

Clarion

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Brain Washing

More often than in previous years it may happen in a Reformed classroom for Catechesis that opposition is voiced against memory work or "learning by heart".

First an aside. Do you realize the difference? In Dutch we say, "uit het hoofd leren"; in English it is, "learning by heart". An important difference that may help us later on.

Coming back to the protests. "Why can't I say it in my own words?" "Why do I have to know all those big words?" And a protest with a motive, "It would help me much more to learn to say it in my own words; then I can talk about our faith with others. You can't recite to them the answers of the Catechism!"

All this culminated in a highly critical remark during a youth meeting. "We, young people of the Canadian Reformed Church, are being brainwashed . . . ; we are not taught to think for ourselves."

Another aside. My experience tells me that these complaints, or whatever you want to call them, are more numerous than in earlier years. When I was young, we were told to learn the Catechism by heart, and so we did, period! We took for granted what the older generation told us.

This has changed quite a bit; and I wonder whether that is not a result of another kind of brainwashing.

For quite some years the traditional Reformed catechesis has been under attack, for its methods as well as for its subject-matter.

I will be the last one to say that there was and is not reason for criticism. The catechism room which I remember from my youth was a dark hole. Half of the time was taken up by hearing the lesson. We were some sixty young boys, all counted. There was one big table in the centre and we sat around it, in rows, three, four deep. We all wore a cap ("pet") and, kept it in our lap, it provided a nice hiding-place for "Landwehr", the small Kuyperian "vragenboekje". We never had anything else. There was no blackboard, no decent seating, let alone an opportunity for making notes

or anything. I never saw or used a Bible in those years. They simply weren't there, Bibles I mean, for every student.

Many readers may have better memories, but I told you the plain truth, even without the help of Mr. Armstrong.

Against this kind of catechetical instruction criticism is legitimate. Much has changed since, although there are still few consistories who, when putting the yearly budget together, reserve an amount for improving the classroom of the Church which, let's agree on that, comes in importance right on the heels of the pulpit.

The least a consistory can do for its young members (and don't forget the minister) is to provide and furnish a suitable classroom, with tables and chairs, with a blackboard, with Bibles and other necessary material.

But let's come back to that brainwashing business.

Attacks are being launched against our Reformed Catechesis. Against the Catechism in the first place. Not only against its old-fashioned form (in this I am willing to join the critics) but against its contents. Even a man like Dr. A. De Graaff, in his *The Educational Ministry of the Church*, discards the Heidelberg Catechism as being unsuitable for the purpose, because of its definitions and its specific-theological character.

More dangerous even is the attack that fights with the weapons of modern theology as well as modern psychology. Learning is equated with "searching for the truth", but whether we ever reach it remains the big question. The Catechism class should be such a searching place. Workshops, discussions and dialogue must replace the old-fashioned teaching method. The student should never think that the answer to his question is ready-made in a booklet. That is "detrimental for the process of learning". As mentioned, psychology and theology have joined forces. Modern theology is opposed to "propositional truths". We should never think we *have* the truth. It must

be searched, but one can never be sure whether he has found it. The final answer cannot be found. Psychology has taught the present generation that it is unethical to impose upon the younger generation the answers that the older one lived by, and "thought they had".

This kind of brainwashing seems to have some influence also on our youngsters, unwittingly of course, but we do not live on an island. It is my impression that the present teaching methods in the schools, especially in the highschools, are an important, though dangerous, factor. Students must do projects, engage in research work. And that's fine with me. I wish we had had more of that when I was young. However, if it goes at the cost of memory work, of learning by heart the hard facts and dates, the real knowledge will go down the drain in the long run.

Because there is so little memory work to be learned by heart anymore, our Catechism students start wondering why they have to do so much of that old-fashioned stuff for their minister (mind you: for him, not for themselves . . .). They want "to say it in their own words".

I let them do that every now and then. Within ten minutes you have heard a dozen heresies. Okay, they are young; let them speak their mind. But what kind of a mind is that anyway? If I can trust my Bible, then it is a darkened mind. Then I know that we, for knowing the truth, depend for one hundred per cent on revelation.

Humanists are more optimistic, but it is the worst kind of pessimism, if you know what I mean. They say, let the young mind develop from its own resources. All you can and should do is, guide them a little now and then, prodding them if they do not progress. The pastor's function should be that of a discussion leader. He should watch out for the danger of fast conclusions and glib answers. No brainwashing please!

But wait a moment. That is said in our day?

Are we not all being bombarded, daily, hour after hour, by an immense and ominous brainwashing? Chairman Mao, or for that matter Hitler with his false prophet Goebbels, are not the

only ones. Hitler turned a gifted and talented nation into a horde of murderers. Mao is creating a new type of man (six, seven hundred million of them) by his "Thoughts" that are recited and repeated all day long.

Is the "free world" free of that? You know better; you should know better. Our kids are being brainwashed to such an extent that they do the shopping. T.V. is not the only culprit, though the most dangerous one. Do not underestimate the daily press. One is startled every now and then at the opinions our good Reformed people have about all kinds of political, national and world issues. They do not even realize that they have been brainwashed by their daily paper. Slogans are repeated, till everyone seems to believe them. Whether it is the kind of cereal, or cat-food, or Pepsi, or "you can take Salem out of the country but you cannot take the country out of Salem . . .", no one is totally immune to this daily bombardment. Millions of dollars are spent on moulding the public mind. That's a new, fullfledged, science today. Dr. Meerloo, discussing this brainwashing, gave his book the title *The Rape of the Mind*.

One quote. "As Big Brother talks, so all the little brothers and sisters talk". That was the case with Hitler's "Jugend". That's going on in Mao's China, and the number of Maoists is growing by the day in Canada.

We are heading, headlong, into the days in which the false prophet (Revelation 13) will pull the whole world behind the Antichrist and his miracles.

And now the trick (you know the devil's tricks, don't you? II Cor. 2:11). While everyone, Mao or the producers of Pepsi or of Cornflakes, is brainwashing the general public into changing its preferences, even its taste, the Church of Jesus Christ should be forbidden to do the same? But it is not the same.

Yes, indeed, you and I, and our children, need brainwashing, and a radical one at that. A washing of the brain, a cleansing of the mind, and of the heart, that's what they need. Call it regeneration or faith, they have and know nothing of their own. They have to be told.

Let's not misunderstand each other. I do not condemn any discussion, groupwork and workshop as such. I do not say that in the

Catechism class the students have to keep their mouths shut all the time, reverently listening to a continuous stream of popular dogmatics. Be it far from me. But they shall have to *learn* the language of faith. And they shall have to know by heart (mind you, by heart!) the exact answers and know them exactly. Their minds, their hearts have to be moulded, formed, reformed by revealed truth, as it is faithfully formulated and professed in that age-old and ever young jewel, our Catechism.

Brainwashing indeed, so that they may be protected against the satanic brainwashing attacking us from all sides.

Yes, we take over those words. Our Big Brother (isn't Jesus Christ our Brother too?) speaks, and all little brothers and sisters have to learn to "say the same." So that they may stand fast in the spiritual battle.

And, while we are trying so hard to brainwash them with the divinely revealed truth, are we at the same time opening all the gates for that other, antichristian, brainwashing? Be it by uncontrolled TV watching or by all kinds of magazines and papers

which laugh at even the idea of divine revelation?

Let's conclude with another reference to Meerloo's book. This man went through Hitler's concentration camps and remained able to study his fellow prisoners. You want to know to what conclusion he came?

Those who, as "intellectuals", had always questioned ultimate truth, and were always wavering between yes and no with regard to any human problem, succumbed, as a rule. But survive did those who had been brought up with strong convictions, who had acquired the truth in well-formulated terms. In my words, survive (or die as conquerors) did those who knew their Catechism by heart. What is your only comfort in life and death?

"May I please say that in my own words?" Sure you may, but only after you have learned by heart what the "booklet" says. You may say it in your own words (you even must) but only after you have been brainwashed by Spirit and Word. After having learned by heart, by H E A R T.

G. VANDOOREN

Yearbook 1973

The new Yearbook is here. What can one say about a Yearbook?

It contains the official information, provided by Consistories regarding the number of members, of office-bearers, times and place of the Services, and address of the Church and of the Deacons. Further there is the un-official information (we mean: information not provided by the Consistory, but by the societies) which shows what activities are being conducted within the various Churches.

From the Statistics it appears that the membership has increased by 178. That is not a very high figure, and we wonder whether it is correct. If it is, the conclusion must almost be that more people broke with the Church or moved away than there were children born. Maybe we are exceptionally blest here in Fergus/Guelph, but if we multiply the number of babies baptized here during 1972 by half the number of the Churches, we reach a figure which is already

higher than the total growth as mentioned in the Yearbook.

We know that in this age of falling away it might already be called quite a feat if the Church should be able to hold her own; yet we are convinced that if the figure given is correct, there is something wrong.

We are thankful for the remarks which the Rev. H.A. Stel made in his review of the year 1972 and especially those concerning the decision of Synod 1971 regarding the correspondence with the Netherlands sister Churches. His words are wise words.

It must be the undersigned's inability to comprehend, but he still cannot discover where he deviated from the official decision in his "unofficial report" against which so many exclamations were launched.

Let everyone who plans to travel, take a Yearbook along: then he will have a guide which shows him where to find the Church building and whom to contact in the place where he stays during the weekend.

vO

schoolXcrossing

Summer vacation is only a final test and report card away and our schools and societies are beehives of activity. For awhile one school-year draws to a busy close, principals, teachers and boards are already making plans for the next season. A flood of school bulletins testifies that little sleep, little slumber and little folding of hands are the occupational hazards of the men and women who are at work in this corner of God's vineyard.

Starting at the West coast we come first to the *William of Orange School*, the oldest of our schools. After having occupied a building in Burnaby for many years, the school hopes to be in new facilities by next September. Land was bought near the Cloverdale Church, the present building on Armstrong Ave. has been sold, and work is under progress on the new school building. Together with the school of Abbotsford a study has been made of expanding one of the schools with grades VIII, IX and X. The William of Orange School calls its bulletin: *The Orange Courier*. When the children of grade V compile a collection of their own poetry, they publish it under the title of "Marmalade". It would not surprise me therefore if the school's Ladies Committee goes by the name of "Orange-Ade". The tuition fees at this school are between \$600 and \$660 yearly. Annual membership dues are set at \$150.

And on to *Smithers*, where the office of principal (if not the principal's office!) will, from September next on, be occupied by Mr. J.J. Hoekstra, at present a teacher of the intermediate grades there. In the place of Mr. Hoekstra the board appointed Mr. W. den Hollander, a teacher from The Netherlands. The vacancy to be left by Mr. H. Vandermolen's departure has, at last report, not been filled yet. Applications are still being solicited. The Smithers school, with a staff of four, is fully graded up to grade X and has in attendance several students at the grade XI and XII level. These follow correspondence courses and receive tutoring from one of the

teachers. In his February 1973 report the principal writes: "The possibility of operating grades XI and XII has to be investigated again; the correspondence courses prove to be very hard and extensive; therefore a combination of correspondence and oral teaching must be found . . . it will remain a very hard task for any teacher." The problem of how to meet the need for Reformed Secondary education is being examined not only by congregations in the Fraser Valley, or by the school of Smithers. Quite obviously, something has to be done; but how . . . and where? When, as in the case of New Westminster and Cloverdale, cooperation between congregations is possible, that possibility should be fully explored. But where distances are prohibitive, the problems associated with providing Reformed education for our teenagers are multiplied. Smithers' school has shown that local expansion to grade X is possible, even where the congregation is relatively small. Then, if it is so difficult to arrive at unanimity in deciding what ought to be done to make Reformed Secondary education available, (as appears to be the case in Ontario), might it not be better to develop the local schools until each is complete to grade X, and together concentrate on establishing regional Senior Highschools?

After this short side-trip, we go on to *Edmonton*, where, judging by the reports in their school society bulletin, the society suffers from malnutrition. Saturday school attendance is slipping, an annual meeting was attended by only 18 members and opinions were sharply divided in that meeting. This is not an advice-to-school-societies column, but a listening and observation post. Having heard of and been in a situation not unlike that in which the Edmonton society finds itself, I am convinced that at least this point may be legitimately made: When in a congregation a small number gives its financial support to a Can. Ref. School Society while their children attend a public school, and another minority makes sacrifices for the local

Chr. School, you have to accept the risk that those who eventually may outnumber both minorities will be the parents who are (or appear to be) quite *happy* with public education. The road of least resistance becomes much to be preferred to roads which lead steeply uphill, especially if they take a different route to different hills. That is the experience in at least two other congregations. And who would *not* be held accountable for such a development?

Now to *Carman*, from where Mr. F. DeWit sent a letter with news about their new school. As previously reported, a principal was appointed but the biggest problem at the moment is that they have been unable to find a teacher for grades I and II. So if *you* should qualify and are able to serve the school in Carman (or Smithers), you know what you should do. Fortunately, nearly all the families in Carman have enrolled their children and the Manitoba Government has agreed to grant the school \$12.00 per student for the purchase of Dept. of Education approved textbooks. (No buying Bibles or Books of Praise with *that* money now!) The school building is a renovated church building which has been moved onto society property.

In Ontario, the *Chatham* society is also having a really moving experience. The school building will soon be put on wheels and taken, lock, stock, and chalkboard, to its new location. The board has appointed Mr. L. Bol as principal and Miss L. Wildeboer as teacher of the lower grades. Enrolment is nearing the 60 student mark and the number of members is increasing rapidly.

The *Fergus* school resounds to the music of saws and hammers as a third classroom is being readied for September. Miss M. Bol was appointed teacher at this school, which now will have a staff of three. Recently, at a society meeting, a panel discussed the "Pro's and con's of a Reformed Highschool". We hope that *Link's* editor will not deny us a report of that discussion. That the need to encourage love and support for a school never stops, can be judged from this quotation: "Time and again *Link* has stressed the necessity of Reformed education, and from the pulpit we are also reminded of what our duty and task is." That's typical of congregations with their own Reformed school. Pulpit and

school bulletin are equally yoked together.

The *Burlington* school has lost the services of long-time teacher Mr. J.B. Ludwig, who resigned on medical advice. To fill that vacancy and another loss (which is Chatham's gain), the board appointed Miss B. Thorkildsen and Mr. B. VanRaalte. Mr. W. Horsman has been appointed vice-principal. In the pages of *Burlington's Home and School* we found reported the constitution of East and West Chapters for Reformed Secondary Education in Burlington.

The all-Ontario steering committee has convened a meeting for May 5 here, to which representatives of all

local chapters have been invited, for the purpose of forming a regional board of the Association for Reformed Secondary Education in Ontario.

Hamilton's society is making slow progress toward the September opening of its new school. Weather conditions delayed construction of the building and enrolment, at 25 students, is much below what it should be. Mrs. T. Ludwig was recently appointed supply teacher.

And so we criss-crossed the country, skipping a few places which did not mail us any bulletins. We hope to be able to include them on our next itinerary. J. J. KUNTZ

inactive professing Christians will suffer martyrdom - and that before the anticipated push-button leisure-year of 1975 dawns upon us."

All this was of course written some time ago. The year, 1972, which was at first stated as being the beginning of the Great Tribulation, was later made to be the "termination of the great opportunity to proclaim His gospel". When there was only a short time left before 1972, they wrote, "We set no dates," but still we find in their literature statements such as, "a very few more years, perhaps less than 10", "less than 15 years", "in the next very few years".

The simple and undeniable fact is that Armstrong, who claims that he is the spokesman for God, wrote that in 1972 the Great Tribulation would begin and that the return of Jesus Christ would be in 1975.

If these things do not happen as predicted (and they do not believe it themselves anymore), then Deut. 18:22 is applicable to Armstrong, or, in other words, Armstrong is a *false prophet* and does not speak the words of God.

A. H. DEKKER

THE SECTS

The Armstrong Cult (7)

11. *The Last Things*

A. *The Time of the Second Coming*

According to Armstrong the Jewish calendar was devised by God and had a cycle of 19 years. He writes, "It is important that we realize the significance of 100 time-cycles! God set the earth, sun and moon in their orbits to mark the divisions of time. One revolution of the earth is a day. One revolution of the moon around the earth is a lunar month (according to God's sacred calendar). One revolution of the earth around the sun is a solar year. But the earth, the sun and the moon come into almost exact conjunction only once in 19 years. Thus 19 years mark off one complete time-cycle."

And then he starts the comparison between our Lord Jesus Christ and himself.

Jesus Christ began His earthly ministry at about 30. He was the same age. Jesus began the actual teaching and training of the disciples in the year 27. Armstrong started studying in 1927, 100 time-cycles later.

In the year 31 at Pentecost the disciples were ordained. In 1931 Armstrong was ordained.

"Christ started out His original apostles preaching the very Gospel of the Kingdom which God had sent by Him, and which He had taught the apostles in the year 31 A.D. For exactly one 19-year cycle this preach-

ing was confined to the continent where it started - Asia. After precisely one 19-year time-cycle, 50 A.D. Christ opened a door for the Apostle Paul to carry the same Gospel to Europe. Exactly one time-cycle later, 69 A.D., the disciples fled from Judaea northward to Pella." That ended, according to Armstrong the true preaching of the gospel; after that it was only a counterfeit gospel which was preached, until "God first opened a door - that of radio and the printing press - for the mass proclaiming of HIS ORIGINAL TRUE GOSPEL the first week in 1934. The exact date was Sunday, January 7, 1934. Exactly one time-cycle later, Monday January 5, 1953, God opened wide the massive door of the most powerful commercial radio station on earth and Radio Luxembourg began broadcasting Christ's gospel to Europe and Britian."

That means that "today Christ has raised up His work and once again allotted two 19-year time cycles for proclaiming His same Gospel, preparatory to His Second Coming."

Therefore the end of this proclaiming was to come in 1972. To be exact, in January 1972. This was to be the beginning of the Great Tribulation which will last 3½ years and end in 1975, when Christ will return. In the booklet *1975 in Prophecy* Armstrong writes, "Yes, millions of lukewarm

OUR COVER

An orchard near Naramata, B.C.
[British Columbia Government Photograph].



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Church Life Overseas

Various papers from the Netherlands have by now grown into quite a pile. However, after scanning them for news items concerning "Church Life Overseas", as this column is to be called from now on, we are left with some important and interesting impressions.

We even go back to the beginning of March, when Prof. J. Kamphuis celebrated his 25th anniversary as minister of the Word. At a "feestavond" (festive get-together) in the Noorderkerk of Bunschoten-Spakenburg and at a reception in another building this anniversary received much attention. As President of the Board of Governors of our Theological College I take the liberty to express here our heartfelt congratulations.

THE TESTIMONY (Het Getuigenis)

In October 1970 several ministers of the Netherlands Reformed Church wrote a "Testimony" in which they expressed their concern about the developments in the Church. Some time ago a book was published in which ministers of the Reformed Churches (Synodical) and of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk gave their impressions about this testimony. The book-reviewer of *Nederlands Dagblad* made the following comments:

Rev. Verkuyl is of the opinion that the confession is "having your feet in the block", a delusion and a temptation. A block, because we must learn to answer to the Word of God in critical detachment from tradition. A delusion, because circumstances change; and a temptation, because we make a mistake when we think that theology can confine itself to repeating, being of the opinion that the historical Confessions have said everything that can be said.

It is remarkable that people who warn so seriously against polarization seem to grab every opportunity to evoke reactions. The same can be

noticed in an interview with Prof. Dr. J. Furet in a magazine of a Reformed Student Organization. According to a report in *Nederlands Dagblad*, he remarked:

It may be that the survival of the church means: the breakdown of certain institutes.

To this he added:

I sometimes feel - although this may be too abstract - that it would be of great importance if the church had a training for the ministry which is not so institute-oriented.

In the Netherlands they have a well known saying: "Het is allemaal: koekoek één zang." Everyone is so concerned but in the meantime many are ready to swing the sledgehammers.

JEWISH ACTION AGAINST MISSION

Although this news item is not directly related to church life in the Netherlands, we mention it here because it seems that an anti-mission trend is developing in many nations. Ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel have started an action to collect signatures for a petition in which they request the closing of Christian Missions and a by-law against public proclamation. Apart from that, acts of arson - in a Bible Institute - and breaking and entering into the houses of Christians have been reported. These activities are directed specifically against the movement "Jews for Jesus". Young Jews who are Israeli citizens and who have become Christians are working among their fellow-citizens. For the time being the Justice-Minister has expressed himself against the granting of such requests, but the requests might change into demands.

THE ALARMED WILL GO ON FIGHTING (De verontrusten blijven strijden!)

That was the decision of the executive of "the Alarmed", the people who are very much concerned - they SAY - about developments in

the (Synodical) Reformed Churches. It is interesting to hear what e.g. Rev. Oomkes said at a meeting in Amersfoort. It was reported in quotation marks, so I assume that it is a direct quotation from a speech delivered by Rev. Oomkes as the chairman of the "Society of the Alarmed". Here it is:

The executive has decided not to leave (the Synodical Geref. Kerken). Not because ecclesiastical unity is one and all; not because we shall sacrifice the truth. We remain in the Church because our calling and fighting have not been completed. As a society we do not see any use in presenting appeals. We would be knocking at the door of deaf people. We have gone the ecclesiastical way so long that we are tired. We will present an appeal to all church-people; we will call upon them not to acquiesce and to become conscious of their "office as believers" against unscriptural preaching.

What the Reformed Confession says about "unscriptural preaching" has not (yet?) entered into the discussion, although one of the ministers present remarked:

The (Synodical) Reformed Church cannot be called false Church in the full sense; however, she is speeding in that direction.

This was Rev. Van de Brink, who on a previous occasion remarked that the Reformed Churches had been buried in the woods at Lunteren. At this meeting he once again made some interesting remarks:

Synod speaks with Wiersinga but they deny him the mercy of discipline. Kuitert goes his own way. He says: This and that I do not believe, and . . . the Synod goes out to dine on chicken.

Bitter words, indeed, but the main and last question, which was also put before this meeting, was: Where is the borderline? When will the fight with words and witty expressions end? "We must fight till the Lord decides that the time has come," Rev. Oomkes said.

To this he added:

The synodical committee is still talking with Rev. Wiersinga. I expect a decision during the next Synod. If it becomes apparent

that an unbearable situation is created, the borderline is reached.

This is utter confusion and a dodging of the issues. On the one hand "we go on till the Lord decides that the time is ripe"; on the other hand "let

us see what the next Synod does." In the light of these remarks one of his statements is completely unbelievable to this writer:

Our Churches must remain reformed, submit to the authority of the Word of God and honour

the Confessions.

And so the fight against wind-mills continues, because the enemy is provided by the "Alarmed" with a smoke-screen of words.

D.V.

40th Wedding Anniversary

Mr. and Mrs. A. Van Raalte's 40th wedding anniversary was celebrated on April 27th. Mr. and Mrs. A. Van Raalte emigrated to Canada in the spring of 1948 with ten children. They arrived in Quebec City by boat, and then a long trip was made by train to Lacombe, Alberta, where relatives would be met. The train ride was a very dusty one, but that was not the worst part of it. When the train arrived at Lacombe, one of the family was missing: Mr. Van Raalte was 400 miles behind, in Moose Jaw, where he went to buy bread and butter for his offspring. The Dutch guide had misinformed him as to the length of time the train would stop there. With his arms full of bread, Mr. Van Raalte could only see the tracks which the train left behind . . . He could hardly speak any English to discuss his problem, but with the help of some other Dutch people there, Mr. Van Raalte arrived some 10 hours later at his destination.

Our brother had farmed all his life in the old country, and a new start was made by renting 60 acres of cropland to seed grain in. The crop was a failure, because first the weather was too dry and later the frost came too early.

There was a time when Mr. Van Raalte travelled 16 miles a day going back and forth by bicycle to work, for there was no money to buy a car. The family lived in a log house for one summer where you could see through the seams between the beams. This shows that the early settlers from the Netherlands did not have an easy life the first year or so.

Mr. Van Raalte had a very good friend who came on the same boat and train to Canada. For a short time Mr. Van Raalte and Mr. J. de Vries visited the Christian Reformed Church at Lacombe. The minister there asked them if they would give their attestation. After having asked about recognition of the liberated Churches in Holland, Van Raalte and De Vries said that they could not give their attestations, because the Christian Reformed Church did not recognize the liberated Church people in Holland to be their brethren and sisters.

Mr. De Vries had a car at that time, and so Mr. Van Raalte asked him whether he would come to his place to worship the next Sunday, when they read a sermon. This was done, with also Mr. S. de Vries attending, and later H. J. Van Luit. These gatherings took place usually every other week.

As time went on, the congregation around Edmonton grew, and the brothers went there as often as possible, which meant travelling about 150 miles one way. One time a taxi was rented, which cost them \$40.00.

Then, on the 9th of July, 1950, the Church at



Edmonton was instituted under the guidance of the Rev. J. Hettinga. Mr. Van Raalte became an elder then. Four months later the family moved to Edmonton. Before moving to Edmonton, Mr. Van Raalte was doing very well on a rented farm, but the distance to go to Church was too great, so that the children could not participate in society activities. Therefore Mr. Van Raalte saw it as his duty to move to Edmonton. He served as an elder for 1½ years. Later on, he became an elder again but did not complete the term, due to a move to Ontario in May of 1953 to seek a better opportunity to start farming himself. He farmed there for 16 years with the help of his sons [there were 6 boys and 4 girls when the family came to Canada. One boy was born in Canada]. Three of the Van Raalte boys have a steady job in the Orangeville Foundry, which belongs to the eldest son, Bill. It has been in operation for about ten years. Mr. Van Raalte also works there, having sold his farm in 1971. He has proved to be a good worker at the age of 67. May the Lord bless Mr. and Mrs. Van Raalte in the years to come.

(The above write-up is somewhat lengthier than usual. Yet, we did not wish to shorten it too much because of the historic element in the description. It is good, especially for the younger generation, to know what those who immigrated did for the sake of the Church. The minutes of the Consistory of Edmonton of August 13, 1950 mention the following: "It is impossible to set a date for the next Consistory meeting, because bro. A. Van Raalte lives 165 miles away, which means considerable expenses and then there is the uncertainty of the weather conditions." Nowadays some complain already when they have to drive ten or fifteen miles to Church. Brother Van Raalte was present at the first "Classis Canada", held Nov. 15, 1950, at Lethbridge, and it must be a miracle of God's mercy and faithfulness when he looks at the growth and development of Church life since that time. Also on behalf of the whole Family, we wish them both the blessing of our heavenly Father during the time to come. May they see the Lord's faithfulness in the generations.)

-vO

news medley

One of these days we had a pleasant surprise. A brother and sister from the West, visiting here in the neighbourhood, came to see us too. However, during our discussions I was told that I was slipping and that this was not appreciated by many. Wondering what that might be, I asked for further explanation. Then it appeared that many of our readers missed our News Medley a few weeks ago, when a **Clarion** was received which did not contain our chat. It was very gratifying to learn that this column is appreciated, and we shall do our best to have one every time. However, two reasons may prevent us from achieving that: lack of time and lack of news. Although many Churches do send their bulletins regularly, those bulletins may not always contain items of interest to all or even the majority of our readers. That, personally, I like to read brief reports of consistory meetings (to see what they say and what they hide) does not yet mean that our readers have the same interest. And not in every bulletin is **there** an eye-opener which makes clear why consistory meetings last so long and oftentimes are so frequent, as I found this time, where a letter was brought up and tabled, while it was decided, "It will be tabled at the next meeting again." Not in every bulletin can we find strange things. Typist's mistakes can be found everywhere and they sometimes produce comic effects. But it would be somewhat childish to use them. It seems to be a more serious mistake when a congregation takes it ill of a newly-married woman when she goes and joins her husband to live with him. That a congregation regrets it when a member leaves for another place is understandable and it would be wrong if they would not regret it. The following, however, appears to go too far: "We regretfully take note of the fact that N.N., now Mrs. N., has moved to N. to reside with her husband." She must have made a bad choice!

Let's get down to the facts.

The April 8 weekend I was in **Ottawa**, to which Church the ministers of Ontario-North go in turn. One of every three Sundays Ottawa has a minister in its midst. Once in a while one of our professors goes there, too. The bond between the members is strong and with the "manpower" they have (which does not exclude woman-power!!) they do their best to edify one another. During the winter season Sunday school is held and catechism classes given; besides, every two weeks a study-evening is held on Sundays. Ministers who preach in Ottawa usually have an introduction there or speak about a topic which appears to be of general interest. These meetings cannot last too long, for one couple lives in Montreal and comes to Ottawa every Sunday. They have to work the next day and therefore leave around 10:00.

Some time ago I drew the attention of the membership to Calgary. Now I should like to do the same with Ottawa. It is a city with a population of around 300,000 and there should be an opportunity for young people, especially tradesmen to find employment there. It is a beautiful city with little industry. It would be very encouraging for the brethren and sisters there to see their number grow.

Chatham decided, as we mentioned before, to discontinue the services in the Dutch language. Requests were received to the effect that the decision should be rescinded. But Chatham stuck to its chosen course. Suggestions for a third service could not find acceptance either, for the reason that "Introducing a third service would not be good since then older ones would really feel out."

Orangeville also decided to have all the services in English. The Congregation does have the opportunity to make known to the Consistory whatever objections they may have, but we see that the basic decision has been taken. The same applies to **Fergus/Guelph**. No date has been set as yet at which it will become effective. The latter Church is still investigating the possibility to have a third service (Dutch) simultaneously with the afternoon service. It does split up the Congregation, indeed, but it proves that the consistories are aware of the needs also of the older members who have not learned the English language well enough (either through inability to learn languages or because of their unwillingness to do so). It simply is not true that the younger ones do need the regular nourishment of the Bread of life, but that the older ones do not need it that badly any more! The "perseverance of the saints" is the fruit of the **continuous** preaching of the Gospel, with its promises, admonitions, warnings and exhortations.

To return to **Chatham** for a moment, the other time I had words of praise for the exterior of the proposed Church building. I am sorry that I cannot speak unqualified words of praise regarding the interior as shown in the floor-plan. Nothing about the upstairs: Chatham apparently expects quite some growth in the future. With a present membership of 352 they aim for a seating capacity of 400. Speaking of optimism!

I presume that this growth will have to come to a large extent from within. Thus I conclude that quite a few students for catechism classes will show up in the near future. **But why then not a decent catechism room???** The floor plan for the basement shows just some of those rectangular long rooms ("pijpela") which hamper teaching of students: the teacher sitting at the head of the table and the dear little covenant children sitting across from each other, able to hide behind each other and to escape from the probing eyes of the minister.

When, O when, is someone coming up with a decent design for a catechism room?

And when, O when, will consistories bear in mind that it is their duty to provide such facilities?

We spend thousands of dollars on electronic music boxes (which some call "organs") to produce some sickening vibrating sounds by which the congregation is to sing. We spend tens of thousands of dollars on organs (and those knowing me are aware that I would defend every penny spent on an organ!). But for catechism classes there is always some hidden corner in a boarded off space in the basement or upstairs where the minister can try not only to teach but also to catch those whose attention is directed towards completely different things. We spend tens of thousands of dollars on our schoolbuildings, which are to be functional and which are designed so that the teaching itself is facilitated.

But for catechism instruction no provision is made. Maybe some five hundred dollars extra could work miracles in this respect. Yet, they are never made

available. How many teachers at our schools have every teaching help at their fingertips! And how many ministers have a set of maps and other instruments by which the history of the Church in Old and in New Testament dispensation could be brought closer to the young people of today?

Chatham published the floor plan "for discussion". Please listen to the above for your own sakes. And let every congregation which intends to build or rebuild bear it in mind. Let, moreover, every Consistory consider the possibility to change the situation where it is wrong at the moment.

I know that the above paragraphs, strictly speaking, do not belong in a News Medley. But having discovered that our column does have the interest of the readers, I am happy that I have the opportunity to urge improvement in this respect. DO something about it!

We are in Ontario anyway, so we continue for some time with the Ontario events.

The spring office-bearers conference is scheduled for April 14 and will be a thing of the past when you read these lines. Family visiting appears to have the attention once more: this time there will be a panel discussion. And, which is important, visits by the deacons will be discussed, too. To be a deacon and to bring a good visit as a deacon is oftentimes much more difficult than many visits which have to be brought by the elders! The work of the deacons usually is more hidden (although not "secret") than the work of the elders. Brief reports of Consistory meetings very seldom mention reports of visits brought by the deacons. Those, however, who know more about the work of the latter also know of the difficulties. For that reason, too, it is good that their work is discussed, and the advice of fellow office-bearers sought and received.

The second topic for this conference is the question why elders and deacons retire periodically. Should be an interesting topic. In all likelihood you will read a report in **Clarion**.

Another conference, or rather conferences, planned for the month of April are those of the young people in Ontario. One will be held in Toronto, the other one in Burlington. The main theme of these conferences is the family, marriage, parents and children. We just mention these events; further reports can be expected.

Hamilton officially dedicated its new Church building, the Cornerstone Church. This somewhat reminds us of the road on which the building is located: Stone Church Road. I saw the outside but, due to catechism classes that evening, was prevented from attending the festive evening. You can be sure that, once I have the opportunity to have a look inside, I am going for a catechism room!

Hamilton has more plans: also a school building has to be erected. The Ladies' Auxiliary sells even fertilizer to help with the finances for that! What all feminine inventiveness can achieve!

Burlington West, too, has plans and also appointed an organ committee (note: ORGAN); that is all we can mention at the moment.

Orangeville and **Fergus/Guelph** also instituted a babysitting service. Our experience is that such a service is highly appreciated and gratefully used by many parents who then have the opportunity to attend more services.

Fergus/Guelph also sent a protest and appeal to the physicians and surgeons who have hospital privileges in Fergus, protesting the liberalization of abortion-practises.

Copies were sent to the Members of Parliament of the region. The local and regional press gave the main contents of the appeal and several letters from readers were received in reaction to the above action.

London discussed the collection at the Lord's Table again. As far as I understood, it was not a discussion to abolish it.

Personally I have never understood why a collection receptacle is put before your nose when you go to the Holy Supper. Whenever we have the privilege of sharing our meals with visitors, I would not think of holding up a collection bag or plate when they take their place at the table or when they leave it. Why, then, is that being done when the Lord invites us to His table and when we are nourished with the body and blood of the Saviour? I can see no reason for it.

Besides, whatever we do, we do as a CONGREGATION. But when a collection is taken at the table this is an act of only PART of the Congregation. The celebration of the holy supper affects the congregation as a whole: it shows the unity of the body and thus also those who are not yet entitled to partake of it are involved nevertheless. But a collection at the table affects only part. The public worship service is no occasion for individual acts.

Most of the news came from Ontario this time.

One more thing has to be mentioned.

Grand Rapids may expect to have their second minister within the foreseeable future. Having declined the call extended to him, the Rev. G. Van Rongen of Launceston, Tas., requested to receive the opportunity to reconsider it and sent word that he accepts Grand Rapids' call. We congratulate our sister Church with this speedy fruit of their efforts to obtain another minister. We express the wish that Rev. G. Van Rongen may see his path cleared and may arrive here in due time in good health with his family insofar as they will come with him. In the past he has shown that he is able to write clearly about a wide range of subjects and we do not doubt that we all shall benefit from that also once he is in our midst.

The Rev. **A.B. Roukema** intends to move to Toronto in the middle of May and we wish him much joy in the service of his Lord also during the time of his retirement.

We have not yet read any reports on the office-bearers conference which was held in **Edmonton**. Rev. G. Van Dooren, however, told me that he enjoyed it and was glad that he had the opportunity to meet the brethren and to discuss together "the things pertaining to the office."

Edmonton appointed a committee to investigate the matter of the right to vote. The right we speak of is the (existing or non-existing) right of the sisters in the Church to vote on Church matters. The question which will be investigated is not whether this right shall be given or not, but whether it is a right which they possess or not and which we simply have to acknowledge if the conclusion should be that there is such a right. Will be an interesting report.

Not much can be said of the development in the Fraser Valley, whether there will be another Church shortly, between Cloverdale and New Westminister. **New Westminister** has other "problems". One is the question whether to renovate the present building at considerable cost or to erect a new building, but then south of the Fraser River. The latter would mean that the Church would disappear out of New Westminister and that - I think - is

Continued on page 10

An Introduction To CHRISTIAN LITERATURE [3]

BIBLICAL INTRODUCTION

(a) *Canon and Text*

1. Bruce, F.F. *The Books and the Parchments*. (Toronto: Welch) 1963, 286 pp. (**)

Gives an account of the original manuscripts and languages, the text, canon and versions of the Bible. It starts with the beginnings of alphabetic writing and goes up to the New English Bible.

2. Bruce, F.F. *The English Bible*. (New York: Oxford) 1961, 255 pp. (**)

A most interesting volume giving the history of English translations of the Bible from the earliest versions to the New English Bible (N.T.).

3. Kenyon, F.G. *The Story of the Bible*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1967, 150 pp., \$1.95. (*)

Popularly written, this book gives the history of the Bible, how it came to its present form. The author was one of the world's leading authorities on biblical manuscripts. Anyone desiring a deeper knowledge of the history of the Bible is advised to consult the excellent 3-volume *Cambridge History of the Bible*.

4. Wurthwein, E. *The Text of the Old Testament*. (New York: Macmillan) 1957, 173 pp.

This is a translation of the standard German work on the text of the O.T. It gives a brief history of the Hebrew text and includes some good illustrations; it is meant to serve as a companion volume to Kittel-Kahle's *Biblia Hebraica*.

5. Metzger, B.M. *The Text of the New Testament*. (New York: Oxford) 1968, 284 pp.

By far the best book on the text of the N.T. It discusses the science of textual criticism: (a) the making and transmission of ancient manuscripts; (b) the description and evaluation of the most important witnesses to the N.T., and (c) the history of textual criticism as reflected in the printed editions of the Greek N.T.

NEWS MEDLEY *Continued From Previous Page*

something which should be prevented if possible. Once the Church building is in Surrey, you can no longer call the Church the Church at **New Westminster**.

It is not for personal (maybe nostalgic) reasons that I wrote the above. Even if the present building should be sold and the Church would meet at another location, the memories would remain, the memories of that cold day when we visited the unheated, long unused theatre for the first time, of the discussions and meetings, of the weddings and the funerals, the congregational meetings and the performances of Choir and Band, the programs by the children of the William of Orange Christian School.

I wish the brethren much wisdom.

This, then, is our News Medley.

Till next time, the Lord willing.

vO.

(b) *Bible Study*

1. Stibbs, A.M., ed. *Search the Scriptures*. (London: InterVarsity Press) 1967, 3 vols. \$1.25 each. (*)

A course of daily Bible study on the whole Bible lasting three years. It includes a list of passages to be read, short-introductions to each book, questions for each day's study and some explanatory notes where needed.

2. Vos, H.F. *Effective Bible Study*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 1969, 224 pp., \$1.95. (**)

This volume discusses 17 different methods of Bible Study. Some of the methods are helpful, others are not; nevertheless, by reading this book you are bound to pick up many good suggestions.

3. Viening, E., ed. *Zondervan Topical Bible*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 1968, 1,088 pp., \$9.95. (**)

Gives Scriptural references to any topic, person, place, object or event and can be very handy for Bible study.

4. Danker, F.W. *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study*. (St. Louis: Concordia) 1970, 295 pp.

Although this book is primarily designed for pastors and theology students, laymen will be able to use it with profit. It discusses all the different tools needed for Bible study and includes sections on: the use of grammars and lexicons; the use of the Septuagint (Greek O.T.); judaica; archaeology, etc.

(c) *Interpretation*

1. Berkhof, L. *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*. (Grand Rapids: Baker) 1950. (**)

One of the few volumes on this subject, giving some good advice on how to interpret different kinds of writing in the Bible.

2. Farrar, F.W. *History of Interpretation*. (Grand Rapids: Baker) 1886, reprinted 1962.

Detailed and exhaustive, this volume gives a great deal of information about the Bible as well as its interpretation through the ages. It only goes up to the late 19th century.

3. Mickelsen, A.B. *Interpreting the Bible*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1970, 425 pp. \$5.95. (**)

A very useful and up-to-date book; however it is not without the occasional critical influence. If used carefully and with discretion it can be a real help; included are sections dealing with: language, short figures of speech, typology, prophecy, poetry and symbols.

(*) Recommended for individual purchase.

(**) Recommended for societies or church libraries.

(***) Recommended for both.

J. VISSCHER

Kanttekening bij het Kerkelijk Leven.

“Vreemdelingen”?

‘k Heb sinds m’n aankomst in Ontario het voorrecht gehad in aanraking te komen met kerkleden die “van buiten af” zich bij de kerk gevoegd hebben. Wat een voorrecht is dat! Als onze kerken niet langer vergaderingen blijven van alleen maar dutch people. Als we hier in dit ons land mee mogen werken om de kerk des Heeren te vergaderen uit alle naties. Zo moet het toch zijn, en hoe langer hoe meer worden, anders zijn we onze naam niet waard. We zijn toch niet een secte, en de HEERE heeft toch ook zijn kinderen buiten onze kleine gemeenschap?

De blijdschap in het ontmoeten van zulke ‘nieuwe leden’ was echter gemengd. Bij alle waardering die sommigen van hen hebben voor ons kerkelijk leven, hadden ze toch ook bepaalde klachten, klachten die me echt zeer deden. En die er op neerkwamen dat, althans sommigen van hen zich, ook na een behoorlijk aantal jaren Canadian Reformed zijn, nog altijd vreemdeling voelen.

Mag ik een paar van die klachten doorgeven? Misschien kunt u er uw winst mee doen. Het zou toch verschrikkelijk wezen als ware gelovigen zich bij ons niet thuis voelden, en, wie weet, er over denken om maar weer “weg te gaan”.

Als dat zou komen omdat ze zich niet in alle dingen aan Gods Woord onderwerpen, well, dat is alleen maar erg voor henzelf: “zij zijn van ons uitgegaan want ze waren van ons niet,” zou Johannes zeggen.

Hier gaan we dan.

Ik heb kritische opmerkingen gehoord over de tucht zoals die bij ons geëfend wordt. ‘n Mens wordt niet vrijgelaten, zo hoorde ik. Je moet toch voor je zelf weten hoe je leeft, en dat straks voor God verantwoorden. Maar de kerk moet niet tussen jou en God in gaan staan, en “voor God spelen.”

Ik geloof dat hier veel misverstand is. Ik geloof dat een deel van de oorzaak is dat wij de gewoonte hebben zo op elkaar te kijken en elkaar te becritiseren, ook in kleine dingen. Aan de andere kant moeten

we, dunkt me, in alle geduld aan zulke nieuwkomers uitleggen dat discipline een zegen is, een genade. Uitleggen wat de Bijbel ervan zegt. Dat ‘t niet is om elkaar de christelijke vrijheid te beroven, maar om elkaar te waarschuwen als we de verkeerde kant uit gaan. Ook duidelijk maken dat, omdat de kerk een vergadering van gelovigen is, iemand die zich als ongelovige aanstelt, er gewoon niet thuis hoort en de anderen zou aansteken als hij niet afgesneden wordt. En dat zulke afsnijding tot doel heeft zo iemand te laten schrikken, en zo nog terug te roepen. “Overgeven aan satan”, zei Paulus, om hem nog te redden.

In de tweede plaats, ondanks alle waardering die ik hoor, voor de prediking, voor de offerbereidheid en trouw bij velen, onze mensen zijn in het oog van anderen zo conservatief. Naast trouw aan Gods Woord is er ook gebondenheid aan tradities die voor geboren Canadezen op z’n minst vreemd aandoen. De mensen zijn zo ‘stijf’, hoor ik zeggen. Ik weet niet goed wat ik daarop zeggen moet. Behalve dan dat wij inderdaad wel erg op onszelf zijn, en ongemerkt dingen doen die, zacht gezegd, op anderen een eigenaardige indruk maken. Misschien schrijf ik daarover nog wel’s een apart stukje. Het is ook waar dat ieder volk z’n eigenaardigheden heeft, en daarin moeten we elkaar leren verdragen. Niet alles wat wij zeggen en doen is op Gods Woord gegrond, er komt ook traditie bij. Maar de Here Jezus en zijn evangelie zijn internationaal. Misschien moeten wij dat nog wat beter leren. Als anderen anders doen dan wij, dan hebben wij niet altijd het bij het rechte eind.

Vervolgens, veel mensen van onze kerken hebben zo eenzijdig belangstelling voor Nederland, en zo weinig voor Canada. Een Canadees voelt zich dan buiten-gesloten. Hier mogen we wel even ‘au!’ roepen. Niet dat iemand ons kwalijk mag nemen als we ons verleden niet vergeten (dat is hetzelfde met alle ethnische groepen) maar we moeten van een Canadian Reformed church geen hollands kerk maken, ook al

hebben we nauwe relaties met Holland.

In dezelfde lijn ligt een andere klacht die ik meermalen hoor, en die ik erger vindt. Ik hoorde verleden week nog iemand die al veel jaren in ons midden leeft, klagen dat hij zich altijd buitengesloten voelt in een vergadering, op een visite. De mensen beginnen direkt weer hollands te praten, ook al valt er zo nu en dan een engels woord. Dat is erg, dat is onchristelijk. Wie iets verstaat van de gemeenschap der heiligen, is het daarmee eens. Op die manier jagen wij de mensen weg. Ja heus, ik ben ervan overtuigd dat, al is er ook maar een die geen hollands verstaat, dan moeten wij allemaal (op een visite b.v.) alleen maar engels spreken; tenminste engels *willen* spreken. Niemand neemt u kwalijk als ‘t niet altijd lukt; als de wil er maar is. Je moet niet vergeten, nieuwe leden moeten nog zo veel leren over gereformeerd zijn, en (!) dat moeten ze van ons leren!

Over ons zingen hoorde ik ook klachten. Soms, zo zei iemand onlangs tegen me, klinkt het als een begrafenis lied. Ik probeerde uit te leggen dat er onder de psalmen ook vele klaagliederen, zonde-belijdenissen zijn, en dat kun je natuurlijk horen aan de manier van zingen. In de Bijbel wordt veel geklaagd over eigen zonden, over vijanden en zo. Onze Genevan tunes zijn ook wel moeilijk, al zijn ze veel mooier dan vele goedkope hymn melodien. Maar laten we met z’n allen dan proberen beter te zingen. En wat de klacht betreft (ook die hoorde ik) dat er in onze kerken zo weinig over de Here Jezus gezongen wordt, die klacht zal verdwijnen als we een verstandig en goed gebruik maken van ons mooie nieuwe Psalmboek. We moeten proberen zulk een klacht te verstaan, en recht te doen. Wie altijd wel in z’n lied de naam van de Heere Jezus met dankbaarheid gezongen heeft, valt ‘t vreemd op ‘t lijf, in een kerk te komen waar dat haast nooit gebeurt.

Iets anders wat er nauw mee in verband staat. De klacht dat ‘onze

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Wake Up, Canada

Even a cursory glance at the daily news will have alerted the reader to the almost obsessive preoccupation with economic issues both in Canada and abroad. We hear of meat boycotts, wage and price controls, food price review boards, increases in prime lending rates, and on and on. No doubt the strange language of the monetary experts is mystifying to most of us. Yet the decisions or lack of them being made by government and business affect each one of us, directly or indirectly. Though I don't claim to have any experience in the area of economics, I do wish to say something about the underlying assumptions which pertain to so much economic thinking today.

One thing that strikes us is the increasing dominance of governments over many facets of economic life as well as other areas of life. Think only of the recent announcement by the socialist government in B.C. to take over the entire automobile insurance industry and the establishment of a land commission which would give the government almost dictatorial powers in regard to the control of use of privately owned land. Even the federal government with its land bank proposals intends to get into the business of buying up large chunks of land "for the benefit of the people".

This ever increasing involvement of government in the free market economy is a trend which has grown steadily since the depression years. Through the control of money and credit (Bank of Canada) the government is able to influence the economy for ill or good. Its policies in regard to taxation, regional grants, external commercial regulations, and various other monetary and fiscal arrangements, directly affect businesses and individuals. Government with its huge bureaucracy has become one of the biggest spenders and has itself contributed greatly to inflation. Through the policies of successive governments, it is costing the taxpayers over a billion dollars a year to service the national debt.

The proliferation of government programs is staggering and the burden of so-called social security measures is weighing heavily upon

the tax paying public. The peculiar thing is that people are constantly demanding more services from the government but at the same time complain the loudest when taxes are raised to pay for them. The recent furore over the Unemployment Insurance Commission payments demonstrates some of the evils of government intervention. A program of this kind can certainly not be called insurance. What it is, in fact, is a compulsory tax on all wage earners in order to equalize income between various groups as well as provide for the genuinely unemployed. (This much was admitted by the former minister, Bryce Mackasey.) The existence of such a system which pays a good income induces people to take advantage of it. What incentive is there for a man to seek employment when the benefits of doing so are so miniscule compared to the handout that awaits him from the government? Cracking down on abusers may be politically attractive but ignores the basic faults of the system itself.

There is little doubt that the genuine poor and unfortunate must be taken care of, but history shows that the kind of universal welfare program in existence now does not actually contribute to the wealth of the nation and in fact does much to destroy the bonds of human love and mutual responsibility.

The underlying assumption is that governments know what is best for the people and that it is their responsibility to look after the general welfare. Many politicians talk as if governments have some pre-ordained right to expropriate private property or to regulate all kinds of commercial and other activities for the common good. In the long run what is deemed to be the common good may not actually be that but instead represent only the ideas of a minority wishing to impose its own ideas of "social justice".

All this is part of the modern mania for planning which is rooted in the modern apostate faith in the superiority and boundlessness of science and reason. "Ever since Francis Bacon, Western humanists have believed that man can redeem

himself by applying scientific methods of control to his social as well as to his natural environment, rather than by repentance of his sins and by relying on God's Word" (H. Van Riessen in *The Society of the Future*). Scientific planning will not be limited to economic life alone but this will only be one component of the scientific problem "society". Thus both the society and the individual must be controlled once the diagnosis has been made and a prognosis of the future drawn. Personal individuality cannot be allowed to disrupt the plan. Thus wages, prices, rents, social security, production quota, choice of profession, migration, and birth rate will all have to be directed from the top. This is not an unduly exaggerated picture when one looks at all the areas in which government involves itself today. As far as that goes, the differences between the Communist societies and those of the "free" world, are slowly disappearing.

I am afraid that too many of us swallow the propaganda of the decriers of free enterprise (a dirty word in itself) system which after all has done so much to create the wealth which so many are now trying to redistribute. What is fundamentally at stake is the freedom of individuals and groups to pursue their own goals, to reap the rewards of their own efforts without restraints imposed by governments or others seeking to impose their will. Men cannot be free unless they are able to move about from one place to another, from one enterprise to another, offering their skills or using their resources. Wherever the means of production and distribution are controlled by the state, slavery follows. We must admit that the present chaotic condition of society is already a judgment over man's abandonment of God and his Word. This is reflected in personal and corporate violence and the seeking after false idols of a nihilistic culture.

The state as an all-powerful organ controlled by self-seeking men is no guarantor of the liberties which we still enjoy as individuals and as church. It is easy enough to say, "You are being naive about the political and economic realities of this world. And really, there is nothing we can do about it." That is a position which we must not accept, for then we would be admitting that the powers of evil are greater than those of our Lord and

Saviour, Jesus Christ, who was given dominion over all the earth.

Let us endeavour to express the alternatives to the present spirit of socialism and collectivism engulfing

this land which was entrusted also to us, to develop and to bear witness therein to the true liberty to be found in obedience to our Lord and Saviour.

HAROLD J. LUDWIG

Office Bearers' Conference in Ontario

On Saturday, April 14, the office-bearers of various Churches in Ontario came together in their spring conference. It was evident that it was a "spring" conference, since several brethren who were planning to attend were prevented by the drying of the fields, which gave them the opportunity to start working in them.

The secretary/treasurer, brother J. Schutten was absent also this time, due to lack of time. A proposal to appoint the Rev. A.B. Roukema as secretary and leave the treasurer-part to brother Schutten was adopted. Brother P. Vanderschaaf of Toronto, who also the previous time acted as secretary, was willing to do it this time too.

Professor Selles was the chairman and gave some information about the correspondence with Korea. It seems that it is hard to get answers to pertinent questions. The money collected in 1972 is still here and it was decided that the deacons of Smithville shall again try to get pertinent answers. They will also contact the brethren in the Netherlands.

From the Holland Christian Homes Inc. a letter was received informing the conference of the annual meeting scheduled for April 11. Prof. Selles informed the conference of his answer to that letter. He stressed in his reply that the need appeared to be more for a nursing home than for an old age home, but that the Conference as such would not undertake anything in this respect.

The main part of the meeting was formed by a panel discussion about family visiting. The panel members who were present were brother H. Aasman and Rev. G. Van Dooren, while Dr. J. Faber was the moderator. Unfortunately, the deacon-member of the panel was unable to attend the conference.

Mr. Aasman spoke first. He gave

a few impressions from his own experience. He pointed out the necessity of choosing the brethren who are to form a team with much care, so that they really are able to help each other. The main thrust of his short introduction was that the visiting brethren must know how to let the people communicate to us. We do not come to talk but mainly to listen. It is therefore wrong if a visiting office-bearer delivers a speech (or "sermon") of five or ten minutes on the part of the Scripture that was read. If we are to make any introductory remarks, they should be few and brief; talking is easy but to really listen in order to be able to help a family, that is difficult. The elders should prepare themselves and pray to the Lord before they set out on a visit. And when the visit is done, go home; don't drag and stretch it out. As for the rest: be flexible.

Rev. G. Van Dooren added to the above by emphasizing that we should not let the members we visit talk *too* much, nor that we should be content with "Yes" or "No". He, too, stressed that the elders do not come to deliver a sermon or a Bible lecture, but to inquire about the life of the members before the Lord. We are to find out where the interest of the members lies. Rev. Van Dooren distributed a list of questions which may form a guideline for the family visits. It would be good to continue a program at the next visit, so that you do not have the same things every time.

Several questions were brought up during the discussion period which followed the above presentations. "How do you get young people to talk in the presence of their parents about things they may not have talked about with their parents for years?" "Should we have a theme for the visits planned in a certain year?" "May personal experiences of the office-bearers be used during the visits?"

A special point was formed by the questions about visits by the deacons. Some suggested that the deacons should also visit the whole congregation.

Dacons sometimes experience difficulties when they ask pertinent questions. In some instances the members refuse to answer them. But the conference came to the conclusion that, if you wish to really help, you have to know all the facts. That does not mean that the excesses which are oftentimes quoted as proofs of too much inquisitiveness on the part of the deacons are condoned. But, on the other hand, the deacons have to give account to Christ also of the manner in which they distribute the aid. In some instances it may be necessary to keep a close track of all expenses in order to help a family on their feet again.

The chairman thanked the members of the panel for their cooperation and the conference audibly agreed.

The Rev. C. Olij investigated the historical background of the periodic retirement of elders and deacons, as provided for in the Church Order. John Calvin appeared to have introduced it and the reasons given on more than one occasion were: The Holy Scripture does not state that elders should serve for life; when office-bearers retire periodically, more persons become involved in the matters of the Church; change of office-bearers prevents that a minister would be able to form a tight group of adherents, which would promote tyranny. There were Churches, apart from the Presbyterian Churches, where elders served for life. But the principle of "Prevent Tyranny" and the fact that elders have their domestic duties and therefore should have a time of rest which they could use to dedicate wholly to their own families, promoted the retirement policy.

Plans for the next meeting - to be held on the last Saturday in October - are: introductions on counselling by the Rev. G. Van Dooren, M.Th., and by Mr. H.C. Van Dooren, M.S.W. Further, the Rev. W. Huizinga will search for Scriptural reasons behind the periodic retirement of elders and deacons, as a sequence to the work of Rev. C. Olij.

After Psalm 135 stanzas 1 and 2 were sung, Mr. Aasman led in thanksgiving.

vO

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

How time flies! Here it's Spring already again! Or did the winter seem long to you? Well I'm always glad when the grass is green and everything seems to come alive again. And of course, with Spring comes - Mother's Day!

One time I read a story about how one family spent Mother's Day. You couldn't guess what they did! They spent the day having a lovely time by themselves and let their Mother prepare them a big dinner, all on her own! What do you think of that!

I know our Busy Beavers know better, for one of you wrote "every day is mother's day for the children of the Lord". Still it's nice to have one special day to show our Mother how much we appreciate all she means to us. So I wonder what the Busy Beavers are secretly planning for their mothers on her special day! Here's hoping you all, with your mothers and families will have a very happy Mother's Day.

We have some Mother's Day poems, too, from our Busy Beavers. The first one is by *Margaret Linde*. Thank you for sharing, Margaret.

Mothers

Mothers, Mothers, Mothers,
That's all we hear.
Mothers, Mothers, Mothers,
We know them very dear.
From the day we are born
To the day we die,
Mothers, Mothers, Mothers,
Are always in our eye.
And Mothers work so very hard
They should deserve a little card -
Cleaning, washing, sewing and caring,
And are always in the mood for sharing.

What I mean to my Mother

I am mother's helper,
I help her every day
By dusting all the furniture
And putting things away.
I keep my cupboard tidy,
I help to make my bed,
I run on errands to the store
For butter and for bread.
And sometimes after eating
I wipe the dishes, too.
Why, mother says, without me
She can't think what she'd do.

BOOK NOOK

Here are two more BOOK LOOKS for you, Busy Beavers. I think all of you would enjoy the first book - it's a true story. And the second one is for those who like adventure stories.

Helen Keller's Teacher, by Margaret Davidson.

This is a true story.

This is a story about Annie Sullivan, who came to teach Helen Keller.

Helen Keller could not hear, see, or speak before Annie Sullivan came into her life. Helen, who'd been locked away in dark silence, would never be quite so lonely again.

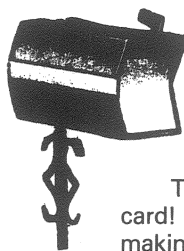
She would never see the world outside, she would never hear it, but she was learning to communicate. Annie, her teacher, taught her how to talk with her fingers, and to listen with her palm. Next would come the mastery of braille, that exciting tool for both reading and writing. Annie stayed with Helen until she died.

(Marian Van Dyk)

The House on the Volcano, by Virginia Nielsen.

Kimo lived with his tutu (grandmother) by the side of a volcano. They believed that there was a goddess named Madame Pele. Some people agreed with Kimo's tutu, others didn't. One day there was an earthquake which continued about a week. Then the volcano erupted. Warnings were sent and just about everybody left except tutu and Kimo. Finally they left. Then they were glad they left because everybody else was there.

(Norma Vander Pol)



From The Mailbox

Thank you, *Jane Kobes*, for your very pretty card! How did you do on the tests? Are you busy making plans for when your visitors are coming?

Hello, *Rita Koning*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thank you for sending in your sister's name. I hope she gets some nice mail from the Busy Beavers.

You had the Pyramid quiz all right, *Nellie Jane Kno!* Keep up the good work. I'm glad you're doing so well on your music lessons, too.

And you had your quiz right, too, *Shirley Devries*. Good for you! Write again soon, Shirley.

Thank you for your long letter, *Caroline Hoeksema*. And you had your quiz all right too! I'm glad to hear everyone in your family is doing so much better after the accident.

And how did you do on your tests, *Wilma Van Woudenberg* (Dunnville)? I'm sure you did all right. You had your quiz all right, too! And thank you for your contribution to the Birthday Fund.

Hello, *Marian Van Dyk*. No wonder you do so well on your reading at school, when you read so much at home! And I'm glad your father is getting better too.

Thanks for the poems for next winter, *Lizzie Oosterhoff*. They'll keep. How is your crocheting coming? You had your quiz all right, too. Good for you!

Did you have a good birthday, *Celia Van Woudenberg?* Thank you for your contribution to the Birthday Fund. You had your quiz right, too, Celia. Keep up the good work!

What an interesting trip you made with your class, *Norma Vander Pol!* Did you miss your parents while they were gone, Norma? Bye now, write again.

Hello, *Tony Van Eerden*. Thank you for your quiz. You did quite well on the answers you sent in, too. I'm curious, Tony, how you helped fix up your house!

Were you pleased with your report card, *Karen Oostenbrug*? I think you must be watching those tulips all the time, waiting for them to bloom!

How do you like your new house, *Janet Oostdijk*? Have you got a little used to living in the city? You'll have to let me know how you are getting along.

And now here is our puzzle. Hope you enjoy it!

BENJAMIN

- B _____ B. "Judah and his _____ came to Joseph's house" (44:14).
- E _____ E. Whose bag did Joseph's steward begin searching? (44:12)
- N _____ N. "_____ also let it be according unto your words" (44:10).
- J _____ J. Who commanded the steward to place the silver cup in Benjamin's sack? (44:2)
- A _____ A. "Let not thine _____ burn against thy servant" (44:18).
- M _____ M. What was found in the sacks' mouths? (44:8)

- I _____ I "Let thy servant abide _____ of the lad" (44:33).
- N _____ N. "Judah came _____ unto him" (44:18).

These answers may all be found in Genesis.

These are the answers to our Easter quiz. How did you do?

1. The Lord Jesus is God.
2. Judas betrayed the Lord with a kiss.
3. They all forsook the Lord and fled.
4. They took the Lord to the High Priest's house.
5. The Council decided that the Lord Jesus should die.
6. The Lord was crucified on Golgotha or Calvary.
7. Two murderers were crucified with the Lord Jesus.
8. This took place the day before the Sabbath.
9. The Lord Jesus was on the cross for about six hours.
10. There was an earthquake, the veil to the temple was rent from top to bottom, and the rocks were rent so that the graves opened.
11. The Lord Jesus was buried by Joseph of Arimathea in a grave in his own garden.

Bye for now, Busy Beavers. Will you let me know how you spent Mother's Day?

Yours,
Aunt Betty

Continued from page 11
mensen' zo weinig blijdschap tonen. In de kerk zie je allemaal ernstige gezichten en dat is vooral zo bij het Avondmaal. Er kan geen lachje af; doodernstig is iedereen. Je merkt zo weinig van de vreugde dat we Gods kinderen zijn, op weg naar een eeuwigdurend feest.

Ik geloof dat deze klacht niet ongegrond is. Dat wil niet zeggen dat we er een Leger des Heils vrolijkheid van maken. Maar onze gezichten mogen wel een spiegel zijn van een blij hart. Als de dominee aan het avondmaal zegt: "tot een volkomen verzoening van al onze zonden" dan mogen we toch wel blij kijken? Ik zou zeggen: dan *moeten* we toch wel blij kijken. Of zitten we nog vast aan de zeventiende eeuw toen bijna ieder aan het avondmaal zat met de doodsschrik in de benen: ik eet en drink me toch niet een oordeel . . . ? U mag best 's lachen in de kerk. "Gij hebt mijn weeklacht en geschrei veranderd in een blijde rei". Een christen is een blij en een vrij mens. Tenminste dat hoort hij te wezen.

Dit zijn dus sommige van die klachten van hen die zo'n moeite hebben zich in ons midden echt thuis te voelen. In sommige gevallen, zo hoor ik, is het resultaat geworden dat enkelen weer 'vertrokken' zijn. Ze

hadden heimwee; ze waren home-sick, nee niet naar de zonde, maar naar een vrij en blij christelijk leven. Ik praat dat natuurlijk niet goed; 'k zeg ook niet dat al die klachten altijd gegrond zijn. Maar al zouden wij ook maar 5% van de 100% er schuld aan hebben, dan zullen we dat op de oordeelsdag tegen ons horen getuigen.

Nog's, wij kunnen ons verleden onmogelijk zo maar afschudden. Dat mag ook niemand van ons verlangen. Niemand is in staat om dat te doen. Volgende geslachten zullen daarmee minder moeite hebben. De Kerkorde zegt dat we elkaar in "middelmattige dingen" niet moeten verwerpen. Dat moet men ons niet doen; dat moeten wij anderen ook niet doen.

Maar wee ons als wij "een van

deze kleinen" (in het gereformeerd-zijn) een struikelblok in de weg leggen. Het ware ons beter . . . nooit geboren te zijn.

Wij zijn - als we menen wat we zeggen - plaatselijke vergaderingen van de "algemene", katholieke, universele kerk (Cat. 21 en Art. 27 Bel.). We moeten een toevluchtsoord zijn voor allen die het benauwd hebben onder hun zonden, en onder de afval, het modernisme en de Schriftverlating in vele zogenaamde kerken.

Als we dat niet zijn, dan zijn we een secte. We hebben nu toch de zotte bewering van de eerste jaren, "dat je in het engels niet gereformeerd kunnen zijn" wel volledig achter ons gelaten?"

KriTiKus.

Mr. and Mrs. Egbert Witten and Mr. and Mrs. Peter Helder are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their children:

ALICE and ED

on D.V. Friday, May 18, 1973, at 8:00 p.m. in Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, Burlington, Rev. G. VanDooren officiating.

630 Drury Lane
Burlington

P.O.
Waterdown