



Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 23, No. 2

January 26, 1974



Stay On Your Level

Recently I was asked during one of the catechism-classes whether it would be advisable to give *The Living Bible* to people outside the Church, since its language was more easily understood than that of the King James Version or of the Revised Standard Version. Another possibility was seen in giving *Good News for Modern Man*.

Such a question is understandable, for language is a living thing; it is not stationary and never becomes stagnant. Language develops and changes almost constantly. Those who make a trip to the old country note the differences already even though they have been here for "only" some twenty-odd years: not only has the way of life changed considerably so that they may no longer feel at home there, and not only can the countryside hardly be recognized in many instances, but also the language used in private and public life and even on the pulpit shows considerable differences from that to which we have remained accustomed.

It would, therefore, be foolish if we should insist on using the same language which was in use in the Church some 350 years ago. That applies not only to the language and terminology used in the sermons, it applies also to the language of the Bible translations we use. In fact, no one today uses the King James Version as it came off the presses in 1611 A.D.! Countless changes have been made in spelling and in the words used. As, in the Netherlands, also before the appearing of the new translation of the Netherlands Bible Society, no one except maybe some extreme groups (if even they!) used the original text of the *Statenvertaling* of 1637. During my first year at the Theological College our lectures in Hebrew were also attended by Dr. J.J. Esser, retired principal of the Reformed Highschool in Kampen, who was engaged in checking the correctness (or incorrectness) of all the changes made in the course of the centuries.

The best and clearest translation should be used in order to bring the Word of God as close as can be. But what we should never do is: Try to make God's Word more "understandable" than it is by changing expressions, by adding explanatory remarks, by putting it in "modern" language.

We should never think that we can improve on the work of the Holy Spirit!! We should never think that we can say things more clearly and with more effect than our God Himself has said things in His own Word! The only "Bible" which we can trust is the Word as the Lord Himself has spoken it. For that reason a translation should be a translation indeed, and stick as closely as possible to the original text. By that Word and thereby alone faith is worked in the hearts.

There should never be an effort to put the Holy Scriptures into the language of the man of the street. That

is contrary to the dignity and character of Holy Writ as the Word of God.

Several years ago I read a "modern rendition" of the parable of the prodigal son, made by a minister somewhere in Liverpool, England. It was horrible to read for someone who loves God's Word. It was no longer the Gospel.

Let's bear in mind that you can never save one who is sinking to his death in quicksand by jumping in with him, nor can you ever pull someone out of a deep pit by going in and joining him. You can do these things only when you stay on firm ground.

Likewise you can never convince one of the majesty of our God and of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ by descending and by bringing His Word down to street-level.

That applies not only to the "translation" we use; it affects our whole way in which we approach others. It is only when people see that we are different that they may become jealous and may be desirous to join us, seeing that in this manner they can get *out* of their pattern of life which rendered them miserable anyway!

Many young people nowadays can be recognized by their clothing, their guitar, their hairdo (or lack of it), and their language. Therein they show and utter a protest against "the establishment". How wrong it would be if we should approach them in the same clothing, strumming the same guitar, having the same hairdo, and addressing them in the same language. What we bring is on a different level and is not at all a message of protest nor, for that matter, of defense. What they long to hear is not the same expressions they have been using, but something different, something that will lift them out of the mess and their misery.

Sometimes churches where attendance is dwindling take refuge to all sorts of gimmicks to get young and old back to what they still call a "service". The regular order of worship is then replaced by the singing of all sorts of modern songs and extracts from blasphemous rock-operas; boys and girls deliver speeches in the language of the street to be more readily acceptable to eventual visitors. But there is no place for an authoritative preaching of the Gospel. The Christ of the Scriptures is not brought.

We can never save anyone by lowering ourselves to his level. In such a case it cannot be seen that we are different. We should show that we are different, indeed, and such not for the sake of being different but because the Spirit of Christ changes people and brings about a difference.

You can pull people up only when you stay on the level to which God has elevated you. And you can do so only by the sword of the Spirit which is God's own Word, not by adulterated editions which incorporate thoughts of an un-Scriptural theology in order to render them more acceptable to natural man.

vO

A Neglected Part Of Recent Church History

In the October 27, 1973 issue of the Dutch weekly *De Reformatie* the press review column contained a quotation from another weekly, *Waarheid en Eenheid*, wherein Dr. E. Masselink, one of the "concerned" in the synodical Churches in The Netherlands once again tabled the question: Why was the late Prof. Dr. K. Schilder never honoured by the Queen and the Netherlands Government for his very courageous attitude in the first few months of the German occupation of the country?

Dr. Masselink summarizes the outstanding articles written by K.S., which acted as eye openers for many and gave them courage and spiritual strength under the sad circumstances of the Nazi occupation.

It was no wonder, then, that after the end of the War these articles were reprinted and published as a book.

We feel inclined to quote the whole summary as given by Dr. Masselink and even more. However, this is not the proper time for it. It is not the point either.

For the Netherlands Government was not the only one who neglected an important part of recent Church history; there were others who did the same thing.

When I read the above-mentioned press review I was reminded of a book that I recently purchased.

In a certain sense the 15 cents which I spent to buy it had not been thrown away.

Its title reads: *What is the Church doing?*, and the author is Henry P. Van Dusen, a well-known American Church leader. The year of publication is of importance, being 1943. So this book was written and published in the middle of the Second World War.

It informs its readers about the consequences of this war for the churches all over the world.

Special attention is given to the native churches in the Pacific area which were suddenly left without European guidance. The author calls them, together with others, "orphaned missions", and assured his

readers that these young churches proved that they could cope with their problems independently.

It is further accentuated that "numerous organic church unions" were taking place under the stress of war conditions - which was hailed by the author, who happened to be one of the promoters of the so-called "ecumenical movement" which led to the establishing of the World Council of Churches soon after the end of World War II, in the year 1948.

However, we were most interested in the first section of this book, which is called "The Churches in Captivity".

Therein the author describes the stand which the churches took in the respective countries that had been occupied by the Nazis.

Particularly his story about The Netherlands drew my attention, since we used to live there as a theological student and - at the end of the war - as a young minister.

The main points of the story, which we are told in that particular chapter, are the following:

First it is emphasized that the testing came to a church seemingly ill-prepared. "The Dutch Reformed Church had become a Church without spiritual leadership and without a voice", as a young Dutch minister wrote according to the author.

However, the church woke up, as soon as the occupying forces began to force anti-Semitic measures upon the country.

Again a Dutch pastor is quoted who wrote: "October 27, 1940, was a historic day for our Church. The terrible silence in which our Church and our nation had lived for months was broken. The Church which had been silent for so long spoke and showed itself to be a Church which subordinates its own life to its message. The Church and the nation are deeply thankful for this word".

By the latter an official protest against the just mentioned anti-Jewish measures is meant.

Later on the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church re-affirmed

its solidarity with the Jews, stating: "The commandment of the Saviour to love our neighbours refers to them as it does to any other neighbour."

The leaders of the Church of Rome are reported as also taking up a strong position. In August 1941 a pastoral letter signed by the five bishops was read from all its pulpits.

United action was undertaken by Protestants and "Catholics" in joint representation to the authorities, and the reading of a pastoral letter on Sunday, April 19, 1942, regarding "the merciless treatment of the Jewish section of the population" and "the imposition of the National-Socialist conception of life and world order, which is directly contrary to the teachings of the Gospel".

The story continues by informing its readers that consequently many pastors and professors had been arrested and sent to a concentration camp.

Further on it is stated: "In Holland, the Church of Christ is resuming its old leadership of the entire nation." Again a certain pastor is quoted who wrote: "The barrier between the Church and the people has become transparent. The preacher has the feeling in the church service that he not only speaks to the Church people, but that he addresses the nation as a whole".

Well, here the old ideal of a "national church" is looking around the corner.

Besides, the whole book is full of the idea of "unity" as it was promoted by the "ecumenical movement".

It is no wonder, then, that the story of this book contains a large "pothole". The entire period between May and October 1940 is left out of the picture.

We could also mention the many and many pages of thorough information which Prof. Dr. K. Schilder had written long before World War II on the dangers of National-Socialism.

But let us restrict ourselves to the fact that Schilder began to publish his heart-warming and comforting articles as soon as his publisher could print them. His words drew the attention of many people who had never heard of this man before. I remember that the directors of the large business house for which he was working urged my father to bring with him his copy of

Continued on next page.

Understanding the Old Testament

NAHUM [7]

Chapter 7:15-2:2 [2:1-3 in Hebrew]

The verse which in the English translation is ch. 1:15, is in e.g. Dutch Bibles ch. 2:1. And the latter numbering is in agreement with that of the Hebrew Bible. As the reader may gather, the present writer prefers the division of the Hebrew Bible.

BEHOLD, ON THE MOUNTAINS THE FEET OF HIM WHO BRINGS GOOD TIDINGS, WHO PROCLAIMS PEACE! (vs. 15a)

And isn't this wonderful verse, perhaps the best known of the whole book, brought out into its actual relief at the beginning of a new chapter? Such glad tidings to Zion must start off a new chapter, another part of the

CHURCH HISTORY - Continued.

De Reformatie. They wanted to read what K.S. wrote.

When others, e.g. in the large Dutch Reformed Church, were slowly waking up, Prof. Schilder was in prison in Arnhem!

The author of the book refers to three main sources of information:

a. The International Christian Press and Information Service, a weekly issued in New York by the American Office of the World Council of Churches.

b. The Spiritual Issues of the War, published weekly by the Religious Division of the British Ministry of Information, giving "fullest account of developments among the Continental Churches, with additional news from other parts of the world".

c. Orphaned Missions, bulletins issued occasionally by the International Missionary Council, New York.

It would be worthwhile to check these sources - if still available somewhere, perhaps in a library - and see whether they, too, completely neglected the important period of recent Church history to which we referred in the lines which we wrote and have completed now.

G. VAN RONGEN
[*Pro Ecclesia*]

book. In this chapter the verses 1-3 (= 1:15-2:2) belong together, for they introduce the picture of Nineveh's siege. In ch. 1 we have seen YAHWEH approaching the earth in the manifestation of His anger, passing judgment on Nineveh. Judah was told, to her consolation, what the LORD would do to this city. And we were surprised by the vivid way in which Judah and Nineveh are alternately addressed by the prophet. It is clear that he points to the future.

But in ch. 2:1 (= 1:15) we hear him prophesy in a way suggesting present reality. "Behold!" the prophet says, and he intends us to look, to fix our eyes upon the scene that he is going to picture, or rather, the scene that he is himself looking at. It is Judah that is summoned to look. At whom? At the messenger upon the mountains. And who does not call to mind the well-known passage in Isaiah 52:7: "How beautiful are the feet of him who brings good tidings to Zion"? Why does it say: On the mountains? Well, in the landscape of Judah the horizon is formed by the contours of mountains, in whatever direction you may look. So, when they see the messenger coming, he is coming over the mountains. *Mebasser* is the Hebrew word for messenger, and it means that he brings not just tidings, but good tidings. The cognate word *besorah* has become the stereotype phrase for Gospel.

The nearer he approaches, the better the voice of the herald is heard. And the contents of his message are summarized in the word "peace". But "peace" is an insufficient rendering of the wonderful Hebrew word *SJALOOM*, which includes much more than the English word "peace" or the Dutch "vrede". For to us peace means: no war. But as for "*sjaloom*", its fundamental meaning is: totality, a being complete or whole. It means the untrammelled, free growth of life - life that expands harmoniously - although we may say that this harmonious life results when peace has been restored, when GOD has made wars cease;

when He has broken the bow, and shattered the spear, and burnt the chariots with fire.

KEEP YOUR FEASTS, O JUDAH, FULFIL YOUR VOWS, FOR NEVER AGAIN SHALL THE WICKED COME AGAINST YOU; HE IS UTTERLY CUT OFF. (vs. 15b)

And just as the population of the Netherlands and other European countries celebrated their feasts in May 1945, so Judah is summoned here to keep its feast. They are congratulated "because the feasts could not be properly kept during the oppression by the enemy, or, at any rate, could not be visited by those who lived at a distance from the temple." They are summoned "because the *chaggim*, the great yearly feasts, were feasts of thanksgiving for the blessings of salvation, which Israel owed to the LORD". (C.F. Keil)

There was an obligation. Apart from the Assyrian occupation, the celebration of the great feasts must have left much to be desired. How otherwise do you explain the enthusiasm and exuberance with which the Passover was celebrated by Hezekiah and, a century later, by Josiah? Moreover, Judah had pledged itself by its vows. "The many vows that have been made in the effort to win the favor of God for the afflicted people are now due." (Powis Smith) "It is characteristic that the religious duties of the nation are the first thought in the writer's mind. The deliverance will be wrought by GOD; the first obligation of the rescued people is to Him!"

And with a view to the future: "O Judah, O Church of God, keep your solemn feasts! Your joyous hope of a Redeemer, commemorated on these feasts, shall not be disappointed! Pay your vows! Your salvation is assured! It will not and cannot fail. As Nineveh, so shall all the enemies of your salvation be overcome! Both Isaiah (ch. 10:5-27) and Micah (5:4-5) had foretold the destruction of Assyria prior to the coming of the Messiah as a guarantee of the ultimate destruction of all enemies of the Church and of the salvation of God's people. Nahum's prophecy of Nineveh's fall is therefore a further guarantee that all Messianic prophecies shall be fulfilled in due time." (Th. Laetsch)

"The wicked shall no more pass through thee". (The A.V. is better

here than R.S.V.: "come against you"). "He is utterly cut off."

THE SHATTERER HAS COME UP AGAINST YOU. (vs. 1a)

Then, in 2:2 (= 2:1) there is a sudden change in the person addressed. Just as in ch. 1:11 and 1:14, Nineveh is addressed here. Its enemy is called a *mefits* in Hebrew, that is, a scatterer, rather than "a shatterer" (R.S.V.) or "he that dasheth in pieces" (A.V.).

Why does the prophet address Nineveh? Does he have a message for the city? If so, must it not be one full of doom and condemnation, in accordance with the LORD's wrath in ch. 1? However, what do we hear? Isn't it as if he feels sorry for Nineveh? As if he encourages the citizens? One may wonder how we are to account for such a change in attitude.

Someone who scatters has come up against Nineveh - "before thy face" (A.V.), openly, fearlessly. We ask: Does the prophet have in mind a specific people, a nation well-known to him? The designation is too general to answer that question. Anyway, Nahum cannot go into details now. The year 612 B.C., the date of Nineveh's destruction, is too far in the future.

MAN THE RAMPARTS; WATCH THE ROAD; GIRD YOUR LOINS; COLLECT ALL YOUR STRENGTH. (vs. 1b)

Nevertheless, what is he doing now? As if he lived that very year, which is some forty years after the time when Nahum wrote the book, he transports himself mentally into the city as it is endangered. He makes a pretence of being one of the inhabitants devoted to the city and trembling because of its fate. He foresees things taking a turn for the worse. Afraid that the city is past redemption, he tries his hardest to save it. In utter distress he urges his fellow Ninevites to do anything possible. We hear the pretended Ninevite utter his screams, his cries, in striking graphic language. "Keep the munition", guard your bulwarks and fortifications! "Watch," keep a sharp look-out on all the highways leading to your city, to guard against any surprise attack. "Make your loins strong," muster up all the courage you can. You will need it! (Cp. vs. 10: weakened knees and aching loins.). "Fortify the power mightily," make use of every possible

means to present a solid, strong front.

What the prophet means is that Yahweh knows that all their efforts will not save the nation, from disintegration. The Scatterer will come and do his work thoroughly.

So, we have here an ironic manner of speaking that we'll meet more than once in this book. And this very way of expression is such as to make the message, the glad tidings, unforgettable.

FOR THE LORD IS RESTORING (WILL RESTORE) THE MAJESTY OF JACOB AS THE MAJESTY OF ISRAEL. (vs. 2a)

The next verse mentions for what reason the inhabitants of Nineveh are to feel so anxious that they will fight with courage born of despair. "For YAHWEH will restore the majesty, glory, of Jacob." There are some problems as far as the form of the verb is concerned. The A.V. translates with an English perfect tense: "hath turned away". The translation "turned away" is wrong here; it is not necessary or even allowed to translate the Hebrew perfect tense with a perfect tense in English, Dutch, or whatever Indo-European language, because what we call "tense" (Dutch: *tijden* - hier: *de verleden tijd*) do not function in a Semitic language, like Hebrew, as tenses but rather as manners of action. So the Hebrew "perfect" may be rendered by either a past, or present, or even future tense in English and Dutch. We can render here: the LORD will restore. I am sorry that the R.S.V. puts verse 3 (= 2) between brackets. I wonder why, for it is not out of place here.

Now, here the motive is given why the LORD will have such distress come on Nineveh. It is because of Jacob, of Israel, of the Church. Considered from the LORD's angle, in world history, with all the Great Powers appearing on the stage, the Church of His Son Jesus Christ is in the centre of interest. Already in days of old that church had its "excellency" (A.V.), "majesty" (R.S.V.) - *ga'on* in Hebrew. The reader remembers the times of king David and Solomon. Israel had forfeited this *ga'on*.

Besides, it is a peculiar thing that *ga'on* may be used either in a good sense ("glory") or in a bad sense ("pride"). The latter we come across in Amos 6:8: "I abhor the pride (*ga'on*

- A.V.: excellency) of Jacob and hate its strongholds," or its palaces, because they "store up violence and robbery in their strongholds" (Amos 3:10).

On the other hand, we see the word in a good, favourable sense in Amos 8:7: "The LORD has sworn by the pride (A.V.: excellency) of Jacob."

An interesting translation problem we face here. We cannot always translate a particular Hebrew word by one and the same expression in English. So in Amos 6:8 the R.S.V. is right, but in 8:7, as in Psalm 47:4, I prefer the A.V. There is all the difference between *ga'on* as a work of sinful man, haughtiness, pride, and *ga'on* as wrought, bestowed on Israel, by the LORD. And as far as the latter meaning is concerned, it is a thing the LORD can swear by. And Nahum declares that He surely will restore.

Some scholars have explained Jacob as representing the two tribes, and Israel as the kingdom of the ten tribes. Others see in the name Jacob, Israel according to the flesh, and in the name Israel, the purified, true, spiritual Israel of the future. I wonder, whether it is necessary to read so much in these names. I for one consider it simply as a matter of parallelism in poetic and prophetic language.

FOR PLUNDERERS HAVE STRIPPED THEM AND RUINED THEIR BRANCHES. (vs. 2b)

Last but not least, we see how consolatory the comforting prophet is when calling to mind all the misery which the vine of Israel had suffered in the past because of the Assyrian plunderer. The same image of the vine we meet in Isaiah 5, Jeremiah 12, and Psalm 80.

H.M. OHMANN



A Reminder to Our Subscribers:

1974 Clarion Subscriptions are now due. This is to remind those readers who have not yet paid. It is of great assistance to us to have all subscriptions paid up by the end of January. This reduces the administration costs tremendously.



Its Historical Background



The Fall Conference of office-bearers in Ontario (1972) requested me to give some information about the historical background of Art. 27 of our Church Order regarding the rule that elders and deacons serve with limited tenure and not for life, as is the usual case for ministers. The article reads: "The Elders and Deacons shall serve two or more years according to local regulations, and a proportionate number shall retire each year. The retiring office-bearers shall be succeeded by others unless the circumstances and the well-being of any church, in the executive of Articles 22 and 24 (about the election of elders and deacons), render a re-election advisable."

There is no Canadian Reformed Church, I think, where office-bearers serve for only two years. The article itself already speaks of "two or more years". Moreover, there is even spoken of the possibility of a re-election, though in case of such a re-election the first term of such an elder or deacon has really expired. He does not automatically continue in his office, but a re-election is necessary. I'd say it is not difficult to see that there is quite a difference in the position of an elder and a minister (full-time, part-time; training, serving several congregations, etc.) - not a difference, of course, of greater or less importance, but we'll not elaborate on that now.

Our only question is: what is the historical background of Art. 27 C.O.? It is a rule we don't find in many Presbyterian denominations, which have a Scottish background. There we find the practice of elders who serve for life, although, while holding that all the offices are for life, they nevertheless have adopted a distinction between permanent Eldership and Term or Rotary Eldership. Why is there such a distinction? Though the New Testament gives proof of the election of elders in the young churches the Scriptures are silent about the tenure of office of elders and deacons. John Calvin held that the Scriptures therefore give no proof that the office was for life, and that

no scriptural objection can be raised against term-eldership as he introduced it. On the other hand, the Presbyterian Churches introduced life tenure on the grounds that the New Testament nowhere gives any evidence for a limitation of the term of the elder's office. We all know how the Reformation in the Netherlands was strongly influenced by John Calvin.

The organization of the Reformed Churches was partially based on the situation in Geneva. Geneva had achieved its independence from the duchy of Savoy. Its government was the Senate. This form of government influenced the organization of the church in this city, as the church had an important position in Geneva, especially after Calvin's return from Strasbourg. We who are used to a separation of church and state and enjoy the total independence of the church from the government will question quite a bit of what was accepted by the church of Geneva in those days. The members of the city council of Geneva annually retired. That was a rule for all those who served in a civil office. They were elected only for a year. The office-bearers of the church were appointed by the city council. They had the same limited tenure as the city council members.

We read in the church order of Geneva, adopted in 1541, "At the end of the year, after the election for the Council the elders will present themselves before the Council in order that the latter will judge (with the advice of the ministers of the Word) whether they will be continued in their offices or will be succeeded by others. It will, however, not be profitable to replace them often without reason, when they faithfully fulfil their duties." We find the same article in the later editions of the C.O. of 1560 and 1561. The rule was that the twelve elders of Geneva's church were appointed in February of each year for a period of one year. That was the rule, even in case of re-appointment. The minutes of the sessions of Geneva's City Council have been preserved. They regularly

record that the rules were strictly maintained year after year. It also appears from these minutes that replacements often took place. It became practice almost at the end of Calvin's life that the ministers nominated the elders to the civil government. Calvin often recommended this practice in letters written by him to churches or persons abroad, for instance in a letter to the well-known Caspar Olevianus in Heidelberg in 1560.

The same practice of periodic retirement was adopted in the Reformed Churches of France and elsewhere, also in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. The late Prof. F.L. Rutgers wrote that there was only this difference between Geneva and the Netherlands that reappointment of qualified elders was stressed in Geneva, while limited appointment was stressed in the Netherlands. Let us never forget that the biblical office of the elder had totally disappeared in the hierarchical popish church. There we had the great distance between the clergy and the laity. There was nothing left of the glory of the New Testament Church in which the office of all believers was of such a great value. Someone (Dr. O. Noordmans) once said that John Calvin checkmated the pope with the pawn of the elder. Nowadays a readiness is growing in many so-called protestant churches to accept a personal-universal office in the "world church". There is a development in modern theology also regarding the offices in the church which we have to watch closely.

We must be thankful that the men used by the Lord for the edification of His church in the Low Countries in those early days of the Reformation insisted on a periodic retirement of elders and deacons. At the Convent at Wesel, held in 1568, the delegates agreed upon a certain number of rules, the so-called Articles of Wesel. This convent laid the foundation of the confederation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Article 17 reads, "Besides the difficulties that are daily the case related to

the office of Elders and Deacons, it is obvious that those who have proved to be faithful in their calling for some time could not do that without causing great harm to their domestic duties. Therefore we think it profitable that new elders are yearly chosen in such a way that after the end of a year or six months (inasmuch as the case or circumstances will require) half a part will be dismissed from their service, and others elected instead of them in order to have supervision of the church with those who will remain in their office - on the understanding, however, that the consistory is free to request the elders and deacons who are most competent and willing to serve in their calling the next half or full year (according to the discretion of the consistory)."

The Synod of Emden of 1571 made a decision as approved at Wesel, but left the persecuted Churches "under the Cross" free to agree upon a shorter or longer period. The same regulations were made by the Provincial Synod of Dordrecht, 1574, and by the National Synod of 1578, also held at Dordrecht. We again see here how careful they were in not overruling the local churches. The article in question reads in its second part, "But regarding the secret congregations (de "heimelijke gemeenten" - we would call them the Underground Churches) or those churches that cannot maintain this rule, they are free to shorten or lengthen the term in accordance with their need and circumstances. Should there arise any objection, the matter will be judged by classis". The article in question as decided upon at the Synod of Middelburg 1581 remained the same till 1905. It also speaks of a tenure of two years and leaves possibilities open: "unless the circumstances and profit of any churches require otherwise." We still have the article in the form agreed upon at the Synod of Utrecht 1905.

At the Synod of Middelburg 1581 there was a question from East Flanders whether it would not be better for the elders and deacons to serve for life (and in that case also to be financially supported) rather than to retire and be succeeded by others. Synod asked Prof. Danaeus of Leyden for advice. He advised Synod as follows: (1) Scripture does not teach that they always remained in their calling. So, succession is allowed, and is better than a life tenure in preventing church tyranny. (2) It is desirable

that more persons are initiated in church matters. (3) The ministers will lose their adherents or hangers-on by regular retirement of half the elders and deacons, and so the danger of tyranny is diminished. (4) In case of the continuation of some of the office-bearers there is still the necessity of approbation by the members of the church. Besides the fact that Art. 27 as agreed upon in 1905 speaks of "two or more years" (two years were deemed too short already long before), the last part of the article in express terms speaks of a re-election. The above, however, speaks of a continuation.

It is interesting to know that in the Reformed Church of Dutch refugees at London, England, the elders and deacons did not serve with limited tenure. That church was instituted in 1550. Within that church objections were probably voiced against this practice, as its ministers deemed it necessary to defend the practice of life tenure in 1560. Other refugee churches in England did not agree with this rule either. As we saw, also the churches in the Netherlands had a different practice. The acts of the so-called "colloquia" (to be compared with our classes) dealt again and again with this matter, which shows something in itself. It is remarkable that the reasoning given by the ministers of London is almost the opposite of the advice given by the above-mentioned Prof. Danaeus of Leyden. They did not consider periodic retirement to be profitable for the churches ("practice makes 'perfect' "). Having been only requested to tell you something about the historical background of Art. 27 C.O., I shall not mention all pros and cons. The decisions agreed upon in the Netherlands did not change the situation in the church at London. They held to the opinion that with regard to the term of office there is no difference between a minister and an elder or deacon. Only in case of lawful reasons retirement was allowed: otherwise continuation in the office was considered the right way. They were still of the same opinion in 1612.

We have to take into account, however, that developments in the English Church probably played an important role. Already in 1550 the Dutch church at London had to accept a superintendent. She came under the direct authority of the bishop of the Episcopal Church, which

church opposed any influence of its ordinary members. Moreover, the records of the history of the Reformed Church at London witness again and again of a hierarchical and clerical attitude especially among the ministers. It was these ministers who fought for life tenure for elders and deacons. When reading about their reasoning in these matters. A "resolution" of August 1612 reads: "De populaire verkiesinghe, daer se noch niet en is afgeschafft, is te houden voor een oordeel van Gods Kerke" - i.e. the popular election (by the congregation), where it is not yet abolished, is to be considered a judgment on God's Church. Small wonder that this same colloquium complains of a lack of respect for the office of elder in regard to the situation of the Reformed Churches in England (in a letter to the Synod of Dort of 1618-1619).

The churches in North-Holland for a time also had the practice of continuation of the tenure of all office-bearers, but they gradually adopted the practice of their sister churches. The only exception was the church at Groningen. There the elders were appointed for life, namely four from the magistrates, four from the university and four from the citizenry. It remained a custom there until the nineteenth century.

C. OLY



THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE
Published biweekly by Premier Printing Ltd.
Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Second class mail registration number 1025.

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE
MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.
1249 Plessis Road, Winnipeg
Manitoba, Canada, R2C 3L9

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION
P.O. Box 54, Fergus
Ontario, Canada, N1M 2W7

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

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

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS:

J. M. Boersema, J. Faber, E. Gosker,
W. Huizinga, P. Kingma, H. J. Ludwig,
H. M. Ohmann, A. H. Oosterhoff,
F. G. Oosterhoff, A. B. Roukema,
C. Tenhage, C. Van Dam, G. Van Dooren
H. C. VanDooren, C. Van Spronsen
J. Visscher, M. C. Werkman

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

\$13.50 per year (to be paid in advance).

ADVERTISEMENTS:

\$3.50 per column inch (width of column:
one-third of page). Contract rates upon
request.

news medley

In almost every bulletin which I receive and read, tribute was paid to the late Rev. H.A. Stel. Four Churches sent a telegram before the funeral took place: Coaldale, Edmonton, Houston, and Lincoln, if I am not mistaken. If I am, I shall correct it next time. The Church at Neerlandia tried to send a representative to Winnipeg for the funeral, but because of holiday-bookings on the airlines, this was not possible. I think that everything that was written about our late brother is summed up best in what the Rev. G. Van Dooren wrote. For the benefit of our readers I insert that here:

Although we knew that Rev. Stel was seriously ill, it came as a shock when we were told that he had passed away. Another of our 'first' ministers relieved from his post before the retirement age. We heard that some see this as a judgment from the Lord: so many ministers that pass away or have to retire before their years are 'full'. We should rather see this, first, as a test whether we as Churches put our trust only in the Lord (Psalm 146). In the second place the Churches may wonder, maybe, if not the load and burden of the ministry, especially in the first years of immigration, has been too heavy; or, if not **we** have made it too heavy. But the LORD does not make mistakes. The years of Rev. Stel's ministry were 'full' indeed. He will uphold his widow, according to the same Psalm 146.

And our 'application'? First, that we support the ministers that are left to us with our prayers, love and appreciation, knowing that their work is among the most difficult on earth, be it also the most beautiful. And second, let us support to the utmost, with gifts, prayers and encouragement to young men, our training for the ministry, so that in time the Churches may be provided with a sufficient number of men dedicated to the high office of preaching and teaching.

Is there still even one person left among us who dares to question the need and necessity of our own Theological College, for which Rev. Stel had such a great love?

Meanwhile, also in Winnipeg the life of the Church goes on. The Consistory decided to bring the matter of sale of the Church building to the Congregational Meeting planned for January. It will have been held by the time you read this, I presume. Plans for a new Church building are in the making; if I understood the brethren well, they intend to build facilities that can also be used for school purposes. The monthly contribution for the school was raised to \$20.00.

Especially now that also Winnipeg is vacant, the decision will be much more difficult for the Rev. Geertsema, who together with Mrs. Geertsema, visited Hamilton.

Now that we mentioned Hamilton, we may also mention that, with a view to the attendance at such services, it was decided to continue the Dutch services. What is discontinued (after a trial period) is the singing before the services. Only in very few cases have I just attended a service. If it was in a place where they were

used to singing before the start of the service, I was always unfavourably impressed by it. Some sing, others just sit there and look without singing or they talk. Others again are rather late coming to Church, and walk in, looking for a seat and oftentimes disturbing the singing of others. Should they feel ashamed that they come in and look where they can sit while the rest are singing? Technically, they are not too late in Church; with a view to the pre-service singing, however, they must have a feeling that they are too late. The Hamilton bulletin does not give the reasons for the discontinuation; I, for one, could give several reasons, which, however, is not necessary.

From Hamilton twenty-four boxes with clothing were shipped to Korea, 435 pounds in total, at a cost of \$176.25. Our ladies are, and remain, active.

Hamilton, too, requested the Committee of Administration to investigate the possibility of having a sound-system installed. The bulletin also mentioned that oftentimes the front pews are not occupied. Although that does not explain the problem which must be in the building itself, it does render invalid the complaints of all who love to sit in the back and then start grumbling because they cannot hear what is being said from the pulpit.

Now that we are busy with problems concerning Church buildings anyway, we might as well go to Edmonton. There they had a fire in the Church building, which appears to have been arson. The **City Guide** mentioned right away that the fire was set, and in a later issue it was mentioned that also in another part of the city a Church building had been set on fire, as was also the case with some schools. Quick action of neighbours and fire department saved the building and contents, although there was considerable damage to both, including the organ which was being built. Some parts have to be repaired, other parts have to be replaced completely since they were destroyed by the fire. Contracts for cleaning and repairs have been let. Only one service had to be cancelled, the afternoon service on the day of the fire. Apparently it was started between the services.

The Consistory received an offer of the Greek Orthodox Church to use their building for the services; the Ottowell Christian Reformed Church also expressed sympathy and offered help, as did a Christian Reformed Ladies Auxiliary; a Roman Catholic priest phoned Rev. De Jong, and expressed his sympathy. Of all offers of help, however, none had to be used, since on the Sunday after the fire the services could be resumed. It will be the end of March before the organ ("The Thing", as you will recall) can be used.

Brampton, too, has its organ problems. There the Consistory informed the Congregation: "The keyboard which was ordered from England completed its disappearing act and, according to the organ builder, is nowhere to be found." Now a new one has been ordered in the United States. Brampton has been waiting long enough for it; we'll keep you posted.

Returning to Edmonton for a moment, we mention that the school bazaar brought in some \$753.93 in clear profits, and that Edmonton is still very active in the work of supporting Korean orphans, for which work they also receive some assistance from Ontario Churches as well as the one in Classis Alberta/Manitoba. And, speaking of bazaars, in Grand Rapids the same "institution" yielded \$430.00; in the Fraser Valley it was over \$2,000.00.

Yes, about Grand Rapids: I was struck by the

exclamation, "Columbus did it again!" I envisaged some new discoveries, a new "Wild West" and oil- and gold-field discoveries with all the glitter and misery that comes with it. But no, it was about Rev. Van Rongen's household effects and library (you see that I very carefully separate "household effects" and "library") and the exclamation referred to a ship, the "Columbus Australia" which brought the possessions of the Van Rongens to the United States. Rev. Van Rongen promised that they both would be invisible for a few days. They must have felt like a couple of newly-weds! Lack of his library did not prevent the minister, however, from giving an organ solo ("Vol van Pracht", a Dutch Christmas Carol, in the arrangement of Jan Zwart) at the "Children's Commemoration of Christ's Birth", as it was described in **Pro Ecclesia**.

Grand Rapids also issued a booklet which contains reprints of the articles on Key 73 which appeared in **Clarion**. I refer to the articles on that subject by the Revs. Kingma and Werkman. Grand Rapids uses this booklet to inform others about the objections to that Key 73 and about the manner in which this action is to be evaluated. It has been published by "Lecture Committee", American Reformed Church. Our readers know these articles already and therefore I do not have to say much about them. By means of such small brochures the contents of **Clarion** become known in a wider circle.

Going from Grand Rapids, we reach Chatham. There it was decided that the age for starting catechism classes was 14 years. It was stated that, also with a view to the fact that there is a Reformed school, the students may be supposed to know the Catechism by heart when they begin attending catechism classes, so that the minister can then build on that foundation.

Chatham is also active in collecting clothes, to be shipped to Korea. (The same is the case in Lincoln and other places.) Further, they decided to accept a plan for a Church building similar to that in Hamilton, seeing that the majority of the Congregation was in favour of such a plan. The latest information is that a total of approximately \$35,000.00 has been collected and/or pledged towards the new building.

Chatham also made some decisions concerning collections, decisions which "found favour in my eyes", to say it in a very dignified manner. In the first place it was decided to abolish special collections for "the Church". Evidently it was deemed wrong to have regular contributions and then, on top of that, collections. Further, it was decided to drop the collections at the Holy Supper table. These collections, we were informed, were originally for the Church; later they were for the support of the needy. But since there is already a collection taken for the support of the needy, it was felt that no second collection should be held for the same purpose.

But what made me most happy was the decision to lower the boxes for envelopes so that also children can use them. Children should be taught to give regularly, but also be enabled to do it themselves. It is a good rule that everyone who has income receives a set of envelopes and contributes on a regular basis. Boys who have a paper route will be most proud to deposit their envelope into the box every month after they have collected the subscription fees and know how much they earned that month. It is gratifying when a Consistory takes into account that there are also members of small stature who have to reach the boxes. An example to be followed!

Speaking of collections, Burlington East also made the decision that in every worship service there shall be only one collection: the giving of Christian alms. For only five causes one collection will be held during the first five months of this new year. Then, if I understood it well, it will be up to "private initiative" to collect the moneys needed for non-ecclesiastical causes. As for the fund-raising action in Burlington East: they may have reached their goal to bring together \$25,000 extra for debt reduction. Young people, too, I read, did their best to raise extra cash by taking odd jobs and donating the proceeds for the reduction of the debt incurred by the paving of the parking lot and the necessity of "buying out" Burlington West. A school bazaar yielded some \$3,000.00. When we look at all these (and other) figures, we realize anew what enormous sums of money are brought together by our community in the course of one year even. The regular expenses for the maintenance of the ministry of the Gospel, for the support of the needy, for the maintenance of the schools, and so on, come already to a staggering amount. Then there are the special actions.

And yet we may say that, generally speaking, our people are doing very well, also in economic respect. We may even say that we **could** do more without giving up any of the necessities of life! That is not because we are so smart or successful, but therein we are to note the faithfulness of our God. Let's never forget that!

Burlington East also spoke of the necessity of establishing a home for the elderly. The need for such a home has been felt for a long time by many Church members. Unfortunately, as one once said, the plans and actions have to be made and taken by those who do not need it and who (in their hearts) are not planning ever to go into such a home! Action undertaken in this respect in the Fraser Valley many years ago seems to have petered out; now there is some action in Ontario. Keep it up and push it! It is necessary: we are getting more and more elderly members and, as I see it, we have an obligation towards them.

Burlington West is happy. They received word from the Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs (whatever that may be under that expensive name!) that their property for the Church building has been exempted from the parkway belt. The property had been frozen under the parkway belt regulations in September, which prevented them from getting started in the fall. Now they hope to have construction under way in the spring. All the permits are in.

Speaking of buildings, Lincoln mentioned that good progress is made on construction of the manse. They also had a special farewell evening for the Van Rietschoten family. I know that the latter is old "news", but you will recall that I had to limit the previous News Medley to a few pages.

We stay in Ontario for a little longer. The number of Churches has increased by one. On January 1, 1974, the Church was instituted in Guelph when the two parts of the Fergus/Guelph Church, which were already meeting in two different places, became two separate and autonomous Churches.

It is always sort of sad when you see members go and realize that there is no longer any special bond. After the New Year's service, one of the brethren in Guelph said to me: "Now you are sort of a stranger, aren't you?" He was right, although, practically, not much will change in the

near future. The Fergus Church has about 300 members, the Guelph Church has approximately 135 members. We have come a long way since January 1956, when the Georgetown/Orangeville Church lost the members who instituted the Church at Brampton and at Fergus/Guelph on the same Sunday. Also here we see the blessing of the Lord.

There seems to be not much prospect of another Church between Cloverdale and New Westminster. New Westminster decided to build south of the Fraser River, and the Committee of Administration was authorized to proceed. We got some marvelously clear information in the press release of the Consistory meeting. We were told that the Consistory voted on three parts of a proposal regarding relocation of the Church. Part one was adopted, we are told to our great joy; but until the present day I have not read what part one was. Part three was also adopted, but it remains a mystery what it was. What was very clear, indeed, and may clear matters up even more was that the "suggestion is adopted to abolish smoking during meetings of Council." Congratulations. At least something has improved since I left! (How conceited!!)

New Westminster also dealt with a report, prepared by the Valley ministers together with the Rev. C. Van Spronsen, about how to deal with situations in Sao Jose when the time is there that people can make profession of faith, what to do in case the holy sacraments are to be administered, and so on. Is it not a miracle that already so soon after the start of the work in Brazil, such questions have to be discussed? It is a reason for joy also when we learn that there was unanimity in the reaching of conclusions. May the work be blessed.

In Cloverdale the Consistory stated that there is no Scriptural ground why an elder, when conducting a service, should change the word "you" in the benediction into "us". Further, the Consistory-room shall be fixed up, and the Ladies Auxiliary (bless these Ladies Auxiliaries!) will be asked to take care of the nursery room. The Consistory also decided to purchase a new pipe organ (they might also have said: an Organ) and to sell the old one. They can get even more for the old one today than what they paid for it many years ago! Upon the advice of Mr. Dirk Jansz Zwart, they decided to add a trumpet rank to the planned organ. It will be quite an improvement to the wall behind the pulpit, too, once the organ has been installed! I never liked that jute with the white strips. But then, when I was in Church there, I usually had that wall behind me.

Cloverdale also had a get-together as a Congregation after the New Year's service. There were "oliebollen" and coffee, plus goodies for the children. It is good when we realize that the unity of the Church is enjoyed not only during the services, but also during a "social hour". Thereby the bond is strengthened, indeed. We should not live alongside one another as if we were strangers. There are more Congregations where something similar is done on a more or less regular basis.

Abbotsford discontinued their subscription to a Dutch sermon series. There must be stacks of Dutch sermons among our people. But what we need is English sermons. Barrhead also considered and discussed the necessity of having more English sermons once Rev. Van Dam has left for Brampton, but only relatively few are available. Generally speaking, the cooperation of various ministers for all sorts of undertakings is not something to specifically boast of. Too much is left to too few who have to do too

many things. Maybe we could engage the Congregations in an effort to get more things done. Who knows.

Barrhead also gave a breakdown of the costs of the Church Federation over the period October 1970 - October 1972. It appears that the costs of Classes, Church visits, etc., within the Classis Alberta/Manitoba were well in excess of \$6,000.00. It is, of course, a Classis where delegates have to travel farthest, but still it is quite an amount!

The Fellowship of Canadian Reformed University Students (an organization which, alas, is confined to Ontario; why do we never hear anything of such student-activities in Alberta and in British Columbia?) is quite active. A panel discussion was held on "The Distinctiveness of Reformed Education". A series of public lectures has been drawn up which will have as their basic theme "The Church - Gathering of God's People". On January 26, Rev. VanderBoom will lecture on "The Church According to God's Word". Further, the students have succeeded in engaging prof. F.G. Oosterhoff (who is on leave of absence from the University of Winnipeg) in their efforts to better understand their place and task. On Feb. 2, prof. Oosterhoff will speak on "The Relationship between Christianity and Scholarship". We are to be very thankful that our students endeavour to edify one another and together face the questions, temptations, and difficulties which they encounter with their studies.

A completely different topic (and with this we'll close our Medley) is what I wrote about a few months ago, namely, that oftentimes second-hand clothes are rejected as being something below standard and that the time has passed that children in one family wear each other's clothes successively. I received a few letters and remarks about that and especially those of mothers of larger families were very interesting and revealed that it still does happen that the clothes are worn by the children in succession, and that they are not ashamed to accept clothes from others to have their children wear them. I deemed it good to pass this on to you and am happy that I am able to do it. I was afraid that in very many cases the affluence in which we are living renders us less careful with what we have and less thrifty. Abuse and waste of God's gifts are still mentioned with the explanation of the eighth commandment. We run the risk that we are taken along with the general carelessness and the waste which surrounds us. May we, once again, also in this respect prove that we love God's creatures because we love the Creator.

It was a rather lengthy Medley; that was because the Churches which send their bulletins so faithfully have a right to it that due attention is paid to what goes on in their midst. In this way we all enjoy it. Be seeing you.

vO

SHARE YOUR FAMILY HAPPENINGS, BE IT:

*Engagement, Birth, Wedding, Anniversary,
or Bereavement.*

WITH THE READERS OF CLARION.

*You reach just about all the members of the
Churches from East to West.*

You also financially support Clarion.

Holy Supper in the Afternoon

In addition to what has been written previously about our beautiful, yet imperfect Form for the Holy Supper, the following suggestions are submitted, especially with regard to the celebration of the Holy Supper in the *afternoon* services.

There is a variety of possibilities, also of practices.

In some churches the Holy Supper of A.M. is "continued" in the P.M. worship service. Thus A.M. and P.M. services are considered one. Right after the vatum, blessing, and opening Psalm, those who could not attend in the morning are invited to the table of the Lord.

Other churches expect the minister to read part of the form, be it the whole second part, starting with "Let us now also consider . . .", or with the prayer (*B.o.P.*, pp. 150 ff.); in that case the introductory sentence must be somewhat altered, in order to make sense.

One complaint against this practice is that those who could not attend in the morning, do not get a "complete" celebration because the biblical contents of the Form is, should be, an integral part of it. The remark, "let them read the Form at home for themselves," does not solve the problem. Why is that not also said to those who attend the A.M. service?

In addition, this practice is liturgically wrong. The Form is a unity and should not be cut in pieces. We would not dream of doing that with any other Form.

Thus other churches have the whole Form read again in the afternoon service. However, thus taking away one wrong, they at the same time introduce another. The great majority of the congregation, present in the P.M. service, has already heard it in the morning. The Form has some appearance of a sermon. Would one ever subject the congregation to hearing the same sermon twice on one Sunday? Is this not a "vain repetition" for many? I remember a Letter-to-the-Editor of many years ago whose author stated that he received as much blessing from hearing it the second time as he does from the first time. This may be true for him, but certainly not for all.

There is also the view that our present set-up of Supper celebration

(preparation, long Form, several tables instead of celebrating all together in our pews, a "sermon of thanksgiving", etc.) takes too much time away from the regular preaching which remains, and should remain, the main part of every service of worship.

* * *

One realizes that it is quite a complex matter with several pros and cons. Not one of the above-mentioned practices is one hundred per cent satisfactory with regard to the afternoon celebration. Thus one looks for a better solution.

One suggestion is that the afternoon celebration be abolished. (In some churches the number of Supper celebrants is very small.) Can this not be prevented by nursery, baby-sitting, car-pool, or whatever else may be necessary to enable every (healthy) communicant member to attend the morning service? Thus the unity of the congregation, which is so strongly stressed in our Form, according to the Scriptures, would become more obvious. The afternoon service could then be a regular one with a sermon of normal length.

Although at first some readers may reject this suggestion with protest, let them think again, and look around in their congregation: is it really impossible?

Another suggestion is to have a second, shorter but complete, Form for the P.M. service. Suggestions for such a Form are numerous. I remember some Forms composed by the Church at Rijswijk, the Netherlands, a number of years ago, which served a classis committee in Ontario. One of these Forms contained materials other than those we have in our present Form. The Bible is so abundant, also with regard to the Lord's Supper, as Rijswijk proved, that it is possible to compose a second Form which brings to the fore such Scripture teachings as are not found in the one we have. Previously I have - to mention one aspect - suggested a stronger stress on the eschatological meaning of the Supper.

Another possibility is to select some passages from the present Form and mould them into a much shorter but yet "complete" Form. I have found that that would be quite easy. It

took me only a little time to produce such a Form. Here it is:

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ, attend to the words of the institution of the holy supper of our Lord Jesus Christ:

"In his last supper, the Lord Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it and gave to the disciples and said, Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. In like manner, after supper, he took the cup and gave thanks and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you and for many, unto remission of sins; this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me! [I Cor. 11]"

That we now may celebrate the supper of the Lord to our comfort, it is necessary before all things to remember that the Lord's Supper "is instituted for those who are truly displeased with themselves for their sins, and yet trust that these are forgiven them for the sake of Christ; and that all their remaining infirmity is covered by his passion and death; who also desire more and more to strengthen their faith and amend their life. But hypocrites and such as turn not to God with sincere hearts eat and drink judgment to themselves." [Heid. Cat., answer 81]

Further, we direct the celebration of this Holy Supper to that end for which the Lord Christ has ordained and instituted it, namely to his remembrance.

Let us be fully persuaded in our hearts that our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the promises in the Old Testament, was sent into this world; that he assumed our flesh and blood, and has confirmed with his sufferings and death and shedding of his blood the new and eternal covenant of grace and of reconciliation, that we might be accepted of God and nevermore be forsaken of him.

From the institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ we see that he directs our faith and trust to his perfect sacrifice, once offered on the cross, as to the only ground and foundation of our salvation.

He has also obtained for us the quickening Spirit, so that we by his Spirit should have true communion with him, and also be united as members of one body in true brotherly love.

May the almighty, merciful God

and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
help us in this through his Holy Spirit.
Amen.

That we may obtain all this, let us
humble ourselves before God and
with true faith implore him for his
grace:

[Here follows the Prayer, Book of
Praise, bottom of page 510, and the
rest of the Form to page 514].

Thus far this summary.

* * *

One sees that nearly every word
is taken from the existing Form. The
"two things necessary" have been
maintained. Instead of the elaborate
part on self-examination (*B.o.P.*, pp.
507-8) the shorter formulation of
Heidelberg Catechism, L.D. 30, has
been quoted.

The prayer, pp. 510f., could
easily be shortened by leaving out the
Lord's Prayer and the Creed (the latter
has already a place in the P.M. lit-
urgy). The same could, if desired, be
done with the concluding words of
thanksgiving.

It certainly is not perfect, but it
does, I hope, demonstrate that it is
not all that difficult to find a way. The
next General Synod is coming into
view. May this article contribute to a
discussion which, in my opinion, is
overdue.

G. VANDOOREN

Church News

With gratitude to the Lord, the con-
sistory may inform all our brothers
and sisters in the Canadian Reformed
Churches, that on January 1, 1974
A.D., the first service of worship was
held as the autonomous Canadian Re-
formed Church at Guelph, Ontario.

Correspondence address:

Canadian Reformed Church
at Guelph, Ont.
P.O. Box 1636
Guelph, Ontario
N1H 6R7

* * *

New Address:

CANADIAN REFORMED
SCHOOL SOCIETY
Smithville, Ontario
Secretary:

Mr. M. Hofsink
Box 121,
Smithville, Ont. L0R 2A0



Elora Park (Photo by Leo Lodder.)

New Converts On The Campus

The grace of God works in
strange and wonderful ways. We, his
people, know how God has sent His
Son to save sinners. We are grateful
when we can share our joy with
brothers and sisters in the faith and,
once in a while, we even remember to
pray for the lost and lonely who have
not found the light. At times we
become so matter-of-fact about our
salvation, passed on from generation
to generation, that we are astonished
when we see people who have not
had the benefit of believing parents
turn to Christ. Yet we should not be
surprised as we know that with Christ
all things are possible.

I have a subscription to *The Jour-
nal*, which is a monthly paper pub-
lished by the Addiction Research
Foundation. This paper disseminates
information of a scientific nature
about developments in the area of
drug addiction. While the information
is often quite valuable and interesting
it typically avoids discussion about
religious values. It was, therefore, a
real surprise to read the editorial in the
October issue commenting on an in-
teresting development among young
people who are rejecting drugs and
turning to the Bible.

The editorial refers to an address
by a Dr. Nicholi to the American
Psychiatric Association. This man has
discovered that adherence to religion,
particularly among college-age
people, is growing and seems to be
replacing many of those pockets of
emptiness and isolation that have so
strongly characterized life styles in the
drug age. Students are unobtrusively
renouncing a grossly secular life style
for a disciplined adherence to the

basic tenets of Biblical faith. They are
adopting striking "new" attitudes to-
ward sexual freedom, placing a greater
priority on chastity and marriage
with fidelity. Dr. Nicholi emphasizes
that this movement is not merely a
replacement of drugs, or seeking a
new "high", but an answer to spiritual
emptiness.

It is striking that for many of
these young people the conversion is
not a return to the faith of their
parents - they have never had such
faith, and their parents have provided
them with no spiritual precepts to
embrace or reject. The effect of these
conversions on the parents was that
they expressed alarm about their chil-
dren becoming "fanatic". "Involve-
ment in drugs and sex they can un-
derstand," suggests Dr. Nicholi, "but
this new lifestyle they find eerie and
uncomfortable." The result of it all is
a paradoxical trend in our society
where the child sets the moral values
and established the ideology adopted
by the parents.

One aspect of this phenomenon
that reflects on the attempts made by
church people to reach out is the fact
that many of these young converts
have found this new sense of religion
outside of the church. Some people
would view this as another confirma-
tion of the church's becoming obso-
lete as an institution. In actual fact the
renaissance of interest in Biblical faith
among young people presents new
challenges to the confirmed believer
who would be in an excellent position
to extend his knowledge to the young
convert to help him mature in the
faith.

H.C. VANDOOREN

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

I know you always like a contest very much. So how about having a brand new one? What would you say about a "finish-the-story" Contest?

Here's how it works. I will give you the beginning, and then you write your own story using this beginning.

Does it sound like fun? Just try it!

Here's your beginning:

John and Frank flew down the long hill on their toboggans.

"Let's go down the next hill too, Frank", called John as they slowed at the bottom.

"Think we should, John? We're pretty far from home and I've never been there."

"Oh come on, Frank." And with a laugh John had already started up the next hill. What awaited them on the other side?

Now finish the story and send it in with your name and age.

BOOK NOOK

I know many of the Busy Beavers will be doing a lot of reading. Here are two BOOK LOOKS for our book worms.

The Lemonade Trick

Once upon a time Kerby Maxwell went to a park. He knew the exact time he was supposed to be home. He could tell when he had to go home because of the sunset. Kerby asked a man what time it was. Six o'clock. Kerby ran home. He took the shortcut. All of a sudden a lady asked him to help her. Her shoe was stuck in the drain. Kerby took it out.

"Thanks," she said. She promised Kerby a chemistry set. The next day Kerby met Mrs. Malkins again, and she had the chemistry set. Mrs. Malkins gave it to him.

"Thank you", said Kerby. He ran home and sneaked upstairs with it. One day he used it. He made fake lemonade and gave it to his mother. She drank it and Kerby said, "Mother it's water."

"Oh, you tricked me!"

Kerby kept his chemistry set for a long time.

GLEENDA BULTHUIS

The title of the book I am writing about is: Nancy Drew and the Mystery of the Ski Jump. The author of the book is Carolyn Keene. You can find the book in many libraries.

This story is full of adventure and mystery. It takes place in Canada in modern days.

The general idea of the story is about stolen furs being sold by a company which doesn't exist. An interesting incident is when Nancy and her friend George are locked in a store and they got out by making smoke. Thus they trick the watchman into opening the door to see what it is.

This story is an exciting, interesting, and instructive story. I think others should read it because you learn not to stick your nose into other people's business, and not to masquerade as someone else.

IRENE VANOENE

Here is a joke-poem especially for our Birthday People from Busy Beaver *Margaret VandenHaak*.

A fly fell in the butter
And said, "My oh my
Why must I
Who was born a fly
Now die a butterfly?"

We all join in wishing these Busy Beavers their happiest birthday yet! And may the Lord guide and keep you in the coming year.

Cecile Van Woudenberg	Feb. 2	Marian Onderwater...	12
Tina Bos	6	Clara Barendregt	18
Greta Paize	6	Matthew Aikema	20
Jeannette Bouwman	10	Jackie Vanderwoerd	25
Cathy Post	10	Monica De Vries	28
Gary Sandink	11	Shirley Veenema	28
Joyce Jansen Van't Land	12		

And while we're talking about birthdays, Busy Beavers, would *Ronny Van Grootheest*, *Marcelle Lindhout*, *Hilda Tams*, and *Louis Dijkstra* please write and tell me their birthdays? When you became members you didn't let me know and now we can't wish you a happy birthday when it comes!

And of course, those of you who have had your 15th birthday and are more interested in other things than in Our Little Magazine, be sure to write and tell us, so that we won't be wishing you a happy birthday while you don't even read Our Little Magazine any longer!



From The Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Henrietta Selles*. You had your puzzle all right, so you are sure to make a good Busy Beaver! Write again soon, Henrietta.

Thank you for your good wishes, *Melanie De Gelder*. You did very well on your Christmas quiz, Melanie. And you were sure lucky to get such a nice book!

Congratulations, *Marian Van Dyk*, you had your quiz all right! How are your organ lessons coming, Marian? Do you practise every day?

Thank you for your picture, *Loretta Dam*. Did you have a good holiday in B.C.? Were you glad to see your old friends?

Glad you had such a nice holiday, *Cathy Wendt*. And thank you for the riddles. Whatever would we do if you stopped sending us your riddles and poems and things!

Congratulations on a good report card, *Lorraine Linde*. And you did very well on your quiz too. Glad you had such a nice holiday, Lorraine.

And you did very well on your report card also, *Elizabeth Linde*. And on your quiz too! Thank you for your pretty pictures, too, Elizabeth.

Thank you for your card and good wishes, *Grace Jongs*. And for your poem too. Bye for now, Grace.

Thank you for your card too, *Jane Kobes*. Write again soon sometime, Jane.

I'm glad you and your brothers and sisters have such a good time out in the snow, *Geraldine De Boer*. How is your new puppy doing? You had your quiz all right, Geraldine! Keep up the good work.

Do you have your thinking caps on? Here are some riddles for you from Busy Beaver *Cathy Wendt*.

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. What is most likely to become a woman? | |
| 2. Many eyes,
Never cries. | <i>Answers:</i> |
| 3. Red within, and red without,
Four corner's round about. | 1. girl e littl e |
| 4. What has an eye that never closes? | 2. potato e |
| | 3. brick e |
| | 4. needle e |

Now let's see how well you did on last time's puzzle! Here are the answers:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| Across: 1. Nixon | Down: 1. Nile |
| 2. Egypt | 3. gay |
| 4. yes | 5. spelling |
| 6. pull | 7. light |

Till next time, Busy Beavers!

Yours,
Aunt Betty.

MR. MENNO DE GROOT

and

MRS. ANNA ISARD

Both of Burlington, Ont., are happy to announce their re-marriage which has taken place on December 21, 1973 in Burlington.

The Rev. G. van Dooren officiated.

JOHN CALVIN SCHOOL
SMITHVILLE, ONT.

The Board of the Canadian Reformed School Society of Smithville invites applications for the position of:

TEACHER

Due to plans for matrimony we have vacancies in our staff for the school-year 1974-75.

Please mail applications to Mr. M. Hofsink, Box 121, Smithville, Ont. L0R 2A0.

THE CANADIAN REFORMED SCHOOL SOCIETY
OF FERGUS - GUELPH

invites applications for the position of a:

Fourth Teacher

starting September, 1974.

Please send applications stating qualifications, experience, and names for possible references to:

Mr. L. Hoogerdijk, B.Ed.
Maranatha Christian School
Box 12, Fergus, Ontario.

"A COMPLETE
INSURANCE
SERVICE"

795 KING E.

**MAC VANDERHOUT
INSURANCE AGENCY LTD.**

HAMILTON . . . 544-2837

Mac Vanderhout 632-6033
Peter Van Dyk 637-9752

Andy Vanderhout 637-0272
Tony Vanderhout 385-9244

get out!

**A GUIDELINE FOR REFORMED
CONGREGATIONAL EVANGELISM**

BY G. VANDOOREN M. TH.
MINISTER OF THE WORD
CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCH, BURLINGTON E.

***Still Available but the supply
is Low***

104 Pages - Price: \$2.00

PREMIER PRINTING LTD.
1249 Plessis Road,
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2C 3L9

Also available at the:

CHRISTIAN BOOK STORE
661 Upper James, Mountain Plaza
Hamilton, Ontario L9C 5R8

Engaged:

MARILYN WAYLAND
to
BILL NYMAN

December 24, 1973.
Box 66, Houston, B.C.

Engaged:

BONNIE A. THORKILDSEN
to
JAKOB DERK BOUWMAN

January 1, 1974
Burlington, Ontario.

OUR COVER

*Elora Gorge Park, Elora, Ont.
Photo by Leo Lodder.*

THANK YOU

We wish to take this opportunity to thank all our brothers and sisters who through their good wishes expressed in letters, cards or flowers, contributed to make our 55th Wedding Anniversary another joyous occasion.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Kuik
Carman, Manitoba.

Engaged:

JOANNE TERPSTRA
to
JOHN BOSSCHER

January 18, 1974.
336 Henderson Rd.
Burlington, Ont.
423 Pine Cove Rd.
Burlington, Ontario

Grateful to God, the Giver of life, we announce the birth of our son:

BERNARD JOHN

on December 9, 1973.

Ben and Joan Kottelenberg

A brother for: *Jan* and
Joanne

R.R. #2,
Orangeville, Ont. L9W 2Y9

With thankfulness to the Lord we are pleased to announce the birth of our son:

PAUL ANDREW

January 9, 1974

Ed and Wilma VanDer Velde
(nee - Vis)

A brother for: *Glen* and
Ronald

R.R. #2,
St. Anns, Ontario LOR 1Y0

With thankfulness to the Lord we announce the birth of:

DENISE FRANCIS

A sister for: *David* and
Karen

Richard and Margaret Bos

R.R. #1, Caistor Centre
December 18, 1973.

With great joy and gratitude to the Lord, we announce the birth of our son:

DAVID ANTHONY

on December 23, 1973.

John and Thea Heyink
(nee Bremer)

Psalm 127:3-5.
248 Merlin, Cres.
London, Ontario.

With thankfulness to the Lord, the Creator of life, we announce the birth of our daughter:

LAURA CHRISTY

Dave and Gerrie Terpsma
(nee VanderHorst)

A sister for: *Sharalee*

St. Albert, Alberta.

Born: to Bill and Anne Helder, a third daughter:

SUSAN ELEANOR

"The LORD records as he registers the peoples, 'This one was born in Zion.' " Ps. 87.

January 3, 1974.
Hamilton, Ont.

With great joy and thankfulness to the Lord we announce the birth of our daughter:

CHANDRA JOANNE

Born December 23, 1973.

A sister for: *Shona*
Ben and Nancy Meerstra

6205 - 120th St.
Delta, B.C.

Wie kan ons helpen?

Wij zoeken voor onze Vader (leeftijd 74 jaar), iemand die hem kan verzorgen.

Woont momenteel alleen en zou gaarne in zijn eigen huisje blijven wonen.

Gerieflijk huis niet ver van het plaatsje Smithville, Ont. verwijderd, ook dicht by de Kerk.

Correspondentie hierover te richten aan:

Mr. J. DeBoer
R.R. #1
Caistor Centre, Ontario

Born January 10, 1974:

FIONA KAMPEN

It pleased the Lord to entrust us another child, a daughter.

A sister for: *Yolanda, Eric*
and *Sylvia*

We are thankful and glad for He made everything well.

Edward and Maureen Kampen
53 Erindale Ave.
Orangeville, Ontario
L9W 2V8

We give thanks to God, who has richly blessed us, in entrusting to our care, another child:

MARY-LYNNE

Mr. and Mrs. J. Kottelenberg

Sister for: *Gary, Carl,* and
Anne.

December 10, 1973.
R.R. #1,
Grand Valley, Ont.

Are you studying the Confessions this year?

Let us help you with Study-aids:

<i>We Believe I</i> - Articles 1-17, of the Belgic Confession, - 31 pages	J.A. Vink	\$0.90
<i>We Believe II</i> - Articles 18-37, of the Belgic Confession, - 57 pages	J.A. Vink	1.25
<i>The Church according to the Reformed Confession</i> - 27 pages	G. Visee	0.90
<i>To the Praise of His Glory</i> - on the Canons of Dort - 59 pages	J. Faber et al	1.25
<i>You . . . God's Child</i> - on the Sacrament of Baptism - 32 pages	P.C. van Wijk	0.55
<i>You . . . His Guest</i> - on the Lord's Supper - 32 pages	P.C. van Wijk	0.55

Special prices for League and Contributing Societies.
For others a 10% discount off list price for orders of
10 or more copies.

Order from:

VONKENBERG STUDY AIDS
Box 783, London, Ont.
N6A 4Y8



The Fellowship of Canadian Reformed University
Students announces a:

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

to be held in Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church,
Dynes Rd., Burlington.

1. January 26, 1974

The Church according to God's Word

- Rev. D. VanderBoom, M.Th., Toronto

2. February 16, 1974

The Church in Historical Perspective

- Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th., Fergus

3. March 23, 1974

The Church and the Individual

- Rev. M.C. Werkman, Th.B., Chatham

4. April 20, 1974

The Church in the Reformed Confessions

- Prof. Dr. J. Faber, Hamilton

* * * * *

Time: 8:00 P.M.

No admission fee
but a collection will be held.

*De Heere nam tot zich in Zijn hemelse heerlijkheid,
ons erelid:*

MRS. C. KNEGT - (nee Van Wingerden)

Psalm 52:7

De Gereformeerde Vrouwenvereniging "Rondom het
Woord" te Hamilton.

Mrs. W. Faber, Pres.

Mrs. S. VanderVelde, Sec.

After a lengthy and serious illness, it pleased our
Covenant LORD to deliver unto Himself, His servant,
our dearly beloved husband, father and grandfather:

HENDRIK ALBERTUS STEL, V.D.M.

at the age of 62 years.

*To Him, the LORD, my rock, I flee, I tell Him all that
troubles me, And with a spirit weak I say, Thou
knowest, O my God, my way.*

Psalm 142:2, Book of Praise

The everlasting, sure covenant-promises of our eter-
nal God and Father in Christ the LORD, are our only
comfort.

Winnipeg, Man.: Mrs. M.L. Stel-Dagelet
Henry

Langley, B.C.: Harry Stel
Siska Stel-Schaap
Kenneth

Edmonton, Alta.: Herman Stel
Jenny Stel-Wiegers
Kelly, Michelle

Winnipeg, December 17, 1973.

38 St. Claire Blvd., Winnipeg, Man.

Funeral service took place on Saturday, December
22, 1973, at the Transcona Funeral Chapel, Trans-
cona. The Reverend W.W.J. VanOene, minister of
the Canadian Reformed Church at Fergus-Guelph,
Ontario officiated.

Interment at the Transcona Cemetery.

In His wisdom the Lord took unto Himself and into
His glory His servant:

REV. H.A. STEL

Who has so served our congregation in the years
1951 to 1956.

May our gracious covenant Lord and shepherd com-
fort the widow, children and congregation with the
words of Psalm 23.

On behalf of the consistory and congregation of
Neerlandia, Alberta:

Rev. C. Van Dam, Pres.
S. Tuininga, Secretary.