

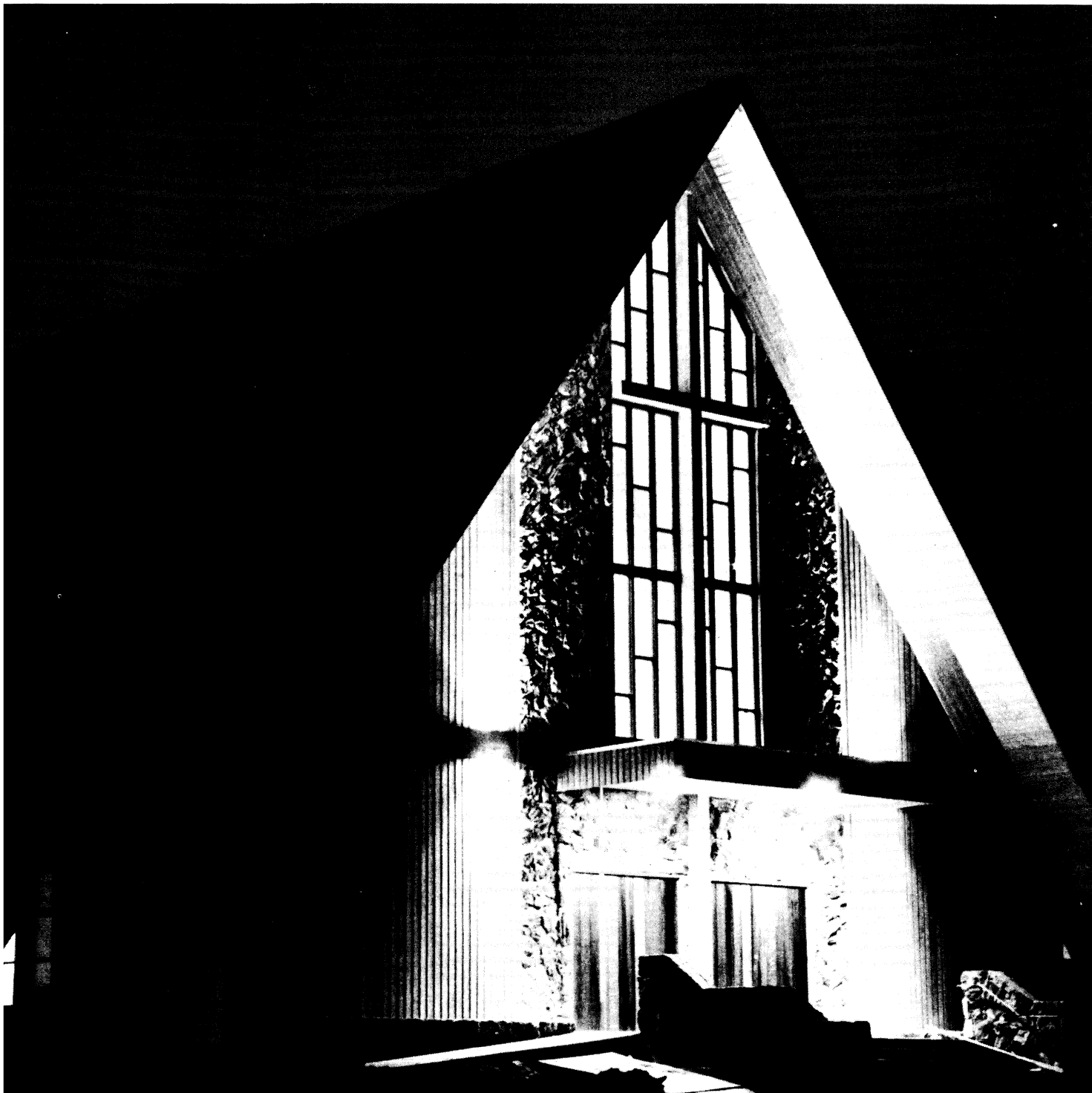


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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The Future of Bible Translations

This is the (English translation of) the title of a book recently published by Dr. J. VAN BRUGGEN, professor N.T. at the Theological School at Kampen.

Expressing the hope that this book may be translated - and then with illustrations from English Scripture versions - we feel free to profit from an article written by the Rev. A.H. Dekker in *Una Sancta*, magazine of our Australian sister-churches. Every Bible-reader is, as a matter of fact, interested in the proper translation of the divine revelation which our God gave us in languages that are strange to us: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. Thus, God's people depend on those who know these languages, and on the way such people translate, transfer, the divine Word to us and our children. How have they done that till now? And how should they do it in "The Future"?

Resisting the inclination to meditate on the title chosen by Dr. Van Bruggen (except the remark that he obviously believes that translation is an on-going business, according to the way he formulated his title) we now gladly make use of the summary given by Rev. Dekker, and again summarized by the present writer.

* * *

Dr. Van Bruggen formulates no less than *seven conditions* or standards for a proper and faithful translation.

1. Faithfulness to the Form.

While Luther was quite free in his German translation, the Synod of Dort opted for a more word-to-word translation. The Hebrew way of speaking was retained as far as the clarity and character of the Dutch would allow. This stand was taken not only out of concern for the reader, who should be able to read the Word as closely as possible to the original, but even more out of reverence for Scripture.

This principle was also applied to the construction of sentences. Paul, for example, writes sometimes in very long sentences; the longest: Ephesians 1:3-14. He could have written in shorter sentences but obviously chose this way to show the height and depth of God's work in Christ. We should

not cut up such a sentence in shorter ones (NASB has 6, NIV even 8 sentences).

The rule of thumb is that, if a Hebrew or Greek scholar were to re-translate into Hebrew or Greek, he should come very close to the original text. (N.B. Remark VanD.: the purpose of this article is to pass on the main contents of this book; not to discuss it. In that case I would have some questions, although I wholeheartedly agree with the tenor of this first thesis).

2. Clarity.

A good translation must have clarity, clearness of the language. Of course, it should never be clearer than the original. Paul wrote some things which are hard to understand (II Peter 3:16). Although the Bible should be translated into proper English, yet it may not do so at the cost of the depth of revelation. "Intellectuals" may complain, about older translations but the common people have not too much trouble with them. Yet, words which are not in use in daily language should not have a place in the translation. (N.B. Permit me only one question here: what is "daily language"? See sub 7).

3. Completeness.

The Bible is a unity and therefore it can only be seen in its completeness of Old and New Testament. The publication of only the New Testament must be considered harmful. One of the dangers would be: no unity in language between Old Testament and New Testament.

(Remark: "Hebrew and Greek scholars" were mentioned above. Several translations by only one person - see below in the "Illustration" - suffer from the drawback of being too 'personal'. For Hebrew and Greek, separate scholars are needed. Finally: is there, indeed, "unity of language" in the Bible? Does not every Bible-writer have his own language, even his own vocabulary? Should that not also show up in a translation? Is that not part of God's purpose to give His Word in "multi-coloured wisdom" (Ephesians 3:10)? It is not all that simple, vD).

4. Faithfulness to the Text.

In this chapter Dr. Van Bruggen

deals with the many manuscripts and their evaluation. His conclusion is that the text used by the older translations gives more solidity and continuity than the "texts" fabricated by science, because for centuries the Church has lived with it and it has not been proven that there is a better text.

(Remark: I depend here on Rev. Dekker's summary, because I have not yet received the book itself. I doubt whether the whole history of text-criticism can be summarized in one such sentence. Of course, we all agree that faithfulness to the text is the first demand. But it is open to discussion what the original text has been in quite some cases, vD).

5. Spirituality.

In the time of the Reformation there was a difference of opinion concerning the person of the translator. Erasmus thought that as long as a person knows Greek and Hebrew, he will be able to translate God's Word. The scholar, believer or not, should determine how a word, a sentence, has to be translated. Luther opposed this view and stated that grace (and illumination of the Holy Spirit, vD) is necessary to understand the Bible. If we do not see Christ in the Old Testament, then we cannot really understand it. Bible translation must be done in and by faith, for a deep insight in Scripture as a whole is necessary. While Erasmus gave a translation in the language of scholars, Luther's translation, though sometimes free, became a blessing for God's people for centuries. Dort took the same position.

6. Authority.

If a translation is spiritual, it is also authoritative. Decisions of Synods cannot give a translation authority. They can only help towards the acknowledgment of a good translation. The authority of a translation is borrowed (derived? vD) for only the Word of God in the original has binding authority. The closer to the original, the greater the authority of a translation.

7. Ecclesiastical language, and acceptance.

A translation should be accepted by the Churches and in such a way that the unity of the Church is pro-

moted. It is damaging for unity when different translations are used in different congregations (I would add: one and the same translation should be used in Church, School, Home, Societies, etc., although comparison of various translations can be helpful, see "Illustration," vD).

A second aspect is that the translation should adhere to the language of the Church, the language of the Creeds. A translator should not turn his back to the Church and act as if the Bible had never been translated before. The Church has used the former translations in order to state the doctrines of Scripture. (There should be continuity. That is, in my opinion, one of the merits of the R.S.V., and one of the de-merits of so many modern translations like NEB, NIV, Good News for Modern Man, etc. vD).

The Rev. Dekker then proceeds to apply these criteria to some English translations, but it was not our purpose to go into that. May this brief summary awaken the interest for Bible-translation, and at the same time challenge the experts among us to give us some more guidance in this matter of utmost importance.

I am not so happy about the present situation. Everyone seems to use his own translation. Confusion is the result. To prevent that, overtures were sent to Synods here in Canada, that, anyway for the time being, a translation be chosen which, though far from perfect, would create a common language, and promote the possibility that God's Word sinks into our memory. In this respect, I am sorry to say, the Rev. Dekker does not do justice to the Canadian Reformed Churches: "the R.S.V. has been pushed on to the Churches . . ." (etc.). Also in this respect we seek the best for Christ's Churches for today, while hoping and praying for something better-than-best for the future.

G. VANDOOREN

ILLUSTRATION.

To give the reader an idea how translation (in our case: of God's Word) may turn up different results, here is an example of a text: *James 4:5*. One can, then, at the same time, try to decide which translation answers most of Dr. Van Bruggen's conditions.

King James Version:

"The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy."

Revised Standard:

"He yearns jealously over the spirit which he has made to dwell in us."

New English Bible:

". . . when it says that the spirit which God implanted in man turns towards envious desires."

New International Version:

". . . that the spirit he caused to live in us tends towards envy."

New American Standard Bible:

"He jealously desires the spirit which He made to dwell in us."

American Standard Version:

"Doth the spirit he made to dwell in us long unto envying?"

James Moffat, New Translation:

"He yearns jealously for the spirit he set within us."

New World Translation (Watch Tower):

"It is with a tendency to envy that the spirit which has taken up residence within us keeps longing."

Modern King James Version:

"The spirit that dwells in us desires to envy."

Interruption.

N.B. Up to this point you read translations which all speak of *man's* spirit. They can, however, be divided into two groups: 1. those which speak about that human spirit in an unfavourable way (it "lusteth to envy" KJV) and others which do it in a favourable way (like "He (God) jealously desires the spirit", NASB). Now we get a series of translations which understand "spirit" as the Holy Spirit, which - of course - changes the picture completely.

(We hear one, even two questions. First: to what text does James refer here with the words, "Or do you suppose it is in vain that *the scripture says . . .*" (and then follow the words we are dealing with). Which Scripture? Undoubtedly James refers to the Old Testament, to a divine inspiration. Yet, there is not such a text! That need not worry us, because it is not the only time that the New Testament refers to 'Scripture' without having a special text in mind. Rather a general biblical truth. One could think here of the word in the Law: "The LORD our God is a jealous God.")

A second question: is there maybe so much difference between the manuscripts, as ministers sometimes tell us from the pulpit? The answer is, again, no!

But now then those translations which speak of, not the human, but the divine Spirit:

American Translation, Goodspeed:

"He yearns jealously over the Spirit he has put in our hearts."

The New Testament, trans. Alford:

"The Spirit that he placed in us jealously desireth us."

The New Testament in Modern Speech:

"The Spirit which He caused to dwell in us yearns jealously over us."

The New Testament in Basic English:

"The Spirit which God has put in our hearts has a strong desire for us."

The New Testament, trans. Broadus and others:

"The Spirit he made to dwell in us has jealous longings."

The Living Bible:

"the Holy Spirit, whom God has placed within us, watches over us with tender jealousy."

Again, this series can be divided into two groups: one, in which God "longs for" the Spirit which (why not, as in *The Living Bible*, "whom"?) he put in us; - the other, in which The Holy Spirit Himself longs for us, wants to have us. In both interpretations (translating is interpretation!) the verb "to long" is taken in a favourable sense, which seems to be the regular meaning in the Scriptures.

Finally, a kind of combination between group one and group two.

The New Testament in Modern English, J.B. Phillips:

"Or do you imagine that this *spirit* of passionate jealousy is *the Spirit* he has caused to live in us?"

A long list, and yet not by far complete. Long enough, however, that the average Bible reader gets confused, even upset. "Can we still know what the Bible really says?"

In order to calm this "upsetness", I admit that I chose a very difficult example.

Then, one sees that it certainly is not true: "the older the translation, the better."

While leaving it to the experts to decide which one is the preferable translation, I myself would like to read this word of James in the light of the second commandment: Our God is as jealous as a bridegroom, a husband. He wants to have us completely. The same, of course, must be said about our heavenly Bridegroom who sent His Spirit in us to make our confession in Lord's Day 1 true: "My only comfort . . . I am not my own but belong to my Saviour."

That does not exclude the truth of the first group: our sinful spirit is possessed by envy, jealousy, the fountain of all kinds of sin. It needs regeneration to establish one-ness between His

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“For now that the Lord has arisen . . .” (2)

We are not the most pitiable but the happiest of all men.

We are no sheep without a shepherd and no citizens without a king.

STRANGERS

But we are “strangers” on earth. Be sure of it. Not like a tourist in a foreign country, but strangers in our *own* (promised) land. Canaan was the country of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God had promised it to them. But the Canaanites rule, and the patriarchs were “sojourners.” They only lived in with the Canaanites. That gave trouble and much grief. But they never despised Canaan, nor looked down condescendingly on this life of sojourning.

Joseph spent twelve years in the prisons of Egypt. From his 18th to his 30th year: “the best years of your life.” But he did not become cynical because of his many miseries of youth. Hear how obliging and interested the young Joseph has remained in spite of his own grief. When one morning he sees the gloomy faces of the baker and the cupbearer, he doesn’t say: “O gentlemen, you are sitting here for but a few days only; I have been here for many years already.” No, though he was himself filled with grief, he with attention sought the cause of his fellow-prisoners’ troubles. He didn’t say: “Everyone is on his own and must see how he will manage.” After that, God gave him eighty years (from his 30th to his 110th year) of streams of wealth and prosperity. And in all these years of unimaginable wealth there remained burning in his heart the yearning for Canaan. Canaan was the present of God in which they tasted His love. When he was dying in Egypt, he didn’t listlessly push aside the cup of wealth. High as a tower there flamed up in him the burning longing to be present when God turned to His people to lead them out of Egypt to Canaan. To participate! We may participate when God lets His people inherit “the heavenly Canaan,” the so blessed earth. (One question: If Joseph could manage, keep on his feet in his misery as a prisoner and in his wealth as a viceroy, and that long before the coming of our Saviour in the flesh, would that not be possible anymore now?)

This doesn’t mean that the world is none of our concern or leaves us cold or that we look down upon “this

life.” Not in the least. For the earth is the Lord God’s and our Saviour is the Redeemer of the world. It does mean: *in* this world, but not: *of* the world. The devil poses as if he is running the show here. But it isn’t true. The Lord Jesus has all power and He is busy redeeming the earth and our life and making it free. Therefore we are not to be pitied. We are well off in this life with the great privilege of being “strangers” because we belong to Jesus. That is certainly no trifle.

CURSE AND VANITY BROKEN

When the disciples had been fishing once all night for their daily bread, they had caught nothing. So they had to go home. Then Jesus was standing on the shore. The eternally living Man was simply standing on the beach and He was calling. A question, a word of advice and . . . the net was filled to the brim. So He broke the curse and vanity of all their toiling. If He is willing, He wipes the sweat off our brows and He lets us eat our bread to satisfaction and with joy. But you must see it. You must see His hand in all sorts of events. The one sees that sooner than the other. John saw that sooner than the others. “It is the Lord!” Peter was the first to take action. He jumped into the sea. The remaining ones also did very good work. They counted the blessings one by one: 153 big fishes. John, Peter, the other ones: one did this thing, another that, and they did not slight each other by claiming that all must be equal and must do equal things. In this way the risen Lord revealed Himself there and then.

If He is willing, He takes away the exhaustion from our work. For so our Lord still is! He is the Eternal-in-time who strengthens us in bearing the burden of the “vanity” that we in our work are subject to, who gives us courage again when everything breaks off at our hands, who revives us when we are exhausted.

Now the new life is beginning. There are not three dispensations, but two. The first dispensation: till the coming of the Lord Jesus in the flesh. The second dispensation: after His coming in the flesh. Old Testament and New Testament. “Christ has by His death and the shedding of His blood brought to eternal validity the new and eternal testament, the Cove-

nant of grace and atonement, when He called out: ‘It is consummated!’ ” It is an “evil communication” to say: “After the coming back of our Lord, only then begins eternal life.” No, now the new life is beginning. “He who puts his faith in the Son has hold of eternal life,” John 3:36. The coming of the Lord Jesus in our flesh is the great turning-point in world history. His coming back on the clouds will complete the delivery of the creation in the perfect glorification of it by the renewing of heaven and earth and the resurrection of the flesh. He is the firstling of the dead. The forthcoming renewing of heaven and earth and the glorious continuation of our renewed bodily life presently is not the great turning point, but the completion of the “coming age.” The “coming age” is not the same as the “future era.” “Coming is in this connection something else, something more than futurity. The new age has already been go-

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“PRO LIFE?”

You've probably heard of Karen Ann Quinlan, the girl who's been in an unconscious state already for some time, after taking a mixed dosage of alcohol and barbiturates. Karen is apparently being kept alive through a respiratory-aid machine, and cannot function independently. Karen's adoptive parents have tried to persuade the responsible doctors to "pull the plug" and give Karen the right and the opportunity to die. However, the doctors refused . . .

Quite a hassle resulted. The whole case, of course, was taken to court, and has some sensational undertones. At first, I understand, the court supported the viewpoint of the doctors who denied the parents' request. But after an appeal, another court reversed the decision and said that "pulling the plug" is something which must be decided mutually by doctors and parents, and that such an act is in itself not homicidal! Now Karen's parents are trying to find doctors who are willing to cooperate.

I realize, the whole matter is somewhat unpleasant, and I don't appreciate this "tug-of-war" over the life of an unconscious girl. But I cannot understand the rather vehement reaction of some people (also in our midst) against the decision of the appeal court. Someone even said to me, "If pulling the plug is not homicidal, then mercy-killing has been declared legal!" Sorry, brother, I doubt it. I for one do find positive elements in the last decision of the court. If applied correctly, it could even be a step ahead in a very controversial matter.

Let me explain what I mean. As I understand it, the court's decision basically has two interrelated elements. In the first place, the court contended that the question whether or even when "the plug may be pulled" is primarily not a JUDICIAL but a MEDICAL question. I agree fully. Oh yes, I realize that there must be certain laws also governing the medical profession, but a judge simply doesn't have the competency and the duty to decide on medical procedures. Doctors are being sued too readily these days. Secondly, the court implied that there is a difference between "ending someone's life" (which indeed could be a homicidal act) and "terminating a medical procedure" (which is a professional act based on clear medical indications). Again, I agree.

The decision of the court reminded me of remarks made by Prof.

Circumspection...

Dr. J. Douma (professor of ethics and philosophy at Kampen, The Netherlands) in his booklet *Euthanasie (De Vuurbaak, 1973)*. Let me quote: "There is a difference between ending someone's life and ending a medical treatment" (page 30). Or perhaps another remark will clarify: "Letting someone die responsibly or irresponsibly killing someone are certainly not one and the SAME thing!" (page 18). Although Douma doesn't completely accept the much-praised distinction between "active" and "passive" euthanasia, it does hold some value. There is a difference between actively administering a lethal drug and letting a terminal illness run its final course. That difference must be kept in mind, also in the case of Karen Ann Quinlan.

We always have to watch for extremes. There is the danger that modern man uses his tremendous technical and medical knowledge to remove weak and undesired elements from society by advocating an indiscriminate process of "mercy-killing." Well, let it be clear then that I abhor the practices of abortion and euthanasia as well as the modern philosophies behind them. And I wish the courts would be more active in preventing such atrocities. In that sense I am "pro life."

There is also the danger, however, that man starts to use this almost unlimited scientific knowledge to PROLONG life beyond credibility and reason, and that a certain patient is denied an honourable process of passing-away. And if the court wishes to prevent this extreme, I'M quite sympathetic . . . Because I am not unconditionally "pro life." The Bible doesn't teach us to have an absolute respect for this life, and the idea that life must be prolonged at all costs and despite all suffering is simply not Scriptural. Such ideas are rather "vitalistic" and follow the humanistic teachings of Dr. Albert Schweitzer.

One could e.g. lose his life in the service of Christ, and yet in this way FIND it. It is possible to give your life up for someone else (Romans 5:7). We should not cherish our life above everything else and love it "even unto death" (Revelation 12:11). We should not base all our hope on this life alone; that would make us quite miserable (I Corinthians 15:19). For, strictly speaking, "life" is not just our

existence on THIS earth and in THIS flesh, but life is our communion with the Father through the Son. So I am not unconditionally pro-life, as many are, and I cannot battle cruel abortion practices on that basis.

Prof. Douma makes the remark, "We cannot have an absolute respect for 'life' but still we'll have to deal with it very carefully." That's why we could never agree with active euthanasia, i.e. purposely ending a human life which is no longer deemed to be worthwhile. But this also implies that sometimes we must prefer ending a medical treatment to ease prolonged suffering and to permit someone who IS dying also to die. Or to let someone who HAS died BE dead, and not force some kind of "vegetative" existence upon a person.

In this respect I would like to point to what Douma says concerning certain patients in deep coma, in that state of profound insensibility or lethargy. Douma refers specifically to patients who are unable to function autonomously, but must continually be reanimated physically, while their "brain-waves" are nil and cerebral death is factual. Pulling the plug in this case, is only a RECOGNITION that death has already come; it is indeed not a homicidal act.

I may add that, if someone is dying, in the end no medical science will be able to prolong life indefinitely. And terminating whatever treatment on medical grounds, in the end also doesn't undo the Lord's final decision as to the exact moment of someone's DEATH. Compare Psalm 31:15, "My times are in THY hand." The ultimate decision, the final right, is the Lord's and belongs to no one else.

We should emphasize what Life means. God has given us life eternal and this life is "in the Son" (I John 5). Only in that sense am I unconditionally "pro Life." If we have this Life in Christ, we can leave our times in the hand of the Father.

For the rest, we should pray unceasingly for those who have to make the almost unbearable decisions whether to terminate or continue treatments. Being a doctor nowadays is not easy. God grant us God-fearing doctors whose work is borne on the prayers of their patients.

Cid

Book of Praise

It is quite a while ago that our readers heard something about our *Book of Praise*. Now I have been asked by two Committees to publish something.

In the first place there is the Publication Committee. This Committee asked me to tell you that the copies of the last printing which are still available are few in number. A reprint is being considered, but it will take some time before this new printing becomes available. Meanwhile, if you would wish to lengthen the life of your present copy and hesitate to give it along with the children to Catechism classes or to let the children learn their catechism question and answer from it, you could still purchase separate booklets which contain only the Three Forms of Unity. The Committee informed me that there are plenty of copies of those booklets left for the price of 60¢ plus postage. You can send your order to Committee for the Publication of an Anglo-Genevan Psalter, P.O. Box 854, Burlington, Ontario, L7R 3Y7.

* * * * *

Further the Committee appointed by Synod 1974 asked me to write about the following.

The *Book of Praise* will be revised, for what we have now is not yet the definite edition, just a provisional one. For this revision the help of the membership is needed.

Repeatedly the request has been made to include more rhymings of Scripture-passages in the definite

BIBLE TRANSLATIONS — Cont.

Spirit and our spirit as expressed by Paul, Romans 8:16, "it is *the Spirit* himself bearing witness with *our spirit* that we are children of God."

Concluding with two statements:

1. It may be a nice exercise to compare all these translations in our study or Bible Society, but how badly we need one, clear, faithful translation to be used in Home, Church, Schools and Societies!
2. May "The Future of Bible Translation" (Dr. Van Bruggen's title) bring us such a translation, answering his "seven conditions". To my knowledge we do not have such a translation yet. vD

edition of our *Book of Praise*. Although you can, of course, never satisfy everyone, yet the Committee wishes to take these expressed desires into account as much as possible. Some of such passages have already been suggested to the committee. Likewise, specific hymns, now found in the *Book of Praise*, have been earmarked for deletion. The committee would rather not increase the number of hymns but replace those which are deemed unsuitable by such rhymings as indicated above.

For this we again, and most urgently, request the help and cooperation of the membership. You can help in the following ways:

1. Bring to the attention of the committee such passages from Scripture which could be rhymed or which you would like to see rhymed.
2. Bring to the attention of the committee any tunes which you would consider fit to be used.
3. Inform the committee in case you would be willing to rhyme certain passages. Do not start rhyming as yet! If you are willing and able to do this work, both passage and tune to which this specific passage is to be rhymed will be given to you. Perhaps more than one rhyming will be received from various Church members. Then the committee will have to make a choice; such a choice will only mean that the *better* one has been chosen, not that your rhyming was no good at all!

You must also be willing to make changes if requested to do so by the committee. Besides, the committee reserves the right to make any such changes as are deemed advisable.

It isn't really all that bad, but in order to prevent later difficulties and disappointments, these stipulations have to be made.

The address to which such passages and tunes or indications of willingness to help should be made known to the secretary of the committee: *Rev. D. VanderBoom*

3 Knotty Pine Trail

Thornhill, Ontario L3T 3W5

The committee also still requests

you to inform it of any corrections you would deem necessary in the *Book of Praise* as we have it now, and to send these to:

Dr. W. Helder

250 Magnolia Drive, Unit 11
Hamilton, Ontario L9C 6M3

May we count on everyone's cooperation? Thank you. vO

"THE LORD HAS ARISEN" — Cont.

ing on for a long time! Nineteen centuries already! "Coming" is "arriving." *In Him* the whole coming age is already present. When the Lord Jesus stood up from His most severe struggle, the coming age broke through into "this era."

He has already passed "the point of time," that "indivisible moment" (I Corinthians 15:52), but we have it still before us. He has already inherited the eternal, bodily, fully spiritual life. And He is our imperishable, immaculate and unfaded heritage which is preserved in the heavens for us (I Peter 1:4). In the heavens the whole new life is lying ready for us in Him. Any moment it can break through into this time, to clothe with imperishableness the "vanity" and perishableness of our life-here, and to consume death, which is still dominating.

HOW LONG WILL IT STILL LAST?

We must not speculate on that. One sometimes says: "It can still last a hundred years," and another says: "Still a thousand years." When we talk in this way we are in practice also "scoffers," according to Peter's word (II Peter 3:3) — though it may look very pious. For if we speak in this way, we don't *really* expect Him. Such an "evil communication" corrupts in the practice of our Christian life the looking for (which is still more than the "expecting") "the heavenly fatherland," the city of God, the new Jerusalem (Hebrews 11:14, 15). What can happen after a thousand years we don't expect and we are still less looking for it. Then we are not in practice focused on it like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who made known by their being "aliens" that they looked for the "fatherland." When we don't continually look upward, where He is ready and where in Him our new living together is also ready, then we do not have a living expectation of the future. That has always been the strength of God's people.

(To be continued)

P.K. KEIZER

press review

ANOTHER SYNOD IN AFRICA

In the previous Press Review attention was given to decisions of two Reformed churches in South Africa, the Dutch Reformed Church and the Reformed Church (the Dopper church). Early this year another Reformed Church also had its synod, namely our sister-churches, the Free Reformed churches in South Africa. In NEDERLANDS DAGBLAD of Friday, January 30, a report of this synod appeared. We read:

The January 1976 Synod of the Free Reformed churches in South Africa decided in Pretoria to send observers to the general synod of the Reformed (Dopper) church, meeting in Potchefstroom at the moment.

Synod decided to do so while dealing with the report re contact with churches in their own country. In this report especially the relation with the Reformed church was raised for discussion. The report observed that the attitude of the Dopper church was that they refused to state an opinion on the Liberation of 1944. According to the deputies, the talks which took place were, from the side of the Dopper church, only directed toward a union of the two churches without the necessity of a pronouncement regarding the Liberation.

The deputies of the Free Reformed Churches urged the Doppers to sever the ties with the (synodical) Reformed churches in The Netherlands. In order to learn for itself how the Dopper synod would deal with this question, the synod decided to send observers to Potchefstroom.

These observers learned that the Dopper churches did break with the synodical Reformed churches in The Netherlands. Maybe this opens the way for further talks, not only with the Free Reformed churches in South Africa but also with their sister-churches.

The rest of the report in NEDERLANDS DAGBLAD deals with internal matters of the Free Reformed Churches. I quote:

In 1963 a decision was made that in services in the Afrikaans language and in which the Afrikaans Book of Psalms is used, there will be no departure from (using) the Genevan tunes. This has had the consequence that 19 Psalms could not be sung. The Consistory of Pretoria felt this as a lack and requested synod to come to an arrangement whereby also those 19 Psalms can again be sung in the

worship service. From the discussions it appeared that also the African churches have a preference for the Genevan tunes. Deputies were appointed to serve the churches with a report, so that the next synod can come to a decision.

Reading this can make us the more grateful to the LORD that He has blessed the Canadian and American Reformed Churches with a complete Book of Praise with all the Genevan tunes. The rhyming needs some correction and improvement yet. But it is being worked on. We read further:

The church at Capetown had found something in the synodical regulations that was hindering the good functioning of the already small federation of the churches. Since the church visitors with their alternates are appointed as a body for appeals, and have to terminate their activities two months before the next synod, according to the regulations, this regulation meant a hindrance for the way for appeals. The synod agreed with the opinion of the church at Capetown, and the hindering time limit was taken away.

Another matter dealt with at the synod was Mission. For years already the Dutch sister church at Drachten has a Mission field in South Africa. The Rev. J.G. Agema is the missionary. He first worked a number of years on Borneo, Indonesia, but left that island because of the situation as it then existed in Indonesia. "Drachten," then, sent him to South Africa to work among the black population in the vicinity of Pretoria, where he is still working.

In the meantime, incidentally, the mission work on Borneo has been resumed. It first appeared that the work on Borneo had been in vain. But one man, br. Harahap, who had become a believer, began to preach the gospel. At the moment the church at Drachten, with the cooperating churches, have two missionaries working there. The Lord did not let His work go. After all it proved not to be in vain. Returning now to the Mission work in South Africa, we read:

Some weeks ago a delegation of the church at Drachten and the churches cooperating with this church for the mission in South Africa had paid a visit to and had talked with all the consistories [of the Free Reformed churches]. All churches had made a principle decision to work together with Drachten in the Mission. The church at Capetown proposed the establishment of a general

Mission Committee and to cooperate with Drachten as confederation of churches. Since not all the consistories had been able to deal with this proposal, synod decided to appoint deputies to advise the next synod regarding the agreement of cooperation. The churches can already send mission moneys for the work of Drachten, however.

Another matter which the synod dealt with was Korea. In this matter also our churches have not reached a final decision as yet. The article continues:

From the report of the Deputies for Correspondence with Churches Abroad it appeared that much attention was paid to the correspondence with the churches in Korea. As an independent confederation of churches the synod had the task to verify on the basis of the rules for correspondence whether there is agreement with these churches in doctrine, worship, and discipline. Since no contact was made with these churches themselves, the newly appointed deputies were charged with taking up this matter with the churches in Korea and to serve the next synod with proposals.

We read further about difficulties in one of the churches. Hopefully the problems will be solved:

Much time was needed to deal with an appeal of Johannesburg and some counter decisions about Johannesburg. This was done partly in closed and partly in open session.

We read yet about two other matters in the article:

Deputies for Correspondence with the Government reported about the good reception of their letters as they were sent in cases that occurred. Again the synod decided to send a letter with wishes of [God's] blessing to the President of the State and the Premier, since they are, in accordance with God's providence, the shields of the earth (Psalm 47:9).

With respect to the continuation of the ministry of the gospel, deputies were appointed ad Article 19 Church Order (Needy Students) at the request of the church at Capetown.

As convening church for the next synod the church at Johannesburg was appointed.

So far the report. The synod of our sister-churches in South Africa did not last as long as the one of the Dutch churches and as our own synod. It is a confederation of only three churches, just as in Australia. It would be a great thing if union with the Dopper churches could prove to be possible in the future. We wish our sister-churches in South Africa the blessing of the Lord, and not only them but also all God's children there, white and black, and their nation, especially in the turmoil of our days.
J. GEERTSEMA

news medley

Via our Medley we may extend some heartfelt congratulations to various brothers and sisters. We begin, of course, with those who received the privilege that they celebrated their fortieth or even forty-fifth wedding anniversary. The latter was the case with brother and sister W. Rosier of Chatham. We saw their photograph in the previous issue of **Clarion**, and this issue will arrive in time, we hope (if the honourable sorters and mailers at the various stations of the postal service are of a favourable disposition) to add our wishes in time to those which they undoubtedly will receive from many quarters. On the same day brother and sister H. Van Egmond of Smithville will celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary. That is the same number of years the Lord left brother and sister J. Van de Ree in Toronto together. With the latter couple we are much too late, but we cannot know everything; they celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary on March 19. All the above brethren and sisters may be certain that we are thankful with them, even though we may not know each other in a special sense: we are all united by the bond of faith and we rejoice when there are members who receive special privileges from the Lord. As we could learn from the write-ups with the pictures, getting on in years also brings with it loss of certain facilities, the infirmities of old age. Yet the privileges which our gracious Father gives far outweigh all the less pleasant things which seem to be unavoidable when one reaches an advanced age.

We would not be complete with our congratulations if we should forget to mention our brother Akkerman, whose picture adorned **Clarion** of a few weeks ago. When we needed a "seal" for our College, it was brother Akkerman who designed it, who drew it. Thus he put his artistic talents to the service of the Churches in general. We wish him the nearness of the Lord also in the time to come.

Yes, and then we have a picture of brother John Van Dyk of Coaldale at the organ. He celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary as organist of the Coaldale Church. That means that he was appointed as such almost as soon as the Coaldale (Lethbridge) Church acquired an instrument to accompany the congregational singing. It is something which does not need any further elaboration when I wholeheartedly support the wish that he may be able to accompany the singing on a real organ. Keep pushing! One day I will run out of material in this respect because all Churches have such an instrument. Who knows!

We mentioned a place in Alberta in the previous paragraph. Let's stay in Alberta for a while.

From the Barrhead bulletin I understood that the young people there rotate the chairmanship of the meetings: the one who has the introduction this week will be chairman the next meeting. That may be something to keep in mind. Oftentimes the chairmen (and chairwomen) of our societies complain about the difficulty of chairing a meeting: there always seem to be some who do not pay much attention, who make things miserable for the one who chairs the meeting. If the chairmanship rotates, this will give those members a chance to see what it means to sit there and to try to keep things going. Perhaps they fumble the whole

thing and then sheepishly relinquish their place in shame. Good for their big mouth!

The Barrhead Consistory "decided to write Rev. Faber about catechism sermons which are urgently needed." I hope that the brethren of Barrhead have some success in this respect, although they might have been better off directing their question to a minister in active service. But there they did not have much success either, as I understand. The Houston Consistory even mentions that "The question is raised to ask the ministers in Holland if they could make English sermons"!! Isn't that a shame? Who are the ones that should provide sermons for the vacant Churches and for those Churches where regular sermon-reading is normal? Are they foreign ministers? Mind you, I do not refer to the Houston Consistory, I am referring to our ministers. Foreign ministers cannot prepare "good" English sermons for our Congregations. Besides, do we not remember those first years, when we received translated sermons from The Netherlands? The brethren there did their best, but it was no proper English as it is spoken here. Even after having lived here for twenty-five years the older ones among us still have difficulty with the language and sometimes write more translated Dutch than English. Let our ministers draw some encouragement (and admonition) from the above news items!

From Alberta we go to British Columbia. The Smithers Congregation as a whole is engaged in the labour-of-love involving the **Book of Praise**. Remembering that the Committee appointed by Synod 1974 requested the cooperation of all and everyone, the Smithers congregation has been assigned some "homework." There are six wards, so each ward is to study twenty-five Psalms and to pay special attention to the "faithfulness to the Scriptures" of the rhymings. "Please hand the results in to your ward-elder or the minister. The latter is charged to deal with all the psalms"!! I gather that the remarks that are sent in will be scrutinized and sifted before they are passed on to the Committee.

After a journey of some seven hundred miles, we reach The Valley.

The Broadcasting Committee reports that the radio stations via which the Gospel is brought, appreciate the programs and that the managers of these stations did not increase the rates for this year. Considering that practically all rates and costs go up, this is indeed something we should appreciate.

Some time ago I mentioned that the change in the political field in British Columbia might be of benefit to the Canadian Reformed Schools in that province. In a letter which I received the following clipping was enclosed:

"Did you know that . . .

- in a public opinion poll the majority were in favour of putting public funds to good use in Independent schools.
- the Hon. P.L. McGeer assured FISA in a letter dated February 5, 1976, that 'we have not forgotten our promises nor will we fail to fulfil them.'

There seems, therefore, to be some perspective in the far West.

The news about New Westminster's Churchbuilding is little. The finishing touches are being applied, and the expectation was that the middle or end of April occupancy would become a happy fact. As for the organ, that will take a little longer, I presume. It appears to be quite a job to take the organ out of the First Presbyterian Church in Vancou-

ver. "The big wooden pipes (16' long) resemble chimney stacks and the big metal pipes look like torpedoes of a submarine." Boy, will that ever be a big noise when all the stops are pulled!! It will be an instrument which, I am sure, will be used many a time for a concert.

From the West coast we take a big jump all the way to Ontario.

In Rehoboth Burlington the young couples who wish to get married can now make their final preparations: the Rev. Cl. Stam did receive his registration with the Department concerned and is therefore authorized to solemnize marriages.

The same minister wrote an extensive report (or is writing an extensive report) on the visit to a service in the synagogue in Hamilton, as I mentioned the other time. It is quite interesting and will show the young people the more the riches which, as the Church of the Lord, we have received by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

In Ebenezer Church (and this will also apply to the Rehoboth), as in the Hamilton Church the ladies are busy again with their spring activities. I do not refer to the yearly spring cleaning, as you may have thought, but to the sale of fertilizer which (as the Hamilton bulletin tells us) will even be delivered. Last year they made a handsome profit on these sales and hopefully they will do just as well or even better this year. Knowing our inventive sisters a little, I have no doubts in this respect.

The Ebenezer Consistory also listened to a report from the Study Committee Mission. From the information I gather that the committee suggested (and that the Consistory took over the suggestions): to further cooperate with the Toronto Church and "when a new missionary is available to add as a team a nurse, a handyman and agriculturalist;

2. To ask Toronto for approval to keep our yearly contributions, which then could be used for supporting Wycliffe and/or other causes." Toronto will be informed of these suggestions.

A brief report on Consistory meetings always condenses things, and therefore I do not understand the above completely. What does cooperation with Toronto mean when it is asked to permit the moneys to be retained and to be used for other causes?

And then that part about a nurse and handyman: Is it the intention that they shall be sent out by the Toronto Church? That would mean that we come back on the arrangement that the cooperation as Churches will concern only the preaching of the Gospel, not all sorts of other activities. The suggestion by Ebenezer Burlington (if it means that this is done by the Church as such) is in conflict with the agreement of cooperation as the Churches adopted it in 1958 and as it has remained in force ever since (the changes that were made did not alter the basic contents of the agreement). Future bulletins will most likely give some more information which we then shall pass on to you. It is good when we discuss these questions.

The Watford Consistory decided to diminish the number of Dutch services. From now on there will be only one every four weeks. The Consistory also put up for sale some surplus materials: some old pews, a reed organ, etcetera. I do not know whether there are any Churchmembers anywhere who are in the market for a reed organ, but you could try anyway. And, to mention a last decision of Watford's Consistory: it was decided to purchase a tape-recorder to be used for those members who are ill and are shut-ins. Watford thereby joins the long list of Churches



This is brother John VanDyk of Coaldale, who was officially appointed as organist of the Coaldale Church in 1951. Thus he celebrates his twenty-fifth anniversary as organist.

"He has devoted a lot of his time to enrich the worship services with the right kind of music which he plays — an important role in our services.

We pray the Lord that we may sing to the praise of His Name many more times with brother VanDyk accompanying us on the organ and, if possible, a pipe organ in the future. Our sincere congratulations go out to this brother. May the congregation and br. VanDyk himself enjoy the talents which the Lord has given this brother and then in such a manner that it is to the honour and glory of God's Name."

where this has been the practice for many years already. It is highly appreciated.

That is the news insofar as I have been able to gather it from the various bulletins which I received this time. I could, perhaps, add that the VanRongens are down under right now, and that it will be the end of May before they are back. The latest bulletin of Grand Rapids contains a long list for the services, collections, etcetera until May 30th. From that I conclude that the Grand Rapids minister will be absent until that time. We hope that they may enjoy themselves and that they may not find it too hard to return to the North American continent after having seen again their children, grandchildren and former parishioners.

I do not wish to claim at all that my language is always correct and that I do not make mistakes here and there. But permit me to make a few remarks about mistakes which I notice regularly in various bulletins.

Sometimes a Consistory report contains the sentence: "Is decided to" That is translated Dutch: "Besloten wordt" It should read, "It is decided"

And then, with the time approaching which in various Churches groups of young people will publicly profess their faith before God and His holy Church, I sometimes notice the expression "public profession will be done by" Again, that is translated Dutch. The proper wording is: "to **make** profession of faith."

It is especially in the little things that we betray our past. That past is not something to be ashamed of; it is just that we should do either the one thing or the other.

But then, not everyone has a supervisor such as I have!

Hopefully we'll meet again in the next issue.

vO

Dear brothers and sisters,

The month of January was a very busy one for us. Many new places were visited, many people were met, many new impressions picked up, etc. It was all very good. In all our travelling we have known the presence of our Lord who said to Joshua and so also to us: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; be not frightened, neither be dismayed; for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).

Our planned first visit to Manggelum on January 2nd did not go through, due to motor trouble on a trip of Rev. D.J. Zandbergen to Niop (under Sawagit), who left on January 1st and planned to come back the same day, but was delayed until the next day.

We did, however, on January 3rd, start our trip to the south, about which Joanne tells you the following: This report will be purely from the woman's angle, so don't catch me on something technical. On Saturday morning, January 3rd, we packed ourselves and our baggage in a sloop and set off downriver to Kouh. Our party included Rev. D.J. Zandbergen, guru Maboro from Kawagit, a guide, Bram and myself. It was a trip of two and three-quarter hours, and the weather was too beautiful. There wasn't a cloud in sight, which means sun, sun, sun. We all wore extra clothes to protect ourselves from sunburn, and I for one am glad there was no ambitious photographer around.

It is interesting to zoom down although when the river meanders like the Digul, it takes ages to get from place to place. Some of those loops in the river take

15 minutes of navigating, and then you are back where you started from, almost. In a couple of places that little neck of land is only 100 yards across. If you have an empty boat it saves time to walk over, and many natives do.

Kouh was almost deserted. Mr. and Mrs. Kees de Wolf and their three children were still in Senggo, where their new baby was born. Miss Elly Nieboer was there to meet us. She is a teacher and has been in Kouh for 16 years.

Saturday afternoon was spent in preparing for our trip and loading up the big boat, the SAKSI. Saksi means "witness" in Indonesian. It is a riverboat, approximately 30 feet long by 10 feet wide, and is powered by a 20 horsepower, 2 cylinder, Diesel engine. In the front (fore) is a cabin, approximately 9' by 9'. The cabin has, against the port side, a 2 1/2' by 2 1/2' cubicle with a toilet in it; further two shelves (beds). Against the starboard side we made a little table for food and so on. A cot in the middle, to set up each night, increased the sleeping space, and so we had a home for three people. In day time the top shelf doubled as workspace, the bottom one as storage for bedding; the stretcher disappeared, and at first glance you'd hardly think three could sleep there.

The back two-thirds of the boat was for the crew, the motor, and all supplies we picked up along the way. The motor is placed right behind the cabin, and on the port side is a high seat, overlooking the cabin, for the man at the helm. Also in the back are two benches, lining each side.

We spent our Sunday in Kouh. Rev. Zandbergen preached, of course, as there is

not a minister in Kouh now. Rev. de Vries, of The Netherlands, is still waiting for his visa, as are Rev. Haak, Dr. Cees Louwerse, Miss Janet Velvis, and Miss Corrie van Driel, the two nurses. All news regarding visas is eagerly pounced on here. We need these people.

The church in Kouh was quite well filled. The front one-third was pretty well solid with children that can sing their hearts out. In church, the women and men do not sit together. What I have experienced so far is children at the front, adults at the back, female on the right, male on the left. The women keep the babies and very small children with them. Everything is quite orderly, with the most distraction provided by the babies.

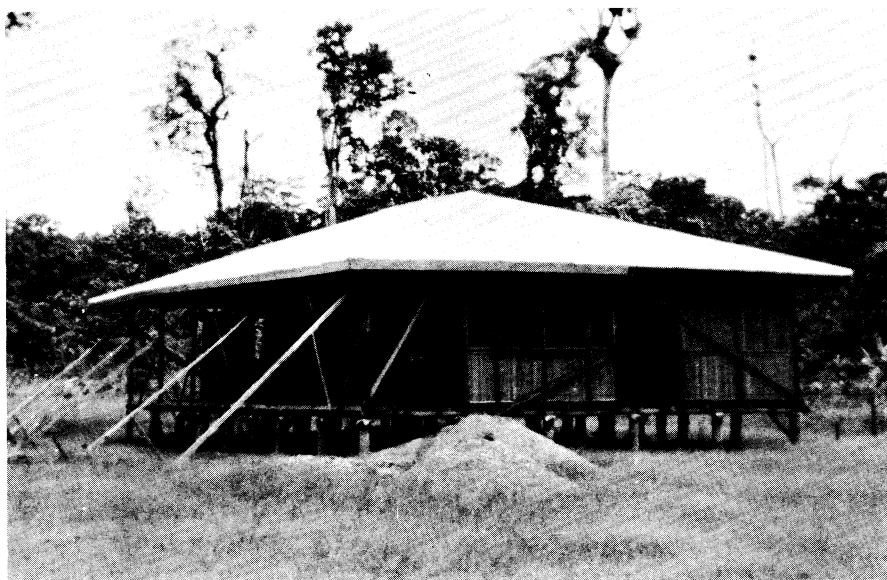
Monday morning we sailed away from Kouh at 5:00 a.m. Those of you that have a mission map can follow our course there. Just before noon we reached Tanah Merah. We stopped for about one hour, dropping off a group of students who go to school there, and getting our travelling permit signed. Around here, if you are travelling, you need a permit, and every time you pass a place where anybody sits that is the least bit official, he must sign it. It is sometimes a bother, especially if you want to travel at night.

Now we were really on our way. There were just the three of us and our three crew members left. At eight o'clock we reached Gegentiri, at the bottom of the big map. By ten-thirty we were on our way again. We travelled on through the night, and, while I slept soundly, experienced a heavy rain storm. The crew sailed on, however, and by a quarter to nine, a.m., we were exactly 100 miles (as the crow flies!) from Kawagit. Who knows how many miles of river that is.

By Tuesday afternoon we reached Badé, a larger town on the Digul, just before the Digul empties into the Arafura Sea. This was the farthest south we went. You can check it out on the small map at the top of the mission map. Tuesday night and Wednesday we did our shopping, because Badé is the closest place with stores that handle a lot of supplies. While there, we also met Mr. Dirk Griffioen, who was sailing on the BOMAKIA, the riverboat from Boma. The boats travel to Badé at least once a month, picking up things like rice, sugar, canned goods, oil and other things. It saves a lot on flying costs, which are calculated per pound-mile. Here we also could set up our radio at the Roman Catholic Mission Compound, and let everyone on Z.G.K. territory know how we were doing.

Wednesday afternoon we left Badé, and travelled back upstream towards Butip-tiri. We sailed through the night again, and our powerful steering lamp attracted a plague of flying ants. Ugh! It took Bram a lot of pails of water to clean off the roof of the cabin the next morning. Inside, they had gotten into everything. Oh well . . .

Thursday afternoon we were back in Gegentiri. We were making good time, and



The new house in Manggelum.



Welcome to Manggelum! Far left in white: Guru Yohan Bahai. Just off centre, to the right, in white: Guru Obed Pekey.

after a good night's sleep and an early start we reached Butiptiri at 12:30 p.m.

We travelled on the river for so long that I'd better tell you something of what we saw along it. Trees, shrubs, and vines of all shapes and sizes grow right to the waters' edge. Usually you can't even see the riverbank; it is hidden in a tangle of growth. Two vines we saw quite often, recognizing them by their flowers. One was a mauve morning-glory, believe it or not. It grows wild all over the place. The other was a brilliant fire-red color, very pretty to see. Also we often saw very brightly coloured butterflies, which are common everywhere.

Now to tell you of our stay in Butiptiri. There were hardly any people there to meet us. Usually the arrival of the boat at a village draws crowds. Unfortunately, very many people were in the jungle, and also many were sick. Both groups included a number of Christians, much to our dismay. Rev. Zandbergen had a few good meetings with three members of the consistory. They sadly decided not to celebrate the Lord's Supper on Sunday as we had planned. There were just not enough people. Sunday night, however, we were able to have a short congregational meeting after the church service. Bram brought greetings from Rev. Knigge and his family, and also told the people we were pleased to be there.

We spent most of our time in Butiptiri with sorting out various items in the Knigge home that we could use in Manggelum. Chairs, a desk, and many books attracted Bram, while I naturally examined the kitchen and everything that could be useful for the baby we expect in early April.

On Wednesday morning, January

14th, we flew back to Kawagit with the float-plane, after saying goodbye to Lawrence, one of the elders, guru Pakage and all his schoolchildren, and Januarius, who runs the polyclinic. Our stay in Butiptiri had come to an end.

* * *

So, my turn again (B.V.). Two days after our return from Butiptiri, the Saksi arrived in Kawagit. It was already late and dark, so the next morning early we helped to unload the new supply of petroleum, as also the goods that came from Butiptiri.

The Saksi doesn't go further than Kawagit, because there are many gravel-banks, rocks, and also tree trunks in the Digul River and if the water level suddenly goes down and stays down for a while (a difference of 10 ft./3 m. is nothing unusual) then the boat cannot be used at all. So from Kawagit everything goes further either by float-plane or by sloop.

Then also on that same day (January 17th) Mr. Ben van der Lugt and I finally made our first visit to Manggelum; first for me at least. With the sloop it takes approximately 2½ hours to get there; downstream from Manggelum to Kawagit it takes a little less than two hours, so if we wanted to be back the same day, it had to be a short visit. It was very good to get acquainted with the people and to see our future place to stay. The house — although not finished yet — looked beautiful! The shell is ready but some holes have to be filled yet with doors, windows, floor and ceiling. We will enclose some pictures, so hopefully you can get a glimpse of Manggelum.

On January 26th we had two flights from Kawagit to Manggelum, and on the

second flight I was the passenger: going to Manggelum to be the only one of the mission there, at least for a couple of days. Well, it went wonderfully well. I got to know both the gurus a little bit; also the "Kepala Desa," the authority for the people that live in the region of Heyokubun, Manggelum, and Sawagit. He seemed to be a nice man and shows much interest in spiritual matters.

The following Wednesday (January 28th) Ben came from Kawagit by sloop, along with a polyclinic helper from the poly in Kawagit. The poly helper had to take a look at the health of the people in Bi, Sawagit, Manggelum, and Heyokubun, while for Ben and I this trip was mainly for the purpose of checking out the schools in these places; in other words, the method of teaching, sticking with the program, etc. Ben picked me up at Manggelum and that Wednesday afternoon we went right through to Heyokubun, because the river looked very good and then you have to make use of it.

We attended classes in Heyokubun the following day (classes are from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) and afterwards Ben had a talk with the teacher about the "ups and downs" of his teaching; in this way the gurus are coached. So we sat in on classes in Heyokubun, Manggelum, and Bi. Not in Sawagit because the guru was — due to sickness — in Kawagit at the time.

Therefore on Sunday morning Ben spoke to the people in Sawagit (approximately 100 had gathered in the church/school) about the Kingdom of God and the new life in Jesus Christ. On Sunday afternoon a similar service was held in Manggelum for 80 people. The harvest is plentiful . . . Let us not stop praying for a missionary, able and willing to go out and work among these people. Wednesday, February 3rd, we arrived again in Kawagit, and our series of visits had been very worthwhile.

In our December newsletter I didn't mention Heyokubun at all. My fault: plainly forgotten. The name of the guru there is Kornelis Wandengge. So the area in which we will be working includes Sawagit, Manggelum and Heyokubun and hopefully in the future more villages! Butiptiri will be regularly visited by a minister, as was done recently by Rev. D.J. Zandbergen, and we all pray that in the future it will receive a minister from among its own people.

In most villages, we were confronted with the fact that people (Christians also!) were staying in the jungle for long periods of time. Our prayers are much needed for this, because it is a real problem in the mission field and the powers of Satan can be conquered if we all pray without ceasing. Then, on the other hand, we have seen people reading aloud for themselves from an Indonesian Bible. Not very fast sometimes, but always eager, to learn more about the Word of God.

And so His light shines in the darkness.

BRAM and JOANNE VEGTER

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

How sad the Lord Jesus' disciples were that first Easter morning. Only the sad, teary-eyed women went on their way to the Lord's grave in the early morning light.

But the Good Shepherd gathered his scattered sheep back into the fold. And when the travellers to Emmaus return after dark to share their joyful tidings with the believers in Jerusalem, they find them all together sharing the glorious news of the Lord's resurrection. And then the Lord Himself appears! How sadly the day had started. How joyfully it ended!

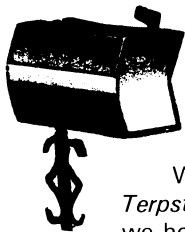
And still the Good Shepherd gathers His sheep. We too, may sing this happy Easter hymn: "Christ is risen! Hallelujah!" (Hymn 21:1, Book of Praise).

* * * * *

To all the Busy Beavers who celebrate May birthdays we wish a very happy day and many happy returns of the day, also. May the Lord guide you and bless you in the year ahead.

Linda Huttema	May 1	Theresa De Gelder	May 15
Nelly Jane Tenhage	1	Irene Lodder	15
Sheila Van Sydenborgh	2	Rita Hoeksema	16
Rolean Hulzebosch	3	Barry Post	16
Sharon Knol	4	Jimmy Hoeksema	17
Theresa Terpstra	6	Hilda Beyes	19
Peter Van Grootheest	7	Sandra Veenema	19
Alice Sandink	9	Jake Ruggi	20
Sylvia Selles	9	Denise Boes	21
Yvonne Van Grootheest	9	Keith Doesburg	21
Jenny Bosscher	11	Lizzie Oosterhoff	24
Yvonne Wiegiers	11	Carl Mulder	25
Geraldine De Boer	12	Teresa Metzlar	26
Peter Kok	12	Brenda Vanden Bos	27
Bobby Lindhout	12	Jacob Kuik	27
Janet Oostdijk	12	Anna-Lynn Vander	27
Ronny Van Andel	12	Woude	
Janet Dekker	13	Audrey Knol	30
Elaine Knegt	14	Kina Vander Putten	30

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From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Theresa Terpstra*. We are happy to have you join us. And we hope you will be happy to join in all our Busy Beaver activities. Write again soon, Theresa.

And a big welcome to you too, *Karen Ellens*. Sounds to me as if you had lots of fun during your holidays. Thank you for your poem, Karen. I intend to "save it for later."

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Kimberley Ellens*.

We hope you will enjoy joining in all our activities. Do you have a big collection of coins, Kimberley? Maybe you will like to tell us something about collecting coins. And please write and tell me your birthday, Kimberley.

Thank you very much for your contribution to the Birthday Fund, *Irene Vande Burgt*! Also for the good wishes. You did very well on the quizzes, Irene. Keep up the good work!

Thank you for a very special card, *Mary Vande Burgt*! Write again soon.

I'm glad you like contests, *Robert Feenstra*! Don't worry, now that spring is here, summer isn't very far away. And you know we always have a REALLY big contest then!

Thank you for a very pretty letter, *Ria Hofsink*. You and your friends must have had a lot of fun at school. Bye for now, Ria. Write again soon.

How did you like the pancake supper, *Heather Bergsma*? Was it lots of fun? I'm glad you had such a nice birthday, Heather. Thank you for writing.

Hello *Sharon Leffers*. Thank you for your letter and poem. Do you practise on the organ every day? Did you do today's puzzle already?

Thank you for your story, *Marion Van Grootheest*. Do you often write a story, Marion. And how is your music coming?

What did you call your new puppy, *Julia Huttema*? Are you finding it hard to wait for July? You must be quite busy practising on the organ and doing your crocheting and embroidery!

Is your hand all better, *Benita Tamminga*? Or are you still wearing your sling? But you could still do your writing, I see. I'm glad you liked the contest, Benita. Write again soon.

Did you lose your membership card, *Jacqueline Riemersma*? Just write and tell me and I will send you a duplicate. Thanks for the riddles, Jacqueline. The Busy Beavers will enjoy them!

Sounds as if you had a really nice holiday, *Anna Riemersma*. Thank you for your letter and your riddles. Write again soon, Anna.

Thank you for a big letter, *Hetty Witteveen*. We'll have to share your "recipe" with the Busy Beavers soon. They'll enjoy it. Are you still bowling every week, Hetty?

* * * * *

Busy Beaver *Marion Van Grootheest* has a story for us. Here it is.

The Storm

One day as I was in bed I heard "pitter, patter, pitter, patter," then a storm, then lightning. I put my head under the pillow, but it was too loud. Then before I knew it, it was morning.

* * * * *

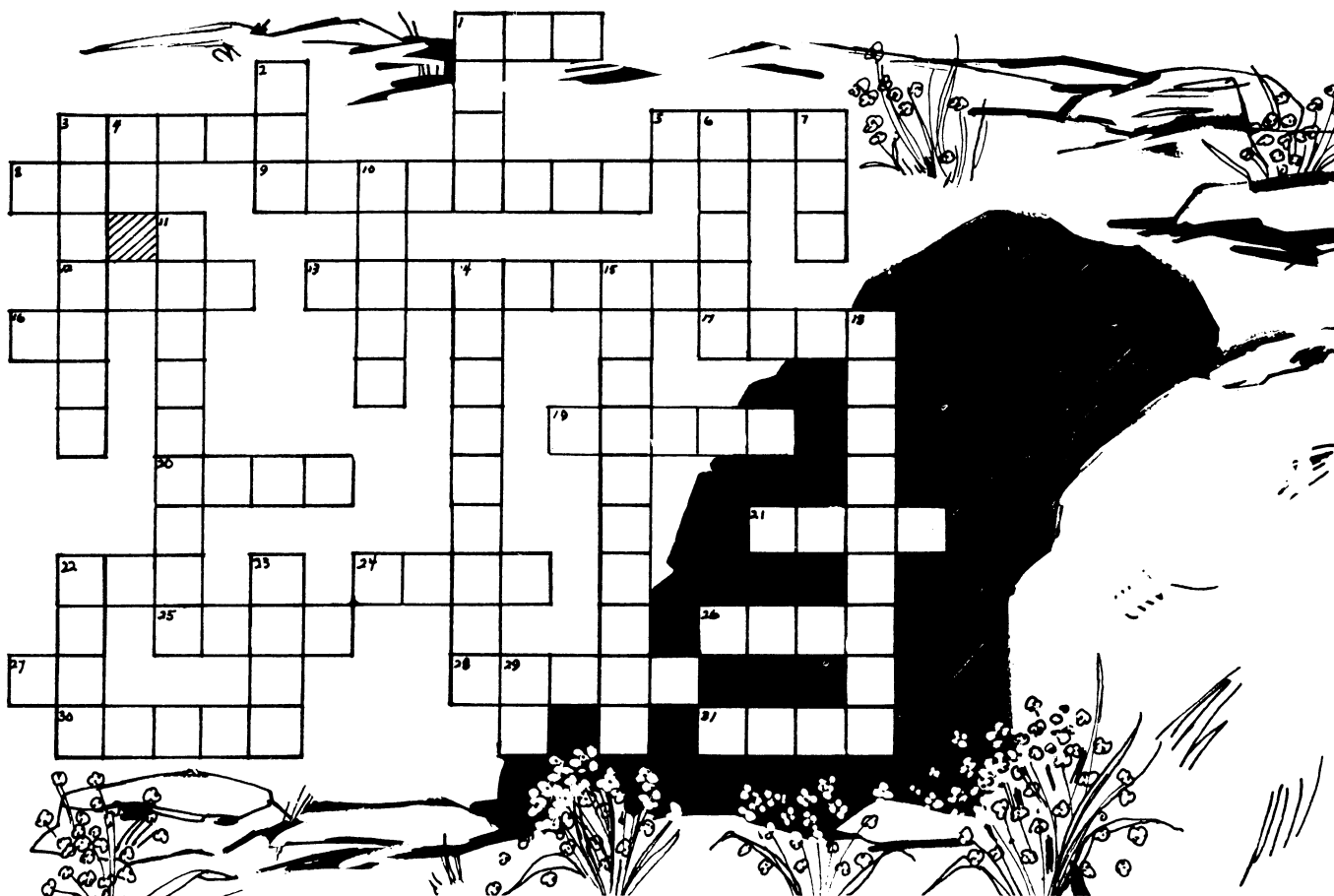
QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Joan Hofsink* has a cross-word puzzle for us.

ACROSS

1. It was the first _____ of the week (v. 1).
3. "He is _____" (v. 6).
5. "The other _____" (v. 1).
8. The angel _____ on the stone (v. 2).
9. Went away (v. 8).
12. First woman mentioned in verse 1.
13. The other name of 12 across (v. 1).
16. The angel said, "Fear not _____" (v. 5).

CHRIST AROSE! MATTHEW 28:1-10



17. Another name for Jesus (v. 6).
 19. The angel rolled this back (v. 2).
 20. "_____ not ye" (v. 5).
 21. Look for (v. 5).
 22. The women came to the sepulchre to _____ (v. 1).
 24. "Go quickly, and _____" (v. 7).
 25. Not alive (v. 4).
 26. They _____ His feet (v. 9).
 27. "_____, I have told you" (v. 7).
 28. Tremble (v. 4).
 30. The angle talked to them (v. 5).
 31. They ran to bring His disciples this (v. 8).

DOWN

1. The stone was rolled from the _____ (v. 2).
 2. The sabbath was at an _____ (v. 1).
 3. Clothing (v. 3).
 4. "And sat upon _____" (v. 2).
 6. He rolled back the stone (v. 2).
 7. "He goeth before _____ into Galilee" (v. 7).
 10. What the women were to see (v. 6).
 11. How Jesus died (v. 5).
 14. Followers (v. 7).
 15. "There was a great _____" (v. 2).
 18. Came down (v. 2).
 22. "White as _____" (v. 3).
 23. Turn to daylight (v. 1).
 29. Word used three times in verse 6.

I hope you will enjoy this puzzle!
 Next time I hope to have some news about our Make-a-Quiz Contest. Till then, Busy Beavers!

With love from your Aunt Betty.

HYMN 21
Johann Schop 1641

1. Christ is ris-en! Hal-le-lu-jah! Ris-en our vic-
 - to-rious Head! Sing His prais-es, Hal-le-lu-jah!
 Christ is ris-en from the dead. Grate-ful-ly our
 hearts a-dore Him, As His light once more ap-pears,
 Ris-ing up from grief and tears. Christ is ris-en,
 Hal-le-lu-jah! Ris-en our vic-to-rious Head!
 Christ is ris-en from the dead!

A Letter to My Daughter

Dear Jean,

It's a long time since I have written to you, although I promised you quite a while ago that I was half-way through a letter already. The fact is that I had in mind writing you about "Canada, crying for a dictator" and that I had half of what I wanted to write in my mind. However, I never got around to putting that on paper and in the meantime another subject has come up that I think is more important for the time being.

You have always been interested in witnessing to other people and studying the Scriptures together with other people. This is a worthwhile project and I have always liked this trait in you, because I always was interested in it myself.

No doubt, you have had the same disappointments as I have had, but since you were a little younger and less experienced, it may have had a different effect on you than on me. Therefore I am glad that you are in your present circle of life and of work and I hope that the present environment will have a good influence on you and will enable you to better evaluate those disappointments for what they are.

Nevertheless, I think it may be worthwhile to spell out my experiences so that you may work them out in your own life and profit from them.

There are a lot of people interested in Bible-study besides Canadian Reformed people. We certainly do not have the monopoly, as you will have noticed by now. Furthermore, you will also have noticed that our eagerness and zeal does not top theirs. It is quite often so that we are put to shame by them. They are, in general, willing to spend a lot more time on Bible study than we do and, as a rule, also witness more easily for their Lord and Saviour and very often praise His Name more easily than we do.

All of this does not fail to make a favourable impression, does it? And yet, afterwards, when thinking over what was said and what you replied, if anything, you don't feel satisfied. It was so different from what you were used to; anyway, that is the case with me and I think to a certain extent also with you. They talk about things you have never heard of before and therefore you are unable to say anything about it. But when you later on think about it, you find that the consequences are contrary to what you learned in catechism class.

I have heard and experienced the same things. I have sat there and listened, wondering what to say and also wondering how people could believe those things, especially how they could believe things that in my opinion were contradicting each other, all depending on where and what it said in the Scriptures.

They come with their dispensations and declare that God after Paradise tried a different way with Adam and Eve and with mankind. It did not work, and so God sent the Flood and tried another way with Noah and his descendants. It failed again, and God called Abraham and made a covenant with him and the chosen people. Have you noticed that every time God's work failed? That God, as it were, was taken by surprise in that His work did not reach its purpose and that God had to try something else? I don't know what you think about it, but every time I read or hear this I cannot but wonder how people can believe this about a faithful Father, Who does not forsake the work He once began.

You know, those people talk about Bible study, but I don't think they ever did any real studying. They just browse a little here and a little there. They read a chapter or a couple of verses and start talking about it, theorizing about it and come to the craziest things. And before you waste as much time as I have, I want to tell you to what conclusion I have come.

In the first place: do not try to refute whatever they say. It is useless, because they just do not understand what you are saying. Most of it they have never heard before and very often they never even read that part of the Bible.

Secondly, I think the best thing is to tell them that browsing is not Bible study yet. Tell them (do not read it) what Lord's Day 1 says, especially the second question and answer. The Bible was not given for browsing, not for chronological history, not for any other secular art or science. Although, none of the real facts of science have been contradicted by the Bible.

Tell them that the Bible was given to us in the first place to show us how deep we had fallen and how great our sins and misery are, so that we would desperately look and long for redemption.

Tell them that the Bible was given to us in the second place to show us how we are to be delivered from our sins and misery, so that we may bear fruit for our Creator again in our redeemed life.

Tell them that in the third place the Bible teaches us how and in what way we may show our gratitude and bear fruit for such deliverance.

And tell them then in the fourth place that everything that does not agree with this "main" line cannot be proven from Scripture but is false prophecy as far as you are concerned.

And if they do not want to listen to that, if they do not want to check the Scriptures on that, don't waste your time anymore. For then it does become a waste of time. Well, that's all for now. I'll have some more next time.

Love, Dad.