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Reformation and Education

Second of Two Parts

Purposes of education

According to the Reformation, what were the *purposes* of education?

Luther suggested that there were two main purposes in educating the children of believers, a 'spiritual' purpose and a 'temporal' purpose.

(a) The welfare of the Church requires an educated ministry. The preachers of the Word of God must be learned in the *languages*. It is a well-known fact that Luther stressed the significance of the study of languages, not because of Humanism, but because of his concern for the gospel: "Let us be sure of this: we will not long preserve the gospel without the languages. The languages are the sheath in which the word of the Spirit is contained; they are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; they are the vessel in which the wine is held; they are the larder in which this food is stored . . . If through our neglect we let the languages go (which God forbid!), we shall not only lose the gospel, but the time will come when we shall be unable either to speak or write a correct Latin or German." (45, p. 360).

But you will understand that this 'spiritual' purpose of education was not limited to those boys who would become ministers of the Word. We already saw that it was Luther's contention that *every* child must be educated, at least for several years. Also girls must go to school. "And would to God that every town had a girls' school as well, where the girls would be taught the gospel for an hour every day either in German or in Latin." (44, p. 206).

The Reformation discovered the office of *all* believers again, the office of men and women, boys and girls. As children of believers, the girls too must be able to read the Scriptures, to confess their faith intelligently, and to instruct their own children in time to come.

The significance of the schools for the preaching of the Word is confessed in the most influential Reformed confession, our Heidelberg Catechism, *Lord's Day 38*. When the Catechism deals with the sabbath

commandment, it says that God requires first, that the ministry of the gospel and the schools be maintained. There is also in this respect a close and important relationship between the school and the Church. In his explanation of this Lord's Day Dr. *Abraham Kuyper* made the following striking remarks:

"Indeed, when in the church of God the preaching of the truth goes forth, there must not only be someone who *speaks*, but there must also be those who *hear*. This hearing is impossible unless the hearers, from youth on, are established in the paths of truth.

Hearing in the church is not merely a listening but a being able to *follow* what is spoken; a penetrating with the entire consciousness into that which one hears; and also spiritually to 'live along' with the preacher. Now, this is impossible, if our children are educated 'heathenishly' and then once a Sunday are placed in an entirely different world of thoughts. Such an unprepared faculty of hearing hears sounds, but understands nothing . . . For the right blossoming of the preaching it is, therefore, not only necessary that there be schools where the preachers learn to preach, but, likewise, schools where the hearers learn to hear." (*E Voto*, Vol IV, p. 36; trans. D. Engelsma).

Brothers and sisters, one of the main reasons that the Reformation cried out for the establishing of Reformed schools was that all the children be able to read the Scriptures.

You know that overagainst Rome the Reformation stressed that God has given Holy Scripture into the hands of *every* believer, for every believer to read, to understand, to confess, and to teach to others (especially, to his own children).

Reformed education serves to equip all believers for their christian calling, as confessed in Lord's Day 12 of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Therefore, the education of the covenant children is to be a continual concern also of the elders of Christ's congregation. Article 21 of the Church Order states: "The Consistories every-

where shall see to it that there are good teachers who shall not only teach the children reading, writing, languages, and arts, but also instruct them in godliness and the Catechism." And art. 41 regulates that the president of a classis shall, among other things, present to all delegates the question whether the schools are cared for. Those articles of the church order show the concern of the Reformation for education and the awareness that Christian education is of tremendous importance for the Church itself.

(b) The other of the two main purposes for establishing Christian schools was, as Luther put it, the welfare of the 'temporal estate'.

Schools had to serve the purpose of enabling the children to live and work as *responsible* Christians in the various spheres of temporal, earthly life.

"Let us suppose," Luther says, "that there were no soul, no heaven or hell, and that we were to consider solely the temporal government from the standpoint of its worldly functions. Does it not need good schools and educated persons even more than the spiritual realm?" (Vol. 45, p. 367).

"(The Christian school will make) men able to rule well over land and people, (and) women able to manage the household and train children and servants aright."

Overagainst Anabaptism the Reformation proclaimed that God called His people to serve Him *in* this world; *in* the ordinances of marriage, labour, and government; *in* the use and enjoyment of all the aspects of the creation. Reformed schools must instruct the children with a view to this calling. They must explain the world, its history, its ordinances, and its many aspects. They must develop the abilities of the children, the ability to read, the ability to understand, the ability to analyze, the ability to reason, the ability to write, and others. The schools will help men on the farm and women in the homes.

Luther says, "(Children should) set before themselves as in a mirror the character, life, counsels, and pur-

poses - successful and unsuccessful - of the whole world from the beginning; on the basis of which they could then draw the proper inferences and in the fear of God take their own place in the stream of human events. In addition, they could gain from history the knowledge and understanding of what to seek and what to avoid in this outward life, and be able to advise and direct others accordingly."

Curriculum.

This broad scope and perspective of Reformed education had an impact on the *curriculum* of the schools. Scripture itself was the foremost subject of study. Melanchthon set up the schools in Germany in such a way that the first class studied, among other things, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and other prayers. The second class of older students was required to learn "the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and to commit to memory a number of psalms. They must study the Gospel of Matthew, the two Pauline Epistles to Timothy, the First Epistle of John, and the Proverbs of Solomon (Melanchthon, Saxon Visitation Articles of 1528).

Dr. James H. Olthuis and Dr. Bernard Zylstra published a paper "Schools in the Christian Community", December 1969, in which they made the following remarks with respect to the function of the curriculum in the schools:

"a. The goal of education from kindergarten through high schools concerns the cultural development of the pupil and student. This goal cannot be achieved meaningfully without a curricular program in which the unifying focus of the Word of God is given educational expression.

b. A Christian school is not in the first place concerned with offering a series of 'subjects' but is vitally interested in relating the diversity of subject-material taught to the unifying perspective of a Christian educational curriculum.

This means, concretely, that a Christian school is not a 'school with the bible.'

There can be a poor Christian school even if it has a good 'Bible department'. Likewise, there can be a good Christian school without a 'Bible department'." (p. 5).

Now we can agree with doctors Olthuis and Hart that a Christian educational curriculum has to possess a

unifying perspective. In this respect the approach of Calvinism was stronger than the approach of Lutheranism. We can also agree that a Christian school is not a "school *with* the Bible".

The late Prof. B. Holwerda warned against the danger that this expression may come to mean that a Christian school simply is a secular school *plus* the Bible. But it is not according to the educational principles of the Reformation that there can be a good Christian school without a "Bible department."

The Rev. David Engelsma wrote in *The Standard Bearer* - the magazine in the Protestant Reformed Church - a series of valuable articles about "The Concern of the Reformation for Christian Education" (Vol. 47, p. 20 ff.).

He showed that the schools had to perform the task of teaching the children of believers the knowledge of God, as it is revealed in Scripture. Nobody who studies the writings of the Reformers can possibly deny this. But then, also Rev. Engelsma is of the opinion that this was a mistaken view of the function of the Christian school. He says: "It is the duty of the Church, not the school, to give instruction in the Bible itself. The Church carries out this duty, through the minister or elders, in the Catechism classes. It is even questionable," Rev. Engelsma says, "whether 'Bible' should be included in the curriculum of the Christian school as an academic course. Scripture must, of course, be present in the Christian school. If Scripture is not present, a school is not and cannot be Christian. But its place in the Christian school is not that of a subject alongside the other subjects in the curriculum." (Vol. 47, No. 11, March 1, 1971, p. 258).

In my opinion it would be entirely wrong if we were not to include "Bible" in the curriculum of a Reformed school anymore. True, it is the duty of the Church to give instruction in the Bible itself. But does this exclude that this is the duty of the school too, as it is the duty of the family first of all? Home, church, and school form an indissoluble bond also in this respect, and the teaching of Bible history and of the meaning of God's revelation in Scripture as an academic course will be of invaluable help for the instruction in preaching and catechism class. Let us not throw out the baby with the soap-suds!

On the other hand, it is true that the Word of God must be present in the school as the light, the foundation, and the rule for *every* subject that is taught.

In this respect Bucer and Calvin went further than Luther.

Luther was still caught up in a medieval system that reminds us of the Roman Catholic dualism of nature and grace.

As servant of the gospel Luther spoke to the rulers and the parents in order to show them *their* duties. But education as such, according to Luther is a *secular* thing; it does not belong to the doctrine of the *gospel*. Certainly, the school had two functions: a secular and a spiritual. As place for *religious* education the school is spiritual. But teachers are essentially, according to Luther, servants of the *secular* reign of God, e.g. in matters of discipline. As far as the school teaches languages and liberal arts, Luther regarded it as "a heathen, external thing."

But *Bucer* saw the foundation of the school as such in the Covenant of God and in baptism, and he emphasized the kingdom of *Christ*.

In his line *Calvin* strove for a school that is totally governed by the Word of God, the kingdom of Christ, and the principles of the Reformation.

In his Catechism the first question of the minister is: What is the chief end of human life? And the child answers: That men should know God by whom they were created. What reason have you for saying so? Because He created us for this, and placed us in the world, that He might be glorified in us. And it is certainly proper that our life, of which He is the beginning, be directed to His glory (*LCC*, vol. 22, p. 91).

This service of God and this direction of our lives to His glory lends *unity* to Reformed education.

Calvin on God's heart and hands

More than Luther, Calvin overcame Roman Catholic dualism.

There is a wonderful passage in the 'Argument' (preface) to his commentary on the book of Genesis. It shows us how Calvin regarded God's handiwork in creation and how he wanted to have children educated in their study of creation.

We know God, who is himself invisible, only through His works. But

Continued on next page.

REFORMATION - *Continued.*

is the study of God's creation at variance with what Paul declares: "Since in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe" (1 Cor. 1:21).

Calvin answers: "It is in vain for any to reason as philosophers on the workmanship of the world, except those who, having been first humbled by the preaching of the gospel, have learned to submit the whole of their intellectual wisdom . . . to the foolishness of the cross (1 Cor. 1:21.) Nothing shall we find, I say, above or below, which can raise us up to God, until Christ shall have instructed us in His own school.

Yet this cannot be done, unless we, having emerged out of the lowest depths, are borne up above all heavens, in the chariot of His cross, that there by faith we may apprehend those things which the eye has never seen, the ear never heard, and which far surpass our hearts and minds. For this earth, with its supply of fruits for our daily nourishment is not there set before us; but Christ offers Himself to us unto life eternal.

Nor does heaven, by the shining of the sun and stars, enlighten our bodily eyes, but the same Christ, the Light of the world and the Sun of righteousness, shines into our souls; neither does the air stretch out its empty space for us to breathe in, but the Spirit of God Himself quickens us and causes us to live. There, in short, the invisible kingdom of Christ fills all things, and His spiritual grace is diffused through all.

Yet this does not prevent us from applying our senses to the consideration of heaven and earth, that we may thence seek *confirmation* in the true knowledge of God.

For Christ is that image in which God presents to our view, not only His heart, but also His hands and His feet. I give the name of His *heart* to that secret love with which He embraces us in Christ; by His *hands* and His *feet* I understand those works of His which are displayed before our eyes. As soon as ever we depart from Christ, there is nothing, be it ever so gross or insignificant in itself, respecting which we are not necessarily deceived." (*Calvin Commentaries*, Grand Rapids, I, p. XI).

In this profound statement Calvin

overcomes Humanism and Anabaptism. Humanism adheres to the creatures without any consideration of the Creator itself.

Anabaptism wanted to do away with the study of creation because of the knowledge of God in Christ, because of the preaching of the cross of Christ.

But Calvin shows the unity of creation and redemption. This unity is centered in Christ, the Light of the world and the Sun of righteousness. He is the image of God. In Him God reveals to us His *heart*, His wonderful love. But Christ is also the one in whom He presents to our view His hands and His feet, His handiworks, displayed before our eyes in creation.

Conclusion

Brothers and sisters, at the opening of our Reformed day-school here in Hamilton, we pray God that the teaching and instruction may be in the line of the Reformation, as far as that line was in accordance with God's infallible word.

There may be found harmony between Church, school, and home.

There may be found unity in the curriculum taught.

It is the unity of God's mighty works in creation and redemption, that unity of which we read in Colossians 1, the unity that makes a truly Christian school, the unity of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3).

"For He - God's beloved Son - is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities - all things were created through Him and for Him. *He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.* He is the Head of the body, the church; He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything He might be pre-eminent. For in Him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross." Col. 1:15-20.

J. FABER

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OUR COVER

Cornerstone Church, the new building of the Hamilton congregation. [Photo by N. Nyenhuis].

Do We Have Only Half The Truth?

The Challenge of
Neo-Pentecostalism [3]

Are we fighting against God?

After two articles the reader may start to wonder whether we, in our description of forms of Pentecostalism, do not run the risk of fighting against God!

Is there not the danger that we who cannot boast about the gifts of tongue-speaking and healing, try to cover up and to cover our nakedness by turning a defect into a merit and, as a result, despise the gifts of the Spirit?

Or in other words, are we doing justice to all the givens in the New Testament? Who can deny that, at the coming of the Holy Spirit, there was an outburst of Spirit-gifts? Who would not like to see such an outburst happen again?

This last question leads to the first of a series of remarks.

A Repetition of Pentecost?

It cannot be denied that Pentecostalism maintains that repetitions of Pentecost happen in their midst. That is, a repetition of a certain, clearly dated, event in the history of Revelation. This statement should set us thinking. The French may say, "*l'histoire se répète*", history repeats itself, but is not one of the characteristics of the history of revelation that each event is dated, and cannot be repeated? Abraham's sacrifice is not to be repeated, nor the conversion of Saul/Paul before the gates of Damascus. Every event was a step forward by the LORD on his way to the completion of his plan of redemption and consummation. Many of these redemptive-historical events changed the course of history, thus having a lasting effect, but that does not include that, for the sake of that effect, the events themselves have to be repeated! Pentecost is one of these events, as described in the previous articles; Jesus Christ, enthroned, received the Holy Spirit in order to complete his work and to gather his Church.

This, however, does not mean that now that redemptive-historical event has to be repeated every time. Nor that every worship service has to find its culmination in a kind of explosion of tongue-speaking.

But, one says, there were some repetitions, were there not?

Indeed. The Book of Acts describes them.

There was one in Cornelius' house, Acts 10. There was another in Ephesus, after Paul had met the disciples of John who hadn't heard of the Holy Spirit yet.

One should, however, keep in mind that both events had a special redemptive-historical character. Both contain and indicate a very special message. Peter refused to enter the house of a gentile. He had to learn that, since that remarkable day in Jerusalem, there was no wall-of-partition anymore. In Jesus Christ there would no longer be Jew or Greek, barbarian or Scythian, but for all the one and same Gospel. That's why Peter's conclusion is so important: seeing what happened in Cornelius' house, he concluded: they received the Holy Spirit just as we!

Thus it happened when for the first time an apostle brought the Gospel to gentiles. But that does not mean that this has now to be repeated every time after. It surely did not, as the case of the eucharist clearly indicates.

In Ephesus there was, again, a very special case. A group of men, still calling themselves "disciples of John" the Baptist, had to learn that what they had heard from their master, was now fulfilled. They should retire as "disciples of John" and become disciples of Jesus Christ. To stress this passing of the preparatory period of John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit demonstrated himself in this way to and through these disciples.

But, again, one looks in vain if one looks for such a "repetition" every time.

"Ringing bells before the service"

If you have ever, as an onlooker, attended a pentecostal meeting, you will have witnessed the following "order of liturgy". First singing, and some kind of a sermon. Then repeated prayers, urging the Holy Spirit to manifest himself. Then people calling out, coming forward; others joining with their exclamations, and . . . if the meeting is really successful - some

demonstration of tongue-speaking. That is then the end. People start leaving, the lights are turned off.

The order: first the sermon, as some kind of "introduction", then the climax.

But is that the order of Acts 2? The reader knows better. There the signs come first. People are attracted and come running from all sides. Then, after having explained the signs and their meaning with a quotation from Joel, Peter proceeds to preaching, preaching Christ. The result is: many believe (vs. 41); they were promised (vs. 38) "the gift of the Holy Spirit". One does not read, however, that now the whole complex of events described in verses 1-4, is repeated. A real repetition would have included a sound like a mighty wind, tongues as of fire. But nothing of the kind is described in the final part of Acts 2. What is described there is a wonderful picture of fellowship, in which the stress is on "devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles, to the breaking of bread, to prayers and to praising God and having favour with all the people

Another look at "the order of liturgy" in Acts 2 tells us that the miraculous sign came first, then the preaching, then the fellowship and devotion to teaching, etc. Just the other way around than in pentecostal meetings. The "continuation" of Pentecost was not in tongue-speaking, a mighty sound and tongues of fire, but in the doctrine of the apostles and a



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ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION
P.O. Box 144, Fergus
Ontario, Canada, N1M 2W7

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: W. W. J. VanOene
Co-Editors: W. Heldez, D. VanderBoom

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strong fellowship.

The signs described in the first verses were, as K. Schilder once remarked, like the pealing of the church bells, calling people together for the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. The "climax", the "end" or goal of a worship service is not a repetition of tongue-speaking but a continuing in the study of the Scriptures and a living fellowship, supported by prayers.

The Pauline Letters.

Reformed Scripture-reading is always marked by keeping the whole of the Scriptures in mind when reading and studying a certain part.

One example: when reading Romans 9-11, one should not lose his balance by starting to dream of a Millennium in which the earthly Jerusalem will be the centre of the world for 1,000 years. One should, to understand Paul here, listen to him when he speaks, in his other letters, about who really are the children of Abraham, the Jews or those who have the same faith as Abraham.

You know how Paul approaches and admonishes the churches, answering their questions, and criticizing them because of their wrongdoing, of not living up to the standard of being Christ's own body. This is, in varying degrees, true of all his letters.

If the Pentecostals were right, one would expect in all these letters as the main criticism of the apostle: "you have lost the most important mark of the church, you have only fifty per cent left of what you received at the beginning, your main shortcoming is that you do not speak in tongues anymore."

But the Bible reader knows better. Nowhere do you read as criticism: "you have lost the gift of glossolaly". Paul's objections against the churches are related to matters of discipline, listening to false teachers, not being aware of heresies, letting sin reign in their bodies, and so on.

The same is the case in the so-called "General" Letters of James, Peter, John and Jude.

In the Pastoral Letters the stress in Paul's instruction of his assistants Timothy and Titus is on setting the house of God in good order, appointing elders, teaching unceasingly. Nowhere Paul charges them to be instrumental in preparing and promoting outbursts of tongue-speaking.

Yes, indeed, he speaks about the

fruits of the Spirit. He repeatedly describes the new life in distinction from the old life of sins. But you look in vain for a description of glossolaly.

When listing the fruits of the Spirit, Paul mentions (Galatians 5:22) "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." But not one word about tongue-speaking, which one would have expected as the most important fruit if the Pentecostals were right.

But . . . what about I Corinthians 12 and 14? Can anyone deny that Paul speaks here in detail about many gifts and especially the gift of tongues?

No one should deny that; that would be contradicting the Word of God.

Another matter, however, is *how* he speaks about this gift, how he evaluates it, and what his main concern is.

But this is so important that we had better start a new article on it.

The Letters of Jesus Christ.

In addition to the letters of Christ's apostles, we are the happy "owners" and addressees of a series of letters from Jesus Christ himself. They may be short but they are of the utmost importance, not only for the Church of all ages, but especially to get an impression of the life of the churches some decades after the great event of Acts 2.

In these letters (Revelation 2 and 3), seven of them, to the seven churches in Asia Minor, we hear the exalted Lord speaking directly from heaven, dictating to John just as Paul dictated his letters.

Even before reading them, one expects to hear in these letters how the Ascended Head of the Church judges (about) his churches. The reproof against some of them is that they have "abandoned the love they had at first" (2:4).

Is this, maybe, a reproof that they did no longer speak in tongues? Not a word about it. The "things I have against you" are that they have not been on the alert against heresies and heretics; that they have not kept his Word; that they permit false teaching and suffer from false pride.

One should read these seven letters again, and discover what a different picture they present, different from the pentecostalistic ideal that is.

Now, no one knows better what is good for the Church than Christ himself. If he, indeed deemed tongue-

speaking the all-important, decisive gift of his Church upon earth, a description of this glossolaly would not only have been "splashed over" all seven letters, but Christ in his love for his Church would have repeated Pentecost right there and then, in Ephesus, Sardis, and the other places.

But, seven times they are told to "hear what the Spirit says to the churches." And what is said by the Spirit is the contents of these letters, and of the whole Book, yes, of the whole Bible. The whole Bible!

G. VANDOOREN

POSTSCRIPT.

We expect the remark that the argumentation in this article is mostly "from silence" and for that reason of little or no value.

It must be admitted that an "argument from silence", as a rule, is of little consequence. One cannot build a strong case upon the ground that certain things are *not* mentioned.

However, we believe that this should not be said about the reasoning in the above article.

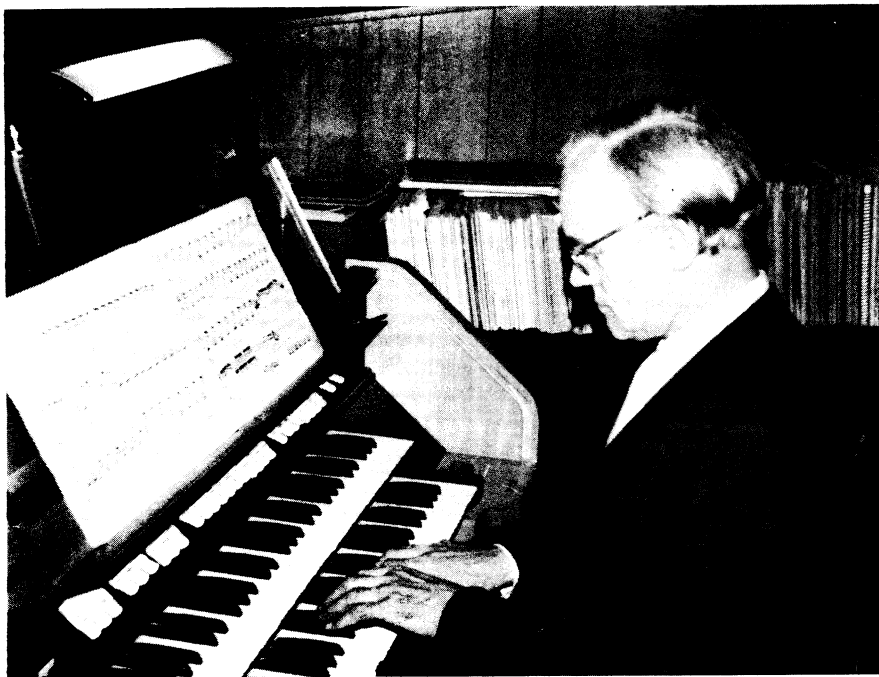
Neo- (and other) Pentecostalists assert that tongue-speaking, to mention only this, was meant to stay as a proof, as *the* proof, of being a living, Spirit-filled Church. Theirs is the burden to prove it, not only from certain historical events, recorded in Acts, but from all the parts of the New Testament, if indeed - as they say - this gift was of such central importance for the Christian Church.

Dr. J.W. STOTT rightly remarks in one of his recent booklets that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as other doctrines, should be built upon, not certain historical facts in the first place, but on the apostolic interpretation of those facts, on the apostolic preaching and teaching in general, as found in all the parts of the New Testament.

We tried to build our argument upon these various parts of the New Testament (although we readily agree that we dealt with them only very summarily). This is our main argument in rejecting the pentecostalistic claim.

We repeat, theirs is the burden to prove that the whole New Testament as such demands the presence of tongue-speaking as a decisive mark of the true Church.

Thus, our argumentation is not one "from silence" but from the eloquent abundance of New Testament teaching. vD



*Dirk Jansz. Zwart at the Console of the Organ
of the New Westminster Church.*

DIRK JANSZ ZWART Opening Concert in New Westminster - A Review

Dirk Jansz. Zwart, organist of the Rotterdam-Centrum church, played the opening concert of his first North American tour in the Canadian Reformed Church at New Westminster, B.C. On hearing the organist perform his father's well-known works, one is reminded of Joost van den Vondel's words written at the death of Dirk Jansz. Sweelinck:

*"Men kon, door Kerckgewelf en
Kooren,
den Vader in den Zone hooren."*

The Hymn, Psalm 75, which opened the program, perfectly illustrates Jan Zwart's idea of an effective organ choral. The main thought of the psalm, one of praise, is presented in a forth-right and terse manner. Dirk Jansz. Zwart's rendition, as could be expected, was in keeping with his father's concept of the work and with the content of the psalm. The audience enthusiastically joined in the singing of the stanzas one and six.

A happy Trio in F, by Bach's favourite pupil Joh. L. Krebs (Bach

used to call him the only crayfish - Krebs - in the brook) was next on the program. Unfamiliarity with the instrument may have been the case of a certain hesitancy which somewhat detracted from the dance-like quality of the work.

The famous Prelude and Fugue in A minor, a longtime favourite with audience and organists alike, received a thoroughly convincing reading. The work in the hands of Mr. Zwart, particularly in the Fugue, lived up to the appellation "Great" given to this masterpiece. The interpretation, at times dramatic, at times electrifying, released the work's musical energy and swept the audience along.

Georg Böhm's partita on "Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten" (Hymn 54, B.o.P.) was well-played. Faster tempi could perhaps have heightened the work's interest.

Like his father's, Dirk Jansz. Zwart's compositions are by and large centered around the Protestant choral. The Introitus, Trio and Toccato,

Psalm 105, is not only a worthwhile addition to Reformed organ literature but also displays Mr. Zwart's gifts as a composer in his own right. The work musically underlines the words of the psalm:

*"O thank the Lord with great
rejoicing,
His deeds among the peoples
voicing!"*

Mr. Zwart's playing was that indeed.

Leon Boellmann's Suite Gothique, an unpretentious work, was handled with just the right touch of frivolity, pathos and exuberance. The organ, no doubt due to Mr. Zwart's intimate knowledge of the art of registration, sounded surprisingly French. Delightful, or, as I heard exclaimed behind me, Wow!

That greatness does not necessarily lie in virtuosity the recitalist demonstrated with the sensitive playing of Gustav Merkel's quiet, reflective prelude on "Schmücke dich o liebe Seele".

This year the Max Reger centennial is celebrated throughout the Western world. It was therefore good to see a composition of this somewhat underestimated German composer included in the program. The Toccata in d, a technically demanding work was played with flair and virtuosity.

Two well-known Jan Zwart compositions, Andante Religioso, Psalm 25:2, and Toccata, Psalm 146, brought the recital to a close. The compositions by Jan Zwart did not only provide the program with a most suitable frame but also gave the evening its dominant theme. From the first number, Ps. 75 (Thee, o God, yes, thee we praise), to the last, Ps. 146 (Praise the Lord, who reigns forever), the recital was a paean of praise to God our Father, or as Rev. Van Spronsen put it in his closing word, "a foretaste of things to come in the New Jerusalem". In this day and age it is refreshing to meet and hear an artist who makes his talents subject to the "gloria Dei" and who at the same time does not forget the "aedificatio hominum".

S. VANDERPLOEG

P.S. Mr. Zwart has expressed great interest in making a cross-country tour sometime next year. Persons interested in organizing a concert in their particular congregation are asked to contact Mr. S. Vander Ploeg, 809 - 14th Street, New Westminster, B.C.

news medley

The winter season is the season for meetings, festivities, and whatever else may be going on. Oftentimes there is hardly an evening available if something special has to be arranged. That will have prompted the Consistory of the Church at Fergus/Guelph to cancel catechism classes during one evening a few weeks ago, when they wished to have a special evening with the minister and the organist. The Church at Fergus/Guelph wished to celebrate together that the minister had been a minister for thirty years, and that the organist, Mr. J.J. Knegt, had been an organist for twenty-five years. Both families were ushered to the front pew, and the evening was under the chairmanship of Mr. K. Nijenhuis, vice-chairman of the Consistory. It would take too much space if we were to mention all the things that were done that evening. Children and older ones alike did their best and together made it a most pleasant evening. It was shown anew that it is possible to have a thoroughly enjoyable evening together without all the artificial means by which so many try to lift their own and others' spirits. On behalf of the Congregation, Mr. Knegt received a beautiful watch, and the minister an equally beautiful slide-projector. The former was also presented with a cassette-recorder, which he promised to use to let the choir hear how well they were doing during the practice-evenings! Also from societies delegates offered congratulations and presents. But I promised that I would not tell everything. One thing, however, should be added: one of the Women's Societies had made up a piece in which they reviewed the lives and experiences of quite a few women who had played an important part in the course of history. Starting with Monica, the mother of Augustine, via Catharina von Bora, Juliana Van Stolberg, and Pietje Baltus, they closed with Queen Emma and Queen Wilhelmina. All admired the ingenuity of the ladies not only in finding the persons to be portrayed, but also the persons to portray them and the garments to be worn. If you ever need some good, instructive, and entertaining performance, contact the ladies of Fergus: I am sure that (for re-imbusement of travelling expenses) they are most willing to let others enjoy it too!

Another evening in Fergus to which I would like to draw your attention is a Concert that was held on Saturday, November 10. It was, especially for the older members, something to be enjoyed, since some of the well-known Dutch songs were also played and sung by audience and participants. I wrote about this concert a few weeks ago, and we are happy to say that more than two hundred dollars was collected, of which by far the larger part will be used for the establishment of a fund from which young people may be supported who wish to become Church organist but would not be able to pay all the expenses involved. Although those who participated in this concert would not be able to travel all the way West, yet I hope sincerely that they will be invited to have such an evening also in other places in Ontario. It also shows to our younger members the beauty of music by which the praises of God are sung, instead of the ugliness of the raw sounds and screams by which modern man and modern

youth express their frustration and the hopelessness of their condition. It was remarkable that our young people who were present, even the smaller ones, behaved so wonderfully although many did not understand much of the text of the Dutch songs.

One of the highlights of the evening was an improvisation on a theme given that very same evening. Mr. J.J. Knegt received four themes from which he chose two: in the first place the beginning of "Klokje Klinkt", and in the second place the first line of Psalm 47. Once again we became convinced that the organ is the "king of instruments" and that it is a wonderful thing when we have received voices and hands and feet by which we may exalt our God and Saviour. In addition to Mr. Knegt, the participants were: Mr. Bert Hopman, Bass/Baritone; Miss G. Kuik, Accomp. Organ; and Mrs. G. VanWoudenberg, Soprano.

Now that we are speaking of Concerts anyway, we might as well make a big jump, all the way to the West coast. You will find a review of it in this issue of **Clarion**, but we may say a few more things about it, for they not only had this Concert there out West: on Sunday evening there was also a program of music and songs with Dirk Jansz. Zwart at the console. It was a mixed program, partly Dutch, partly English. When I read the words "Rust mijn ziel, uw God is Koning", I hear the music rolling out of the pipes, the music of the late Jan Zwart. The same happens when I read "De Heer is mijn Herder, 'k heb all wat mij lust", or "Ga niet alleen door 't leven, die last is u te zwaar". Personally, I have always loved Jan Zwart's music and I vaguely recall the years when he gave regular recitals, mostly during the lunch hour, which were broadcast. I strongly support the suggestion to invite Dirk Jansz. Zwart for a tour next year. This is one of the happy fruits of the acquisition of real organs by many of the Churches, that we can do a thing like that.

Edmonton is in the process of installing the pipe organ they purchased. It seems that they do have a little trouble in finding a suitable place for a 16-footer. I heard by rumor, that New Westminster planned a new building of sufficient height to accommodate the organ and to make it sound good. It needs room! However, back to Edmonton. The **City Guide** congratulated the Congregation on the occasion of having paid off the debt on the Church building. That is something to be congratulated with, indeed. Apparently the School Association sees its chance now, for the Ladies' Auxiliary is very busy and has several projects going. A bazaar was planned and will have been held by now. A free booth has been offered at a shopping mall, with the request to wrap presents for customers. And finally, the ladies planned a meeting where the topic "The History of the Canadian Schools" is to be introduced. We hope that we can soon read a congratulatory message in the **City Guide** on the occasion of the school building being debt-free. However, that will take quite a few years, I presume.

Edmonton's Junior Choir could count on 25 members, according to the latest information, and six boxes with winter clothing were sent to the orphanage in Korea which is supported by the Edmonton congregation in cooperation with others. In each box some bars of soap were sent with the clothes. Apparently, they use the soap to fill the openings between the various garments. That will take a few bars!

The Consistory appointed a committee to look into

FESTIVITIES IN FERGUS



Mr. John J. Knegt

On Wednesday evening, November 7th, the church building in Fergus was filled to capacity. Together we were allowed to celebrate the facts that Rev. W.W.J. VanOene had been minister for thirty years and that br. J.J. Knegt had been an organist for twenty-five years.

The evening was a real surprise for Rev. VanOene and for br. Knegt. They didn't know what to say when they received a few tokens of appreciation.

It was a pleasure to look at and listen to the children of our school, who also took part in the programme. The highlight of the evening was the historical play presented by the Fergus women's society "In God We Trust". It was entitled "Women from Church History".

It was a very nice evening, where the honour was not brought to a minister and an organist, but where thanks and honour were brought to our heavenly Father. Psalm 150.

H. BOUWMAN



Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

the possibility of the celebration of the holy Supper by those who are chronically ill.

Previously, we mentioned Barrhead's going out to resthomes there to bring the Gospel and to sing. Since quite a few patients sing along, and this is not well possible with the (for them) unfamiliar tunes and words of our Book of Praise, it was decided to use the Psalter Hymnal of the Christian Reformed Church. We can understand that, although it is not something to be very happy about. I recall the saying of a wise elderly minister: "Het Evangelie is er nog nooit zingende in gegaan, wel zingende er uit gegaan!" It will cost money, but would it not be more advisable to take some extra copies of the Book of Praise along and to try to teach the people who wish to sing along, to sing these tunes and rhymings? Might be too difficult.

Let's go to the West coast once more. Rev. C. Van Spronsen tells us in the **Mission News** that he has received many letters from people in Brazil, some of which were hardly legible or understandable, but they all show how interested the people are: something is developing over there. During his trip to visit the Churches, our brother took up collections for a building fund, to erect a simple but functional Church building in which all activities can be conducted. So far he has brought together more than 1,200 dollars of an estimated 8,000 which will be needed. Meanwhile, the J. Kuik family is continuing the work, eagerly awaiting the return of the missionary family. It will not be long before the Van Spronsens are gone again; and the same is to be said of the Knigges. The Rev. H. Knigge visited practically all Churches here in Ontario and the American Reformed Church in Grand Rapids. Wherever there is a school, he visited the school, too, which makes it a little easier on the families during the evening, and which also brings the work of the mission closer to the children.

We mentioned the American Reformed Church: there the Ladies' Auxiliary is busy too! They organized a soup-supper which yielded some \$130.00 and are planning a bazaar. The Rev. G. VanRongen tells something about

the work of translation that is going on in order to provide the societies and Church members in general with good reading material. He saw with his very own eyes the stock which is being held when he was on his way to a Classis where, as he put it, the "typical Canadian Reformed ceremony of a colloquium had to be undergone". I do not know whether the Churches in Australia ever made such a decision - most likely not - but I can assure my colleague that a colloquium for foreign ministers is certainly not a "typical Canadian Reformed ceremony". We have taken it over from our Netherlands sister Churches, which made decisions in this respect already in 1893 and 1920. I still chuckle when I recall how one member of a General Synod in the Netherlands, some years ago, called our decision to demand a colloquium "a slap in the face of the Netherlands Churches", but had to eat his words a couple of days later when he had discovered that the Netherlands Churches have the very same provision . . .

More than once we mentioned activities going on in Burlington with respect to bringing the glad tidings to others. Now we are informed that more than 100 Bibles have been placed in the motels in the neighbourhood and that visits are being brought to parents of children who attended the Vacation Bible School this past summer.

The Consistory decided to drop the collections for the "Property Fund", as we already expected they would do, and also launched a special "drive" to get rid of a large part of the debt. If no special action were undertaken, the yearly budget would be increased by \$10,000, half for interest, half for debt reduction. Pavement of the parking lot and fulfilment of the promise to Burlington West will result in a considerable debt for the Church at Burlington East. Now they will try to pay off half of it by the year-end.

For some time we did not have the opportunity to congratulate couples with their fortieth wedding anniversary. However, this time we found a little note in the **Sheepfold**, that brother and sister B.J. Van Ommen of Orangeville celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary. On behalf of the big Family: our sincere congratulations. May the Lord be your Light on your further pathway. vO

Understanding the Old Testament

NAHUM [4]

Chapter 1:3-6

The first words of vs. 3 have always drawn the attention of exegetes: "The LORD is slow to anger." Such words cannot fail to strike the reader after all that has been revealed of the wrath of YAHWEH in vs. 2. Deeply impressed by this revelation he goes on reading. It is quite a change and it has set scholars thinking. For it says literally in Hebrew (translated): long as far as anger is concerned. Some thought that these words had always been misunderstood. According to them it meant not that the LORD could contain His anger for a long time but, on the contrary, that He kept on being angry. If conceived of this way, the words would better fit into the context. Other scholars, displeased at the interruption of the alphabetic scheme (the first word of vs. 3 does not begin with a *beth*), said: Didn't I tell you? There you are! It is obvious that somebody else, being of the opinion that vs. 2 was too strongly worded, deemed it necessary to mitigate the impression of God's revelation by having the other, the benevolent side of his being brought out as well. So vs. 3a was inserted in the text afterwards. Such remarks are beside the point. The point at issue is that we always should consider a part of Scripture against its proper background, the state of affairs obtaining in those times. Circumstances were such that a great many people thought to themselves: We are oppressed. We are in great misery. As for the rescue, the vengeance, it will come to nothing. YAHWEH is long-suffering. He postpones His anger time and again. Small wonder that the Assyrians think: "What is to prevent us from having our own way? As to the God of Israel, He is long-suffering. We have nothing to fear!"

We think that the text is put in the proper light this way. It is in this line that we understand that after the "slow to anger" the prophet does not continue with the "abounding in steadfast love" (a frequent combina-

tion in the O.T.; cp. Ex. 34:6; Num. 14:18; Jb. 2:13; Jon. 4:2; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; 145:8) but, on the contrary, with "great in power". The word "and" has the meaning of "but"; it is adversative. The words "great in power" are to reinforce all that has been said of YAHWEH's anger in vs. 1.

And in this very way Nahum is consolatory, in accordance with his name. Now it is to be expected that YAHWEH, the lover of justice, who has established equity, shall act accordingly. "YAHWEH will not at all acquit the wicked. The LORD will by no means clear the guilty" (R.S.V.). The words "wicked" or "guilty" are inserted in our translations. I do not mention this to show that the translation is wrong, but to point out that the Hebrew language has a particular construction to strengthen the idea of a verb; to emphasize the certainty or the forcibleness of an occurrence. Literally rendered it reads: An acquitting He will not acquit. He shall punish! You can be sure of that. This the prophet does not deduce from the political situation - although something might have happened that showed a weak side of Assyria, e.g. the revolt in Babel - but he infers it from the manifestation, from the attributes of YAHWEH.

From vs. 3 on Nahum sees YAHWEH coming from heaven to the earth.

Is there a way prepared for the LORD? No. And YAHWEH is not looking for a way either. He is not in need of a road as we are when walking. Nor does it say that whirlwind and storm are the way He prefers, so that wherever there is a gale, there the LORD is. I Kings 19:9ff. teaches us otherwise. The Hebrew word *derek* rather describes His manner of appearing, the action of His coming. When He comes, a whirlwind springs up. A gale blows where the LORD reveals Himself in His anger.

The prophet sees the LORD drawing near. On His "way" He first passes by the clouds. High above the

earth He goes. "And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers," we can supply from Isaiah 40. And those inhabitants are meant, we know. But they are mentioned in vs. 5 only. The clouds! Nobody had ever been there, at least in those times. The clouds swirling around the continents are to Him but the fine dust that arises when a man walks on the street. Those clouds are real clouds. Those beautiful clouds that we look up at from earth beneath are to YAHWEH but dust, in a figurative manner of speaking.

YAHWEH approaches the earth. He rebukes the sea. Why is it the sea in the first place? Has the sea misbehaved? No, one may say, the sea is not a man. Right. Nevertheless, we often read in our Bibles that the LORD rebukes the sea; that is to say; He threatens the sea so as to restrain it, to fence it in. In comparing this verse with others, we observe that this is what is intended. The sea is a potential danger, a continuous menace to life on earth. However, it is not the sea but it is man who is to be convinced of YAHWEH's superiority by His having the sea dry up when He rebukes. That's the intention. What is practicable with one person, difficult with a whole people, is not feasible with the elements of nature, e.g. the sea. But YAHWEH is able to do it.

Besides, there is a historical line, for when reading of YAHWEH's making the sea dry, we are reminded of the people of Israel's crossing the Red Sea in Exodus 14 - one of the great facts of salvation recorded in the history of the Bible, especially in the Psalms and the Prophets. What YAHWEH is able to do, He once has done. So this mighty deed of salvation may come into the picture when we deal with this text. But it is not permitted to go back from there to creation as is done by e.g. J.H. EATON in the volume relating to this in *The Torch Bible Commentary*, pp. 58-59: "Ancient traditions told how the Creator God had overcome the chaos represented by the sea to establish the living order of the world, and saw this victory renewed in the miracle of each new year. Nahum, influenced by such lore, saw God's advance against Nineveh as a manifestation of this greater combat . . . And so he describes God's going forth to war with features which echo the traditions of the Creation drama."

I for one do not believe in a Creation drama, a struggle with Crea-

tion. It is the glory of GOD's Creation that it was just He who disposed, and nobody opposed.

After the sea the rivers are mentioned, displaying in small what is shown by the sea on a large scale. They are mentioned here partly because of parallelism in poetic and prophetic language, which the Israelites cherished, and partly in order to show that YAHWEH is drawing near to the world inhabited by man.

But we do not yet hear of man. YAHWEH attains His end in a round-about way, so to speak. First the earth is shown in its beauty and splendour. Three exquisite regions are mentioned: *"Bashan, one of the most fertile of the regions, east of the Jordan . . . famous for its flocks [Amos 1:2; 4:1; Micah 7:14]. And the wooded heights of Carmel and the snow-clad summits of Lebanon are mentioned as representatives of the regions least likely to show the effects of an ordinary drought"*. A recollection of creation? Sure! But not as of a struggle, which never took place, but as revelation of YAHWEH's power and goodness. Man may rejoice in its splendour. But when man behaves as if there were no God, He, the Creator and Owner, Who is allowed to do what He chooses with what belongs to Him, makes those lovely spots wither. And again we say: not because of those spots, but because of man.

Verse 5 carries us a step farther in this direction. *YAHWEH is going to touch, to move, the foundations of the earth. "The mountains quake before Him." "The very pillars of the earth, as the ancients considered the mountains [Job 9:5, 6], tremble and dissolve before the wrath of YAHWEH"*. And the hills melt dissolving in the stream, the flood, poured out over them.

Moreover, the earth itself, the continent, bearer of all that exists, also of all human beings, is lifted up, or rises. (This translation preferable to "is burned", A.V., and "is laid waste", R.S.V. Both of them follow a version that has *wattisjsjā'* in Hebrew; this is not backed up by the manuscripts. I for one, prefer to follow the version of the Masoretes: *wattissā'*.) The LORD's appearance as the effect of an earthquake. And in the second half of the verse, running parallel, it says: "the world and all that dwell therein."

Only at the end of vs. 5 the inhabitants are mentioned. But right

from the beginning YAHWEH was aiming at them. Through all that happens to winds and clouds, forests and vegetation, mountains and earth, YAHWEH is addressing Himself to man - man, appearing in vs. 6 as object of His anger: "Who can stand before His indignation?" Here we find another word for anger than in vs. 2.

There are several expressions in Hebrew designating the concept of anger: *hemah* denotes a glow: *za'am* here in vs. 6a, something like cursing, scolding, hurling imprecations; *haron* is a burning. "His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken asunder" (R.S.V.) or "thrown down" (A.V.).
H.M. OHMANN

A Five-Year-Old Goes To The "Cottage"

On Wednesday, October 31, 1973, our boy, a first grader of the TIMOTHY Canadian Reformed School of Hamilton, came home about 4:30 p.m. and was all excited. Not about the fact that it was Hallowe'en night (that came later). It was about what had happened that afternoon.

"Mom, you know what?! We went to see the Cottage this afternoon. A great big cottage!"

"A cottage?"

"Yes, a big cottage. We went there with Miss Schuller and other kids from the school."

"What cottage? Where was that cottage?"

"Oh, you know, where Otto's father works" (Rev. Selles).

"You mean a College!"

"Yes, the college."

"Did you go there? I have not even been there. What did you see?"

"Books. Lots of books."

As it was Reformation Day, there could be some connection with this visit.

"Did the teacher talk about Luther?"

"Yes, Luther wrote a whole lot of books to Ben's father (Dr. Faber). I saw them in the cottage."

At supper time Daddy is informed by Mommy of the "cottage visit" and further questions are asked.

"What else did you see in the College?"

"Lots of books. And a nice organ, nicer than our organ. And there were many rooms and big long tables. And there was a nice kitchen with nice wallpaper. But there were no books in the kitchen."

"Did you go upstairs?"

"Yes, there was Otto's father's room and there were also books."

"Was anybody working in the College?"

"No, nobody was doing something. They were all walking around. I think Otto's father was writing something."

"Was the other minister there?" (Rev. Ohmann)

"No, he was not there."

Sunday, November 4, 1973. We went for a short drive and came to Albion Road:

"Daddy, this looks like the way to the cottage. There were lots of trees!"

ALBERT DE JONG

school X crossing

For the time being our readers will not see the name J.J. Kuntz under "School Crossing". Because of illness our brother is unable to continue this work. We hope and pray that the Lord may give him complete recovery of health. We also hope that in the future he will be able to serve us again in this column. Needless to say, his articles have been greatly appreciated by the readers and have been inspiring many to go in the work for Reformed Education.

In the meantime the undersigned has been asked to take over. With hesitation this was accepted. It will be hard to match br. Kuntz' style and use of the language. I am not going to try it either. But the work must go on. May the Lord bless it.

Will those who are taking care of sending school bulletins, newsletters, teachers' publications, etc., send these from now on to my address: 103 Chippewa Dr., Chatham, Ont. N7M 2B3. Thank you.

From COALDALE, Alberta we received some good and encouraging news. They write: "On the meeting of Friday, Sept. 21, the proposal from the Board 'to come to the establishment of a Canadian Reformed School in Coaldale per September 1974' was accepted by the membership. Hopefully the school will include the grades one through nine and will temporarily be held in the basement of the Can. Ref. Church building. We hope to have a school building in the near future."

May the Lord bless this important decision. Time and again God's people experience it that we must not wait till we are all ready for it (when are we ever?) but that we must be simply obedient to the Lord's commandments and go on in faith. Then it is up to the Lord to provide the ways and means.

There is more good news! This time from LONDON. A proposal of the Board to increase the weekly dues from \$10.00 to \$12.00 effective Nov. 1st was accepted by the membership. It was also decided to open the school in September 1975, the Lord willing. The small congregation of London

has been encouraged by the way the Lord has blessed the work for truly Reformed education in other places. Indeed, what we do locally, is an example also for others. Our communion of saints is broader than the local church.

EDMONTON hopes to build, in the future, a school on the land purchased, or to sell the land and acquire land or an existing school building elsewhere in the city. There may be some real possibility with some public schools being closed because of lack of enrolment. They are in contact with the public school board regarding this. In the meantime, however, they are trying to figure out the cost of building a school. The land is now rented out to a farmer who will pay the School Society a third of the profits. The two houses on this land are also rented out. The Saturday School has opened its doors again to the children of the congregation. May the Lord also bless the work for truly Reformed education in Edmonton for the edification of His Church.

HAMILTON has unanimously decided to accept the documents for Incorporation of the School Society. They note that Burlington, Carman, and Orangeville have been incorporated already for some time. Reformed, private schools need all the protection that can be given them. Some advantages are the fact that the Society receives certain rights which are clearly defined in law (The Corporations Act); the Society obtains an existence separate and distinct from its members; there will be no personal liability for the Society's debts and obligations; the law protects against illegal acts by the Board or by majority groups in the Society; the Board is compelled to adopt and follow administrative methods which ensure proper management of the Society's business. All of these are indeed good advantages! Perhaps other Societies will find it worthwhile to look into this? The sisters in Hamilton are also active. Proceeds of a dinner amounted to \$215.00. Furniture was also bought for the principal's room, but they add that the ladies are not doing

the buying, they just do the paying! The principal may consider himself very fortunate that the women know their place!

GRAND RAPIDS reports a steady flow of incoming contributions. Regularity is indeed very important. And: "a constant drop of water wears away the hardest stone". The Board had decided to meet once a month but already it appears necessary to meet more often. And for a good reason! They are looking into the possibility of buying an existing school building which is presently not in use. There is some excitement. If the school can be bought at a price they can afford, they may have their own school building at a time nobody expected. What about the teachers? One step at a time! The results (financial, that is) of the picnic: \$57.57 and of the light bulb sale: \$116.00. A collection at the picnic resulted in another \$80.00.

Reports of the opening of the Reformed Schools in Carman, Chatham and Hamilton have appeared elsewhere in *Clarion*. From CHATHAM there is a bit of unpleasant news: somebody broke into the school at night. It was well known that there is considerable interest in our school during the daytime. Now it seems some people also are interested in our school during the night. The extent of damage and what was stolen has not been published yet. Let it not discourage anyone! Next time we hope to be able to report on the activities in some other congregations. Please remember to send all publications to the undersigned.

M.C. WERKMAN

Christmas

New Year's Issue

Absolute deadline for:

News Items

Greeting Advertisements

Business Advertisements,
etc.

is Friday, December 7, 1973.

We plan to publish an attractive Christmas/New Year's issue on Dec. 12, in time for all our readers to receive *Clarion* before Christmas.

Country Walks

It isn't too often that I can spend more than a few hours to go hiking; but one Saturday morning after my regular chores were done I permitted myself the luxury of taking the rest of the day off, giving myself six hours.

Already while washing the schoolbus that my wife and I use to transport 21 children of our congregation (Brampton) to John Calvin School in Burlington had I noticed little groups of ring-billed gulls flying over and the calls of crows and blue jays from the direction of Fletchers Creek.

Already past the peak of their fall migration at which time the woods literally seem to be alive with birds around these parts, enough species were left in addition to the resident birds to keep my pen busy that day.

The flats beside the creek, which only a month ago were ablaze with the blue and yellow of wild aster, were host to dozens of goldfinches and groups of chickadees feeding on the seedpods.

But it was near the trees and shrubbery along the creek bank where I saw the first birds of the hundreds I would see before going home: the golden-crowned kinglets (goudhaantjes) - birds just about as tame as the familiar chipping sparrows but, despite the large numbers in which they pass through Brampton every fall and spring, remarkably unknown, so that people ask me again every year: Which little green bird has a yellow mark on its head?

The huge willows along the bank had almost lost all their leaves and that is where I finally spotted the downy woodpecker and nuthatch again, who always elude me through the summer on account of the foliage, bark-feeders as they are.

The junco's were back, too. Twittering near a group of poplars they constantly revealed their white outer tail feathers. It is fascinating to realize that their breeding range is so far north that some of them have been known to stray into Siberia at times.

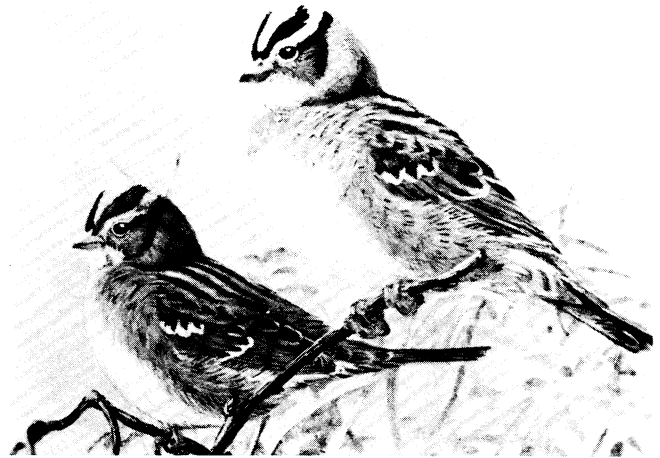
I had a good look at two robins feeding on the berries of a hawthorn. Once they're gone they won't be back for half a year.

More birds appeared farther down stream: four cardinals, parents with two young, also feeding on hawthorn berries, and song sparrows rummaging through the fallen leaves.

A red-tailed hawk took off from its perch in the long-dead elm while from the plowed field across the fence the wailing of a killdeer told me that he, too, hadn't departed as yet.

The myrtle warblers showed themselves in a little concealed hollow encircled by the old stump fence, a row of sugar maples, and the winding creek. These birds, too, with their conspicuous yellow rump, showed a remarkable liking for the seeds of the wild aster.

This little valley seemed to have a representative of all trees growing in southern Ontario. The colouring of these trees was hard to describe. The maples especially were outstanding with their varieties of green, yellow, orange and scarlet. The ash trees were wine-coloured and the hickories, basswood, and willows all shades of yellow. Of the two kinds of hawthorns one was already leafless but the other was still a healthy green with both kinds showing their bright red fruit. One hawthorn, of the kind already



White-crowned Sparrows
(Courtesy National Museums of Canada, Ottawa)

supposed to be bare, was covered with scarlet leaves. This was caused by a wild grape which had used the hawthorn for support to reach the top and the necessary sunlight. Other trees were adorned with the bare vines of the wild cucumber and their prickly seedpods containing the oversized seeds. A pear tree in the fence row, always full of pears at this time of year, could only offer me one this time. Climbing on the hill and over the fence I walked along the plowed field for a distance through the furrow full of leaves in order to get to another valley where fallen trees and six feet high weeds and bushes make the going rough so that I seem to have this valley all to myself the year round. Wading through a low shaded area I must have scattered thousands of jewel weed seeds that with their ripe seedpods were just waiting for someone to come along. It was here that I finally saw the white-crowned sparrows which, gregarious birds as they are, were foraging together with song sparrows and white throats and which never yet have failed to make their appearance here during their two annual journeys.

What continues to amaze me is that the area where I spent that day does seem to attract birds at all times of the year despite subdivisions being built in the immediate vicinity, bringing with it the noise and clamour of children in the usually undisturbed woods plus the litter dumped there by irresponsible contractors.

COR TENHAGE

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Hoek van Holland

N.a.v. H. Zwaanstra, *Reformed Thought and Experience in a New World: A Study of the Christian Reformed Church in its American Environment, 1890-1918* (Kok, Kampen 1973, f 29.50).

Voor ons ligt een bijzonder interessant boek. Het is het proefschrift van Dr. H. Zwaanstra, professor in kerkgeschiedenis in Grand Rapids; het werd verdedigd aan de Vrije Universiteit en uitgegeven met financiële steun van de Nederlandse organisatie tot bevordering van zuiver wetenschappelijk onderzoek (Z.W.O.).

'k Las in een recensie van ds. L. Verduin in *The Banner* van 16 Nov. 1973, dat zeer weinig van de schrijver zelf in het proefschrift valt te vinden, omdat het drukken van dit boek werd gesubsidieerd door deze Nederlandse organisatie.

Dat lijkt me weinig waarschijnlijk en 'k heb ook geen enkele aanduiding daarvan in dit proefschrift zelf kunnen vinden. Indien de mededeling van ds. Verduin onjuist is, dunkt me een rectificatie wel op haar plaats. De organisatie voor Zuiver Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek doet prachtig cultureel werk; ze heeft voorzover mij bekend is, nog nimmer een schrijver aan banden gelegd in het doen uitkomen van zijn eigen opvatting. Dat zou ook wel enigszins in strijd zijn met de opzet en de naam van deze instelling.

Het is waar dat men als het ware tussen de regels moet doorlezen om het standpunt van de schrijver ten aanzien van de door hem beschreven kwesties en bewegingen te ontdekken. Overigens is dat ook weer niet te moeilijk en men kan dit feit gemakkelijk verklaren. Een geschiedschrijver is er allereerst op uit anderen aan het woord te laten.

Maar laat me U eerst een indruk geven van dit proefschrift. Het beschrijft de ontwikkeling van de Christian Reformed Church in de periode tussen 1890 en 1918 en het is vooral gebouwd op een nauwkeurig onderzoek van de volgende bladen: *De Wachter*, *The Banner*, *De Gereformeerde Amerikaan* en *De Calvinist*. Een van de aantrekkelijke kanten van dit proefschrift is dat het de discussies, die in de beschreven periode nog hoofdzakelijk in de Nederlandse taal gevoerd werden, in duidelijk Engels voor ons samenvat.

De schrijver geeft in het eerste hoofdstuk de historische achtergrond van de beschreven periode. In het tweede hoofdstuk beschrijft hij de aanpassing aan de Amerikaanse omgeving en het streven om de Gereformeerde erfenis, door de emigranten uit Nederland meegenomen, in Amerika te bewaren en een kerk van Nederlands-Amerikanen te vormen. "Voortgaand op de grondslag van beginsel" (Proceeding on the basis of principle) is de titel van het derde hoofdstuk. In dit derde hoofdstuk vinden we een beschrijving van de drie groepen, die Dr. Zwaanstra in deze periode van de geschiedenis van de Chr. Ref. Church onderscheidt.

Het zijn de Confessioneel Gereformeerden, de Separatistische Calvinisten en de Amerikaanse Calvinisten. Bij de eerste groep behoren mannen als F.M. ten Hoor, H. Beuker, G.K. Hemkes, W. Heyns en L.J. Hulst. Deze "Confessional Reformed" zijn de broeders uit de Afscheiden kring, de leerlingen van Kampen. Zij waren gekant tegen allerlei speculatieve theoriën van Abraham Kuyper. In dogmatisch opzicht waren ze infralapsarisch ("beneden val drijvers"); ze benadrukten de betekenis van het verbond Gods met de gelovigen en hun zaad; ze wisten zich gebonden aan de gereformeerde belijdenisgeschriften en onderscheidten nadrukkelijk tussen de gereformeerde leer en de opvattingen van gereformeerde theologen.

Het is jammer dat Dr. Zwaanstra, die aan de invloed van Abraham Kuyper op de bewegingen in deze periode van 1809-1918 terecht grote aandacht wijdt, de naam van Helenuis de Cock zelfs niet een enkel maal noemt. Het is duidelijk dat bij de beantwoording van de vraag "Wat is Gereformeerd?" de *Confessional Reformed party* zich door deze Kamper docent liet leiden. Deze Confessionele Gereformeerden hebben veel betekend voor de opkomst en bloei van de actie voor Christelijk onderwijs in Amerika. Naast

hun sterke gebondenheid aan de gereformeerde belijdenisgeschriften in het leven der kerk lag m.i. daarin vooral hun kracht en hun blijvende betekenis. K. Kuiper is er een prachtig voorbeeld van. De tweede groep wordt gevormd door wat Dr. Zwaanstra de "Separatist Calvinists" noemt. Men kan zich afvragen of de schrijver met deze naam aan de betrokken groep wel geheel recht doet. Zeker, het was de groep die in navolging van de ontwikkeling in Nederland zich sterk doordrongen voelde van de roeping om afzonderlijke christelijke organisaties in politiek en sociaal opzicht op te richten. Maar "separatistisch" geeft een wat nare smaak in de mond. Naar mijn oordeel kan men uit deze naamgeving reeds bemerken waar de sympathie van de schrijver *niet* ligt! Ook al noemt de auteur natuurlijk geen ogenblik de A.A.C.S., men kan zich niet onttrekken aan de indruk, dat bij zijn beschrijving van deze beweging der "Separatist Calvinists" hij zich een beetje heeft laten leiden door zijn opvatting over de A.A.C.S. Hij schrijft bijv. op blz. 310, dat het Calvinistisch reveil in Nederland en Kuyper's ideeën over Christelijk onderwijs geen invloed van betekenis hadden op de grondslag en de vroege ontwikkeling van de beweging voor Christelijk onderwijs in Amerika. "The schools from the beginning were considered an extension of the family with the teacher representing the parents, rather than an independent sphere of life to be claimed for Christ."

Maar wilde ook Abraham Kuyper - en juist Kuyper - de school niet aan de ouders hebben? Moet men niet onderscheiden tussen Kuyper's opvatting en latere ideeën van aanhangers van de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee? Hier beкроop mij de indruk dat de auteur meer de huidige A.A.C.S. beschreef dan de "Separatist Calvinists", mannen als K. Schoolland en J. Van Lonkhuyzen.

Tussen haakjes: het proefschrift van Dr. Zwaanstra geeft een prachtige aanvulling in het doen kennen van de boeiende figuur van J. Van Lonkhuyzen. Hij is in onze kring vooral bekend door zijn principieel verzet tegen het nieuwe kerkrecht van H.H. Kuyper. In de Vrijmakingstijd hebben wij teruggerepen o.a. naar de kerkrechtelijke brochures van Van Lonkhuyzen. In het proefschrift van Dr. Zwaanstra leren we deze doorgewinterde Kuyperiaan weer van een andere kant kennen. Van Lonkhuyzen heeft zich

o.a. krachtig ingezet voor de oprichting van een christelijke organisatie op sociaal terrein in Amerika, maar het werk is hem bij de handen afgebroken.

Oorzaak daarvan is o.a. het verzet geweest uit de derde kring, door Zwaanstra de "American Calvinists" genoemd. De leidende figuren ervan waren H. Beets, J. Groen en B.K. Kuiper. Deze derde groep heeft als het ware de overwinning behaald. De ver-amerikanisering van de Christian Reformed Church kreeg haar beslag gedurende de eerste wereldoorlog en dus aan het eind van de beschreven periode.

In 1918 bedankte Van Lonkhuyzen als medewerker van *De Wachter*. In hetzelfde jaar hield *De Calvinist* op te verschijnen. De invloed van de "Separatist Calvinists" verdween. In 1914 was *The Banner* aangekocht door de Christian Reformed Church en tot Engelstalig officieel orgaan verheven.

Dr. Zwaanstra oordeelt: "Increased exposure to and involvement in American life is the most significant clue to understanding the changing mentality of the Christian Reformed from 1890 to 1918" (p. 305). Hij heeft dus oog voor de sociologische factor. Toch kan men, juist op grond van het materiaal dat hij zelf heeft aangedragen, vragen of er niet meer in het ge-

ding was. Het is waar dat in deze zelfde periode de overgang voltrok van het gebruik van het Nederlands naar dat van het Engels. In 1914 verscheen het Jaarboek van de Chr. Ref. Church voor de eerste maal in de Engelse taal. Maar de synode van 1914 trok ook de afwijzende beslissing van haar voorganger uit 1904 ten aanzien van de unions in. In 1918 sloot de Chr. Ref. Church zich officieel aan bij de Federal Council of Churches. Zwaanstra spreekt van "the ecumenical vision of the Synod of 1918", die o.a. ook uitkwam in haar beslissing om samen met de Presbyteriaanse Kerk een opleidingschool voor inheemse zendingshulpers in New Mexico te stichten. Men kan m.i. dit alles niet brengen onder het hoofd van een aanpassing aan de praktische Amerikaanse mentaliteit. Er was hier meer in het geding. Een duidelijk voorbeeld daarvan was de zaak van de vakbonden. Zwaanstra oordeelt: "The Christian political and labour organizations did not succeed simply because experience in American society taught the church that the existing American organizations were not as anti-Christian as the Separatist Calvinists presumed and declared them to be" (p. 313).

Maar zou de oorzaak van de mislukking van Christelijke politieke en sociale organisaties louter te verklaren

Amerikaanse organisaties nog niet zo anti-christelijk waren? Of is hier een immanente zwakte van de door Kuiper beïnvloede beweging der "Separatist Americans" openbaar geworden? Naar mijn oordeel is het laatste minstens ook het geval geweest.

Vandaar dat ik boven dit artikel plaatste: Kuiper met Kuiper verslagen. Maar de uitwerking daarvan moet overstaan tot een volgend maal, zo de Heere wil dat wij leven.

J. FABER

Church News

Synod 1974

The consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church of Toronto informs the churches of the date of the next Synod:

November 5, 1974

All correspondence should be directed to the secretary:

G. DeBoer

9 Kersey Crescent
Richmond Hill, Ont. L4C 3W2

our little magazine

Time for birthday wishes for the last time this year. Last, but not least, come these Busy Beavers. We all join in wishing you a wonderful day! May the Lord grant you many, many happy returns of the day!

Karen Bergsma	Dec. 4		
Bonita Stiksma	5	Rita Bouwsema	21
Alinda Greta Kuik	6	Edward Versteeg	21
Albert Riemersma	6	Linda Meliefste	23
Loretta Dam	8	Johanna Van Dam	23
Wilma De Vos	8	Karl Veldkamp	24
Annie-Lynn Ruggi	9	Corinne Welfing	24
Sharon Koerselman	11	Corinne Medemblik	25
Jacqueline Kobes	17	Pearl De Vries	27
Margaret Ellhart	18	Audrey Bultena	28
Jack Lodder	18	Betty Vander Meulen	28
Walter Van Grootheest	19	Christine Van Zandwyk	29

Wilma Bouwman	Dec. 30	Jackie Bakker	31
Louis Dijkstra	30	Theresa Boersema	31

* * * * *



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Jeanette Vande Burgt*. We hope you'll really enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Does your baby brother smile a lot at you already?

Thank you for the pretty card, *Carolyn Paize*. Can you play some songs on the organ already? I'm glad you had such a nice birthday, Carolyn. Bye for now.

Hello, *Margaret Vanden Haak*. I'm glad you like the letter from Brazil. So did I. And thank you for your funny poem. I like it too!

And hello to you too, *Bonita Stiksma*. Did you enjoy doing the LADIES' quiz? You had it all right. Keep up the good work!

* * * * *

Watch for Our Little Magazine in the next issue, the Christmas/New Year's Issue. Bye for now, Busy Beavers.

Aunt Betty.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Slomp are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter:

COBY

to

HANS BARTELS

son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Bartels.

The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on Thursday, December 6, 1973, at seven-thirty o'clock, in the Canadian Reformed Church of Hamilton.

Prof. Dr. J. Faber officiating.

8 Varidi Ave.
Brantford, Ont.

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The Lord willing, we hope to celebrate on December 2nd, 1973, the 35th Wedding Anniversary of our parents:

MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM BARTELS

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever! Psalm 107:1

Their thankful children:

Geraldine *Helioo, Holland*

John and Willy

William and Annemarie

Henry and Nancy

Ben and Ingrid

George and Marta

Hans and Coby

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