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# Pro Rege

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## Editor Explains

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is used either to gather literary norm proofs from texts themselves or to show that the literary form of the Bible is itself a model for writing and evaluating literature.

This 168-page volume contains thirty short chapters whose titles all begin with the words, "The Norm of . . .," completed with such literary norms as Unity, Variety, Conflict, Holiness, and Peace.

It is the pattern of the book to establish first the Scriptural references to the norm in question and then to balance the application with a brief evaluation of literature that is disobedient to that norm and literature that is obedient. For example, "The Norm of Obedience" is established with such texts as, "Wives, be subject to your husbands in all things." The author then shows how this involves love, before he applies this norm to an evaluation of The Heart of the Matter, a novel by Graham Greene. Meeter shows that Father Rank's retort to Mrs. Scobie, after her husband's dismal death, is in contradiction to the norm of love and obedience. Father Rank says, "...don't imagine you--or I--know a thing about God's mercy." Meeter writes: "But the Bible does tell us much, and that explicitly, about God's mercy--as well as about damnation" (p. 82). For an obedient Biblical

response the author turns to a less-known work, He Is Not Gone by Bernard Brunsting. Letting a rather lengthy quotation from the novel speak for itself, Meeter generalizes: "A strong and tender spirit of Christlike submission pervades this book and illustrates the norm of obedience for all those who are eager to learn the true principles of writing" (p. 83).

It is not my purpose here to evaluate either my colleague's interpretation of literature or to show our differences in critical technique. However, his sustained insistence that Christian writers have made and are making contributions to the imaginative writing field is to Meeter's credit. In his Literature and the Gospel, in bibliographies, and in other pieces he writes, Meeter insists on the place and validity of such writers as C. S. Lewis, Ruby Wiebe, Elisabeth Elliot, Bernard Palmer, Grace Irwin, Luci Shaw, Thomas John Carlisle, Fred Taminga, Sherwood Wirt, James Hefley, Clyde Kilby, John Pollock, and many more. Though they might not appreciate being lumped together, they have their place in Christian literary history, and Meeter is concerned about giving them a place more respectable than they are normally given.

Such effort, in my opinion, needs recognition.

## THE EDITOR EXPLAINS

The Dordt campus is the scene of many and varied activities. Some activities are widely publicized; some are made known only on the campus. Still other activities are seldom referred to in public. One such activity is the inter-faculty discussion. This discussion is an ongoing thing. At times it reaches a near feverish point; then again, it recedes to the

proportion of a summer stream in Iowa, a week after the last good rain.

In this issue of Pro Rege we are introducing you to some of this discussion. Or, possibly I should say, we are inviting you to listen to faculty discussions.

Such discussions take place, for example, in our science building. You may recall that

Mr. Gary Parker presented some provisional thoughts on "Alloformitarianism" in the previous issue (Dec., 1972). Mr. Richard Hodgson is making an initial public response to the thoughts of Parker. Later, Hodgson hopes to develop and explain some of the points he raised in this issue. Look for a further contribution from him to appear some time in the next six months. In the meantime, if anyone wishes to join the discussions, do so!

While referring to the discussions emanating from our science department, may I call your attention to Dr. Russell Maatman's thesis on a unifying factor in science. His is an interesting thought to mull over. "All men are made in the image of God, therefore we have a unifying factor in scientific endeavor." Anyone wish to comment on this?

Evidence of inter-faculty discussion on Dordt's campus is apparent within the English department also. Elsewhere in this issue you will find reference to a book published by a Dordt faculty member, Mr. Merle Meeter. With care he has developed his approach to a

critical evaluation of literature. In the near future you will have the opportunity to listen in on faculty discussions which present alternative approaches to a critical Christian evaluation. Be looking for it. I'm certain you will find the discussion stimulating and instructive.

Formal discussions continue by Dordt's Educational Purposes committee. In a previous issue, a paper produced by this committee was published. In this issue, the article by Mr. Gerald O'Donnell, represents another Purposes Committee study. It would seem quite self-evident that such articles do not reflect only the position or view of one man. Rather, these articles are considered to be faculty materials which are designed to serve as resource material and as an indication of direction in thought.

O'Donnell's article sets forth some basic factors involved in Christian scholars' attitudes to and uses of the Scriptures in relation to the study of the specific givens of a discipline.

Further thought, undoubtedly, will be given to this intriguing question.

G.V.G.