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THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD

By

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An historical introduction to a Christian theory of culture, prepared for the faculty-Board Conference of Calvin College and Seminary, to be held at Castle Rock Hotel, near Holland, Michigan, on September 9-10, 1953.

## THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD

When at the beginning of the summer vacation Prof. Radius called me on the telephone to ask if I would prepare something for this faculty-Board Conference, on the subject of the Christian's relation to the world, I first was very much inclined to beg off. Already I had constructed a plan of work which could have taken all my available vacation hours. After a moment's reflection, however, I accepted, on the condition that I might approach the topic in a way that would enable me to adjust the preparation for the paper to some of the work I already contemplated doing. That was the agreement, and only later did I see that the topic had been enlarged by the addition of the modifying, explicative phrase: A Statement of Principles. Since to this enlargement I had been no party, I chose to ignore it. Largely, because it is so high sounding. Do not, therefore, expect from this effort a statement of principles. One principle, if it can be nicely got hold of and securely held on to, will satisfy me tremendously, and, I dare say, you too. Moreover, it is a mark of good method, I have learned, rather than to deal hurriedly and superficially with a wide range of interrelated topics, to attempt to come to grips with a more limited number in a whole-hearted way. In this spirit I went to work on the topic generally described as The Christian and the World.

Phrased thus the topic may be said to contain an ambiguity. For by 'world' we can mean (1) this temporal life except for the activities we call worship (the cult proper) or, in other words, those human pursuits commonly called cultural, and (2) these cultural pursuits as they have been informed and given direction by the disobedience of Adam and his posterity. Actually, however, it is this very ambiguity which constitutes our problem, and the solution as we shall see in what follows, lies just exactly in distinguishing properly the two meanings of 'world'. So looked at, the phrasing of our topic suggests just what we want it to: not the solution to which we aspire, but the problem with which we start.

It is noteworthy that, while the problem of the relation of the Church to the world of culture has tormented Christians unremittingly through all the Christian centuries, it has yet taken the Church such a long time to develop a theoretical account of that relation. The practical necessity of relating herself to the world round about her pressed on the Church, of course from the very beginning that the truth of divine revelation once again was preached and believed outside Israel. How tremendously difficult of solution was the problem of determining that relation can be seen in the wide diversity of the answers given to it by the second-century Apologists, by the anti-gnostic Fathers and by the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries.

On the side of a radical rejection of the world stands, e.g., the Syrian Tatian, who, in his address *πρὸς Ἕλληνας* (To the Greeks), contemptuously and in strong and even abusive language rejects Hellenic culture for the Old Testament, which he describes as *τὰ βαρβάρων δόγματα* (the Barbarians' dogmata), and even desires that Christianity remain a virile, barbarous faith.

With him is to be classed the great father of Latin Christian literature, Tertullian. Of him Pierre de Labriolle says that he "scarcely ever passes over an opportunity to dig still deeper the ditch separating the world from the Church. He proclaims that all the doctrina saecularis litteraturae is foolishness in the eyes of God, and that the Christian must reject it. 'What is there in common,' he cries, 'between Athens and Jerusalem, between the Academe and the Church?' (1)

Dé Labriolle analyzes the motivations of these men, and and of others who felt like them, in the following paragraph.

"Under this train of reasoning more or less unfavorable to the Greco-Latin learning, there lay an element of rough but formidable logic. What good to make any endeavor at conciliation, or pretence of coquetting with a civilization wherein the true faith found so few points of contact, and so many occasions for becoming impaired or broken up? To live uprightly, to expiate one's faults, to keep oneself on the road to the eternal Fatherland without too many deviations -- was not this the essential duty of a Christian? Why aggravate a task already so difficult by mingling with it the study of writers brought up on polytheism, with no care for any moral law, who welcome all

undisciplined curiosities of the spirit, all carnal weaknesses, and whose contradictory speculations disclosed uncertainties deadly to the stability of the established faith? By reading the Scriptures, were there not revealed therein more than one counsel susceptible of justifying the energetic prejudices already suggested by the experience and even by good sense? The question then was no other than resolutely to take no account of that 'wisdom of the world', which the Apostle Paul had called 'foolishness', in order to attach oneself to that which was the whole duty of man during his terrestrial pilgrimage."

Thus far de Labriolle. What he has written we might paraphrase in language presently current among us by saying that these particular early Christians put too much emphasis on the antithesis at the expense of common grace. Many will wonder if it is wholly coincidental that both these men fell away finally from the Orthodox church and ended their days in heretical movements: Tatian in Encratitism, of which he was probably the founder, and Tertullian in Montanism.

To have achieved the absolute break with the world of culture that they professed to want these intransigents, as de Labriolle calls them, would have had to press their absolute principles to the utmost and to have applied them in all their vigor. But, the same writer keenly observes, "life has its necessary requirements and reactions, wherein our preconceived notions, however ardently held they may have been, are brought up against their own limitations, with which they are constrained to make some attempt at composition. To have entirely rejected Greco-Latin learning might have been a bold and imposing attitude to have taken but we can truly imagine that it could have brought about and realized its work of making a complete breach and destroying it?" To put de Labriolle's thoughts once again into the words of our own choosing, Does the nature of reality itself allow the absolute break which these men's standpoint seemed to encourage? That is, is not the theory in conflict with the existing reality, and therefore a false theory?

Telling here, perhaps, are a couple of facts connected with these two men whom we have singled out to illustrate one type of answer given to the question of the Christian's relation to the world. First, Tatian's "elaborate style", to quote the words of

Prof. Jaeger, "is not in agreement with his antipathy to Greek culture, and also his language shows the strong influence of Greek rhetoric in every line and proves that his practice was not quite as (sic!) uncompromising as his theory." (4) And the same kind of remark could have been made, and has been, about not only the style of Tertullian but also his extensive learning, betraying as it does at every point, his thorough acquaintance with all the classical writers. Indeed, as de Labriolle has pointed out, Tertullian, when it came right down to it, "recognized that to forbid Christians to become acquainted with profane learning was to reduce them to an intellectual and practical helplessness well nigh complete." (5)

The point we are discussing is that while it has taken the Church so long to arrive at an adequate theory of its relation to the world, the practical need of discovering the proper relation was there from the beginning. We said that the difficulty of determining exactly what the relation should be was evident in the great diversities in the answers that came to be given to the problem. We have discussed the answer given by men such as Tatian and Tertullian, and we found it to be extreme. We saw that neither man could maintain his theory in practice.

At the other extremity of the gamut of opinion stands a man like Justin Martyr. Reared in the thought-world of Stoicism, with its World-Reason or World-Logos and, in man, the logos spermatikos or seed-reason, this wandering Hellenistic philosopher, after his conversion, sought how he might bring his newly found faith to those old associates of his unbelieving years. The answer he found in the first chapter of John's gospel. By an illegitimate appeal to John 1:9. "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." he could say, in effect, to his old associates in paganism: "See here, you talk abstractly of your World-logos and of the logos spermatikos in each individual. Now it is just that, but with far greater clarity, that Christianity teaches. Christ is the World-logos, and the logos spermatikos in the individual is what John means when he says that the light lighteth every man. That you who call yourselves Stoic s-- he refers especially to the Roman Stoic Musonius-- that Herakleitos, that Sokrates could know enough to speak of the logos was itself the result of our Christ's having illuminated you, them and all men."

What is Justin doing here? He is reducing the meaning of Scripture to that of the pagan philosophers in order to ease the transition of his old comrades from their paganism to the Christian faith. He attempts to show the essential unity of truth in Greek philosophy and in the divine revelation. The antithesis between true prophecy (God's Word in Scripture) and false prophecy (the messages of the various philosophers) is concealed behind an assumed mere difference of degree of clarity of insight. Christianity sees clearly what the Greek philosophers were but half blindly grasping after. Prof. Vollenhoven, in his 1933 publication Het Calvinisme en de Reformatie van de Wijsbegeerte, writes of Justin:

"Proceeding not from revelation but from the reason, and with the later Stoa accepting the freedom of the will and applying that consistently with respect to the work of redemption, he--i.e. Justin--further identified the logos of the true God with the subjectivistic and anti-materialistic logos of that (Stoic) school; following Sextus Empiricus he thought that he found traces of the late Stoa also in Sokrates and Herakleitos, and in this connection he speaks of 'logos spermatikos' and thus saw in the speculations of the philosophers mentioned 'germs' or 'seeds' of the Truth of God! You can see: here everything is present that characterizes this movement up to the present moment, in the field of physics an anti-materialistic energetics à la Herakleitos, with respect to the higher (human) functions a Christianized subjectivism, and--listen carefully-- such a total misconception of common grace that this is changed from a goodness of God into being -- an activity of men, more specifically, of heathen, and thus the difference between true and false prophecy becomes relativized." (6)

Of this same line of thought de Labriolle says, "There were some who went so far as to admit that very nearly all of the truth was scattered throughout pagan philosophical systems, but that no thoughtful mind had embraced it in its integrity, because none of them knew of the master idea which dominates life and which gives it a sense and end. It was only necessary then to reconstitute again by the light of revelation these scattered morsels of truth and bring them back to unity." In a footnote de Labriolle says, "This is the theory of Laetantius who in this respect is in line with Justin, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria and Minucius Felix." (7)

Here then we have the second type of early Christian answer to the problem of the relation of the Christian to the world, to culture. We might say that this answer makes too much, ~~is~~ common grace.

What we ought too see is that neither group could let go utterly of the world and culture in which it found itself. Both Justin and Tatian, though with somewhat different intent, had taken shelter behind a fancy conceived previously by the Alexandrine Jews (Philo) according to which Greek culture, or parts of it, had been derived from the Hebrews. Justin had declared that certain Platonic doctrines were derived from Moses. But Tatian went further, exclaiming that the "wisdom of the Greek sophists" was a "plagiarism drawn by misunderstanding and conceit from its Old Testament source" (Lietzmann). Justin accepted Hellenic culture, simply clothing it in a loose Biblical dress. Tatian, though by asserting it to be a plagiarism from the Old Testament he was tacidly admitting that the culture was not a pure lie, nevertheless felt the evil spiritual direction present in it. The great mass of Christian believers in the first centuries, it seems, were more inclined to agree with Tatian. Clement complains that such was the case in his day even in the enlightened city of scholarship, Alexandria.

We have seen that the difficulty of our problem caused even the inexorable Tertullian, as de Labriolle calls him, to vacillate. Such vacillation was not, however, peculiar to him; it sometimes approached being duplicity, as in the case of Jerome. You are all probably acquainted with the famous 'dream of Jerome', which Jerome himself relates in one of his letters. So he tells the story he was on his way to Jerusalem and the desert, where he intended to live an ascetic life. With him he had his books, procured before leaving Rome. And here is what he writes:

"Miserable man that I am! I was fasting and then I began to read Cicero; after many nights spent in wathing, after many tears, which the remembrance of my faults of not so long ago drew forth from the depths of my heart, I took Plantus in my hands. If by chance, on recollecting myself, I started reading the Prophets, their unadorned style awoke in me feelings of repulsion. My eyes, blinded, saw no longer the light, and it was not on my eyes that I laid the blame, it was on heaven.

"While the old serpent thus misused me, a violent fever penetrated the marrow of my worn-out body towards the middle of Lent, and, without any respite, in an incredible manner, it so consumed my poor members that I had scarcely any flesh left on my bones. Already people were thinking of my funeral. My body felt quite frozen; a remnant of vital heat no longer palpitated save in the lukewarmness of my poor breast.

"Suddenly, I felt myself ravished away in ecstasy and transported before the tribunal of the Judge. Such a dazzling light emanated from those present that, crouched on the ground, I dared not lift up my eyes. On being asked my profession, I replied, 'I am a Christian.' Whereupon, he who presided said, 'Thou dost lie; thou art a Ciceronian and no Christian; where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.'"

At last the sore-tried Jerome uttered the following oath: "Lord, if ever it happens to me to possess or to read profane books, I shall have denied Thee."

It so happens that years later this same Jerome, in answer to a correspondent in Rome, who had asked him "why he strewed here and there in his writings examples taken from profane literature, thus soiling the whiteness of the Church with pagan horrors", asserts his "absolute right to make use of the Greco-Latin literature in the interests and honor of the faith" (de Labriolle).

"If we are perplexed to know", writes de Labriolle, "how St. Jerome reconciled in his mind this doctrine with the somewhat formal obligations whereof his dream of Cicero has furnished the testimony, St. Jerome himself removes this difficulty when he retorts that after all a dream is only a dream and engages us to nothing." (8) That would seem to me to approach, as I said, duplicity. Nevertheless, I must agree with de Labriolle that "it is open to no doubt" that the scruple which he thus vividly in his dream was for him, as for so many other lettered Christians of the first centuries, the cause of very real and very grievous anguish.

In the wrestling of these early Christians with the problem of the Christian's relation to the world of culture, two elements have appeared: (1) there is widespread awareness of an evil principle in the world; but (2) there is unwillingness and a vaguely sensed inability to cut oneself entirely from that world.



Sometimes, this second element led to a dangerously naive acceptance of the world of culture.

Towards the end of the fourth century a kind of compromise arrangement came to be widely accepted. This practical "solution" is found, first, in a celebrated tract of Basil of Caesarea which sometimes goes by the title *Ἐπὶ τοῖς νεοῖς* (To the Youth) but which, as to content, might better be entitled "On the Right Way of Drawing Profit from the Profane Authors". I shall employ de Labriolle's description of its essential argument.

"Basil considers that all was not tainted from the moral point of view in even this profane literature so much decried at the time; that the poets, orators and historians knew how to give praise to what is good and that they provide an abundance of precepts and examples capable of bringing an ennobling influence into the soul of the young man. Only he insists on a proper selection in order that the suspect portions may be eliminated. Under reserve of this preliminary expurgation, in young people having dealings with profane letters; they will supply them with the beginnings of a formation of character which they will later on complete by the study of the Holy Books; they will accustom their eyes, when still young, the better to support the dazzling splendour of the teachings of Scripture. They are, in short, for the young Christian of the first century, what had been in former days the learning of the Egyptians to Moses, and to Daniel, that of the Chaldeans. Their value consists in being a preparation and setting out on a still higher task, which is, in its special bearing, the understanding of the Old and New Testaments." (9)

A little later Jerome sums up his views in a comparison (I quote de Labriolle): "...Just as in the Book of Deuteronomy (XXI.12) God ordains that before marriage with a captive her head and eyebrows must be shaved and her nails cut in order to render her worthy of the bed of her husband, so likewise the Christian who has been seduced by the beauty of the sapientia saecularis must make a beginning of cleansing of it all that holds of death, idolatry, voluptuousness, error, and passion, and, when purified thus and suitably prepared, it will become worthy for the service of God."

Augustine speaks in a similar vein in his De Doctrina Christiana. According to him -- again I shall rely upon de Labriolle's summary -- "in profane learning there are elements so evidently sullied by superstition that no upright man should think of making experiments in it: astrology, for example. There are others, such as history, natural history, astronomy, dialectics, rhetoric, etc., which, provided they (be) guarded against the depravities and abuses to which they gave rise, are worthy of study and should render the greatest service in connection with exegesis and oral commentary on the Scriptures." (10)

With these men we have reached what we may call the classical patristic solution to our problem. The commonness of their viewpoint is indicated by their use of the same allegorical simile. Like the Jews in their flight from Egypt, these fathers argued, Christianity must carry away the gold and silver vessels of her enemies and employ them for her own uses.

Note that the standpoint here adopted is still no theoretical accounting of the Christian's relation to the world of culture. Nor is it the result of such theory. It is, rather, immediate reaction, pressed from these Christians by the exigencies of their life in the Roman Empire. You will recall that I spoke of it as a working arrangement. To these men it must have seemed a correct standpoint because it was felt as a necessary one. But that is not yet to render an account of its "necessity". The lack is recognized, in effect, by de Labriolle, who says of Basil's discourse: "Truth to tell, we do not see the subject developed with the fulness and precision we might have hoped from it. Basil brings to his discussion less of method than of agreeable bonhomie and abounding humanism." (11) To which we may add, that a theoretical account would have to explain how there could be any precious jewels in Egypt at all, and just what in Egypt was jewels and what something less valuable, how great the relative purity of the jewels was, and again -- a problem obscured by the figure employed -- how it was possible to gather up the jewels without getting Egypt itself to boot. Such critical reflection was conspicuously absent from the patristic "solution."

Yet it is this essentially uncritical modus vivendi of the patres which forms the nucleus of scholastic thought on our problem. Two of the chief distinguishing features of scholasticism

are found already here. First to be noted is the ancillary position assigned by these men to cultural pursuits. These are to be, it would seem, but the handmaid of theological studies -- the ancilla theologiae of scholastic conception, though the term seems first to have been used by Peter Damiani in a different sense. Does this conception not carry with it the implication that the possibility of an independent service of God in the cultural fields of study is denied? And may it not be that such a conclusion is but the direct consequence of a lack of reflection upon the cultural problem itself?

In the second place, --and this feature is most intimately tied up with the first --, as in scholasticism, so here the body of the cultural product is accepted as it stands, and only certain obvious conflicts with Christian doctrine and a Christian sense of piety are to be excinded. Again, no radical reformation of the cultural product itself, as Prof. Vollenhoven pleads for in his book with the suggestive title, Het Calvinisme en de Reformatie van de Wijsbegeerte. Is this not the basic fault in the method by which Thomas of Aquino later adapted Aristotle's thought to the faith of the Church? For to accept the great part of the cultural product is equivalent to affirming that that culture is fundamentally good, that it displays general integrity or soundness, and therefore can be transported mechanically, as it were, into the larger Christian framework. Although a more critical position is taken by Augustine in his De Civitate Dei --in just a moment I shall have something to say about it-- in general, subsequent developments in the history of the Church worked to bolster this position of the Fathers, and only the revival of the Augustinian view of man at the time of the Reformation would make possible a more critical consideration of the cultural problem. Before that time the line of development lies over the Synod of Orange (529), which, although it condemned both Pelagianism and semi Pelagianism, yet by abandoning to doctrine of double predestination and exchanging the doctrine of the irresistible grace of divine predestination for that of the sacramental grace of baptism abetted the Church's drift, in practice, to the very semi-Pelagianism it condemned. In time, this tendency led to the (anthropological) teachings that, while 'natural' grace was preserved 'supernatural' grace was lost by the Fall, bu

in redemption, again added to 'natural' grace as a donum super - addition. We begin to recognize here the form of the Roman view of the doctrine of the image of God where the Scriptural notion of grace has been supplanted, more or less, by that of the Greek *Χείρις*. To this view of things the distinction of theologia naturalis and theologia supranaturalis could attach itself without much trouble. In this way, the scholastic scheme of nature and grace came to provide a congenial theological framework for the uncritical appropriation of the great part of antique culture. Which is far from saying, of course, that such treatment of cultural goods had been accounted for by immanent criticism of the problem posed by the world of culture.

The conclusion to which we now appear to have arrived is this: that neither in the patristic age nor in the age of scholasticism did there arise anything like a theoretical accounting for the Christian's relation (felt in some sense or other, and more or less (felt) to be necessary) to the cultural world about him: where a positive relation was recognized it was naively assumed, and the negative position was equally direct.

This same lack of critical reflection has always characterized the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church toward this problem. Witness, for example, the form of statement in a letter which Pope Leo XIII wrote to Cardinal Parocchi in 1885:

"Perceiving, then, the usefulness of the literatures of Greece and Rome, the Catholic Church, which has always fostered whatsoever things are of good report, has always given to the study of the humanities the favor that it deserves, and in promoting it, has expended (12) no slight portion of its best endeavor."

We may reasonably ask ourselves whether it would ever be possible, within the Roman Church, apart from a radical reconstruction of her whole position, to come to a properly critical theory of the Christian's relation to the world.

Earlier I intimated that it would require a return to the Augustinian view of man, of sin and grace, before the Christian's relation to the world would become a problem demanding theoretical explication. But what then of Augustine himself? Did not the very man who, at the end of his life, had learned so much about how the Scriptures would have themselves, understood and

who attempted to interpret their view of grace and of direction in human life in his delineation of the two civitates, did not this Augustine come himself to some deeper appreciation of the problem that is posed for the Christian by the existence of a world of culture?

To answer that question we must turn to his monumental work, the De Civitate Dei. In this work Augustine undertook, as you all know, to describe the nature and the history of the two cities, the two cities that, to quote Augustine himself, "have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God even to the contempt of self." (Bk. XIV ch. 28). As one might expect, the anti<sup>u</sup>thetical relation is very much in the foreground throughout. Nevertheless, there are a number of passages that deal with the commonness, to the citizens of both cities, of this earthly life. (Bk. I ch. 8; V 18; XIX 17). In such passages mention is made of the goodness, long-suffering, patience and condescension of God. And yet, no conscious effort is made to come to close grips with the subject. We might say that much of the Biblical material that later was to be put to such good use is cited here, but has not been claimed for theory. Further, with their eye directed mainly to the antithetical relation, it proves difficult to come to an adequate appraisal of the fact of cultural development. I am thinking of the treatment Augustine gives to the question, how God could prosper the Romans to the point of giving them such conspicuous enlargement of their empire. The most relevant passages are V 11-12 and XIX 24-26. What Augustine does is the following. The Romans loved honor, and praise, and glory. For love of praise they consulted well (consules) for their country, suppressing the desire of wealth and many other vices. Now they who restrain baser lusts, not by the power of the Holy Spirit obtained by the faith of piety, or by the love of intelligible beauty (note the Platonism) but by the desire of human praise... are indeed not yet holy, but only less base. But so far as regards human and temporal glory, the lives of these ancient Romans were reckoned sufficiently worthy (emphasis mine). Augustine admonishes his reader: "But let us avail ourselves even in these things the kindness of God (emphasis mine). Let us consider

how great things they despised, how great things they endured, what lusts they subdued for the sake of human glory, who merited that glory, as it were, in reward for such virtues." It is clear how far short Augustine falls here in his appreciation of the forces at work in the creation of the Roman Empire.

What I am trying to get at is summed up neatly by Whitney Oates in his introduction to the Random House edition of Augustine (pp. XXXIV f.). He is dealing there with the discussion in the famous nineteenth book, and cites from it a fairly long passage which ends thus: "For, in general (i.e. not only in the case of Rome), the city of the ungodly, which did not obey the command of God that it should offer no sacrifice save to Him alone, and which, therefore, could not give to the Soul its proper command over the body, nor to reason its just authority over the vices, is void of true justice" (mine). Then Oates himself continues.

"With this definition before him, St. Augustine goes on to argue that without true religion there can be no true virtues, along with the implication that no society or state can be truly just without a proper orientation towards God. Yet the Roman state, particularly in the early stages of its development remains most impressive to St. Augustine. He sees that its success arose from the devotion to a certain kind of justice (mine), and that the peace which it produced from time to time was indeed a peace of a certain sort (mine). Because a degree of justice and virtue did exist, he can explain why the Roman state endured for as long a time, but also he can understand why with all its strength it began to disintegrate. The entire attitude is summed up in the well known Augustinian observation that the Roman virtues were but 'splendid vices.' So long as Roman justice, for example, was motivated by national pride, or a desire for imperial power or glory, it could only be a spurious virtue, majestic, powerful, 'splendid' indeed, but it inevitably falls short of being a true virtue, and becomes 'vicious because it has not been inspired by love of God.'"

You probably see what I am driving at. Beginning from the antithetical position of the heavenly kingdom, Augustine can only approach the "virtues" of the heathen from the point of view of their falling short of spiritual good. This is fine,

except that that it leaves him in an embarrassing position to explain how God can honor such less-than-good. Oates said, you will remember, that "because a degree of justice and virtue existed, (Augustine) can explain why the Roman state endured for so long a time," but how critical has Augustine been of these concepts "justice" and virtue". These are to him, considered from the spiritual point of view of the heavenly kingdom, not vices, are they not? Has Augustine any other vantage-point from which to consider the Roman virtues? How can there even be a degree of justice? In other words, how is it possible that the ungodly can have a city at all?

Truly the Augustinian view of man, of sin and grace, far surpasses the semi-humanism of many a Church Father, but just that conception of total depravity must yet lead to the discovery in Scripture of an explanation for the cultural accomplishments of unregenerate men, or the very conception is in danger of being swallowed up by the humanistic dragon. With respect to the problem of culture Augustine is still on the naive level of the other Patres, yet he represents the moment in the history of ideas corresponding to that moment in the thought of an individual which just precedes the breaking forth of a new insight.

That higher insight was the accomplishment of Calvin. While Luther clung to the idea of a lower earthly sphere in which man is capable of doing much good, "Calvin's logical mind", as Herman Kuiper tells us in his doctoral dissertation, Calvin on Common Grace, (13) "could not put up with this dualism. On the other hand, his deep insight into the terrible consequences of sin did not allow him to admit that fallen man, when left wholly to himself, could produce any good in any domain whatsoever; and, on the other hand, found it impossible to subscribe to the view of Zwingli, who virtually surrendered the absoluteness of Christianity by teaching that at least certain heathen philosophers who remained utter strangers to the Gospel of Christ participated in God's saving grace. Calvin found the solution for the problem how we must account for the good with unregenerate men in the concept of common grace. He was the first theologian who made a clear-cut distinction between common and saving grace, between the operations of the Spirit of God which are common to mankind at large and the sanctifying work of the same Spirit which is limited to God's elect."

In the present paper I do not propose to examine the nature of the data to be found in Calvin. You will recall that our intention here is to show how long it took the Church to come to a theoretical accounting of the problem of culture. For this occasion, therefore, it will suffice to show, what the structure of the dissertation of H. Kuiper also evidences, that Calvin's thoughts on common grace -- the term itself is not used by him in a technical sense! --<sup>(14)</sup> are developed only incidentally; nowhere do they form a separate topic.<sup>(15)</sup> Mr. Kuiper is not guilty of minimizing the importance of Calvin's insight, but rather is simply reducing his accomplishment to its real proportions when he calls what he judges to be the clearest statement of the idea in the Institutes 11 iii 3 "the root of the doctrine of common grace" (emphasis mine). Into theological soil a new root had been planted. It was not yet clear how wide the branches would extend or what fruits for the restoring and refreshment of the Kingdom of God would appear. But the root was there.

"Kuiper in the same place points out that not only the root of the doctrine is found in Calvin, but also the explanation why it constitutes such an indispensable part of the Reformed confession. "It did not arise", he writes there, out of philosophical invention but out of the confession of the mortal character of sin ... But apparently this (confession) did not square with reality. There was the sinful world, also outside the church, so much that was beautiful, so much to be respected, so much that provoked to envy. This placed (the formulators of the Reformed confession) before the dilemma; either to deny all this good, against their better knowledge, and thus to err with the anabaptists; or to view man as not so deeply fallen, and thus to stray into the Arminian heresy. And placed before that choice, the Reformed confession has refused to travel either of those roads. We might not close our eyes to the good and beautiful outside the Church, among unbelievers, in the world. This good was there and that had to be acknowledged. And just as little might the least bit be detracted from the total depravity of sinful nature. But herein lay the solution of this apparent contradiction, that also outside the Church, among the heathen, in the midst of the world, grace was at work, grace not eternal, nor unto salvation, but temporal and <sup>for</sup> the stemming of the destruction that lurked in sin."



The fundamental importance of this answer of Calvin's to the question how culture is possible in a world of totally depraved men will be recognized wherever a serious investigation into what Calvin has written is undertaken. A recent illustration of this is afforded by Prof. Berkhouwers's discussion of natural law in his book De Algemene Openbaring,<sup>(17)</sup> where it is pointed out how different Calvin's conception of natural law is from that of the schoolmen. While their theory is grounded in the rational nature of man, which, according to Rome, must always --with the necessity that attaches to being-- strive after the good, nothing of that is found in the former. Calvin sees as central the corruption of human nature directed against the good will of God in hostility and disobedience. "For Calvin the natural man does not live from what remains of the real, ontological goodness (18) within the ordinances of God, but he moves within the witnessing force, and the evidence of the divinely ordained good as Revelation of His holy will. The predominating aspect in Calvin is not the goodness of human nature, but the goodness of the law and the ordinances of God. Calvin's doctrine of common grace does not arise out of the inclination to remove anything from the corruption of human nature, but out of the certitude that this total corruption is taught by the Scripture.<sup>(19)</sup> (earlier we read:) The total depravity of man is indeed present, according to Calvin, but that is for him, not equivalent to the absence of all God's gifts to human nature. For Calvin is convinced that man can manifest his total depravity with his gifts and in the function of those gifts. A profound view of sin is the background of Calvin's thought: one could say, a total-existential view, which is religious in character and is governed by the question of the attitude of the heart of man towards God. The absence of the true, religious obedience of man towards God does not exclude it that man, with the gifts left to him, functions in the world, where he is still assigned a place. (going back to p. 170, we read:) We find ourselves here in the area of the activity of God in preserving and governing. Therein lies the possibility of the connection between so-called "natural law" and ... corruptio naturae ... It is indeed a strange thing, that in the radical aversion of human life from God and His Holy will, in its inability to subject itself to the law of God (the "natural" man!), there

is nevertheless still present a championing of right and justice, a punishing of evil and a reward for good, a valuing of community with one another and of limits set for man in that community, a seeking of truth and science... Every man stirs and moves within the superior power of the works of God and of the preservation of his blessing -- bestowing law... and in his actions, in his conscience, in his judgment with regard to others and in his protest against complete anarchy he manifests the superior power of the work and the law of God... To acknowledge this--" here Berkouwer comes to the heart of the matter-- "does not therefore involve an optimistic estimate of man. For this man, in the total direction of his existence, is turned away from God, and moreover can also in his concrete deeds progress continually farther along the road of manifest degeneration. In Roman 2 Paul is not speaking of a constant quality of the heathen (the doing of that which is contained in the law). The process of sin can also so burst forth that there remain only minimal remnants of the power to distinguish. The eye of man can increasingly be darkened with respect to the goodness of God's ordinances, so that he finally has an eye only for the "law" that is pleasing to himself and that protects his own life. Life can develop as Paul predicts it for the last days, viz. in almost complete and uncompromising opposition to what the law of God still makes valuable in life. Those are the days in which man will even be without natural love. Therein can be manifested the judgment of God, as it already was revealed in the divine "giving over", of which Paul makes mention in Romans 1. This proves that one cannot describe the history of humanity "-- we might add, or of human culture--" from the point of view of human 'nature' and its 'natural light'. The relation between the general Revelation of God, common restraining grace and human life is not a static one, but a dynamic relation, which is completely and utterly tied up with the development of history and with the process of sin. One will never be able to write about general Revelation and about common grace without also paying attention to that judgment of God which is already manifest in history."

I have devote considerable time to Prof. Berkouwer's analysis in order, by following closely one instance of Calvin's treatment of cultural questions, to set in a clear light the radical

novelty of Calvin's explanation of culture. How superior his explanation is will appear to one who compares what has just been written with the embarrassment Augustine faced in attempting to explain the enlargement and the long life of the Roman state. Note particularly the oneness of Calvin's approach to culture with his whole presentation; the centrality of God, theocentricity. There is no longer any need for the vacillation of a Tertullian or the near duplicity of a Jerome.

In thus following Berkhouwer's account we have been enjoying, one could say, a foretaste of the admirable faithfulness which later developments show, marks Calvin's solution of the problem of culture and of the Christian's relation to the world, I say a foretaste. For in Calvin's day, unfortunately, it never goes beyond that. We must not forget that what Berkhouwer here has given us is the result of later scientific (theological) reflection upon Calvin's utterances. Calvin's own writings are more prophetic, more religious than scientific. The germs of later theory lie scattered throughout his writings, but they would have to be fertilized by the hovering over them of the scientific mind, before their inherent worth, and their eminent practicability could be shown.

In the arcana of God's all-wise providence three debilitating centuries were to elapse before men were to see the fruit of Calvin's work as it relates to the problem of culture. Partly because Calvin did not, with sufficient clarity of statement and fulness of presentation, distinguish, in his treatment of such cultural subjects as natural law, his own wholly Biblical view from the traditional (Greco-Roman, scholastic) one which everywhere present in the learned world of his day. Berkhouwer himself makes the remark, "The term 'natural law' will always and again get us on a wrong track, because it naturally creates the impression that everything arises out of the nature of man, whom one then begins automatically to shield against the confession of total depravity." (20)

However, that may be, in general it is true that the Reformation leaders, in failing to come to grips with the problem of culture in its broadest scope, made a considerable contribution, humanly speaking, to their own undoing. Years ago there appeared in the pages of the Princeton Theological Review an article by August Lang entitled "The Reformation and Natural

which, with three other studies, was shortly thereafter published in book form (21) as a contribution to the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Calvin. Although in the article he addresses himself directly to the problem of natural law, his concern is with the whole cultural question. Permit me to quote him.

"Students of recent history have long been agreed that the close of the seventeenth century, the conclusion of the religious wars, marks the beginning of a new epoch in Church history... The peculiarity of the new period is, expressed in one word, what is called ... 'modernism', or 'the modern spirit.' But if the division is a real one, there arises the question, embarrassing to every evangelical Christian, How is the modern spirit, which, since the seventeenth century, has been unfolding itself with ever increasing vigor, related to the gospel of the Reformation? How could the age of the Reformation with its conflicts of faith be followed so suddenly by an age whose views about historical criticism and natural science, about politics and social life, are in part directly opposed to the Reformation conception of the world? What forces of the Gospel had a part in the development of the new way of thinking? What other, unevangelical, tendencies intruded themselves, and therefore, because they arose, for example, in Catholicism (and hence in false belief), or in the unbelieving and therefore pernicious development of civilization, must be combatted and eliminated?" (22)

After thus showing the wide range of his interest, Lang expresses the desire to make a contribution by "examining the relation between the Reformation and Natural Law", and he motivates his choice of topic by pointing out that "natural law was one of the principal historical factors in the formation of the modern spirit...it became also the starting point for 'natural theology', the broad religious basis of the religion of the 'Enlightenment'. How," he asks, "could this natural law spring up on the ground of the Reformation, take such deep root and put forth such wide-spreading branches?" Later he asks the more specific question, "how did it happen that it was precisely Calvinists who, first among the men of evangelical faith, and so early as the sixteenth century, not merely developed natural law theoretically, but at the same time, as political publicists, made it a weapon in the conflicts of the time?" (23)

We cannot take the time here to enter into the absorbing details of Mr. Lang's argument. In another place I have attempted to relate the baleful influence that Melancthon, the great

Germaniae, had upon the cultural outlook of the Reformation party. The conclusions of Lang are in harmony with what I there presented. Here is that final result:

"The Reformation at its very beginning found itself in the presence of problems and exigencies of indefinite range, first of all, conflicts of purely religious and theological character -- doctrinal, liturgical, and constitutional conflicts. What an amount of spiritual strength was consumed even by these conflicts! How much there was which went wrong! What unrest, what losses these conflicts produced! And yet the problem which then appeared could be settled by reference to the fundamental religious principle of Protestantism, and on the whole were in fact settled in a truly Protestant way. Much more dangerous, however, was the second adjustment, which lay more on the periphery of religious truth and yet was no less necessary -- namely the adjustment to the general ethical, political, and social problems, to science and art. The adjustment, I say, was unavoidable, for if Protestantism, over against the Medieval-Catholic world, involves a new world-view, then there must necessarily be a Protestant science of politics, a Protestant philosophy and science, a Protestant art... For such an adjustment, however, in the very nature of things, time is required; it cannot be accomplished by one man or one generation. It was indeed, a thankworthy undertaking, when Calvin in his Institutio did not entirely ignore politics, but the results were of such kind that they did not give satisfaction even negatively, on the question of the obedience of subjects and the right of resistance, much less positively. But now the tasks and problems of culture came upon the young evangelical Church in a storm... The Reformed were obliged to fight the hardest battles for existence; then, after the final victory, they had new states to found both at home and in the wilderness; above all, they had to settle the question of tolerance between the different parties that had arisen in their own camp. But the tasks were met by the will to accomplish them. Calvin had inspired in his disciples that energy of piety which abhors all half-way measures, which boldly endeavors to make all the affairs of life subject to Christ, the Head and Lord... But what was needed.; (the) firm principles about the relation of the Reformation to the forces of culture -- to the state science and art -- was lacking, and how could it be attained all at once in the midst of all the unrest and of the time? Regarded in this way, we believe the appearance of natural law becomes comprehensible. A doctrine of the state constructed on evangelical principles was not in existence. But such a doctrine was imperatively demanded by the need of the time. Men needed to have clearness about the relation of the ruler to the subjects, about the problem of Church and State, about the relation between different churches in the same country. No wonder that in the lack of a conception of the state revised in the light of fundamental evangelical ideas, man had recourse to the political theory taught in the traditional

jurisprudence, without heeding the fact that that theory had origin foreign to the Reformation and involved tendencies and consequences which would lead away from the Reformation. These tendencies, of course, became apparent later in slowly-developing after-effects, and then, especially after the spiritual enervation sustained in the protracted religious wars, they could not fail gradually to dissipate and destroy the Reformation's basis of faith... Unless all indications are deceptive, the progress of events was similar in the case of other cultural questions. The desire for knowledge, the desire for activity, which was experienced by the individual after he had been liberated through the Reformation, plunged itself into all problems of the spiritual life of man, became absorbed in the traditional manner of their treatment, and was all too quickly satisfied with solutions which were not in agreement with the fundamental ethical religious factors of the practical religious life of the Reformation. The reaction did not remain absent. The evangelical life of faith became shallower, instead of deepening itself and developing in all directions... If it is true that the religious spirit of the Reformation in passing through Deism, was moving on a downward path, the reason for its deterioration was that the adjustment between the Reformation and culture was neither brought to a satisfactory conclusion nor even earnestly enough attempted. Nevertheless, we hope that such an adjustment may yet be accomplished; the better it succeeds, the more completely will the difficulties of our present religious situation disappear." (24)

This default on the part of the Calvinists of the Reformation period with respect to the cultural question meant that the germinal insight of Calvin, when it was treated at all by later theologians, acquired the character of a purely theological subject. As the key to the proper solution to the problem of culture and the Christian's relation to the world it was utterly lost to view in the Epigonenzeit. Moreover, even as in Calvin, so in these men the doctrine of common grace never received complete treatment, even as a dogmatical subject, in one chapter or locus of theology. Kuyper writes of this at the beginning of his Common Grace as follows:

"And when, in the footsteps of Calvin, the attention especially of the Reformed theologians was focused more particularly upon this extremely important subject, they did indeed work out its main features, but without making a separate chapter of it. For the most part they still treated it under the 'virtues' of the heathen, 'civic righteousness', 'natural knowledge of God' etc., but without ever bringing all the various parts belonging to this subject together into one orderly, connected discussion. Even our catechism has no

separate treatment of the subject, which, in turn, prevented my dealing with it in E Voto in a separate series of articles." (25)

So it is that Dr. Abraham Kuyper, looking back over the past history of the Reformed party, can declare in the Preface to his classic work on the subject.

"No greater harm ever came to the Reformed principle than (came to it) through the imperfect development of the doctrine of Common Grace. Cause of this was the battle for the preservation of a position won with difficulty, an uneasing battle waged with both pen and sword. The mere struggle to get free of the ecclesiastical monopoly of Rome required in France in France, in the Netherlands and in Scotland such incredible exertions; added to that there was for Western Europe the lateral party of the Anabaptists, for northern and eastern Europe the sometimes extremely fierce opposition from the Lutherans, and on our own soil (thus, in the Netherlands) the Arminian and Erastian disturbances. In this way Reformed ecclesiastical, political and scientific life, already in the first decades after its exceedingly swift rise, was hard put to it, and when the Reformed in the Netherlands and in Scotland through their brave resistance had finally secured for themselves the freedom to live, their last strength was spent, and with the newly won comfortable times an opulence crept in which emasculated them and robbed them of their desire for the ideal. So it is to be explained how all dogmatical vigor first concentrated upon interminable polemics and then went to seed in dull rehashing.

"There is no question of dogmatical development after 1650 either in Switzerland, The Netherlands, or in Scotland. Not a single original talent arose again in the field of dogmatics after the first period of florescence. The once so fresh stream of Reformed thought in theology chokes up. What had first been taken hold of in broad and ample fashion shrinks into narrow, typically Byzantine investigation, and that arid investigation lacks even the resilience to retrace its steps to the root of the Reformed idea. In their narrowness men keep at their unraveling work on the polemics most recently engaged in against the Arminians, and scarcely take note of anything of new contrasts that are arising. In this manner the tie to the past was lost and men found themselves outside the intellectual movement of their times. For that reason there could no longer be any question of exercising an influence upon one's time. It became a closing oneself up in one's narrow circle, a withdrawing of oneself from the mighty movement of life. Meanwhile the aridity of hairsplitting called forth within the same circles a reaction of the heart, and the repugnance to all such intellectualistic theology, no longer could be held in check, shattered into sects of all kinds what in the 16th century had been one.

"In this situation a change has now come, at least within our borders. Historical research into the Reformed

life-principle awakened, and so was discovered the joyful truth that the Reformed, in their original development had put forward principles which, when developed broadly and logically, naturally gave rise to an all embracing life and world view possessing more than sufficient elasticity to determine in this century also our conscious position in the midst of the presently living generation. What at first appeared to offer only historical worth now acquired an utterly timely significance for the present. In this connection the question forced itself on the foreground, how the Christian life as we understood it had to relate itself to the life of the world in all its expressions and gradations, and in what way our influence on public life, which once had reached so far and since had so pitiable been lost, could be restored. The answer to that question might not arise from a process of bargaining, but had to be derived from the Reformed principle itself, i.e., there had to be investigated, what creative idea had originally, in both theory and practice, governed for the Reformed their relation to the life outside Christianity. Every anabaptistic set had isolated itself; in contrast with which the Reformed had chosen as their rule the apostolic idea of "all things are yours and ye are Christ's", and had with full awareness thrown themselves, with uncommon talent and resilience that overcame all obstacles, into the full life of humanity, in the midst of the turbulence of the nations. This character-trait, very pronounced in the history of all western Europe, could not be accidental; it had to find its explanation in an all-controlling fundamental conviction, and so what that governing root-idea was had now to be investigated.

"In this inquiry it quickly appeared with unassailable potency that this root-idea lay before us in the doctrine of Common Grace, derived directly from the Sovereignty of the Lord, which is and remains the root-conviction for all Reformed thinking. If God is Sovereign, then His dominion must extend over all life and cannot be shut up within the walls of a church or the circle of Christians. The world outside of Christianity has not been abandoned to Satan, not to fallen man, nor to to chance. God's Sovereignty is also in the life of that unbaptized world great and all-controlling, and for that reason Christ's church on earth, for that reason the child of God cannot summarily withdraw from that life. If his God is working in that world, then his hand too must be put to the plow in that world, and also there the Name of the Lord must be glorified.

"Consequently, what above all had to be done was to bring once more to life the rich fundamental idea that was embodied in the doctrine of Common Grace."

It must by now have become abundantly clear that Kuyper's interest in the subject of common grace is much more than the interest of the scientific theologian alone. We see rising before us the responsible veldheer, first after Groen van Prinsterer, of the army of Christian believers in The Netherlands.



Kuyper also is in a very real sense a cultuurfilosoof, and in his three-volume work De Gemene Gratie we see the doctrine of common grace developed into a theory of the possibility, legitimacy and the responsibility of cultural life. (26)

After nineteen centuries of history the Church is here for the first time in possession of a worked-out theoretical accounting of the world of culture and of the Christian's relation to it.

Should my description of Kuyper's work require any further substantiation, I would, in the first place, direct the reader to the contents of the work itself. There ample proof will be found of my contention. In addition, I can point to the title of a book by A.A. Van Ruler, Kuyper's Idee eener Christelijke Cultuur, and to the words with which the book begins:

"It cannot be said to be superfluous to ask the attention of the reader for Kuyper's solution of the problem of Christian culture,... since it continues largely to govern the situation in the Netherlands in all the questions mentioned. The way in which we are accustomed to put the questions of christian politics, christian social-work, christian radio etc. is not conceivable apart from Kuyper's doctrine of common grace, the dominant in his idea of Christian culture." (27)

There is also the doctoral dissertation of S.J. Ridderbos, with the title, De Theologische Cultuurbeschouwing van Abraham Kuyper. (28) If the qualifying word 'theological' in the title provides difficulty, I may refer my reader to what Ridderbos himself has to say about it:

"We have further limited our subject by speaking of Abraham Kuyper's theological view of culture. With this formulation we are serving notice that not only the historical, but also the special philosophical questions are left out of consideration by us as much as possible." (29)

Immediately after that Ridderbos suggests the extent to which in his view, practical cultural considerations were at work to produce De Gemene Gratie when he writes:

"Because Kuyper's mind was as pre-eminently directed to the practice of life, it is not surprising that he repeatedly applied his general views to the various individual areas of culture. One does him perhaps even more justice by saying that he pushed onward from the particular problems (the school-question, politics) to the general (common grace, etc.)." (30)

Kuyper is himself fully aware of the distinctiveness of his work and of its eminently practical and cultural point of departure. Here is what he says:

"Although we have since 1878 (the date at which De Heraut began to be published) been repeatedly and constantly pointing to this "common grace", and although we have, with thanksgiving and interest, taken cognizance of the well-documented address on the subject of "de Algemene Genade" published by Dr. Bavinck in 1894, up to now this momentous subject has not yet been treated in its total connection or in any sense exhaustively stated. Thus there remained nothing for us to do but this time to blaze our own trail, least of all with the pretension as if herewith this portion of Dogmatics would be finished for good; but, inasmuch as this subject cuts so deep into our life and into our contemporary struggles (emphasis mine), in order to furnish at least a first specimen of treatment, which can lead later to a more elaborated and rounded out dogmatical treatment." (31)

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Obviously, Kuyper was conscious not only of the originality and pressing practical motivation of his conception, but also, as a consequence, of the tentative character ("first specimen") of his formulations. Thus he says explicitly in his preface:

"To a sharp formulation of this doctrine it will be possible to come only later. What had to be done first was, that all the historical and dogmatical material related to this doctrine be assembled and put in order under the sway of the principle... Completeness and a good arrangement of the material was here the main thing. It had to appear, of what far-reaching significance for all of life this Reformed ground-conviction was."

We sense here again the practical urgency that Kuyper felt prompting him to carry out his task. That urgent practical need, we have already seen, was for an effective influence of the Christian body of citizens upon such problems as politics, education, social-work, etc. For that, the Church had first to be drawn from the cultural isolation into which it had fallen by a gradual process which I have already described in Kuyper's own language. The thing of prime importance was to cause Christians to see their responsibility in the public, the cultural life of the day. And Kuyper reasoned as follows: if our God concerns himself with that life, then we Christians must get to work, that also there the name of the Lord may be glorified. Kuyper felt not only this urgent need but also its great risks. Thus he ends his preface with the following words:

"Spiritual as well as ecclesiastical isolation is anti-Reformed, and only then will this work accomplish the purpose I had in view, when it has broken this isolatio

without, which God prevent!, ever anyone's being tempted to to lose himself in that world; it must not control him, but he it, in the strength of his God."

The work which Kuyper here offered to the Church is obviously of universal validity; its significance and relevancy reach beyond the borders of his own little country into the whole wide world. Just as the Calvinism of the Reformer had been marked ecumenical-minded, so Kuyper aspired to bring the Reformed of all nations back from the narrow range of conventicle meetings, to which their vision had deteriorated, to their original glorious calling of reforming the world after the principle of life revealed in God's word. He speaks at the very beginning of a beginnel, a levenstebeginnel (life-principle) that is deeper, of wider range than mere theological life. This principle, apart from the understanding of it, is the principle out of which Reformed Christians everywhere must live. Thus in his preface Kuyper states expressly that he is presenting his book "to the Reformed Churches in all lands." Here in America we who are Reformed ought not lightly pass by what Kuyper has given, fancying that we are faced with different problems and different situations. Kuyper knew better: the history of the Reformed Churches with respect to their place in the world had been the same everywhere; for causes general in the western world had been at work. And how the spiritual revival among the Calvinists in the Netherlands was with such divine force and providentially under such propitious human circumstances that from the beginning its talented leaders found themselves being driven back to the common roots and universal principles. In the sixteenth century it was Geneva to which all who would be Reformed had to go; today it is the Netherlands. Recognition of this fact is a simple mark of Christian piety, which is ever alert to the providences of Jehovah

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We have now accomplished the first purpose that we set for ourselves when we began: to see the historic place and the historic significance of Kuyper's De Gemene Gratie. In it, we saw, the Church was for the first time in her entire history in possession of a critical theory of the world of culture and of her relation to it. Surely it is no wonder that the following generation, busying itself with this tremendous heritage left to it, displayed differences as to some of the emphases, some questions of exegesis even some matters of fundamental conception. Had not Kuyper

e himself foreseen the necessity of correcting and supplementing his work? Yet in all the subsequent debate it is important not to overlook the fact that all the participants who are Kuyper's geloofsgenoten (comrades in the faith) are agreed with him in his main purpose: (32) that there are none who would follow the path of Anabaptistic withdrawal from cultural pursuits nor any who think of allowing a higher estimate to be put on man fallen. Moreover, all participants to the debate are agreed that we must enter the world of culture essentially in the way Kuyper proposed.

Time no longer will permit us to enter into all the questions surrounding Kuyper's work De Gemene Gratie that have been debated within the last thirty-five years. However, this last point does most assuredly have to be touched upon. I said that all the participants to the debate are in essential agreement with Kuyper's views as to the manner in which Christians are to relate themselves to the world of culture. But what were his views here? A discussion of this ought not, in my opinion, to be delayed any longer.

For on this question of the how -- let us not close our eyes to it -- not only do hesitancy and uncertainty characterize the mind of the Christian Reformed Church generally, but in the case of certain of her more vocal representatives rather basic disagreement appears to exist. A case in point is the difference between the view expressed by our esteemed president, Dr. Spoelho in his contribution to the volume God-centered Living and the view held by the Calvinistic Culture Association as it was expressed in my address Het Roer Om! Of course, that is but one concrete instance. The disagreement among us is far more general than that. Always -- it may be the question whether a Christian has to treat the field of logic differently from the unbeliever, or whether the necessity exists generally of a radical-Christian reformation of the various sciences, or of the interpretation of literature -- always, I say, it soon appears that wholly diverse views are entertained in our circles. In all these cases the point at issue is the relation that exists between common grace and the antithesis. For example, I have heard several of my colleagues put it this way: "Once we had a generation of students with an appreciation for common grace; now all

they seem to know about is the antithesis." This remark is followed by another to the effect that there is in the new situation a great danger of losing contact with the world of culture. I am a somewhat prominent minister in our denomination, after he read my address Het Roer Om! as it appeared in the English translation in the periodical Torch and Trumpet, said to me, "You have taken only one side of Kuyper, that of the Encyclopaedia with its doctrine of the antithesis; don't forget, there is also the doctrine of common grace." Both these expressions of opinion suggest that the relation between common grace and antithesis is a contrary one. It would seem to be the case, therefore, that the tensions among us largely revolve about the question of the relation between common grace and antithesis as that relation determinative of the way in which we throw ourselves into the life of the cultural world.

I find it highly significant that on this point which is presently troubling us there is no essential difference of opinion among Kuyper's descendants in The Netherlands. That fact itself it seems to me, should give us pause. For we have already heard van Ruler affirm that the "way in which we are accustomed to put the questions of christian politics, christian social-work, christian radio etc. is not conceivable apart from Kuyper's doctrine of common grace." (33) It would seem apparent that we have to do here with two irreconcilable interpretations of Kuyper's meaning in his De Gemene Gratie. Thus, many who opposed what I said in Het Roer Om! defended participation in organizations such as Citizens Action, with an appeal to common grace. Last spring the Calvinistic Culture Association received a communication from one of our recent graduates, who insisted that he as a true-blue "Kuyperian" could not go along with the Schilder - Van Til - Tijdsbegeerte der Wetsidee approach -- whatever that might be! In connection with the cultural problems outlined in the Declaration of Principles and Work Program of the C.C.A. We of the association found it difficult to repress a smile when only a few weeks later a prominent writer in the Gereformeerd Weekblad, Dr H. J. Rommes, wrote two articles in that organ of the Reformed churches (34) about the same document, in which he expressed his joy at seeing the principles of Kuyper (!) being applied to the American scene. Obviously, somebody is misunderstanding something somewhere. It therefore becomes imperative that in the short time remaining we try to obtain some light on the question, how Kuyper conceives

of the relation between antithesis and common grace, particularly as it relates to cultural activity.

Prof. van Ruler, a careful student of Kuyper's writings, admits in his book Kuyper's Idee eener Christelijke Cultuur, from which I have already quoted: "At first sight it is not clear how the doctrine of common grace leads to the idea of a Christian culture; one is then fond of having recourse to his doctrine of palingenesis (regeneration) as the antipode of his views on common grace; this is however, at the very least, superficial; the lines here do not run parallel nor in opposite directions either, but intersect, and that more than one!" Just a little later he warns once more against forcing a contrast between particular grace (the doctrine of palingenesis) and the doctrine of common grace. Permit me to cite this significant passage. (36)

"Prof. Haitjema<sup>(37)</sup> once worked out this contrast in a particularly good article that is still very worth the reading entitled 'The Appreciation of Culture in Neo-calvinism' and appearing in Onze Eeuw (Volume XIX no. 10, pp. 83-108). He pictures neo-calvinism as a spiritual movement that has its characteristic features in its openness to the life of modern culture, and then points out that this movement had to battle on two fronts. 'Over against its own adherents the christian appreciation of universal-human culture had to be supported and elucidated dogmatically. And over against the world of culture, which in our modern time is alienated from the basic christian convictions, a most emphatic plea had once again to be made for the cultural significance of the christian religion, more particularly of Calvinism a life-system! (p.91). On the first front Kuyper developed the doctrine of common grace, and on the second front he maintained the doctrine of regeneration. 'To come from the one line to the other a leap is always necessary.... And no wonder, for the one line of thought, that of common grace, points to a side that is situated over against the other; that of the necessity of regeneration, even in the life of this world' (p.103). The conclusion to which the writer comes is then: 'The inner connection between the element of palingenesis and the doctrine of common grace he never pointed out' (p.107). With this description of the layout in Kuyper's thinking I cannot agree. Undoubtedly, there is an element of truth in it. In writing about the truth of common grace, Kuyper does indeed come now and then to a very broad appreciation of universal-human culture. But that is most assuredly not the reason why he constructed his doctrine of common grace. This neutral appreciation of culture is but one of the results, not one of the motives of this doctrine. And certainly Kuyper's purpose was not to arouse his own fellow-believers out of their cultural indifference to this broad humanistic appreciation of the cultural process as such. What he wanted to arouse them to, and his reason for requiring the

doctrine of common grace, that was his christian action in all the spheres of life. Indeed, Kuyper's theories on common grace were never so construed by his followers. (emphasis mine). Prof. Hepp is right when he observes that Prof. Schilder is beating the air when he goes into action against the neutral-culture-unity-ideals on the basis of the common grace doctrine. 'Where are the many among us, who turn against a christian cultivation of science, a christian politics, a christian art and all the rest?' (Dr. V. Hepp, De Algemene Genade, Kampen, 1937, p.80)

"In my opinion there is in Kuyper a very real inner connection between the doctrine of particular grace and the doctrine of common grace.... One cannot make this connection too close, too intimate. Repeatedly Kuyper argues that common grace was the point 'at which our Reformed confession diverged from the Anabaptistic path of separation (mijding).' (De Gemeen Gratie II, 349, et Passim). In the doctrine of particular grace the bond with the universal-human, earthly, temporal life is severed, but...it is restored in common grace. The motive of the doctrine common grace lies not in the appreciation of culture but in cultural activity. Its purpose is to afford the regenerated believer possibility of existence, material for work, meaningful activity. Even when his life is enlarged in time round about the point of election and regeneration (although this is really a point of eternity), yet he is met with grace from the same God who elected and regenerated him. Grace from the same same God, albeit not the same grace. Here lie all the tensions of Kuyper's fundamental conception. In motive and design there is a very close connection and a most intimate bond between particular grace and common grace. But in the elaboration Kuyper often comes to a duality of grace, to an absolutizing of common grace which obscures the original thought. Then it can appear as though the doctrine of regeneration and the doctrine of common grace stand opposed to each other as principles of antithesis and synthesis. Nevertheless, there are only a few passages to which this construction can properly appeal, though it must be acknowledged that just in these passages Kuyper's soul sings out so lyrically. In general, however, this original connection of particular grace and common grace remains, I think, visible."

Even one who knows only a little about the life of Abraham Kuyper could scarcely mistake Kuyper's meaning on the point, it seems to me. It is well to recall here the judgment of Ridderbos that "one does him (Kuyper) even more justice by saying that pushed onward from the particular problems (the school-question, politics) to the (common grace etc.)." (38) When Kuyper sat down to write his articles on common grace for De Heraut he had already become the great leader of the Anti-revolutionary party, of which Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer was the spiritual father. No one ever thought more antithetically than Groen. Dr. Bruins Slot, the editor of Trouw (a Dutch Christian daily newspaper),

in his recent book Bezinning en Uitzicht (Reflection and Prospe-  
speaking of the necessity for the Christian-in-politics of dis-  
guishing carefully the historical development of his time, and  
showing that that distinguishing must be a spiritual distinguish-  
i.e. a distinguishing in the light of God's revelation, where  
the task of the righteous for our life opens up before our very  
eyes, says, "So it once happened with Groen van Prinsterer...  
discovered at a given moment--as if struck by lightning--the  
element of decisive significance in the character of the histo-  
period in which he lived. This he fixed in his concept of the  
Revolution. And out of that discovery has developed the Chris-  
historical or anti-revolutionary political movement in The Net-  
lands." (39) Thus, a discovery of actual antithesis in history  
had led to the insight that antithetical organization was a  
fundamental necessity.

Before the appearance of <sup>the</sup> common grace articles Kuyper had  
further shown how he felt by pleading for a Christian, prefera-  
Anti-revolutionary press, by urging the establishment of a Free  
University, by his support of Patrimonium and his acceptance of  
invitation to deliver the opening address of the first Christian  
Social Congress.

If, however, one should be inclined to put Kuyper's practi-  
over against his thought on this question, we can also show from  
his writings what his view was. In Pro Rege, vol. III, the whole  
of chapter XIX is devoted to the subject of Christian organization.  
The question naturally arises, Kuyper writes there, "whether the  
subjects of King Jesus can for this purpose (the organization of  
society) unite themselves with those who reject Him in one and  
same organization, or whether it is the requirement of their con-  
viction that they organize themselves independently, call into  
being a system of Christian associations, and have to accept a  
conscious division between themselves and the others in the so-  
sphere also." (40) Kuyper then remarks that such separate Chris-  
action is already a fact in The Netherlands, but that that does  
not discharge us from the task of providing a principial elucidation  
of the rightfulness of this separation. After dealing at some  
with the Scriptural basis of such separate organization he goes  
on to say:

"There is thus not the least uncertainty on this point.  
In mixing socially dangerous things always lurks for Christians.  
One so easily allows the law to be laid down by society



and its worldly form. What society can get away with, Christians too can so easily permit. One floats along on a stream to which one can offer no resistance. And unconsciously one exchanges the principle of the Christian life for the unpurified principle of worldly society." (41)

Kuyper concludes the chapter with a very telling sect which I am loathe to omit.

"It was necessary here deliberately to ground this system of private, separate organizations in Scriptur because voices are still constantly being raised among us which regard this rule as now no longer susceptible of complete application... The influence which emanates from all these (non-Christian) organizations is thus exception destructive for our Christian confession. reasons and acts out of principles which are absolute opposed to ours. If now one allows oneself to enter such organizations and if one mingles in such organizations with those who are of a wholly other mind, then what they think or judge becomes the starting-point of the decisions that are to be taken, and one supports one's membership what one, in conformity with one's Christian confession, may not support but combat. In anarchistic, socialistic or neutral (emphasis is mine associations a spirit is operative which never can or be ours. The leadership in such organizations falls to us but always and inflexibly to our opponents. They carry out their intention, and whoever of us embarks with them ends up where they want to land but where we never may land. Thus our principle settles down at the point of non-activity, loses its position of influence and is pressed into the corner...mingling with these of another spirit in the organization itself leads always to a bitterly sad fiasco of the Christian principle and prepares the way for their victory and for our overthrow. If one disregards this and yet enters into such company there then arises in addition the danger that evil companionships corrupt good morals. In the organizations are now thinking of material interests are always and invariably in the foreground; the concern is for more power over against the employer and higher wages for work. Of course, there is in itself nothing wrong with the fact that everyone stands up for his rights and also attempts to improve his material position... But just for that reason the temptation is so great even for Christians in such organizations to let the end justify the means, to let material interests prevail over spiritual and to float along on a stream which can and may never be ours. The spirit at work in such principally unbelieving organizations is so alluring and contagious that almost none of us, once he enters into such company, can offer resistance to it. One absorbs this person without suspecting it. Especially so because once one is a part of such organizations, one sees one's Christian principle doomed to silence. In separate Christian organizations there is the prayer, the guidance of God's Word, mutual admonition, and one comes naturally, on each occasion free spiritual discussion, to test one's attitude and method on the pronouncements of the Word of God." (42)

That was, mind you, Kuyper speaking. Notice that he, at least, did not hesitate to speak of an absolute antithesis in this human life. Such utterances would be multiplied many times over.

In our effort to set forth the position of Abraham Kuyper on the manner in which the Christian is to relate himself to the cultural world we have pointed, first to what he did, and then, to show <sup>the</sup> harmony of his thought and practice we quoted from a decisive section of his Pro Rege.

Nevertheless, a truly persistent opponent might still come with two objections to our citing from Pro Rege. The first objection, one more easily dealt with, is that Kuyper's works in their original form, were for the most part journalistic pieces, written over the years for De Heraut, and that one should not expect to find so much system and unity of thought in them as I am doing. In our particular case one might argue that while the third volume of De Gemene Gratie appeared in 1904 the first volume of Pro Rege was not published until 1911. The point of objection would then be this: on what grounds do we assert opinions expressed by Kuyper in 1911 to be the only ones of Kuyper on the Subject, and, particularly, the view of Kuyper in De Gemene Gratie ?

Ridderbos refers to this objection in his dissertation and says, "Our answer is: tolle lege! It became evident to us in the study of Kuyper's works that even in his hastily written weekly articles more system is present than one often supposed. Even though in the reading one is in danger of losing the thread now and then, and although the writer sometimes appears to involve himself in obvious contradictions, upon closer examination everything yet appears to be governed by one notion or conception."<sup>(43)</sup> To this witness I can now add my own. In a dissertation dating from the year before the Doleantie, thus in 1887 and entitled " De Leem" Kuyper defended the antithesis also in the organizational sense. Again two years later he developed the national significance of this antithetical activity in the cultural world in his Tweeërlei Vaderland. The idea is with him early and late.

The second objection stems from the view I have already mentioned with the help of van Ruler, attempted to explode, viz. that there is a conflict within Kuyper's thought (and left unrecapitulated by him) between the two motifs of antithesis and common ground.

"Naturally", this objector would probably say, "naturally you go to a work like Pro Rege for an expression of the antithesis. But that is one thing; the Kuyper of De Gemene Gratie is something else."

Obviously, this objection stands or falls with the interpretation of Kuyper out of which it takes its rise. It is so very important, however, that some further comment is called for.

It is, in the first place, highly interesting to observe how, towards the end of his life, Kuyper thinks of his work De Gemene Gratie. As an illustration I refer you to the preface of his two-volume Antirevolutionaire Staatkunde, published in 1916. There <sup>(44)</sup> he is referring to the fact that, as in earlier periods of history, as also in the nineteenth century "only the Reformed kernel felt the urgency, the need, the necessity of coming up with an all-embracing central world-view; but with one which now, no more than in Paul's day, could ripen out of the prevailing science. Clearly an antithetical context. He then adds this sentence: "The need of arousing the same striving and purpose once again, and, where it proved to be still awake, of directing it, I tried to satisfy to some extent first in Ons Program (an antithetical program for the A.R. Party) and later -- listen--in the Gemene Gratie (emphasis mine). Here his work on common grace is, in an undeniable manner, given its place in all his practical and theoretical effort at strengthening the antithetical cultural action of the Reformed group in The Netherlands.

The secret to the interpretation of Kuyper's doctrine of common grace is to be found in seeing rightly the relation between common grace and particular grace (regeneration, poligenesis, antithesis). There goes out from the sphere of special grace a moral influence which strengthens, elevates, and secures common grace. Cultural activity can take place in this sinful world thanks to the existence of a common grace, but particular grace is necessary to preserve that common grace from destruction and to lead it to fulfilment. Kuyper speaks accordingly of two kinds of development of common grace: 1) <sup>(45)</sup> the general human development, which is borne up by common grace and thus (!) ends repeatedly (in the histories of several nations) in sin and death, and 2) the development in Israel, where particular grace came to the grace of common grace. The former kind is also spoken of as "the anti-Christian development of common grace. In a separate series of articles <sup>(46)</sup> published under the title "De Gemene Gratie in Wetenschap en Kunst" Kuyper writes these two directions, "conciliation, which would lead to agreement

is here utterly out of the question. There gapes here a cleft over which no bridges can be thrown. And as long as Christendom does not accept this two-ness with full conviction and in all its consequences it will be published time after time with the obtrusion of unbelieving science unto its own premises, with a falsification of its theology, an undermining of its confession, and a weakening of its faith." (47)

In the section of these articles on art (Kunst) Kuyper tells us that in art as art also two kinds of spirit can govern. (48) Here a most significant section occurs dealing with a matter much disputed among us of late. Kuyper writes: "Of course, no more than in the other spheres of life do these two spirits always stand opposite one another in absolute form... Satan stood opposed to Christ only in the wilderness. But although there is here manifold gradation in weakened form, yet it is not subject to doubt, that in all this two directions are constantly running contrary to each other, and that finally even these weakened and watered down expressions always and again draw our human life either in the direction of the spirit out of the abyss or in the direction of the spirit from above." (49) On the basis of this passage, and others like it -- think of the absolute opposition of principles in the section of Pro Rege! -- perhaps we might bring to an end one of the little bits of debate among us by agreeing that, while neither of the two antithetical spirits is present in our human lives in absolute form or degree, yet the direction of the two, present to be sure in weakened form, is absolutely antithetical. That is, after all, all that Prof. Van Til means when he speaks of an absolute antithesis. And now it appears that he is saying nothing more than was said by Kuyper, the man of common grace.

One more quotation. At the beginning of volume III of his De Gemene Gratie Kuyper is discussing the rise of the Christians in the Netherlands of the nineteenth century to responsible cultural activity, whereupon he says: "This affected a turn, which necessarily had led to, and so did lead to making us see that we could not get anywhere with the prevailing ideas, with the results of the sciences and thus also with the construction of principles as they are current in the non-Christian world. They did not fit our confession. It was like mixing iron with clay -- think of Kuyper's antithetical oration of 1885! -- Thus we found ourselves before a dilemma. We either had

to return to the little conventicle-circle and give up all concern with matters of science and art, of land and people, or we were compelled ourselves to build up our own construction of principles, which accorded with our Reformed confession." (50)

By now it must have become sufficiently clear that far from common grace and antithesis being two irreconcilable elements in Kuyper's thinking, both are most intimately related in any concrete human situation. There is an antithetical development of common grace that takes place. That is the reason why, in Kuyper, separate Christian schools and separate organization of society generally is a requirement of faith. As Ridderbos says somewhere in his dissertation, by a common action we prevent God's cultural purpose in special grace from being operative. Thus, all our cultural work too must be a confessing, a witnessing. To this we may append a remark of J.A. Diepenhorst in his booklet Algemene Genade en Antithese: (5) "But with common grace and general revelation one does not have enough when a choice must be made between good and evil. The heath do know the state and establish an ordered life under law, but in regard to bases of state and right they cannot come to certainty. And just these foundations are of particular importance for political science... The revolution principle opposes the gospel in the political sphere in an entirely distinct form. That is sufficient reason why it is wrong that believers and unbelievers, at least those who recognize the gospel as norm for political life and those who reject it, continue to be linked up with each other in common activity. The spirit out of the abyss would make himself master of state and right. Proper here is only unrelenting, unflinching opposition which does not call the antithesis into existence, but which acknowledges its existence.

Thus Kuyper's view turns out to be much the same as Calvin's, least in the interpretation of Berkouwer. And it is in the same sense we here describe it, Biblical. Kuyper himself, in the series on De Gemene Gratie in Wetenschap en Kunst (p.27) says: "Holy Scripture says clearly that the wisdom and science which the world derives from her own principles is directly opposed to the true, substantial science, and as sharply as possible it is established that the difference between that science of the world, which for God is foolishness and the true science which for him is valid, arises out of the difference of heart-condition in the investigating subject. There are two kinds of men. Scripture calls them "natural" and "spiritual men."

This is the doctrine of the two ways, as found in Psalm 1 and Proverbs 2.

We have seen that in Kuyper the Church first possessed a critical accounting of the world of culture and of the Christian's relation to it, and that in that theory common grace and antithesis: two false abstractions when taken alone or absolutized, mingle with each other in the most intimate fellowship as two elements in the concrete life situation. We have seen that this view demands organizational antithesis, and that such a consequence has been accepted by all of Kuyper's spiritual descendants in The Netherlands. In our Christian Reformed circles another view is to be held, propagated or practiced, we should be told of its origin and show its Biblical basis. As Kuyper himself wrote of his own view, "It cannot come from a process of bargaining but must be derived from the Reformed principle "itself" (see above, p.20b, bottom).

REFERENCES

- Ref. 1 - page 2  
Pierre de Labriolle, History and Literature of Christianity from Tertullian to Boethius, translated from the French by Herbert Wilson, London and New York, 1924. Page 18
- Ref. 2 - page 3  
 Idem, p. 20
- Ref. 3 - page 3  
 Idem, p. 21
- Ref. 4 - page 4  
Werner Jaeger, Humanism and Theology, (The Aquinas Lectures, 1943), Milwaukee, 1943. P.70, Note 16.
- Ref. 5 - page 4  
 de Labriolle, op. cit., p.24. He cites the following passages: De Idolol. X, "...cum instrumentum sit ad omnem vitam litteratura"; Der Cor. VIII (Oehler, I, 436), "(Litteras) necessariarias confitebor et commerciis rerum et nostras erga Deum studiis."
- Ref. 6 - page 5  
 P. 119f
- Ref. 7 - page 5  
 Op. cit., p.24 and note 2.
- Ref. 8 - page 7  
 Idem, p.26
- Ref. 9 - page 8  
 Idem, p.25
- Ref. 10 - page 9  
 Idem, p.27
- Ref. 11 - page 9  
 Idem, p.25
- Ref. 12 - page 11  
 Cited in E.K.Rand, Founders of the Middle Ages, p.68
- Ref. 13 - page 14  
 P. 2
- Ref. 14 - page 15  
S.J.Ridderbos, De Theologische Cultuurbeschouwing van Abraham Kuyper, Kok, 1947, p.18  
 of H. Kuiper, op.cit. p.177
- Ref. 15 - page 15  
 The fullest expression in the Institutes is found in III 3, Abraham Kuyper, but compare II ii 15-16.
- Ref. 16 - page 15  
De Gemene Gratie I (1902), p. 7. Hereafter this work be cited as G.G.

## REFERENCES (2)

- Ref. 17 - page 16  
 pp. 157-181, esp. 166-174. My quotations are from 168-173.
- Ref. 18 - page 16  
 I should prefer to use the word "ontic" here instead of "ontological"; reference is made to (a supposed) real something (on-tic) not to a theory about reality (onto-log-ic)
- Ref. 19 - page 16  
 Here (footnote 166 On p.170) Berkhouwer refers to Calvin's view as expressed in the passage already cited, viz. Institutes 11 iii 3, and points out that Abraham Kuyper, in laying the basis for common grace, attached himself to this whole picture.
- Ref. 20 - page 18  
 op. cit. p. 171
- Ref. 21 - page 19  
Calvin and the Reformation, Revell, 1909, pp. 56-98.  
 My quotations are from the article as published in this book.
- Ref. 22 - page 19  
 Op. cit., p.57 f.
- Ref. 23 - page 19  
 Idem, p.72
- Ref. 24 - page 21  
 Idem, p.94 ff.
- Ref. 25 - page 22  
G.G. I p.5.
- Ref. 26 - page 24  
 It is this fact that eminently sets off the work of Kuyper from that of Bavinck, Hodge and from the article of Prof. John Murray on the subject of Common grace, which appeared in Westminster Theological Journal, Vol V
- Ref. 27 - page 24  
 Published by G.F.Callenbach, N.V., Nijkerk (no date)
- Ref. 28 - page 24  
 Published by J.H.kok N.V., Kampen, 1947.
- Ref. 29 - page 24  
 Op.cit., p. 8
- Ref. 30 - page 24  
loc.cit.
- Ref. 31 - page 25  
G.G. I p.5 f.
- Ref. 32 - page 27  
 cf. Schilder, Wat is de Hemel? P.294
- Ref. 33 - page 28  
 See above p.22 a.



REFERENCES (3)

- Ref. 34 - page 28  
The issues of June 11 and 19, 1953
- Ref. 35 - page 29  
P. 5.
- Ref. 36 - 29  
Idem, pp. 11-13
- Ref. 37 - page 29  
A Dutch Barthian, member of the Hervormde Merk (?)  
and prof. of ?
- Ref. 38 - page 30  
see above, p.22 b.
- Ref. 39 - page 31  
P. 9.
- Ref. 40 - page 31  
Pro Rege III, p.184 f.
- Ref. 41 - page 32  
Idem, p.189
- Ref. 42 - page 32  
Idem, p. 189 - 191
- Ref. 43 - page 33  
De Theolog. Cultuurbeschouwing van Abr. Kuyper, p.10.
- Ref. 44 - page 34  
P. XI
- Ref. 45 - page 34  
G.G. I 498 f.
- Ref. 46 - page 34  
Idem, p.500
- Ref. 47 - page 35  
P. 42
- Ref. 48 - page 35  
P. 81
- Ref. 49 - page 35  
P. 83
- Ref. 50 - page 36  
G.G. III p. 6 f.
- Ref. 51 - page 36  
P. 41 f.

ERRATA (1)

Please note: Only the errors which affect the meaning or sense of the sentence are to be found here. Other obvious mistakes, typographical and others, are not included.

- p. 2 2nd paragraph, line 1, read: On the side of radical rejection of the world of culture stands...
- p. 5 quot. (7) read: Lactantius (not Laetantius).
- p. 6 1st paragraph. last line, read: We might say that this answer makes too much of, i.e. would misconceive, common grace.  
The quot. on this page should be marked: (8)  
Also, the author referred to is Plautus. (not Plantus)
- p. 8 2nd sentence, read: ...naive acceptance of much of the world of ancient culture.  
8th line, 2nd paragraph, read: Under reserve of this preliminary expurgation Basil is of the opinion that there is great advantage in young people having dealings with profane letters; ...  
Also, fourth century (not first).  
4th line from bottom, read: ...of the sapientia secularis must make a beginning by cleansing it of all that holds...
- p. 11 quot. (12), read: "...the Catholic Church, which always has fostered whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, has..."
- p.16 bracketed statement after quot. (19); read:(two pp. earlier in Berkouwer we read)...
- p. 18 3rd paragraph, read: ...all-wise providence three frustrating three dolibitating...  
3rd paragraph, line 8, read: ...one which was everywhere...  
in quot. (20), term should be underlined.
- p. 19 In the sentence directly preceding quot. (22) the "he" refers to Iang.
- p. 21 quot. (24), 8th line from bottom, read: Deism, the 'Enlightenment' and rationalism, was...  
Also, in between quotations, line 5, read: ...proper solution of the problem of culture and of the Christian's...
- p. 30 N.B. quot. (38), read:"one does him.....pushed onwards from particular problems.....to the general (common grace etc)."
- p. 31 1st line, Perhaps 'Prospect'(Reflection and Prospect) is better translated as 'Outlook'.
- p. 33 9th line from bottom, the name of the oration is Ijzer en Lee
- p. 34 quot.(45), read: ...borne up by grace alone and...

ERRATA (2)

Also, read: 2) ...where particular grace came to the aid of common grace.

p.35 4th line down, read: punished instead of published.

Prof. C. Van Til

6th line from bottom, read: ...which necessarily had to lead to...

p. 37 Please omit last bracketed statement.