

Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Vol. 22 - No. 8

April 21, 1973



Agnus Dei

Recitation and Singing about the Son of Man Who is the Christ

(Concluding Section)

RECITING Abraham

He looks up at the stars that glisten in the sky,
And brings into remembrance the words of the Most High:
"As countless as the stars, as numerous as the sand,
Your seed shall be: a holy nation in the promised land."

He looks down at his son, and puzzled shakes his head.
How can he ever sacrifice this child, this little lad?
And yet the LORD has said so. It really must be done!
"Abraham, go to Moriah and sacrifice your son."

The Lord of life, the Covenant God, requires him to kill!
Shall Abraham doubt His promises; shall He not do God's will?

He looks down at his only child, and humbly bows his head.
"I'll sacrifice my son; the LORD can raise him from the dead."

Through valleys dark as death he travels with his laughing son,

But Abraham does not waver: the Lord his God is One!
For three oppressive days he travels; then the place is there.
The wood, the knife, the fire is there, and Isaac . . . the heir.

"My Father . . ." "Here am I, my son." "Look, we have everything:

The fire, the wood . . . , but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

"My son, God will Himself provide a lamb that satisfies . . ."

E'en in the face of certain death Abraham prophesies.

God will provide. Stop, Abraham! Put down your knife at once!

The LORD has seen your love and faith; He sends deliverance:

He sends His own beloved Son to pay the penalty.

Receive your son as from the dead: you and your seed go free!

SINGING of "Agnus Dei"

recorder [flute] accompaniment

song

To have His justice satisfied

Our God and Father will provide

A sacrifice that satisfies

Agnus Dei

2. For God so loves the world that He sends down His Son to set us free from slavery and misery: Agnus Dei.

3. The Son of God, the Son of Man is born a babe in Bethelhem, is put to grief for who believe: Agnus Dei.

RECITING

The glorious Son of God becomes the humble Son of Man; The Shepherd of God's flock becomes a deadly-wounded Lamb.

From godless kings and Roman pride the King of Kings must hide,

And worst of all, the Bridegroom is not honoured by His bride.

The Living Word is put to silence in the synagogues: God's people do not listen, but they sent Him to the dogs. They try to catch the Fisherman in nets which they invent, and where He shows "I am the Way", they put the sign "Dead End."

From Bethlehem to Golgotha leads ever further down: No comeliness, no beauty has the great King without crown.

Incomprehension, ignorance and hatred pave the way to where bloodthirsty people cry, "Away with Him, away!"

"Away with Him! His blood may come on us and on our seed!"

They do not want a king in scarlet, in His hand a reed, And on His head a crown of thorns: a toy in brutish hands,

A meek and silent lamb that yields to infamous demands.
 Who came to do the Father's will, is tried for blasphemy;
 Who was obedient to death, is charged with mutiny;
 Who came to save from sin and death, is being put to grief
 for all who trust THIS saviour, for all them who believe.

SINGING of "Do not pity . . ."

Do not pi ty, don't weep, do not cry,
 the Lord your Lord is the Lord most high
 And He suf fers and dies, that you ne ver may die.
 Do not pi ty, don't weep, do not cry.

2. Do not pity, don't weep, do not cry!
 For the Day of Judgment is very nigh;
 All your words He will judge and your tears He will try:
 Do not pity, don't weep, do not cry.
3. Do not pity, don't weep, do not cry!
 For if men are going to crucify
 A green tree, what will happen to wood which is dry?
 Do not pity, don't weep, do not cry.

RECITING

Look, soldiers are leading Him out of the city;
 Fine ladies humiliate Him with their pity
 And spiritual leaders are watching with hate.
 Why must He suffer outside the gate?

GROUP RECITING

Outside the gate He suffers,
 Outside the gate He dies,
 That we may enter freely
 God's promised paradise.

Look, soldiers are driving the nails through His body;
 He is counted with criminals: mean and ungodly.
 Disciples are watching, perplexed, at a loss:
 Why must He suffer and die on a cross?

Nailed to a cross He suffers,
 Nailed to a cross He dies,
 That we - free from the dreadful curse -
 To newer life may rise.

Look, God makes an end to all communication:
 The sunlight is fading. In bare desolation
 The Son of the Father is forsaken of Him!
 Why must He suffer in darkness so grim?

Under grim skies He suffers,
 Under grim skies He dies,
 That we may live eternally
 Under wide-open skies.

Look, Soldiers are wetting His lips on His begging;
 Spectators are scornfully mocking and bragging;
 Some women are watching the fate of the Cursed.
 Why must He suffer unbearable thirst?

With parching lips He suffers,
 With parching lips He dies,
 That we may come unto the Lord
 And buy wine without price.

RECITING

Look, Jesus is dying, while dead are awaking;
 The earth is quaking! The temple is shaking!
 "Receive My spirit, O Father on high."
 Why must He suffer, why must He die?

GROUP RECITING

Outside the gate, nailed to a cross,
 In loneliness He dies,
 That we may be redeemed by His
 atoning sacrifice.

* * * * *

RECITING

- How silent is the garden;
 How silent is the grave!
 As if men had not rolled aside
 the heavy stone for Him Who died
 to conquer and to save!
2. How silent is the garden;
 How mute the sombre tomb!
 As if no burial occurred,
 As if no burial had stirred
 This place of death and doom!
3. How silent is the garden;
 How peaceful seems the site!
 As if there were no memory
 Of Jesus' stirring prophecy:
 "Three days only, three nights!"
4. How silent is the garden!
 All nature holds her breath,
 For the Lord Jesus will not stay
 Among the dead. He is not prey,
 But conqueror of Death!
5. How does He change the garden
 into a battle field!
 Once more the earth is quaking;
 The Roman seals are breaking
 And Death cannot but yield!
6. The soldiers flee! They dread
 What angels are announcing,
 What chief priests keep denouncing:
 THE LORD, THE LORD IS RISEN,
 RISEN FROM THE DEAD!

SINGING of "The Lord is risen", while the tune of "Agnus Dei" is played on the flute/recorder.

The Lord is risen,
ri sen from the dead
through death and grave He did us save.
Hal le lu jah.

2. The Lord is risen,
risen from the dead!
The Lord He lives
And life He gives.
Hallelujah!

3. The Lord is risen,
risen from the dead!
He's Victor now;
God kept His vow.
Hallelujah!

CHANTING of I Corinthians 15:55 immediately after the third stanza, as if it were part of the song:
O death, where is thy sting?
O grave, where is thy victory?

SINGING of two groups simultaneously with flute-accompaniment of "Agnus Dei."

One group (males) on melody of "Agnus Dei":

The Lord is risen from the dead!
A blessed future lies ahead;
We shall be fed
With heav'nly bread:
Agnus Dei.

His body broke, His blood was shed,
But He is risen from the dead.
The seal and sign
Are bread and wine:
Agnus Dei.

Second group (females) on melody of "The Lord is risen":

The Lord is risen,
Risen from the dead!
We shall be fed
With heav'nly bread.
Hallelujah!

The Lord is risen,
Risen from the dead!
The seal and sign
Are bread and wine.
Hallelujah!

RECITING

There is war, God, war in the world,
And the struggle goes on without ceasing.
Thy Son, God, is cursed and condemned;
All Thy promises meet with contempt,
And Thy children, with taunting and teasing.

It is finished, saith God. Yes it is!
I delivered My Son for your good.
For your sins He was treated ill,

For your trespasses, led to that hill,
For your wickedness, nailed to that wood!

It is finished, saith God. Yes it is!
On the third day He rose from the dead!
He's in heaven and He will not tarry;
He is coming with haste to marry
His Bride; He is her glorious Head!

RECITING

Yet you have to war for a while,
but the Day of the Son is at hand!
Stand firm then! Keep what I gave.
Like children of promise behave.
On Mount Zion the LAMB shall STAND!

RECITING of Revelation 5:11-13

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels
Round about the throne and the beasts and the elders:
And the number of them was ten thousand times ten
thousand,
And thousands of thousands,
Saying with a loud voice:

CHANTING

Worth y is the Lamb that was slain to re ceive
po wer and rich es and wis dom and strength
and ho nour and glo ry and bless ing.

RECITING

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth,
And under the earth, and such as are in the sea,
And all that are in them,
heard I saying:

CHANTING

Bless ing and ho nour and glo ry and power un to
Him that sit teth up on the throne
and un to the Lamb for e ver and e ver.

EWOUDE GOSKER

THE SECTS

The Armstrong Cult (6)

9. *Salvation by Works.*

Armstrong teaches a salvation by works. Of course, he himself denies this time and again and says that the Bible itself tells us that we are saved through grace, not by works. Yet if we study the teachings of this cult, we come to the conclusion that they teach (what Paul in Galatians 1:8, 9; cf. 2:16, 21, calls) another gospel. But also in his teachings regarding this point is Armstrong confusing.

He states that the three steps for becoming a Christian are 1) repentance, 2) baptism, 3) receiving the Holy Spirit. As far as it is stated we cannot deny that it is Biblical, but the explanation given by Armstrong is not scriptural.

He says that God's gift of Eternal Life is a free gift, it is grace. God does not have to give it but gives it to the ones who qualify for it. He writes, "Salvation is God's gift, You do not, cannot, earn it. God gives it. But God will give it only on condition! Yes, there are terms and conditions! . . . Salvation is God's free gift - it is by Grace alone. Yet the very purpose of God demands two prior conditions on YOUR part. First, you must repent! Second, you must believe in Christ as Saviour . . . The two conditions of turning from sin, and accepting Christ (including baptism) you must do yourself! That's what you must do."

These things are completely man's work, but, according to Armstrong, they do not save us. If we have done these things, then and *only then* do we receive the Holy Spirit of God and do we receive saving faith.

Armstrong also says, "God's merciful Pardon - His Grace - is bestowed on us *because* we have repented with a sincere desire to turn from our wicked ways of lawlessness".

When a person has repented, has changed his mind, all by himself, in his own power and believes in Christ and has been baptised, then he will receive the Holy Spirit. That is God's

free gift, according to Armstrong. He says that salvation is not by works, but by grace, because it is God's free gift, but he says this tongue in cheek, because we have to qualify for it by our own works. We can also lose the Holy Spirit by our own actions, and we have to persevere in the Armstrong doctrines to receive salvation.

When Armstrong says that we first have to repent and believe before we receive the Holy Spirit, this sounds similar to the scriptural teaching that God is willing and ready to give eternal life on the condition of faith and repentance. Yet there is a vast difference, for, although God has stated these conditions, He Himself confers upon men this faith and repentance. When we say that God gives eternal life on condition of faith and repentance we at the same time accept that He produces the fulfillment of the conditions. As Schilder says ("Boven-schriftuurlijke binding - een nieuw gevaar"), "Within the circle of God's Word that which is promised is connected with the condition of acceptance of the promised thing . . . But the acceptance is also given, it is also contents of the promise."

That is the big difference between the biblical teaching and the teaching of Armstrong. The Bible says that we receive eternal life on the condition of faith and repentance, but it is God, through His Holy Spirit, who produces this faith and repentance. Armstrong says we qualify for salvation only on the condition of faith and repentance and only then do we receive the Holy Spirit. He believes that a person dead in trespasses and sins can repent in his own power.

The confusing part of Armstrong's teaching is that he states that repentance is a change of the mind, while he also says that the Holy Spirit produces this state of the mind.

10. *The Resurrection of Christ.*

Armstrong has the same unscriptural

teaching as the Jehovah's Witnesses, namely that Jesus Christ did not rise from the grave with the same physical body which was crucified. He believes that a spiritual body was raised, and he says, "God the Father did not cause Jesus Christ to get back into the body which had died . . . the resurrected body was no longer human." He also denies that Jesus Christ *rose* from the grave by His own power, that He conquered death, and says only that the Father *raised* Christ from the dead.

He can in fact not speak about a resurrection, for he really believes that Christ, who at first was changed from a spirit being into a human being, was now again changed from a human being into a spirit being. I cannot recall that he ever wrote what happened to the body of Jesus Christ, whether that remained in the grave or not.

He does not see a real difference between the resurrection of Christ and that of the believers. This is connected with the view that it is the destiny of human beings to become gods or to be annihilated.

A. H. DEKKER

OUR COVER

Lundbreck Falls, west of Lethbridge, near the British Columbia border. Courtesy Alberta Government Photographic Services.



THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE
Published biweekly by Premier Printing Ltd.
Winnipeg, Manitoba.
Second class mail registration number 1025.

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

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

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Hoek van Holland

WAT IS ETHIEK?

N.a.v. het gelijknamige boek van G.Th. Rothuizen, verschenen bij J.H. Kok te Kampen, 1973, 213 blz., prijs f 18.75.

Dr. G.Th. Rothuizen is hoogleraar in de Ethiek aan de Theologische Hogeschool (Oudestraat) te Kampen. Zijn boekje is ontstaan uit colleges voor studenten aan genoemde Hogeschool, maar de vormgeving is mede te danken aan ethercolleges, lezingen en artikelen. Gevolg daarvan is dat de auteur soms in herhaling vervalt of hetzelfde citaat in ietwat ander verband opnieuw gebruikt. Ook de taal heeft soms het kenmerk van de praatstijl, hoewel ik hier direct aan toevoeg dat ik daar misschien niet meer geheel over kan oordelen. Een levende taal ontwikkelt zich en emigranten zijn geneigd het taalpatroon van het moment van hun vertrek van Nederlandse bodem als norm te beschouwen. Lezing van een boek als van dr. Rothuizen, ongetwijfeld een kunstzinnig mens, die in een ietwat springeringe stijl flitsende gedachten formuleert, doet je met enige spijt beseffen dat je als emigrant tussen de wal van het Nederlands en het schip van het Engles dreigt te belanden. Een woord als "onwegdenkbaar", dat ik enkele malen in dit boek tegenkwam, was voor mij nieuw. Als weergave van iets dat niet valt weg te denken doet het mij eerder Duits dan Nederlands aan. Maar genoeg over de verpakking; laat ik me tot de inhoud bepalen.

Wat is ethiek? Voordat onze lezers dit artikel ter zijde leggen, omdat hun de zin ervan ontgaat, wil ik als heel simpele omschrijving geven: de leer van het handelen van de mens; de leer omtrent zijn levenswandel.

Dr. K. Schilder gaf ons een omschrijving, die tot verbazing der toehoorders nog wel eens op een kerkelijk classicaal examen ter tafel werd gebracht. Wilt U haar eens lezen? Hier volgt ze: Ethiek is de wetenschap van de constante rationes, de wisselende oeconomieën en de actueel concrete bepaaldheid der obligatie van de wil des mensen tot gehoorzaamheid aan Gods geopenbaarde wil. Het gaat dus over de

verplichting van 's mensen wil tot gehoorzaamheid aan Gods bevel, en deze wetenschap onderzoekt wat daar de duurzame en gelijkblijvende gronden van zijn; zij let op de wisselende bedelingen ervan en beziet de toepassing van geval tot geval.

In het boekje van Dr. Rothuizen zult U deze omschrijving niet vinden. Hij schrijft ergens: "Gelukkig is de tijd der absolutisten voorbij, gelukkig komen eindelijk de relativisten aan bod" (159). Ongetwijfeld zou dr. Schilder onder zijn oordeel van "absolutist" vallen . . . Dr. Rothuizen deelt zich zelf bij de relativisten in; wij behoeven dat dus niet meer te doen. Een relativist maakt de dingen betrekkelijk. Hij houdt niet van geladen woorden. Nadat Dr. Rothuizen in het eerste hoofdstuk over de naam van deze vakwetenschap heeft geschreven en gehandeld heeft over begrippen als zedelijkheid en zede en over verbanden als ethiek en cultuur, ethiek en techniek, ethiek en politiek, komt hij tot een definitie van wat ethiek eigenlijk is. Het is niet meer dan "enige orde op zaken stellen" (35).

Het voordeel van deze omschrijving is volgens de auteur dat zij bescheiden is, dat zij nogal politiek klinkt en dat er niet met zoveel woorden in gesproken wordt over de liefde. Dit laatste is wel het geval bij de omschrijving die de Amsterdamse hoogleraar dr. A. Troost - een aanhanger van de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee - heeft gegeven. Dr. A. Troost verstaat onder de typisch morele problemen in het leven die vraagstukken, waarin de functie van de naastenliefde, in haar verschillende gestalten, haar rol speelt. Bij die verschillende gestalten denkt hij met name aan huwelijksleven, gezinsleven en vriendschap.

Tussen twee haakjes merk ik op dat ook dr. James Olthuis, de ethicus van het ons welbekende Instituut te Toronto, zijn studievak opzet vanuit de Wijsbegeerte des Wetsidee en het op gelijke wijze beperkt tot de problemen van huwelijk, gezin en vriendschap.

De omschrijving van dr. Troost klinkt dr. Rothuizen te dierbaar.

Ondergetekende is het met de afwijzing eens, zij het dan met name op deze ground dat het veld van de ethiek (in de kring van de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee) te zeer begrensd wordt. Het verwijt van "dierbaarheid" gaat m.i. niet op; dr. Rothuizen vergeet dat liefde hier genomen wordt in de zin van "trouw" (of bij dr. Olthuis "troth").

Overigens, wanneer dr. Rothuizen spreekt over de taak van de ethiek als "enige orde op zaken stellen", waarschuwt hij zelf de lezer dat hij niet beoogt domweg de gegeven toestand aan te houden. "Protest en revolutie komen in de kraam van de ware ethiek regelmatig te pas" (36.) Ethiek bedoelt volgens hem enig goed in het kwaad teweeg te brengen; hij stelt als norm "het meehelpen om de aarde bewoonbaar te maken".

Niet zonder opzet begon ik deze bespreking met een herinnering aan de omschrijving van ethiek door dr. K. Schilder. De lezer zal nu bemerken het verschil met de definitie van dr. Rothuizen. Schilder plaatste - geheel in de lijn van de klassieke gereformeerde ethiek - de wil van God in het middelpunt. Of om een andere oudere ethicus te noemen: dr. W. Geesink, wiens twee delen "Gereformeerde Ethiek" nog in mijn tijd op de jongelingsvereniging voor de Vrijmaking de bron vóór dit vak vormden, wijdt een brede bespreking aan de Tien Woorden des Verbonds. Bij dr. Rothuizen leest ge over die decaloog bijkans niets.

Zijn tweede hoofdstuk handelt over "Zedelijk en natuurlijk" en begint met een behandeling van het zgn. natuurrecht. Dr. Rothuizen is van oordeel dat ook de reformatoren het natuurrecht in hoge ere hebben gehad en hebben erkend, dat de mens ook buiten de bijbel en het geloof in Jezus Christus om, buiten de zg. bijzondere en dank zij een zg. algemene openbaring (of genade), nog zeer wel tot allerlei goeds in staat is. Nu kan men de auteur toestemmen, dat Karl Barth die van het natuurrecht weinig of niets hebben moest, een geforceerde uitleg gaf van Romeinen 2:14. De apostle Paulus schrijft daar over heidenen die de wet niet hebben en toch van nature doen wat de wet gebiedt. Barth legde dit uit als sprak Paulus over christenen-uit-de-heidene, maar hij is - zegt dr. R. - in deze "dogmatische" exegese door bijna niemand bijgevallen, omdat het

er eenvoudig niet staat. Maar aan de andere kant kan men vragen of er in Rom. 2 staat wat dr. Rothuizen er in leest: De joden "mogen dan de wet van God gekregen hebben, de heidenen hebben hem in hun hart en houden zich er van nature aan. Men kan zeggen: de wereld kan meevallen en hoe!" (155). Staat er inderdaad in Rom. 2 geschreven dat de heidenen *de wet* in hun hart hebben? Er staat juist dat ze de wet *niet* hebben, laat staan in hun hart. De apostel spreekt over het *werk* der wet en dat is nog wel te onderscheiden van de wet zelf. Wanneer Paulus in Romeinen 2 inderdaad de jood aanspreekt en in dit verband, om de joodse eigengerechtigheid ter neer te slaan, even op heidenen wijst, neemt hij volstrekt niet terug wat hij in het vorige hoofdstuk, Romeinen 1, over het heidense leven geschreven had. Alle mond wordt gestopt - eerst van de heiden, maar dan ook van de jood - en de gehele wereld wordt strafwaardig voor God.

Dr. Rothuizen wil met natuurrecht zeggen dat er iets natuurlijks schuilt in alle zedelijkheid. Dat natuurlijke noemt hij het evidente, dus dat wat duidelijk en vanzelfsprekend is. Hij is van oordeel dat er méér zelfde noties op zedelijk gebied onder diverse volkeren en naturen verankerd liggen dan men wel eens heeft gedacht.

Om een en ander voor onze lezers wat meer verteerbaar te maken - onze levenswandel is ten slotte een praktische zaak -, las ik hier het bekende verhaal van Nils Egede in. Deze zendeling onder de Eskimo's uit de achttiende eeuw had met een Eskimo-meisje over de liefde tot God en de naaste gesproken. Het meisje zei: "Ik heb bewezen, dat ik mijn naasten liefheb, want een oude vrouw, die ziek was en niet sterven kon, smeekte mij, dat ik haar voor geld naar de steile rots zou brengen, van welke de mensen, die niet meer willen leven, zich altijd afwerpen. Omdat ik mijn naasten liefheb, heb ik haar zonder geld te vragen naar de rots gebracht en haar eraf gestoten."

Dr. Rothuizen zegt nu: de regel is inderdaad anders, maar de norm, hoe wonderlijk o.i. gehanteerd ook, is dezelfde: liefde tot de naaste. "Natuurlijk is en blijft het zinvol te twisten over de verschillende vullingen van dezelfde norm. Maar men zal niet mogen zeggen, dat de norm door het zojuist genoemde meisje *niet* vervuld werd" (59).



On May 8, 1973 Mr. and Mrs. W. VanderMolen hope to celebrate their 40th Wedding Anniversary.

Willem VanderMolen was born in Leek, The Netherlands, Annechina Berendina VanderMolen, nee Prins, in Veendam, The Netherlands. They lived in Groningen till they came to Canada May 1951. After having been in Coaldale, Alberta, for half a year they moved to New Westminster, B.C. Mr. VanderMolen held several jobs for the first five years in Canada; he then entered into the real estate in 1957. He served as an elder for a number of years and at present is president of the Mission Board of the Church at New Westminster which work has his full attention.

They received seven children all of which reside in British Columbia; they are proud of their 28 grandchildren.

Their present address is 833 - 4th Ave., New Westminster, B.C. May the Lord grant them many more years under His blessings.

Is het waar dat de *gezindheid* de ethiek van dit Eskimomeisje redt, zoals de auteur meent? Heeft men de norm van de naastenliefde dan niet verwaagd? Is de norm niet de liefde tot de naaste *om Gods wil*? En is deze norm niet uitgespeld juist ook in het zesde gebod: Gij zult niet doodslaan? Zou de apostel Paulus in dit geval het afstoten van de rots een werk der *wet* genoemd hebben? Staat wie hier een vervulling van de norm ziet en ter verdediging van de handelwijze van het Eskimomeisje verwijst naar de vraag van de stervende vrouw zelf, niet zwak tegenover allerlei modern geredeneer inzake "mercy-killing"?

Een van de weinige plaatsen in het boek van dr. Rothuizen waar de tien geboden genoemd worden, is uitgerekend dit tweede hoofdstuk over "zedelijk en natuurlijk". Wickler schreef een boek over "De biologie der tien geboden"; het handelt over onze ethische normen in het licht van het vergelijkend gedragsonderzoek bij dier en mens. Het wijst er op dat de tien geboden de beste gedragscode inhielden binnen de gegeven bestaansvormen, om te overleven. Een groep die er aan gehoorzaamde, had meer kans om te overleven dan een groep die dat niet deed en door innerlijke wrijving verzwakte. Dr.

Rothuizen is van oordeel dat het "natuurrechtelijke" van de decalogue thans een verdieping, wil men: verbreding, krijgt in de richting van het natuurlijke, zelfs dierlijke.

Met enige verbazing heb ik deze beschouwing van de ethicus uit Kampen gelezen. Hoe kan men zo over de tien woorden van het Verbond spreken? Kan men geheel afzien van de evangelische aanhef: Ik ben de HEERE, uw God, Die u uit Egypte, uit het diensthuis, heb uitgeleid?

Kan men het eerste gebod herleiden tot een zaak van nuttigheid, nl. dat het - laat ons nu maar zeggen voor een volk - de overlevingskansen vergroot, wanneer men er geen tegenstrijdige goden op nahoudt? Zelf heb ik het boek van Wickler niet onder ogen gehad, maar is het niet geheel en al opgezet vanuit een overschatting van het biologische in een door het evolutionisme sterk beïnvloede twintigste eeuw?

Dr. Rothuizen geeft aan het zgn. natuurrecht een te grote plaats en tegelijk - het laatste punt, nl. dat over de tien woorden des Verbonds, bewijst het reeds - doet hij af aan het unieke en allesbeheersende van de openbaring van de wil Gods in de Heilige Schrift.

J. FABER

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CORNERSTONE CHURCH

Hamilton

On a rainy evening April 4, 1973, the official presentation of the Canadian Reformed Cornerstone Church of Hamilton took place. In the presence of the mayor, Mr. V.K. Copps, official delegates, guests, and congregation of Hamilton, the keys of the church were presented to the chairman of the consistory, Dr. J. Faber. In his remarks preceding the presentation of the symbolic two-foot long key, the chairman of the building committee, Mr. C. Walinga, related some of the history leading up to the erection of the building.

It was clear that much work was done by the committee as they had some eighty meetings since 1970. The land on which the church is located was purchased from the Timothy School Society of Hamilton. In June of 1972 the architectural plans were

received and a building permit applied for. After some delay caused by certain city bylaws which resulted in some changes, construction was undertaken in the fall by G. & G. Hart Construction Ltd. By Feb. 1973 the building was almost complete and work could begin in earnest on the inside. The eleven-rank reconditioned organ was installed by Keates Organ Co. of Acton, Ont.

In order to raise the necessary funds for such an undertaking a walkathon, drives, sales, etc., were held, in all a total congregation effort reaching back over many years.

In addition to the key, Dr. Faber was also presented with a large box containing all the files of the building committee, in recognition of his interest in archives.

After the presentation of the

keys, the chairman read from Psalm 118:18-24 and Peter 2:4-10, which speak of the cornerstone, the name of the church. The congregation responded by singing Psalm 118:5, 6.

Mr. Leo Knegt presented the beautiful organ consisting of 686 pipes, two manuals and a full pedal board. The case work was designed by Mr. J.H.W. Van Der Bruggen. The organ works are situated above the pulpit with the console off to the side. The full range and diversity of the organ were displayed in solos by Mr. John Knegt, the Organ Advisor, and by Mr. J.H.W. Van Der Bruggen.

Among those offering their congratulations were Mayor Copps of Hamilton, who briefly addressed the audience, and Rev. VanDooren, who, speaking on behalf of sister churches and the Theological College, stated that the Lord has given rest to the congregation of Hamilton in their new church building after many years of going from one meeting place to the other.

In a brief address, the Rev. W. Loopstra, Minister Emeritus of Hamilton, related some of the history of the congregation leading up to the

An Introduction To CHRISTIAN LITERATURE [2]

Handbooks, Dictionaries and Encyclopedias of the Bible

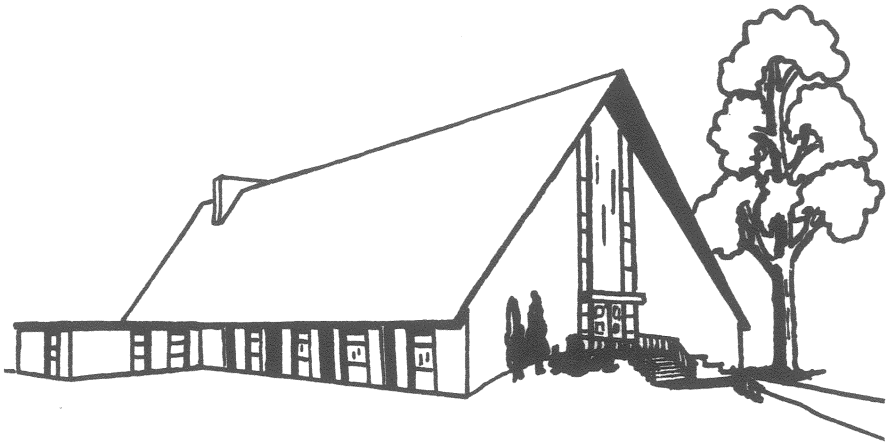
1. Halley, H.H. *Halley's Bible Handbook*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 1970, 860 pp., \$4.50. (*)
Contains much useful information and is handy as a help in personal Bible study.
2. Manley, G.T. ed. *The New Bible Handbook*. (London: InterVarsity Press) 480 pp., \$3.75.
Not quite as popular as Halley's but just as useful, this Handbook discusses such questions as inspiration, the canon, modern criticism and miracles. Part 2 deals with the Old Testament; Part 3 with the Inter-Testamental period and the background of the New Testament; Part 4 deals with the teaching of Christ and the rest of the N.T.
3. Davis, J.D. ed. *A Dictionary of the Bible*. (Grand Rapids: Baker) 4th Revised edition.
This old classic of conservative scholarship is still available. It has some excellent articles by Warfield, Purves and Davis himself; however, it is somewhat out of date and its small print makes it awkward to read.
4. Douglas, J.D. ed. *The New Bible Dictionary*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1970, 1424 pp. \$12.95. (***)
This is one of the most up-to-date one volume Bible dictionaries on the market. It is on the whole loyal to the Scriptures and filled with information, diagrams, pictures and maps. Heartily recommended, especially as a companion volume to the *New Bible Commentary: Revised*.
5. Tenney, M.C. ed. *The Pictorial Bible Dictionary*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 1963, 916 pp., \$9.95.
A well-illustrated and useful Dictionary with over 5,000 entries and 700 illustrations; dispensational and millennial views creep through here and there but it contains good material. In terms of scholarship and depth, it stands second to the *New Bible Dictionary*.
6. Hastings, J. ed. *Dictionary of the Bible*. (Edinburgh: Clark) one vol. and 5 vol. editions, 1909.
These old works are all mines of information but the quality of the articles vary. If you can buy them used at a low price, do it.

present. When he was ordained as minister in May 1951, church meetings were held in the Labour Temple. Since then they met in the Seventh Day Adventist Church and in 1960 purchased a small church on West Avenue. For the past two years the congregation met in Southgate Presbyterian Church. The Lord has richly blessed the congregation of Hamilton over the years: we are thankful for the establishment of the College and for the school society which purchased the land on which the church is located and which, the Lord willing, will this year complete the construction of a school for the education of the youth of the church. Being Cornerstone Church we accept Jesus Christ as the only solid foundation of our lives. He ended by quoting the words of Hymn 61, "To Thee, our great Redeemer, forever be praise."

After closing prayer and the singing of O Canada, people were invited to go downstairs for refreshments and a closer inspection of the building.

Brief Description

The church is of block construction with light brown brick outer-



CORNERSTONE CHURCH, HAMILTON [illustration by John Hutten].

facing. The seating capacity is 360 with room for expansion on an uncompleted balcony. The basement consists of a large meeting room, very large modern kitchen, and a number of other rooms for meetings and catechism classes. The consistory room is carpeted and has dark wood panelling donated by members of the congregation. A number of other gifts were also received, too numerous to mention here.

The colour scheme in the church

itself consists of white painted walls, blue carpeting, and orange cushions on dark wooden pews. The pulpit was designed and built by J.H.W. Van Der Bruggen.

There is a side wing which contains washrooms, the children's nursery, and another meeting room. The nursery is every mother's dream. The floors are carpeted, cribs have been built in and there is even an intercom system for the babysitters.

H.J. LUDWIG

7. Orr, J. ed. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 5 vols. 3,500 pp., \$39.50.

This 5 volume work was first published in 1920. It is a predominantly conservative work and still of some use; however, it will soon be superseded by a new multi-volume encyclopedia, edited by G.F. Bromiley.

GRAMMARS AND LEXICA (for ministers and the like)

1. Davidson, A.B. *An Introductory Hebrew Grammar*. Revised by J. Mauchline. (Edinburgh: Clark) 27th ed., 1970, 319 pp., \$7.00.

This is the most widely used elementary Hebrew grammar.

2. Gesenius, F.H.W. *Hebrew Grammar*. Edited by E. Kautzsch, 2nd ed., (New York: Oxford) 1906, 1127 pp.

This is still, despite its age, the standard Hebrew reference grammar.

3. Brown, F. Driver, S.R. and Briggs, C.A. eds. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. (New York: Oxford) 1906, 1127 pp., \$20.00.

For the past 50 years this has been the standard Hebrew lexicon in the English language; however, it is soon to be replaced by a newer, more up-to-date work.

4. Machen, J.G. *New Testament Greek for Beginners*. (New York: Macmillan) 1923, 286 pp., \$5.25.

An excellent elementary Greek grammar.

5. Dana, H.E. and Mantey, J.R. *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*. (New York: Macmillan) 1927, 356 pp.

One of the best Greek grammars in the intermediate range. It conserves many of the values of A.T. Robertson's larger grammar.

6. Funk, R.W. ed. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. by F. Blass and A. Debrunner. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 1961, 325 pp., \$12.50.

The best Greek reference grammar available.

7. Arndt, W.F. and Gingrich, F.W. eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 1957, 909 pp., \$16.70.

Surely the best New Testament lexicon available; a translation and revision of W. Bauer's German lexicon. Still useful in this regard is also *Thayer's Greek English Lexicon*.

(*) Recommended for individual purchase.

(**) Recommended for societies or church libraries.

(***) Recommended for both.

J. VISSCHER

BOOKS

THE AMSTERDAM PHILOSOPHY: A PRELIMINARY CRITIQUE

I recently received the above mentioned booklet containing two essays by John M. Frame and Leonard J. Coppes. The second name is unfamiliar to me but the first is not. J. M. Frame is professor of Apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and is frequently mentioned as the successor of Cornelius Van Til.

It is primarily the second essay of Prof. Frame (55 pp. long) that I would like to bring to your attention. In it he gives some very basic criticisms of the Amsterdam philosophy, a philosophy championed in this country by the AACS/ICS in Toronto. I quote on:

Scripture and the Word of God

"The attempt to distinguish sharply between 'power Word' and 'text Word' is characteristic of neo-orthodox theology, the 'new hermeneutic' and other forms of modern thought. In these movements, the 'text word' is always deprecated as a merely human word, while the 'power Word', which conveys no intelligible content, is exalted as the true Word of God. This scheme enables these modern theologians to accept the fallibility of the Bible and to deny that God has ever spoken to men in words and sentences. The Amsterdam construction comes perilously close to these modern views, and some members of the school have in fact rejected the inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture.

But even without explicitly denying biblical authority, it is possible for an Amsterdam philosopher to *evade* biblical authority by adopting principles of interpretation which distort the plain meaning of the Bible. Dooyeweerd, for example, argues that the 'six days' of Genesis 1 must have nothing to do with astronomical or geological concepts of time, since Scripture is concerned directly only with the faith-aspect. The six days, therefore, are faith-days, rather than geological periods of calendar days. . . Note here that Dooyeweerd's interpretation does not arise through study of the Hebrew text; rather it is dictated by his philosophical (and

anti-Scriptural) presupposition that Scripture as text speaks only to the realm of faith. But this sort of 'interpretation' evades the authority of the Bible just as surely as does an explicit denial of that authority." (page 37)

Education

"The elimination of commitment to the Reformed Standards stem from an Amsterdam dogma which we have not yet mentioned, namely, the dogma that no 'ecclesiastical creed' may ever be used as the basis of an educational institution. This dogma is based, of course, upon Dooyeweerd's system of modalities: the church is a faith-institution, while the school is an analytic institution. The two belong to different modal spheres, and thus can never share a common basis. In our view, this is nonsense. For one thing, we can not regard school and church as so different that they cannot share a common basis. A Scriptural perspective on the matter indicates that there are certain truths which all Christians must confess in common. It may be that in *addition* to the common Christian confession, a Christian school may wish to confess Scriptural truths of particular relevance for the educational task; but this does not imply that the school and church may confess nothing in common. For one thing, the Reformed Standards are not 'ecclesiastical creeds' in any narrow sense. The Westminster Confession, Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, etc., are simply summaries of the redemptive message of Scripture. They are not concerned with details of church government, liturgical ritual, etc. Like Scripture itself, they address the *heart* of man, not some narrowly defined area of man's life. Therefore it is altogether appropriate that a Christian school, as much as a Christian church, should confess the historic standards of the Reformed faith." (page 45)

Church and Society

"The Amsterdam philosophy draws a sharp distinction between the church as 'institution' and the church as 'visible body of Christ'. This distinction is not the same as the theological distinction between the church visible and the church invisible. Rather, in the Amsterdam view, both 'institution' and 'visible body of Christ' are *visible* entities. The

latter is the broader category, manifesting itself in many institutions of which the 'church institution' is only one. Some of these are: Christian school, Christian labour unions, Christian political parties, etc. Thus on this view the Christian school is as much the body of Christ as is the local church congregation.

We do not deny that Christian schools and other such institutions are legitimate and important; but we must question the legitimacy of the above distinction between church institute and visible body of Christ. We do not find it in Scripture. Ephesians 4 speaks of the 'body' and explains that that body grows through the gifts which God has given to each member. At the head of this list of gifts are 'apostles', 'prophets', 'evangelists', 'pastors and teachers'. These are the men whom God has appointed 'for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ' (vs. 12). In this passage, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors-teachers are the leaders and edifiers, not merely of the 'church institution' but of the 'body of Christ' itself. This passage knows of no distinction between the two. The officers of the institutional church are the officers of the body of Christ. The officers of the one are charged with the oversight of the other. This is the regular Scriptural pattern: in the New Testament, the 'Church' *is* that 'organization' ruled by God through his elders and deacons, wherein the worship of God in prayer, preaching, sacrament and offering is carried on. The New Testament knows of no other visible form of the 'Church'. The Amsterdam

Church News

REV. G. VAN RONGEN

Launceston, Australia, has accepted the call to Grand Rapids.

* * *

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Applications for admission to the Course 1973-1974 of the Theological College should be forwarded to the Registrar, Prof. L. Selles, 374 Queen St. S., Hamilton 12, Ont., before May 31, 1973.

The Registrar.

distinction is a sheer speculation.

Christian schools and other organizations, no doubt, manifest the 'unity of the body of Christ' in various ways. Christians who are 'one in Christ' will demonstrate their love in all areas of life. Paul, indeed, later in the Ephesian letter, makes this very point with regard to family life (Eph. 5:22-6:4) and the master-servant relation (6:5-9). These points, however, do not make the school, family or business into visible forms of the body of Christ coordinate with the institutional church. In the New Testament, the institutional church is the visible body of Christ." (page 46-7)

Conclusion

"We recognize that this movement has many supporters in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and much influence in other churches and Christian organizations. We consider it most important that Christians in our presbytery become informed concerning this movement and that they take firm stands against its unscriptural emphases. We are convinced that if the goals of the Amsterdam philosophy prevail in our circles, the Reformed Faith as we have known it will disappear entirely from those circles. The good elements of this philosophy are not unique to it; they have been held by Calvin, Kuyper, and many other Reformed people. The *distinctive* elements of the Amsterdam philosophy, those which distinguish it from other kinds of Reformed thinking, we find to be almost entirely harmful."

Thus far Prof. Frame. With expectation we await the reply of the advocates of the Amsterdam philosophy to this booklet. In the meantime, those who would like to study Prof. Frame's critique in more detail, can obtain it for \$1.00 from Reformation Book Service, 2043c Avenue Rd, Toronto 380, Ontario. J. Visscher

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

JULIA INGRID

Jake and Dorothy Wilderdyk
Jenny, Diana, Jacqueline.

April 6, 1973

225 Joseph St., Chatham, Ont.

COPEREN SLANGE

Geswollen vant fenijn der dodelijcker slangen,
Voorsmakende het vier dat nimmermeer en blust
Wy sleepten langs de gront, en hadden geene rust
Ter tijt toe dat tot u wy keerden onse gangen.

O slange sonder gift, die voor ons opgehangen
De welverdiende grim ws Vaders hebt gesust:
Ghy geeft ons het geloof, waer door wy met een lust
Omvingen uwen troost en sijn van u omvangen.

Ghy quamet onse sond' ontsonden en bedelven,
Ghy namet onse quael en loedtse op u selven,
Ghy wiert voor ons een worm getreden met den voet.

Treect ons tot u om hooch, en leert ons recht bedencken
Hoe ghy der slangen hoeft cost morselen en crencken
Doort breken van u lijf, doort storten van u bloet.

BRAZEN SERPENT

Swollen with venom of the deadly snake,
Hot as the hellish flames that never cease,
We dragged along the ground and found no peace
Until we saw thee dying for our sake.

O fangless serpent, hanging on the tree,
Soft'ning for us the grimness of God's face,
Thou giv'st the faith by which we dare embrace
Thy holy cure, and be embraced by thee.

Our sin, now sinless, thou hast come to bury,
Our sickness loaded on thyself to carry,
Become a worm down-trodden with the foot.

O draw us up to thee, teach us to feel
How thou hast crushed the serpent with thy heel
By offering for us thy flesh and blood.

JACOBUS REVIUS (1586-1658)

English translation reprinted from *Jacobus Revius, Dutch Metaphysical Poet*, by Henrietta Ten Harmsel, by permission of Wayne State University Press.

1973 YEARBOOK
CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

We still have a few copies on hand Price 50 cents per copy.

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

mission news

Reports from Sao José da Coroa Grande, Pernambuco, Brazil

RETROSPECT

We are most thankful that the Lord has given us open doors here so soon after we arrived here and so many opportunities to bring His Word in public meetings and personal visits. The Lord has blessed us in many ways. There is established work here now; we have many contacts and some are very fine contacts, indeed. Our work has already become known in town and generally, I think, it has a good name. Whether the planted seed will grow and bear fruit is as yet unknown to us, although there are a few positive indications. What we can see are the difficulties and obstacles for the Word to be effective in the lives of these people. Lack of commitment and responsibility I feel to be a great difficulty. Another one, next to it, is lack of order and attention. It seems that many feel that only their presence in the church building is already sufficient: in the meantime they can talk together, shuffle around, walk in and out. Some of the younger ones are especially disturbing and one wonders if they and others can even hear you. It is the same complaint one hears from all corners, other churches, schools, etc. Brazilians are very noisy people. Even during prayers they are noisy and I have noticed the same thing in long-time established Presbyterian churches.

Another difficulty is that many give the impression that they do not think for themselves: they seem to have no questions nor to disagree with anything said. Whatever "o pastor" says is correct: Of course, he knows! He is an educated man and has studied this and they don't know anything. I am sure that many would wholeheartedly agree to every answer and every article of the Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession and Canons of Dort even if you asked it while explaining them one by one as you went along. But that does not mean they have made it their own: they just don't seem to disagree with

anything, nor argue, nor have any other convictions of their own. This same "acceptance" is also part of their lives, taking the form of fatalism. "Deus e bom" (God is good) is an often repeated phrase, and whatever God does is good and must be accepted. The poor is unfortunate because he is "one of the poor" and that is his unchangeable destiny, which he seems to accept without bitterness or grumbling. And so he also accepts us as being sent by God, for, after all, we do good, and our words are undoubtedly true. That our words are in contrast with those of the Roman Catholic Church he does not notice because he has little or no knowledge of the R.C. doctrines either.

These are some of the difficulties and obstacles which we see mounting before us more and more and which

cannot be overcome by human strength but only by the power of the Word of God and the working of the holy Spirit in the hearts of the people.

Looking back on the year passed-by, we do indeed see many blessings but as a missionary-on-the-spot I also see the towering difficulties very clearly. The true battle has hardly begun yet! Yet the positive side is that the people are coming and continue to come: something must draw them! Also the Sunday-School is showing a positive development: they are learning, showing interest and behaving better than in the beginning. It may be possible, under the Lord's blessing, that in the not too distant future, we could begin more systematic instruction to a selected group of them, a catechism class more or less.

May also through this retrospect again become clear to you that your prayers for the work here are needed. Remember that in most cases we must be the prayer-force for these people, who themselves do not know how to pray or do not see the need for prayer.

C. VAN SPRONSEN

Grateful to the Lord for all His blessings, we hope to celebrate the 45th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents:

ALBERT VAN DER VEEN

and

DIEVERTJE VAN DER VEEN - (nee Duimering)

on April 26, 1973.

Ed Van der Veen
Jane Van der Veen - nee Boog
*Dianne, Henry, Albert, Allan
Danny, Henriette, Eddy.*

Harry Aasman
Margaret Aasman - nee Van der Veen
*Richard, Albert, Donald, Eddy,
Paul, Billy, Margaret Rose.*

Herman Deboersap
Trudy Deboersap - nee Van der Veen
*Cathy, Alex, Robert,
Michael, Teresa.*

Clare Kieft
Jane Kieft - nee Van der Veen
*Vincent, Andrew, David,
Dorothy, Christine.*

- all of Burlington.

2149 Headon Rd.,
Burlington, Ont.

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

The First Easter Morning

T'was in the solemn hush, before the dawn
Of that first bright triumphal Easter morn
Before the morning star had gone to rest
Ere the first sleepy bird had left its nest
Came Magdalene to see where Jesus lay.
A waning moon lit up the empty tomb,
The stone was rolled away.

The risen Christ walked in the garden fair
And spake unto the weeping woman there,
"Mary, why weepest thou?" She answered "Yea,
I weep because they've borne my Lord away.
And if thou art the gardener thou mayest know
Where they have laid Him so that I may go
To see His resting place."

"Mary," He said again. "Dost thou not know
I am the Lord, and I would bid thee go
And seek out my disciples far and near.
Tell them that I am risen and waiting here
And bid them haste and see they tell no man.
My time is short and there is much to plan
Ere I ascend to heaven."

Mary with joyful heart and eager feet
Hastened away His followers to greet.
"The Lord is risen" was her joyful cry,
"I bring the glad news to you, for I
Have seen Him and He bade me go
To tell you that He lives and He will show
The prints of nails and spear."

O Christ Who by Thy resurrection power
Dost take away the sting of death's dread hour,
The grave no longer victory can claim
For victory is Thine, the bitter pain
And ignominy of the cross is o'er
Triumphant, Thou shalt live for evermore
Redeemer Lord and King.

I hope you enjoyed our Easter poem as much as I did.
Thank you for sharing it with us, *Wilma Van Woudenberg*
(Dunnville).

Now we have an Easter quiz by *Sylvia Selles*. Thank
you, Sylvia.

Easter Quiz

1. How was Jesus able to suffer all the punishment on the cross?
2. When the multitude came to arrest Jesus how did they recognize Him?
3. What became of the disciples?
4. To what place did the officers take Jesus?
5. To what decision did the council come?

6. Where was Jesus crucified?
7. Who were crucified with Him?
8. On what day did this take place?
9. How many hours did Jesus hang on the cross?
10. What happened when Jesus died?
11. Where was Jesus buried and by whom?

(Answers next time.)

* * * * *

Remember, Busy Beavers, we were talking about boys and girls who would like to get a card or a little letter from us? Well, Rita Koning has sent in the name of her sister, Liz. I'm sure Liz Koning will be very happy to hear from you, Busy Beavers, for she's staying at a "school hospital", away from her family. Her address is:

Liz Koning
Box 580
Red Deer, Alta.

* * * * *

The merry month of May is just around the corner! And what a merry month it will be with all these birthday celebrations! We wish all these Busy Beavers a very happy birthday, and God's blessing all during your next year.

Linda Huttema	May 1	Theresa De Gelder	15
Nelly Jan Tenhage	1	Irene Lodder	15
Rolean Hulzelbosch	3	Rita Hoeksema	16
Margaret Linde	6	Barry Post	16
Peter Van Grootheest	7	Jimmy Hoeksema	17
Alice Sandink	9	Hilda Beyes	19
Sylvia Selles	9	Jake Ruggi	20
Yvonne Van Grootheest	9	Caroline Onderwater	24
Jenny Bosscher	11	Lizzie Oosterhoff	24
Bobby Lindhout	12	Ann Holtvluwer	25
Janet Oostdijk	12	Carl Mulder	25
Ronny Van Aniel	12	Teresa Metzlar	26
Annette Vandenbos	12	Brenda Vanden Bos	27
Janet Dekker	13	Teresa Vanden Bos	27
Elaine Knegt	14	Kina Vander Putten	30



From The Mailbox

First of all we have some new members to welcome to our Club.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Grace Bosscher*. We are glad to have you join us. And I see you plan to be a very active club member!

Hello, *Alice* and *Gary Sandink*. Welcome to you, too. We hope you'll enjoy all our Busy Beaver activities, too.

Of course you may join the Busy Beaver Club, *Lorraine De Boer*! I'm sure you'll be a real Busy Beaver. Have a good day on your birthday, Lorraine. And yes, do write again soon.

I had ever so many more letters, Busy Beavers. Thanks to everybody who wrote. There isn't space to answer today, but next time I'll answer you all. I really do enjoy getting your mail!

Now for the riddles I promised you.
These are from *Carl Mulder*. Thank you, Carl.

1. What has four eyes, yet cannot see?
2. What has a red face and green hair?
Thanks for yours, too, *Margaret Tenhage*.
3. What has two legs and many ribs and is many, many miles long?
4. What has many eyes but can't see?
5. What travels on and on but never moves?
6. How can you have water above you and below you without getting wet?

7. Why are fish so smart?

(Answers: 1. Mississippi 2. tomato 3. railroad 4. potato 5. road 6. put a pail of water above you and walk over a bridge 7. they travel in schools.)

That's it for today, Busy Beavers. Hope you enjoyed the Easter issue of *Our Little Magazine*. Before I close I want to wish you all good days on Good Friday and Easter. Bye for now,
Aunt Betty.

let's read

THE EARMUFFS (6)

Peter and Allen are great friends now. Allen has told him all that happened on that terrible day . . . how he and his mother found him in the snow; how Allen's mother had carried him home, all by herself; how his dad had come and temporarily put his leg in splints; how later on that night an ambulance had transported him to the hospital. And Peter had confessed why he came to Allen's house, why he ran away like a coward. It had been very hard to explain it all, and Peter did not dare look at that nervous little boy by his bed, whose eyes were so big and questioning, but once it was said . . . Now everything is all right again and Peter feels relieved; that heavy burden of guilt and remorse is gone.

There is the nurse! Peter hears her shoes click in the hall. Which one is it? The one with long hair and the cute wrinkle between her eyes, or the older one with her invariable "How are my children today?" The door swings open. The nurse hurries to the curtains and with a quick "zzzp, zzzp" draws them apart.

"How are my children today?" She is already by his bed. "You did not sleep, you rascal!" she grumbles, but her voice does not sound angry, really. "Open up!" she demands, the thermometer ready in her hand. "And don't bite!" With jerky movements she pulls his sheets straight and pummels his pillow in shape again. "Those kids nowadays . . ." She is already by the next bed. The boy lying there is still very sick: he was brought in only yesterday and, judging by his occasional groans, must be in pain. Each of the four boys in the room gets a turn: a few friendly words, a playful stroke through tousled hair and the inevitable thermometer. Three o'clock! In a moment there will be tea and juice, and then it is time for visitors again . . . Will Allen come?

Allen does come, with a big brown envelope in his hand. "Hi," he says. "For you, from the class." He shoves the envelope in Peter's hands and quickly pulls up a chair. His shining eyes betray his curiosity.

Peter slowly and cautiously opens the envelope and draws out a whole pack of papers . . . letters! All the pupils have written long letters, and some have decorated them with neat and colourful illustrations. Peter beams with pleasure; Allen does too. "Why! That's fun!" There is one letter from his teacher too in small regular handwriting. Peter can almost picture him as he must have written it: the dark eyes glancing over his glasses every now and then.

But Allen has a still greater surprise. From out of his pocket he produces a smaller, white envelope. "And that is mine," he adds and rapidly looks away at the boys in the other beds. The boy next to Peter's bed lies behind curtains now; does the afternoon light hurt his eyes? With tight lips and reddened cheeks Allen watches Peter unfold the white card; he strains to read Peter's reaction from his eyes, from his mouth. Will he like it? Will he think it queer? The palms of his hands are clammy with tension . . . Peter . . . ? He looks at the beautiful small pen-drawing of an old grey-haired man embracing his child: the prodigal son, his clothes all rags and tatters, his shock of hair in unruly curls, hiding his face on the shoulder of the father . . . How beautiful! "Did you . . . ?" Allen nods awkwardly. His heart thumps with happiness . . . What precise and careful copying! Hundreds of little lines and strokes make up the luxuriantly flowing beard of the aged man, depict his pensively smiling eyes, his slender sensitive hands . . . "That's . . . marvellous . . ." he whispers. Allen grins. "Is it?" For a moment there is an embarrassed silence; neither of them knows what to say. Then Allen gets up. "I'll go now; you . . . you have so much to read yet . . ." Carefully he puts the chair back in place. "All right?"

"All right." But when he is by the door, Peter calls, "But you'll be here again tomorrow, won't you?" "Sure!"

"Okay." With a sigh he drops back in the pillows and looks at the precious card beside his bed: the old father and his boy, his unruly child . . . He is not fully recovered yet, for his eyes are pricking so funny. Unobserved he folds his hands under the blankets . . .

Outside Allen runs along the streets of town and bawls a hearty song at the top of his lungs to get rid of that annoying lump in his throat.

EWOUND GOSKER