

THE CALVIN FORUM

A MONTHLY

The Angelic Song

Christmas Editorial

The Munich Conference

Peace Before War!

An Historic Ox Wagon

South African Centenary

Karl Barth's Theology

Alterations and Weaknesses

Primacy of the Intellect

A Discussion

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The CALVIN FORUM

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ANGELIC SONG AND REDEMPTIVE FACT AN EDITORIAL

"GLORY to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased." Such are the words to which the heavenly hosts gave expression in joyous song as they celebrated the birth of the Savior. They were not playing the prophet's role by proclaiming what needs must be fulfilled after the significance of the event is appreciated by men. Neither were they singing a song of hope—hoping that men will realize what the incarnation of the Son of God means and will then glorify God and promote peace among men. This song was nothing less than a declaration of a fact. Regardless of the reaction of the authorities and of the peoples to the event that transpired in Bethlehem, it did and does mean glory to God. There would be glory to God in it, even though all men should reject God's way of salvation. The birth of Jesus was a great step in that marvelous plan of salvation and the realization of that plan, together with every step in it, glorifies God.

If the celebration of the angels is to constitute a pattern of proper Christmas reaction, we are then not called upon to initiate glory to God, but rather to recognize the fact that God was and is glorified in the incarnation. It is the privilege of the celebrants of Christmas to share with the angels the recognition of a fact. But one wonders as he looks about at the spirit of men and the trend of affairs abroad and at home, whether the angels will not be singing alone. It does not seem that the voices of men, women and children will in large numbers mingle with those of the heavenly choir. Russia has been silencing, and will probably continue to silence, the voice of those who dare to acknowledge the fact that God was and is glorified in the birth of the Christ. Germany in godless mockery laughs down any recognition of divine glorification.

But why continue the parade of nations? This is not primarily a national problem, but an individual one. Men everywhere, round about us, are so absorbed in the things that are here and now, that they have no admiration for the broad processes of redemption nor for any part of it. Didn't someone somewhere say that men have eyes that see not, and ears that hear not, and hearts that do not understand? On no other occasion does that observation seem more true than when men stand before the

fact that God was and is glorified in the miraculous event that occurred a few miles south of Jerusalem. The appropriateness of men's commemoration should and can always be measured not by his attitude toward his fellow-beings but by his reaction to the declaration of fact made by the angels.

The second part of the angelic proclamation is no less a statement of fact. The thought of the angels was not that there would be peace among men. Neither was it an expression of a vague hope that all men may after a while live with each other in peace. There was and is peace among men in whom God is well pleased. That's the message. The question of the application and appropriation of the peace is another one.

In the contemplation of the birth of Jesus, men tend to err in the same direction as they do in reflecting upon any other aspect of the life and death of Jesus. They seem to insist that the primary question is how did or do these things affect man, when as a matter of fact the more important thing is how did they affect God. That is the angle from which the angels approached this matter. It was not only an event that glorified God, but it also occasioned God's peace to come among men. The first and most important step in the establishment of peace is that the party offended be reconciled. God's peace could not radiate from him and go to men unless the offense of which men are guilty was removed or in the process of being removed. The significance of the drama of Christ's birth, life, suffering and death means very little when viewed from the angle of its direct influence upon men. The important question is what was its effect upon God. The greatest objective factor in life is God's attitude towards us. If that has not been modified by the historical events that took place in the shepherds' village in Judea, we shall have no occasion to rejoice in this Christmas season. But something did happen and it occasioned a release of divine peace among men in whom God is well pleased. The angelic proclamation does not tell us that there was peace among men toward one another. So it is often misinterpreted. The heart of the message is then missed. But it is the peace of God having been or being reconciled with men. That is what the angels detected and gave expression to. They realized too

that the peace of God was not indiscriminately distributed, but given to specific individuals who are the objects of divine redemptive purposes. Hence the proper observance of the birth of Jesus calls for a recognition that God is at peace with the subject.

We have been humanizing the conception of Christmas so much that our songs are of a vastly different spirit than that of the heavenly hosts. They sang songs of fact proclaiming what part God played in the birth of Christ, the Lord. We sing songs of hope expressing our desires as to what may happen to men. We hope for peace among men in their mutual relationships. We trust that mutual exchange of gifts may foster peace and good will. We begin to prate about peace among nations. We urge kindness to our neighbor, be he an individual or a nation. We miss the inducements that angels had.

Last year, I think it was, a prominent American theologian asked the question in all sincerity, Shall we abolish Christmas? He answered it in the affirmative. Something of the hollowness of our celebrations he detected. The spirit of observance is promoted by men interested in the matter for commercial reasons. Even those men and women who give of their time and efforts and who contribute lavishly for the purpose of securing the articles that the poor and others may appreciate, fail to promote real Christmas cheer. We'll have to go back to the angels. They will inform us that Christmas celebration consists of the recognition of two outstanding facts. Both deal with the divine side of the story of the Son of God coming into the flesh.

H. S.

In Pursuit Of An Ideal

IN the midst of all the world-stirring events of the last weeks comes the announcement that Secretary Hull has concluded a trade agreement with Great Britain and Canada. To those who feared that the Munich appeasement might have brought nationalistic Germany and Great Britain closer together and have made a trade agreement between the two great English-speaking nations an impossibility, this may come as a surprise. It comes as a pleasant surprise to those who have admired Secretary Hull's quiet pursuit of his goal.

There are of course many who, regarding themselves as hard-headed and realistic, believe that this latest trade agreement is but another concession to foreign nations and a further sacrifice of American industry. The spokesmen for the opposition are already making themselves heard and will undoubtedly continue to do so later in Congress. Their criticism is based upon the possible loss that producers and manufacturers, in those lines in which we have agreed to reduce tariffs on goods coming in from England and Canada, may suffer. Just as our high tariffs have been built up by demands of our

producers for protection of thousands of items threatened by foreign competition, so any concession whatsoever is likely, at least for a time, to endanger the favored position of such producers. But such critics do not seem to have learned the lesson that, "we cannot eat our cake and have it too." In foreign trade, just as in domestic trade, it is practically axiomatic that if we wish to sell we must buy. If, therefore, we are intent on maintaining our world markets, in order to maintain employment of labor for example, we must buy from others just as we want them to buy from us. And in a world now divided against itself by trade barriers, tariffs, embargoes, subsidies, etc., the continuing or reviving of trade will mean mutual concession.

We may, of course, as some would have us do, discourage foreign trade and move in the direction of economic self-sufficiency. But it would seem that the only justification of such a policy (since it is generally conceded that exchange is necessary to industry) would be fear of the rest of the world and confidence in the measure of security and abundance of resources that we have. Practicable as such a policy might conceivably be for so fortunately situated a people as the American people, it is impracticable for many a small impoverished nation today. If it has the will and the power, such a nation will eventually resist the crushing effect of such a policy and will resort to anything necessary, even war, to end it. The only comfort of nations pursuing isolation policies then will be their comparative isolation and the strength of their armies and navies. And whether the having of strong armies and navies tends to prevent wars or to cause them is, as every one must admit, an open question. As long as they enjoy the comfort of not being drawn into war, nations pursuing the isolationist policy must feel the discomfort, one would think, of following merely a negative, not to say a selfish, policy.

It cannot be admitted, however, that a policy such as that of Secretary Hull is merely an idealistic, unrealistic one. Its purpose is the stimulation of trade, and the bitterest attacks of its opponents have not proved that it fails to do that. We must give and take, at least for a time it would seem, if we are to restore trade. Those who must give, raise the clamor against reciprocal tariff agreements. The others are likely to remain silent. But what seems to be misunderstood is this, that the restoration of world trade, including especially the benefits accruing from buying goods cheaper as the result, because bought when they can be produced most cheaply, will help bit by bit to stimulate domestic trade, so that even industries temporarily hit by foreign competition may gain by a measure of improvement in the home market. Secretary Hull's policy may not only be the most idealistic policy with reference to foreign trade, it may very well be the most realistic. This we should realize because it is certain to be subjected to attack with the realignment of our political parties in Congress.

It is possible as the better critic insists that we may be caught "out on a limb" if, geared up to the world trade, a world war should suddenly break upon us or if Great Britain should feel compelled to side with Germany,—and, as some have thought, therefore against us in trade policies. The latter does not now seem to be at all imminent, and, so far as the danger of world war is concerned, we are out on a limb anyway. We would fight only in case of defense we tell ourselves and the world, and so we would adopt a policy of isolation as a matter of defense. But what is defense and what is offense? What may not be regarded as offense in world crises as tense as those of the past few months!

Who did not feel sorry for Mr. Hull when a few days ago with England apparently drawn away from us, it seemed that all his building had been in vain? Who does not feel relieved at the announcement of this latest treaty? But, in spite of what might have happened or what may happen, can we afford to sacrifice the ideals implied in Mr. Hull's program, so long as there is an opportunity to give expression to them? Our failure to give expression to them in the past is responsible for a situation in which it seems to some people unwise to give expression to them today. For what defense can there be, ultimately, for following a negative and a morally destructive policy?

H. J. R.

Toward Security

THE emphasis on social security has been unmistakable in the last few years, and the achievements in this field have been quite remarkable, considering the retarded movement in that direction in the years before. In addition to workmen's compensation we now have governmental old age assistance, old age pensions, and unemployment insurance, and health insurance in some form is undoubtedly on the way.

It is not surprising that this almost too rapid introduction of one new type of protection after another should have awakened or intensified opposition. Workmen's compensation was bitterly opposed in this country until the United States supreme court declared it constitutional in 1910. But from 1910 to 1933 little was done other than some rather inadequate planning for dependent mothers and children. It appears to many today as if we have suddenly taken to coddling the masses, and as if we are, therefore, training or permitting the development of a class of "leaners." This is deplored not only because, as it is contended, it tends to weaken individual initiative but also because it will inevitably tend to hurt business. Both our individual and our national integrity are at stake, we are warned.

Such criticism, if tempered and reasoned, is necessary and should be wholesome. There is danger of swinging to an opposite extreme from that of the period before 1933 and of encouraging the growth of

evils as bad as, or worse than, those which we have had to fight in the last few years. Granting this, however, we should be reminded that the striving for individual and group security is not new. In ancient society the individual was in a real measure lost in the group but his life was also as secure as that of the whole group. This was true of the patriarchal family, for example, and of the tribe. It was true in large measure throughout ancient and mediæval times. The individual had, it is true, often to sacrifice much to gain the security which the feudal lord or bishop assured him, but he must have preferred that to "going it alone." In the boundless opportunities offered man after the period of discovery of new lands and after the industrial revolution men dared to venture out beyond the old boundaries, the old protections; and men enriched themselves and gave expression to the human spirit in a measure not known before. But the loosening of the old ties which had bound men, at the same time that it enfranchised some left many others helpless. And we have gradually awakened to the realization that in our rapid individualization we sloughed off much that was essential to real group and individual living. We know now that we must emphasize both security and individual freedom.

In the light of this realization the announcement of the General Motors Corporation, this past week, that it would put into effect in 1939 two plans whereby some 75% of its 150,000 employees would be guaranteed an "annual wage," or a close approximation to it, comes to us with particular force. It should mean much to these thousands of employees that they can look forward with certainty to at least 60% of their standard wages every week of the year. Such certainty will not only make possible provision for necessary payments, but also remove certain worries, and, it is hoped, contribute to the peace of mind necessary to real efficiency and productivity. For is this not an attempt to give to the laborer what every salaried man values so much and what every individual with a competence great enough tries to assure himself and his family by means of insurance and annuities?

But it won't work, people say. Industry cannot afford to do this, and human nature is so perverse that it will take unfair advantage of any such security. If true this must, it would seem, be a reflection on any kind of financial security, that of the well-to-do as well as that to be provided for the masses. And it ignores the fact that men may also be more efficient if relieved of some of the worries they have to bear. But can it be done! From the time of the first demands which organized labor has ever made of management down to the present the usual answer has been, "It can't be done." And in most instances it finally has been done.

We readily give in to what appears to be impossible. And as Christians we so easily give expression to the statement, "Sinful human nature simply does not permit of such realization." But when we as Christians say human nature is perverse we have

but just begun to say what must be said. In our experience we have learned something of the meaning of the paradox, "We cannot, yet we must." For what we cannot by our nature do we are enabled to do. This very season of the year reminds us of the way that paradox has been resolved,—in Him who came and died that we might live. And does not human history teach that what seemed humanly impossible has been made possible, time after time? The Christian, with all the assurance that Christ means to him and with all the perspective of history, should be the last one to drop consideration of a new venture with the statement, "It can't be done."

True, just as the naturalism and the false individualism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced the problems we are now trying to solve, the naturalism, rationalism, and humanism responsible for the social approach today will not and cannot give us a panacea. There is in it, it must be admitted, a recognition of the organic nature of society. But there is not in it a power sufficient to change fundamentally our human attitudes. To ennoble human motives so that we may have real individualism within a framework of real group organization and group control we need something no mere change in organization will provide. For just that reason, however, there is in all this a new challenge to the Christian today. H. J. R.

The Perennial Jewish Problem

A FANATIC Jewish lad kills a German representative in Paris. The Jewish people in the land of Hitler are punished for it. The authorities have among many other unjust reprisals levied a fine of one billion marks against the Jews dwelling in the land of Hitler. The German people are expressing their own disapproval of the people of Israel in such a ferocious and thorough-going manner that it has seriously upset some of the economic plans of those in authority. The anti-Semitism had gotten to be too *anti*, and the people ordered to be a bit more temperate in their fanaticism. The incidents in Germany have forced the attention of statesmen to face the question squarely. Perhaps a solution for the problem will be found before this goes to the press. But it would seem to be hopeless in looking for a solution in the direction in which most of them are looking, to-wit, in the direction of a territory where they may have independent national existence. That solution was first suggested by Dr. Herzl, a Vienna journalist, in his book, *Der Judenstaat* (1896). Statesmen have played with the idea of a separate Jewish nation ever since. But they seem to forget that it will invariably mean an imposition upon a people already in possession of a designated land. England may have wanted to place the Jews in Palestine, but there were the Arabs who for many centuries possessed the land. They too have their national rights. And the diffi-

culty that England has been experiencing is of such a kind that they are contemplating giving up the idea of giving Palestine to the Jews. Mussolini is reported to be favorably inclined to let the Jews have the barren stretches in Abyssinia, but the Abyssinians will ask, and that quite properly, Haven't we as well as the Jews a right to live as a distinct people in the land which we and our forefathers have possessed for centuries? Furthermore, whatever solutions the statesmen may offer, it should do justice to that kind of occupation for which the Jews have a special aptitude. What they are entitled to is not only a bit of land to which they may be shipped, but an opportunity to develop economic security for themselves. Just a year ago, a South American country received Jews on the condition that they remain on the soil back in the country. They were expected to develop a country that failed to sustain human life before. But the Jews naturally gravitated to the commercial centers where they could earn a living for themselves and their dear ones. When the government became aware of this migration to the cities, it threatened the people with expulsion. The statesmen must find a place for them among the nations, preferably in the industrial and commercial centers. If Jewish characteristics necessitate certain legal restrictions, these can be adopted and enforced without the crushing of a people. But such restriction need not be reduced to persecution. H. S.

The Odor Is Bad

THE November elections of 1938 in the United States of America are over. The control of many of the states has passed from one party to another. But it doesn't seem to make even a ripple in the course of our social, economic and political life. In the pre-election days every available means of publicity was employed to inform us of the dire consequences if the opposite party should get into control and about the Utopian conditions that would prevail if the speaker's (or writer's) party should be put in or kept in control. But just a few days after the election the vast majority of our people seem to be entirely oblivious to all the prophecies of doom and the promises of weal. That is peculiar about American politics. We become exceedingly upset in the pre-election days, but when the elections are over we tend to "kid" one another about the results, and for the rest we go much as we did before. We don't take a campaign nearly as seriously as the pre-election noise and excitement would seem to indicate. That is perhaps one of the reasons why a campaign of villification is taken so lightly. Said a friend of mine, "When I approach the polls, I hold my nose, rush in to vote and then rush out again." Now though it is true that the stench usually disappears rapidly after the elections, it is nevertheless an aspect of our political life that needs the

most serious form of rebuke. Men of high moral character cannot without the greatest difficulty be induced to take part in any campaign, because they do not care to have their names besmirched with false campaign filth. They refuse to run for office, because they know that they will be dipped into the cesspool of political campaigning. And this method beclouds the real issues at stake. The voter fails to

get the facts which he needs to vote intelligently. The outstanding impression that is frequently left is that we are called upon to select from men of black characters one or more to have and to exercise authority over us. It is high time that the respectable citizenry of our communities adopt effective measures to flush out the filth from our political campaigns.

H. S.

THE MUNICH CONFERENCE

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THE Munich agreement continues to hold the center of the international stage. In world interest it eclipses for the time being the conflict in the Far East, where China and Japan are waging the greatest war since the treaty of Versailles. The agreement of 1938 promises to be a turning point in the history of Europe, and in view of the whole European set-up, in view of the peculiar three-cornered conflict of forces—Communism, Fascism, Democracy—it may well prove to be a turning point in the history of the world.

That the representatives of democracy should be willing to meet the Fascist twins around the conference table was itself a matter of significance. But aside from this, the conference was perhaps unique in the history of international relations in that it completely reversed the usual order of procedure. A peace conference it was, yet there had been no war. A peace treaty, ordinarily entered into after the contestants have tried out their strength on the battlefield, was here drawn up in advance of war. Yet exactly as though the contest had been decided by force of arms there was a victor and a vanquished, and it was the victor who dictated the terms. It was peace without war, but not peace without a price.

Was the price worthwhile, and was the decision at Munich wise and just? On these questions there will perhaps be for years to come an honest difference of opinion, just as there has long been a difference of opinion on the question of the responsibility for the World War. France and England were faced with an exceedingly unpleasant and difficult dilemma. They had to choose between peace on such terms as Hitler was willing to offer or assume the responsibility of dragging Europe into war. That these two nations were in part responsible for permitting the dilemma to arise does not lessen or efface the dilemma. They faced this dilemma realistically, weighing the probable results of war over against the known terms of peace. It was realism rather than idealism which dictated the terms of peace, but may we not concede that it was

at least a sane realism, tinged with a measure of humanitarianism? This more favorable interpretation may at least be claimed for the representatives of democracy when they agreed to an acceptance of the terms. Their role was not an enviable one, and full well they must have realized that whatever their choice, whether for peace or for war, their choice was likely to stand condemned by contemporaries and posterity.

Chamberlain and Daladier chose for peace, and this decision of theirs has been called "Judas-like." Is this extreme condemnation justified? Does the accusation not assume that these men willingly and cheerfully betrayed Czechoslovakia into the arms of Fascist imperialism? Had they chosen for war, would the results for Czechoslovakia, for England and France, and for the cause of democracy have been more favorable than they are today? Conceivably might the results not have been far worse? In the event of war, whether democracy would have lost or won in the struggle with Fascism, would not Communism, the enemy of both, have gained in relative strength, and would not the civilization of a large part of Europe have collapsed? It was no doubt momentous considerations such as these which induced the representatives of England and France to pay the price demanded by Hitler. They did so, not cheerfully, but reluctantly and sadly, and as is the way of the vanquished with a realization of their own helplessness and defeat, with a realization, too, of the political and moral consequences for themselves, for their countries, for the cause of democracy. Realists they were—but does not their decision also manifest a measure of idealism?

Yet the hard, sad fact remains that peace was purchased at a price and that this peace has changed the whole European situation as profoundly as though Germany had fought and won a major war. The changes wrought by the Munich agreement may prove to be more far-reaching and lasting than those of the World War. It is still too early to evaluate the full significance of this agreement, but an attempt may be made to point out a few of the obvious or more probable consequences.



BENES was president of the last democracy to survive in central Europe. He stood for international law as it should be, rather than for international law as it is. He is the symbol of statesmanship, of law and order, of justice and liberty, of integrity and scrupulous fidelity to treaty obligations. For these reasons, among others, Hitler, with his perverted sense of what is right and wrong, could no longer stomach him. As the price of peace Hitler demanded that England and France abandon this friend and ally of theirs in central Europe, and that they go back on their plighted word and their sacred treaty obligations. Czechoslovakia, in the picturesque phrase which expresses America's moral condemnation of this act, has been "sold down the river." For England especially, who has helped to shape many of the principles of International Law, the agreement seems like a sacrifice of almost everything for which she was supposed to stand. What central European state, what state anywhere, will now have the hardihood to ally itself with England? Should another European crisis arise, what guarantee does France have that England will not sell her down the river? In fact, has England not already done so, and has she not thereby reduced France to the position of a third rate power? The loss in moral prestige for England and France and the cause of democracy is incalculable.

Whether this loss is also irreparable is a question that time alone can answer. Democracies possess a resiliency and elasticity that is lacking in dictatorships. "The dictatorship cannot face failure; it means the destruction of such a regime. Democracy, provided its leaders frankly recognize their mistakes, can adjust itself and correct its errors. This makes me confident that democracy is far from lost." These words written by President Benes before the crisis of September, 1938, may afford a measure of hope. It is the democratic leaders who have failed, not the democratic form of government as such.

Not only morally but also politically have England and France gone tobogganing. As a result of this agreement the whole structure of collective security by which peace has for some time been maintained in Europe has collapsed. The system of alliances has been torn down and as a result the balance of power has been altered radically. This balance is now in Germany's favor, backed as she is by Italy. Not only has Russia been isolated, but so have France and England, and in their case to a greater degree than was at first apparent.

Though there is some uncertainty as to the meaning and scope of the agreement, one possible and plausible interpretation is that Hitler has been given a free hand to extend Germany's sway in central and southern Europe. Germany is thus in a position to carry out the "Drang nach Osten" idea, cherished by the Kaiser in 1914 and since then adopted by Hitler. Whether or not this is an express stipulation of the treaty, the developments of this year

have shown that France and England are no longer willing or able to offer further opposition to Germany's ambitions in that direction. There is now no obstacle in Hitler's path. He is free to annex the whole of Czechoslovakia, then to turn against Hungary and Roumania. In time he may reach out for the rich wheat lands of the Ukraine. Thus Germany may be on the way toward acquiring a man power that will enable her to meet any enemy in Europe, while the foodstuffs, oil, minerals and other resources of these regions may make her economically self-sufficing and put her in a position to wage a war of long duration.

It is true that Hitler has gone on record as saying that he wishes no more territory. But is there any certainty that this promise will not be broken as his previous promises have been? And even though he keeps his word and no additional central European territory is annexed, the danger to Europe will still be real. For it is now well-nigh certain that these states will continue to gravitate, as they have for some time been doing, into Germany's economic orbit. Already they are shaping their policies accordingly and becoming decidedly pro-Nazi. There is nothing else they can do.

Any hope which England and France may have had of warding off by this agreement a demand by Germany for a return of her former colonies has gone aglimmering. Negotiations to this effect are now under way. France's geographic and political isolation as well as her critical position between Italy and Germany, and England's need of looking to the defense of her life-line to Egypt and Palestine and India may necessitate further concessions on their part. Moreover to these colonies Germany has a better historic claim than to the Sudeten area. With his usual vigor Hitler may now be expected to exert this claim. Should Germany be successful and should she regain, for instance, her West African possessions, she would then be in easy striking distance by warship and airplane of South America. She would in fact be much nearer to South America than is the United States. There is as yet no reason for undue alarmism, but South America may well become the future battleground where the conflict between Fascism and Democracy is fought to a finish.



HOW exceedingly interesting it would be just now to hold an interview with the former Kaiser of Germany. He must have followed the events of the past weeks with a certain amount of grim satisfaction. He was not permitted to carry out the "Drang nach Osten" idea. To block his plans the Allies waged one of the bloodiest wars in history. But it may be doubted whether even the former Kaiser derives much pleasure today from the idea that his plan of 1914 seems about to be realized under the auspices of a totalitarian state and by an irresponsible and unpredictable Hitler. He must have done considerable

musings of late on the irony of history. Twenty years after the allies won the war Germany gains the objectives for which she fought, while all the purposes for which the allies fought, so far as they concerned Germany's position in Europe, have been defeated. In the solution of the central European problem Europe is back where it was in 1914 or even in 1890. Then Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism were contending for the mastery of central Europe. The parties have changed but the problem remains.

Might it not have been wiser in view of present developments for the allies to have given the Kaiser of Germany in 1914 a free hand? In Imperial Germany there was at least democracy of a sort, there were parliamentary institutions, freedom of speech and freedom from religious persecution. Even though the Kaiser had been able to realize to the full his plan of dominating all the territory from

Berlin to Bagdad, the outlook for democracy and for Christianity in these regions would be far brighter than it now is. The solution of the central European problem—unless Russia wrests it from his grasp—now seems to rest with Hitler and his Nazi followers, for whom there is no standard of morality except that which the state decrees.

It is small comfort to England and France today to say that the Munich conference might have been unnecessary if the allies in 1918 had dealt more kindly with Germany, and refrained from their blustering and bullying policy of the past twenty years. The situation of today is due to human errors and blunders of the past. A goodly share of the blame will have to be allotted to German leadership since 1933. But history is more than a series of "ifs" and "might-have-beens." To seek to reconstruct the past on the basis of what might have been is an attempt to give the counsel of perfection.

THE TREK OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN OX WAGON

1838 - 1938

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THERE are in the history of all nations of the world some periods that are of special importance. One of these important periods in the history of Dutch South Africa consists of the twelve hard, long months of the year 1838.

1838 is a year which marks a time of deepest sorrow, desolation and humiliation in the history of Dutch South Africa, but also a year of great glory, salvation and joy.

1938 marks the hundredth year in our commemoration of the sufferings and the joys, of the defeat and the victory of our forefathers, but it also marks a year of new beginnings for Dutch South Africa.

I should like briefly to recount the main events of that eventful year in our history, and also to relate what we, their descendants, are doing to commemorate their deeds.

To follow the events of the fateful year 1838 one should begin by reviewing what occurred towards the end of the preceding year.

The Boers Leave the Cape

Our forefathers, the Voortrekkers, emigrant Boers from the Cape of Good Hope, which to them was no longer a harbor of good hope since the annexation of the Cape by the English in 1806, had arrived in Natal, the new land of hope, and desired to settle down there by the end of 1837. But this new land of hope did not belong to them. Pieter Retief, their leader, a man of peace and justice, desired land not obtained by conquest but by barter or purchase. It was, therefore, decided to approach Dingaan, the all-powerful chief of the Zulus, the natives who then

occupied that territory, with a view to obtaining by fair and peaceful means a certain portion of uninhabited territory in which to settle down after their long and dangerous trek from the Cape. On the 5th of November, 1837, Retief and a party of Voortrekkers arrived at the city of Dingaan, Umgungundhlovo, with this purpose in mind. Dingaan proved to be quite willing to cede certain territory to Retief and his followers, provided they could prove to his satisfaction that they did not shoot some of his people and take their cattle. On the 8th of November Dingaan wrote a letter to Retief, in which he referred to this matter in the following terms: "Now, as regards the request you have made to me as to the territory, I am almost inclined to cede it to you: but, in the first place, I desire to say that a great number of cattle have been stolen from my country by a people having clothes, horses, and guns. The Zulus assure me that these people were Boers. . . . My great wish, therefore, is that you should show that you are not guilty of the matters alleged against you." Retief willingly accepted this proviso, and, having in the meantime obtained information that the real culprit was another native chief by the name of Sikonyella, resolved during December to send some fifty men to recover the stolen cattle from him. The cattle were easily retaken, and were then sent on to Zululand. Retief returned from this expedition on the 11th of January, 1838. At a meeting of the Trekkers called by Retief it was then decided that Retief himself should accompany the cattle to Dingaan's kraal or city. Retief also decided to send a letter in advance reporting what had happened at

Sikonyella's. This letter Dingaan received on the 21st or 22nd of January. Dingaan was not pleased with what had occurred, and on the 23rd he dictated a letter to Owen meant for Retief. In this letter he said that Retief lied to him, as Retief had promised to deliver up Sikonyella as a prisoner. This was untrue, as Owen tried to show Dingaan. Owen now realized that Dingaan was playing a double game, and had no doubts of his hostility to the Boers.

The Great Massacre

On January 25th Retief left with a party of some seventy men for Dingaan's kraal, not without some misgivings. On the morning of their departure morning-prayers were held in the tent of Governor Retief. Then with hearty handshakes, heavy hearts and amid final admonitions to be on their guard against treachery, they mounted their horses, fired a parting salute and set out on their last journey. They arrived at their destination on the 3rd of February, and on the following day the document of cession was signed. It read as follows: "Know all men by this that Whereas Pieter Retief, Governor of the Dutch Emigrant South Africans has retaken my Cattle which Sikonyella has stolen which cattle he the said Retief now deliver unto me—I Dingaan, King of the Zoolas, do hereby Certify and declare that I thought fit to resign, unto him the said Retief and his Countrymen (on reward of the Case hereabove mentioned) the Place called Port Natal together with all the Land annexed, that is to say from Dogeela to the Omsoboeb River westward and from the Sea to the North as far as the Land may be useful and in my possession Which I did by this and give unto them for their Everlasting property." February 5th was spent as a day of rejoicing and entertainment, in which the Zulu chief tried to impress the Boers with his riches and might, and on the next day these trusting Boers were coldbloodedly massacred by Dingaan's soldiers on his instructions: "Slay the wizards: Bulalani Abatagati!" Dingaan was determined to wipe out the white menace: he thereupon gave orders to go in great force and destroy the Boer "laers" (encampments). On February 17th the Zulu impis fell on the Emigrant "laers" at Blaauwkrans: it was not an attack or onslaught but a descent in the dark on a community all unsuspecting and fast asleep. One can only imagine what happened: man, woman, child and servant were indiscriminately killed by the murderous hordes: very few escaped; and yet some succeeded in warning the furthestmost encampments in time to offer some effective resistance. Foremost in the recovery once they were apprised of the situation, were Gerrit Maritz and Charl Celliers, two of the best leaders among the Trekkers after Retief. They proceeded to attack the attacker: the Zulus were charged by the combined forces and driven back, and finally completely routed. Thereupon they returned to the scene of the massacre: dead,

dying and wounded were to be seen everywhere; the valley presented a scene of utter desolation; 41 men, 56 women, 185 children and some 250 servants had been slaughtered! This place is known to this day as "Weenen" (Weeping).

Discouragement and Defeat

One can easily understand the mental and emotional reactions amongst the Trekkers after these shocking experiences. There were men and women who favored abandonment of all idea of settling in Natal and wanted to retreat over the Drakensberge into the Orange Free State or Transvaal territory. But the majority were in favor of staying and punishing the treacherous Dingaan. An appeal was made to two strong leaders of other treks still across the Berge, namely Hendrik Potgieter and Piet Uys. They responded by coming to the assistance of their brethren. A force of some 350 men was brought together and divided in two sections, one commanded by Potgieter and the other by Uys. On April the 10th the joint commando came in sight of the van of the Zulu forces. The two sections decided to attack independently; they were led into an ambush by the wily Zulus, Uys was killed amongst others and his men put to flight, Potgieter and his men were also forced to seek safety in flight, and the Trekkers experienced one of their worst defeats. This commando has since then been aptly called the "Flight" Commando. In disgust Potgieter returned across the Berge, and it seemed as if Dingaan had finally triumphed. Retief and Uys dead, Potgieter gone away, and Maritz in very bad health, the Trekkers were really in a bad way. They had to look out for a new leader. On April 18th a representative of the Trekkers was sent to the Cape to interview Andries Pretorius, who had previously paid a visit to the Trekkers, to ask him to accept the leadership of the emigrants in Natal and to undertake the punishment of Dingaan. He could not go immediately. In the meantime the Trekkers had to do without a leader, Hans de Lange, a most courageous man, acting as leader. On the 13th of August he was attacked by the Zulus at "Veg Lager" (Fighting Encampment). It is said that the attacking Zulus numbered fully 10,000, the fight was desperate and finally the small emigrant force, some three hundred strong, succeeded in driving the enemy away. This victory gave the Trekkers new courage and showed them that they were still able to inflict a decisive defeat on the Zulus. This might be called the "Fighting" Commando.

The Victory of Blood River

On September 25th Maritz died and the Trekkers were now without a single recognized leader. But in the meantime Pretorius had accepted the invitation to become their leader. He arrived at the Emigrant encampment on the little Tugela River on November 22nd, and was formally elected leader. He immediately set about making careful prepara-

tions for the punitive expedition. On December 4th a commando of 464 men under Pretorius set out. Discipline was strictly maintained and a very orderly force was on the march of retribution. Pretorius considered that ox wagons were absolutely necessary on this march as a means of defense. He issued orders that a camp should be formed by means of these wagons, and that this should be their fortress on the march. On the 7th of December still on the march, the Voortrekkers took the now famous Vow of Danskraal, the place where they now camped. Pretorius had previously raised the question of a vow with Charl Celliers. Accordingly, Celliers, in the presence of the whole force, standing on a gun-carriage, prayed to God in Heaven, and then addressed the men, asking them to promise, if God gave them victory over the heathen Dingaan, that they would celebrate the day of triumph, year by year, as a holy Sabbath to the glory of His name and that they would tell their children to do likewise. All the men present testified their agreement. A further vow was made that they would build a church to the glory of God.

On the morning of December 15th, the commando reached a tributary of the Buffalo River, named Ingame, the Cattle river, by the Zulus, but ever since then known as Blood River. Here this small force of determined, God-fearing men decisively defeated the flower of Dingaan's forces, numbering some 10,000 warriors all picked for bravery. Pretorius gave the fleeing enemy no rest and on the 20th he reached the city of Dingaan, now deserted and in flames. Reverently they gathered the unburied remains of the Retief party and buried them. Pretorius also found in Retief's leather pouch the deed of cession still in perfect condition. Early in 1839 the "Win" Commando arrived back at the main encampment.

That in brief is the history of this eventful year 1838.

Let us now come to 1938, the centenary of a momentous year in the history of Dutch South Africa.

The Coming Centenary Ceremonies

Preparations for a true and worthy celebration of the centenary year have been in progress for quite a long time before the actual year of celebration.

I shall now try to relate what we are doing over here to commemorate in a fitting way the sufferings and the brave deeds of our forefathers and mothers.

One of the main events of this year of celebrations will be the laying of the foundation stone of the colossal Voortrekker Monument at Pretoria, the administrative capital of the Union of South Africa. A most beautiful site has been chosen for the erection of this impressive monument on one of the surrounding hill tops, which commands a unique view of this city. A masterly conception of the monument drawn by architect Moerdyk has been accepted by the Monument Committee and building opera-

tions have been in progress now for some months. The main aim is the laying of the foundation stone of this monument on the 16th of December, 1938, the centenary of the great and decisive victory of the Voortrekkers over Dingaan at the battle of Blood River. The funds for the erection of this monument have been collected from all people, rich and poor, private and public, Afrikaans- and English-speaking, from state and church. The general response has been very good, but the total needed has not yet come in and further attempts are still being made. When this monument will have been completed, it will be a token of our respect, worthy of our forefathers and mothers. Even now, still more than two months ahead, all eyes are fixed on Pretoria, all hearts are yearning for the day, all feet are set on the road to Pretoria. Arrangements are already being made to cope with the vast crowds that are expected there at the final ceremony on the 16th of December. For those who will not be able to attend the national ceremony at Pretoria, smaller or larger functions are being arranged at various central places all over the Union. A function, which is rivalling that of Pretoria, will be the one to be held at Blood River itself on the same date. Enthusiasm all over the country is gradually reaching unknown heights. What it will be on the final days, is hardly imaginable.

The Trek of the Ox Wagon

A second event, that has already caught the imagination of all Dutch South Africans especially, is a strange procession of ox wagons moving at a leisurely and triumphant pace from Cape Town, the legislative capital, to Pretoria—a symbolic trek! The "Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging" of the "Spoor-bond" are the originators of this most novel idea of imprinting on the minds of all South Africans what the Voortrekkers did and what the Great Trek meant. The idea is very simple indeed: a typical ox wagon of model 1838 is to follow "the path of South Africa" from Cape Town in the extreme southwest to Pretoria in the far northeast along all the more important points on the road taken by the original Trekkers; and this symbolic trek is to be a typical trek by ox wagon. This symbolic trek has now been in progress for two months, and has been in fact a triumphant march. It has started in Cape Town on the 8th of August and will reach Pretoria in time for the final celebrations on the 16th of December. It will be quite impossible, owing to lack of space, to follow this new trek along its trail, but I should like to mention just a few of the more important events and incidents on its way.

The Trek, though symbolic, is in every detail a real trek; the typical ox wagon of 1838 drawn by a full span of Afrikaander oxen, complete with tent and outfittings and necessities, with trekkers, man, wife, children and servants on the move northwards and eastwards. The departure from Cape Town was in the form of a triumphant exodus: laden with all

earthly necessities, accompanied by all sorts of ancient and modern vehicles, motor cars, trollies, lorries, Cape carts, donkey carts, push bicycles, pedestrians by the thousands. It looked like a complete emigration of all Cape Town's inhabitants; it was a grand, magnificent send-off. At Goodwood, on the outskirts of the city, an impressive function took place: warm speeches were delivered, songs were sung, a religious service was conducted, prayers were sent up for the welfare of these trekkers, relics were freely given to be taken along for a Voortrekkers' museum. Between two towns the wagons are escorted by people, half way they are met by a commando of horsemen, a new span of oxen, and all sorts of conveyances. In one long procession the ox wagons and their accompaniment move slowly and impressively to the next place on the program. There they are received by all the prominent people: mayor, magistrate, minister, teacher, farmer. On the open square a ceremony takes place; the trekkers are welcomed in word, song and prayer; speeches are made by the leader of the trek, by the mayor of the town or city, by a specially invited "Feesredenaar"; concerts are held; patriotic verses recited and sung; old people recount what they remember about olden days; around a camp fire "boere-wors" (sausage) is grilled on large gridirons; groups are gathered jesting and playing, but also earnestly conversing about the glorious past. And everything is finally rounded off by a religious service conducted by one or other of the Dutch ministers. And then the trek is seen off on its way further inland.

Effects of the Historic Trek

For the benefit of those who cannot attend, owing to distance, illness or whatever cause, a radio report of what takes place is sent over the air, and so we live every day with the ox wagon on its trek from Cape Town inland to Pretoria. In most places the attendance has been more than hundred per cent, people from the adjoining towns and districts attending in large numbers. So great has been the enthusiasm, that the original trek has had to be extended, and now instead of having one trek we are recapitulating the Great Trek itself by having several treks slowly moving along the vast areas of our South Africa. In this way more districts and towns may see the ox wagon in action.

One of the first and finest fruits of this symbolic trek can even now, long before the end of the trek, be stated: the trek is awakening a spirit of true co-operation and unity between people of the most divergent political points of view. How wide this political rift has become, only he can appreciate who knows how seriously we South Africans take our politics. Politics over here is more than a question of administration and government, it is in the last instance a question of national self-preservation. This trek is awakening a powerful and intense feeling of national pride and self-respect, of national independence and liberty. Another fruit that we of

the conservative section are hoping for is a re-awakening of our national religious life: our forefathers and mothers were intensely religious and God-fearing. Wherever this trek is welcomed a religious ceremony and service forms part and parcel of the reception, and one may hope that this turning to God will bring about a return to God of so many of the descendants of the Voortrekkers who have deviated from the "ou paaie" (the old ways). A fine, rather superficial and undoubtedly temporary effect of this trek is a turning back to the modes of living of the Voortrekkers; they lived, clad and ate simply. Our women folk are dressmaking: they intend to attend the year's ceremonies clad in garments similar to those worn by their Voortrekker ancestors. We men, not to be outstripped and striving to outdo our women, intend not only to wear clothes like those of the Voortrekker men but to look like Voortrekkers by letting our beards grow like those of our forefathers, who were naturally enough beard-growers owing to circumstances. It is a most amusing and interesting sight to see the usually clean-shaved Dutch South African sporting at present a more or less attractive beard. Some of us look veritable patriarchs.

Teaching the Rising Generation

A last event, worth mentioning in this respect, is the action of our Provincial Education Departments. Knowing that the child of today is the man of tomorrow, they have issued at the beginning of the current school year special instructions to the schools, suggesting with a view to the Voortrekker Centenary which is to be celebrated at the end of 1938 that schools devote special attention to the history of the Voortrekkers during the year. They consider the Centenary of the Voortrekkers one of the most important mile-stones in the history of South Africa. Over the length and breadth of our country ceremonious gatherings will be organized to commemorate the heroic deeds of a century ago. The steps to be taken by the teacher in his school in this connection will be obvious. The Great Trek is to take a more prominent place than usual in his history lessons, while his pupils are to be encouraged by him to read books on the Great Trek, recite poems thereon and to write essays and letters on subjects connected therewith. He should endeavor to impress deeply upon his pupils in all school activities the meaning of this event to South Africa. The Education Department of the Province of the Orange Free State has gone even to the extent of issuing detailed suggestions for the guidance of the schools. The first group of suggestions comprises a memorandum indicating how the Great Trek could become a starting point for instruction in the several school subjects; the second consists of recommendations on school activities during the year in view of the Centenary; and the last gives a list of books and data which could be utilized.

And thus we are trying to celebrate in a worthy way the Centenary of the Voortrekkers.

THE THEOLOGY OF KARL BARTH

ALTERATIONS INDICATIVE OF WEAKNESS

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OUR article on the revision of Barth's *Lehre vom Wort Gottes* reviewed such revisions as made for greater consistency in the statement of his fundamental position. There are in the revision also other alterations, doubtless meant to clarify and to rectify the statement of his position, but which nevertheless fail in this purpose and thereby reveal the inherent weakness of his view. I have in mind his repudiation of the term, *Urgeschichte*, his repudiation of the idea of an extratemporal revelation, his discussion of the notion of time as determined by the revelation, and his new discussion of the verbal inspiration of the Bible. The present article aims to acquaint the reader with these features of Barth's revision of his *Lehre vom Wort Gottes*.

Urgeschichte

Urgeschichte is a term which F. Overbeck employed as an aid in the historical study of the origins of the Christian Church and its proclamation. This history is visible as an unknown quantity behind the New Testament sources which presents itself to and at the same time eludes historical investigation and presentation. In the original edition of the *Lehre vom Wort Gottes* Barth employed the term to indicate the peculiar relation that obtains between revelation and history. He desired to reserve the term, superhistory, for the eternal activity that goes on within the Trinity between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Yet since the revelation is the revelation of the triune God, it partakes of or participates in superhistory. But the revelation consists in this, that it has pleased God to create the world as a reality distinct from Himself and to create man as an I distinct from Himself, and in this world to address this man as a Thou recognizable by man. In the Incarnation God posits Himself as flesh, as man in time. Thus the revelation partakes not only of the eternal superhistory but also of history. The term, *Urgeschichte*, was reserved for the revelation in Christ beginning with His incarnation and culminating in His resurrection, because of this its sharing in both, the eternal innerdivine activity and the ordinary history in time. Thus we may summarize what is found on pp. 230-232 of the original edition.

The term was deemed necessary not merely for distinguishing the revelation from the superhistory, but also for distinguishing it from ordinary history. Not history is the revealing activity of God. An investigation of the concept of history will not lead to a determination of the concept of revelation. The peculiar historicity of the revelation consists herein, that God in person speaks to us. That makes the revelation more than history. As the speech of God

in person, the revelation can be heard only when God in person is heard, when He causes Himself in this speech to be heard by men. If this speaking and hearing is lacking or if we abstract from it artificially, then the *Urgeschichte* as such, though surely history, cannot at all be discovered in history (p. 232 f, orig. edit.).

But all history as such can be testimony of the revelation, reflex of its light, echo of its voice. For all history transpires in the sign of man's contradiction of God and with himself, and the revelation is the proclamation, in this sign, in history, in the flesh, of God's victory over the contradiction. Therefore the revelation is the meaning or sense of all history. History is empty of meaning, needs meaning; but it is also, as the incarnation reveals, capable of receiving meaning. The *Urgeschichte* is meaningful. All history has within itself the possibility of being recognition of its meaning as fulfilled in the *Urgeschichte*. This possibility has actually been realized in the case of the prophets of the Old Testament and of the Apostles of the New. Thus has originated the biblical testimony of the revelation in part before the revelation and in part after it. It happens still, again and again, wherever God manifests in the flesh, the revelation in Jesus Christ, finds recognition. Thus we might condense what Barth unfolds down to p. 254 of the original edition. In passing, we may note, that thus the reason becomes clear for his preferential speaking of the Old and the New Testaments as testimony of the revelation, and that by so doing he discounts the revelational character of the direct messages received from God by the prophets and the apostles and subordinates these messages to the revelation in the Incarnation.

Urgeschichte and Extratemporal Revelation

We have seen that in the first edition Barth employed the term to indicate the peculiar relationship that obtains between the revelation and history. In the revision he repudiates the term, *Urgeschichte*, for this purpose (vol. 2, p. 64). The term is unfit because in it history is the noun and *Ur* the attribute; but revelation is never a predicate of history, but history is a predicate of the revelation. There is another angle to the problem that is here involved: if revelation is not some kind of essence extracted from history, does it in any sense enter the temporal realm at all? Barth acknowledges that he has erred also in the direction of the denial of the temporal character of the revelation; to wit, in certain passages of his *Roemberbrief*. He now warns against those "passages and connections that at least toyed and occasionally also operated with the notion of a revelation that remains transcendent

to time and merely bounds time and determines it from without" (vol. 2, p. 56).

This double disavowal of *Urgeschichte* and of an extratemporal revelation would call for such a restatement of Barth's conception of the revelation in its relation to history and to time as would make clear that it is not a predicate of history and that it occurs in time. In fact, these two disavowals are found in such a restatement. Paragraph 14 deals with the time of the revelation and develops the thesis, that "God's revelation in the event of the presence of Jesus Christ is God's time for us. It is the filled time in this event itself. But as the Old Testament time of expectation and as the New Testament time of recollection it is also the time of the testimony of this event" (p. 50). The last two sections under this paragraph are devoted to the time of expectation and the time of recollection respectively, while the first section treats of God's time and our time. It should be borne in mind, that the problem which he is trying to solve here consists of a positive and a negative part. The two misunderstandings which he wishes to eliminate are, on the one hand, that revelation is a predicate of history and, on the other, that the revelation is extratemporal. It can easily be seen, that this peculiar character of the problem invites one to deal with it in terms derived from the idea of time rather than in terms drawn from the idea of history. And so Barth does.

Two Problems

He means to deal with both problems, that of the relation of the revelation to history as well as that of the relation of the revelation to time. He identifies the two problems when he writes: "Let us try first to clarify the sense in which that is to be said, that there, at yonder point of universal time, the light of this special new time can be seen. It is the problem which has played a great role in recent theology under the name, Revelation and History" (p. 61). Or, reversing the order: "The problem, Revelation and History, that is, the question whether and in how far human time can be understood at any one definite point as time of God's revelation, is based on a fateful misunderstanding of this essence of the revelation" (to wit, the veiling of the Word of God in Jesus Christ and the rending of this veil in His selfdisclosure, p. 62). Once more: of the three mistakes that were and are made in this respect, the first is the failure to realize "that in answering this question we cannot proceed from the general phenomenon of time or, as men prefer to say, of history, whose normal structure is thought to be known on the basis of comparative observation, in order to ask, whether and how perhaps at a definite place the phenomenon of the revelation might show itself to this same comparative observation. This must be said about it: The general phenomenon of time or of history in its manifoldness certainly is not the text in the perusal of which any one ever has either directly or indirectly chanced

upon the phenomenon of the revelation. This general phenomenon of time is not even that which in the New Testament itself is called the passing old aeon in view of the coming age" (p. 62). One who thus fails to see the revelation while standing before it as before a wall may be told that the historical as such is in its universality and relativity the necessary offense of the revelation.

Barth means to say, that the revelation cannot be conceived under the ordinary categories of history, nor even under the categories of revelation in general, but must be conceived strictly under categories furnished by the revelation itself, the revelation in Jesus Christ. But in trying to say this in terminology derived from the concept of time, he is building up a rather complex and not perspicuous speculation about time. We have just now heard him say, that the general phenomenon of time is not even the passing, old age of which Scripture speaks. Yet a moment before he has claimed, that "the general, the old time, our time, in so far as Christ assumes it, is the veil and the unveiling is the accomplishment of Christ's purpose in assuming it, namely, to make it His, the new time. As such, in abstraction and alone, neither the old nor the new time are present, but they are present in the triumph of the new time, which therefore is already present, over the old time, which therefore is still present in the revelation. This triumph, this act of victory, in which the victor is already present and in which also the vanquished is still present, this transition from the Old to the New Testament, from the old age which ends with the cross of Christ to the new which begins with His resurrection, this transition is the revelation, is the light of the fulfilled time" (p. 62).

The Time-Speculation

In view of Barth's intentions we should not speak of speculation here, for his aim is precisely to avoid basing the interpretation of the concept of time of the revelation on a concept of time derived independently. Serious inquiry into the time of the revelation, he claims, brings immediate certainty of two facts: 1. that we have no other time than the time which God has for us, and 2. that God has no other time for us than the time of the revelation. Hence the revelation will have to tell us what time is, in order that we may understand the time of the revelation as such (p. 50). He distinguishes between the time which God has created and our time, the time which we think we know and have (p. 52). Between these two times lies the fall, just as the fall lies between our existence and the existence as it was created by God. On the basis of God's Word we may in this, our, time believe that God has created time, but faith is not therefore the removal of this, our, time and does not enable us to identify our time with the time which God has created. Precisely in faith our time, the time which we know and have, is and remains lost, and the time created by God remains a time hid and withdrawn from us. If God's revelation also has a time, if therefore God

has time for us, if we therefore really know and have time in the theologically relevant sense, then this must be another time next to our own and to the time originally created by God, a third time (p. 32).

The problematical character of our time and the hiddenness of created time Barth then proceeds to illustrate with the three great difficulties attaching to the popular conception of time, viz., the problem of the meaning of the present in its relation to the past and the future, the problem whether or not time has a beginning and an end, and the problem what the relationship is that obtains between time and eternity. In the presence of God in His revelation the dissolution of our time into a past and a future is overcome. Without reserve it cannot be said, that the revelation takes place in our time. The time of the revelation is in its kind the time which God originally created, but from that time it is distinct by being no longer hidden. It is the time of the Lord of time, fulfilled time, present with past and future, the past of the expectation and the future of the recollection, or, we may add, present with our recollection of the revelation in the past and with our expectation of the revelation in the future (pp. 53-57).

Meaning and Value of this Speculation

Whatever one may think of the proportion which speculation assumes in this construction, it is undeniably an attempt to do justice to the biblical declarations and implications that bear on the concept of time and of which Barth has much to say on pp. 55, 57, 59, and 60. In Barth's eyes the value of this construction is certainly enhanced by its serviceableness for relating in his own way the Old and New Testament witnesses to the revelation and for maintaining the indirectness of the revelation in our subjective experience as recollection and hope. It also has the merit of the possibility of being read as having a great measure of inner consistency. Time as created by God becomes under the impact of man's fall and sin our time, the general phenomenon of time, lost and empty time, while in the revelation of Jesus Christ it is resurrected from that burial and restored to faith as the filled time, filled with the presence of the Lord of time, Who breaks through the irreversibility of the temporal succession and embraces in His presence also the preceding Old Testament time of prophecy and the succeeding New Testament time of recollection. It should be remembered, however, that this is not quite what Barth says: while this interpretation emphasizes the unity of time, Barth emphasizes the discreteness of the times.

It is exactly at this point, that the time-construction is related to the discarded history-construction upon which it is meant to be an improvement. For the discreteness of these times hinges upon their widely discrete content. But all these various contents, on the one hand of man's sin and on the other of God's gracious revelation in Jesus Christ, certainly

run parallel, are contemporaneous in time as abstracted from its contents, in time in the purely formal sense. Or are they not? In an objective sense, is not the time of the Old Testament expectation formally contemporaneous with the time *ante Christum natum* and the time of the New Testament recollection contemporary with the time *post Christum natum*? Would Barth place this contemporaneousness under the proviso, that it is true only when and where it pleases God to give also the subjective revelation through the Holy Spirit? From there only can these times be distinguished; on this all Reformed theologians are agreed. But does also the objective reality of those times hinge upon the subjective completion of the revelation?

The superiority of this new time-terminology over the discarded Urgeschichte-terminology is far from evident. The substitution rids us of an inadequate term, but its inadequacy could do little harm in view of the satisfactory plainness with which Barth had said that the revelation assumes the predicate of history but that history in general does not have the predicate of revelation. For the attainment of this end the substitution is superfluous, and its other end it fails to realize. Barth can still not say without reserve, that the revelation takes place in our time, as he himself admits, for he has projected into the subjectivity of God the difficulties rooting in man's sin.

Inspiration

Some remarkable alterations characterize the new discussion of the Inspiration of the Bible as it is found in vol. 2, pp. 525-598, particularly pp. 563-585. In this section there are passages which sound as though Barth had been converted to the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Bible. In the first place, he no longer thinks that this doctrine as held in the seventeenth century was unknown to the Reformers. "The Reformers have without misgivings and without reservations appropriated the thesis of the inspiration of the Bible in the sense of its verbal inspiration," "even with the formula that God is the author of the Bible and occasionally with the use of the representation of a dictation received by the biblical writers" (p. 577).

In the second place, this same doctrine was held by the Fathers of the Church a millennium or so before the Reformers. "In the ancient ecclesiastical literature there is observable a tendency to concentrate the interest in the inspiration of the Scripture on a very special point of the circle, even to limit it to this point; to wit, to the operation of the Spirit specially in the origination of the spoken, respectively the written prophetic-apostolic word as such." "There appears already at an early time a tendency to emphasize the fact that the operation of the Holy Spirit in the inspiration of the biblical writers extended throughout in the grammatical sense of the term to the single words employed by them." He refers to Theophilus of Antioch and Pseudo-Justin,

Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Gregory of Nazianzus (p. 574).

In the third place, the doctrine of verbal inspiration was Paul's own. "This Spirit he, Paul, has received, to wit, for the purpose of recognizing the divine blessings of the divine wisdom as such. But he does not view the work of the Holy Spirit as exhausted in this. In strict correspondence with this recognition of the benefits shown us by God's wisdom he believes he can and may now also express them: not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual: in spiritual words measuring and embracing that spiritual reality. In view of this selfdeclaration one cannot assume that Paul has not figured also with an inspiration in the sense of a real and verbal inspiration also of the Old Testament Hagiographa" (p. 572).

One would think, that the recognition of Paul's holding such a doctrine would involve the acceptance of the doctrine by Barth. Indeed, he approves of the statement of Gregory of Nazianzus, that "every little stroke and every line of Scripture came into existence due to the exactitude of the Holy Spirit, even the smallest turn of the writer happened not to no purpose and is not preserved for us to no purpose." He comments: "Here also one will take care, if only in view of Matth. 5:17, not to say anything else. If the witnesses of the revelation in their concrete existence and therefore also in their concrete writing and speaking belong themselves to the revelation, if they have really spoken by the Spirit as they have known by the Spirit, if we are really to hear them and therefore to hear their words, then it cannot be seen in how far we should not have to hear in fact all their words with the same respect. It would then be arbitrary to refer their inspiration only to this and that element in their testimony which perhaps seems important to us, or to refer it perhaps not at all to their words as such but to the opinions and thoughts that were moving them while writing" (pp. 574-575).

Verbal Inspiration with a Proviso

But Barth accepts this doctrine of verbal inspiration only with a reservation: "Provided the inspiration is integrated in the circular movement of God's becoming manifest through the Spirit till and inclusive of our becoming illumined through the same Spirit, then the inspiration of the biblical witnesses which mediates between here and there, between God and us, may and must very definitely be understood not merely as real inspiration but as verbal inspiration" (pp. 575). Outside and apart from this circle in its completion their words are and remain fallible and erring human words.

From a comparison of II Cor. 3:4-18 with I Cor. 2:6-16 he draws the teaching that in its essence and limits the function of the witnesses of the revelation includes three things: that the revelation disclose itself to them, that they can speak of it, and that

their hearers and readers actually get testimony of the revelation. These are the three stages or elements in the one miracle of their being witnesses to the revelation through the Holy Spirit. And he underscores the declaration that this selfdisclosure in its totality is the inspiration of the word of the apostles and the prophets (p. 573).

Inspiration Not Inherent in Scripture?

On this basis he rejects the idea of an inherent and continuous inspiredness of the Bible and criticizes this notion where it appears in the ancient and the mediæval Church as the logical preparation for the Roman Catholic transfer of authority to the Church, the clergy, and ultimately the pope, and criticizes the development of that same idea in the seventeenth century doctrine of inspiration as the setting up of a paper pope in the stead of the self-revealing God and as the gate to the modern interpretation of history as revelation (pp. 571-584).

In this respect he draws a distinction between Christ and the Bible. "The act in which He became God's Word also in His humanity needs neither repetition nor confirmation. But for us on earth He is in this His eternal presence as God's Word hidden, manifest only in the sign of His humanity and therefore above all in the testimony of His prophets and apostles. And these signs are like ourselves not of a heavenly human nature but of an earthly-temporal human nature. For this reason the act of their establishment as God's Word needs repetition and confirmation; for this reason their being the Word of God needs the promise and faith;—and all this precisely because they are signs of the eternal presence of Jesus Christ" (p. 570).

This distinction between Christ and the Bible can be granted. But why it should call for the denial of the continuous inspiredness of the Bible, is not clear. The presence of the Spirit's illumination in the reader or its absence certainly does not alter the objective inherent character of the book which he holds in his hands and whose pages he scans.

INGRATITUDE

And still we know that there are things
 We never mention, never think;
 Things that we take for granted every day.
 The little helps on our rough way
 We casually accept and give no word
 Of thanks.
 A streak of color drawn by some bright bird,
 The warm, sweet taste of fresh picked fruit;
 When these things happen we are often mute.
 Or when bright sunshine slants on a beloved face;
 Or wind bends low a field of Queen Anne's Lace;
 When a book falls open at a well read page;
 And things we love are mellowed by old age;
 We never turn to God and softly say,
 "Thanks for the little helps, dear Lord, today."

—MARIE J. TUINSTR.

THE PRIMACY OF THE INTELLECT IN THEOLOGY

A DISCUSSION

Dear Editor:

Will you please give this article a place in THE CALVIN FORUM? The subject of this article is a matter of vital importance. Dr. S. G. Craig wrote a booklet on *The Revival of Theology in the Roman Catholic Church*. He writes that the Neo-Scholastics of Rome in their defence of the primacy of the intellect are rendering us a service that should have the hearty appreciation of all intelligent Christians. Many of our Holland people seem to favor a Calvinistic philosophy, containing a life and world view. In such a philosophy the primacy of the intellect is consciously or unconsciously maintained. The majority in the Edinburgh Calvinistic Congress seemed to attach more importance to the intellect in the construction of a theological system than should be done. There were at least very few delegates who opposed the primacy of the intellect in Theology. Those who did it were called New Calvinists. According to William Childs Robinson in THE CALVIN FORUM of September, 1938, these New Calvinists held that Theology should be moulded by faith according to the Word of God. One of them, Rev. Saussure, passed adverse comment on Boettner's *Predestination*, because he sets to show that this doctrine is in accord with reason as well as with the Bible. Prof. Thompson opposed the preaching of God, the Creator, from the testimony of the current astronomy—Preach God, the Creator, from the Word, was his thought. Dr. Rutgers feared that the position of de Saussure's is Manichæan in its opposition to reason and philosophy.

If I rightly understand De Saussure and Thompson, then they oppose a Scholastic Theology. But I do not understand why this should be called New Calvinism. Did not Luther and Calvin take the same stand on the Word of God against the Roman Catholic Scholasticism? And did not their stand on the absolute authority of the Word of God bring new light and life into the church? The influence exerted by their stand has even been beneficial to the corrupted Catholic church itself, while the Scholasticism of the Middle Ages had caused its deep fall. And the Theologians in that period considered themselves especially enlightened, but history has stigmatized this period as the dark period. Scholasticism never did any good to the church. In the 17th and 18th centuries a Protestant scholastic Theology was developed in the Netherlands, but it was a bridge for Modernism into the Church. In the same period Scholasticism was predominant in England. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* says that people became weary of Protestant Scholasticism and they became Rationalists or Freethinkers. It was the preaching of the simple Gospel which then saved the church, although it was done by Methodism. Whereas before this preaching began, it was considered an honor to be an unbeliever, this preaching changed public opinion to such an extent that it was thereafter considered an honor to be a believer. In Geneva a few students learned the forgotten Gospel from the Moravian Brethren, and they were instruments in the hand of God to bring about a revival, which spread into the Netherlands and brought life into the Liberalistic dead church. History teaches us that the hope of the church lies in the preaching of the simple Gospel and not in the building up of a scholastic system.

If we would try to build up a theological system in agreement with our reason, we will never come to a pure Biblical Theology, because we will then be compelled to choose between God's absolute sovereignty and the responsibility of man as a foundation to build on. Our reason can not harmonize these two things. Scholastics in Reformed circles consider the absolute sovereignty of God as the kernel of truth which God has revealed in the Bible, and which we have to develop. Proceeding from this principle, we, however, have to build up a deterministic system, because from this standpoint we can not arrive at man's responsibility; and we have to believe a passive regeneration, justification and other doctrines in that line.

If we would proceed, as the Arminians do, from the responsibility of man, then we can not arrive at the absolute sovereignty of God; and we have to deny then the doctrine of unconditional election, perseverance of saints, etc. The Bible, however, teaches us both these principles, and we have to proceed from both these principles, as also Calvin did.

But there is something still more serious. If we are going to believe in the primacy of the intellect, how can we then understand the miracles? We should try then to explain them in a naturalistic way. How can we understand then that a loving God can cast some of His creatures in hell, where they have to suffer everlasting pain? How can we understand then that a just God can punish an innocent person (Christ) for the sins of others, and let the real sinners free? If we take our

stand in the primacy of the intellect, then we pave the way for modernism, which we try to combat.

We have to submit our reason to the absolute authority of the Bible. This, however, does not mean that we then have to accept conflicting ideas. Many ideas appear to us conflicting, but they are not conflicting. That they appear to us conflicting is on account of lack of knowledge on our side. So, e.g., in the days of Columbus the scientists could not believe that the world was round and we could sail around it. It was considered impossible that such could be done, because a ship can not sail up hill. The cause that these ideas appeared conflicting was lack of knowledge.

If before the radio was invented scientists would have been told that in time to come men would be able to talk with each other while great distances apart, then they would have said that such a thing was impossible. In fact some unbelievers had said already: "It is impossible that there shall be a judgment day in which all people shall be gathered before Christ, and that they all shall see and hear Him. The voice of one man does not carry so far that it can be heard by such a multitude." These things simply appeared to conflict on account of lack of knowledge, but in reality they did not.

So God has revealed truths to us which appear to be conflicting, but this is simply because we do not know all the laws and facts in the material and spiritual world. But, since an omniscient and truthful God has revealed them to us, we creatures with our puny reason and limited knowledge have simply to believe them, although it might seem unreasonable. Once we shall understand. It should be with us: "Credo ut intelligam," and not the opposite.

M. BORDUIN.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

1. Our correspondent is quite right in contending that the subject he touches upon is of vital importance. He makes some pertinent observations which have fundamental significance for straight thinking in matters theological. He also confuses a number of things which should not be confused. Hence our attempt to aid in clarifying the subject by means of a few editorial comments.

2. Insofar as the writer protests against the introduction of "scholasticism" into Reformed Theology and calls it a sort of rationalism, his plea is to be appreciated. To build up a theological system in agreement with our reason, rather than in harmony with the Word of God, is deserving of condemnation. This is what modern Rationalism has done and is still doing. The scholastic system of Medieval Roman Catholicism, now revived in a new form, cannot be the model for a sound Reformed Theology either. The Aristotelian logic which serves as the frame work for this Roman Catholic theology, and the dualism between reason and faith which Scholastic Theology has woven into its entire fabric, are unacceptable. The protest and repudiation on this score on the part of the Reformers is as important today as it ever was.

3. Also our correspondent's condemnation of what is usually called the Protestant scholasticism is to the point, if by that "scholasticism" is meant the building up of a system of theology from one fundamental idea, guided by the principles of Aristotle's deductive logic, and in such a way that certain biblical truths which will not harmonize with this logical scheme are repudiated and ruled out. This has sometimes been done by certain extremist currents in historical Reformed theology. The Rev. Mr. Borduin's plea for the simple gospel in its full-orbed biblical, revealed form, as over against such a "scholastic system" is entirely sound.

4. The plea for faith as over against reason is likewise sound and of great importance for Reformed Theology, if by faith be meant the humble acceptance of the Word of God as the source of our true knowledge of God, and if by reason be meant either the human mind as darkened by sin without the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, or a one-sided emphasis on the part of the Christian believer on his human logic by which some revelation truth is denied or distorted. The former is plain Rationalism and Unbelief; the latter is the kind of "scholasticism" to which some Protestant theologians have sometimes succumbed.

5. But it is a great mistake to confuse this exaltation of the human reason with belief in the primacy of the intellect. And this confusion runs throughout the entire article of our correspondent. The correspondent has himself chosen the title at the head of his contribution. He conceives the primacy of the intellect to be the root error of all the errors mentioned

by him. He thinks this to be the error of Dr. Craig in the latter's favorable judgment on the new Scholastic Theology in the Roman Church. He considers it to be the error vitiating every attempt to construct a Calvinistic philosophy. He (though unwittingly, I suppose) lauds the Barthians at the Edinburgh Calvinistic Congress as over against the true Calvinists, who are supposed to have been suffering from this same error of belief in the primacy of the intellect. And finally he maintains that a real believer in the primacy of the intellect must reject the miracles, deny eternal punishment—in short, must be a modernist. All this is a gross misunderstanding, due to a confusion of belief in the primacy of the intellect with rationalism, or the undue exaltation of human reason.

6. The primacy of the intellect is maintained in our day, not by modernists, but especially by the orthodox, and by the Reformed more than any others among the orthodox. The primacy of the intellect stands over against the primacy of feeling or of the will (volition). But the undue exaltation of human reason stands over against the standpoint of faith. It is precisely the modernists who are the sworn enemies of the primacy of the intellect. Their slogans are: No doctrine, but life! It does not make any difference what a man believes, but it makes all the difference how he lives! These modernistic slogans are at fundamental variance with the Christian faith in the biblical and Reformed sense, and the alternative to these slogans is that belief, doctrine, the intellectually formulated treasures of the Word of God are to be accepted—i.e., that it does make all the difference in the world what you believe. All our emphasis upon the need of doctrine, as basic to life, our stressing of the need of catechetical preaching and indoctrination of our youth, is grounded in the assumption of the primacy of the intellect.

7. Belief in the primacy of the intellect has nothing to do with rationalism or the undue exaltation of human reason over against faith, but it means the recognition that all faith is first of all a matter of knowledge. "Primacy of the intellect is the familiar and usual formula in Psychology and Dogmatics to express that in the human soul the intellect or mind guides and directs the will" (*Christelijke Encyclopaedie*, Vol. IV, p. 615). The Heidelberg Catechism (Que. 21) teaches us that faith is "not only a sure knowledge . . . but also a firm confidence," but in this very statement it is implied that faith is a sure knowledge and this is mentioned first. All confidence must be grounded in knowledge. That is the significance of belief in the primacy of the intellect.

8. It may be doubted whether anyone in recent American theology has been a bolder and more fearless champion for orthodoxy and for the Reformed Theology than has Dr. Machen. But it is precisely Dr. Machen (though not he alone) who was a powerful champion of the primacy of the intellect. In his fine little book, *What is Faith?* he writes: "As over against this anti-intellectual tendency in the modern world, it will be one chief purpose of the present little book to defend the primacy of the intellect, and in particular to try to break down the false and disastrous opposition which has been set up between knowledge and faith." (p. 26) He saw that the errors of Kantianism and Ritschlianism in their influence upon present-day theology could be traced back to their repudiation of the primacy of the intellect. (Read also page 23 in the same book. Also Chapter II in Machen's *Christianity and Liberalism* and Chapter VIII in his *The Christian Faith in the Modern World*, entitled "Life Founded Upon Truth.")

9. That it is this primacy of the intellect which Dr. Craig in his booklet, referred to by our correspondent, praises and appreciates in the New Scholasticism is clear from a reading of the pamphlet. One does not need to agree with Dr. Craig in all that he says in this pamphlet, to see that he champions especially this primacy-of-the-intellect emphasis as over against its repudiation by the current Modernism. Note these sentences: "In the fourth place, value and significance attach to the revival of Scholasticism by reason of its opposition to that anti-intellectualism that is so rampant in the modern world. In every sphere the intellect has been removed from that position of supremacy it once universally enjoyed and assigned the position of a servant. In philosophy we have vitalism and pragmatism; in psychology, psychoanalysis and behaviorism; in religion, mysticism, Buchmanism, Barthianism, and what not. It is this anti-intellectualism that is at the root of that indifference and even hostility to doctrine that is so prevalent even among many even classed as Christian teachers, despite the fact that since Christianity is a religion based upon facts with its doctrines in the main simply its interpretation of those facts, a nondoctrinal Christianity is inconceivable. Not only does anti-intellectualism rob Christianity of its content; it militates against its defense and progress . . . In their defense of the primacy of the intellect, and, more particularly, in their contention that Christianity, though not a rationalistic, is nevertheless a rational not an irrational, religion the Neo-

Scholastics are rendering a service that should have the hearty appreciation of all intelligent Christians." (Samuel G. Craig, *The Revival of Theology in the Roman Catholic Church*, pp. 18, 19).

10. Belief in the primacy of the intellect has as such nothing to do with extolling reason at the expense of faith and divine revelation. The latter has been the mark of rationalism and of modernism; the former has ever been the earmark of Orthodox Christian thinking, and especially of Reformed Theology. C. B.

MY HEART'S THANKSGIVING

Can I give thanks for all that God has done for me?
His mercies are as many as the sands by the sea;
His goodness is as boundless as the tides of the shore;
His grace and love are everlasting, ever more.

How can I evaluate His daily benefit
Could any praise of mine be adequate?
For full salvation from my soul's deep wrong,
For His election to the heavenly throng?

First on my nameless list of blessings given
Is this amazing truth of sins forgiven,
Of the abiding sense of Christ in me,
His tender keeping power continually.

Each hour is thus made sweeter in the day,
Each light affliction blesses in its way,
Each joy is richer, truer, and deeper still
Because I am united to His will.

Spontaneous love of children, happy, free;
Small dimpled arms thrown round me lovingly;
Friends that are tried and true of loyal heart—
These of my earthly treasures form a part.

Beauty in seasons, delicacy in flower;
Grandeur in hills; solitude's silent power;
All are the essence of the God triune
And knowing Him is blessedness and boon.

Shall I proclaim material temporal gifts?
Shall I assert the hidden good in rifts?
Could I enumerate the charms of earth
These are as little to the second birth.

That all the best of me (born of His grace)
Emotion, will and intellect give place
To sing His praises in most sweet accord—
This is my heart's thanksgiving to my Lord!

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

PRESENT CONFUSION

Amid the conflict we confess
Finite dependence on Eternal Mind;
Amid confusing "higher consciousness"
The simple truths of Jesus are most kind;
There peace we find.

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.

BOOK REVIEWS

ANCIENT HISTORY IN BIBLE LIGHT

A HANDBOOK OF ANCIENT HISTORY IN BIBLE LIGHT. By Dorothy R. Miller. Fleming Revell Co., New York City. 280 pages. \$2.50.

MISS MILLER is a teacher of ancient history, probably in a mission school or a Bible School where the Word of God has the right of way. She became convinced that the Bible is the key by which history must be interpreted. She attempts, and that quite successfully, to demonstrate that history shows no evidence for the extreme antiquity of man, nor that mankind has shown steady progress as the ages roll by. The author is equally sure that history is a revelation of God's presence and that it is the fulfilment of prophecy.

The first part of the book is an apologetic for the biblical presentation of man's origin and antiquity. The numerous citations from experts in the various fields of science in the interest of her interpretations reveal wide and careful study of this matter. The same defensive spirit manifests itself prominently until we are led beyond the Diluvian Age. After these introductory chapters, the reader is given a survey of the Empires of Babylonia, Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome, together with those of Israel, Judah and other lesser nations. Each step of the way Scripture is drawn in to shed its light upon secular occurrences and in turn to be corroborated by them.

The work as a history will probably be a bit disappointing. As an attempt to interpret history in the light of God's Word it deserves to be appreciated. H. S.

THE DIVINE PLAN

THE HUMAN QUEST AND THE DIVINE PLAN. By W. H. Wrighton. Zondervan Publishing House. 165 pages. \$1.00.

DR. WRIGHTON taught a course in Moral Philosophy and the New Testament in the University of Georgia and in Wheaton College. The work before us was written as a text for the classes that took the course.

The volume bears a slightly devotional character. It was probably cast into that form for the benefit of the general public to whom this volume is offered. Every intelligent layman should be able to read it with pleasure and not without profit.

The author has in his past works expressed his devotion to the Spirit of Christ. This volume constitutes another testimony to his faith. For individuals well versed in the teachings of the Bible this book discusses familiar material. H. S.

TOPICAL BIBLE STUDIES

CORNERSTONES OF FAITH. By J. M. Stainfield. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. pp. 227; price \$2.00.

THE book under consideration is the work of a layman, who has for many years taught a man's Bible class. The author describes it as "the result of my topical study of the Bible for many years." The general scheme controlling the arrangement of the topics discussed is that of systematic theology. At the same time the doctrinal material is interspersed with a great many discussions of practical subjects. The whole work breathes a devout spirit. While it is naturally somewhat fragmentary, it is on the whole well written, and adduces a wealth of Scripture material to substantiate the positions taken. The writer does not hesitate to take his stand on the Bible as the infallible Word of God. As a true follower of John Wesley he accepts the doctrine of the freedom of the will, and considers man as still on probation. At the same time he believes that man is saved only by grace, a grace that should issue in a sinless life, but that can also be lost again. In eschatology he is a Postmillennialist, who regards the Millennium as the last great revival. He rightly maintains

over against Premillenarians that the plan of salvation is ever the same, that the gospel will continue to be the effective means of salvation, and that all the dead will be raised up at the same time in a general resurrection. Like them, however, he too believes in the conversion of Israel as a nation. The book contains a good deal of edifying and instructive material, but should be read with discrimination, since it is tinged with Arminianism.

L. BERKHOF.

BOOK BREVITIES

Dinabandhu: A Background Book on India. By Ruth Isabel Seabury. Friendship Press, New York. Cloth: \$1. An excellent little background book on India, giving one the flavor of the life, beliefs, customs, and practices of the country. But very disappointing on the gospel to be preached in India, viz., a humanistic Jesus. See the view of Jesus on p. 148.

Tales from India. By Basil Mathews. Friendship Press, New York. Paper: 50 cts. True-to-life tales—96 pages of them—from Indian life. Missionary flavor and background, but the gospel of the cross is singularly absent from these pages. Social uplift and the practice of the universal brotherhood of man is held to be the essence of Christianity.

Vivid Experiences in Korea. By a Missionary Doctor, William H. Chisholm. Foreword by Dr. Howard A. Kelly, Chicago Bible Institute Colportage Assn. pp. 136. Price: \$1. Refreshing stories from Korean life exhibiting the power of the gospel. In striking contrast to the above publications of the Friendship Press.

China Marches Toward the Cross. By Earl Cressy. Friendship Press, New York, 1938. pp. 79. Paper: 25 cts. A vivid account of what is going on in China in recent months. Missions have justified themselves gloriously. China, according to the author, is full of hope. Christianity may be facing a wonderful new opportunity in this land—all on the assumption that China will win the war.

The Secret Empire. A Handbook of Lodges. By Theodore Graebner. St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House. 1927. This handbook gives the gist of the beliefs, aims, and practices of some forty lodges for men and some ten lodges for women. In addition there is a discussion of college fraternities and junior orders. It is well-known that the Missouri Synod Lutherans, among whom the author is a leader, has consistently resisted the encroachment of secret, oath-bound societies upon the church and has been strong in warning Christians against the evils of the lodge. This book of 243 pages is very informing. It is interesting to note also a brief discussion of groups like the American Legion, the Boy Scouts, the Rotarians, and other societies not secret and oath-bound under a separate head.

Masonry. By James Putt, Th.M. Zondervan, Grand Rapids. Paper: 25 cts. A popular address exposing masonry as an evil to be opposed by the church.

Some Foundation Truths of the Reformed Faith. Brief Doctrinal Outlines by the Rev. Donald Beaton. London, Sovereign Grace Union. 1938. pp. 64. sh. 1—. The Sovereign Grace Union is known for its staunch adherence to the great verities of the Reformed Faith. This is one of its publications. Chapter headings: The Absolute Sufficiency of Holy Scripture; The Triune Jehovah; The Fall of Man; Unconditional Election; Particular Redemption; Effectual Calling; Justification; Final Preservation; The Last Things. Clear and sound exposition, with references to further literature.

The Borderland of Right and Wrong. By Prof. Theodore Graebner. 4th Edition. St. Louis, Concordia Publishing Co. 1938. pp. 122. Apart from the discussion on adiaphora (i. e.,

things morally neither commanded nor forbidden), on which the Reformed might not agree with a Lutheran, this little book contains a good deal of fine sanctified common sense on matters of right and wrong in present-day practices. Amusements, drinking, card playing, dancing, use of tobacco, cremation, and many other subjects are taken up. This conservative Lutheran professor is guided by the Word of God. His judgment in moral things is on the whole, sane and scriptural. We could wish this little book in the hands of all sincere Christian people.

The Guest Chamber. By S. C. Parker. (The Thorn Press, Toronto, Canada), Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, Va. pp. 125. Price: \$1. Seventeen splendid meditations on matters that center around the rite of Holy Communion. The treatment is marked by sincerity, simplicity, and genuine spirituality.

The Message from Patmos. By Rev. David S. Clark. Kregel's Book Store, 525 Eastern Ave., SE., Grand Rapids, Mich. 148 pp. Price: 75 cts., cloth. A commentary on the book of Revelation within 148 pages. Simple, clear, sound. The author is an orthodox Presbyterian scholar and calls himself a post-millennial fundamentalist. He criticizes the premillennial view throughout.

Daily Manna Calendar. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids. 75 cts. A devotional leaflet for each day of the year 1939. Written up by Reformed, Christian Reformed, and Presbyterian ministers. Sound and edifying material. Why not get the Christian daily calendar habit?

Peter, the Man Jesus Made. By Hillyer Hawthorne Stratton. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1938. \$1. Popular devotional sketches on the Apostle Peter by an orthodox Baptist pastor, son of John Roach Stratton.

Youth's Problem No. 1, or, Friendship, Courtship, and Marriage. By Alfred L. Murray. Grand Rapids, Zondervan. Cloth \$1.39. Moral pep talks to youth. Straightforward, stressing especially the difficulties associated with sex life. Wholesome, though the religious motive might be stressed more.

G. Campbell Morgan, Bible Teacher. By Harold Murray, Zondervan, Grand Rapids. \$1. Campbell Morgan, the peerless expository preacher of two continents, is sketched here briefly by the pen of a friend. Much of the account gives Morgan's own words and opinions.

That Men May Know. By Walter D. Kallenbach. Zondervan, Grand Rapids. \$1. Sermons by a blind Baptist preacher. The exegetical element is rather weak, but the evangelistic appeal is strong.

Christ at Every Turn. By Karl Frederick Wettstone. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1938. \$1. Twelve popular Sunday evening sermons by a Presbyterian minister. Full of good counsel.

Tomorrow Begins Today. By Bertha Moore. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1938. \$1. A woman speaks to mothers about their children, stressing their need of being converted and coming to Christ.

Filled! With the Spirit. A Book of Devotions. By Richard Ellsworth Day. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1938. \$1.50. A one-page devotional message for each day of the year. In distinction from the wall calendar, in book form. Neatly bound. One could wish the author had honored the Scripture passages more by unfolding them.

Exposition of Reformed Doctrine. By Rev. M. J. Bosma. 5th Edition. Zondervan, Grand Rapids. \$1.50. This book was written more than 30 years ago and its author has been dead some 25 years. His book lives on, having served the purpose of indoctrinating Reformed people in the essentials of the Reformed faith. The order followed is that of the standard works on Dogmatics: the doctrines of God, of man, of Christ, of salvation, of the Church, of the means of grace, and of the last things. The form is that of questions with extensive

answers. The material presented is clear and easily grasped. Dr. Beets has added a few footnotes in this fifth edition, bringing it up to date. This manual will undoubtedly retain its value for years to come.

The Christian School: The First Line Trench. Educational Convention Papers, 1938. Chicago, National Union of Christian Schools. Five addresses on the Christian Day School. This 64-page booklet will serve as splendid propaganda material for the cause of Christian instruction. Especially the addresses of Professors Berkhof and Kuiper are excellent.

Vital Issues, 1938. American Federation Reformed Young Men's Societies. Grand Rapids, Mich. A 35-page booklet offering the addresses delivered at the 1938 annual convention of the young men's societies of the Christian Reformed Church. The theme: Solidarity versus Individualism. The young men's position as Christian in and toward the church as well as society at large is discussed in the light of scriptural principles.

Missionary Ideals. By the Rev. T. Walker. London, The Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 39 Bedford Square. 1938. One shilling. The Inter-Varsity Fellowship is the outstanding orthodox student movement in Great Britain. It has published a number of volumes for student use. This is a booklet of 92 pages intended as a manual for mission groups. It is a study of the Book of Acts with a view to the missionary ideals it offers and the solution of missionary problems it presents. An admirable little handbook for the purpose. C. B.

WHAT IT MEANS

The world is full of Christmas-time,
And, wandering about,
I see great crowds through shops and stores
Go rushing in and out.
And while each busy city street
With hurried people teems,
I murmur, "Is *this* Christmas?"
And I wonder what it means.

I hear the sounds of revelling
As people lilt and swing
In hectic celebration
Of this great, eventful thing.
A laugh comes from a table
Where a form unsteady leans,
And I query, "Is *this* Christmas?"
While I wonder what it means.

But when I turn from scenes of men,
And raise my searching eyes,
Another voice in softest tones
Responds from out the skies:
"Behold, to you is born this day,
According to the Word,
In David's city far away,
A Saviour, Christ the Lord."

And ah, this voice sheds over me
A spell that will not cease,
While to my inmost heart there creeps
A deep, abiding peace.
For through the din that's 'round about,
With all its varied scenes,
It breathes the heart of Christmas
As it tells me what it means.

—VERNA SMITH TEEUWISSEN.

CORRESPONDENCE AND NEWS

A London Letter

Dear Mr. Editor:

As your readers are aware, 1938 has been observed in this country as "Bible-Reformation Year," with special reference to the royal proclamation of 1538 ordering that a copy of the Bible in English should be placed in every parish church throughout the realm. The celebrations culminated in a magnificent demonstration held in London's largest auditorium, the Royal Albert Hall, on October 31. The date was well chosen, for it was on All Saints' Eve, 1517, that Martin Luther nailed his theses to the door of the Castle Church, Wittenberg; and the meeting appropriately commenced with his celebrated hymn, translated as "A mighty fortress is our God," sung with good effect by some ten thousand voices. Commander R. G. Studd presided, and Prebendary H. W. Hinde, Principal of Oakhill Theological College, offered prayer, after which the vast audience united in reading Psalm xlvii.

The first speaker was Sir Thomas Inskip, Minister of Defence, who remarked that the combination of the words Bible and Reformation in the title of the celebrations was felicitous, for, whatever might be said to the contrary, it was the Bible which brought about the Protestant Reformation. They thanked God for Luther's witness to the doctrine of justification by faith which he found in the Bible, but long before his time the Reformation had begun to dawn in Britain when John Wyclif published his translation of the Word of God, and sent forth his "poor priests" to proclaim its precious truths. "What a wonder it must have seemed, a mercy almost beyond belief, when men realized that they might approach God through Jesus, the sinner's Saviour, without the intervention of any other priest, and through Him might find pardon and peace." The doctrines of the Reformation were then outlined by the Rev. H. T. Chilvers, of Hove, formerly minister of Spurgeon's Metropolitan Tabernacle. Mr. Chilvers recently published a small volume entitled *Is Calvinism Dead?* in which he answered the question with a vigorous negative. A rousing speech followed from Mr. J. A. Kensit, Secretary of the Protestant Truth Society and Wyclif Preachers, who was largely responsible for the organization of this splendid gathering.

The XXXIX Articles and Calvinism

The Anglican Church Congress held at Bristol last month had for its subject "The Gospel to this Generation." At the official services and sessions, however, the message of salvation by grace seemed to be less in evidence than the "Social Gospel," the "Gospel of Education," Anglo-Catholicism or some "other Gospel." An Evangelical demonstration was organized by the Church Association, at which large numbers gathered to hear addresses by such stalwart Calvinists as Principal W. Dodgson Sykes of the Bible Churchmen's Missionary and Theological College, Bristol, and the Rev. Isaiah Siviter of Ilfracombe. At one of the Congress sessions Dr. W. R. Matthews, the Modernist Dean of St. Paul's, attacked the XXXIX Articles of Religion, basing his case on the fact that "they were compiled by men who took the inerrancy of Scripture for granted" and whose "theological standpoint was Calvinistic." The doctrine taught by the Articles concerning sin and salvation required drastic revision in the light of modern psychology, "nor could their teaching on the Incarnation remain unaffected by new knowledge concerning the nature of personality." "It seems grotesque," he added, "that any one who asks today for an authentic statement of Church doctrine must be referred to a set of statements often designedly ambiguous, engendered in and by the controversies of the Tudor age." Unlike the Dean, Roman controversialists find the Articles far from ambiguous, while John Wesley found it necessary to revise them drastically in order to support his Arminian views. It is satisfactory to note that Dr. Matthews' proposal for the revision of the Articles was recently rejected by a large majority of the Convocation of Canterbury.

One result of the Evangelical Revival which swept England in the XVIIIth century, was the formation of voluntary organizations which have done much to keep spiritual religion alive, both within and without the National Church. Foremost among these organizations, at least in order of time, was the Church Missionary Society founded in 1799 by avowed Calvinists like John Newton, Thomas Scott and John Venn. Sixteen years ago, as a protest against the Liberalism which had invaded the ranks of the old society, some of its keenest members formed the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society on a distinctive exclusive basis of the plenary inspiration and consequent reliability of the sacred Scriptures and of the veracity of all the utterances of our Lord Jesus Christ. The society now has representatives in all parts of the world, and a theological

training college to which reference has been made above. Preaching at St. Peter's-upon-Cornhill, London, on the occasion of the autumn valedictory, the Rev. G. Neathy, of Blackpool, remarked that although prejudice against Calvinism lingered in some quarters its doctrines were never more needed by the Church. Missionaries and ministers, if they were to be effective, must be vessels of election, predestinated to salvation and to service.

Two Significant Addresses

Professor J. A. Findlay, of Didsbury Methodist College, who contributes a theological column to *The British Weekly*, a leading organ of religious Liberalism in this country, has lately been discussing the differences between the Apostolic Church and Modern Churches. "Why does a man become a Christian?" he asks in a recent issue. "We tend to think that a man becomes a Christian as he might become a Communist, because he decides to 'accept' Christianity, his own personal decision being the decisive factor. . . . It is a fine and noble way of thinking, but all its nobility does not alter the fact that it is so remote from the thought of the New Testament that it makes nonsense of three-quarters of it. . . . [To St. Paul] Church members were God's chosen people not because they were all that they ought to be, but simply by God's choice. . . . If this point of view was simply characteristic of Paul's epistles, we might discount it as a relic of his Pharisaic predestination ideas, but it also underlies the Gospels." With engaging frankness Dr. Findlay disclaims any attempt "to push an unacceptable dogma down the throats of unwilling people, much less because I am a Calvinist. I do so because, if this difference in point of view exists, we ought to face it, and ask ourselves if our Christianity is the real thing."

The autumn gatherings of the Congregational Union Assembly held at Bradford last month were remarkable for a trenchant address delivered by Mr. Bernard Manning, Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, who reproached his fellow-Congregationalists with having largely abandoned the theology of the Reformation. "We have churches," he said, "where the inheritance of the Reformers has been almost lost, because the Word of God has almost gone. The great Bible, which formerly occupied such a conspicuous position in the chapel, has disappeared. The readings from the Old and New Testament Scriptures have dwindled to a snippet of a lesson. The hymns are not paraphrases, nor charged in every line with Scriptural content. They discuss mountain scenery (with emphasis on the sunset), psychological disorders, priggish ambitions and political programs. The preaching of the Word has evaporated into flabby platitudes about the dangers of the international situation, or the benevolent commonplaces of Ella Wheeler Wilcox expressed even more prosaically than in her poetry. The great sacrament of the preached Word, preached by dying men to dying men, which was the great tradition of our forefathers, is going, or has gone, from some Congregational churches. And we have a doctrine of development the very image of the Pope's. It is the Scarlet Woman, though she wears a Quaker's bonnet. We, too, know of a spirit which takes things of Christ to improve upon them, which leads us, if not to the Vatican and the Immaculate Conception to notions equally unscriptural: which promises 'a dispensation of the spirit' where historic Christendom becomes only a stage in our emancipation. Some of us will be, like the German Christians, emancipated from the Sermon on the Mount in a year or two. A Congregationalism which thinks lightly or coldly about the Word and the sacraments, will surely, however slowly, set itself outside the communion of Christendom. No man needs the gift of prophecy to predict that; for that has already happened to what was once a sister Church as evangelical and orthodox as our own. English Presbyterianism, at first the most splendid of the three dissenting bodies, clung only to the *negations* and abandoned the *affirmations* of the Reformers. In the XVIIIth century it wilted in Arianism and perished in Unitarianism. Congregationalism in the XXth century appears to be in danger of repeating that pitiful and shameful story. It is a path which some of us seem not loth to tread."

British Science

It has been remarked that scientists seldom attract widespread attention by statements of a strictly scientific character. This year's meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science were scarcely noticed in the popular press, a circumstance probably due to the unusual restraint which characterized the speakers. The old confident tone with which the members were wont to propound their theories, seems to have vanished, with the result that the sensation-seeking public finds little to interest it in the proceedings. An important paper was read before the Anthropological section by Dr.

Alwan T. Marston on the results of his excavations and research work in the Thames Valley, and particularly his discovery of the so-called "Swanscombe Skull," described as "the oldest specimen of humanity yet discovered in Britain." From examination of this cranium, it is computed that, even at the remote period to which it has been assigned, man had a brain comparable with that of his present-day descendants. Dr. Marston proceeded to show how the hypothesis of man's simian ancestry has thus been still further discredited.

Cordially yours,
S. LEIGH HUNT.

London, 11th November, 1938.

From Boston and Harvard

Cambridge, Mass., Nov. 17, 1938.

Editor of THE CALVIN FORUM,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dear Professor Bouma:

When your request for a New England letter came some days ago, I happened to be reading a volume of sermons delivered in Park St. Church, in Boston, a hundred and twenty-seven years ago, by Edward D. Griffin, then pastor of the church. Needless, perhaps, to say, even the table of contents of the collection reveals the unequivocally Calvinistic character of the collection of discourses. Today, when Unitarianism and a variety of other forms of religion (Boston can boast almost as great a diversity of religious groups as Los Angeles is reputed to harbor) have almost completely supplanted the old Calvinistic tradition in New England, it is interesting to observe that in the same pulpit which Rev. Griffin occupied when these sermons were delivered in 1812, the same doctrines of "Total depravity," "Supernatural regeneration," and "Divine election" are still being preached to congregations of fifteen hundred and more people. The present pastor of the historic church at "Brimstone Corner" is Rev. Harold J. Ockenga, a graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary, at Philadelphia.

It will doubtless be of interest to readers of the Forum at least to those living in the Eastern section of the country, to know that during this past summer, an effort was made to organize a series of annual "Reformed" Bible conferences at a site near Portland, Maine. The time would seem to be particularly propitious for inaugurating such a project in this section just now, inasmuch as there is a number of energetic young Calvinistic ministers and missionaries active, throughout New England, in a vigorous and sincere endeavor to propagate the Reformed Faith, and to heal the forlorn appearance of the religious scene in so many New England towns, by rehabilitating a goodly number of churches that have fallen into disuse in the course of the last few decades. The existence of a summer camp and conference ground, operating as a New England center of the Reformed conception of Christianity, would be a great boon to this missionary activity as well as to the cause of Calvinism generally.

The visit of the Very Reverend W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's, to Harvard University this past week, has been a matter of considerable interest to religious observers in the vicinity, as well as to an appreciably large number of Harvard students. His series of addresses here was rather unique for the Harvard of today, inasmuch as it represented a forthright critique of "liberal Christianity" and of Humanism in the name of Evangelicalism. He emphasized the need of faith viewed as a relationship of personal trust to Jesus as Lord. His series of addresses terminated on Sunday with a sermon on the Forgiveness of Sins, in which he pointed out the need of recognizing the disruptive character of sin and the need of forgiveness, and addressing himself finally to those for whom forgiveness is a matter of actual experience, he said: "We are not saved by Psychology, nor by Ethics, nor even by Education, but 'by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.'" Dr. Dieffenbach, in his weekly religious page in *The Boston Transcript*, Saturday night, said of him: "One finds in the lecturer that sureness of composure which moves with quietness among the well accepted paths of Christian tradition, yet with a knowledge of the new varieties of thought which make his unwavering orthodoxy seem to many valid and permanent."

Yesterday, Harvard students registered their feeling on the Nazistic persecution of the Jews, by holding a "protest meeting" at which five eminent Harvard faculty members voiced condemnation of the current outburst of inhumanity in Germany. A dominant note running through the speeches, and emphasized especially by Professor Chafee of the Law School and by Dr. Friedrich, Professor of Government, was the

need of correcting the same though less accentuated evil in our own country, and of dispelling race prejudice and selfishness from ourselves. The large convocation of students crystallized its reactions in a pair of resolutions to the President of the United States, commending his criticism of the Nazi persecutions and urging the United States government to help the oppressed Jews to find a home in this country.

Now, since the focal point of this letter has been reduced from the whole of New England to the small compass of Harvard Yard, I shall close before the range of its interest becomes smaller still.

Very cordially yours,
PETER VAN TUINEN.

An Eastern Letter

Englewood, New Jersey, November 17, 1938.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

From now on we shall all be interested in the developments of our American Calvinistic Conference. The social-entertainment committee has been appointed. Mr. George A. Bruer, attorney-at-law, Mr. G. Egedy, prominent christian business man, and Mr. John Teitsma, chorus director and organist, have accepted the invitation to serve on this committee. Strategic persons have been approached to make this conference a success. The president of the Westminster Student Body has pledged his co-operation. We are expecting many of our christian school teachers to be there. We sincerely hope that both old and young may meet each other at this conference. This is not only a conference for the advancement of Reformed theology. It purports to be Calvinistic, applying our Reformed faith within the entire ambit of human responsibilities.

American Calvinistic Conference

A friend of mine wrote me that Dr. H. Beets had made some comments in the *Missionary Monthly* regarding our conference. This conference theme did not look very appetizing to the editor. According to him we were going to re-chew 16th century cud. This feeling on the part of the editor is no reflection on the work of the committee, nor on the judgment of the eastern brethren for this theme was suggested by the theological leaders of our nation. We simply agreed after seeing the wisdom of the theme.

We younger men do not know all the applications of this doctrine to modern life. Our purpose is not to canonize the past, but to challenge the future. In a sense, it is true that Calvin taught it. This past summer our German Reformed brethren had hoped to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the writing of the Heidelberg Catechism. Age does not make a theme obsolete. St. Augustine struggled with it in his neoplatonic stage of development. Thomas Aquinas did not fathom it in his flirting with Aristotle. Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven are showing plausible possibilities in the field of philosophy. Moreover, you will remember that one of the subjects to be discussed is Barthianism and the Sovereignty of God. This without a doubt is far from antique. The implications of the doctrine of creation and sovereignty are far more basic than the question of the exact length of the days of Genesis one. This theme also involves a knowledge of modern subjects for comparisons will be made. And suppose we should discuss communism or fascism? We can readily see that these subjects would depend upon our conception of the sovereignty of God. The more I study this theme in its relation to common grace, and to a static or dynamic interpretation of life, the more I feel the need of discussing it with others.

In reply to the suggestion that our meetings should be held in the city of New York instead of Paterson, New Jersey, I do feel that this remark was made in consequence of not knowing the real situation. We wish to have public meetings at night as well as conference meetings during the day. New York is full of transients at night. Lodging will be sky-high during the world's fair.

You may also be interested to know that Dr. L. Greenway of the Second Reformed Church of Grand Haven, Michigan, will speak on "The Sovereignty of God and Human Responsibility."

Seminary News

Strictly speaking the Biblical Seminary in New York is not a Calvinistic Institution. There are many Presbyterians on the faculty. Membership is, however, not limited to adherents of the Reformed faith. Still there is news that is of interest to all.

Strange as it may seem, the ideal of this seminary was born in India. Dr. W. White, a professor at Xenia, had been invited to address missionaries. He found that many of them

knew all about the critical problems, but did not know the Bible. He desired the Bible to come to the students. Each book was as an individual in this entire literary family. All problems were to be studied in the light of the Bible. Some seminaries are known for their psychological approach, others for their sociological approach, and others for their systematic or dogmatic approach, but Dr. White felt the need of a seminary which was biblical-centered. Prof. Dr. A. Wentz of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, Pa., has popularized this ideal of Dr. White. Upon graduation, a theological student should know the Bible better than any other book in the world. Dr. White is blazing new trails in the theological educational world. His school has gained that recognition in New York, that in consequence of what Dr. White had done this school is related to the University of New York as Union Seminary is related to Columbia University.

Dr. W. White has reached his seventy-fifth birthday. His energetic personality refused to ease up a bit. He was forced to take a rest because of illness. As this school is the very concretion of his ideals his absence seemed to make the future of this institution a little precarious. Dr. White's brother, Dr. C. White, pastor of a United Presbyterian Church, is acting president. He has instilled new courage in all. The doors of the seminary remained open.

This biblio-centric emphasis does not imply that every member of the faculty or lecturer believes in the inerrancy of the scriptures as we understand this doctrine. In many respects this school is a middle-of-the-road institution. At the same time this school has taught many to study the Bible first hand. The difficulties such a situation evidences are but a reflection upon modern theological conditions.

Travelling south some fifty miles we soon spy the commanding towers of Princeton University peering above the foliage of a late autumn. Behind these towers is Princeton Seminary. Students are reported to be flocking to Dr. E. Brunner's classes. I just wonder how the American mind can absorb paradoxes, "ja oder nein-s," and that Barth is not even Barthian. It is significant that Dr. P. Tillich should introduce German theology in Union Seminary in New York and that Dr. E. Brunner should do the same, somewhat of a different brand perhaps, in Princeton. Just how this double flank attack will influence us is a question only a prophet can decide.

From Princeton we can easily drive to Westminster Seminary. In spite of autumn the campus is beautiful. In looking around a bit I noticed that the second floor of the library had been converted into an assembly room. This is pleasant news. The library was formerly a garage that belonged to the estate. Now it is as imposing a building as you can find anywhere. The second floor assembly supplies a real need. Sometimes meetings were held on the campus, somewhat sheltered to be sure, when the winds had free play. The enrolment is steady, showing a slight increase. It has weathered the Faith Seminary Premillenarian storm as a proud seaworthy vessel. Progressive Calvinism moved in the right direction when this seminary launched a new Calvinistic journal: *The Westminster Journal*. The first issue is off the press. Dr. Ned Stonehouse's address on "Jesus in the hands of a Barthian" is printed in its entirety. This address discusses one of the leading figures in Germany, Rudolph Bultmann. The book reviews are excellent revealing the position of the reviewer as well as of the one reviewed. The faculty has made a happy choice in selecting Professors Paul Woolley and John Murray as editors. I am sure they will give splendid direction to theological thinking. Mr. Woolley told me the other day that the editors do not wish to limit the periodical to one article in an issue. Perhaps some issues may have a few articles. Nor are the contributors to be faculty members only. This is a venture of faith because of a need felt. We sincerely wish this journal God's blessing in creating a real appetite for the theological sciences. Criticisms could be made, I imagine, but the best way to overcome obstacles is through coöperation.

Club News

Our Eastern Ministers Conference met early in September. The Rev. Mr. Van Pernis gave some reflections on the Edinburgh Conference. There were two main criticisms: the basis of fellowship and the lack of thorough discussions. In view of our conference these remarks were most interesting. Dr. Ned Stonehouse gave a paper on Rudolph Bultmann's book, *Jesus*. This brought out theological differences as well as critical.

Our philosophy club met very late this year because of the absence of our president, Dr. C. Van Til. This was our first all day session. The Rev. Peter Holwerda gave a praiseworthy paper on Dooyeweerd's "De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee," or the philosophy of idea of law. His remarks were supplemented by those of Dr. C. Van Til. Rev. Mr. Holwerda's paper as well as others will soon be published in our *Proceedings for 1938*. We are working in the direction of increasing the size of the

book within the price limit of 60 cents. You may also be interested to know that we have planned to cover the entire field of the history of philosophy in the light of Christian thinking. These studies will be given at our morning meetings. The afternoon meetings will be devoted to contemporary philosophical literature. At our spring meeting we hope to study Pre-Socratic Philosophy, and Charles Hartshorne's book, *Beyond Humanism*. Dr. Leon Wencelius, author and professor at Swarthmore, Pa., and Mr. Stanley Reid, graduate student in the University of Pennsylvania, were welcomed as members of our club.

I appreciate knowing what other clubs are doing. THE CALVIN FORUM brings to light that we are not asleep at the helm. Perhaps some day other clubs will mimeograph their reports for exchange.

Cordially,
JACOB HOOGSTRA.

A Letter from Amsterdam

Amsterdam, Nov. 18, 1938.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

In my initial letter to the readers of THE CALVIN FORUM I propose to discuss a subject less startling than significant—the Free University of Amsterdam. I know I do so at the risk of repeating an old tale, but I am willing to take the risk on the further chance that certain less familiar facts about this singular institution will prove interesting.

Everything in middle nineteenth century Holland called for the establishment of such a school as the Free University ultimately became. Not only were the seats of learning in possession of men to whom the scriptures had ceased to speak, but men of orthodox faith, whatever their scholastic attainments, were excluded from the academic career on the theory that faith, whatever its worth in the inner chamber, was positively inimical to objective scientific procedure. Men like Bilderdijk and DaCosta waited in vain for appointments, and Groen van Prinsterer, who himself deserved a chair, was led to remark as early as 1844 that conditions pointed to nothing more imperatively than to the necessity of establishing a school based on fundamental Christian principles. If negative considerations led him to adopt this view, more positive motives animated Kuyper. For him the establishment of a free reformed university was not an expedient dictated by circumstances, but a positive calling dictated by the absolute sovereignty of Christ, a view he expressed in the winged words: ". . . geen duimbreed is er op heel het erf van ons menschelijk leven, waarvan de Christus, die aller Souverein is, niet roept: Mij!"

This right of Christ to be acknowledged in every department of life, in science as well as in religion, in the classroom as well as in pulpit, in the laboratory as well as in the prayer-closet Kuyper never ceased to preach. That preaching was unpopular. The doctrine it proclaimed was, in the academic world, regarded as hopelessly medieval. Natural science, it was recalled, owes its success to depersonalized observation, and philosophy since Descartes has thrived on the methodological doubt. The ability to abstract from Self—from one's history, inclinations, and basic faith—has proved itself the *conditio sine qua non* of scientific advance. It is illegitimate, therefore, to foist on a free and robust science a body of theological presuppositions of whatever character. When they are demonstrably false, as is the case with those of orthodox stamp, it is positively reprehensible. Besides, Christ is a religious concept. To claim the Church for him is reasonable, but to make him determinative for mathematics is to confound two wholly disparate magnitudes. Again, truth in theology may depend on the disposition of the heart. In philosophy it most certainly depends on the ability to judge that disposition critically.

Yet Kuyper was adamant. Mind as well as heart, he was convinced, should be brought into subjection unto Christ. And this conviction he sought to interpret in concrete terms. The Free University was the result.

Its founding was, of course, not a one man's job. As lustrous in the early history of the school as that of Kuyper is the name of Hoedemaker. Then there was that indispensable band of consecrated laymen who with "pro rege" on their lips counted no sacrifice too great for their king. On the 22nd of October, 1878, a number of them met in Utrecht, decided on the founding of a university, and appointed a committee of action. On the 5th of December, in the same city, a society was formed known thenceforth as "De Vereeniging voor Hooger Onderwijs op Gereformeerden Grondslag" (Freely: The Society for Advanced Reformed Education). This society corresponded and now corresponds to the societies which in American Reformed circles found and maintain Christian grammar and high schools.

Starting with a very small number of members, it issued an appeal for support that, for earnestness and pathos, has been rarely excelled in propagandistic literature. The response was various. Some joined the new society. Others, whose interest might have been expected, kept themselves aloof. The many went over to positive opposition. The whole idea of a Christian University was ridiculed. Wits wanted to know whether two plus two was to make four in the new school and some enquired seriously after the Reformed manner of conjugating Greek verbs. Newspapers and magazines carried on a bitter attack. Brochures appeared branding the plan as fantastic, impracticable, illegal, and pharisaistic.

It was fortunate that in those critical years the Society could rely on Kuyper's pen. The erstwhile lament that in the whole land of Israel no smith was to be found to forge a sword or a spear, was silenced by the appearance of this arch polemist. Kuyper wrote a prose that bristled and his matter had the quality of either silencing or convicting. With the passion and thoroughness characteristic of the man, he threw himself into the conflict. How many articles he wrote in defense and elucidation of the society's plan in the first years after 1878 is hard to determine. Significant are his controversial brochures, among them "De Leidsche Professoren en de Executeurs der Dordtsche Nalatenschap," "Revisie der Revisie-legende," "Bede om een dubbel corrigendum aan Dr. A. W. Bronsveld," and "Strikt Genomen." Through them the idea of an independent reformed university gained in precision and favor, and two years after the founding of the Society the Free University of Amsterdam was a reality.

I propose in a following letter to describe its first lean years.

HENRY J. STOB.

A Cry from China

Shanghai China, October 25, 1938.

Dr. Clarence Bouma,
Grand Rapids, Mich., U. S. A.

Dear Friend:

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." Some eighteen years ago, I read those words written in large letters on the wall of a hotel lobby in Hong-kong. Not only the Fountain from which they are drawn but also experience proves their truth. Your friendly letter was very welcome.

The sentiments you express prove your sympathy with the people to whom we have been sent. The national existence of the Chinese nation is being threatened. Steadily her armed forces are being forced to retreat before the onslaught of victory-intoxicated armies utilizing the advantages of vastly superior equipment. The recent capture of Canton seems to prove that the united front hitherto shown is cracking. The heroic struggle along the Yangtze River shores is not capable of stemming the Japanese advance by air, water and land. This warfare is the most ruthlessly inhuman! The imagination staggers and the mind revolts against such unnecessary murder as that just perpetrated in the bombing and destruction of a steamer loaded with two thousand non-combatant refugees proceeding from doomed Hankow to Changsha. A few weeks ago I returned from our North Kiangsu mission field where "mopping-up" operations are now in progress against the so-called bandits. Wherever the bands of Japanese marauders push through that peaceful country, they leave a track of devastated country-homes and villages. Three weeks ago they entered Suan-tien where no opposition was offered because Chinese troops had evacuated. The people cannot oppose the advance of Chinese soldiers into their town any more than they can block the way to the Japanese invaders. The town was systematically burned and thousands of innocent victims of this war were again rendered homeless. No war during recent centuries has been so destructive of non-combatant lives and property. Careful investigation by impartial world leaders stamps this war as one of aggression by Japan and the world is called upon to help the Chinese government in its heroic war of resistance. The people in the interior among whom I live may be crushed in defeat but their spirit is not broken. Regular armies are being driven back but the country teems with irregular troops who seek to isolate and paralyze the Japanese in the occupied centers.

Do you know what most hurts me as an American? It is that oft repeated question asked by intelligent Chinese: "Why does your country, while professing sympathy, sustain Japan in her unmerciful efforts to crush us?" I do not know what to answer. You state that there is very little sympathy for Japan. You pray for the victory of China. But are informed Christians and right thinking citizens doing all in their power to remedy the frightful inconsistency whereby we are becoming stigmatized as the most hypocritical nation in the world?

Allow me to quote a few paragraphs from a letter which is being circularized in Shanghai at the present time.

"Japan is buying 54% of her munitions from the U. S. A. Her heavy industry depends upon a grade of steel and a type of machinery that can be bought only in America. Her military trucks, airplanes, oil and gasoline come largely from our country.

"It is our purchase of Japan's chief export, silk, that enables her to buy these indispensable supplies from us. 97% of our silk comes from Japan; 85% of all the silk that she exports is sold in the U. S. A.

"Let us face it: Instruments of death and destruction are being made by Americans largely paid for by Americans through the silk and other trades, and sold to Japan to help carry forward a barbarous invasion that these same Americans are anxious to see defeated and would be willing to restrain, if they realized that they could."

Our esteemed THE CALVIN FORUM stands for the highest principles. I have been happy to find editorials, etc., which lend active support to a cause which the entire world—in as far as the League can be said to represent world opinion—espouses. Let me recommend that all the readers of this letter lend their support to a resolution known as the Peace Act which is due to come before the House at the present session beginning in December. It is Resolution No. 527, introduced by Rep. J. J. O'Connell. It advocates making unlawful the sale or shipment of arms, munitions, and other war materials to aggressor nations. Surely, such a resolution is the expression of the mind of men and women with Christian convictions who do not desire to share in the doubtful prosperity founded upon the blood of innocent non-combatants, men, women and children; and who desire to see the operation of principles to which America has offered her whole-hearted allegiance.

Fraternal greetings from your China correspondent,

H. A. DYKSTRA.

MY CHRISTMAS GIFT

When I was a little child
I heard of the Baby mild;
My heart was faintly stirred
At the hearing of the Word.

When I was eight or ten
I revered Christmas then;
But the presents took large part
In my Christmas thought and heart.

As adolescent grown,
With the Star of Bethlehem shone
A star in my heart to stay
Of faith for a Christian way.

Having come to maturity
I try with simplicity
To tell my child of God,
To shed His light abroad.

Yet many a time I've been
Ashamed of the Christmas seen;
Only consecrated in part
To the Christ who wants all my heart.

Now at this time of year
As the packaged gifts appear
May mine be an unseen one
To deliver at Bethlehem town.

May this be my gift to Him
Who brought goodwill to men;
For His love to me beyond price
May I yield my all to the Christ.

—JOAN GEISEL GARDNER.