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CALVINISM AND NATIONAL REACTION, ESPECIALLY IN SOUTH AFRICA

I

IN the sixteenth century Reformed Protestantism spread over many lands. From Switzerland it was brought to France, Italy and Spain ; it took root in the Western parts of Germany, in the Low Countries and in England and Scotland ; it shot up luxuriantly in Poland and Hungary and was transplanted through colonization to North America and South Africa. In all these countries, with the exception of three, it was enabled to maintain itself throughout the centuries and during the last few generations it has even renewed its youth in some. Shortly after its introduction it was to succumb, in Spain under the autos-da-fe of the Inquisition, in Italy to the onslaughts of the Counter-Reformation and in Poland to the wiles of Socinianism and Jesuitism, yet everywhere else, whenever time was on its side to touch the national genius, it identified itself therewith, and to the extent to which it did this, it developed national varieties, of universal Reformed Protestantism.

To quote an example : in the " period of the confessions " the national churches attempted to express their doctrinal convictions nationally in as many as forty creeds, confessions and other standards of unity named after the country or even the town of their origin. Side by side with the *Confessio Gallicana* (1559), the *Confessio Belgica* (1561) and *Helvetica posterior* (1562) we mention the Heidelberg catechism and the thirty-nine Articles of Westminster (both dating from 1563), and within a period of five years five national standards of faith were drawn up in order to legitimize national Calvinistic convictions before the tribunal of public opinion.

Lutheranism on the other hand is much less internationally-minded : it found its adherents almost exclusively among the Nordic nations and even to-day, after more than four centuries, its influence is well nigh confined to Northern Germany and the three Scandinavian countries, and to emigrants from these countries to other lands in Europe and across the high seas. We would not be children of the twentieth century, especially in its modern tendency to exaggerated nationalism and racial

pride, if in the process of searching for the causes of difference in geographical expansion of Lutheranism as against Calvinism, the question did not present itself to our minds whether nationality and race are wholly or partly responsible for this striking divergence. In order to be quite clear I wish to submit that *race* is a biological fact with all the anthropological implications it connotes, whilst *nationality* is a historical fact. In my opinion race has not had, nor could it have had, any part in explaining the difference in expansion, between the doctrines of Luther and Calvin. The former has been embraced exclusively by Germanic, and even only by a few Germanic nations, the latter by many Germanic peoples, and also by Romance and Magyar nations. As for race, however, in the strict scientific sense of the term, both Calvinism and Lutheranism so far have limited their capacity for church formation to the Indo-Germanic race.

II

Why then did only North Germanic nations respond, and respond eagerly and consistently, to Christian doctrine as expounded by Luther and why did John Calvin's appeal among them fall on irresponsive ears? I wish to propose two explanatory factors for the case in Germany. The first is the gregarious instinct which strikes even the casual observer of German national character in spite of the impetuous and almost proverbial German love of independence. The German follows his leader almost blindly: on the battlefield, in politics and even in matters spiritual. The history of twenty centuries bears out the truth of this assertion: we need only mention the names of Arminius, Barbarossa, Luther, Frederick the Great and Bismarck, not to speak of the living. The insistence of Calvinism on personality does not fit in with this herd-sense. Of course, we have to grant that Calvinism obtained a firm hold in Western Germany: Bremen, Anhalt, Nassau, Hesse, the Palatinate and the Rhine Province, but this apparent contradiction only strengthens the argument, as the whole of this western zone is not typically German, but constitutes, anthropologically, the transition to the Low Countries, historically a bulwark of Reformed Protestantism.

As a second factor likely to explain Germany's Lutheran stability I mention the Roman Catholic leaven operating as an after-effect in Luther and Lutheranism. Dr. Martin's spiritual attitude remained monastic all his life, whereas Calvin drew a

deep line through and underneath his Roman Catholic past. Uniformity is the hall mark of Roman Catholicism and it is characteristic that Lutheran statement of doctrine for over four centuries confined itself to the one Augsburg Confession of 1530.

Roman Catholicism again maintained its catholicity throughout the centuries and in all lands by uniformity of discipline, one general language of the Church, the same rites and liturgy all over its domain and obedience *cadaver instar* to one central authority: the pope, who succeeded Peter and supplanted Caesar. Race and nationality had to take second place as a logical consequence of its fundamental principle—the dualism of nature and grace.

Calvinism on the other hand developed a wealth of differentiation, it gave utterance to the same immutable universal truths in a variety of national media so as to form a mighty symphony which rang out above the dead monotone of the Roman Catholic universal creed. Reformed Protestantism did not fix a great gulf between nature and grace, but placed under tribute life and the fulness thereof to the glory of God. Under the dispensation of Calvinism national distinctions in the divine bestowal of powers and talents, of gifts and favours became so many facets of God's precious jewel: a regenerate mankind, so as to reflect the manifold wisdom and will of a bountiful Creator. Viewed in this light, national differences no longer were a dissonance and discord, in fact they supplied an enhanced concord and harmony in the "Te Deum" world without end.

A simultaneous awakening of national consciousness all over sixteenth century Europe was highly conducive to this plurality of Reformed Protestantism then in process of organization, which proceeded gradually along historical lines. It originated in medieval travel and traffic, for the people of the middle ages were anything but home-staying folk: migrations and invasions, the inroads of the Norsemen and the crusades tell their own tale. Commercial expeditions, yearly markets, voyages of discovery and wars of a wide range carried many from place to place and promoted international communication and intercourse. Artisans in their course of training had to put in certain years of journeymanhood, which perfected them professionally, and incidentally educated them to notice geographical and political divisions and modifications. Students travelled from one university to another, disregarding profane frontiers

and the *grand tour* was the keystone in the system of education for the noble and the rich.

There was also the predominant factor of the Church. It had established a network of spiritual lines of communication with bishops to regulate the traffic. The texture of the net connected every fibre with Rome; monasteries and schools constituted the knots, which at the same time were the signal-posts to collect and transmit, loyally and disinterestedly, all intelligence useful to the Holy See. If ever humanity was well informed and wide of vision, it was when the Middle Ages were on the wane. Renaissance and Humanism took full advantage of the situation and the Reformation followed in their wake. Without Erasmus of Rotterdam we cannot explain this great religious revolution of the sixteenth century in Switzerland, France and England. Erasmus called the scholars away from Scholasticism to Patristics; he opened many eyes by his publication of the Greek New Testament (1516). Erasmus became the forerunner and pathfinder to John Calvin and the other Reformers.

Calvin himself was internationally-minded. His interest embraced the whole of known Europe, then the known world. A Frenchman by birth and education, he wrote and spoke beautiful classical Latin, the world language of his day. He married Idelette van Buren, the widow of a Dutch Anabaptist; was introduced to the practice of Reformed Protestantism at Strassburg; visited Italy; performed his life work at Geneva, then an international centre where he co-operated with scholars from many countries; conferred with visitors and carried on correspondence with church leaders, with the oppressed, prisoners and martyrs from the four points of the compass; he had his finger on the pulse of church life in all quarters of Europe, and expressed his readiness to cross ten seas in order to plead and promote the sacred cause of Reformation. The universality of Calvinism became typified in Calvin.

III

Here we have arrived at the kernel of our dissertation: the universal significance of Calvinism, pre-eminently in its blossoming forth into national varieties, springing from national reaction. National types react like individuals, for diversity is always the hall mark of God's handiwork. It is never mechanical. There

is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

One of the causes of this diversity in unity is the balance between counter-polar relations as a structural principle in Calvin's conception of the world and of life. As telling examples we quote: Mystery and revelation, transcendency and immanency, reason and mysticism, mind and matter, heaven and earth, divine sovereignty and human responsibility, *Weltflucht* and culture.

Professor Huizinga of Leyden University has propounded, at Leyden and Vienna, a theory on play and pleasure, starting from the fact that nature, history and human life is full of play, diversion and sport. It is on sacred record that "then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Would it not be possible that the play of sound and colour in the multi-coloured and polyglot system of Calvinism constituted an act in the *Divina Comoedia* of the ages?

National differences in the manifestation of Calvinism can often be reduced to and explained by the varying stress being laid on the one or on the other member of one or more of the counter-polar relations mentioned, following ultimately, historically and ethnologically, from impulses peculiar to the relative national media. These differences were moreover accentuated by additional social, ecclesiastical, political and intellectual conditions of these nations. They all operated like a number of chemical syntheses of the same elements taken every time in another proportion.

Two components have to be distinguished here: first, the *constant component*, i.e. the common ideology of Calvinism everywhere; it constitutes the static element in every national manifestation of Reformed Protestantism and can be best apprehended in comparing Calvinism with Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, Anabaptism and Rationalism. Side by side with this constant component there is the second, the *variable component*; it constitutes the dynamic element in every national manifestation of Calvinism; it is the national soul or genius of the people concerned, in its geo-political conception. History teaches us that around the constant component by a process of

crystallization there were formed all those national and regional creeds, confessions and standards of faith which attempt to formulate the various national conceptions of religion; the variable component is responsible for the particular accent or modulation urged subconsciously by distinctive national religious idiosyncrasy. National reaction, therefore, is the resultant from two causes: the constant component directing the action of the variable component, and the latter assimilating the effect of the former to the innate national bias.

IV

One of the most striking and most recent applications of this theory is taking place before our very eyes in the subject under discussion: Calvinism and national reaction in South Africa.

In order to appreciate South African Calvinism of to-day genetically and organically, we must know its history. It is derived from the Calvinism of Holland; but, together with the majority of Dutchmen, mainly hailing from the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, who in 1652 colonized the Cape of Good Hope, there was also a strong minority of Germans. One generation later the element of French Huguenots joined the pioneers at the Cape; they were not numerous, but they were staunch adherents of the Reformed faith. For a century and a half these Dutch, German and French types of Calvinism had an opportunity to blend. In 1806 the British occupied the Southern African territory and for well over a century now the English and Scotch factors, in friendly emulation with the international mixture mentioned, had a share in evolving a type of South African Calvinism bearing its own stamp. To make the complication worse confounded, emotional methodism and intellectual modernism in the nineteenth century became famous in Southern Africa according as "they lifted up axes upon the thick trees and attempted to break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers", nay, they even "laid the axe unto the root of the trees". Few subjects in comparative church history could for actuality lay a stronger claim to arresting the interest of serious students than this problem of South African Calvinism.

In order to gauge it, we have to investigate how the national genius of Holland, Germany, France, England and Scotland, severally, reacted on the constant component of Calvinism, and secondly, in what way the variable component of South African

national genius reacted on these various types of Calvinism introduced from elsewhere so as to shape by fusion its own national type.

Chronologically, German Calvinism first calls for attention. As one of the most striking German characteristics, we mentioned above the feature of tractability, and judged it as alien to the Calvinistic attitude of mind. A second trait equally opposed is the very weak German sense of patriotism conceived as a deep-rooted love embracing the whole of the German Empire. If it exists at all, it is a hot-house plant reared by Bismarck and placed there again by Adolph Hitler. The average German fosters a strong, but at heart medieval local patriotism for the place of his birth or his Gau or one of the twenty-five states out of which with fire and iron the German Empire was welded together in 1871, so that a Prussian and a Bavarian, ethnologically, differ more widely from one another than an inhabitant of northern Brabant in Holland from a native of southern Brabant in Belgium. Nothing could bear out more strongly the truth of this assertion than a comparative study of the very numerable German *National-lieder*. If this contention of a weak general German patriotism applies to the German in his *Vaterland*, it applies much more strongly to the German in South Africa. *Ubi bene, ibi patria*. Besides, the Germans among the first pioneers at the Cape were mercenaries and lower officials, single men, staying there temporarily and under contract. The few men who obtained permission to settle as free-burghers, married Dutch wives, and it is typical of Calvinism as it is of all well founded principles of life, that it thrives best in family life as a society of equally minded people. The German father could not set the Calvinistic tune, because, if not Roman Catholic, he was a Lutheran; consequently the families raised by these non-Calvinistic German husbands joined in wedlock to non-German wives could hardly confirm a non-existing German Calvinism. We conclude, therefore, that a German factor in the upbuilding of South African Calvinism can hardly be proved or even asserted.

V

The case was entirely different with French Calvinism. It was introduced into South Africa by Huguenot refugee families who had to flee from France in order to save the faith delivered

unto the saints. They landed in South Africa in 1688 and 1689 to the number of slightly less than two hundred, men, women and children, and formed about one-sixth of the total number of white people at the Cape. A widespread notion in connection with these Huguenots we have to put right first. In South Africa the Huguenot forebears have often been idealized, as though they belonged one and all to the noblest representatives of French Calvinism. Not a few should have belonged to nobility and have been titled persons with escutcheons and coats of arms. Compared with them the Dutch settlers then were mere sea-dogs and battle-scarred fortune-hunters. As a consequence of this misrepresentation, some Dutch South Africans, even with purely Dutch or German patronymics, wanted to pass as Huguenots. We concede at once that the Cape settlement was not founded with eugenistic intentions from a selection of the noblest specimens of Dutch perfection physically, intellectually, morally and religiously. The Dutch East Indian Company was a commercial undertaking which for economic reasons had founded this refreshment station on the long, long way from Amsterdam to Batavia; but it was manned with the sturdy sons of the sea-beggars, among whom stern discipline was maintained, albeit that among this enterprising crowd there may have been a mixed multitude that "went up also with them and many a man that was in distress and that was in debt and that was discontented." Immediately on landing, the commander, Jan van Riebeeck and his men knelt down where Afric's sunny fountains roll down their golden sand and offered up the prayer prescribed for the purpose of opening the meetings of the Council, and which was used during more than a century and a half.

According to the tradition and custom of the Netherlands, practised on founding Batavia and New Amsterdam (now commonly called New York) and other Dutch colonies across the seven seas, the Calvinistic stamp was deeply and lastingly impressed on African soil. Among the Dutch colonists there were sailors and soldiers, but also gardeners, farmers and artisans, and in this respect they were socially the equals of the Huguenots, mostly agriculturists and viticulturists. But they were to a large extent also equals in speech and national outlook. For this Huguenot contingent had not set sail from La Rochelle, but from Amsterdam, in the good ships *Voorschoten*, *Oosterlandt* and *Zuid-Beveland*, which have a Dutch ring about them.

Most of them had lived in Holland for years, some had been born there, the majority spoke Dutch or understood it. For reasons of linguistic policy they were scattered and settled between the other colonists. This arrangement was eminently suited to merge them into the Dutch element of this polyglottic society where a German scholar ascertained in 1709 that fifty-four languages were spoken by white, brown, yellow and black. The arrangement proved to be exceedingly favourable for the process of effecting by exchange a degree of assimilation of the varying national forms of Calvinistic practice; intermarriage in course of time accelerated the process.

Which are the variable components of French Calvinism?

In the first place French national characteristics: love of form, beauty and decorum. They control the utterances of a strong character and a decidedly sanguine temperament, turning it to a degree of courteousness which spares the neighbour's feelings. Further, by a strong intellect and need of regularity, love of system, law and order, logic and style. But all these features are strongly marked in the personal character of John Calvin, who as a typical Frenchman reflected the French national mind. In the most malleable years of French Calvinism, those in which it arose and took shape, it acquired adherents among all classes of society, even among the highest nobility and royalty. In the St. Bartholomew night, however, 10,000 Huguenots were massacred, even from among those of noble and princely birth, and half a million of the best, bravest and ablest citizens fled from the country of their birth; they belonged to the lower middle class, mechanics and farmers. After this treacherous stroke, French Calvinism languished. The loss of France became the gain of Great Britain, the Low Countries, of Switzerland and Brandenburg. From the distress of persecution and struggle for life there sprang a beautiful harvest. The blood of the martyrs proved the seed of the Church. The oppression yielded the intense piety and noble sense of dependence which characterize the French Calvinistic conception of life in which also the national sanguine temperament plays its part. Conversion of a man or a nation does not destroy character, but sanctifies it. A French Calvinist is not a morose individual, probing his own feelings; he enjoys thankfully the temporal blessings which God bestows on him; he enjoys as freely and cheerfully the spiritual gifts, principally the joy of faith. He does not indulge in

Germanic gloom, fondling for years a morbid sense of uncertainty as regards his everlasting salvation, but strives for a life of gratitude, for waxing and increasing in grace ; he exalts God's fatherly goodness and loving kindness ; and he fights and conquers the world, the flesh and the devil. This optimism of faith made the righteous to flourish in abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

We quite agree that a generalization as the one offered here may seem to overstate the real position and thereby cause disillusion, yet we venture to say that most of the features mentioned are recognizable as French heirlooms in South African Calvinism, as furrows made long when the plowers of persecution and adversity ploughed upon their backs.

VI

After this short dissertation of German and French variable components of South African Calvinism, we come to the main contributor : Dutch Reformed Protestantism.

Compared with the real or alleged aristocratic and monarchical character of French Calvinism the Dutch variety strikes even the most casual observer as genuinely democratic and republican. The national task, performed elsewhere by the nobleman as a diplomatist, a ruler and a magistrate, was undertaken in the Netherlands by the merchant, the scholar and the well-to-do burgher. Royalty was introduced only when the French Revolution had shorn it of its prerogatives. The presbyterial form of church government is eminently fitted to the democratic national character. Another feature is lack of originality. Holland is hemmed in between three mighty cultures : the French, the German and the British. Hereditarily the Hollander is a good linguist : every educated Dutchman reads three languages which convey to him the cultural treasures from the adjacent territories. Consequently he becomes an eclectic, a compiler, and Holland came to be the Paradise of epigones. In an attitude of critical selection the Dutchman examines all currents in art, in learning and ethics. He learns and borrows from each and all. But by his width of vision and by constant practice of tolerance he is apt to lose in depth and originality. The Netherlands is rich in talented men, sustains a high average of intellectuality, but is not represented among the men of universal genius, unless we may count among them

Rembrand van Rijn who used a universal medium, Hugo Grotius who entered into the service of a foreign government and William the Silent who in the Dutch national anthem with real Dutch bluntness introduces himself in the opening lines under the title of a French prince of German extraction. Typically Dutch is the fact that Dutch Calvinism was founded and built up by a host of foreigners. The first churches in Holland professing Reformed Protestantism were founded by French pastors commissioned thereto by the Fugitives' Church of Strassburg; they were short-lived but left in the *Confessio Belgica* a bequest of lasting value to Holland. The real founder was a Pole, the nobleman and shepherd of souls, Johannes à Lasco. Yet he did not found Dutch Calvinism in Holland, but in London (1550) as pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Metropolis, still residing in its original abode, the Austin Friars' Church of Threadneedle Street.

After Mary Tudor's accession à Lasco and his congregation in the diaspora fled from England, not yet as might be expected to the Netherlands, but to Emden in Germany, where a number of fugitives' congregations were founded, extending north to south from Emden to the Palatinate. When at last the Reformed Dutch came out of great tribulation they brought with them the best material collected abroad and with it laid the foundations of their Church life and doctrine well and strong for the ages. They used three cornerstones: the first, from France, the Dutch Confession hewn by Guido de Bres (1562); the second, from Germany, the Heidelberg Catechism (1563); the third, the Canones of Dordrecht (1618-19) cut to shape locally, but in collaboration with the ablest divines gathered together from all Reformed countries at the Synod of Dort.

Nowhere outside Geneva was Calvin's influence ever stronger. The Dutch Republic of the Seven Provinces became the monument of Calvinism and its meaning and value we need not describe here. The debt of honour Holland owed to Britain was repaid with interest by offering shelter from 1581 to 1620 to the Brownists and by conveying in the *Mayflower*, fitted out in Holland, these Pilgrim Fathers to Boston so as to benefit America and the world with another—the American variety, again a local reaction on universal Calvinism.

The genuinely Dutch offshoot, however, of Dutch Calvinism, transplanted across the high seas, was Calvinism in South Africa.

The Cape Colony was founded in 1652, a few years after the Peace of Westphalia, when Reformed Protestantism in Holland had reached its high water mark. Holland thereby gave the best it had and the vital strength of the southern offshoot is accounted for by the fact that under Divine Providence the Cape was Holland's Reuben, "its first-born, its might and the beginning of its strength". It has progenerated the father's character, but adapted to the climate, the soil, the stamp of South Africa whose history it was to write. It supplied as variable component to the formation of a local Reformed Protestantism: democratic institutions for the white people, a patriarchal attitude to the coloured and blacks, deep-rooted patriotism to the country it built up, indomitable love of freedom and a sustained struggle for the purity of the faith once, but then for good, delivered unto the saints. Its religious and Church life displays the ancestral charismata: simplicity, depth and warmth.

VII

As the last factor in the reaction of South Africa on Reformed Protestantism we proceed to discuss succinctly the influence of the British variety of Calvinism. It was established when Thomas Cranmer appointed Bucer and Vermilius to teach it at Oxford and Cambridge. Its convictions and Church system were registered in a catechism, in the *Book of Common Prayer* (1553) and the *Confession of Westminster* (1559).

The spiritual father of Scottish Calvinism was John Knox, who as "a preacher of righteousness" was condemned to work as a slave at the oar of a galley. On his release he repaired to Geneva, where he became acquainted with the practice of Calvinism and preached in Calvin's pulpit. Returning to Edinburgh in 1555 he compelled the submission of King James and the Romanists. Of him it was rightly said: he neither feared nor flattered any flesh. Scottish and English Calvinists co-operated in the framing of British Reformed Protestantism and the blended British variable component became known under the collective appellation: Puritanism (1564). The hall mark was stamped upon it amid the fire of strife and persecution. The Established Church in England considered Calvinists as dissenters and excluded them from offices in State and Church; they could not occupy any rank in the feudal system as lords or property owners and, therefore, they had to work with head and hand to find their

living. Puritanism evolved in its adherents a peculiar devotion to their daily callings, first from physical necessity, but also from the desire, subconscious with many, to attain to certainty concerning their future state through the fruits of faith: good works. Of ethical necessity this led to frugality in living and purity in morals, to modest domestic happiness and sobriety in pleasure—it led also unintentionally, but inevitably, to economic prosperity. The national characteristic of individuality urged the British Calvinist to draw the last conclusion of the cardinal dogma of Predestination, that no priest, no Church nor sacrament could save his soul which ultimately had to appear face to face before the Creator under the seal of His elective love. Other national inborn features found equal satisfaction in Calvinism, such as love of method and purposefulness. So it became less dogmatical and more ethical than either Dutch or French Calvinism. British Reformed Protestantism strikes the observer as particular, strict, rigid and formal; it must make this impression as it strives for the sanctification of the believer. At the period of its introduction there was a crying need for improvement of morals, as the standard was decidedly low. Constitutionally the Britisher is pragmatic, utilitarian, orderly, matter-of-fact and methodical. If we combine the effect of these propensities, lift them from the social to an ethical, to a conscientiously religious plane, and do so among the seventeenth century British middle class, the result must be Puritanism. Puritanism produced virile men, at the same time it encouraged formalism, founding the certainty of salvation more on the presence of good works than on trust in God's promises. Turning the practice of Christian life into a system dimmed the spontaneity of faith and hope and charity.

The direct influence of British Calvinism on the South African variety is hard to indicate. The reason is that the greatest English Church in South Africa, the Anglican or Episcopal Church which counts twenty per cent. of the white population, professes Reformed convictions in its standards of faith, but, with very few exceptions indeed, does not preach them from its pulpits. In the Nonconformist churches there are many Baptist ministers and a few Presbyterians who pay more than lip service to the tenets of Calvinism. Among the laity there are those who hold strong Calvinistic views, but they are not organized and, therefore, remain inarticulate.

Indirectly, however, Puritanism, interwoven with the British national character, strongly promoted the practice of South African Calvinism. No public orator dare face a South African audience on whatever topic with any hope of success, unless he strikes the ethical note. This fact is a silent homage to Puritanism and must be placed to the credit of British Calvinism. During the thirty years I have been in close touch with church life in South Africa I have not been able to detect other results.

Yet South African Calvinism would commit an act of gross ingratitude to God and to the instruments He deigned to employ, if it remained silent on the contribution of Scottish pioneers, particularly of the Murrays (Andrew senior and junior, John, George and William), Dr. Robertson, Macgregor and others in stemming the tide of Unitarianism that threatened the religious life and Calvinistic doctrine and practice of the Dutch Reformed Church, as well as in the creating and fostering of Missionary enterprise which is a marked feature of that Church, placing it second only to the Moravian Church in obedience to the tender behest of a parting Saviour.

VIII

Here we have arrived at the end of our investigations historical and psychological. In the discussion of each contributing factor I have endeavoured to make up the balance and I think a few final remarks should suffice to describe the present situation.

South African reaction to Calvinism coming to her shores in types nationally assimilated elsewhere, has evolved its own type. Incidentally this fact proves how untenable the assertion is that Reformed Protestantism is not meant for warm climates. South African Calvinism appears to us to be elementary, less philosophically elaborated than in older countries, more spontaneous, practical in its application to national idiosyncrasies and eminently suited to national life which in this young country is malleable and not yet stereotyped. Generalizations are always dangerous, but I think it is agreed that South African Calvinism is indebted to the Calvinism of Holland for its seriousness of life, its loyalty to Church and doctrine ; to French Calvinism for its child-like deep piety, and to British Calvinism for strong Puritanical leanings. Dutch South Africans number about one million souls ; the majority presumably has a Calvinistic bias, a small

minority is consciously so inclined. The dangers which encompass them are methodism, modernism, black and white paganism, isolation and insufficient organization. Fortunately a good beginning has been made by the founding of a Calvinistic League which has held three successful conferences and is trying to link up with international Reformed Protestantism. A programme of principles and one of action have been drawn up and the enthusiasm raised is being directed to a clearly defined object : parental direction of education.

South African Calvinism has to face the same problems as the European varieties, but in addition to these it has to face and solve the native question. Under God's good guidance it took up spontaneously the patriarchal attitude which has proved the best for the moral and national preservation of the South African Dutch as a nation and for the maintenance of culture and Christianity. That a handful of whites were able to retain their purity of race and all it stands for during close on three centuries is a brilliant vindication of Calvinism as a principle of colonization. A comparison between South America and South Africa on this point is instructive. If Dutch and English Calvinists in South Africa would unite, the issue might under God's blessing prove a boon to Boer, Briton and Bantu.

IX

I have tried to be frank in dealing with Dutch, French, British and South African types of Calvinism. The imperfections, limits and limitations of their variable components are human, their essence is God's gift. In each and all we recognize the works of a Triune Sovereign God who writes history and moulds the nations to His glory ; therefore only one conclusion befits these investigations :

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out !

For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? or who hath been his counsellor ?

Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again ?

For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things : to whom be glory for ever. Amen.