

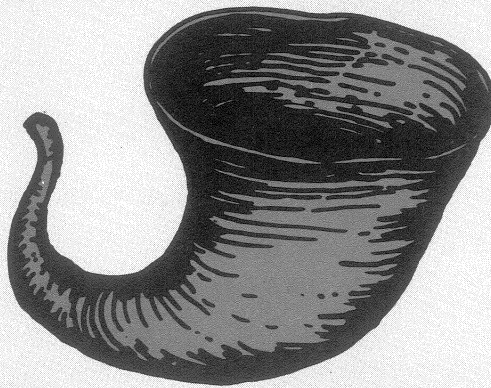


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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A Horn of Salvation



In Him Was Light

Towards the end of the year people tend to get a somewhat sad feeling. The days become shorter, the nights longer, darkness seems to win out over light. There is a feeling of relief when the sun starts on its way back and when the darkness yields more and more to the power of the light. It is never so that darkness dispels the light; it is the other way around: the coming of the light spells the end of darkness.

The "struggle" between light and darkness has been the object of much speculation. It plays a role in ancient mythology, it forms part of eschatological speculations. What happens every year, the victory of light over darkness, should that not be the pattern which will be followed when the end of all things is there and when the final battle takes place? Every year anew we see that light is stronger than darkness: the days may become shorter and shorter, it does not go on until no day is left; the power of darkness is broken, the light returns.

Every year anew we see the power of death; but every year anew, in spring, life proves to be stronger than death, as light proves stronger than darkness.

Thus the present situation and the regularly returning phenomena are projected into the future and the eschatological speculations are given in the form of the battle between light and darkness. The final battle will take place, a plan of campaign has to be drawn up, and everything should be ready for the last assault of darkness on light, ending in the final victory of light over darkness.

Among the scrolls found in the caves of Qumran, we find a document describing the preparations for that battle and the way in which the battle is to be conducted. It is entitled *The War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness*.

In this "Manual" we at least find the spiritual aspect stressed, be it that the battle is waged in the conventional manner, patterned after the Roman way of assault and defense. The battle described there is an eschatological battle.

However much speculation there may be in that concept and however "apocryphal" the whole thing may be, however wrong it may be as a whole, it shows a deeper insight than the superficial handling of the expressions "Sons of Light" and "Sons of Darkness" as we find it with some modern theologians.

When Reinhold Niebuhr writes a book on *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, he just takes some terms from the Scriptures, but fills them with a meaning which is even more alien to the message of the Word of God than the (Essene?) sect in the days of our Saviour's life on earth. The "children of light" become those who seek to bring self-interest under the discipline of a moral universal law and in harmony with a more universal good. And "the children of darkness," on the other hand, are they who know no law beyond the self.

With such definitions it is no longer surprising that Marxists, too, are children of light and that even a man as the philosopher Hegel is included in their number.

The struggle between the children of light and the children of darkness in that sense will be going on in the coming year, too. And we can be assured that "the children of light" will win the battle: the individual person with his limited views and his "self," his deviating opinions and his religious convictions which contradict the common good will be overcome by those who acknowledge the universal good, the one world-will, the interest of the community which overrides and should override all personal, individual interests and convictions.

What are we to do in the midst of all this?

Are we to speculate on a future battle and the victory following that, looking forward towards the ultimate victory of the light?

Or are we to become involved in the struggle between the common will and the individual interest as presented to us by people who have distorted the Scriptural Ethics and built up some sort of Social Ethics which uses the terms from Scripture and fills them with contents which are alien to the revelation of our God and Saviour?

We shall do neither of the above.

We are the Children of the Light, as the Apostle Paul assures us.

The darkness *has* been overcome.

Of the Lord Jesus Christ the Apostle John writes, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Note: The Apostle does *not* say that in Him was light and that thus life became possible. It is the other way around: in Him was life, and thus light was spread before the wondering eyes of men.

“Light is the condition for life,” one might think. The Apostle tells us: “Life is the condition for light.”

He that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ walks in the light, because he has the life which the Saviour obtained for and imparted to all who have been freed by Him from the bondage of satan and death!

When man fell into sin, he chose death, he chose darkness, the darkness of the realm of satan. Children of darkness are they who belong to the Satanic world, that world which is set against God. Darkness is the fruit of death and not death the result of darkness.

Likewise, light is the fruit of life, not life the product of light.

Christ Jesus is our Light, for He is Life. In Him was life from the beginning; He has brought life to light.

Life does not exist in its own right; Christ has

brought life. Thereby the light has arisen. For light is sown for those who are upright of heart.

That the Light has arisen for the nations is because He has appeared Who is our Life. This is the reason why the nations can walk in the light.

The darkness did not believe It; neither did the darkness overcome It.

The victory has been obtained; it is not something of the far future, neither is it something which has to be gained via a lengthy struggle between parties locked in mortal combat. The promise of Genesis 3:15, the Gospel, has been fulfilled.

We see the heavenly Jerusalem, bathed in heavenly light. For there the river of the water of life is flowing. Darkness reigns outside its walls. But she herself does not need the sun or the moon, for fulness of life is found within her: “for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb.”

vO

a Horn of Salvation

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,
And has raised up *a horn of salvation* for us
In the house of David His servant” LUKE 1:68, 69

CALVIN’S COMMENTARY (AP&A) ON “. . . A HORN OF SALVATION . . . ,”

That is, saving power: for, when the throne of David was cast down, and the people scattered, the hope of salvation had to all appearance perished. Zacharias alludes to the predictions of the prophets, which hold out that a sudden revival would take place, when the state of affairs should have become melancholy and desperate. This mode of expression is borrowed from the passage, “There I will cause the horn of David to spring forth; I have prepared a lamp for Mine anointed” (Psalm 132:17). But if it is only in Christ that God has put forth His power to save us, we are not at liberty to depart from that method, if we desire to obtain salvation from God. Let it be also observed that this *horn* brings *salvation* to believers, but terror to the ungodly, whom it scatters, or bruises and lays prostrate.

The Coming Christ in the Prophecy of Micah

Among the Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament the one of Micah 5:1 has always fascinated the attention. For what reason? Is it because in his prophesy the birthplace, Bethlehem, is mentioned by name? Bethlehem which plays such an important part in our representations of the Christmas event? Is it because, of all the prophets, it is Micah who brings us closest to the place where the scene is set in Luke 2?

Be that as it may, I would like to dwell with you for a while on this wonderful part of the Scriptures in the Christmas-issue of our magazine. I am not going to dwell on the person of the prophet now. Known to us first of all as one of the Minor Prophets, the sixth in the row, Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah, the greatest of the major prophets. He was destined to live in Isaiah's shadow, one thinks, but the thoughts of the LORD have been otherwise. In the era of the great Isaiah He was pleased to have another prophet appear on the scene beside him with a message that was not just an epitome of his message, and so to really contribute to God's Word as we have it now, and to the knowledge of Him Who was and is the centre of that Word: JESUS CHRIST, Son of man and Son of God, not only for his contemporaries, but also for the Church of all ages. For still today the Church is called to believe Christ as He is portrayed in the Scriptures of the Old as well as of the New Testament.

In order that we may have a real, genuine Christmas and not a feast day that does not differ so much from what the world calls "Christmas," or if it is honest: X-mas or Yuletide, I would like to read with you what our prophet in his days spoke concerning the Christ to come. So let us look up the passage, Micah 5:1-6, and read.

Those among our readers who remember the text and division of the Bible in the Dutch translation, will also recall that in the Dutch versions a new chapter begins with the words, "En gij Bethlehem Efratha . . ." Micah 5:1 was one of those texts they had to learn by heart at school. In all the English versions, however, it is chapter 4:14 of the Dutch translations which leads off the new chapter, and rightly so, because what in our English translations is known as Micah 5:1-6 (Dutch: 4:14-5:5) constitutes a unity: it is a text; a whole, woven together; as the original meaning of "text" is. If a minister is going to preach on it he ought to take the six verses together as his text.

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THE BACKGROUND OF OUR PROPHECY

In taking chapter 5:1 as part of the prophecy, we immediately encounter some questions. Look at verse 1a and

you are struck by the diversity of translations presented. A.V.: "Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops"; R.S.V.: "Now you are walled about with a wall" (the last two words of the text are omitted, because, it says in a footnote, the Hebrew is obscure). The N.A.S.B. sides with the A.V., and the N.E.B. with the R.S.V. And still the number of possible translations is not exhausted, for Leslie C. Allen, for example, in his commentary¹ renders: "Now you are gashing yourself, Lady under attack." It is not easy to make a decision in this matter, I freely admit, even upon closer investigation. Because the "root" of the Hebrew word² used here leaves more than one possibility open: It can point at "a gathering together," but it can also indicate "an administering of incisions to oneself," and then thirdly you can think of the idea of "raiding, attacking." In such a case the context is decisive. In the context of our text we come across military terms. The daughter Zion (not: "daughter of Zion") is addressed. The daughter Zion is Jerusalem. As in the previous chapter in our text, Jerusalem comes into the picture again. In what condition? As a besieged city. Strange! She who was "a daughter of troops" in the past, a city used to equipping bands of soldiers against the enemy, had turned into a city where people flocked together, huddled together in fear. Jerusalem was to be a besieged city. "Siege is laid against us" we read in the R.S.V., which is almost identical with the A.V. in verse 1b. That does not imply that I agree with it in verse 1a, since the translation "walled about with a wall" is based upon an unwarranted emendation of the text.³ But in 1b a siege is spoken of. We may translate more concretely: siegeworks are raised against us. "Against us," the prophet says. A countryman, a non-Jerusalemite, he includes himself among the citizens nonetheless, sharing their fate. In the future, things will come so far that Jerusalem will be beleaguered. The enemy prevails. When worst comes to worst, "they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek." The judge is the king of Judah. That it will come to this implies that in the future the city will be taken and the king captured. Israel's king is indicated here as Israel's judge. That is very meaningful. That is what a king in Israel was, or had to be, first of all: Judge! — judging the people in righteousness; according to the standard of the Divine Law. That was his strength and his glory. But now, this privileged high official, used to passing sentence on others and inflicting punishment on others, is going to be punished himself; to be treated like a delinquent. Not so much a painful treatment as a scornful, insulting treatment for a king, a judge.

To whom of the kings does this apply? In whose days has this terrible verdict come true? Some think of the king of Micah's time, his contemporary Hezekiah, who saw the Assyrian enemy invade his country and besiege his city. But then the word was fulfilled in a figurative way. For Jerusalem, though encircled by the Assyrian army, was not captured. The setback the country suffered was like a slap on the cheek then, they say. When Jerusalem fell, about a century later, in 586, it may have come true literally to the king then, Zedekiah, who was caught by the Chaldeans (cf. Jeremiah 39:5). Since Hezekiah and Zedekiah belonged to the renowned house of David, the outlook was sombre and dreary. That is what would become of the famous dynasty, Israel's pride and hope. And that is the background of our prophecy.

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THE BRIGHT PROSPECT HELD OUT IN OUR PROPHECY

Against such a background the prediction concerning

the coming Christ, the manifestation of the great King of the future is brought out into full relief, as usually happens with Old Testament prophets (cf. Isaiah 7; 9; 11; Amos 9). Micah's prophecy focusses on three items: 1) The place of His birth. 2) The time of His appearance. 3) The character of His reign. Let us consider them successively.

1) *The place of His birth.*

"But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah . . ." With these words the verse, well-known to us and dear to us, leads off. I would like to ask my reader: "What is great here? The fulfilment of the prophecy only? Or also that the LORD had such an all-important event prophesied long beforehand?" I, for one, think: the one as well as the other. The second point also matters. The New Testament Church is called to sympathize with the Old Testament Church in the time of advent and Christmas, and praise the LORD that He had His people, His church of olden times comforted in such a way that it might take courage anew.

Jerusalem has fallen. The city, the capital, has come to a bad end. One may say: Jerusalem lost, all is lost. Well, where people see themselves deprived of everything to boast of, there the LORD is going to make a fresh start. And the people of Micah's days were already allowed to hear exactly *where* God was going to do that: "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah." Bethlehem was not a city; it was just a town; and Ephrathah was the area, the district, in which the town was located. In Genesis 35 and 49 the two are identical. Meanwhile we learn there that the little town was linked up with the history of Israel in a particular way. Mother Rachel had been buried there. Amidst the clan living in this town and district, the ancestors of King David occupied an important place. Here is where the later king, the greatest king of Israel, had been born and brought up. Later on the ways parted. King David opted for Jerusalem as capital and since then Jerusalem was known as the city of David. It was in Jerusalem that David was given the promise of I Samuel 7, about the house that the LORD would build for him. A far-reaching promise indeed. But then after some centuries we see the ways of David's house and Jerusalem part. The last descendent is led into captivity in Babel.

What about the fulfilment of the promise? Will it come to naught? No way! The LORD is faithful. That is the continuous preaching of the Old Testament. He does not forsake what His hand has begun. But the way He is pleased to fulfil it is simply divine. Where man has lost his hope for the future, the LORD starts in His own inimitable manner of working. Heading for the future He goes back into the history, as if He were to do it all over again. He goes back to Bethlehem, to Ephrathah, characterized as small, small in comparison with other areas in Judah. Please mind the translation: "Small as areas in Judah go." So, not: too small; nor: the smallest, as the Greek translation of the Old Testament puts it. You may consider Matthew 2:6: "By no means the least . . ." as a reaction to it, kind of a refutation to the way the Old Testament was translated in Greek, because of the glory imparted to it in the birth of the Christ. However, that does not remove the fact that Bethlehem was but a small area or "thousand" as the A.V. has.⁴ We know the LORD from the Bible as the GOD Who has a preference for what is small and insignificant (I Corinthians 1). In the prophet's knowledge about Bethlehem as the starting point of GOD's work in the future, we learn what inspiration is.

It obviously was the LORD Who had told His prophet the secret of His counsel, but at the same time the LORD is

following up the line of history. Working something quite new, the LORD is in the line of what He had been doing in the past. The name of David is not mentioned, though. Seemingly he is ignored. Only the name of the town, the clan, reminding the hearer of David's humble beginnings is given. That suffices. What matters now is where, and especially how, the LORD found him: shepherding the flock. "Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart" (I Samuel 16:7). Well, just as it was in those days, so it will be in the future. "From you shall come forth for Me, one who is to be ruler of Israel." "For me" reminds us of the words "for myself" in I Samuel 16:1. As an other David He comes to serve the LORD's purpose. He is the representative of YAHWEH. He comes to be a ruler. Contrary to the sombre prospect held out in verse 1 of our chapter, Israel is to have a ruler again.

The indication is vague: "One"; — no name is mention-



Hymn 62

Johann Crüger, 1598-1662

1. Now thank we all our God, With heart, and hands, and
 voic - es, Who won-drous things hath done, In
 whom His world re-joic-es; Who from our mo-ther's
 arms Hath blessed us on our way With
 count-less gifts of love, And still is ours to-day.

- 2. O may this bounteous God
 Through all our life be near us,
 With ever joyful hearts
 And blessed peace to cheer us;
 And keep us in His grace,
 And guide us when perplexed,
 And free us from all ills
 In this world and the next.
- 3. All praise and thanks to God
 The Father now be given,
 The Son, and Him who reigns
 With them in highest heaven,
 The one eternal God,
 Whom earth and heaven adore;
 For thus it was, is now,
 And shall be evermore.

Martin Rinckart, 1586-1649
 Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829-1878



ed; "shall come forth" — but we do not read precisely how. It must refer to His being born, and then there is reminiscence of Isaiah 11:1.

But what more do you expect? It is prophecy, confining itself to the headlines, seldom going into details, as a historical account can do.

"Whose origin is from of old, from ancient days," R.S.V. renders. This is not a mark of heterodoxy. Cf. Prof. J. Ridderbos in his *Korte Verklaring*: "Wiens uitgaan is uit de oudheid, uit de dagen van onafzienbare verte." This does not mean that the eternal generation of the Son by the Father is disputed or denied. No, it is a faithful rendering of what the Hebrew words meant to the hearers and readers of that time. What we today call eternity, looking to the past and to the future, the Hebrews called "olaam," literally; time that is withdrawn from sight by a veil, a curtain. In the course of time the insight into the contents of the word has been deepened. We believe that the LORD our God adapts Himself to the level of understanding of His people at a certain time. The Church that is privileged to possess the revelation of the New Testament may extend the line backwards and forwards and speak of eternity; the way to this confession has been prepared and paved by a text like Micah 5. So we do not agree with those students of the Old Testament who deem that it is the dynasty of David whose the origin is called "from of old, from ancient days," and that that, then, would be all: An ancient family. Some of them go so far as to say that this manner of speaking betrays a post-exilic origin of our prophecy, because before the exile you could hardly say of the house of David that it was old. In conclusion we can gather already: the relationship between the Son of David and God His Father is obvious in this pericope.

2) *The time of His birth.*

A second aspect of the prophecy is the time of His coming. The word "therefore" introduces rather a conclusion than a cause. It is to be connected with and to be considered in the light of both verses 1 and 2. It is in the line of chapter 4:10 where the delivery from the exile was predicted. "Therefore He shall give them up." "He" is the LORD, and "them" are the citizens of Jerusalem. God will give them up to the power of their enemies. They will be at their mercy. They will be taken prisoner and led away into exile. "Until." This word indicates the great turningpoint. For distress will be but *for a time!* That turning point is marked by a birth: "Until the time that she who is in travail has brought forth." Is it an allusion by Micah to the word of his contemporary Isaiah in his chapter 7:14? Not necessarily, I think. Anyway we do not know whether and in how far his hearers were able to link up the one prophecy with the other. Whatever the case, when we heed the way the great event of the future is announced, we see firstly that just the birth, the mere fact, is mentioned. By focussing on the fact of the birth, the birth of the Christ must have been meant, since it is only He Who can be significant to His people and the world by His very birth. Secondly, the mother is only mentioned in the capacity of mother, the one who gives birth to a child. Her personality, and so on, remains in the background. The father is passed over in silence altogether. May one see here an allusion to the "without the means of man" of Article 18 of the Belgic Confession? Again I say: Do not read too much into the text, though once more I can state that the way for what the Church confesses today concerning the incarnation of its Saviour is prepared by a text like the one under consideration now. For it is only Jesus

Christ Who *by His very birth* can begin and has begun the work of salvation. His birth introduces the new era.

"Then the rest of his brethren shall return to the people of Israel." Subsequently, after the Saviour, the blessed result of His work — salvation — is announced by the prophet. However, again a little differently from the way we are used to putting it in the confession of the Church. Whereas everything pivots there around the forgiveness of sins, Micah points to the return from the exile. The rest of the brethren, in this case not the scanty remainder, but rather something like the surplus, those brothers who are to be counted in addition to the number that live in Palestine, shall return to the latter, who live in the land of the fathers.

Now we should be careful so as not to ascribe to ancient Israel an earthly-minded Messianism. The "sons of Israel" is a specific religious term. In the return from the exile the favour of the LORD GOD is shown to the people. The return to their homeland presupposes a return, a repentance, *to the Lord*. The spiritual aspect is not to be excluded. During the Old Testament Dispensation things were not all that earthly, corporeal. Just think of Psalms like 79 and 85. With a view to the future, especially the sombre perspectives of chapter 5:1 and other verses, this must have been their first concern. Just as the exile was a token of the LORD's anger, so the permission to return was to be an indication that her iniquity was pardoned, that she had received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. For the Israel of Micah's days, exile and return are spiritual matters throughout, and that is how they are linked up with the appearance of the Messiah. However, the New Testament Church realizes that there is a so-called prophetic perspective in these parts of the Bible. That which a prophet mentions in one breath, as if it were to happen simultaneously, in reality could be separated by a long span of time.

3) *The character of His reign.*

"And He shall stand and feed His flock . . ." ". . . and shepherd His flock . . .," N.A.S.B. renders. Flock, shepherd — that fits very well in this context, for it calls to mind the occupation of David when he was still a lad looking after the sheep in the pastures around Bethlehem Ephrathah. Besides, it was part of the terminology current at the eastern courts. Monarchs in the ancient near East were used to expressing themselves in this way concerning their office; they liked to be considered as the shepherds of their peoples. And whereas we have our own opinions about such a phraseology with respect to an Assyrian or a Babylonian king, we may be fully assured that in the case of David's Son it does apply. His church is His flock, the sheep of His pasture, and His government is actually a shepherding. Such features make the text attractive. Why? Because they are so idyllic? Be cautious. A shepherd in the east had a hard job. He had to be on guard. That is why He is pictured *standing!* On the alert! Watchful, in view of imminent danger. It is not at all so idyllic. Yet we are glad, for so the flock, His church, is really comforted. It takes more than an idyl, an idyl about Christmas to have Christ's Church comforted. She needs Him Who is the Shepherd.

Let us look at Him, how He stands there "in the strength of the LORD and in the majesty of the Name of the LORD." All terms bear testimony to the Divine Majesty He shares with His God and Father. In Christ, His envoy, messenger, servant, and Son, the glory and sublimity of the LORD GOD Himself becomes visible. The preposition "in" in the phrases "in the strength" and "in the majesty" usually is

taken as instrumental, so that it will be through or by means of the strength and majesty of the LORD that the King of the future will acquit Himself of His duty. With Prof. A.S. van der Woude in his commentary⁵ we may rather see Christ's government characterized as Divine throughout. Whatever can be said of the Father applies to the Son as well. "And they shall dwell secure"; there is no doubt about that anymore now.

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THE CONCLUSION THE HEARERS MAY DRAW IN VIEW OF PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES

What remains are the verses 5 and 6, which are part of the text as well, and should not be left out of consideration, though it may seem difficult to fit them in in the proper way. For, having enjoyed the great picture of the future, it is hard to be called back to the present reality. Yet that is what a good prophet does. He does not take his audience out for a while, ignoring their present condition, talking about Paradise, only throwing a sop to them. No, just as their hearers, the prophets have to face the stern reality of their times. And they know how to answer the need.

"And this shall be peace." The translation of the R.S.V. is to be preferred here to that of the A.V. or N.A.S.B. "And this One will be our peace." Yet there are difficulties in understanding and explaining what follows. "When the Assyrian shall come into our land . . . when he shall tread in our palaces . . . then we shall raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men."

Questions arising here are, among others: Who are meant by "we"? Who is speaking here? Prof. van der Woude in his commentary takes it to be the opponents, the adversaries of the prophet, who are given the floor now by the prophet. He does so more often in his book. The first chapters of Micah are a continuous dialogue between the prophet and his opponents in the land. In the opinion of the latter, Israel is not in need of a Messiah. The present king, in power now, is a sufficient guarantee that the assault of the Assyrian army will come to naught. The first line of verse 5 van der Woude renders: "And this one will be at peace." He refers to II Samuel 17:3, where Ahithophel says to Absalom: "You seek the life of only one man and all the people will be at peace." So, King Hezekiah will receive no hurt. Moreover, if it would come so far that the Assyrian invades our country, well, then we have seven shepherds and eight princes of men, namely, our allies, e.g., Egypt, Philistia, Arabs, Moab, and others. With their help, we shall prevail over Asshur anyway.

Although I took notice of this new interpretation with a certain interest — it is something I had never heard of — I cannot go along with the author. Too much is implied concerning the whole structure and set-up of the book. Following him, you are in doubt about what is the word of the LORD in Micah, and what is not.

That does not take away that there are serious problems and that I am not always so pleased with the solutions of orthodox scholars. Prof. J. Ridderbos, for example, finds his way out by positing subordinate shepherds who are to serve under the Chief shepherd, Jesus Christ — men who have the same position as ministers and elders today. Others, like Prof. A.H. Edelkoort, think of the Angels of the peoples, spoken of in Daniel 10:13, and 12:1 — a figure like Michael," the great prince who has charge of your people." This exegesis has met with much approval, but I, for one wonder who the "we" are who are to raise them? Apparent-

ly, it is the prophet. And I agree with Edelkoort that in the consciousness of his high office the prophet can speak so. But doesn't this derogate from the greatness of the Christ to come? I wonder. In answer, I say that it is a message for the present. Those seven or eight princes are not to serve as subordinate shepherds under the Christ, but represent the power, symbolize the power, the people of Israel can put into the field right now, as soon as it comes to war with Assyria. I would like to consider the seven shepherds and eight princes as a figurative manner of speaking, seven and eight being symbolic numbers for a fullness of power. A power sufficient to bring down the proud, valiant, ancient kingdom of Assyria, whose origin is of old, the days of Nimrod, figure of the table of the nations of Genesis 10. It is always significant when the LORD goes back into the past so far. It means that He will make the ancient primeval kingdom totter and shake on its foundations. What was generally deemed impossible will come true nonetheless. "And they shall rule the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod with the drawn sword."

Since the Assyrian Empire has fallen — in 612 B.C., with the downfall of Ninevah — verses 5 and 6 have a bearing to the near future. Within a century, what was considered unbelievable, would come true. That obviously is the LORD's doing. The LORD is the CHRIST, who long before the day of His coming exerted such an influence on the course of world events. A kingdom as old as the days of Nimrod has to succumb under the sword of the kingdom of Him whose origins are from of old — and now I say plainly — from the days of eternity. He excels the ancient Nimrod.

This is the consolation the Church has today. I am not going to give a political turn to the gospel as many a minister is wont to. But I am glad that the CHRIST of the gospel has been prophesied with these words to Israel of olden times. His Church knows so much better where she is with Him, now and forevermore.

H.M. OHMANN

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹ LESLIE C. ALLEN: The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah
- ² Hebrew: G-D-D is: to gather together; or: to make incisions
G-W-D is: to raid, attack
- ³ G-D-R instead of G-D-D
- ⁴ Hebrew 'elef = 1. an ox 2. a clan 3. a number of people a clan can call up 4. number: 1000
- ⁵ *Micha in de serie De Prediking van het Oude Testament*



HYMN 12

LUKE 2, 29-32

Genevan Psalter, 1549

1. Now may Thy serv-ant, Lord, Ac-cord-ing
to Thy word, De-part in ex-ul-ta-tion.
My rest shall be se-rene, For, lo, mine
eyes have seen Thy won-der-ful Sal-va-tion.



To Our Readers

First a word of thanks.

No less than 282 readers took the time to return the card which was enclosed with the issue of *Clarion* of November 13. We wish to begin with expressing our great appreciation of this cooperation. It is not so much the fact that some 92% were in favour of our suggestions and plans, but more the fact that so many responded which renders us grateful and greatly encourages us to continue in the way we have been going and have proposed.

That does not mean that there is no room for improvement. The many suggestions received from you show that very clearly. Many of *your* suggestions have been *our* wishes for a long time, and with you we hope sincerely that we shall be able to realize them. Much, if not all, will depend on the cooperation of brothers and sisters qualified in their respective fields.

You will understand that some of the suggestions received were conflicting with one another. What the one praises, the other rejects; what the one would like to see included, the other wants to see eliminated; what the one considers to be too hard, the other enjoys thoroughly. There will never be a magazine which satisfies every member. There are always differences of taste, of interest, of erudition, of preferences, and so on. As long as a magazine keeps the segments of the membership in view and endeavours to give something for everyone, it does what it can do in this respect.

For that, as said above, we need the cooperation of brothers and sisters qualified in their respective fields.

1. When, for example, it is suggested that we include reports on political and other current events with Reformed commentary, this is a suggestion which we would only be too happy to put into effect, but . . . there is already the comment that more and different people should write in *Clarion* and not just ministers! We wholeheartedly agree with that, and pass this on to you. If you know someone who would be qualified to take up that task, please let us know so that we can approach him. That applies not only to the field of politics and economics but also to other fields. We solicit as wide a cooperation from our readers as we can possibly get.

2. The editorial committee has already considered inclusion of meditations and the increased size of our magazine will certainly render that possible.

3. The one asks for more articles in the Dutch language, the other wants them to be eliminated altogether. Some asked for the return of "Hoek van Holland." We think that inclusion of an article in Dutch now and then would not "offend" anyone and would fulfil an often expressed wish of our older brothers and sisters.

4. It is the intention to make the column "Mission News" a regular feature. We have already promised

the Toronto Mission Board that they may count on a regular printing of their reports. We also intend to take over as much as possible from the *Mission News* of New Westminster.

5. As for study material and incorporation of *In Holy Array* and *Almond Branch*, we have no intention to compete with those periodicals or to "take them over." That is the reason why we hesitate to include specific study material. If those periodicals should wish to cease their separate existence and have their materials printed in *Clarion*, we think that a way could be found to assure regular publication of the articles and outlines which they have prepared.

6. We do wish to give more for our young people, but need the men and women who could do that. The same applies to the young children, below the "Busy Beaver Age."

7. The use of cheaper paper was suggested by more than one. Apparently those readers are of the opinion that using cheaper paper would enable the publisher to lower the subscription price considerably. That is a misconception! In the first place we do not wish to make our magazine cheap-looking. As the publisher of *Clarion* we would rather withdraw completely than print a cheap magazine. Besides, using low-grade paper would not make all that much difference in the price. Per subscription it could amount to approximately 50-75c per year. For those two or three quarters we do not wish to cheapen things.

The cost of a magazine is determined mostly by the number of man-hours involved in the preparation of each issue. There is the type-setting or compu-setting, the make-up, preparing of the plates, the actual printing, folding, addressing, sorting and, not to forget, mailing! The average price per copy or volume is further determined by the number of subscribers. A periodical with eight or nine thousand subscribers can be made available for less than half of what *Clarion* has to cost. Some publications are funded by a Foundation.

We wished to give to our readers an insight into the many aspects of publishing a magazine and for that reason wrote the above.

8. It is not our intention to reply broadly to all the comments made. Be it sufficient to state:

that we, too, like to see the coverage of *Clarion* extended to all aspects of life;
that a crossword puzzle had to be omitted time and again for lack of room;
that we can print pictures only when they are provided by someone;
that we, too, like to restrict contributions under a pen-name as much as possible;
that paying in installments would greatly increase administration costs and thus would bring the price up;
that publishing every week would practically double the cost of publication and mailing, which would have to be borne by the subscribers;
that we shall try to keep up the good work.

Editor and Publisher.

"A.D."

The year 1976 is almost history. This is the elaborate "Year-end" issue of Clarion in which we wish one another the continued blessing of the Lord for and in the coming year. The year's end is always an enjoyable time; there's nothing wrong in Christian festivity in which the Gospel is central. And I do hope that during the many festive days you'll seek and find the richness and the comfort of God's Word in the midst of the Saints. The saints' feasting is always determined by the Spirit's preaching.

The year's end is also a nostalgic time. Another year has passed, and we tend to look back, to review and to assess. We like to make up the balance and to determine whether we have progressed and how far we have travelled. I understand that in this issue you will even read such a year-review.

Reviewing is a rewarding, yet difficult activity. In the past year so MUCH has happened, and who's to determine which events should be included or deleted? What the one regards as highly important, the other deems quite insignificant. It also depends on your principal starting-point: a Reformed reviewer will mention different things than a liberal one. Indeed.

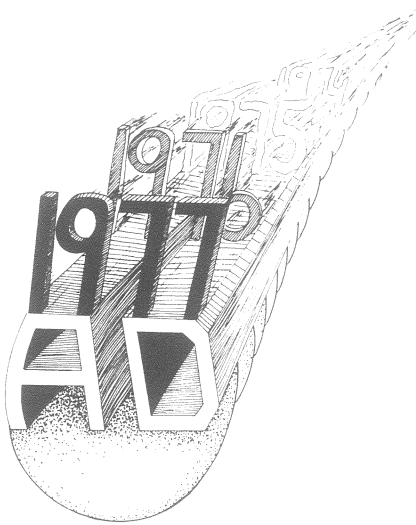
I was thinking, what is so important about 1976? That Canada won the Canada Cup and could finally re-assume the pretense of being the greatest hockey-nation in the world? Hardly, in my opinion. That Mao Tse Tung passed away and the moderate line was confirmed in the communist-Chinese politics? That the Reformed Ecumenical Synod decided to maintain the membership of the Synodical Reformed Churches? That the Parti Quebecois was finally pushed into prominence in La Belle Province? Are all these things — and much more — significant events? Certainly.

But, you know, it's amazing how much one FORGETS. If a reviewer does not have all the necessary sources available, he runs the high risk of forgetting perhaps even some major happenings. The year is not yet gone, but already I find that much has slipped my mind. We are like that: finite, small, with short memory. As for me, my days are like grass, Psalm 103:15. Only God Who has shaped 1976 in His ex-

Circumspection...

act providence and detailed government can perceive all the events in their true historical depth and significance.

We could engage in looking back in this Circumspection. Call it: retrospection. I could list many events and comment on them. Political, economical, social and ecclesiastical events. Provincial, national and international events. But I will not do that, for at the end of the year



I feel that "of making many articles there is no end, and much typing is a weariness of the flesh" (à la Ecclesiastes, excusez la modification). But I would like to remind you of just one thing which pertains not only to the year 1976, but also adequately covers the coming year.

Something simple, but so important. It was and will be a "year of our Lord." That's what the letters A.D. stand for: Anno Domini, meaning literally, "in the year of our Lord." Some freely translate, "after Christ," meaning, in the period of history which starts with the birth of Christ and ends with His return on the clouds of heaven. If you wish, the time between His first and second coming.

In the year of our Lord 1976 many things may have happened. And much will happen, the Lord willing, in the year 1977. The signs of the times will continue unabatedly. I think almost inevitably of the earthquakes and epidemics with which 1976 was so pre-occupied. But what-

ever happens, of one thing we can all be quite sure: our Lord Jesus Christ remains in charge. 1976 was His year, therefore "it was a very good year . . ." He determined the events and caused the flow of history. He stood at the beginning of that year with all power in heaven and on earth, and now, at the end, He closes the books on '76. And no matter what we think or feel about 1976, Jesus Christ has PROGRESS-ED to the goal He has set. His time is never lost or wasted.

Christ has progressed towards His eternal purpose, also in 1976, and will continue that same course in 1977. Every year is His year, none excluded. Even the years B.C. (Before Christ) were formed according to His plan and pleasure. Does not Christ Himself claim, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Revelation 22:13)? Christ is the beginning, the heart, and the consummation of ALL history and EVERY year. Whether our calendar reads B.C. or A.D., it is always a very good year, because Christ is the essence of time, the Alpha and the Omega.

Christ works on to the glorious end, even through the increasing turbulence of the latter days, gathering His Church in fulness and bringing about a new heaven and a new earth. That was the theme of 1976 and that will also be the tune of 1977.

How do you estimate the year 1976? What are your expectations for 1977? If the years were MINE, I'd despair. If time was in the Satan's hands, we'd have no hope. But it is A.D. 1976 - 1977. Christ in charge, yesterday, today, and tomorrow. That makes all the difference.

Finally, this year you became acquainted with Cid. Nothing special, really. Like the other contributors, Cid tried to point you to Jesus Christ and His central position in time, in the Church, even in the world. If some things will stick with you, the work was not in vain. No work is in vain, if it is done in the Lord. Your work and mine.

Cid and family wish you and yours a blessed Christmas and the Lord's constant guidance for 1977. Whatever happens: Anno Domini there is always perspective. Cid.

Report on Church Life 1976

It has been a long time since I wrote a "Jaaroverzicht" for (at that time) *The Canadian Reformed Magazine*. Therefore, when the editor asked me to do it this time, I was inclined to refuse, saying I no longer know how to do it. But when he persisted I gave in, and so: here I am!

1. As a general introduction I may say that our church-life went on quietly. Naturally, there were some problems and troubles, discussions and even disagreements here and there but I think that is nothing special. After all, we all are human, and what is more: imperfect and sinful people, who make mistakes and have our particular faults. So, in spite of this, we should be very, very thankful to the LORD Who, also in 1976, gathered, preserved, and guided His church by His Word and Spirit. One thing, for instance, that should be mentioned is that none of our ministers — and some of them are not very young anymore — were taken away. At this moment the Rev. Werkman is ill and not able to do his work, but, if I am well informed, he is recovering. Let us hope and pray that he may return to his work soon.

2. Some of the churches had a special reason for gratitude: they could remember that it was 25 years ago that they were instituted: March 4th: Houston, B.C.; May 20th: Hamilton, Ont.; August 12th: Carman, Man. With joyful hearts they celebrated this and praised the LORD for His mercy and faithfulness.

3. As far as the increase in membership is concerned, last year it was almost two percent. That was not much. But, I think, this year things will not be very different. Edmonton, for example, appeared to have been stationary since 1967! Quite a few of its members moved to the Fraser Valley in B.C. Therefore, in some places, an increase in membership may be nothing but a transfer from others.

At the same time, referring to the rapid growth of Rehoboth Church in Burlington, and the apparent need for sound-systems in many church-buildings, the Rev. Van Oene made a plea for smaller church-buildings and, consequently, smaller congregations — or the other way round. He did so, not because the ministers are not able to make themselves understood in larger churches (I myself preached for ten years in a church with a seating capacity of just about 1800, without the help of a sound system!), but because in a larger church the mutual bond "tends to be weaker" — to say the least — and the danger of "fringe-people is greater." I wholeheartedly agree with his reasoning. In the old country I had a "wijk" of over 300 families: I did not even know them all, although people said I knew everybody (which was not true)! It stands to reason that in the "pastoral part" of his work the minister must fall short.

The consistories are aware of this, though. Cloverdale decided to split its growing church, and on June 20 the church of Langley was established (the old name popped up

again!) and it is already trying to get a minister. Barrhead and Neerlandia discontinued their combination, as did London and Watford, which had been cooperating together, sharing one minister since April 1, 1960. London extended a call to the Rev. Visscher. At this very moment (Today it is November 25th) I do not know whether or not he has accepted. Watford is asking for classical support to call a minister of their own. I hope they will get it. Ebenezer Church in Burlington sometimes seems to be thinking of calling a second minister.

New Westminster dedicated (Is that the right expression? I found it in a review of the ceremony) its new building on June 25th. Several churches changed the manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper: Grand Rapids and Winnipeg, for example, are trying to hold it in only one service on the Sundays it is celebrated, while others introduced an increase in the number of times it is celebrated from only four times a year. Matters such as "training of office-bearers" (Calgary's idea) and voting by women (Toronto's proposal) reached the level of the major assemblies. More and more churches abolished the collections for the church — also the disguised ones? — because they felt that what the church needs should come from the regular contributions. I think they are right. The collections put an unfair burden on large families and, as one of my elders at one time used to say, the consistory has better control over what everybody really contributes.

4. This year the ministers were on the move, I tell you! Or they will move shortly. Of course I cannot mention all the calls which some of them received; I just mention some things. The Rev. Visscher declined several calls (see above for his present situation); the Rev. Huizinga did the same, and finally accepted Hamilton's call. The Rev. Geertsema accepted the call by Chatham after having declined several other calls; the Rev. Werkman went to Lincoln; Cand. S. de Bruin to Winnipeg (in *Clarion* a picture was published of his entire family); the Rev. van Rongen of Grand Rapids made a trip to Australia to visit his children, and, shortly after his return, received two calls from The Netherlands of which he accepted the one by Steenwijk. This must be a heavy blow for the ever-decreasing church at Grand Rapids. Last year's Yearbook (1975) gave a membership of 157, this year's (1976), 127; since then, at least fifteen persons have left the church and/or the city. So, humanly speaking, its future seems to be dark. But, let us never forget: it is not people who preserve God's Church; *He* does, and its future is sure — unless because of our shortcomings He removes our lampstand from its place! The Rev. van Rietschoten is moving from the mountains of Smithers to the plains of Carman.

Furthermore, the Rev. van Dooren remembered on March 1st that he had been in the ministry for 40 years (and had been married for 40 years). In *Clarion* the Rev. VanOene wrote a well-deserved appreciative article on him. I was very glad he did, for it is hard to say how much work the Rev. van Dooren has done for the churches and how much we owe to him. Think of the work he has done as member of the Committee for the Book of Praise for 20 years (although he was not the only one — I don't forget Br. M. de Groot who served in the same capacity all those years), his work for C.R.M., as well as his lecturership at the Theological College.

As you all know, once in a while the Ministers have a "get-together," in which their wives take part, too. Perhaps somebody will think: then they have a day of fun. Well, they have fun, of course; you should hear how they beat each

other up (spiritually) — but at the same time, what you read in the press releases about these meetings is true: they are “workshops”; boy, do I get tired on days like that! On January 5th we had the first one. Dr. Faber introduced to us the brand new book on Dutch Dogmatics, *Ons Christelijk geloof*, written by Dr. H. Berkhof, the well-known Dutch member of the W.C.C. In his introduction Dr. Faber made it perfectly clear to us that, on the one hand, Berkhof’s book shows the influence of the Rev. S.G. de Graaf (the author of *Verbondsgeschiedenis*) — Berkhof was a student at the Reformed Gymnasium in Amsterdam although his parents belonged to the Netherlands Reformed (Hervormde) Church — yet, on the other hand, in his later years (I knew him during World War II) he was influenced by the new theology so much that now he has come to very unbiblical concepts about topics such as the doctrine of Trinity. On June 15th we had our second workshop where Mr. H.C. van Dooren, a social worker, delivered a speech on “Perspectives in Helping Disturbed Members of the Flock.” Dr. H.A. Scholtens added the needed medical insights in the matter. It was a very interesting morning. In the afternoon the Rev. van Rongen gave an introduction on: “The Epistle to the Hebrews as a Word of Exhortation” (13:22). Both speeches were followed by lively discussions.

In one respect there is not much change: I mean: there is still the complaint about too few English sermons. Don’t we feel guilty, brothers?

5. About the work of the Mission in Irian Jaya we are informed by the regular reports the Vegters send (published in *Clarion*); about Brazil by the Rev. van Spronsen. The Rev. Knigge who could not get a visa for Canada (at first; later on he got one, but by then it was too late) accepted a call in The Netherlands and now serves the Church of Langeslag, where he succeeded the Rev. Stam. During the summer-months he and his wife paid a “farewell visit” to the churches in Canada. Toronto made an agreement with Br. H. Versteeg, who presently is studying at the College, and at the same time is preparing for being sent out into the Mission field. The van Spronsens were on furlough for some time this summer and returned to Brazil; nevertheless, “the West” is hoping to get another missionary in about two years. Finally, the question already was raised if it is not time to establish a sort of federation of the new churches in Irian Jaya.

In the field of Evangelization, in the West (especially Calgary and Edmonton), a monthly paper, “The Good Word,” is published. Besides that, in Edmonton and “the valley” (B.C.), they have their Broadcasts. When will Ontario follow? (If possible, that is; I remember that years ago we made some inquiries into the matter, but at that time the costs were far too high.)

6. The work in the College went on as usual. From my own observation I can assure you that the people who work there do not spend their days in idleness. If I am not mistaken there are six students at the moment. Mr. Jack de Jong received his Bachelor of Divinity degree at the Annual Convocation, September 10th; after that he left for The Netherlands to do some studying in Kampen. He himself said: “I think at first I will have a pretty rough time because of language problems!” But we heard later that he was doing well and feels quite at home already. Since March 1st we have an administrative assistant, Miss Ann van Sydenborgh; she is doing a wonderful job, taking much work off the professors’ hands (and also of yours truly). Consequently Mrs. Faber who had worked part-time in this capacity left us. A

most important point is that General Synod of Toronto decided to extend the study time for the B.D. degree from three to four years to make more time available for the study of the Bible languages, Hebrew and Greek, and of Church-Latin. A thorough knowledge of the original languages of the Bible is a must. What I have seen and heard about that in the U.S.A. (I lived within easy reach of Calvin Seminary, didn’t I?) taught me the more how necessary this knowledge is. For a short time we had the Rev. Y.C. Kim, minister of the First Korean Presbyterian church at Toronto, as an auditor at the college. Alas, he did not return after the summer holidays.

7. Now about the Schools. By the mercy of God the parents started a Canadian Reformed School this year in various places (next to the ones which started earlier, of course): Coaldale, London, Winnipeg. In an article in *Clarion* the Rev. van Dooren reminded us of our privilege of still having the opportunity to do this. He quoted a letter from a “liberal” enemy of Christian education which showed that some people in this country have not outgrown the 19th century intolerance of the “liberals” towards Christianity. He also told of a case in the U.S.A. where charges were dropped against people who had sent their children to a Christian school. If the charges had been accepted, it would have resulted in the removal of the children concerned from their parents’ home! But on what ground were these charges dropped? Only after a demonstration of about 10,000 people in the Capital! Because of the storm of protest from Christians throughout the State (Ohio), these charges were dropped. Otherwise the case would have been won by the prosecutor “according to the Law.” Sarcastically, the Rev. van Dooren adds: “This, then, is possible in the country with the Statue of Liberty!” As a matter of fact, he also informs us that this was only one of eight similar “cases” in two years throughout the “Land of Liberty.” In B.C. there seems to be a change of attitude towards Christian independent schools. Perhaps in the future these schools will receive public support, as in Alberta.

At the College, Teachers’ courses were given during the summer-months. These courses are badly needed, because one of the problems of our Education committees and the teachers themselves is that those who studied here in Canada did not receive a Christian training. For this reason the College tries to help them in this respect. Another problem is that there still is a shortage of teachers, and, consequently, quite a few boards have to manage with unqualified personnel.

The Guido de Brès Highschool in Hamilton is doing very well. This last September the enrolment was about 200 students. There are three Grade 9 classes, and if I am not mistaken, thirteen teachers work in the school. This year’s budget is \$280,000. A building is in the making, for which a drive in “the old country” contributed more than 1,000,000 guilders! An impressive propaganda-speech for the Highschool, delivered by the Rev. Stam at a meeting in Burlington, entitled: “Arrows in a Warrior’s Hand” (Psalm 127), was published in *Clarion*.

A matter which should not be forgotten is the retirement of the first Canadian Reformed Teacher in our country, Mr. W. van der Kamp of New Westminster. The “Orange Courier,” the school-paper, had a “Special Edition” about it. Various old and new friends and fellow-workers of Mr. van der Kamp contributed. Years ago — as a matter of fact some 40 years ago — I met van der Kamp for the first time (at a course given by Dr. K.J. Popma in Zwolle, where he,

van der Kamp, quite often was in the opposition). During the war he worked in the "underground" and his Diary of a civil servant was published by J.H. Kok N.V., *Jan Jansen in bezet gebied*. In *De Reformatie* he published several rhymed psalms and the "Courier" now informs us that "something over half of the Psalms in our *Book of Praise* are his." I pass by his membership of the City Council of Kampen for the G.P.V., and his starting a Concordance on the new translation of the Bible in The Netherlands, a work which still is not quite completed, if I am not mistaken. Then, in 1955, he gave up his well-paid position with the Department of Manpower, his work as a columnist for the *Gereformeerd Gezinsblad*, his membership of Kok's Educational Advisory Committee, to take up the work at the William of Orange School in New Westminster. I have not seen him since then, but one of my sons who is a teacher at the school right now, and attends the same church, told me that, as soon as Mr. van der Kamp saw him, he said, "The Roukema family brought me up!" — and amiable exaggeration! Because of the uniqueness of the fact I pass on to you what some people who have known this man better than I did, wrote in the above mentioned special edition:

1955 - 1976 "AN ERA"

As school society we have come to an end of an era. For 21 years Mr. van der Kamp has given direction to our school and instructed our children and even some of our children's children. He expounded to them the riches of God's Word and showed them His hand in the history of His Church; he increased their skills in reading, writing and arithmetic; he instructed them in the art of language and spelling and at times regaled them with terrific tales in Social Studies and Geography. He also taught them the intricacies of paper-rolling in P.E. In short, he helped the parents in the "education" of their children.

That in summing up Mr. van der Kamp's task we started with Bible Study is no accident. Not only was this the usual subject with which the day started, but in his instruction Mr. van der Kamp was also motivated by the fact that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" in other subjects than Bible Study. When the class, for instance, had spelling, he frequently used these lessons to teach his pupils the difficult words and names in the Bible, thereby making them more familiar with the Word of God. The same can be said about other subjects. Whether he spoke about "Habitat," a word with which we have been inundated lately, he related it to God's Word. He firmly insisted on the need for knowledge of the Scriptures. He expected from students that they would use their God-given talents to the full. Many students having passed through his division, while not always recognizing his motivations at the time, have appreciated his endeavouring and will admit that it was from Mr. van der Kamp that they received much of their knowledge of the scriptures and that he showed them that God's Word is pertinent today.

We will not attempt to assess all the 21 years of this era, or to analyze all the years that have gone by, but we wish to thank our Heavenly Father for the gift which He has entrusted to our principal and for enabling him to carry out his task as principal of the William of Orange, and we express the wish that the Lord will give Mr. van der Kamp, along with his wife and family, many more years. Years, in which he may receive the Lord's blessing also in the new era he is embarking on.

H.A.B., Secretary

The Rev. VanOene, who was his pastor for years, writes, among other things:

One thing stands out among all the things which I have noticed with our brother; that is his effort to make the student become well-acquainted with the Word of the Lord, and his constant endeavour to render them able to find their way in the Holy Scriptures. And, although he sometimes has ideas and thoughts of which I cannot say that they are also mine, yet I have never noticed any unfaithfulness to the promise made that the whole in-

struction at school would be given in full harmony with the Holy Scriptures and in faithful adherence to the Confessions of the Church. The result was that, as soon as the William of Orange School had opened its doors and the instruction began to show its results, I could notice the difference in Catechism Classes.

Those early years were difficult. Neither the teachers of today nor the boards of today nor the students that attend the schools today can fully visualize the difficulties which those first teachers had to face. A homogenous student body had to be forged from elements coming from many different public schools and from many different families or backgrounds. Those were the days when a typical immigrant mentality dominated much of the conduct of parents as well as of children. Everyone thought that things would go well only if they went along his lines; it was thought that, since everyone called everyone else by his first name, there were no different levels of society in Canada; parents and children had to find their way in a strange country, which brought conflicts, rebellious attitudes, a lack of respect for authority, etcetera. I do not have to recall *all* things.

Add to this that the van der Kamp family, too, just like all other families, had to adjust themselves to the life in the new country with conditions which differed so vastly from those in the old country (also economically), and we can see the enormous task which faced our brother.

The Rev. Vander Boom tells about their friendship in Kampen and says:

The man who represented the Reformed people in the City Council of Kampen considered his work at the William of Orange School in New Westminsters a calling which he had to follow. A calling in which he has now served 21 years. Half a generation has passed through the doors of that school and most of the families in the Valley have children who have studied under "Kampie." We count him among the "workers of the first hour," the first hour in which things did not go too smoothly but they kept their heads high and their eyes straight. He may now look back at a time well used in the service of the Lord.

In a moving "Farewell article" Br. van der Kamp himself says:

As far as I myself am concerned: I do not reveal a secret when I state that in many aspects I do not fit in the "mainstream" of Canadian Reformed thought. But when I accepted the School Society's "call," I promised that in my teaching I would adhere to the Three Forms of Unity. To the best of my knowledge I have, however much I may have failed in all other aspects, by the grace of God been able to keep my word. Thankfully I may put this on record; not once in my twenty-one years among you has a parent accused me of un-Scriptural or un-Reformed instruction.

8. Society-life went on as usual. The ministers had their meetings, or rather, their workshops; the Canadian Reformed students and teachers had theirs, the Men's and Women's societies and Leagues, and the Young People, had their Annual meetings and study weekends in East and West. Now that I myself am getting older and my children all have left home I am no longer so well-informed about these matters; so I leave it at this. I am sorry that I cannot tell you more about it, but I think the mere mention of these things will bring back to your memory what you could enjoy in the past year. Let us not forget that it is a privilege to have societies, and, in spite of disagreements sometimes, to be able to discuss all sorts of issues. Here and there even a Political study club was started; it is about time. If we do not show any interest in things like these we will never really integrate in this country. In B.C. a Society for the Retarded was set up. In the Valley plans are also underway to set up a Senior citizens' home, just as in Hamilton — actually the latter is a little different but the background is the same: care for the elderly. In Burlington the Maranatha Homes were opened, where at least about 25% of the tenants belong to the Can-

adian Reformed Church, among others yours truly, who at the opening-ceremony had the privilege of saying something on behalf of the tenants. His topic was (of course): "Maranatha!" In Burlington a committee set up a series of "Winterlezingen," which are very interesting and instructive. In my opinion, the attendance could be better.

9. In our relations with "others," here and abroad, the Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund made a special appeal to help the victims of the earthquake in Guatemala, which resulted in an offering of almost \$20,000. Interest in foreign countries was also shown in an article on the U.S.A. Bicentennial in *Clarion*. In several churches actions against the proposed liberalization of the abortion law were supported by most of our people who still believe that also an unborn child is a child, created for eternity.

With respect to our relation to other churches, the most important matter for now is the proposal to set up sister-

church relations with the Korean Presbyterian Church, and, consequently, to admit to our church-federation, as a Korean-speaking church, the First Korean Presbyterian Church in Toronto. Time will tell what this will bring about. Most probably I have forgotten many matters and numerous people who should have been mentioned. Please forgive me. One thing I want to mention yet is that in *Clarion* a most interesting column was revived: a correspondence between a father and his daughter(s). I hope none of us will skip it in reading the Magazine.

10. Now, at the end of my survey I may return to what I said in the beginning: we should and may be thankful to the LORD Who also in this past year showed us His mercy and faithfulness by gathering, preserving, and guiding His church by His Word and Spirit. To Him be the glory for ever and ever.

A.B. ROUKEMA

Hymn 11

LUKE 1, 68-79

Genevan Psalter, 1549

1. Blest be the God of Is - ra - el,
 The Lord who vis - it - ed His own;
 Who by His gra - cious prov - i - dence
 Re - demp - tion un - to us made known.
 With - in His serv - ant Da - vid's tent
 Has He to - us, His peo - ple, sent
 A horn of full sal - va - tion; E'en as
 He spoke by ho - ly men of old,
 Who un - to Is - ra - el fore - told
 How He to them His mer - cy would un - fold

2. He promised us that He would save
 From all who for our ru-in wait,
 And from the hands of them that rave
 Against us with a warring hate;
 To show the mercy once foretold
 Unto our fathers, and uphold
 His holy cov'nant with us;
 That He would still remember in His care
 The oath which He to Abram sware,
 To benefit his seed from heir to heir.
3. He spoke that He would strength command,
 And grant to us when foemen near,
 That we, delivered from their hand,
 Might worship Him without a fear,
 And walk before Him faithfully
 In righteousness and sanctity,
 While life to us is given.
 And thou, O child, so shall they say of thee,
 "The prophet of the Lord is he,"
 For thou shalt go before Christ's majesty.
4. Yea, thou shalt make salvation known,
 That we may be revived again,
 Receiving favour as His own,
 In free remission of our sin,
 Through God's compassion and His love
 Whereby the Dayspring from above
 Has visited His people;
 To lighten them that in the darkness hide,
 And in the shades of death abide;
 Our feet into the way of peace to guide.

Psalter Hymnal 1957

"Page Two"

This is a translation of an address delivered by Dr. S.G. Huh of Busan, Korea, at the annual "School Day" of our Netherlands Sister Churches Ed.

With a view to Church History, it was a great event in the year 1969 when the Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands and the Presbyterian Churches in Korea, which up to that time were little known to each other, sealed a sister relationship.

Since 1969 this bond has been increasingly deepened and strengthened, among other ways by means of mutual visits, and also through cooperation in the training for the ministry.

When we look into the past history, then we begin to realize that this relationship did not suddenly fall out of the sky. For us, people, it was rather sudden. But when we look back we see that the Lord has been busy. In the history of Korea we see the beginning traces for this already as early as the 17th century. Although one can not unequivocally state that one sees the historical line of union, yet one can not ignore historical facts. On the contrary, do we not believe that all events that occur in the historical world are under the Providence of God?

In the 17th century the Kingdom of Korea was an entirely closed land. All contact with foreign countries was forbidden, thus with all world powers with the one exception of China. Foreigners were not allowed to enter Korea. If someone from another country did accidentally or purposefully enter the country, he was not free to leave the country.

During this time The Netherlands was one of the first nations to have contact with Korea. Dutch people were by and large the first to set foot in Korea. That came about through unfortunate circumstances. In the year 1628 a Dutch ship, that was on its way to Japan via Formosa, suffered a tragic shipwreck in the sea south of Japan and Korea. Only three men of the entire crew survived the shipwreck, and these landed on an island, Chedju, just south of Korea. Immediately they were found by Korean officials and taken to the capital city, Seoul. They were asked by the "ministry of defense" if they

were willing to serve towards the improvement of the armament of Korean soldiers, since they were technically trained for this. In this way they did Korea a service. One of the three was named Jan Janse Weltevree. He was married to a Korean girl, and even took a Korean name for himself: Park Yon. He gave his entire life in serving for the defense of the Kingdom of Korea, until finally he died in Korea. The other two were killed in military action in the war against Manchuria.

Although they were living in forced circumstances, yet they were the first Westerners who fought for Korea as allies, and in the battle against the enemy lost their lives. On a page of Korean history one is able to read this remarkable story. So already in this early stage there was, in a certain sense, a close relationship between the nations of The Netherlands and Korea. However, there is not much said about this historical fact and in the course of time it has almost passed into oblivion. Centuries later this relationship between the two nations was renewed in the Korean War of 1951-1953. When Korea was attacked by the communists, the Dutch people were one of the first to hasten to send aid, and Dutch young men gave their lives for their Korean partners. In the western section of Busan in Korea one finds the only cemetery of the Allied Nations where the national flags of sixteen countries fly every day high in the sky. One of these is the flag of The Netherlands under which scores of young Dutch men lie, having given their lives during the Korean war against Communism. Thus Korea and The Netherlands have not remained strangers during their mutual national relationships. Truly a firm bond was formed.

But contact between these countries has not been exclusively on an international level. Also in the Church History of Korea one finds an early remarkable contact between both nations.

Twenty-five years after the first shipwreck of Dutch sailors had taken place, another ship named "'t Jacht de Sperwer" from Batavia suffered

shipwreck in the same area in 1653. This time 36 of the 64 crew members survived the tragedy. They landed on the same island, Chedju. They were also brought to Seoul. There they met their fellow countryman, Jan Janse Weltevree, who did them a great service as translator. Unfortunately, they were not allowed to leave Korea. In different provinces of southern Korea, Sunchen, Yusso, etc., they were taken into service. Thirteen years later eight of them were fortunate enough to escape by ship and to reach Japan. One of them was named Hendrik Hamel, originally from Gorkum. On his return he wrote a Journal about his experiences. In this way he gave the first information about Korea to the western world.

The remainder of the Dutch spent the rest of their lives in Korea. It is particularly noteworthy for us that some of these men left a deep impression on the Koreans. During this time there was a great famine in which many people died. Then the Koreans often heard from the Dutch, "Disasters are punishment from God." Thus it is written in the Korean historical literature. In this way they showed that they were God-fearing men. It is difficult to discover whether or not they tried to bring the Gospel to the Korean people, because there is no trace of Christianity in Korea at that time. But we may assume that they were Reformed people, for at that time The Netherlands was greatly influenced by the Reformation. In any case we may assume as certain fact that the Word of God sounded clearly through the talk of these men. So one may say that Dutch people were the first to introduce the true God to the Korean people, even though a Roman Catholic missionary entered Korea along with Japanese troops during the time of the Japanese invasion in 1592.

During the time of the Kingdom of Korea Confucianism was the national religion. Thus the Korean people did not know the PERSONAL and LIVING God, the Creator of heaven and earth. For the god of Confucianism is only considered as a Being behind the universe. Even though the Dutch were in a forced situation in Korea because of an unfortunate shipwreck, yet they let the Gospel be heard in a heathen country. So one could say that they sowed a seed of the Gospel in Korea in the 17th century. One can not see, as human, the whole pattern of the

Providence of God, Who rules over history. Neither can one state that this historical fact, which I have related to you, has a clear relationship with our present-day sister relationship. Yet we believe that this historical fact bears importance with a view to the present-day relationship between the churches in The Netherlands and the churches in Korea. Indeed, the same God Who guided history during the 17th century still governs the history of today.

Three and a half centuries after the first contact, our God brought the churches in Korea and the churches in The Netherlands close together as sister churches. Everyone of us feels this strong bond. We long for one another. Each has great interest in the life of the other. Each is eager to hear and to know how the brothers and sisters live and struggle in this decadent age. It is thus in The Netherlands. This is also the same in Korea. In this way a brother in Korea, in the far East, waits for news from The Netherlands, in the far-away West. The "Nederlands Dagblad" travels via the sea route through the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean by sea post. That takes more than five weeks. When one finally gets this newspaper in his hands, then he is not really interested in the world news on PAGE ONE. That is already old news. But one immediately turns to PAGE TWO with the news about the churches and the church situation.

For that reason I wish, in my turn, to open for you here in The Netherlands, "page two" with the Korean news and now, in short, to give certain information about how the brothers and sisters fare in Korea.

In the first place, I am often asked how the churches in Korea stand in relationship with the government. Naturally I wish to say that there is no persecution for the churches, and that they enjoy complete freedom to preach and to evangelize. If one brings the pure gospel and lives thereto, then one enjoys complete freedom. Only those who concern themselves with the political world from out of a revolutionary spirit are oppressed by the government. One must realize that Korea lives under the particular threat of the communists and so is in the situation of an armed peace. Nowadays one sees everywhere a revolutionary spirit wherever the liberal, modern theology creeps in. But we may say that the Church in Korea grows steadily without any persecu-

tion. In the last year more than ten new evangelization posts were opened in several different provinces. Here the gospel receives a good hearing from the people. There one experiences the power of the gospel. The cooperation from the sister churches in The Netherlands, Australia and Canada* for the evangelization work is of great service. With this I wish to mention the "Werkgroep Ankosanri" in Groningen for her great devotion to this work.

As far as the training for the ministry is concerned, I may say that this is continuously finding progress. At the moment ten full time professors and lecturers serve at the Seminary and at the College. We are always hoping for more teachers since the number of instructors is far too small for the school; the enrollment stands at three hundred students for both the Seminary and the College, at which preparatory lessons for the study of theology are also given. The recent visit of Prof. J. Kamphuis was extremely beneficial, particularly his lectures as guest instructor.

At the College level around two hundred students are enrolled. At the Seminary, where the actual training for the ministry is given, around one hundred students are enrolled. These are then the number of students who are preparing themselves at our school to go and labor in the fields ripe for the harvest. For ninety percent of the Korean population still belongs to heathendom.

As far as the new building of our Seminary is concerned, that has been completed and taken into use. Your hearts are also bound to this by means of your loving contributions. Construction was begun on August 12, 1974. It was completed more than a year later. The church members in Korea held a festive opening ceremony on August 15, 1975 in the large auditorium. More than two thousand church members flocked to Busan to take part in this festivity. Exuberant joy was the spirit of the day. Unfortunately none of the brothers from The Netherlands was able to attend. Yet we felt and experienced a strong spiritual bond.

One saw there not only a beautiful new building on the outside. But underneath one saw the wonderful binding together of God's people, who, called by one Lord, work towards one goal, namely the upbuilding of His Church.

When you enter the main en-

trance of the new building, you see immediately in front of you a bronze plaque on the wall. The following is inscribed on it in both Korean and English: "This building was built with the help of the Gereformeerde Kerken Vrijgemaakt in The Netherlands and with the contributions from the Presbyterian Churches in Korea."

This small plaque speaks of much more than what is written in such brief words.

From it one can learn that there is one Church called by the Lord and bound to the same truth.

Therein one sees the wonderful communion of God's people, called by a heavenly Father from different nations to live under His grace. There one sees the true, ecumenical Church which lives out of the same Word of God and which works together for the upbuilding of His Church.

So our sister relationship is not just an external formality or nothing more than a decoration. On the contrary, our sister relationship is a living and real communion with each other in which we share spiritual possessions. We long for each other. We are always seeking each other. We work together. So together we serve for the ecumenical upbuilding of His Church according to His good pleasure in this decadent age.

S.G. HUH

* The cooperation from Canada mentioned here is the work of the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church in Burlington. Once every month a collection is held and proceeds sent to Korea for the support of the evangelization work done on Chedju island. Rev. Cho has been laboring here among the heathen since August of 1975 and hopes that a self-supporting congregation will be established there in three to five years.

Translator: (Mrs.) Femie VanderBoom.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

ISAIAH 9:6

Bless the Little Children ²

OUR OBLIGATION TO THE RETARDED

In order for us to develop the correct approach with the retarded we should be able to learn from errors made in the past. In the early days attitudes of hopelessness and revulsion, ignorance and fear led towards gross neglect of the mentally retarded. They were left unprotected and allowed to roam the countryside, or they were restrained at home or confined to jails.

Around the middle of the 19th Century, after years of mistreatment and neglect, a wave of optimism developed. This was based on the belief that the mentally retarded person could be cured. With special help and in the security of a family-type residence, offering a temporary Boarding situation, the child could benefit from expert and intensive attention. Eventually he could be returned to his own environment and function as a normal person. Sad to say, this optimism soon faded away, and it was learned that many of the retarded would require life-long care and supervision.

In the 1880's another attitude set in. The retarded person was now regarded not as one who needed special schooling to return to normalcy, but he was one who required care and protection. Retarded persons were then being moved into large institutions. What started with good intentions turned into a nightmare of human beings packed into huge storage spaces. These institutions became overcrowded and poorly managed, and they began to fester and develop their own problems of crime and indecency. This had such an impact that these institutions, and the people in them, came to be regarded as being responsible for many of the social evils in society as a whole. It is striking that the pattern described above followed almost the same time trends in most of the countries of the Western Hemisphere.

Here in Ontario any significant changes in the handling of retarded children were not made until around the 1950's, when the government began to introduce policies which would reduce the size of the institutions, and

increase the types of care that could be provided for these people. The Ontario Government forged ahead with a number of programmes, and also made available large sums of money to stimulate local initiative in this area. This also meant that the adage of "He who pays the fiddler calls the tune" was becoming more of a reality — the State would become more critical of admission policies, and the emphasis would be more on making the retarded person more useful economically. The Government's desire to not allow retarded people to mope around in large institutions, but to get them out into society, was couched in nice words which spoke of giving these people a more meaningful existence and improve their self-image.

There is some fear that many of the smaller centres that have been established in recent years subscribe to an approach that cranks the people back into the community as quickly as possible, and the new programmes fail to build a firm base for ongoing care and support. This is somewhat reminiscent of the new hope which was raised in the middle of the last Century, when it was felt that retardation was just another social evil and could be remedied through proper education and instruction.

The greatest lack in these new programmes is that there is little or no emphasis on exposing retarded people to the real meaning of life. It has not occurred to the experts that, also for the retarded, we have to provide *real meaning*, which comes from knowing the full nature of the Lord's redeeming work. This goes far beyond all the scientific insights that are being geared to providing more effective ways of behaviour modification and social engineering.

It is easy to spout off against the obvious shortcomings of others, but when we look at our own record in helping the retarded we must all feel a twinge of guilt. It was astonishing to hear from one member of the *Steering Committee* in Ontario that there are

more than twenty retarded people in the Canadian Reformed Churches of this province. But they are almost totally invisible. Only the parents and close relatives are painfully aware of the misunderstandings of others, and their frustrations in having others appreciate the dilemmas of raising a retarded child. Combined with this are the difficulties of integrating the retarded into a caring community which can only be a community which professes that Christ is Lord. Yet, with the right strategy and organization much can be done to raise the awareness of our members. This has happened in Holland where in our sister Churches an organization called "DIT KONINGSKIND" has, in the past five years, blossomed from a group of fifty members to a staggering membership of close to ten thousand. This has also happened closer to home in some Evangelical circles. An organization called "CHRISTIAN HORIZONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN" declares that it is soundly based on the Word of God. "CHRISTIAN HORIZONS" has been providing a most successful camp programme for retarded youngsters, and in the next month or two will be opening a residence for retarded females in the Waterloo area. It has also come to our attention that in Alberta our brothers and sisters are cooperating with others to establish an organization. In British Columbia, "BETHESDA, THE CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE RETARDED," is planning to purchase a home. This Association has most of its support from Christian Reformed people but it may also have support from some members of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

No organization or concerted effort can be successful if we cannot open our hearts to what it means for Christian parents to be given a retarded child by the Lord. We can only surmise that the initial disappointment and resentment must be overpowering for such parents. We can also rejoice with such parents who turn to God to provide the answer to their acute dilemma and learn, in a new and unique way, to present also this child as a living sacrifice of thankfulness to the Lord.

One of the pamphlets⁴ distributed by "CHRISTIAN HORIZONS" contains a father's confession that he had to remind himself of certain directives which would enable him to have the correct orientation to his retarded son. These directives can be paraphrased

and serve as suitable guidelines to any communal approach to the retarded members of our Churches:

First. We must view the retarded not just in the perspective of the now, but in the light of eternity. We must see them as potentially whole and perfect in Christ, and we must make every attempt to prepare them for a glorious eternity of fulfillment with the Lord.

Second. We must seek, with God's help, to give our retarded children all the educational, physical, social, and spiritual advantages that are within our grasp to give.

Third. We must also help parents of retarded children to remain sensitive to the needs of their normal children, and help them to be careful not to short-change them while serving the needs of the handicapped child.

The writer's emphasis on problems with children is not unintentional, but this does not mean that problems with retarded adults are less significant. The issues involved in the growing up process in normal children is relevant to the retarded person growing to adulthood. These people may feel the same need for independence and to find an existence outside their family of origin. This process can

be painful both for the person and the parents, and this might be an area where much of the direct support from the brotherhood may have to come. We may need to consider the importance of providing boarding situations for such people. There may be possibilities for some of our tradesmen to take a retarded person on as a helper and provide him with understanding and guidance. Encouraging the retarded to develop a degree of independence is highly appropriate in view of the fact that at some point the parents may not be able to provide the same care, and that a time will come when they will pass from this world. Another possibility would be to provide these people with a kind of residence where they can stay for shorter or longer periods of time to receive support and care in their difficult period of growth.

A number of suggestions for action will be provided, and these might perhaps lend some thrust to some of the discussions which have been initiated in our own circles.

What about forming an Association? Yes, it certainly makes sense to organize our own people to accentuate the Christian concern for exceptional

or handicapped people, and to alert each other to their needs. The Association should be carefully planned and make ample use of the experiences of other groups such as "Christian Horizons," and the organization in The Netherlands, "Dit Koningskind." The Association should have parents of exceptional children as its strongest base, but it should also seek the advice and support of specialists and professional people who are aware of the Christian mandate in this area.

Whom should such an association serve? Such an association should focus on all exceptional children, although it ought to have a commitment to provide more of a direct service to the retarded (possibly by way of summer camps, and eventually setting up a residence). With the broader focus the association would become an advocate for all exceptional children and their parents, and it will be in a position to indicate the kinds of special services which could be provided within our Church communities, and our Reformed schools. The association might also be in a position to assist parents, teachers, ministers, and officebearers

The Wedding Feast Rev. 19:5-9



Al- le- lu- ia! The Lord our God reigns o'er us all. Praise

2. The Lord our God is King of kings,
Let us rejoice.
Be glad and praise His Holy name
as with one voice.

Him all men who fear His name, both great and small.

3. The wedding of the Lamb is here,
The day has come.
His Bride is dressed and waits for Him
To take her home.
4. She has been given clean white linen
For her dress;
(The linen is the Blessed's deeds
Of righteousness.)
5. The guests have come from North and South,
From West and East.
How blest are they who are invited
to His feast.

Words and music: Copyright 1975, by S. VANDERPLOEG

to seek appropriate help from specialists outside the Church community, when these services are not being provided by our own people. This should be done in a way which will not allow us to compromise any of our beliefs and principles. Referrals might be made for special testing and clinical interviewing which will establish the proper diagnosis, and assist in formulating suitable treatment plans.

What about funds? Most of the financial support may need to come from our own people. However, we should also be attuned to all opportunities to exercise our rights as citizens. Some effort should be made to develop expertise in understanding Government legislation, and the various possibilities of Government support. Once again, the underlying rule of thumb is that we do not leave ourselves open to compromise.

Who will be the workers? Much will need to be done to recruit people who have the sensitivity and the ability to work with exceptional children and adults. The association, if and when it is formed, should stimulate a sense of calling especially among the young people, who may be able to direct their studies and their interests toward careers in working with exceptional people in our own Churches. There should also be ample opportunity to provide volunteer support in many different ways — helping out in camp programmes, providing temporary relief for parents, encouraging Christian employers to reach out, etc. In developing a cadre of volunteer workers we should be able to make good use of some of our older brothers and sisters who may be looking for a meaningful preoccupation during their retirement.

Undoubtedly many of the readers will have suggestions to add, and some may even be critical of the approach that is being advocated. It is hoped that these people will come out of the woodwork to contribute to the discussion that has been started.

Bless all the little children, O Lord, especially those whose minds are clouded over. Help these children through the stages of life, and help us to surround them with love and care in early and later years. Help us realize that it is only a little while between now and the time of the Lord's return, when we will all have a perfect mind and a perfect body.

H.C. VANDOOREN

FOOTNOTE:

⁴ Reese, J. *Retarded . . . and Beautiful* Christian Horizons for Exceptional Children, n.d.

Summary of the responses on the reply cards as of Dec. 4

	YES no comments	YES with comments	NO no comments	NO with comments
Ontario	79	57	2	12
B.C.	49	21	0	4
Alberta	22	12	1	0
Manitoba	9	5	0	4
Others	4	1	0	0
Total	163	96	3	20

GRAND TOTAL — YES 259 - 92% — NO 23 - 8%

COMMENTS: Include:

- a. political and other current events with Reformed commentary 16
- b. more **truly Reformed** articles 9
- c. occasional article in the Dutch language 7
- d. articles on Bible topics for Bible study societies 4
- e. **only news** in News Medley 4
- f. simple language articles only (one reference to Prof. Ohmann) 4
- g. more for the Young People 4
- h. meditations (Schriftoverdenkingen) 3
- i. other writers besides ministers 3
- j. material from other (Canadian Reformed) publications 2
- k. articles on practical topics — everyday living 2
- l. more for children (e.g. a story) 1
- m. Young People's News (incorporate I.H.A.; editors East & West) 1
- n. Mission News (complete bulletin) 1
- o. weekly crossword puzzle 1
- p. serial story (in English) 1
- q. serial story (in Dutch) 1
- r. good Christian reading (e.g. poems) 1
- s. only **upbuilding** letters-to-the-editor 1
- t. a question and answer column 1
- u. bring KriTiKus back — 10 times better than Cid 1
- v. church news from other churches (i.e. United, Baptist, etc.) 1
- w. more articles on various subjects in a similar style to Country Walks 1
- x. articles about "The Church" — same idea as Schilder in "De Kerk" and "Ons Aller Moeder" 1
- y. more photos of church members in their daily activities and church related activities 1
- z. more Book Reviews 1

Exclude:

- a. Dad and Jean 3
- b. "Anonymous" articles 2
- c. Dutch articles 1
- d. News Medley 1

Other:

- a. Use cheaper paper 9
- b. price out of line compared to similar papers 7
- c. present content is enough to read every 2 weeks (besides all the other literature) 4
- d. people will start reading it together if the price goes up 3
- e. we have enough to pay already for church and school 3
- f. print on the front page instead of wasting it on a picture 2
- g. permit payment in 2 installments 1
- h. use larger type in some places 1
- i. stop picking fleas from each other 1
- j. hold subscription campaign, including gift subscriptions 1
- k. publish every week, but with fewer pages 1
- l. you don't have to print 20 pages — 3 of them are advertisements 1
- m. if everyone would take Clarion in our churches, Clarion would be cheaper 1

Favourable comments:

- a. e.g. "Keep up the good work!" 28
- b. a few others:
 - 1. "We are all in favour of making **Clarion** a weekly magazine and gladly pay the difference."
 - 2. "We very much enjoyed articles the way Prof. Ohmann wrote."
 - 3. "I am looking forward to the time that **Clarion** will become a weekly magazine with double the coverage (50 pages), touching upon all walks of life, while staying **truly Reformed**, whatever that may have to cost."

mission news

Dear brothers and sisters,

Last month we told you about the problem of getting people to come to take medicine in time. This month this problem resulted in the death of three people. Around the 8th of September Kayamanop came with his wife (Ambunop) and child (Hawanop, 3) back from the jungle. Mother and child being very thin, came to us for medicine from the 8th-17th of September. Then suddenly on the morning of the 20th we heard that Ambunop had just died. So we went over to the house and found the mother dead and the child barely alive, laying on the father's lap. Although the mother wasn't buried yet, we could persuade the father to go to Kawagit with the child. Two helpers were found that were willing to go along. The fact is, that if you leave at 9 a.m. from Manggelum by prow, you can still get to Kawagit the same day, arriving there at approximately 5 p.m. (at 6 p.m. it is dark). That afternoon we buried the mother. In the evening, around seven o'clock suddenly the helpers were at our door to say they had turned back. The child had died underway, just past Sawagit. The next morning we heard rumors that the child was alive, so over we went and "she had come to life again" was what everyone told us.

Again we talked about going to Kawagit, but the father didn't want to go anymore. He said "Let it die and we'll bury it here." We arranged to have the child brought by others, to which he agreed and so they were on the way again. The child stayed in a coma for several days and died in Kawagit on September 24th of malnutrition.

The third death was quite a shock for us. It concerned a woman that had worked for us several times, we knew her well and we both were fond of her. She was pregnant and left for the jungle about two months before. Occasionally we would ask others: "How's it going with Dinggawop?" and they would tell us: "Masih ada di hutan" (she's still in the jungle). Then, all of a sudden, on September 18th someone told us that Dinggawop had died. We heard that she wanted to have the

baby close to the kampung, but her husband didn't agree. Finally they started to come back, but on route (still a day's walk from Manggelum) the baby started to come. Of course they waited for the baby to be born. Due to complications however, the mother died about one and a half weeks after the child was born.

Right now the child (a healthy baby girl) is being taken care of by another woman. Because she is unable to nurse the child adequately, we provide some bottle feeding and the child is doing very well. The father of the child is still in the jungle . . .

The above has been rather lengthy and I'm not planning to write things like this all the time, but I think it's good that you do get a picture of what happens regularly. Especially around here, where the mission has not been for very long yet.

Besides all this sad news, there's also reason to be glad and thankful. We know that our Father in Heaven who takes life, also gives life and in that He blessed us richly this month. On ZGK grounds 2 missionary babies were born this month! On September 10th a son for Mr. and Mrs. Vanderlugt in Kawagit, named Gerrit and on September 20th Monica, a daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Haak in Boma. Both babies were born in Senggo, but all have returned home again and everything is going fine.

Further we had another pregnant woman in the kampung namely Ablanop. Before she left for the jungle to deliver her child we spoke to her husband (he understands Indonesian, Ablanop doesn't), to make sure they wouldn't go very far into the jungle and to please let us know fast if anything would go wrong, so that we could arrange help. Fortunately all went well and after about a week the mother returned with a little baby girl. Obviously we were very thankful, and we hope and pray that also in these matters the people may receive more insight in these matters then be willing to accept our help.

It was not all that busy in the kampung, this month. People were slowly returning from their August-hol-

idays. One week almost everyone left for Sawagit, where a Sawagiter married a woman from Manggelum. Several pigs were killed and a big feast was organized. In a week like that you don't get much work done around the house or at the strip.

Regarding the strip: three survey-paths have been made, of which the last one seems usable. This path we're making a little wider (15 ft.) and we're trying to see how long we can make it without hitting a stream, a hill or such like obstacle. Some 250 meters are done now, which is about half of the required length.

Also another visit was paid to Butiptiri this month. Rev. D.J. Zandbergen (from Kawagit) went together with our new missionary for Kouh, Rev. J.B.K. DeVries. Also present was the nurse Miss Greet Euwema to take care of the medical end of things. More about this visit you most likely will be able to read in the near future.

From now on Reverend DeVries hopes to visit Butiptiri regularly. We are thankful that Reverend Zandbergen has been willing to help us in the time past.

In our July letter I mentioned that delegates from the Reformed Churches of Sumba were planning to visit our churches here on the missionfield. Well, on September 28th they (2 ministers and a teacher-evangelist) were flown from Sentani to Kouh. They will tour all our mission-stations, after which a combined meeting is planned in Kouh, between them and most of the workers here.

This month we've also been preparing for our first short guru-course to be held in Manggelum, but more about that next time.

Regarding the situation in the village: work on the new school has now begun. The framework is pretty well finished. After the roof is on, part of the workers will start on the house for Guru Yohan Bakai. From the Sawagit-guru I heard that also there work on a new school has started. Because the old school is being used as church, the schoolbenches are not holding up very well.

We again noticed that the mail service can be very irregular here. On September 15th mail was brought to us by walkers from Kawagit. It was the first mail after a period of 5 weeks and then it sure makes you thankful to "be in touch again."

BRAM and JOANNE VEGTER

Letter to Cid

Dear Cid:

Most of the time I do enjoy the remarks which you make in your column, and usually I agree with them. The last time, however, I had to disagree with many of your statements.

Mind you, I fully agree with you that we have a calling also in political respect. It would be an anabaptist stand if we withdrew from "public life," content to be in our own small corner, "and let the rest be damned." We have a duty towards our country and our nation and are here on this earth not just to make money, to have a comfortable and sheltered life, attend Church at regular times, and even not be bothered when establishing and maintaining our schools. There is no difference of opinion between you and me as far as this is concerned.

There is, however, a difference especially in two areas.

You state that we cannot cast a ballot in civic elections due to the nature, basis, and policies of the existing political parties.

And in the second place you urge the membership to form a political party, a "federal" political party, if I understood you well. And that is then to be the best way in which to fulfil our political calling.

Sorry, Cid, but I have to disagree with both those statements of yours.

REPRESENTATION

It is already quite some time ago that I wrote a little article dealing with proportionate representation. That, as you may know, is the system in The Netherlands and in many other countries. We have, as you do know, a different system, a system of regional representation, district representation. I greatly prefer our system above the

Dutch system. The latter has been called the "shortest way towards dictatorship," and we see it in that country. Political parties can count on a certain number of votes throughout the years (give or take a few thousand due to fluctuations) and once they have banded together and come to an understanding among themselves, they set their policy and continue year after year without having to be afraid that they will be "toppled." The "Red-Romish" coalition of the post-war years in The Netherlands proves that.

When, on the other hand, you have the "district representation," the possibilities of change are far greater and those elected will be more careful and listen better to the ones who have elected them! A party never knows how many members they will see elected to the next parliament or legislature. Just look at the province of Quebec and what happened there!

There is another aspect.

When you have proportionate representations, the elected representatives, *for all practical purposes*, represent only that segment of the population by whom they were elected; they represent more their *party*. But when you have district representation, the elected representatives are far more aware of it that they represent *all* the people in their riding.

I have experienced it that, on the provincial as well as on the federal level, the honourable gentlemen who represent the riding in which I live do not deign themselves too high to reply personally to your letters and pleas for help or to your thoughts and wishes about their duty in specific cases. I have experienced it that they are willing to listen and promise to use their position to promote the cause you advocate, when they are convinced that you are right.

To *whom* are you to appeal in the case of proportionate representation? To the party chief, high and mighty? To the central committee which may be more concerned with issues than with persons? And what do they know about your local, regional, or — in the case of a federal party — perhaps even of your provincial problems, apart from the main issues?

In the case of proportionate representation you have very little, if any, communication with "your" representative.

And: for district representation you do not need a large political party.



Letters to the Editor

Dear Mr. Editor,

I am writing in response to the "Letter-to-the-Editor" in the Clarion of November 13, 1976, or more precisely, to the reply given to that letter.

To say the least, I was very puzzled by the answer Br. S. de Bruin received to his letter.

I've looked up the News Medley Br. de Bruin referred to in his letter, and you indeed did write this statement the way he said you did.

I must therefore agree with Br. de Bruin, that your summary is somewhat misleading.

I must admit I did not read the bulletin from which this summary was taken, but that should not make any difference here.

Then why this short "No I don't" answer, not short and to the point, but rather short and insulting.

Because even if you were right, Mr. Editor, which you are not, your

brother in Christ, Br. S. de Bruin deserves better than that.

Your brothers and sisters in Christ, readers of this magazine, deserve better than that.

And last but not least, our children which we encourage to read our magazine, deserve better than that.

For such a reply does not show that love which is expected from us toward God and our neighbour.

This, Mr. Editor, is the reason why I'm so puzzled with your reply.

With brotherly love,
E.J. SCHULENBERG

* * *

According to "Webster," "misleading" means: fallacious, deceptive. The same dictionary gives as synonyms: deceitful, fraudulent. Was what I wrote really that bad? I was asked to agree with such qualification. I did not, nor do I right now.

vO

You do not need a party at all! I'll come back to that.

VOTING

First I like to say something about that voting bit.

Many years ago (it may well be close to twenty years ago) we conducted a few meetings in which we discussed the question what we could do to fulfil our calling as citizens of Canada.

Some brethren were of the opinion that we could not take part in voting for reasons of principle. (Yet, they did not hesitate to go to a citizenship court to be examined with a view to becoming a Canadian citizen. They had to tell, and could tell, the judge exactly what the privileges and duties of a Canadian citizen are: freedom of religion, freedom of movement, etc.; further the duty to honour the Queen, to pay taxes, to vote And, when the moment was there, they made the oath of allegiance, kissing the Bible)

I recall that one brother, who was of a different opinion, stated: "If I cannot find a person who will promote the causes for which I stand, I shall at least vote for the person who will maintain the status quo." Is it not always the "silent majority," the indifferent or, in any case, inactive massive "center section" of the population which renders it possible for relatively small, vociferous, activist groups to gain control?

I know very well that, in fact, only two parties in existence have any principles to speak of, and we wholeheartedly reject both: they are the communist party and the New Democratic Party. I can see no other than practical differences between the more or less pragmatic approach of the other existing parties. I cannot discover any real principles. However, that makes it much easier for me to vote!! I only have to judge a practical approach to things, not a commitment to a *real principle*. (In order to prevent misunderstanding: I do not deny that behind practical measures there is a certain theory which "inspired" them, but that is not the same as a political party having certain expressed principles.) That, combined with the district-representation gives me a free conscience to vote for the man of whom I am convinced that he will represent me best and who, at least, will maintain the status quo in which we have freedom of religion, freedom to establish and maintain Reformed schools, etc.

I reject any approach in an anabaptist line as if we would be allowed to entrust the task of representing or governing only to those of whom we are convinced that they adhere to the true faith or even are members of the true Church. It shall not be my fault if vociferous and activist groups gain control because I have withheld support from those who did their best to preserve the freedoms and possibilities we have. Does the Lord use only true believers to preserve and protect His Church??? Besides, do we talk with those who are candidates, whose names are on the ballot to find out whether they believe in the Lord and wish to speak and decide in obedience to His will? Or do we allow ourselves the right, in their cases, to "judge rashly and unheard"? The ninth commandment applies also to our attitude to "those who are without"!!

POLITICAL PARTY

As for forming a political party, I see absolutely no sense in that, and I shall be very blunt.

Study-groups? Yes, please, and the more, the better; and the more active, the better.

A party? No.

I see it happening already: a committee formed, an organization set up, a board elected, membership drive and fund-raising activities, a new periodical with beautiful, principally thoroughly sound articles, either original or translated from the Dutch, regional or even national rallies, attended only by our own people and a few curious passers-by plus a representative of the local press; then, perhaps, a token candidate here or there who does not have a chance in the world, and everybody knows that.

Worthless in our situation.

We have to start somewhere else!!

SOME QUESTIONS

What I should like to know is: How many among our membership are active in local affairs and how many among our membership have ever seriously become involved in the matters of the local civic community?? How many among our membership have ever seriously presented themselves for election to the municipal council or any civic function which is filled via the ballot-box?? Of how many among our membership has the name ever appeared on a local ballot??

See, Cid, as long as we cannot

speak of any real involvement on the *local* level, let's not even start talking about provincial or federal matters. Grassroots, man!

Are our people known locally, and is it known of them that they are really concerned with the needs of the community?

I think that in most cases and generally speaking our people have kept pretty well to themselves. As long as that has not changed and as long as there is practically no local involvement, let's forget about forming a political party.

I know what some will say: "We have to speak prophetically also in the chamber of the House of Commons!" I know, and I agree, but I would say, "First try to get into the chamber of the municipal council! That's closer to home, and that's where you can expect people to know you best Or not?"

To speak prophetically has no value at all if it comes in the place of, or serves to camouflage the lack of, or in any case, is not accompanied by, a priestly concern.

I had to tell you this, for I think that your remarks were not correct in this respect. And I, for one, wholly disagreed with them.

Meanwhile, keep going, will you?

Yours,
W.W.J. VANOENE

* * * * *

Your case for proportionate representation has been refuted by politicians of name, e.g. recently the honourable P. Jongeling, Dutch M.P. In my opinion, the "district system" causes an undemocratic disintegration of the voters' combined potential.

Your stress on local activity (which I appreciate) doesn't need to exclude a striving towards national cooperation and unity, and I do not understand this fear for national organization(s). As it stands, everyone does as he sees fit, and this usually amounts to doing nothing.

Besides, maintaining the "status quo" is really a poor motivation for continuing political involvement. We cannot go on indefinitely voting for the lesser of evils, but must unite to promote the glory of the Lord in a positive, reformed-political campaign at all levels. At least, I will not settle for less. Thank you for your worthwhile reaction.

Cid.



News items are published with a view to their importance for the Reformed Churches. Selection of an item does not necessarily imply agreement with its contents.

SUCCESS-TRIP

Emmen, The Netherlands. The recent trip of the ministers P. Van Gulp and O.J. Douma (Deputies for Correspondence with Foreign Churches, appointed by the Synod of the Reformed Churches Liberated in The Netherlands) to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland seems to have been a great success. Rev. Douma was of the opinion, "We should have done this thirty years earlier." The first contact between these churches came about in 1970, when Dutch deputies asked for and received written information from the Rev. McDowell (Belfast), the Secretary of the Council of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. This Church has already existed since 1927, born out of a conflict within the Irish Presbyterian



"The cross denied . . ."

Church over the teachings of Prof. J.E. Davey concerning reconciliation and the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures. A group under the Rev. James Hunter — who had appealed to Synod — broke away and instituted the Irish Evangelical Church on October 15, 1927, adopting the Westminster Confession as official creed. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church now consists of nine congregations, all situated in or around Belfast, with five ministers and a mission-worker in the field of the Free Scottish Church in Peru. The ministers were (and are) being trained at the Seminary of the Free Scottish Church (Edinburgh) and at Westminster Seminary, OPC, (Philadelphia). The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland is still a member of the RES, but has already severed ties with the Reformed Churches (Synodical) in The Netherlands. "The visit of the ministers Van Gulp and Douma will most likely result in a proposal to the next General Synod to recognize the Evangelical Church of Northern Ireland as a sister-Church," according to VARIANT (Saturday-extra of Netherlands Dagblad).

NAPARC CONFERENCE

Grand Rapids, USA. The North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) held its second meeting from October 29-30 in Grand Rapids. Present were delegates from all member-churches: the Christian Reformed Church, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in America, The Reformed Presbyterian Church (Evangelical Synod), and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, which has applied for membership, sent two observers to the meeting. In the coming year a conference will be held in the Pittsburgh area on "The Office in the Church." The NAPARC will also sponsor a conference on "racial issues" sometime early in 1977, especially with a view to South African problems.

EVANGELICAL SYNOD WEST GERMANY

Braunschweig, West Germany. At the occasion of the opening of the Synod of the Evangelische Kirche of West Germany, a new revised Luther-Bible was presented to the Churches. It is a revision of the issue of 1956. This edition contained only the New Testament, since the Old Testament

was completed earlier in 1964. The Chairman, Rev. Class, also welcomed Chancellor Schmidt, who was present at the opening ceremonies. The Synod appealed to the believers to show solidarity with the unemployed and suggested that refusal to make extra money through overtime might alleviate the unemployment problem.

SUPPORT FOR WIERSINGA

Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

The Consistory of the Reformed Church (Synodical) at Amsterdam maintains full confidence in its student-pastor, Dr. H. Wiersinga, despite the fact that earlier this year the General Synod of the Reformed Churches had called Dr. Wiersinga's opinions concerning "reconciliation" unpermissible ("ontoelaatbaar"). Dr. Wiersinga denies that Christ died in man's place on the cross of Golgotha, but teaches that man himself must effectuate reconciliation on earth with his fellow men from out of the "example" of Christ. The consistory has now sent a letter to the General Synod, stating that it regrets the fact that Rev. Wiersinga was not given room for his thoughts. The consistory cannot share the Synod's conviction that Dr. Wiersinga has endangered the "unity of faith." Meanwhile, in the Dutch Reformed Church, a Dr. E. Stern has developed and defended similar ideas as expounded by Dr. H. Wiersinga.



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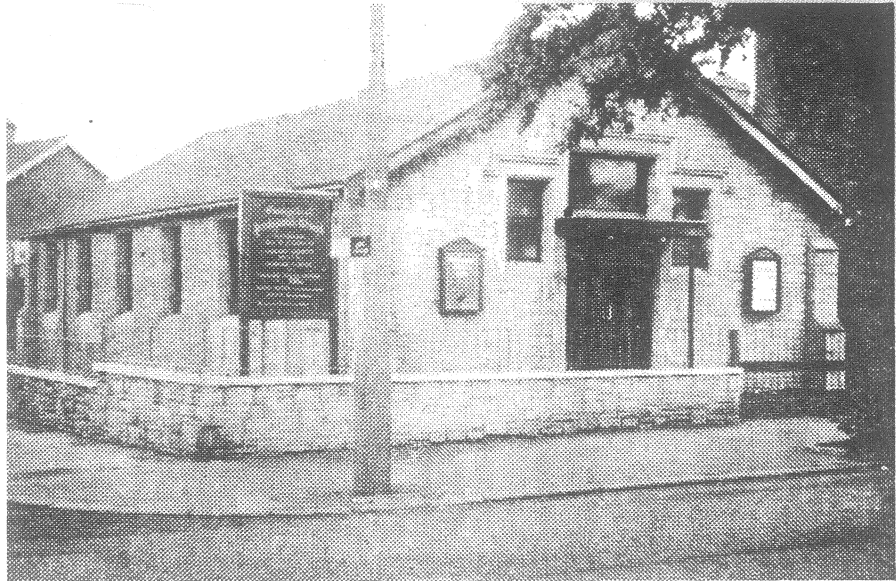
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VATICAN OPPOSES SATANIST CINEMA

Vatican City. The Radio Vatican has criticized the recent trend of Hollywood movie-producers to come up with occultist Satan-films. "No one forbids the film industry to occupy itself with satanism," according to Radio Vatican, "but one does become angered that such a serious subject is treated only in a commercial atmosphere." The Vatican recalls the film, "The Exorcist," which has earned the producers more than 100 million dollars and the more recent film, "The Omen," which has already grossed a profit of 50 million. The radio station claims that the large Hollywood firms each plan at least five or six of such films. "Satan seems to be a new star," Radio Vatican concluded.



"Building of the Evangelical Church of Belfast."

Women's League Report

On October 13th, 1976 about 342 ladies came together in the Ebenezer Church building in Burlington East for our annual convention.

It was a little after 10:00 a.m. when the ladies, after having enjoyed coffee and cake in the basement had taken their seats upstairs in the church.

This 15th League Day was opened by our president Mrs. Riemersma. We sang Psalm 118:1 and 6 after which she read Ephesians 1 and led in prayer. The theme of her welcome word was "Rejoice in the Lord." Philipians 4:4. A special word of welcome was extended to the guests from Holland and the organist for today. Some announcements followed. Mrs. G. Stieva from Lincoln has been chosen as treasurer. Next League Day will be held in Burlington West.

Following the announcements Mrs. Bergsma read her review of last year's convention in Toronto. Mrs. Riemersma thanks her for her work. The financial report was given by Mrs. de Vries. A special word of thanks is in place here for she has done her work for five years and never a penny was missing.

Roll call followed and about 342 guests were present, several from The

Netherlands and from British Columbia.

After we sang our League song the floor was given to Mrs. F. Ludwig to read her essay on "The Church and her Confession."

She showed that talking about the confession is also speaking about the church. The confession was born out of persecution to preserve the church by her true faith in God's Word. Also today we need our confession because heresies go on even today, satan is always active to lead the Church away from her true calling. But Christ promised to lead His church through the centuries to everlasting life.

After the essay Mrs. Riemersma thanks Mrs. Ludwig for her work. We sing together Hymn 46 and discussion follows. The singing of Hymn 51 closed the morning session.

Everybody went to the nice roomy John Calvin School gymnasium where a delicious lunch was prepared by the ladies of Burlington. It also was nice to see so many familiar faces again and talk to each other.

When the afternoon session started again we all join in singing "O Canada" after which Mrs. Bosscher read us a poem, "Myn Belyden." Mrs.

Riemersma then read Genesis 1:26 - 31 and Genesis 2:18 - 25, followed by singing Psalm 128:1, 2, 3.

Rev. G. Van Dooren then gets the floor for his speech "Priorities in the Life of the Christian Wife," a very timely topic. When God created man. He created them male and female. Eve was a help and together they had a mandate to be fruitful and have dominion. The wife is not under the man but together they have to fulfil their task.

After the question period our president has some closing remarks yet. We had a good day together again, a special thanks for Rev. Van Dooren, and Mrs. Ludwig for their contribution this day. We also appreciate all the work done by the Burlington Society to make this day a success and the organist for his work to make it a happy day. Mrs. Zuidhof thanks Mrs. Riemersma for leading this meeting so well all day. We sang Psalm 146:1, 3, and 8, and Rev. Van Dooren closed with prayer. The president closed the meeting but we could enjoy coffee and tea again to make us ready for our trip home. Indeed a day to rejoice in the Lord.

THE BOARD

First . . . Priority in the Life of a Christian Wife⁽³⁾

“THERE IS IN CHRIST NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE.”

Jesus Christ has been sent by the Father to undo what sin had destroyed in God's beautiful creation, to bear the punishment for that sin, and to restore life. This certainly is true also of that part of life where sin had its starting-point: marriage.

This redemption of Jesus Christ was already prepared and prefigured in the *Old Dispensation*. The position of the women in general and of the wife in particular among God's Covenant people differed greatly and in principle from that in the nations “outside.”

For Israel it is, “Honour your father and your mother.” “Honour your mother?!” A thing unheard of among most nations. Sarai was like a queen, and the mothers of Israel's kings had a place of great honour. In the genealogy of Israel several women occupied a place of honour. Some were prophetesses, like Deborah, Mirjam, Hulda and Anna.

And most of all: a woman would become the mother of the Saviour.

Jesus Christ came to deliver woman from sin and from the punishment or results of sin. “There is in Christ neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, *male nor female*” (Galatians 3:28). With a view to being delivered there is no difference between man and woman, husband and wife. Both are set free from the bondage of sin. A christian marriage is a marriage set free from the bondage of sin.

What the New Testament preaches about women and wives meant no less than a total upsetting of the prevailing conditions. And no wonder, if indeed the redemption of Jesus Christ is to have any meaning for marriage and wives!

PAUL CONTRADICTING HIMSELF?

When we study the New Testament, especially Paul, about the rela-

tionship husband-wife, the result seems ambiguous, contradictory.

On the one hand he stresses the (restored) *equality* between husband and wife, as members of the body of Christ. Women share in the charismas or special gifts bestowed upon the Church. Acts 21:9 mentions four prophetesses, the daughters of Philip. According to I Corinthians 11:5 women pray and prophesy *in public* (of course in public: in the privacy of her home she would not need a veil).

In the following verses of this chapter Paul states that, indeed, woman was made for man, and not the other way around, but he continues (verse 11), “*Nevertheless*, in the Lord woman is not independent of man *nor* (!) man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born from woman.” (These words certainly express some form of equality: “*as . . . so . . .*”

This “*as . . . so . . .*” receives a much stronger emphasis where Paul, in the same letter, chapter 7, preaches complete *equality* between husband and wife in the most-intimate relationship of marriage, i.e. sexual intercourse. Let Paul speak for himself. “The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and *likewise* the wife to her husband. For (!) the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; *likewise* the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does” (verses 4, 5). Each other's equals, that must be the conclusion. Put that next to Genesis 3:16, “and he shall rule over you” and you see how Jesus Christ has set the wife free from that specific “rule” as punishment of woman's sin.

We are confining ourselves to marriage-relationships, — otherwise we could dwell on the fact that the apostle granted women quite some activities in the life of the Church and propagation of the Gospel. We need only mention Romans 16, and mention

the name of Priscilla as “co-worker” (!) in the Gospel; also the widows that were “enrolled” (I Timothy 5:9), — and then we wonder whether we make the same use of female talents as Paul did. But that would lead us outside the scope of our topic.

This on the one hand, restoration of equality in the marriage.

Yet — on the other hand — Paul reminds the women repeatedly of the fact that woman sinned first and misled man; therefore she shall not have a position of leadership. Women shall not teach in the Church. The New Testament does not have room for female preachers, teachers and overseers. They shall “keep silent.” The wife (Ephesians 5) shall be submissive to her husband, and obey him.

Does this not contradict his teaching of equality as expressed in I Corinthians 7?

The answer is “No.” Three things are to be noted here.

First, we must maintain that Christ has delivered us from the punishment of sin. The fact that the husband is the head of the family, does *not* mean (and certainly not in a christian marriage — and that is what we are talking about) that he shall “rule” over his wife as meant in Genesis 3:16. The wife is restored to her original position as “wederhelft” or partner.

Second, Jesus Christ, in redeeming us, most certainly does not break up the “natural” relationships in life. Paul did not even abolish slavery, but sent Onesimus back to his master Philemon. However, the latter has now to receive his runaway slave as a brother in Christ! “No longer as a slave, but more than a slave, as a beloved brother” (verse 16). We are not Anabaptists who reasoned, “because we are children of the kingdom, we no longer need obey the “worldly” authorities.” Children are brothers and sisters of their parents “in the Lord,” but that does not free them from honouring their parents, and so on. Equally, the freedom in Christ does not dissolve the marriage; the priority of man remains. He was created first, and woman was made for man, not the other way around. The husband remains the “*primus inter pares*,” the first among equals. How beautifully does Paul describe that in the unsurpassed passage of Ephesians 5 (*that* should be the very centre of the Form for Holy Wedlock!). Husbands have to

love their wives as Christ loved (past tense! i.e. He gave His life) the Church and gave Himself up for her. You hear that, don't you? The husband has "to give up his life for his wife." Again, compare that with Genesis 3:16. The husband shall nourish and *cherish* his wife. And then Paul quotes Genesis 2; "cleave to his wife and they become one flesh." There is, I'm convinced, not a single woman, wife in the world who would not gladly be submissive to such a husband; as gladly as the Church is submissive to Christ. The question is, whether all (christian) husbands answer this description . . .

Third, one should keep in mind that during this dispensation the results of sin will never be completely erased. That goes for all relationships, also for the most ideal christian marriage.

CONCLUSION.

From the biblical evidence we are entitled to draw, first, the conclusion that *the priority* in the life of a christian wife is the "First . . ." of the Form for Wedlock. She is, and she has to be, the "wederhelft," the partner, *next* to (and not "under") her husband. She has to be that in both parts of the (original) mandate. Together they have to be fruitful and multiply. Together they have to have dominion. Just as the Creator made it in the beginning. If that were not true, Jesus Christ would not have accomplished his Father's mandate.

This does not exclude a division of roles and tasks, as prescribed by the "natural" (I prefer "creational") difference between male and female. For

the wife the bearing of children, for the husband to "make a living" for the family. Yet, *not* as two different jobs! A wife who does not show interest in her husband's business, and is unable, or unwilling, to discuss with him all things that interest him, or in which he has to be interested, does not live up to her mandate. The husband who leaves his wife alone in managing the children ("none of my business") breaks the ordinance of God. Both are "together" in both parts of the mandate.

But — apart from that — it should be stressed with all strength, that a wife, a marriage, is in for trouble, if the wife is "only mother," or anyway (and even) "first mother." The order of the Form should never be reversed. "First" remains first! Jay Adams says beautiful things about that in his book on Christian Family Life. A crisis is bound to come in a marriage where the wife is so wrapped up in the care for her ("her?") children, that there is hardly any time for her husband. *He* is and remains the first in her life, as well as *she* in his life. Any deviation from this priority-rule endangers the marriage.

By the time he comes home, she should not be running around, unorganized, sloppy and untidy. She should "adorn herself for her husband" who (maybe) all day was surrounded by neatly dressed secretaries, or other ladies, who are on the lookout for an affair. Equally, the husband should "cherish" his wife, bring some flowers home every now and then; retain some flavour of the honeymoon. I even suggested in the discussion that it may be good to enjoy together a glass of sherry before supper. Some shook their head, fie, fie! what a frivolous dominee . . . "Helemaal niet degelijk . . ."

You just try it. Would anyone make me believe that there are no dull marriages among "us"? We do not need to agree with Ann Landers who wrote recently, "I can't give you any figures on the number of couples whose marriages are hanging together with safety-pins and Elmer's glue, but I can tell you there are more poor marriages around than good ones — by a long shot. Especially after ten years . . ." Okay, it may be better, much better among true believers (which is not always the same as being both members of the true church). But no one can make me, after forty years of pastoral experience and coun-

HYMN 14

LUKE 2, 8-14

Este's Psalter, 1592

1. While shep-herds watched their flocks by night, All
 seat-ed on the ground, The an-gel of the
 Lord came down And glo-ry shone a-round.

2. Fear not, said he (for mighty dread
 Had seized their troubled mind);
 Glad tidings of great joy I bring
 To you and all mankind.
3. To you in David's town this day
 Is born of David's line
 A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
 And this shall be the sign:
4. 'The heavenly Babe you there shall find
 To human view displayed,
 All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
 And in a manger laid.'
5. Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
 Appeared a shining throng
 Of angels praising God, who thus
 Addressed their joyful song:
6. 'All glory be to God on high,
 And to the earth be peace;
 Good-will henceforth from heaven to men
 Begin and never cease.'

Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

selling, believe that there are no dull marriages among "us." Let's not be hypocritical, please!

In many cases that started already during the honeymoon, when what we heard from Paul in I Corinthians 7, was not put into practice. Here we return again to Genesis 2; "cleave together and be one flesh." I do not need to be too explicit (especially not after the letter from a young lady, writing, "my mother blushes only when I ask something about this, and my grandmother hid everything "onder de wollen deken . . ."

Are you still "in love" with each other? You can only be, if you live up to the "First . . ." of the Wedding Form.

Talking about *sex-education*, the topic of today. The best sex-education is, if and when the children see that mom and dad are still in love with each other. THAT REMAINS FIRST, IN ALL MARRIAGES, ALWAYS.

We happen to know many older couples. You know what? A number of them lead dull lives. Why? Because they never practiced that "priority" that we have been talking about all along. The wife was only mother, and now the children are gone . . . and they don't know what to talk about together. Her life is so empty. The days are so long . . . Isn't it terrible. That's what you get, ladies, if you betray the priority in your life as a christian wife. It can be beautiful and wonderful, after you have accomplished your most-important task in life: bringing up your children for the LORD, and then be together again, just the two of you, cleaving to each other, having a full life together. It may even become the most beautiful part of your life, because your love has grown and matured. But don't expect that that will be your joyful lot, if, during all the years of having your children around, your husband was not number one in your life (the same goes, of course, for the husband, but I am talking to wives).

Permit me, before the final conclusion, to trace back my steps for two remarks.

I have been told (but I can hardly believe it) that it is "preached" among us that sex-life is only meant for getting children. What kind of nonsense is that? Did such "teachers" only read Genesis 1 and not Genesis 2? (and, I would add, I Corinthians 7, "Do not refuse one another except perhaps

by agreement for a season . . . but then come together again." O boy!, that's even an apostolic command . . .) I have, for several years, adopted the role of marriage-counsellor; every minister should do that. I have learned that it is high time that we step down from our (Anabaptistic, and therefore certainly *not* God-pleasing) stepladders, and give our young couples some sound advice in this respect. I cannot forget the remark of Dr. K. Schilder, in a sermon (of all things) that God rejoices when His children, male and female, "cleave together and be one flesh." Stretch out that honeymoon over the years, as long as you can. No, as long as you live! Stay "in love." Be each other's partners. That's the greatest blessing you can give to your children.

Second, talking to the ladies, now you realize that preparation for a God-pleasing, and thus happy, marriage life, means more than being a good cook, sewing, baby-care and the like (sure: all these things are most necessary, and if our Reformed (High) Schools do not realize their calling in this respect, they are not "Reformed" the way I see it). But . . . that is not enough. You will have to be a "partner" to "hubby," esteemed ladies (or: sisters, if you insist), and therefore anything that you can pick up during your preparatory years, developing your talents the LORD has given you, will pay off with double interest, when you (and here is again your "priority") have to help and assist your husband in all things that belong to this life (and, of course, to the life eternal). If you cannot talk intelligently with "hubby" about anything that interests him, you're a failure, sorry.

Now the final word: a successful marriage life depends on your husband. The husbands were not at that League meeting. But I hope they take the trouble to read these lines. If the husband not only nourishes but also cherishes his wife, his "bride of the wedding day," and, remembering everyday, that the Lord, with His own hand, gave to him this wife; gives "honour to the wife as the weaker vessel," your wife will be all too happy to be submissive to you, because there she finds her happiness, and this will be a proof to her that she, living up to her priority as a christian wife, is "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18).

G. VANDOOREN

Church News

REV. G. VAN RONGEN

of the American Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, accepted the call extended to him by the Church of Steenwijk, The Netherlands.

REV. M. VANBEVEREN

of New Westminster, B.C. declined the call extended to him by the Canadian Reformed Church at Guelph, Ontario.

REV. J. MULDER

of the Canadian Reformed Church in Cloverdale, B.C., declined the call extended to him by the Church of Smithers, B.C.

REV. J. VISSCHER

of Coaldale, Alberta declined the call extended to him by the Canadian Reformed Churches at Langley, B.C. and London, Ontario.

CANDIDATE J.P.D. GROEN

Groningen, The Netherlands declined the call received from the Church at New Westminster, B.C. for mission in Brazil.

CANDIDATE J. DEJONG

wishes to inform the Churches that, due to increased course requirements, it has become impossible for him to finish the projected courses by May 1977, and he will, for that reason, not be available for call until further notice.

New Address:

Clerk of the Church at Chatham, Ontario:

F. Westrik
69 Thornhill Crescent,
Chatham, Ontario N7L 4M2
Phone: (519) 351-1982

New Address:

CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCH
AT CALGARY

Meeting place:

Trinity United Church
10th Avenue and 13 Street S.E.,

Services: 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Mailing Address:

Box 3518 Station "B",
Calgary, Alberta.

Letter to my Daughter

Dear Jean,

It looks like the storm has petered out a little. At least I did not see any new point of view in the Clarion of November 13.

What I did see however, was that the Rev. Stam and the Rev. VanDooren had the same trouble as we had. You are in good company, dear. I hope it gives you some comfort.

But joking aside, you should read and study those articles. There is quite some similarity. People seem to pick on some of the minor things and leave the main theme alone. Also, some seem to have trouble reading. Coloured glasses, weak eyes, or just plain lack of education, I don't know what the cause of it is, but some read "yes" when it is "no," read things that are not there, or completely overlook the things that are there.

I am enclosing a letter I received from your cousin Diehard.

He wrote some nice things, but seems to have overlooked completely that you wrote: "As Canadian Reformed people we have many things to be glad about, and not the least is the new Guido de Brès High School, added to the many Christian elementary schools already established." He apparently did not notice either that I told you to "enjoy what you have in privileges and blessings, including the school . . .," for he wanted me to come with grounds that it is wrong to pull all our forces together to build a Reformed Highschool. He wanted me to sit in judgment over those three reverend gentlemen and say who is right and who is wrong. I would even have to prove it. Well, I'm sorry for him, but I did not think that it was my task to do that and besides that, I do not have the qualifications for that. The next thing he said was that I am "always talking about Christian schools." That gives him a funny taste in his mouth. He'd rather speak about Reformed schools. Apparently we have different ideas about the meaning of the word "christian." In my opinion a school that is not Reformed is not Christian either, but of course opinions may differ.

I do indeed know the stories of the Old Testament where the Israelites mixed with the Canaanites. But I was not talking about Israelites mixing with the Canaanites, but just the other way around: Rahab, the harlot; Ruth, the Moabitess; Uriah, the Hittite, and many more, mixing with the Israelites. You know, talking about "funny," this same cousin who gave such a beautiful example of confidence and faithfulness when he said that the Lord will provide the means to buy another car, apparently seems to think that the Lord, all of a sudden, is unable to look after His own business when it comes to education. Does he think that he himself has to save his children? Monica had a different experience.

Your cousin also accused me of writing that 0.1% make an obsession or idol out of our schools and he figured out that this was an awfully small number to make such a fuss about. I don't know what "fuss" he's talking about, nor who is making the fuss, but I do agree with him that it is an awfully small number and therefore I warned you not to be too worried or too concerned about those few. However, I did not say that 0.1% made an idol out of our schools. Your cousin made a boobo there. Or should I say: "He lied"? If I say it that way, at least I don't "walk around the hot porridge." That would be what you call "straight talk," but I think we all should keep in mind that it is very human to make a mistake, and we would not right away, like that other famous animal, jump on the oat-chest.

One thing I cannot understand. Unless it was for the privilege of being able to sacrifice for the schools, I cannot figure out why your cousin left the old country. There were churches, there were schools, and, at the time, even over there it was still possible to sacrifice for the schools. And he left that to come to a country where there were no schools and where the Lord did not even have a church left

Well, Jean, I think that is enough gossip for one day.

Love, Dad.

Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden

CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

10 KINGSTREET E., TORONTO M5C 1C3
PHONE: 364-5443

"Nederlanders, die in het studiejaar 1977-1978 in Nederland een studie aan een Nederlandse universiteit of hogeschool willen

beginnen, moeten zich (uiterlijk 1 Januari 1977) aanmelden bij het Centraal Bureau Aanmelding en Plaatsing (CBAP), Postbus 888, Groningen.

Aanmelding dient te geschieden op een formulier verkrijgbaar bij de afdeling onderwijs en studie-voorlichting van het Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen, Postbus 28, 's-Gravenhage.

Tevens zal een vragenlijst worden gezonden waarmee inlichtingen kunnen worden

gevraagd of de gevolgde buitenlandse vooropleiding voldoet aan de Nederlandse vooropleidingseisen.

Aanmelding voor het volgen van hoger beroepsonderwijs in Nederland dient zo spoedig mogelijk plaats te vinden bij de instelling waarbij men denkt te gaan studeren."

DE CONSUL-GENERAAL, voor deze:-
(G.C.M. BARON VAN PALLANDT)
Vice-Consul

Country Walks

Without going in detail we all know that the coming of the white men to this continent wasn't favourable to its native wildlife. The disappearance of the Great Auk, the slaughter of the buffaloes, the diminishing birds of prey, the annihilation of the passenger pigeons and the pitifully few whooping cranes left are only a few examples of the results of the white men's greed.

Yet, although unintentionally, their arrival has been a boon to at least a few members of animals and birds.

I am not referring to the thousands of skunks and raccoons inhabiting the wooded ravines and gullies of Toronto and who partly survive and multiply by scrounging through the garbage pails, but to birds like the robin and the horned lark.

The horned lark was never observed in Southern Ontario until the land was cleared; strictly a bird of the wide open spaces like the prairies it is as much a part of our local rural bird population as the juncos and cardinals.

The robin needs no explanation. Seeing how they're part of our lawns and gardens during nesting time, we can easily imagine how handicapped they must have been when, except along riverbanks and a few natural clearings, the whole of Eastern North America was one great forest.

I could name more cases, but just would like to name one more: the ruby-throated hummingbird.

It seems strange to realize that even before white men arrived these tiny birds hovered around the wild flowers and that they didn't depend in the least on the cultivated flowers the settlers brought along and which are the only flowers we, in general, see them hovering about.

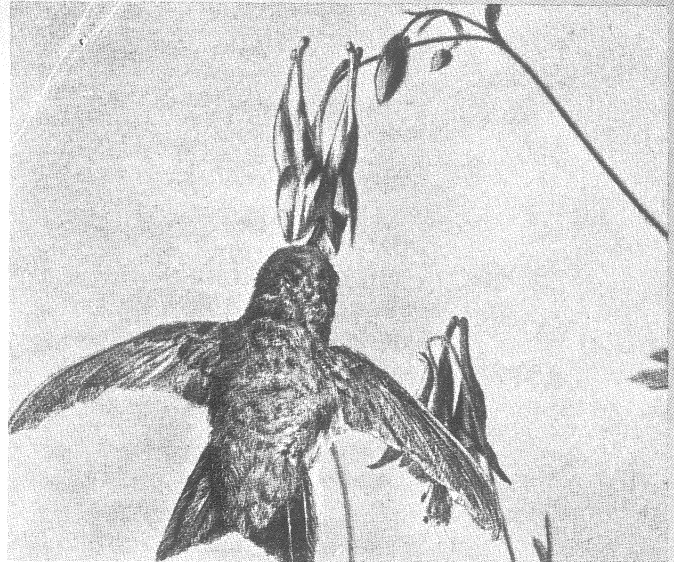
Every living creature is a marvel in itself, but to study the ways of the hummingbirds is reason enough to stop and ponder the miracles of Creation and to bring homage to its Maker, especially as scientists are unable to explain so many questions about this minute bird.

The only one of its kind found north of Florida and east of the Mississippi, it has left over four hundred of other hummingbird species behind while a few venture along the Westcoast into B.C.

As with so many other migrating birds the hummingbirds, too, leave the tropical area where they've spent the winter, when the food supply is abundant. Yet it undertakes to journey thousands of miles on its two-inch wingspan to reach its nesting grounds.

Without any doubt the coming of the white man with his imported trees, vines, shrubbery and flowering plants has been a boon to them, but how did they succeed in making this tremendous journey before?

If we go through the list of the flowers in our gardens and also those growing in the wilds, we'll find that each kind was created and designed to attract, with special pleasing features, those insects upon which it depends for pollination, resulting in the discovery that plants can be divided into bee, fly, beetle, wasp, butterfly and moth flowers. Most flowers, like the milkweed on which I once counted six different insects, do cater to more than one particular insect but some do in such a way depend on the one insect that, if it doesn't arrive for some reason, the plant just is prevented from producing seed for the season.



Draining the columbine's horns of plenty

A host of white and yellow flowers like the twining honeysuckle, the nicotine plant, the lillies, moonflowers and evening primroses either by their scent or, if that isn't present, by their bright colours solely attract the night-flying moths. A jack-in-the-pulpit will only attract gnats while the provincial wild flower of Ontario, that beautiful spring flowering trillium, due to its carrion scent is only able to appeal to the flesh-flies.

But certain flowers do not attract insects at all. Not even the great bumblebees, moths or butterflies with their long tongues are able to drain the nectar out of the long tubes of the wild colombines for instance. Although bees have been observed to bite holes in the tips of the horns of these flowers, it is obvious that, since the flower doesn't receive any benefit from this procedure, the bees just aren't legitimate guests.

And here is where the hummingbirds come in. The old sayings tell us that hunger will make raw beans sweet and as it is true that, if necessary, any flower secreting nectar could serve the hummingbird, it doesn't waste much time on such flowers which are easily drained by other insects.

It is rather amusing to visualize how a bumblebee or butterfly would go about trying to get at the nectar of a columbine; their weight alone would cause them to hang in an upside down position; a difficult position for a butterfly with its weak legs and also hard for its tongue to unroll itself upward. The bumblebee, clumsily stretching its tongue in the crooked tube wouldn't be able to reach the nectar either, with its straight tongue unable to go around the bend.

But the hummingbird, sucking with its wings in motion and able, by flying backwards, sideways or up and down, can position itself in such a way as to direct its beak into any flowertube no matter at which angle. It also has a further advantage in that it can, after inserting its needle-like bill in the flower tube, run out its tongue in any direction to lick up the last bit of hidden nectar, a feat an insect cannot perform.

It is a well-known fact that hummingbirds prefer red or orange flowers especially those where the nectar is hidden away in long tubes where the regular insectmob doesn't visit. Although many a time I have seen them at my Dutch white climbing beans or, as this fall, vying with some bees at a planter with balsams which had escaped the frost.

Before this continent was settled the flower they depended on, after flying non-stop the five or seven hundred mile trip across the Gulf of Mexico, was the coral honey suckle. Covering the wooded hillsides and thickets of the southern states in April it was a vine strictly depending on birds for keeping its numbers. The hummingbirds gratefully feasting on the nectar would unknowingly pollinate the flowers and other birds during the return journey in the fall would eat the berries and drop the seeds over a wide area.

With a broader and more northerly range than the coral honey suckle the painted cup or Indian paintbrush was in bloom along the streams during May and also was a flower strictly catering to the hummingbirds. A little farther North and partly overlapping its flowering season came the graceful wild Columbine with its five inverted red and yellow horns of plenty with at the ends the smaller tips where nectar was secreted strictly for the hummingbirds' benefit.

And after these had faded? Appearing in July came the bright-orange and brown-speckled jewelweeds. Fringing the

streams and covering the damp and shady areas in the woods they were and probably still are the favourite source of nectar for the hummers as they bloom right up to the time in fall when the frost blackens them. As is the case with the Columbine, the jewelweed, too, hides its nectar in a curved horn made available only to the hummingbirds and those tiny insects able to crawl right in.

More wild flowers were and still are around to the benefit of the hummingbirds. I could name the Oswego tea or the trumpet creeper or the cultivated flowers we have in our gardens like the nasturtiums, the cannas, the salvias, the balsams, scarlet runners, fuchsias or gladioli, but just the fact that these tiny sprites could perfectly look after themselves at a time when this part of our world was covered with a green canopy of trees solely because wild flowers were in bloom at the right time and place makes us the more reverent for the Maker of us all.

COR TENHAGE

Promotie

Er zijn in 't leven van die dingen,
vertederende herinneringen,
gezegden, half vergeten dromen,
die plotseling weer boven komen,
doordat opeens de gang van zaken
ze uit hun half slaap deed ontwaken.
't Is nu zo 'n jaar of twaalf geleden,
'k Had met mijn dochttertje gebeden
haar lekker ingestopt in bed
en mij nog even neergezet
om een verhaaltje te vertellen
en dan weer naar mijn werk te snellen.
In dat verhaaltje kwam alras
een "oom" voor, die professor was.
De kleine informeerde nader:
"Wat is dat, een professor, vader?"
Ik had mijn antwoord gauw gereed:
"Iemand die bijna alles weet."
"O" zei meteen die kleine zus,
"net zoiets als een opa dus!"
Zo heb ik toen voorgoed geleerd,
hoe of een kind een mens taxeert.
Dat 's niet een kwestie van prestaties,
maar allereerst van generaties.
Een vader is een hele "ster,"
maar opa overtreft hem ver.
De vader mag studeren, schrijven,
ja elke soort van werk bedrijven:
hoe ijverig hij zich betoon,

de opa spant de kroon.
Enfin de tijd heelt vele wonden,
dat heb ik vaker ondervonden.
De kinderen worden groter en wijzer
en vader langzaam aan wat grijzer,
en eindelijk komt dan wel de dag,
waarop hij "promoveren" mag
en zomaar door de gang van 't leven
zowaar tot opa wordt verheven.
Hij wordt dan zonder moeite of zweet
met hoger waardigheid bekleed;
't kleinkind geeft hem een nieuwe staat:
zoiets als een professoraat.
(Maar 'k denk, dat hij zichzelf beleert:
Je wordt toch al een ouwe vent,
je voelt je jongeling misschien,
maar 't is je heus wel aan te zien
dat toch de tijd is voortgeschreden
en ook jouw jeugd lang is vergleden.)
De jaren gaan als een gedachte
Maar in de kringloop der geslachten
en in de wisseling der tijden
die komen, rijpen en verglijden
en die hun tol van ieder vergen,
blijft een ding vaster dan de bergen.
Ik heb het zondag weer gehoord,
dat simpel en ontzaglijk woord:
't Verbond met Abraham, Zijn vrind,
bevestigt Hij van kind tot kind.

PIET PRINS

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,
It's Christmastime again! That's not hard to see, is it?
Christmas lights, Christmas colours, glitter and glow
But Christmas is not just what we see
What is Christmas?
Christmas is a GIFT!
"For God so loved the world that he GAVE his only
Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but
have eternal life" (John 3:16).

That Gift of God is more wonderful than we can ever
imagine!

The Son of God born as a humble baby, in a stable.
Born a King yet hung on a cross!
Born to save His people from their sin and bring them
back to their Heavenly Father.

And because of this great Gift of God we receive ALL
good things from Him! Do you remember the "Count your
Blessings" quiz we had one Christmas?

All these good things come to us because of the one
Gift of God, our Saviour, Who was born a little child to make
us too, children of His Father.

Above the Stable

Above the stable,	Lies an Infant,
Angels sing,	Meek and lowly,
Inside the manger,	Lies a Sovereign
Lies a King!	High and Holy!

Thank you, Busy Beaver *Henrietta Stieva* for sharing
this Christmas poem with us.

Sometimes we forget at Christmas, when we think of
Him as a child, that the Lord Jesus really is our King, too!

That was the *first* poem. But you know, Busy Beavers,
we have our own poets, too! Here are two Christmas poems
for you from Busy Beavers *Sylvia Jans* and *Michael Wilde-
boer*.

Jesus was born

In the town of Bethlehem
where the babe was born,
Lying in the manger
on the early morn.

Christmas time

Christmas time is coming soon
When we sing a very nice tune.
When we remember Christ's birth:
When He lived on this earth.
To save us from the things we did bad
That made God very, very mad
But He had mercy on us
And Christ, saved us
And that's what Christmas is about.

Did you enjoy the poems as much as I did?
And now we have a Christmas Story for you too! And a
true one, at that! Busy Beaver *Corrie DeBoer* wrote it for us.

My Best Day in 1975

My best day in 1975 was on Christmas Day. We had
lots of fun. We planned to go to my aunt's house. We all
were overjoyed about it! When it was Christmas we heard
the wonderful story about the Lord Jesus being born.

Then we went home and played for a while. We ate
and did the dishes so fast that my mother was surprised!

My father went to bed and we got ready to go to my
aunt's house. At 15 minutes to 3 we went to my aunt's
house. My father drove very fast and we got there soon.

When we got there we all said "Merry Christmas!"

I played with my cousin Charlene. We played a long
time! Finally we ate! We ate turkey and many other good
things. After we ate we helped our aunt do the dishes.
There were very many!

When we were finished my 2 brothers and my 4
cousins had to go to bed. We had to play together. It was
fun!

We had many candies and goodies to eat. My Dad, my
Uncle, and my Mom were telling stories about when they
were young.

When it was 11 o'clock we had to go home. My broth-
ers had to get out of bed.

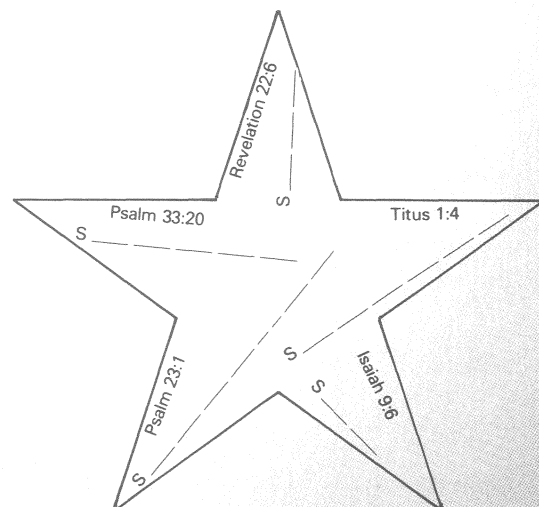
We rode home in our car. When we were home again,
we were snug in our bed.

Doesn't Corrie's story make you feel thankful for the
good things we enjoy at Christmas? And all the time really!
There are many of God's people in the world today who will
not be able to stop their work this Christmas day. They will
not be able really to celebrate with joy the birth of our Savi-
our. We should never forget to BE thankful and to SHOW
our thankfulness.

QUIZ TIME

The Bright and Morning Star

In Revelation 22:16 we read, "I am the root and the off-
spring of David, and the bright and morning star." The Lord
Jesus is called many wonderful things in the Bible. Can you
fill in the points of the star?



Busy Beaver *Theresa De Gelder* has a quiz for you called:

The Life of Christ

1. King _____ tried to kill Him.
2. Mary, Joseph, and Jesus fled from _____ to _____.
3. Later they returned and went to _____.
4. Herod's son _____ reigned after his father's death.
5. Jesus was baptized by _____.
6. He was tempted _____ times by the devil.
7. His disciple _____ betrayed Him.
8. The Jews brought him to _____ who washed his hands of the matter.
9. The Lord Jesus was crucified on _____.

Unscramble

a quiz for you from Busy Beaver *Anita Meints*.

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. hheieNam | 6. bwreHes |
| 2. kkkaaHub | 7. ggaaHi |
| 3. eehaJrim | 8. OanmRs |
| 4. onJh | 9. emnataLsitno |
| 5. ssaohaiseTnnl | 10. aPsnllhipip |

Who Did It?

1. Who brought the good news to the shepherds?

2. Who beheaded John the Baptist? _____
3. Who denied Jesus? _____
4. Who betrayed Samson? _____
5. Who betrayed Jesus? _____
6. Who armed his soldiers with lamps, trumpets, and pitchers? _____
7. Who built the first great temple at Jerusalem? _____
8. Who returned from exile to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity? _____
9. Who preached the sermon on the day of Pentecost?

10. Who entered a chariot and explained the Scriptures to an officer? _____
11. Who climbed into a sycamore tree to see Jesus pass by?

12. Who anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her hair? _____
13. Who stopped a man from killing himself? _____
14. Who used his Roman citizenship to save himself from a beating? _____
15. Who brought spices to anoint the body of Jesus?

16. Who escaped from his enemies over the wall of a city in a basket? _____
17. Who walked with God and was taken to heaven?

18. Who made a meal for an angel? _____
19. Who set up a monument in the middle of a river?

from the boys and girls in Canada. Wietze is 9 years old. His name is: Wietze de Haan
address: Kaatsveld 20
Drachten (Fr.)
The Netherlands."

I think too, it would be wonderful if Wietze received some cards from you Busy Beavers. Don't wait for others to do it! Send YOURS soon! (And if you know of someone else who is ill for a long time, you know we are always happy to let the other Busy Beavers know, and give them a chance to send cards.)

Now for the rest of the mail!

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Marieke Geertsema*. We hope you will really enjoy participating in all our Busy Beaver activities! You really had a different way of celebrating your birthday, didn't you? We hope you will really like your new home. Write again soon, Marieke.

Of course you may join the Busy Beaver Club, *Marion Overbeek*. And we hope you, too, will enjoy being a Busy Beaver. Sounds to me as if you really are a Busy Beaver with all those hobbies and pets to look after too! Bye for now, Marion.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Arthur Pieterman*. We hope you really will enter all the contests and take part in all our activities! Write again soon, Arthur.

Hello *Shiela Klaver*. Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club. We hope you will enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. I can tell you are a good Busy Beaver already — what with a poem for us the first time you write? Bye for now, Shiela.

Thank you for a very nice, neat letter *James Slaa*. And I really like your poem! I'm sure the other Busy Beavers will like it too. Keep up the good work, James.

Hello *Betty Aikema*. It was nice to hear from you again. And I really like your story and poem. Write again soon, Betty.

You did very well on your quizzes, *Sylvia Foekens*! Keep up the good work. Did you enjoy doing them? Is your teacher better again, Sylvia?

* * * * *

Last but not least, it is time for birthday greetings! A very happy January birthday and many happy returns of the day to all the following Busy Beavers from Aunt Betty and all the other Busy Beavers. May the Lord guide and keep you, and us all, in the year ahead!

Dirk Barendregt	January 1	Walter Geurts	January 19
Brenda Kobes	2	Debbie Hartman	19
Nick Mans	3	Jackie Hordyk	20
Cathy Wendt	3	Henrietta Selles	22
Gerlinda Buist	4	Aneta Van Seters	22
Albert Bultena	5	Clarence Blokhuis	23
Nancy Van Raalte	5	Yvonne Byker	23
Anita Oosterhoff	9	Dianne Holtvluwer	24
Kenneth Vanden Haak	9	Hilda Tams	24
Debbie Knol	11	Henrietta Veldkamp	25
Nellie Knol	11	Vera Vandenberg	26
Marian Lof	11	Judy Jansen Van't Land	27
Helena Blokhuis	12	Diane Breukelman	29
Joan Veldkamp	16	Janette De Haas	31
Ena Beyes	17		

* * * * *

To you all, Busy Beavers, and to your families, a joyous and blessed Christmas. With love from your Aunt Betty.



From the Mailbox

Now, Busy Beavers, with my mail came a letter meant not just for me, but also for YOU. Here it is: "I have a nephew in Holland who is seriously ill. It would be nice if he could receive some cards

Two Points To Ponder

“LET’S BE PERSONAL”

I, VanDooren, — *am not* in a position to speak expertly about the Two Points I recommend to the attention of those among us who know about finances, are businesslike, and so on; that’s why these lines are written; — *am* in a position to write these lines because it is not an *oratio pro domo*; I am not asking anything for myself; the problems to be mentioned are not mine.

Okay then.

“SHARE IN ALL THINGS”

The New Testament, even on the basis of the Old Testament, is not uncertain as to the right of those who labour in preaching and teaching, to receive their living from those who hear: the congregation.

The Reformed Churches have understood this.

With *one exception*, however.

Part of the minister’s salary is “free living” or “free parsonage,” often including heating, tax etc. That’s nice for the minister because that part of his income is not taxable.

But, what did I say there? “*Part of his income?*” Yes, that’s how it looked, all those years of his ministry, on the yearly budget: “For the minister,” and then, part of it straight salary, another part, superannuation, another part: payments etc. on the manse, plus tax.

Again: was that his income, really? Yes and No! Yes, inasmuch as he had free living, all those years, — but No, because not a penny of it was or became his; he leaves, or retires, and . . . has nothing. Now it becomes clear that the congregation was during all these years building up a sizable equity *for itself*; the best investment: a parsonage, bought or built for under \$20,000, is now worth around 70 or 80 thousand: for whom? For the minister? No way, for the congregation.

Thus again: was free living part of his income? Or, in Paul’s words: did the preacher-and-teacher share with the congregation in *all* things? When “we started” no one had a house of his own. By now nearly everyone has, *except the retiring minister!*

Is that right? No, it isn’t. Unwittingly, both parties involved in a letter-of-call, were leading each other by the nose.

Therefore the suggestion: let income be income. The Churches should enable a minister to build up his equity by paying him the whole salary *and let him keep it!*

I realize the problems for the start. But, at least, the churches should start with the young ministers. Several other churches do that already. A solution has to be found (by others, see introductory remarks) to help, for a start, in a downpayment, etc. Tax-consequences have to be calculated, but it must be possible to become ‘fair’ in this matter: let your minister share *in everything*, also in a house-of-his-own, just like you and everyone with you has, or is going to have.

“CARRYING PENSION”

Referring again to the opening remarks, a way must be found to achieve that it does not make any difference, either for congregation or for minister, to call, and accept a call, when the minister-in-question is, let’s say, around 60 years of age.

Two of my colleagues in Enschede, that oversized big-city-church, could, at a later age, accept a call to a small congregation, to have it a little easier, and to serve that congregation with accumulated experience and wisdom (younger ministers may not believe in such accumulation until they reach such age themselves), *without any unpleasant consequences* for their present income or for their retirement.

I have been told that in our sister-churches in The Netherlands they *have* found a solution for that (so, just write a letter to find out). A (small) congregation does not have to hesitate calling an “older” minister, fearing that within a couple of years they have a retired minister on their hands, with all the consequences of that.

Would it not mean a way-out, a great blessing sometimes, for a minister as well as for a congregation, if the minister, in the last years of his ministry could leave a large church, and go to a small one, a little “easier job,” and yet fruitful and satisfying — and let younger ones take the heaviest loads?

But in the present situation a small congregation would hesitate (I am not uttering fantasies) to extend such a call, while an older minister, if he received one, would (have to) ask

himself: do I sacrifice my retirement-rights, and to what extent?

Well, I have been sufficiently clear, I hope.

These two Points should be Pondered by Committees and others.

They can be solved, as we can see from examples.

They should be solved, not only in order to be fair to the ministers, but also for the benefit of the churches themselves.

G. VANDOOREN

Reading Sermons

In a recently started column in De Reformatie, called “Zebra-Pad” (Pedestrian Crossing) the author “Klaar-Over” (Ready: Cross!) makes interesting remarks. The following ones about Reading Sermons should find a place in Clarion. (Translated by vD.)

Sermon-reading in the worship-service is a good and pious matter. Similarly listening to such sermon-reading. A sermon read is not less than a sermon preached. The sermon derives its authority not from the person of the preacher. It has authority in itself. It has pleased the Lord to grant salvation by means of it: by the Word and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

That’s why sermon-reading should not be despised. We must honour reading services: they have a power to life as well as to death.

Therefore every congregation should see to it that there are good readers. He can be an elder, or the caretaker, or a teacher, or, for that matter, a carpenter. Reading a sermon is not bound to the special office. People think so, but it is not so.

Every congregation should take care to have a group of sermon-readers, so that sermon-reading can come into its own.

The sermon-reader has to do something for that, of course. He has to prepare himself. That will take at least one evening, or a Saturday afternoon. He must read the sermon for himself aloud, at least once. With a red pencil he must indicate the proper stress; with a green one the rests in-between sentences or paragraphs. He must “appropriate” the sermon. Only after the sermon has become “his own,” can he appear before the congregation.

Thus he can also look the congregation into the eyes. He *has to* do that. He does not just “read a lesson.” No! He calls to redemption, and for that one must see eye to eye.

Blessed is the sermon-reader who reads a sermon in this manner.

Blessed is the congregation which hears the sermon-reading in this manner.

Press Release

of the Classis of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Alberta and Manitoba, held on November 10, 1976 in Edmonton.

On behalf of the convening Church at Edmonton, the Rev. D. DeJong opens the meeting of delegates with the reading of II Corinthians 2:12-3:6 and Hymn 34:1, 2, 5 is sung. He leads in prayer.

Several developments that occurred since the last Classis are mentioned. The Church at Carman saw the departure of the Rev. J. Geertsema and was almost immediately blessed in that the Rev. J. vanRietschoten of Smithers accepted the call to serve her. The Church at Coaldale was blessed in that the Rev. J. Visscher declined the calls extended to him from the Churches at London and Langley. The Church at Neerlandia was disappointed in that the Rev. H.E. Nieuwenhuis of Zuidwolde (Groningen), The Netherlands declined the call extended to him.

A report was submitted on the credentials. All the Churches were represented by two delegates with proper credentials. The Church at Calgary delegated a deacon. No objections are raised. Classis is declared constituted.

The moderamen are as follows: the Rev. S. DeBruin, chairman; the Rev. D. DeJong, clerk; the Rev. J. Visscher, vice-chairman.

The agenda is adopted with a number of additions.

The following reports were read and taken note of: The report of the Church at Edmonton regarding the auditing of the books of the Classical Treasurer; the report of the Committee for Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry; the report of the Church Visitation made to the Church at Calgary by the visitors: D. DeJong and J. Visscher. The report on the Classis Contracta held on September 30, 1976 regarding the call that the Rev. J. Geertsema accepted to the Church at Chatham was given orally. The written Acts of that Classis will be added to the Acts of this Classis.

The Church at Edmonton proposes that the Classis adopt its enclosed study on the solemnization of marriages which study was requested by the provincial Government of Alberta. The Government had requested Classis response to the following pro-

posals: (1) "That the state ought to assume total legal responsibility for the performance of marriage ceremonies with the result that religious marriage ceremonies would not be given legal recognition but would continue to be optional to any couple desiring a religious blessing of their marriage; and (2) "That the state ought to prescribe a form of pre-marital counselling program and require that all couples seeking to be married in the province must complete the program." The study/report of the Church at Edmonton in reply to these proposals is discussed and adopted. Classis also decides to appoint two ministers (one from Alberta and one from Manitoba) as Classical Deputies who will represent Classis in which matters of communication with the respective Governments of Alberta and Manitoba on behalf of the Churches in Alberta and Manitoba is called for (cf. Article 28, 30 Church Order).

Next, the Classis decided to adopt the proposal of the Church at Edmonton to have a "First Public Admonition" added on to the *Form for the Excommunication of Members who, Having Not Yet Made Profession of Faith, Are living in Disobedience*. This proposal, which reads as follows, will be sent on to the next General Synod: "The Consistory has the sad duty of informing the Congregation that a brother/sister, by Baptism ingrafted into the Christian Church, is guilty of the sin of . . . , and that he/she in spite of many earnest admonitions, did not show any evidence of true penitence. Therefore the Consistory, to its great sorrow, is obliged to deal further with this brother/sister and, if he/she persists in his/her sin, to proceed to his/her excommunication. The Consistory is making this known to you for the first time and in all seriousness exhorts you to pray for him/her continually, that it might please the Lord to bring him/her to repentance."

Classis adopts this proposal because it feels that the mentioning of the name right away, in the first public admonition, goes too fast, especially because the next step is the excommunication itself. Also, the feeling that this is too fast could cause an undue postponement and delay in *initiating* the process of excommunication, and in the involvement of the congregation.

At the request of the Church at Carman, the Classis appoints the Rev. S. DeBruin as counselor of the Church

at Carman during the time of her vacancy.

Under Question Period according to Article 41 Church Order, the Churches at Neerlandia and Barrhead request Classis to continue the preaching arrangements for both Churches combined. Classis agrees to continue the arrangement which enables these Churches to receive the services of a minister every fourth Sunday.

The Church at Coaldale asks advice relating to the Church membership of a brother who has decided to live in the Yukon for a one year period. Advice is given.

The Church at Edmonton asks for advice in certain matters of discipline, and it is given.

Several items of correspondence were received. The Church at Edmonton asks advice in the matter of the date of the next Regional Synod. It is advised to have this Regional Synod some time in May of 1977 after both Classis Alberta/Manitoba and Pacific have had their Classical gatherings.

The Church at Carman asks the Classis to approbate the call of the Rev. J. vanRietschoten of Smithers, B.C. who has accepted the call to the Church at Carman, Manitoba. The following documents were submitted and found to be in good order (see Article 5-10 Church Order): (a) a certificate of release from the Classis Pacific; (b) the letter of call from the Church at Carman; (c) the letter of acceptance from the Rev. J. vanRietschoten; (d) the letter of release from the Church at Smithers. A letter from the Church at Carman stating that the name of the minister had been announced on two successive Sundays, and that no lawful objections were brought forward, has not been enclosed. Approbation of the call is given, provided that the last-mentioned matter is properly dealt with and that no objections are brought forward and remain.

A letter of farewell was received from the Rev. J. Geertsema and it is gratefully acknowledged.

The convening Church for the next Classis is the Church at Neerlandia. It will be held D.V., on March 16, 1977 at 9:00 a.m. in Edmonton. The convening Church may postpone this date if it should work out better with regard to the next Officebearers' Conference to be held in April. Suggested officers are: the Rev. R.F. Boersema, chairman; the Rev. S. DeBruin,

clerk; the Rev. D. DeJong, vice-chairman.

The following appointments and re-appointments were made: the Classical Treasurer, the Br. E.C. Koning is re-appointed; the Church at Edmonton is re-appointed for auditing the books of the Classical Treasurer; the Church at Edmonton is re-appointed to look after the Classical Archives; the Church at Barrhead is re-appointed to inspect the Archives; the Church Visitors: the Rev. D. DeJong and the Rev. J. Visscher are re-appointed and the Rev. S. DeBruin is appointed; the

Committee for Examinations consisting of the Rev. D. DeJong and the Rev. J. Visscher is re-appointed, the Rev. S. DeBruin is appointed examiner in Doctrine and Creeds and Ethics; the Committee for Financial Aid to Students in the Ministry consisting of the Brothers C. Veldkamp, T. vandenBrink and S. Tuininga is re-appointed; the Committee for Needy Churches is re-appointed and includes the Brothers C. Poppe, T. Veenendaal and the Rev. S. DeBruin; as Deputies for Contact with the Provincial Governments are appointed: the Rev. D. DeJong (Alberta)

and the Rev. S. DeBruin (Manitoba); and finally as delegate for Classis to the installation of the Rev. J. vanRietschoten, the Rev. S. DeBruin.

Personal Question Period is held. Censure according to Article 43 Church Order, is not necessary.

The Acts and the Press Release are read and approved.

In closing, the chairman proposes that Psalm 119:1 be sung, after which he leads in prayer.

On behalf of the Classis,
J. VISSCHER, vice-chairman e.t.

A Letter from the Publisher

The year 1976 is fleeting to an end. We have been able to serve you regularly, without any interruptions, and we hope that the year will end without another postal strike.

Approximately one half of the *Clarions* you received this year were 20-page issues. There has been and continues to be an abundance of copy for the magazine. Although *Clarion* has improved this year, much more can and should be done, and therefore we are looking forward to expanding and developing our magazine even further in the coming year, the Lord willing. We have decided as of January 1977 to publish 24-page issues on a regular basis. A survey conducted overwhelmingly supported our plan to expand (see elsewhere in this issue). We hope, with the help of more contributors, to provide articles on a greater variety of subjects.

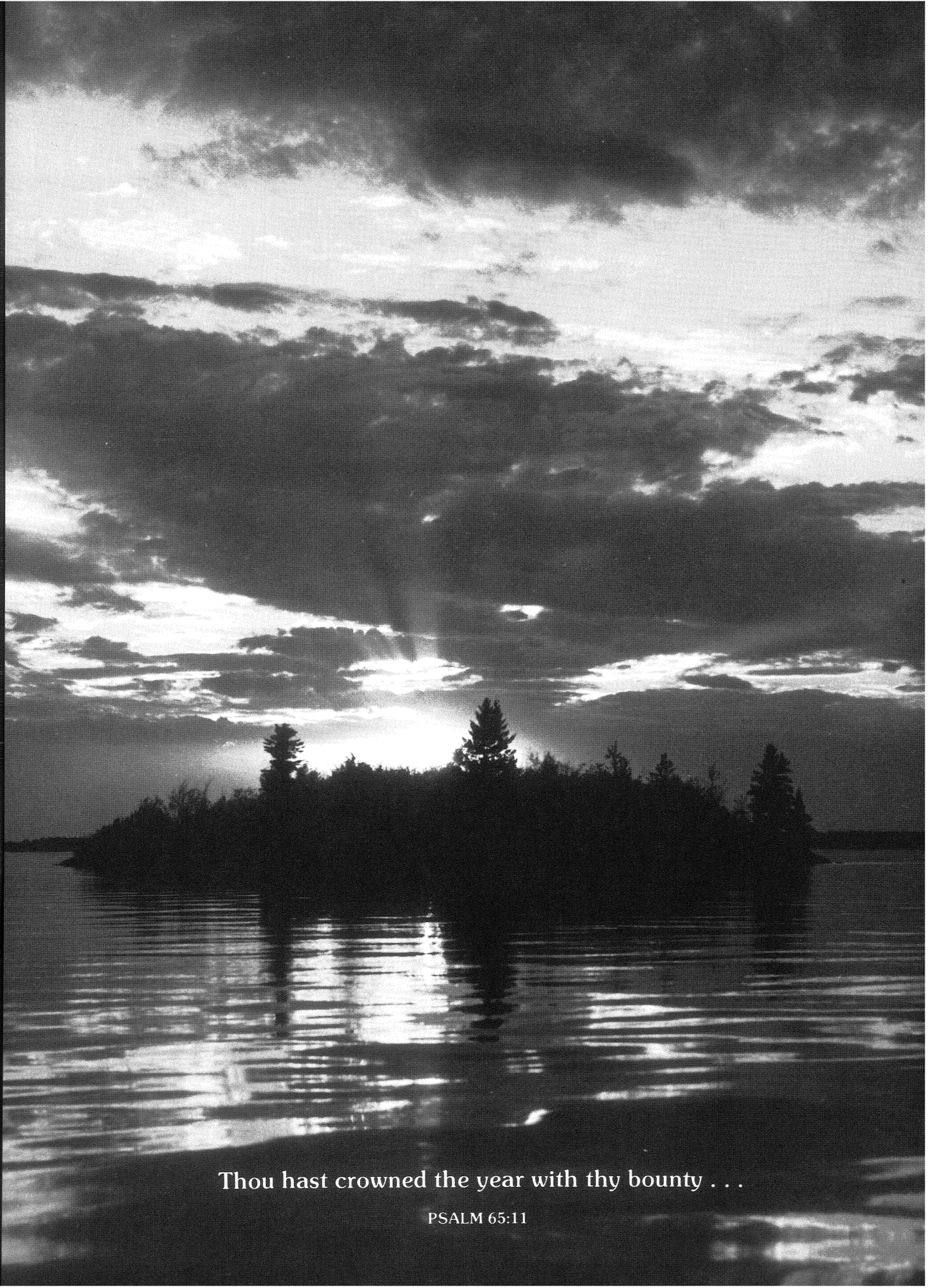
As publishers, we are only involved in outlining the basic policy of our magazine. The daily operation and the matter of content are decided on by the editor, in cooperation with the other members of the editorial committee. It is this daily task which requires a tremendous amount of work, and even though it sometimes receives criticism, it also does receive much praise. We at Premier Printing wish to express our sincere appreciation to the editor and the other members of the committee for the great amount of work done. Also to our contributors, we say, "Thank you!" At this time, it is also fitting to acknowledge someone who for many years quietly gathered in the copy, decided on the content of each issue, and took care of all the correspondence with the contributors, but who, due to other work pressure, has been forced to withdraw from the editorial committee: Dr. W. Helder, a heartfelt thank you!

We have published only one book this year: *Marriage in Honour*, by Dr. W.G. DeVries, which, we are happy to report, is being received very well; and a booklet containing a lecture by Dr. J. van Bruggen, entitled "The Ancient Text of the New Testament," which was delivered on the occasion of the anniversary of the Theological College in Kampen, The Netherlands, December 8, 1975. Everywhere, also in circles outside our church federation, more and more contacts are being made, not only with respect to authors and translators, but also with respect to marketing — in The Netherlands, England, Korea, Australia, South Africa, The United States, etc., to name a few countries. During the course of 1977 we also hope to publish several books for children. Because this work is done mainly through correspondence, much time is involved, and a great deal of patience is required.

We are looking forward to continuing and broadening cooperation with all who are involved in publishing *Clarion* and/or books for the propagation of our Reformed faith in the English speaking world. We also rely heavily on the continued support from you, our readers, for without your support we cannot succeed. It is our hope that through all our concerted efforts our LORD will be glorified and His Church edified.

May you all enjoy the Christian festive season and may the LORD give one and all a blessed New Year.

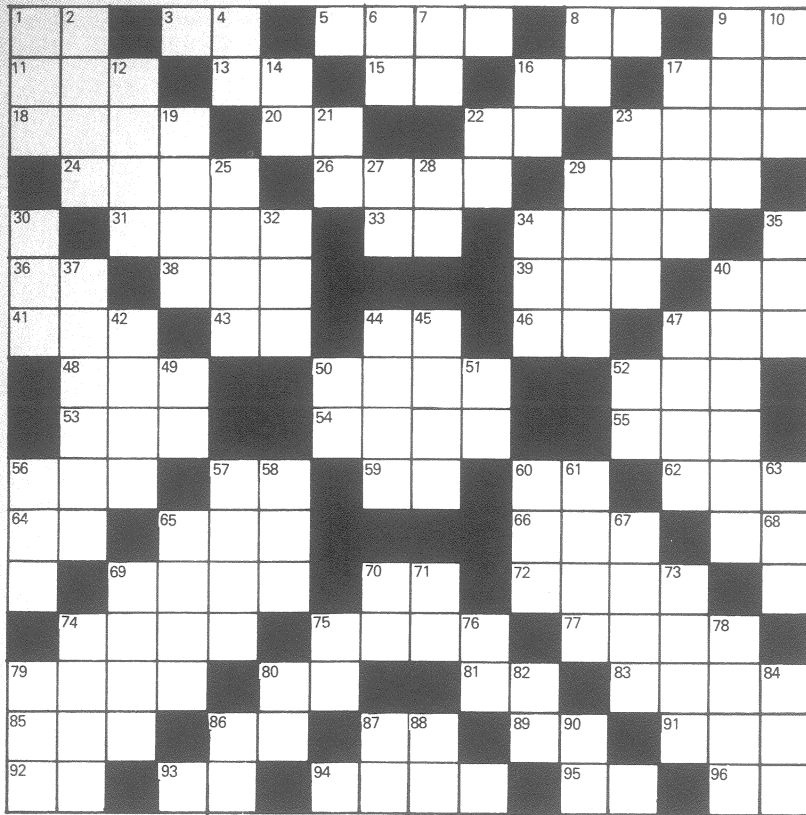
G. KUIK



Thou hast crowned the year with thy bounty . . .

PSALM 65:11

Puzzle No. 15



ACROSS

1. Musical note
3. The (French-ml-)
5. Fruit
8. to: prefix
9. Before Christ (abbrev.)
11. tree
13. see 1 across
15. Hail to the reader (Lat. Abbrev.)
16. Auto manufacturer
17. snake
18. cry
20. see 1 across
22. denial
23. hearken
24. not to succeed
26. field
29. expensive
31. State in the U.S.A.
33. see 1 across
34. shout
36. present tense of "to be"
38. Australian bird
39. explode
40. see 1 across
41. revs per minute (abbrev.)
43. exclamation
44. lung disease (abbrev.)
46. a title
47. faucet
48. cereal spike

50. wild animal
52. limb
53. a drink
54. performer
55. look
57. Titanium (abbrev.)
59. Saint
60. see 59 across
62. without
64. see 36 across
65. to write with
66. food
68. Measurement (metric)
69. top
70. government leader
72. "so let it be"
74. rip
75. baby carriage
77. Kingdom (Bible)
79. skin
80. Thallium (abbrev.)
81. part of the day
83. biblical ruler
85. boat
86. denial
87. postscript
89. since Christ was born
91. water (French)
92. Time (abbrev.)
93. Beryllium (abbrev.)
94. humming sound

95. this (French)
96. name not known

DOWN

1. mist
2. Boys' name
4. elevated railroad
6. see 4 down
7. equally
8. Before twelve
9. wild hog
10. mode of transport
12. cat cry
14. see 8 down
16. leave
17. wild animal
19. mineral
21. a piece
22. wind direction
23. pile
25. can't move
27. metric length measure
28. about, of
29. entrance
30. title
32. 43 across
34. see 41 across
35. round
37. weapons
40. Biblical patriarch
42. Stag

44. Ionian city
45. vegetable
47. woody plant
49. see 28 down
50. see 1 across
51. Railroad (abbrev.)
52. see 7 down
56. expose
57. see 74 across
58. blacken
60. a mineral spring
61. docile
63. colour
65. ring
67. Wax insect
69. peep
70. Public relations
71. Goddess of justice
73. making a _____ for oneself
74. stint
75. place (abbrev.)
76. see 1 across
78. a lament
79. tap
80. as far as
82. Virginia
84. living in a convent
86. see 22 down
87. River (Italy)
88. hence
90. Before Christ

G. DE BOER

Books

Dr. A.W. Begemann, *Aanvangen der Griekse Wijsbegeerte*, Uitgeverij De Vuurbaak, Groningen, 1975. Fl. 27.50

Actually this book should have been reviewed by a philosopher or anyway by someone who knows all about philosophy. However, it does have its advantages that someone who never understood much of either philosophy or philosophers has to give his opinion about the above work, in which "De Vuurbaak" published what was available of the results of the late Professor Begemann's lectures.

I leave the scholarly value of this book to competent reviewers to judge. What I can say about it is: Here we find a serious and pious effort to teach philosophy in such a manner that it appears that the pre-scientific confession and conviction of a Christian "cannot be produced but only deepened and enriched by the scientific research," page 15. Here we also find the work of a man who was able to make things clear and who sometimes needed only a few words to define and to explain. I think of his remarks with the discussion of Vorländer's division of history into periods, page 104.

What we have here is no "easy" book but one which will enrich the serious student and which will cause him to bear in mind that "at bottom, philosophy is not rationally but religiously qualified," page 12.

vO



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