October 14 1953

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
Shelton College

Dear Dr. Buswell,

Thank you for sending me your review of my book, A Christian View of Men and Things. I wish you had told me where your review will appear. Your vigorous opposition to my views does not affect in the least my friendship toward you, and I trust that the converse is also true. Indeed, I am convinced it is.

As your review is quite long, I do not see how I could examine it in detail without writing another book, which would in turn require another review. But I should like to make one or two points.

One point is that here and there you ascribe to me views that I do not hold. Naturally your criticisms of such views is irrelevant as applied to me. One of the clearest and most comprehensive instances is found on page 15 of your MS. You say, "Looking back over Dr. Clarkis constructive efforts to prove the existence of God from the existence of truth, we must say that it takes the pattern of the cosmological argument. Taking truth as an existing datum, Dr. Clark draws the inference that because truth exists therefore God exists." Since you admit that you are looking back over the whole of my argument, I must reply that it is the whole of my argument that you have missed. I have nowhere attempted to prove the existence of God. I have not tried to prove God's existence from the existence of truth, and I certainly did not take truth (if truth is other than God) as an existing datum. Naturally if you miss the main idea of the book as a whole, the particular criticisms are understandably irrelevant.

A second point is what I believe to be your historical inaccuracy. You say on page 4, and you have said before, that Thomism does not regard the proofs as logically demonstrative. Would you kindly produce the evidence. Gilson, The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, p. 64, supports my view.

Allow me just one instance of your irrelevancy, for I cannot possibly take the time to discuss them all. On page 13 you refer to my position that truth is mental

and is not, as behavioriam teaches, a physical motion. Part of my argument in that communication requires the presence of the same thought in two minds, and also that memory requires the same thought to occur twice to one mind. But you reply that your thought of Mt. Shasta today is not the same as your thought of Mt. Shasta yesterday. This is irrelevant, for I have not argued that a thought must recur, or that any given thought is the same as a previous one. I have argued that unless one thought occurs twice, there cannot be communication or memory. The fact that a given thought, the thought of Mt. Shasta, does not occur twice, does not show that a thought cannot occur twice. The remained of the argument, of course, is that these phenomena cannot be physical; they can only be mental.

Again let me say that I am sorry you discontinued publishing The Bible Today. Perhaps you would have permitted me to say there that I disavowed your statements of my position.

Cordially yours,

Shelton College

RINGWOOD BOROUGH, NEW JERSEY

October
nineteen
1953

Professor Gordon H. Clark, Ph.D.
Department of Philosophy
Butler University
Indianapolis 7, Indiana

Dear Dr. Clark

I have studied your letter of October 14 with some dismay. I really do not know where the review will be printed. I confess that I wrote it primarily for you, and I sent it to you in the hope that your reaction would be something more than quibbling.

I hate to use the word quibbling but please examine your third paragraph. By the end of the paragraph you are talking about my idea of "the book as a whole". At the beginning you quote my own words which refer to "Dr. Clark's constructive efforts". These words of mine were found in a context in which I stated that your constructive efforts ~~is~~ are a very small part of your total work. Now, if my opinion of your constructive argument as a whole is to be equated with my opinion of the book as a whole, when it so obviously has no such reference, you can understand my use of the word dismay at the beginning of this letter. I had hoped for something better from you.

When you say "I have no where attempted to prove the existence of God. I have not tried to prove God's existence from the existence of truth..." I suppose you are using one of your special definitions of "prove".

As to your question about Thomas Aquinas, I have several times pointed out that Thomas does not regard the theistic arguments as proof in the sense of what you call logical demonstration. My evidence is based upon what Thomas himself says. I have quoted him extensively and I assume that ~~the~~ his works are available for you. I do not take my Thomas from Gilson though I recognize the value of the latter's studies. Thomas' statements of the theistic arguments are not very lengthy. Why not read them for yourself? I have just finished a 100 page paper on Thomas which is available in multilith offset printed form, but the evidence for Thomas' opinion is found in Thomas, not in Buswell.

The Point in your next to the last paragraph seems to me quite confused and contradictory. You have ignored again the distinction between truth as it exists in minds and truth in the ~~cases~~ in which men's minds are attempting to ascertain it. The proposition "it is 9:50 by my clock" is a truth in my mind. But when I do not know what time it is and look at the clock to see what time it is by the clock, I am looking for the physical relation-

ship of parts of a physical object. Of course the idealists deny the existence of material objects as such and so the truth of what time it is by my clock is nothing but mental.

It was the editor of the Bulletin of The American Scientific Affiliation ~~which~~ who originally asked me for the review, but I have long delayed and I am afraid that this is entirely too long for them. Perhaps I can publish it somewhere else. However, a comment like that of your third paragraph in which you take what I specifically limit to a small phase of your book as referring to the book as a whole, would hardly be worth a footnote if The Bible Today were still available.

With cordial personal regards, in spite of much disappointment at your reply,

Yours in Christian fellowship

J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
President

job/e

October 24 1953

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
Shelton College
Ringwood Borough, N.J.

Dear Dr. Buswell,

I debated with myself whether or not to answer your letter of Oct. 19, for I know how busy you are. You are at perfect liberty to ignore this letter if you are pressed for time, but I concluded that I ought to ask you to implement your previous reply on one point at least.

You wrote, "I have several times pointed out that Thomas does not regard the theistic arguments as proof in the sense of what you call logical demonstration . . . I have quoted him extensively.""

In your letters to me you have several times asserted that Thomas did not regard his proofs as logical demonstrations. But I do not remember a single time that you quoted him to support this assertion. If you could send me the references, I would certainly look them up. And Gilson, with whom I agree, would surely have discussed any statements that contradicted his view.

You suggest that I read the proofs, which you say are not lengthy. Perhaps you refer to the summary of the proofs in the Summa Theologica, which precedes the final conclusion. The proofs themselves are a hundred pages or so long. But I think the material to be examined is not the proofs, but rather Thomas' theory of demonstration. Let me quote one little bit.

S. Th. I, Q2, Art. 2: "Whether it can be demonstrated that God exists? . . . I answer that demonstration can be made in two ways: one is through the cause and is called propter quid, . . . the other is through the effect and is called a demonstration quia. . . . And from every effect the existence of its proper cause can be demonstrated . . . If the effect exists, the cause must preexist. Hence the existence of God can be demonstrated from those of his effects which are known to us. . . . Reply to Obj. 2. When the existence of a cause is demonstrated from an effect, this effect takes the place of the definition of the cause in proving the cause's existence . . . Reply to Obj. 3. . . . Yet from every effect the existence of the cause can be clearly demonstrated, and so we can demonstrate the existence of God from his effects . . ."

Now, unless you can show from Thomas' commentaries on the Posterior Analytics, which I must examine, or from elsewhere, that Thomas rejected the Aristotelian theory of demonstration, it seems to me that the above quotation tells heavily in my favor against your interpretation. Certainly the quotation uses the term demonstation several times, refers to middle terms in some lines I omitted here, and says the cause must preexist. If this does not mean a strictly logical demonstration, such as is best exemplified in geometrical proofs, then the wording is singlularly misleading.

Since you say that you have a 100 page paper on St. Thomas in multilith offset, I would be glad to receive a copy, and see if you have given references for a non-aristotelian theory of demonstration in Thomas.

I refrain from mentioning other items in your last letter, for I fear it would complicate things entirely too much.

Very truly yours,

Summa Theol.

Part I, Q. 2, Art 2.

Whether it can be demonstrated that God exists?

"... I answer that demonstration can be made in two ways: one is through the cause and is called propter quid, ... the other is through the effect and is called a demonstration quia. .... And from every effect the existence of its proper cause can be demonstrated ... if the effect exists, the cause must preexist. Hence the existence of God ... can be demonstrated from those of his effects which are known to us.

... Reply to Obj. 2. When the existence of a cause is demonstrated from an effect, this effect takes the place of the definition of the cause in proving the cause's existence ...

Reply to Obj. 3. ... Yet from every effect the existence of the cause can be clearly demonstration, and so we can demonstrate the existence of God from his effects ....

345 Buckingham Drive.
Indianapolis 8, Ind.

November 4 1953.

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
Shelton College
Ringwood, N.J.

Dear Dr. Buswell,

Thank you for sending me your study of Thomas and the Bible. It has clarified the point at issue.

My statements have been that Thomas intended the arguments for God's existence as demonstrative arguments. You say I am historically incorrect and that Thomas did not assert that these arguments are demonstrative. This seems to me to be the point at issue, and I was perplexed how you could assert that I was historically mistaken when Thomas explicitly calls the arguments demonstrative.

In your paper, page 81, you quote Schaff as saying that "the existence of God . . has been demonstrated by philosophers by irrefragable proofs." I take it therefore that Schaff agrees with me.

On page 83 you say, "the opinion that the . . arguments are deductive or a priori throws confusion into the whole field . . . Thomas' arguments are clearly inductive inferences a posteriori from effects to cause. Thomas makes no claim to deductive demonstration."

Now, first, he did indeed so claim, as I quoted in my last letter. He explicitly says that the existence of God can be demonstrated.

But you apparently confuse deductive demonstrationwith the a priori. There are two meanings of a priori, the Kantian and the Aristotelian. If you will reread what I have written, both in my book and in my letters, you will see that I never said Thomas used a priori proofs in the Kantian sense of a priori. In fact I placed Thomas under the subsection entitled Empiricism. Nor did I ever say that the proofs were a priori in the Aristotelian sense. It is quite true that Thomas' arguments are a posteriori, both in the Kantian sense of requiring sensation and in the Aristotelian sense of proceeding from effects to cause. And if that is induction, they are inductive proofs. But they are still deductive demonstrations. Even you admit, by quoting Robinson with approval on page 83 that "Deduction is really present in all inductive inferences." Thomas distinguishes between two types of demonstration: from cause to effect and from effect to cause. But though the latter may be inferior in a certain respect, it is still a valid inference and Thomas still classes it as demonstration.

On page 84 you seem to equate deductive argument with the ontological proof. But if this is the limit of the term deduction, then there are no deductive arguments whatever in Aristotle or in Thomas. Surely I am not to understand you as saying that Thomas denied that he ever used deduction; but in this case he must have used a posteriori deductive arguments.

Not only have you confused demonstration with the a priori, you also characterize the arguments as probably, on pp. 83 & 85. Note that Schaff said irrefragable demonstration. Now, if Schaff is mistaken, you ought to cite references where Thomas admits that the syllogisms he uses are not necessary inferences but are only probabilities. At any rate I know of no place where Thomas makes such an admission.

Hence I must continue to believe that Thomas intended his arguments to be irrefragable, strictly valid syllogisms. They claim to meet all the requirements of validity in deductive logic, and since they are not intended to be fallacious probability arguments, their conclusions claim to be necessary inferences from their premises. This is demonstration, as Thomas explicitly claimed.

Of course, I believe that Thomas was wrong in his claim, and that the arguments are really fallacies. But this is not a matter of Medieval history.

Very cordially yours,

Gordon H. Clark.

Notes on Dr. Clark's letter to Editor,
JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SCIENTIFIC AFFILIATION,
Volume 6, No. 1, March, 1954.

To Dr. Clark

Page 36, Column 1, paragraph 2. Dr. Clark does not make it clear to even a very careful reader that he is summarizing Spengler. Now that he states the fact, one can see what was in Dr. Clark's mind. He refers to Spengler three full pages before the sentence quoted, and he begins the paragraph following the sentence quoted with the words, "... continues Spengler..." All of this, however, is under the heading (page 127) "The consent of the governed." No quotation marks are used. Spengler has not been mentioned for three full pages. The last author quoted before the sentence which I took out is Goethe, and Rousseau is the author most frequently quoted in this section. In what actually appears in this section the thoughtful reader has no grounds to conclude that Dr. Clark is doing anything but giving his own opinions with illustrative collateral references to several different authors.

Furthermore, there is not the slightest hint in the book itself, or in Dr. Clark's letter to the editor giving the reader to understand that Dr. Clark in any way disagrees with Spengler on the point quoted. Dr. Clark introduces the material which he derived from Spengler by a favorable comment that Spengler is more consistent and more factual than Rousseau. Ignoring I Peter 2:13, 14, Dr. Clark repeatedly takes Spengler's position in rejecting the doctrine that government depends upon "the consent of the governed," as enunciated in our Declaration of Independence. See, for example, his reference to, "the empty phrases of the consent of the governed..." (p. 136).

Spengler is even more cynical than Clark in the sentence in question, for Spengler (Decline of the West, Vol. 2, chapter 12, p. 452) ascribes, "the naïve assumption" that the mass of the electorate could choose men capable of managing a nation's affairs to "all constitutions". Even though it now appears that the sentence which I quoted was derived from Spengler, yet Dr. Clark does not repudiate the opinion expressed, and I think that the evidence still shows that this sentence expresses Dr. Clark's own opinion.

I agree in what Dr. Clark calls "unadulterated Christian truth", but this is not a point at issue. I disagree in his rejection of the doctrine of the Declaration of Independence.

Page 36, Column 1, paragraph 4. In the passage cited by Dr. Clark, Kuyper does not say without qualifications that "every effort to prove the existence of God by so-called evidences must fail and has failed." He says that this would be the case on an assumption which he says is contrary to fact. His argument is that because of sin "those data, which were at our command, for obtaining the knowledge of God" have been reduced to "ruin". He says, "Without the sense of God in the heart no one shall ever attain to a knowledge of God ... /but/ ... experience shows that this sense has not worn away entirely, and ... this impulse has not ceased altogether, but ... in virtue of its own motive, sin has weakened this sense to such an extent as to render it oftentimes unrecognizable ..." Kuyper continues, "... it follows at the same time that the knowledge of the cosmos as a whole ... is equally bound to founder upon this obstruction wrought by sin. ... it by no means follows, that you should skeptically doubt all science, but simply that it will not do to omit the fact of sin from your theory of knowledge." (Encyclopedia, pp.112f)

It is thus clear that the statement which Dr. Clark quotes as though it expressed Kuyper's opinion, is merely a statement which Kuyper says would be true upon an assumption contrary to fact, that is, on the assumption that the sense of God is completely obliterated from the heart of mankind.

Kuyper uses the cosmological and teleological arguments in an extended section beginning on page 76 of his great work on Theological Encyclopedia. For example:

> ... the Subject defined these relations when he called them into being. If there were no thought imbedded in the object, it could not be digestable to our thinking. (P. 78)

> And since the object does not produce the subject, nor the subject the object, the power that binds the two organically together must of necessity be sought outside of each. And however much we may speculate and ponder, no explanation can ever suggest itself to our sense, of the all-sufficient ground for this admirable correspondence and affinity between object and subject, on which the possibility and development of science wholly rests, until at the hand of Holy Scriptures we confess that the Author of the cosmos created man in the cosmos as microcosmos "after his image and likeness." (P. 83)

Quoting from the Dutch edition of Kuyper's Encyclopedia, Volume 2, Page 23, Van Til says

> Kuyper argues that we must stress the "identity of our thinking consciousness with the world of relation so far as to maintain that without an original Subject, who has thought them, and possessed the power to bring the product of his thought into dominance in the cosmos, they would not exist". (Common Grace, p. 37)

Such clear examples of argument from the creation as an effect to God as a Cause are found frequently in Kuyper's writings.

Page 36, Column 1, last paragraph. Dr. Clark knows very well that I reject Aquinas' form of the cosmological argument. I have written extensively on this point and Dr. Clark has read what I have written and corresponded with me at length about it. His dragging in the word "Thomistic", and his reference to " a particular student's demonstration", as though I have defended the Thomistic position when he knows that I have not, is scarcely characteristic of straightforward thinking.

Page 36, Column 2, first paragraph. It is quite amazing that Dr. Clark would defend his extreme statement on Nietzsche. If Nietzsche did not arrive at his so-called truth "by scientific experimentation", he certainly did not arrive at this "truth" on any theistic presupposition or by divine revelation! Nietzsche's statement as quoted by Clark is an inexcusable exaggeration, and Clark's calling it "exact truth" is a clear example of Dr. Clark's careless and inconsistent use of the word "truth".

Page 36, Column 2, second paragraph. I did not say that Pearson and Carlson were straw men, but that in selecting certain of their eccentric statements as representative of "Science" Dr. Clark has set up a straw man.

I have not touched upon Dr. Clark's few remarks on the main point at issue, namely, the validity of inductive processes of reasoning by the scientific method. It seems to me that in his reply he has not refuted my argument. If anyone should desire a serious treatment of any point in Dr. Clark's reply, I shall be glad to take the matter up in whatever way may seem appropriate.

J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.

March 27, 1954

cc Dr. Clark

JAMES OLIVER BUSWELL JR.
DEAN OF GRADUATE FACULTY
COVENANT COLLEGE & SEMINARY ST. LOUIS
RES. ROUTE 3, BOX 527 L, CREVE COEUR, MO.

May 20, 1958

Professor Gordon H. Clark, Ph.D.
Butler University
Indianapolis, Indiana

Dear Dr. Clark:

I am writing to you in obedience to Matthew 18:15-17.

In your chapter in Carl Henry's new book you have several times seriously misrepresented me. On p. 142f. you specifically violate the 9th commandment.

I may be in Indianapolis on the afternoon of Sunday, June 15th. If so, possibly we could get together in the Bible Presbyterian Church, so that I could lay this matter before you without interruptions, as the Scripture indicates. Please let me know your thought as to a time and place of meeting in case the afternoon of June 15th is impossible.

Yours in Christ,

J. Oliver Buswell Jr.

My dear Dr B.

Your letter of May 20 took me by surprise. Contemporary Evangelical Thought has been published for a year now, and last week we met on what seemed to me the friendliest terms, so that I was far from expecting the letter you have written.

Your letter disturbed me considerably. It contrasts so strongly with the tone of our friendly meeting last week. Not only do you charge me with "serious misrepresentation," but you emphasize your accusation by alleging that I bear false witness. To my mind this

suggests the connotation of my having deliberately and knowingly attempted to injure you. Instead of trying to avoid such by softer language, a suggestion, your letter is formal, and its form is the recognized form that prepares for judicial proceedings in a church court. I cannot understand such severity.

First of all, let me say plainly that I did not intend to misrepresent you.

In the second place, if I misunderstood your article in The Bible Today and so failed to reproduce your thought, the

~~point at issue is so mis~~

misrepresentation is so minor that there is no reason to call it "serious."

Then, in the third place, after rereading The Bible Today and the pages you ~~op~~ cite in C. E. T. I fail to see the alleged misrepresentation. Your letter does not state what the supposed misrepresentation consists of.

In The Bible Today (Nov. 1948, p. 53) you say "Van Til holds that holiness and truth are created by the will of God." You then refer to Charles Hodge who makes a distinction between the will and the character of God.

You then, for yourself, at least as I understand the passage, assert, "Never does the Scripture represent the will of God as creating his holiness and truth but always as expressing God's character which is holy and true."

At the end of column two you continue "Professor Van Til does not realize that the source of the abstract law of non-contradiction as we know it, is the immutable character of God rather than the free will of God."

Now in C. E. T. (pp. 140-143) I am discussing moral ~~distinct~~ norms. ~~I mention~~, Among several other authors I mention Van Til, who says "The good is good for man

because it has been set as good for man?) by God. This is usually expressed by saying that the good is good because God says it is good ... We do not artificially separate the will of God from the nature of God." Just before, I referred to the primacy of the divine lawgiver in contrast with Leibniz' primacy of law.

It is true that I also refer to Hamilton, Barnell, and to the philosophy of naturalism. Therefore several points are under discussion at once, and I can see how this might cause some confusion.

Nevertheless, what I say about you seems to be fully justified by your article in The Bible Today. The paragraph you deem a "serious

misrepresentation", and for which you accuse me of false witness, is as follows:

quote

Kindly note, first, that I refer to your article so that anyone may look it up and see precisely what you said. Then, second, note my care in warning the reader against drawing unwarranted inferences. ~~[illegible]~~ not much more can be reasonably expected in six lines.

The sentence preceding these six lines is, "The only basis for moral distinctions must therefore be the preceptive will of God, and these precepts are found only in the Scripture."

Now, I must say that your writings seem to deny that the preceptive will of God, ~~or simply the~~ or generally the will of God, is "the only basis for moral distinctions." ~~Did you not~~ ~~[illegible]~~ The words of your article as I read them seem to say that the character of God is at least also the basis; ~~and~~ in fact I would suppose that you ~~you~~ mean that God's character is the basis of moral norms and all truth.

Therefore I cannot see that I have misrepresented you, ~~or have~~ much less borne deliberate false witness.

However, you take such a serious view of the situation that, ~~you feel the~~ in accord with the regular forms of discipline, you ~~wish~~ ask to meet with me. I am not inclined to ignore such a strict requirement. Although I expect to be at Covenant College on May 30, it is possible that other duties would leave little time for this. If such is the case, June 15th, perhaps 2:30 p.m., at the Bible Presbyterian Church here, as you suggest, would be convenient.

Very truly yours,

May 23 1958

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.
Covenant College and Seminary
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Dr. Buswell,

Your letter of May 20 took me by surprise. Contemporary Evangelical Thought has been published for a year now, and last week we met on what seemed to me such friendly terms, so that I was far from expecting the letter you have written.

Your letter disturbed me considerably. It contrasts so strongly with the tone of our friendly meeting last week. Not only do you charge me with "serious misrepresentation," but you emphasize your accusation by alleging that I bear false witness. To my mind this suggests the connotation of my having deliberately and knowingly attempted to injure you. Instead of trying to avoid such a suggestion by softer language, your letter is formal, and its form is the recognized form that prepares for judicial proceedings in a church court. I cannot understand such severity.

First, Let me say plainly that I did not intend to misrepresent you.

In the second place, if I misunderstood your article in The Bible Today and so failed to reproduce your thought, the misrepresentation is so minor that there is no reason to call it "serious."

Then, third, after rereading The Bible Today and the pages you cite in Contemporary Evangelical Thought, I fail to see the alleged misrepresentation. Your letter does not state what the supposed misrepresentation consists of.

In The Bible Today(Nov. 1948, p. 55) you say, "Van Til holds that ~~kkx~~ holiness and truth are created by the will of God." You then refer to Charles Hodge who makes a distinction between the will and the character of God. You then, for yourself, at least as I understand the passage, assert, "Never does the Scripture represent the will of God as creating his holiness and truth, but always as expressing God's character which is holy and true." At the end of column two you continue, "Professor Van Til does not realize that the source of the abstract law of non-contradiction as we know it, is the immutable character of God rather than the free will of God."

Now, in Contemporary Evangelical Thought (pp. 140-143) I am discussing moral norms. Among several other authors I mention Van Til, who says, "The good is good for man because it has been set as good for man by God. This is usually expressed by saying that the good is good because God says it is good. . . We do not artificially separate the will of God from the nautre of God." Just before, I refered to the primacy of the divine Lawgiver in contrast with Leibniz' primacy of law.

It is true that I also refer to Hamilton, Carnell, and to the philosophy of naturalism. Therefore several points are under discussion at once, and I can see that this might cause some confusion.

Nevertheless, what I say about you seems to be fully justified by your article in The Bible Today. The paragraph you deem a "serious misrepresentation, and for which you accuse me of false witness, is as follows: "In fairness and for greater completeness it should be noted that one contemporary evangelical apologete, Dr. J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., in The Bible Today (Nov. 1948, p. 53), takes issue with the position that moral distinctions are based on the will of God. As the passage is short, perhaps nothing more should be said, for fear of reading extraneous ideas into the text."

Kindly note first that I refer to your article so that anyone may look it up and see precisely what you said. Then, second, note my care in warning the reader against drawing unwarranted inferences. Not much more can reasonably be expected in six lines.

The sentence preceding these six lines is, "The only basis for moral distinctions must therefore be the preceptive will of God, and these precepts are found only in the Bible." Now, I must say that your writings seem to deny that the preceptive will of God, or generally the will of God, is "the only ~~basis~~ basis for moral distinctions." The words of your article as I read them seem to say that the character of God is at least also the basis; in fact I would suppose that you mean that God's character is the basis of moral norms and all truth.

Therefore I cannot see that I have misrepresented you, much less borne deliberate false witness.

However, you take such a serious view of the situation that in accord with the regular forms of discipline you ask me to meet with you. I am not inclined to ignore such a strict requirement. Although I expect to be at Covenant College on May 30, it is possible that other duties would leave little time for this. If such is the case, June 15, perhaps at 2:30 p.m., at the Bible Presbyterian Church here, would be convenient.

Very truly yours,

JAMES OLIVER BUSWELL JR.
DEAN OF GRADUATE FACULTY
COVENANT COLLEGE AND SEMINARY
RT. 1, BOX 334, ST. LOUIS 41, MO.

Jan. 16. 1962

Dear Dr Clark

I have just finished reading your Religion, Reason and Revelation and am preparing a review. On p. 43 I find quite a blunder. When I commit a blunder and it gets into print, I always appreciate an opportunity to retract it myself.

Now my old algebra, Introductory College Algebra by Reitz and Crathorne, Ch. I P. 10 defines "Division" as follows: "To divide any number a by any number b ($b \neq 0$) is to find a number x such that the product $bx = a$." Then follows the comment: "Note the condition that $b \neq 0$. This means that the divisor is not zero." Later, P 14 is devoted to exposing the fallacy of "zero in division." But P 9 in the same chapter it is made plain that "the product of any number x and 0 is 0." In other words, Hodge, Vol I p. 211 did not make a mistake in arithmetic, but Clark, p. 43 made a

mistake in argument.

To me this is not trivial, because I have the discrediting of the Calvinism of Charles Hodge and of the inductive argument for theism is a great mistake. You have a perfect right to your opposite opinion within the bounds of our company fellowship, and I do not wish to take advantage of a mere blunder. I make blunders!

Wouldn't you like to have me say something like this: "I have called to Dr Clark's attention the error of the following sentence [illegible] "It is not true that zero . . ." and he graciously replied "It was a blunder! Our best scholars make blunders."?

Cordial personal regards

Yours in Christ

J. Oliver Buswell Jr.

January 30 1962

The Rev. Dr. James Oliver Buswell, Jr.
Dean of Graduate Faculty
Covenant College and Seminary
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Dr. Buswell,

Indeed, blunders sometimes occur. For example, in a book , The Philosophies of F. R. Tennant and John Dewey, page 16, the author points up the alleged ignorance of Bertocci and Scudder in that they did not know certain men's names. But the author himself falls under his own criticism because on page 14 he is obviously ignorant of the name of Dr. Machen, whom he admires.

Another blunder is that of Hodge in the passage under discussion. And a further blunder would be an attempt to show that Hodge's argument is not a fallacy.

Therefore I decline your generous offer to publicize my retraction, for I do not retract

Very truly yours,

Gordon H. Clark

JAMES OLIVER BUSWELL JR.
ROUTE 1 BOX 334
ST. LOUIS 41, MISSOURI
PHONE: TREMONT 2-7073

DEAN OF GRADUATE FACULTY
COVENANT COLLEGE AND
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Jan. 23, 1962

Dear Dr Clark

Thank you for pointing out my dilemma. I had to find out if my first name was Jonathan. Do you intend to have the enclosed [illegible] my attention. This is not the worst blunder of your grade. I remember "Glenden," "Ofin," [illegible] for [illegible] "Glen," "Ofin" [illegible] many years. [illegible] [illegible] fortunately [illegible] that [illegible] is [illegible] for "J. C." Dan (Dan) [illegible] a combination of [illegible] first name.

I wonder how far you could carry out your reference

$\frac{1}{2} = 00$

$\frac{2}{3} = 000$

[illegible] expand

$\frac{2}{3} = 3$

[illegible]

? ?

[F]

I should not [illegible] this [illegible], but I [illegible] the attack on [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible].

Cordial greetings [illegible], and sincere regrets [illegible] this [illegible].

Yours Cordially