

# THE CALVIN FORUM . . . . .

Christmas  
In Scripture and History

The Christmas Narrative  
Story of the Unexpected

John a Lasco  
Polish Calvinist

Leprosy and Tuberculosis  
A Comparison

Soren Kierkegaard  
Sources for Americans

Letters—  
From Russia, Australia, China, India,  
Hungary, Canada, California

News

Books

Verse

# The CALVIN FORUM

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# The CALVIN FORUM

VOLUME V

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH., DECEMBER, 1939

NUMBER 5

## CHRISTMAS IN SCRIPTURE AND IN HISTORY

### SOME RADIO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

#### What Did the Angels Sing?

*Question:* In the Douay version of the Bible, Luke 2:12 reads, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." In the authorized version of the Bible it is translated as follows, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Which is correct? Does the translation have any doctrinal implications?

*Answer:* Neither of the two is an exact translation. Of the two the Douay translation is well-nigh a word for word translation of the original. But translations must express the thought of the original and a verbatim translation does not always succeed in doing just that. The last words of the Douay translation, to wit, "men of good will" may mean that the men are the object of divine good will or that the men are the subject of good will toward others. The former interpretation seems now to be regarded as correct by the majority of recent New Testament scholars. Here is, for instance, the translation of the American Revised Version. "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased." Moffatt discovers that same thought in the passage. He translates it, "Glory to God in high heaven, and peace on earth for men whom he favors." Here is Goodspeed's version, "Glory to God in heaven and on earth, Peace to men he favors." I would therefore recommend the American revised rendering of this passage as being the most accurate. There may be some doctrinal implications in the various translations. It is certainly in line with the Calvinistic position that God will send peace to men whom he favors or in whom he is well pleased. The source of all men's benefits derived from above proceeds from a divine favorable disposition toward the objects of his grace. The reason for the peace toward men is found not in man but in God. The translation which credits the good will to man suggests that it is ultimately the disposition of man that determines whether God will grant him peace or not.

#### Are Christmas Trees To Be Condemned?

*Question:* Does Jeremiah 10:3-5 condemn the popular custom of having Christmas trees? The passage reads as follows, "For the customs of the people are vanity; for one cutteth a tree out of a forest, the work of the hands of a workman with an axe. They deck it with silver and gold; they fashion it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are like a palm tree of turned work, and they speak not. They must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good."

*Answer:* When one receives a question of this kind, he is at first inclined to cast it aside as one that is too ridiculous to deserve a serious answer. But when he realizes that there are hundreds of sincere Christians that harbor in their souls sincere objections to the use of a Christmas tree and when he notes that there is something in this text that seems to be a fairly accurate description of the preparation and the character of such a tree, it would seem that it is not superfluous to honor the question with a brief answer. It has obviously, as a careful reading of the chapter in question will reveal, no reference to a Christmas tree whatsoever. This word of Jeremiah constitutes a condemnation of the making of heathen gods. The God of Israel is compared with the gods of the pagans that are made with hands and that are consequently not able to speak, move, do good or evil. Whatever condemnation there may be of the Christmas tree custom among us, it will have to be sought elsewhere. There is no condemnation of the practice here, except in case the tree should be worshipped as a god, or if it tends to displace the Christ from the center of our devotions on the day dedicated to the observance of Christ's birthday.

#### Wasn't It Too Cold for the Shepherds?

*Question:* It has been argued that the twenty-fifth day of December could not have been the birthday of Jesus, because it was then altogether too cold for the shepherds to be out at night tending their flocks. Is that a cogent argument?

*Answer:* No; though the argument is frequently heard, it is by no means compelling. If you will take the trouble to look at your maps, you will note that the shepherds were tending their flocks just a little north of the thirty-first degree latitude. That would place them as far south as the southern part of the state of Mississippi near the Gulf of Mexico. In that latitude the climate is sufficiently mild to offer many a December night sufficiently mild for the shepherds to go out and stay out over night with their flocks. The climate of our southern states may vary considerably from that of Judea, but in any case the location of Bethlehem is where mild nights at the close of the year are not improbable.

## When Was Jesus Born?

*Question:* Is there any doubt that Jesus was born on the twenty-fifth of December in the year 1 B.C. or 1 A.D.?

*Answer:* Yes, that has been seriously doubted and that with sufficient reason. No one is certain today about the exact year of Christ's birth. But there seems to be no one who holds that Jesus was born 1 B.C. or 1 A.D. The consensus of opinion of scholars today is that Jesus was born about 5 or 4 B.C. It is generally conceded that Dionysius, a monk of the sixth century, erred when he changed the Roman calendar and converted it into a Christian calendar. His mistake has never been corrected. That would have involved a tremendous change in all the dates of history. They would all have to be set forward four or five years. Today is really about 1944 A.D., if 5 B.C. is the actual year of the birth of Jesus. Still less is known about the exact day and month of Christ's birth. The earliest Christians discouraged the observance of the birthday of Jesus, apparently because it tended to stress his humanity. And one of the common heresies that they were constantly battling was the teaching that tended to rob him of his deity. That may account for the fact that the date of his birth was lost during the first few centuries of the Christian era. The observance of the 25th of December as Christ's birthday is ascribed by many scholars to Julius, Bishop of Rome in the fourth century. Up to this time in the Eastern Church Jan. 6 was observed, but that date was also changed to Dec. 25, through the influence of the West. This tradition has persisted until this day and because of the lack of more light it will probably continue to exist as long as Christmas is observed.

## Is Christmas Properly Named?

*Question:* Recently I heard a minister explain that the word Xmas is improper because the X stands for an unknown quantity and Christ should never be designated by the symbol of the unknown. Is Xmas an appropriate name for the day of commemorating the birthday of Jesus?

*Answer:* The minister that you heard has allowed his mathematical symbols to get mixed up with the symbols that have for centuries been used in the Christian world. The X in Xmas is not the algebraic x at all. It is in Xmas a Greek letter, indeed, the first Greek letter of the word Christ as you find it in the N. T. Such abbreviations can be traced very far back in the history of Christianity. They are found in some of the earliest New Testament manuscripts that have been discovered by our archeologists. The word Christmas might be improved upon. It is merely a combination of the words "Christ" and "mass," or feast. It means literally Christ-feast or a feast of Christ. There is nothing distinctive or suggestive about it. Why not call the day "Christ's birthday"? But since it has been taken into our language with this definite meaning, we can use it with little possibility of being misunderstood.

## As to Christmas Gifts

*Question:* What do you think of the custom of buying and giving presents upon the occasion of Christmas?

*Answer:* The customs that have grown around the celebration of the birth of Jesus are not of Christian origin. They have been absorbed from the pagan world and have been tolerated within the Church. They have their source in the Roman feasts of merriment, especially the Saturnalia of Rome. The Northern type of Christmas customs is found in the Teutonic Yule feasts. So we have been drawing our Christmas customs from two sources, both pagan in character. These customs are not the same in all countries. There are, for instance, many countries in which the gift giving customs are not associated with Christmas, but with New Year. In America the giving of gifts is common and has been developed chiefly through the commercial interests. And, after all, we are a commercial people. We measure all values in terms of commerce. The business world has a tendency to take over anything that can in any way be commercialized. This has been done likewise with the feast on which we observe the resurrection of Jesus. And we who want to take this matter of Christmas seriously willy-nilly fall in line. I think it would be far better to leave the commercial ideas out of these commemorations if possible. But that is certainly impractical in this country. Of course, there can be no objection to the custom of giving presents if they bring more joy and cheer into the lives of both givers and receivers without lessening the appreciation of the great gift of God. It behooves us as Christians, just because of this custom, to be doubly on our guard in preventing the tendency of the gifts of men to overshadow the gift of God. Let's observe Christ's birthday and let the joy of the day be the deep spiritual joy that can only come from an appreciation of what God has done for us. H. S.

# CHRISTMAS: THE STORY OF THE UNEXPECTED

Jacob T. Hoogstra

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THE Christmas story is unthinkable apart from the Christmas mother. Her reply to Gabriel, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord" indicates the living faith that could burst forth in song: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He hath looked upon the low estate of his handmaid." Mother Mary was overwhelmed with the favor that the most high God selected from the poor and humble of this world but rich in faith a mother for the Redeemer of the world. God's appraisal is radically different from that of human beings.

The unexpected in the Christmas story is more fundamental than this choice of a mother. Three facts are mentioned that make Christmas unique: The Holy Spirit shall come upon Thee; also, the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; finally, *wherefore*, also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35).

In Acts 1:8 Jesus says that the Holy Spirit shall come upon the disciples on Pentecost Sunday (*eperxomai*). This coming was a definite act of the Holy Spirit. Likewise at the conception of our Lord. His birth is not the result of the usual operation of the Holy Spirit. By His creative act Mary conceived, by His watchfulness the babe was guarded.

Gabriel also speaks of power. The birth of Jesus Christ was not of man, nor by the will of man. We must remember that the birth of Christ is the birth of the Son of God, *our Redeemer*. To be born the Son of God would require the power of God. To be our Redeemer would demand nothing less. Men could not bring forth the Son of God unless we in some vague, poetic, pantheistic fashion believe that we all belong to the world soul—god. If there is an unbridgeable gulf between God and man by virtue of creation, if man is hopelessly enmeshed in the endless snarls of sin, the power of the Most High must be operative to give us the Redeemer. "I am not ashamed," says Paul, "even though I must face the Greek or the Roman, for from incarnation to the very last act of redemption the gospel is the *power* of God unto salvation." Christmas is the story of the omnipotent God who puts his power in action for the salvation of His own.

## **Christmas Anti-Humanistic**

The uniqueness of Jesus is clearly indicated by the connecting link: *wherefore*. In other words, Jesus' sonship as Saviour is different from any sonship we mortals may expect to attain because the Holy Spirit came down and the power of God was active in his conception and birth. What follows? Christmas is not the feast of the human babe Jesus.

Christmas is the commemoration of the birth of the Son of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Negatively, if we honor only the human in the babe Jesus we are guilty of idolatry, for we may not pray to the human nature of Jesus unless we are convinced that this human nature is united with his deity. Humanism weaves its subtle web before our eyes during this season. What we usually love in this feast is the picture of a helpless babe, tender skin, little arms stealing their way to a proud mother. If Christmas is only that, then Christmas is only what we human beings like about our own children. Or the very contrast between the humble beginnings and the lofty heights the man Jesus attained may inspire us with a sense of our own native ability similar to the average notion that every poor boy in America is a potential president. To the contrary, "And they shall call His name Immanuel: which is, being interpreted, God with us." This does not take place when Jesus is thirty years of age. This takes place in conception and at birth.

There is no room for humanism at Christmas. Even the humanism found in Roman Catholic theology that finds a ready appeal to the average human instinct of deepest respect for motherhood (the *practical* deification of Mary) must receive a fatal blow the moment we realize that the highest exponent of motherhood could not bring forth a Saviour pure from sin unless the Holy Spirit would guard the infant to be born. Joseph could not be His father, not only because the power of God was required for so great a salvation, but also for the sin in Adam from generation to generation. Christmas is anti-humanistic.

## **God's Tent and the Eternal Sanctuary**

What unexpected deed God has performed! He has entered into sinful mankind to dwell with mankind forever. He has pitched his tent with those in misery, bruised by the fall. He did more than that. The power of the Most High overshadowed Mary. As the cloud of the glory of God's presence overshadowed the ark in the tabernacle and in the temple, so in the most sacred moment of human history did God make visible his presence through a cloud of glory in a lowly dwelling place in Nazareth. The tabernacle was the presence and the knowledge of God unto salvation. Christ is the true temple of God which can be broken on the cross and in three days can be rebuilt. The power of God overshadowed that true and eternal sanctuary.

How can the Second Person of the holy Trinity take upon Himself human nature? Are not God and man as wholly-other as the flying sparks resulting

from the contact of a negative and a positive wire? True, God cannot use man to bring forth the Christ, but God can dwell among men to save them. Why? God created man in His image for fellowship. There is a great antagonism between God and man. This condition is the result not of the creation of man, but of the fall of our disobedient father. God is not ashamed of the human nature He has created. The Word of God has pitched his tent among us on Christmas. Never shall He forsake it. When the plan of God is fulfilled, we shall see the new Jerusalem coming down to dwell among men forever.

### **The Receptions the Child Jesus Received**

To enumerate all the receptions would be impossible. May we mention only six to indicate that God does things in an unexpected way. We read that there was no room in the inn. Mankind has dramatized the harshness of the innkeeper. One Christmas pageant I saw pictured the innkeeper chuckling over the many shekels this rush for shelter brought to him. A heartless man! A cruel man! But—who knows? Kind men can do harsh things in their ignorance. How could a crowded inn entertain Mary on the night that Christ was born? Did Mary tell him the secret that the child to be born was to be the Christ? There was no room for Mary in the inn for Mary and Joseph had failed to register on time. But that is not the end of the story. Behind the doing of man an Almighty God is fulfilling the decrees of His will. God desired his son to be born in a manger. His birth was to be on the lowest social level in order that the child of God to be saved would feel at home with Jesus whether it was born in a palace or in a hovel. Was the seed of the serpent seeking to bruise His heels by sending Mary away from a home?

Swaddling clothes have the same message. The mother's joy of preparing garments for the first-born was forbidden Mary. Swaddling clothes give us a faint glimmer of the Savior who later on will wash his disciples' feet. Swaddling clothes are the first footstep on the pathway to the cross.

### **Shepherds and Magi**

Shepherds of Bethlehem receive him. Not Rome, not Jerusalem, but a little city of David, too small to be numbered among the thousands. No, the pride of the human heart may not be inflamed by knowing a Savior of an imperial city. The low and the insignificant things of the world God uses to make for us the spiritual breadhouse—Bethlehem. So Micah taught centuries ago. Not Samaria nor Jerusalem, but Bethlehem would be the city of the birth of the Lord. Shepherds receive the announcement. They adore. Even the wise men who come later to worship go to Jerusalem first. Man's wisdom even though it may follow a star does not know that God does many unexpected things. No human greatness present. No soldiers to guard the manger. No ruler nor priest to pay homage.

After some time has elapsed Mary and Joseph were in a position to rent a house in Bethlehem. Unlike the general opinion the wise men came to visit the child Jesus here. Undoubtedly they did not meet the shepherds at the manger. To teach that they did may have dramatic effect, but no warrant for such a notion can be found in the New Testament. The beauty of this reception is that nature had to assist in announcing the birth of the King. God miraculously commanded the star to guide the wise men of the orient to the place where Christ was. God told the representatives of the world about the King of the world who alone is worthy to receive the gold and the incense of His own. Christmas is not a story for the Jews only, for not a representative of the Jewish nation was there officially. It is not a story of a king born to subdue a hostile Rome. Christmas has for its theme the coming of the educated men of that day with their treasures. Christmas is one of our greatest missionary themes.

### **Predestinarian Angels and Slain Babies**

Angels share in welcoming Jesus to this earth. The song of angels is typically a song only angels can sing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased." Or, if you will, "peace among the men of his good pleasure." The other familiar Christmas hymns recorded by Luke show the human touch of the composers. Zachariah cannot hide the human pride that he is to be the father of a great man. There is also a wholesome touch of nationalism in his hymn for he knew that Israel was the chosen nation to bring forth the Christ. Mary does not care to suppress the joy that future generations will call *her* blessed. Angels have no such *human* attachments to express in *celestial* poetry. They bring their glory to God, a glory for a manger, no room in an inn, and swaddling clothes. They are astonished at the depth of the Savior's humility for sinners. After the angelic glories to God are carried away by soft winds of the night, this heavenly chorus with a new volume of majestic strains peals forth: Peace among the men of his good pleasure! The eternal plan inspires them. God shall give his own peace. Angels are the great predestinarians who put their faith in music. And they have not known by experience what it is to be saved by grace. Not the muffling of cannons or the scrapping of battleships is the peace that God gives first of all. God makes us His friends. Still we cannot fail to remind every Christian rejoicing in receiving the everlasting peace that if we appreciate this Christmas gift how can we feed our mind with hatred? Having that peace we shall pray for the day when the children of God shall dwell in the unbroken peace in the brotherhood of the saints in the Lord.

Jesus was also received by conspiracy in the garb of worship. Herod had no room for Jesus. Must the Son of God go to the land from which Israel had

been delivered? Must Jesus find shelter in a reprobate's realm? Three rulers: Herod, Augustus, and the Christ. Augustus gives us the silver edge fringing the dark cloud. He gives us the peace of Rome, the *pax Romana*. His sword keeps nations from rebelling against Rome. He achieves what the League of Nations imagines will happen some day. Still there is no peace in the heart of man. Herod shows that Christ was born while the thickness of night enveloped the world. Hope had given way to despair in all fields of human endeavor. Augustus' sword could not stay the nefarious hand of Herod of whom he said that he would rather be his pig than his son. Herod in the service of Satan gave us slain babes and mothers, the daughters of Rachel, who could not be comforted. God gave us the babe to heal the wounds of sin. As the closing of the doors of the inn in Bethlehem could not prevent the birth of the child Jesus, so the killing of many innocent children could not stop him from growing into manhood.

### ***The Ruler Who Subdues All Our Thoughts***

Christmas should not be an isolated event in our daily thinking. The apostle St. John did not consider it such. He speaks of the Logos or the Word that became flesh. He informs us of the activity of the Logos even before Christmas. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. Through God's common grace all men have received some light of the Logos. But the darkness apprehended it not. This is no reflection upon God, but upon man. Just because men do not apprehend the light it does not follow that God was not gracious in giving the light to men. God's common grace does not depend upon what man does with it. At Christmas this Logos pitched his tent among us. He follows the same method of operation as He did in the creation and in the providential government of the world. In him is first of all life. This life is the light of those who are born again. In other words one must be regenerated first before one can know the Word. Light is a symbol for knowledge. There can be no true knowledge without the life of Christ in our heart. Life precedes light. This Jesus taught Nicodemus. This is the purpose of the discourse on the resurrection (John 5). The closing chapters on the Holy Spirit reveal how this life and this light will come to the redeemed. Christmas tells the philosopher, the theologian, the scientist, the educator, or whoever penetrates in any aspect of truth, life precedes light, a new heart precedes a new mind. There is no such independent god called reason for which Christian and unbeliever with just as much propriety can bow. All our thoughts must be held in subjection to the Logos who pitched his tent among us. No one can discover the Logos of creation with-

out knowing the Logos of recreation. Scholar, instead of contemplation, let there be today adoration.

### ***The Ethics of Swaddling Clothes***

While Jesus was a babe, he did not cease to be the Second Person of the holy Trinity. He did not cease to be the One through whom the world was created. As God he was rich. Angels sang of His majesty. But as the Christ he made himself of no account. He became poor voluntarily. As the King of the world he still did not disdain the cross. To save us, being rich, he became poor. Christmas speaks to the proud and unbending hearts of Christians: Can you not humble yourself for your brother? Can you not deny yourself for the good of someone else? Christmas brings to the world the ethics of swaddling clothes. Unless a degree of that attitude is found in our souls we have never related our Christmas to our ethics. Christ demands that we do, and his demand is just, for He has fulfilled this demand himself.

This Ruler demands of us not only to see the unexpected things of God that make this little babe to be the Logos who has come in the flesh, and his reception of swaddling clothes a lesson in Christian ethics. He demands of us to see one expected thing of God. God expects of us all to pay the homage due to his son this Christmas day. There are two possibilities facing us today. Shall we redouble our efforts to proclaim the Christ of God and thus counteract the idol of commercialism? Will preaching halt the flow of shekels into coffers perhaps of Christ denying Jews? There is another possibility. The fear of idolatry may cause us to emulate John Calvin. He is reported to have preached on the divorce laws on Christmas day. He paid scant attention to the day the Roman Church set aside. Perhaps we may have to do the same. We can inform the world that because of commercialism which is decidedly beyond all reasonable limits we simply refuse to recognize the day. Sometimes it may be necessary to pull down the brazen serpent as Hezekiah had to do. I am not ready to say which way I think more effective. I am still of the opinion that we should use the pulpit to break the deadly and costly materialism of Christmas. One thing is certain the exchange of gifts on the basis of equality has no similarity at all to the gift of the Son of God to sinners. The only gift that Christ knows is the gold and the frankincense of gratitude to the newborn king. We cannot copy God in his gift to man. Such can never be the pattern for our giving. We can, however, copy the wise men in presenting gifts of appreciation. Or we can follow the shepherds in going to Bethlehem, for there alone will we find Christmas. Perhaps on that day we can leave our sheep alone in the field.

# JOHN A LASCO

## *Polish Calvinist and Reformer*

D. H. Kromminga

**A** LASCO belonged to a rich and prominent noble family of Poland. An uncle of his advanced to the first place in the Polish Church, and his influence probably did much to win the young man for a life in the service of the Church and toward helping him forward in his career. After finishing the schooling Poland could offer him, the future reformer traveled through western Europe and contacted such men as Zwingli and Erasmus, and later corresponded with Melancthon. Called back home, he returned in 1526. It was the time when the Polish king began the repression of the Reformation which had invaded the land. A Lasco advanced in honors and influence but labored in vain to restore peace and order to the Church. His position afforded him a deep insight and extended knowledge of the evils that were corrupting the Church. In 1531 his uncle died, and in 1536 he himself declined an episcopal appointment by the king and left the country for the sake of his evangelical convictions, though till the end of his life his homeland kept the love and prayers of his heart.

He first made his way to the city of Louvain, which was a center of Romanism, but soon exchanged that place for the evangelical city of Emden. The Eastfriesian Church had early seen a beginning of reformation, but in the last ten years the work had lagged, Rome had advanced, and the little country had become a refuge for all kinds of sectaries. Count Enno invited the Polish nobleman to accept the superintendency of the whole Church and a pastorate at the Church of Emden, but it was only in the next reign, that of Countess Anna, that he was well enough acquainted with the language of the land to accept these positions. He succeeded in the removal of remaining images from churches and the exclusion of the remaining monks from preaching, held disputations with such Anabaptists as Menno Simons and David Joris, managed to introduce a beginning of church discipline, and composed the Catechism that was to serve as guide for the Sunday afternoon preaching. He also had considerable influence on the civil legislation of the countess and defended the Reformed conception of the Lord's Supper against the Lutheran Lemsius.

Meanwhile, circumstances were shaping for his removal to England. The physician William Turner made his acquaintance while a religious refugee from the wrath of Henry VIII at Emden, and when Edward VI began to reign, a Lasco was invited to help in the reformation of the English Church. This led to a six months' stay in England. When he returned to Emden in 1549, Eastfriesland had passed under the *regime* of one of the Interims that aimed

at the forcible restoration of Romanism, and the Church and the countess were forced to let a Lasco go. He was called back to England, where he arrived about May, 1550. Many others were at the same time given shelter in England, and in London a church of fugitives was organized, of which church a Lasco now became superintendent. The autonomy of this church, particularly in its worship, was largely the fruit of a Lasco's opposition to Archbishop Cranmer, who sought complete incorporation into the Anglican Church with its elaborate ritual. The fugitives were largely from the Netherlands, and together with Utenhove and Micron a Lasco now worked on a creed, catechism, psalter, liturgy, and church order. Through these, though they were later superseded, he exercised notable influence on the reorganization of the Church in the Netherlands after the departure of Alva.

The brief reign of Edward VI ended July 6, 1553, and under Mary a violent Roman reaction set in. A Lasco sensed the coming persecution, and under his guidance the consistory decided that part of the church should seek safety elsewhere. Since Eastfriesland was being threatened by war, Denmark was chosen as the refuge, and in September they left on two Danish ships. They expected to be welcomed by the king, whose piety was praised, but after a stormy voyage they could excite the populace to pity, but not move the king to grant them shelter in the face of the violent opposition of his Lutheran court preacher. In midwinter they had to leave, ill provisioned, with their sick, and without a place to go. They tried various seaports on the Baltic and the North Seas, but, all being of the Lutheran creed, the result was invariably that, after some inquiry into the faith of these fugitives, they were ordered to leave. Gradually many of them made their way to Eastfriesland, where they found a warm welcome. A Lasco, who had reached Emden earlier, found it necessary to defend the fugitives from the slanders of Wastphal, Lutheran pastor in Hamburg. While in the Emden Church, he discovered not a few deteriorations, and the desire to end the theological quarrels had gained a hold on the authorities.

A Lasco was approaching the end of his days, when at last the call came to him to return to his fatherland for the purpose of helping in the work of reforming the Polish Church. He left Emden in April, 1555, and spent a troublous eighteen months with the refugee church at Frankfurt a/M. while waiting for the completion of the negotiations for his return to Poland. There he finally arrived in December, 1556. In his new task, to which he gave his whole heart, he was severely handicapped. Suc-



cessively Luther's, Calvin's, and Unitarian influence had entered Poland, where also the Moravians were found, and the Romish faction still was very powerful. In their weakness, the Evangelicals had in 1555 adopted the creed of the Moravians, and now a Lasco had to labor to bring about a separation from this group for the sake of a proper development of the evangelical Church in harmony with its own true

nature. In the midst of the disunion of the Evangelicals, the opposition of the Unitarians, and the intrigues of the Catholics, he carried on, till his Lord took this wanderer without a home for the sake of Christ to Himself into the eternal rest. The reformation of Poland soon came to naught, but the Churches of England, the Netherlands, and East-friesland should not forget John a Lasco.

## LEPROSY AND TUBERCULOSIS

### *Lightrays from Scripture and Medical Science*

Lee S. Huizenga

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**L**EPROSY and tuberculosis have many things in common. In the light of Scripture we see both appearing about the same time. Although the first is thought of frequently as a type of sin, the second is distinctly spoken of as a punishment for sin. (Lev. 26:14-16). Leprosy is related to religion. Not only did the ancient Jewish ceremonial laws speak in clear terms about leprosy, but the Christian Church of the Middle Ages in view of O. T. Biblical injunctions also ostracized the leper from its community. Even to the present day both Protestantism and Catholicism are not clear in the practical application of the Lord's command—"cleanse the leper."

Tuberculosis patients, far more contagious, have never been feared as has the leprous patient. This universal fear of leprosy does suggest some deep-seated difference in leprosy from any other disease. We do not want to go into the cause of this difference, but we do want to compare in this article the two diseases in the light of present day scientific and religious findings, and thus form a background upon which to build a more reasonable christian attitude toward the leper in his plight.

#### **The Two Diseases in General**

Leprosy and tuberculosis have many things in common. Both come to us from the earliest history of mankind, both are mentioned throughout history, both are with us today and dreaded as ever before. In general it may be said that leprosy is primarily a disease of the skin and nerves, whereas tuberculosis is that of the internal organs. There are exceptions to this generalization, for there is tuberculosis of the skin and leprosy has been found in some of the deeper organs. Although both diseases are very chronic, leprosy is far more so than tuberculosis and this may be a reason for the fact that few people die of leprosy as such, whereas in Shanghai, China, and many other places throughout the world more people die of tuberculosis than any other disease—even cholera, in moderately epidemic years. The following chart may interest the reader:

Number of deaths reported in Shanghai, where leprosy is common, due to following causes during the twelve-month period, July, 1938, to June, 1939, according to official figures—

<i>Diseases</i>	<i>Deaths</i>
Leprosy .....	0
Scarlet Fever .....	45
Diphtheria .....	253
Dysentery (Amoebic and Bacillary)....	894
Smallpox .....	1,017
Typhoid and Paratyphoid .....	1,845
Cholera .....	2,072
Tuberculosis .....	2,335

#### **The Bible Speaks**

From a Biblical viewpoint it is interesting to note that tuberculosis is mentioned by name very seldom, whereas leprosy is mentioned more than any other disease. Consumption is early spoken of in the books of Moses as a punishment for forsaking the Lord, and Israel chronically forsook the Lord, and thus must have suffered from this disease a great deal. Leprosy as such, however, is not mentioned in the law as a threat upon disobedience, but does now and again in the Old Testament appear as a direct punishment of God upon sin.

#### **Science Speaks**

With the revival of medical science and the invention of several instruments of precision the cause of many infectious diseases has been ascertained without a doubt.

Robert Koch, in 1882, put the light of his microscope on the sputum of the tuberculosis patient and found the bacillus, and this great event was only twelve years after Hansen had found the leprosy bacillus, so similar in all respects to the tuberculosis bacillus, that they can easily be confused by the non-orientated. Since this discovery the two diseases are becoming more and more associated in the minds of observers, not only as dating back to the earliest medical history, but as being exceedingly chronic;

as practically incurable, though preventable; as similar in their mode of attack, though attacking different organs; as exceedingly feared by man, though one is excommunicated and the other is not. Of the two tuberculosis is far more infectious, far more deadly, has far more physical suffering, is less hopeful as to life and saps one more of the pleasures of life. The tuberculosis patient soon goes to bed, the leper roams about; the average life of the tuberculous patient is but a couple of years, the leper dies seldom of his disease. And yet men dread leprosy to the point of ostracizing the one suffering from leprosy, but the tuberculous patient is kept in the home in crowded rooms, spitting disease among its relatives and friends.

### The Two Germs

The germs causing these two diseases are microscopically alike. They belong to the same family, are prepared for microscopic examination in the same way, have the same shape and if only one germ was found it would be indistinguishable by microscope and its identity would have to be determined by the clinical findings of disease as such. The tuberculosis germ, however, can be grown in the test tube within a comparatively short time, and when injected into guinea-pigs will produce tuberculosis, whereas the leprosy germ has not been grown very successfully in the laboratory nor in other animals. There are still many observers, who believe with the author that this type of germ can accommodate itself to various kinds of soil in which it may grow and appear in various forms, similar in shape and general characteristic, but with varying facultative qualities, depending upon the soil. It is possible that it may develop in the ground, on the walls of houses where lepers live and where they emit their excretions and in lepers' clothing under certain favorable conditions. Though this school of workers believes in this theory, it has not been proven epidemiologically. The epidemiology of leprosy has not been sufficiently developed in this of all diseases the most chronic. To give correct data, these data must be collected over many, many years and in many lands and under varying conditions.

Both the tuberculosis and the leprosy germ may stay in the body indefinitely. It is a question if they are ever totally eliminated. As to virulence, the leprosy germ is far less virulent than that of tuberculosis. It can multiply to enormous quantities in any given area and yet produce but little general *malaise* in the patients. Many hundred millions of germs can crowd into a small space in leprosy without producing any more than a small tumorlike formation of the skin, whereas comparatively few tubercle bacilli found in the lungs can eventually cause death. The leprosy germ grows without producing much destruction, the development of the tubercle bacillus is always associated with destruction.

That both diseases have influence on the blood seems evident from the study of the blood. Both diseases respond similarly in certain microscopical tests and both show the same type of anemia.

### Society Speaks

Socially, both diseases present a similar problem. Infection, or rather the multiplication of the two germs leading to the disease, is undoubtedly dependent in both diseases upon constitutional factors as seen in those affected, and this constitution is related to social standards of living. In both diseases youth is especially attacked. Well developed tuberculosis seems to affect children even earlier than leprosy, but this is undoubtedly due to the fact that leprosy is a much slower growing disease and less fatal, and hence the beginning of the disease is obscured by the slow and insidious approach of leprosy. In both cases the constitutional factor upon which the growth of these germs seem dependent, may be inherited, *the disease as such is not inherited*. Remove children at once after birth from their diseased parents and leprosy or tuberculosis does not develop except from other contacts. The run down, the badly housed, those living undernourished, under poor hygienic conditions, especially in damp homes are subject to the disease. However, this does not tell the whole story for kings and generals, men and women in all ranks of society, even the best nourished, have developed the disease. Socially, the two diseases rob mankind of more manpower than probably any other diseases. This is partly due to the great chronicity of the diseases and to the tendency of the diseases to attack mankind in its best years of service. To do any kind of effective preventive work in these diseases, society must get ready for a long period of time. At least two or three generations are required to control tuberculosis by the application of most rigid public health regulation and it will require an equal number of centuries to get the same results in leprosy, unless our present knowledge of combating the disease is greatly increased in the near future.

### How the Diseases Spread

The mode of spread of the two diseases in the individual is similar. It is very common for leprosy to make its first appearance in one place, say in the hands or feet, and then spread within a year or two to many parts of the body. This spread may be facilitated by the bloodstream which supplies all parts of the body, or by the lymph stream. It can also take place by contact, as certain exposed parts of the body are usually being attacked before the unexposed parts. This would, however, hardly apply to nerve leprosy, although it must be admitted that the nerves affected in leprosy are not disassociated with the surface of the body.

In tuberculosis, too, the disease spreads from one organ to another. The more benign form of glandular affections of a tuberculous nature may lead to

the more deadly form of lung tuberculosis and it in turn, probably by the constant swallowing of tuberculous sputum, leads to tuberculosis of the lung and to tuberculosis of the intestines. A slight fall or bruise in tuberculosis patients may lead to tuberculosis of the bones, and tuberculosis of the throat and of the coverings of the brain are usually the results of tuberculosis elsewhere.

Each of the two diseases in question attack its own favorite places. Leprosy rarely attacks anything but certain areas of the skin and certain nerves, and tuberculosis has a predilection for the lungs, bones, and glands.

Both germs develop small or large tubercles or nodules. In the spread of both diseases, the respiratory organs play an important part. Germs are spread in tuberculosis by coughing, sneezing and spitting. The germ of leprosy is also eliminated in great quantities from the nasal secretion and can thus be spread by coughing and sneezing as well, although coughing as such is no symptom of leprosy, nor is sneezing.

Tuberculosis is a common complication of leprosy. Many lepers die of tuberculosis. It is probably not true to say that tuberculous people are subject to leprosy. Even if they were, tuberculosis is so much shorter in its fatal course that leprosy would not get a chance to develop to any alarming proportion with initial tuberculosis.

From a geographic viewpoint leprosy selects areas for development and passes by areas leaving them untouched, the reason for which is not yet understood, tuberculosis seems fairly well distributed, although high altitudes seem unfavorable to both diseases.

Leprosy has its exceedingly chronic nerve type, tuberculosis has its exceedingly refined and usually fatal type of military tuberculosis. Both diseases have their acute and active cases as well as their exceedingly slow and chronic cases. Both have exceptional cases of spontaneous cures, both follow the rule of incurability to such an extent that competent observers no longer speak of "cures" in these two diseases, but speak of the result of treatment in these two diseases, as "arrested, apparently arrested, improved . . . ."

#### **Organized Religion Speaks**

Religiously, both diseases have been treated unlike throughout the ages, as we started out to say in the opening paragraph. Although alike in so many ways, although the one is far more deadly than the other, organized religion called leprosy, the least deadly, "living death" and the sufferer of the disease has been ostracized from the church community. Even today to my knowledge not one leper church, either Protestant or Catholic, is fully and regularly incorporated in the larger denominations, nor sends its delegates to the districts or general meetings of these denominations.

This phenomenon is not only found in the Christian Church, but is fairly well established in all of

the great religions of the world. All ban leprosy out of its courts. Buddhism uses the leper to receive charity, but receives not the leper. Confucianism has from Confucius' day turned the leper away in Confucius' own words: "Such a man and such a disease." Protestantism since the Reformation has proceeded somewhat upon a broader basis than the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages, yet even today Protestantism has a big way to go along practical lines to be able to "*cleanse the leper*" sufficiently to accept him as a regular member, and the "leper church" as a component part of its denominations.

As to tuberculosis, no religion has ever closed its doors to it. Christianity of today builds institutions for its tubercular people and endows them. The doors of sanatoria are always open. No law isolates the sufferer from tuberculosis and no one attributes the disease to the hand of God in the sense that this has been done for ages in the case of leprosy. It is the ceremonial aspect of leprosy that made it important in Scripture and this ceremonial aspect did not apply to tuberculosis or any other disease, much as it may have applied to certain symptoms of other diseases, such as discharges; or to certain physiological functions, such as menstruation and childbirth; or to social functions, such as touching the dead and touching unclean things.

#### **Finally Let the Word Speak**

God's word shows a way to the final conquest of tuberculosis, or consumption as it is called. It is by obedience to God's law, Leviticus 26:14-16. In leprosy on the other hand the New Testament tells of our Lord's interest in healing this disease both by his own examples of healing and his injunction to his disciples "to cleanse the leper." No christian, therefore, can withdraw himself from the health campaigns against these two diseases. Beside our sanatoria for the tuberculous fellowmen of ours, christians will build their leprosaria, and while we are carrying out our annual campaign against tuberculosis in the purchase of Christmas Seals, we will not be unmindful of the constant struggle we must put forth to overcome leprosy.

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## **HE CAME**

He walked at evening through the city square;  
His head was crowned, His feet were bare,  
And He turned to where I stood alone.

He saw my hurt and my constant fear,  
What sordid defeat had brought me here,  
And He knew my bitter heart a stone.

He spoke to me quietly through the night  
Of a Cross road eternal from blight  
To steel-stayed Faith and Heart renewed.

He left when from my eyes there shone  
The ardent Will . . . and I stood alone  
In the morning's misty solitude.

Ann Arbor.

JOHN VAN LONKHUYZEN.

# KIERKEGAARD FOR AMERICANS

William T. Riviere

First Presbyterian Church, Victoria, Texas

SOREN KIERKEGAARD (1813-55), made more than one stir in Copenhagen during his lifetime. A demonstration by the university students at his funeral prefigured the fact that after his death he would attract still more attention. A generation later that began to be true in Germany; but it seemed to require post-war moods to give him vogue on the Continent. Despite Professor David F. Swenson's valiant work at the University of Minnesota, to most Americans Kierkegaard was just a queer name: in the eleventh and fourteenth editions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* the title of his first great book, *Enten-Eller, Either-Or*, is misspelled; while some of our scholarly young pedants, liking that forceful expression for "you must choose," cite not the original Danish but the German form "entweder-oder," which is less emphatic than our plain and simple "either-or." Perhaps we Presbyterians noticed Kierkegaard's name in Forsyth, *The Work of Christ*, p. ix; or in Denny, *The Death of Christ*, p. 216ff. We may have noticed such phrases as Forsyth's (id.): "That searching Christian genius Kierkegaard—the great and melancholy Dane in whom Hamlet was mastered by Christ." Then came Karl Barth, who brought Kierkegaard to our attention, and Dr. Walter Lowrie, *Our Concern with the Theology of Crisis*, p. 11, called this stranger to us "that tremendous Dane . . . who failed to make any impression upon his own century and has become the predominant intellectual factor in ours." I even devised a pun and in *The Evangelical Quarterly*, Jan. 1936, p. 63, called him "the gloomy Dane"; but on Feb. 4 of the same year found the very same expression on the jacket of Bain's book published in the preceding November. Despite my honored correspondent Dr. Swenson, the adjective can be defended: the journals frequently show the melancholy diarist as a lonely man who showed a cheerful face to the world and who, in earnest, almost desperate, solitary written prayer, counted his blessings in honest effort to be of good cheer in his heart.

Now, in our native language, we are beginning to have a considerable available literature by and about Kierkegaard. Swenson and Lowrie will soon publish other books; I propose to list those already printed in English of which I know today. Furthermore, as a pastor who enjoys Kierkegaard but who, of course, has not surrendered to him, I shall venture to express some personal opinions about these books.

A word of warning: Kierkegaard was a voluminous and many-sided writer. It would be hard to outline him satisfactorily, even with three or more heads bracketed between introduction and conclusion. The nearest I have come to an outline was in

a slight talk on him to a Rotary club: some of his main teachings were subsumed under the theme, "It's hard to be a Christian." Part of the real Kierkegaard always eludes such simplification. When I first read Allen's book, to be listed below, it seemed to me that he over-schema-tized Kierkegaard's thought; then I found every item of his schematization in the Dane's own writings; but still the scheme is as unlike what Kierkegaard's books and journals reveal to me as a caricature in a political cartoon is unlike a real portrait. The scheme is valuable. But unlike Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, Hamilton, or Spencer, Kierkegaard's thought cannot be fairly presented in summary form—not even by himself! Perhaps Bergson's basic distinction between fluidity, duration, life, on the one hand, and the geometrical form of our thinking about that living flow of experience on the other, may help the student of philosophy to understand what I am trying to say.

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We have several books that include treatments of Kierkegaard. Lowrie's book on the theology of crisis has been mentioned. Professor Donald Mackenzie's *Christianity the Paradox of God* is another. Far better is the section in Aubrey, *Present Theological Tendencies*; Professor Aubrey follows a competent German scholar, W. Ruttenbeck, and introduces his study of Barth by something about Hegel, then Kierkegaard's anti-Hegelianism as a starter for Barth. The chapter on Kierkegaard in Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology* (in other respects a splendid book) is utterly infelicitous, in fact wretched: the Scot unfortunately depended upon a German writer on contemporary philosophy, Werner Brock. A glance through Brock's book suggests unripeness; careful reading of his pages on Kierkegaard fails to show a Kierkegaard that this student of Kierkegaard can recognize.

There is not much valuable information about Kierkegaard in most of our books about Barth and about Brunner. The famous passage where Barth quotes him, in the preface to the 2d edition of *The Epistle to the Romans*, is usually cited too briefly. This deals with what is literally translated as "the infinite qualitative distinction between time and eternity." Let me offer a simpler translation: Barth is replying to the charge that his system makes him force a meaning upon the text: "If I have a system, here it is: as persistently as possible I keep in view what Kierkegaard called the infinite unlikeness in kind" (one might almost say, as the French translators do, "in nature") "between time and eternity, taking this dissimilarity in both its negative and its positive aspects." These two aspects are not sufficiently treated by those who comment on Barth.

Following Höffding, I made a feeble stab at it in the *Ev. Q.* already mentioned, p. 54f. Immediately after the words which I have just translated Barth quotes most of the last half of Eccl. 5:2: "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth." Barth's omission of the last clause of the verse may amuse you until you observe that the Preacher probably agreed with our Swiss brother here: he warns against presumptuous thinking and speaking rather than against mere verbosity and longwindedness. Barth's next sentence may be quoted from Hoskyns' translation, p. 10: "The relation between such a God and such a man, and the relation between such a man and such a God, is for me the theme of the Bible and the essence of philosophy." And Barth goes on to state that while philosophers speculate about this relationship in terms of ultimate origin, the Bible puts Jesus Christ here connecting God and man.

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There are two American translations of Kierkegaard which are not readily available. The first was in the Comparative Literature series published by the University of Texas years ago: *Selections from Kierkegaard*, by Dr. Lee M. Hollander of the faculty. The translator's interest was largely in the style; but his selections are admirably chosen for our religious interest; they are somewhat less apt, but not much less, if our interest is in philosophy. But this little volume is out of print.

Several years ago someone privately printed 500 copies of Kierkegaard's *Diary of a Seducer* in Ithaca, New York. I have not been able to get a copy of this translation; but have read a French translation of the same work. It is the last part of the first half of *Either-Or*, presenting the aesthetic view of life, namely, thoughtful provision for selfish pleasure. It is a psychological study of one who wants to take without incurring obligation. Commentators suggest that Kierkegaard wanted to show the vanity of such a life; certainly, the morning after his success, *Seducing John* writes, "All is over, however, and I don't want to see her again."

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There are three books by Kierkegaard which you can buy for about two or two and a half dollars apiece.

The first is Swenson's translation of *Philosophical Fragments*, 1936. Here you have something worthy of study, a type of religious philosophy which is not even mentioned in such a new book as Burt's on that subject. The important part of the book is very briefly and plainly put. There is a good introduction and there are good notes. A much longer sequel is being translated by the same competent hand.

The next was published by Harpers late last summer or early in the fall: *Purity of Heart*, beautifully translated by Douglas Steere. This was recommended by the Religious Book Club, and worthily so. From the translation and introduction, however, you would not realize that Kierkegaard was

writing this meditation to be read before the Lord's Supper. In 1937 the same religious discourse was printed in London, translated under the title of *Purify Your Hearts!* by Aldworth and Ferrie. Comparing the two translations with Tisseau's limpid French version, one finds that sometimes the American is better than the British, and sometimes the British is better. In one place a bit of quotation is given an entirely different meaning by each of the three!

In the early summer of 1939 the Oxford Press brought out Robert Payne's translation of *Fear and Trembling*. Kierkegaard thought enough of this book to predict that it would outlive him and give him a name. It is a study of Abraham's faith, and is generally believed to present one side of Kierkegaard's own thinking about faith. Ninety-six years ago this volume and its twin *Repetition*, of which Payne's version will soon be printed, appeared the same day under different pen-names. Both deal with faith as hoping against hope. This English edition of *Fear and Trembling* is a very attractive volume, and offers a good place to begin your study of Kierkegaard. The translator fails to acknowledge an apparent indebtedness to Dr. Hollander, who translated nearly a third of the same work in the university bulletin already referred to. There are some striking verbal similarities.

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There are four books about Kierkegaard for about the same price as these translations.

By far the best is *Lectures on the Religious Thought of Soren Kierkegaard*, by Eduard Geismar, Professor of Theology, University of Copenhagen. These were the Stone Lectures at Princeton in March, 1936. Even better than these fine informative lectures, with their well-chosen presentations of parts of Kierkegaard's own writings, is Swenson's introduction.

The other three are British, but the first of them is well advertised over here. *Kierkegaard*, by Allen, gives an account of the author's life and a study of his teachings. This study has been mentioned in the first part of this paper. But Swenson, without giving Allen's name, in his introduction to Geismar, p. xxiii, demolishes Allen (p. 205) as follows: "To one who has through a reading of the *Journals* seen how Kierkegaard's reflection, with respect to each and every position he was about to take, anxiously guarded the integrity of this guiding principle of not 'lying himself into the possession of a result'—to such a reader the lofty superiority with which a recent English writer on Kierkegaard, intending to bestow a compliment while pointing a criticism, says of him that 'he was a valiant fighter in a cause he did not understand,' can scarcely fail to convey a sense of something a bit ludicrous. . . . A professor in philosophy passes in review during the course of a year the greatest thinkers of all time, and shows precisely where each of them failed and where they succeeded. The reviewer-journalist . . . quickly concocts an article. . . ." *Mea culpa*.

Bain's *Soren Kierkegaard* is very interesting. The summaries of certain works are excellent. The quotations, especially the prayers, in the appendix are well selected. Dr. Bain finds some dangerous elements in Kierkegaard's teaching. Ferrie criticizes both Allen and Bain for trying to explain Kierkegaard, that is, to explain him away.

The third British book is Dru's translation of an essay by Theodor Haecker of Innsbruck. Really, of course, it is a German (now; Austrian when published) Catholic presentation. The title is *Soren Kierkegaard*. This is a very valuable study. Haecker finds the real Kierkegaard in the various edifying discourses and other religious writings, rather than in the many volumes which, though he afterward acknowledged them, Kierkegaard originally published under a variety of carefully discriminated *noms-de-plume*.

\* \* \* \* \*

And now we have two big books in the seven dollar class.

The "magnum opus" of Dr. Walter Lowrie, after years of ministry in Rome and of lecturing in America, is his *Kierkegaard*, which appeared last year. This is a large book, thoroughly equipped with appendix after appendix, abounding in long quotations, with very exact references to the Danish collected works. No serious student of Kierkegaard can do without this great book. The method of presentation gives a better understanding of the Danish thinker than a more formal statement. Many choice passages are translated.

With reference to one remark of Lowrie's, and to another in the review of this book by Dr. S. G. Craig in *Christianity Today*, let this be said: no Calvinist can read much of Kierkegaard without observing with regret that the Dane had not read Calvin. Calvin would have helped his soul in its solitary battles for truth. But Kierkegaard was a rebel soul: he admired Luther but not only disagreed with him on some points but wrote violently against him; the suggestion that his ascetic conception of Christianity might have led him to Rome seems more absurd than the famous Absurd of which he had so much to say; and our Calvinism, though it might have helped him, would not have won the full allegiance of this man who could not understand the serpent and so omitted him from his study of the Fall and of Original Sin in his book, *The Concept of Dread* (which you can get in German, and in two French translations, but not yet in English).

The last book we have is Alexander Dru's large volume, *The Journals of Soren Kierkegaard*. This selection is based on Haecker's and the point of view is the same. Having just mailed an extensive notice of this book to *The Union Seminary Review* (Richmond, Va.), and commended it for browsing or for study, I may limit myself to three remarks:

First, Dru omits the note of March, 1844: "There are only 3 positions between faith and knowledge.

1. Paul: 'I know Whom I have believed.' 2. Credo ut intelligam. 3. Faith is direct, unmediated. In each, knowledge follows faith."

Second, Dru gives (p. 282f.) the full context of Kierkegaard's famous remark to the King of Denmark. It seems that Kierkegaard really felt it to be true of himself, but complimented Christian VIII, when he said: "It is hard luck to be a genius in Gopher Prairie." Naturally Dru renders this well-known remark with dignity: "It is a misfortune to be a genius in a provincial town."

Third, let me close with these words, written for the *Union Seminary Review* about this book. "Kierkegaard's writings need less comment than those of almost any other serious thinker. They also need more comment. Less because he writes clearly, plainly, and amply; more because of the variety of viewpoints from which he treats his themes."

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## CHRISTMAS MUSINGS

AND again the lights and shops, the music and the money changers proclaim that it is the Christmas season. But do they know why? From the open window of a church from the lips of diligently practicing choristers comes the answer, "*Unto us a child is born . . .*" and a joy should flood the world like the joy that sweeps a father when the news is brought, "*Unto us a son is given.*" I wonder what He must think of the world *and the government* of man's destiny. I suppose what shall be *shall be* and we shall all one day say, "It was well done," but I think that when He looks down the cross must still seem to weigh heavily *upon His shoulder*. *And His name* is supposed to be held in honor in these "Christian" nations! I wonder if ever His help *shall be called in* by this mad world and her leaders. They say there will be a *wonderful* day when He shall become the world's *Counsellor*, at His coming again. Will the *Mighty God* condescend to take personal charge of the muddled threads from the skeins of the world's weaving? For me it is sufficiently marvelous that He is still willing to hear us call, not any too often or consistently either, to him and name him our "*Everlasting Father*." He must not be fooled by our mercenary motives. When He comes he cannot but come to judgment and *the Prince* of this world shall be cast out and all his petty minions in high places with him. Then only could His *peace* descend upon us. Without that fiery purge men may continue to cry, "Peace, Peace!" But there is, there can be no peace.

Best CHRIST-mas wishes to you all!

ALA BANDON.

# U - E - R - S - E

## My Lord

I heard some Christmas carolers  
Lift voices up with one accord,  
And to the very smallest child,  
With eyes that shone and lips that smiled,  
They echoed praises to their Lord.

I did not like to stand aloof,  
But joined their ranks, while upward soared  
My voice to One I did not know,  
For Whom I tried a love to show  
While singing, "Welcome to our Lord."

But when I knew just why He came,  
The depths of true devotion poured  
Forth from my heart at His pierced feet—  
Who life and death came down to meet  
That He might some day be—*my* Lord.

—VERNA SMITH TEEUWISSEN.

## Last Month and Now

Last month, I walked along this glowing vale—  
The hills were radiant in their glistening gold  
With crimson branches flung across the wold  
And carpeting the ground with brown green shale.  
But now so desolate the view and chill  
The trees are naked, stark against the sky  
Gray meeting around and wide and high;  
Instead of singing birds, how strangely still!  
The river that was pearly merrily  
Is murmuring in broken undertone;  
No silver flashing fish play round the stone  
But all the earth seems sighing drearily.  
This is oppressive but I do surmise  
A promise of white snowflakes in the skies.

—J. G. G.

## Peace On Earth

O sin-torn heart, a scene of strife,  
O troubled soul, with misery rife,  
From bonds of death now find release  
By leaning on the Prince of Peace!

O wretched man, in evil brave,  
False freedom-holder, Satan's slave,  
Your vain, blind, hopeless strivings cease,  
Behold in faith the Prince of Peace!

O war-torn world, all steeped in hate,  
O envious rulers, nations great,  
Give to your selfish aims surcease,  
And bow before the Prince of Peace!

O Prince of Peace, Thou Lord of all,  
Come and dispel sin's deathsome pall,  
Bring healing, freedom, soul-rebirth,  
Good will to men and peace on earth!

—H. P.

## Acquiescence

There's a field on yon hillside, I must till it and plow,  
There's the seed to be sown, it had better be now,  
Soon the harvest will beckon and I needs must be  
strong,  
But my feet are so weary and the furrow so long.

There are volumes of knowledge for pleasure or gain,  
I would garner them in with might and with main,  
For my mind is athirst and my soul longs for light,  
But life is so short and soon comes the night.

I would fain on my canvas the colors arrange,  
How the eye would delight in their infinite change.  
There is ecstasy pure in their riotous play,  
But the eye is imperfect while time still holds sway.

With one sweep I that field on my hillside would  
plan,  
In one surge I with knowledge the mind would  
endow,  
With one masterly stroke I my canvas would dress,  
If only for once I thy power might possess.

When the swells of ambition sore harass the soul,  
When it seems I will never attain to my goal,  
While time surges on in its merciless stride—  
It is then I must learn by thy will to abide.

Ah! my life I must live, I must live it and love  
My neighbor and self, through the Love from above.  
And in Thee, oh my Sovereign, all my love must  
converge,  
But self-love most oft of that love sounds the dirge.

Yea, thy knowledge and power are forever supreme,  
Thy hand all-directing the vast cosmic scheme.  
While others surge upward to heights higher still,  
Give me grace to find peace in just doing thy Will.

Clifton, N. J.

M. M. JELLEMA.

# FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

## A Christian Russian Exile Writes

Dear Professor:

**T**HANK you very much for your kind letter. Excuse me, please, for the delay in answering you. With joy we recall the Cambridge International Evangelical Student Conference of this summer, that mighty and unanimous testimony for Christ and the whole Bible on the part of professors and students from over 30 countries.

Seven hundred students, all standing for Christ—what a cheering and encouraging impression! As for myself, it was as though I had returned to my student days, when 35 years ago I experienced my surrender to the Lord, my first love to Him. It reminded me in spirit of our Christian Student Movement in Russia, which always stood on the basis of the Gospel of salvation through the precious blood of Christ.

### Persecution in Russia

For the sake of this faith many of us suffered in Russia. I myself, as you know, was imprisoned by the Russian authorities for a period of seven months because of my participation in this Christian student work. When I went into exile I was entrusted with the commission to witness to our Western fellow-students the whole Gospel—not the modern one, devastated by human critics, bloodless, lifeless, not able to save, not able to turn the water into wine, but only to transform the wine of heavenly inspiration into the luke-warm water which thirsty young people will spurn with anger and disgust.

We, Russian Christians, saw that in our country, in the forefront of the great spiritual battle, only the entire, genuine Gospel could stand the test. Only the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, can overcome. And only for this true gospel we were, and we are now, ready and able to endure severe persecutions. This is the message of the Russian Christians which my friends in Moscow committed to me to convey to our Western brethren. "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death." (Rev. 12:11) This is our apocalyptic creed, the message of the last days, as well as of the early days of Christianity: Christ crucified and risen; the Word of our testimony: full surrender to the Lord! so that "not I, but Christ liveth in me."

And He is the divine Conqueror. Let us share His victory, as good soldiers and witnesses of Him. Only He could enable us to sing praises even in the midst of suffering and to experience the glorious truth that to be in prison with Christ is freedom, and without Christ, even freedom is a prison.

### The Gospel and the Soviet in Poland

Here in England we continue to visit the assemblies and to deliver our Russian message; also to relate about the Gospel work in Russia, Palestine, and Poland. Our desire was to return to Poland. There, in the eastern part, close to the Soviet border, my native village is situated. In the midst of it, in my house, in a special Gospel hall we had the privilege to preach the good tidings, to have Bible courses for preachers, etc. Since September 17 my home land is occupied by the Soviet government. That means that my return there is evidently not possible. As you know, I was exiled by this government. I fear that with this Russian occupation of my home town my second exile has now begun. Yes, "persecuted, but not forsaken." (2 Cor. 4:9)

Humanly speaking, our near future is uncertain. The way into Palestine, which in recent years had been our field and permanent place of residence, is now also barred. But our Father knows, and He is able. The very day we read in the papers the sad news about the fate of our house in Poland, we moved into a little bungalow on the outskirts of London, kindly offered to us by its evacuated owners. My wife remarked: "God takes with one hand and gives with the other."

In Poland many of our Christian friends are in a very difficult position. "The floods have lifted up their voice . . . The Lord on high is mightier than the voice of many waters." (Ps. 93:4) In the days of old the waves of the flood have lifted up, but Noah's ark was always higher. Let us pray for our brethren and sisters whose land now is covered with the flood of the godless power, threatening with its horrible system of the anti-God campaign and with persecution of Christians. May God help them to be loyal and faithful, and even to influence the godless with the Gospel of truth and love.

### Ukrainian Calvinists

Many Ukrainian Christians in Galicia (also occupied by the Soviets) belong to the Reformed (Calvinistic) Church. I had good fellowship with their leaders in connection with my work on the Revision Committee of the new translation of the Bible into the modern Ukrainian language from the original Hebrew and Greek. The New Testament of this revised version was already printed before the war broke out.

We are booked here till the end of October. The further way is known only to God, who is the Shepherd and Guide. The planned visit to the U.S.A. remains indefinite.

Yours in the Lord's service,

W. MARCINKOWSKI.

Bletchingley,  
Surrey, England.  
Oct. 14, 1939.

(NOTE: We are happy to place this letter from our Ukrainian brother, whom we met in Christian fellowship among the speakers at the recent Cambridge Evangelical Student Conference. Brother Marcinkowski speaks and writes his English well. We have made only minor corrections in the above letter. Our readers will be interested to know that for years before his exile from Russia he has been engaged in Christian student work in Russian universities. Those interested to know more of his personal experiences both in a Russian prison and in active service, are referred to his book, *With Christ in Soviet Russia* (by W. Marcinkowski), pp. 364. Price \$1.25. Paper: \$1.00. It may be had from: American-European Fellowship, 1213 North Franklin Street, Philadelphia, Pa. We welcome our brother as a correspondent to our pages and hope to hear from him right often. Through his words our contact with persecuted Christians in Russia will become more real and it will vitalize our prayer in their behalf.—EDITOR.)

## Calvinism and Modernism in Australia

Geelong, Victoria,  
Australia.

September 27, 1939.

Dear Dr. Bouma:

**Y**OUR letter of the 25th of August duly received, and I have communicated with the secretary of the Calvinistic Society, Mr. F. Maxwell Bradshaw, M.A., LL.B., and asked him to inform you of what has and is being done in Australia to revive Calvinism. As he has the minute books of the Society, he will be able to give you the information in more detail than I would be able to do.

I can assure you that the Calvinistic Society of Australia would do its utmost to encourage our American brethren, who stand so firmly for the Sovereignty of God and loyalty to His Holy Word.

The movement in Australia is as yet in its infancy and is up against considerable opposition. The liberal theologians under the leadership of Dr. Angus dominate the General Assembly of



the Presbyterian Church. So that avenue for the propagation of the Reformed Faith is closed.

Dr. Angus is definitely a Unitarian. He is a man of charming personality, a gifted orator, and an able teacher. During the next week I will mail to you Dr. Angus' book *Truth and Tradition*, as a perusal of it will be more satisfactory than a statement of my conclusions concerning his teachings.

Dr. Angus' latest book, *Essential Christianity*, is nothing more or less than *Truth and Tradition* well padded.

At present I am preparing a paper to read before the Calvinistic Society during the month of November. I will forward to you a copy or have the secretary do so. And you may use it as you think fit.

We are now in communication with New Zealand and we hope to form a branch of the movement in that country. We will let you know later with what success we meet.

Praying that God may bless the efforts put forward for the glory of His name in the U.S.A., and with kindest regards, I remain

Yours in Him,  
ARTHUR ALLEN.

P.S. At the next meeting I will move that a correspondent be appointed to keep you in touch with the movement in Australia.

The following may serve as a suitable footnote to this letter. It is an article on the modernistic views of Dr. Angus, who is Professor of New Testament and Historical Theology at St. Andrew's College, University of Sydney, Australia, and appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of May 31 last.

#### The Modernism of Dr. Angus

The Rev. D. F. Brandt, a former Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly, at Chalmers Church last night criticized the teachings of Dr. Angus in his book, "Truth and Tradition."

Mr. Brandt said that for 12 or 14 years some of the Presbyterian clergy had become dissatisfied with the teachings of Dr. Angus to students. Finally, in the opinion of those who opposed Dr. Angus' teachings, there came a time when something had to be done. Dr. Angus was asked to define his position in a statement, and that statement took the form of the book, "Truth and Tradition."

"The kernel of the whole thing," said Mr. Brandt, "is the Personality of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Christ of Dr. Angus works from below and ours comes down from above. It is not a question of being hidebound. We must hold to some things; if they go, Christianity goes."

Mr. Brandt pointed out that the controversy centered around the question of the divinity of Christ. Dr. Angus held that Christ was a superman taken by God and endowed with high spiritual powers—powers so great that in the end this man became divine. By following Him people would become perfect, and would pass into the Kingdom of God. That was Dr. Angus' conception of Christ coming from below. Dr. Angus' critics held that Christ came into the world by the great miracle of the Virgin Birth which, however, nobody could explain. Christ came down to earth and became man. If the Christ of Dr. Angus was the true Christ, there was no need for the Incarnation and no need for the Trinity. If that was so, people could become perfect and work their way to Heaven. It meant the survival of the fittest; only those who were physically and morally fit could attain to Heaven—the great mass of men and women because of their imperfections were to be kept out. One chapter in the book—admittedly a brief and scrappy one—contained a distinct denial of the Resurrection; Dr. Angus evidently believed in a kind of spiritual reanimation, but nobody had been able to find out what that was.

The disciples said distinctly that Christ had appeared to them. If that was not true, the disciples were lying, and if they lied in this matter, why not in others? If so, the whole of the New Testament fell to pieces.

Dr. Angus had said that God was a God of love, and did not require any expiation for sins. God, however, was perfect, said

Mr. Brandt, and must be perfect in His justice. To be perfect in His justice He must fulfil every letter of the law, and that law said that "he who sinneth shall die." God paid that we might be free. If that were not so Jesus Christ was only a common martyr, and His death meant nothing more to us than the death of any other martyr. It was not true, as Dr. Angus contended, that Jesus was sinless because He could not sin. That suggested that Christ was flabby. Yet Christ had resisted temptation after he had fasted 40 days and 40 nights, and later in the Garden of Gethsemane, where he might easily have walked away and said, "I will not do it." Instead, He said, "Thy will be done."

Regarding the question of the Trinity, Mr. Brandt said he could see no difference between the position of Dr. Angus and that of a Unitarian.

"Truth will prevail," Mr. Brandt added.

## The Sino-Japanese War

DR. CLARENCE BOUMA,  
Grand Rapids, Mich., U.S.A.

Dear Friend:

SEVERAL months have elapsed since my last letter was mailed to you. To-day events are transpiring with such amazing rapidity and the immediate future is pregnant with such possibilities of unpredictable change that one hardly dares voice an opinion, and even the recording of present circumstances seems less worthwhile since even these will change before this letter sees print.

In this day of ruthless exploitation of the weak by the strong; while kingdoms rise and others wane and sink into oblivion, it is heartening for a Christian to know that we see also to-day the unfolding of God's eternal purpose in the conquest against sin and the establishment of His eternal Kingdom. We may be called upon to endure continued physical inconvenience or suffering but there is nothing that needs hamper our spiritual growth. To the contrary, our convictions regarding God, Christ, human nature, sin and redemption are deepened. The truth of God's Word is being vindicated and those who lack a basis in that Truth stand confounded and helpless.

There are aspects in the present situation that fill one with awe and amazement. Let me mention just a few.

#### Japan and China

Japan. Less than a hundred years since she was forced from isolation to accept relations with the aggressive nations of the West. Bowing before the inevitable but undesired, she acquired Western tools of aggression and utilizes them on behalf of a feudal system and in a way which—because it brings to fruition with inexorable logic ideals underlying a national existence—is truly oriental.

The stage is set for this outburst of Japanese energy. The whole world is anti-Japanese but that world is so beset by political and economic problems that no reserves of power are available to stem this surging tide which threatens to overwhelm the Asiatic continent.

China. Truly marvelous that in this hour God provides leaders who are able to use the marked characteristics of the Chinese race and pit them against this orgy of ruthless force. China lacks aggressiveness. She bows before the storm. Lack of offensive warfare is not accounted for by lack of sufficient and efficient equipment. The defensive form of warfare suits the Chinese character much better. The Chinese talent for compromise is a powerful asset. General Chiang understands the people with and for whom he is fighting and he maintains his faith in the ultimate outcome. Racially the Chinese and Japanese are closely related. In their national characteristics they vary greatly.

#### Japanese Strategy

Japanese armies are victorious wherever they go. But garrisons cannot be left everywhere. When the Japanese withdraw

from conquered areas, Chinese life returns like waters behind a passing vessel.

The economic and financial weapons so cruelly used by the Japanese have not accomplished their purpose. Nor is there a likelihood that they will unless the Chinese compromise and co-operate.

To that end the Japanese are now forming another "puppet government" with one of China's revolutionary leaders, a disciple of Sun Yat-sen, as leader. The trick is a clever one but success is far from assured. At present Chiang continues as China's recognized leader. The co-operation with Communist forces is so close that, should Chiang be eliminated, Chu Teh, the leader of the Communists, would inevitably take his place. China's future does not look promising just now. But Japan's success is far from assured. One stands awed by the possibilities.

#### Heroic Labors by Missionaries

Missionaries. The tenacity with which they have clung to their positions is truly amazing. They have made big sacrifices but most of them refuse to budge. Yesterday a friend from Hunan called and calmly told of days when they applied six hundred surgical dressings after severe bombings of civilian populations. Recently a friend from Honan province casually mentioned the fact that the strategic city in which they work has been bombed at least two hundred times. It is a mass of ruins but the work goes on. The material losses suffered are insignificant compared to the spiritual and moral strengthening.

One Mission decided to recall the workers who have "trekked" to the west for re-occupation of the "occupied" field. The present situation may last indefinitely and in many respects it is best to come to terms with the conquerors in order that the work of bringing the Gospel may go on. Such measures also require courage and self-denial. Conditions have changed. Handicaps abound. Old forms of work have to be abandoned for the present but what can be done must be done.

I'll stop at this point. We in this part of the world anxiously watch developments in America. May Christians be alert during these momentous days.

Sincerely yours,  
H. A. DYKSTRA.

Shanghai, China,  
September 26, 1939.

## Echoes from India

Telugu Village Mission,  
Adoni, Bellary Dist.,  
South India.  
Oct. 2, 1939.

The Editor,  
THE CALVIN FORUM,  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear Mr. Editor:

TO most of us who are "Veterans of the Great War" and still in the forties, the outbreak of another war cannot be other than disconcerting. My own part in the present hostilities, however, must of necessity be confined to a little speaking and writing sandwiched in between the job of helping bring the Living Christ into the lives of the "Untouchables"—a role which, if not so exciting as that of soldiering, is nevertheless more satisfying. But my present task being that of a scribe, I must try to chronicle faithfully the reactions of a representative cross section of Indian opinion.

India's reaction in rallying around the Union Jack has been little short of amazing when one looks back on the bitter criticism that was levelled against England a few short weeks ago in connection with her policy in India. Prince, pundit and peasant alike have expressed their warm approval of Great Britain's support of Poland and her championship of the cause

of democracy. Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, and even "the fire-eating" Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru have publicly declared their adherence to the British policy and, apart from the vaporings of a section of political windbags, the great majority of thinking Indians are unreservedly for England and France.

Here is an instance which will serve as an example of the prevalent feeling. A prominent (Bangalore) industrialist, Mr. V. S. Moorty, implementing the offer of his personal services and those of his two sons with the gift to the authorities of two thousand tons of chrome ore valued at about \$30,000, writes: "We have our own small grievances against Britain. Which member of a family has not got a grievance against another? But now, when we have to face a common enemy, an enemy not only of Britain and the Empire but of civilization itself, it is our foremost duty to forget everything and to put our shoulders to the wheel and win this war."

#### Mahatma Gandhi

One of the clearest impressions I retain of the contacts made with certain sections of the public in America is the genuine interest shown in Mr. Gandhi and his sayings and doings. That being so, I have referred to the extraordinary little man in my letters from time to time and do so again. Describing the Indian leader as "The Mahatma, teacher, and prophet," Lord Lothian, the present British Ambassador at Washington, writing in *The Observer*, says: "The Mahatma's fundamental motives are religious. He has repeatedly declared that his object in life is to bring religion into politics. His religion is based on the fundamental Hindu Scriptures, *The Bhagavat Gita*, which teaches that the way to salvation and to the knowledge of reality lies in renunciation of the things of this world, and especially of responsibility for the fruits of righteous action. But he interprets the *Gita*, not negatively in the introspective Hindu tradition, but positively so that it accords with the Christian doctrine that the love of God can only be learned or shown by actively loving one's neighbor as oneself.

"This religious faith has not only led him to throw himself into the political movement for the emancipation and regeneration of his countrymen from the 'enervating and Satanic effects of foreign rule' and domestic superstition and social injustice, but has convinced him that Western civilization has gone off the rails in its passionate pursuit of material values. There is nothing wrong in machinery or natural science as such. The folly of the West, and increasingly of the East, has been that it lost interest in and contact with the things of the Spirit in the mad effort to pile up more of the 'things' given to it by the discoveries of science.

"Gandhi points out, as every great religious teacher has taught from the beginning of time, that his pursuit of 'things', or money and speed and pleasure and power, does not make mankind happy, individually or collectively. On the contrary, it inevitably produces bitter discords between individuals, classes, and nations. Above all, it destroys religion, the true religion of the Spirit active in man, because amid the turmoil and the struggle of the modern world, the voice of the Eternal cannot be heard. There is, therefore, in Gandhi's opinion, no way out for mankind save a deliberate return to the ideal of the simple life, where man is content with simplicity because he has recognized that the real values of life—love, religion, art, and human brotherhood—can only thus be regained."

#### Conference at Voorhees College

A correspondent from Vellore, the headquarters of the American Arcot Mission, mentions an interesting gathering held at the Voorhees College which was founded by the Reformed Church some sixty years ago and which, in that writer's words, "ably leads the way in Christian teaching and higher education." Presiding over a Conference of Indian Christians was Mrs. Mona Hensman, M.B.E., a member of the Madras Legislature and a leading figure in South Indian society. Educated mostly in England where she graduated from London University, this lady visited Canada and the United States

last year under the aegis of the Y.W.C.A., studying among other subjects, divorce laws as they affect women. Divorce, of course, is unknown for the vast majority of women in India although it is technically possible for a Christian woman to obtain a divorce. Speaking on the subject, Mrs. Hensman said, "Even in a religion like Christianity where divorce is a possibility, it is seldom used for selfish ends in India because the prestige of holding the family together for the sake of children still remains."

Another woman speaker at the conference was Miss Indira Varkey, a well known educator, who dealt with the Syrian Christian community about which I wrote in my last letter to THE CALVIN FORUM. "In Travancore State," said Miss Varkey, "the Syrian Christian community is one of the most forward groups in India—materially rich, politically progressive, and educationally one hundred per cent literate." Continuing, the speaker declared, "In India the best brains of the country are now concentrated in building up the political edifice. In this struggle, in the bickerings and injustices of political life, the Christian Church and the Christian community have a great part to play."

#### Hindu Nationalism and Christian Missions

The past decade has witnessed an ever growing desire for cultural and religious unity on the part of several Hindu and Neo-Hindu cults, culminating in the formation of the Hindu Mahasabha—literally, "The Grand Convention of Hindus." With this trend towards unification there has been a positive and growing antagonism towards the work of all Christian bodies. Speaking at a mass meeting held in Calcutta a few weeks ago, Dr. Moonjie, a well known politician, said, "The Hindu Mahasabha stands for the preservation of homogeneity of the nation. No nation on the face of the earth can be great without homogeneity in race, religion, and culture, which are the prime factors in the constitution of a nation." Proceeding, Dr. Moonjie said, "The first thing necessary for the establishment of homogeneity in India is the prevention of proselytism. This must be stopped through the efforts of the members of the Hindu community and the Government, in order that the work of building up a consolidated and stable nation may go on unhampered."

To one who knows his India and who is vitally interested in the spread of the Gospel of Christ, the foregoing and similar statements made elsewhere are ominous.

With more or less serious delays to mails due to circumstances not unconnected with the war, it behooves one to be in good time with seasonable greetings. So, although these are early days, I shall nevertheless extend to you, Mr. Editor and my readers, cordial greetings for a blessed Christmas and good wishes for the coming year, Nineteen-forty. And may I add that THE CALVIN FORUM is looked forward to and enjoyed as much as ever.

Sincerely yours,  
ARTHUR V. RAMIAH.

## Hungary and the European War

Dear Dr. Bouma:

AT the outbreak of the war in Europe we felt almost sure that it would become impossible for us to get any news or information from Hungary. To our great relief, however, this is not the case. Mail service goes on uninterruptedly between the United States and Hungary.

The fact of Hungary's neutrality gives us a twofold satisfaction. First, it tends to prove to us that Hungary is not under an alien influence, as suspected, at least not to an extent that would make it impossible for her to remain mistress of her own interests. Secondly, we cannot help admiring the self-restraint employed by the land of our origin in regard to her revisionist aspirations. Hungary, as you know, was the foremost victim of the post-war peace-making allied wisdom and idealism. More than two thirds of her more than a thousand-year-old posses-

sions were torn away from her without any semblance of a plebiscite. It must have been exceedingly tempting to Hungarians to sell out their neutrality for the return of at least parts of their lost, but in mind never abandoned, territories. Well, so far that temptation did not get the better of them. The Hungarian nation, which has always recognized it as part of its mission to safeguard the peace of the world in its own part of the globe, did not sacrifice world interest for the sake of satisfying its own particular interest.

How long Hungary will be able to maintain that attitude, we do not know. But we do know that certain utterances irritate all Hungarians. Here is, for example, one such utterance: "He [Stalin] was in a position to grab, if he liked, a jackel's share of the spoils in Eastern Europe, as Poland and Hungary had done in the partition of Czechoslovakia." (Demaree Bess in "Stalin over Europe" in the October 14, 1939, issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*). Here Hungary is grouped with Stalin. An ancient bulwark of Christendom with an arch enemy of religion. A rightful restitution of a thousand-year-old legacy is likened to the lowdown tactics of a sneaking jackal. It is simply disgusting how little historical perspective is displayed by people parading as experts and shaping the public opinion of millions.

Then those maps so frequently appearing in the public press! They all show the pre-Munich boundaries of Czechoslovakia, but they fail to show the more than a thousand-year-old boundaries of that Hungary at whose expense—to a great extent—Czechoslovakia was created after the first world war. Twenty years is taken for more than a thousand years! That's how much historical perspective some noted "experts" in international affairs possess. Again, Hungarians cannot suppress a twitch of their mouth when they hear France and England profess that they are fighting for "a full restoration of the wrongs done by Germany to her smaller neighbors." I would not be a bit surprised if twelve million Hungarians would begin to shout in unison the slogan of "Full Restoration!" into the ears of France and England, demanding the restoration of ancient territories lost as a consequence of their wartime pledges and ill-conceived determination to annihilate the old Dual Monarchy, the only effective barrier to Germany's southward "Drang."

Again, we witnessed the world make so much of Poland's necessity to have an outlet to the sea. In fact, it became the immediate cause that unleashed the bloodthirsty dogs of another war. But we never heard anyone even mention that the very same France and England helped to deprive Hungary of her only sea-port on the Adriatic. Even now, when both these countries profess to be the champions of smaller nations, they make it impossible for Hungary to feel with them without reservations, by guaranteeing the integrity of that Rumania that received the lion's share of Hungary's lost territories, the territories of the ancient principality of Transylvania, whose Calvinist princes made it the lifesaver of the whole Hungarian Protestant cause in the XVIIth century. Had it not been for Transylvania with its Calvinist princes, there would be no appreciable Calvinism in Hungary today. And it is an open question whether there would be any Hungary at all. Knowing this, how could any one expect any public enthusiasm in Hungary for that England that is openly guaranteeing the inviolable possession of this Transylvania for Rumania?

On the other hand, the Hungarian public has its own view of the other side to the conflict, too. They have no illusions concerning either side. They are unable to see anything holy in the whole imbroglio. This is why they try their utmost to stay out of it even at the cost of passing up seemingly good opportunities to realize their revisionist aspirations. The Hungarian nation is a seasoned nation. It does not gamble with history. The Hungarian nation is displaying in these days a very excellent proof of sound judgment and maturity. May God help it to maintain its neutrality, achieve its righteous aspirations peacefully, and enjoy a better understanding and appreciation among the nations!

Perth Amboy, N. J.

CHARLES VINCZE.

## Canada At War

Dear Mr. Editor:

THE complex of war has gripped the Canadian mind, and no wonder. Except for blaring bands, there is almost everything to develop the complex and make it lurid. There is probably no congregation in Canada that has not some of her boys in khaki, away to camp training for the inevitable. Canada is a "belligerent" but not by nature. She hates this war as much as anybody, in spite of the fact that she promptly said she would throw her resources of men, food, and machinery back of her motherland. She loves peace, and to us it seemed a mighty fine gesture over on the far-west coast when thousands from both sides of the renowned unfortified border demonstrated their gratitude for continued peace between Canada and the United States under a peace arch. Mr. Stob will probably tell us more about it. However, no contingent has gone across yet. If the carnage continues, it is likely that two divisions will go over early in the next year.

### The Meaning of the War

Does this war affect the ordinary citizen in Canada materially? In some respects not very much more than it does the average United States citizen. The government is doing a remarkably good work in restraining the evil of profiteering. It had been solemnly determined that if Canada went into another war there would be none, and thus far the solemn pledge has been pretty well maintained. Heavy fines are imposed without respect to anyone who makes a breach of the law. And then, too, there is obviously a fine attempt to keep the temper of the Canadian citizen on an even keel by all who have the power of propaganda. Frenzy is nowhere apparent. We see no hateful, blood-curdling cartoons as in the last war. All of which may yet come. Who knows?

But as in the previous conflict this conflict is in no want of pulpsters. Plenty of religious pretext can be found, indeed, more so than in the last war. This is more of a sacred conflict to the majority than any war in the last century. We are oft reminded that this is not a war for the balance of power, or for economic expansion, of imperialism, but for the dominance of ideologies—and these ideologies are religious or anti-religious in their nature.

Without endorsing that general attitude of many clerics completely, it probably goes without saying that the ambition of Germany's chancellor is nevertheless menacing. Could the government and temper of the British people be so completely undermined and thrown into confusion as Germany was after the world war, who knows how great the impetus to the spirit of antichrist and revolution would be.

### Seventy-five Pacifist Ministers

Amidst such general unanimity of purpose in Canada it would be strange not to find a pimple break out somewhere. Political parties all stood together. The overwhelming victory of the Liberals in the French-Canadian province of Quebec indicated the strong desire to maintain federal unity. But among the clergy of the United Church of Canada, a body composed of Methodists, Congregationalists, and some Presbyterians, seventy-five stood out for no war. They signed a strongly pacifistic manifesto and the question arose whether or not they were to be regarded as traitors to their country. A sub-executive committee of the United Church, with more than ordinary powers, took the matter in hand and expressed publicly "regret" that seventy-five ministers had seen fit to issue the manifesto. One of the prominent signatories was Dr. Richard D. Roberts, former moderator of the United Church of Canada. The Hon. Gordon Conant, Attorney General of Ontario, decided against prosecuting the seventy-five ministers who disapproved of "this war or any other war as incompatible with Christian spirit and aims." The Federal Deputy Minister of Justice doubted whether the action of the seventy-five would have any effect upon recruiting of His Majesty's forces.

Not as believed in some places, are Canadians placed under uncomfortable laws of censorship. The press, we suppose, is controlled somewhat, for at least, we know there is in existence a board of censorship. But it is not noticeably felt. Of course, no one gets the real inside, even in neutral countries—and we get as much as we care to get. Ether waves are careless about government censors, and we can go around the world for radio news anyway. We fortunately have no eavesdropping gestapo around. And so life goes on about as freely and easily as ever. Exchange of currency is one of the most annoying things—and my "Evangelical Quarterly" from Edinburgh which should have been here in October is still on the way. Hope it hasn't become fishfood.

Well sir, Mr. Editor, this little ramble springs from the complex of war—next time I shall have a little more religious complex. But this kind of a crazy dream of war is so awfully real we cannot shake it off. If we could shake ourselves awake, and believe it were only a phantom nightmare . . . but no, the very principalities and powers of Satan are abroad. And we will have to fight it out, for it is very apparent that in an apotheosized state Christianity is like a yacht at sea in a storm with her sails tied down tight to the backbone of her keel, buffeted by raging uncontrolled elements, her furniture cracked up, her beams taking unusual stress, and her men down in the holds bailing water. That is the only way she can make any progress, now. "God moves in a mysterious way."

WILLIAM VERWOLF.

Summerside, P. E. I.  
November 14, 1939.

## California's Spit and Argue Club

DR. C. BOUMA,

*Esteemed Professor:*

THE next time you come to California I want to take you to the Plaza Park in Los Angeles or to the Rainbow Pier in Long Beach where they have what is called a "Spit and Argue Club." Both these places resemble that section of the Market Place where the apostle Paul preached Jesus to the inquisitive Athenians. In the two places mentioned above they have an open forum and since you are editor in chief of THE CALVIN FORUM, I am sure these places would be of interest to you. Perhaps you would be aroused to the defense of Calvinism!

On my way to and from the radio station which we use for our Mission labors here, I pass the Plaza. Above the shifting of gears, the roar of motors, and the screeching of street car wheels, you can hear the orators rave and preach. A recent afternoon presented about the following scene:

At one end of the park a man with a buckskin shirt wide open at the neck and long, thin, grey hair hanging on his shoulders, was working himself into a sweat. With a cane swinging high into the air, he roared in a deep, bass voice: "The day of judgment is near at hand! All signs point to it! We're in the period of the Red Dragon now." Upon closer inspection it appeared that he was delivering a sort of illustrated lecture. Before him on the hot pavement lay a long, dirty canvass on which he had painted a typical Premillenarian presentation of eschatology. A few listless individuals formed his audience. Earnest and sincere as he was, it seemed more like casting pearls before swine than bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Here and there, all over the park, the regular forum of exhorting, yelling, singing and other forms of chest expansion, were on in full force. Los Angeles boasts of liberty and freedom of speech, "with no interference as long as the lung stretchers don't incite mob violence and treason."

Among the other enthusiasts that afternoon was a woman in a bright yellow dress, a funny little hat perched on a crop of red hair, and a heavy fur around her neck. She fairly shrieked above all her competitors and kept repeating: "You're going to

die! Every single one of you is going to die!" The tragic news seemed to have but little effect upon the motley group.

Near her a group of singers were gathered around an old portable organ offering their contribution of religious songs to the confusion. Beyond these again were four colored men with banjos putting plenty of gusto into their presentation.

Not all the speakers were proponents of the old time gospel. One hard-looking individual with a wiseacre smile on his face, was denouncing the Bible with scorching words. His filthy mind had hunted down all the offensive stories in the sacred book and he even accused our Lord Himself of doubtful conduct in relation to the woman who was caught in adultery.

In a farther section of the famous park, miscellaneous topics were set forth. A "bottle scarred veteran" of the new saloon age was making a plea for total abstinence. "I've seen more snakes and demons than you could jam into Griffith Park (a few hundred acres!)" he shouted. And it seemed that nobody doubted his word. After his fireworks were burned a veteran of World

War No. 1 began a word picture of the horrors of war. It seemed that his aim and desire was to keep us out of another major conflict, but his logic and rhetoric were too muddy to see the main line of thought. With the dead sure conviction of Ahab's court prophets he predicted the end of all dictators within a year and complete victory for the Chinese.

And so it goes on, week after week. It seems that many of these listeners are mere human derelicts, curious and idle, who find these gatherings a good place to kill time. For the speakers it affords a wonderful safety valve, especially for those who feel an overwhelming urge to talk, and who are denied an audience in their own parlor, prayer meeting, or workshop.

So much for the Plaza Forum. I'll try to tell you some other time about the confusion of tongues in the pulpits of the west coast cities.

Fraternally yours,

Arcadia, Calif.,  
Nov. 6, 1939.

FRANK DE JONG.

## RELIGIOUS NEWS AND VIEWS

### The New Encyclical

The new Pope, Pius XII, has at last sent out his first encyclical. An encyclical is an epistle written by the Pope as head of the Catholic hierarchy, to all the faithful in all lands, in which he defines the policies of the Church regarding important current matters, as guidance for all. It is written in the official, ancient Roman language. The first words of the document are usually elevated to the dignity of its official name. The present epistle is called "Summi Pontificatus," i.e., concerning the Supreme Pontificate.

The pope singled out two countries by name as being "beloved," namely Italy and Poland. Then analysing the present world-situation he finds "spiritual and moral bankruptcy." Two errors are mentioned, racism and totalitarianism. And the resultant "stress of our times . . . is tasted by none so bitterly as that noble little cell—the family."

The reaction of the Church Press everywhere, in general, is that the document is more Christian than specifically Roman Catholic. Many Protestants agree heartily with the Pope's analysis of modern conditions. And we can agree to the words of Pius XII when he says "To consider the State as something ultimate to which everything else should be subordinated and directed, can not fail to harm the true and lasting prosperity of nations." But, of course, no mention was made of the Roman Catholic position that the Church is supreme. Therefore the Protestant press is correct in saying that the encyclical is more Christian than specifically Roman Catholic.

### Colijn and the New Dutch Cabinet

When Hendrik Colijn headed the Dutch Cabinet, he put great emphasis upon economy. All his policies were based upon that idea. But the politicians who were bent upon a policy of spending lavishly, caused the downfall of Calvinist Colijn's cabinet. Now that the spend-into-prosperity people are in power, they . . . are silently and assiduously working out the policies of economy advocated by Colijn! A question arises: why then was Colijn forced into retirement? Because he is a Calvinist?

### The Right Approach in Missions

Dr. J. H. Bavinck is the professor recently appointed to teach Missions at the Free University and the Kampen Theological School of the Netherlands. In his inaugural address he said something about method. What he said is worthy of note because he knows Missions and the Mission field experientially. This is what he said about method: When you begin, simply tell the story of Jesus, how he lived, how he suffered. Do not commence with profound considerations concerning Jesus the Christ

as Son of God, Light of Light, and God of God, for it would only too readily result in driving the man of the Orient into the domain of wearisome speculation. That Christ is the Son of God is by itself of no value until it has been made clear that Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth who went about doing good, and who gave His life on the cross, is the Christ. Starting out with the Gospel of Jesus, explicating it, the Christ-idea assumes its form and meaning. When the heathen has learned to know that this Jesus must be called the only begotten Son of God, then and then only, does he receive the wondrous content of the name Christ the Son of God.

These remarks about method are worthy of application in all Mission work. Therefore we pass them on to our readers.

### Proposed Episcopalian-Presbyterian Merger

For sometime there has been, but under the surface, a tendency among the Protestant Episcopalians to frown upon the proposed merger with the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. Of late this frown has become outright opposition. Leader of the opposition is the well-known Bishop William T. Manning. He has sent an open letter to the Commission (on union) of his Church. This letter was at his request published by the "The Presbyterian" also. From the epistle's concluding paragraph we quote: "Our Prayer Book requires every Bishop, at his consecration, to promise that he will labor to set forward 'quietness, love, and peace among all men.' It is with this desire and in this spirit that I beg and urge that the Proposed Concordat be laid aside. I do not believe that this Concordat will be adopted, but if it were adopted, I am certain that the Episcopal Church would be faced with the gravest crisis in its history." Hence he pleads for immediate withdrawal of the Concordat.

The Editor of "The Presbyterian" writes anent this matter: ". . . we believe our next General Assembly will not wish to encourage any longer this enterprise which will, evidently, only exacerbate our differences and bring discredit upon ourselves if we push it beyond the bounds of polite interest. . . . Would it not be better for the Department of the Stated Clerk's Office charged with church-cooperation and union, to turn to Presbyterian fields and let us seek to attempt to unite that which is alike before we try to join two churches which are different?"

Sober thinking is beginning to take the place of wishful thinking. And that is a gain.

### The War and the Churches

Writing in "The Presbyterian Review," published in London, Professor Adolf Keller of Geneva asks the question, "Where Does War Find the Churches?" Comparing 1914 and 1939 he

believes that the church is better prepared spiritually today to meet the attack of the world, than it was in 1914. He gives three reasons for his view. "First, the Church is more conscious than in 1914 of the fundamental differences between Church and World." "Secondly, a larger and deeper fellowship of the Churches has grown since 1914." "The third element which differentiates the Church of today from that of 1914, is a deepening of the belief that human differences, and even ecclesiastic and theological differences, have not that final importance which was attributed to them in our former controversies."

We hope Dr. Keller is right, but it appears to be still too early to state definitely that the Church is better equipped today than it was in 1914. According to Hebrews 11 faith *does* things. The Church still has to prove its faith in these days of terrific stress and distress. There are hopeful signs. But there also are other signs. And both of them are found in Dr. Keller's third reason for thinking the Church is in better position now than in 1914.

#### Synod of Reformed Churches in Holland

The Reformed Churches of the Netherlands have met in General Synod, in the city of Sneek. Six weeks Synod was in session. Then it adjourned. Not because it had finished its work. No, Synod adjourned, because its work is *not* finished.

First a word about the work that was actually done. The Theological School of Kampen which very much desires a sixth professor, is not going to get its desire gratified "now."

The Church of Ierseke requested Synod to give and publish a Testimony or Declaration regarding the Oxford Group. In the discussion concerning this matter it became evident that some delegates were outspoken in their opposition to the movement. Others, and especially the delegates of India, opined that there was much good in it. They said that in India the movement was considered a means used by God to bring sinners to conversion. Reformed people there used the methods of the Buchmanites but strictly in connection with the Scriptures. Prof. Schilder compared the Groupers with the maid of Phillippi. She had a spirit of divination and was silenced by Paul. Synod did not declare itself however.

The Committee for Relations with Churches in other countries had been instructed in 1936 to formulate a declaration regarding

Dialectic Theology (Barthianism). They desired at this Synod a more detailed information about this work. The Committee for pre-advice advised discharge.

In the discussion which followed Dr. K. Schilder championed the cause of the Protestant Reformed Church, in the United States. Dr. G. Ch. Aalders, who had been in the United States recently representing the Dutch Churches at the Grand Rapids Christian Reformed Church Synod, assured the assembled delegates that the Protestant Church was an exceedingly small group, and but a one-man church.

The Kampen Theological School is not going to receive the right to grant the degree Doctor of Theology. At least not yet.

Although the Synod of 1936 had enjoined all journalistically inclined professors and ministers to refrain from controversy-methods which are not in harmony with the teachings of Christ, the debate in the religious press had not shown a very great degree of improvement. Now the Synod dealt again with this "burning" question. A four-point motion was laid before the assembled delegates. 1. Synod express its sorrow that its admonition of 1936 was not heeded. 2. Synod express its disapproval about the manner in which writers sometimes wrote in a slighting vein concerning Synod 1936. 3. Synod decide to send a pastoral epistle to the Churches in which emphasis is placed upon the fact that journalistic controversy is a potent factor in the life of the Churches, and that controversy which is not in harmony with the rule of Synod 1936, is a grave danger. 4. Synod decide to admonish the Classes to watch very carefully the matters published and the manner in which they are formulated, within their own territory.

Fourteen delegates demanded the floor. A juicy debate was in the offing. But Dr. Ridderbos, ever ready, ever witty, ever pleasant, proposed that there be no debate since all members were agreed in principle. Point 1-2-3, were accepted without debate, and the fourth point dropped.

Work not done. The Drachten-case, the Goossens-case (discipline) and last but not in any wise the least, the matter of doctrinal differences. The last-named matter is of great importance, not only for the brethren in the Netherlands, but also for all Reformed men who seek to advance the cause of Christ in this present world.

Grand Haven, Mich.

J. G. VAN DYKE.

## AROUND THE BOOK TABLE

### HISTORY OF AMERICAN THEOLOGY

PIETY VERSUS MORALISM. THE PASSING OF THE NEW ENGLAND THEOLOGY. *By Joseph Haroutunian. (Reduced price: \$1.25. Available at Baker's Book Store, 1019 Wealthy, S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich.)*

THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN AMERICAN THEOLOGY. *By Frank Hugh Foster. New York, Revell, 1939. \$1.75.*

THESE two books are seven years apart in date of publication, but in subject matter and standpoint they belong together. The first is a penetrating history of the New England Theology from Jonathan Edwards to about the middle of the 19th century; the second discusses outstanding movements and theological systems from about that time to the second decade of the present century.

Haroutunian's is a carefully documented history. He has crowded as much source material into the 300 pages of this book as is physically possible. This makes the book valuable. The reader feels that he stands above his material. He knows his sources. An excellent 15-page bibliography shows what these sources are. The author has a remarkable gift of catching the spirit of the writers whom he discusses and of reflecting that spirit in his select quotations. He has a genuine historical

sense, in that he does not distort the view of the theologians he discusses, as is so often the case with other modernists. For a modernist he has penetrated into the genius of historical Calvinism and of the New England Theology in a remarkable way.

Of course, this is no book for the average church library nor for the mind untrained in theology. As it tells the story of "the decline of Calvinism" in America, the author's ultimate evaluation of the movement is that of a thorough-going modernist. Nevertheless this is a valuable book to read for the Calvinistic student of theology. We are deeply interested in Reformed theology and its future in America. The knowledge of its past in this country is hence of great value and importance. The history of Calvinism in America has much to teach us for the future, especially in a negative way. And now the remarkable thing about this book of Haroutunian lies right there.

Despite his thorough-going Modernism the author gives a strikingly pertinent analysis of the course of degeneration in American theology since Jonathan Edwards. However much he would differ with us in his ultimate evaluation of the movement, he has a wonderful grasp of the real issues at stake. Just as in recent years the most thorough-going modernists (who no longer had an ax to grind with the orthodox) were often the clearest and fairest judges of the issues at stake be-

tween orthodox and liberals, so here. It was an out-and-out Unitarian who gave evidence of having seen the fundamental issue between Dr. Machen and his liberal opponents much more clearly than most of the liberals themselves. There are passages in this book of which the true Calvinist will say again and again: That man has grasped the real issue at stake.

He champions Jonathan Edwards as over against the Half-Way Covenant position. He places a high evaluation upon the theology of Edwards Sr. and shows that the entire development after him in the New England Theology was a poor attempt to compromise with the demands of humanitarian thinking. In fact, the author interprets the entire conflict between the old and the new to have been the conflict between "theocentric piety and humanitarian morality" (p. xxiv). And this thesis is carried out throughout the book, as the following citations can show. ". . . the conflict between Calvinism and the sentiments of the new age can be epitomized as a conflict between the conceptions 'Almighty God' and 'our compassionate heavenly father'" (24). "This shift is of supreme significance for an understanding of the decline of Calvinism in New England. The common sense ethics of a secular age was undermining the piety of Calvinism" (81). "It is not hard to see the consequences of this ill-concealed loss of interest in the glory of God. The great and humanly insuperable chasm between the natural and the supernatural, between the states of the regenerate and the unregenerate, between the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the carnal,—was all but obliterated." (87). "It is not necessary to repeat at length that such moralism jeopardized the whole Calvinistic philosophy of piety and salvation." (113) "Before religion was God-centered, now it was centered in man. Before whatever was not conducive to the glory of God was infinitely evil, now that which is not conducive to the happiness of man is evil, unjust, and impossible to attribute to the deity. Before the good of man consisted ultimately in glorifying God; now, the glory of God consists in the good of man. Before man lived to worship and to serve God, and now God lives to serve human happiness." (145) Surely, no orthodox Calvinist could have put the antithesis more pointedly.

Those who want to water down the wine of pure Calvinism will do well to read this work. Though not so intended by its author, this book by its analysis of the real issue at stake in the history of the New England theology constitutes a powerful testimony against the watering down of Calvinism by any form of moralism or humanitarianism.

Foster's book is a discussion of the views of outstanding liberal American theologians of the last half century, such as T. T. Munger, Henry Ward Beecher, Lyman Abbott, George A. Gordon, William Newton Clarke, Henry Churchill King, Washington Gladdon, Newman Smyth, Levi L. Paine, and George Burman Foster. The book may be viewed as a sequel to the author's earlier *A Genetic History of the New England Theology* (1907). In that book the author still showed some sympathy for a more or less conservative position, but in the work under discussion he is outspoken in informing his readers that he has ended up in the company of such a left-wing liberal as George Burman Foster. There is a good deal of autobiography in this volume. The author passed away recently. The volume lacks the incisiveness, force, and clarity which Haroutunian's possesses.

C. B.

### DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH HISTORY

VADERLANDSCHE KERKGESCHIEDENIS. DEEL III, VAN DE HERVORMING TOT HEDEN. By G. Van der Zee. J. H. Kok, N. V., Kampen, Neth. 1939. Price fl. 3.75.

THE present volume completes the work by the Rev. Mr. Van der Zee on the history of the National Church of the Netherlands. The earlier volumes, which were reviewed in

THE CALVIN FORUM some time ago, appeared in 1935 and 1937 respectively. The three volumes offer a substantial history, covering 736 pages with about 300,000 words, for the completion of which the author deserves the thanks of all who are interested in his subject.

Van der Zee has divided the history of the Dutch Church into five periods, of which the last two are treated in the present volume. The incision between these two periods is placed in the year 1816. From the Synod of Dordt till 1651 the Church flourished, but then a period of decadence set in, which issued in a destructive period that lasted from 1795 till the imposition of a new organization on the old Church in 1816. The second period dealt with in the present volume has seen continued struggles against the dominant forces of rationalism in its various forms for the restoration of the Church.

The author is particularly interested in demonstrating the continuity in the corruption of the Church. The situation after 1816 has had ample preparation in the century and a half preceding the French Revolution and, as in so many other instances, the good old days, in comparison with which the present gives occasion to nothing but lamentations, are largely a myth. The maintenance of Reformed doctrine and government has always been a matter of struggle, and the struggle has throughout been a losing battle. It can easily be seen how this picture of the past gives encouragement to those who, as the author, continue the fight for the restoration of the National Church, even though it does not give them much assurance of success in the future.

From his standpoint the author can of course not well approve of such reformatory movements as the Secession of 1834 and the 'Doleantie' of 1887, which issued in ruptures for the State Church. He holds that not only the leaders of the Secession, who were weak in church polity, but also those of the 'Doleantie' made serious mistakes, and he points out that the Reformed Churches of The Netherlands have not adhered to the church polity of Dr. A. Kuyper and his associates. Nevertheless, the author is very appreciative of both those movements and of the church organization free from government control which has resulted from them. He may tell his separated brethren that they were wrong in breaking the unity of the Church for the sake of the purity of the doctrine, but he is heartily grateful for their loyalty to the doctrine.

Although Van der Zee has given us much, also in this final volume, it is somewhat regrettable, that he has not seen his way clear to spread the treatment of its material out over at least a hundred pages or so extra. Again and again he has had to condense and to indicate rather than unfold, so that the reader without independent information on the subject finds it hard to know just what it is all about. This defect is found more or less throughout the volume, particularly in the sketches of the struggles prior to the Revolution and in the discussion of the attempts at restoration after 1816. It is fortunate that in footnotes an abundance of further sources of information is indicated. Though for us in this country those sources may be hard to reach or altogether inaccessible, this is not so for the student of the National Church of The Netherlands in that country itself.

D. H. KROMMINGA.

### A THEOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHIE, BETREFFENDE DEN BIJBEL, DEN GODSDIENST, HET CHRISTELIJK GELOOF, DE KERKGESCHIEDENIS, ENZ., 1882-1933. Samengesteld door P. H. Muller. N. V. Uitgevers-Maatschappij "De Tijdstroom," Lochem, Nederlands. 792 pp. Price f 17.50.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL works are books about books. Such works give extensive and exhaustive lists of the literature available on a given subject or in a given field. The student who must make a thorough study of any subject appreciates

having access to such bibliographies. From the nature of the case it is usually only libraries that make it their business to have a good collection of bibliographical works.

This is such an extensive bibliographical work. It is a Dutch publication and in the main may be said to cover all Protestant religious and theological books which have been published in the Netherlands from 1882 to 1933, i.e., roughly speaking during the last half century. Roman Catholic works are not included. Neither have works on the subject of missions. The material is grouped under nine main heads, with numerous sub-heads. The titles are then arranged alphabetically by authors under the various sub-heads. A 30-page Index of all authors and the page on which their works appear is found at the close of the volume. Although the compiler does not use the usual encyclopedic division of Theology, the grouping of the titles in the body of the work nevertheless may be said in the main to follow that order. There are some 300 pages of works on Scripture (Exegetical Theology); some 140 pages on Systematics (Dogmatics, Apologetics, Ethics, Philosophy of Religion); another 140 pages on Church History; and once more 140 pages on Practical Theology with its sub-divisions, under the title: De Kerk. This work is indispensable for any theological reference library. Many American works written in Dutch are also listed. C. B.

### ONE HUNDRED SELECT BOOKS FOR BIBLE STUDY

PROFITABLE BIBLE STUDY. SEVEN SIMPLE METHODS—WITH AN ANNOTATED LIST OF THE FIRST ONE HUNDRED BEST BOOKS FOR THE BIBLE STUDENT'S LIBRARY. By Wilbur M. Smith. W. A. Wilde Co., Boston, 1939. 214 pages. Price \$1.50.

IN many ways a fine little book. Ninety pages are devoted to the value, the methods, and the manner of Bible study. This is very helpful material for every student of the Bible. It is practical as it aims and claims to be. Possibly the most valuable part of this little book is the second half. It consists of a list of the First One Hundred Books for the Bible Student's Library. Dr. Wilbur Smith, whom many of our readers know as the editor of Peloubet's Select Sunday School Notes, is a real Bible teacher and Bible student. He is at present teaching English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute. The author is a premillennialist. This is the only regrettable bias that marks the selection and comments on some of the titles. For the rest, the list is a very fine one. The comments on these hundred titles—practically everyone of which is on or about Scripture—is very helpful and marked by the evaluations of a reverent Bible scholar who loves the Word. Every minister ought to have this little book and read over the fine comments on the titles with

a view to building up his library. It may be considered an annotated bibliography on every phase of Exegetical Theology. C. B.

### A FRIESIAN DOG STORY

DIRK'S DOG, BELLO. By Meindert De Jong. New York, 1939, Harper & Brothers. \$2.00.

LET every parent whose child has no heart for domestic pets encourage him to read *Dirk's Dog, Bello*. In this delightful story the author portrays the undying affection and comradeship existing between the boy-hero, Dirk, and his great dog. Dirk rescues the Great Dane from the angry waves after the English ship whose captain is Bello's master, has foundered on the Friesian shore. He loves him dearly, but Bello is so huge, his appetite so enormous, and Dirk's mother so poor, that he has a desperate struggle to keep and feed him. This struggle, sometimes pathetic, sometimes humorous, but ending in victory and triumph, is vividly told in the author's unique graphic style.

To those of Dutch blood the story has an additional appeal. The scene of this genuinely human-interest as well as dog story is laid in Wierom (Wierum) in the Dutch province of Friesland. Even adults, especially those of Friesian ancestry, will thoroughly enjoy the local coloring. Simple fisher folk—Mighty Pier, Grandfather Tjerk, Dikke Trien, Old Ott the Crone, Aage the Roamer, and many others—enliven the true-to-life story of bravery, hardiness, sense of duty, simple love, and group loyalty. One smiles at the *naïveté*, the quaint customs, the odd mannerisms of these village and fisher folk. To a Friesian the old landmarks are familiar, though some of the names are dressed in English garb. Schiermonnikoog has become 'Almost a Monk's Eye', and Kattegat 'Hole of the Cat', but Dokkum, Nes, Ternaa(r)d, and even the Friesian Liaut (Leeuwarden) have come through unscathed.

The author is a brother to David De Jong, the author of *Old Haven*. Nothing of the revolting unrealistic realism which marked that novel, whose scene is likewise laid in this little Friesian fisher village—the birth place of both De Jong's—marks the pages of this story. This is Meindert De Jong's second juvenile, the first being *The Big Goose and the Little Wild Duck*, reviewed on these pages in the June-July issue of this year. All lovers of dogs and of common folk will relish this clean story. And it makes no difference whether they be eight or eighty. One only wishes the author had not mixed his treatment of things religious with humor, as he does in one or two connections. That hurts a spiritually sensitive soul and does our children no good.

TESSIE LUIDENS BOUMA.

## A Christmas Suggestion-

A Christmas Treat  
that lasts throughout  
: the Year :

WHAT FINER CHRISTMAS GIFT THAN  
A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO  
THE CALVIN FORUM?