



Clarion
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 26 - No. 10

May 21, 1977

. . . There is Liberty

It may sound somewhat strange when the Apostle states, "Now the Lord is the Spirit."

For fear that these words might be understood or because they did not understand them, some have suggested to read II Corinthians 3:17a as follows: "Now the Spirit is the Lord." Thus, they felt, the difficulty was solved and at the same time a text was obtained which clearly states the divinity of the Holy Spirit, a text which would substantiate what we confess in the Athanasian Creed in Article 17: "So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord."

However, the above suggested "translation" is not a correct rendering of the original words.

We abide by the translation as it is given in the RSV which, basically, is the same as the one found in the KJV.

* * *

Does the Apostle Paul here fall into the heresy of identifying the Person of the Son with the Person of the Holy Spirit? If he were doing that, it would not be a heresy but the divine Truth. Yet Paul does nothing in that line. And a heresy it is and will remain. There is no confusion or fusion of the divine Persons, even though we confess, "The Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord; yet they are not three Lords but one Lord."

* * *

To whom does the Apostle refer when he says, "Now the Lord is the Spirit"? Does he then mean the Holy Spirit, the third divine Person?

Yes, he does.

Can we speak of the Holy Spirit apart from the work which He does?

No, we cannot.

Does Paul speak here of the Holy Spirit apart from the work which He does?

No, he does not, but he speaks of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit who is the Spirit of Christ, who takes it all out of Christ, who applies and represents all that Christ has obtained.

Whoever speaks of the Holy Spirit, speaks of the new dispensation, of the fulfilment of all the shadows, of the era in which the old things have

disappeared and in which everything has become new. The Holy Spirit can indeed be "identified" with the new dispensation.

* * *

By whom has the new dispensation come?

Is it not by the Lord Jesus Christ, Who came and fulfilled all the shadows, Who gave full satisfaction to God, Who by His perfect obedience has made an end to all the ceremonies of the Law?

Thereby the Saviour brought life, for the second Man has become a life-giving Spirit.

To give life, to bring to life, is a specific work of the Holy Spirit. He works it by taking everything out of Christ and imparting it to His own. The work of the Spirit cannot be separated from the work of Christ: it is only through Christ's work that the Holy Spirit is able to do His specific work; as it is only through the work of the Spirit that the labours of Christ can become effective.

Thus the work of the Christ and the work of the Spirit can indeed be identified, but not in an ontological sense. Likewise the Lord (Jesus Christ) can be called the Spirit by the apostle Paul: the dispensation of the Spirit is the dispensation of Christ and His accomplished work. And when one wishes to say in one word what the age of the Spirit brings, one can do it no better than the apostle Paul did: The Lord (Jesus), He is the Spirit.

* * *

In the Old Testament dispensation, too, there was splendour, even such a splendour that Moses had to cover his face: the Israelites could not stand to look at his face; that's how bright the shine of it was.

The veil with which Moses had to cover his face is a symbol of the veil which the Israel of Paul's days had on their faces when reading Moses: they did not see the Christ in the Law, and thus the whole Old Testament dispensation became to them a dispensation of condemnation.

Apart from Christ the letter kills. When one reads the law through a veil, through coloured glasses, one

cannot see the riches of the Saviour, but is kept in darkness, in bondage, burdened with rule upon rule and command upon command which no one can keep anyway, including the one who imposes them.

On the other hand, now that the fulfilment has come and has been brought about by the Saviour, now that the age of the Spirit has arrived, this Spirit gives life: Has not the second Man become a life-giving Spirit?

The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

And the Lord Jesus, He is the Spirit: the Holy Spirit takes it all out of Him and distributes Christ's treasures to all God's elect.

We do not find it strange that the Apostle Peter, when "explaining" the signs of the sound of a mighty storm, of the tongues as of fire, and of the speaking in other tongues, does not say much about the Person of the Holy Spirit but proceeds right away to describing the work of Christ and proclaiming the fulfilment brought about by Him. The Lord Jesus, He is the Spirit: without Him and His work the work of the Holy Spirit would not have been possible, and without the Holy Spirit and His work the labour of the Redeemer would have remained without effect.

Thus we can know the Holy Spirit and His work only from Christ and His work, as, on the other hand, we can know Christ and His work only from the Holy Spirit and from what He does: working faith in the heart, bringing to life, imparting to us that which we have in Christ.

* * *

Such is ignored and neglected by the spiritualistic movements and by all who speak about the Holy Spirit and His work as of a work which is more or less independent, which adds something to Christ's work. In their doctrine and, perhaps even more, in their practice these movements and sects adhere to the opinion that relying on the work of Christ is not sufficient if one is to be a true and *complete* Christian: Christ's work has to be complemented by the work of the Spirit which should become evident in special and spectacular gifts and signs. They ignore the

The Liturgical Forms

fact that the Lord is the Spirit: the work of the Spirit receives its sense and character from the work of the Lord Jesus alone, and the work of the Lord becomes effective only through the work of the Spirit.

The difference between truly Scriptural speaking about the Holy Spirit and His work and the speaking about Him and His work as we find it in Pentecostalism and related movements is not just a difference in accent and extent: it is a basic difference.

Only when it is acknowledged that the Lord Jesus is the Spirit can there be liberty, true liberty.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, freedom.

Paul refers here to the freedom from rules and from bondage, opposing therein any effort to bring the Christian Church anew under the yoke of the letter, provisions which kill since Christ is not acknowledged in them and since His satisfaction is ignored and practically denied.

Christians live out of the fulness of Christ's satisfaction. They have been set free by the Son and for that reason they are really free. For the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is true freedom.

Thus they refuse to let themselves be brought again under a yoke of "Touch not, handle not, taste not, use not."

Anyone who, under whatever pretext, would try to burden the free children of God anew with rules and regulations denies thereby "at bottom" the sufficiency of Christ's work and the coming of the Spirit, for where indeed the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Bearing that in mind and cherishing that precious truth will cause us more and more to live out of the fulness of Christ's deliverance.

We shall then dismiss any claim as if we need anything but that the fruits of Christ's sufferings and death are imparted to us by the Holy Spirit.

Likewise we shall reject any effort to burden us anew with all sorts of rules and regulations as if the presence and working of the Holy Spirit were no sufficient guarantee that by His power and direction we are able to do what the Spirit commands us through the pen of Paul:

"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore!"

vO

When I was asked in connection with a course for communicant members to discuss the liturgical forms of the Canadian Reformed Churches, I immediately consented to do so. The Forms are as much a product of the Reformation as the Creeds are, and function regularly in the worship of the Church. Therefore examination of and instruction in the Forms certainly is warranted and necessary.

It is good also for another reason to look at the Forms. The Form for Baptism already indicates that the danger of "custom or superstition" is always present in the liturgical activities of the Church, and it could very well be that we get so used to these Forms that we hardly hear the immense riches contained in them. When the Forms are being read, the congregation should not sleep but be wide awake, for the forms give the Scriptural FOUNDATION and EXPLANATION of what is happening. Examination of the Forms will only help us to appreciate more the function of the Forms and in this way perhaps ameliorate the attention when they are being used. Therefore I feel free to ask your attention for this matter.

DEFINITION

It is wise to define what we understand by the words, the Liturgical Forms. These forms are located at the back of the *BOOK OF PRAISE* and are those accepted form(ulation)s or standards which are used as a regular part of the liturgy. The word, liturgy, denotes that which pertains to the order of the worship service, both in contents and in sequence. In these forms the Churches are indeed giving concrete, Scriptural form to essential parts of the worship service, so that in ALL the Churches there will be a unity of worship, like Paul once also had certain rules for all the churches (I Corinthians 11:16; 14:40). The Forms serve the peace and the edification of the Church.

There is a difference, of course, between the Creeds and the Forms. In the Creeds (or confessions) the churches confess the full doctrine of salvation as it has been revealed in the Scriptures, often polemically and apologetically designed for the benefit of

heretics and outsiders. In the Forms this SAME doctrine is applied liturgically to certain aspects of the worship service. Therefore, "even if the forms sometime also give a DOGMATICAL explanation, there is a different tone than in a polemical piece or a confession" (P. Biesterveld, *Het Gereformeerde Kerkboek*, 1902, page 166). Not only a different tone, but also a different function and purpose, I'd say.

However, that doesn't reduce the



THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE
Published bi-weekly by Premier Printing Ltd.
Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Second class mail registration number 1025.

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.
1249 Plessis Road, Winnipeg,
Manitoba, Canada R2C 3L9
Phone (204) 222-5218

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SUBSCRIPTIONS:

\$19.50 per year (to be paid in advance).

ADVERTISEMENTS:

\$4.50 per column inch (width of column: one-third of page). Contract rates upon request.

Advertising copy for weddings, anniversaries, meetings, etc., must be in our office three to four weeks prior to event.

ISSN 0383-0438

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importance of the Forms, for just as the Churches voluntarily bind themselves to certain Creeds (the Three Forms of Unity), likewise they bind themselves in the Church Order to the Forms. This is desirable and necessary, because behind every liturgy lies a confession, and behind our Liturgical Forms we can easily discern the Three Forms of Unity (Compare G. van Rongen, *Zijn Schone Dienst*, page 31).

The distinction has been made between SACRAMENTAL and CEREMONIAL Forms (Abraham Kuyper, *Onze Eredienst*, page 358). We have forms indeed pertaining directly to the administration of the sacraments and those which deal with non-sacramental matters like ordination and discipline. But the one is not more important than the other (as Roman Catholicism would claim) for all forms deal with essential matters and touch the marks of the Church in all respects, for they determine the style of the preaching, the usage of the sacraments, the exercising of discipline, and so reflect the full administration of grace to the flock of Jesus Christ.

THE REFORMATION

Since our present Forms find their roots and origin in the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, it's wise for a moment to return to that era. The Churches then broke with the sacramentalistic rituals of the Roman Catholic Church and returned to a Scriptural liturgy.

It is important to note that not only many CREEDS were written in those days, but also many LITURGIES. The reformers certainly understood that confession and liturgy, doctrine and practice form an unbreakable unity! So, among the many fruits of the Reformation we find many liturgical forms, all of which essentially oppose the age-old rituals of Rome.

These various forms out of the time of the Reformation do not only show us clearly where the break with Rome is realized PRACTICALLY in the worship of the Church, they also show us the similarities and differences between the various reformers themselves. Famous is the comparison between the LUTHERAN and CALVINISTIC liturgies. One immediately notices that Luther only wanted "to purify" the Romanist liturgy, but that Calvin wanted to abolish it completely, since all Roman Catholic liturgy revolves around the Mass (or Eucharist) which

the catechism determines as an "accursed idolatry" (Lord's Day 30). Consequently Luther preserved many Romanist attributes and rituals. For example, in his "Order for Mass" (published in 1523) he retained the altar, crucifix, candles, paintings and the priestly ceremony. This was no surprise, but in complete harmony with Luther's doctrine of CONSUBSTANTIATION, which basically is nothing else than a mutation of the Roman Catholic teaching of TRANSSUBSTANTIATION. Calvin's liturgy, however, is known for both its radical break with Romanism and its sober, simple and Scriptural formulation.

FOUR CITIES

The earliest history of our present forms seems to be concentrated in four European centres, namely Geneva, Strassbourg, London and Heidelberg. A tale of four cities. No wonder, because it was in these cities that the Reformation came to great prominence and developed impressive momentum. Here we come into contact with people such as Farel, Calvin, à Lasco and Olevianus.

In 1533 William Farel, who has been called the "founder of Reformed liturgy" (van Rongen, o.c. page 193), published "Manière et Façon," manner and fashion of the worship service for the church at Geneva, which offered an explanatory form for Holy Baptism, Marriage and the Lord's Supper. It also gave an order of worship and directives for visiting the sick. This liturgy was largely followed by Calvin and others, while a specific Genevan Liturgy was published in 1542.

Also in 1542 a liturgy was published by Peter Brully, who was successor to John Calvin in Strassbourg, and this book shows that Calvin had initiated various forms for the worship, namely Baptism, Lord's Supper and Marriage. In 1551 Valerandus Pollanus published a "Holy Liturgy" or the manner of worship of the Church at Strassbourg.

During these years the fugitive-congregation at London (England) was served by the Rev. John à Lasco — a minister of Polish origin — and he published a specific liturgy (along with a confession and a catechism). This was translated into Dutch by Marten Micronius and became the famous version of Micron, which for many years prevailed in the Dutch Churches.

And finally, in 1563 (the same year in which the Heidelberg Catechism was written) Caspar Olevianus



"Farel: Founder of Reformed Liturgy"

wrote a Church-order for the Pfalz on the request of Frederick III and included a liturgy set up after the Genevan Model (i.e. prayers, songs, Forms for Lord's Supper and Marriage).

From these dates and publications we indeed learn that the Reformed Churches were concerned with the Liturgical Forms from the very beginning of the Reformation and that it took only a few years before established liturgies could function and be used for the edification of the Church and the glorification of God's Name. The rapid conception and the swift application of the various forms certainly shows us the penetrating force of the Reformation in the life of the Church. Only when the worship service was "reformed," was the Church truly free from the rituals of Rome.

DUTCH DEVELOPMENT

To understand the present contents of our Churchbook, we must yet relevelate the subsequent history of the Forms in The Netherlands. A most important figure in this respect is Rev. Peter Datheen who (together with Rev. Caspar VanderHeyden) published a "Psalmboek" in 1566, with a liturgy based on London, Heidelberg and Geneva. Datheen's work included Psalms, a general liturgy and Forms for its ASSIMILATION of various Reformed liturgies and to my knowledge it is the FIRST attempt in this direction. The Convent of Wesel (1568, a meeting in which preparations were made for the realization of a Dutch federal

Continued on page 195.

"TOLLE, LEGE?"

Gradually I'm beginning to realize that not only as Canadians in general, but also as believers in particular, we are losing an important art and tool, namely, reading. Is it true that a fairly large percentage of Canadians hardly reads on a regular basis? Very often whatever is read is of such low artistic and intrinsic quality that it can respectfully be labelled as "trash." Many do not progress beyond the limit of browsing through the daily newspaper or the odd magazine, while others devour simplistic pocket-book novels of questionable content — like eating "junk-food."

The picture seems to have emerged victorious over the word. The comic-strip, the television, and the cinema have unnecessarily pampered many to the degree that they cannot read for extended periods of time. Reading has become so tiresome for many people that magazine publishers demand short, one-page articles of their contributors, and even then lavishly lard their publications with a horde of impressive pictures and graphic illustrations.

Magazines which offer only solid text are regarded to be indigestible; people shrink away merely at seeing long articles. Writing a "series" of articles is considered suicidal, because people never seem to remember the previous instalment. It must be short, concise, ready-made to suit the taste of the times, like the quick-service offered by pre-fab hamburger joints.

Of course, we may make use of modern techniques of printing and the present-day possibilities in artwork. The "reader" (a rare specimen) might have noticed that *Clarion* is lately offering more illustrations and photos than was the case in the past. *Circumspection*, for example (that respectable column), tries to employ the services of a carefully chosen center-photograph, indeed meant to attract attention and give an impression of the contents of the article itself. There is such a thing as "layout," and if the text and the accompanying illustrations are "in balance," there is no valid objection to be made, really. Some might label this "a catering to the whims of the times" (or even worse, "a trend towards sensationalism"), but I would rather call that an acceptable exploitation of beneficial techniques.

But, understood well, the words are the most important. Reading is

Circumspection...

more than viewing. We must progress from the illustration to the text itself, and through careful reading, we must try to grasp the message contained in the words, faithfully following the thought-development until we reach the conclusion.

This applies both to fictional and non-fictional reading. Starting with the first category, I may ask the question, "Do parents and teachers still strongly promote the reading of positive, Reformed novels, selecting those books which can be beneficial



to the children of the Covenant?" How many book-reviews are kids writing these days? There are not many modern novels with true Christian content in the English language, but there are still some classics which can afford much enjoyment and education. Children, who have the God-given talents, must be stimulated to read, will learn to enjoy reading, and through practice will learn to appreciate the beauty of language in both poetry and prose. Is it not a part of the "cultural mandate," given to God's people, to develop these skills, so that these in turn can be used to the glorification of God and the edification of the Church?

The other category (non-fiction) is equally important, because it opens to us a world of facts and information, necessary for our operation as Christians in this depraved world. I might be wrong, but I have the impression that if any reading is done, it's mostly fiction, while non-fiction is avoided. Do we still read historical, geographical, political, scientific, and theological works (to name a few), or are these too cumbersome for us? The level of knowl-

edge which I encounter sometimes scares me. And I don't scare easily. I even wonder if many subscribers really read *Clarion* which does attempt (despite its limited circle of contributors) to give a basic variety of material.

In this respect, I might divulge some personal information. I am Canadian-bred, believe me, but I learned to read and speak two languages, Dutch and English. I remember from my boyhood how utterly fascinated I was with many Dutch children's books and novels by such authors as van der Hulst, Piet Prins, and Penning (again, to name a few). It honestly pains me that most of our young people today will never read these beautiful works, and I wonder if we should not have put much more emphasis (like other ethnic groups have done) on preserving our ancestral heritage, instead of neglecting the Dutch language and the literary treasures contained in it. Should "Dutch" not be promoted at our grade and high schools? Then, at least, those who have the knack for languages have ample opportunity to learn.

You know, since we are losing the art of reading, there is an inevitable, sad result. Because people do not read, they also cannot write any longer! Professors at Toronto's York University recently complained about the present-day students' extremely poor writing ability. Well, writing and reading are closely related, like parent and child. You learn the one through the other. If there are no "readers," there are no "writers," and we need people who can and will write for our people, especially if our Dutch heritage becomes inaccessible for most of us. So if we lose the art of reading, we lose more than we think.

There is a famous aphorism: *Tolle, lege!* Take and read! If we do not "re-discover" the arts of reading and writing, we are impoverishing ourselves, weakening ourselves in the struggle of the spirits, and in this way endangering the Church of Christ. You see, we are then giving up the mighty weapon of the pen, the magazine, and the book.

This is a serious request: *Tolle, lege!* Take and read. 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.

HEIDELBERG CATECHISM GETS "ECUMENICAL" FOOTNOTE

Rheine, West Germany. The famous statement in the Heidelberg Catechism concerning the Mass (in Lord's Day 30, where the mass is called an "accursed idolatry") will be supplemented with an "ecumenical footnote." The decision to do so was recently taken by the Moderamen of the West-German Reformed Union (Reformierte Bund). The Reformed Union says that the statement of Lord's Day 30 reveals "the strong language of the struggle during the Reformation to preserve the purity of doctrine" and is not in place today. The Union does admit that differences in viewpoint still exist, "but the damnation has made way for an ecumenical dialogue between the churches."

RUSSIAN-RUMANIAN BAPTISTS TERRORIZED

Washington, USA. A recent edi-



*Georgi Vins
"... prisoner of communism"*

tion of the U.S. News and World Report states that possibly thousands of Baptists in Russia are locked away in concentration camps. During the past year, at least 7 known Baptists died (or were killed) under mysterious circumstances. The most well-known Baptist, Georgi Vins, is presently serving a second lengthy term in prison. A list containing the names of 148 imprisoned Christians was recently published by Keston College (Great Britain). From this list it appears that the prisoners range from Russian-Orthodox to Baptist. Keston College admits that the list is far from being complete, estimating a total of 2,000 people to be imprisoned, banished, displaced, or "hospitalized." Keston College has also made known that a number of Baptist ministers have been arrested in Rumania. Among these ministers is Rev. Josif Ton, who studied theology at Oxford, and planned to travel to Great Britain this year to receive his degree.

NATIONAL LOTTERY FOR DEFENSE?

Pretoria, South Africa. For the first time in its history, South Africa is getting a national "lottery" (in the form of handing out obligations), proceeds of which will be used to meet the heavily burdened defense budget. Deputies of the Reformed Church (Dopperkerk) for contact with the authorities have already asked the government not to proceed with this lottery. Rev. W. Boessenkool of the Free Reformed Church of Johannesburg also rejects the idea, "because the element of gambling is contrary to Reformed ethics."

ALVIN TOFFLER: CHURCH CRITICAL ROLE

Ridgecrest, North Carolina. At a meeting of the Southern Baptists Convention, the well-known humanist and author (of "Future Shock"), Alvin Toffler, called upon the churches to play an absolutely critical role in society. "The churches should break with the traditional role of telling people what their values and norms should be," said Toffler, who also claimed that in our complex society there can hardly be any certainty over norms.

REV. VAN RONGEN AT "MANNENBONDS DAG"

Hardenberg, The Netherlands. Among the speakers selected for the annual League Day of the Dutch Reformed League of Men's Societies was

Rev. G. van Rongen, former minister of the American Reformed Church at Grand Rapids. Rev. van Rongen spoke about the ecclesiastical situation in North America, and gave many particulars about the federation of American/Canadian Reformed Churches. While mentioning the contacts between the Canadian Churches and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Rev. van Rongen advised the Dutch Churches — seeing the objections which are being raised in Canada against certain sections of the Westminster Confession — to take good note of these contacts. This advice was given in connection with the Dutch churches' own contacts with Korean, Irish, and Scottish Churches which also have the Westminster Confession.

RUNIA: SYNODICALS STAY IN WCC

Utrecht, The Netherlands. At a recent annual meeting of ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church (Hervormde Kerk), Prof. Dr. K. Runia of Kampen (Synodical Seminary) spoke about the criticism heard from many sides on the activities of the World Council of Churches (WCC). He made the following remarkable statement: "Our Churches decided to become members of the WCC in 1969. Even though we've had Nairobi (the latest assembly of the WCC), our churches are still largely grateful for this decision. Looking back, we can agree with Prof. Berkhof that the WCC is the great gift of God in this century. Despite the criticism which I mentioned, our churches do not see any reason at present to leave the WCC. We will continue to act as a positive-critical partner."

OPC AND RPCES PROPOSE AGAIN

Grand Rapids, USA. Committees of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES), framed recommendations to their respective Synods to adopt a plan of Union between the two denominations. Because the OPC is still wrestling with its New Form of Government, which is slated to be part of the Plan of Union, the vote will take place in 1979. An earlier plan of union was approved by the OPC in 1975, but narrowly defeated by the RPCES in the same year (RES).

CHILD-COMMUNION?

Grand Rapids, USA. The General
Continued on page 195.



John Calvin

THE LITURGICAL FORMS — Cont'd.

tion of Reformed Churches) suggested that this book of Datheen be used by the Churches. Datheen's Psalboek therefore became the first uniform liturgical model for a federation of Reformed Churches.

The Synod of Dordrecht (1574) officially adopted Datheen's liturgy for usage in the Churches, and this Synod made a beginning with an overall binding form for the Reformed Churches. What Wesel could only RECOMMEND, Dort made OBLIGATORY, a big step towards uniformity in liturgy!

The following Synod of The Hague (1586) made some important ADDITIONS to the existing Churchbook and included the Forms for ORDINATION and DISCIPLINE. Though these forms are rather late in the history of the Reformation, they will constantly prove their value for the life of the Churches. It is interesting to note that the Synod of Zeeland, 1610, (in the beautiful seaside town of Veere) adopted a form for the Baptism of the Aged ("bejaarden") which has become our form for the Baptism of Adults. And all these forms were published (together with the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession and the "Kort Begrip") in the well-known edition Schippers (1611), which edition was used by the famous Synod of Dordrecht (1618-1619) for the REVISION of the Churchbook.

Besides subsequent revisions of the Forms, one more addition was made in 1923 (quite some time later!) at the Synod of Utrecht, which adopted into the Churchbook a short form for the public profession of faith. This

was done on the repeated advice of the famous Dr. Abraham Kuyper. A final major revision was made in 1933 at the Synod of Middelburg, also in the province Zeeland. For this reason we often speak of the Liturgy of Middelburg.

ENGLISH VERSION

From the very beginning of their existence, the Canadian Reformed Churches were concerned and occupied with the matter of the Forms. The Synod of Homewood, 1954, appointed a committee to look into the question which English Version of the doctrinal and liturgical Forms should be used in the Churches.

In approaching the matter in this way, the Canadian Reformed Churches recognized that liturgy was a matter of the Churches together and continued the line of the Reformation in looking for fully responsible and suited Forms for the worship service. It was a continuation, because no new forms were sought, not even a revision, only an adequate translation.

The matter of the forms was later included in the preparations for the BOOK OF PRAISE and dealt with on subsequent Canadian Synods. Also in our churches the matter of liturgy was deemed important and crucial.

CONCLUSION

I hope that this historical survey has given you some insight into the importance of our Liturgical Forms. It does show that our present forms are truly products of the Reformation, especially the Swiss Reformation (under Zwingli, Calvin and Farel) and that our forms have been compiled from various existing forms (Geneva, Strassbourg, London and Heidelberg). Our forms are, therefore, a rich heritage and may be called ECUMENICALLY Reformed. Although being finalized and adopted at a Dutch Synod (Dordrecht, 1618-1619) our forms certainly are "European" in origin and international in significance.

We also note that our liturgical forms are the products of much work and intensive study of the Scriptures. Not a BYproduct, but a foremost fruit of the Reformation. The Lord led His Church back into the Scriptures so that the Church-service would again become a "meeting between the Lord and His people" (A. Kuyper, *Onze Eredienst*, page 21 ff.). Every Sunday we reap the fruits of this Reformation.

CL. STAM

INTERNATIONAL — Continued.

Synod of the Reformed Church of America will consider several theological studies when it meets this summer. The most important one for the church will be "Baptized Non-Communicants and the Celebration of the Lord's Supper." Documented with Scriptural quotations and arguments from the Reformed tradition, the paper proposes that baptized children be allowed to partake of the elements when the Lord's Supper is celebrated. The proposal will be submitted for a year of study and revision, and a final decision will be taken in 1978 (RES). For background information, see *Clarion*, Volume 25, November 13, 1976, Comment "Children."

C.I.S.

Capital Calling

It sounds more like a radio call from Ottawa, but it is meant as a person-to-person call, showing appreciation to all who spent some or all of their summer vacation in Ottawa.

At the same time it is an invitation to come to the Capital to those who plan to spend their vacation away from home.

It is very encouraging for the Congregation of Ottawa to find more visiting brothers and sisters than there are members of the Congregation.

With the summer coming up, we would like to have you visit the beautiful camping sites around Ottawa, and see several points of interest within a day's travel.

Ottawa being situated in a valley, you can get a full view of the city!

Then there is the guided tour through the Parliament Buildings, boat and bus tours, museums and galleries.

For those who like to spend their time in a more relaxing way there is fishing, boating, swimming, water skiing, and nature trails. Ottawa is a beautiful city!

So, spend some of your leisure time here.

Our worship services are held in the Ottawa Christian School library on 3191 Benjamin Avenue, at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Come as you are and someone will introduce you after the services, or call:

W. Scheper — (613) 825-2403

C. Torenvliet — (613) 832-2004

The Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
CONGREGATION OF OTTAWA

*The Offerings and Their Place in the Church of God and the Manner in Which They are to be Made **

It was certainly not one of my brightest moments when I took upon myself the task which the previous conference was so eager to lay upon my shoulders to speak on the topic which I mentioned as the title of this introduction. And I must add to that the remark that, after that first not-so-bright moment, not many brighter ones followed. I have not been able to find much literature on that topic which would help us to make progress on the way of understanding the offerings and their character, their place in the church of God, and the manner in which they are to be made. What I have been able to find is, for by far the largest part, either a very pragmatic treatment of the topic, in the sense of: "How to make a tithing Church" or "How to raise funds for the work of the Church," or a collection of statements without further proof. If there is a thorough treatment of the above topic, then I have not been able to find it in the libraries which I consulted. Insofar as the writers whom I consulted tried to base the use of collections, e.g. on the Word of God, they content themselves with making some statements which sound very Biblical, but which are made without adducing proof that their conclusions and statements are indeed backed by the places from Scripture which they quote and use for their theories.

I shall quote you some of those statements in proof for what I judge them to be: just statements, perhaps useful, perhaps true, but baseless. It will not surprise you that the statement of the one sometimes flatly contradicts the statement of the other, and they both deem themselves to be in the line of the Scriptures.

In an article entitled "Now Concerning the Collection" in *The Outlook* of August of last year we read the statement, "The collection has a definite role to play in worship." But when we ask for proof, we cannot find it at all in that same article. Similarly the thesis is put "There is a need for collections like this," but we look in vain for the substantiation of that statement.

The last-quoted statement was

made in connection with the collection which the Apostle Paul took up for the Church at Jerusalem. We read about that in I Corinthians 16. It is stressed that what the Apostle gathered is called by the same name as the religious ingatherings which took place more often in the ancient world: ingatherings for the gods, for the temples, and therefore ingatherings of a religious nature. Thus, the commentators tell us, we are not to forget that what the Apostle Paul brought together for the Jerusalem Church was not just a humanitarian undertaking, but was the endeavour to show the unity of the Church, the true love towards the neighbour, an endeavour which was to be seen in the light of II Corinthians 8 and 9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that by His poverty you might become rich."

In the same article I find another statement which is put without further proof. It reads, "Because we're new men, we have a new view of money, too. The offering is a working out of this new view of money and of our possessions. We give because we're born again. We are concerned for the needs of the saints." It does occur to me that here we find a rather anthropocentric view. Then I would rather go along with another statement in the same article — and that will be the last quotation from it for the time being — which reads as follows, "Every time that offering plate goes down the row and you put money into it, you are acting in a special way as a priest before the Lord. The offering is a way of ministering." Anyway, that is much better than the manner in which many people view the collection. That writer describes those people's views as follows: "It is just a time for an organ interlude, when the deacons walk up the aisle with plates for offering." It is fact that many people do not pay much attention to the collection and sit there mostly talking or doing other things. I recall that for some time in the New Westminster Church the organist was

requested not to play during the collection so that the collection could be taken in silence. It was an eerie silence during the first few Sundays, for little talking was going on and the Congregation was more aware of it that a collection was being taken. Whether it did serve the purpose, that is something about which I have not formed a judgment.

I have been using the word collection a few times. Our title speaks of "offerings," which is a much wider concept.

Baker's Dictionary of Practical Theology states, "The word collection suggests passing the hat and receiving a token gift from unconcerned donors. The word offering suggests a sacrifice, costing the donor something to give. It is symbolic of the offering of ourselves to God" (p. 409). That may be so nowadays; originally, however, the word collection meant nothing else than something which has been brought together. The Dutch is a literal translation of the Latin original with its "samenlezen."

And, on the other hand, the word "offering" does not need to involve more than to present, to bring something to someone to present it to him. The word "offering" does not necessarily include that what is being brought is a sacrifice.

When we speak of offerings and their place in the Church of God, and when we wish to gather from the Scriptures what we wish to know about this topic, then we turn our attention in the first place to the Old Testament. Can we get any light from there as to the question which occupies our thoughts right now?

There are some among us who appeal to the Old Testament requirement of bringing the tithes and who claim that that command has remained in force. Thus, faithfully, they give the tenth part of what they earn for the maintenance of the ministry of the Gospel and for the causes which directly belong to the task of the Church.

We shall let the question rest for the moment whether they are right in assuming that the requirement of bringing the tithes for the Lord is still valid for the Church today. The question is not whether we cannot learn from that requirement. We certainly can, and even should, for we confess that the shadows may have been fulfilled by Christ, but that does not mean at all that we have nothing to do with them. The substance remains with us,

we say in Article 25 of the Belgic Confession. But we'll come back to that later on.

The first question which we have to answer is whether it is indeed correct to assume that the Israelites, the Old Testament Church, had to bring the tithes, ten percent of their earnings.

There are portions in the Old Testament which give the impression that Israel had to bring not just ten percent, but that the total of their offerings amounted to no less than thirty or, according to some, even fifty percent of their income from the field, from their flocks, etcetera.

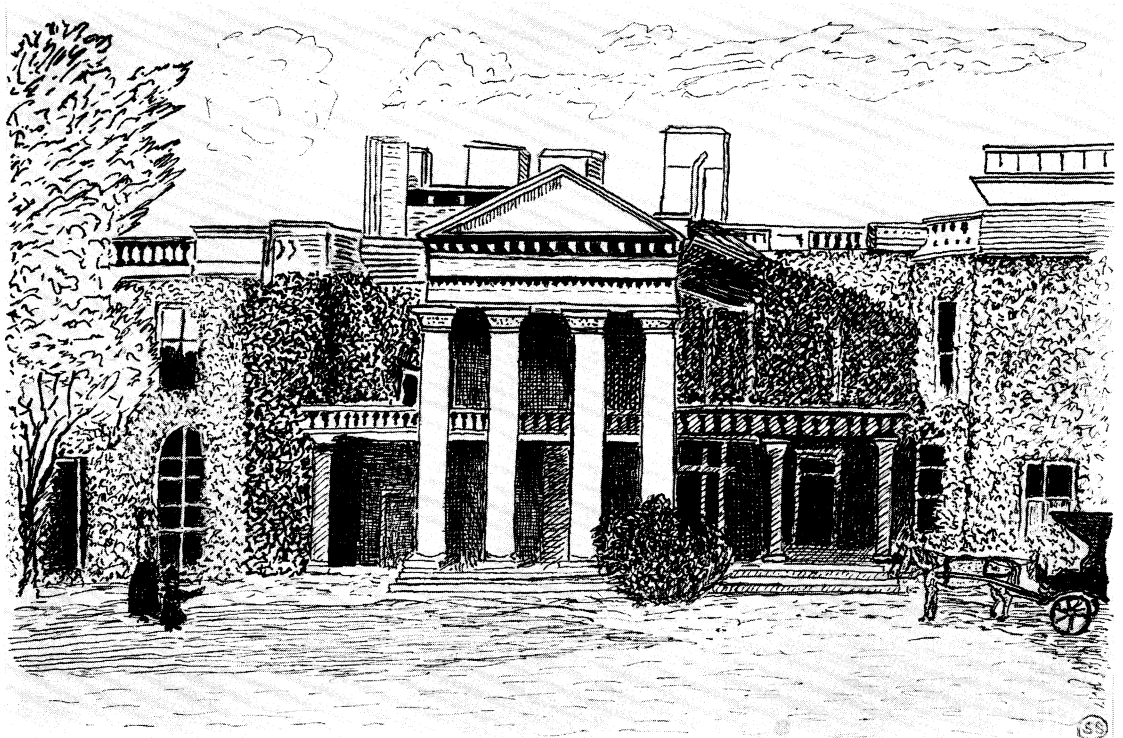
In a book well over seventy years old we read, "We are accustomed to think 'a tithe' was their duty, when it is established beyond question they were required to pay two tithes or one-fifth of their entire income. Some assert, and it cannot be successfully denied, that a third tithe was apportioned, if not yearly, at least every third year. Besides, the first fruits set aside for the Lord's service are estimated by Jewish writers at one-sixtieth of the entire products of the fields and flocks (Ex. 23:19). There was also the redemption money of the first born (Numbers 18:15, 18), the half shekel tax (Ex. 30:11-15), and the large number of animals required for temple service. Alexander Campbell says of

this matter: 'I have been calculating the amount of property necessary to support the Jewish religion, and have elaborated this result: that one half of the time and money, a full moiety of the whole resources of the nation was exacted.' And this agrees with many other writers, who have reached the same conclusion."

Others do not come that high. In the previously mentioned *Baker's Dictionary of Practical Theology*, p. 335, we read the following: "In addition to the tithes given for the religious festivals in Jerusalem such as Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles, another tithe was given for the poor, and a third tithe was required for support of the sons of Levi who officiated in the temple at Jerusalem. This is the rabbinical system which is reported in the Book of Tobit at a time when the tributary tithe for the priests was collected annually; the festive tithe was due in the first, second and fourth year, and the eleemosynary tithe in the third and sixth years, 1:7-8. No tithe was collected in the seventh year since the land lay fallow. Hence although there were three tithes, only two were collected annually."

The impression which I have received from the lectures of the late Prof. B. Holwerda, which have appeared in print, is that he sees only one tithe, ten percent indeed, which was received by another beneficiary every

third year. If I understand him well, he considers the mentioning of the tithes every time in another context only as a different approach, not as three different kinds of tithe. You can look at it, he argues, from different angles, for the tithes were shared. First there was the one who brought them and who was allowed to use some of what he brought to be happy at the place where he offered his part. Then there were the Levites who received the rest, and thus the tithes can be considered from the viewpoint of the Levites and it can be said that they were brought to support that tribe which had no separate inheritance among Israel. And then in the third year the tithes were to be stored in the village itself, to be used exclusively for the support of the needy. However, that various aspects and different beneficiaries of the tithes are mentioned does not give us the right to speak of three different kinds of tithes. And when it is said that the one who brought the tithes was allowed to enjoy them before the countenance of the Lord, we should not think that he was allowed to finish his offering off. How would he even be able to! Holwerda makes the practical remark that the God Who taught His people to use His good gifts well most certainly will not have commanded them to go through ten percent of their annual crop in just one day! Assuming even



Dundurn Castle,
built in 1832-85
— as redrawn by
S. Sipkema,
Burlington, Ontario.

that such would have been possible!

The conclusion to which I came (but I must admit that it was not a very thorough study; that would have required many months!) is that Israel was required to bring just the tithes and not two or three times the tithes, either in one year or alternately as suggested above.

We should not think, on the other hand, that that was all the children of Israel had to bring. There were also the firstborn of their cattle and the redeeming of the firstborn among their children. And then there were the free-will offerings.

It appears from the Old Testament that the Lord insisted on a faithful observance of this commandment. In case an Israelite was living too far from the holy place where he had to bring his tithes, he was allowed to sell it in the place of his residence, take the money to the holy place, buy there what he needed to celebrate before the Lord and, of course, the rest was given to the Levites for their sustenance. And when, in the third year, the tithes were not to be brought to the holy place but were to be stored in the village itself to be given to the needy, the Israelite had to appear before the Lord and had to declare solemnly before the Lord: "I have removed the sacred portion out of my house, and moreover, I have given it to the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all the commandment which Thou hast commanded me; I have not transgressed any of Thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them; I have not eaten of the tithe while I was mourning, or removed any of it while I was unclean, or offered any of it to the dead; I have obeyed the voice of the Lord my God, I have done according to all that Thou hast commanded me."

It will not be necessary to remind you of the words which Malachi spoke to the people when they appeared unfaithful in bringing the tithe into the storehouse of the Lord. We are convinced of it that the Lord demanded them of His Old Testament Church.

What many among us are not convinced of is whether they are also obligatory in the New Testament Church. As I have already said, there are not a few among us who adhere to those requirements and keep them.

Our Saviour mentions the tithes when He speaks of the pharisee and the publican, and when, in the parable, the pharisee assures God that he gives

tithes of everything that comes in. And further the Lord Jesus speaks of the painstaking accuracy of the pharisees and the scribes in tithing even the herbs that grew in their small gardens. But what we look for in vain is any indication in the New Testament that the New Testament Church is still under the obligation to keep that commandment.

In defense of the statement that the tithes are still required of the New Testament Church, it is then sometimes pointed out that, when speaking His "Woe" to the pharisees and scribes because of their wickedness and chiding them for their preciseness in tithing even the herbs, the Saviour said, "These you ought to have done without neglecting the others."

And another place from Scripture, which is quoted to prove that we are still obliged to bring the tithes, is what we find in Matthew 23:2: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat: so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do." Look, it is said, does not the Saviour Himself tell His New Testament Church to do what the pharisees and scribes tell them to do, since they are sitting in the seat of Moses?

However, we are to bear in mind that, basically, the Old Testament dispensation was still there when the Saviour spoke those words. Did not the Lord Jesus Himself obey all the Old Testament provisions until the very last moment of His life on earth? Even in the very night in which He was betrayed, the Lord celebrated the pass-over with His disciples. For it was not yet finished. Thus it is understandable that the Saviour told His people that they should obey the commandments.

What we have to know and what we have to see proved is that, even after the Lord Jesus declared, "It is finished," those provisions were still binding on the New Testament Church. I am convinced that they are not, since the regulation of the tithes should be kept in its entirety if it is to be kept at all. But keeping that provision in its entirety would amount to a fulfilling of the Law of Moses which, in turn, would constitute a contempt of the work and the satisfaction of our Redeemer. We simply cannot lift out the simple sentence: "Bring the tithes into My storehouse" and neglect the whole context and all the arrangements which the Lord made in connection with that commandment.

Those whom I consulted for this

introduction agree that the New Testament does not give any direct or even indirect command that the tithes shall be given.

I shall give a few quotations.

"Although Paul comes from Judaism, and the Corinthian Church has its contingent of Jews, at no time does he propose the old Jewish system of tithing to the churches under his care. The only references to tithes found in the New Testament take us back into the Old Testament, or criticize the Pharisees at Christ's time. This is quite decisive for us" (Lenski).

"Early Church did not resort to the system of tithing for several centuries, even though support of the clergy was recognized from the beginning and alms were given to the poor" (*Baker's Dictionary*).

"At the time of Charlemagne the tithe became generally established for the bishop and clergy, for the poor, and for the support of church property" (*Baker's Dictionary*).

"It is apparent that the pages of the New Testament do not present anything like a comprehensive treatment of tithing" (*Baker's Dictionary*, p. 354).

However, after having read that statement, it is amazing to read immediately following, "Despite this, we can still say that tithing is integral to the New Testament. The relative silence may be understood from the tithe being assumed by Jesus, by Paul, and the other writers. The life and faith of the people to whom they were speaking included tithing. It was a regular practice, not needing to be established"!! (ibidem).

There are many practical advantages which can be mentioned in the case of tithing. It can be stated that tithing is a time-honoured practice. But when the question has to be answered whether the New Testament Church is still under that obligation, then I must agree with the following statement.

"Our Lord always sanctioned the law of tithing, saying, 'This ye ought to have done' but His sanction or reinforcement of the law while He is in the flesh cannot, in itself, be taken as evidence fixing this obligation upon us, for He was 'a minister of the circumcision,' and His earthly ministry was confined to the Jews" (Lampkin).

(To be continued.)

W.W.J. VANOENE

Introduction delivered at the Office-bearers' Conference on October 30, 1976.

The Reformed Practice Regarding Attestations *

INTRODUCTION

The undersigned, G. vanDooren, having been commissioned by Classis of December 1967 to provide some guidelines with respect to attestations, has found it necessary to provide Classis with a report in the Dutch language, since practically all references (to Synod decisions and some quotes from church polity authorities) are obtained from Dutch sources. Anyone who has attempted to translate these will know from experience that it is very difficult, and sometimes practically impossible, to translate Synod decisions in such a way that the original meaning does not suffer, since often they are written in a difficult style.

Furthermore, the undersigned has requested to have this report duplicated into sufficient number of copies, so that each elder may receive one. This will ensure easier discussion of this report by the consistories.

Finally, he has tried to compose some conclusions or recommendations that can easily be translated into our own language.

Although the matter of attestations appears to be a "small matter," when given closer scrutiny and thought, it becomes apparent that a great deal is involved. Therefore, we were glad with the classical assignment, so that also in this we may preserve (or re-establish) the pure Reformed style. (N.B. Dates refer to a Synod of that particular year; details are omitted. See Dr. F.L. Bos: *De Orde der Kerk.*)

1. NAME

Early Synods showed that to them the "attestation" was not a formal matter, one to be handled by a kind of church board. Synod 1578 says: "Letters of testimony . . . written in the consistory" (if for some reason — lack of time? — this is not possible, then "by ministers of the Word with advice of some elders"). Another (Regional) Synod in 1578 speaks of "if someone desires a testimony from his congregation . . . regarding his walk." Synod 1581 therefore speaks of "attestation and/or testimony," and 1587 warns against misuse "by careless issuance" of such an attestation.

"An attestation is not a written

notice of departure but an ecclesiastical testimony, in which the consistory gives a written declaration to a member that moves from one place to another . . ." (1930).

From the above it is clear that an attestation is to be more than a printed form with just names, address and dates to be filled in. This leads us to:

2. FORMULATION

Synod 1578: "that the pious and godly are recommended with these words: that they have conducted themselves in the church of God in a Christian way, without giving occasion for complaint of offence," therefore "those that cannot meet this requirement" cannot receive such a declaration. (N.B. Originally one spoke only of "walk" ["wandel"] and later on the term "doctrine and conduct" ["leer en leven"] — both parts of the "walk," v.D.).

The consistory that receives an attestation knows quite a bit already when such a declaration does not appear on an attestation. Synod 1578: "when this formula is not used as such, one shall not have the best opinion of him."

Of course, a consistory must proceed here with caution and wisdom. Synod 1599: "should words of complaint also be included, etc.? It is decided that each church shall issue a testimony, of (departing) members, in truth and according to circumstances." And further 1877: "The freedom of each consistory to use discretion in issuing attestations must not be curtailed. A particular *formula* is not recommended(!) but it is recommended that the consistory, when issuing an attestation, keep the ninth commandment in mind." ("That I bear false witness against no man . . . ; and that, as much as I am able, I defend and promote the honour and reputation of my neighbour." Catechism, Answer 112. Compare also: "prevent his hurt as much as in us lies," Catechism, Answer 107; added by v.D.) This does not exclude that it must be "a clear testimony" (1840).

In a report to Synod 1946 (Groningen): "Your committee is of the opinion that uniform attestations are not desirable, since an attestation is

more than a certificate of baptism or of membership, and therefore there will be variety." When a member of the congregation moves away, then why should the one consistory not inform the other consistory whether this member was an office-bearer, or has a special feeling for the work of mission or home mission, or for the work among the youth and has indeed received special gifts for these, etc.; or, when a member that is moving away is a weak brother or sister that needs special care by the consistory? Synod 1946 therefore decided *not* to recommend a regulation attestation to the consistories. (N.B. The undersigned adds a "hint" to this: to expressly ask new members, at "the welcome visit," which special talents they wish to dedicate, out of thankfulness, to the upbuilding of God's Church and Kingdom. Once, on a journey, he here and there picked up cards containing a list that is in accordance with that mentioned in 1946. On these the new member himself can indicate in which particular sphere he wants to offer his God-given talent: "Commitment of talents.")

Naturally the above includes that

Continued on page 204.

Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches

The Faculty of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches invites students who plan to study at the Theological College and who obtain their B.A. degree or its equivalent this spring, or who are eligible for admission via the admission examination, to contact the Registrar with a view to the requirements for application.

Students who graduate from Highschool and are considering to study theology after completion of an undergraduate program are also requested to contact the Registrar to be advised as to the B.A. program which forms the best preparation for their future study at the College.

The Registrar,
L. SELLES
374 Queen St. S.,
Hamilton, Ont. L8P 3T8.

news medley

It appears that we are in the time of the wedding anniversaries. Last time we could mention and congratulate a few couples, this time we can do the same. The only difference is that this time I cannot tell you much about the brethren and sisters whom it concerns.

Starting at the top, we go to Burlington, where brother and sister U. Kampen celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on May 13th. Some time ago we would have had to go to Toronto, for that's where they used to live and that's where I met them first. Brother Kampen was an elder when we met first, and some of the sons of this couple have served or are serving in that same capacity. Residing in the Maranatha Home in Burlington at present, they may enjoy the company of the Family, and they also have the opportunity to listen in to the services of the Ebenezer Church whenever they are prevented from attending in the Church building.

For the first forty-fifth wedding anniversary we stay in Burlington. On May 6th, brother and sister A.J. Van Sydenborgh celebrated that happy event. I am sorry that I cannot tell you any more about them.

Another forty-fifth wedding anniversary is to be celebrated, this time by brother and sister J. Bos in Edmonton. If I am not mistaken, sister Bos took an active part in the work of the Korea Committee and was a faithful correspondent until her "retirement" as such.

A fortieth wedding anniversary will be celebrated on May 28th by brother and sister K. Doekes in Orangeville. Of them I cannot tell you much either. It would, of course, cost little trouble to learn something about their forty years in marriage, for Orangeville is not very far from Fergus; but then I would pass on hearsay and that is something I do not do. Let me just tell you that they occupy a place of honour in the midst of the Congregation and that they certainly will experience the blessing of the communion of saints.

I have no doubts that the latter will be the case with all the above mentioned couples. The larger part of their married life they will have spent here in Canada, and the bonds which have been established during the first years of their life here will bear fruit in these days, too.

Now that the years are multiplied and the days increase, there is also a greater possibility that life becomes lonelier, when old friends and acquaintances are taken away by the Lord. We wish our brethren and sisters a happy time in the evening of life and may the words of Psalm 92 be fulfilled in them: in old age they are green and bear rich fruit.

The other time I mentioned something about Hamilton and its plans to send out a missionary. This time we can tell you the same thing about Ebenezer Burlington. The bulletin informs us that the Mission Committee had a meeting with the "Toronto Mission Board to discuss the mandate to become a missionary church. The Church of Toronto expressed her thankfulness for the fact that our congregation is considering to become a missionary church. As a result of these discussions the Committee recommends to the Consistory that we terminate our support to Toronto as of January 1978 and become a missionary church. As a

mission field the committee is at this moment concentrating on New Guinea, as there is still a lot of work to be done there."

The above is still only a proposal made by the Mission Committee. The Consistory, if I understood it well, did not make any definite decision as yet. That would not be possible either, for I think that it is also a matter of the Churches that cooperate with Toronto. If, as a result of eventual "secession" by Ebenezer Burlington and (as was suggested) Rehoboth Burlington, the burdens should be increased for the other Churches, then they would have a say in it, too. I do not say that they would not be able to bear an increased financial burden. In all likelihood they would be able perhaps even to double their present contribution. But the point is that such an increased burden could not be laid upon them without their consent. It will also be with a view to that that the Consistory has not yet made any definite decisions.

I used the names "Ebenezer Burlington" and "Rehoboth Burlington." The Rev. Cl. Stam would criticize me for that. In the bulletin of Rehoboth Church he states that the name of the Church officially is "Canadian Reformed Church of Burlington-West." "Rehoboth," he says, is only the name of the building, not of the Church. Thus I have been committing an offense every time I used the name "Rehoboth Church" for the Church instead of for the Church building. I find it much handier and clearer to use that "name" than to speak of "The Church at Burlington-West" and "The Church at Burlington-East." Should it, in that case, not rather be "East Burlington" and "West Burlington"? I think that I shall stick to my way of telling our readers which Church I mean. It should be clear that by "Church" the people are meant; when I refer to the building, I always use the designation "Church building."

How did the Rev. Cl. Stam come to criticize that designation? He was making some remarks about a little folder, an "introductory brochure" which is available in Rehoboth Burlington (I beg your pardon) to be distributed to others, e.g., in the neighbourhood. Therein the Church gives some summary information about itself, to introduce itself to the neighbours. "It also contains an illustration by sr. Sjanie Bethlehem, based on Psalm 122, 'I was glad when they said to me: Let us go to the house of the Lord,' aptly indicating that the purpose of evangelism is to bring people to the CHURCH of the Lord."

I mention that part of his remarks expressly, because this sister has also put her gifts at the disposal of **Clarion**. In previous issues we did enjoy drawings and "cartoons" from her hand. Whoever knows a little about the prices which "commercial artists" can command for their products will appreciate it the more that this sister has given herself wholeheartedly to the task of providing our readers with illustrations. Remember, e.g., the question about the belly-button?

Our Medley must be much sought after for various reasons! Its help is even solicited more than once. The newest effort is made by the Rev. Cl. Stam, when he writes at the end of a piece: "Perhaps this ad could be 'meddled' on, then Meine will certainly find someone."

What is the case?

A while ago I received a request from a young person in The Netherlands with the following contents generally:

'Canada is a country which appeals to me greatly, and

English is a universal language. Would you be so kind as to place an ad in your bulletin requesting a pen-pal for me?

Here goes: I am looking for a pen friend. My hobbies are politics, organ-playing, and studying nature.

Meine Jansma
de Petten 8,

Marum, The Netherlands.

Meine Jansma is 18 years of age, and his list of hobbies certainly is intriguing. Anyone interested? Perhaps this ad could be . . . (and so on, but you know that already).

Well, then, I have complied with the subtle suggestion but wish to add a word of caution. Usually I don't take hints but ignore them on purpose. This, however, was more or less an open invitation and who can refuse that? Now the word of warning: Let no girl that is not unshakable in her decision to stay here in Canada take the pen to meet the challenge!! The only reason why I decided to insert the "advertisement" is that this young man confesses that Canada is a country which appeals to him greatly. If that had not been the case, I would never have thought of complying with the suggestion to "meddley on" this ad. But then, it is always hard to refuse a colleague's modest request! Before we leave Ontario we mention that in Chatham, too, they used the presence of Dr. C. Trimp by having him deliver a speech.

Jumping all the way to Alberta, we express the wish that the Rev. R.F. Boersema may have found another roof over his head and over the heads of his family. The house in which they were living was sold and they had to move out by April 30th. I do not know whether this **Clarion** will contain a change of address, but it might be better, if you have any mail for him, to send it to the address of the clerk of the Church. Then you can be certain that it will reach its destination.

I was most happy with the quotation which I found in Edmonton's bulletin and which I pass on here to our readers. Over against the words spoken "against" the Genevan tunes, it might be good to listen to the following.

In another bulletin I found a Christian Reformed voice about our Book of Praise which I like to pass on to you. Originally it was written by Rev. J. Kuntz in **De Wachter**, and I translate it from the Dutch: 'Here an important achievement has been reached to come out with a Calvinistic Psalter in which also the beautiful Genevan tunes are preserved The powerful (Dutch: *gespiede*) language of many psalms and hymns sounds much better in the ears than the sweet words of many a song in our Psalter Hymnal.

Those Genevan tunes do not appear to be too bad after all, do they? Yes, the one who wrote the words which the Rev. D. DeJong translated is, no doubt, another "Dutchie," but one who can judge from experience. We are thankful for his support.

And that is, then, this time almost the end of our medley. Not many bulletins have been received this time and in many of the ones which I did receive there was not much that should be mentioned.

Yes, one more thing which I found (how's that possible?) in the Fergus/Guelph bulletin: The School Society bid on a school building for sale in Guelph and the Lord made it so that the offer was accepted. It is the intention to expand the present eight Grades with Grades IX and X. Six

40th Wedding Anniversary



John and Willemina Nobels (nee Oostdijk) celebrated their 40th Wedding Anniversary on May 20th, 1977.

Mr. Nobels was born in Rozenburg (ZH), on November 30, 1913, and Mrs. Nobels was born in Terneuzen (Z), on July 17, 1913.

They were married on May 20, 1937. They came to Canada with their 4 children in 1953 and lived in Burlington until 1975.

Brother and sister Nobels are members of the Church at Brampton. Their address is Box 247, Wasaga Beach, Ontario.

Grades will then be taught in the present building and four Grades will be taught in Guelph. Three-fourths of the purchase price had been pledged and efforts are being made to bring the whole amount of some \$80,000. — together before the money has to be put on the table. The lower the amount that has to be borrowed the better for future budgets.

Herewith we conclude our chat.

I am looking forward to seeing you two weeks from now.

As always, Yours,
vO

PSALM 112

1. O praise the LORD, come and adore him.
Blest he who walks in fear before him,
Who takes delight in his commandments.
Blest shall be also his descend-ants;
They shall be might-y in the na-tion,
For blest shall be their gen-er-a-tion.

mission news

Newsletter 17

Dear brothers and sisters,

Last month we already told you something about Gauwop, the new village N.W. of Manggelum. In February we had a conversation with the kepala kampung (head of the village) from Gauwop, who was here temporarily. After his return to Gauwop he will try to get more people to stay permanently in the village, so that a start can be made on a church/school building, as well as a house for the future guru. On February 12th, I received the first report regarding the situation in Gauwop from our Sawagit teacher-evangelist, Abner Saikembi. He had been to Gauwop during the holiday week, and four times he had spoken to the people about God's Kingdom. Also in the past year he has done this a few times. It is good initiative from this young guru. On February 14th, we made our first visit to Gauwop (Manggelum to Gauwop = 1 1/2 hours). Karet (a Christian from Kawagit) and Saul Domuno (possibly a future guru-evangelist for Gauwop) also went along. The Tsaw River, or West Digul, is much shallower than the East Digul, and so we had to find our way between the gravel banks. Finally we saw Gauwop, high above the river. From the village you have a magnificent view of the ranges. There were not too many people in the village: 12 women, 26 men, and about 10 children. No work on a church/school building had been done yet, due to sickness of the kepala kampung. Together we discussed the possibility of erecting such a building, and there appeared to be a general willingness to help. First, however, a feast was to be held, but after that the people would make a start with it; also a place for the future guru would be made. Home again, Karet told me that one of the reasons that there are not too many people in the village is the following: Every time a family with a daughter of marriageable age comes into the village, one of two prominent men in the village wants to marry her. This has scared the people somewhat, and, according to Karet, several families are therefore staying in the jungle. He has spoken to these two men about this,

and probably I'll do this, too, once there is a good opportunity for it. Right now we're waiting for some more news from Gauwop people regarding the present situation, and we hope that this results in our being able to make more definite plans for a teacher-evangelist for them.

I also visited Heyokubun in February and sat in on the lessons. Several things were discussed, also some improvements on the interior of the new school building. At the end of January most of the people had made the move to the new village. During my visit, 10 of the 22 houses present were finished; the rest were still being worked on. Further there are still many trees, branches, etc., lying all over in the village, which means that you have to move like a kangaroo when you walk through it. In due time this will be cleared as well.

In the beginning of February, our guru-evangelist, Yohan Bakai, and his family were very low on food. The people of the village just don't bring them anything, although when the guru-evangelist first came they promised they would supply him and his family with food. We solved the problem partly, for right now he receives some food from the gifts that the people bring to the church on Sunday, and this brings us to our next news item.

On February 17th, we had a meet-

ing with the "congregation" regarding gifts (food or money) to be brought to church on Sunday. You might recall we had the first (introductory) meeting about this back in October 1976. A carpenter from Kouh, who is leading the plank sawing program here in the jungle, was very willing to make a little box for the money and a large one (60 x 70 x 30 cm) for food items. At this second meeting the meaning of gifts was explained and also what they would be used for. We need the food for the clinic, so that we can help some kids who aren't in very good shape. Also, sometimes people from other villages come for treatment and end up leaving before they are well, because they have no more food. So we explained that the food is mainly for the poly-clinic and further for people that need it. The result on Sunday the 20th was better than we expected. Money-wise there wasn't very much, but not much money is around either, due to the fact that no work for the mission has been done lately by the people here. The food box was filled to the top, however, and still others had to put their gifts under the box. Although we realize these are literally "first fruits," we were very pleased with this first result. On the Sundays following the 20th, the box has been filled every time, and we hope it can stay this way.

Suddenly, on the 9th of February, we heard Miss Greet Euwema and Miss Janet Velvis on the radio. They were back again in Irian Jaya. In the meantime Janet has returned to Kawagit. She seems to have quite some torn ligaments and will have to do therapy each day for the time being. It is a painful story, but slowly she's get-



"Sago larvae (alive) are added to the sago." (Laying on banana-leaves.)

ting into her work again. Pray that she soon may be able to do her work as before.

We also had a government visitation in Manggelum this month. It resulted in a quick finish of the house of the guru-evangelist. Right now the people are energetically working on a building for the upcoming national election (May 2nd). I had some good discussions with the government officials while they were here. After three days they left again for Kouh.

On February 18th, the helicopter landed in Manggelum for the first time. The landing-pad was given the "O.K." by the pilot, so that was nice to know. On the 24th he came again. Unfortunately (due to reasons too lengthy to explain here), he will not be able to serve the ZGK area again for the time being.

And that sums it up for this month.

Kind greetings,
BRAM and JOANNE VEGTER



"Kohtop, his wife Ablanop, and child, inside their home."
(Read Christmas-edition of *Clarion* — "Mission News.")

Letters-to-the-Editor

Dear Sir:

For a long time I have been very unhappy about a certain type and style of criticism which has frequently appeared in *Clarion*, but I could not think of a way to express my criticism without committing the same offense, and therefore I did not write. However, L. Van Zandwijk's letter in the April 23 issue of *Clarion* was the last straw.

We seem to have become almost paranoiac about the appearance of "Dutchisms" and Dutch syntax in the English prose of some of our publications, and have become so unkind in our criticism of such offenses.

Having studied the English language and how to teach it for six years beyond highschool, and having taught it for over ten years, I am probably as knowledgeable in the subject as any one of us, and am as concerned as anyone that it should be well taught to our children. However, it does not bother me in the least that people who have received all or most of their education in the Dutch language should use occasional, or even frequent "Dutchisms" or grammar errors in the articles they write for *Clarion* or other Canadian Reformed periodicals. I can only admire them for their effort and willingness to write in English. I cannot imagine myself doing half as well if I

were to write articles in French, a language which I have also studied for years.

At the same time, while I would urge every student in our schools to read *Clarion*, I would certainly not recommend it as a model of good English prose. But then, that is not the purpose of *Clarion* or of our local church bulletins.

I am made particularly unhappy by the fact that those who criticize are often not really qualified to do so, and use such unkind terms (and such incorrect sentences). What is English that is "at least bearable" to quote from Mr. Van Zandwijk's letter? I find most of the English in *Clarion* quite bearable because it is generally understandable and well-meant. It is so easy to become "nit-picky," and that is not really constructive. If I were commenting on a sentence such as the one in which the word "fore-study" was used, I would be more concerned about the use of that word, which is a "Dutchism" if I ever heard one, than about the dangling participle, which is an error frequently committed by even reasonably educated English Canadians.

I also find it embarrassing when the editor of "News Medley" criticizes a grammar or diction error encounter-

ed in a church bulletin, by writing a sentence in which another or similar error is committed. Since Rev. Van Oene freely admits his own deficiencies in English, it would be wiser and certainly kinder, if he refrained from such comments.

While I definitely agree with Rev. Van Oene that it is inexcusable that a book such as *Marriage in Honour* should have as many language errors as it does, I must regretfully inform him that it does not have all the errors he pointed out, and would have more if some of his corrections were made.

I believe, as he does, that we have the right to expect a high standard of English in a book published by a competent publisher, and intended to be a more permanent part of our libraries. But I am afraid that if we become too critical of the honest efforts of amateur writers, they will simply stop writing and we would all be the losers.

It would be ideal if all our publications could have language-competent editors with lots of time to do a thorough job. But since they do not, let us have a moratorium on public fault-finding, shall we? There are so many more important things. And when we really must criticize, let us be a little kinder, so that we do not corner our opposition and make him overreact defensively.

Yours sincerely,
(Mrs.) JULIE LINDHOUT

REFORMED PRACTICE — Cont'd.

the information on an attestation is to be as complete as possible:

Synod 1943-45: “. . . that, when issuing an attestation, all information be included that will serve to maintain a proper church register, such as name — in the case of a baptism attestation also the names of the parents — date of birth, date of baptism, date of public profession of faith, date of solemnization of marriage, correct address, and that this practice be maintained as strictly and as faithfully as possible.”

According to the report, more was required: “to mention when and from which congregation the member in question arrived into the congregation from which he is now departing.” And possibly more can be added; mentioning of the names of parents, also of communicant members, since there are names which sound alike and misunderstanding in the church register in this way is avoided.

In this context we feel the following remark has importance: “and, because an accurate church register has value in the event the register of the civil authorities should fall in disorder.” We fully agree with this and believe that this is of even greater importance in Canada than in The Netherlands. (See the section regarding the issuing of baptism certificates later in this report.)

3. CERTIFICATION

It is noticeable that many ecclesiastical assemblies have expressly determined that an attestation must be certified by *two* signatures. For example: “henceforth no attestations shall be accepted as valid except those legally and properly formulated as explained before (i.e.: with prior approval by the consistory, using the seal of the church, or where the church has no seal, signed by two)” (1587). Synod 1620 added to this: “or with the seal of the church and one signature.” The seal was more than a rubber stamp: a wax seal that guaranteed authenticity. Proof enough that the Reformed forefathers took the matter of attestations seriously!

FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION
This issue of *Clarion* was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on May 13, 1977.

4. ISSUING OF ATTESTATIONS

Reformed tradition does not allow “transfer of membership,” (a form sent from one consistory to the other (see Article 82, Church Order: “give along”). “. . . this way the idea is easily promoted that, when one is a member of one local church, one automatically is a member of another local church;

and the idea could easily creep in again that membership pertains not to local church, but to the denomination, which spreads over various places and of which the local churches are but local branches.” “Furthermore, through the personal presentation of the attestation the incoming member comes into a desirable contact with the office-bearers of the church” (1889).



God Is Gone Up

PSALM 47:8; ACTS 1:8-11



Refrain God is gone up with a shout,
The Lord with the sound of the trumpet. (2x)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. On the mount called Olivet,
Outside Jerusalem,
Jesus left His faithful men
As He was blessing them.</p> | <p>2. Even though a cloud hid Him
They stared up at the sky.
Then an angel said to them,
“Why do you gaze on high?”</p> |
|---|---|

Refrain

Refrain

3. “Jesus who was taken up
Comes back to you some day.
As He went so He'll return
To you in the same way.”

Refrain

S. VANDERPLOEG



"An attestation is not a written notice of departure" (1930).

Joh. Jansen, *Korte Verklaring der Kerkenordering*, page 353: "For joining the other church is always a *voluntary deed*." He, and also Rutgers, emphasize that "upon leaving he *ipso facto* ceases to be a member of the local church" (Rutgers, *Kerkelijke Adviezen*, II, 336). It follows that the Reformed people should be taught to request the attestation *on time*, (at least three weeks before the expected date of moving). Time must be allotted: (a) to write the attestation at the meeting of the consistory; (b) to hand the attestation to the departing member before his departure. (Regarding announcement see further in this report.) The question, "What to do in case the departing member *does not request* an attestation or testimony?" is important. This leads us (among other things) to the following:

5. NOTIFICATION TO ANOTHER CONSISTORY

Jansen is quite short about this: "When someone neglects to request his attestation, the consistory must bring this neglect to his attention; if he refuses to request it, the consistory may not force it upon him, neither may she send it to the other consistory without his request" (p. 353). And further, (very briefly!): "When he does request it but omits to present it, he thereby denies himself membership." However, he adds to this, "His baptism and confession of faith are not invalidated by this, but he does lose his rights connected with baptism and confession of faith."

Several Synods were somewhat more pastoral. Synod 1578: "The churches, from which they have departed, shall write to the church at the place of their destination that this church deal with them in a manner that will return them, if possible, to the communion." Synod 1600: "Some, in departing, become totally estranged from the church when arriving without attestation in places where they are not known, either because they did not request an attestation, or because they did not deserve it." (!!! a remarkable addition! This shows that the forefathers often considered an attestation: a *good* testimony. A bad member "did not deserve this." What the forefathers did in a case like this is not mentioned, v.D.) Synod 1600 continues: "therefore the Synod has judged it necessary that the ministers

shall take heed to this, and send information regarding their situation to the consistory in the place where they (now) live, in order that they may be contacted, admonished, and returned . . ."

In any case, several Synods (among others, 1889, 1896, 1905, 1914) strongly urged that, besides the attestations to the departing member, "a short notice" (1889) be immediately sent to the consistory in the new place "as soon as possible" (1896), "including, if possible, the correct address" (1905). Synod 1914 "urges strict ad-

herence to this decision of Synod." This is, therefore, not an attestation, but a notification. For this a printed form may be used; not, however, (according to the forefathers) for the attestation.

G. VANDOOREN

**Report to Classis Ontario North as adopted by Classis Ontario North, June 5th, 1968 and released for publication in English translation by Classis Ontario North of September 9, 1976.*

(Translated from Dutch to English by the Canadian Reformed Church at Brampton, Ontario, 1976.)

Books

H.J. Schilder, In Sion Is het Woord Nabij, "De Vuurbaak," Groningen, Fl. 19.90. Temporarily for members of "De Vuurbaak," Fl. 16.00.

I was so curious as to look first of all in the back of the book, the part in which the author gives account of all sorts of things. He writes about the necessity of having a theme and points (three of them) for the Congregation to remember the main line of the sermon; he speaks about the length of the sermon, the choice of text, the difference between texts taken from the historical books and those taken from the books of the prophets, etc. Via this "giving account" a lesson is given which contains many hints and directives for those who have to prepare sermons.

It is too bad that the present book — which contains the text of fifteen sermons — is written in Dutch, for now our "sermon readers" cannot benefit from those sermons unless they translate them, but that will be difficult if one wishes to retain the style, and that will be necessary to do justice to the author.

All sermons have one thing in common: almost without exception they deal with very short texts, sometimes even consisting of only part of a verse from Scripture. If one chooses a very short text, there is the danger that one either repeats oneself almost endlessly or brings all sorts of elements into the picture which only distantly have something to do with the main theme of the text and of the sermon. Professor Schilder avoided both dangers, although, in my opinion, he came very close to succumbing to the latter

danger in the first sermon (the one on Deuteronomy 30:14a).

Those who have to read a sermon in a Dutch service will do well to seriously consider using the sermons found in the above book. The Congregation will certainly be edified by them.

vO

J. Douma, *Kritische Aantekeningen bij de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, De Vuurbaak, Groningen, 1976, Fl. 16.50. Members "De Vuurbaak" Fl. 15.00.

The above-named brochure appeared as No. XIX in the series "Kamper Bijdragen." Its 91 pages contain a lecture delivered by Dr. J. Douma at a meeting of (Docents of) the Society for Calvinist Philosophy, held at Leusden on Friday, September 17, 1976. Many notes have been added to substantiate, clarify, and supplement statements made in this lecture. Dr. Douma gives an understandable, clear, and yet concise summary of the criticism which has been published (especially from within the Reformed Churches) in evaluation of "the Amsterdam Philosophy" as the "Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee" (the "Philosophy of the Cosmomic Idea") sometimes is called. No one should think, however, that Dr. Douma confines himself to summarizing and passing on the criticism uttered by others; he clearly states his own conviction and criticism.

I wished someone would translate this brochure into English — a difficult undertaking! — since it would be a very valuable aid for those who are not able to understand the Dutch language and who are very much concerned about the development within, and the influence of, the A.A.C.S.

Heartily recommended.

vO

Fraser Valley Office-bearers' Conference

Chilliwack, B.C., April 12, 1977.

Almost sixty ministers, elders and deacons came to Chilliwack on April 12th to attend the Fraser Valley Office-bearers' Conference. For the first time there were also some representatives present from the Bulkley Valley. Four delegates, representing the churches at Houston and Smithers at Classis Pacific on the following day, attended the conference that was held on the eve of Classis.

On behalf of the Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church at Chilliwack, the "convening church" for this office-bearers' conference, br. K.F. Huttema, president of the Consistory, called the meeting to order. After requesting the meeting to sing Psalm 89:1 and 7 and leading the brothers in prayer, he read I Thessalonians 1. Brother Huttema welcomed all to the meeting, in particular Rev. R.F. Boersema of Calgary, Alberta, our guest speaker for the evening. Besides the elders and deacons that attended, there were also a few ex-office-bearers present as guests. In his opening remarks, the chairman remarked that the first office-bearers' conference of the churches in the Fraser Valley was held eight years ago. It was meant to be an annual occasion but it turned out to be more like every other year.

Brother K.F. Huttema then introduced the speaker, Rev. R.F. Boersema, and gave him the floor for his address on: "Mission and Home Mission and the Relation Between the Two."

In his address Rev. Boersema stated first that he would have liked to see the title a little different. It should have been: "Foreign Mission and Home Mission and the Relation Between the Two." If the word "Foreign" is left out, it might imply that "Mission" is the real thing and "Home Mission" not as much so. The speaker asked: "In what sense is foreign mission and home mission the task of the consistory?" It is generally accepted in our churches that the foreign mission is the responsibility of the consistory but as far as the home mission is concerned, it is not generally accepted that it, too, is the responsibility of the consistories.

In his speech Rev. Boersema first took us back to the time of the great

reformation in Europe. Luther and Calvin both had great zeal in proclaiming the gospel. The Church at Geneva itself was established by home mission. John Calvin possibly trained as many as nine hundred men to preach the Gospel and the Church at Geneva sent them out to different parts of Europe. In 1556, two men were elected to serve in some small islands off the coast of Brazil.

"Today we need this same zeal for bringing this same Gospel to men. We will not get it from looking at history and therefore we will take a look at what the Scripture says about this," Rev. Boersema went on to say. He pointed out that God's choosing of the people of Israel was only one step in the salvation of the whole world. God said to Abraham: "In you, all the families of the earth will be blessed." Solomon, in his prayer for the dedication, also prays for the foreigners. We find it in many of the Psalms: "Praise the Lord all nations." The Lord reveals His perspective that cries out for fulfillment in the New Testament Church. God's message of salvation must be proclaimed to all. Matthew 28:18-21 is a passage that fulfills the whole scope of Scripture. Christ, after receiving all power and authority, sends out His disciples to all nations. Rev. Boersema then asked: "Does the command of Matthew 28 still apply to us today?" He answered the question by saying: Yes, for: 1. This is the age for the ingathering of the church. 2. The office of the apostles was this: they were the foundation-stone of the Church. The command to baptize was not just for the apostles; it also applies today. 3. The baptism with the Holy Spirit empowers and equips to preach the Word.

The text ends: "Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." The promise is for all times and so is the command itself. This is a very basic text; the apostles represent the Church of all future ages also. No distinction is made between bringing the Gospel to the heathen peoples and to those that have heard the Gospel before. The relation between foreign mission and home mission is in principle: One mandate, one mission. The command is given to the apostles as representa-

tives of the whole Church. This means that every believer has the commission in general, but every office-bearer in particular. Paul says to Timothy (II Timothy 4:5): "Do the work of an evangelist." Thus the official officers have the official calling to lead the congregation in evangelizing.

Rev. Boersema concluded his address with this: The church as a whole has received the mandate to bring the Gospel to all. We make distinction for different areas of responsibility but should not make a difference in priorities.

Foreign mission and home mission should be treated as being essentially all the same. There are no differences in principle.

Therefore, as a matter of principle, there should be no question whether we are doing the right thing in Brazil because these people do already have some knowledge of the Gospel.

There is no basis in Scripture for saying that home mission is the responsibility of the office of all believers and foreign mission that of the office-bearers.

The chairman thanks Rev. Boersema for his speech and adjourned the meeting for an intermission. The ladies then served coffee and tea with cake and cookies.

After the intermission the subject was given in discussion. The topic proved to be a controversial one, although Rev. Boersema's address was generally well received. Several questioners took issue with the statement that there are no real priorities in the preaching of the Gospel. They felt that the preaching of the Gospel to the congregation should always come first. Rev. Boersema replied that the Church should not have any priorities. The difference is: What is the pastor ordained for? He then has a priority to his congregation. Other questioners felt that Rev. Boersema's criticism of our Canadian Reformed Churches in our lack of missionary zeal was not justified, and that he should be more specific. The speaker, in his reply, pointed at the zeal in the time of the great reformation. He said that we can start by doing more in talking to our neighbours of the real need to turn to Christ and to repent from their sins.

It was also pointed out to Rev. Boersema that the form for the ordination of elders shows that it is a direct responsibility to take care of the flock and not just a matter of priorities. The

Guido de Bres Press Release

speaker agreed that one can not prove his point from the Forms and the Church Order but, he said, if you go back to Scripture you can.

Others were of the opinion that there should be more emphasis on preserving what we already have. Rev. Boersema replied that the two go together: the churches that are really effective on the mission field are those that really have the Gospel, the Reformed Churches. He emphasized that the dilemma is a wrong one, when a church is active in the preaching of the Word it is very effective. The two perspectives go together. The world is like an apartment building that is on fire. You save people from the fire, you help them a little, then you go in and save more. You can't spend all your time with one and let the others die.

Other questions discussed concerned the practical application today: What methods should be used; does the consistory have the duty to stimulate the home mission or should it actually participate and give the leadership, etc. The time proved too short to discuss all aspects.

Then the next point on the agenda was brought up: The question from the deacons of the church at New Westminster: "Is Mission Aid considered a part of the diaconry?" The opinions expressed on this question were far from unanimous, but the consensus seemed to be that there is no need for the deacons to step in when private initiative is doing the work well. If there is a lack, it may be necessary for the deacons to step in.

The discussion was closed and on behalf of all present, the chairman thanked Rev. Boersema for his willingness to accept our invitation and the tremendous amount of work he put into his speech for this conference.

It was decided that the church at Langley will sponsor the next office-bearers conference. It should be held next year if at all possible.

The question was brought up whether the meeting should be restricted to office-bearers and ex-office-bearers, as was the case now or whether it should be open to all, as it is done in Alberta. Although no vote was taken it appeared that most of those present like the way it is done now.

Brother Huttema, chairman of the meeting, again thanked all who contributed to the success of the conference, also the wives of the Chilliwack

of the meeting of the Board of the Canadian Reformed Highschool Association of Ontario, held on April 18, 1977, in the Hamilton Church building.

The Chairman, Br. J. Schutten, calls the meeting to order and we sing Psalm 68:1; he reads I Corinthians 15:1-26, after which he leads in prayer.

In his word of welcome he notes that the membership of Hamilton increased to such an extent that we may welcome Br. G. Gritter as the fourth delegate for that local.

The agenda is adopted.

The minutes of the meeting of March 21, 1977, are adopted.

The Principal reports that enrolment is 212 with one withdrawal this month. Also, that one of our teachers, Miss Annette Hulzebosch, has been ill for some time and that the rest of the staff has taken care of her classes. The Board hopes and prays that this sister may have her health restored and wishes to thank the staff for their co-operation.

The principal would like the staff to be able to see the blueprints of the building, now that construction is in progress. This is necessary in connection with the preparation of the time table, while minor changes may also have to be suggested. The staff would also like a guided tour of the building while under construction. The Board approves of their interest and will organize such a tour, provided all teachers have high boots which they can wear.

There are some desks and fixtures for sale in Central Secondary and we will try to purchase some for our new building.

Mr. Nienhuis, the Industrial Arts teacher, who has accepted his appointment, will visit our school soon to make plans for next year. Mrs. Meerveld will leave us at the end of this term and the Board expresses its regret at losing a good and dedicated staff member. She will be formally thanked by the Board. A teacher to replace her will be diligently searched for by the Education Committee.

A Field Day and an all-school picnic will probably be organized around the end of the year.

The Chairman thanks the principal for her report and congratulates her, the staff, and the students on behalf of the Board

elders who looked after the refreshments that were served.

Psalm 96:1 and 2 were sung and Rev. R.F. Boersema closed with thanksgiving.

A.C. LENGKEEK

(Press Report on behalf of the Consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church at Chilliwack, B.C.)

and the membership for the successful Fine Arts Day we recently enjoyed so much.

Incoming Mail. We deal with a letter of a brother.

Education Committee Reports: Mr. H.D. Nienhuis accepted his appointment. Mrs. Meerveld will not return next term. Applications for positions have been received.

Classroom visits have been brought by the Education Committee on behalf of the Board and reports will be submitted to the Board.

Transportation Committee Report: It presents the Board with some guidelines for policies on transportation. The following are some of those accepted by the Board which may be of interest to all parents and students:

Policy regarding behaviour on the bus, and what the driver's duties and responsibilities are: A. that the driver should have complete control of the bus, and is responsible for the behaviour of the passengers on the bus. B. that in cases of difficulties with a student, the driver is to report him/her to the principal for further action. Principal can then decide what action to take against the student. In very extreme cases, the principal may/should inform the parents, and the Board. Decision is the principal's.

principal's. C. that in a case where the driver refuses to pick up a student, for whatever reason, the driver will upon arrival at the school immediately inform the principal of this.

The Board hopes that all the students will co-operate with the driver so that their journeys to and from school may be safe ones all the time.

Question period.

We sing Psalm 68:12, Br. Hartman leads in thanksgiving prayer and the Chairman adjourns the meeting.

For the Board,
LEO ROZEMA.

Which minister of the Canadian Reformed Churches travelling through Manitoba is willing to preach in Carman on July 3 and/or July 10, July 17, 1977?

Please contact:

F. Vandermeulen,
Box 641, Carman,
Manitoba R0G 0J0
Phone: (204) 745-3025

PRESS RELEASE

of the *Classis Pacific of the Canadian Reformed Churches*, held on April 13, 1977, at Abbotsford, B.C.

1. On behalf of the convening church, the Church at Abbotsford, the Rev. M. VanderWel calls the meeting to order. He reads from the Word of God Psalm 16 and requests the brothers to sing stanzas 1 and 3 of the same psalm, after which he leads in prayer.

2. The brother delegates are welcomed. So are the visitors, among whom the Rev. R.F. Boersema of the Church at Calgary, Alberta. He receives an extra word of welcome.

3. The delegates of the Church at Smithers, B.C., have checked the *credentials* and report that they are found in good order, and that all churches of the Classical district are lawfully represented.

4. *Classis is constituted*. The following brothers are appointed to serve the Classis as officers: Rev. J. Mulder, chairman; Rev. M. van Beveren, clerk; Rev. M. VanderWel, vice-chairman.

5. In his *address to the Classis* the chairman, Rev. J. Mulder, gives attention to the situation concerning the vacant churches in the Classis. The Churches of Chilliwack, Smithers, and New Westminster did not see their desire to receive a minister (respectively, missionary) fulfilled as yet. He expresses the wish that the Lord may provide them with the right person in due time. The Church at Langley is congratulated with the fact that the Rev. D. Vander Boom of the Church at Toronto, Ontario, has accepted her call.

6. After two points have been added to the provisional agenda, the *agenda* is established.

7. The following *correspondence* is received and dealt with:

a. A letter from the Church at Edmonton, Alberta (dated November 17, 1976) re the postponement of the Regional Synod 1976, and another letter from the same Church (dated March 10, 1977) convening the Regional Synod for May 11, 1977. They are received for information.

b. A request from the Church at Chilliwack for financial support in the amount of \$4,000.00, to enable her to call a minister, is discussed and granted. If the Church at Chilliwack feels necessitated to approach the Classis Pacific with such a request again in the future, Classis deems it sufficient that this then will be done only at the October Classis.

8. The following *proposals* are dealt with:

a. The Church at New Westminster proposes that all Classes be held in one of the churches of the Fraser Valley. This proposal is rejected.

b. The Church at New Westminster also proposes that a Classical Fund ad Article 19, Church Order, be established. Classis decides: a) to appoint classical deputies ad Article 19, Church Order, with a well-defined mandate; b) to request the churches of the Classis to provide these classical deputies with the necessary funds. The following mandate is made up by Classis:

1. Deputies are to restrict financial aid to theological students of the Canadian Reformed Churches, enrolled at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

2. A student must apply to the Deputies, stating his grounds for requesting support. This application must be accompanied by a letter of advice from the consistory of his "home-church." For those who are studying at the College the application must also be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the faculty of the College.

3. Deputies are to consider the possibility of income through employment (summer and partial employment) of the student, aid from parents or other relatives, or any other support.

4. A student is obliged to present each year before the first day of June a specific request to the Deputies. He also is obliged to provide all desired information required by the Deputies.

5. If a student is dismissed from the Theological College, he is under the obligation to repay to the Deputies aid received at a rate of interest, determined by the Deputies. In case of withdrawal from the College, Deputies shall determine whether aid received must be repaid.

6. Deputies are authorized to request the Churches to provide them with the necessary funds.

7. Deputies shall submit a written report on their work to each October Classis.

8. In cases for which this mandate does not provide, Deputies shall ask the advice of Classis.

9. *Reports*:

a. The annual report of the classical treasurer is read. Total expenses for the year 1976 were \$1,041.37, which caused a deficit of \$75.30. The report is taken note of with thanks to the treasurer, br. P. Van Egmond.

b. Seeing that there are no reports of church visitation, Classis instructs the ministers M. van Beveren and M. VanderWel to visit the Church at Langley, and the ministers J. Mulder and M. VanderWel to visit the Church of New Westminster before the next Classis.

10. In the *Question Period ad Article 41, Church Order*, the Church of Abbots-

ford asks and receives advice in a disciplinary matter.

11. *For the Regional Synod*, to be held on May 11, 1977, at Edmonton, Alberta, the following brothers are appointed as delegates: the ministers J. Mulder, M. van Beveren, and M. VanderWel. (Alternates for ministers are the elders: E.C. Baartman, A.W. DeLeeuw, and T. Van Laar, in that order); the elders W. Den Hollander (alternate: G. Leffers), J. Hendricks (alternate: T. Pothoven), and A.C. Lengkeek (alternate: W. VanderPol).

12. *Appointments*:

a. Br. P.A. VanEgmond is re-appointed treasurer of Classis.

b. The Revs. J. Mulder and M. VanderWel are re-appointed for the arrangement of preaching engagements in vacant churches.

c. The Revs. J. Mulder and M. van Beveren are re-appointed as deputies for examinations.

d. Appointed examiners in the following subjects are: Exegesis Old Testament and Practical Theology: Rev. M. van Beveren; Exegesis New Testament and Ethics: Rev. M. VanderWel; Systematic Theology and Symbolics: Rev. J. Mulder; Church History: Rev. M. van Beveren; Church Polity: Rev. M. VanderWel; Knowledge of Holy Scripture: Rev. J. Mulder.

e. As church visitors are re-appointed all the ministers in the classical district.

f. As deputies ad Article 19, Church Order, are appointed: br. J. DeVos, Rev. J. Mulder, and Rev. M. VanderWel, convener (address of the latter: 33947 King Road, R.R. 2, Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 4N2).

g. The Rev. M. VanderWel is re-appointed counsellor for the Church at Chilliwack.

h. The Rev. M. van Beveren is appointed counsellor for the Church at Houston.

i. The Rev. J. Mulder is appointed counsellor for the Church at Smithers.

j. The Church at New Westminster is re-appointed for the auditing of the books of the classical treasurer.

k. The Church at Houston is re-appointed for the inspection of the classical archives.

13. *Preaching engagements* in vacant churches are arranged as follows: the Churches at Houston and Smithers will each receive two services per period of six weeks; the Church at Chilliwack will receive four services in six weeks.

14. As convening church for the *next Classis* is appointed the Church at Chilliwack. Time: October 5, 1977, at 9:30 a.m. Moderamen: Rev. M. VanderWel, chairman; Rev. J. Mulder, clerk; Rev. M. van Beveren, vice-chairman.

15. A *personal question period* is held.

16. The *acts* of Classis are adopted, and the *press release* is approved.

17. The chairman thanks the delegates for their co-operation, and requests to sing together Hymn 46:3. After prayer of thanksgiving the Classis is *closed*. For the Classis, M. VANDERWEL.

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

I wonder how many of you have "green thumbs." Do you like to get out in the garden with your Dad or Mom? Do you like planting the tiny seeds and watching for them to sprout and grow up?

Or maybe you like working in a flower garden? Flowers make a yard look so cheerful!

Colourful beds of flowers or neat rows of growing vegetables, both are a miracle after winter, don't you think so too?

* * * * *

The Birthday Surprise

"It's my birthday today!" Kim sprang out of bed, but jumped right in again. It seemed so quiet in the house, and a little cold, too.

Then suddenly the door opened and there was Mom saying,

"Happy birthday, Kim!"

Dad couldn't because he was at work. Then Mom gave her a nice book. Kim's sister gave her a box with pictures to paint, and Kim's big brother gave her a watch. But today was a school day. Kim had to go to school. When she was in school it seemed very long until it was time to go home. When she went home she brought four friends with her to her party. First they had a drink and some chips. Then they played some games like musical chairs, fish for candy in a bowl, get an apple on a string, and try to break the balloons. Then everybody told Kim to go out of the room, and they hid the presents they were giving her. When Kim came back she went to look for them. Then she could open them. That was fun!

After that they had supper. For supper they had hot-dogs and after that they had an ice cream cone.

They played a few games again and got a candy roll to take home. First they brought home Mary because she lived closest. Then they took home Margaret because she lived second closest. Then they brought home Diane and Julie because they lived farthest away. They all went home happily, ready for school the next day.

by Busy Beaver *Nancy Van Raalte*.



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Jeffrey De Boer*. I see you are a real Busy Beaver already, doing the quizzes and even sending us one! And helping your Dad, too. Thanks for a big letter, Jeffrey.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Bernice Vandenbos*. We hope you will really enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Will you write and let us know about some of your favourite animal stories, Bernice?

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Marnix Sikkema*. We are happy to have you join us. And thank you for the big word search puzzle! I'm looking forward to getting that story from you, Marnix.

Thank you for an interesting quiz and a nice letter, *Denise Boes*. It was nice to hear from you again. I hope, too, for you that you'll get the report card you're looking for Denise. You know, of course, what you can do about *that*, don't you?

Hello, *Evelyn Geusebroek*. Thank you for a pretty letter and for the puzzles, too. It was nice to hear from you. Write again soon, Evelyn.

You did very well on the quizzes, *Nancy Van Raalte*. Keep up the good work! Thank you very much for the picture. And how was your Talent Night, Nancy?

Hello *Cathy Bouwman*. Nice to hear from you again. Are you busy outside, Cathy, now that the weather is nice? Thanks for the quiz. Write again soon.

How did you do on Talent Night, *Irene Van Grootheest*? I'm very curious to hear. And did you get your milking cow yet? Thanks for your letter, Irene. Bye for now.

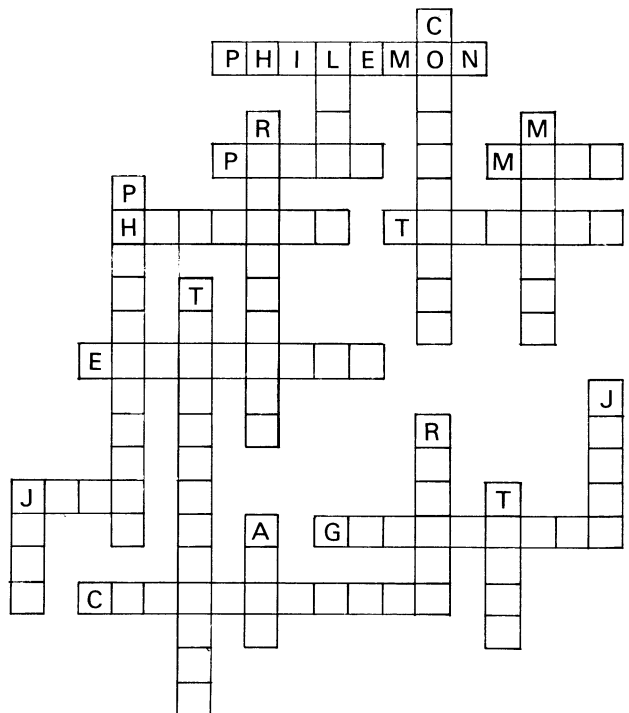
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QUIZ TIME

New Testament Word-Across

Fit the following names of the books of the New Testament into their proper places in the diagram. One name is filled in as a starter; the rest are up to you!

Acts	James	Matthew	Colossians
Luke	Peter	Timothy	Revelation
Mark	Titus	Philemon	Corinthians
John	Romans	Ephesians	Philippians
Jude	Hebrews	Galatians	Thessalonians.



Thanks for sharing this puzzle with us Busy Beaver *Joan Hofsink*.

And Busy Beaver *Nellie Knol* also has a quiz for us.