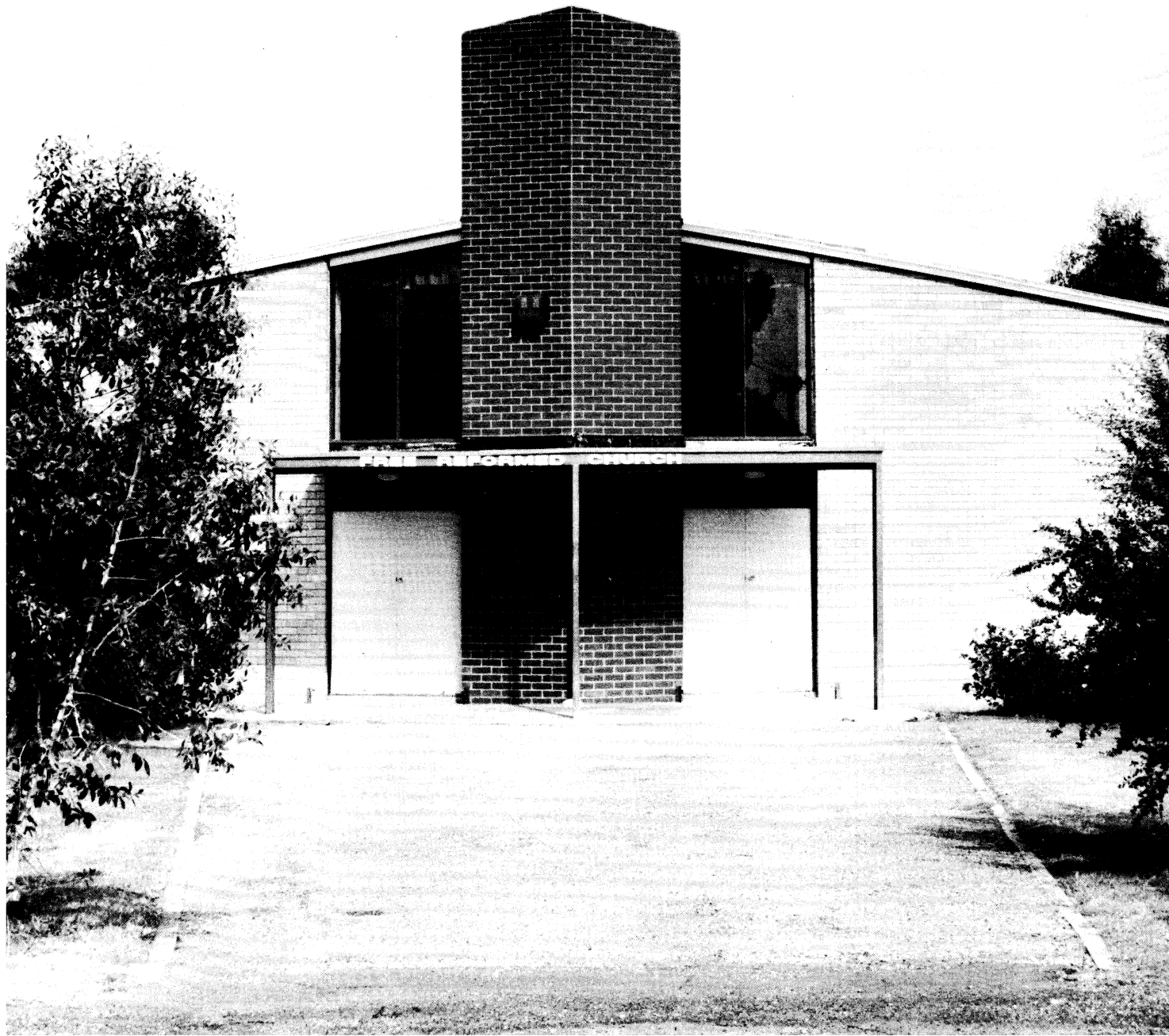


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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This is how it happened . . .

She took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. Genesis 3:6

"I have known that story about the apple since I was a child."

Is that so?

Ten to one that you don't even know it. Who, for instance, has told you that it was an apple, whereas it only says "fruit"? Do you always read in such a sloppy manner?

The serpent was one of the most clever animals which the LORD God had made. We do not read about any amazement or scare on the part of Eve when this clever animal talked.

Imagine that nowadays a dog would start talking to us! Television crews and reporters would swarm around your house like a cloud of flies! The twentieth century man has been so affected by the "evolution-faith" — which already has to "believe" so much! — that he pictures Adam and Eve as primitive, naked half-savages, and himself as being far exalted above that. Whereas the truth is just the opposite: first the children of God were highly developed in comprehensive, living knowledge of God and His creation of heaven and earth; but we are seriously degenerated and severely maimed as for our ability to know and understand. Of a very small part of what is still left (since all the catastrophes and disasters with which God has punished the cursed earth) some specialists know sometimes much, but the masses of the millions and millions of people . . . ?

From Adam until now there is a descending line of degeneration instead of an ascending line of evolution.

* * * * *

The serpent starts a conversation with Eve about God and about what He said. Basically, every other conversation is just talk, however "deep" it may be.

That was a real, historical conversation in the Garden of Eden. (I guess that it was some ten to twelve thousand years ago; but you don't have to agree with me, for God did not

tell us infallibly how old the creation is; only, I do not belong to the "traders in zeros", millions or billions!).

We are still suffering under the effects of that conversation, in an ever increasing measure.

For in the course of the centuries the situation has become more and more serious: the fire of enmity, anger and wrath sets now the whole of mankind on fire in an ever increasing measure. More about that later on.

The serpent persistently speaks only of "God", not of "the LORD God," the Father, who conversed with Adam and Eve in great confidentiality. Eve lets herself be brought onto this "level of conversation" and also calls her heavenly Father only "God." Thereby the serpent has taken the lead: the bond of love between God the LORD and man is not mentioned, as if this bond-of-love did not exist. What girl would accept that? Or would take it if she were addressed as if she were not engaged? Or imagine talking to a woman about "a man" as if he were not *her* man?

Eve does not speak of God as *her* God and Father.

God Himself kept silent! Surely, for He does not wish to be a competitor alongside the devil in vying for our love.

Eve did not rebuke the serpent when it in its questioning insolently turned God's command-of-love upside down. She reacted in a weak manner and reported God's speaking only half and in a distorted manner.

God *did* say: eat freely of all trees; freely! Of all the trees! What freedom! Only: no lawlessness, a life separated from God the Father. Thence that command-of-love that was so full of tender protection, for against these happy people murderous assaults were being planned. They did not know that as yet at that moment. They did not need to know either. It was sufficient that they recognized the authority of their heavenly Father. That was, at the same time, their safety. Thence that warning prohibition: do not eat of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil." For man shall not be able to live by bread alone (the fruits of all the trees in the garden). For that he needs the bond with God

and obedience to every word and ordinance that proceeds out of His mouth. By not eating they would learn to know, guided by God's hand, the difference between good and evil, and they would be happy for ever. Of that everlasting happiness "the tree of life" was a symbol and a sacrament, we could say. "In the day when" means plainly "When" and does not mean "at the very moment" (cf. Genesis 2:4). They did not drop dead at the moment when they transgressed God's command.

* * * * *

By suppressing the full truth concerning God the Father and by distorting His words and by not meeting any resistance on the part of Eve, but only indulgence and tepidity, the climate was prepared for the hard lie: you definitely will not die. There is quite something different behind this command than loving authority and fatherly care. I shall tell you the "truth": watch out for God! He does not want any competition. If you eat of that tree and thus decide for yourself what is good or evil, then your eyes will really be opened, then you will look with your own eyes, then you will be just like God. And God knows that! Hence this prohibition. To be a creature, to be subject to a Creator, that is a terrible straitjacket. You can't go anywhere! You have lost your freedom. He put blinkers on you. Set yourself free from God. —

The serpent "disclosed" to Eve the "truth" about God and about His secret intentions.

Now all of mankind knows who God is: He says . . . He pretends . . . but God Himself knows very well that He does not speak the full truth.

The serpent "reveals" to us the "truth" of God's intentions.

Eve did not jump up. Eve did not curse the serpent away. Eve did not even call her husband. None of those things!

The slander of the serpent would not have had any effect if she had not wilfully lent her ear to this instigation of the serpent.

Then her heart looked at the tree with different eyes.

That's what she does: she listens and looks. Then she succumbs without

striking a blow: really, the tree is good, it is a pleasure to the eyes, yea, it is appealing to become wise by means of its fruit and to receive insight. Indeed, the serpent was right. "And she took . . . and ate . . . and her husband ate," verse 6.

Then they looked through their own eyes. Then they were "wise" and "free." But then they knew all of a sudden that they had been deceived by their own doing. Their "world" collapsed. Eve was not cursed, but delivered from the disastrous "friendship" with the serpent, instead of which God put enmity. But the earth was cursed and both of them would have a hard time.

They left that beautiful garden of Eden with a heart full of abhorrence of themselves, but also full of hope for the Redeemer whom God in His boundless grace promised to them. They were expelled.

This catastrophic event is still valid for each person, and basically still in the same manner: wilful disobedience and that upon the instigation of the devil.

* * *

To look at, it was just a rustic scene there in that garden. There was nothing repulsive, nothing special or impressive.

No, that was not the case in Bethlehem either, when a "baby" was born; nor was that the case when later on outside Jerusalem, a "freedom fighter" was crucified; when Jerusalem was still fast asleep, a "man" came walking out of the garden of Joseph of Arimathea; on the Mount of Olives first stood twelve persons, but a little while later eleven returned.

Who was there who saw what really happened in the history of the world?

Revelation 12 gives us some "background information": the dragon with seven heads and ten horns, a red monster, the old serpent!

This monster stood before the woman in her most helpless condition: she was at the point of giving birth. But when the child was born, it was suddenly taken away, "kidnapped" to God and His throne on the day of His ascension.

It was with this monster that Adam and Eve had to do, the "old serpent."

And later on Joseph and Mary, too. We sing "Now be welcome, Jesus . . ."; well, you'd better forget about that! A dragon was waiting for Him!

The old serpent, the devil: diabo-

los — he who separates God and man, and people among themselves; satan — the adversary, "who deceives the whole world", verse 9.

* * * * *

That "instigation," that "deception," was something which Paul, too, knew all about: through the sin in our own hearts the devil always takes his "starting-point" in the commandment. "Finding opportunity in the commandment" sin wrought in me all kinds of covetousness, Romans 7:8-12. *That's how it happened in the garden of Eden, too.*

Whoever does not know of that, is a dead Christian.

Nowadays this demonic suggestion is called "brainwashing." The sovereign Word of God, full of wisdom and protection, is pictured as a pressing bond. God our Father becomes a hard, exalted tyrant; that which has been forbidden becomes desirable in our eyes. What God calls "the way to death" is presented to us as the way to freedom. And we even believe it!

By rinsing away our "former" thoughts, we start to "think differently" and we become "new" people, "free," "knowledgeable" people, "progressive."

Eve agreed with the serpent, without force or torture, but voluntarily. That's what is so demonic, that by means of "re-education" the will is violated.

The martyrs and heretics died a violent death, for they did not suffer themselves to be deceived.

In our age whole nations are become "voluntary believers" (in the lie) by means of brainwashing. They "confess their guilt," their being guilty of their "christian past."

There are other "norms," other "ways of thinking," another climate, a different "public opinion." You can always find some words in the Bible to use for a "starting-point."

* * * * *

There was a time when divorce was something bad, something abnormal, conflicting with the Word of God. But now it is: "Are you really happy, ma'am?" — "My husband is short-tempered and he drinks. Actually I am afraid of him and so are the children." — "But, ma'am, that's no life in your family. That hampers your development and destroys your happiness, and the children say, 'Dad is a tyrant.' But that's not what marriage has been instituted for by God, has it? And God knows that your children suffer from

that. Is that what He wants?" —

"Brainwashing": the ideal of self-development and a happy family pushes itself into the place of God's command not to put asunder that which God has joined together. Self-development and a happy family — all that is according to the Bible, isn't it? Now then . . .

The old "framework of thought" is: no divorce. The "new framework" is: "this is no life. Be smart and look out with your own free eyes and not with scared eyes. That is not the will of God!"

Eve agreed with the serpent and ate of her own free will.

* * *

Brainwashing: if you meet another woman, but then one who "understands" you better, one who really can make you "happy" . . . well, we have been created for happiness, haven't we? God's norms for happiness disappear behind our norms for happiness, oftentimes without our striking a blow: it goes voluntarily.

* * *

It is a matter of twisting the truth half a turn, of creating another "climate" — no, not one without standards but one with "different standards," different norms for becoming "wise" — and . . . voluntarily we follow the instigation of the devil.

Eve agreed with the serpent and she ate, fully convinced. She did not get into this by accident.

Thus Lenin became the "god" of the Russian people and the mass-murderer acquired the name of "Father Stalin."

Even worse the dragon is raging in China. Lenin said: first a new society, then the people are renewed "voluntarily." Mao says: first new people; away with the old standards and, instead, the new standards of the Red Book; then society is renewed "voluntarily." "There's something in that," says "Eve."

In Russia and China, too, there are many "unconverted" who do not let themselves be renewed willingly. For them there is the hell of the work-camps. The dragon is not thrifty with people. The devil is not creative, his religion is competition with the true religion.

Through Chinese brainwashing the Lutheran missionary P.J. Mackensen Jr. has become a fervent defender of Mao. He saw with his own eyes that the "Christian" Western world

does not feed the hungry Chinese people, but that it exploits them. And it was even true!

Oh, oh, if this deluge should fall down upon the empty, played out but ever talking, divided Western world that has fallen away from God and Christ and does not know what to do with all its problems . . . !

"The wind is east," the Red Book proclaims.

* * *

What are we to do? Don't act spasmodically, as if the past was good and the present is bad.

We are to read the Word of God very accurately and re-read it in order so as not to be caught in a dogmatic system or to twaddle about the "apple" of Genesis.

We are to keep Him in view who is the only Person in the world to have stood face to face with the devil, who did not tolerate it that the words of His Father were twisted, for He knew all the Scriptures.

The devil has never shown himself openly to any man. But in the desert of Judea our Saviour was waiting for him. Then he had to make his appearance. Then he could not "demonize" a serpent or ecclesiastical leaders, like the Pharisees later on (John 8:44) or Judas.

The devil wished to inspire all sorts of things into Him, even literal quotations from the Scripture.

Finally the Lord Jesus sent him away: "Depart."

Then it was again, just for a moment, paradise, for our Saviour stayed peacefully (just as Adam and Eve did before) with the wild animals, and the angels served Him, Mark 1:13.

"Resist the devil (resistance alone already!) and he shall flee from you," James 4:7.

P.K. KEIZER

The Struggle Around Israel (2)

2. THE BACKGROUND

Time does not permit the listing and reciting of the many historical events which lay behind the eventual founding of the State of Israel. Furthermore, any brief history of Israel can provide that sort of data. Let us instead concentrate on the philosophies that have laid the groundwork for the present situation of there being a return of some Jews to Palestine who claim that land as theirs.

When we are dealing with the background of the Israeli State, the term Zionism looms very large. Yet Zionism did not just come up. The groundwork first had to be laid, so that Jews could be aroused and so that action could be taken. For the action or the inclination to act with regard to a homeland was not always there.

Emotional Link But Little Action

Through the centuries the desire was always alive that the Jews would someday return to Palestine. However, until relatively recently little action was born from that desire. And the desire was strong. Since the second Jewish revolt under Bar Kokhba (A.D. 132-135), after which Jewish political power was crushed, the dream of a return was never forgotten. Synagogue prayers, no matter where in the world they were offered, were made in the direction of Jerusalem. A strong emotional contact with Jerusalem was maintained. Through the centuries, the poetry and literature of the Jews spoke of Zion and Israel. Each year the Passover festival would end with the words, "Next year in Jerusalem!" However, and this is striking, for well over a thousand years, no attempt was made to return to the old Jewish homeland to transform their dream into reality. Even in times of tremendous persecution, in which the Jews suffered innumerable atrocities (for example, at the hands of the Spanish inquisition, so that they were even expelled from Spain in 1492), there was no mass movement to the old homeland.

One could note two exceptions. In 1210-1211, 300 rabbis left France and England for Palestine and in 1550-1557, 4,000 Cabalist Jews emigrated

from Italy to Safad in Galilee. However, these statistics are almost negligible when one considers that Jews did go to other places in mass migrations when Spain expelled them and when they faced persecutions in other European countries. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries they moved to East Europe and especially to Turkey (Ottoman Empire), so that Constantinople had a Jewish population of some 30,000. Even Egypt had large flourishing Jewish communities.

But what about Palestine? There was no special attraction there. A Jewish historian notes, "Even Palestine, long neglected and sunk in sloth and ignorance increased its Jewish population to more than five hundred families." There was no mass return to Palestine. The emotional connection with that country was there, but it was not coupled with action, even though those who went apparently had no problems (except poverty that was there. But that surely is a small hindrance compared to the difficulties that had to be overcome in the twentieth century). The absence of large movement to Palestine becomes even more striking when one considers that after 1517, Palestine was ruled from Constantinople and the large Jewish settlement there was not without influence in the government. The opportunities were apparently present then to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine, but these opportunities were never realized. Why? What made the nineteenth and twentieth centuries such a ripe time for the emotional ties and dream to be translated into action for a new reality? Why was it that even areas outside Palestine were considered as a possible new homeland for the Jews?

Often the explanation is sought in the anti-semitism of the nineteenth century. Undoubtedly this was a factor, an important immediate factor. But, it must also be remembered that the anti-semitism of, for example, the Dreyfus affair in France (1894) was just another in the long list of persecutions. There is a new factor that must be considered. It is the factor of national-



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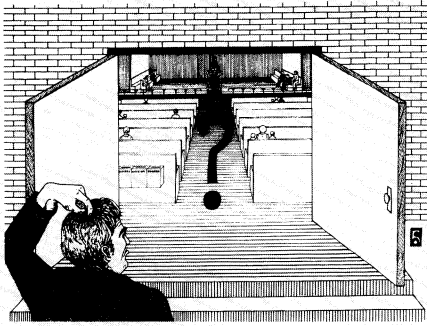
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Circumspection...



“NEVER ON A SUNDAY”

“Oh you can kiss me on a Monday,
A Tuesday, a Wednesday . . .
But never, never on a Sunday . . .”

Remember this old song? Although it intrigues me, I just can't remember why that kiss was not permitted on Sunday. But it does seem that the writer of the song thought the Sunday to be some special day

A special day? Somehow I have the uneasy feeling that for many people the Sunday is not so special anymore, at least not in the sense it once was. Moreover, I have the proof that for many so-called Reformed people the Sunday is being neglected in an alarming measure. And what worries me most is that also in our churches there seems to be an increasing depreciation of the Day of the Lord, perhaps more than we'll admit to. Never on a Sunday, in the Scriptural sense, is not so common anymore in our midst.

In most denominations this appalling apathy towards the Lord's Day is due to a weakened sense of norms, in turn caused by spineless sermons in which ministers do not dare to lay it on the line. If the Word of God is not being preached diligently in fullness, then, of course, the Law of gratitude will meet growing depreciation.

In the sixties, our sister-churches in The Netherlands have known quite a conflict concerning the fourth commandment and the significance of the Sunday in the life of the church. Giving rise to this conflict were statements to the effect that the “sabbath is not an ordinance of God from the beginning of the world, but only an institution for Israel” (G. Visee in Opbouw, 1963). And behind all this was the misleading teaching that the whole Mosaic law (including the 10 commandments!) was fulfilled by

Christ and THEREFORE abolished, and that we now have only the obligation to “follow Christ” in the love towards God and the neighbour. However, it was pointed out, “fulfilling” does not mean “abolishing” (Matthew 5:17), and such undifferentiated teaching only disrupts the life of the church. In the end our sister-churches rejected such an interpretation of the law's significance for our life today (Synod of Hoogeveen, 1969).

In many Synodical churches in The Netherlands the ten commandments are no longer read in the morning services as an accepted part of the regular liturgy. Is that the reason behind the rather spectacular statistics which I recently came across in NEDERLANDS DAGBLAD concerning the Sunday? A recent analysis of church-attendance has shown that “while the attendance of the morning service is stabilizing, the afternoon services are being neglected more and more.”

The survey — done by Dr. J. Hendriks of the Pastoral Theology department at the Free University of Amsterdam — points out that church-attendance started to decline sharply after 1960. There has even been a decrease in attendance up to 54%, i.e. more than half of the members still attending twice in 1960 only go once now. As reasons for this decline are given: changed attitudes towards faith, doctrinal conflicts in the church, and more desire to “go out” on Sunday.

Well, we haven't had any outright conflict about the Law or the Sunday in our churches, and I'm sure the 10 commandments are still being read every Sunday-morning in our congregations. Weekly we hear the words, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” In this respect we are still very fortunate.

How come, then, that I keep hearing these stories about diminishing attendance also in our afternoon services, and this especially during the summer months? Okay, in most churches we have established “oncers” and all the admonishing in the world doesn't seem to change them one bit, spiritual lazybones. Looking around, in my local situation

the afternoon service is indeed less beloved than the morning one. And in a church I recently attended elsewhere, the afternoon produced slightly more than half the participants of the morning. No kidding, at least 45% less. Must really have been a “black sabbath.”

I tried to figure out, where have all the flowers gone? Even Houdini would be impressed with this disappearing act. Church visitation elsewhere? I heard that other local churches couldn't report a noticeable increase. Babysitting? Perhaps, but c'mon, here and there whole families were missing, and you don't need six people to babysit one baby; I call that baby-crushing. Besides, with morning and afternoon nurseries in most churches, staying at home to watch junior should be a last resort, not a first excuse. Holidays? Fine, but how do some people manage holidays all summer long. Weekend trips to go hunting, canoeing, fishing? How is it that the fish always seem to bite better on Sunday?

I wonder, have we become somewhat perfidious since we have become somewhat prosperous? Like Israel in Canaan, taking it all in, but giving so little in return. Moses warned them beforehand, “But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked, then he forsook God Who made him and scoffed at the rock of his salvation” (Deuteronomy 32:15).

Is it true that for an increasing number of our people the Sunday is not fully a special day anymore and that church-attendance TWICE each Lord's Day is no longer a FACT but a QUESTION? If it is, this is the beginning of the end, for the heart of church life beats in the public worship on the Day of the Lord.

Another example. If we buy summer cottages, why does it have to be in a remote area, at least far away from any Canadian Reformed Church? If we go on annual vacations, why must it be in a place where there is no church with which we have fellowship. Attending church DILIGENTLY, as we promised at our confession — doesn't seem to be an undoubted rule anymore.

And don't sell me the line that
Continued on page 292.

ism and self-determination. There are at least two influences behind this: the French revolution and the revolution in philosophy as seen in the work of Kant.

The French Revolution (1789)

Before the French Revolution, political power was seen as being in the hands of the rulers, and they were respected for that. The revolution drastically changed that. Now the power and sovereignty is seen as residing in the people and not in the ruler. As the French Declaration of the Rights of Man puts it: "The principle of sovereignty resides essentially in the Nation; no body of men, no individual, can exercise authority that does not emanate expressly from it."

This concept has implications as to how one regards a fatherland. While before, the ruler was the "embodiment" (symbol) of the fatherland and the fatherland was simply a safe and good place to grow up in, now, with the focus on the people as being the important factor, the definition of a fatherland becomes more and more determined by the people who dwell in it. *Theirs'* is the power and the country! Those key elements are the first new factor that we must notice to understand political Zionism or Jewish nationalism. For now countries are more and more thought of in terms of national origin, race, people rather than in terms of a ruler over a certain territory who, in a sense, held it all together.

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

The second factor is the revolution in philosophy. The political revolution taught that men had inalienable, natural rights, such as, freedom, liberty. However, what is freedom? What are the limits? The old classic legal way of defining it was: "Freedom is a man's natural capacity of doing what he pleases unless he is prevented by force or law" (Institutes of Justinian — sixth century). There was someone or something outside of man that could say "No." Kant however, saw it differently. "Man is free when he obeys the laws of morality which he finds within himself and not in the external world." Man is a law to himself! This was a thought revolutionary to the whole "Christian" basis of Europe and the Americas. For Kant made the individual (in a way never envisaged by the French revolutionaries) as the very centre, the arbiter and sovereign of the

universe. The individual by his own self-imposed norms determines himself as a free and moral being. Therefore, in the last analysis, Kant makes God the creature of man. Man is a god to himself. As a result, intimate conviction, needing support from nothing external, came to be seen as the true guide for political action.

Far-reaching political conclusions were drawn from Kant's thought which reinforced and pushed further the shock waves of the French revolution. Kant was excited by the French Revolution. Man was determining his own destiny. Although struggle, brutality, and death were unfortunately part of it, it was a necessary part of man's self-determination. Man had to determine his place in this world and only the limits and laws which he imposes on himself are acceptable. Therefore it is correct and morally justified for any group of people who feel shackled or confined, to rebel and set up their own government. (Think of the waves of revolution that swept through Europe and the Western world between 1814-1848.) Man was free and independent and therefore the France of the French Revolution could feel free not to honour international treaties which had been negotiated prior to the revolution. Man individually and a nation as a collection of individuals had to have the right of self-determination, of deciding what limits and what laws they would accept.

Zionism

In this atmosphere, the soil was prepared for modern political Zionism. Now the climate was such that the Jew in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries did what his forefathers did not do. They sought to determine their own destiny and saw the need for it. The anti-semitism of nineteenth-century France and Germany gave the final push, to be sure, but the crucial groundwork had been laid. Zionism is a nationalism in which a people seeks its own self-determination as a nation so that it as a specific people can decide on its own future. It was therefore not so important to two fathers of modern Zionism, Leo Pinkster (Russian) and Theodore Herzl (who was in France during the Dreyfus case), exactly where the nation of Israel was to be. Both had independently come to see that a national homeland must be established and *that* was the important thing. When Pinkster published his

Auto-Emancipation (notice the title) in 1882, he pleaded for self-emancipation, preferably in Palestine, but, if that wasn't possible, elsewhere would do. Herzl had the same view, as the seriousness with which he considered the Ugandan proposal from the British government shows.

It is important to notice that Zionism is a political movement, and not a religious one. The religious overtones were there and that helped clinch Palestine as *the* place where the new state should be established, but the basis for the state was purely secular. Biblical influences did not shape Zionism, but the influences of nationalism, self-determination, the influences of the revolution in France and the influences from Kant. Because it was a political movement, nationalist fervour demanded the restoration of the language of the nation — Hebrew. This would bind Jews from Russia, France, Italy, etc., into the one people that they were.

It is interesting to note that religiously (before modern Zionism) Reform Jews had already eliminated all references to Zion from their prayer book, insisting that Judaism had outgrown Palestine and that it was now the mission of Israel to be a light to the nations. They therefore opposed Zionism. Orthodox Judaism was also against it for they considered it forcing the hand of God. Their God would miraculously restore them to their homeland, for that is what He had promised in their view. They must therefore wait for Him. (Note: *Even if* the Old Testament spoke of a twentieth century restoration of Israel to Palestine, the Old Testament shows clearly that this would only be if there was obedience to the Lord (Deuteronomy 30:2, 3, 9, 10). The migration to Palestine today is completely secular and has nothing to do with obedience to God.)

(Conclusion in next issue.)

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Church  News

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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.

RES IN CAPETOWN

Capetown, South Africa. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES), planning to meet in Capetown from August 10 to 22, does not consider the recent unrest in Johannesburg and Pretoria sufficient reason not to meet as scheduled in South Africa. These events will make it all the more necessary, according to RES press, to discuss the racial difficulties in South Africa. The meeting will consist of 110 delegates from 38 denominations and will also spend time on such topics as "The Bible's teaching on the Holy Spirit" and "The relationship between the Sunday and the Sabbath." It is expected that the membership of the Synodical Reformed Churches in The Netherlands will be challenged, since these churches have also joined the World Council of Churches.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE WCC

Geneva, Switzerland. The central committee of the World Council of Churches hopes to meet in Geneva from August 10 to 18 to determine the WCC policy for the coming years. The committee will discuss the proposals for new programs which have been submitted at the recent assembly in Nairobi, Kenya. Reports are expected from various countries on such topics as human rights and freedom of religion. The group "Church and Society" will deal with matters such as economic growth, consumption and energy. Most existing programs (like PCR, Program to Combat Racism) will be continued.

PRESBYTERIAN CHILD-COMMUNION

Tuscaloosa, USA. After a lively

debate, the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) has accepted a report in which the way is paved for baptized children to participate in the celebration of the Lord's Supper without having previously done confession of faith. If this "child-communion" is to go into effect, first the majority of the sixty classes and the next Synod must agree. This report leaves the responsibility for participation to the local consistories and does not suggest any minimum age, since the parents should know "whether their child is ready."

SEMINARY SEARCH

Geelong, Australia. During a meeting of the General Synod of the Presbyterian Church of East-Australia a decision was made no longer to support the theological school of Geelong, the Reformed Theological College. Reason for this decision is the growing criticism of concerned members of the Reformed Churches in Australia and New Zealand. A conflict around the appointed and later deposed Prof. Dr. S. Woudstra of the Christian Reformed Churches in the U.S. contributed to the loss of support. Students will now receive their training at the seminary of the Free Church of Scotland in Edinburgh. There are also contacts with Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and the seminary of the Protestant Reformed Church (the so-called Hoeksema-church) in the USA.

METHODIST WORLD CONFERENCE

Dublin, Ireland. The Methodist World Council will convene an international conference in Dublin from August 25 to 31 in which an expected 2,000 people will participate. The theme of the conference is: The Day of the Lord.

RCA SYNOD 1976

Madison, New Jersey. The Synod 1976 of the Reformed Church of America has concluded the sessions held at Fairleigh-Dickinson University. Synod has sent the proposal concerning ordination of women again to the classes with the recommendation that it finally be approved. Fellowship was established with the Christian Reformed Church and an annual CRC/RCA Unity Day was endorsed. Synod also approved a recommendation to enter into dialogue with the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk, the Black Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. No action was taken on the request of the Classis of Dakota to end membership

of the World Council of Churches. A recommendation urging Reformed church-members not to participate in state lotteries passed without debate. Synod elected Dr. Louis H. Benes as the new president of the RCA.

THE CASE OF DR. BOER

Grand Rapids, USA. The Synod 1976 of the Christian Reformed Church decided to maintain the present Form of Subscription, despite attempts to revise it. Synod, however, also adopted certain explanations and regulations which significantly change the way in which this Form will function. Synod recognized two kinds of gravamens (formal objections to the Creeds), one a CONFSSIONAL DIFFICULTY gravamen (to be handled pastorally and personally without being publicized and in which the "burden of proof" does not lie on the subscriber to defend his sentiments), the other a CONFSSIONAL REVISION gravamen (which does place the burden of proof on the subscriber who wants to see the confession changed and which must be handled in a more judicial way). Synod decided that Dr. Harry Boer's case (who attacked the Canons of Dort by asking questions concerning Biblical proof) would be considered as a PERSONAL DIFFICULTY gravamen which will be handled by a special four-man committee appointed to deal with him in a pastoral and personal way.

PRESBYTERIAN REUNION?

Grand Rapids, USA. The docket of the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES) was largely dominated by inter-church relations. The Synod moved to re-open negotiations with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and also expressed interest in an "ultimate united walk" with the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA). The General Assembly of the OPC, however, showed little eagerness in re-opening the negotiations which it had approved last year, and tabled the matter. An observer remarked, "If the RPCES is making eyes again, the OPC is playing hard to get."

WOMEN IN OFFICE?

Grand Rapids, USA. By vote of 135-74 the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARP) rejected a proposal that the church open the offices of both ruling and teaching elder to women.

Tubingen, West Germany. The Roman Catholic theologian Dr. Hans
Continued on page 292.

news medley

Yes, we are back on the job. And the word "job" does not refer to my regular work but to what I do for **Clarion**. Resuming that work, the first thing that demands the attention is our medley. In spite of the holidays quite a pile of bulletins was waiting for me when I came home again. Many of them originated in the days before the holidays, a few were born after the return of their editors. There were no shocking things to be passed on and although the various bulletins spoke of happy events and of sad occurrences, generally speaking, the work was continued, couples were blessed with the birth of children in such a manner that everything was well; in a few instances the Lord sent sorrow by taking away either an infant or a grown-up child, a brother or sister, a mother or distant relative. It is only when one receives and reads the various bulletins that one realizes how much is going on in the midst of the Churches and how many blessings the Lord bestows upon us. When reading the announcements, the requests made by Consistories, the reports submitted by Committees of Administration, one cannot but make a comparison with the situation as it existed some twenty-four years ago. It becomes evident that the Lord has made our lives and economic condition much easier; it is also obvious that there are still members who live off the others, so to speak, and who leave it up to the others to shoulder the burdens. However, there is abundant reason for gratitude.

That we see also this time. On July 2nd, brother and sister A. Goossen Sr. celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary. That was in Chatham. In Carman, Manitoba, brother and sister J. Veldman celebrated the same event on July 24th. And on September 3rd, brother and sister K. Riemersma in Burlington will celebrate their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. On behalf of the one big Family I extend our heartfelt congratulations to these couples, their children, grandchildren and all who belong to their families. For the one we are actually too late, for the other we are a little too early, but the wish remains the same: may also further our gracious God cause His countenance to shine upon you and to lighten your pathway.

Although I have not yet seen the latest issue of **Clarion**, and for that reason have not yet read the report on the dedication of the new Churchbuilding of the New Westminster Church, I can say something about that from personal observation. The acoustics are excellent as can also be heard when one listens to the broadcast of a service at 8:00 p.m. Part (and not the smaller part!) of the credit for the excellence of the tapes goes to the recorder (a person is meant in this case) and his recorders (instruments) in the specially constructed "broadcasting room." Special input jacks have been installed on the podium and also on the first row of seats on the balcony, so that with for instance, a slideshow, a person can use the amplifying system while standing on the platform in front of the pulpit, and so that services or eventual concerts can be recorded from the balcony.

I expect quite a few concerts to take place there in the future, for the organ, I have been told, will be the fourth or

fifth largest in British Columbia with a total of well over 2,600 pipes. The console will be a three-manual console with pedal. Delivery, however, is not expected until the beginning of next year. Meanwhile, the organ builder is slowly but surely filling up the gaping hole above the pulpit. I have urged the brethren to produce records and have also promised that I would evaluate them eventually in the medley. We are looking forward to the first issue!

As name for the new Church has been chosen the name "Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church." That made me feel at home, for here in Fergus we have the same name.

Completion of the building and paving of the parking lot resulted in termination of the building chats. Perhaps we get some other talk now to keep the interest alive and to keep the activity going. The cookbook (at least) is still keeping minds and hands and ovens occupied, to the joy of fathers and husbands.

The Rev. C. VanSpronsen and his family have arrived safely in Canada and he is already visiting the Churches to tell them about his work in Brazil. It is hoped that he will return for no more than two years; but it all depends on the finding of someone who is willing to go and work there as a missionary. Even if one is found shortly, the months of preparation and of learning the Portuguese language will not render it very likely that he will take up the work there within a year. Besides, time and again it is stressed that for fruitful (or more fruitful) work the presence of two missionaries is almost a necessity. We are not that far by far, neither in Brazil nor in Irian Jaya. Our prayers and our gifts are certainly needed and will be needed for as long as the task is there.

From New Westminster we go to Cloverdale. The Church there sent a letter to the Minister of Justice regarding abortion. They received a reply from the member of parliament who represents most of the members of the Cloverdale Church, in which he thanked them for the letter they sent (of which he had received a copy). "I also want to say how much I appreciate the warmth and dignity of your letter. The spiritually reasoned approach permeated with compassion is so different from a lot of the militant and almost abusive mail we sometimes get on this very subject."

Here we have one of the ways and means by which we can fulfil our obligation as citizens. I have only one objection. The letter was addressed to "The Honorable . . ." I did not think that that was very honourable. But that is only a minor thing. For the rest I am thankful for what the Cloverdale Consistory did.

Cloverdale also expressed the desirability of a conference of office-bearers before October of this year. I presume that the stress they put on that desirability is caused by the desire to have some guidelines for the family visiting during this coming winter.

Rev. J. Mulder also welcomes the Langley Church, which now numbers 203 members (of whom 100 are communicant members). Cloverdale still have 328 members, of whom 153 are communicants. "We are thankful that the LORD has given such a steady growth here in the Valley. On December 17, 1950, the New Westminster Church was instituted with about 40 members! That was the first Canadian Reformed Church in the Valley. Twenty-six years later 5 Churches with a total membership of about 1560! And who knows, some time in the future there might even come a sixth one: an American Sisterchurch in the Sumas-Lynden area!"

Some general Valley news: The Fraser Valley Women's League Day was held on June 24th, on which the Rev. M. VanderWel spoke in the morning on "Our Christian Conversation", and (Mrs.) Helen Aikema introduced "Religious Repression in Russia" in the afternoon.

In Edmonton the Consistory appointed a committee to study the question of "the calling of the deacons and of government welfare program." We all are very much interested in the result of that study, for this is a point which has been discussed for as long as I can remember. Edmonton's Consistory also decided to suggest to the Committee of Administration to appoint some ushers to guard the cars while people are in Church, since through vandalism cars have been damaged. Too bad that Edmonton does not have a parking lot where most of the cars can be parked during the services. It is a sad thing when brethren have to forego the services to guard the members' possessions.

The Carman bulletin mentions that on June 28th a Women's League Day was held where, if I understood it well, Prof. L. Selles was to speak.

The same bulletin contains a report on the Consistory meeting in which I found this line: "Another sermon from the Rev. van Rongen in the series **Preach the Word**. (That minister must be good with the typewriter.)"

I can assure the brethren that my colleague is good with the typewriter; every issue of **Pro Ecclesia** attests to that. But here I am certain that the explanation given is incorrect. I know more ministers who are good with a typewriter but from whom almost never ever a sermon appears in the series. I think that it is more a matter of self-control and of the ability to schedule one's work well. It is also a matter of making certain that the preparation for the Sunday is as thorough as one can make it. I do not refer to anyone personally, don't misunderstand me(!), but I would not dare to go to the pulpit with just a few pages with notes. That, I am convinced, can be done only by the "great" ones. I know some colleagues who are able to do it, but it is my considered opinion that for the large majority of the ministers it is absolutely necessary to have their prepared sermon written out or typed out. I will frankly admit that I have not outgrown that stage and I never will outgrow that in the relatively few years which rest me in active service. And I would urge all my colleagues to write or type out their sermons. It costs far more time than just jotting down some notes and weaving the rest around it while standing on the pulpit, but everyone will benefit from it, the preacher himself not in the last place! Then I do not even speak of the benefit which the vacant Churches would receive via the series! And colleague Mulder would not have to write note upon note upon note requesting material for the series.

From Carman to Winnipeg is only some fifty miles. And what are fifty miles among us? The bulletin tells us that still no certainty has been obtained that a parsonage can be built close to the Churchbuilding. The Consistory will wait for another couple of months, but then it will be considered to buy a lot and to build elsewhere.

When I saw what is expected from the membership in Winnipeg (\$7.00 per week per communicant member; \$14.00 per week per couple) I was thinking of the first year when I was here, and when the total amount requested from the membership was six percent of the yearly income which, at that time, was estimated at \$2,000 per year! One hundred and twenty dollars per year was the requested voluntary contribution. Now the Winnipeg Consistory informs the membership that from a couple six times

45th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. K. Riemersma will celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary, the Lord willing, on September 3, 1976, among their five children and twenty-four grandchildren.

They were married in Marum, Groningen, The Netherlands, on September 3, 1931, and emigrated to Canada in April 1954.

At first they settled in Fergus, but moved from there to Burlington after two years, where br. Riemersma has his own contracting business. They both still enjoy a reasonably good health and have many reasons for abundant gratitude.

that amount is expected. And, is it not so that it is easier for us to contribute \$720 per year now than it was to contribute \$120 per year in 1953] We still can afford many luxuries. It is only a matter of what our priorities are.

Take a big jump (we are speaking about finances anyway) and go with me to Chatham. I do not think that they really mean it as it has been written down, but it makes the impression as if they are bidding: "Remuneration preaching and travelling expenses for ministers who preach here for pulpit supply is discussed. Decided to offer max. . . ." As I said, I don't think that they wish to bargain; I just wish to express my appreciation for the thoughtfulness of the brethren. Above I mentioned the increase in voluntary contributions since twenty-three years ago; Chatham has now joined the number of Churches that realize that it would not be fair to leave the remuneration at the level of ten or more years ago. Thanks.

Chatham also asked for classical appointments during the vacancy, which they hope will be of very short duration. And the Rev. M.C. Werkman suggests that the societies make use of the presence of ministers by asking them to speak, as a sort of "kick-off" for the society work. He, too, mentions especially the name of the brother who is so good with the typewriter.

Proceeding to London and Watford, I may tell you that these Churches consider changes in the agreement of co-operation and that their thoughts even go into the direction of calling a minister all by themselves instead of in combination with each other. That would create another vacancy in the midst of the Churches, since the present agreement arranges for the minister to be minister of both Churches (something which I always have found rather strange and a practical impossibility). Watford appointed a committee to look into the possibility of calling a minister by themselves and London discusses the same question. It will be somewhat easier to come to a conclusion now that the Rev. W. Huizinga is leaving for Hamilton, for because of his departure no concrete person is involved in discussions and decisions. Whenever you make a change in an agreement or a set-up, you should do it, preferably, without changing

Fraser Valley Women's League Day

On Thursday, June 24, 1976, the women of the Fraser Valley met at Abbotsford for their 13th Annual League Day. Shortly after 10:00 A.M. the meeting was called to order by our chairlady, Mrs. B.H. Janzen. After our League Song, Mrs. Janzen led in prayer, read Hebrews 13:1-21, and spoke a word of welcome. Our speaker for the morning session, Rev. M. VanderWel, spoke to us about "Our Christian Conversation." The word "conversation" may be translated by two meanings, for in the original text, two different words are used: "politeuma," which means "citizenship," and "anastrophe," meaning "conduct" or "way of life." Our citizenship is in heaven; therefore our Christian conversation must be related to this citizenship. In our lives, the practical application is made only in the light of our redemption. Its characteristics are derived from Leviticus 19, which the apostle Peter summarizes in I Peter 1:15 — "Be ye holy for I am Holy." Our Christian conversation is evident when we are set apart in this world, edifying the household of God. Yet it does not only isolate but it also confronts, meets the world. Christian conversation is also presented in quietness, meekness, a gentle spirit, and with discernment according to a given situation. With concentration we are to establish the virtues of Philippians 4:8 as mothers and

wives, in expectation of the return of Christ.

After the speech, we sang Psalm 37:2, 12, and 16. Then Mrs. A.C. Lengkeek read for us a poem written by Helen Steiner Rice, entitled "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God." Following this, there was a discussion on the speech we had heard. The morning session was closed with the singing of Hymn 36:1-4

Lunch followed in the Church hall, where the Abbotsford ladies had prepared a tasty cold plate. Mrs. H. Heetebrij led in prayer and Scripture reading and several other ladies from Abbotsford provided some entertainment during the meal.

Mrs. B. VanderPol of Cloverdale presided over the afternoon session. She introduced Mrs. H. Aikema, also from Cloverdale, who read to us a very well prepared paper on "Religious Repression in Russia," based on information that she had derived from several books which had been written by people who had actually experienced conditions in the U.S.S.R. (e.g. *The Gulag Archipelago* by Alexander Solzhenitsyn). Mrs. Aikema outlined the historical development of the U.S.S.R. and the conditions at the present time. She told about the ardent hatred that the Communists have for all religion and how they have called for the complete eradication of religion by 1980.

The Communist philosophy considers religion as an obstacle to social progress and wants all church doors closed. Today there are still some churches being tolerated but they are under the complete control of the state. The introduction illustrated the atrocious methods used by Communism in order to destroy religion. True Christians are being treated as wicked criminals. Many are subjected to terrible punishment and torture in prison camps or psychiatric institutions. They may be arrested or executed for the most trivial deeds, while their children are brainwashed by educators to hate God and to put their faith in the state. When hearing about such things going on in our world today, we are made to realize that we do not nearly appreciate, nor take advantage of, the wonderful blessing of freedom that we are still allowed to enjoy in our country.

After the introduction, Mrs. Penninga of New Westminster, read to us a poem called "Daily Prayers Resolve Your Cares." Then we sang Hymn 46:2 and 5, followed by a very entertaining musical skit by some New Westminster ladies. A collection was held to cover the expenses of the day. This was followed by a question period. The meeting was then closed with singing and the chairlady led in thanksgiving prayer.

Again everyone was invited to the Church hall for coffee, tea, and refreshments. Cards were signed by all the ladies to be sent to Mrs. C. Van Spronsen and Mrs. Kuik. The ladies went home after an enjoyable day of learning and fellowship.

MRS. B.H. JANZEN

ships in midstream: then your arguments and decisions are more "neutral," impersonal.

Smithville decided to go ahead with the remodelling plans for the Churchbuilding. The appointed committee is very active, for they inform us that in a short time they conducted "four meetings and a couple of unofficial ones." Perhaps they could consult with the Brampton property committee, which divided the tasks beautifully according to the schedule published in their bulletin.

Smithville's Consistory also received a report on the findings of the committee for "retarded and special education." It was the Smithville Church that brought this point up at the office-bearers' conference here in Ontario; we expect that at the forthcoming Conference we shall have an introduction on this topic; meanwhile the Smithville brethren could serve us there, too, with their conclusions.

And as a last item from Smithville: a "cultural evening" was scheduled for the upgrading and "upbuilding of our standard of congregational singing, accompanied by various performances of piano and organ." I would have loved to see these performances of the piano and of the organ. I can tell you!

From the Ebenezer bulletin (Burlington) I learned that newspaper-collecting is still going on and therefore must still be a profitable undertaking. Let all our congregations look into this manner of raising money for various projects and causes.

We end our journey this time (as we did our extended holiday-trip) in Ottawa. This Congregation had quite a good

supply of ministers during the past few weeks; this was the more pleasant since they enjoyed the company of many visitors who were holidaying in the Ottawa region. Thus far they have been able to seat them all in the room where the services are held. And the visitors have no reason to say that they are not welcomed there. The members make sure that no one is without an invitation to go along during lunch-time. On the Sunday when I was there, a family of seventeen (with husbands, wives, boy- and girl-friends) objected to going along because they were so many and they did not wish to bother the families with so many unexpected guests. "Ah, what!" exclaimed our host-for-the-day, "last week I had twenty-five!"

I hope that the manner in which visitors are received there will result in some settling in our capital city. Ottawa is a beautiful city and the brethren and sisters there long for some strengthening of ranks. Why should it be impossible to make a living and to find a place there whereas it appears to be possible in other places?

We have arrived back home. A beginning has been made to the resumption of the normal work. Have a good holiday, all you who are vacationing right now or who will taste the luxury of going away while most of the others are back in the mill.

And you who have resumed your regular work: may the tan you managed to get disappear only very slowly so as to give you some after-joy and a pleasant reminder of the sunny days past. We discover every time anew that it is good to be back at work.

Cheerio! vO

Küng has joined bishop Moser in pleading for the ordination of women. He feels that "theologically speaking" there can be no objection against women serving in priesthood. If this will ever be realized, however, first the celibacy (the unmarried state of priests) will have to be eliminated because it discriminates against the female sex, according to Küng.

RUDOLF BULTMANN PASSES AWAY

Frankfurt, West Germany. Three weeks before his 92nd birthday, the influential protestant theologian Dr. R. Bultmann passed away in Marburg, Hessen.

COMMENT

RUDOLF BULTMANN

The death of Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976) came shortly after the burial of Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). Both had been professors at the University of Marburg in Germany already in the twenties of this century. Heidegger became the famous representative of the philosophy of Existentialism. Bultmann was the theologian who used this philosophy in his program of "demythologizing" the New Testament.

The New Testament was said to be full of myths and these myths had to be made understandable to modern man. They had to be explained existentially; their message had to be "translated" into concepts that are of significance for human existence.

The bishop of Woolwich, John A.T. Robinson, made Bultmann's program popular in the Anglo-Saxon world by his bestseller *Honest to God* (1963). The grandmaster of modern radical biblical criticism himself had summarized his teaching through lectures in the United States after his retirement in 1951 (published under the title *Jesus Christ and Mythology*, 1958). Bultmann had then already won the attention of the theological world. He dominated the debates in the fifties even more strongly than Karl Barth had done as the leader in the pre-war period. His essay "New Testament and Mythology" (1941) had become a *pièce de résistance* first in the church life of Germany, in the same manner as its program would be in discussion during the sixties all over Europe and would make its impact felt even on the Second Vatican Council. In these days I re-read some outspoken passages of this essay of 1941:

"We no longer believe in the three-storied universe (heaven, earth, hell, JF) which the creeds take for granted. The only honest way of reciting the creeds is to strip the mythological framework from the truth they enshrine There is no longer any heaven in the traditional sense of the word. The same applies to hell in the sense of a mythical underworld beneath our feet. And if this is so, the story of Christ's descent into hell and of His Ascension into heaven is done with. We can no longer look for the return of the Son of man on the clouds of heaven It is impossible to use electric light and the wireless and to avail ourselves of modern medical and surgical discoveries, and at the same time to believe in the New Testament world of spirits and miracles." (Reprinted in *Kerygma and Myth*, 1972, p. 4f.).

It has rightly been stated that, according to Bultmann, Jesus Christ was not conceived by the Holy Spirit, not born of the virgin Mary. He did suffer under Pontius Pilate, He was crucified, He did not descend into hell and did not rise again on the third day from the dead; He did not ascend into heaven and does not sit on the right hand of God the Father, and will not come to judge the living and the dead. Nothing remained of the catholic creed about Christ. The same is true of the doctrine of the Trinity, the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

We know that also Bultmann's teaching has been followed up by other modern movements: the theology of hope and the theology of revolution. The existentialist reduction to the individual is not "in" anymore. Nevertheless, there is no return from the criticism on the Bible as the infallible Word of God.

Already in 1927, S. Greijdanus attacked Bultmann's idea of a mixture of history and legend in the stories of the gospel (*Schriftgeloof en Canoniek*, p. 47f.). Greijdanus rightly stated: "Rejecting what Holy Scripture relates as genuine history, Bultmann himself evoked problems which are not real but imaginary."

At the death of Rudolf Bultmann, we acknowledge that the gospel has to be preached to man in the twentieth century, but we know that this gospel is not man's gospel (Galatians 1:11) and we joyfully listen to the apostle Peter. He was one of "those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and

ministers of the word" (Luke 1:2), and he assures us that "we did not follow cleverly devised myths" (II Peter 1:16).

J. FABER

DOUBLE GRAVAMEN?

The Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches has withstood attempts to have the form of subscription (in which office-bearers declare agreement with the Three Forms of Unity) undergo actual revision. But perhaps it has fallen into another trap, namely, letting the form be neutralized in the matters at hand.

The Synod overcame the embarrassment, caused by Dr. Harry Boer's questioning of the Canons of Dort (see *Clarion*, July 24, 1976) by speaking of two different kinds of gravamens or formal objections against the Creeds. One is (only) an expression of personal difficulty, and the other is a formal request to revise some part of doctrine. Despite the fact that Dr. Boer has directed succinct questions to the major assembly, according to Synod he still falls in the first category. This solution enables Synod to postpone any drastic action and to consider it sufficient for the moment to appoint a committee which will deal with Dr. Boer.

In itself, one might appreciate Synod's attempt to be "pastoral and personal." And I can understand that at times also office-bearers have difficulties with certain points of doctrine — who doesn't?

But to be honest, I don't swallow much of this double-gravamen idea. Office-bearers should start with keeping their personal difficulties regarding points of doctrine to themselves, and only after coming to a firm conviction present their case to the body concerned. That is the line of thought in the "Form of Subscription" drawn up at the Synod of Dordrecht 1618-1619: "And if hereafter any difficulties or different sentiments respecting the aforesaid doctrines should arise in our minds, we promise that we will neither publicly nor privately propose, teach or defend the same, either by preaching or writing, until we have first revealed such sentiments to the consistory, classis or synod, under the penalty in case of refusal to be, by that very fact, suspended from our office." I don't read anything of a double gravamen in this quote! A gravamen is a very serious thing, an ultimate means, not a channel to voice personal difficulties

Continued on next page

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM IRIAN JAYA



During ZGK Conference in Kawagit, 23-4-'76. Left to Right: Mrs. Ellie van der Lugt, Miss Greet Euwema, Mrs. Lyda Haak, Miss Elly Nieboer, Mr. Kees de Wolf, Rev. C.C. Haak.



During ZGK Conference in Kawagit, 23-4-'76. Left to Right: Rev. J. Kruidhof, Mrs. Mies Kruidhof, Mr. Dirk Griffioen, Miss Mien van Egmond.



Ready for a feast in the jungle near Kawagit.



Young man dressed for a feast.

INTERNATIONAL — Continued.

when they come up.

I agree fully with the procedure that an office-bearer who has serious objections to a point of doctrine finally after much pondering and prayer presents a well-documented case to the churches. That's even an obligation. But simple questioning — in the line of contemporary liberal theology which attacks basic truths without even bearing the burden of proof — certainly doesn't fall into this category.

The Synodical Churches in The Netherlands also appointed committee after committee to deal with those who did not come up with a concrete gravamen, but were meanwhile engaged in continuous questioning of the Creeds. Synods even distinguished between various forms of discipline only to avoid real disciplinary action, and meanwhile the dissidents conveniently carried on their subversive activities. I hope that the Christian Reformed Churches are not getting into the same habit. I also hope that the ap-

pointed committee will be able to convince Dr. Boer of the unfoundedness of his questions.

Happily there are those in the CRC who share these misgivings. In *Outlook*, Rev. P. de Jong writes, "In effect, Dr. Boer by his attack on and violation of the Form of Subscription and creed has effectively changed the functioning of that form in a way in which the consequences are not yet clear. These things may well need improvement, but no man may be permitted to break his promises and disregard church rules at will, if the church is to be preserved from anarchy." So right

C.I.S.

OUR COVER

Free Reformed Church of Armadale, Western Australia. (Photo courtesy of Rev. G. VanRongen).

CIRCUMSPECTION — Continued.

the Bible doesn't command us to go to Church TWICE each Sunday. "Keeping it holy" does mean FULLY sanctifying it in the service of God. As the Psalm-writer said, "I was glad when they said, Let us go to the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122:1). And the writer to the Hebrews admonishes the church not to "neglect to meet together, as is the HABIT of some . . ." (Hebrews 10:25). They must have had oncers and noncers already in those days.

If the fourth commandment does not function positively, as a blessing, for us and our children and everyone connected with us, we're in trouble. If the Lord and His service are not in the CENTRE of attention and we do not find joy and strength in that service, we're even in deeper trouble.

The Lord gives us a day off so that we will be busy with Him. It is a day of rest from ALL our work, so that we find our true rest in the mighty works of God in Christ.

Cid.

Letter to my Father

Dear Dad,

This time it is my turn to write a letter to you. You have often helped me in your letters to have a better understanding of life and faith. Your favourite phrase: "On the other hand," has many times been the beginning of thought on a subject that seemed clear-cut and one-sided before. It's great to have a father who can and will write letters to his daughter.

I have come to see the value of sometimes writing things down instead of talking about them. In writing, you can take your time and think things through completely. You do not have to think of an answer at least until you yourself ask the question. We have often talked about many different things, but this time you receive a letter from me.

You see, Dad, something has been bothering me a bit lately, and I would like to hear your comments about this topic.

Maybe I am too critical. People are so often most critical of their families, because they are concerned. In the same way I find myself being critical of some Canadian Reformed attitudes, not because I feel uncertain about being a member, but out of concern for what certain attitudes may lead to.

As Canadian Reformed People, we have many things to be glad about, and not the least is the new Guido de Bres High School, added to the many Christian elementary schools already established. However, I find we are no longer only glad, or even grateful, but we are becoming proud, and possibly tying ourselves to these schools as if these are a mark of the true church. I hear many people referring to the high-school as "our own school." How can we even think, let alone call it that? Even "our own" body and soul do not belong to us. And then we call the school God has given us the privilege of starting "ours" and emphasize our ownership by adding "own."

I'm scared, Dad. So often lately, there have been people from all over Ontario saying they will be moving to the Hamilton-Burlington area. It is the logical thing to do: the high school is there. THE SCHOOL has become more than a privilege and a blessing. It has become an obligation, an obsession, maybe even an idol for some people. The commandment to bring up your children in the fear and knowledge of the

Lord comes before the command to spread the gospel over the whole world.

In the Old Testament, Israel had the privilege and obligation to worship God in Jerusalem. In the New Testament we were freed from that. God's people were to go all over the world. "Wherever two or three are gathered together in My Name, there I am," we are told. But some people would like to add: There must be an established congregation, and also a Christian elementary and our own secondary school.

I know many people worked and continue to work very hard for Christian education; and, yes, this is right and important. But not all-important. As soon as anything becomes too important, it becomes to us an idol.

C.S. Lewis warns against being "Christians with . . ." For instance, pentecostals would claim to be Christians with the "gifts of the Spirit." United Church members are Christians with humanitarianism. Maybe we are in danger of becoming Christians with Christian education.

You know I think Christian education is important. You taught me that. I also know how anti-Christian the public schools are. I am certainly not arguing for them. And I know, Dad, that really you are not the one I should be saying this to. You are more wary of extremes than I am. Like you said once, you like to be an anchor. And an anchor may seem to drag behind and slow down the boat sometimes, but if the boat is without one, the wind will carry it in any direction.

Zeal is good. To be willing to sacrifice anything and everything for God is good. But to be willing to sacrifice everything for the school is not! That is the wrong focus. God's will is more, so much more, than that we support the school, or that we send our children there. We may not neglect the other aspects of our worship of God for the school.

We have not discussed this topic often, Dad. I have a vague idea of what your thoughts will be — in keeping with all you have taught me. But I would appreciate it if you would get out the typewriter and point out the sides of the issue that I have missed. I am sure from your position you will see things in a different way than I do.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Love Jean

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Are you enjoying the last weeks of your summer holidays? How do you feel about summer? Do you wish it would never end? Or are you beginning to look forward to meeting your friends at school?

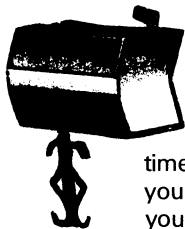
Summer is lovely. But there comes an end to everything, right?

Busy Beaver *Jo-anna Flach* has a poem to get us into "a school mood"!

Thoughts About School

With school coming soon,
You whistle a tune,
Thinking of what it may bring.
With a loud voice you sing
Of many a thing?
That happens when sitting in school.
Hustle and bustle, hurrying too,
You look for your one lost shoe
With memories floating
Of this summer's boating
And how fast
This summer has past.
When walking to school the first day
Your heart feels so light and so gay
When thinking of friends
And the things that she lends
You realize how much
You have missed SCHOOL!

From the Mailbox



Hello *Corrie De Boer*. Did you have a good time on your birthday? And how did you do on your swimming lessons? What do you do with all your rabbits and pheasant chicks, Corrie?

I'm very happy to hear that your brother is better, *Debbie Hartman*. And I'm glad too, that you're enjoying your summer holidays so much. But aren't you looking forward to seeing your friends at school again?

It was nice to hear from you again, *Charles Slaa*. And I see you are a real Busy Beaver making up such a fine quiz for us! Thank you very much!

And thank you, too, *James Slaa*, for your very nice letter and your quiz, too! Between the two of you, you and your brother really mean to keep us busy, don't you? Keep up the good work!

You did very, very well on your quizzes, *Lucille De Boer*. Keep up the good work! I hope you will really enjoy your trip "out west." You'll have to write and tell me, Lucille, what you enjoyed most!

Hello *Sylvia Jans*. Congratulations on passing! And aren't you lucky to get such a reward! Thank you for the quizzes. You mean to keep us busy, too, don't you?

Thank you for writing, *Lorraine* and *Geraldine De Boer*. We wish you all the best as you go on to your new school in September. Bye for now!

* * * * *

QUIZ TIME

Lots of Busy Beavers are travelling this summer. But some of us are staying home. Let's all be "arm-chair travellers" and go all across Canada to see the interesting sights of our country!

Complete your cross-Canada trip by matching the place to the name of the province where you'll find it.

Sights Across Canada

<i>Place</i>	<i>(What you'll see)</i>	<i>Province</i>
Confederation Chamber	historic sight	Manitoba
Sandstone rocks at Hopewell Cape	tide-carved	Newfoundland
Welland Ship Canal	locks	British Columbia
Jasper National Park	the Rocky Mountains	Quebec
Chapel Arm	annual whale hunt	Saskatchewan
Chateau de Ramezay	one of the oldest buildings in Canada	Prince Edward Island
Thunderbird Park	totem poles	New Brunswick
Port Royal Habitation National Historic Park	historic reconstruction	Alberta
Uranium City	open pit uranium mine	Ontario
Riding Mountain National Park	buffalo	Nova Scotia

Which Holiday?

1. We celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ on this day. _____
2. We remember the death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross on this day. _____
3. We remember that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead on this day. _____
4. We remember the going to heaven of our Lord Jesus Christ on this day. _____
5. We remember the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on this day. _____

Thank you very much Busy Beavers Charles and James Slaa for providing these quizzes for us! (Answers next time.)

Before we forget now, Busy Beavers! Have you sent in your very best entry for the BIG SUMMER CONTEST? You liked it and sent it right along? Great! Or are you still busy writing your (story, poem, essay, etc.) for the WRITING CONTEST? Be sure to send your entries BEFORE the last day of AUGUST, all right? And remember we only want your own writing! And it should include your name and age. Have fun!

Bye for now. Till next time, Busy Beavers!

With love from your Aunt Betty.

PRESS RELEASE

of Classis Ontario-North, held on May 27, 1976, at Toronto, Ontario.

1. On behalf of the convening church at Guelph, Ontario, br. K. Sikkema calls the meeting to order. He requests to sing Psalm 89:1, reads Psalm 119:33-40, and leads in prayer.

2. The delegates of Fergus report on the credentials. All churches are duly represented. The delegates are: from Brampton: Rev. C. VanDam and H. Vis; from Ebenezer, Burlington: Rev. G. VanDooren and H. Dantuma; from Rehoboth, Burlington: Rev. Cl. Stam and H. VanVeen; from Fergus: Rev. W.W.J. VanOene and K. Nijenhuis; from Guelph: H. Meerveld and K. Sikkema; from Orangeville: Rev. C. Olij and R. Grit; from Ottawa: C. Torenvliet and H. Holtvluwer; from Toronto: Rev. D. VanderBoom and H. Kampen. The church at Burlington-East has an instruction.

3. Classis is constituted. The officers are: Rev. G. VanDooren, chairman; Rev. Cl. Stam, clerk; Rev. C. Olij, assessor. The chairman extends a welcome to all members and to some visitors, among whom the Rev. Kim of the First Korean Presbyterian Church at Toronto.

4. The agenda is adopted after some items have been added to the provisional agenda.

5. A request for permission to speak an edifying word in the churches can not yet be granted.

6. Instruction from Ebenezer Church Burlington-East "to put before classis the request of the First Korean Presbyterian Church at Toronto to be admitted to the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches." Classis unanimously decides: 1. Classis gratefully takes note of the request of

the First Korean Presbyterian Church at Toronto to be admitted into the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches, passed on to classis by the consistory of the Ebenezer Church at Burlington-East. 2. Classis decides to appoint a committee to investigate all aspects and questions involved in granting such a request, and to report to the churches possibly before the next classis.

7. Overture by Ebenezer Church at Burlington-East to rescind the decision of Classis March 11, 1976 to abandon the Guide for Church visitation. By a tie vote the proposal is rejected.

8. There are no reports.

9. Classis appoints the following brethren in the committee mentioned under article 6: H. DeBoerSap, H. Kampen, Rev. C. VanDam (convener), Rev. D. VanderBoom, and Rev. W.W.J. VanOene.

10. Question Period ad article 41, Church Order. Rehoboth Church at Burlington-West asks and receives advise on a matter of discipline.

11. Personal Question Period. Rev. D. VanderBoom expresses his concern about members of the churches who are living in dispersion without attending church services regularly. He asks the churches to think about a possible effective procedure to deal with these members.

12. Convening church of next classis: Orangeville; Date, D.V., Thursday, September 9, 1976; officers: Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene, chairman; Rev. G. VanDooren, clerk; Rev. Cl. Stam, assessor.

13. There is no need to exercise censure ad article 43, Church Order.

14. The Acts are read and adopted; the Press Release is read and approved.

15. At request of the chairman Psalm 93:1 and 3 are sung. He leads in prayer of thanksgiving. Classis stands adjourned.

For Classis, REV. C. OLIJ, assessor e.t.

Engaged:

BERTHA STIKSMA
to
HENDRIX BOUWERS

July 30, 1976
Orangeville, Ontario.

Engaged:

RUBY HARKE to
MATT VANDER MOOREN

July 30, 1976.
2289 Sharron Street,
Burlington, Ontario L7R 1W5.

REQUEST

The Consulate General of The Netherlands requests your assistance in locating:

- HOEBERT-JONKER, Paulina Catharina Petronella, born February 15, 1913, in The Hague, The Netherlands. Emigrated to Canada on March 31, 1953.

- JONKER, Heinrich Johannes, born February 25, 1925 in The Hague, The Netherlands. Emigrated to Canada on April 23, 1959.

- WATERREUS-JONKER, Pieter-nella, born October 27, 1927 in The Hague, The Netherlands. Emigrated to Canada on June 13, 1952.

- HAIJTEMA, Wouter, born July 2, 1933 in Workum, The Netherlands.

- DEJONG, Hessel, born May 28, 1911 in Het Bilt, The Netherlands. Emigrated on November 19, 1956 to Canada.

If you know of any of these persons' whereabouts, please contact (before August 31, 1976): W.S. ten Bosch, Asst. Chancellor, Consulate General of The Netherlands, 10 King Street E., Toronto, Ontario M5C 1C3; Phone (416) 364-5443.

With thankfulness to the Lord we are happy to announce the birth of our son:

KEVIN ADRIEL

July 20, 1976.

Albert and Tricia Visscher
(nee Huisman)

3491-196 St., Surrey, B.C.

Mr. and Mrs. Sybren Raap and Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Toet take great pleasure in announcing the marriage of their children:

WILMA ALICE and
JACOB

D.V., on Saturday, August 28, 1976, at one o'clock in the Canadian Reformed Church at Winnipeg.

Rev. S. De Bruin officiating.

Future address:

343 Yale Ave. West, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2C 1V1.

Mr. and Mrs. Hessel Dantuma are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of:

LISA ANN SINCLAIR
to their son
ROBERT WILLIAM

The ceremony will take place, D.V., on Saturday, September 11, 1976, in the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, Dynes Road, Burlington, Ontario.

Rev. G. VanDooren, M.Th. officiating.

186 Burloak Drive, Burlington, Ontario L7L 4W4.