

# THE CALVIN FORUM

A MONTHLY

Christ in Christmas  
An Editorial

Capitalism and Christianity  
An Historical Approach

The Kuyper Institute  
A Monument--Not a Statue

Kuyper as Dogmatician  
Renewing Reformed Theology

American Teaching  
Integrated or Detached?

Voetius on Synods  
Their Proper Authority

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Verse

# The CALVIN FORUM

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# The CALVIN FORUM

VOLUME III

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## CHRISTMAS, CHRIST, AND INCARNATION AN EDITORIAL

Christmas, Thou art a mockery!

Red clad, ruddy faced and bearded jolly old Claus occupies the throne in the hearts and homes of individuals who claim to be Christians everywhere. The Babe of Bethlehem is left and forgotten in the place of shelter for the beasts of the fields in a Judean hamlet. The spirit of commercialism has replaced the spirit of worship. It is business, not religion, that rises to a new high level in these days that have been set aside for the commemoration of the birth of Him whom the angels heralded with joyous songs. It's the time in which the love—affected or real—of man to man finds formal expression in the custom of gift exchange. The love of God to man, however, manifested by the giving of the incomparable gift of His own Son to a perverse generation is somehow or other absent from our Christmas reflections. Conscious effort will be needed to promote a proper perspective of true values in the season before us.

The incarnation is humiliation.

This truth is ignored by most Christians in practice and denied by many theologians in theory. Worshippers who are moved to contemplate the infant Jesus see nothing but the halo placed by the artists above His head and hear nothing but the angelic renditions of heavenly song. They ignore the fact that the helpless babe in his mother's arms is none other than the Son of God, who abided by all the limitations of the human nature that he took on. And there are theologians who argue that the incarnation was a necessary step in the process of self-completion on the part of Jesus and would have taken place even if man had not sinned. It is claimed that there can be no humiliation for God to appear in the form of a creature whom He made after His own image. And the modernists who find no deity in Christ will, of course, not concede that there can be any humiliation in Christ's appearance as man.

This is a serious error. It violates crystal clear scriptural presentations on this matter and is of far reaching consequence in our Christmas observances. Surely Paul leaves no doubt on this point. Hear him: Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor. Being in the form of and on an equality with God, he emptied Himself. He took on the form of a *servant*. He humbled himself. And there are many other utterances equally transparent. Such failure to see a humiliation in the incarnation can be but

part of a system of thought that holds that man must and can work out his own salvation if he is in need of it at all. It is not a matter that must be wrought by God. Thus it is alleged. Thus our tiny systems pass judgment upon majestic divine revelation.

It is, of course, impossible to appreciate the Gift of God except we have some understanding of what the giving of the Gift meant for both the Giver and the Gift. There must be a bit of sorrow lurking in our souls in order that our Christmas joys may ascend to their highest spiritual heights. We should be able to say, "It is terrible that the incarnation had to take place, but Halleluja! it has taken place."

The incarnation is indispensable.

If one would appreciate the incarnation, he must place it in its proper setting. If he would appreciate the light, he must see it as dispelling darkness. The only condition upon which he will be vouchsafed a true view of the spiritual light is to see it shine in the midst of spiritual darkness. Somehow or other he must become aware of the indispensability of the Christ as a dispeller of darkness. An optimistic view of the world and of man outside of Christ renders the subject unfit for a proper Christmas observance. In Christ's time there wasn't a single ray of light anywhere for the godly Jew apart from the Messianic promises. Self-examination revealed to him all too clearly that it was utterly futile to attempt to live a life satisfactory to God and to himself by keeping the law. An examination of the world about him was no more encouraging. Every human attempt to better the political, social, and religious condition of the Jews failed. At times there seemed to have been temporary successes but these only emphasized the folly of human endeavors. Their sacred literature offered no light except in the coming of the Messiah.

This threefold source of information would bring us today to precisely the same conclusion. It is exceedingly dark around about us. It is pitch black. Men blunder and stumble. Their little systems have their day. Every human effort for world betterment seems to have been rebuffed by failure. Every human effort at self-betterment has been put to shame. One can only marvel at the blind persistency and courage that induce men to try and try again after each succeeding failure. But it is surely dark with a terrible darkness that no man seems able to dispel. Realizing that situation and then looking across the

ages to Bethlehem and seeing the indispensability of the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, we can appreciate the fact that He must be enthroned and He alone.

The incarnation is love.

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." The love in the incarnation can be somewhat measured only if we reflect upon three distinct aspects of the birth of Jesus. The first is the unworthiness of the recipients of God's gift. When the gift is given to individuals who by nature hate the giver and persist in manifesting that hatred by a satanic opposition to His will, as sinners are bent on doing, then it requires a love far surpassing human understanding to regard them as objects of divine favor or as recipients of so great a divine gift. And yet such was the love of God as revealed in the shepherd's village. The second aspect is the value of the gift. This can be somewhat gaged by an appreciation of all that we treasure in our salvation from sin and in our hopes for life everlasting. After all there was and is no other name given under heaven by which man can be saved. The third aspect is that of the Giver. His Son was precious to Him. Indeed, the love of God for His Son measures the greatness of His love for the world for whom He was given. And it is in the realization of basking in the warm glow of divine love, as we contemplate the birth of Jesus, that our hearts will be able to respond with conscious Christmas joy.

H. S.

## TOLL

Dark, dark are the deeps of the soul  
And narrow the pathways that wind;  
And never a bridge that we cross  
But we pay with a blood-bought toll;  
Steep, steep is the highway of life,  
And sharp are the crags we must scale;  
And ever the heights we attain  
Leave valleys of infinite pain.

But free is the gift of God's love  
And open the door to that Way  
Where Christ is forever the Light  
That shines to the more perfect day—  
And "He addeth no sorrow therewith."

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

## VOLCANO

Within the crater of the brain  
Smoulders volcanic force;  
Erupting, it will rock the world  
Revolving on its course.

The tiny fissure of the mouth  
Spouts lava fierce with fire  
Whose violence will light the world  
To one vast funeral pyre.

The mounting flames will kindle heaven  
With chaos black behind;  
While man bewildered views a waste  
Laid barren by his mind.

—MILDRED R. ZYLSTRA.

## GIVE US A BURDEN

O give us a burden for souls, dear God!  
Give us, the laymen, a charge.  
That we may not sleep while to right and left  
Death is a plunging barge  
Flinging its victims to destined woe,  
Victims quite willing to go.

O give us a burden for souls, dear God!  
Teach us prevailing prayer;  
Thy arm is not shortened, Thou wilt redeem  
Thou hast a Father's care  
For all who call humbly upon Thy Name—  
O Lord, set our souls aflame.

Give us a burden for souls, dear God!  
Show us thy ancient power  
That we may be filled with the Holy Ghost  
To slay all satanic power  
Wherever we meet it, in whatever guise—  
Harmless as doves, but serpent-wise.

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

## LET HIM IN

Silence and night and snow  
Bright stars above  
The thought of a manger-child  
And the Father's love.

A tree and wreaths of holly  
Children's glad eyes,  
The shouts of happy laughter,  
And—awed surprise.

Families and carols and chimes  
Peace and goodwill,  
And bells of Christmas ringing  
From every high hill.

For these my love is shining  
As candles light the gloom,  
But oh, let my heart be open  
To give the Savior room.

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

# CHRISTIANITY AND CAPITALISM

By Albert Hyma, Ph. D.

Professor of History, University of Michigan. Author of "Christianity, Capitalism, and Communism."

**D**URING the past twenty-five years a large number of remarkable statements have been made by leading scholars about the proper relations between capital and labor, the rights of the workmen, the privileges of employers, the sins committed by great corporations, and the contrast between democracy and communism or fascism. Little emphasis has usually been placed upon the fundamental principles of the Christian religion. It has indeed become fashionable and popular to scoff at the teachings of the orthodox denominations, with the inevitable result that these denominations are frequently portrayed in a light which reveals plainly the superficial study on the part of the author. One writer claims, for example, that Protestantism produced absolutism in government, another that it did exactly the opposite; many theologians in this country still try to perpetuate the indefensible theory that Lutheranism was "hostile to the things of this world" while Calvinism was "friendly to this world." Professor Reinhold Niebuhr was quoted in the August number of *THE CALVIN FORUM* as saying that Calvinism, unlike Lutheranism, influenced politics and economics, and made "a valuable contribution to social progress," even becoming "the spiritual foundation upon which the whole structure of modern civilization has been built."

Before the Calvinist, however, gets ready to congratulate himself upon having received the praises of the New Deal theologians and historians, he should study carefully the condemnation orthodox Christianity must withstand from the pens of the very same writers. Niebuhr minces no words when he sets himself up as a judge to pass the verdict of "guilty" upon Christian orthodoxy in the fifth chapter of his book, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*. Now the bewildered Calvinist feels himself impelled to slink away in some dark corner, where he will find plenty of company among devout Catholics and Lutherans. He wonders whether such great thinkers as Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther and John Calvin were really "blind leaders of the blind?" No, let him take comfort in the thought that the Word of God will in the end confute the experts in our new era of "enlightenment."

## **The Teachings of Jesus and the Apostolic Church**

Neither the capitalists nor the socialists nor the communists can turn with pleasant anticipation to the pronouncements by the founders of the Christian church. The Sermon on the Mount must frighten them away from a serious study of the New Testament, while even the Old Testament contains little to make them feel at ease. For did not the Christ say that He came not to destroy the law and the prophecies, but to fulfil them? Perhaps the enthusiastic disciple of Karl Marx and Lenin might argue that Jesus and His apostles favored communism, as they objected to the acquisition of ma-

terial possessions in excessive quantities on the part of any individual. They must know then that to give one's property away to the poor is by no means communism or socialism. To surrender voluntarily all superfluous wealth is far removed from the program of the socialists who aim to have the government seize private property, including utility companies, railroads and mines, and to control it for the benefit of the populace at large.

Everyone admits that it is a most difficult task to become a real Christian. Man in his present state cannot attain the high aim set up by Christ. A husband who has to support a wife and several children is not easily moved to let a robber take away his most valuable possessions and then to show that robber where he can obtain still more. Not every Christian feels obliged to seek retirement in a monastery or a convent. Not every Christian business man wants to imitate Saint Francis of Assisi, whose father besought him in vain to take over his well-established firm. Few ministers of the Gospel dare to charge nothing at all for their labors, hoping that, like the leaders in the primitive Christian church, they will receive their proper reward. To love one's enemies and to do good to those who hate us is no small matter. But before us all there arises that marvelous goal about which the apostle Paul spoke so eloquently.

What would the world have been without the matchless teachings of Jesus? Imperfect though His early followers were, did they not show us the way out of divorce, wars, strikes, robbery and oppression? Did they not indicate what the relation between employer and employee should be? Ministers who forsake their pulpits and spend their energy in sowing the seeds of dissension between labor and capital will have much to account for in the final judgment day. The term "social justice" has a very fine sound, but to love one's neighbor as oneself will do infinitely more good. More than one hundred years ago Thomas Carlyle clearly perceived the dangers which lurked in the path of those who were continually clamoring for more liberty and more privileges to be accorded to the masses of the people. In a treatise called *Signs of the Times* (1829) he urged his fellow-citizens to return to the spirit of the early Christian church. His words sound as if they had been written in Flint or Detroit, Michigan, during our notorious strikes:

"Or, to take an infinitely higher instance, that of the Christian religion, which, under every theory of it, in the believing or unbelieving mind, must be ever regarded as the crowning glory, or rather the life and soul, of our whole modern culture: How did Christianity arise and spread among men? Was it by institutions, and establishments and well-arranged systems of mechanism? Not so . . . It arose in the mystic deeps of man's soul; and was spread by the 'preaching of the word,' by simple, altogether natural

and individual efforts; and flew, like hallowed fire, from heart to heart, till all were purified and illuminated by it; and its heavenly light shone, as it still shines, and as sun or star will ever shine, through the whole dark destinies of man . . . Strange as it may seem, if we read history with any degree of thoughtfulness, we shall find that the checks and balances of Profit and Loss have never been the grand agents with man."

### **The Message of the Medieval Church**

After the Roman Empire had collapsed and barbarians roamed over the plains and through the rich valleys of what is now France, Spain, Italy and Germany, the Christian church intervened and restored order. Its monks preserved the records and manuscripts of the past, they opened new schools, established new libraries, helped the peasants to improve the soil, and preached the Word of God to a world steeped in sin and humbled by two centuries of economic depression. Gradually the church itself was affected by the "things of this world," and the bishop of Rome, now called the Pope, or Father, as the official representative of Christ lived not in a dismal abode, as did the early apostles, but in an enormous palace. Nor was the Pope clad in simple garments or consumed meager fare. He was in many respects like the princes of the world, a man of affairs. But he did not thereby alter the basic precepts of the Christian faith.

The Middle Ages produced a multitude of saints, erected the noblest examples of ecclesiastical architecture, founded thousands of hospitals, provided employment for practically every able-bodied person, and engraved in the hearts of nearly every European adult the commandments of Jesus. To love God with all the heart and all the mind and all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself—those remained the two principal commandments, upon which depended all the law and the prophecies of ancient Israel.

Much has been said about the asceticism of the Middle Ages, but it is very doubtful that more than one per cent of the people of medieval Europe could be classified as ascetics. Such works as the doctoral dissertation of Dr. W. F. van Gunsteren presented at the Free University of Amsterdam in 1934 and entitled, *Kalvinismus und Kapitalismus*, present an unfair picture of social and economic conditions during the Middle Ages (see pp. 7-61 in the brilliant booklet by the Roman Catholic writer Dr. Ir. E. H. M. Beekman, entitled, *Katholicisme, Calvinisme, Kapitalisme*, 1935).

Thomas Aquinas admirably summed up the attitude of the Catholic Church toward capitalism by saying, "It is not at all prohibited to carry on business enterprises and to make a profit on them, as long as either honesty or necessity is the impelling motive; and in this manner a moderate profit is used for the maintenance of one's family or for the sustenance of the needy" (*Summa Theologica*, 2, 2ae., q. 77, a. 4, c. 1). Augustine also reasoned in the same tone, recommending the honest dealings of business men, while scholastic writers in general supported

both Augustine and Thomas Aquinas in this respect (see J. B. Kraus, *Scholastik, Puritanismus und Kapitalismus*, 1930, pp. 19-92).

### **Martin Luther's Viewpoint**

Luther argued in favor of personal property, approved of business in the same vein as did Augustine or the great scholastic writers, urged that the biblical injunctions against usury be followed, sympathized always with the oppressed, and remained a typical German in his desire to see all the gold and silver possible kept inside of Germany, instead of having it sent either to the Pope or to the importers of spices in Portugal or the manufacturers of cloth in England. Luther has generally been accused of inconsistency and of opposition to progress. He is usually depicted as the son of a peasant, a monk hiding from the world, a "backward looking theologian."

Would it not be much more helpful to see Luther as he really was, namely, the favored son of a well-to-do miner, the student in the prosperous city of Erfurt, the man who wanted to be a lawyer, the monk who was so successful that he was chosen to take a trip to Italy in 1510 and visit the papal court in Rome? Luther's writings show that he knew a great deal about business, and when he objected to the wide-spread use of luxuries by grumbling about the rich merchants in Portugal who brought the spices from India to Germany and the English who drew money out of Germany by selling cloths at prices that were too high, he talked almost exactly as did Colbert in France when he set out to protect French industries (see Luther's *Werke*, Weimar ed., Vol. XV, pp. 293-322).

In the *Short Sermon on Usury* (see *Werke*, VI, 3-8), and again in the *Long Sermon on Usury* (see *Werke*, VI, 36-60), published respectively in 1519 and 1520 and reprinted in the very interesting treatise on business, published in 1524 (see *Werke*, XV, 293-322), Luther consistently opposed, as did Thomas Aquinas, the payment of interest on borrowed capital as mere capital. "Money," he argued, "is sterile." He said the same thing again in several of his Table Talks (see *Werke, Tischreden*, Vol. IV, Nos. 4801 and 4805; and Vol. V, Nos. 5429 and 6164) and his long *Address to the Pastors, to Preach against Usury*, dated 1540 (see *Werke*, Vol. LI, pp. 325-424). It is for this reason that he is accused of having been a backward-looking theologian. He certainly was a thorough-going medievalist in this respect.

Luther seems to puzzle those writers who have also noted his remarkable views on capital loaned to debtors who offer security in the form of a house or a piece of land. The followers of Max Weber and E. Troeltsch, however, have very little to say about the numerous remarks made by Luther regarding such loans and the interest which according to him is charged legitimately, for these remarks would undermine the thesis they are so anxious to maintain, namely, that not Lutheranism but Calvinism prepared the way for the rise of modern capitalism. Catholic writers, especially H. Grisar, heap ridicule upon Luther for his "inconsistency" (see Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. III, pp. 586-596). But it happens that neither the liberal theologians nor the new school of

history nor the Catholics have told the truth about Luther's viewpoint when he talks or writes about interest charged on moneys when loaned on security.

Luther made a very careful distinction between two kinds of loans. When security was offered, the rate should be 4%, 5%, or 6%, so he judged in the period from 1519 to 1535. After 1535 he felt that slightly higher rates were justified, owing to higher prices, namely, 7% or 8% (see references just mentioned and also *Werke, Briefwechsel*, III, 307). In all these cases, says Luther, it is no violation of the Canon Law to charge interest. He hates to admit it, though, and he refers to Flanders and the Netherlands, which "are drowned in usury," as in *Table Talks*, No. 4805, pp. 524 and 525. Nevertheless, since everybody accepts these rates as proper, he will make a concession and do the same. Such, it is well to note, is his attitude from 1519 until the day of his death. He adds that in case the debtor's house burns down or his crops are drowned, the creditor will receive no interest, and he may not force the debtor to return the principal until he is fully able to do so. In short, the element of risk accepted by the creditor entitles him to the rate of interest charged, and there is no evidence to prove that in permitting a slightly higher rate of interest after 1535, Luther became inconsistent.

It is easy to condemn or to ridicule this "childish" or "old-fashioned" attitude of Luther. Nevertheless, only such an attitude, adopted by several hundred million persons, will save this world from continued strikes, sabotage, bloodshed, and the final catastrophe so plainly foretold in the New Testament. Luther made little progress in his viewpoint toward capitalism. This was most fortunate for himself and for Europe, for no amount of written contracts between debtors and creditors, and between capital and labor will prevent the last and greatest of all depressions and the ultimate destruction of civilization. Luther showed far more understanding of God's purpose than all the experts and brain trusters who in the middle of the eighteenth and again in this our twentieth century have tried to replace the love toward one's neighbor with social and economic contracts.

### **The Contribution of Calvinism**

Calvin's views on capitalism are not nearly so often distorted and are much better understood today than those of Luther. Whereas Luther devoted about one hundred folio pages to the subject and used terms which even the editors of his earlier works did not understand, Calvin gives us only twenty-five such pages and writes excellent French and Latin. For example, E. Troeltsch, who in his large work, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*, (1931), carefully refrains from alluding to Luther's numerous references concerning interest charged on loans when security is given, admits that Calvin possessed the "anti-Mammon Christian spirit." He does, however, make the same serious mistake as committed by R. H. Tawney, thinking that Calvin's immediate successors set up a bank of exchange, although it was their opposition to such a venture which actually prevented it. Tawney also wrongly

concludes that Calvin established a communistic state in Geneva (see *Annales d'histoire économique*, VII, 1935, p. 227, note 3).

While several distinguished writers still argue that Calvin's approval of the payment of 5% interest on loans was the decisive turning point in the economic history of Europe, others who are more careful reason in the following vein: "The exhortation to continual industry in labor, combined with the limitation of consumption and of luxury, produced a tendency to pile up capital. . . . The duty of labor, coupled with the ban on luxury, worked out 'economically as the impulse to save,' and the impulse to save had the effect of building up capital." More important still, the Calvinists are said to have developed out of this duty to work hard a "capitalistic spirit" which led in turn to actual capitalism. It would be too naive to say that Calvinism directly produced capitalism, wherefore the adept followers of Max Weber now resort to the theory of indirect results (see E. Troeltsch, *l.c.*, Vol. II, pp. 644-650). Perhaps the humble reader might ask why these things are said about Calvin the bourgeois, since Luther had uttered identical thoughts in the year 1524, when Calvin was only fifteen years old? Why did hard work and saving lead to the capitalistic spirit among the Calvinists and not among the Lutherans?

Calvin, in his admirable commentary on Exodus, Ch. XXII, writes almost exactly as Luther did in several places: "The question now is, whether usury is evil in itself; and surely that which even the heathen have detested appears to be by no means lawful to the children of God. . . . But if we come to an accurate decision as to the thing itself, our determination must be derived from nowhere else than the universal rule of justice, and especially from the declaration of Christ, on which depend the law and the prophets, 'Do not unto others what ye would not have done to yourself.' . . . If we would form an equitable judgment, reason does not suffer us to admit that all usury is to be condemned without exception. . . . If any rich man, wishing to buy a piece of land, should borrow some part of the sum required of another, may not he who lends the money receive some part of the revenues of the farm until the principal shall be repaid? Many such cases daily occur in which, as far as equity is concerned, usury is no worse than purchase. Nor will that subtle argument of Aristotle avail, that usury is unnatural, because money is barren and does not beget money. . . . But those who think differently may object that we must abide by God's judgment, when He generally prohibits all usury to His people. I reply that the question is only one for the poor, and consequently, if we have to do with the rich, that usury is freely permitted."

When Luther argued in exactly the same manner, he obscured the whole issue through the use of the mysterious word *Kaufzins*, which appears to have misled almost all recent writers on the subject, including Professor Z. W. Sneller of the Commercial University of Rotterdam, who in his article published this year in *Christendom en Historie* ("Economische inzichten van Maarten Luther") constantly uses the word *rente* (interest) as something that was bought

and sold, which is technically correct. Luther, like Calvin after him, tried to get away from the idea of "barren money," the phrase coined by Aristotle and perpetuated by the scholastic philosophers. His clumsy expressions prevented him from sharing with Calvin the honor of having prepared the stage for modern capitalism, an honor which neither he nor Calvin would have appreciated.

Inasmuch as Dutch capitalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, accompanied by the rise of Dutch sea power, the founding and growth of the Dutch East India Company, the rise of the Bank of Amsterdam and the development of the Amsterdam stock exchange, constitutes the most important phenomenon in the economic history of modern Europe before 1750, I have investigated the connection between Calvinism and capitalism in the Dutch Republic. The result of my researches, some of which will be embodied in an article to be published in *The Journal of Modern History*, indicate that Calvinism did not contribute in the slightest degree to the growth of modern capitalism. Calvinism has likewise done very little for the development of socialism and communism, for Calvin's disciples deliberately aimed to restore as much as possible the primitive Christian church as it flourished in the Roman Empire.

### **What does Liberalism Offer?**

Liberalism, on the other hand, which is the arch-enemy of orthodox Calvinism, is very much attached to the "things of this world." Its advocates do not show the reverence for the Word of God which char-

acterized the early Protestants. Consequently, they ally themselves with the humanists of old in exalting things human. They also quote with approbation the works of Voltaire and Rousseau, the prophets of the "era of enlightenment." Many a liberal does what Thomas Carlyle aptly said of Voltaire: "He warred against Christianity without understanding beyond the mere superficies of what Christianity was."

Our own government is now controlled very largely by men of this type. They must seek reliance upon the puny brain of man. They think it natural for employer and employee to regard each other as enemies, hence force alone must be used to secure higher wages and better working conditions. The fact that the officials of our great corporations are partly to be blamed for this unfortunate philosophy of life does not fully exculpate the government. To think that after five millenniums of civilization mankind still has to prepare for social warfare!

When man becomes a law unto himself, when God's guiding hand is no longer recognized, when agitators induce workmen to despoil the owners of factories of their property and thus hold it as a sort of ransom to get more favorable terms, when men and women in the highest positions tolerate the violations of the most ancient and most fundamental laws recognized by all civilized countries before the twentieth century, and when honest workmen receive no protection when they demand a right to work when they so desire—then it is high time for the people to break with these "liberals" and return to the simple precepts of Jesus Christ.

## **DR. KUYPER AND THE REVIVAL OF CALVINISTIC DOCTRINE**

Louis Berkhof, B. D.

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ON the 29th of October, 1937, the Reformed people of the Netherlands, and many others with them, commemorated the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Dr. Kuyper, one of the greatest men of the previous century. In view of this event the managing editor of THE CALVIN FORUM requested me to write an article on the doctrinal significance of Dr. Kuyper's work. After some hesitation I consented. The hesitation was due, partly to the conviction that the time has not yet come for a proper evaluation of that great and in many ways unique man, of whom Charles Boissevain once spoke as an opponent who has ten heads and a hundred arms, and partly to the fact that what can be said at this time in a brief article has already been said by others who sat at his feet and were therefore intimately acquainted with his work. I was overcome by the consideration that the substance of what was said will bear repetition, especially in another tongue, since many, even of our own people, do not understand the Dutch language, and those who do may need a reminder of the wonderful provision which God made for the recovery and maintenance of the Reformed truth

after it had suffered partial eclipse, by raising up men with unusual intellectual and spiritual endowments.

Dr. Kuyper was a truly great man, a many-sided man, a man with rich and varied talents, with an indomitable will, and with an amazing capacity for work. He moved with the greatest ease in all circles of society, and was equally at home on the pulpit and in the professorial chair, at the desk of the journalist and on the dais of the prime minister. He excelled in all things, as preacher and educator, as church reformer and political leader, as journalist and statesman.

### **The Rise of Modernism**

In this article only one aspect of the many-sided work of Dr. Kuyper calls for consideration, namely his work as a dogmatician. When we think of the Netherlands today, we think of it as a country in which the doctrinal principles of Calvinism are held in honor more than in any other country of the world. This would not have been possible for anyone living about the year 1870, when Dr. Kuyper began his

labors at Amsterdam. In those days the doctrines of Calvinism were far from popular in the low lands. A revival had begun, it is true, in the secession of 1834, three years before the birth of Dr. Kuyper, but had not yet reached any great proportions. In the National Church they still lived on like glowing embers, especially in the hearts of the common people, but the prevailing spirit was fast moving in another direction.

The ministers were trained at the public universities, and these could hardly be called strongholds of Calvinism. At the university of Groningen the so-called "Groninger richting" developed, which stressed the Fatherhood of God at the expense of his sovereignty, denied the lost condition of man and regarded him as a child of God, educated up to the ideal by God's revelation in nature and history, and saw in Christ, not the very Son of God nor the High-priest making atonement for His people, but only a pre-existent creature of God, the highest revelation of divine love, and the great teacher and exemplar of humanity. At the University of Leyden Kuenen and Scholten undermined the authority of the Word of God by their critical studies of the Old and New Testaments and made human reason supreme in matters of religion. And at the other great institution of learning at Utrecht Opzoomer held forth as the great apostle of Modernism, whose classrooms were always crowded to capacity, and who sought to combine his purely naturalistic philosophy with some mystical form of religion. His most brilliant disciples were Allard Pierson and Busken Huet. Meanwhile a superficial form of Supernaturalism was still prevalent among the people and in the churches. The doctrine of universal atonement was rather common, and in some pulpits the teachings of Modernism were boldly proclaimed.

### **Attempts to Stem the Tide**

There were attempts to stem the tide of intruding Modernism, but these were not very successful. While there was some overlapping, there were two that may be distinguished and that call for special mention, namely, the Apologetical School, represented by such men as Van Oosterzee and Doedes, and the Ethical Movement fathered by Chantepie de la Saussaye and Gunning. The former sought its strength in an apologetic defense of Christianity, but succeeded only in securing a somewhat orderly retreat, in which one citadel after another was yielded to the enemy. It failed to take a sufficiently positive stand, to engage in aggressive warfare, and to regain lost territory. The latter followed the guiding stars of Schleiermacher and Vinet, especially of the latter, and sought escape from Rationalism by teaching the primacy of the will and seeking the seat of religion in the Christian conscience. The underlying assumption was that God did not reveal Himself in a communication of truth, such as we have in Scripture, but in a communication of life which is in no way affected by the results of higher criticism. The emphasis was not on the Bible as the infallible Word of God, but on Christian experience as the real source of theology.

Meanwhile the revival of Calvinism had begun in the churches of the secession of 1834. There was a return to the Word of God and to the confessional standards of the Reformed churches in the Netherlands. But these churches were comparatively few in number, were for many years torn by internal dissensions, and were not able to accomplish much for the rehabilitation of Reformed doctrine on a large scale. While their leaders were men of considerable ability, there was no outstanding theologian among them. In their study of theology they made little attempt to re-think Reformed theology in the light of the new developments in science and philosophy and to shed new light on the religious problems of the day, but in the main simply continued to teach what they found in the works of Reformed theologians. And even in doing this they did not as a rule go back to what is generally recognized as the heyday of Reformed theology, but to the lesser lights of a more recent day. The churches of the Secession also harbored a pietistic tendency. While the people were not pietists in the historical sense of the word, they nevertheless sought spiritual nourishment largely in the devotional literature of Dutch and Scotch writers who were somewhat mystically inclined.

### **Kuyper Revives Reformed Theology**

This was the situation when Dr. Kuyper appeared on the scene. He saw at once that there had been a sad neglect of original study in Reformed theology, and that the study of the Word of God had fallen on evil days. Its inspiration was denied, its authority was called in question, and human reason or the Christian consciousness had taken its place as the source of theology. Consequently he found it necessary to defend the inspiration of Scripture, to re-assert its divine authority, and to restore it to its place of honor in the study of theology. He magnified Scripture as the infallible Word of God and the only source of theology, and insisted on studying it anew in the interest of Reformed theology.

It goes without saying that in calling the theological world and the people of his day back to the Word of God, he did not want them to ignore the work of previous generations. He himself made a diligent study of Reformed theology, and especially of those works which were characterized by originality and made a real contribution to the study of Reformed truth. Discovering but few of these in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he focussed his attention primarily on Calvin and on the post-Reformation writers of the seventeenth century, and found in these a veritable gold mine of Reformed theology. Through his efforts the great Reformer of Geneva began to live once more in the minds of the people and theological names that had long been forgotten again became household words.

There was something else that he at once perceived, namely, that Reformed theology had largely lost contact with the life of the world in general. It was out of touch with the main current of thought in the theological world, and in so far out of date. He felt that it was sorely in need of being interpreted in terms of the present day and with a view to the needs of nineteenth century Christianity. It was his

passionate desire to restore Reformed theology to a place of honor as over against the superficial supernaturalism of the first part of the nineteenth century, the Modernism that was fast making inroads in the churches, the Arminian doctrine of a universal atonement, the ethical tendency to substitute Christian experience for the Word of God and to seek its strength in the inner life rather than in doctrine, and the Anabaptist tendency to withdraw from the affairs of this present life in the interest of true piety and devotion to God and His Church.

### **His Labors as Dogmatician**

He realized that he would have to take heroic measures for the accomplishment of the revival of Calvinism, and therefore after much prayer and consultation with staunch friends decided upon the founding of the Free University, a school which by the grace of God became a bulwark of Calvinism and at the same time a training-school for the ministry in the Reformed churches of the Netherlands. Dr. Kuyper himself became professor of Systematics, and for more than twenty years lectured on Reformed theology. He proved to be a very inspiring teacher. Students often yielded so completely to the spell of his eloquent and instructive lectures that they forgot all about taking notes. His *Dictaten Dogmatiek* bears evidence to the wealth of material which he offered his classes. It is no wonder that they who sat at his feet became enthusiastic protagonists of the Reformed truth and of Calvinism in the more comprehensive sense of the term.

Dr. Kuyper hoped at one time that he might be permitted to complete his Dogmatics, but his ardent desire was never realized. His duties as the recognized leader of the Anti-Revolutionary Party finally demanded so much of his time that he could not continue his work at the Free University. We may be grateful, however, that we have as the fruit of his labors at that institution his *Encyclopaedie der Heilige Godgeleerdheid*, a beautifully written standard work on the nature and structure of the science of theology, and his *Dictaten Dogmatiek*, consisting of five large volumes of carefully collated student notes, covering practically the whole field of theology. These notes are not all equally detailed and complete, but are nevertheless very valuable and highly suggestive, and give us at least an inkling of what his Dogmatics would have been, if he had been permitted to complete it. The Reformed theologian who does not consult them again and again impoverishes himself.

While it can be said that Dr. Bavinck rather than Dr. Kuyper became the real dogmatician of the Reformed churches of the Netherlands, it should not be forgotten that the latter gave the common people a surprising amount of doctrinal instruction. For many years he wrote the leading articles of the religious weekly, *De Heraut*, which were devoted almost exclusively to the development of Reformed doctrine and were faithfully read by the people. One series of articles after another appeared in this important paper, and were afterwards published in book form. Together they cover a great part of the field of Reformed theology and had a tremendous influence in promoting the knowledge of the Reformed truth among the masses. We only remind you of such series as *Uit het Woord*, *E Voto*, *Het*

*Werk van den Heiligen Geest*, *De Gemeene Gratie*, *Pro Rege*, and *Van de Voleinding*. It is impossible to enumerate all the subjects discussed in them and to evaluate correctly their bearing on the revival of Calvinism in the Netherlands. It is quite evident that Dr. Kuyper was more than a mere dogmatician. His *Encyclopaedia* clearly shows that he saw doctrinal truth in its relation to the whole of theology. Moreover, he saw it also in relation to the broader aspects of Calvinism. This appears from all his works, but becomes particularly evident in his *Lectures on Calvinism*, which were delivered on the L. P. Stone foundation at Princeton, and are well known also in our country.

### **Some Characteristics**

In conclusion a few formal characteristics of the work of Dr. Kuyper may be mentioned. He placed all emphasis on constructive work and, in his opposition to the Apologetical School of Doedes and Van Oosterzee, minimized the value of Apologetics. While he was highly intellectual, he was averse to dry intellectualism and regarded it, together with mysticism and practicism (activism), as the three foxes that despoiled the vineyard. It was his ambition to present the truth as a vibrant force in life. In writing for the people he avoided technical language, and studied to present the most profound truths in simple but beautiful language. His works are highly suggestive and imaginative, and are usually replete with a wealth of illustrations. His representations are often the result of an intuitive insight into the truth rather than of careful reasoning. Analogies sometimes take the place of arguments. And the result is that, while they are generally appealing and attractive, they are not always convincing. His assertions are frequently too dogmatic to carry conviction, and he undoubtedly made some mistakes. But who has not? It is well to bear in mind what Dr. Warfield once remarked to the present writer: "The wonder is not that Dr. Kuyper is mistaken sometimes, but rather that he is right so often." Only the future will fully reveal how much he has done for the revival of Calvinism.

## **COME YE APART**

I am having a quiet time—  
As well I talk and laugh and sing,  
But far below the surface  
My soul is silencing.

Sometimes a life is turbulent  
Although it may seem calm and poised;  
Hidden are seething battles  
As rushing rivers noised.

O sometimes, aren't we all bright  
With paint and smiles and gaiety  
To hide the anguish underneath  
From bold eyes of the "laity"?

But ah, God's pure delights of peace  
That we may have within, a spring,  
Whereat the soul may come to feast  
Apart—in times of silencing.

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

# THE DR. KUYPER INSTITUTE

Dr. C. Beekenkamp

*Assistant Director of the Dr. Kuyper Institute, The Hague. Member of the City Council of Leyden.*

COMMEMORATING the centennial of the birth of Dr. Abraham Kuyper, perhaps it will be interesting to tell our American brethren about the monument erected by the Anti-Revolutionary Party in honor of its great Founder. This monument is not a statue of bronze or marble—we, Calvinists, don't like statues!—but it is an institute, a foundation, that keeps the ideas of Dr. Kuyper living among our people, especially for social and political purposes.

## **How It Originated**

After Kuyper's death on November 8, 1920, the leaders of the Anti-Revolutionary Party desired to create an institute for research, information, and propaganda. They saw the need of an organization to promote the spread of the political views of Dr. Kuyper on a scientific basis.

There was sore need for such an organization in the years after the Great War, because of the sad decline of religious and spiritual convictions in the thinking and living of large groups of people in our country. Socialism and communism were in the ascendancy. In political matters the principles of the French Revolution gained ground. Against these destructive movements and influences the people of the Netherlands were to be protected.

In this way the so-called "Million-Plan" was born. The goal set was the collection of one million guilders, the annual interest of which was to be used for the founding of an institute bearing the name and continuing the traditions of Dr. Kuyper. The present Prime Minister of the Netherlands, His Excellency Dr. H. Colijn, the successor of Kuyper, was at the moment the leader of the Anti-Revolutionary Party. Assisted by Dr. A. W. F. Idenburg, late Minister of State, he stirred up real interest in the Million-Plan by delivering a number of addresses in its behalf.

Their message to the followers of Dr. Kuyper ran as follows: "Three things are needed. First of all, the continuation of the scholarly work of Dr. Kuyper in politics, i.e., the scientific pursuit and the deepening of the Anti-Revolutionary principles. Secondly, the application of these principles to the problems of every day life. To realize this, we need an office, where skilled men may collect those data which offer a basis for further study and for working out the actual problems, facts to inform and enlighten anyone who is called to a position of leadership in the Anti-Revolutionary Party. And, thirdly, there must be carried forward a strong propaganda by the spoken and written word, so that every member of the party may be well informed and able to maintain our positions even over against our critics and opponents.

"When the Lord crowns our efforts with success, we will thank Him for the equipment with a view to the coming struggle, but we will thank Him even more for the willingness of our people and the love

for our principles that He instilled in their hearts. First and most of all we desire love and faith, of which prayer is the fruit. Where true love for the cause is found, there prayer will be in evidence also, and when there is prayer there is faith. And where love, prayer, and faith are found as living forces, there will be no slackening of enthusiasm, but vigorous and energetic activity to the glory of God."

In response the Anti-Revolutionary people made an offering of a million guilders as a sacrifice of love and gratitude laid on the altar near Kuyper's tomb. Dr. Colijn set the example. He bought the house in which Dr. Kuyper had lived and died and presented it to the Anti-Revolutionary Party. This generous example was followed by rich and poor, by old and young. In fact, it was as in Moses' days: "They brought a willing offering unto the Lord, every man and woman whose heart made them willing to bring for the work, which the Lord had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses." (Exodus 35:29).

The Million-Plan was a complete success. Not only materially; also spiritually it proved a great blessing. Love for the principles was deepened. Dr. Idenburg could testify in a meeting of the party that the people had shown great willingness to offer for the Lord's sake. That was in April, 1922. No less than eight hundred and fifty thousand guilders had already been collected. Three years later the Million was complete.

## **The Institute in Operation**

In this way the Kuyper Institute was born. What was to be its aim and objective?

In the deed of foundation the aims are circumscribed as follows. Under God's blessing and in loyalty to the labors of Groen van Prinsterer and Dr. Kuyper to deepen the knowledge of the eternal principles which, in harmony with the Word of God, are confessed and championed in the realm of politics by the Anti-Revolutionary Party, and to do so in a scholarly and scientific way. To promote the application of these principles in political and social life, and to increase the influence of those principles amongst the Anti-Revolutionary group in particular, and amongst the people of the Netherlands in general. Such was the program of the Board of Directors of the Kuyper Institute during the fifteen years of its existence. Such also is the inspiring ideal for us, who esteem it an honor and privilege to collaborate in this cause in the spirit of Kuyper.

As stated above, the Institute is lodged in the house which was Dr. Kuyper's home while living in the Hague. Formerly this was No. 5 Kanaalstraat. Now, through the courtesy of the City Council of the Hague, rebaptized into No. 5 Dr. Kuyperstraat. A few years later, in 1926, the Institute's Board of Directors also procured the mansion next door, No. 3 Dr. Kuyperstraat. Located on the first floor you can find there the library of the Institute, originally con-

taining all the books of Dr. Kuyper bought up by the funds of the Million-Plan and increased by new acquisitions from year to year. The visitor is aided in his search by two indexes, the one alphabetic and the other systematic. Also a large number of periodicals is on file here, and significant articles culled from daily papers are likewise on file.

All this material is used to serve those who may have to discourse on some political subject in their own clubs. The books are mailed all over the country. Besides this, the officers in charge compile statements and reports about several current issues for the benefit of members of city councils, of parliament, and of other men in leading positions. The Institute also publishes a monthly and a quarterly, both known by the name of "Anti-Revolutionaire Staatskunde," which offer valuable articles on subjects of a political, social, and ethical nature. The monthly also offers replies to questions and advice written up by the officers for the benefit of those engaged in the administration of the affairs of local as well as national government. In addition there is published a special quarterly for the benefit of those engaged in municipal government, called *De Magistratuur*. In this way the Institute through various channels disseminates the Calvinistic principles among various groups of people. We are happy to say that everywhere in the land interest in, and appreciation of our labors is real and deep, so that especially during the winter season the officers are constantly kept busy.

In connection with the scholarly aim of the Institute we should not fail to mention that a fund has been created for the promotion of historical and philosophical study. Calvinistic students writing their doctor's thesis are in some cases given aid from this fund, provided the publication of their dissertation is of importance and value for the spread of principles championed by the Institute. Nor are students the only ones who benefit from this fund. In case of need, also more mature scholars are given financial aid for the publication of their scientific labors. In this way there have during recent years been published a number of important works.

It is hardly necessary to say that in the days of national political campaigns the Kuyper Institute is the hub of all Anti-Revolutionary political activity. Pamphlets are written, reports compiled, material collated—all for the benefit of speakers and debaters making propaganda for the cause of the party. Our Institute is a veritable arsenal for the Anti-Revolutionary Party. Its services are much sought and deeply appreciated in the struggle of national elections.

### **The Task of the Future**

Not only in the past sixteen years, but also in the future the Kuyper Institute hopes to be of value and importance for the development and maintenance of Christian political principles.

The Institute had its inception in the years immediately following the Great War with its stress and turmoil, when prospects for the nation, but no less for the Anti-Revolutionary Party, were rather gloomy. Its activity coincided with a crisis in the political, economic, and social spheres which men-

aced the spiritual and material interests of the nation. Nor is the outlook for the future a rosy one. There is unrest among the nations. Russia is still the focus point of revolution and a constant menace for Europe as well as for the Far East. Fascism and National Socialism are striving to promulgate and spread a Machiavellian system of government in countries other than Italy and Germany.

The repercussion of this unrest is evident also in our national life. Danger still threatens. Though it is true that neither Communism nor National Socialism have gained in our recent national elections, nevertheless prudence and caution are in order. And our economic crisis—not surmounted despite the successful economic policy of Dr. Colijn—is an ever fruitful spawning ground for various forms of extremism.

Increasing unbelief gnaws at the foundation of human society. Revolutionary tendencies are undermining the basis of faith and order. Then, also, there are dangers within the Christian fold. There is the fact that the school of Barth and Brunner is not on good terms with Calvinism and is, in fact, on many fundamental points its antagonist. Then there is also the division between various Christian groups which ought to be one in Christ and stand shoulder to shoulder in fighting the common enemy. Alas, all is not gold that glitters!

It remains to be seen what the inner strength of Calvinism will be. The future may be dark, but there is no room for despair. The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not. The conviction of the sovereignty of God is the starting point of the Calvinistic faith. It is also the great source of strength for every Calvinist in the struggle. He knows that "He giveth power to the faint." Let us wait upon the Lord. Then we shall renew our strength.

### **International Influence**

One question remains to be answered. Is the Kuyper Institute only of value and significance for the Calvinistic group in the Netherlands?

I am happy to reply: No. In the publication of our monthlies and quarterlies you will find as collaborators true Calvinists from Scotland, Hungary, Switzerland, South Africa, and America. In this way an exchange of spiritual goods is promoted. We might also mention in this connection the happy relations we have with the Sovereign Grace Union in England.

Calvinism is not a mere national phenomenon. It is international, even universal. However, when Dr. Kuyper in 1898 delivered his Stone Lectures at Princeton Seminary he made the following true observation: "Calvinism never will be appropriated by the large masses. It will impress with a sense of its inevitability only a relatively small circle. Nevertheless, as a phenomenon of universal significance Calvinism is to be commended."

Hence also Dr. Kuyper in 1898 asked his American audience that Calvinism be no longer ignored where it is still found, but that it be revived and strengthened in those groups where the after effects of its influence are still apparent; that Calvinism shall again be made a subject of research and study, so

that the outside world may cease to misrepresent it; and that its principles shall again be consistently applied to every phase and realm of human life.

Today, nearly forty years later, the Institute bearing the name of Dr. Abraham Kuyper addresses the same message to all American Calvinists. We are happy to note the progress of the ideas and the extension of the influence of John Calvin in the New World. THE CALVIN FORUM has the task of exhibiting the power resident within Calvinism for the future of the nations. Hid in its germ today is the

same vital energy and power exhibited in the days of its former glory. Calvinism is not dead. Its inflexible principle armed Dr. Kuyper with strength. And not only him, but all who are marching under the banner of the cross against the spirit of the times.

Dear American friends, let us co-operate to realize this end! *Concordia res parvae crescunt.* And may the Lord bless your fight in America, and our struggle in the Netherlands—to His own glory and to the well-being of mankind!

## THE SOAPBOX ORATOR

(Mounting the platform after two others have receded.)

ORATOR—(Addressing an audience excited and confused over many 'isms).

Quiet!

Friends, do not speak to kindle the fires of insurrection,

But to display the cancered root of greed  
That sickens the social structure.

Treat the cause of our distress,

Excoriate the false values that contort wisdom  
And mangle virtue within our breast.

Conservatives call stridently that private initiative,  
Or individualism, may be preserved.

Individualism!—Are many stations of business  
dotting the nation,

Controlled by a few men with superfluous wealth,  
Who subjugate the creative trend in the minds of  
many men

To the tedious routine of their production line,  
Or rein them in with a business procedure,

Are these evidence of individualism?

VOICE—No!

ORATOR—It is concentrated individualism.

VOICE—Concentrated in a few hogs of industry!

ORATOR—Thousands about us have no means of  
subsistence.

Young men robbed of the incentive and lacking  
the depth

To cultivate the creative and nobler sense,

Become spineless, gullible victims for any rising  
despotist.

Freedom is strangled by syndicates;

Men are molded by industrialists,

Such is the record of the concentrated individualist!

COMMUNIST—We're with you there!

ORATOR—But what 'ism among you is worthy of  
our adoption?

Communism? Fascism? Nazism?

Why should we be soulless cogs

In the gears of a governmental machine?

Why should the whim, fancy and self-aggrandizements of a demagogue,

Be tunes to which we, as robots, shall dance in a  
heartless regime?

Men! abhor the sophistries of materialism,

The craving for that which fills the belly

And caters to the lust for pleasure.

Contort yourself not to fit a malformed economic  
system,

But renovate the system so you may be well  
formed!

Consider man as God made him.

His stature—how noble!

His countenance—how expressive!

He reasons, for he is king of creation;

In his cunning he searches out hidden things.

He wills to follow the good, not the evil;

He listens attentively for the voice of almighty  
God.

His thoughts rise within him;

He sees visions, and he is eloquent with his tongue.

He has aspirations and follows them relentlessly.

He loves, and has compassion on lesser things.

He is pure as the lily is pure.

The Spirit of God has breathed majesty in him.

Will your 'ism place men closer to that image of  
God?

Or start a new era of personal degeneration?

Brothers, awake! We live like water spilt upon  
the ground,

Brinkless, shapeless, like an amoeba bound!

Let us return to depth, to truth, to purity,

To the laws, to the guidance of God almighty.

Let us conduct ourselves unwaveringly;

As the myriad gigantic jewels of the cosmos

Are weaving, not haphazardly,

But with unerring regularity.

E'en as a flower's growth is guided by a divine  
innate force,

So we must adopt the saner governmental course.

Then limit, one per man, the places of commerce  
and industry,

So more of us, with the creative and executive  
ability,

May walk thru our shop or our store and say,  
 "This is my creation."  
 Limit the over-abundant riches of wealth obese  
 men,  
 Whose money glands have made monsters of them.  
 Denounce fickleness and frivolity!  
 Stir men to deep, personal, creative industry.  
 Offer national and local rewards for ideas of im-  
 provement and beauty,  
 In the many manufacturing branches of labor.  
 For long we have flayed America the Beautiful,  
 We have taken her tints of scintillating, glowing  
 loveliness,  
 And left the effluvium of materialism in its stead.  
 Beauty is calling the idle to weave her in all places;  
 Let us cause the desolate places to bloom as the  
 rose!  
 Inlay beauty along our highways, implant her in  
 our cities,  
 With form, light, color and sound.

How pathetic that babes must enter a world con-  
 torted,  
 That men do reason, they are not wanted!  
 I say, there is work for all, we are all for work,  
 Go and make the coming era the greater renaiss-  
 sance!  
 Pray God for guidance along the silver current  
 of events,  
 Till the new world this old world supplants.  
 FIRST CITIZEN (*Aside*) — He speaks not against  
 the dumb steel of the machine,  
 Nor does he speedy production impale,  
 But munitions and delicate instruments of scien-  
 tific gleam,  
 Who should produce these, I desire more detail.  
 SECOND CITIZEN — Why, the man is completely  
 daffy!  
 THIRD CITIZEN TO FOURTH — What think you?  
 — HENRY R. IDSINGA.

## PRESENT-DAY TEACHING IN THE UNITED STATES INTEGRATED OR DETACHED?

Henry Van Zyl, Ph. D.

*Professor of Educational Methods, Calvin College.*

[This is the last of a series of four articles in which Dr. Van Zyl has made a valuable and significant plea for a genuinely Christian, God-centered, and hence religiously integrated and unified conception of education.—EDITOR.]

WITH the Greek attitude toward mind and mat-  
 ter and their relative importance reversed  
 in the United States, where the physiological and  
 physical is exalted above matters of the mind among  
 school men in general, the experimental psychology  
 occupies a central place. With Plato dead and buried  
 for most of them, with Wundt about forgotten at  
 least in European countries, the latter, the father of  
 the physiological approach in psychology, is still  
 bravely honored by thousands of experiments in our  
 country, where, indeed, we find the laboratories of  
 experimentation in matters educational. Here we  
 have a larger enrollment in secondary schools than  
 in all other countries combined. Literally thousands  
 of articles, pamphlets, books, courses of study, etc.,  
 are published and experiments performed annually  
 even about a single subject like reading. Again,  
 there is not a single individual who can possibly  
 keep track of the hundreds of mental and educa-  
 tional achievement tests thrown on the market. Re-  
 minded of the old saying that "the many is not good,  
 but the good is much," one is inclined to conclude  
 that this type of approach in such a multitudinous  
 fashion is practiced at the expense of the "good."

### **The Gospel of Experimentation Examined**

There is in all this realm of experimentation in-  
 evitably an extensive and intensive study of parts  
 and minute details, but usually it is done without  
 getting much of a totality picture. No matter how  
 important experimental psychology is, any student

of education and for that matter of life in general  
 isn't worth the name of student unless in all his  
 studies he remembers the principle of relative im-  
 portance and reminds himself that the significance  
 of his experiment is conditioned by two important  
 considerations; viz., first that his conclusions are no  
 more valid than his apriori assumptions, and sec-  
 ondly that he owes it to himself and to others to  
 show how his experiment and his findings are re-  
 lated to the general scheme of things in order to re-  
 veal how significant they are. Usually we find that  
 the marvelous enthusiasm for parts and details and  
 the otherwise laudable spirit of investigation are  
 dimmed and marred by a near-sightedness as far as  
 the whole is concerned. The disease of "detachment"  
 is too general. No wonder that several leaders see  
 this lack of integration. Dr. John Dewey, as we  
 noted in the first article, considers this need for in-  
 tegration our biggest problem. So, too, Professors  
 Bode and Finney confess that our greatest need is a  
 philosophy of education to supply the blue print of  
 action for superintendent, supervisor, and classroom  
 teacher and to provide for our great deficiency in  
 norms.

But the type of philosophy Dr. Bode would insist  
 on for binding us all together does clearly reveal that  
 it is totally different from what has been. In an  
 article entitled "The Most Outstanding Next Steps  
 for Curriculum Makers," *Teachers College Record*,  
 Dec. 1928, he writes:

"There seems to be no doubt that the old sense of a super-sensible reality, which constitutes a sort of fourth dimension and which is the traditional basis for moral and religious authority, is passing away. The consequence is that men are learning to judge of good and bad, right and wrong in terms of consequences rather than in terms of a set formula. . . . The whole center of our spiritual life is shifting. We are developing a pragmatic, experimental attitude of mind. A new humanism is on the way."

### More Confusion

There is no doubt that the prevailing features of American education are instrumentalism (experiment) as method; naturalism as basis; pragmatism as the road signs to travel onward; and humanism as aim. This program, discarding practically all of the past history of education and quite in harmony with the remark made a few years ago by a professor in the school of education of the University of Chicago who had to approve of all master's theses in that school, that we really had no history of education but we were now beginning to make one by scientific investigations, would seem to make integration a simple matter.

Yet, there is the greatest confusion possible. The new creed is so naturalistic that it becomes unnatural, and therefore ignoring the past of Greece and of Christianity becomes non-historical, non-Christian, and actually dehumanizes life. This very radicalism of the "new humanism" must make for still more disintegration. Absence of certainty, an air of tentativeness, conflicting opinions about psychology—behaviorism of Dr. Watson, physiological psychology of Dr. Thorndike, and purposive psychology of Dr. McDougal—and a general aversion to see things *in toto*, to stress the global approach or *Gesamt*-method or *Ganzheits*-method, as Dr. Hutchins of the University of Chicago advocates with emphasis on the philosophy of the ancients—all of this gives little hope for more unity by simply following Dr. Bode's prescription, completely detached as it is from the four-fold divine manifestation mentioned earlier, from Plato, and from what the Protestant leaders at least in principle had achieved; *viz.*, the rediscovery of personality on the basis of Holy Writ.

### Breakers Ahead

This "new humanism" as advocated not only by Dr. Bode but also by many leaders of experimental psychology, educational psychology and pedagogy in Columbia University and elsewhere, is slowly but surely bringing us into another "slough of despond." The consistency with which detachment is carried out brings us to hopeless confusion. If personality is "an awareness of the totality of relationships," are we not by this very experimental approach pumping the wells dry and stopping all the well springs of past history for personality to grow and feed on. True, Dr. Bode does confess that our greatest need is for a philosophy of education, but what sort of philosophy will this be if it is to be representative of this "new humanism"? No doubt, he agrees fully with Dr. William H. Kilpatrick's position set forth in *School and Society*, April, 1935, that "With the growth of science, philosophy escaped from theology and now becomes increasingly critical even of goals." In other words, personality is to be developed in line with a philosophy divorced from theology and

critical even of goals. But what becomes of the "awareness of the totality relationships?" The former position among philosophers that philosophy and religion are identical in substance is, therefore, also abandoned. More detachment and more disintegration are sure to come. Increasing confusion is bound to follow.

Is there in view of this new educational approach not some justification for the complaint made about present day mentality that it is a life-view without dogma, that it has a morality without religion, that knowledge is acquired without faith, that it is practicing a culture without God, that real art is without morals and exists for its own sake, and that subjectivism is on the throne, dictated by the super-king, Whirl? Indeed, one may well ask the questions: "If gold rust what shall iron do?" and "If they do these things in a green tree what shall be done in the dry?" If that college student following a seminar course with Professor Elisha in the plains of the Jordan some three thousand years ago would eat of this pottage of the "new humanism" he might with even more emphasis cry out "O Thou man of God, there is death in the pot." And death is separation, disintegration, dissolution.

### Some Practical Consequences

Let my reader visit a college or a university in his search for integration or the lack of it. The elective system of a decade ago, whereby a student could choose all his courses regardless of any integration, today is replaced by groups of majors and minors. Educators felt there was too much of the freedom in education leading to detached study and detached living. Indeed, the grouping of courses in certain definite fields served to check this piling up of credits without rhyme or reason. But the many departments found at present even in small denominational colleges, often with no more integration than that of an alphabetical list in the catalogue, surely cannot possibly make for unity, and chapel exercises are hardly sufficient to integrate the work in the numerous departments toward a unified world and life view.

Other attempts to bring a little order into the chaos of credits, courses, conflicting psychologies and philosophies, scientific methods and social and ethical aims are seen in the introduction of courses such as "Character Education" and "Mental Hygiene." It is felt that something more basic is needed to undergird the heavy structure of knowledge, skills, habits, and attitudes. It is felt that courses and departments are not well integrated. But the very introduction of these new courses is evidence of detached teaching. If all the science teachers would in a series of lectures reveal to their students the relative validity and the serious limitations of the scientific method already much would be gained in the matter of molding character. If teachers in other departments likewise would pave the way for external relationships of their courses as well as for internal connections, they would perform an excellent service toward integration. If all teachers, meanwhile, would first realize that proper integration is necessary for true learning, and would secondly set to work to help students integrate their

learning, there would be little need of separate courses in character education and mental hygiene.

### **Our Stern Duties but Glorious Opportunities**

Proper integration cannot be brought about, however, by superficial methods. It implies that the teacher see the thing whole, at least in some measure. It implies that ethics may not be divorced from metaphysics, nor the latter from epistemology. In other words, our conduct is to be related to the nature of reality and both are to be interpreted in terms of ultimate sources of truth. It implies that the teacher have a philosophy of education. And for the Protestant teacher it implies that our main business in teaching is to help the student to re-discover personality on the basis of Holy Writ.

Just as the philosophers of Greece and the Church Fathers attempted to picture for themselves and others the totality of relationships, so, too, the real Protestant teacher fully realizing the evils of detached teaching and learning should try to see things whole. Aristotle placed the State above personality, the former being one of the higher "Ideas" and the latter one of the lower "Matters." The Roman Catholic Church, in imitation of Aristotle, ranked the Church above personality on the same modified basis of things sacred and spiritual, and matters secular. Protestant leaders restored the unity of "Forms" and "Matters"; of the sacred and the secular; of nature and grace. Grace to them had the function of restoring true nature in personality; the church had the task to nourish this regenerated personality; and the State had the duty to protect personality. And they restored this balance in principle because they returned to the final court of appeals in determining matters ethical, metaphysical, or epistemological—a court than which none, nay

not even Church or State, is higher—namely, Holy Writ. Here they were taught that the highest reality, the Ultimate of all ultimates, and the highest personality of all personalities is in the sovereign Creator of heaven and earth. In this central source of their convictions they found that enthusiasm and idealism which throughout the ages gave them the keen insight in and sense for reality which enabled them to fight the nominalism of Aristotelian followers, of the Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages, and of the experimental psychologists in the mighty American school system, where detached teaching, cultivated by an experimental and scientific approach, is one of the curses of this western civilization.

Dr. Zuidema in his recent dissertation on the Nominalism of William of Occam has in his introduction laid down what may well be considered the corner stone for a Christian philosophy of education: the warning that the most important thing for any Christian thinker is zealously to observe and maintain the boundary line between Creator and creature. And Dr. H. Dooyeweerd in *De Christelyke Staatsidee* adds that this line is found in the law of God. Here we find the central and ultimate point of reference for unity in knowledge and action, in nature and grace, in science and faith, in personality as individual and as social being, in things sacred and secular, in mind and matter, in ideas and matters. And the free man is he who is freed by the Son. Then separation of the unity of knowledge and action is a foreign element. Then division of what is one is something alien. Then disintegration and detached teaching mar the picture and hinder one in the progress he would like to make towards abundant living.

## VOETIUS ON SYNODICAL AUTHORITY

Samuel Volbeda, Th. D.

*Professor of Ecclesiastical Polity and Church Government, Calvin Seminary.*

The appearance of a recent doctoral dissertation on a basic element in Presbyterian (and Reformed) ecclesiastical polity is the occasion for the writing of this article. Readers of THE CALVIN FORUM may hence look upon this contribution as an article and a book review in one. The volume under discussion is of sufficient moment to warrant a more extensive discussion of the problem than the limits of an ordinary book review would allow.

The book under discussion and responsible for starting what may prove a significant controversy in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands is entitled, *Voetius over het Gezag der Synoden* (*Voetius on the Authority of Synods*). Its author is the Rev. M. Bouwman. Its publisher is S. J. P. Bakker, Amsterdam, and its price five florins and a quarter.

THIS portly volume of 462 pages is the dissertation of the Rev. Marius Bouwman of the Netherlands, on the strength of which the Free University of Amsterdam awarded him the degree of doctor of Theology last summer. The literary first-fruit of the young ministerial doctor promises well to go down in history of Dutch Presbyterianism as an epochal book. At any rate, it has already created considerable stir among our staid brethren in the Low Lands beyond the sea. There is every reason to believe that the thesis to whose defense the book is devoted, will be vigorously discussed and earnestly debated, if not heatedly. In fact, the first rumblings of controversial thunder have already been heard this side of the Atlantic. And it is quite imaginable that before long we shall see fierce flashes of polemical lightning rend the eastern skies once more. This will then be the third serious debate engrossing the leaders of Dutch theological Calvinism of the present age and

day. Dogmatical fighting is going on. A battle royal is in progress in the field of philosophy. Now a canonical controversy appears in the offing. Dutch Calvinism is anything but pacifistic. And no wonder! It believes sincerely and ardently in the antithesis; it fights error wherever and whenever it thinks it meets this foe of God's truth and honor. One theological magnate of the author's own church has already registered his pronounced dissent; to his mind the author is protagonizing hierarchism. It is reported that the first gun of the battle that may develop into a protracted struggle, was fired at the academic trial of the aspirant to doctoral honors. Others have expressed themselves more guardedly. And there are those who prudentially suspended judgment until the matter at issue has been threshed out more adequately.

But what is the *causa belli*? Should one merely note the title of the volume under discussion, he might be a bit surprised

to hear that theological war-clouds have already crossed the horizon and emerged into view. For it would seem that the book is an objective, and by that token innocent, exposé of Voetius' construction of synodical authority, or the jurisdiction of the major assemblies of Presbyterian Churches. A study of this kind would seem to be historical in character. There would be room for scholarly dissent; but there would hardly be occasion for ecclesiastical incrimination. Why should one raise a hue and cry apropos of a historical examination of Voetius' canonical views, such as rang out from a Dutch theological journal some time ago? If a connoisseur honestly believes that Voetius was misrepresented, it ought not to be a difficult task to demonstrate the fact. The great Utrecht canonist of the 17th century wrote voluminously on synodical authority as well as on all other canonical questions. Besides, he was well able to state his meaning clearly for such as are able to read ecclesiastical Latin. And what he believed regarding the jurisdiction of major assemblies of the Presbyterian system and taught at the then newly-founded university of Utrecht 1634-1676, is not stated *en passant* or only upon one single occasion and in but one solitary connection of thought. If this were the case, it might require unusual exegetical skill to distill his mind from his hypothetical few and furtive pronouncements. But there is no paucity at all of source-material; nor did Voetius halt between two opinions. As Dr. Bouwman shows convincingly, no *Voetius vs. Voetius* case can even by approximation be made out. His one and only construction of synodical authority can be readily ascertained, not only by drawing on unequivocal statements, but also by checking up after the manner of cross-reference. For, true to the 17th century style of composition, Voetius repeats himself occasionally rather than leave room for doubt where he stood and make it necessary for Philadelphia lawyers to be called in. To conclude, there is no textual problem constituting a vexing previous question. But why, then, should men versed in canonical lore and familiar with ecclesiastical latinity construe the publication of the volume under discussion as an occasion for ecclesiastical and theological debate instead of academic discussion? Thus one might conceivably query, unless he knows the *background* of the situation created by Bouwman's *opus doctorale*.

### Local Autonomy vs. Synodical Authority

What is this *background*, and what light does it shed upon the turmoil that this dissertation has produced? The story is too long to tell in detail; a bare outline must suffice under the circumstances. In a prefatory way it may be remarked, that the realities of history and the actualities of life definitely affect such matters as angle of vision, manner of approach, location of accent, slant, understanding, and appreciation. The reformatory movements (Afscheiding 1834 and Doleantie 1886) that gave birth to the "Gereformeerde Kerken" of the Netherlands (in 1892 the confluence of the two streams was effected) were precipitated by the reorganization of the ancestral Reformed Church and its consequences in the field of faith and practice. In 1816 the civil magistrates saw fit to annul the Presbyterian polity of the Church and to substitute for it a form of government that was collegialistic in character and hierarchical in spirit. A semblance of Reformed church government remained, but in reality Presbyterianism had gone by the board. The alteration made by the new set-up upset the nice balance of congregational rights and synodical authority that constitutes the hallmark and virtue of Presbyterianism. The liberties of the local church were practically cancelled and virtually all power was concentrated in the hands of the few men who succeeded in securing membership in the general synod.

Under these circumstances it was rather natural that the reformers of 1834 and 1886 who aimed at restoring Presbyterianism, should be bent upon reestablishing the rights and liberties of the congregations severally, and, having done this, should guard them jealously against even the appearance of encroachment thereon on the part of the major assemblies. It is hardly too much to say that they were deeply distrustful, the Doleantie

leaders particularly, of synodical authority. "Synodaal" became a synonym of "hierarchisch." At the same time they seemed to be naively unmindful of the danger of Independentism that arose when they stressed unduly the right of the local church and by that token disparaged the authority of the major assemblies. They forgot that, Presbyterianism being the system of delicate authoritative equilibrium that it is, as based on confederation, the Scylla of Independentism is a real danger no less than the Charybdis of Hierarchy. The moment Presbyterians emphasize congregational liberty at the expense of synodical authority by glorifying the former as the *ne plus ultra* of their system and *tolerating* synodical authority rather than owning it on principle, Independentism is around the corner on their side. The anti-synodical bias, so much in evidence in 19th century reformation in the Netherlands, is plain proof of reactionary psychology according to which extremes provoke each other. The rise of Anabaptism and the emergence of Independentism are cases in point. Fortunately the Dutch reformers could not quite escape the restraints which their national sanity imposed upon them. They developed an Independentic tendency and betrayed Independentistic leanings. But never did they become sled-length Independents. Their canonical equilibrium was disturbed; they listed dangerously. But they stayed on their feet, though their posture may have been a bit awkward at times.

### The Appeal to Voetius

It is now time to bring *Voetius* into the picture. The Dutch are rational and theologically-minded enough to know that practice should have the sanction of precept, and that precept should be anchored in truth. Hence they looked about for reasoned support of their construction of congregational liberty and synodical authority. Automatically their thoughts turned to Voetius. Of course, there was a vast mass of ecclesiastical legislation and history. But these materials had been transmuted into canonical theology by the great Gysbertus Voetius of Utrecht fame, who in the course of a long professorate had published *Politica Ecclesiastica* in four bulky volumes, not to mention other products of his fertile brain and facile pen. This 17th century scholar of international standing had explored the field of Presbyterian Polity and Government in so thorough a fashion and in so complete a canvas, that to all practical purposes and intents he had spoken the next to the last word, if not the last word, on the subject, in the estimation of his 19th century admirers and followers. His word was adjudged the end of controversy. *Voetius locutus, causa finita*. This appraisal of Voetius' authority apart, fact is that the 17th century canonist who had been a contra-remonstrant member of the illustrious Synod of Dordt, 1618-'19, brought to his task prodigious erudition, philosophical ability and dialectical skill. Nor should it be overlooked that he lived and wrought in the hey-day of Reformed theology; that he was a contemporary of the great Westminster divines, and that he entered upon his labors when the canonical development of his Church had borne rich fruit in a vast mass of constitutional and statutory legislation. As a capable exegete he had thoroughly canvassed the passages of Scripture that bear on church polity and government, and had reached the conclusion that Presbyterianism could claim *jus divinum* and, hence, that no other polity had any standing in court. Accordingly, he developed the *rationale* of Presbyterianism in a way that would seem to leave little room, if any, for improvement, whether qualitative or quantitative. The canonical reformers of the Dutch Church were awed by Voetius' attainments and prestige, and bowed to his authority in full assurance of its validity.

But like all men who are impelled by the exigencies of the situation to justify themselves and to meet the challenge that rules them out of order, they knew what they wanted when they turned their faces to Utrecht, and what they looked for when they ransacked Voetius' ponderous quartos. What they sought in the Voetian tomes was not so much the theory of a precise balance of congregational rights and synodical authority gov-

erned by a constitutional distribution and allocation of jurisdiction. They were supremely interested in finding support for the view that synodical authority is consistently secondary to congregational rights. And they believed, in utter sincerity, of course, that Voetius sponsored the construction of synodical authority to which circumstances and psychology predisposed them favorably.

It was somewhat disconcerting to hear Dr. Kleyn of the old Church (Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk) say that Voetius was a crypto-independentist. When the fathers of the Doleantie appealed to the great Voetius for support, this vigorous opponent, nothing daunted, replied in effect: Yea verily, Voetius is with you; but do you not know that Voetius was with the Independents of his day, contrary to the Presbyterian genius of the Church he served. You who presume to be Presbyterian reformers, are in bad company. And to make a bad matter worse: you do not seem to be aware of it.

### Dr. Bouwman's Fresh Study of Voetius

At this juncture the *dissertation* under discussion must be introduced anew. As an aspirant to doctoral standing and honors, the Rev. Bouwman decided to study Voetius in as thoroughly exhaustive manner as possible, in order to determine confidently, could it be, whether the renowned 17th century canonist of Utrecht was reported correctly by his 19th century commentators. Who was right, Dr. Kleyn, c. s., or those who believed and declared that Voetius lent support to their views? Or were both parties mistaken, possibly? The divergent interpretations of Voetius on the score of the authority of the major assemblies, perhaps, aroused the young minister's suspicions. By finding out who were right he would render a splendid service not only to his own Church, but to Presbyterianism in general as well. As far as the present reviewer knows, no Reformed theologian of Dutch extraction, if any, has made a special study of Voetius as a *canonist*. Dr. A. C. Duker of the Old Dutch Church has written an extensive biography of the Dutch canonical colossus. However, a biography of the man Voetius is one thing, but an exhaustive study of his canonical views is quite another thing. Besides, Voetius was not altogether congenial to Dr. Duker theologically, though Duker professes in the introduction to his biography of Voetius to have striven earnestly to do him the justice of impartiality. Bouwman and Voetius are theological affinities. That circumstance does not disqualify him, of course. Kindred spirits need not be partial. Dr. Bouwman was well equipped for his task as appears to perfect satisfaction from his book. He brought to bear upon his project not only a splendid theological education gained at the Free University, but also a training in law at the same institution of learning. Needless to say, his legal education came him in exceedingly good stead in the particular research he conducted. The book he wrote gives ample evidence of the author's happy gift of legal phraseological precision and perspicuity. It is very apparent that he studied Voetius in an objective frame of mind and reports his findings dispassionately. He never turns pleader, but always abides in his rôle of historian of Voetian canonical theology. And he is felicitous, indeed, in marshalling his evidence, that Voetius felt as he sets forth, and in reasoning persuasively without resorting to speciousness.

And what *conclusion* did the learned author reach as the result of his painstaking studies? We now return to the stormy opposition which the publication of this noble volume has excited. The present reviewer is sorely tempted to summarize the contents of the book. But space forbids yielding to this temptation. In briefest outline Dr. Bouwman's conclusion is, that both parties to the dispute as to where Voetius stood as regards the authority of the major assemblies, were in error. Voetius was not an Independent as Dr. Kleyn, c. s., contended, though it must be conceded that, to quote one of Dr. Bouwman's *thèses* (III), Voetius' canonical views were somewhat influenced by the Independents of his day. The author points out that in the

early part of his career Voetius put forth an earnest effort to win the Moderate Independents for Presbyterianism. He sympathized with them very deeply, indeed, in their implacable hostility to the hierarchism of the Church of England. It was a matter of strategy with him at this time to stress what Presbyterians and Independents have in common, not what divides them. But even so, he never denied the structural principle of Presbyterianism on any score. Particularly synodical authority, he maintained without abatement. In later life, when even the milder Independents prove stubbornly intransigent, Voetius abandoned whatever accomodative tactics he may previously have employed, and became more pronounced and explicit in his affirmation of the *mandatory* power of the major assemblies, as defined by the organic law of the Church.

### The Reception of His Conclusions

The result of Dr. Bouwman's investigations of Voetius on the authority of Synods, was calculated to disappoint both parties to the dispute as to where Voetius stood in the matter of synodical authority. Dr. Kleyn c. s., are convicted in this scholar's court of having misinterpreted the Utrecht *canonicus*; but his opponents are also charged with having misunderstood Voetius and having misconstrued his deliverances on the subject under discussion. It is this verdict of the expert investigator of Voetius' doctrine of the power of the major assemblies, that has brought consternation to the camp of those who had confidently hitched the mighty Voetius to their chariot of "the autonomy of the local church." The conclusion that Voetius was not even a wild or moderate Independent would have pleased them immensely, if the corollary of this finding had not been that he was a decisive protagonist of the mandatory power of synods. And to make matters worse, it now appears that Voetius carried synodical authority to such a length as solemnly averring that major assemblies may even exercise the constitutional prerogatives of minor assemblies in the event of abnormal and critical circumstances. And, to add pain to suffering, it is credibly reported that Voetius repeatedly refers to historical instances in which the Reformed Churches everywhere acted agreeably to the principles he lays down. Thus the testimony of history is added to the argument of theology.

What to do about it? About the only proper thing to do is to study Voetius as patiently and thoroughly and in as scholarly a way as Dr. Bouwman has done; and then either to prove, by sufficient documentary evidence, properly handled, of course, that Voetius' most recent examiner misunderstood him and reports him incorrectly; or to grant that Dr. Bouwman does Voetius perfect justice as regards the latter's view respecting the authority of the major assemblies. Those disagreeing with Dr. Bouwman and endeavoring to sustain their challenge of his conclusions by adequate study of the great Utrecht canonist, will discover that they have addressed themselves to a *supremely* difficult task. It will strike any careful and impartial reader of this dissertation, as being extremely hard work to destroy the evidential force of the vast amount of documentary proof that Dr. Bouwman has piled up, ceiling high, in substantiation of his interpretation of Voetius *in re* synodical authority. And if Voetius was anything like *consistent* it will require equally Herculean efforts to produce material unquoted in Dr. Bouwman's book that offsets the quotations adduced in support of his conclusions.

Dr. Bouwman's dissertation reflects a fine measure of credit upon himself; it is an honor to the university and in particular to the professor, Dr. H. H. Kuyper, under whose direction he prepared it; it is proof demonstrative that God is blessing the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands with superlative talent; and it is an invaluable help to all Presbyterians who wish to inform themselves reliably on one of the cardinal principles of the ecclesiastical polity that has the sanction of Holy Writ, that commends itself to sanctified reason, and that has proved its practical merit in the century-long history of Reformed Churches everywhere.

# THIS MONTH'S BOOK TABLE

## SCIENCE AND GENESIS

MODERN SCIENCE AND THE GENESIS RECORD. *By Harry Rimmer, D.D., Sc.D. Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. Vol. II of John Laurence Frost Memorial Library. 370 pages. \$2.00.*

THE first chapter of the book of Genesis has been made the butt of frequent criticism on the part of a presumptuous science which scores its scientific inaccuracy. Much has been written to disclaim that charge in defense of the Biblical record of creation. Outside of the fact that much "science" has been refuted by reference to and proofs of its own scientific inaccuracy, orthodox believers have often been content to reply calmly that Moses never claimed to be a scientist, nor to give a "scientific" record of creation, since, as Cardinal Baronius wisely remarks: "The intention of Holy Scripture is to teach us how to go to heaven, and not how the heavens go."

And it is true that the Genesis record is not a text-book of science. It directs our attention not first of all to the variety and intricacy of the structure of the universe, but rather reveals the majesty and omnipotence and wisdom of Him who was before all things and by whom all things consist. God is the first study of revelation, and not the universe. And that is why the first chapter of Genesis is written with such poetic simplicity. God is there—and what to the scientist must be represented as the product of laborious ages, is to God but the matter of a mighty spoken word, "and it was so."

The account of God's action "in the beginning" is the Almighty's description of the constitution of the universe, and not the scientist's. And yet, far from being an inaccurate record, it is shown by known facts of science to be a perfectly accurate record—this is the main thesis of Dr. Rimmer's book. By relating the facts of science to the Genesis record of each day's creation, the latter is seen to be a descriptive framework in which every bit of scientific knowledge perfectly fits. And not only is there so demonstrated to be a total absence of contradiction of any sort, but each phrase in the creation story is demonstrated to be a precise description of the now known phenomena of science.

In pursuing his proof, Dr. Rimmer follows a simple method. Each chapter in the book begins with a quotation of a phase of the creation story, and then the facts of science appropriate to that day's creation are set forth to show how perfect is their adjustment to the Genesis description. Subsidiary to that main line of argument, Dr. Rimmer demonstrates how that in a host of instances science cannot reasonably explain the structure and functioning and environment of created things without the first postulate of a Designing Mind to account for their origin. The marvels of scientific lore are liberally and interestingly explained to induce in the mind of the reader a spirit of wonder and praise at the power and wisdom of the Creator. And at the close of each chapter the typical significance of natural phenomena are brought in relation to the revelation of Christ—not germane in any sense to the main thesis of the book, but interesting and spiritually profitable nevertheless, and in keeping with Dr. Rimmer's stated purpose that "we approach the study . . . only that we may have additional illumination on the person and work of our Savior." For those interested in the argument of the solar day versus geological ages in connection with the days of creation, Dr. Rimmer, in the first chapter of this book, outlines a series of nine rather effective arguments to establish the high probability of interpreting these creation days as solar days, without in any sense being dogmatic.

The style and approach of the book commend themselves to the interests of the lay reader. It is not in any sense a dry, scholastic treatise. Dr. Rimmer writes in a "chatty" way—at times one thinks he is almost garrulous—interspersing his proofs

and expositions with stories and personal experiences, many of which serve no other purpose than to act as a sort of "by the way" tonic which spices the conversation and relieves whatever monotony the reader may perchance begin to feel.

GEORGE STOB.

Sumas, Washington.

## THE COMMON GRACE ISSUE

DE ALGEMEENE GENADE (*Fourth Brochure in Series entitled DREIGENDE DEFORMATIE*). *By Dr. V. Hepp, J. H. Kok, Kampen, Nederland. 1937. Price fl. 1.75.*

FOR a time it seemed that Dr. Hepp would not complete the series of announced brochures respecting what appears to him as a threatening deformation in the Reformed theology of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. The fourth brochure has now appeared, however, dealing with the denial of common grace. The author makes a comparison of the denial of common grace in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and the somewhat similar denial in our own country, and says that in both we have a species of "single-track theology." But he says that, while in America the single track was the doctrine of election, in his own group of Churches it is the doctrine of the covenant. Furthermore, he points out that the denial assumes two forms among them, of which the one is based on the covenant of grace, and the other on the covenant of works. According to the former it is permissible to speak of a certain goodness of God shown to unbelievers, but not of common grace. And this general goodness of God to His enemies does not find its explanation in anything that remains of the original creation, but in the covenant of grace. It is a sort of concomitant of the special grace of the covenant. The second view takes its startingpoint in creation, more particularly in the covenant of works. By a rather peculiar twist grace is here turned into a work or task. It is considered desirable to substitute the term "common obligation" for "common grace." In the covenant of works man was constituted a co-laborer with God, and his general cultural task remains in spite of the fall. Man continues to work at the assigned task. The description of this view is not as clear as that of the other. This may be due to a dearth of material. Dr. Hepp explicates some of the implications of these views and argues their untenableness from Scripture and from our confessional standards. We are not able to control his representation of the opposing views, but can say that his own view is in harmony with that of our own Church. This brochure cannot be regarded as a tirade; there is no evidence of bitterness in it. Dr. Hepp wields a facile pen and writes in a clear style. But, as already indicated, the description of the second view is not altogether transparent. We sincerely hope that the differences between the brethren in the Netherlands may not be as great as it seems to be.

L. BERKHOF.

Grand Rapids, Michigan.

## ON THE HISTORY OF DOGMA

REFORMED DOGMATICS. *By Louis Berkhof, B.D. Historical Volume. Grand Rapids, Mich., 1937, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. pp. 293. Price \$5.00.*

UNTIL 1932 there existed a real need for an American work in which the system of Reformed Dogmatics is presented in a brief, yet comprehensive fashion, suitable not only as a manual for students of divinity but also for the more intelligent laymen of the Church. In that year Professor Berkhof, who teaches Dogmatics at Calvin Seminary, supplied that need by publishing what had heretofore been current among his students as mimeo-

graphed notes covering the entire field of Dogmatics. The work appeared in two volumes (427 and 369 pages, respectively), and was promptly welcomed by all who love the Reformed Faith. Its clarity, its avoidance of Hebrew and Greek, and especially its fidelity to the classic positions of the historic Reformed Faith at once gave the work a unique standing and value. Recently the author has had the satisfaction of receiving requests for permission to translate these two volumes into Hungarian and into Korean.

The volume now reviewed is in a sense a part of this larger work and in another sense it is quite independent of it. The two volumes of 1932, known simply as *Reformed Dogmatics* and covering the various phases of the body of Reformed divinity, are quite complete in themselves and were placed on the market as such at the time. But since that time Professor Berkhof has been induced also to publish an Introductory Volume, dealing with the presuppositions of Dogmatics and largely based upon the first volume of Bavinck's *magnum opus*, and a Historical Volume, which contains the material of the course offered by the author at Calvin Seminary in the History of Doctrine. This last volume has just made its appearance: the occasion for this review. The four volumes are uniform in size and binding and appropriately form one set.

The method adopted by the author in covering the material of the history of dogma is that of the older historians who treat the history of each of the great doctrines in succession. If the distinction be permitted, it is a history of doctrines, rather than a history of doctrine. This also enabled the author to utilize, among others, the discussions of Orr in his *Progress of Dogma* and the treatment of Bavinck in the historical portions of his *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*. After about forty pages of introduction, and another forty pages devoted to the preparatory development of doctrine up to Nicaea, the bulk of the book is devoted successively to the history of the doctrines of the Trinity, Christ, Sin and Grace, the Atonement, the Application and Appropriation of Divine Grace, the Church and the Sacraments, and the Last Things.

As in the other volumes, the discussion is clear and easy to grasp. Professor Berkhof places even the most intricate doctrinal issues within the comprehension of the thoughtful reader. He has read widely and possesses the happy faculty of condensing much material into few words and little space. At times the treatment almost suffers from too great brevity and condensation, so that the reader may be pardoned for wishing the volume (which covers less than 300 pages) might have been expanded a bit, so as to allow for a fuller picture of some of the doctrines in certain periods—especially the more recent.

Publisher as well as author are to be congratulated on this, as well as the other three volumes. Barring a possible dozen of minor spelling errors, the proof-reading is excellent. The appearance and binding is pleasing.

Let no one think this is a volume for theological students only. This work—or, rather, the four-volume set—ought not only to have a place in the library of every Reformed minister and theologian, but also on the shelves of every church library, for reading as well as reference purposes.

C. B.

### ON THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

THE FAITH WE LIVE BY. By Earl L. Douglass. Nashville, Tenn. 1937. Cokesbury Press. \$1.50.

THIS book of one hundred ninety pages gives a popular exposition of the Apostles' Creed. At the same time it has practical value, because it speaks to the heart. The author does not write as a spectator, but as one who believes what he confesses. Since he does so, it is important to note that he professes allegiance to the Word of God—the Bible. He wants it firmly understood that to minimize the historical facts of Christianity, is to minimize what Apostolic preaching made central.

The author is at his best in the explanation of such articles of faith as the Virgin Birth, the Deity of Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Not so good are his remarks on the *Descensus* and, in particular, on the Atonement. For example, the author says, "when the Son suffered, God suffered" (page 96). If Mr. Douglass were a Monist, the meaning of this statement would be plain. But he is not a Monist, identifying the human and the Divine. It must be pointed out therefore that God and the word "suffered" cannot be joined together. Christ suffered according to his human nature. But the sufferings of the Mediator did not penetrate into his Divine nature.

However, there is no need to enter upon a detailed discussion of this point (a very important one) here, for on page 97 our author says that the extreme penalty which God metes out is "separation from God." Now putting his two remarks together we get this: God suffered—forsaking himself. This is a contradiction. God can not separate himself from himself. The readers will do well to keep these things in mind, for, on the doctrine of the Atonement many a theologian has met his Waterloo.

J. G. VAN DYKE.

Grand Haven, Michigan.

### THE TRINITY

THE TRIUNE GOD. By C. Norman Bartlett. American Tract Society, New York, 1937. \$1.50.

FOR those who have never had any difficulty with believing the Christian doctrine of the Trinity taught in the Word of God there is no need of this book. But those who know something of the opposition of the rationalists against this blessed truth, and those who have at times entertained serious doubts themselves as to the ground on which the doctrine of the Trinity rests, will be greatly benefitted by this 200-page book. It is a popular treatise on one phase of Apologetics. The author shows that belief in the Trinity, though ultimately and primarily accepted because it is taught by the Word of God, is also in perfect harmony with the best in human thought, in fact, demanded by it. He proceeds in this book "to demonstrate that this great doctrine, far from being, as is often alleged, utterly contradictory to all reason, is wonderfully harmonious with the truest and profoundest rationality." It is a worthwhile discussion, of interest to every orthodox theologian. Incidentally, it may bring home better than many an extended explanation just what an apologetic argument is.

C. B.

### BOOKS IN BRIEF

THE SECRET OF A BEAUTIFUL LIFE. *Sermons on Living Issues and Timely Problems.* By Dallas C. Baer. Grand Rapids, 1937, Zondervan. \$1.50.

CATCHY, "religious" talks called sermons. The author says some clever and pointed things, but these are not sermons. In his little apology for these "topical" sermons in the Foreword the author says he is not conscious "of having subordinated Christ and His Word to any theme discussed." But this is precisely what he does in: Is the World Growing Better? and in, Is War Inevitable? Apparently there are many "orthodox" preachers who speak in the lingo of modernism on many subjects and know it not.

THE MAGNETIC MASTER. *Evangelistic Sermons, by Southern Baptist Ministers.* Compiled by Alfred L. Murray. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1937. \$1.50.

SERMONS full of stories. Some good, some mediocre, some indifferent. "What's the Harm of Dancing Anyway?" is a good popular lecture against the modern dance.

THOU ART THE CHRIST! *A Study of Man's Redeemer.* By Bert Brower. Grand Rapids, 1937, Zondervan, \$1.00.

**E**DIFYING devotional sketches on the life and death of our Savior. Biblical and truly spiritual, though not profound.

THE LIGHT IN THE WINDOW. *Funeral Addresses and Outlines.* By R. E. Golladay. Grand Rapids, 1937, Zondervan, \$1.00.

**T**WENTY-TWO funeral sermon outlines. There is room for some funeral sermon books for the use of ministers, but only of the best. This one is mediocre. One could wish that some of our presses today would be relieved of their groaning under the weight of mediocrity.

KUYPER'S GELOOFSSTUK. Dr. F. W. Grosheide. Kampen, 1937, Kok. pp. 23. Price: f 0.50.

**T**HIS is the address which Professor Grosheide delivered to professors, students, and interested friends of the Free University on the occasion of the celebration of the centenary of the birth of Dr. Abraham Kuyper. The author pictures Kuyper's founding of the Free University as an act of faith in the deep sense of the word and lays bare some of the ideals that prompted and guided him in this heroic undertaking.

WORKBOOK TO THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM. By Alvin Grether, A.M. Central Pub. House, 1937, Cleveland, Ohio.

**H**ERE is an effort that deserves the interest and support of anyone interested in making the Heidelberg Catechism live in the consciousness of the rising generation. It is a large-sized workbook of 96 pages for the pupil covering all the 129 questions of the Heidelberg Catechism. The author, who is connected with the Mission House College of Plymouth, Wis., is interested in making this manual of Reformed truth pedagogically accessible to the children and young people of his own church, the Reformed Church in the U. S., now about to join with the Evangelical Church. Copies may be secured at 27½c a piece for ten or more, and at 35c for single copies.

SCHEURKALENDAR "MARANATHA," 1938. *Bewerkt door Ds. J. J. Knap Czn.* Price: f 0.85.

**T**HE practice of placing a daily calendar on the market whose 365 leaflets offer devotional material on front and back is, as far as we know, of Dutch origin. This "Maranatha" calendar is one of the best of its kind published in the Netherlands. We recommend it to those interested in such a calendar and able to read the Dutch. Those who would like an American calendar of this type can not do better than procure the "Daily Manna" calendar, edited by Rev. M. Monsma of Pella, Iowa, and published by the Zondervan Publishing House.

AUTHORITY AND LIBERTY. *Convention Book-Yearbook, National Union of Christian Schools, 10119 Lafayette Ave., Chicago, Ill. 1937.*

**A**N 80-page booklet offering four addresses delivered at the 1937 annual meeting of the National Union of Christian Schools, together with statistics and addresses of the movement. Heartily recommended.

VITAL ISSUES, 1937. *Theme: Steadfastness Amid Confusion.* American Federation of Reformed Young Men's Societies. Grand Rapids, Mich. Price: 25 cents.

**T**HREE ringing speeches addressed to Reformed young people on loyalty to the Christian faith in the midst of new conditions. Delivered at last summer's convention in Denver.

SERMONS ON THE APOSTLES' CREED. *Volume II of Sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism.* By Ministers of the Reformed and Christian Reformed Churches. Edited by Henry J. Kuyper. Grand Rapids, 1937, Zondervan. pp. 296. Price: \$2.00.

**T**WENTY-TWO sermons on the great themes of the Apostles' Creed as discussed in the Heidelberg Catechism. Sound, biblical, edifying. Two of these productions are treatises rather than sermons. This applies especially to Lord's Day IX, Part II, which is an excellent 30-page discussion of evolutionism and modernism, but can hardly be called a sermon. We heartily recommend the volume.

## LETTERS AND CORRESPONDENCE

### AN EDITORIAL CHAT

**P**RESIDENT ROOSEVELT has his fireside chats with the nation from time to time. There usually is no fireside in sight, and the chat is more in the nature of a speech or monologue than a chat, but . . . I suppose that is inevitable. I would also like to have a chat with you. Shall we call it a family confab? You know I mean our CALVIN FORUM family.

No, I won't do all the chatting. In fact, I wanted to give the floor to some of the FORUM family members. You see, I received some interesting letters from CALVIN FORUM brothers and sisters which I feel I ought to share with you. I cannot write out all the names and addresses, because there are some rather personal things in some of these missives, but it is just these personal little things that I want to share with you. To me it is a heartening experience to read letters like these, and I am inclined to believe they will have the same effect upon you.

Here is a letter from a FORUM brother in distant California. He writes:

I have neglected to send you \$2.00 for my subscription to THE CALVIN FORUM, and I am sending you my check this day. I add to the amount of \$2.00 which I owe you, \$10.00 for subscriptions to the following ministers.

Then follow the names of five ministers together with their addresses. Variety? I should say. One Baptist, one Episcopalian, one Presbyterian, one Reformed Church of America, and one of the Protestant Reformed Church. The brother from California is big-hearted, you see. He continues his letter:

I have enjoyed reading your magazine so much, and I am deriving so much good of it, that I would like to see it in the hands of those people who are spiritual leaders of the city. I wish that you would write each of them a personal letter, informing them that "a local friend" has paid for their subscription, and that he believes they will appreciate the magazine and will derive much good from its reading; and that you will appreciate to hear from them. . . .

Such enthusiasm!

If our efforts in behalf of THE CALVIN FORUM can stir up such interest and enthusiasm, I want to say that it is worth all the trouble.

And here is a little note from a Rocky Mountain CalvinForum-ite. It reads:

Please see from the attached letter what a Presbyterian Missionary nurse thinks about THE CALVIN FORUM.

The "attached letter" came from India. It proved to be a note of grateful recognition to another member of our family for having shared the pleasure of reading our magazine. Here is the letter, minus a few personal passages.

Vengurla,  
Bombay Presidency,  
India.

Dear Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your letter of July 20th, in which you say that you renewed my subscription to THE CALVIN FORUM.

Please, let me thank you for the subscriptions of the various religious magazines of the past. I have enjoyed them and so has the Indian pastor of our church.

But, I am glad that of all the periodicals you chose THE CALVIN FORUM, because I like it best.

You are a thoughtful person to be doing that for me. And what is for me is for India.

God has been good to me in many ways and one wishes to return in service for others, some of the goodness which He lets us enjoy.

India is going through a very interesting period just now with Home Rule just starting in six provinces. We are all looking with keen interest how they will respond to responsibility.

Thanking you again and wishing you all the best.

Very sincerely,  
L. F. FROESÉ.

The other day I received two letters in the same mail, one from a mid-western state, the other from Seattle, Washington. The former was a missive from a young Presbyterian minister, who was holding a small charge and was forced for the time being to subsist on a meager salary. He told me so (I happened to know him personally) and added that he deeply regretted his inability under the circumstances to renew his subscription to THE CALVIN FORUM. The Pacific coast letter ran like this:

5554 Thirtieth, N.E.  
Seattle, Wash.

Dear Sir:

I have seen a number of copies of THE CALVIN FORUM and it pleases me very much. It is conservative in the best sense. So many conservative journals are merely Fundamentalist organs written in an illiberal atmosphere, hostile to all liberal economic and political progress, confounding the evaluation of human institutions with the one unchanging truth of all time.

Now, Sir, I wondered if you could place a copy of THE CALVIN FORUM in our Public Library. I would do this, but at present I simply cannot. I feel that such a paper as yours, especially if people knew about it, would serve a great need.

We have no *strong* conservative weekly coming to the library comparable to *The Christian Century*, that is so much read. I hope you can see your way clear to do this.

Sincerely yours,  
F. G. SMITH.

With the mid-western underpaid Presbyterian minister and the wonderful opportunity of the Seattle Public Library on my mind, I sat down to peck away at my typewriter for a minute or two, and here was the result:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Lately two letters came to my desk as editor of THE CALVIN FORUM that left me in a quandary, and then I suddenly had an idea that brought you at once into the range of my reflections.

One of these letters is from a friend in Seattle, who pleads for the placing of our magazine in the Public Library of that large city. He stresses the need for just such a periodical to offset the influence of the liberal *Christian Century* and asks whether we cannot give the Library a free subscription.

The other letter is from a young struggling minister of the Presbyterian Church in America, who has to live on a very meager salary and says that he is forced to discontinue his subscription, adding: "I would like to receive the magazine so much, but our income simply does not allow it."

And then I thought of you and your fine letter of last year in which, after you had generously donated \$25.00 for the deficit we had at the time, you insisted nevertheless on paying your Two Dollars for your subscription besides.

Would I be imposing on you if I asked whether you would like the idea of being a sort of godfather to some of these subscribers? These are cases in which our magazine would be of great value and might be of splendid influence in key positions. We cannot afford to give free subscriptions and, although we have kept out of the red this year, we have as yet no margin to speak of.

If I am too bold in this sort of begging for a good cause, do not hesitate to say so. Even goede vrienden. We are both serving the cause!

Cordially yours,  
CLARENCE BOUMA.

P. S. I am enclosing the two letters for your information. Please return them. I am also adding another interesting letter, which just happens to be lying on my desk. Kindly return all three. Thanks!

Promptly came the reply of our CALVIN FORUM brother. Four dollars were enclosed. On the slip pinned to the four dollar bills he hastily scribbled (having just returned from a business trip): "Glad to assist." Now our magazine goes forward to the young underpaid minister and to the Seattle Library. Upon writing Mr. Smith, I received the following reply:

5554 Thirtieth, NE.,  
Seattle, Wash.

Dear Sir:

I received your letter a few days ago replacing THE CALVIN FORUM in the Seattle Public Library.

I turned your letter over to a Mr. Herbert Butts, a fine young man looking forward to the ministry. He works in the library to support himself while attending the University. I had previously showed him a few copies of THE CALVIN FORUM and he was delighted with the same. . . .

As to placing the magazine in a prominent place—all the magazines here are arranged alphabetically in rows along the walls. THE CALVIN FORUM therefore will be placed very close to *The Christian Century*, which is read very assiduously.

I thank you for your interest in this matter and look forward to seeing the best conservative religious magazine in America in a prominent place in our library. It may take some years to gain its proper recognition, but it will, and some of us will tell all we meet about it.

Sincerely,  
F. G. SMITH.

Now isn't that a fine spirit of comrade Smith? I'm proud to belong to a group with such a spirit and for such a cause.

And now, before I ring off, I must tell you about one other enthusiastic member of our FORUM circle. Read the three letters. They speak for themselves. I shall omit the name because of the personal reference to his parishioners, but I can assure you it is a fine old Scotch name and it belongs to a young preacher, as you can read for yourself. How the younger generation is coming to the front! His first letter is dated October 8. Here it is:

Gentlemen:

First of all allow me to express my gratitude for your increasingly valuable publication.

A group of some fourteen young people here, realizing the need for a unified life-and-world-view, have begun a Thursday evening study of Calvinism believing that it presents the only consistently Christian philosophy of life. (For that matter, the only consistent philosophy.) I feel that they should make use of THE CALVIN FORUM and it would aid me in introducing it if you would send me sample copies. As there are some married couples in the group about 10 copies would suffice. I feel that the October number should make a very great appeal inasmuch as I have already emphasized something of the importance of the work of Dr. A. Kuyper. Is it your practice to offer club rates on group subscriptions?

Gratefully yours,

Our reply follows:

Dear Sir:

We are most happy to hear of your splendid plan to use THE CALVIN FORUM in connection with your class for the study of the Reformed Faith, or, if you will, Calvinism as a world and life view.

I have already ordered the office to send you ten copies of the October issue, in harmony with your request. You may consider these sample copies, which we gladly donate to the cause.

It will please us even more if you could arrange to get your group to subscribe. In response to your query anent club subscriptions I can say that we are prepared to offer club subscriptions on the following terms:

1. Minimum number of subscriptions: 10.
  2. All copies are sent in one bundle and to the one address of the party responsible for the subscription.
  3. Subscription at the rate of \$1.25 a piece and to be paid promptly in advance for the entire group.
- We shall be most happy to hear from you.

Sincerely yours,  
CLARENCE BOUMA, Editor.

Came the response dated November 12:

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

Dear Sir:

Please accept my thanks for your kind letter of Oct. 25 and for the sample copies of the October issue of THE CALVIN FORUM. Your letter was, in itself, an encouraging thing. The Reformed Faith in its purity is a novelty in this "Presbyterian area" of Northwestern Pennsylvania. The Scotch-Irish inhabitants whose ancestors were the strictest of Calvinists revolt

against the teaching. Fortunately, however, their children receive it gladly. Our class now numbers 20 young people between the ages of 18 and 28.

We are grateful for your offer anent club subscriptions. After reading issues of both THE CALVIN FORUM and the \_\_\_\_\_ the class last night decided to subscribe for THE CALVIN FORUM. My only regret is that they did not decide for both. However, as they become more conversant with Calvinism I hope they will want the other paper. My check is enclosed for \$12.50 for ten subscriptions to be sent to me. This subscription should begin with the November issue, and we would appreciate immediate mailing of that issue.

Cordially yours,

Are you surprised that I am proud to belong to a family group as fine and loyal as this?

Chatilly yours,

YE EDITOR.

P. S. By the way, don't miss the fine opportunity to present some friend or relative of yours with a subscription to THE CALVIN FORUM as a Christmas gift. Watch your mail.

## AN EASTERN NEWS LETTER

Dear Dr. Bouma:

The Alumni Association of Princeton held its eighth annual fall meeting on the Seminary campus. The interest of this conference centered around the proceedings of both the Oxford and the Edinburgh Conferences. The main speakers were the Princeton of today and tomorrow, the President, Rev. Dr. J. Mackay, and of yesterday, the former president, Rev. Dr. J. R. Stevenson. Past, present, and future met in their similarities and in their contrasts in the Episcopalian type of pulpit of the Presbyterian Miller Chapel.

President J. Mackay gave his observations and appreciation of the Oxford Conference. Oxford Conference invites us to think clearly. Edinburgh Conference invites us to love dearly, and the coming Hanchow missionary conference invites us to act redemptively. After discussing the disintegrating influences the Oxford Conference faced, the speaker made these practical remarks: The church itself must become a true pattern of unity. Within the Christian Church nothing should be condeoned that would be questioned ethically in economics. God, not mammon, is the Lord of the Church. There must also be the feeling of Christian solidarity. Men who receive large salaries must voluntarily contribute some of their income, for example, if not harmful to their dependents. The underpaid Rocky Mountain preacher is in need of a living wage. The church must review its own deposit of truth. We must know who we are, and who others are. The church must gain an increasing knowledge of its own nature. The unit around which the New Testament is centered is the church. Finally, the members of the church must have the needed insight in the truths for which the church stands. Our youth must be taught theology with a popular appeal.

The former president, Dr. J. R. Stevenson, remarked that Dr. Mackay's speech was better than the Oxford Conference itself. He pointed out that Oxford was supposed to be practical but that it turned out to be a tournament of wits of theologians. Edinburgh was more democratic, although not as learned. These are the gains of Edinburgh according to this commentator: A sincere recognition of the indefensibility of a divided church, coupled with a sense of shame. A determined will for unity. Theological differences were discussed and compared. Many questions were not touched upon by the speaker. We know that denominations are a result of sin, but it is begging the question to aver that the result is sin. Grace abounds where sin is, but grace itself does not become sin. A thing can

be the result of sin, but not sinful in itself. Denominations in many instances have originated in opposition to sin. They have also been, historically, custodians of liberty. One often wonders how much cogency there is in the logic that missionary difficulties resulting from a divided church should force the church at home to forget the differences. Are missionary difficulties a criterion of truth? Perhaps our age ought to have a sense of shame for forgetting the good that came from denominations. In reading the last issue of *Christendom*, especially the editor's contribution, one wonders whether or no the importance of truth has received sufficient emphasis.

### Calvinistic Philosophy Club

The photographs fail to flatter Westminster Seminary's new home. This seminary is envired by beauty. On the campus, and surrounding the campus, one feels the inspiration from mountains, trees, and quietude. If Westminster should ever have summer retreats for pastors the very location would be a nerve tonic. Here the fall meeting of the Calvinistic Philosophy Club was held on the morning of the opening day. The Rev. Dr. W. Burggraaff gave an interesting history on "New Scholasticism." He also promised to continue his studies in comparative metaphysical presuppositions of New Scholasticism and Calvinism. A constitution was adopted.

It was also decided to publish "The Proceedings of the Calvinistic Philosophy Club" annually. In the near future mimeographed copies will be in circulation.

Dr. C. Van Til has been elected president, the Rev. E. F. J. Van Halsema, vice-president, and Dr. J. T. Hoogstra, secretary-treasurer.

### Eastern Theological Conference

This conference met the nineteenth of October in the Northside Christian Reformed church of Passaic, N. J. The morning meeting was taken up entirely by a discussion on an American Calvinistic Conference. Perhaps next month our CALVIN FORUM readers may be able to know more about it. Our enthusiastic young attorney, Mr. John Hamersma, gave a splendid paper on "The Constitution and Social Progress." The Rev. M. J. Broekstra was chosen president, the undersigned vice-president, and the Rev. A. Borst of Clifton, secretary-treasurer.

J. T. HOOGSTRA.

Englewood, New Jersey.

# RELIGIOUS NEWS CHIPS

● In Japan Dr. Kagawa, who made a very successful tour from a financial point of view throughout the U. S. A. a couple of years ago, has been forced to take a vacation because of his ailing eyes. His restless soul will allow him, however, no rest. He is finishing a book on the life of Jesus. He will undoubtedly stress the social significance of Christ. From his past utterances and writings, one hopes too much if he expects the doctrine of vicarious atonement as understood by historical Christianity to color his presentation of the Christ. He is also preaching to the fishermen of the region of his retreat. His noble soul must burn in protest against the Japanese invasion of China! Dr. Hirakawa of Tokyo has declared that 90% of the Japs are opposed to the militaristic aggression of their country. Kagawa does not stand alone.

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● The Roman Catholics in Australia have been making real headway in their endeavor to secure Governmental aid in financing their schools on the ground that they are doing valuable state-work and are forced to pay taxes for state-controlled educational institutions from which they receive no benefit. The Church of England, supported by the leaders of the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist Churches, the Church of Christ, the Salvation Army, and the Society of Friends, has officially and publicly opposed the Catholic bid. Among the most serious defects found among the Churches, allegedly belonging to Christ, is their disagreement on the proper type of education for the little lambs in their flocks.

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● Appointed October 12 to the Chair of Christian Education at the Princeton Theological Seminary, Dr. E. G. Homrighausen, 37, one of the leading exponents of Barthianism in America, author of *Christianity in America*, pastor of the Carrollton Ave. Evangelical and Reformed church in Indianapolis, and lecturer in Church History at Butler University. Princeton has also recently appointed as a guest professor in Systematic Theology Prof. O. Piper, colleague of Barth in Göttingen, successor to him at Münster, and deposed by the Hitler Regime. Dr. Frederick Bronkema, instructor in Systematics since the beginning of the academic year, is also known to be very appreciative of the Barthian position. Has Princeton gone Barthian? The Rev. H. S. Brown, Executive Secretary of the Chicago Presbytery, has been appointed vice-president and instructor in Church Administration. W. P. Farmer of the Western Theological Seminary teaches in the department of Homiletics, and J. S. Bonnell of the Fifth Ave. Church of New York City in Pastoral Theology. *The Presbyterian Guardian* suggests that these appointments are indicative of a compromising spirit upon which it looks askance.

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● Mr. Fegert, an earnest student of Jewish affairs and of Zionist meetings, was staggered to find that those Jews who contemplate a return to the land of their fathers have a humanistic, unscriptural and godless outlook. Bible students should be very wary in finding in this nationalistic and political emigration to Palestine a fulfilment of Jehovah's promises of a return to the home land.

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● The Palestine question is a thorn in the flesh of the long-suffering British government. They have discovered what the prophets have declared long ago, namely, that the people of Israel constitute a stiffnecked generation. This may be said with just as much truth about their cousins the Arabs. The happy or unhappy solution of the partition of the land was and is actively resisted by the rebellious Arabs and condemned by eloquent Jewish leaders. Compromise often satisfies no one. Italy fans the fire by posing as a friend of the Arabs. That is

perhaps little more than an expression of their anti-British sympathies. The latest device, enacted Oct. 20, by the Palestinian Government, is to adopt a policy of restricting Jewish immigration to numbers thought advisable according to the political condition of the country. (Formerly it was according to the economic absorptive capacity of the country.) This policy would seem to be the beginning of the end of making Palestine a home for the much-abused Jew. He is not even wanted in Palestine.

\* \* \* \* \*

● Hopes are entertained that the Student Volunteer Movement, which showed such signs of vitality a score of years ago and has been gradually reduced to dormancy during the last two years, may be revived. Dr. Paul Judson Braisted, 34, for a time missionary for the Baptists in South India and associated for six months with E. Stanley Jones, has been placed in charge of the awakening. Let me suggest a way. Don't use the serum labelled "Occidental Civilization Will Save the World." The organization went to sleep because of that opiate. Here is something far better for this erstwhile enthusiastic missionary organization, to-wit, "Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God, is the only Savior of Men."

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● Canon B. I. Bell of Providence declares, "The Public, finding next to no doctrine from the pulpits, and weary of beautiful ideas and sentiments spun out of the void, has stopped going to Church." Of course, he's right. The Churches' chief business is to preach the gospel of Christ and to teach the whole counsel of God. This is the only field of endeavor in which the Church can have no adequate competition and in which it can hope to excel.

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● President James H. Franklin of Crozer Theological Seminary sees a threat to the Church's liberty. Within ten years there will be a struggle for freedom of speech, he predicts. Governments are interested more and more in dominating religious life. The Church must lead, he advises in effect, and prayerfully seek after the truth in the fields of economics and international relationships. That would be the surest way, I believe, in bringing about a reign of governmental muzzling. Why not lead and seek the truth in the field of religion? Let the Church take care of its own business and it will more probably be left unmolested and it will be, though less directly, far more influential in working as a leaven.

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● Dr. Canon Hugh Richard Lowrie Sheppard, 57, England's leading pacifist, tireless social worker, enthusiastic detective story reader, first radio preacher in Great Britain, and chaplain to four kings, rests because of a heart attack Oct. 31. Death is no respecter of persons. It spares not even those honored by kings and beloved and admired by all.

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● Dr. Henry Hospers, professor of O. T. Languages and Literature in the Western Theological Seminary at Holland, Michigan, passed on after three years of ailing health, Oct. 25. He was beloved and appreciated by his colleagues, revered by his students, respected by his fellow-citizens, and regarded as a qualified leader in the Reformed Church in America.

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● Dr. Leander S. Keyser, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology at Hamma Divinity School, fell asleep Oct. 18. He was a defender of the faith of historical Christianity, a Lutheran in his confession, a prolific writer on theological themes, and a lover of birds in whose interest he has written at least three volumes.

H. S.