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the **CALVIN** **orum**

God and Human Knowledge

**Sanctification: Barth, Mediaevalism,
and Other Views**

"In a College Chapel"

Correspondence

Book Reviews

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**TWO DOLLARS
A YEAR**

OCTOBER, 1953

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Professor Van Til's Apologetics

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Part II: God and Human Knowledge

MY first paper tried to show that Professor Cornelius Van Til's manner of writing suffers from serious obscurity and from the use of slogans and theories taken over uncritically from speculative idealism. The quantity of evidence offered to support my analysis justifies the conclusion that Van Til fails entirely to achieve what he aims at, viz., a purist version of Reformed theology. This second paper begins a study of three important topics in Van Til's theology; these are (I) the evidence or proof for Christian theism, (II) the question whether the God of Christian faith is necessary for predication, and (III) the status of the natural man in respect of knowledge. Two papers will be needed to cover these topics. I shall divide the two papers into sections in accordance with the outline indicated by my naming the three topics above, and I trust that readers will take up my next paper with the understanding that it is a direct continuation of this one. Finally, while it will not be possible for me to avoid taking notice of Van Til's constant vagueness in the use of language, my purpose in these two papers will not be to do over again what I sought to do in the first.

I

How does Van Til "vindicate," to use his own term, the Christian belief in God the perfect Being Who created, sustains, and governs the finite world? I call attention first to passages in which Van Til says something like this: God created this world; therefore every creature exists and has what character it has because of God's counsel and creative act. Thus everything finite, since it is a creature, reveals God as Creator. God is the presupposition of the existence of all creatures and of all their operations, including human knowledge. And since every fact is what it is because of God's plan and creative fiat, no fact would be distinguishable from another without the presupposition of God's knowledge or plan; and all human knowledge, to be true, has to be reinterpretation of God's knowledge. The Christian position, says Van Til, "posits God's self-existence and plan, as well as his self-contained self-knowledge, as the presupposition of all created existence and knowledge. Accordingly, all facts show forth and thus prove the existence of God and his plan. Accordingly, too, all human knowledge should be self-consciously subordinated to that plan" (*I. S.*

Theol. 19). "... the Reformed believer should stress with Calvin that *every* fact of history here and now actually is a revelation of God. Hence *any* fact and *every* fact proves the existence of God and therefore the truth of the Scriptures. If this is not the case, *no* fact *ever* will. Every fact proves the existence of God because without the presupposition of God and his counsel no fact has any distinguishable character at all" (*I. S. Theol.* 17).

Now, the term "presupposition" is entirely unsuited for characterizing the relation of God to creation. God is not a premise which implies the existence of the finite order. This is another sample of Van Til's idealist language. Further, there is a logical mistake in supposing that to deny that *every* fact proves God's existence is equivalent to saying that *no* fact proves His existence. The contradictory of a universal affirmative statement is a particular negative statement; this is a matter of the most elementary logic. As for Van Til's radical statement that unless I presuppose God and His counsel I cannot distinguish a hawk from a handsaw, I see no point in hesitating to deny it. God's knowledge of the difference between an apple and a tomato is not a premise to which I must appeal in order to justify my noting the difference. If one looks for the evidence on which Van Til relies to support his radical statement, he finds nothing but an unwarrantable jump from the statement that every finite being is a creature, and all its operations are creaturely operations, to the further statement that human knowledge is possible only by presupposing God's knowledge and ought to be subordinated to it. From the statement that I am a creature of God it simply does not follow that my rational operations need to be authenticated by means of duplicates in God's mind. Van Til is playing on an ambiguity which he has imported into the word "presuppose." Just as there is no logical tie between saying that apples and tomatoes are creatures of God and saying that they are not distinguishable except by presupposing God's counsel, so too the statement that human reason is a created function in no way implies that God's knowledge of Euclidean geometry is a premise required for the proof of any theorem in this geometry.

Of course, God is the cause of the existence and character and operations of all things in this world, including man's reason; but then, if God has given

His creatures definite and diverse characters and powers, they are sufficiently equipped to possess their natures and to exercise their powers. If God had not created them to be definite and diverse, they would be indistinguishable; but since He *has* created them so, they *are* so, and I don't need to refer to a duplication in God's mind of my recognition of their being so. That creatures reveal God in being created is true enough; but since Van Til says nothing about how I go about "seeing" that they are creatures, I may be excused for saying that this first argument for God's existence is a fallacy.

II

Van Til is firmly attached to idealist logic. He insists that all reasoning is circular, and in a second argument for God's existence develops the point that science must presuppose God and His counsel if it is to proceed with confidence in the assumption of the uniformity of nature. This sort of argument is really an odd one for Van Til to employ, for his doing so implies that he is more sure of the success of science than he is sure of God. "Christian Theism . . . is the only position which gives human reason a field for successful operation and a method of true progress in knowledge." The late Professor A. E. Taylor stated the perfectly familiar point that modern science has proceeded on the postulate of the uniformity of nature but cannot prove its truth: any attempt to prove this postulate would presuppose it and beg the question. "Our argument as over against this would be that the existence of the God of Christian Theism and the conception of his counsel as controlling all things in the universe is the only presupposition which can account for the uniformity of nature which the scientist needs. But the best and only possible proof for the existence of such a God is that his existence is required for the uniformity of nature and for the coherence of all things in the world. We cannot *prove* the existence of beams underneath a floor if by proof we mean that they must be ascertainable in the way that we can see the chairs and tables of the room. But the very idea of a floor as the support of tables and chairs requires the idea of beams that are underneath. But there would be no floor if no beams were underneath. Thus there is absolutely certain proof for the existence of God and the truth of Christian theism. Even non-Christians presuppose its truth while they verbally reject it. They need to presuppose the truth of Christian theism in order to account for their own accomplishments" (Apol. 65).

This argument is no proof at all; and there is no difficulty finding several flaws in Van Til's statement. What is the point of saying that this proof is the *best* (which implies "as compared with others") when it is *only* possible proof? Further, Van Til does not explain what "coherence of all things" means; coherence may be displayed in a thousand and one ways, so the phrase gives no information.

Nor does he offer a jot of evidence to show that the scientist must hold as true the principle of the uniformity of nature. Who knows how much the scientist could achieve if nature were somewhat less uniform than it is? I beg the reader's indulgence as I put this question. I am not at all clear, and I doubt whether Van Til can be, as to precisely how to verify or call in question the uniformity of nature *as he uses this phrase*. Further, if God has made nature uniform, then it *is* uniform; and the scientist, *qua* scientist, does not need to account for it by going beyond it. At any rate, natural uniformity signifies a type of order among natural events and things, not a relation of creatures to God. And this brings me to the "proof" of the beams beneath the floor. I shall try to state simply why this is an obvious fallacy.

(1) In direct opposition to Van Til, the existence of beams beneath the floor, if there are any, is ascertainable in precisely the same way as is the existence of the floor or of chairs and tables. All one has to do is view the underside of the floor. If I can see and touch the floor, I can also see and touch the beams. Besides, I have now and then observed a house being built. (2) It is not the case that the idea of a floor requires the idea of beams, except when the idea of a floor is the idea of a floor resting on beams (and in this case we have nothing more than tautology). Further, even if I could deduce the concept of beams from the concept of floor (as I cannot unless I mean by floor a floor on beams), I should have as conclusion only a concept. And there *are* floors that rest on concrete slabs instead of on beams or joists. There is no justification for a general principle which states that for every effect there is but one cause, that a given fact presupposes one and only one explanation. One has to wait on experience to learn what supports the floor; logical argument is no substitute. (3) If Van Til's argument were to be taken seriously, and if it were valid, it would prove a God Who is related to natural events as the floor is to the table or the beams to the floor; i.e., God would be one among the other events in nature. For beams certainly do not have a "transcendent" relation to floors nor floors to tables. And since Van Til has not shown that a given fact presupposes only one explanation, he fails entirely to show that the God of Christian faith is required for the successful prosecution of science.

(4) I add a final comment. Van Til would be more true to Christianity if he held more firmly to the fact that it is a faith. He is unduly concerned about establishing the certainty of natural science. Scientists do not need to be encouraged to defend themselves or to screw up their confidence in their business. General talk about the certainty of natural uniformity is no aid to the search for fruitful hypotheses and for means of testing them. There is no good reason for recommending the Christian faith

on the ground of its playing a role *vis a vis* natural science like that of the indulgent uncle who picks up the gambling checks of his erring nephew. In strict language, the most important and distinctive components of Christian faith are matters of belief, not of knowledge or proof.

III

I turn to an argument of Van Til for the truth of Scripture which, being a circle, is simply a fallacy. I note to begin with that here again he argues by appealing to a presupposition. "... the true method for any Protestant with respect to the Scripture (Christianity) and with respect to the existence of God (theism) must be the indirect method of reasoning by presupposition" (*Apol.* 69; the parentheses are Van Til's). Van Til's calling this method the "true" method for Protestants is really not informative; it is a command, a piece of legislation, plus perhaps the statement that he himself has adopted it. The argument itself draws the conclusion that the Scripture is true from its being the source of our fundamental beliefs about God as Creator, about man's sin and need of redemption by supernatural intervention, and about the saving work of Christ and the Spirit. As Van Til says, Christians would not hold these beliefs unless they had been taught them through the Scriptures. To account for the holding of these beliefs by Christians, says Van Til, it is necessary to presuppose the truth of the Scriptures. Therefore the Scriptures are the infallible revelation of God. Well, this is just a blunder. One reason why Christians believe what they believe is the fact that they believe in the truth of Scripture. All this proves is that Christians *believe in* the truth of Scripture; it is not evidence for the truth of Scripture. The presupposition of the Christian's holding Christian beliefs is not the truth of Scripture but the Christian's believing in the truth of Scripture. Van Til has no proof here at all! And why try to "prove" the truth of Scripture? If this argument is the best one can offer, he would be well advised to give up arguing and return to the first two words of the Apostles' Creed.

Van Til, however, confuses the issue still further in another passage, where he writes as follows: "... the capacities of the human mind would have no opportunity for their exercise except upon the presupposition that the "most absolute" God does exist and that all things in this world are revelational of him. We grant that it is only by the frank acceptance of the Scriptures as the infallible revelation of God that man can know this. But this only shows that unless one thus accepts the Scripture there is no place for the exercise of reason. The "most absolute" God of the Confession can only be presupposed" (*I. S. Theol.* 168). The first of these sentences says only that if God had not created man, man could not exercise his mind. This is not news: if man did not exist, he could not act or perform.

Van Til's use of "revelational" means only that creatures are creatures. Again, this is not news. I wish to complain once more, however, that this statement, like the statement that man can "see" God's "face" everywhere, says nothing about those characters of creatures which reveal their creatureliness. The second sentence merely reports that the Bible is the source of Christian belief in God and creation. The third sentence is entirely erroneous. The fact that I learn of creation from the Bible does not allow me to infer that the unbeliever cannot exercise his reason. He too is a creature, and a creature bearing the image of God; *as such* he is able to exercise his reason. That which provides man with the ability to exercise reason is God's creating him with a definite nature and the powers pertaining thereto. It is certainly not the acceptance of the Bible. Van Til's third sentence, if it says anything, says that *my act of believing* in God or *my act of accepting* the Bible as His word is the *cause* of my being a certain kind of creature, viz., one endowed with reason. This is certainly nonsense; it is a fantastic version of theological subjectivism. Hence the fourth sentence does not follow at all. To think it does is mere confusion.

IV

Van Til states repeatedly that man is unable to make statements except by presupposing the Christian God and His revelation in nature and Scripture. The issue here brought up he calls the problem of the basis of predication, and tries to argue that all statements made by unbelievers are in a sense groundless and mistaken. It is no secret that I consider Van Til quite wrong on this matter, and I shall try, by analysis and inspection of various types of argument offered by him, to provide grounds for my judgment. My general objection to his thesis is the point that it is presented as an easy, one-stroke solution to a very complex problem (like some miraculous trick in wrestling which is guaranteed to win every match) and that Van Til's reasoning about it is mostly fallacious. Furthermore, near the end of the next paper I shall bring forward some statements of Van Til in which he reverses all those views of his on predication which I shall now present at length.

Many passages contain the fallacy already noticed, that of leaping from the doctrine of creation to the statement that man knows only by relating his statements to God's knowledge; i.e., man's knowledge has to be authenticated by *duplicates* in the mind of God. Other passages, however, state views which, being obviously Christian, I am happy to applaud. Let me quote one or two from the latter group. "... the nature of any created thing is what it is because of an act of determination with respect to it on the part of God. Created things are not identical with God nor with any act of God with respect to them. They have a being and activity of their

own. . . . They are what they are in relation to one another because of the place that God has assigned them in his plan. God expresses something of his plan with respect to the facts and laws of nature in the facts and laws themselves" (*Apol.* 11). This passage simply works out the meaning of the doctrine of creation (or part of it), and it is obvious that what is said about all creatures applies equally to the nature and operations of man. Thus one is not surprised to find Van Til saying about man prior to the fall: "Ordinarily man had to use his God-given powers of investigation to discover the workings of the processes of nature. . . . Man was given permission by means of the direct authority to control and subdue the powers of nature. . . . The mark of God's ownership was from the beginning writ large upon the facts of the universe. Man was to cultivate the garden of the Lord and gladly pay tribute to the Lord of the manor" (*Apol.* 32). Man as created in God's image has a nature enabling him to investigate and control the sub-human order and can apprehend the creatureliness of creatures by the exercise of his own faculties.

I turn to passages of the first group, where the fallacy I have mentioned occurs. Van Til speaks of God's perfect knowledge of creation, and also of all creatures as revealing God in virtue of their being creatures. In the sense that men are creatures of a God Who knows all, man's knowledge is "derivative and reinterpetative" (*I. S. Theol.* 13). But is this the same as saying that every statement of man's is in need of authentication by a divine duplicate? "We cannot do without God any more when we wish to know about physics or psychology than when we wish to know about our own soul's salvation. Not one single fact in this universe can be known truly without the existence of God. Even if man will not recognize God's existence, the fact of God's existence none the less accounts for whatever measure of knowledge man has about God. We can readily see that this must be so. The idea of creation is implied in the idea of the self-sufficient God. Now if every fact in this universe is created by God, and if the mind of man and whatever the mind of man knows is created by God, it goes without saying that the whole fabric of human knowledge would dash to pieces if God did not exist and if all finite existence were not revelational of God" (*I. S. Theol.* 14). I notice defects of expression in this passage. The phrase "whatever the mind of man knows" includes God Himself, no doubt; so Van Til is saying that God is created. Also, if God did not exist, man would not exist; there is no point in picking on "the whole fabric of human knowledge" as that which "would dash to pieces"; and obviously nothing can dash to pieces unless it first exists, which would not occur unless God had created something.

As to Van Til's argument, however, how does it go and where is the fallacy? When he says that finite existence is revelational, he says only that it con-

sists of creatures. Man is a creature too, of course, and as such he attains knowledge by the exercise of powers given to him by God in the creative act. From this Van Til tries to reach the statement that man's effort to know physics is on the same footing with his effort to know about salvation. God *tells* man about salvation, so that a statement of mine about salvation is true if (because) it agrees with a statement made by God. And so with physics: truth here too is reinterpetation. The conclusion implied by Van Til's comparison is that a statement in physics is not true unless it copies or duplicates a statement made by God. This conclusion simply does not follow. To say that man cannot do without God in physics is perfectly correct if it says only that physical objects and man himself would not exist unless God created them. Of course, this is not all that Van Til is interested in; it certainly is not news. Yet it is all he says in the later sentences of the passage. His purpose is more ambitious; it is to imply that man must appeal to God and to God's knowledge in order to ascertain any truth. But obviously there is no connection between the statement that apart from God's creative act neither man nor earth nor sun would exist, and the statement that man must appeal to God's knowledge in order to ascertain the distance of the earth from the sun. God's existence and perfect knowledge are not premises in an argument which leads to a specification of the earth's distance from the sun.

Van Til is simply confusing two very different propositions and mistaking the confusion for inference. Let him show how God's existence enters into the physicist's procedure for analyzing atoms or light as a premise in an argument. This simply does not and need not happen. Of course, the sun and light would not exist except by the will of God; but once man and other creatures exist they all have definite natures and functions, and man has no difficulty developing physics by attending to the objects in nature. Naturally, physics does not exhaust man's knowledge about natural things; besides attending to those features of things which physics investigates, man can also attend to the creatureliness of creatures and understand that the ground of their existence is in God. When Van Til says, "Not one single fact in this universe can be known truly without the existence of God" (which means, since Van Til is talking about knowledge, i.e. about statements, that I must acknowledge, recognize, state God's existence in order to gain knowledge of any created fact) he seems to be restricting the term "knowledge" to knowledge of God's creative relation to finite things. He is entitled to use words as he chooses, of course. But no reader is obliged to follow his example, and it would be nothing but a blunder to conclude from his usage that physics is mistaken unless God serves as a premise in an analysis of light. Does Van Til really want to say

that physics is a body of false statements and a set of useless methods?

V

I am struck by Van Til's solicitude for the success of natural science. He writes as if science *ought* to be quite certain and he recommends Christian theism because, for him, it guarantees the possibility of scientific progress and certainly. (See *C. T. Evid.* 57-58 and *I. S. Theol.* 24 for sample statements.) Of course, he also wants to *challenge* what he calls the methodology of modern science because of its anti-theistic presuppositions (*C. T. Evid.* 60).

I begin with Van Til's remarks about the relation of the Bible to science. He is justified in saying that the Bible is the source from which the Christian learns his basic doctrines. Thus he is entitled to say that "the existence and meaning of every fact in this universe must in the last analysis be related to the self-conscious and eternally self-subsistent God of the Scriptures" (*I. S. Theol.* 22). For all finite things are creatures existing for God's glory. As teaching basic truths "the Bible sheds its indispensable light on everything we as Christians study. There is a philosophy of fact in the Bible that we use for the interpretation of every fact of our lives" (*I. S. Theol.* 15). But does this allow Van Til to say that "in the study of zoology or botany the Bible is involved" (*I. S. Theol.* 15) if this statement means to say that "there is nothing in this universe on which human beings can have full and true information unless they take the Bible into account" (*Apol.* 2)? I grant that one has not *full* information about robins and pepper plants unless one receives Biblical teaching about God and creation. I deny, however, that one cannot have *true* information about robins and pepper plants unless he believes in their creatureliness. My abstracting from or even my failing to acknowledge the creatureliness of the robins does not prevent my prosecuting a successful study of their nesting and migratory habits. In fact, I can gain *full and true* knowledge about their nesting habits without attending to their creatureliness, just as I can with complete success make a birdhouse for the robins without believing in their being God's creatures. Creatureliness is a very different property from nesting and migratory habits, and certainly my not attending to it does not alter them. Of course, their being creatures is the most important property of all creatures, but this is not to say that their ordinary "empirical" properties and movements cannot be studied by themselves. And science is study of these ordinary properties. Van Til is quite wrong when he says (*Apol.* 2) that if one studies the anatomy of the snake in the laboratory without recourse to the Bible the information he can acquire is not true.

If it is the business of zoology to say all that can be said about snakes and robins, then zoology would falsify facts if it did not go to the Bible for the doc-

trine of the creatureliness of these animals. But it is certainly misleading, perhaps worse, to suggest that unless zoology does say all this, it falsifies. The fact is that in ordinary usage such words as zoology, botany, physics, etc., are not names of encyclopedic or omnibus collections of information. Zoology has plenty to do without doing what the Bible does; and it does it very well. And does the Bible provide information in botany, physics, chemistry, geometry, numismatics, etc.? The Bible has something better to do for man than to do science for him. It doesn't even do theology. "The Bible is thought of as authoritative on everything of which it speaks. Moreover, it speaks of everything." But what does it say? "We do not mean that it speaks of football games, of atoms, etc., directly, but we do mean that it speaks of everything either directly or by implication. It tells us not only of the Christ and his work but it also tells us who God is and where the universe about us came from. It tells us about theism as well as about Christianity" (*Apol.* 2). All this agrees with my suggestion that the Bible does *not* provide the kind of organized, systematic knowledge, whether mathematical or empirical, which is provided by the geometer, the botanist, the ornithologist, etc.

VI

Turning to the wider topic of the relation of Christian theism to science, I begin with a long passage which it is necessary to quote in full before comment is in order. Van Til is trying to substantiate his thesis that God and His plan must be presupposed if man is to attain knowledge of nature. He begins with the familiar point that God created and knows all His creatures. It is important to observe closely the lack of a logical bond between this familiar view and what he says thereafter, and to observe how he fabricates a difficulty in order to justify Christian trinitarianism. After saying that in order to know any facts man must presuppose God and His plan, Van Til says, "If we wish to know the facts of this world we must relate these facts to laws. That is, in every knowledge transaction we must bring the particulars into relation with universals. . . . (Van Til mentions gravitational law as an instance of a universal.) . . . But the most comprehensive interpretation that we can give of the facts by connecting the particulars and the universals that together constitute the universe leaves our knowledge at loose ends, unless we may presuppose God back of the world. It is of the greatest moment to make clear that the ultimate subject of our predication is not the Ultimate, Reality or Being in general in which God is the universal, and historical facts are the particulars. If such were the case, God and the universe would be correlative to one another. And it is precisely in order to set off the Christian position against such correlativism that the equal ultimacy of the one and the many within the Godhead,

prior to and independent of its relation to the created universe, must be presupposed. As Christians, we hold that in this universe we deal with a *derivative* one and many, which can be brought into fruitful relation with one another, because, back of both, we have in God the original One and Many. If we are to have *coherence* in our experience, there must be a correspondence of our experience to the eternally coherent experience of God. Human knowledge ultimately rests upon the internal coherence within the Godhead; our knowledge rests upon the ontological trinity as its presupposition" (*I. S. Theol.* 22-23).

Now, it takes a rash man to fancy that he can "prove" the doctrine of the Trinity unless he means by "proof" nothing more esoteric than the collection and interpretation of passages in the Bible. I have already criticized the use of argument by presupposition; it fails because it does not establish the necessity of one and only one explanation. Here again Van Til is liable to the same criticism. Besides, all Van Til means by calling God a "presupposition" is that God is Creator. That is not news, nor does it justify Van Til's inference. Furthermore, I wish to point out that Van Til's argument really *unsettles* the doctrine of the Trinity. By saying that it is not possible for man to relate created particulars and universals to one another he suggests that the relation between particulars and universals in God is equally unintelligible. Why should he suppose that by transposing the problem from creation to God the difficulty suddenly evaporates? If God, in creating finite universals and particulars, left the relation between them unintelligible, how am I relieved from perplexity by being told that a like relation subsists in God? I should think that if I cannot satisfactorily relate gravitational law to the sun and planets I certainly cannot relate the persons in the Godhead. (Besides, Van Til gives no reason for speaking as if the proper language to use about the Trinity is the same in kind as the language used for speaking of the relation of Jane and Mary to femininity. I suspect that a theologian would raise his eyebrows over this talk.) In fact, a physicist simply has no difficulty relating gravitational law to the sun and planets. If he has, Van Til is obliged to say what the difficulty is. The physicist has no more difficulty in his own field than the layman has with saying that Jane and Mary are both girls or cousins. In this case, where are the Irish pennants dangling in the breeze? Because God is the Creator of all physical objects He is "back of the world" (though I protest against this careless metaphor). But physics is not engaged in studying the creatureliness of its objects. Of course, God is not the widest universal which may be attributed to creation. Why Van Til should raise this possibility as the only alternative to Christian theism can be understood only by remembering his idealist leanings. Those leanings are displayed again in his use of the phrases

"coherence in our experience," "the eternally coherent experience of God," "the internal coherence within the Godhead." I conclude that the problem of knowledge as Van Til sees it is an invention of his fantasy, and that instead of "proving" the Trinity he has made belief in it and speech about it more difficult than they already are.

VII

Van Til is anxious about the possibility that scientists should deny Christian doctrines. Obviously they do so on occasion, and during the past century or more many scientists and philosophers have almost adopted the habit of doing so. What is the cure? I propose that one part of the remedy would be to help scientists understand the character of their own work and to set an example of excellent performance in science itself. Modern culture suffers from scepticism with respect to various types of knowledge, and the most outstanding sceptics are confident about one branch of science while doubtful of others. Physiologists sometimes try to annex psychology and ethics to their own specialty; psychologists write books "solving" the problems of politics. Theology is of course scorned by many kinds of scientists. The cause of this bad habit is philosophical failure, reflecting itself in the ambition of scientists to extrapolate their concepts, useful within a restricted field, over the whole field of knowledge. In other words, when a physicist talks as if notions peculiar to ethics or theology are mythical, he is performing not *qua* physicist but *qua* philosopher; and his performance is bad physics.

Van Til is entirely in the right when he says, "Christian apologetics cannot be indifferent to a system of philosophy or of science which, by its presuppositions and implications, as well as by its open assertions, rejects the doctrine of the ontological trinity, the doctrine of creation, the doctrine of the fall of man and of his redemption through Christ" (*Apol.* 25). But the important question is, What can the Christian do to defend himself? I have suggested that he can do something by offering a careful definition of the limitations and of the hierarchical interrelation of the sciences, and by doing science without indulging in philosophical heresies.

Van Til, however, wants to do something a great deal more direct and simple. It looks as though he is hunting for the miraculous, infallible wrestling trick. There is a French saying which warns against simplifiers. Van Til talks as if there can be no scientific knowledge unless the scientist starts by recognizing the creatureliness of all natural things. The difficulty is that having started there one still has no natural science. To begin a textbook in physics with *Genesis* 1:1 is not to have made a start with physics. Two physicists, one of them accepting *Genesis* 1:1 and the other not, do not differ *as physicists*; both will have to do the very same work if they are to do physics. (Likewise, if an unbeliever

visits me, and I point to a bird and say, "That is a cardinal," both of us do the very same things in grasping what I said and in confirming or disconfirming its truth). Again and again I have brought forward Van Til's argument to the effect that knowledge must start from God and His counsel because God created and has perfect knowledge of all the objects of science, including man himself, both as object and as subject of science. But there is no valid inference here. All creatures reveal their Creator. Of course! But acknowledgement of their creatureliness does not provide a premise for a classification of invertebrates, or of cereals, or for an analysis of sound or heat. And the Christian who makes this acknowledgement is not thereby ensured against an error in doing science. Man's knowledge is "derivative" from God's "original" knowledge because man is a creature; but what God knows about heat or sound is not a premise in physics, nor is it something with which the physicist has to compare his own statements before he can have confidence in them.

Van Til says, "There is nothing that does not exist by his (God's) creation. All things take their meaning from him. Every witness to him is a 'prejudiced' witness. For any fact to be a fact at all, it must be a revelational fact" (*Apol.* 36). This asserts only the doctrine of creation. He goes on as follows: "Man is said or assumed from the first page to the last (of Scripture) to be a creature of God. God's consciousness is therefore taken to be naturally original as man's is naturally derivative." By grace a sinner is enabled "to observe the fact that all nature . . . is revelational of God, the God of Scripture . . . one must be a believing Christian to study nature in the proper frame of mind and with proper procedure" (*Apol.* 37). I protest that Van Til has not explained what features of finite objects indicate their creatureliness. I protest that a natural scientist is equipped to do his proper work as a scientist (though not as a worshipper) without attending to the creaturely status of his objects. As creatures, finite things have characters and operations which are what they are, and can be apprehended as what they are, whether or not the scientist acknowledges their creatureliness. Does Van Til suggest that, on his view, the scientist's personal act of acknowledging the creatureliness of things causes their having the properties which it is the business of science to ascertain? How does a cartographer's acknowledgement of the earth's having been created help him draw an accurate map of Kentucky? One does not have to be a believing Christian to study nature successfully in the manner of scientific study; in fact one's being a believing Christian is compatible with being inferior to an unbeliever as a theologian.

VIII

From the remarks above there has emerged what I consider to be a distinction between Van Til's views and my own of what a natural science is and does. In the remainder of this section I shall discuss a few of Van Til's statements about science which are useful for bringing this distinction into focus. The late Professor Morris R. Cohen, in his *Reason and Nature*, described natural science as a search for connections between items in nature. Creation is not a topic for scientific investigation. Cohen added that science postulates what he calls "pluralism," i.e. the principle that in order to understand triangles or the circulation of blood in mammals it is not necessary to take into account every factor present in the world. This is Cohen's restatement of the ancient point of Plato that if every form combined with every other form there could be no discourse or science. Knowledge would be impossible if to understand one fact one had first to know all facts. Mistaking Cohen's description of natural science for a theological compendium, Van Til objects. "We are, in contrast to Cohen, most deeply concerned about the origin of facts" (*C. T. Evid.* 57). Now, Cohen did not say that he was not concerned about origins (why should I suppose that he wasn't?); he said only that natural science does not study this topic. And on this question Cohen is right. Further, Cohen's statement that science postulates "contingency" in the sense that science ascertains connections among natural items and not how a natural event is determined by some factor outside nature or by some general character of the sum or total of reality (whatever this may be)—this statement too is taken in a theological sense by Van Til, and again he objects: "There is no contingency for God and therefore no probability for God. There is contingency for us and therefore probability for us. But the probable character of our knowledge presupposes the certainty and comprehensiveness of God's knowledge" (*C. T. Evid.* 57). Obviously Van Til and Cohen are talking about quite different matters, so that Van Til is mistaken if he supposes that he contradicts Cohen. It might be useful to make a careful comparison of Van Til's formulations of certain Christian doctrines with the formulations in the *Westminster Confession*. I quote Article II of Chapter V. "Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, yet, by the same providence, he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently." There is no talk of "pre-suppositions" here, and there is no hint that second causes have not a nature of their own which is open to understanding and which expresses itself, in some cases, contingently. While Van Til suggests that man's knowledge contrasts with God's knowledge because man recognizes the contingency of some events, the *Confession* implies that God, while He

knows infallibly every event, recognizes that some events do occur freely and that some occur contingently. Thus these events *are*, in the manner of their occurrence, free or contingent, and in a sense it is correct to say that God's knowledge too, while infallible, is contingent knowledge, i.e. of the contingency of certain events. The *Confession* does not hint, as Van Til *appears* to do, that what is the case "for us" is not really the case. (I should not be divulging a secret if I should say that in point of accuracy the language of the *Confession* is not inferior to Van Til's. I suspect that Van Til is once more borrowing from Hegel.)

Van Til's further remarks about science suggest that it formulates quite horrifying doctrines (they might be horrifying if one could learn just what they meant and what it would be to assert or deny them). Christians, says Van Til, are certain of such "facts" as God, creation, the fall, etc. "Our uncertainty then about many matters is not based on an ultimate irrationalism. In this exactly is it distinguished from the uncertainty of modern scientific methodology. Scientific methodology, as we know it in the literature of the day and as it has developed out of the history of philosophy and science, presupposes an Ultimate Chance back of the universe. It could not do otherwise inasmuch as it thinks that it deals with brute or uninterpreted facts. "Science" thinks that it deals with a stream of time out of which the absolutely novel proceeds constantly. . . . (According to Cohen) God can never be thought of as the final or ultimate cause of anything. . . . He holds that there may be rational connections between various phenomena in the universe, but that it is unintelligible to speak of God as creating or being the cause of anything in this world" (*C. T. Evid.* 57-58). Well, I repeat that Cohen does not deny what Van Til affirms, viz., God's creating the finite world. All

Cohen says is that natural science investigates characters and connections which are internal to nature. Must it do theology too? Van Til simply misrepresents Cohen. And his use of the terms "ultimate irrationalism" and "brute facts" is not descriptive but emotive; they serve as bludgeons or as terms of abuse. I suppose that the distance from Lexington to Louisville is a "brute fact" until I state my belief in God; thereafter it is a "God-interpreted fact." The oddity is that the distance remains the same. In what particular respect open to scientific investigation is a "brute fact" different from a "God-interpreted fact?" Until Van Til answers this question I cannot use his pejorative terms. His entire discussion of scientific method (*C. T. Evid.* 56-68) as assuming a metaphysics of ultimate chance, as lacking a means to exclude any and every hypothesis, as making use of "bare possibility," and as misusing observation because the facts it appeals to in testing hypotheses are "brute facts" instead of "God-interpreted facts," is vitiated by his failure to acknowledge that natural science investigates the internal organization of the created order by selected methods. When it refuses to explain a physical event by God's Will it is not denying providence; it is simply sticking to its last. It does not deny God or God's perfect knowledge. Van Til is altogether in error when he says that "For Cohen, or any modern scientist, to allow the concept of God, as a Christian thinks of God, would be to destroy 'scientific method'" (*C. T. Evid.* 65). Science simply is not theology. Each has its special work to do, and while science may not be as important as theology, it is a noble work of man exercising his God-given powers upon God's natural creation.

Note: This is the second of a series of three articles by Professor De Boer on the new apologetic. The third will appear in the November issue of the *Forum*. (Editors)

Thy Hands on Me

Lord, when I think of all the men
Whom Thou couldst choose
To tell this sinful world about
Thy love and grace
Why didst Thou place Thy hands on me?

Couldst Thou not find a better tongue
Than mine to use?
Couldst Thou not find a foot more fair
The tidings bring?
That Thou shouldst place Thy hands on me?

Or didst Thou plan by using me
No eloquence
Of man or earthly wisdom would
Conceal Thy name,
And thus, Thou placed Thy hands on me?

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Sanctification in Relation to the Will: Historically Considered

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SANCTIFICATION is part of the doctrine of the plan of salvation, and is to be viewed as part of the application of Redemption, as is the case with Effectual Calling, Regeneration, Adoption, and the Perseverance of the Saints. Whether we consider the salvation of the individual or the salvation of the world, we must have a definite doctrine of sanctification. And our doctrine of sanctification will be coloured and moulded by our doctrine of God and the other doctrines that flow from that governing doctrine. There is the *synergism* of Chrysostom and the *monergism* of Augustine; there is the Pelagian approach and the Calvinistic approach to our subject. Sanctification according to the Unitarian and sanctification according to the Trinitarian are two entirely different things.

Patristic Views:

According to the Alexandrine Anthropology, the will of man, in spite of its apostasy, was said to possess "a plenary power to good." It was able, on this view, to turn from sin on its own initiative and in its own "inherent energy." Yet there were modifications; and Clement, for example, insisted that divine influences were *necessary* if man were to be delivered from his sin. Says Clement: "God co-operates with those souls that are willing." "As the physician," he says, "furnishes health to that body which synergizes towards health (by a recuperative energy of its own—Shedd), so God furnishes eternal salvation to those who synergize towards the knowledge and obedience of the truth." According to this synergism, "the first motion towards holiness is the work of man, but it needs to be succeeded and strengthened by the influences of the Holy Spirit"—to employ the words of Dr. W. G. T. Shedd. Synergism, (*sun ergon*—comp. *sunergeo*) teaches that in regeneration, viewed at its broadest and from every aspect, the human will co-operates, in the strict sense of the term, with the Holy Ghost, in the renewing act and in the work that follows. The implications of such synergism, especially in relation to the human will after the fall of man, are far-reaching in their ramifications. It follows logically, that the "co-operation" of the synergist and the "co-operation" of the monergist, even in the field of sanctification, are very different in nature. The one

is initiated by man, and man is accredited a good share of, if not all, of the glory; the other is initiated by God, sustained by God, and He receives all the glory.

The synergism of Clement was shared by Origen. According to later Alexandrine views on this subject, modifications were necessary, and as a result there was a more qualified doctrine of power to holiness in the fallen man. The Later-Alexandrine School includes those Greek theologians who had been influenced by Origen—Athanasius, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory Nyssa, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Cyril of Alexandria. The Antiochian School adopted a fairly similar anthropology to that of the Later-Alexandrines. Chrysostom, who may be taken as the representative of this school and of such fathers as Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret, was a synergist. "It is necessary," he writes, "for us first to choose goodness, and when we have chosen it, then God introduces goodness from himself. . . . It is our function to choose beforehand, and to will, but it is God's function to finish and bring to completion."

Turning from Alexandrine Anthropology in its various forms, we must view our subject against the background of the Latin Anthropology with its distinctive historical contribution. Here we meet that great Patristic star, Augustine. The views of Tertullian, Cyprian, Hilary, and Ambrose received a more definite form in the Latin Church and were best stated by Augustine. Synergism is easily detected in Augustine's earlier writings, owing to the influence of his teacher Ambrose. But, as Dr. Shedd reminds us, "The severe conflict which Augustine was called to wage with his bodily appetites, and his heathen habits, revealed to him the fact that the governing power of the soul, the will itself, has been affected by the same apostasy that has affected the other parts of human nature."

Gradually he moved away from the Greek anthropology to the view which now bears his name—Augustinian Anthropology. He became a *monergist*, and his whole view of salvation is thoroughly monergistic. "Without grace," he says, "we can do nothing, achieve nothing, commence nothing." That is a wonderful transition from the days when he said: "It is ours to believe and to will; but it is His to give, through His Spirit, to those who believe and will, the power of performing good works. . . ."

This statement was one of those later retracted by this great Father. For he came to see that the work of the Holy Spirit is necessary to take the very initiative in the soul, renovating the will, and remaining the "sole originating cause of holiness in fallen man" (Shedd). Thus to Augustine, even in the matter of sanctification, the Holy Spirit acts *independently* upon the human spirit, and the latter can act only as it is acted upon by Him. He held to prevenient grace (*gratia praeveniens*); operative grace (*gratia operans*); and co-operative grace (*gratia co-operans*). In the life-long struggle of the regenerate soul, the now renovated and holy will is operative for the first time and co-operates or co-works with the Holy Spirit. The crowning act of grace results in the removal of all indwelling sin from the soul and the resulting absolute perfection. This is never attained this side of the grave. Even his errors concerning baptism did not damage his doctrine of sanctification.

To Augustine, "the Holy Spirit takes the initiative in the change from sin to holiness . . ." (Shedd). Dr. B. B. Warfield states that Augustine believed that as a result of the grace of God, "we come to love and freely choose, in co-operation with God's aid, just the things which hitherto we have been unable to choose because in bondage to sin. Grace, thus, does not make void free will: it acts through free will, and acts upon it only by liberating it from its bondage to sin, i.e., by liberating the agent that uses the free will, so that he is no longer enslaved by his fleshly lusts, and is enabled to make use of his free will in choosing the good; and thus it is only by grace that free will is enabled to act in good part." But this co-operation is not the co-operation of the synergist, who claims to co-operate with God in the strict sense of the term, and to take the initiative in this strict co-operation! Augustine had departed once and for all from the very appearance of such synergism. Says Warfield, "Thus, although Augustine's theology had a very strong churchly element within it, it was, on the side that is presented in the controversy against pelagianism, distinctly anti-ecclesiastical. Its central thought was the absolute dependence of the individual on the grace of God in Jesus Christ. It made everything that concerned salvation to be of God, and traced the source of all good to Him."

The clash between Augustinianism and Pelagianism served to throw Augustine's system into greater relief against the dark background of Pelagianism—Pelagius, a British monk, believing in almighty man and denying that mankind was made sinful by the Fall, asserted that each man decided his own destiny by the choice of either right or wrong. Semi-Pelagianism, as its name suggests, was a form of synergism, teaching that there was a place for divine assistance. The three positions have been defined as follows: Augustinianism asserts that man is morally dead; Semi-Pelagianism maintains that he is morally

sick; Pelagianism holds that he is morally *well*. And there are, of course, three different views of sanctification to correspond with these positions. These three views of sanctification, as we shall see, are still current in the world, and most likely will continue to be current.

Reformed Views

The Reformation saw a re-assertion of Augustinianism—Augustinianism rid of its Roman Catholic doctrines of the Church. Lutheran and Calvinistic confessions agree in their definitions of sin and grace. And one's view of sin and grace plays an essential part in the formation of a doctrine of sanctification. Further, the leading Protestant Confessions agree in their view of the will in fallen man, and adopt the Augustinian position. Dr. Shedd quotes the *Formula Concordiae*, the symbol of High Lutheranism, as stating: "before man is illuminated, converted, regenerated, and drawn by the Holy Spirit; he can no more operate, co-operate, or even make a beginning towards his conversion or regeneration, with his own natural powers, than can a stone, a tree, or a piece of clay." Calvinistic Confessions, like the *First Helvetic Confession*, adopt a similar position. The *Second Helvetic Confession*, drawn up by Bullinger, states that the regenerate "in the choice and working of that which is good, not only act passively, but actively also. For they are acted upon by God, that they themselves may act what they do act." These words point to the Biblical co-operation of Augustine, and not the synergism of Chrysostom or Melancthon—for we now come to that reformer's view on the matter.

Melancthon's Synergism: Synergism has been defined as "a sublimated type of Semi-Pelagianism" that "had for its representatives Erasmus, and specially Melancthon and his school" (Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia). Melancthon at first held to Augustine's view of the salvation of the soul, including sanctification, but later he departed from the strictly Reformed and Lutheran position concerning sanctification, soft-pedalled the doctrine of Predestination and introduced a distinct synergism into his theology. To be fair to Melancthon, the best we can say is that his brand of synergism is perhaps the nearest to monergism of any, because "it reduces down the human factor to a minimum" (Shedd), yet that is not saying a great deal. He had departed from the monergism of Augustine, Luther and Calvin. It is the writer's opinion, however, that the above-named encyclopaedia is just a little sweeping in identifying synergism so closely with the name of this reformer. His synergism is inexcusable, but is by no means the most thorough-going type.

Arminianism in relation to Sanctification: Arminianism, at first sight, seems to agree with Lutheran and Calvinistic confessions on the matter before us.

But certain modifications introduce a divergence between it and the truly Reformed position. While stating the impotence to good of the will in fallen man, Arminianism also states, in the *Confession or Declaration* of the Remonstrants, "Although there is the greatest diversity in the degree in which grace is bestowed in accordance with the Divine will, yet the Holy Spirit confers, *or at least is ready to confer*, upon all and each to whom the word of faith is ordinarily preached, *as much grace as is sufficient* for generating faith and carrying forward their conversion in its successive stages. Thus, sufficient grace for faith and conversion is allotted not only to those who actually believe and are converted, *but also to those who do not actually believe, and are not in fact converted* . . . so that there is no decree of absolute reprobation." This statement has a definitely synergistic trend. If this official Arminian statement be taken to its logical conclusion, it means, for one thing, that if a man is not saved it must be from want of human efficiency or desire to co-operate with God, and so the difference between the saved and the lost must ultimately be linked with the human will. This synergism the Arminian carries right through to every aspect of sanctification. Man takes up salvation, to begin with, and he can lay it down again, if he chooses. "Grace," says one Arminian, (Limborch) is not the *solitary*, yet it is the *primary* cause of salvation; for the co-operation of free will is due to grace as a primary cause; for unless the free will had been *excited* by prevenient grace, it would not be able to co-operate with grace." Thus grace is represented as merely exciting or stimulating the will, not renewing it. When Arminianism states that the influence of the Holy Spirit is granted provided that the human will concurs, everything is made to depend upon the human will.

The Romanist View

Romanists teach that the commands of Christ are binding upon all Christians, without exception, but that His Counsels are binding only upon those who voluntarily assume them in order to reach a higher degree of sanctification. Under the Counsels of Christ they include celibacy, voluntary poverty, etc. To Dr. A. A. Hodge this is a wicked distinction. The whole idea of supererogation is repugnant to the Protestant. Dr. A. A. Hodge points out that Christ demands the entire consecration of every Christian and that after having done all we are only unprofitable servants. Works of supererogation, therefore, are impossible. "All such will-worship," he says, "is declared abhorrent to God, Col. 2:18-23; I Tim. 4:3."

Turning to *The New Catholic Dictionary*, which bears the imprimatur of Patrick Cardinal Hayes (New York), we read under the heading "Sanctifying Grace," "the free gift of God establishing the

soul in the way of justification and holiness. Its intimate nature is beyond mere human analysis, but judging by its effects, we are justified in regarding it as a physical adornment of the soul, permanent in its essence, incompatible with grievous sin, recreating the soul as a new nature competent to act supernaturally and meritoriously. It is habitual grace regarded under one aspect—the real interior sanctification which enriches the soul and makes it permanently holy in the sight of God." The Romanists confuse Justification and Sanctification. The Council of Trent declares: "If anyone saith, that by faith alone the impious is justified; in such wise as to means, that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to the obtaining of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary, that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will; let him be anathema." (Canon IX). Canons XII, XXIV, XXXII of the same Council repeat and amplify this statement on Justification. The synergism of the Council of Trent, and indeed of the Roman Church, is very obvious in these sentences. Its whole position on this matter is fundamentally different from the Westminster Confession and from that Assembly's Shorter Catechism—"An act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth as righteous in His sight, *only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.*" The Church of Rome still hurls her anathema at all who hold the Reformed doctrines of Justification and Sanctification. Says Dr. T. C. Hammond, "The Church of Rome has confused 'justification' with 'sanctification.' Justification is being *accounted* righteous; Sanctification is being *made* righteous: the former is imputed; the latter is imparted; the former is an act completed at a definite period; the latter is progressive throughout the life of the child of God."

One of the reasons why Rome confuses Justification and Sanctification is because of her rigid Arminianism which reflects synergistically in her whole view of the plan of salvation. Rome does not teach salvation by grace, as we understand it from the Holy Scriptures; and when someone attempts to blend grace with meritorious works as she does, the result is a system of works and not a system of grace. Rome as a result of this also holds to her own peculiar brand of Perfectionism. Dr. A. A. Hodge says that upon this subject, as upon all critical points, the Council of Trent is "studiously ambiguous." They admit that the just may fall into venial sins daily, and that no man can live without sin, unless by a special privilege of God. But they state that God does not command impossibilities, and that in this life the renewed can fully keep the law of God, and even, "by the observance of the evangelical counsels, (i.e., "the counsels of Christ") *do more than is commanded*; and thus, as many saints have actually done, lay up a fund of supererogatory merit" (A. A. Hodge). Rome also teaches that the Pope can draw

on this fund of merit, or this balance of merit, for the benefit of souls in this world or in Purgatory, sanctification seldom being completed in this world! The excess of merit is said to be accumulated in a kind of deposit, to which the Pope has access in virtue of his power of the keys, and the faithful may benefit from the excess good works of others by way of indulgences. Frequently this is made possible, on Roman teaching, through the payment of money. Indulgences are still sold by Rome, though not so vulgarly as in Tetzels day. It has been pointed out that the conception of a common treasury of excess good works is contrary to the parable of the Ten Virgins, in which the wise virgins could spare no oil for foolish. Again, the standard of holiness is God Himself, and Rome seems to forget that at times. But the real cause, or at least one of the main causes of her doctrine of supererogation is her synergistic view of the application of Redemption. Her view of sin, the will in fallen man, etc., is different, radically different, from the Augustinian and Calvinistic view.

Much more might be said about Rome's elaborate doctrine of merit and her view of sanctification in relation to the sacraments and the Church, but we have seen that her doctrine in relation to the will is synergistic, affirming and denying the grace of God, in turn.

Modern Trends

We have now laid the background to a brief survey of modern trends in the matter of sanctification as considered in this paper. No matter what view of sanctification a man holds, he may roughly be classified as Pelagian, Semi-Pelagian, or Augustinian. He either believes that man is morally dead, sick, or well. And his doctrine of sanctification will be coloured accordingly.

John Wesley: Wesley taught that a Christian could fall from grace and be totally lost. The Church of Rome teaches the same. Wesley taught that in a certain sense a man could live without sin. Rome teaches a brand of perfection, too, though not the same as that of the Methodists. Nevertheless, in the thoroughly Arminian and synergistic system these two traits are usually in evidence. What man can take up of his own accord, he can finish, or he can throw it away. Wesley, to be fair to him, taught a progressive sanctification which in itself was not perfect. He held that every Christian, sooner or later, experienced "entire sanctification," but the majority did not reach it long before death. This "evangelical perfection" did not mean an ability to fulfill the law of holiness under which Adam was created, nor did it imply infallibility or a freedom from temperamental infirmities; but it did mean, according to Wesley, an exclusion of all inward disposition to sin as well as all outward commission of

it. The perfect love of God is said to govern the entire life that is entirely sanctified and there is a fulfillment of the "law of Christ" under which alone the Christian's probation is said to be held. Wesley did not use the term "sinless perfection," but he did not object to the phrase. Wesley held to a sharp crisis in the attainment of this perfection. "I believe," he said, "this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith, consequently in an instant. But I believe there is a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant."

Romish and Arminian theories have much in common in the matter of sanctification, but it must be remembered that John Wesley cannot be classified with the classical Arminianism of the Dutch Remonstrants. In many respects he is a theological conundrum. There are elements of semi-Pelagianism in the Wesleyan system, but there are also many points where it is definitely evangelical. Therefore they could claim to be "Evangelical Arminians." But that very title points to the inconsistency of Wesley's position. He and his followers were not accurate in their use of technical language. Indeed one wonders at times if they fully realized what they were saying. Wesley was undoubtedly a godly man who was much better than his system. We have to be very careful in assessing his teachings, remembering that he was an evangelist rather than a theologian. Writing about the "Evangelical Arminians," Dr. A. A. Hodge says: "I attribute the peculiar theoretical indefiniteness which appears to render their definitions obscure, especially on the subjects of justification and of perfection, to the spirit of a warm, loving, working Christianity, struggling with the false premises of an Arminian philosophy." Bishop Ryle says that "we must learn to distinguish between things that are of the *essence* of the gospel and things which are of the *perfection* of gospel." He preferred Whitfield's gospel to Wesley's, but he would not say that Wesley had no gospel at all. The sermon which Wesley preached at Whitfield's funeral could never have been preached by a man who held the entire position of the Dutch Remonstrants. In that sermon Wesley said: "There is no power in man, till it is given him from above, to do one good work, to speak one good word, or to form one good desire. For it is not enough to say all men are sick of sin: no, we are all *dead* in trespasses and sins." Wesley cannot be classified; he is difficult to understand; he must be considered with care and charity. He was a Christian of quality and zeal, but he can hardly be termed a great theologian.

In passing, we might note the *Oberlin* doctrine of sanctification. The Oberlin theologians were Perfectionists, too. They believed that a Christian could render perfect obedience to God's original moral law, but said that this law, because of justice, always adjusted itself to the present ability of the subject. Thus God only has the right to demand what we have the power to render, or, we have the power to

render all that God demands, and therefore we can perfectly conform to His will *as it regards us*, just as the saints in heaven conform to His will *as it regards them*. Under the Oberlin doctrine of perfection we must fit Mr. Finney.* Thus whether we turn to Rome, or Wesley, or Finney we find that the standard of perfection is not right. It is largely forgotten that God Himself is the only standard of perfection. Whether we make the "law of Christ" a lower standard, or whether we make the original moral law an accommodating and adjustable standard, the ultimate difference is very slight. Perfection as understood by these teachers is not being holy as God is holy, no matter what they may say. They have tampered with the only standard of holiness and perfection.

Liberal View of Sanctification: The sanctification of the Rationalist and Liberal is a mere reformation. The followers of Kant could see nothing supernatural in sanctification: to them it was mere moral improvement on the part of man. Schleiermacher viewed it as the progressive domination of the God-consciousness within us. The "sanctification" of men like Professor J. E. Davey (Belfast) is anti-supernatural and synergistic, too; in other words it is rationalistic. To the evolutionist, sanctification is a matter of culture and social refinement—a disappearance of the last of the jungle markings on man. This position is thoroughly Pelagian, at times slightly semi-Pelagian, and quite synergistic. Thus the rationalist is terribly self-consistent, and his system is thoroughly anti-Christian.

Barth's view: Barth is another theological conundrum. But one thing is certain: he is a "higher critic" so-called. To be scientifically correct, he is an unbelieving critic in his approach to the Word of God. He readily accepts the modernist view of the Bible. Barth is a modernist. Where Barth proves interesting in the matter before us is in his representation of the relation between sanctification and justification. To him the two must always be considered jointly. They always go together, according to Barth, and must not be thought of quantitatively, as if one followed the other. Thus justification is occurring over and over again in the Christian experience, going hand in hand with sanctification. And as a man remains a sinner in justification, so he does in sanctification. According to Barth, his best deeds are at the same time sins! Sanctification, he believes, does not gradually purify a man. It does not engender personal holiness. It does not make him a saint; he remains a sinner throughout all. To Barth, sanctification is a declarative act like justification. Dr. Louis Berkhof quotes McConachie, one of Barth's sympathetic interpreters, as saying: "Justification and sanctification are, therefore, to Barth, two sides of one act of God upon men. Justification is the pardon of the sinner, by which God declares the sinner righteous. Sanctification is

the sanctification of the sinner, by which God declares the sinner 'holy'." Says Berkhof: "however laudable the desire of Barth to destroy every vestige of work-righteousness, he certainly goes to an unwarranted extreme, in which he virtually confuses justification and sanctification, negatives the Christian life, and rules out the possibility of confident assurance." To classify Barth in this matter, to say whether he is a strict monergist or not, would be no easy task. But just as we regard Wesley as being evangelical, and rightly so, we may group Barth and his followers in the liberal camp, with their own peculiar philosophical background, proclaiming a "Christianity" which is bewildering to ordinary people, and which does not seem to give much light or assurance to those who proclaim it.

Second Blessing Theories: There are many theories of Second Blessing current to-day, and some of them are to be regarded as Perfectionism. They are synergistic in trend. Sanctification is "accepted" by the individual; it can, to a large extent, be laid aside at will. Most of the supporters of this school of thought now believe that a Christian may fall away and be lost. No doubt many of these people approximate to Wesley's position. Some go further, and others not nearly so far. By their use of terms like "sanctification," holiness," etc., it is evident that there is a confusion about the exact meaning of the terms. The appeal to be sanctified, to come to a crisis in sanctification, to be filled with the Spirit, etc., is usually made in an Arminian manner. Life, after this step has been taken, is described as "Higher," "Victorious," etc. Many regard this Second Blessing as a "second act of grace"; but it is secured synergistically, man taking the initiative, not God. While most of the supporters of this view, in its many variations, are supernaturalists and fundamentalists, historically they must be linked with semi-Pelagianism so far as sanctification is concerned. They cannot be linked with Pelagianism, nor with Augustinianism. Their synergism is marked; so is their Arminianism and a proneness to subjectivism, ultra-introspection, and a psychologically unhealthy reliance on feelings and emotions. Second Blessing teaching, whether given that title or not, is to be found ranging from a very mild type to the most extreme Pentecostalism. But some use the term unthinkingly when they really mean consecration and a whole-hearted yielding of oneself to the Spirit of Christ, for which we should all earnestly pray.

The Church of Christ is essentially a holiness movement, and every service held in a congregation should be a holiness meeting. Daily and hourly we should yield and consecrate ourselves to the service of our Master, praying for grace to receive grace. A careful reading of all of Scripture will assure us of the rightness of the Augustinian and Calvinistic position concerning sanctification, as well as other doctrines. The Puritans have enshrined that posi-

* Made Professor of Theology in Oberlin Theological Seminary.

tion in the Confession of Faith, duly recognizing the Sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. The Confession of Faith has been criticised on the grounds that it does not give a chapter specifically devoted to the Holy Spirit and His work; but as Dr. Warfield says in his Introductory Note to Dr. Kuyper's *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, "The sole reason why it does not give a chapter to this subject, however, is because it prefers to give *nine* chapters to it; and when an attempt was made to supply the fancied omission, it was found that pretty much all that could be done was to present in the proposed new chapter a meager summary of the contents of these nine chapters."

I have heard it said by Arminians that Calvinism has no doctrine of sanctification! To us this is utterly absurd. But when we consider that the advocates of Second Blessing in its many forms are tireless in their propagation of that teaching, we must ask ourselves if we are striving after personal holiness, by God's grace, and if we are proclaiming the Scriptural doctrines which Augustine and Calvin proclaimed to a needy world? Our doctrines must be

Christ-centered, for He is the Truth, and we must bear in mind with Dr. Warfield that "The goal to which the race is advancing is set by God: it is salvation. And every stage in the advance to this goal is, of course, determined by God. The progress of the race is, in other words, a God-determined progress, to a God-determined end. That being true, every detail in every moment of the life of the race is God-determined; and is a stage in its God-determined advance to its God-determined end. . . . The salvation of the world is absolutely dependent (as is the salvation of the individual soul) on its salvation being the sole work of the Lord Christ Himself, in His irresistible might. It is only the Calvinist that has warrant to believe in salvation, whether of the individual or of the world. Both alike rest utterly on the sovereign grace of God. All other ground is shifting sand."

If our doctrine of sanctification is Scriptural and bigger and grander than the self-centered Second Blessing, the humanistic reform of the liberal, the proud synergism of the Romanist and Arminian—then let us proclaim it, study it, know it, and live it, declaring as we do so that "Salvation is of the Lord."

My Hands Are Thine

My hands are Thine, O Lord,
To reach the one outstretched
In desperate agony
Amid the troubled waves,
And with one mighty pull
Of love to draw that one
From death to life again.

My hands are Thine, O Lord,
With tenderness and speed
To bring the rescued one
From flick'ring life to strength
To buoyant ecstasy.
Lord Jesus Christ, my hands
Are Thine to save the lost.

Calvin A. Busch.

"... As Thyself"* (A Chapel Talk)

William T. Radius
Professor of Classical Languages
Calvin College

THERE are, as you certainly must know, two classes of speakers, those who have something to say, and again, those who have to say something. Fortunately, there is always something in Holy Writ on which we may fall back and allow, as it were, to speak for itself. There is a little sentence in the words of Matthew which I have read and it has been in my mind much of late: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." I have been asking myself, "Whatever in the world can these words mean?" If I have to confess that they mean exactly what they say, I stand under terrific indictment and an intolerable burden. I have not loved my neighbor as myself. And yet, I see no possibility of sophisticating away the plain meaning of these words. There is no possibility of defining neighbor in this text to suit your or my reluctance, because elsewhere Scripture says quite unmistakably that our neighbor is anyone with whom we come into contact. And especially is there no chance to quibble about the word love. It is almost as if Jesus were anticipating our attempt to scale down and to narrow the concept of love, for he adds, "as thyself." How much do I love *myself*? How much do you love *yourself*? I do not know, but it appears to me to be immeasurable. And so I can assure you that if I were to love my neighbor as much as I do myself, he will be the object of a substantial amount of affection.

We are thinking much these days about the peace. Nearly everybody now understands that we shall have to think of the rest of the world as our neighbors. In the past, with our Atlantic and Pacific oceans we enjoyed the luxury of a man who has a vacant lot on both sides of his house. But it is now as if the oceans have dried up; what were barriers have become highways, and the travel advertisements tell us that you can now reach any spot on this earth in less than 50 hours. The biggest news since the close of World War II (and it is worth a headline every day) is that neighbors have moved in. And we pull the curtains to one side a little and peer out to see what sort of people they be. And what we see is not very promising. Many of them are dirty, ill-clad, obviously hungry, and as for their goods, it is for the most part a pile of junk.

Now if you have neighbors, you must have a foreign policy. A foreign policy is nothing more than your method of getting on with your neighbors.

* A brief message based on Matthew 22:34-40 and presented in the faculty-conducted chapel hour at Calvin College.

We say that as yet America has no foreign policy. Well, we could not do better than to start with these plain words of Jesus, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This is basic. Whatever follows shall have to rest on this. It is at once simple and radical. The Bible is full of plain talk which contrasts with the subtleties and evasions of policy-makers, (including all of us.) And it is radical in the literal sense of the word, getting to the root of the matter. If hate is at the bottom of the trouble, then love is the prescription.

But I can almost sense the sort of reaction which you are verbalizing to yourself. You are saying something like this. The speaker is over-simplifying the whole complex problem of world affairs. International relations are endlessly involved, made up as they are of highly intricate economic, political, social and religious differences. Huge staffs of experts in foreign offices the world over ponder these problems far into the night and now you come along with the utterly simple and naive formula, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." That is all very well, you are saying, for this quiet, peaceful summer morning in this pleasant chapel, but what sense does that make in the halls of Congress, in the White House or in London, Paris, or Berlin? To all of this I must make a short reply. Jesus spoke these profound words when Rome was master of the whole civilized world. The corner-stone of Roman foreign policy was physical power, employed for the most part with utter ruthlessness. We Americans, I like to believe, have progressed beyond the exercise of naked power, but I ask, which is easier, to vote billions of dollars for foreign aid or to love the foreigners; to say, take up thy bed and walk, or to say, thy sins are forgiven thee? For God so *loved* the world that He gave His only Son. At the time of creation He gave to mankind this amazing world, stored with endless wealth, because he loved the man whom he had created. But, as events proved, it was not enough. He had to give more. He had to make the supreme sacrifice and so he gave his only begotten Son to die on the cross. Shall we then say that love is a simple and naive solution?

Let me say just a few words about school teachers. For better or for worse, that's what many of us are and others here present hope to become. I think that I am correct when I say that there is no such thing as an exact science of teaching. I mean this: only the most sanguine of methodologists would say that the method of putting history and arithmetic in

the child's head is as rigid and as specific as is the technique whereby his appendix is removed and he is made immune to small-pox. That is simply another way of saying that medicine is to a greater extent an exact science than is psychology. It is of course, not to say that there is not a poor, a good, and a better way of teaching history, arithmetic, and any subject whatever. There most certainly may be an important difference between one and another method of teaching. But while there is much room for difference of opinion in the field of methodology, there can be no doubt as to what *attitudes* on the part of the teacher toward the pupil are most effective. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" is as sound

pedagogy as it is politics. The best way of *getting on* with your neighbor is to love him; there is no other way if you want to *teach* him.

PRAYER:

Almighty and ever-loving Father, teach us who are Thy children to love the brethren in the Lord, so that the world seeing us may marvel and exclaim, "Behold, how they love one another!" And grant us, we pray, an enlargement of our hearts that will embrace all mankind, so that our deepest desire for all men is that they may come to a saving knowledge of the blessed Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Two Arguments for the Christian School

Mark Fakkema

Educational Director
National Association of Christian Schools
Chicago, Illinois

IN SEEKING to interest others in the cause of the Christian day school we are likely to make one of two approaches: We either employ the practical argument or the argument based on religious conviction.

The Practical Argument

In using this argument we contrast the product of the Christian School with that of the Public School. We call attention to the Bible knowledge gained in the Christian School, the social advantage derived from a select Christian pupil body, and the greater emphasis on that which is fundamental in the educational process. We may also add that the Christian School may be instrumental in saving our children.

This practical argument is not without force: From facts available we believe it can be demonstrated beyond doubt that by and large the Christian School indeed stands for superior scholarship, that it makes for Christian character, and that it promotes true piety. Those parents who do not make use of the Christian School indeed deprive their children of certain intellectual, moral, and spiritual influences which are of superb value to the children.

There is, however, a marked limitation to the practical argument: If certain practical considerations move us to send our children to the Christian School, then certain other practical considerations, which in our estimation outweigh the practical argument for Christian School attendance, may prompt us to take our children from the Christian School. Accordingly, on the basis of the practical argument Christian School attendance is made to depend upon each one's personal sense of values rather than upon one's sense of religious duty. Floating upon practical considerations only, a school movement is not

likely to weather the storm of prolonged financial depression.

The Practical Argument Contrasted with the Religious Argument

He who for practical reasons sends his children to the Christian School is looking forward to certain services which he expects the school will render in behalf of his children. Realizing that the anticipated services are worth the price, he chooses to send his children to the Christian School. He who for the sake of religious principles sends his children to a Christian School does so as an act of service to God. He believes that God wills it; having committed his way to the Lord he has no choice in the matter. In presenting the *practical argument* one presents the parent as master and the school as his servant. In presenting the *argument from religious principle* one presents God as master and the parent as God's servant.

He who is prompted merely by *practical* considerations has counted the cost and is content either to send his children to a Christian School, or, if in his estimation financial circumstances forbid, he is content in not sending his children. He who looks upon the sending of his children to a Christian School as a matter of *religious principle* is never really content unless he sends his children to the Christian School. For such a person adverse circumstances do not alter his attitude toward Christian instruction—they merely test his religious faith.

The great importance of the *religious* argument is apparent. We will never get very far in our Christian School promotion activity unless we succeed in pointing out that providing Christian day school instruction is not merely a matter of obtaining certain practical benefits. It must become crystal clear that making provision for such instruction is a question of faithfulness and loyalty to God Himself.

From Our Correspondents

A LETTER FROM RIPON

Ripon, California
May 26, 1953

Dr. Cecil De Boer, Editor The Calvin Forum
Calvin College and Seminary
Grand Rapids 6, Michigan

Dear Dr. De Boer:

IT was during the last political campaign that I joined the ranks of the "writing public," directing my efforts to the editor of our local paper. It was in refutation of glowing articles written in support of Adlai Stevenson's presidential aspirations that I was aroused to action. At this present time, I could again be accused of dereliction of duty if I were to allow H. Z.'s "Eggheads" of May, 1953, to go unchallenged.

I consider myself one of the herd, so aptly described by H. Z. as "our good old average citizen, our John Q. Public, our common man, the man in the street, John Doe." As such, I feel H. Z. has the same condescending attitude towards me that he has towards those who used the term "Egghead" during the campaign. This is a new expression for me, and personally, I dislike it. But for the purpose of this discussion, I shall use it as the writer has done.

I shall not attempt a dissecting type of criticism or refutation of the entire article, but rather a specific reaction to the writer's (I wish he had identified himself) defense of Arthur Schlesinger's quoted paragraph. He evidently supports that thesis, since he writes "Schlesinger *rightly* fears such a development."

If I may be permitted to quote anew this passage, I believe it will assist your readers in understanding my attitude of criticism.

"The American intellectual finds himself in a situation he has not known for a generation. . . . For twenty years, the government of the United States, while often one which the intellectual has found confused or mistaken, has nevertheless been one which has basically understood, respected and protected intellectual purposes. Now business is in power again; and with it will inevitably come the vulgarization which has been the almost invariable consequence of business supremacy."

My aching heart bleeds for the destitute "intellectual" who has lost his downy bed. What a revolting development that he must now mingle with the herd, leave his cloistered sanctuary, and brush his robe on the fringes of life as it is. The "protection" he received from the late administration is so reminiscent of the "protection" afforded legitimate

business by the gangsters and racketeers of our major cities.

Is there still question in the minds of some of our people regarding the fact that the Truman administration was a protective organization for Communist spies? Certainly the evidence is clear that Truman and Acheson were aware of the activity of this menace to our heritage of freedom. And yet, they vigorously protested every attempt made to release this country of the strangling force of those malignant personalities—dedicated with a viciously fervent zeal to the transformation of our treasured, vital freedom into the abject slavery they envisioned.

Is the doubtful "protection" of the intellectual, generously granted by our previous administration, adequate recompense for the national danger they cultivated? What a questionable sense of values for the individual if he finds a choice here.

Felix Wittmer so aptly describes former Secretary of State, Dean Acheson—a superlative Egghead—in these words: "To understand their Secretary of State in 1952, Americans must understand that he began seeking favor for Soviet Russia as a paid advocate. He was selected and hired by the Soviet leaders to promote their cause; and for most of his life he has been trying to prove that his clients, the Soviet leaders—if only they can be made to feel secure in the affections of free men—will be good little boys."

I had contact with the Soviet military machine, and in 1945 they were not "good little boys." After 8 more years of conquest and insidious invasion of world freedom, the barbaric and ruthless attitudes of these demoniac peoples have only increased in arrogance, hatred and brutality.

Whittaker Chambers, well known former Russian agent; Elizabeth Bentley, former Soviet espionage messenger; and Igor Guzenko, former Soviet code clerk in Canada—all presented lists of Soviet personnel to our former President and State Department. Of the hundreds listed, most were U. S. Government employees, many in responsible positions associated with the State Department. And yet, reprehensible as it may seem, these maggots were supported and encouraged in their activities. Acheson, intellectual giant that he is, was always ready with his sneer of condescension and aggrandizement towards the *hoi-polloi* who questioned his loyalty.

My personal experience with the Soviet military was such that I shudder with apprehension, realizing that our former Secretary of State was in position

for 19 years to benefit that organization. The American people placed their trust and confidence in Truman and Acheson, but after all, we're just the herd, or better yet, the fodder!

Adlai Stevenson stated that Richard Nixon was an impertinent young man who showed poor judgment in the Alger Hiss case. What a beautiful comparison between the "intellectual" evaluation and our present "business" administration judgment. To the former administration, Alger Hiss was a valuable constituent of government—a convenient courier for top secret information. To our present administration he was a Soviet spy. Because of the persistent efforts of those men who are now in government, although frustrated and intimidated by Truman and Acheson, Alger Hiss was proven to be a man endeavoring to destroy us. The "wise and mature" Stevenson gave an unsolicited character support for this evil, slime-covered cobra, but now we, the people, should regret the choice of the American citizenry because our "intellectual" has lost his asylum.

I may be considered harsh and vehement in my reaction to the article under discussion, but I realize the source, and I tremble. The *Calvin Forum* represents the thought of the combined faculties of Calvin College and Seminary. If it is true that this article echoes sentiments of this body of Calvinistic thought, then it is incumbent upon me to express a conflicting opinion.

I become extremely agitated when the basic drives and desires of a man such as President Eisenhower are disparaged in favor of Harry Truman's. Eisenhower has spent all his mature years with one objective in mind, that of protecting this country from forces which would threaten its security and safety. His record is a revelation for all to see, and his present attack on the evil forces which were inherited from the former administration are but a beginning. I no longer fear the presence of foreign representatives in positions of trust in our government today. We may expect an occasional, intrepid espionage agent in a strategic post. But I feel confident that if exposure results, he will be ejected and punished as he rightly deserves.

My reaction to the efforts of the Democratic Party in its last, desperate effort to prolong its threat to our national safety was partially expressed in these words:

If I could but turn back the pages of history a few years and struggle again with the broken bodies, the mangled forms, the bleeding hearts of those brave men who fought and died that we might live; if I could again experience those months of tortured mind, seeing the youth of my country blasted into eternity—convinced that their deaths were preserving for us that tremendous ideal of home, and family, and country; if I could again hear the whimpering, the crying, the screaming—see the glazed stare of the dying—feel warm blood flowing thru my fingers—smell the nauseating stench of the dead—aye, then I could whisper in those failing ears the words that their living has been vain, their dying a mockery, their death a void!

A prose picture? A word portrait? A histrionic play? No—but a terribly realistic nostalgia for the days when

I, too, thought it was a valiant effort. But the price was too dear. Today we're being sold down the river in easy stages, and we may not even have a bloody revolution. But the concentration camps are there—and don't excite my memories of Gardelegan and Belsen which I cleaned up of human debris—the misguided peoples of a deluded governmental power.

Those were heated words, but the gloves were off then, and they still reflect my attitude towards our former administration. The record of Communist protection shall certainly be recorded in history as a travesty of justice, trust and honesty in our national government.

The intellectual will find as much room for expression in our present administration as he has found in the past. And, he will also find an intelligent group of men guiding the destinies of his country. It might be interesting to compare the IQ average of our cabinet today with that of the previous administration. I believe one of the most revealing comparisons would be that of the highest Executive.

H. Z. deplors the fact that the plain man fosters a resentment against the intellectual. He admits that the intellectual keeps on espousing lost or impossible causes. One wonders if he has ever contemplated the fact that among the "plain people" there may be many who are intelligent enough to fathom the same depths to which he delves? Has he ever considered the latent possibility that there are "common men" who may have the same capacity for theorizing and idealizing as he himself may claim?

I wonder if he might give just a little thought to the possibility that the intellectual, as "protected" by our late and unlamented administration, has jeopardized his very reason for existence. By exploiting the unlimited reaches of his freedom, he has destroyed the trust and confidence he once enjoyed. Why should the common man hold in esteem the visionary who is interested in eradicating him? H. Z. has placed the two at odds, but I believe I can consider myself identified with the common man, and yet have the visions he seems to think is a cloistered privilege.

Certainly, one hopes he cannot find at Calvin that rare "intellectual" who is so absorbed by his introspection and contemplation that he has lost contact with the world in which he lives. I can conceive of such an individual, but I am convinced that he does not exist at the College or Seminary.

It must have been as magnificent a revelation to the intellectual at Calvin, as it was to the rest of us, after the total results of the last election had been tabulated, how the American people reacted to the "protection, understanding, and respect" of the late administration. How refreshing and stimulating it was to realize that an aroused citizenry had torn away the cataracts of delusion which had blinded their eyes previously; had risen up in an overwhelming tide of outraged and independent thought to crush the treacherous betrayal of our glorious heritage.

How thrilling it was to discover that our people did not feel the ill-gotten gains of a morally corrupt administration too great a temptation to risk losing; that the offspring of a traditionally independent heritage were not deluded into believing that freedom is only a degree different from bondage; that the present generation of Americans had not become steeped in the desire for economic security at all costs—that our common man could see the enslaved peoples of the world attaining security and protection from their governmental dynasties.

And now, what a tremendously stimulating experience it is to have a President who attempts to raise the spiritual level of our people. His sincere desire to place his burden of responsibility upon the Source of all Wisdom, Judgment, and Thought—is a new experience for this generation of Americans. As Calvinists, we should derive blessing and strength from such efforts of elevating our national, moral tone. We could actually do much to support and encourage him in his obvious struggle to raise our people out of torpor and lethargy into a spiritual revival.

Let this then be the criteria upon which we base our evaluation of comparisons:

A business organization of respected and capable men supplanting impracticable visionaries and Missouri henchmen;
Exposure and conviction of espionage forces instead of protection and encouragement;
Economic stabilization by natural demands replacing sustenance by artificial determinism;
Equity and justice superseding dishonesty and partiality;
Spiritual growth redeeming moral decline!

As a "common man" I have no difficulty making my choice. I pity the "Egghead" if, with considerate contemplation, he finds a problem of decision here.

However, privileged as we both are by the inherent rights of our Constitution, he has as much right to express his opinion as I have to state mine. Since the *Calvin Forum* is a medium of exchange for Calvinistic thought, it should be only equitable that a conflicting opinion on so controversial a topic be injected into the consciousness of your readers.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN D. HOLLANDER, M.D.

DR. ZYLSTRA'S REPLY

I WROTE my editorial, as I suppose Mr. Schlesinger wrote the article from which I quoted, with this in mind: namely, the understanding, respect, and protection of intellectual purposes. I felt that there was in this country at the present time an attitude, sometimes of indifference, and sometimes of hostility, towards the disinterested criticism which it has always been the role of the intellectual to exercise in democratic and other societies. I saw in the appropriation of the term "Egghead" and in the subsequent career of this word a symptom of this recently augmented indifference and hostility. What I meant by an intellectual was not a Democrat, much less a Communist, though Dr.

Hollander's case depends pretty largely upon using these three terms interchangeably. By an intellectual I meant, and I thought my editorial suggested as much, simply the thoughtful man, whose thought, being disinterested from the practical momentums of the common man and of the business man, had some chance to be free, some chance also, therefore, in its disengagement from what IS, to do justice to what OUGHT TO BE. My notion, indeed, was not so very different from that of Matthew Arnold who spoke of the function of disinterested criticism as that of "turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits, which we now follow staunchly but mechanically, vainly imagining that there is a virtue in following them staunchly which makes up for the mischief of following them mechanically."

In reply to this thought of mine, Dr. Hollander chants his funeral dirge over the dead body of the Truman administration, raises his panegyric to President Eisenhower's promise and performance, and delineates the evil of Communism. I think that he is inaccurate in his characterization of the first, over-sanguine in his expectations from the second, and generally right in his delineation of the third. But I marvel at how all this strong feeling on these big matters can come up out of my little editorial on the role of the intellectual in democratic society. And I regret Dr. Hollander's repudiation of that role, since, as I suggested then, I consider it indispensable.

It bothers me that educated men should in these unimaginative times give comfort to those many who hold that schools and books and universities and professors and writers, except as they implement the instincts of people, or confirm their habits, or provide the tools and skills for getting some kind of work done, are useless and dangerous. My distinction between the common man, the business man, and the intellectual does not imply inferiority, but I do think there is a distinction. I consider, for example, that Dr. Hollander is not a common man to whom some diagnostic and surgical skills have been added, nor a business man whose "line" happens to be tonsils instead of tires, but that he is a person who by the disciplining of education has developed a normatively critical approach to the problems of life. This constitutes him an intellectual, and I am sorry that he does not prize it highly.

I know, too, that intellectuals, when they are goaded into disaffection by an untoward environment, are capable of dangerous things. But so, of course, are masses of common people, and so are business men when they are blinded by the chance for success. But I do not want to contribute to the corporate responsibility for disaffecting thoughtful people. This, in its logical culmination, would make for a state of affairs like that in Germany during the 20's and 30's. The person who took advantage of it was not an intellectual Hiss but a paper-hanging

corporal and the upshot was the book-burning Jew-baiting pogrom, purge, and propaganda of Fascism.

Since writing that editorial I came upon some statements from Mr. Peter Viereck, author of *Conservatism Revisited*, which can serve to reinforce the thrust of my editorial. He wrote them in *Fortune* magazine, for February of this year:

The more short-sighted portion of the business community grants no status or respect to any non-utilitarian intellect and has scant sympathy for the literary and ethical ideals of such intellectuals. But a society that alienates its intellectuals . . . cannot long survive. This holds true, no matter how few, helpless, weak, and uninfluential the intellectuals may seem to be. From their group, and only from their group, comes the leaders

—always the disaffected intellectuals—who win over the masses and organize revolution when some crisis . . . has struck the status quo.

To survive such crises a free society must achieve the conservative function of rooting or rerooting its men of ideas. Can our industrial society (business plus labor) still give the intellectuals a status inside of the status quo? Status means a lot more than mere material recognition. . . . Status means *dignity*: the acceptance of free, non-utilitarian intellect by the business community. It means acceptance of that bulwark of the Christian-Hellenic heritage: *the priority of beauty-seeking and truth-seeking over utility-seeking* and over the merely practical, technological, and manipulative aspects of intellect."

I am sorry about that H. Z. It was an old custom of the staff in subscribing *Forum* editorials.

HENRY ZYLSTRA

Book Reviews

SCHOLARLY AND STANDARD

THE TYPOLOGY OF SCRIPTURE. By Patrick Fairbairn. *Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing Company. Two volumes in one. Complete and unabridged. Vol. I, 420 pp. Vol. II, 484 pp. \$6.95.*

FOR the biblical student who desires a scholarly, comprehensive, reliable, and clear treatise of the typology of Scripture, this is it. For years *The Typology of Scripture* of Fairbairn has been a classic. It has been recognized as the standard work on the subject in Reformed circles.

Doctor Patrick Fairbairn accepts the historical truthfulness of Scripture, stands committed to the view of the supernatural revelation and divine inspiration of the Bible record. Taking position within this sacred edifice, he proceeds to make his observations on the many types found in the Bible and their fulfillment. He does this with a thoroughness and depth of thought that only a great scholar like the elder Fairbairn can do, one who is familiar with Scripture as an organism and with its interrelated parts.

The results of his painstaking labors are presented to us in this two volume work. It has been rated (Archdeacon Denison) as "one of the most sober, profound, and thorough treatises which we possess on a subject of great importance in it bearing on Christian doctrine" and it bids fair to remain a standard work on typology for many a year. The biblical scholar that undertakes to study his way through the two volumes of Fairbairn will find himself upon completion not only much enriched with the meaning and intent of numerous examples of typology in Scripture, but along with it a better understanding of prophecy of which typology in a sense is but a part. And he will arrive at his increased stock of knowledge through a freshness of approach as each of the types in the original setting sheds its light anew on the teachings of Scripture.

The first of the two volumes will prepare the reader for a proper understanding of the proper method of typology, while the explanations of the several types are presented in the second volume. Without a careful study of the meaning of the word type and the nature and province of typology no biblical student can expect to have a true understanding of the types presented in Scripture, nor can he avoid the pitfalls

into which many others in the history of the Christian Church have fallen for lack of proper rules of interpretation to guide them.

In Volume One the author furnishes his readers with a forty page historical introduction and critical survey of the theological opinion on the subject from the earliest Christian centuries down to his own day (d. 1874). The early church divines, says Fairbairn, had no just rules of interpretation to guide them, and therefore quite easily with men like Origen ran into wild allegorical excesses. The Middle Ages likewise furnish numerous examples of the same lack of definite rules and the accompanying errors. With the Protestant Reformation we arrive at sound interpretation of Scripture as well as studied examination of original texts. But the early Protestant leaders as a whole did not have the necessary time to delve into the investigation of the typical aspects of the Old Testament and its methodology. In the seventeenth century a new impetus was given to the study of types. A prominent leader, but none too reliable, was Cocceus who conceived of every event in the Old Testament that had resemblance to the New as symbolical. As a characteristic example Fairbairn cites his interpretation of Psalm Eight where not alone the sheep there mentioned are represented as symbols of the church of Christ, but the oxen, beasts, and fowl are all made to represent some specific spiritual objects in the New Testament dispensation.

If Fairbairn were commenting on current literature on the subject, he could find for citation numerous examples of such fantastic explanations today that parade as superior Bible knowledge. To cite but one example, in a widely publicized annotated Bible in circulation today we are told that the accacia wood of the tabernacle was a fit type of Christ because it was a desert growth and He was as a root out of a dry ground. The boards of the tabernacle typified the Christian believers, because the boards were separated from the earth by silver sockets. The Showbread was a type of Christ since He was like a grain of wheat ground in the mill of suffering and brought into the first judgment. When interpretations of Scriptures run to such excesses, it is time for the study of books as that of Fairbairn to lead men back to normalcy.

After presenting in the 420 pages of the first volume the proper methods which typology should follow, Fairbairn

proceeds to explain in order in the second volume the typological elements of the Old Testament Scriptures and those in the New. The reader must not suppose that the typical elements in Scripture are limited to just a few types as the prophets, priests, and kings of the Old Testament, the tabernacle and the Mosaic sacrifices. There is a far wider range to typology than that. It includes even the first creation itself, the symbols as the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life in the garden on Eden, the marriage relation and the Sabbatical institution, the deluge, Canaan, the O. T. theocracy, and several other elements of the Hebrew Scriptures.

The author also explains the types found in the New Testament, and in appendices such related problems as the explanation of prophecies referred to by Christ, the deeper principles involved in Christ's use of the Old Testament, references in Paul's letters, and the applications made in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Also whether the original relation of the seed of Abraham to the land of Canaan affords any ground for expecting their final return to it.

All in all Fairbairn's typology of Scripture, considering his scholarliness, thoroughgoing knowledge of Scripture and sterling orthodoxy, offers a veritable goldmine of information. In a sense it offers the reader a course in the entrancing study of biblical theology or *historia revelationis*—of which typology can be considered a part—for the one who undertakes to study it.

The value of Fairbairn's work is enhanced by an extensive index of subjects, and also an index of texts, enabling the reader to find at a glance the specific subject or text in which he at the time is interested.

The publishers deserve our compliments for the republication of this readable, useful, and reliable guide to the typology of Scripture.

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ESSAYS ON PHILIPPIANS

TOWARD THE MARK: *Studies in Philippians*. By Stephen W. Paine. Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1953. 191 pp. \$2.50.

THE author thinks of *Philippians* as a "wonderful little epistle," a "veritable diamond mine," in which "we slip over . . . little words . . . when a bit of thought might reveal an area of important truth." Dr. Paine offers his revelatory "bits" in *Toward the Mark*, a collection of meditations on selected passages from St. Paul's letter. *Toward the Mark* hardly pretends to stand with the expositions of an Ellicott, a Meyer or a Vincent. It is "devotional" literature, and as such it is well calculated to keep the eyes of faith clear of the scales bred by unbelief. It is a ready means for providing that our "love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment."

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THE CALLING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

DE DIENST DER KERK. By Klaas Dyk. Kampen: J. H. Kok. 261 pages. 8.90 florins.

IN THE crisis of our world the attention of many Christians has again been focused on the subject of the church. Especially among scholars and theologians the burning issues of the day revolve around the nature and function and

goal of the church of Christ. Much of this is in a measure attributable to the reinstatement of theology to a place of honor by Barth and Brunner and their disciples. The discussions so vigorously prosecuted on the Continent have also profoundly influenced the thought and life of the churches in this part of the world. Now after a period of more or less going our own way in America we are again ready to listen to what men in Europe have to say. For us as Reformed Christians this is peculiarly valuable, since little has been contributed in our own land to Reformed thinking in recent years.

This book by Professor Dyk, professor of practical theology at the Reformed seminary of Kampen, The Netherlands, contains a series of addresses on subjects related to his field. The scope of the work becomes at once apparent when perusing the titles of the chapters. Most of the disciplines in this field receive careful attention. The author himself calls attention to the omission of material relating to evangelization and missions. This is a serious lack, since many of the significant problems with which the church must wrestle concern her calling to those on the outside. As is to be expected by those who have any acquaintance with the church in which he labors, Dyk's positions are in full accord with those traditionally accepted by the free churches (Gereformeerde) in the Netherlands. This, however does not prevent the author from doing full justice to the positions advocated by his opponents.

The first chapter deals with the relevant problem of the boundaries of the church's ministry in this world. Is she inherently limited by her divinely-constituted nature and calling? Must she reach out at all costs to the unchurched, or should she in a rapidly paganizing world concern herself chiefly with the edification of believers and their children? In view of the turn of events in the Reformed Church (Hervormd) in that country this is a relevant and burning issue. In his answer he takes sharp issue not only with the Roman Catholics and Lutherans but also with those who as a result of Barthian influences have revived the old ideal of the Reformed Church (Hervormd) to minister to the masses.

The second address on the place and purpose of confessional standards is particularly illuminating. Waging a sharp warfare against sectarianism which raises the confession to a shibboleth, he insists on making a careful distinction between the *confessing*—and the *confessional*—church. The nature, purpose, and authority of these standards are carefully delineated. He fully recognizes the presence of such tensions as those of the static versus the dynamic, the abiding versus the actual, and the unity versus the catholicity motifs in the life of the churches. Attention is also devoted to those problems which arise in connection with revision of the confessional standards. Much as he values the emphasis of Barth that the church must confess the teaching of Scripture on present-day problems now and not thirty years hence, Dyk argues that this can be done in the confessional language of the fathers.

In considering the "Preaching as the Ministry of the Word" the author signalizes the trend towards subjectivism which so frequently has done damage to the proclamation of the Word throughout the ages. Although grateful for the confessed attempt of the dialectical theologians to escape this snare, he argues that they are fatally committed to a form of subjectivism in preaching by their own presuppositions. In the chapter on "Word or Sacrifice" he has analyzed

the trend toward liturgical revival which has swept much of Protestantism in recent years. Much as he approves the striving for greater objectivity in worship and a recognition of its communal character, he is convinced that this revival will only distantiate the churches farther from the reformatory emphasis on the centrality of preaching in the services.

Much of this volume is polemical and orientated towards the pressing problems of the Dutch churches. As a result the reviewer believes that its chief contribution will not be made in non-Dutch circles. Nor is this the purpose of the author. He is fully conversant with the needs of the churches in his own land and aims at winning them for the historic Reformed position on the ministry of the church in this world. Therefore he repeatedly tilts his lance against Dutch opponents, especially those in the Reformed Church (Hervormd). Only those somewhat initiated in the intricacies of the Dutch ecclesiastical situation will be able to grasp the full import of Dr. Dyk's message.

Yet the book has value for those throughout the world who are interested in the Reformed faith. The author signalizes the dangers to which these churches are exposed in our day. His analysis of Barth and Brunner and their disciples is worthy of serious consideration. For although the dialectical theologians have not concerned themselves first of all with the field of practical theology, their positions have greatly influenced the disciplines in this area of theological science.

Especially for us in America there is a vital message which we should take to heart. We seem frequently to live in the delusion that practical theology is so "practical" that it requires only some superficial knowledge of a few techniques for preaching and teaching and pastoral visitation. Those who live in this never-never land are in for a rude awakening if they read Dyk's argument. To maintain an effective Reformed witness in the modern world, we must face squarely the questions of the nature and function of the church as outlined by Holy Writ. Only when the church is truly church may we confidently expect the Lord's blessing on our witness for Him and His Word.

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BOOK BRIEFS

ELIJAH THE TISHBITE. By F. W. Krummacher. Translated by R. F. Walker. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1952. 310 pp. \$2.95.

A reprint of a series of devotional meditations based upon the life of the great opponent of Baalism in Israelitish history. Issued first in 1828 it came from the pen of an uncompromising witness of evangelical truth in Germany in the days when rationalism and infidelity had reared its ugly head.

BIBLE CHARACTERS. By Alexander Whytle. Vols. I and II. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1952. 926 pp. \$12.50.

Some one hundred and fifty sketches of living and fictional Bible characters portrayed by a gifted Scottish divine and theologian, a man of stanch orthodoxy, wholesome mysticism and vivid imagination.

RAY'S OF MESSIAH'S GLORY. By David Baron. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Co. 1952. 274 pp. \$2.95.

An impassioned apologetic by a converted Jew, who became a missionary to his kinsmen and seeks to point out to them that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament Scriptures. Premillennial in interpretation Baron breaks the unity of the covenant conception by a variety of dispensations.

DE BIJBEL TOEGELICHT VOOR HET NEDERLANDSCHE VOLK. EXODUS by P. N. Kruyswijk; JEREMIAH I by H. A. Wiersenga. Kampen: J. H. Kok.

Unfolding of the Scriptures for the Netherlands folk—involving paraphrase of the text and brief commentary thereon. Exegetically sound and eminently useful for the common man in that technical detail and terminology is reduced to a minimum.

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NOTICE TO OUR READERS

The Editor of the *Calvin Forum* regrets the unfortunate wording of some of the cover titles of the August-September number, and he wishes to assure the readers that no offence to Professor Van Til or disrespect toward Westminster Seminary was intended.

Signed,
CECIL DE BOER
