



Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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June 1992

“Catechism Preaching” (2)

ASPECTS OF ARTICLE 68 CHURCH ORDER

Here is Article 68 again, now with some stress here and there on important expressions which deserve closer scrutiny:

The ministers, everywhere, shall on Sundays, *ordinarily* in the afternoon service, *briefly explain* the *sum of Christian doctrine, comprehended* in the Catechism, so that, *as much as possible*, the *explanation* shall be annually completed *according to the division* of the Catechism itself.

Now some remarks on the underlined terms.

“ORDINARILY IN THE AFTERNOON”

During the struggle around the Liberation 1944, quite some discussion went on about the meaning of the word “ordinarily.” It also occurs in the article about General Synods: “The National (General) Synod shall *ordinarily* be held once every three years (unless there is an urgent reason to convene one *sooner*)” (Article 50 Church Order). Synodicals said that “ordinarily” means, *as a rule* . . . but it need not always be so. That was during the years that the Synod Sneek-Utrecht prolonged its life beyond the three years, and we told them to go home in order to make room for the next synod! An urgent reason may force us to have a General Synod *sooner*, but certainly not later! Therefore the Liberated people said, “Ordinarily” means *according to the rule*. This is the rule that we have agreed upon; we’ll have to stick to it.

I mentioned this in order to warn against the ease with which churches take “ordinarily” in Article 68 as being different from that in Article 50. Catechism preaching shall be held in the afternoon *according to the rule* — not *as a rule*, from which rule anyone who wants may deviate according to his own pleasure.

Quite some time ago the present writer published an article about the special character of the P.M. service, exactly because of the rule of Article 68. I do not have to repeat that but still maintain it: in the afternoon the

preaching is somewhat different in character from that in the morning service. The preaching in the P.M. is a “two-way” business. The Word of God is preached, but also we as congregation confess it (in the words of the Catechism). As Rev. M.J.C. BLOK called his book with Catechism-sermons: *Beleden Beloften* (Confessed Promises). The promises of the LORD are proclaimed; and we confess them.

Conclusion is that the Churches should stick to the rule: Catechism preaching in the afternoon. We know the practical reasons for which Churches have changed the rule: Catechism alternately in A.M. and P.M. But this is not according to the accepted rule.

CATECHISM CLASS A LATE-COMER

In this context something should first be said about the fact that the Catechism Class as-we-know-it, appeared on the scene at a very late date. The reader may be somewhat surprised to hear that not earlier than about the middle of the 19th century the specific ecclesiastical catechism class became a reality.

John Calvin’s set-up, which was closely followed by Dort 1618-19, was that Home, School, Church (in that order!) work together in the teaching of the Catechism.

The *parents* were supposed to teach their children at home. (For that purpose it was decided to prepare a “shorter catechism.” This summary was published around 1580 or 1585 in Heidelberg but we have not [yet] been able to lay our hands on it. In 1610 Rev. Faulkelius of Middelburg composed the well-known Compendium [Kort Begrip] but that one has never been officially adopted [happily so].)

The *School* was to add to this primary teaching of the Home. “The Consistories everywhere shall see to it that there are good teachers who shall teach the children . . . in godliness *and the Catechism*” (Article 21 Church Order). In those days the schools were under the supervision of the consistories. Usually the teachers taught the Catechism on Saturday afternoon, the

same Lord’s Day that the minister would preach about the next day in the P.M. service.

Thus the *Church* took over, not in a special Catechism class as we have now, but on Sunday afternoon, teaching young and old the sum of Christian doctrine from the Catechism.

Now this has changed. After the Secession 1834 the need for a Catechism instruction by the minister was felt (although that should *not* mean that the Schools have no task here anymore!). Yet, with the arrival of the Catechism class in the Church building, the preaching on the Catechism in Church was *not* abolished. The need for this kind of preaching has not disappeared; it has grown, I would say.

This brings us back to Article 68 itself again.

“BRIEFLY EXPLAIN” — “THE SUM OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE” — “COMPREHENDED IN THE CATECHISM.”

We take these three important expressions together because they describe in a lucid way what “Catechism Preaching” really should be.

There is the word, “*briefly*.” “Aha!” someone says, “the Catechism sermon should be short, Reverend; shorter than your morning sermon!” That would, however, be a completely mistaken conclusion.

Why? Because “*the sum of Christian doctrine*” has to be preached in P.M. sermon. “*Sum*” means here: sum-total. Fulness, completeness. An example may clarify this. If the minister preaches on Matthew 28:19, his theme will be something like, “Christ’s mandate to preach the Gospel to the whole world.” In his sermon he will also preach about “baptizing them . . .”, and consequently say something about God’s being the Triune, thus emphasizing the difference between “the baptism of John” and “Christian baptism.” But the main message is “the great commission.”

Now, in the afternoon he preaches on Catechism Lord’s Day 8, “that these three distinct Persons are the one true God.” Now he must preach

the "sum," the completeness of this main Christian doctrine: God is Triune. He will take his congregation for a walk through the Scriptures, mention several "texts" and thus make clear that God "has so revealed Himself in His Word" (Catechism 8).

Again, it must be clear to us that this "sum" (i.e. fulness, completeness) is *not found in the Catechism!!* That would be impossible. The Catechism would become as big as the Bible itself. Therefore, Article 68 Church Order says that this sum "is *comprehended* in the Catechism." In other words, the Catechism gives only a "skeleton" of the fulness of that specific Christian doctrine. For that fulness the pastor has to lead his flock into the green pastures of Scripture itself. But he does this by using the Catechism as a "guide." Again: Why? Simply because we as Churches have agreed in our Confession that this is the way the Bible should be understood. Not as the Jehovah's Witnesses or Liberals do it, but as Reformed people, in agreement with the Ecumenical Symbols of the Early Church.

But — and here we return to the word "briefly" — if the minister would try to repeat everything in his sermon what the Bible reveals about the Triune, or about justification, etc., it would take him hours and hours. It would become a day-long session. Therefore: "briefly." But in that "briefly" he has to do justice to the "sum" or completeness and fulness of that doctrine. It has to be a well-balanced (not one-sided) presentation of a complete doctrine, with all its nuances and effects for us.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

From what has been said some conclusions may now be drawn as to the special character of a "Catechism sermon."

1. It is clear by now that the P.M. sermon is *not* "about" or "on" the Catechism as though the Catechism is the text for the sermon the same way as the inspired Word of God is the text for the A.M. sermon. It would be against our Confession to do it that way. The text for the P.M. sermon is the "Christian doctrine" as found in the Bible, and comprehended in the Catechism as a "skeleton."

2. The preacher, however, is bound to read, not only the Catechism in the light of the Bible (that goes without saying) but also to read the

Bible in the light of the Catechism. And that may not go without saying Does that mean that the Catechism has more authority than the Bible? Certainly not, but the minister is bound to read (and preach) the Bible, not as a Romanist does it, or a Jehovah's Witness, or a Liberal, or a Pentecostal, and so on . . . , but as the Church of the Reformation has always understood and preached the Word of God. Call that prejudice, but everyone is prejudiced, a Liberal or Jehovah's Witness as much, even much more, than a Reformed believer.

3. The Bible belongs to the Church, not to the preacher. It is not enough that he preaches from here and there, on texts chosen by himself (in which choice he may be one-sided in whatever sense) but he has to preach the fulness of the Word of God. Article 68 "forces" him to preach on many parts of the Bible which, maybe, he would never choose himself. For 50% he may choose his "own text," but for the other 50% he is bound — and every minister ought to be happy with this binding.

4. Once again: "the sum" has to be preached. In the morning the minister should stick to his text, understand it in its context, and not wander away from it, going afield in an erratic walk through the whole Bible (as one can often hear in radio-broadcasted sermons). Stick to your text!

But in the afternoon he may, he must, "run through the whole Bible" in order to find the "sum": what the whole Bible has to say on election, providence, justification, regeneration, marriage, daily bread, etc., etc., etc. It is tempting to give more examples, like on the keys of the kingdom, the threefold office of the believer, the Church, and so on, but we hope that the reader got the message all right.

5. Some more things should be stated, however briefly. The word "doctrine" is used by Article 68. That means a positive, well-balanced exposition of the revealed truth of God's Word as confessed by the Church, but also — by the same token — a rejection of all that is not in agreement with this doctrine. The Catechism is strong in "controversies," those of the 16th century. Essentially not much has changed, though these same errors may now come in a different attire. The congregation must be protected against them and be trained in rejecting them, wherever they meet them. But the word "doctrine" in our church-

language should not be understood intellectually! Doctrine is life. Therefore Catechism preaching can and must be very practical. The Catechism itself gives the lead. "What is *your* only comfort . . . ?" One may think of the third part, the Ten Words and the Lord's Prayer. How immensely practical is that whole third part. Lord's Days 45-52 is no less than a training course in prayer, and ministers should keep it that way, instead of giving a series of lectures on "the Name," "The Will of God," "The Kingdom," "Daily Bread," "Temptations." Sure, he must teach the sum of Christian doctrine on all these themes, but in such a way that the prayers of the membership become enriched by it, and more pleasing in God's sight, so that He may hear us, and give abundantly what we ask of Him.

(To be Continued)

G. VANDOOREN



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MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

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ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION

P.O. Box 54, Fergus
Ontario, Canada N1M 2W7

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: W.W.J. VanOene

Co-Editors: W. Helder, D. VanderBoom

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS:

J.M. Boersema, J. Faber, J. Geertsema,
E. Gosker, W. Huizinga, P. Kingma,
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school X crossing

A GOOD WORD FOR OUR REFORMED SCHOOLS!

You may remember that in the April 3, 1976 issue of *Clarion* I raised the question why Reformed Education was not mentioned in the introductory letter of *The Good Word*. I received a reaction from two editors of *The Good Word* on this point. The first, Rev. Boersema, wrote in a personal letter: "... to assure you that we certainly also want to deal with Reformed education in *The Good Word*. In my original letter I thought that 'family life' and my reference to the sciences would cover education." And he adds: "... there has never been a moment's doubt whether we would deal with education or not."

I am glad and thankful that I may pass on these good words. Rev. Boersema clearly understood and interpreted my question from the contents of the article.

An evangelistic paper that aims to "specifically promote the position of the Canadian Reformed Churches" and plans "to speak about every aspect of the Christian life . . ." (see their introductory letter), *must* indeed speak on education. *The Good Word* wants to promote the position of the Canadian Reformed Churches on Reformed Education also! Thank you, brother Boersema, for having understood my question correctly and for the answer you have given!

A DIFFERENT REACTION

I wish I could leave it at that. However, not long after Rev. Boersema's letter I received some Bulletins of the Canadian Reformed Church of Edmonton, mailed by Edmonton's pastor, Rev. D. De Jong. He seems to understand and interpret my question in an entirely different way, as though the question was: Why does *The Good Word* not specifically address itself to our Reformed Schools. I quote from the Bulletin of May 15, 1976: "Now it was indeed not the intention of the editors of 'The Good Word' to specifically address themselves to 'our Reformed Schools.'" And: "... it is however specifically directed to those who are not Canadian Reformed; it is an 'evangelization-paper'."

Well, when you read that article in *School X Crossing* again, it will be clear to everyone, that this was not the question at all. We all know that *The Good Word* is meant to address itself to the "outsiders" and not to our own church people, not to our schools either. The question was not: Why does *The Good Word* not address itself to our Reformed Schools? Or: What does this paper have to offer to our schools, our parents, our children, our teachers, Education Committees, Boards, etc. No one reading the entire article will get that impression. Even when you only read the question and ignore the contents of the article, you will not get that impression. You only have to look up Webster's Dictionary to find out what the word "for" means. In this case it clearly means: concerning, regarding, as the first mentioned editor understood it. That is how we in our everyday language use this word, too.

But the question was: Why NOT mention education? Is that not one of the most important aspects of the Christian life?

Rev. De Jong himself adds: "And as such it wants indeed to speak about every aspect of Christian life, and, besides the examples mentioned by name, Reformed Education was certainly included in the 'etc.'"

And yet, this second reaction is different from the first one. From Edmonton's Bulletin I quote again: "But it is clear that the author (of *School X Crossing*, MW) is not so much concerned about the secular public education, but about promoting 'our Canadian Reformed Schools'! Even this evangelization-paper has to do that, and if not: it falls short!"

WHAT IS CLEAR?

It is clear that I am not so much concerned about the secular public education, but about promoting "our Canadian Reformed Schools"! I ask: where *in my article* is that clear? If there is anything clear, it is the fact that Rev. De Jong ignores the contents of my article. It is then no wonder that he misunderstands and misinterprets the question raised. Besides that, when he writes between quotation marks: 'our Canadian Reformed

Schools,' with the word "our" underlined(!) he gives the impression that this is a quotation from my words. This, however, is not true. This is misleading. It is a statement of Rev. De Jong and not a quotation from *School X Crossing*, as anyone reading the article can verify. This is turning things around! The editors (not just one!) have stated as the AIM of their paper: to specifically promote the position of the Canadian Reformed Churches, also in Reformed Education. That is the stand they themselves have taken.

THE FOURTH MARK OF THE TRUE CHURCH?

Is this a mere argument of words? I wish it were. But there is more to it and more behind it. Edmonton's Bulletin continues and asks: "But why then should 'The Good Word' speak to the 'outsiders' about 'our Canadian Reformed Schools' as one of the most important aspects of the Christian life, if it wants to promote the specific position of the Canadian Reformed Churches?" Well, that is a question for the editors of *The Good Word* to answer, since they have taken it upon themselves to speak on every aspect of the Christian life (see their introductory letter). But Rev. De Jong has another answer for us. He writes: "I can only find one answer to this question. It is this, that in the mind of the author (and it agrees with the impression as a whole which you receive from regularly reading 'Clarion') a *fourth* mark of the true church, by which the Canadian Reformed Churches can be known, is this: the promotion of 'our own Canadian Reformed Schools.' Yes, let us be honest. That's the issue! And, sad to say, that's the issue, not only in the mind of the author, and behind the editorial policy of 'Clarion': that's the issue in our churches as a whole. Just see Acts General Synod Toronto 1974, Art. 89: 'General Synod unanimously agrees . . . on the 'desirability of Canadian Reformed Schools.' Mind you, it does not read: 'Reformed- or Christian-Education,' but: 'Canadian Reformed Schools'! This is *not yet* officially the 4th mark of the Canadian Reformed Churches by which they want to be known as the true church. But it is coming closer and closer to that. Canadian Reformed Church-members, get awake!"

There is more on which we could dwell. But the above quoted words really will give us something to think
Continued on page 198.

"REVERENCE"

There is a tendency nowadays to speak quite familiarly about God and with God. No wonder. Modern theology has made God into an object of critical discussion and in doing so dragged Him down into "our world" for closer scrutiny. Mystical theology has brought Him into that realm of deeply-personal experience and changed a "transcendental Being" into "deity-within-us." So a lot of speaking about God today lacks the reverence it should have.

Now reverence should not just be a formal thing, but it certainly does appear in the forms we use. Take for example those newer European Bible translations which no longer write divine pronouns with capital letters. I call that a typographical lack of reverence. We have been used to writing such pronouns with capital letters for many years. What was wrong with it? And I certainly do not believe that the sudden lack of capitals is due to a language-technical insight of late. Typography also reflects the thinking of our times.

Then there is this matter of the use of pronouns in PRAYER. Should we use those archaic forms like "thee, thou, thine" or just the simple "you and your"? An increasing number of people are starting to use the "modern" forms. Which usage has in turn prompted another debate. May I give you a few examples?

In the PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN of August/September 1975, Prof. Dr. R.B. Dillard (Assistant Professor of Old Testament Language and Literature at Westminster Theological Seminary) writes on the art of translating and makes the following statements en passant, "I cannot refrain from at least mentioning the traditional use in the church of the archaic pronouns, thou, thee, thy, thine and ye. It has long been regarded as a mark of Christian devotion to preserve this distinctive way of addressing the transcendent Deity. Reviewers often object to translations that abandon this traditional usage of the church. To the contrary, one must remember that during the period of Shakespearian English, these forms were the equivalent of the ordinary pronouns in use today, and were heard in bawdy humour as often as in prayer. These forms did not originally mark a distinctive way of addressing Deity, nor did the writers of Scripture use any such distinct forms."

Prof. Dillard feels that these forms interfere with the "communication of the Word" and also "make

Circumspection...

Christians hesitant to lead in public prayer." His conclusion is, "the sooner this practice is abandoned, the more effective our prayers and translations will be."

And one of our own ministers is of the SAME opinion, and writes in a local bulletin, "For some time now, some of us have been addressing God in prayer with the pronoun 'you' rather than 'thee' or 'thou.' There is good reason for doing so. Both the Hebrew and the Greek did not have a special form for speaking to God." And my pastor adds that the "Bible is not written in the high-styled language of poets and philosophers, but the common everyday language of newspapers and the man on the street. We also ought to talk about God and to God in the common language and not in some kind of specifically holy language."

Let's face it, both Prof. Dillard and my pastor come up with solid arguments, and together they make a strong case. Technically speaking, they are right: forms like "thee" or "thou" are archaic and therefore seem to be anachronisms (those outdated and misplaced things in these modern times!). And it could very well be true that the English language ORIGINALLY does not contain modes of addressing "Deity," even no politeness-form. Everyone's "you", whether he is king or beggar, man or child.

I agree also when my pastor states that we should talk about God and to God in the common, comprehensible language, and not some kind of a holy language, which no one understands except the "initiated." We should also not be spoken to in such a language, e.g. by our pastors. Avoid "speaking in tongues," says Paul. But I would also like to point rather strongly to something which is overlooked quite easily.

In the course of time those so-called archaic pronouns have received an accepted place in the English language as forms with which to address "Deity." This will be due to the influence of the King James Version, and perhaps even because of technical misunderstandings; but nevertheless it is a fact that for many "common" people "thee" or "thou" constitute an accustomed and preferred way of speaking to the Lord. Even my pastor recognizes this when he writes, "We could say, of course, that thee and thou have received special meaning through USAGE..."

(emphasis Cid's). That is an important point. Has our English language not become ENRICHED with such a development? "Thee and Thou" are not exponents of some special "holy language" but have become simple pronominal forms which are commonly accepted as being reverential.

Besides, most of us being bilingual, we should appreciate this development. The Dutch e.g. has these "forms of politeness" (beleefdheidsformules). Even the German and the French (to name a few others) have distinctive forms (Du-Sie; Tu-Vous). Is it then so far-fetched to accept such forms (You-Thee) in the English language? And in doing so joyfully acquiesce in a historical process? Even Prof. Dillard admits, "The need to communicate the Gospel clearly forces us to take account of the fact of language EVOLUTION" (emphasis Cid's). Well, there is evolution also in this sense that "thee" and "thou" became accepted forms to address the Lord with. Why not take account of this fact?

The fact that many (older?) people are against the use of "you" in addressing the Lord is not just a mark of "Christian devotion." It is also a realization that the switch from "thou" to "you" is not always born out of a desire to achieve linguistic purity, but often comes up out of a nonchalant, unspiritual attitude. Understand well: neither Prof. Dillard nor my pastor has such an attitude. On the contrary (as far as I know). But I do wonder whether they are not unintentionally supporting the wrong cause.

For many of our people (and it seems also for many Presbyterians, etc.) it would not sound or "feel" right to use the more familiar address. Therefore they stick to the archaic form which has to them that deep touch of reverential distinction. And I'm convinced, using those archaic forms in this modern world may be technically impure, but is Spiritually quite pure. It is not a "magic formula," but a sincere and legitimate attempt to avoid and prevent any "earthly thought of the heavenly majesty of God" (Heidelberg Catechism, Question 121).

And I'm sure, when we continue to use these reverential forms, every Canadian/American will know Whom we mean and what we mean. Even outsiders experience the note of reverence. Let's CAPITALIZE on that!

Cid.



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

JAPANESE ANNIVERSARY

Tokyo, Japan. At the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of its existence, the Reformed Church of Japan has published "a declaration of faith" concerning the Church and the State. This declaration was drafted during a Synod-meeting held last month. In it the Reformed Church protests against the state's subsidization of the Shinto faith, which is used to preserve the so-called Yasunkuni Sanctuary. The declaration calls for freedom of worship and the autonomy of the church within the Japanese state. It also extensively discusses the relationship which should exist between the two.

The Reformed Church of Japan says it regards the Scriptures in every respect as the Word of God.

WCC POLICIES

Geneva, Switzerland. On behalf of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Secretary-General Dr. Phillip Potter has declared that this inter-ecclesiastical organization wishes to pay more attention in the coming time to "essential matters like human rights and the realization of these rights, especially freedom of religion." Other matters which, according to Potter, badly need attention are disarmament, militarism, violence and passive resistance. Potter also mentioned education and upbringing, and especially mission, development and ecumenical cooperation.

FRELIMO

Maputo, Mozambique. According to IDEA (Press agency of the West-German Evangelical Alliance) presently 150 missionaries and church-workers are being held in Frelimo prisons. President Samora Machel has led a grand campaign against religion and churches since Mozambique became independent in June, 1975.

"HELP THE DOCTOR"

Leusden, The Netherlands. The national financial drive of the Reformed Churches (Liberated), "Help the Doctor on his Way," meant to send out a physician to Irian Jaya, has reached an amount of fl. 900,000. Meanwhile nurse J. van Egmond, who for many years has worked in Irian Jaya, and lately in Kawagit, has returned to The Netherlands and will be replaced shortly by sister J. Velvis. The Dutch Reformed Churches (Liberated) have now bundled their mission news in one magazine, "Tot aan de Einden der Aarde" (To the Ends of the Earth), with as editor the Rev. D.K. Wielenga of Rotterdam, former lecturer in Missiology at the Theological Seminary at Kampen.

AUSTRALIAN SYNOD

Blacktown, Australia. According to delegates of the Synodical Reformed Churches in The Netherlands — who recently visited Australia — the Synod of the Reformed Churches of Australia — which met during the first two weeks of May — has decided to continue and intensify relations with the Synodical Reformed Churches in The Netherlands. A motion on this Synod to break off sister-relations was not carried.

OPC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Beaver Falls, Pa., U.S.A. The forty-third Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church convened on Thursday, May 27, at Beaver Falls. The main item on the agenda is the proposed "New Form of Government," similar to a church order revision. The New Form e.g. provides for a "probationary system for elders" in an attempt to relieve the need some congregations have felt for "term elder-ship."

FELLOWSHIP

The Committee on Interchurch Relations of the Christian Reformed Church will propose to the next Synod of that Church that it extend ecclesiastical fellowship to the Reformed Church of America. The two Churches have been separated since 1857 because of issues such as Masonic Lodge membership, election and limited atonement. The Reformed Church of America is a member of the World Council of Churches.



*Prof. J. Kamphuis
"worried about youth . . ."*

DUTCH YEARBOOK

Goes, The Netherlands. The recently published Yearbook of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Liberated) shows that Church growth was less in 1975 than in previous years. Total membership now is 92,065. The author of the annual review, Prof. J. Kamphuis, was especially concerned about the youth of the church. "We may be grateful that the growth in membership seems to continue in the Reformed Churches. But do we pay enough lively attention to our youth? Are we losing our grip on them? Are we growing weaker spiritually now that we are getting farther and farther away from the difficulties and the struggles in 1944 and 1967?" he asks.

COMMENT

Having come from The Netherlands not too long ago, I know that Prof. J. Kamphuis' concern for the Dutch youth is not unwarranted. It is especially the almost unlimited prosperity which is causing some young people to become increasingly mate-

rialistic. Many suffer from a high degree of spiritual apathy. Combine this autarchic materialism with a prevailing humanism, and one has a dangerous situation, also for our young people in this country.

Prof. Kamphuis asks a few questions. Some speak of a specific "youth problem," but add that there ALWAYS is such a problem. Others go much farther and speak of a youth CRISIS. Still others feel that the problem lies elsewhere and speak of a "PARENTAL problem." Well, we should not overdo things, but certainly admit that there are difficulties in this area.

Sometimes I also feel that we are losing our grip on the youth. Authority is not easily accepted anymore in this society. And I do find that many young people are poorly motivated, despite the positive effects of Reformed education. Bad motivation leads to diminishing knowledge and this in turn curbs spiritual development and disrupts society-life.

I think that insight into Church History is generally lacking, and that could be detrimental in these revolutionary times. How many young people indeed do know what "1944" or the Liberation was all about? Do they know the principle differences between the Canadian Reformed and other churches? And what about 1967? Do we know the issues of the "latest" struggle in The Netherlands? We should, because these issues are not isolated Dutch incidents, but are related to international religious developments. Lack of knowledge in these fields need not only be the youth's fault, but that does not undo the reality of spiritual weakness also among us, I fear.

As Canadian Reformed Churches we have been blessed in many ways, sharing in the prosperity of this grand nation. We have not known major schisms like the former generations in The Netherlands. And I certainly do not long for any struggles in this respect. But the fact is true: during a struggle for reformation, there is often more knowledge and motivation than otherwise. And the farther one is removed from a reformation, the more necessary another reformation becomes! Why? We tend to sink in, and must be raised up time and time again.

These days we celebrate Pentecost. Feast of the MOTIVATION. And motivation is what we need, young AND old. Cl. S.

Congress of Reformed Mission Workers in Latin America



Left: Rev. C. Van Spronsen.
Second one from right: Mr. John Kuik.

From April 28th to May 5th, the workers of the Reformed Mission in Latin America, met in Curaçao. After a preparation of more than a year, they could, for the first time, hold a joint congress, where attention mainly was given to the exchange of experiences and theoretical reflection upon various aspects of their work. Presently the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands are working in three mission fields on this continent: in Curitiba (in Southern Brazil), on Curaçao, and in Surinam, while the Canadian Reformed Churches do mission-work in São José da Coroa Grande, in the North-East of Brazil.

All the missionaries and other workers in service of the Reformed mission-work could be present at this congress. From Curitiba there were present the ministers S. Braaksma and J.T. Oldenhuis, together with their co-worker, A. Nap, sent out by the Church of Assen. From São José came Rev. C. Van Spronsen, missionary of the Canadian Reformed Church of New Westminster, together with the Mission-Aid worker, J. Kuik. From Paramaribo Rev. K. Verlind came, missionary of the Church of 's Hertogenbosch. Hosts on Curaçao were Rev. R. van Nus and Rev. D.T. Vreugdenhil, sent out by the Church of Rijnsburg, together with the Mesozco-worker, J.T. Sikkema. Curaçao was chosen as the site for the congress to be held, because of the good accommodation available there in the form of an own mission-centre.

An important part of the congress dealt with extensive surveys of the work, as it is

done in the different mission fields up to now. Particular attention was given to the backgrounds and motivations of all sorts of practical decisions. That one in this way was confronted with the work-methods and problems of other fields, appeared to be a specially useful and encouraging experience.

Besides that, four lectures were presented, wherein successively attention was given to the concepts "mission" and "evangelization," as we find them in the New Testament, questions concerning the administration of baptism on the mission field and recognition of baptism administered in other churches, questions in connection with the public profession of faith, and finally the order of worship. Apart from these subjects, separate discussions were held on the use of radio and television in the mission-work, on the use of "native" forces, and concerning the question how the workers of the different fields can best serve each other with the results of their own study, literature and the like. A report of these discussions will be sent to the mission-papers "Tot de Einden der Aarde" and "Mission News."

For the participants of the congress it was a good opportunity to acquaint themselves with the mission-work on Curaçao and to get to know the congregation of Curaçao.

S.B.

(Press Release adopted at the congress.
Translation C.V.)

In Conversation with Dr. Byang Kato (2)

Dr. Byang H. Kato was an evangelical. But not an ordinary one. Although most of the people who carry this name in most cases have a very accommodating view regarding people and things with whom, on the basis of their faithfulness to the Scriptures, they should definitely disagree, Dr. Kato is an exception to this rule. One of the exceptions, for there are more evangelicals who do not, as for example, a Billy Graham, always turn a friendly face in the direction of Geneva or Rome.

From the interview we had with Kato this exception became clear. "During the past weeks, the World Council," he stated, "has tried to give the impression that we — evangelicals and ecumenists — are at heart one. The president of the central committee, Dr. M.M. Thomas, for example, placed the Mission conference of the World Council in Bangkok and the World Evangelization Congress of Evangelicals in Lausanne and Nairobi on one line in his speech. He and Philip Potter emphasized also that the horizontal aspect of faith may not be seen apart from the vertical and both underlined the idea of "spirituality," a term to which several evangelicals are sen-

sitive. The top men of the World Council are clearly trying to create the impression that the evangelicals and ecumenists are as thick as thieves. That attempt was greatly strengthened by the announcement that Billy Graham would come to Nairobi. Many ecumenists were very pleased when they heard of this.

"In all this I can see nothing else but an attempt by Geneva to encapsulate the evangelicals in the whole business of the World Council. But whoever reads between the lines of the speeches sees that, in the theological trends within the World Council, there is not at all a bending towards biblical faithfulness. If Thomas had really been so impressed by Lausanne he would at least have mentioned in his speech the necessity of mission and evangelization, one of the main points of Lausanne. For that matter, the conclusions of Lausanne did not even come up for discussion in Nairobi. From this — and for example also from the preparatory documents for the assembly — it appears that in fact the evangelicals are not taken seriously. Also during the meetings here the evangelicals had hardly any say. The speech of the Rev. John Stott, who

was the only evangelical officially invited to speak, was restricted to twenty minutes, but during the same meeting Mrs. Adriamanjato from Madagascar could give vent to her marxist ideas for more than half an hour. For that matter I do appreciate the attempt of different evangelicals here to use their influence. Here and there, for example in the theological section's report — this has had results. Some other section reports have been influenced to a certain degree. But on the other hand I do not have much faith in this working from within. It will only increase the confusion. For now some reports, because of their choice of words, appear to be faithful to the Bible while they only serve to cover the ecumenical contents. For example, the report of the theological section, in connection with mission, does not mention one word about man's being lost, while this, especially when we speak of mission and evangelization, is a Biblical principle.

Many evangelicals will not recognize this, or will, for the sake of unity, not pay attention to this, but they will only cheer because the words in the reports sound so biblical. I am afraid that Nairobi will increase the polarization among the evangelicals."

AFRICA

Speaking with an African Christian in Africa naturally means speaking about Christian Africa. And Dr. Byang Kato could talk about this. "The influence of the tribal religions on the so-called African theology" was the subject of his thesis for which he received his doctor's degree in the U.S. in 1974. A popular version of his thesis under the title, "Theological Pitfalls in Africa" was published a few weeks before his death by Evangel Publishing House, P.O. Box 1015, Kisumu, Kenya.

Our partner in the conversation appeared definitely worried about the situation of African Christianity. "On the one hand there are many Christians who do not see that ancestor worship, dancing before heathen idols, and the bringing of sacrifices to ancestors is wrong and in conflict with Christianity. On the other hand, liberal theology is penetrating here too, imported by a few intellectuals who were educated in North America and Europe.

One of the most noticeable things in Africa today is the striving towards the so-called own identity. For years the African has been exploited and oppressed. He now wants to assert him-

SCHOOL CROSSING — Cont.

about. Many questions come to our mind when we read these words. I could ask: How does someone else know what is in my mind? Is Rev. De Jong a mind reader? I thought that only the Lord our God knows what is in the heart and mind of man. No one else knows that. We are only human and not omniscient! And I would like to ask for the time being, this question also: What is wrong with promoting our own Canadian Reformed Schools? Are they not desirable? Is it then more desirable to send our children to the public schools? Or to the (mixed) christian schools with their many dangers? Do we find it more desirable to entrust our children to teachers of various churches that do not have the three marks of the true church? Let me state quite emphatically that in my mind I have no fourth mark for the

church of our Lord. But let it also be very clearly understood that the three (!) marks of the true church of Christ include a faithful preaching of God's Covenant claims on us and our children. And in the Canadian Reformed Churches every minister is bound to preach the Word of God, as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity. That includes Lord's Day 38! And the third "baptismal" question and answer. And as Canadian Reformed Churches we have promised each other to keep the Church Order. That includes Article 21, and 41, and 44, and 53! That is the position of the Canadian Reformed Churches, which the editors of *The Good Word* have promised to promote! Let us "get awake" indeed! Let us wake up to the stand of the Canadian Reformed Churches and let us then stand up for this stand!

M. WERKMAN

self as a first-class person, and many, alas, by-pass the Scriptures in their striving.

That is very evident in the so-called black theology, which originated in the United States, but now has also blown over to Africa. The black theology states that the 'white theology' has always exploited the blacks. The whites came to us with the message about a God who lives in heaven, and an eternal life in the hereafter. The whites said: 'Don't worry about what happens in this world, about matters such as money, cars, and food. Be resigned to your poverty, for that is a virtue, and some day God will grant you the true good.' As long as the blacks in this way looked to the everlasting life, so black theology reasons further, whites exploited them. Black theology, however, wants to turn everything over radically: there must be a black economy, black power, etc. Ideologically it is closer to the Black Muslim movement in the U.S., which receives more and more support from the intellectuals in Africa.

I believe that many whites have indeed brought a deformed Christianity and have exploited the blacks. During the time of the slave trade American slave traders appealed to the Scriptures for their bad practices. Now we reap what we have sowed. Nevertheless, God and the Bible remain true in spite of the unfaithfulness of people. The vertical relationship with God must keep its priority, even when the horizontal relationship is completely destroyed. While black theology often poses good questions and rightly denounces certain abuses, it does not give the right biblical solutions. We do not need a black Christ or black God, but the God of the Bible, who also has a message for the black in all his needs."

AFRICANIZATION

For that matter — and Byang Kato emphasized this — black theology is not the same as the African theology. "The African theology does not emphasize being black as such. It states: Africa is Christianized, now it is time to Africanize Christianity. Traditional African religions are brought to life with the thought in mind that the worshipping in these religions is also from God and that only the manner of worship is different. Some supporters of this theology even declare that the African gods which are then worshipped are created by God. It needs little

proof that the danger of syncretism is as large as life. Personally, I believe that Christianity need not always have the same form in the different cultures. In Africa biblical Christianity must be expressed in such a way that the African can feel at home in the church of Jesus Christ. But it is clear that black theology wants something completely different. The Word of God remains the same in every culture and for every nation."

VIOLENCE

The theology of liberation, too, which now is so "in" in World Council circles and which was the theme of nearly all the speeches in Nairobi, has contaminated Africa, and in this connection Byang Kato pointed to a man like Canon Burgess Carr. "This theology probably forms the background to his speaking about a 'theology of violence.' At a meeting of the AACC in Lusaka (Zambia) in 1974 he said that God, by accepting the violence of the cross, has also in Jesus Christ accepted violence as an instrument to bring about a better society. In that connection he called on the churches to give support to the so-called liberation movements. He said that he looked forward to the time when the churches in Africa would be one great liberation movement. For me this is an enormous mutilation of the purpose of Christ's death on the cross. He died to pay our guilt of sin, which is the ultimate source of all violence.

As far as those liberation movements are concerned, it is of course a fable that the money they receive from the World Council is used for humanitarian purposes. The liberation movements' primary concern is not humanitarian help, but a war of liberation by means of force.

I believe that individual Christians do have a political responsibility. I think that the Christian conscience must be a guide to the answers Christians must give to political questions in their respective countries. But I do not believe that it is the church's responsibility to lead the way when it concerns political liberation. The most important task of the church is to bring reconciliation; first of all between God and man, and then also among man. Both oppressors and oppressed need the gospel of reconciliation. The church may not identify herself with either one. And that is why I do not believe that it is right for the churches to give money to the liberation movements.

But individual Christians definitely have responsibility as far as politics are concerned. They must be prophets, the conscience of society. Christians may not keep silent about sins such as racism.

Structural changes in a society can really only take place when the people who maintain these structures are converted to Christ. Conversion will always have consequences for political, social, and economical life. There is no contrast between mission and social action. The New Testament is very clear about that. Christ's care during His life here on earth concerned the body as well as the soul. But when people followed Him only for their welfare, He rejected them. Conversion to Him always comes first."

UNITY

At the end of our conversation the theme of the fifth assembly "Jesus Christ liberates and unifies" was brought up briefly by Dr. Kato. "During the past days there has been continuous talk about Jesus Christ as the political liberator. But Jesus Christ is no political liberator. He is the Son of God Who became man, true God and true man. Jesus Christ liberates. Yes, certainly, but about which liberation does the Bible speak? When the New Testament speaks of 'liberation' it is always about the redemption from the guilt of sin. Only the truth will liberate us. When the incarnate Son of God will make us free, we shall really be free. He frees us from the slavery of sin. On this basis there can be liberation on this earth, although we may not lose sight of Christian eschatology. Only on God's new earth will there be true liberation.

Jesus Christ unifies? Yes, but He also brings division. Some divisions between Christians are not necessary. But the great error of the ecumenical movement is that in her striving after unity all doctrinal differences are dismissed. The slogan then is: doctrine separates, worship unites. I believe this idea is ruinous. Theology, biblical theology, is indeed really important. If I do not speak to a non-convert about the unique character of the biblical gospel and only say to him: 'We are both Africans, we are both black, so let's work together for the improvement of our society,' then I ignore his fundamental need: a new life in Christ. He will die without Christ, and God will hold me responsible for that."

P.A.B.

news medley

Usually when you start with a certain thing, you know what you begin to do but you do not know what the end will be. In the same manner you oftentimes know what you are intending to do but you do not realize what you get into or can get into.

That was something I had to think of again when I saw the pictures and the advertisements of the brethren and sisters who celebrated their fortieth or forty-fifth, or even their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Now that I have set out to congratulate such couples in our medley, I am obligated to continue doing so. Do not think that I consider it to be a burden. Not at all. But I would like to be able to tell you all something about each one of them. And that is something which I cannot do for lack of knowledge.

From the advertisements in **Clarion** I learned that brother and sister J. Veenema of Chatham celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Then there are brother and sister H. VanBodegom of Brampton who, on June 17th, will celebrate their forty-fifth anniversary. Especially with a view to the recent illness of sister VanBodegom the gratitude will be the greater for the mercy of the Lord shown in granting this celebration. We all could read that brother and sister T. Bergsma of The Netherlands celebrated their forty-fifth anniversary in Canada together with their children and grandchildren. Although they had to do without the presence of their friends in the old country, yet they will have been very happy that they could have this day with their whole family together. Another Bergsma couple celebrated their fortieth anniversary in Carman on May 27th. Of brother A. Bergsma I could have written the same I wrote the other time about their sister and brother-in-law, A. Meints, for brother Bergsma, too, was "in the lumber" during the years of their living in Houston. We could renew the acquaintance later on in Carman, where farm life appeared to do the family much good.

The last couple we are going to congratulate are brother and sister J. Beukema of Fergus. You can see their picture in this same issue, and I can assure you that they have not changed much since this picture was taken. Last year brother Beukema was seriously ill, but the Lord restored his health and now they will celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary on June 12. If the mailman is in a good mood, this issue may reach them just around that date.

We wish all the above couples the blessing and nearness of our God also on their further pathway. May the promises of Psalm 92 be fulfilled in them, that they who are planted in the house of the LORD will bear fruit even in old age.

Turning to the news about the Churches, we begin in Ontario.

The Building Committee of Watford now officially offered some items for sale. Among these are some pews and a reed organ. Maybe the articles-for-sale are gone by the time you see this, so don't count on it too much.

From the Watford bulletin I also learned that the students at Catechism classes had to write papers on Calvin's

teachings and practices. That is quite something. Also from other bulletins I concluded that the Catechism students receive much better instruction nowadays than was the case when I attended those classes. They may not appreciate it too much right now, they will be very grateful for it later on. Let them accept that from someone who has experience in this respect.

Perhaps you recall that the picnic which was scheduled for Labour Day in the Hamilton region, was rained out and that it was rescheduled for Victoria Day. The bulletin contained an elaborate program for that day and a "beautiful trophy" was promised to the winner of the car rally which was to be held. The young people had their League Day in Fergus on that same day, and they, too, had a car rally which saw only a few cars lost. However, one of the members of our Congregation said, "If I were in such a rally with my girlfriend, I would have no trouble getting lost!" He even disclosed a few tricks which could achieve such a result. But I have better expectations of our young people(!).

The Hamilton bulletin also contained a press "review" of the meeting of the Regional Board of the Guido de Bres Highschool. The Principal read her report there and it appears that there are already 66 students for Grade IX. It is expected that this number will grow and the result is that three Grade IX's will be necessary. Seeing the necessity to increase the staff considerably, the budget will show increases in various categories.

I know that you cannot mention everything in a press

40th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. J. Beukema were married on June 12, 1936. They emigrated to Canada on May 25, 1951, and lived first in the Brampton/Georgetown area, where Mr. Beukema worked on a turkey farm and later in a shoe factory. He served the Church at Georgetown, later Orangeville, as an elder and travelled many miles to bring the family visits to widely scattered families. In 1960, when he was sixty years old, he bought a farm in the Fergus area, from which he retired several years ago. Until his serious illness last year, brother Beukema still went to the farm (where their son and his family live now) and spent many hours there doing chores, plowing, etcetera. Even now he can be found on the farm many a time.

Both brother and sister Beukema enjoy relatively good health at the moment and keep themselves well-informed about all things going on in the Church and in the world.

release, but I deplore it that no mention at all was made of a discussion with a delegation consisting of two brethren, sent by some fifteen concerned families in the Fergus/Guelph area to investigate the possibility of sending our children, too. In order to do justice to all, I do mention that here.

We go to Ebenezer Church in Burlington. From this Church I received a letter with a clarification in the matter of decisions regarding the mission. Since I made some remarks about the decision as I read it in the bulletin, I think it to be fair when I pass this letter on to you. Here it follows.

Our Study Committee for Mission, appointed to consider the possibilities of sending out our "own" Missionary, came to the conclusion that the time for this had not yet come, mostly because Toronto itself could not even yet find a replacement for the Rev. Knigge.

The Committee suggested to us the following resolutions, which were adopted by the consistory:

1. We are convinced that, when starting mission, we should think in terms of sending out a **team**. Even the apostles always took helpers along, among them Luke the beloved physician. We have already taken a step in that direction by sending out the Vegter couple to serve as "assistants." The Dutch churches, active in the same region, are sending, next to missionaries, also nurses, a mechanic, teachers, and now also a doctor. Knowing that more people would be willing to be sent to the mission field as assistants, we envisage a team, in the centre of which there should always be a fully trained missionary, who gives spiritual leadership to the team, next to his mission work, and in due time has to train converted natives to further spread the Gospel.

The distinction between Mission-proper and Mission-aid is, maybe, more theoretical than practical. In whatever way the line is drawn between the two, the most-profitable way for the work in the field is the best way.

2. Moneys given for the expansion of the Kingdom should not be accumulated in the bank but put to work because the Lord has always haste in the coming of His Kingdom. For that reason the consistory will ask the missionary church for the freedom to use our share in the mission work for other, immediate, mission-work, like Bible-translation and -distribution, — as long as there is no new missionary yet to be sent, and on the condition that Toronto has sufficient funds available for "initial costs" when a missionary becomes available. After that Ebenezer will do its share again for as long as our cooperation with Toronto is maintained.

* * * * *

The Rehoboth Consistory received some suggestions regarding changes in liturgy. These suggestions were made in an extensive report submitted to the Consistory. Of these suggestions I mention the following.

The Congregation will sing the opening song **standing** without a previous announcement. The boards which show the songs to be sung are usually clear enough to enable all members to read them without difficulty. At least, we have never had any trouble with it.

The second suggestion is that the "parents remain at the baptism-font after the child has been baptized and the congregation rise to sing." I am happy that this suggestion does not say anything of the minister standing there. At least, that leaves me free to return to the pulpit right after baptism if I should conduct a service there in which an in-

50th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. John Veenema celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on June 3, 1976.

They immigrated to the Chatham area in October 1951, then moved to the United States in 1962. They were employed in the "Holland Home" nursing home, and after recently retiring, they moved back to Chatham. They now reside at 200 Emma Street.

They have seven children and thirty-seven grandchildren.

fant receives the sign and seal of the covenant. But what about parents who object to standing there? I do know quite a few parents who would not wish to stand there, but whose desire it is to return to their seat in the pew before the singing starts. Will they be obligated to remain standing there although they object to it? And would a minister who objects to it be expected to remain standing with the baptismal font until the song by the Congregation has come to an end? It is easy to make a decision one way or another, but the consequences may be more than one bargained for.

A third suggestion is not to read the first part of the relevant Form on the Sunday before the celebration of the Lord's Supper, but to read the whole Form on the Sunday of the celebration itself. In connection with this, the Consistory will support the request to draw up a shorter form.

That is about all we have to mention about Ontario. Therefore we move on to Manitoba.

As usually, so this time the Winnipeg bulletin contains various pieces of interesting information.

In the first place we are told that the work on the parking lot will start soon and that estimates will be asked for paving during the summer. There will be room for at least 50 cars, we hear.

Further there is the information that "A letter was received from Edmonton informing us that the Regional Syn-

od has been postponed until December 8, 1976. The consistory accepted it as such, although it has its objections to these postponements." I suppose that I would support that, too.

A welcome decision was, no doubt, that "for the duration of the summer, the consistory will meet only once a month." I am happy to state that we have a habit of doing that throughout the year and are well satisfied with that practice. I always wonder what the Consistories that meet every other week are doing at those meetings. Generally speaking, I think that a very important element is, as the Rev. G. VanDooren said during an office-bearers Conference, that our Consistory meetings oftentimes are too UN-businesslike. If a meeting of the Consistory becomes an opportunity to debate certain issues, and if it becomes the "battle-ground" for discussions between two or three members, this can be very interesting and educational even, but then the meeting of the Consistory as such is being abused. I have learned that the only way in which things can get done is when the chairman gives "rounds" and writes down beforehand the names of those who wish to speak on a certain question. If you don't do that, then brother A. wishes to say something to what brother C. has just said. What brother A. says in reaction to what brother C. stated becomes then the reason for brother K. to take the floor (usually without asking for it) and to express his disagreement with both. And so on. Then you go home past midnight and have not achieved anything. "We'll meet again next week, brethren, to finish the agenda." (Hopefully, but not likely.)

"During the question period it was reported (but the question period is no occasion for reports, vO) that the Organ Committee took Mr. Zwart to view a pipe organ in St. Pierre. Since the priest-in-charge will not return till August no definite recommendation could be made." I am happy that I could report that they still have set their hearts upon a pipe organ. The organists whom Winnipeg can boast of deserve nothing less than that.

And, as a last item, the Consistory decided "that **as a rule** our pastor shall not marry any couple until both have first committed themselves to the Lord and His service in their public profession of faith."

The Rev. S. De Bruin then discusses the question whether or not the Consistory, by that very decision, denies the Minister his legal rights by restricting him in the type of marriages he will be permitted to solemnize. He comes to the conclusion that that is not the case, and I agree with him there. I am convinced that a Consistory (of which the minister is a member!) has the perfect right to make such a decision. For it is a fact that the minister has received his registration as a person who is authorized to solemnize marriages on the ground of his being authorized to do so by the Consistory, or, if you wish, by the Church. When I applied for such registration in British Columbia many years ago, one of the documents which had to be submitted was a declaration by the Consistory that I was duly authorized to solemnize marriages. Thus a minister has received his authorization from the Church and it is perfectly logical that the Church then also can set the conditions and put on limitations as to the types of marriage the minister will be allowed to solemnize.

However, this very same point makes me call nothing but a fable the statement that "our pastor, having been properly registered" is "a public servant in the employ of

the Province when he solemnizes a marriage." The situation is simply so that the Government recognizes marriages which are solemnized by a duly authorized and ordained minister as legitimate and valid marriages. I am **at no time** an employee of the Government and at no time do I solemnize a marriage "in the name of the Government." Since I am authorized to do so by the **Church**, the Government accepts that and recognizes the marriages which I solemnize as-authorized-by-the-Church. IF I should be a "public servant in the employ of the Province when I solemnize a marriage" a Consistory would overstep the boundaries of its authority if it should restrict me in the number or type of marriages which I would be allowed to solemnize. These two points are mutually exclusive! A Consistory does not have the right to set rules for someone who (even if it is only at certain occasions and when performing certain tasks) is "a public servant in the employ of the Province." Only the Provincial Government has the right to lay down the rules for its employees, even for the part-time ones. And a Provincial Government does not have the right to set the rules for Ministers of the Gospel which they are to follow with the solemnization of marriages. The Provincial Government only has the right to set down the conditions on which it will **recognize** marriages solemnized by Ministers of the Gospel. That is something different. However, enough about that for now.

We are almost at the end of our journey.

I could, of course, tell you all about the holiday-plans of the ministers. The various bulletins tell us when and where Prof. Selles will speak and conduct services, where the Rev. S. De Bruin will spend part of his holidays, and so on. But I have to leave something to your imagination!

One thing I wish to pass on from Calgary's bulletin. There I read the complaint that oftentimes so few members react to requests made via the bulletin. That is not something which is confined to that one Congregation. It is a regular phenomenon in practically every Congregation and for that reason I pass it on. Also personally I can utter the same complaint. You write letters with requests for text of speeches which were delivered, but do not even get a reply, let alone the speech itself; you write letters asking for information about certain things, but these letters seem to get lost in the mail. It is frustrating, indeed. Our young people here in Ontario had a League Day on Victoria Day and there is a standing request to pre-register so that the host societies can figure out approximately how much food has to be prepared. Only some ninety pre-registered — approximately one hundred and eighty showed up Result: near-panic with the "food-committee." There are always members who are not certain whether they will be able to attend practically until the very last moment. We do not count those, but they can never form fifty percent of the total number! It is just sloppiness.

Those things should not happen among us.

Matters could be made much easier for committees, for persons who have been asked to organize something, for everyone, if each one gave prompt attention to requests for information, for help, for cooperation, for an answer to specific questions.

Even if only one of our readers would feel compelled by the above words to finally write that little note, to finally drop the organizer a line, and whatever has been asked, these words would have found a sufficient reward.

vO

JAWS

Jaws! The newspapers were filled with impressive write-ups: an absolutely sensational film! Jaws was shown in almost every movie theatre in our country. And you can be sure that it'll be shown there where it has not yet come. Jaws! The newspapers wrote big headlines, and still do.

I haven't seen the film. But I did read the book from which the script was taken. And that was enough for me. When I talk to people who have SEEN the movie, I can't really understand why this film attracts such crowds. It's a very "bloody" film, almost enough to make you sick. At least . . . do you like to witness daily that people are ripped apart before your eyes by some white killer whale? Cold realism, as they say. Cold indeed. It's a rip-off!

Of course, it's trick photography, what did you think? But does that make it any less horrible? Do you really enjoy seeing that whale slowly swim away, his JAWS gripping human limbs, while the blood (so I was told) is shooting upwards like a fountain? Yes, do we LIKE to see this? Is that perhaps also the reason for all those crime-shows on television? The more

Brother O.W. Bouwsma is a member of the Reformed Church at Bunschoten, The Netherlands, and regular contributor to the evangelism magazine "Lichtstralen," from which this article was taken (Volume 30, No. 4, 1976).

they fall, the better the series!

During the time of the Roman empire, they also did things like this. People were torn into pieces by wild animals, while the amused public watched and enjoyed. And basically, it is the SAME THING that many do today! Sure, psychologists and psychiatrists will be able to come up with a beautiful explanation, as usual. But that doesn't alter the fact: all this killing and murdering remains . . . a spectacle!

If the Lord forbids KILLING, are we allowed to cash the same killing into a box-office success, because it is only "make-believe" and therefore not REAL killing? Is ENJOYING killing not just as bad as DOING it?

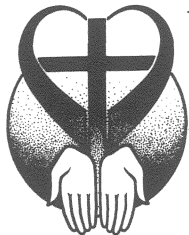
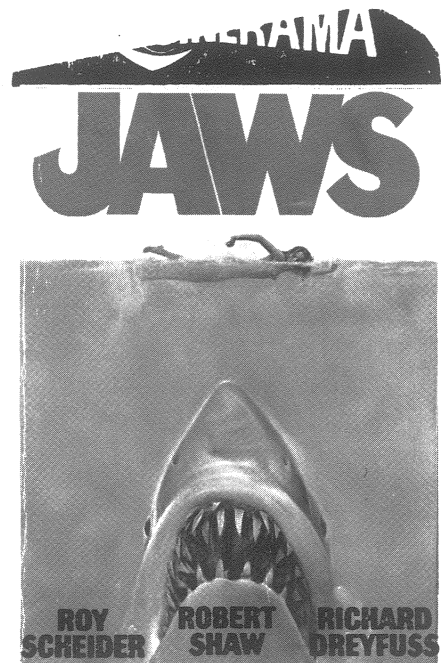
Lately the whole manner of speaking about death has changed. God said to Adam and Eve that death was a punishment for sin! Death does not belong with life! But people make a "natural process" out of it, and nothing more. Because "dead is dead," they say. While the Bible maintains that death is the penalty for SIN! And that even after death, all is not finished.

Because Christ died! He conquered death and did rise out of the

grave. That's why we can and may say: death does not frighten us! But death does remain — so the Bible says — a "last enemy," and therefore not a thing to make jokes about or to look at for relaxation and enjoyment. That way you get caught up in real jaws, the JAWS of Satan! Because this attitude distracts from the Lord and His word.

Never mind "jaws." What we need is the right attitude towards LIFE! Out of the Scriptures, so that we can LIVE eternally with the Lord.

(Translation: REV. CI. STAM)



Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund

RESULTS FOR GUATEMALA

The Executive Committee of CRWRF wishes to express its heartfelt thanks to the Canadian Reformed people for the tremendous response to our appeal for money for earthquake victims in Guatemala. Never before have we received such generous and country-wide reaction to an appeal for funds. At the time of writing (May 6) we have received a total of \$18,416.22 with almost all the Canadian Reformed churches participating. Of this amount \$17,150 has already been sent to the Alliance Guatemala Relief Fund for distribution by the Alliance Reconstruction Committee in Guatemala.

SPECIAL THANKS

In particular we wish to thank the congregation of Abbotsford for an all-time high

contribution of \$4000. Special thanks is also due to the congregations of Carman, Coaldale, Edmonton, New Westminster, and Winnipeg for their first-time contribution to the work of the Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund based in Burlington. We are greatly pleased that east and west were willing to join in relieving the need in Guatemala. The efforts of students at Maranatha Christian School in Fergus and at John Calvin School in Smithville are also appreciated. How good it is to see that even our young children are aware of the poor elsewhere and are willing to make special effort to aid these poor. Lastly, we wish to thank all those congregations that we may count as our regular contributors. Your faithful and constant support over the past ten years has made it possible for the Executive

Committee to expand the work of CRWRF. Without you we would have had no resources and our efforts would have been useless.

PRAY FOR GUATEMALA

As with any effort on our part, it would be quite senseless to work if the Lord did not bless our endeavours. This is particularly true of our contributions to the people of Guatemala. We have to give the distribution of these funds over to non-Canadian Reformed people. We may never personally see the results of our donations. Yet we may trust in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Lord knows our motives, how we seek to bring glory to His name also in Guatemala. Let us pray with earnestness that He will bless this country and our aid, that hearts may be opened to His Gospel. If in some small way our contributions are instrumental in the gathering of God's Church in Guatemala, then our work has been blessed. Let us all pray for that blessing.

Mrs. Femie Vander Boom,
Corresponding Secretary,
Executive Committee CRWRF.

Fourteen and Seven

Recently, while bringing some order in a part of the College Library, I found a booklet, written by an 80-year-old retired minister, A.M. DIERMANSE, as a cry-of-conscience that more New Testament Hymns be introduced in the Church. The year was 1933. It was in Holland. As Dr. H. Kaajan remarks in his Foreward, fear and traditionalism, conservatism and prejudice were again the reason why some strongly objected to more New Testament singing in the Reformed Churches.

Rev. Diermanse himself repeatedly asserts that we must have patience with this mentality, and that we must try to help, to educate. But, with equal stress, he maintains that New Testament singing is a must for us.

Why?

Because Paul writes, Romans 1:16, "I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation."

Because we live in the "better Covenant" of which Hebrews speaks and our singing must be brought up to that level.

Because what the prophets saw from afar, has now been revealed to us and we have to thank the Lord for his mighty acts in Jesus Christ.

Even the songs of Mary and Zechariah are not sufficient because they were born in the early dawn of the new dispensation, and still speak in Old Testament terms. We have the full revelation of the Triune God; we must sing of the Cross and the Resurrection and Pentecost.

Diermanse stresses that the Psalms always come first. The New Testament would be impossible without the Old. But the Psalms must be completed, must find their fulfilment in New Testament hymns.

* * *

The author then analyses what really happens when some members of the congregation refuse to sing these N.T. hymns. Imagine, thus he writes, what they do to the congregation which should, with a united voice, sing the praise of their Saviour. What do they do to themselves! If really Je-

sus Christ is everything to them, how can they face Him when coming home after having refused to sing of Him! How can they face the Triune God in their prayer, if they refused to sing those Hymns in which God is worshipped as the Triune - something that the Psalmists could not do because Jesus Christ had not yet shown to them the Father!

"Fourteen and Seven," this is borrowed from the booklet. Rev. D. proceeds with quoting fourteen arguments, given in 1878 by Rev. A. Brummelkamp, Jr., one year after the Synod of the churches of the Separation had expressed the desirability of adding New Testament Hymns or songs to the Book of Psalms.

Then Rev. D. adds seven more arguments of his own.

I am not going to translate them all but would like to pick some golden grains from here and there.

The old Dutch Bible translators knew very well that Paul in Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, did *not* use three different words for the Psalms but mentioned three different kinds (or at least two) of church songs: Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs. Paul, quoting now and then from old christian hymns, has sung them!

It is really foolish to forbid God's children to express their faith in keeping with the New Testament revelation, while they are allowed to do that at home; but in God's House, no

It is impossible, on christian feast-days when celebrating the birth, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, to satisfy the joy of His believers, if they are forbidden to express in gratitude these N.T. events in their singing.

Then Rev. Brummelkamp rightly states that the best way to honour the Separation of 1834 is to make clear that we reject those humanistic and unbiblical hymns, but highly appreciate biblical ones.

The apostles and church fathers, the Reformers and martyrs have given us the example of singing New Testament Hymns in addition to the Psalms.

Should we not follow their example?

* * *

Rev. Diermanse, adding his own arguments, starts with saying that we do injustice to the Psalms, first if we do not give them the first place, but also if we treat them as though they are not Old Testament Psalms. The O.T. "prepared a highway," Isaiah 40, but we are no longer living in the days of that preparation. Upon us the end of the ages has come.

What would one say if we preached and heard sermons only about the Old Testament and as though there was no New Testament? What would we say if someone, in his prayers, did not come above the Old Testament Revelation, and did not mention the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? What would one say if we would celebrate the sacrament of shadows, Passover, instead of Holy Supper? Thus, in every other respect, preaching, praying, and sacraments, we fully take in what the New Testament added to the Old. But if it comes to singing, must we be forbidden to do the same? Are we allowed to sing that the Messiah *will* come, but forbidden to sing that He *has* come?

The New Testament clearly states that only if we believe with the heart and confess with our lips that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; can, then, a person be saved if he refuses to do that in his singing?

Rev. D. continues that he believes there is a relation between this refusal to sing about the Only Name (how is that possible in the Church of Jesus Christ?) and the lack of assurance of faith and of joy in the lives of many Reformed church members in his days. We do damage, so he says, to the spiritual life if we do not create the possibility of full expression of the joy of faith in Psalms *and* Hymns.

He cannot understand how some can say, "I do not need the New Testament for my singing, the Old Testament is enough for me."

He also has a word for the fear that N.T. hymns might push the Psalms to the background. But he believes that that is unthinkable in a truly Reformed, Bible-believing Church. It may have happened, indeed, in groups and sects that have not much appreciation for the Old Testament ("a Jewish book"), and therefore reject infant-baptism and know nothing about the Covenant. But in our Reformed Faith there is such a strong emphasis on the

Capital Punishment

Lately, many arguments have been offered as to the abolishing or maintaining of the death penalty. Many have attempted to offer their arguments on Scriptural basis. And it often seems that those in favour of abolishing capital punishment use the Scriptural references as convincingly as those who are against its abolition. Yet in all these arguments some concepts, or principles, are being overlooked. The debate is centered on three concepts; namely, deterrence, reform, and retribution.

Most people who favour capital punishment do so on the basis that it is a "supreme deterrent." According to them it is the best method to dissuade others from murdering. However, statistics have shown that, capital punishment or not, the rate of murders has been about the same. It must therefore be obvious that capital punishment is not a supreme deterrent.

Then, there are those that feel that the death penalty must be abolished because any criminal must have the chance for reform. During a lengthy prison term, there is opportunity to educate the criminal so that he may regain meaningful identity for himself. This will give the criminal chance for repentance so that he may be redeemed. But, we must be careful with such reasonings. What is meant by "re-education opportunity"? What, and how much, treatment will be imposed? Assuming that criminals must be "treated" instead of punished because they are "sick" or "socially maladjusted," what would prevent the government from imprisoning any citizen it dis-

likes for his political or religious opinions on the grounds that some expert thinks he is socially maladjusted? Furthermore, if crime can be considered a disease, what is there to stop the government from declaring a disease a crime to be compulsorily cured?

What has been happening is that crime has been shifted from the sphere of justice to that of medicine. The criminal, also a human being with responsibility, is treated as an object or a case. All humanity is taken away. This, in the name of justice? Both the question of deterrence and cure (reform) are not questions about justice anymore since we are not asking what is just but what succeeds.

Theologians of different distinctions oppose the death penalty because, so they claim, no New Testament passages sanction the death penalty. As far as they are concerned, the death penalty can not be made compatible with love, mercy, and compassion. The application of justice in the Biblical sense, must be seen as the gift of forgiveness. God's justice enables man to live in peace with God and man. Retribution, as far as capital punishment is concerned, is interpreted as vengeance on a victim and as a reaction to loss and helplessness. To them, the death penalty is atavistic and counterproductive.

But terms such as love, justice, law, and retribution need defining. Modern definitions show that justice and love actually oppose each other. Whereas love is seen as a personal relationship, justice operates only within institutional orders and structures of society and has nothing to do with the creations of Christian love. In other words, justice is general, impersonal, and abstract. It is the operation of a rule that has been imposed upon us.

But these are definitions of "religious" men attempting to avoid God's order for creation. Both the Old and New Testament proclaim that justice is the very foundation of love and that the essence of justice is retribution. Retribution involves rectitude, a returning to "rightness." It is the just resolution of conflicts between private interests of a citizen and public interests of the state. It refers not only to the instinct of revenge against that which is bad (ad malem partem), as modern criminology interprets it, but it also refers to remuneration or recompense (ad bonam partem). In other words, retribution can also mean that which is deserved (in the benevolent sense), to give back as an equivalent. Retribution can therefore be defined as the standard of proportionality or equivalency. Hence, the decree: "eye for eye, tooth for tooth." That was not just for the sake of revenge but for the sake of restoring the violated order of law.

But mankind has evaded the true meaning of the law. It has tried to separate law from "religion" and has associated it with merely social concerns and needs based on scientific criteria. From the Bible we may learn that law is the holiness, the righteousness, and the faithfulness of God as revealed in the orderly working of His creation. The entire creation is under the law which is the expression of God's righteousness and holy will.

When God asked Adam and Eve in Paradise after their fall into sin: "Where are you" He did not mean to imply that He did not know where they were, but He was reminding them that they were not in the right relationship with Him; they had violated His order for creation. Thus there was a division between man and God (which sin is), the turning of God's face from the sinner. God cannot have dealings with anything that is foreign to His righteousness and to His holiness. According to His law the wages of sin is death. But out of love for the world God would send His Son to take the punishment and provide a recompense for our sins. In other words, Christ would restore the violated order and return to "rightness" the relationship of man to God, to bring man back into harmony and obedience with God. Christ would bring about retribution, a just resolution. Christ's death was a ransom paid for sin to fulfil the requirements of the law.

We then see that God's justice and love are revealed in Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Christ reconciled law and love by His own love. Thus we see that Christ's bringing man back into harmony with God is retributive. The fullness of love is at the same time the fullness of justice. It is in the interest of love to maintain justice. Justice as the very foundation of love restores the balance in social interests.

Man is created in the image of God. If one is murdered it is an act of irreverence and injustice to God; His order has been violated. The application of the death penalty must be exercised for the sake of retribution so that the order can be brought back to balance. In Christ this is possible because He has reconciled law and love. Here, too, we see Christ's rule, also in the judicial aspect of life.

For further insight into this subject one could consult: Taylor, E.L. Hebden, *The Christian Philosophy of Law, Politics, and the State*, The Craig Press, Nutley, N.J. Also, by the same author, *The New Legality*.

J.A. ROUKEMA

FOURTEEN AND SEVEN — Cont.

Covenant made with Abraham, that it can only mean an enrichment if we, also in our singing, combine the Psalms with truly biblical New Testament songs.

Finally, from the fulness of the heart the mouth speaks. Thus we love the Psalms! They speak of God's greatness, His faithfulness and righteousness, of the destruction of His enemies and the fulfilment of His promises. Thus we also love to add the songs of the "better Covenant," if it were only as a preparation for eternal life, when we will sing the Song of Moses and of the Lamb.

Thus be this cry-of-conscience of an old minister, a son of the Separation of 1834, kindly submitted to your christian meditation.

G. VANDOOREN

OUR COVER

McMillan Forest, B.C. Photo courtesy Photographic Branch, Department of Travel Industry, Victoria, B.C.

Books

Herman C. Hanko, *The Mysteries of the Kingdom, An Exposition of the Parables* (Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association). Distribution: by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids.

Rev. Hanko, Professor of Theology in the Theological School of the Protestant Reformed Churches at Grand Rapids, tells in the Preface to his book that, both in the preaching and in the teaching ministry, he studied and re-studied the parables and pondered their truths. The result of this study is deposited in this book of no less than 306 pages. Just as the parables are practical in nature, the book focuses the attention on the principles of the Kingdom of heaven as they apply to the calling of the citizens of the Kingdom. So the book is meant for all Christ believers. It is also accessible for all, for Prof. Hanko writes well and reads easily.

The parables, according to his view, are, though profound in meaning, simple in nature, so simple actually that even Jesus' enemies "never failed to understand the point Jesus was making" (Preface). The trouble with them was that they did not heed the message in spite of their hearing and seeing. The revelation of the mysteries was necessary to make those unbelievers inexcusable and to execute, by the sovereign hardening of their hearts, the decree of reprobation to them (pp. 8, 9). Thus Prof. Hanko.

The seeing and hearing, however, of which the LORD Jesus spoke with respect to the great mass of His hearers was, as the

Isaiah quotation in Matthew 13:14 indicates, not a *true* seeing and hearing. They saw pictures portrayed by the LORD, they heard stories told by the LORD, but that was all. It eluded them what it was really all about. As a matter of fact the *disciples* did not even understand the parables. What distinguished them, however, from the crowds, was that they came to the LORD Jesus for an explanation and thus were trained for the Kingdom of heaven. And as to the execution of the decree of God in the hardening of the hearts of the sinners, that is, as shown by Mark, one reason for Jesus' speaking of the parables. Matthew mentions still another reason why the LORD Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. It was "because seeing they do not see and hearing they do not hear" *Both*: God's decree which is accomplished and man's unbelief and with it man's responsibility should be taken into account in the reading of the parables.

Another point is the interpretation of the parables. Prof. Hanko is aware of it that no attempt should be made to explain all the details of the parables, but that the main point which the LORD wants to teach should have the first and main attention (p. 46). Proceeding, however, from the view that the earthly is a figure and a pattern of the heavenly (p. 4), the author feels free to attach a spiritual meaning to, if not all, then anyway to most elements of the parables. To give some examples: the field, in the parable of the treasure (Matthew 13:44-46), is the Kingdom of God or the Church wherein the Kingdom manifests itself, and the treasure is, just as the pearl of the twin parable, first of all "the incomparably rich and glorious pearl of fellowship and communion with the Most High God through Jesus Christ His Son," and further, all the blessings of salvation (pp. 48, 49). In the parable of the barren fig tree (Luke 13:7-9), the vineyard in which the tree stands is again the Kingdom or the Church; the fig tree, the nation of Israel; the Lord of the vineyard, God; and the vinedresser, Christ (pp. 106, 107).

The King, in the parable of the royal wedding of Matthew 22:1-10, is God; the King's son, Christ; the invited guests, the Jews bidden by the external call of the gospel; the wedding feast, the marriage between Christ and the Church; the people gathered from the streets and brought into the wedding hall, the elect brought together by the internal call of the Gospel (pp. 257, 258). The wedding garment which, according to the author, was provided by the King, is a picture of the righteousness of God (pp. 267, 268).

In the parable of the lost coin (Luke 15:8-10), the woman is the Church; the coin, the elect sinner who is lost; the candle, "probably" the light of the preaching of the gospel; and the sweeping of the broom, the effect of the preaching in the consciousness of the sinner, stirring up the dust of sin and making the sinner aware of and sorry for his sin (pp. 148, 149).

The unjust judge, in the parable of that name (Luke 18:1-8), is by way of contrast a picture of the Holy God; the widow, God's church militant; the widow's request, the prayers of the Church; the widow's adversary, the wicked world with the devil at its head; the delay, God's longsuffering; and the final sentence, God's final deliverance of His people (p. 202ff).

Prof. Hanko does not leave it of course at just mentioning the spiritual meaning of the various elements of the parables; he deals extensively with these truths. As a matter of fact, the entire Protestant Reformed Dogmatics can be found in the book. So much so, that exegesis and dogmatics are interwoven.

As to the exegesis, it is not always easy to tell exactly what is essential for the point which the LORD wants to make with the aid of a parable and what is non-essential. This much is certain, however, that only that which is directly related to the thrust of the parable calls for interpretation.

Take for example the parable of the lost coin. It is clear from context and application that just as in the case of the lost sheep and of the lost son(s), the effort one makes to find what was lost, and the joy one has when it is found, is the point around which everything centres. If that is the case, it follows that candle and broom may underline the aspect of the effort which is made; they cannot be identified with the Word of God and the preaching of the Word, which stirs up the dust of sin. Nor can for that matter the woman be identified with the Church and the coin with the elect sinner. Treating them as such drives the interpreter, whether he wants it or not — and Prof. Hanko does not want that at all — into the bottomless sea of allegorizing, on which it is dangerous sailing.

I am afraid that the author of THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM did not keep his interpretation completely out of those dangerous waters. Of course, that does not mean that there are not many good elements in the book. The point of the various parables is not only given the first place, but in many cases is also well taken. The weakness of the book is, in the opinion of this reviewer, in the exegetical and practical development of the theme of the parables.

Recommended therefore for critical reading. The price need not be an objection. It is "only" \$5.95 — very reasonable for our present inflationary times.

L. SELLES

Church News

REV. M.C. WERKMAN

of Chatham, Ontario has accepted the call extended to him by the Church of Lincoln, Ontario.

FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of "Clarion" was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on June 7, 1976.

Country Walks

It has become a tradition for some people in this part of Ontario to undertake a journey into the woods during the beginning of April to hunt for wild leek.

With nostalgia they might relate to you that they have done this ever since they could walk, that their parents and their parents before them made this annual trip to the damp areas in the woods to cut the slender stems of the wild leek, to wash it and with a pinch of salt and bread eat it at dinner-time as a delicacy.

This wild leek, of the same family as onions, garlic, and regular leek, also has a bulbous root system which it forms during the growing season and this enables it like many others of our spring flowers to develop leaves and flowers before the trees are in leaf and blot out the sunlight.

Quite often I've seen their first sprouts when most of the forest floor was still covered with snow and as I have tasted it for the sake of identification I can well understand that this free-for-the-picking, first vegetable crop of the season was enthusiastically welcomed by the pioneers after a long winter with plain fare as turnips and beans.

The area where I first found and tasted the wild leek this spring was along a part of the Bruce trail between Ball's Falls and Rockpoint Falls, close to the Niagara Falls, an area no doubt familiar to our Smithville and Lincoln people.

Although only about 40 miles due south from Brampton, it is remarkable how much difference this distance plus a higher elevation can make in the plant world. The forsythias in Brampton were barely swelling; in the Vineland area bright yellow spots indicate that they were in full bloom. Just like their kind in Brampton, the grackles and blackwings furiously chased crows out of their domain, but the trees including some fine, healthy-looking specimen of elm, definitely showed thicker, farther advanced buds.

The spot where I started my hike was at the community hall at Rockpoint Falls. Here a creek, barely the size of Fletcher's creek, comes from the grapefields and then cascades down the escarpment into a miniature Niagara gorge, a gorge which even dwarfs the so popular gorge of our region, the Elora gorge. Although the scenery at the bottom was superb it was easy to see that on account of the narrow and deep gorge not too much sunlight ever penetrated to the ground on the side I was at and where only a few trees managed to grow.

It was farther downstream, where the gorge widened and finally disappeared altogether, that the ground became level and where open spaces revealed the green sprouts of the wild leek. Seeing that they were 3 or 4 inches high they must have started to grow a few weeks earlier, around the end of March, at the time when snow still covered part of the forest floor. But by no means were the wild leeks the only plants showing life; the trilliums were present by the hundreds with enough white and purple showing to tell the two species apart, the so familiar spring flower of our road sides and woods; the may apple still had their leaves folded and only by parting these could I see the buds underneath. No flowerbuds could be seen as yet on the violets, adders tongues and bellworts, but on some more exposed slopes were the pink spring beauties with their long and slender leaves in full bloom and even an odd bloodroot in flower with their leaves still rolled up.



The hepatica, one of the first spring flowers in bloom.

But the most important discovery was a spring flower I only rarely meet along the banks of the Credit and which doesn't favour the woods near Fletcher's creek at all apparently. Drove of them were in bloom in this valley. Varying in colour from blue to white, the hepaticas made a remarkable display as in clusters of 5 to 8 flowers, each with its individual stem, they had pushed their way up through the layer of dead tree leaves.

With so many wildflowers in bloom, even the odd bee had ventured out and with uncanny precision headed from one group of flowers to another group ten feet away. In an open glade several dark-coloured mourning-cloak butterflies flitted about or took a rest with expanded wings on the sunniest spots.

The wintercress, which with its shiny green leaves, formed in the fall, patiently had awaited warmer weather, had already grown a foot high, and even buttercups and goldenrods had started, but no trace was yet to be seen of the jack-in-the-pulpit near the swampy spot where the jewelweeds had just begun to sprout.

The trees had only just begun to bud, but the smaller bushes, like dogwood, elder, goose- and wild raspberries, already showed some of their fresh green foliage.

The only birds I met were a few bluejays and a downy woodpecker, and just once did I hear the song of a chickadee in the distance; not once did I use my binoculars, the large variety of wild flowers there kept me quite occupied.

COR TENHAGE

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Let's start with Birthday Wishes this time. There was no room last time for our Birthday list and so it will be *belated* birthday wishes for some of you! I'm sorry about that.

Anyway, here's wishing all the Busy Beavers celebrating June birthdays a lovely day together with their families. May the Lord grant you, also, many happy returns of the day!

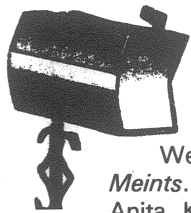
Teresa Bouwman	June 3	Ann Vanden Bos	June 19
Marcelle Lindhout	3	Marion Pieterman	19
Johanna Veldkamp	3	Norma Vander Pol	19
Anneke 't Hart	4	Jacob Jongs	20
Nick Boersema	5	Catherine Smouter	20
Henry Nieuwenhuis	8	Joyce Dalhuisen	21
Wilma Van Woudenberg	10	Debbie Medemblik	21
Calvin Lodder	11	Marianne Bergsma	22
Julia Huttema	12	Mary Oostdyk	22
Linda Van Dyk	14	Joyce De Gelder	23
Bonnie Boeve	16	Cathy Dalhuisen	28
Cheryl Hansma	17	Harold Jansen	28

* * * * *

Busy Beaver *Theresa Terpstra* has a nursery rhyme to share with you. Thank you, Theresa.

On the green banks of Shannon
When Sheelah was nigh —
No blithe Irish lad was so happy as I;
No harp like my own could so cheerily play,
And wherever I went was my faithful dog Tray.

* * * * *



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Anita Meints*. Congratulations on finishing the puzzle, Anita. Keep up the good work! Do you help look after the pets? Thanks for the puzzle, Anita.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Marlissa Lindhout*. We hope you will really enjoy being a Busy Beaver, and will join in all our Busy Beaver fun! Write again soon, Marlissa.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Charles Slaa*. We are happy to have you join us, and we hope you will participate in all our Busy Beaver activities! Are you looking forward to school in September, Charles?

And a big welcome to you, too, *Richard* and *James Slaa*. I hope you will like being Busy Beavers and will join in all our Busy Beaver fun. Write again soon, boys.

Hello *Sylvia Foekens*. Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club. I'm glad you enjoy Our Little Magazine and hope you will join in all our Busy Beaver activities.

I'm glad you had such a good time on your fun day at school, *Bonnie Boeve*. Have you been swimming yet? Thanks for your pretty letter, Bonnie, but I did not receive the money for the Birthday Fund.

Thank you for your letter and your quizzes, *Cynthia Dam*. Are you looking forward to the summer holidays, Cynthia? Write again soon.

Hello *Debbie Hartman*. It was really nice to hear from you again. I hope your little brother is feeling better now. Do you have a pen-pal, Debbie? Would you like to have one?

Thank you for your letter and the pretty picture, *Joanne Doekes*. Are you looking forward to the summer holidays, Joanne?

Hello *Billy Doekes*. Do you care for your pet hamster all on your own? Do you think he knows you? I hope you'll be happy with your last report, Billy.

That was a very good picture you drew for me, *Charles Doekes*. Do you draw many pictures? Did you read the story about the robin in our last Little Magazine, Charles?

QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Hetty Witteveen* has sent in a quiz for you that is really different!

Scripture Cake

Not too surprisingly this recipe is called Scripture Cake. This recipe is well over 150 years old and was once very popular at quilting bees here and in western United States. The trick is in knowing Biblical passages well enough to know the specific ingredients to which the recipe refers, as in the case of 1 ½ cups of Psalm 55:21 ("The words of his mouth were smoother than *butter* but war was in his heart"). The recipe follows. We've made it easier by listing the ingredients, but you can still test yourself by trying to remember the passages cited.

- 1 ½ cups butter (Psalm 55:21)
- 2 cups sugar (Jeremiah 6:20)
- 6 eggs (Isaiah 10:14)
- 4 ½ cups flour (I Kings 4:22)
- 1/8 tsp. salt (Luke 14:34)
- 2 tsp. baking powder (I Corinthians 5:6)
- ½ tsp. nutmeg (II Chronicles 9:9)
- 4 tsp. cinnamon (II Chronicles 9:9)
- ½ cup milk (Judges 4:19)
- 2 tbsp. honey (Judges 14:18)
- 2 cups raisins (II Samuel 16:1)
- 2 cups chopped figs (Song of Solomon 2:13)
- 2 cups blanched slivered almonds (Numbers 17:8)

Hetty also has one more rhyming quiz for you. Do you know the answer?

He was the firstborn twin so red,
A hunter and man of the field, 't is said
Loved by his father, not by his mother
He sold his birthright to his brother.

Answer: _____

Could you match all the names in the FLOWER EMBLEM quiz, last time? Let's see if everyone had them all right.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| British Columbia — Dogwood | Alberta — Wild Rose |
| Saskatchewan — Prairie Lily | Manitoba — Prairie Crocus |
| Ontario — Trillium | Quebec — Madonna Lily |
| New Brunswick — Purple Violet | |
| Prince Edward Island — Lady's Slipper Orchid | |
| Nova Scotia — Trailing Arbutus | |
| Newfoundland — Pitcher Plant | |

That's all for today, Busy Beavers. Bye for now!

Yours,
Aunt Betty.