

Clarion

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A Sectarian Decision

Ministers, beware!

Or rather: Churches, beware!!

I shall tell you first what the reason is why I utter that warning. It is the following decision, taken by the Consistory of the Church at Lincoln, a decision which is one of the most sectarian decisions ever taken by any Canadian Reformed Church. Here it comes:

An ample discussion is the result of a question concerning ministers in our churches, who have decided to purchase a Television set. The consistory decides that any minister of the Canadian Reformed Churches, (who) is in possession of a Television set, will not be invited to conduct services in our congregation. In the past there has been made a decision concerning this matter, and after a review, followed by a vote, this decision is upheld.

I do not hesitate to call this decision, at bottom, a breaking with the Federation of Churches and the beginning of a schism. Here another condition is added to the conditions which the Canadian Reformed Churches have agreed upon for the eligibility of their ministers. The above decision reminds me of the days before the Liberation, when there were consistories that decided that any minister who was "burdened" (bezwaard) and who agreed with the teachings of Dr. K. Schilder, would not be invited, in other words: was barred from the pulpit in that Church. Then, as is the case now in Lincoln, faithful servants of the Lord were blacklisted, although according to the rules accepted by the Federation of Churches, they were ministers in good standing, and no Consistory had the right, on its own authority, to add a condition to those which had been generally accepted. If a Church does add such a "mark" of a true minister and of a faithful servant on its own authority, it breaks in principle with the Federation of Churches. Basically, it means a schism.

The criterion is not even the question how someone uses a television set; no, the very *possession* of such a set causes a minister to be unworthy to preach the Gospel in Lincoln. But if he is not worthy to do it there, is he, then, worthy to do it anywhere at all?? This means a wholesale condemnation of faithful servants of the Lord (partly still being with us, partly already being with Christ), servants who oftentimes stood in the frontline in the days of the Liberation of the Church, when many of the present-day office-bearers were still children or would need another twenty or twenty-five years before liberating themselves; servants who have served their Lord and Master to the best of their ability and to the edification of His people, whose labours were also recognized by a grateful flock!

When such a decision is made concerning ministers, there is undoubtedly a similar one concerning elders and deacons. And it will be only a matter of time that members are forbidden to partake of the holy sacraments because they *possess* a television set. Then the circle closes and the anabaptist line of thought has triumphed completely.

Once, when driving through Coaldale, Alberta, I was told that the large Church building on that road was a Mennonite building, the "Smokers Church"; the one a few blocks over was the "Non-Smokers Church". Around Elmira, Ontario, one can see Mennonites driving around in black cars, with even the bumpers painted black, for no chrome should show; others drive around with horse and buggy and shun even electricity. That is the line of thought in which Lincoln's decision fits: it is purely anabaptist, not Reformed at all.

Let no one have the impression that I am defending myself. He would be mistaken. I have no television set and am not planning to purchase one either. Insofar I would, therefore, have a chance to be invited to conduct services in Lincoln. Most likely there are other reasons why such an invitation will never be extended to me. However, if the brethren should think about inviting me, then they can save themselves the trouble. I declare here openly that I would not accept such an invitation. If there is no place for faithful ministers whose only "sin" is that they are "in possession of a television set", then there is no place for me either, nor for any other minister who otherwise, according to the generally accepted regulations, is a minister in good standing in the midst of the Canadian Reformed Churches. I do not wish to have any part, either directly or indirectly, in this sectarianism and would rather be counted with those who are either still struggling to serve their Master in this life or who, we firmly believe, have already received the crown promised to them and were allowed to enter into the joy of their Lord.

vO

Path To Gentleness

Let us, then, unremittingly examining our faults, call ourselves back to humility. Thus nothing will remain in us to puff us up; but there will be much occasion to be cast down. On the other hand, we are bidden so to esteem and regard whatever gifts of God we see in other men that we may honor those men in whom they reside. For it would be great depravity on our part to deprive them of that honor which the Lord has bestowed upon them. But we are taught to overlook their faults, certainly not flatteringly to cherish them; but not on account of such faults to revile men whom we ought to cherish with good will and honor. Thus it will come about that, whatever man we deal with, we shall treat him not only moderately and modestly but also cordially and as a friend. You will never attain true gentleness except by one path: a heart imbued with lowliness and with reverence for others.

John Calvin
Institutes, III, 7 [tr. L.C.C.]

Perspectives in Teaching

TEACHING COVENANT CHILDREN

Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

[Exodus 19:5, 6]

Constant devaluation of the dollar may hamper a country's economy, devaluation of words may become a danger to the church. The devaluation of a word like "Christian" is obvious: in church we may yet confess a Christian to be a member of Christ, partaking in His anointing, in the church yard already all non-heathens are referred to as "Christians." A keyword like "Covenant" runs the same risk of losing its specific meaning.

When we think of the Covenant the LORD made with His people Israel, it may be good to keep in mind that the making of this treaty was a historic event that happened roughly three thousand years ago. At that time, at Mount Sinai, the LORD made a covenant with Israel, very much like the vassal-treaties known in the political world of that day. This covenant does not have to be made over and over again with every individual; the Great Sovereign made it once and we and our children are subject to it. God the King chose Himself a people and there is no choice for His subjects but to subject themselves to His supreme reign. The King has set the rules: no other god beside Me, no self-willed service, no vain use of My Name, no ungodly behaviour toward Me or your neighbour; and the people obliged, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." (Ex. 19:8).

We all know that God's Covenant is not a parity treaty, an agreement between two equal parties in which each party has laid down his conditions; all conditions have been set by God, the obligations are ours. God's covenant is not temporary either; it is ever-lasting and not subject to change. It may be renewed, it may be stipulated in greater detail, it may be confirmed time and again, but it is not altered and never will become obsolete. Such is the Covenant which God made with Abraham, with Israel, with the believers.

The students in our schools are Covenant children and they must be treated as such since the LORD Himself treats them as such. These children are God's possession (Prof. B. Holwerda suggests the translation "God's treasure"), dignitaries in His Royal Service (a kingdom of priests), and a people which have been and must remain separated from the heathens and their way of living (a holy nation). We are to make our students aware of their unique position and of their bounden duties in school and "outside", in home, church, and society.

A proper view on the Covenant relationship forbids us to approach our students in an "evangelistic" way like, "The LORD wants you for His child, He offers you freely forgiveness of all your sins and eternal life; do not be so foolish as to ignore Father's outstretched hands . . ." for the Covenant HAS BEEN made; our student does not have to BECOME a Covenant child, he IS already! Non-acceptance is a breaking of the Covenant, disloyalty to the sovereign God.

With God, Covenant and faithfulness go together; they should go together with us also. A right view of

the Covenant bears fruits for the complete attitude of student and teacher: they shall be loyal, faithful in whatever they do. It will also direct the attention and interest of both teacher and student toward those things that matter in the world, that are significant for the Kingdom of which they are citizens and heirs.

The LORD in His Covenant demands love, obedience, and loyalty. Teachers and students both must try to meet these demands, to keep the Covenant. They will fail because they are sinful, and they will realize that their sins and shortcomings are violations, trespasses of the Covenant, but then they may know too that in that same Covenant relationship the Almighty God is a compassionate Father Who sent His Son to reconcile them to Him, to cover all Covenant-breaking transgressions. A proper view of the Covenant, conveyed to the students, causes an awareness of lacks and shortcomings, even of incompetence, but it may never lead to despair, because Christ Jesus is there: He subjected Himself to God's Covenant rules and to His Covenant wrath. In Him teachers and students alike find the rest which is promised, as if they "had never had nor committed any sin," and themselves "had accomplished all the obedience which Christ has rendered for them." (LORD's Day XXIII).

EWOU D GOSKER

Gifts for the Theological College

After a period of silence I gladly acknowledge the following gifts for our Theological College: A brother and sister who want to remain anonymous, donated \$300.00.

The young people of the Fraser Valley (the famous F.V.Y.P.L.) collected \$25.82 at a regular meeting and decided to send an extra cheque of \$200.00, an amount that they brought together at the Rally 1973. It goes without saying that we are very thankful for the faithful attention of our young brothers and sisters in the far West.

Another kind of rally took place in Toronto, Ont. There a number of Canadian Reformed boys played hockey together, and the club of Toronto donated an amount of \$50.00 to the Faculty of the College. It has to be put to a specific use. We will have a Faculty Meeting to decide upon this last point, and I shall be very interested in the discourses of my esteemed

colleagues. There is no doubt that they will be able to show the link between hockey and each of the five departments of Reformed theology.

The Ladies' Aid presented us a handy rack for boots. It found its place at the backdoor, but its efficiency was immediately noticeable in the whole building.

During my visit to Westminster Seminary I received a copy of a (rare) translation of Turretinus' *Institutio Theologiae Elencicae*. This was the handbook of Dogmatics in Presbyterian Seminaries until the end of the 19th century, and it was widely used even after the publication of Charles Hodge's *Systematic Theology*. Our library was already in possession of the Latin edition of *Turretini Opera*. We are thankful to Prof. Nurman Shepherd of Philadelphia for this translation. It helps us to stay in contact with our Reformed teachers in the past.

J. Faber

Studying the R.S.V. (3)

The general recommendation of our committee to the Standard Bible Committee, which has not yet been mentioned, concerns the text of the Old Testament.

THE MASSORETIC TEXT

All through the history of His people, God has seen to it that His Word was faithfully preserved and handed down to the next generation. So, for instance, during and after the Babylonian exile, the scribes as they were called, copied and passed on the Word of God.

These scribes were also active in the time of the Lord Jesus and derived much of their influence from the fact that they were officially responsible for an accurate transmission of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, as the Old Testament was called. The concern of the scribes for accuracy resulted in their being called "sopherim" (counters) because they counted the letters of the Law to make sure they missed none.

The work of the scribes came to an end about the beginning of the sixth century after Christ and in their place came the Massoretes ("trans-

mitters") as custodians of the sacred text. For some time a problem had beset the transmission of the text. The difficulty was that as Hebrew ceased to be a spoken tongue, the consonants, in which the Hebrew text was written, became open to misinterpretation since the reader had to supply the vowels in a language with which he was less and less familiar. The Massoretes, therefore, introduced vowel signs and other signs in the consonantal text, so that the text could be standardized and not be open to two or more readings. They made no changes in the consonantal text. If they were convinced that there was a scribal error, they would make a marginal note, but no changes were made in the text. So zealous were they in seeing to it that the text was accurately transmitted that they thought of all kinds of safeguards. As means of double checking to make sure no words were omitted in the copying process, they would count the number of letters in a book and note the middle letter. They did the same with the words. Peculiarities of spelling or positions and forms of letters were also noted. Of the Massoretic Texts, the text of the family of Ben Asher became the standard text. (The differences between the texts were mainly in the manner of vocalization.) This Massoretic text of Ben Asher is the text used in modern Hebrew Old Testaments.

ATTITUDES TO THE MASSORETIC TEXT

During most of the nineteenth century and the beginning of this century, "scholarship" has been highly critical of the accuracy of the Massoretic Text (MT) and suggested changes (emendations) wherever there was the slightest difficulty in understanding the meaning. Many verses ended up being completely re-written to "give more meaning." Generally speaking, the situation has undergone quite some change since then.

Two factors can be mentioned here. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has given important evidence for the accuracy of the MT. Wherever

these scrolls (which are up to 800 years older than the MT) include Old Testament material, they tend to support the MT and are often virtually identical to it. Another factor is that language studies have reminded scholars that words may have meanings which have not been adequately recognized up to now and that therefore words which seemed to be out of place or spelled wrong, could very well be in place and spelled correctly. The increased respect for the Hebrew text (MT) as we have it today, reminds us once again of God's providential care in giving His church His Word accurately. It must be added that this does not exclude the possibility of human error (scribal or Massoretic or otherwise), but the possible errors in writing and copying that exist are small and basically unimportant and should not be blown out of proportion. The Lord is faithful and gave His Word to His people also today, and therefore the modern conclusion that the Hebrew text has been transmitted with remarkable accuracy is not a surprising one. Because of the increased respect for the Massoretic text, increased caution is also being recommended in the use made of other ancient versions, such as the Greek translation, to save text difficulties.

CORRECTIONS

The reader of the Old Testament in the RSV will notice that every once in a while he will meet footnotes showing the correction sign (cn) followed by a translation of what the Hebrew or Massoretic text has. According to the preface, such corrections mean that the translators are convinced that there is an error, but that the other ancient versions give no help. So the only thing left is to come up with a probable correction or solution to the difficulty. There are about 349 corrections like this in the RSV Old Testament.

HOSEA

The committee on the RSV appointed by synod was interested in knowing how some of these "corrections" would stand up under closer scrutiny and whether the Massoretic text did indeed always have to be changed so that sense could be made of the passage in question. The committee decided to examine the corrections which are made in Hosea with a view to seeing whether the correc-



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tions (or changes and emendations) were justified and with a view to determining what principles govern the corrections or emendations made. Since most scholars seem to agree that the text of Hosea is probably the most difficult or more corrupt (depending on one's view of the MT), the Book of Hosea was selected. After all the RSV corrections were studied, one of the observations was that of the 31 places marked "correction" by the RSV, 23 were found to be unwarranted, and 5 were possibly warranted. Interestingly enough, if one compared the translation of the passages in which the RSV makes corrections, with the way the New Dutch Translation handles them, then one notices that the New Dutch Translation makes only 1 or 2 corrections where the RSV makes 31. The same is basically true of the New American Standard Bible. The difference between these translations and the RSV is that the New Dutch and NASB have different understandings of the texts involved and make use of different translation possibilities without changing the text.

Why did the RSV not make use of different translation possibilities? Were they not known to them? If one looks at the dates of completion of the New Dutch Translation (Old Testament in 1951) and the RSV (Old Testament in 1952) one notices that the RSV had essentially the same philological data available to them as the Dutch had and yet they did not always use them, where the Dutch did. (e.g. Hosea 7:12). The RSV therefore seems to resort more easily to changing the text and thereby betrays a mistrust of the Hebrew text which is not justified. As a result of the above, the committee decided that the only clear principle that seemed to emerge in the RSV as far as corrections go is the principle of a Hebrew text hopelessly full of error.

Did the RSV translators change the text more easily in order to produce a translation which would reflect a specifically liberal theology? Corrections with this motive are very difficult to find in the corrections made in Hosea.

Why then is there such an excessive changing of the text? As mentioned already this betrays an unjustified mistrust in the Hebrew text. This mistrust could be the result of a weak view of Scripture, and if this is not the case, it could lead to a weak view of

Scripture and the depreciating of the divine role in preserving it. However, the fact that Reformed exegetes, in days when changing the text was in vogue, also resorted to emendations which we may think excessive now, should caution one against immediately concluding on the basis of this point alone that excessive emendation is a definite proof of liberalism or unscriptural influences in the RSV translation. Other factors have to be considered.

OTHER FACTORS

During preliminary orientation, the feeling in the committee was that the RSV was simply outdated with respect to the Old Testament corrections and that a future edition would automatically make improvements here. However, the fact that the Dutch could provide a better translation in the same period of time with basically the same scholarly resources has led the committee to think differently. Perhaps the matter of "correcting" the text should be seen in the light of the sponsorship that the RSV translation and the New Dutch translation enjoyed. The matter of sponsorship seems to show that the differences in the translations, on this important point of emendation, are probably at bottom theological. There is reason for this suggestion when one considers that the Dutch translation enjoyed the services of a much wider and more even proportion of scholars who would of course tend to set off and negate each other's theological convictions as these tended to influence the translation. The chairman was for instance F.W. Grosheide, and the sponsor was the Netherlands Bible Society. With the RSV, however, the sponsorship was much narrower. It was authorized by churches through their educational boards associated with the International Council of Religious Education and so ended up in the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. The theological representation was consequently much narrower, with liberals being quite obviously the overwhelming majority. One with a liberal theology would have much less difficulty in changing the text than, say, a Reformed Scholar. Indeed, liberals, considering their convictions, could be expected to change the Hebrew text quite easily even when not absolutely necessary, and so undermine

confidence in the authority and trustworthiness of the Bible, as the inerrant Word of God, in the hearts of the simple believers who see a Bible with all kinds of corrections.

It is dangerous to draw conclusions from a study as brief as the Hosea study was. The committee however felt that, in the framework of the above, the emendations, as having been shown (in the study) to be less than necessary in Hosea, betray a theological position critical of the authority and trustworthiness of Scripture.

C. VAN DAM

Church News

Declined:

REVEREND W. HUIZINGA

of London/Watford, Ontario has declined a call extended to him by the Church of Neerlandia, Alberta.

* * *

NEW ADDRESSES:

Clerk of the Consistory of Grand Rapids, U.S.A., from now on is:

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Letter-to-the-Editor

In the News Medley of Clarion #3 of volume 23, dated Feb. 9, 1974, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene makes a reference to the method by which the Church at Orangeville obtains the contribution for the College.

We do not blame the editor of this column for having a different opinion on how to obtain the financial means for the church expenditures. However, his statement that "Orangeville decided to bring the amount for the College together by means of collections, which definitely is a step backwards" is definitely a wrong statement.

Rev. W.W.J. VanOene knows that Orangeville has held the collection for the College for several years already; therefore we feel he is not justified in calling this "a step backward" since it has in actual fact remained the same for this year as it has in the past. For the Consistory, A. VanSydenborgh

The Office and Duty of the Organist⁽²⁾

THE ORGANIST AND HIS ART

First we saw that an organist has to be a believer, if he is to do his task in the worship service properly.

Although his spiritual disposition comes first, it can never replace the artistic know-how. Faith, indispensable as it may be, does not make a person a capable organist; talents for and skills in organ playing must go with it. When the tabernacle was built, God Himself filled men with His Spirit so that they could think of designs (Ex. 31:3, 4). There follows for added emphasis: "and I have given to able men ability" (31:6). Chronicles, in dealing with the singers, speaks about people "who were *trained* in singing to the Lord" (1 Chr. 25:7) The word "skilful" is even used in this context.

From this it becomes clear that we should not be satisfied with a minimum, but should strive for the maximum (the optimum). Our rule should be: our best is not really good enough, for Christ holds the demand of perfection before us.

For that reason the organist has to be an artist. "The church selects that brother," according to Milo, "who perceives the churchsong correctly and who has developed his skills in order to lead the singing in the best possible manner. No one is born with this ability. Only his talents did the artist receive from His Creator; for the development and use of his gifts he himself is responsible . . . Some of us are born with a fine sense of justice, a warm love for humanity, with leadership qualities, or with an acute religious consciousness. Can these people by virtue of their inborn abilities present themselves as lawyers, ministers of social welfare, officers, or preachers? Neither does an organist become a skilled professional by the bare fact of his musical talents alone. The most musically gifted person would not be accepted by an orchestra, unless he has received a sound training. Even less should such an untrained person be allowed to play during the worship service." (1)

THE ORGANIST AND HIS TRAINING

This brings us to the next point: the training of the organist. Regretfully, only a few of our churches have a proper tracker organ. Often we have to be satisfied with a harmonium, sometimes with a piano, or (the less said about them the better) electronics.

Among us professional organists are even rarer than proper church organs. If we have such persons let us treasure them! In the course of time many organists became estranged from the church. Of course, they have themselves to blame, too. Where was their faith when they had to make the choice between a lesser organ within the Reformed church or a better organ without? Such a choice must be made in faith. It remains a sad thing that a man like Jan Zwart became organist of a Lutheran church in Amsterdam. How many of the professional organists, in accepting a position, gave up their church membership or even their faith? At the same time, however, I ask: did the

churches always understand the needs or problems of the organist? (I am not talking about money in the first place). Has there often not been misunderstanding or lack of appreciation that made these persons feel isolated from the congregation?

Training then is needed and that training we must appreciate. The organist should not play all kinds of bravura to show off his virtuosity and the congregation should not react too quickly to an effort by the organist to remain "fresh": "All modern stuff, you can keep it!"

Our requirements should not be put on the low side. One does not become an organist in a few years, if previous training is lacking. Where studies have to be undertaken in spare time, one can count on at least five years. Even then it still depends greatly on the talents of the teacher whether or not one will pass a comparative examination.

Do stimulate this study! We live in a time in which the modern media offer us everything in the easiest possible manner. Seated in a comfortable chair all things are within easy reach. You don't have to do anything for it. Our youth has to be stimulated to activity and creativity, especially now that leisure time increases. Let it not happen again that a minister, when he was unable to find an organist in the congregation, was forced to ask an accordionist to take place on the organ bench. The next Sunday the good man had to play with hands and feet already.

Comparative examination are necessary. The organ committee should not select the least poor from among all the poor candidates. They must have the courage to state that no choice could be made and to advise the candidates to study some more. At best only a temporary appointment can be made under such circumstances.

Apart from competent playing of independent organ music, the organist must, above all, be capable of accompanying the congregation. That means: that he must make the psalmtunes his own and know the churchmodes. "Accompanying," writes Rev. H. Hasper, "means to go along with someone. It neither means to run ahead or drag along, nor to follow or to lag behind, but to be where the other is, not to lose him, if necessary to help him along, to escort him and so create a sense of security and peace." Hasper adds that an organist neglects his duty if he, during the singing of the congregation, does something other than accompanying and supporting. (2).

THE ORGANIST AND HIS HONORARIUM

If the church has capable organists in its employ, they must be esteemed, too. That, in the first place, means honouring him. Also the organist is worthy of honour if he does his work well. Does this have to be expressed in money? Here I touch a hot issue. On purpose I left out one of the stanzas of Van Mijderwijk's poem and quote it now in this context.

Renumerations for his service
Are generally quite small
(Or as frequently the case is

Th' organist gets none at all).
 For 'it broadens his horizon'.
 'Tis a labour-o'-love you know.'
 But the worn seat of his trousers
 Is but all he's got to show.

Nota bene: this stanza dates from a few decades ago. Since then the standard of living has risen considerably. Salaries of church functionaries have risen. Those of the organist, too?

"It has to be a labour of love," is often the reaction. Sometimes one adds naughtily: "He misses the collection already, too!"

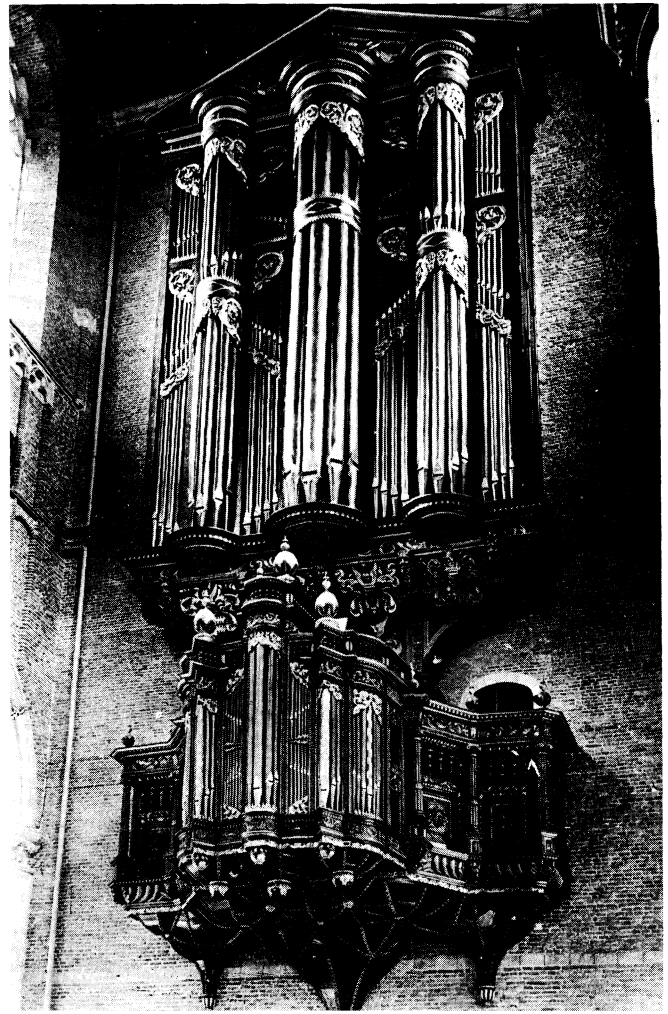
I am afraid that in most cases his honorarium is no more than a sort of indemnification for services rendered during the week and then almost exclusively for marriage ceremonies. Sometimes forced, I am told, because no organist would show up otherwise. They simply couldn't always quit early or take half a day off.

One is quick to draw a comparison with the special office bearer, not with the minister but with the elder and deacon. It is said: how much free time do not these men often give to the church and that also is a labour of love. In the first place I wish to point out that everything in the church is a labour of love, in the sense that it must come from and be done in love. It is not possible to pay for all the hours given. Nobody would want that either. But if an elder, in the course of his duties, regularly has taken time off, e.g. as a delegate to all sorts of meetings, it shouldn't happen that he should have to give up all his holidays for that. It must be possible to indemnify him or at least offer to do that.

Furthermore I wish to speak in favour of making it possible for elders and deacons to keep up with the literature pertaining to their office. If they are to prove the spirits, if they are to remain fresh on home visits, in short, if they are to discharge their offices faithfully, they must study. That costs money. This they should not have to pay out of their own pockets.

Let me extend this parallel. We should at least, I believe, enable the organists to keep up with the developments in his field. They should not have to ask for that; it should be offered to them. They want to put their talents at the disposal of the church community. With love. That comes first. But more is needed than time. They must study if they do not want to play the same old tune over and over. For that books are needed, books about music, books about the worship service, also books with music for before, during, and after the service.

It becomes more difficult when we are dealing with professional organists. I would not like to make a rule, but would like to plead for proper remuneration, which does not turn it into just another job, but which shows appreciation for the work done. Will that kill the love? I am not afraid of that. Milo writes in this connection: "Where the organists form the musical conscience of the church, there is no place for wage-slaves or misers, but for church-members who vigorously stimulate the church's sacred song. And that not only by virtue of inborn talents, but also by virtue of sound training and costly sacrifices . . . Truly, even if they were paid, the character of the labour of love would not be lost." (3) In a footnote he adds: "Even though the comparison with the Levitical singers and instrumentalists is faulty (for theirs was a spiritual office), it is not superfluous to show how the Levite was honoured according to God's law; the tithes were their rewards for services



Orgel Pieterskerk - Leiden Holland

rendered (Num. 18:31); they were free from other service, for they were on duty day and night (I Chron. 9:33); the people were not to forsake the Levite (Deut. 12:19), and when they did that Nehemiah remonstrated with the officials (Neh. 13:10, 11), for the singers, who did work, had fled each to his field and the house of God was forsaken. Yet . . . no one can deny that they performed a labour of love: the Dutch metrical psalter even speaks of a "burning with zeal for the service of the Lord." (Ps. 134) (4)

K. DEDDENS

[*Trans. from De Reformatie by S. VanderPloeg*]

- (1) Milo, *op. cit.*, p. 218.
- (2) H. Hasper, *Een reformatorisch kerkboek*, Leeuwarden, 1941, pp. 140, 141.
- (3) Milo, *op. cit.*, p. 218.
- (4) *Ibid.*, p. 231 n.

OUR COVER

The City of Winnipeg, which celebrates its centennial this year, is a metropolis with over half a million inhabitants. The sketch on our cover provides a startling contrast with the present. The scene which it depicts was officially identified as "Winnipeg Streets: Main #62 south from Market, 1870". [Courtesy Manitoba Archives]

news medley

On the morning of the day when I wrote this Medley, I went to the Post Office to see whether there were more bulletins which might provide us with some interesting news items. But when I got there, the mailbox was bare, so this poor man got none. That was the first time in many, many months, maybe even years, that there was not a single piece of mail waiting for me. The reason for this disappointment was, of course, that there are several strikes going on at the moment: postal employees, airline employees and what all employees may have decided to take some time off from work. Contract or no contract, it seems to be a habit nowadays to complain bitterly only when an employer does not honour his contract. As for the rest, we are assured that those breaking their contract and breaking the law "are prepared to go to jail". They know perfectly well that there are not enough jails to hold them all, and therefore they show utter contempt for the law. Let those loudmouths try to do a similar thing in China: they would be facing a firing squad in no time flat. But we live in a society in which those who are in authority themselves make a mockery of the law in many respects (think only of capital punishment and the matter of abortion!) and do not uphold the authority given to them by the Lord.

There was another point which I pondered when I returned from the post office empty-handed. It was this point: How good competition is! The Federal Government has monopolized the mail services and no one else has the right to establish a system through which the mails could be transported and distributed. Big companies are sometimes sued because they have combined in their efforts to fix the price of certain commodities: there should remain competition! But the federal government itself excludes any possibility of competition by forbidding anyone to act as mail carrier. The result is that the labour unions which



The home of the family J. Kuik in Sao Jose da Coroa Grande

cover the postal employees have an almost limitless power: they also oppose progress. When automation is introduced in order to speed up the mails and to keep the cost down, protests are heard, even though no one presently employed will lose his job! And if the demands are not met, a walkout or "study session" is the result, in clear breach of contract. There are not enough jails anyway. Meanwhile, pensioners are waiting for their cheques, which they need badly; businesses are losing money because either advertising material or personal letters do not reach those for whom they are intended; and I, the poor writer of the News Medley, could have made it so much more interesting if I had received more bulletins which, most likely, got stuck somewhere in the middle.

But the main point is: When the Government, with the power at its disposal, monopolizes something (as it did with the mails, for instance) it thereby violates the anti-trust laws in spirit, lays a heavier load upon the citizens, and provides at the same time an opportunity for a few to disrupt the life of the whole country. Could we not have a **good** article about this point by someone who knows something about it, instead of my chatter?

Let's turn to some healthier and more joyful things.

A few issues ago, I mentioned the 45th wedding anniversary of brother and sister D. Dewitt of Eden Mills. Again it appeared that our Medley is being read and that the brotherhood shows the unity of the body of Christ, for they received many letters and cards from all over the country, for which they expressed their gratitude. I pass this on to let you know that it is being appreciated when you send a card or otherwise let the "victims" know that they are not forgotten. Meanwhile, we have another couple celebrating the same event: Brother and sister G. Tenhage of Guelph will celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary, the Lord willing, on May 4th. Also to them we extend our heartfelt congratulations, expressing the wish that our gracious God may fulfil in old age all the promises given to those who fear Him.

We are speaking of persons anyway, and might just as well mention it here that the Hamilton Consistory received word from the Rev. and Mrs. W. Loopstra that they expected to be back in their midst around the 16th of April. I have not yet heard of it, but they must be back by now. They have been away the cold winter months, and spent part of the time in South Africa. I'll tell you later whether they have a good tan or not.

It has nothing to do with retired ministers (yet) but now that I mentioned Hamilton: the committee for the establishment of a home for the aged and infirm did some preliminary investigation and scheduled a meeting for April 29th.

From the Lincoln-Smithville area we also hear good news in this respect: In Lincoln some 25 forms were received back and in Smithville approximately 30. All those returning the forms were in favour of staying in the immediate area for a home for the aged. Now some meetings are scheduled at which the matter will be discussed more thoroughly.

Lincoln also mentioned in the brief press release "Financial Statement of the Theol. College and the Budget for 1974. A Tax Roll is also enclosed for registration of the correct number of members." It is that expression "tax roll" which gives me a bad taste. I checked it and made sure that the Treasurer of our College did not use that expression. He requested very politely to fill out and return

his "questionnaire" to prevent extra work later on. I always thought that contributing towards the College was a work of love and gratitude, something which cannot be said at all times of filling out tax forms and paying a balance. Speaking of a "tax roll" is not a very good way of promoting the love of our College.

We stay in Ontario for a while. Rev. and Mrs. G. VanDooren have returned safely from a mid-term holiday. It did them good, as far as I could see. The catechism classes were taken care of meanwhile by Prof. L. Selles and Mr. S. DeBruin.

The Burlington East Committee of Administration was asked to come up with a new design for the sign in front of the Church building towards the time that Burlington West will have left to use their own building. Maybe they can get some advice from Hamilton, if they wish to spend one thousand dollars, that is.

Burlington West are busy with their own Church building, which is in the process of being built. A name has been chosen, namely: REHOBOTH, derived from Gen. 26:22: "The LORD has made room for us". Eight different names were proposed: Elihoenai, Beacon Hill, Shilo, Benaja, Shalom, Elim, and Maranatha. And then, of course, the one that was chosen.

The bulletin also contained a progress report. Construction has started. A large area of solid rock had to be removed by blasting. Yes, I was there and saw the hole. I was almost inclined to think that "rehoboth" was a very proper name, for there was lots of room in the hole, so much room that I could hardly find the brethren working down there. At a given moment I was struck by the thought that it could have been in British Columbia, when I saw the giant pieces of rock lying around. This will be a Church built on rock, also literally. The rock that was blasted out of the hole for the basement found a good place: it was used to make a driveway base, and a good one at that! When I was there, the forms were being prepared for the footings and cement may have been poured by now. I'll have a look this coming Monday.

We leave Ontario. On our way West we stop in Edmonton. The Consistory there decided to read only part of the Form for the Lord's Supper in the morning service, and to read the Conclusion in the afternoon. That's how I have been doing it for years and the brethren will experience that this method is the most satisfactory one. It is not ideal, I admit. It would be ideal if we could sit all together around one table, or at least that the celebration of the holy supper were confined to one service. For practical reasons that seems not to be possible. Then it appears to be best as Edmonton is going to do it now.

The Smorgasbord seems to have recovered, for the Ladies Aid tells us that now it would be held on April 20. That is long past by the time you read this. There is one piece of information about which I am sort of curious. We are assured that the "Food is delicious". The ladies must have sampled it and I do not doubt that it was delicious when they tasted it. But, those words were written some time before April 13th. I am wondering how they kept it delicious till the 20th and whether it was not a little stale by then. But then: our ladies are very inventive.

The School Society also had a meeting. Maybe Rev. M. Werkman can tell more about it in the School Crossing, but I may inform you that the following items are of interest; only, I do not know whether they were just proposals brought forward or decisions made upon the

50th Wedding Anniversary



The Lord willing, Mr. and Mrs. K. VanderVelde hope to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on May 22 with an open house in the hall of Cornerstone Can. Ref. Church, Hamilton. Klaas VanderVelde, born July 1896 in Lutjegast, and Foekje VanderVelde (nee Horstman), born January 1900, were united in marriage on May 22, 1924, in Groningen. In 1951 the VanderVelde's and their son Gerrit came to Canada and settled in the Hamilton area. Mr. VanderVelde, known to many as "Oom Klaas", worked for Van's Importing until he retired in 1967. He is still active as the administrator for the Church at Hamilton, a post he has held for over 20 years. Brother and sister VanderVelde have two grandchildren. Their address is 36 Durham Road, Stoney Creek, Ontario.

proposals. "Proposal to have building plans made up in three stages: Grades 1-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Notice of Motion to have membership fee raised retroactive Jan. 1, '74, to \$25.00 a month. Will be discussed at board meeting and brought forward at next general meeting." Our experience is that, if you wish to achieve something, you will have to go considerably higher than \$25.00 per month. It is also advantageous for the members to set the membership fee as high as possible, for then the tuition fee (which is **not** tax deductible) can be set lower once you start the school. Besides, people become used to it to pay so much per month, and the sooner they become used to that, the better it is. At first you look at that higher amount and think: "It will never come in," but experience also teaches that once the whole management of family finances has been arranged with the school contribution in mind, there are only very few who do not meet their obligations.

The Smithers school society also has plans for expansion. It will be quite a building once it is finished.

And the Smithers Consistory discussed "disturbance during worship services". It appears that this disturbance is caused from within, for two elders were appointed "to visit the young people to have them spread more in different places in the church, also the cooperation of the parents is requested."

Smithers further held "Censura Interna". Don't go too far, brethren, I am scared of mysticism!

vO

Understanding the Old Testament

NAHUM [14]

NINEVEH COMPARED WITH
(EGYPTIAN) THEBES - Ch. 3:8-11

RSV.: (8) ARE YOU BETTER THAN
THEBES THAT SAT BY THE
NILE, WITH WATER AROUND
HER, HER RAMPART A SEA,
AND WATER HER WALL?

(9) ETHIOPIA WAS HER
STRENGTH, EGYPT TOO,
AND THAT WITHOUT LIMIT;
PUT AND THE LIBYANS
WERE HER HELPERS.

A.V.: (8) ART THOU BETTER THAN
POPULOUS NO, THAT WAS
SITUATE AMONG THE
RIVERS, THAT HAD THE
WATERS ROUND ABOUT IT,
WHOSE RAMPART WAS THE
SEA, AND HER WALL WAS
FROM THE SEA?

(9) ETHIOPIA AND EGYPT
WERE HER STRENGTH, AND
IT WAS INFINITE; PUT AND
LUBIM WERE THY HELPERS.

In mentioning No Amon - which was in the O.T. the name of a famous city, well-known from other sources by the name of Thebes - the prophet leads the thoughts of his hearers and readers to Egypt, even as far as the southern part of the land, the part usually called Upper Egypt, as distinct from Lower Egypt, the northern part comprising the Delta and the lower course of the River Nile.

It was about the 21st century B.C. - so probably prior to the time of the patriarchs - that the previously small provincial town, in an unknown and unimportant district, rose to power. In those times the town did not enjoy remarkable advantages as compared with other cities. Nevertheless it was Thebes which won the decisive battle in the civil war which had struck Egypt for a time. Along with the city, its god Amon emerged into prominence and went on ultimately to universal dominion. The name of the god is preserved in the name the city has in the O.T.: No Amon, the Hebrew rendering of the Egyptian name *n-w-t 'm-n* (= city of Amon). In Jer. 46:25 and Ez. 30:

14-16 the same city is mentioned only as: No. The city evidently had still another name: Tahut-ipet, which later on was slightly adapted by the Greeks to approximate the name of the famous city of Thebes, in the centre of Greece. By this name it is always mentioned in the history books and that is why we find it in the R.S.V. The R.S.V. is preferable to A.V. "populous No".

Since the 16th century B.C., the period between Joseph's death and Moses' birth, the pharaoh's of Egypt's so-called New Kingdom resided there, making it the capital of an extensive empire, the frontiers of which reached as far as Ethiopia to the south and Mesopotamia to the north. When about 1580 B.C. the Theban dynasty emerged as the liberators of Egypt from "the impious oppression" of the Hyksos (under those Hyksos Jacob's family presumably had entered Egypt, and the first king of the Theban dynasty was the pharaoh "who did not know Joseph", Ex. 1:8), the Theban god Amon emerged as clearly the "King of the Gods". His name, Amon, means the "Hidden One", the invisible god of air, who might be everywhere and thus easily become the god of far-flung empire and the universal deity when the fortunes of the empire carried him abroad.

In those glorious days of the powerful kingdom the still mightier God of Israel brought his people out of the land, which had been unto them the house of bondage. This exodus took place about 1423 B.C. Yahweh on that occasion revealed Himself to be mightier than the pharaoh Amen-hotep II and the god Amon that he relied upon.

The wealth and riches of these times have been brought to light by the work of archaeologists. Where once Thebes lay, today the villages of Karnak and Luqsor are located, both on the east bank of the river Nile; they have a great reputation because of the temple of Amon. On the west bank of the Nile, opposite Karnak and

Luqsor in the Valley of the Kings, the tombs of the rulers of Egypt - among which the world-famous one of Tutankhamon - were discovered. These give a clear insight into the life and culture of ancient Egypt.

Since about the middle of the 12th century a period of decline set in. It was a time of turbulence and changing authority. King Shishak (I Kings 14:25 ff.) was the founder of the 22nd Libyan dynasty, and in the time Nahum refers to, it was the 25th Ethiopian dynasty that wielded power, from about 715 to 664. Egypt was ruled from what today is Nubia. No Amon or Thebes was the seat of a governor.

The geographical situation of this city is expressed more solemnly by the R.S.V., which I prefer here to A.V. "that was situate among rivers." The word "rivers" (Hebr.: *je 'ôrim*) is the plural of the word *je 'ôr* (= the proper name of the Nile), and in using the plural form for what is one river, the author may indicate either the branches and canals of the river or the river itself in its impressive appearance in the surrounding Egyptian landscape, which was totally dependent upon this river. In the R.S.V. Thebes is pictured as a queen sitting or residing by the Nile. However, taking into consideration what follows, "with water around her", something is to be said in favour of the A.V. We know that, when the Nile rises, it overflows the site of Thebes, the waters ascending several feet up the walls of the temple at Karnak. At such times the city might well have been described as protected by a sea, or surrounded by waters.

But that was just in one season - about May to October. If it was to hold good for the entire year the city must have been surrounded by a system of river branches, or at least canals, offering protection against the enemy. So we read: "her rampart a sea" (not: the sea, as the A.V. renders erroneously, for Thebes was not situated on the coast of the Mediterranean). The word translated by "rampart" applies primarily to the moats of a fortification, with the wall belonging to it. "And water her wall," the R.S.V. renders, and also here I prefer it to the A.V.: "her wall was from the sea". The slight emendation of the Hebrew text* is justified, I guess.

That Ethiopia is mentioned first, becomes understandable if we take

into account that it was an Ethiopian (or better: Nubian) dynasty that ruled Egypt for some 50 years. In the second place Egypt is mentioned. And it is not gratuitous or a matter of course, because for a long time two dynasties had reigned over Egypt simultaneously, one in the south and the other in the Delta. So there was no end, no limit, to the power of Thebes, in a manner of speaking. The more so, because she could avail herself of the riches, the treasures, of Put (present-day Somaliland), while its army was reinforced by auxiliary troops from Libya.

(10a) YET SHE WAS CARRIED AWAY, SHE WENT INTO CAPTIVITY.

After having pointed out all the advantages of the city of Thebes or No Amon, the prophet goes on: "Yet she was carried away." It was a spectacular fact that remote Thebes was captured by Assyria. What was deemed impossible became a fact, nevertheless. In 671 B.C. the Assyrian king Esarhaddon (cp. 2 Kings 19:37) made the first expedition against Egypt and captured Memphis, the Nof of the Bible, the "capital" of northern Egypt. His son and successor Ashurbanipal had no sooner taken up the reins of government than he went to Egypt to beat down an insurrection of the unreliable vassals there under the leadership of Tirhaka (cp. 2 Kings 19:9). Tirhaka was defeated and fled to the south, to Thebes, in order to continue the rebellion from this city. He soon died and was succeeded by his nephew Tandamane, who stirred up all of Egypt against Assyria. In consequence of that, the Assyrian army marched once more against Egypt, and the unbelievable came true: Even Thebes was captured and sacked. Everyone who heard of it was quite impressed, and it was the topic of the day. So, it is understandable that Nahum - whose prophecy probably dates back to this time - made a reference to the event. Even Thebes - that is the best translation - . . . for exile . . . she went into captivity. Who would ever have expected a thing like that! If anything, it was Thebes which was beyond the reach of the Assyrian army! In Ashurbanipal's account of the capture of Thebes he says: "that entire city under the protection of Ashur and Ishtar, my hands captured silver, gold, precious stones, the contents of its palace, all that there was:

parti-coloured raiment, cloth, horses, and people, male and female. Two tall obelisks . . . I removed from their place and took to Assyria. Heavy spoils without number I carried off from Thebes."

How the Assyrian soldiers played havoc among the population we learn from the following lines: "her little ones were dashed in pieces at the head of every street" (cp. Ps. 137:9, Hosea 10:14, 13:16). We may shiver in reading. "For her honoured men lots were cast." So, the nobility was not even dealt with like men, but like things, without considering their feelings, or making allowance for their condition. "And all her great men were bound in chains."

RSV.: (11) YOU ALSO WILL BE DRUNKEN, YOU WILL BE DAZED; YOU WILL SEEK A REFUGE FROM THE ENEMY.
A.V.: (11) THOU ALSO SHALT BE DRUNKEN: THOU SHALT BE HID, THOU ALSO SHALT SEEK STRENGTH BECAUSE OF THE ENEMY.

And now the prophet turns toward Nineveh, although the city was addressed already in the question of vs. 8: Art thou better? "Better" is not to be taken here in an ethical respect: more virtuous, more righteous. It is applied here to the prosperous condi-

tion of the city of Thebes, which was rendered strong both by its situation and its resources.

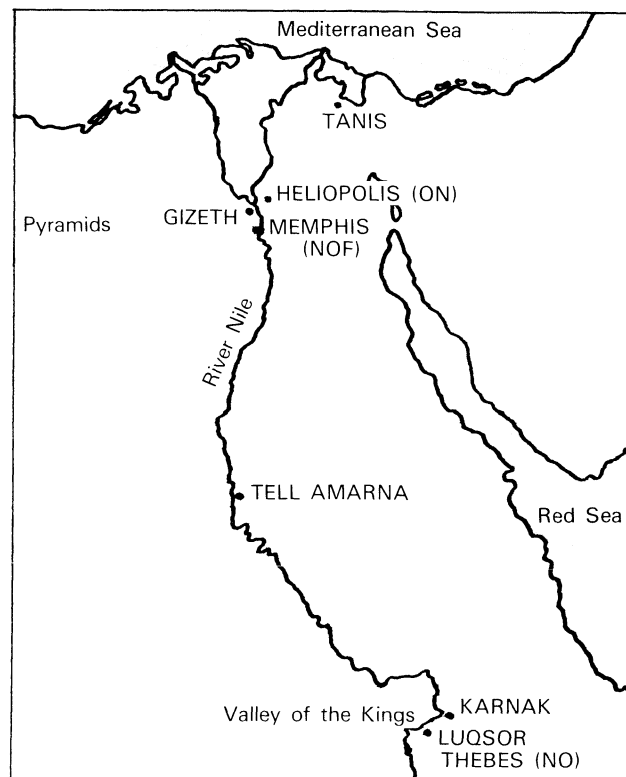
"You also will be drunken," reeling, tottering like an intoxicated person, who has lost control over himself and finally lands in the gutter. One may compare here Jer. 25:27, Lam. 4:21. I think the utter despair is indicated here.

"Thou shalt be hid" (A.V.) is more in accordance with the Hebrew text here than the RSV unless one is in favour of an emendation of the text. Keil objects: "An intoxicated person is not in the habit of hiding himself." He deems Calvin's interpretation the correct one: "Thou wilt vanish away as if thou hadst never been" Hebrew frequently uses the expression "being hidden" for: being reduced to nothing. There is something to be said in favour of Th. Laetsch's explanation: "Hid" beneath huge masses of sand, gone from sight.

But I think it is better to consider it here as: hiding yourself from fear. So it anticipates the thought of the following line: "You will seek a refuge from the enemy." Which, of course, cannot be done by someone who has vanished already.

H.M. OHMANN

**majim* instead of *mijjām*



Press Release

PRESS RELEASE of the Classis of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Alberta and Manitoba, held on March 5 and 6, 1974, in Edmonton.

Brother D. Teitsma, on behalf of the convening Church at Winnipeg called the meeting to order. Zechariah 3 was read and Psalm 95:1, 3 sung. In his opening word he remembered the passing away of Rev. H.A. Stel, the vacancy of the Church at Winnipeg, and the forthcoming vacancy of the Church at Neerlandia.

Classis is then constituted with all the Churches duly represented. Rev. J. Geertsema is chairman, Rev. J. Visscher clerk, Rev. D. DeJong vice-chairman.

The president in his opening word also remembers Rev. H.A. Stel, who passed away after a year of illness. He was one of the first ministers called to serve in the Canadian Reformed Churches, and served the greater part of these years in this Classis. We thank the Lord for all that the Lord has given in this minister to the Churches. The president expresses the wish that soon the Church at Winnipeg may receive another minister. Also the forthcoming departure of Rev. C. VanDam is mentioned, and our regret that he leaves us so soon. May the Lord also give the Churches at Neerlandia and Barrhead a new minister again. The Church at Calgary received in the meantime its own minister and is congratulated with this. The Church at Carman could keep its minister, who declined the call for the Church at Hamilton.

The agenda is now adopted.

Incoming Correspondence. a. A letter of the clerk of the previous classis with some corrections of printing-errors in the Acts of previous Classis is read.

b. A letter of the Church at Neerlandia informs Classis that its pastor, Rev. C. VanDam, accepted the call to the Church at Brampton, Ont., and received honourable dismissal per April 22, 1974; the Church at Neerlandia requests that also the Classis give Rev. VanDam a Certificate of Dismissal from his service in this classis. It is decided to grant Rev. C. VanDam honourable dismissal as requested and to give him a Certificate of Dismissal in duplo, one for himself and one for Classis Ontario-North.

c. Two letters of br. J. Merkus and br. K. Visscher of Edmonton with objections against decisions of the Consistory of the Church at Edmonton. These brothers are referred to decisions of previous Classis in the same matter.

d. The Church at Winnipeg asks

Classis to appoint Rev. J. Geertsema as Counsellor, which request is granted. The delegates of the Church at Neerlandia request Classis to appoint Rev. D. DeJong as Counsellor. Also this request is granted.

Reports. a. Report from the Church at Edmonton about auditing the books of the treasurer. The books are found in good order.

b. The Committee for change in time of examination in Doctrine and Creeds proposes to change the time from 20 to 30 minutes. Adopted.

c. Deputies for Needy Churches propose:

1. The churches start their three-monthly contributions, according to what was pledged by them, to the deputies in the second quarter of this year 1974, so that the deputies are able to provide the Church at Calgary with the pledged help of \$1,015.00 at the beginning of every three-month period, beginning July 1, 1974. Adopted.

2. The Classis appoint one other deputy instead of br. D. DeRuiter. Adopted.

d. A report on the manner of reporting church visitations to Classis is read. The conclusions as proposed by the Committee are adopted. They read as follows:

1. It is the duty of Church Visitors to report to Classis about their findings and actions. *Ground:* Art. 49 C.O. spells out the duty of Deputies as follows: 'And all those deputies shall keep proper record of all their actions to report thereof to Synod.' This is also applicable to deputies of a Classis, Church Visitors included since they too are deputies.

2. Church Visitors shall not make public in their report difficulties which have been solved, except the fact that certain difficulties were solved. *Ground:* The authorization of Church Visitors as spelled out in art. 44 C.O.

e. The Church at Barrhead reports that the Archives are in good order, up to March 1973.

Question-period ad art. 41 C.O. is held. No matters are brought forward.

Appointment of Deputies. Treasurer: br. E.C. Koning; Deputies for Preaching - Arrangements: Since there is no need for these deputies at this time, the left deputy br. L. Toet is, with thanks for the work done, discharged. Deputies ad Examina: Rev. D. DeJong and Rev. J. Visscher; Examiners: Deaconological - Rev. J. Visscher; Old Testament - Rev. R. Boersema. Inspection of Archives: Church at Barrhead; Deputies ad Art. 19 C.O.: brs. S. Tuininga, T. Vanden-

Brink, C. Veldkamp; Archives: Church at Edmonton; Deputies Needy Churches: Rev. J. Geertsema, brs. C. Poppe, T.M. Veenendaal.

Classis appoints br. T. VandenBrink to go over the Classical Regulations, especially regarding appointment of Deputies, and to report to next Classis.

Delegates to Regional Synod. Classis decides, because of the changes which occurred with respect to several earlier appointed delegates, to annul all previous appointments of delegates and to appoint: Ministers: Rev. D. DeJong, Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. J. Visscher. Elders: C. Hoogendijk, D. Teitsma, E. Wierenga. Alternates: G. Veenendaal, C. Veldkamp, P. Doorten, Ch. Bosch, P. VanBostelen (in that order).

Preaching Arrangements. The following ministers will serve the Churches at Barrhead and Neerlandia: May 19 - Rev. D. DeJong; June 30 - Rev. J. Visscher; July 21 - Rev. R. Boersema; Aug. 11 - Rev. D. DeJong; Sept. 8 - Rev. J. Visscher; Oct. 6 - Rev. R. Boersema; Nov. 3 - Rev. D. DeJong.

Next Classis. Convening Church is the Church at Barrhead. The meeting will be at Edmonton on October 22, 1974, Tuesday, 8 p.m. Suggested officers: chairman - D. DeJong; clerk - J. Geertsema; vice-chairman - J. Visscher.

Personal Question-period is held. It was asked to alternate the place of meetings between Edmonton and Calgary. Classis decides that the next Spring Classis will be held in Calgary.

No Censure ad art. 43 C.O. is necessary.

The Acts and the Press-release are adopted.

The chairman thanks the ladies who took care of us for their services. He then addresses Rev. C. VanDam who presently will leave this classical region. He thanks him on behalf of the churches, the delegates to this and to previous Classis, and the colleagues, for what he meant to them, and for the work done. We thank the Lord for all this, and wish you that the Lord bless you also in your work in Brampton and Classis Ontario-North.

After Psalm 33:6 was sung the Rev. D. DeJong led in thanksgiving prayer. At seven minutes before 4 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 1974, this Classis, opened on Tuesday, March 5, 1974, at 8 p.m., was closed.

On behalf of Classis,
D. DeJong, vice-chairman, e.t.

Advertise in
"Clarion"

Country Walks

It is kind of interesting to browse through the old catalogues of Roebuck and Sears of the late 1800's which have been reprinted to show the modern generation the advances made since that time.

I only mentioned these catalogues as I was struck by the sections where ladies wear was exhibited; I wasn't interested in how long the dresses were in those days, really, but wanted to see if the stories were true about the use of feathers in feminine adornment which had its heyday around the turn of the century.

If you could get hold of a newspaper from that time chances would be that you'd see quotations like the following in the ladies or fashion section: "Mrs. Robert Smith had her gown of unrelieved black looped up with black birds; and a winged creature, so dusky that it could have been intended as nothing but a crow, reposed among the curls and braids of her hair." Or "Miss Jones looked extremely well in white with a whole nest of sparkling birds in her hair which would have puzzled an ornithologist wishing to classify them."

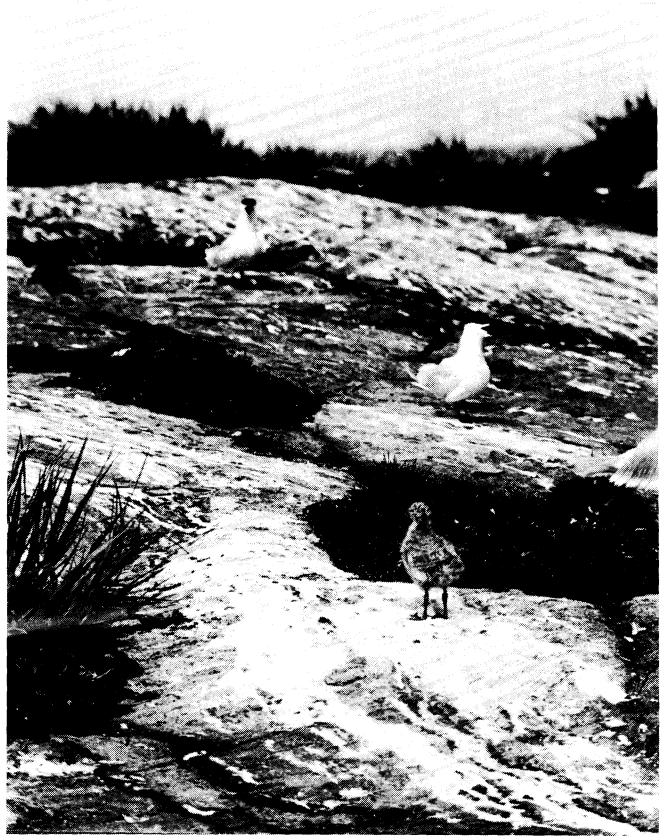
Never have birds been worn on this continent in such numbers as in those days between 1880 and 1900 when often the treated skins of 10 or 15 songbirds were sewed on a single hat. As I was interested, I read some literature on this and came to the conclusion that if certain laws hadn't been passed soon after, the number of bird species would have dwindled to a few kinds like house-sparrows and starlings.

A well-known naturalist, Dr. F.M. Chapman, walked through the shopping district of New York city in 1886 on his way home. For two afternoons he carefully observed the feather decorations on the hats of women he happened to meet. He recognized in all at least 40 species, some of them highly esteemed, such as robins, thrushes, bluebirds, tanagers, swallows, warblers, waxwings, bobolinks, larks, orioles, doves, and woodpeckers, and sadly concluded that the millinery trade didn't exclude any bird if it meant profit. Of the 700 hats he counted one afternoon, 542 were decorated with feathers of some kind. The 158 remaining hats were featherless and were worn by middle-aged, elderly ladies or ladies in mourning.

This was a period when people seemed to go mad on the subject of wearing birds and feathers; they were used for feminine adornment in almost every conceivable fashion.

The wholesale milliners whose business it was to supply these ornaments naturally turned for their supply first to those species most easily procured. Agents were sent about the country looking for men to kill birds for their skins, and circulars offering attractive prices for feathers of various kinds were mailed.

The first great onslaughts were made on the breeding colonies of sea birds along the Atlantic coasts. On Long Island there were some very large communities of terns and these were quickly raided. The old birds trying to defend their nests or young were easily killed and the unattended young were left to starve. The state of Maine with its innumerable outlying rocky islands used to be the chief nursery of the herring gulls and common terns of the North



Common Tern
(National Museum of Canada)

Atlantic, and as this fact was soon discovered, thousands were slaughtered every summer, their wings cut off, and their bodies left to rot among the nests in the rookeries.

Some men in those days, when a dollar could buy so much more, would earn as much as \$100 a week by their skill with a shotgun. During a period of seven years more than 500,000 tern or seaswallow skins were collected in the sounds and bays of North and South Carolina. Even the Great Lakes were almost bare of birds. People couldn't help noticing the scarcity of terns and gulls after the end of a season.

Many more sickening details are available as in those days no laws existed to protect those birds. Now and then a voice cried out at the slaughter or hands were raised at the sight of the horrible shambles, but the public sentiment was not strong enough to demand an end. It wasn't until a few decades after the turn of the century that people found time to crusade against this evil.

Feathers and fur are still used today for adornment, quite often by people not having the slightest idea where it came from, or in what manner it was obtained. We all probably have heard about the cruel way seals or beavers are caught, and all because the demand is still there; laws were passed a long time ago to protect birds, but nothing prevents manufacturers from importing feathers from countries where such laws don't exist.

God gave mankind dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air. Shouldn't we be examples and as members of His Church prove this, also in little things?

COR TENHAGE

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Let's start this time with a story for Mother's Day, by Busy Beaver Debbie Knol!

Mother's Day

Mother is in bed. All is still and quiet. Just then John and Mary race down the stairs. Yes! it's Mother's Day. They gather their presents together and put them on the table. Mary has a plan. She says,

"Let's give a cup of tea and a biscuit to mother in bed."

John thinks it's a good plan. Soon it is ready. They slowly go upstairs. Mary goes and opens mother's bedroom door. They shout,

"HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!"

Mother suddenly wakes up. It is now seven thirty in the morning. She rubs her eyes. She is surprised. She opens her presents and eats her biscuit and drinks her cup of tea.

* * * * *

Well, Busy Beavers do you have some plans for Mother's Day? It's fun, isn't it, to do something special to show Mother how much we love and appreciate her. Not just on Mother's Day, of course, but everyday.

Are you planning to MAKE something for your mother? But you don't know what? Ask the lady in your library for a book or two on CRAFTS. You should be able to find something nice (and simple) that YOU can make. I think that's what your mother will like best of all!

Here is a Mother's Day poem I want to share with you. If you like you could make the prettiest card you know how, for your mother, and copy the poem inside!

A Wonderful Mother

God made a wonderful mother,
A mother who never grows old;
He made her smile of the sunshine,
And He molded her heart of pure gold;
In her eyes He placed bright shining stars,
In her cheeks, fair roses you see;
God made a wonderful mother,
And He gave that dear mother to me.

Pat O'Reilly

BOOK NOOK

Father's Big Improvements,
by Caroline D. Emerson

The Marshal family were always getting new and big improvements, like horseless carriages, talking boxes which were called telephones, and they even had water coming out of a faucet! Mother keeps on saying, "What is the world coming to?" She calls this new-fangled nonsense. But Father says they are big improvements that they must have. Father's new auto even has to be pulled home by horses! For Jimmy and Nan these new improvements are very exciting. This book is very funny and exciting.

- from Busy Beaver Sandra Knegt

The Bobbsey Twins in Tulip Land,
by Laura Lee Hope

This book is a very exciting book. It is about two sets of twins and their adventures. Once Bert has a ride on the wing of a windmill and he catches a thief in a fish net. They also join a parade and Freddie goes as a windmill and Flossie his twin goes as a Dutch walking doll. Bert goes as a Dutch fisherman and Nan his twin goes as a Dutch girl.

I am trying to read all of the series of the Bobbsey twins and I hope you do too, and read their adventures.

- from Busy Beaver Jenny Bosscher



From The Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Christine* and *Henry Vis*. I'm glad you enjoy reading Our Little Magazine and hope you'll enjoy all our Busy Beaver activities. How is your practice coming on Saturday mornings? Hope you had a happy birthday, Christine.

Hello, *Yvonne Wieggers*. A big welcome to you too. Are you in your new school yet? Hope you had a happy birthday, Yvonne.

You are welcome to join us, *Joan Hofsink*. You'll make a good Busy Beaver, I'm sure - you're so good at doing riddles! And thank you for the new ones. Did you have a happy birthday too, Joan?

Hello, *Patricia Barendregt*. I'm glad you're doing so well at school. And you did well on the quizzes too! Thank you for the Easter poem, Patricia. Too bad it was too late.

How did your crocheted homework bag turn out, *Caroline Barendregt*? You got your quizzes all right too. And thank you for the new quizzes, Caroline.

How did you do on your piano exam, *Sandra Knegt*? You must have been busy writing such a long letter! And you had the answers to the quizzes all right, Sandra. Keep up the good work!

Good for you, *Rose Barendregt*, you had the answers to the puzzles all right! I'm glad you and your sister have so much fun riding your bikes. Thank you for your poem, Rose.

QUIZ TIME

JESUS OUR PROPHET, PRIEST, KING

1. Who was also anointed as Prophet? 1Kings 19 (1 example)
2. Who was also anointed as Priest? Lev. 8 (1 example)
3. Who was also anointed as King? (2 examples)

THIS IS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A quiz for you from Busy Beaver *Caroline Barendregt* (Answers next time).

Now we have some riddles for you from *Betty Ann Vander Meulen*.

1. What grows by the yard, dies by the foot?
2. What is it that we often return but never borrow?
3. What has four legs but only one foot?
4. What often falls but never gets hurt?
5. Name me and you break me.
6. What is it that you couldn't hold for ten minutes, even though it is light as a feather?
7. In what month do people talk the least?
8. What never uses it's teeth for chewing?