. Nietzsche put the diabolical matter well when he declared that there is no God and that if there were a God he himself would have to be God.

Thus every sinful experiment in purely finite possibilities is a defiant demonstration that the finite is enough, for it is the infinite. This was the motif that constructed the tower of Babel, that prompted Plato to construct a Republic in which men and social institutions would be so related that all the tensions and oppositions would be removed and the Republic would go on forever. This was the motif which moved Caesar Augustus to dream of an Empire of such stability and security that it would last forever, as the designation of its capitol (Rome) as the *Eternal* City indicates. The same motif is discernible in those poetic creations of the Renaissance: the "Utopias." The same motif finds expression in Communism's endeavor to attain by class struggle the Proletarian Heaven on earth, in Willkie's "One World" and President Truman's "Half World" by the finite means of Production and Marshall Plan distribution.

I do not say that none of these things should have been done. But it is true that when men believe that these purely finite means are able to resolve the tensions and contradictions of history they are putting a sinful confidence in the flesh. The wholly secular man believes that experiments such as these in finite possibilities will eventually solve the problem of history and bring history to rest within history. Man's experiments in secular freedom, secular culture, secular political ideologies, secular education, secular capitalism, secular communism, secular science and philosophy are all purely human sinful attempts to arrest history, as we now know it, and to bring about that security and stability in human affairs which is synonymous with heaven on earth. It is an attempt to eternalize temporality and thus overcome that death which reigns over history.

[The closing instalment of this solid and suggestive article will follow next month.—EDITOR.]

Was Calvin a Philosopher?

A Symposium*

Leonard Verduin
Student Evangelical Chapel
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Whether Calvin is properly called a philosopher depends on what a philosopher is assumed to be. A philosopher may be defined as a person who on the basis of an initial assumption appearing plausible to him attempts to explain reality. Heraclitus, for example, may rightly be called a philosopher: for he assumed that flux is ultimate and on this assumption he sought to explain reality. A philosophy is a *Weltanschauung,* a way of looking at the world in its widest sense.

By this definition Dr. Le Coq is a philosopher. He posits an initial assumption and then seeks to rationalize all of reality on the basis of that assumption. His assumption is that all existence is of one wave length—that of the creature. Therefore he feels that the explanation of things is things, more things of the same category as the thing to be explained. The well known pattern of epistemology follows, namely, that by interviewing the universe one gets all the truth there is. The created universe carries in it the answers to all the problems raised by that same created universe. There is no vantage point anywhere else. By this method Le Coq should come, as come he does, to a complete relativism. "Reality, in the ultimate and most profound meaning we can give to it, is flux. Time, and within it change and becoming are not appearances, they are the nature of reality itself." What becomes of right and wrong on this assumption is quite predictable. "By good I shall mean that which we certainly know to be useful to us . . . goodness is relative to ourselves and our needs." In this system, by definition, one must not broach the matter of origins and ends.

* The present discussion is the closing instalment of this Symposium begun in the March issue.—EDITOR.

Because Le Coq does not share Calvin's basic *Weltanschauung* he has difficulty understanding Calvin, for example, that *all* human knowledge results from revelation and is therefore analogical. True, "revelation is the only criterion of truth" with Calvin: but it does not at all f o l l o w that "therefore human truth has, *per se,* no valid substratum." It is an amazing statement that "the philosophical attitude of Calvin is condemned by Paul when he says 'the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made' ": it shows how a mind can be so committed to an initial assumption that it becomes closed to another mind not committed to that same assumption. Le Coq misreads Paul by the same thought habit. He has completely garbled Romans 1:20 by conveniently dropping the "for God hath showed it to him."

Calvin's doctrine of sin has also given Le Coq trouble. He complains that "nowhere is its meaning clear." As long as one looks at Calvin through the eye of "the Greeks" or of "Lucretius" he must fail to grasp Calvin's argument. It may be true that "there is no use to try atheism with Calvin"; but it is quite as useless to try theism with certain other people.

Calvin deserves to be called a philosopher. He began with a basic assumption, one that seemed plausible to him, and he sought to fit all phenomena into a system controlled by his initial assumption. And he did a fine job.

Calvin's basic assumption is that existence is not all of one wave length; he assumed that there is the existence of the Creator and that of the creature. Interplay between these follows naturally. And in this interplay there is, naturally enough, a priority of the manward thrust. The man's whole system can be predicted now—his doctrine of revelation both general and special, of grace, of divine sovereignty, of election, of the Covenant (monopleuric, of course), etc.

If theism makes sense—perhaps an "emotional postulate" will determine this for a man, as will the "emotional postulate" of him who says that 'thus saith the Lord' is unthinkable—then Calvin was a first rate philosopher. Few systems hang together as well as his, as even the author of *The Wonderful 'One-Hoss Shay'* knew.

If the true dimensions of a thinker may be measured by his ability to understand the *Weltanschauung* of an opponent, then Calvin surpassed most of his critics. He knew the essence of non-theistic thought with its habitual tendency to reduce all to a single wave length. After saying that the common people do this he adds that the philosophers (note he does not deny them the name just because they do not share his conviction) do so no less, even Plato "having more of sobriety and religion than the rest loses himself just as certainly in his round representation, by drawing his original Idea from it" (*lequel ayant plus de sobrieté et religion que les autres, s'esvanouit aussi bien en sa figure ronde, faisant sa premiér Idée d'icelle.* The Latin version has *Plato inter omnes religiosissimus et maxime sobrius ipse quoque in rotundo globo evanescit. Inst. I,* v:11.)

H. G. Stoker
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University College
Potchefstroom
Union of South Africa

A. *Was Calvin a Logician?*

1. Le Coq's eclecticistic exposition makes it somewhat difficult to determine what he exactly means by a logician. It may, however, be near enough to the mark to define his view of a logician as a person who is concerned about the validity of knowledge, i.e., whether knowledge is based on a rational analysis of the data[1] of experience. In this sense I will use this term. Furthermore, Le Coq makes the spearhead of his attack on Calvin his criticism of Calvin's view that faith is the *sine qua non* of knowledge.

2a. Data are accepted by faith (faith taken in a general sense).[2] Faith in reason is also required. Without faith knowledge is impossible and unprovable. But faith is more than a mere act of reason; it is an act of man as a whole and fundamentally of his "heart," the center of his existence; it is an act of trust and surrender. Faith in this sense is a *sine qua non* for Calvin as well as for Le Coq's logicians.

2b. Reason or intellect (interchangeable terms in this context) analyses data and discovers their relations. This too is a *sine qua non* for Calvin as well as for Le Coq's logicians. Calvin's use of his reason is as much that of a logician's as anyone else's, however much Calvin's concept of the nature and limits of reason may differ from that of Le Coq.

2c. The data of Calvin's theology are the Holy Scriptures. To question Calvin's right to accept these data is irrelevant to our question. For, although, *e.g.,* the extreme behaviorist rejects and the introspectionist accepts the data of consciousness, and again, although the mechanist rejects and the vitalist accepts the teleology of life, anyone of these could be a genuine logician. Calvin's premises are accordingly not emotional postulates, but are strictly based on and verifiable by his data, and he consistently demonstrates his tenets and conclusions by an appeal to these data. He is very much concerned about the validity of his knowledge and reasoning, being a very serious searcher of truth. To Le Coq, as well as to Calvin, it applies that the

[1] The data of experience should include not only empirical facts and causes, principles, ends and values, but also the revelation of God in nature and in the Holy Scriptures.
[2] *Vide* my articles in *Standpunte,* July, 1947 and in *Koers,* Oct. 1947.

acceptance or rejection of Holy Writ as data of knowledge, is not a question of logic but of faith.

3a. Religious faith[2] (Dooyeweerd's "pisteutic function"[3] is a faith in the Archê or the Absolute. This is to be distinguished from faith in the "visible things" (perceived by our senses, by introspection, by valuation, by experience of resistance, by immediate, intellectual insight or the intuition of the self-evident, and so forth[4]). The visible things (part and parcel of our created universe) are subject to laws, interdependent, finite, relative, relational, etc., in short: are self-insufficient. God (the Archê, the Absolute, the Self-sufficient and ultimate Reality) is radically invisible and cannot be deduced or induced from the visible things; He transcends not only human reason but the whole created universe. Yet man knows something about God or the Absolute. This is possible only by means of his religious faith, a faith that does not grasp God or the Absolute Himself but His revelation which enters into the visible things and lets them point to the Reality Beyond, the Source and End of their being and becoming. By means of this faith man understands that the visible things have not originated from visible things, and that their revelation of God is the means by which the invisible things can be understood. (Le Coq should read Rom. 1:20 in connection with Heb. 11:3 and preferably *in the Greek texts.*)

By means of this religious faith man comes into contact with the revelation of the Invisible, the Absolute. When he directs this faith to visible things, he makes them absolute, i.e., deifies them. E.g., the materialist (who can "see" matter and can "see" that all visible things somehow depend on matter) cannot "see" the absoluteness of matter; only by means of his (wrongly directed) religious faith he can ascribe to matter the invisible attributes of God (i.e., His absoluteness, self-sufficiency, etc.) and he can think about matter as the Absolute. Likewise the rationalist may "see" reason, but it is only due to his religious faith that he can take reason to be absolute and self-sufficient. For the materialist and for the rationalist as well as for Calvin religious faith a). provides the most fundamental unity to all k n o w l e d g e, and b). even makes knowledge (in the most fundamental sense) possible, because a). all self-insufficient things depend wholly on the Absolute and because b). man even could know nothing about finiteness, relativity, relationality, etc. *as such* (and could not even use these concepts), if he had no implicit or explicit notion of the Absolute, the former being dependent on and deriving their meaning from and in contrast to the latter. In this sense, too, faith is the *sine qua non* for every logician.

Calvin critically (i.e. by deliberate verification) bases his knowledge on his faith in the God of the Scriptures and thereby becomes a more critical logician than those who are not aware of the influence of their religious faith on their knowledge. Not Calvin, but those fundamentally uncritical thinkers who do not delve critically into the depths of the religious foundation of their knowledge, have a lack of rationality. Faith and reason are not contradictory opposites but supplement and complete each other, the latter presupposing the former.

3b. Calvin's acceptance of the Word of God is not an uncritical acceptance of the authority of frail human beings (the prophets and the apostles), the instruments through whom God gave His revelation, but an acceptance of Holy Writ at its face value. The Holy Scriptures present themselves as the Word of God Himself and Calvin discerns in His Word the voice of God just as a child recognizes the voice of his father. It would be illogical for the self-insufficient human being to reject the authority of God, and Calvin accepts this authority as unconditionally as e.g. the rationalist accepts the final authority of (idolized!) reason. To Calvin the acceptance of God's authority does not destroy reason from within, but it enlightens reason by the provision of necessary and fundamental truths which other sources of knowledge cannot give. It is rather the uncritical blindness of those logicians who do not see how their religious faith hampers their discovery of truth, which destroys reason from within.

4. From faith (in the general sense) and from religious faith (the pisteutic function) must be distinguished the living, saving faith manifested in divine worship[5]. Religious faith (the pisteutic function) is the core of the living, saving faith, a faith that is very complex and that peripherally includes faith in the visible things that were seen (e.g. the crucifixion) and in the visible things hoped for (e.g. the prophecies). This faith, too, is not a hindrance but an aid to a logical attitude towards truth.

5. Judged by the standards given in paragraphs 2 and 3, Calvin is one of the greatest logicians of all times.

B. *Is Calvin a Philosopher?*

Calvin may be called a philosopher either in the Greek meaning of this word or as a promotor of what he himself calls the *Philosophia Christiana.*[6] Whether he should be called a philosopher in a technical sense depends on the distinction made between philosophy and theology.

Theology I take to be the verified and systematic knowledge (or science) of the revelation of God Himself and of anything of our created universe in respect of its *immediate* dependency on or its *im-*

[3] The being seized in the centre of one's existence (his "heart") by a revelation of the (true or supposed) Archê.

[4] To the visible things we must also reckon things not seen but visible in appropriate circumstances.

[5] In the Dutch religious faith may be called "religieuse geloof" and the living, saving faith "godsdienstige, saligmakende geloof." [This is Afrikaans, rather than Dutch. — EDITOR.]

[6] *I.e.*, the Christian Faith.

mediate relatedness to God. Philosophy I take to be the verified and systematic knowledge (or science) of our (created and self-insufficient) universe as a totality subjected to laws, and of how all "particular things" in and of our universe are related to this totality.

It is accordingly not the task of a philosopher to philosophise about God or the absolute and ultimate Reality. The philosopher should borrow the truths about God (which he must presuppose) from theology. Metaphysics as a speculative and unverifiable reasoning about the Absolute based on the self-insufficient data of our experience should be rejected. It is (as we have seen) wrong to build faith on reason. It is also wrong to base theology on faith only and philosophy on reason only. For their respective discoveries of truths theology as well as philosophy require faith as well as reason.

According to our definitions of theology and of philosophy Calvin was a theologian and not a philosopher, although he has fundamental and genuine philosophic insights.

But according to the same definitions all philosophers who reject the Holy Scriptures and who philosophise about the Absolute are not philosophers but speculative theologians. Illogically they cannot but mix theology and philosophy, a fault of which a Calvinist philosophy may not be guilty, although it must accept an interaction between theology and philosophy.

Henry Stob
Professor of Philosophy
Calvin College

PROFESSOR LE COQ is interested in determining whether or not John Calvin was a technical philosopher.

The question, be it observed, is a simple question of fact, like whether Huss was a Bohemian, or Napoleon was short of stature. It is not a question of value, like whether Caligula was evil, or Nathanael was guileless. There is no question here of obligation. The answer when found is calculated to satisfy curiosity, not to establish worth. If it turn out that Calvin was "a man whom God g i f t e d with great talents, a great mind, and a great zeal for truth," but was *not* a philosopher of the schools—so what? There is nothing in the universe that requires a man to be a poet, a chemist, or a theoretical philosopher. In a world in which one cannot be everything at once it is enough to be a theologian who "deserves a place of honor in the Pantheon of great men."

Should a man nevertheless p e r s i s t in asking whether Calvin was a philosopher, no one can deny him the privilege. All that one can reasonably demand is that the inquiry be intelligently conducted. This means that two separate questions must be satisfactorily determined: first, what precisely is philosophy and what is a philosopher?, and second, what in fact is the nature of Calvin's thought and doctrine? Each of them lays respectable demands upon an inquirer's learning and acumen.

It is interesting to observe Professor Le Coq at work on these matters. Addressing himself to the first question, he summons witnesses to testify to the n a t u r e of philosophy. His witnesses, however, betray him; their testimony is contradictory. Russell repudiates Aristotle, and Newton negates Leibnitz. Having thus inadvertently allowed his authorities to clear the field, he might have paused to ponder the lesson they teach. He might have learned from them that a m a t e r i a l definition of philosophy cannot be formulated except in terms of a philosophy already embraced, and he might have recognized that his own definition roots in a prior philosophic commitment.

That commitment is to secular rationalism which *believes* in the absolute a u t o n o m y of the finite mind, the incompatibility of faith and rationality, and the impossibility and philosophic irrelevancy of a divine self-disclosure. Professor Le Coq then intimates that whoever does not endorse this *Credo* is not a philosopher. This is to damn by definition. This is the sheerest dogmatism, the rankest sort of *non sequitur*.—But at this point, if this be philosophy, the friends of Calvin leave off their reading, content to let the evidence absolve the Christian thinker from the charge of being a "philosopher."

Herman Kuiper
Author of "Calvin on Common Grace"
Rock Valley, Iowa

PROFESSOR LE COQ in denying that Calvin was a philosopher and a logician starts with certain presuppositions which, if once granted, inevitably lead to the conclusion that Calvin was neither a philosopher nor a logician. According to Prof. Le Coq only such fundamental thinking deserves to be called philosophy as acknowledges human reason to be the supreme judge in the realm of truth and only such thought-processes are to be considered logic as human reason deems to be the avenues that men must follow if they are to find truth.

Of course, Calvin himself would have been more than ready to agree that he was not a philosopher or logician in the sense that Professor Le Coq gives to these terms. Calvin was firmly convinced that all search for truth is vain unless men take as their starting-point the self-revelation of God, who has made all things and rules all things and is therefore sovereign in the realm of knowledge. According to Calvin man's search for truth must be an earnest attempt to think God's thoughts after Him and this implies that he must bring his thought-processes into captivity to the obedience of Christ, the Light of the world.

So our judgment as to whether Professor Le Coq

is correct in his evaluation of Calvin, will necessarily depend on whether we are in agreement with his presuppositions. If we consider these presuppositions erroneous, and agree with Calvin that all sound thinking is based on God's self-revelation, we shall have no difficulty in esteeming Calvin a Christian philosopher of the highest rank and a master logician.

The Voice of our Readers

COMMUNISM IN JAPAN

Urawa City, Japan
February 20, 1949.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

THANK you very much for the copies of THE CALVIN FORUM which I received in succession. I was much interested in the editorial "Communism and Capitalism at Amsterdam" (Vol. XIV, No. 5). It was very instructive to me. I want this article to be read by Japanese Christians. May I have your permission to publish it in our magazine or in a Christian weekly? Recently a minister of the Union Church, an influential Barthian theologian at one time and perhaps even now, was enrolled as a member of the Communistic party in Japan. And now the leaders of the Union Church are warning and guiding the whole church of that denomination on the basis of the resolution of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam.

Praying for God's blessing upon your courageous witness to His truth amidst the ambiguity and cowardice of many modern Churches, I remain,

Sincerely yours,
TAKESHI MATSUO.

A "LAYMAN'S" OPINION

2041 Galewood Ave., S.W.
Grand Rapids 9, Mich.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

I REALIZE there are men more fully qualified than I to reply to Professor Le Coq's article, "Was Calvin a Philosopher?" Yet, I am sure you will appreciate a "layman's" opinion, as that of one who is influenced by leaders.

Professor Le Coq's reasoning would seem to imply more than he himself realizes. Some of his statements betray a sad lack of study of Calvin. Le Coq says that Calvin was primarily a man of action. Then is it not a marvel that a man of such activity could also write such a large number of commentaries? Professor Le Coq almost implies that intense activity and real thought are mutually exclusive.

But more serious is the conclusion that since Calvin accepted Scripture as his standard for faith and reason, he ceased to be a real philosopher. This assertion implies that Scripture is non-rational, it being granted that Calvin accepted Scripture as his guide for faith and reason. From this it would seem to follow that Calvin accepted the Bible in the same manner in which one receives an unopened gift from a friend. But this is disproved when one reads his *Institutes*, which reveal Calvin's thorough study of Scripture. No man was his superior in the knowledge of the Scriptures.

And here the question is pertinent: Does a book become non-rational as soon as we ascribe authority to it? If so, then accepting Euclid's geometry as an authority in that field would make it non-rational. True authority arises from the content of the thing itself and is not an accidental predication from without retained by the force of tradition.

I am convinced that Calvin accepted Scripture as much through his reason as through his heart, because there is enough of the rational in Scripture to make it acceptable to the molds of our thought. As Henry Ward Beecher said: "One, in order to deny the rational in Scripture, has either to disbelieve all the historical data in the Scriptures, because God has chosen to reveal Himself by the means of history, or else prove that God must only be believed by the reflections of one's own thought. If one accepts the latter view, then it is strange how the reason or teleology of the cosmos is possible for our minds to know by the medium of the cosmos, while the Logos—First Cause—is unable to make itself known in the cosmos in the realm of the empirical and the historical."

If you deny the theistic revelation of God as given in Scripture, you are compelled to accept other conceptions of God which, if carried to their logical conclusion, lead you to far greater difficulties. This James Orr proves convincingly in his book, *The Christian View of God and the World.*

Therefore Professor Le Coq must first prove that Scripture contains no data pertinent for the formulation of presuppositions before he may call Calvin and every Bible-believing Christian unphilosophical. The real question is not whether John Calvin is unphilosophical for accepting Scripture as the basis of his thought, but rather whether Scripture is unworthy as a basis for thought. If this question is answered, then one could proceed to make assertions about Calvin as a philosopher. One does not question whether Kant was a true philosopher until he has first studied Kant's philosophy. Like courtesy should be extended to Calvin.

JOHN SIETSEMA.

JUST WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE

Novi, Michigan,
April 11, 1949.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

YOUR editorial in the April copy of THE CALVIN FORUM on Fraternizing with Liberals was read with interest.

In my ministry I have had contacts with men and groups in the denominational field. Through these contacts considerable experience has come my way. This experience has taught me that we are living in a world of complexities in the field of religion as well as in other realms. Such complexities, in fact, that it becomes most difficult in certain instances for a minister of the gospel, a church, or a denomination to know just where to draw the line. This applies to liberalism not only, but to fundamentalism and orthodoxy as well. At times I have said to one or another that "Christian Reformed ministers do not know when they are well off."

With your permission I shall appreciate an opportunity to express my personal views on your editorial at a later time. Right now I am quite busy in my little field.

Sincerely yours,
M. J. REMEIN.

[You are welcome.—EDITOR.]

"YOUTH SPEAKS ON CALVINISM"

Grand Rapids, Mich.
April 11, 1949.

Dear Editor:

THE Youth and Calvinism Group has received a number of oral and written comments on their publication, *Youth Speaks on Calvinism.* It is impossible to share all of these with the readers of THE CALVIN FORUM, but we think

that the following random quotes from one letter merit a wider audience. They come from a layman who is deeply concerned about the propagation of a more vigorous Calvinism.

"The potentialities of our faith, which we call Calvinism, for offering an adequate solution to the cultural crisis of our times are unlimited. May our Covenant God be praised for having made you young men aware of the true relevancy of Calvinism to the problems which have the world as a whole in a state of frustration.

"Your criticism that the Calvinists in this country (consisting, in my opinion, for the most part of the members of the Christian Reformed Church) have failed to realize or express that relevancy by failing to apply vigorously in their respective labors the great principles of Calvinism is well taken. . . . If your efforts make the slightest contribution toward stirring us all to more intense application to this plain duty, they will have been well spent.

"Your booklet has done a creditable job of diagnosing the disease of American Calvinism. . . . But permit me to point out . . . that your work makes hardly a single contribution to the field of *application* of Calvinistic principles to life, about which we share a deep mutual concern.

"You failed to touch at all on the question of the relation that we American Calvinists sustain to our brethren in the Netherlands. . . . Much labor has been and is being expended there on the application of Calvinism to all the fields you mention. . . . Furthermore, the cultural crisis which we face, they also face only more intensely and more dramatically.

"Any plea for action therefore ought to include a plea for more communication with these brethren. Are we to ignore their efforts or shall we take advantage of their extended scientific labors and build on what they have done? The answer is obvious. And to my mind this means that everyone of you who is seriously concerned with the cure, now that you have made the diagnosis, will at least learn to read Dutch fluently so as to keep in touch with these developments. And many of you ought to make every effort to spend some time studying directly under the men at the Free University of Amsterdam—especially Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd.

"In summary, then, I hope you will:

1. Continue to diagnose insofar as you are convinced that your work will be effective and profitable.
2. Maintain a balanced perspective on your labors, giving full recognition to the limits of student activity.
3. Apply Calvinism vigorously in every aspect of your student life.
4. Train yourselves thoroughly for your respective vocations so as to continue the vigorous application after your academic work is completed.
5. Resolve to make your full contribution as active members of the church, now and later . . .
6. Find out more about Dooyeweerd.
7. Study Dutch diligently."

Sincerely yours,

1400 Bemis, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

CALVIN BULTHUIS, Secretary
Youth and Calvinism Group

Editorial Footnote:

We gladly place this comment which contains some wholesome advice and also take this occasion to add a few comments of our own:

1. If this layman, whose name you do not divulge but whose identity is not hard for us to determine, were a member of the Christian Reformed Church, he would be in a better position to judge whether the incriminating terms and statements in your pamphlet truly and correctly reflect the "state of Calvinism" in the Christian Reformed Church. This allusion to the Christian Reformed Church is occasioned by your correspondent's statement that the Calvinists in this country which you are criticizing consist in his opinion "for the most part of the members of the Christian Reformed Church".

2. It would be not only important but, in my judgment, exceedingly helpful to make clear to the public to which you addressed your pamphlet whether the much-incriminated article on "The Road Block" is ideologically an integral part of your impassioned plea for a really active and up-to-date application of Calvinism to life. There seems to be great divergence of opinion on this point, and, unless I am mistaken, this divergence extends also to your own group. Nothing will clear the atmosphere quite so much, in my opinion, as the clarification of this point.—C. B.

From Our Correspondents

CHURCH UNION MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA

30 Warwilla Avenue,
Wahroonga, Sydney,
N. S. W., Australia.
28th February, 1949.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

AT last my long silence is broken, but let me hasten to assure you that my silence was not by design, but circumstance. The spirit was willing but the flesh weak.

In the high places of the ecclesiastical life of Australia there is great activity for the hope of the liberal churchmen, in the form of a "United Church of Australia", seems to have appeared on the horizon. For many years denominational union has dominated the minds of the liberals within the Presbyterian Church, and at the last General Assembly of Australia a motion was carried by a large majority to hold a plebiscite of all members in full communion with the Presbyterian Church on the question of Union with the Methodist and Congregationalist Churches. The motion completely ignored the regular procedure in by-passing presbyteries and making a direct appeal to the people.

The minority registered their dissent with reasons and secured the right to place the Anti-Unionist Case before the people. Committees were formed immediately to prepare arguments for and against union. When the committees have prepared their case, the statements are to be placed in the hands of the Code Committee for approval before being passed down to the congregations. It has also been agreed that both sides will refrain from active propaganda, in the form of pamphlets, organized meetings, etc., until 30 days before the date of the Plebiscite. The preparation of the case for and against union, and its submission to and consideration by the Code Committee, will take some time. I should think that it will be twelve months before the vote is taken.

The Two Groups

The Anti-Unionists are led by the Rev. Wallace Archer and Mr. F. Maxwell Bradshaw. Mr. Archer is an able controversialist, but a sick man. I understand that he laboured in the U. S. A. for a period and had some experience in the ministry of the Continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Mr. Maxwell Bradshaw, a Calvinist and the most eminent ecclesiastical barrister in the Commonwealth, takes his place alongside the Rev. Wallace Archer. The burden of the Anti-Unionists' labours will undoubtedly fall upon the broad shoulders of Mr. Bradshaw, and we know of no other man who is spiritually and intellectually equipped to undertake the leadership of the Anti-Unionists' Party and to carry it on with wisdom, dignity and honour. Mr. Bradshaw is a classical Calvinist, a discriminating tactician, well versed in ecclesiastical strategy and possessed of a refined determination that is characteristic of our Reformed leaders throughout the world. His courage, loyalty and devotion to "the Faith once delivered to the saints"

makes it well-nigh impossible to find a man his equal for the task within the Presbyterian Church.

The leaders in the Unionist Camp are men of high academic attainments, but we are forced to question the sincerity of their conviction or the application of their intellectual qualifications to the question of union, when they are prepared to scrap the fundamental doctrines and regulative principles of Historic Presbyterianism to achieve an organic union with the Arminian Churches of Methodism and Congregationalism.

Methodism in this country is an autocracy of Church Courts. The Church Courts have the final say where a minister will labour and the period of his labours are limited by the whims of the congregation or the decision of the annual Conference. Methodism, to all intents and purposes, is a creedless church, for it is beyond the widest stretch of imagination to suggest that the forty-four sermons of John Wesley are a statement of doctrine, and this fact is emphasized by a statement from the representatives of Methodism at the Conference held at Amsterdam last year. "The Christian Church cannot order its actions by previously agreed 'Christian Principles'." (*The Methodist*, Dec. 1948.)

The structure of Congregationalism lays itself open to all the jetsam and flotsam on the doctrinal sea, as each congregation is independent of all others, each church is supposed to be self-supporting and is controlled by its individual office bearers. A minister can preach anything he likes so long as the office bearers and people are ignorant of the truth.

The Issue

Ecclesiastical utilitarianism appears to be the foundation upon which the Unionists in the Presbyterian Church hope to build "The United Church of Australia". It seems quite evident that they regard the 'Westminster Confession of Faith' as a mischievous invention that is responsible for all the evils in the visible Church. This disregard by Presbyterians for denominational distinctions is due to a lack of discernment of what these distinctions involve or a deliberate indifference to the solemn vows. We would think, on a question so vital to the ecclesiastical life of this Commonwealth, that ministers and elders would at least give some consideration to what was and is involved in the vows they took and the relation of their present position to the Moral Administration of God.

We are reminded that the violation of vows to God is the abuse of that authority deputed to us by God, for it is in the exercise of that authority that we make our vows. It necessarily follows that the violation of vows to God pours the highest contempt upon Him and renders a solemn ordinance of God's own making a means of basely affronting Him; nor can we exempt those who by artful dissimulation seek to evade the charge of perjury, who solemnly avouch and subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith without believing and maintaining the whole doctrine taught therein. If the solemn obligations involved in their ordination vows are not sufficient to prevent the Unionists from destroying the structure of Historic Presbyterianism, there is not anything that will save the Church from being rent asunder, and this will bring about one of the greatest tragedies of our ecclesiastical life. Lifelong friendships will be broken and families divided, but the catastrophe of greater magnitude will be to witness the Presbyterian Church in ruins and from the debris of a glorious past there shall arise a church built upon the flimsy foundations of Humanistic Philosophy.

The Outlook

As we have already said, the question of Union is to be decided by members of the Presbyterian Church in full communion. Taking into consideration the influence of Modernism in the church over the last three decades, it seems most probable that the vote will be in favour of union. Presbyterianism holds its strongest positions in the states of New South Wales, and Victoria. The present generation of Presbyterian ministers in N. S. W. consists largely of men who sat at the feet and absorbed the teaching of Prof. Samuel Angus, the greatest exponent of liberal theology that this country has ever known, with the result that pulpits throughout the land are used for anything and everything but doctrinal preaching. We do not consider that it is an overestimate to say that 80% of the members of the church could not give an intelligent statement on the distinctive principles of Presbyterianism, and to many an Arminian could be a full brother to Pithecanthropus Erectus for all they know.

The state of Victoria has to some degree been able to withstand the aggression of liberalism, owing to the influence of such men as Prof. John Gillis. Prof. Gillis was the first president of the Australian Calvinistic Society. The strongest support for the Anti-Unionists will come from Victoria, but a generous estimate would be 60%. The question of union aroused considerable interest in the Victorian State Assembly 1947 and the main division resulted in a decision against union by 89 votes to 82.

It is not the pen of an antagonist or a bigot that writes, but one who sees the shadows of events that will follow if union is consummated. It is sad to think that the children of the fathers are prepared to discard the documents of Westminster: the Confession of Faith, the Shorter Catechism, and the Directory of Public Worship.

Warmest regards,
Yours very sincerely,
ARTHUR ALLEN.

RACIAL SEGREGATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

University College,
Potchefstroom, South Africa,
January 13, 1949.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

IN my previous letter I wrote you a preliminary exposition on our racial problem. I stated there that the Afrikaner political policy in this matter is based on two main principles, *viz.*, guardianship and apartness. By means of a brief historical argument I tried in that letter to sketch the principle of guardianship as proposed by the Afrikaner Calvinist. The white South African considers himself to stand *in loco parentis* as regards the uncivilized and uncultured South African non-white: spiritually, educationally and politically. Through means of mission work and school education the white man tries to live up to the ideal of guardianship *in loco parentis*.

In this letter I would like to put our point of view as regards political guardianship, which demands not only political apartness, but also regional apartness. *In nuce* the political policy of guardianship means parallel development of the non-white, in the beginning under the leadership of the white, but eventually—when educated to the status—under the leadership of themselves.

Up to the time that the whites and non-whites came into contact in South Africa, they lived apart, that is to say in different areas (or countries). Coming to South Africa in 1652 the European Dutch came into contact with first the coloureds and later the blacks, and the problem of living together in the same areas (or country) sprang into being. Naturally, the first Europeans had very little antipathy towards people of another colour, but gradually, owing to the barbaric and uncivilized conditions under which the coloureds lived, a very distinct feeling against intermingling arose and separate living areas arose. When our forefathers came into contact with the blacks a similar problem arose, although in the beginning not so acutely, as the blacks and whites kept apart. But during the course of time more and more blacks began to live amongst the whites, and *vice versa*. The problem of apartness in living quarters arose. In towns we have today areas reserved for the whites and areas (called locations) reserved for the non-whites. In the rural areas farmers have their own homes, whereas their black servants live apart in what is called "strooise" (straw huts). But this is not what is meant by apartness in our polit-

ical ideology. Most decidedly, the new government wants apartness of habitat of white and non-white. To illustrate, the Orange Free State should be reserved for the white population, and Basutoland for non-whites.

Ever since our forefathers came into contact with the non-whites the dangers of living together in the same area arose. I mention only a few: intermarriage, vocational competition, dominance of the one by the other group. Very little intermarriage did take place, but sexual intercourse between white and black (and coloured) outside legal marriage has created another problem: that of the bastard offspring, the real "coloured" problem in South Africa. And so we have really three problems: the relation between white and black, between white and coloured, between black and coloured. The whites have so far accepted responsibility for the coloureds, and so also do the blacks, so that the coloureds have found themselves between two powerful groups.

The coloured problem can be easily solved. The coloureds carry white blood and should be cared for by the whites. In our policy of apartness, the coloureds will have to share the same territory as the whites, although they will have to live in separate areas in the white territory. On the other hand, the Nationalists are decidedly striving for territorial division between white and black: the blacks should have their own territory, like Basutoland, where no whites will be allowed to live permanently or to become land owners, and like the Orange Free State again, where no blacks will be allowed to live permanently or to become land owners. The idea is further that an inhabitant becomes a full citizen only in the territory of his kind: the black man in the black man's land and the white man in the white man's land. A white man living, even temporarily, in the black man's land, will have no rights of citizenship there, and conversely for the black.

This sounds to us mere common sense and the highest form of "liberalism": just human rights in each other's land, but decidedly no citizen rights.

By apartness the new government, representing the ideas and ideals of the Afrikaner, will create a position in which the black man will come into his own rights. Occupying the same territory and living together, the black man does suffer in political matters. He remains a non-adult. You, I hope, will understand the position of the white: for his own preservation he cannot grant the black man in his midst all the rights that he as a human being is entitled to. If this were the case, it would mean the end of European existence and civilization in South Africa.

By being put into a position to govern—or rather, initially to learn to govern—himself according to civilized standards, the black man will escape from his present position. Apartness means most definitely a policy of parallel development of whites and blacks. During the next generation or two the whites will have to act as parents, teachers, guardians of the separated black. But as soon as he is capable of governing and administering himself, he should be allowed to do that.

In the past, the educated black man had really no home to go back to and no ideal to live for. He was practically separated from his own kind: too cultured to go back and too black to be absorbed in or to be of real service to the white community. Our past policy amounted in fact to creating a class of renegades: a black man too advanced to remain a black and too black to become a white. The highest ideal—and this is most decidedly a false one—of the educated black was to be absorbed in the white community. The policy of apartness is going to put an end to this anomaly. The educated black man will now find a task and a job amongst his own people: he will become their intellectual, spiritual, educational, political leader. We, Afrikaners, desire for the black man what we have been demanding for ourselves: independence. We aim to become an independent Afrikaner nation. By apartness we are granting the black man the opportunity to develop along his own lines and to become eventually an independent black nation.

There are, of course, many problems which will demand serious attention before apartness as a policy can become apartness in fact. I mention only a few: the repatriation of the black man to his own territory, the servant problem, the problem of the coloureds, and of the South African Indian, etc. But they are not insurmountable.

A growing number of non-whites are beginning to grasp the policy of the new government, and on understanding it are openly supporting it. One thing before closing, this policy, once again, is not one of suppression or oppression of the black, but one of creating the opportunity for parallel and fairly independent development.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

J. CHR. COETZEE.

CALVINISM IN NORTH IRELAND

15 College Sq., East,
Belfast, North Ireland.
4/4/'49.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

THE arrival of another copy of the ever-welcome FORUM reminds me that it is time to write you again. Just now the case of Cardinal Mindszenty is uppermost in my mind. Perhaps that is only natural, because the Press has headlined it for days on end, and, the B.B.C. (which is not free from Romanist influence) has given the trial great prominence. Throughout the English-speaking world the Papacy has been crying like a disappointed child, and the noise has attracted great attention. In "The Case of Cardinal Mindszenty," published by the Catholic Truth Society of Scotland, we read, "Even more plainly than against Mgr. Stepinac, the real charge against Cardinal Mindszenty is that he is the chief teacher in Hungary of a doctrine with which the totalitarian ideology of Marx-Leninism cannot co-exist." This is true for the simple reason that Romanism as a politico-religious system is also totalitarian. It is obvious that two totalitarian systems cannot co-exist, at least not without intense friction.

When we in North Ireland watch the Papacy accusing Communism of suppressing civil and religious liberty and undermining the foundations of family life, we consider it an outstanding case of the kettle calling the pot black. What Rome says about Communism is true, but it applies to herself also. Romanism destroys the sanctity of the home, as those who live in Romanist lands know. And when we come to the liberty of the individual, it is really remarkable to listen to the oily tongue of the Papacy protesting against Communist suppression of such liberty. The trouble is that too few know the history of Romanism.

The great international propaganda machine of the Papacy has been working at white heat over the Cardinal's trial, and as we watched the commotion our thoughts went to Spain, where year after year Protestants are being persecuted, pastors imprisoned and even killed, Bibles seized, and churches and schools closed. But do we hear an outcry? What about our Press and B.B.C.? How much do you hear about Spain in the States? The arrest and trial of a Romish dignitary is considered an insult against Christianity—the passions of politicians and church leaders are stirred—yet day after day the sad and bloody ordeal continues in Spain while the press, the radio and politicians remain silent. That is how many of us feel on this side of the Atlantic over the Mindszenty case, and in listening to the Vatican pretending to be the great defender of human liberty and social progress we are reminded of the words of Dr. James Begg, virtual founder of the Scottish Reformation Society, who declared, "No doubt, wherever the ruling powers of a nation are Protestant, Popery is intensely democratic, and uses most recklessly the liberty of the press for the purpose of perplexing and overthrowing the government. But wherever the rulers of a country are Popish, the Roman Church

is foremost in extinguishing liberty, and in maintaining the most iron despotism over the people." The proof of that last sentence is to be found in every Roman Catholic country in the world.

The Trial of Jesus Christ

A book bearing that title has been published quite recently by "The Paternoster Press" (London, 160 pp., 6/-). This attractive little volume is the second in "The Second Thoughts Library" which is appearing under the editorship of Dr. R. E. D. Clark. In this book Frank J. Powell, a metropolitan magistrate, surveys "the greatest trial of all time." The author has been Counsel at the Central Criminal Court, the London Sessions, and on the South-Eastern Circuit. His work received a great reception by the Press, largely because it appeared when the news was circulating that the Israeli Cabinet was considering a petition submitted to the Israeli Supreme Court to review the trial of Jesus Christ, although 19 centuries had elapsed. The petition, believed to have been composed by a British scientist resident in Holland, contained some 8,000 words and described the charge of blasphemy brought against Christ as unfounded. It argued that Pontius Pilate was not qualified to confirm the condemnation of Christ. *The Trial of Jesus Christ* deals comprehensively with pre-trial days, the Hebrew trial, the Roman trial, and the subsequent events.

This is a valuable little book, and the argument is easy to follow. "Both the Jewish and Roman Courts professed to administer natural as well as legal justice," declares Mr. Powell. "Neither did so in the case of Jesus; each Court denied Him both kinds of justice. Justice was not done and was manifestly and undoubtedly seen not to be done." In capitals appear the words, "Jesus of Nazareth, Messiah of the Jews and Saviour of the world, was murdered." That is the decision of a London Magistrate after carefully examining the evidence. "There is a sense," he concludes, "in which the trial of Jesus continues to this day and will continue to the end of time. . . . The choice before the world is still: CHRIST OR BARABBAS." The book is well indexed, easily read, and should prove stimulating to the minds of all who peruse it.

A New Church Building

The Irish Evangelical Church are erecting a building at Finaghy, Belfast. A new housing estate is being erected in this area, and there are great possibilities attached to any Church work which may be commenced. Already services are being held in a nearby hall, and we look forward to the time when the new place of meeting can be used to the glory of God.

Visit of Professor Stonehouse

Professor N. B. Stonehouse of Westminster Theological Seminary is to visit us on May 7th when he will speak at a Conference to be held in Botanic Avenue Evangelical Church, Belfast. On Lord's Day, May 8th, he will preach in two of our city churches. Dr. Stonehouse lectures in the college of the Free Church of Scotland during the last week of April. We look forward to seeing and hearing him.

With greetings from your brethren in Ireland,

Yours in His Service,
FRED S. LEAHY.

A LETTER FROM HOLLAND

Groningen,
March 24, 1949.

Dear Prof. Bouma and FORUM *Friends:*

IT is a real pleasure to have another chat with all of you. This time I would like to tell you about that most unique institution which we have at Amsterdam, viz., the Free University ("Vrije Universiteit"). Since I know that THE CALVIN FORUM is read in many countries throughout the world, I would like to take this opportunity to address a request to all my fellow-readers and also fellow-correspondents in every part of the globe.

Recently one of the professors of the Free University remarked that it surely is a pity that this most unique institution for higher learning is known so little throughout the world. He did not know how this could be remedied. That gave me an idea. A letter in our much-appreciated CALVIN FORUM surely could help! No Calvinistic magazine has such a cosmopolitan circulation and such world-wide connections.

There was also another consideration that spurred me on. Recently while in Canada I met a very orthodox and theologically well-grounded minister who had no idea what the Free University of Amsterdam is. Surely this is a pity and this should not go on. Of course, we know that the circle of Calvin College and Seminary is well-informed on matters pertaining to the Free University, as we in turn are acquainted with them. And yet there could also here be much more contact and coöperation. For instance, one of the professors of your science department recently told me he had no knowledge of the fine monthly published by the Christian Society for Natural Scientists in the Netherlands. I was a bit ashamed, also with a view to the Netherlands, and said to myself: Why has not that Society with its fine magazine ever made contact with their colleagues in the U. S. A.? Happily the theologians have more contact with one another. They can serve as a fine example in this respect. For once they in this way prove themselves to represent "the Queen of the Sciences"!

I would like to ask all Bible-believing brethren throughout the world: Do you know that there is at Amsterdam a Bible-believing and positively Calvinistic University? And would you like to know more about this institution? If so, you can write me and I shall be glad to be of service to you. We are in hopes that Indonesia may soon also have a university like it. And may the same be accomplished with the help of God and the coöperation of all forces in the U. S. A. In the near future we will be facing a very difficult spiritual struggle, and for this we must make the very best preparations, not the least at our Universities. It would seem to be highly desirable that we become mutually acquainted with our labors on this score. The world is becoming ever smaller, and increasingly more unified. This should be recognized and utilized also by Bible-believing Christians.

At this point I would like to add a request of a slightly different but related nature. I have in mind especially the brethren in Australia and New Zealand. You see, the Synod of our Reformed Churches in the Netherlands has appointed me together with a few others to furnish information to all of our emigrants leaving the shores of our crowded country with a view to the question: which church should Dutch Calvinistic emigrants join when going abroad to settle down? Now as far as the U. S. A. and Canada and South Africa are concerned we are well informed. But I am not acquainted with Australian church conditions. Would one of the brethren from that continent be so kind as to furnish me some information in this matter, preferably rather full information? See what splendid service THE CALVIN FORUM may not render in this fashion!

Now I believe I had better stop. We have just been greatly gladdened by the signing of the Atlantic Pact. However, to this we would like to add two wishes: 1. Would that all European countries which are not yet in the claws of the Russian bear might join this Atlantic Pact, and that as soon as possible, before it is too late. [This hope of our correspondent, expressed more than six weeks before it is read, has largely been realized since.—ED.] And: 2. Would that the nations now joined in this pact of friendship might show a more friendly attitude toward the righteous cause of the Netherlands in relation to the Dutch East Indies!

However, I am afraid Harry S. Truman and his advisers are not as yet subscribers to THE CALVIN FORUM and will hence not read this "crie de conscience"! Perhaps one of you will be kind enough to send your copy of THE FORUM with proper red-

pencil marks in the margin to the honorable gentlemen in Washington, D. C.!

With warm greetings from your brother in Holland,

PIETER PRINS,
H. W. Mesdagplein 2,
Groningen,
Netherlands.

[Note of Editor: Perhaps the Rev. Arthur Allen of Sydney, Australia will be glad to furnish Dr. Prins the desired information. A letter of the Rev. Mr. Allen appears on another page of this issue and another is scheduled to appear in the next. A History of the Free Presbyterian Church in Australia has also recently appeared and is obtainable from him. As to our stand on the Indonesian question, we refer our correspondent to our editorial of last month entitled, "The Dutch Have Done It." Also to the fine informative article of Dr. Amry Vanden Bosch in this and the next issue of THE CALVIN FORUM. Dr. Vanden Bosch, who is a son of the Christian Reformed Church and a loyal Calvin alumnus, is a real authority on the Dutch East Indies.]

THE TRUE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

THE American way of life is the practical implication of the conviction that all men "are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights". Among these are "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness". This is understood to include the freedom of religion, of the press, of enterprise, and of owning property. As such the American way of life is diametrically opposed to statism, collectivism, and Communism.

In view of the present trend, which is manifestly subversive to the American way of life, it seems safe to predict that before the approaching centennial of the American Civil War, our country will wage a second civil war. If the first civil war was necessary to abolish a certain type of slavery, the second will be necessary to avert a far greater slavery. If the first concerns the servitude of one race to another, the second concerns the servitude of all races to an all-powerful state.

A Revolution in the Offing!

Times are far more serious than we realize. Note these late developments.

(1) In literally hundreds of key cities in the United States, Communistic promotional agencies have been set up. These agencies, despite their misleading names, are "fronts" of Communism. Communistic agents called "fellow travellers" staff the camouflaged front organizations. All these fronts are organized under one central head—Moscow.

(2) Orders, with revolutionary reference, have already been issued from Russian headquarters to the ranking officers of the ever-increasing subversive army. Listen to the following directive which you will find in the book called "Manual of Organization", written by someone who—true to Russian pattern—goes by a number of different names but who has been identified as the "boss of Russian secret police in U. S. A." Says this Russian tool, "Every Communist must know that the party has a historical mission to fulfill—leading the masses for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and for the establishment of a new world, a Soviet America. Our task is to make every party member a professional revolutionist. A professional revolutionist is ready to go whenever and wherever the party sends him. If the class struggle demands it, he will leave his family for months, even years. The professional revolutionist cannot be demoralized; he is steeled, stable."

(3) In preparation for the coming revolution, literally scores of Communistic schools have already been established. Writes *News and Views* (Jan. 15, 1949), "The science of revolution is taught carefully—and studied intently—on a widespread scale in America. After the Russian revolution, some of our pinko-intellectuals in this country collaborated in setting up such institutions as the Brookwood Labor School, Debs School and other places for 'labor' training. In the early 30's the Communists quit fooling around with these pinko-idealists and got down to business by commissioning Abraham Markoff, a Russian-born-Marx-Leninist-trained bolshevik to set up 'Workers' Schools' in America to train Communist cadres. He established scores of these 'schools' in our industrial centers and they turned out thousands of revolutionists to stir trouble in our nation. . . . The 'Workers' Schools' (shortly after Roosevelt met Stalin at Teheran) were given nice new names such as the Abraham Lincoln School in Chicago, the Jefferson School in New York, etc. This Jefferson School is the big Communist training center now—and is doing big business with some 4,000 constantly enrolled."

Such are the facts. Facts cannot be deprived of their foreboding import by ignoring them. Says the above mentioned issue of *New and Views:* "The world is facing a crisis—and that includes the U. S. A. Everything we have, material, cultural and spiritual, is at stake. Action is needed." What type of action?

What Must Be Done

A. COOPERATION—a first requisite. We must learn—and right quickly—that cooperative efforts must not be made to depend upon the tearing down of the fences that divide us ecclesiastically, socially, vocationally—or in any other way. Taking for granted the differences that divide us, nay, capitalizing on these differences, we must cooperate on one basis—our *common objective.* Not only should the believers of various Christian faiths cooperate, but following the example of the "Father of believers", Abraham, who allied himself with the Canaanites to oppose a foreign invader, all true Americans who can rally around the banner of "America for Americans" should confederate to oppose the present invasion of a foreign ideology. In the light of the really basic issues that confront our nation today, all our diversified evangelical faiths should be but subdivisions of one mighty army fighting for our cherished Christian liberties. Our present major political parties hardly comprise a clash of fundamental issues . . . rather a clash of two groups striving for the driver's seat. We might well wish that there were a political re-grouping along revolutionary and anti-revolutionary lines—the one opposed to and the other committed to the American way of life. Let us thank God that the latter party *is still* in the majority. This majority, however, means little or nothing if unorganized.

B. ORGANIZATION—is the great need of the hour. The unorganized majority favoring Americanism must organize and do so forthwith ere it is too late. We should begin by organizing the various scattered agencies which have already been set up in defense of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the American way of life, etc., etc. If we don't organize under one strong central administration, we may soon witness the sad spectacle of certain parties making a "racket" of patriotic endeavor . . . and casting suspicion upon all efforts at preserving our cherished liberties. Under proper leadership we would soon double and triple our posts of American defense. These American posts should far outnumber the foreign "fronts". Under proper organization and under diligent, systematic dissemination of the truth of our American liberties, and under a bold, courageous refutation of Communistic claims—who knows but by 1952 the proposed "American Party" will capture the seat in the White House!

C. EDUCATION—the revival of Christian education is essential. If this means maintaining schools at private expense—let it be even so. If an American majority under proper organized leadership cannot be moved in this hour of danger to initiate a private educational program which is at least a match to the educational program projected by the subversive minority bloc—then ours is an Americanism that is not worthy of being preserved. Let it perish with its Laodicean indifference. But nay, God willing, for every God-denying school that the Communists have opened we will open a hundred God-honoring

schools. For every socialist-inspired textbook that now disgraces our educational system, we will publish a hundred Christian textbooks. In every subversive endeavor of the enemy we will match philosophy with philosophy, passion with passion, sacrifice with sacrifice!

Our enemy has gained much ground by means of its three-pronged program: COOPERATION—ORGANIZATION—EDUCATION. We will continue to lose ground unless we adopt a similar program. Further delay will be disastrous to our cause.

Chicago, Illinois. MARK FAKKEMA.

Book Reviews

GROWTH OF A UNIVERSITY

THE STORY OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS. *By Bertrand M. Bernheim. New York: Whittlesey House, 1948. 235 pages. $3.50.*

THIS book addresses itself not to the medical profession (though physicians can ill afford to neglect it), but to the general public. This means the public has the perfect right to judge it. This right I now purpose to exercise.

When crusty, crabby, stingy, old bachelor Johns Hopkins set aside millions to found a university, he could not realize it was to bring a millionaire in ill repute, undying fame. An exceptionally wise governing board chose an exceptionally wise president, between them they established a university, and staffed it with a faculty of such brilliance that on the graduate level, and in its medical school it almost instantly took first place among the universities of this country. Ambitious young men ceased trekking to Germany and went to Baltimore instead.

The title of the book, except for its sub-title, is innocently misleading. It is not, as one might think, a history of the Johns Hopkins, but a history of its medical school. In medical circles it is common practice to speak of this school as the Hopkins, or the Johns Hopkins, which accounts for the title.

The story is well told. True, the author's style lacks distinction, but it does not lack vividness. Furthermore, it is a courageous book. Though a Hopkins graduate, and a member of its faculty, he burns no incense at the feet of *alma mater*. If he praises generously he criticizes freely. For him white is white, gray is gray, and black is black. So, for example, he is outspoken in his criticism of anatomy as taught by Mall (to whose merits he is by no means blind) and his successors. Doubtless this criticism gets its cutting edge from the fact that as a practicing surgeon he must have struggled hard to make up for the deficiencies in his anatomical training. Not only in the matter of anatomy but repeatedly he speaks his mind with utter frankness, recking not at all whose toes he may be treading. Even the beloved Welch does not escape stricture as, for example, in the matter of the so-called "full-time" professorships. He does not hesitate to say that bringing Lewis from Chicago was a bad error. He declares that the Hopkins graduate has had too much of science and not enough of practice, though he insists in the same breath that after much floundering at the start Hopkins men almost always came out on top in the long run, just because of their thorough grounding in theory.

Even of the great four: Welch, Osler, Halsted, and Kelly, the Four Horsemen as he likes to call them, only two escape all criticism—Osler and Kelly. Surprisingly, though himself apparently not a religious man, he speaks with all respect of Kelly's sincere Christianity. Be it said in passing that Kelly was an orthodox believer and ardent student of the Scriptures. Literally Bernheim says:

"He was the only surgeon I ever knew personally who indulged in prayer before he began operating. On the occasions I was present he called staff, nurses, and visitors together in an anteroom and read a piece from the Bible or gave a prayer. Brief, sincere gesture that you could see came from the man's innermost being."

A smaller man might have brought ridicule upon himself, but Kelly enforced respect by his almost unbelievable skill as a surgeon. "His fingers", says Bernheim, "actually twinkled. He devised new operations and invented new instruments to carry them out. His originality and energy were extraordinary, and he talked well and taught men by the dozens. His assistants, associates, and nurses adored him. He liked the limelight and took pleasure in quick, flashy operating. He'd be in and out of an abdomen almost before you knew it. It was glorious to watch him."

A great team they were, the Hopkins quartette. One is reminded of the contemporary quartette in philosophy at Harvard, both groups immortalized on canvas by the famous John Singer Sargent. The author's admiration for the Four Horsemen is unbridled. With obvious exaggeration he says of Welch:

"There was nothing he didn't know, no book he hadn't read, no research he hadn't a hand in."

"Halsted", says Bernheim, "was a perfectionist, and his operations were works of art. His surgery was poetry—poetry of a sort few men understood. To this day no surgeon has ever gotten better results, and few have equalled his."

But the glory of the Hopkins was Osler. Not because he was a great physician as Halsted and Kelly were great surgeons, and Welch was a great organizer and administrator, no, Osler was the glory of the Hopkins because by common consent he was the greatest physician in the English-speaking world of that day. Why was he that? Because of the depth and the breadth of his professional knowledge? No. Some few may have known as much. It was not that. It was because Osler was Osler. Something had gone into the making of him that others lacked or lacked to the same degree. There was an aura about him. The moment he entered a sick room patients brightened. There were many, and, mark you, not only the functionally ill, who were better all day not because the great physician had left some wonder-working potion, but simply because he had looked in on them and given them a word of cheer.

Osler was so great a healer because he was so wonderful a man. All who knew him testify to the genius of his personality. He never became professionalized. He always remained a human being whose patients for him were also human beings in need of his professional knowledge and skill. That is why he had nothing but scorn, searing scorn for consultants and surgeons who would not enter into consultation or operate until they were certain of their fee. "Gehazis," he called them, "gehazis who hear nothing but the lowing of the oxen and the tinkling of shekels" (I quote from memory). Osler, one may be sure, never forgot that a great preacher is something more than a theologian, a great teacher something more than a scholar, a great advocate something more than an attorney-at-law, a great physician something more than a healer. He is first of all a human being who sees parishioners, pupils, clients, patients not only as sinners, or ignorant, or in trouble, or ill; no, he sees them as people who are all that.

That is why one summer day Osler refused point-blank to go to Philadelphia in consultation on some Wanamaker, but instead, according to promise, accompanied a lowly country doctor to see some poor old woman who could recompense neither.

Make no mistake. Osler was no fool. He did not despise money. He valued the good things of life, he admired beau-

tiful bindings, he cherished first editions, all of which can be acquired only with money. But Osler always kept money in its proper place. People came first.

Let those young men who are scrambling to get to the top of the professional ladder never forget that if in their scrambling they divest themselves of their common humanity, and think only of cases and fees, they most certainly will never reach the top. The top rung is reserved for those and only those who acquire not only professional competence, but who in their striving always remain human. Neither let them forget that the Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest of all healers, the latchet of whose shoes even an Osler was not worthy to unloose, in His healing never lost either His humanity or His divinity.

All in all, whatever its defects, this is a fascinating book. Though the author expresses his mind with the greatest candor, sparing nobody, the book like the man is charmingly modest. Of himself he says:

"I was never one of the important men at Hopkins, a member of the inner circle. My status was merely that of member of that large group you find in all institutions who carry out orders and keep things going."

I find it hard to believe that a man of so much insight and such freedom of expression can have been quite so insignificant as he would have us believe.

J. BROENE.

T. S. ELIOT ON CULTURE

NOTES TOWARD THE DEFINITION OF CULTURE. *By T. S. Eliot. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1949. 128 pages. $2.50.*

THOMAS STEARNS ELIOT, an American who in 1914 adopted England as his country, is perhaps the most distinguished poet and most influential critic of the contemporary English-speaking world. Last year, at sixty, he received the Nobel Prize for Literature. Previously his achievements had already brought him the coveted British Order of Merit.

In his latest book, written in the usual urbane and impeccable prose, Eliot turns his attention not to literary matters, but to our contemporary culture. What he says about it, constitutes, to the mind of this reviewer, some of the most basic and significant contributions that could be made to the subject. As many other thoughtful persons, Eliot is genuinely disturbed about the present state of our culture. The decay, he feels, is reflected in the career of the word *culture* itself, which has come to be badly misused and therefore needs to be redefined.

In adumbrating the meaning of culture, Eliot points out that the term has varying associations "according to whether we have in mind the development of an *individual*, of a *group* or *class*, or of a *whole society*." He is at pains to clarify that when we use the term in one of these three ways, we should always do so in awareness of the others. Thus we must not expect any one person to be accomplished in all of the several activities of culture. "We shall come to infer that the wholly cultured individual is a phantasm; and we shall look for culture, not in any individual or in any group of individuals, but more and more widely; and we are driven in the end to find it in the pattern of the society as a whole." Restating the matter, Eliot says "that the culture of the individual cannot be isolated from that of the group, and that the culture of the group cannot be abstracted from that of the whole society; and that our notion of 'perfection' must take all three senses of 'culture' into account at once." Culture, then, is a complex social and organic thing; it is "the way of life of a particular people, . . . made visible in their arts, in their social system, in their habits and customs, in their religion."

Because of this organic nature of culture, it can be best preserved and transmitted by natural and organic means—by the family, the class, the region, the ethnic group. Since modern man has lost the sense of the organic nature of things and has, in many ways, come to adopt an individualistic and atomic view of society, his culture is in grave danger of total deterioration. Partly for this reason, too, declares Eliot, modern man fails to see the relevance of religion to culture. Yet he avers, "no culture has appeared and developed except together with a religion." To the religionist the culture will appear as the product of the religion; to the communist, let us say, the religion will be viewed as the product of the culture. But both will have to agree that the one simply does not exist without the other.

Having made these points in his opening chapter, Eliot proceeds to show what he considers the essential conditions for the growth and survival of culture. He repeats the thesis that since culture is an organic and growing thing, it can be best transmitted by organic structure. Consequently, "the most important channel of transmission of culture remains the family." And when Eliot speaks of the family, he means not merely those members of it that are still alive, but "a bond which embraces a longer period of time than this: a piety towards the dead, however obscure, and a solicitude for the unborn, however remote."

Essential to the transmission of culture is also the class. "If we agree that the primary vehicle for the transmission of culture is the family, and if we agree that in a more highly civilized society there must be different levels of culture, then it follows that to ensure the transmission of the culture of these different levels there must be groups of families persisting, from generation to generation, each in the same way of life." The class, then, has a distinct and significant function, that of maintaining that part of the entire cultural pattern which is characteristic of the class. It must be remembered, however, that "in a healthy society this maintenance of a particular level of culture is to the benefit, not merely of the class which maintains it, but of the society as a whole." Recognition of this fact "will prevent us from supposing that the culture of a 'higher' class is something superfluous to society as a whole, or to the majority, and from supposing that it is something which ought to be shared equally by all other classes. It should also remind the 'higher' class, in so far as any such exists, that the survival of the culture in which it is particularly interested is dependent upon the health of the culture of the people."

Eliot continues to show that culture is also dependent upon the persistence of various regions and ethnic groups. In this connection he quotes A. N. Whitehead, who stressed that "a diversification among human communities is essential for the provision of the incentive and material for the Odyssey of the human spirit." He might have quoted John Collier, our former Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who, in discussing the creative value of cultural diversity once remarked: "In the long view, racial differences are not merely matters needing accommodation, forbearance, and the assertion of elementary human rights. Such they are; but in addition, they are the most constructive, building, creative factor in our life as men . . . Racial, ethnic, social diversity, with the interaction of the diversities, is the principal fertilizing and structure-shaping force in human life. It is the deep peril and disease of our age, that these differences tend to become flattened out, swallowed up, annihilated too soon."

Such nationalist movements as those of the Bretons in France, of the Catalans in Spain, of the Frisians in the Netherlands and Germany, and of the Irish, Scots, and Welsh in Britain, Eliot evaluates not only in terms of human rights, but also in terms of cultural significance. He finds two reasons for not allowing a weaker culture to be absorbed by a stronger one. "The first objection is one so profound that it must simply be accepted: it is the instinct of every living thing to persist in its own being . . . Any vigorous small people wants to preserve its individuality." The other reason is that "the survival of the satellite culture is of very great value to the stronger culture." The Welsh, he argues, can contribute nothing worthwhile to the culture of Great Britain by becoming English. They can make a distinct and significant contribution only if they remain Welsh. And to remain Welsh they must maintain and cultivate their own separate language; if they fail to do this, they "will tend to lose their racial character." Eliot believes that if the

other cultures of the British Isles were entirely absorbed by English culture, English culture itself would disappear. "To many it has never occurred to reflect that the disappearance of the peripheral cultures of England . . . might be a calamity."

It follows that Eliot takes a strong stand for the "cultural autonomy" of national minorities within political states. While recognizing that the nationalistic motive of regionalism may be carried to the point of absurdity, he is realistic enough to admit that no small people can live by cultural autonomy alone. In the modern world, cultural, political, and economic problems cannot be isolated. "Cultural autonomy, which . . . is divorced from political and economic power, will only be a shadow of the real thing." The granting of self-rule is never a menace to the unity of the country that gives it. In fact, it makes that unity more natural and genuine. Unity is not synonymous with uniformity, and only unity which admits of diversity can be lasting. Moreover, though it is true that divisions within a nation can go too far (in which case the nation becomes a danger to itself), it is equally true that "a country which is too well united—whether by nature or by device, by honest purpose or by fraud and oppression—is a menace to others. . . . The universality of irritation is the best assurance of peace."

A third condition for the preservation of culture, Eliot finds, is a balance of unity and diversity in religion. There must be "universality of doctrine with particularity of cult and devotion." As it is good for society to have classes, and for a nation to have regions, so it is good for Christendom to have denominations and sects. "Christendom should be one: the form of organization and the locus of powers in that unity are questions upon which we cannot pronounce. But within that unity there should be an endless conflict between ideas—for it is only by the struggle against constantly appearing false ideas that the truth is enlarged and clarified, and in the conflict with heresy that orthodoxy is developed to meet the needs of the times." Speaking not as a Christian apologist, but as someone interested in the preservation of culture, he observes about church union: "I am much concerned with the danger that reunion facilitated by the disappearance of the cultural characteristics of the several bodies reunited might accelerate and confirm the general lowering of culture. The refinement or crudity of theological and philosophical thinking is itself, of course, one of the measures of the state of our culture; and the tendency in some quarters to reduce theology to such principles as a child can understand or a Socinian accept, is itself indicative of cultural debility."

In his last two chapters, Eliot makes an attempt to disentangle culture from politics and education. The remarks which the author makes about current educational theory are as courageous as they are trenchant. Here again one is tempted to quote frequently and at length. Eliot warns against the notion that education can transmit culture in any comprehensive and pregnant sense of the word. He warns, too, against defining education in terms of political goals (democracy, let us say) or social ends. "It would be a pity if we overlooked the possibilities of education as a means of acquiring *wisdom;* if we belittled the acquisition of *knowledge* for the satisfaction of curiosity, without any further motive than the desire to know; and if we lost our respect for *learning.*" He attacks the notion that education necessarily makes people happier and that it is something which everybody wants. He is convinced that we are educating entirely too many people and in the course of the process are not only disintegrating personalities but also endangering our culture. "For there is no doubt that in the headlong rush to educate everybody, we are lowering our standards, and more and more abandoning the study of those subjects by which the essentials of our culture—of that part of it which is transmissible by education—are transmitted; destroying our ancient edifices to make ready the ground upon which the barbarian nomads of the future will encamp in their mechanized caravans."

Many things in this book will outrage the so-called "liberal" mind. But that is because liberalism has long ceased to stand for anything which the word itself suggests and has congealed into a dogma, arrogant and intolerant. Those who equate democracy with such things as "classless society", "equal opportunity", and "compulsory universal education" will find their facile assumptions fundamentally assailed. They will be hard put to refute Eliot's vigorous argumentation. Rather than argue with him, they will find it easier to dismiss him as hopelessly conservative and dangerously undemocratic. But, unfortunately, they will be dismissing one of the best friends that democracy has. For what Eliot combats in this book is the essentially fascist trend toward cultural *Gleichschaltung,* toward the reduction and levelling of everything and everybody to the lowest common denominator. This book is meant to help democracy rescue itself from the uniform mass mind. For it is the mass mind which is not only apt, but actually foredoomed, to become the prey of the demagogue and dictator.

B. FRIDSMA.

LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP

THEORY OF LITERATURE. *By René Wellek and Austin Warren. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1949. 403 pages. $4.50.*

FORUM readers whose interests are not too closely specialized in other-than-literary areas will find real stimulus to thinking about current problems of literature in this recent manual of criticism which offers "to provide an *organon* of method" in dealing with such problems. Those readers who are students of literature will find they do not want to be without it.

Here are some of the questions these writers discuss and to which they sometimes give answers; some of them probably come now and then to the minds of those whose contact with literature proper comes only through the reading of a novel every year or so: What is literature? What is not literature? What is it supposed to do? How important is it to know the story of the author's life in studying a work of literature? Does or should literature mirror society? ("Literature must not be conceived as being merely a passive reflection or copy of the political, social, or even intellectual development of mankind.") What is the relation of literature to philosophy? Of literature to sculpture, painting, or music? How important is structure? What is a poem? Are some languages more adequate than others for certain types of literature? What is the relation of narrative fiction to life? "Does a theory of literary kinds involve the supposition that every work belongs to a kind?" Do kinds remain fixed? Just what is the real business of analyzing and evaluating a work of literature and how should people carry on this business? Before we mock and ask, Pilate-like, "What is truth?", convinced that there are no final answers to any of these questions, let us read the text. These writers seriously propose a point of view and a methodology by which to work toward consistent answers.

These men touch on literally hundreds of critical notions, theories, and exhibits, foreign and domestic. Yet the work successfully escapes classification as a mere omnibus of critical opinion summaries. Each critic and each author held up as an example is seen from a remarkably consistent point of view, in spite of the dual authorship. As if knowing a label will be given to this point of view and reluctantly supplying one before (as so often happens) someone applies a misnomer that sticks, Mr. Wellek suggests the word "Prospectivism." This conception, he says, "does not mean an anarchy of values, a glorification of individual caprice, but a process of getting to know the object from different points of view which may be defined and criticized in their turn." The reader will find the outline of such a process suggested in the chapter, "Literary History." It is not inconceivable that American literary scholarship, increasingly distrustful of mere antiquarianism, literary biography, and social and political backgrounds as the proper matter of study for the literary scholar, may find this kind of pur-

gation and integration of its divergent aims a satisfying program of action. Calvinists, Thomists, and all teleologically minded literary students have in this work a tremendous challenge to define, as articulately and consistently as here, the functions of literature and the core of criteria by which to judge it according to their own postulates.

There is a danger that *Theory of Literature* may be received as a complete and final text-book of literary criticism, just as thirteenth century Roger Bacon's *Opus maius,* for example, was too often taken as a *summa* instead of as a treatise outlining methods and areas of investigation. It is enough that these authors provide powerful suggestions for an *organon*—they make no pretense of having said the last word. Most of the work they have done is in making effective the indication of what ought to be done.

We have called the book a manual. It is not primarily a manual: though one may find elsewhere more complete bibliographies of literary criticism, one is unlikely to find any other so suggestive and in a form so much inviting one to read as the forty pages of bibliography classified according to problems discussed in the text, and the forty-seven pages of notes on the text, mainly bibliographical. Nothing is printed in a way that strains the eye. To the Calvinistic scholar the work is a challenge even more than a manual, if the Calvinistic scholar is sincere about developing every area of life and learning to the glory of God.

University of Michigan. STANLEY E. KONING.

SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

THE SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN. *By Thomas Merton. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1948. 429 pages. $3.00.*

THE Seven Storey Mountain is a spiritual autobiography. Thomas Merton, a thorough-going modern young intellectual, immersed himself in the world, was converted to the Catholic faith, and at the age of twenty-six entered a Trappist monastery. Using the seven-tiered mountain of Dante's Purgatory as a symbol of the modern world, Mr. Merton tells the story of his life, the story of a universal Christian experience. The Protestant reader will be little less interested in Merton's account because of its Catholic tone. His references to particularly Catholic doctrines are only incidental to the truth of his conversion to Christianity.

Thomas Merton had steeped himself in the world. He was also a product of it. Born the son of an English artist in 1915, he grew up in the period of unrest between the two wars. The atmosphere of his early life was one of indifference toward religion and of intolerance toward Catholicism. "When we stood in the chapel and recited the Apostles' Creed," he says, "I used to keep my lips tight shut, with full deliberation and of set purpose, by way of declaring my own creed which was: 'I believe in nothing.'" His interests included James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, jazz, and Hollywood. He was educated at Cambridge in England and at Columbia University. He tried literature, Communism, society, and love, all in a vain attempt to cure his dissatisfaction with himself and with life. Finally he came to the point of which he says:

> I had at last become a true child of the modern world . . . I had done what I intended, and now I found that it was I who was emptied and robbed and gutted . . . God in His mercy was permitting me to fly as far as I could from His love but at the same time preparing to confront me, at the end of it all, and in the bottom of the abyss, when I thought I had gone farthest from Him. . . . Always I was to be punished for my sins by my sins themselves, and to realize, at least obscurely, that I was being punished and burn in the flames of my own hell, and rot in the hell of my own corrupt will until I was forced at last, by my own intense misery, to give up my will.

Among the influences which led to his baptism in the Catholic church and to his ultimate entrance into the Trappist monastery, one of the most severe of the Catholic Orders, were his reading of Gilson's *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy,* which taught him to respect Catholic faith and philosophy; his personal acquaintance with Mark Van Doren, professor of literature at Columbia; his reading in the poetry of William Blake and Gerard Manley Hopkins; and his direct investigation of the Catholic church. His unrest continued after his conversion until he entered "the four walls of my new freedom" to begin the contemplative life of the monastery.

Merton's account of his life, however, is secondary to the story of his religious experience. The biographical facts are important only in so far as they reveal the grace of God in the heart of the sinner. His only possible reason for setting forth his experiences is his belief in a personal God, a God of truth who is concerned with the errors of his soul. As such the book is significant. As such, too, it stands as a companion volume to Augustine's *Confessions* and like works. It is as W. H. Auden has said of a similar account, "not so much an autobiography as a paragraph in the biography of the Divine Grace."

ARTHUR J. OTTEN.

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

WHO SAY YE THAT I AM? *Six Dunn Award Theses on the Deity of Christ. Compiled and edited by William C. Robinson. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1949. 173 pages. $2.50.*

IN the wake of the compiler's *Our Lord,* a vigorous apologetic for the deity of Christ (recently re-edited and re-published by Eerdmans), comes this multiple witness from six of the compiler's select students. This pivotal doctrine which interpenetrates New Testament literature is underscored in a half dozen prize-winning essays, two of them from the hand of the compiler's own sons, who obviously couple their physical inheritance with the spiritual. Evidence as to the divinity of the Saviour is garnered from the gospels and epistles and the conclusion is quite inescapable that if you lift out these witnesses the New Testament is mutilated beyond recognition. Thus from the Bible-loyal contingent of the Southern Presbyterian Church in the heart of the deep south and in a day when the Saviour is humanized on every hand comes another voice, or rather, a sextette of voices, sounding the plea to perpetuate historic Christianity which stands or falls with the doctrine of the deity of Christ.

JOHN H. BRATT.

RADIO SERMONS

GETTING THE RIGHT PITCH. *By Peter H. Eldersveld. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1949. 149 pages. $2.00.*

WHEN the unique witness of a small Calvinistic denomination reaches millions in the providence of God, that is a matter of no little moment. Ours is an age of radio evangelism and amid the welter of religious voices going out over the airwaves, the Back to God Hour, with a competent radio minister and an excellent radio choir and on a major network, aims to bring the full-orbed gospel as it applies to every phase of life. It has as its objective the recall of men to a sense of responsibility to Almighty God and to His Son whom He has sent on a redemptive mission into this world. By and large our American fellows are out of tune with God and as the title of this little volume of sixteen selected messages indicates, their primary need is "Getting the Right Pitch," or once again becoming attuned to God. To attain that end the radio minister, supported to be sure by the choir, projects his voice over the airwaves. But winged words, being intangible, are obviously elusive and fleeting in character. They lack body. Here then is their precipitate on the printed page, a sample of the gospel as the Calvinist brings it to a godless, secular and humanistic world. It is concrete evidence of the effort that one Calvinistic communion is putting forth to be true to the missionary injunction of Christ, to "go out and bring the gospel" which not only saves for eternity but saves for service in this present world.

JOHN H. BRATT.