

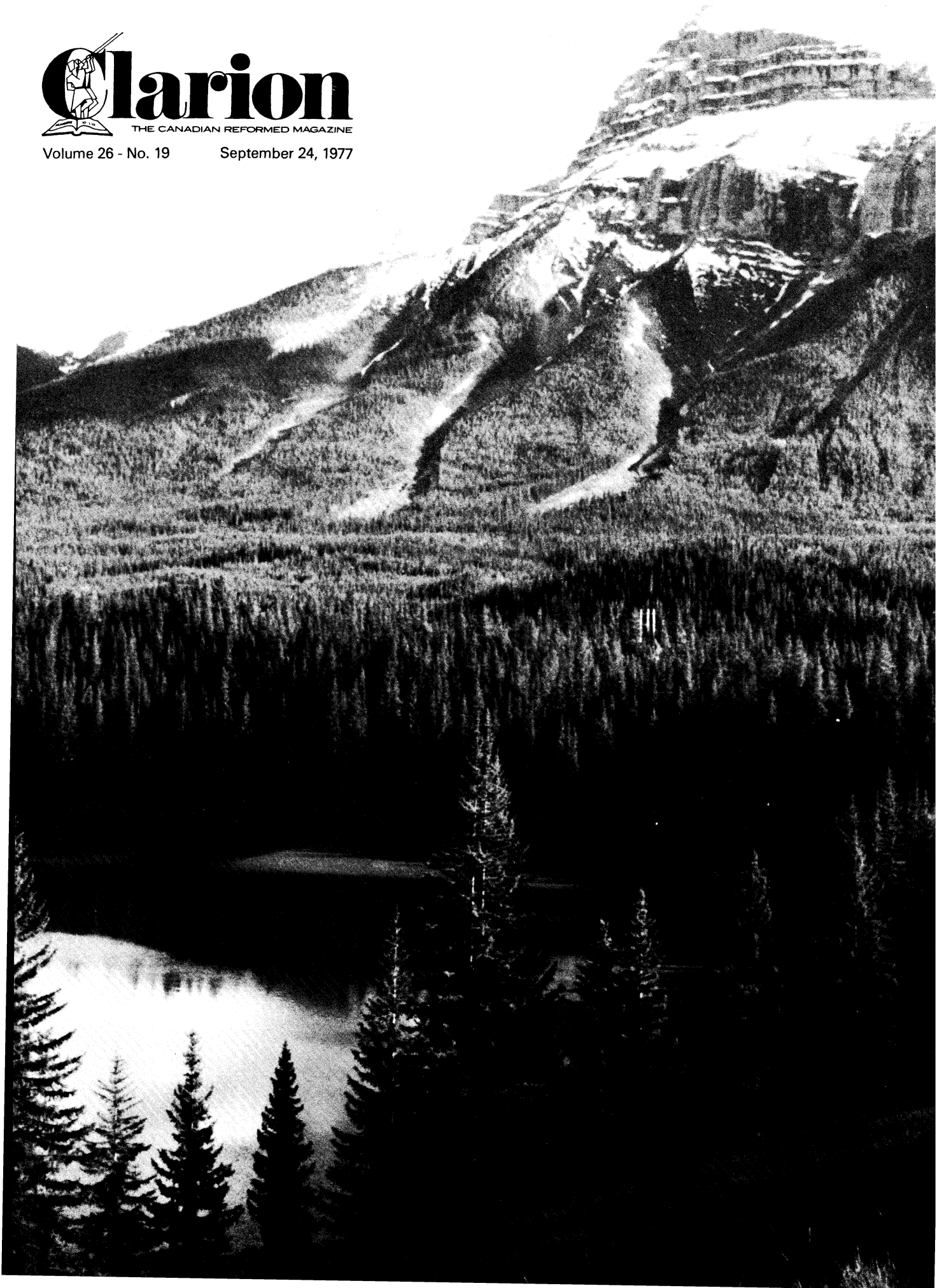


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 26 - No. 19

September 24, 1977



Reformed Faith and Modern Trends:

REDACTION IN NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES*

The latest trend in New Testament studies is "redaction history" or, as it is usually called "redaction criticism." The name "composition criticism" has also been proposed.¹

The last name tells that this trend is concerned with the study of the gospels in terms of composition, i.e. with the way wherein, the plan according to which and the goal for which the gospels, in particular the three first gospels were composed by their authors.

The purpose of this study is of course to get a better insight into the contents and with it into the message of the book.

The appearance of redaction criticism on the theological scene means a shift in the approach to the New Testament.

In the years between the two world wars, theologians — among whom the well-known Rudolph Bultmann — closely studied the various gospel pieces, but hardly the gospels in their entirety.

The reason for the attention for the part with neglect of the whole was the belief of these scholars that the gospel tradition in its oldest, oral form had exclusively existed in a number of sayings, miracle stories, parables and a passion narrative. They were, as one author puts it, like beads which a child strings into a necklace.² The instance which did the stringing and took care of the connecting thread was in the case of the gospel the early church. She collected the stories and sayings, and strung them together into the necklace of the Gospels. The connecting links of time, place, circumstances which were not original but were added by the bead stringing church, were the string which kept everything together.

Comparison of the various gospels and gospel stories convinced later scholars that the theory of a gospel tradition consisting exclusively of individual units and strung together by the early church was far too simplistic.

How to explain all the differences between the gospels and gospel parts that way? There had to be more to it!

This more, as it dawned on these scholars was — what you have known all along — that the hand of particular writers can be seen in and behind each Gospel. These authors shaped and arranged the gospel tradition according to a specific plan related to the condition and the kind of the persons for whom their respective gospels were meant.³

The result of this finding was that the attention of the theologians was no longer exclusively focused on the gospel *parts* but also, and in the first place, on the gospel whole.

This interest for the gospels in their entirety, for their respective authors and for their plan and goal, is refreshing. It is in agreement with the reformed tradition. Attention for the details of the gospel message and a thorough concern with the gospels as books and for their authors go together.⁴ This study of both part and whole in the churches of the Reformation, bore the fruit of a preaching which was, on the one hand, wide in scope because of its rootage in the history of salvation, and which, on the other hand, was pointed in application because of its anchorage in a specific text.⁵

When, therefore, redaction criticism became the new trend in New Testament studies after the second world war, it seemed that the new wind which blew out of these quarters carried with it the seed of a new awakening.

It seemed, I say, but I should add: it was not!

That appears from the books of the redaction critics. One of them, the Heidelberg professor, Günther Bornkamm, published among other writings, a short study on the stilling of the storm in its Matthean version (Matthew 8:18-23).⁶ The *storm* in this version gets, according to Bornkamm, symbolic meaning. It stands for the af-



Prof. L. Selles.

flections which the disciples and in them the church have to endure in their following of Jesus. The *stilling* of the storm is symbolic for the ultimate reward which at the time of the manifestation of the Lord, will be given and received.

Bornkamm bases this interpretation on the fact that, different from Mark, Matthew inserts the incident of a scribe and of another disciple who wanted to follow the Lord Jesus *after* the information that He was going to cross the lake and *before* the story of the crossing itself. It shows, according to Bornkamm, that Matthew views the stilling of the storm from the perspective of discipleship and church. The Christian church may not have existed yet when Jesus walked the earth, she did exist at the time of the writing of the gospel. The name "church," and the existence of the church was therefore read into the gospel for the benefit of the gospel readers to whom Matthew addresses himself.

Willy Marxsen, professor in Munich, published four studies on the gospel of Mark. This gospel is, according to modern scholarship, the main source from which Matthew and Luke drew the material for their gospels. To find out therefore what typifies and sets apart these Evangelists, one need only compare their gospels with that according to Mark.

In the case of Mark, it is more complicated to get a clear picture of his plan of composition. The reason is that the gospel tradition from which he drew, the oral tradition, is no longer available. With the aid of literary criticism, this oral tradition must first be

recovered before a comparison between the reconstituted tradition and the present Gospel according to Mark can be made. A shaky business, but nonetheless one which leads Marxsen to the conclusion that Mark wrote his gospel for Jewish Christians who lived in Jerusalem at the beginning of the Jewish war of 66 A.D. Mark wrote the gospel to exhort them to flee to Galilee. They were to await there the imminent coming of the Lord, which would bring their suffering to an end. Marxsen bases this interpretation on Mark 13:14, which reads: "But when you see the desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not to be — let the reader understand — then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains," and on Mark 16:7, the commandment of the angel who proclaimed the resurrection to the women: "But go tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him as he told you." That is, according to Marxsen, at his final coming. So the first text is *taken out* of the context of the end of time and the last one is *put into* the context of the end of time.⁸

A third representative of the redaction-critical school, is Hans Conzelmann, professor in Tübingen. He wrote a book on the writings of Luke. In its English translation it is called *The Theology of St. Luke*. A literal translation of the German original would be "The Center of Time."⁹ This center, or middle point of time, is according to Conzelmann, the period of Jesus' ministry on earth. It is *preceded* by the period of Israel which includes John

the Baptist, and it is *followed* by the period of the church which will come to a close with the coming of the Lord.¹⁰

Conzelmann bases this scheme of the three epochs which Luke, in his opinion, developed in his gospel and in the book of Acts, among other passages, on the word: "The law and the prophets were until John; since then the good news of the Kingdom of God is preached" (Luke 16:16). This text speaks of two periods; Conzelmann concludes to the third one on the ground of the outpouring of the Spirit and the gathering of the church as related in the book of Acts. Luke's purpose with this outline of salvation history is, according to Conzelmann, to explain to the church *why* the coming of the Lord which had been expected shortly after the resurrection, had not materialized yet. Before it can arrive, the period of the Church must be brought to a close and that may take a while.

This summary survey shows that the redaction critics make good their claim that the respective evangelists were composers; so much so even, that what is proclaimed by the one evangelist is rejected by the other. Whereas Mark and also Matthew picture the coming of the Lord as near, Luke portrays it as far away. Such a contrast between Mark and Luke may be possible for a Marxsen and a Conzelmann, it is impossible indeed for us. Scripture does not leave any doubt that, though the gospel comes in *four-fold* form, it is and remains *one* gospel. *There is no other*, to put it in the words of Paul (Galatians 1:6).

The matter of the *one* gospel is not the only point about which we have a quarrel with the redaction critics. Let me mention one other point. Both Marxsen and Conzelmann devoted a chapter of their books to the geographical data in respectively the gospel according to Mark, and that according to Luke. These chapters were *not* written to make the readers more knowledgeable about the places where the Lord Jesus ministered and the routes along which He travelled. They were written to make the readers understand that this data should not be taken literally, but, as Marxsen puts it — "eschatological-geographical,"¹³ or, in the words of Conzelmann — "theological" or "symbolical."¹⁴ The wilderness of which is spoken in Mark in connection with Isaiah's prophecy and the ministry of the Baptist, is not

meant as a locale but as an indication that with John the Old Testament prophecy is in the process of fulfillment.¹⁵

When we read the name Galilee, we should not identify it with the province of that name, but with Jesus' ministry, with the church's home in the time of waiting, and with the return of the Lord.¹⁶

The desert is symbolically associated with temptation; the plain with the communication of Jesus with the crowd; the mountain with his communication with God; the sea with supernatural power; the journey from Galilee to Jerusalem with the preparation for, and Jerusalem itself with the

Clarion

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

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Editor: W.W.J. VanOane
Co Editors: J. Geertsema, Cl. Stam,
D. VanderBoom

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

IN THIS ISSUE:

Reformed Faith and Modern Trends — L. Selles	382
Church News	384
Principal's Statement 1977 — J. Faber	385
Visit Mr. P. Jongeling — A.J. Hordyk	385
Who Governs the Church — Cl. Stam	386
Circumspection — Cid	387
School Crossing — J.J. Kuntz	388
Press Release — C. Van Dam	390
Mission News — Bram and Joanne Vegter	391
A Chat on Churches — D.V.	392
Press Release (Guido de Bres) — A.J. Hordyk	393
Rev. R.F. Boersema Installed	393
Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty	394



Candidate and Mrs. H. Versteeg.



Graduate, Mr. B. Tiggelaar, his wife Diane, and parents Mr. and Mrs. J. Tiggelaar.

fact of Jesus' suffering.¹⁷ The same holds for the chronology in Luke. It is not a matter of the clock or of the calendar but of the theology of the author of the Gospel.¹⁸

So the geographical and chronological ground is swept from underneath the gospel. That is not all which goes. So is the historical foundation. Marxsen distinguishes between three life-situations in the Gospels. You may as well say — three stages in the study of the gospels: the life situation of Jesus, the life situation of the Church, the life situation of the Evangelist. To put it simply: one is: Jesus speaks in the gospels; two is: the church speaks in the gospels; three is: the evangelist speaks in the gospels. Redaction Criticism deals with the third situation, the one of the speaking Evangelist. "With this approach," Marxsen writes, "the question as to what really happened is excluded from the outset. We inquire rather how the evangelists describe what happened."¹⁹

The Evangelists are not historians in the usual sense of the word;²⁰ they are theologians. As theologians they do not pass on the gospel tradition, they reflect on it, reinterpret, rewrite it, adding, leaving out, changing in the process. Words which Jesus never spoke are put into his mouth, events which never happened are inserted. Why? Well, because they agree with the experience of the congregation in her encounter with the living Jesus, or because they agree with the reflection of the Evangelist or are helpful for the congregation in her particular need. To put it in the words of Marxsen which

he wrote in his book: *The New Testament as the Church's Book* — "In meeting Jesus, men experienced the working of God, and their reflection upon this led to the description of Jesus as the Son of God. Elements such as baptism, and the birth accounts in the Christ-Kerugma support this. By their arrangement in the Gospels, later (confessional) interpretations assume the status of firsthand statements (of what happened)"²¹

Needless to say, in that manner little is left of the historical reliability of the Gospels. Now if the gospels are not historically reliable, then faith is vain. For the redaction-critics it may be different; faith in the Reformed confession is *historical* in the sense that it is based on the factual events of the birth, the ministry, the death and resurrection of the Lord. Thank God we do not have reflections on them, or interpretations of them. We have God's revelation and the apostolic proclamation of them in the gospels. The Evangelist delivered to us what they also received: the whole glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. That does not degrade the gospel writers to mere collectors, nor does it turn them into historians. It leaves them what they are: evangelists, proclaimers of the good news. Each does it in the way which agrees with the goal which was set: the gospel according to Matthew is not identical to the gospel according to Mark, but whatever the differences, the contents remain the good news of great joy.

L. SELLES

¹ Norman Perrin, *What is Redaction Criticism*, Philadelphia, Fortress Press, '69, pp. 5, 6.

² S. Kistemaker, *The Gospels in Current Study*, Grand Rapids, Baker Bookhouse, '72, p. 41.

³ Willy Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist, Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel*, Nashville, Abingdon Press, pp. 18ff. Original title: *Der Evangelist Markus Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte der Evangeliums*, '56.

⁴ Cf. S. Greijdanus, *Schriftbeginselen ter Schriftverklaring*, Kampen, Kok '46.

⁵ See: Sermon collections of Schilder, Holwerda, and others.

⁶ Günther Bornkamm, G. Barth, J. Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press '63. Original title: *Überlieferung und Aulegung in Matthäus Evangelium* '59, pp. 48-53.

⁷ Cf. Kistemaker, *Gospels*, pp. 80-84.

⁸ Cf. Marxsen, *Mark*, Study Four, Mark 13 passion.

⁹ Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, New York, Harper & Row '61. Original title: *Die Mitte der Zeit* '53.

¹⁰ Conzelmann, *Theology*, pp. 14-18 and passion.

¹¹ Marxsen, *Mark*, pp. 37, 43.

¹² Marxsen, *Mark*, pp. 60, 62, 64-65, 94.

¹³ Marxsen, *Mark*, p. 93.

¹⁴ Conzelmann, *Theology*, pp. 27, 42, 44.

¹⁵ Marxsen, p. 37.

¹⁶ Marxsen, *Mark*, pp. 58, 93, 96. Cf. Conzelmann, *Theology*, p. 41.

¹⁷ Conzelmann, *Theology*, pp. 18-94 passion.

¹⁸ Marxsen, *Mark*, p. 43.

¹⁹ Marxsen, *Mark*, pp. 23, 24.

²⁰ Conzelmann, *Theology*, p. 4. Cf. Kistemaker, *Gospels*, pp. 112ff., and Perrin, *What is Redaction Criticism*, pp. 29, 30.

²¹ Willy Marxsen, *The New Testament as the Church's Book*, Philadelphia, Fortress Press '72. Original title: *Das Neue Testament als Buch der Kirche*, pp. 130, 131.

* Address delivered at the eighth Convocation on Friday, September 9, 1977.

Church News

MR. EMBERT JAN TIGGELAAR completed the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity. The Senate decided to confer this degree on him at the Sixth Convocation on September 9, 1977.

On behalf of the Senate,
L. SELLES, Registrar

Accepted: REV. D. DE JONG
of Edmonton, Alberta to Calgary, Alberta.

Principal's Statement 1977

Eighth Anniversary Meeting and Sixth Convocation, Friday, September 9, 1977



Prof. Dr. J. Faber.

1. COLLEGE EVENING

The seventh anniversary meeting and the fifth convocation were held on September 10, 1976. Prof. Drs. H.M. Ohmann, Lic., spoke about "Reformed Faith and Modern Trends in Old Testament Studies." The degree of Bachelor of Divinity was conferred on Mr. J. de Jong, B.A., who addressed the audience on the theme "Pulpit and Stage."

The Ladies' Aid presented \$3,000 for the library again. Their faithfulness is to be applauded.

After his graduation, Mr. deJong left for the "Theologische Hogeschool" at Kampen, The Netherlands, to take up doctoral studies.

2. ENROLLMENT AND CURRICULUM

For the course 1976-1977, Mr. R. Aasman, B.A., enrolled as freshman. The seniors' program was given in a twofold format. Mr. E.J. Tiggelaar and Mr. H. Versteeg followed the senior courses described in Handbook 1970, while Mr. B.J. Berends, Mr. P.K.A. de Boer and Mr. G.H. Visscher studied the senior courses in accord with the new four year program. The transition to this new program has now been concluded. In the future we will refer to the four years as follows: freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors.

3. FACULTY

The Rev. G. VanDooren, M.Th., became emeritus minister of the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church at Burlington-East. We are thankful that

our lecturer in Diaconiology plans to use his leisure time as emeritus to broaden his studies for his work in our Theological College. This is true "otium cum dignitate." The fact that our Faculty of five now includes two emeriti ministers may remind younger theologians of the need for qualified successors in due time.

4. CONTACTS

During this academic year the Senate organized a public lecture of Dr. P. Nijkamp, Professor of Economics at the Free University in Amsterdam. He spoke about "Society and Future."

In April 1977, Dr. C. Trimp, Professor of Diaconiology in Kampen, delivered three lectures concentrating on the concept of the offices in Christ's church. His visit to Hamilton was much appreciated. Personal contact yields more fruit than formal correspondence.

5. CONCLUSION

The academic year 1976-1977 was a blessed year. We are grateful to God that He provided us, through His

churches, with the means to perform our task in the training for the ministry, and that this night may witness to the graduation of two of our students. One of them, Mr. H. Versteeg, accepted already the call of the Bethel Canadian Reformed Church at Toronto to become a missionary in Irian Jaya. May he be the first of a long series of graduates of our institution who labour in the mission. I may remind you of the word of our Saviour and King to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest," (Matthew 9:37).

Next year we hope to have our anniversary meeting but there will be no convocation, because of the decision of the last Synod to lengthen the duration of the program to four years. In the meantime, the need for ministers does not diminish. It may be a stimulus for young men to consider prayerfully whether they should serve God and His people in the wonderful office of minister of the gospel.

We do not beg for students — it is a privilege to become a servant of the Lord in this specific office — nevertheless, we repeat the words once directed by Calvin to the churches in France: "Send us wood, and we will make arrows." Deo Volente.

J. FABER

VISIT MR. P. JONGELING

Brothers and Sisters:

At the meeting of the Board of Directors of Guido de Brès High School it was decided upon recommendation by a brother of the Drive Committee in The Netherlands to invite Br. P. Jongeling, former Member of Parliament and former editor-in-chief of *Nederlands Dagblad*, together with his wife, to attend the official opening of Guido de Brès High School, symbolically representing the brothers and sisters in The Netherlands. In the various telephone conversations we had with Br. Jongeling, he indicated his willingness to be available for speaking engagements in the Southern Ontario region, and the undersigned has offered to be his contact person until he arrives here. It will of

course ultimately be Br. Jongeling's decision whether he will speak or not.

Br. and Sr. Jongeling will be accommodated primarily in the Hamilton, Smithville and Burlington area for the time of their stay here. Unofficially I was informed that they will arrive on September 22nd and will leave October 20th.

The purpose of this announcement is to see whether you would be interested in having Br. Jongeling speak in your locality. If so, please advise me so that we can schedule the event as soon as possible.

A.J. Hordyk,
3386 Regal Road,
Burlington, Ontario L7N 1L8
Phone: (416) 632-2125 (anytime)

Who Governs the Church?

Recently I had the privilege of engaging in a discussion with an esteemed brother on the topic, "The government of the Church." It is a rather broad field, I know, but the matter was concentrated on the following important point: the role of the congregation in the decision-making process of the Church.

Basically the opinion expressed by my brother was: the consistory should remember to take all important matters to the congregation, the "Body of Christ," and the eligible membership should have a final choice and say. He also felt the consistory cannot uphold decisions against the will of the membership. Ultimately, the consistory's task is to formulate proposals, make recommendations, and leave the final decision to the Church. Otherwise, he claimed, *hierarchy* results, the ruling of the congregation by a higher body (in this case: the consistory).

The same, it was argued, also holds true for the major ecclesiastical assemblies (Classis and Synod); these, too, may only formulate recommendations, and the decision (in the form of ratification) is again with the (local) "Body of Christ." The brother argued that the very essence of the Liberation in 1944 was a refusal of the Synod's right to make *binding* decisions and a maintaining of the independence and freedom of the local Churches.

I answered that his vision entails nothing less than a far-reaching "congregationalism" and "independentism," which in the past have been repeatedly rejected by the Reformed Churches. Besides, the issue in the Liberation was not that we did not recognize the Synod's right to make *any* binding decision, but that we could not accept an *unscriptural* and *super-confessional* binding. The Churches even had this right of refusal according to Article 31 of the Church Order.

GOVERNING AND RULING

My partner made the distinction between "ruling" and "governing." Ruling, he said, was acting as a "lord," imposing on others, and thus hierarchy. But governing is simply guiding without force, and thus formulating proposals for the benefit of the congregation. Such governing which re-

spected the basic freedom of the congregation was truly anti-hierarchical.

There is some merit in this distinction, even though the words are interchangeable. Webster's writes the following: " 'Govern' connotes as its end a keeping in a straight course or smooth operation for the good of the whole and the individual; 'rule' more often suggests the exercise of despotic or arbitrary power."

The Church Order certainly warns against a "lording it over" one another, and whether this is done by persons or assemblies makes no difference, Article 85. The apostle Peter calls on the elders to govern "not as domineering," but rather as "examples" to the flock. In matters of major importance, a consistory will certainly take the remarks of the congregation into account, although the people's preference need not be decisive. So, agreed, there may be no despotism in the Church of Christ!

But the point is still: "governing" is much more than just formulating proposals as a possible guideline of action. The Dictionary already indicates that it includes setting rules or laws "to determine" things. Governing has in it not only a real responsibility, but also strong authority. "Obey your leaders, and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account," Hebrews 13:17. My brother's view is unbiblical in that it unwittingly reduces the consistories and assemblies to mere consultative bodies without God-given authority and true governing power.

DEMOCRATIC OR THEOCRATIC?

In opposing one enemy, my friend is succumbing to another! Although he is fighting "hierarchy," he really is promoting it; namely, the hierarchy of the *people*, a democratic system: government of the people, by the people, for the people.

And the thing is: the Church is not a democratic institution! The highest authority in the Church is not the congregation itself, not even the consistory, but *Christ*. The Church, we say, is *theocratic*, i.e., governed by God through His Spirit and Word.

My partner agreed with this, of course, but failed to see the conse-

quences for his viewpoint. In His sovereign authority and grace, Christ has laid down a form of government, entrusted to the overseers, wherein He remains the final and foremost Bishop. The consistory does not so much rule in the *place* of Christ (that would already be saying too much!), nor does it represent the congregation in the way House-members represent a certain constituency, but it rules in the *name* of Christ, applying *His* Word with the full authority of that Word. The office-bearers collectively "exercise the authority" given to them by Christ. So we say: Christ rules *through* them.

There has been an interesting debate on the point *to whom* exactly the authority of Christ has been given in the Church. Prof. H. Ridderbos once wrote: the New Testament points to the *congregation* as the first and principal carrier of the authority of Christ, and the office-bearers are the means (Dutch: de organen) through which the congregation acts. But H. Bavinck has pointed out that the congregation's right to *elect* office-bearers, does not necessarily include the right to *partake* in the government of the Church, nor does it suggest that the congregation rules itself through the office-bearers! The office-bearers do not receive their authorization from the congregation which elects, nor from the consistory which appoints, but from Christ to Whom they must give account (Ezekiel 34, 1 Corinthians 3 and 4). "The members of the congregation do not partake, as such, in the government of the Church" (for this debate see: Dr. G.P.L. vander Linde, *Die Grondbeginsels van die Presbyteriale Kerkregeringstelsel*, Potchefstroom, South Africa, 1965).

So the government of the Church is to the overseers, and regulated by the Word of God. A consistory can and must make binding decisions only on the basis of that Word. This right, by the way, is also given to the major assemblies by mutual agreement of the Churches. Through all these assemblies Christ is ruling His Church by His Spirit and Word.

Christ did not impose hierarchy when He gave this authority to men. They rule only *under* Him. Therefore, there is no right or need to reduce the office-bearers' position to the advantage of the congregation. Such a move would be a direct attack on Christ's own position in the Church. He who disobeys the consistory's

Continued on page 390.

ELVIS (II)

The "King of Rock" may be dead, but (as we noted last time) his music lives on as an active cultural force. What is this rock and roll music from which parents recoil and to which teenagers are almost invariably attracted?

The words "rock and roll" basically denote motion. Rather, a combination of violent (rock) and controlled (roll) motion. Or to say it differently: rock and roll is all beat. It simply is an overdose of intensified rhythm, implemented by a deafening electrical amplification of sound: all noise.

It is certainly not music for quiet relaxation, but for erratic dancing, a dance so full of motion that the partners cannot maintain physical contact. Rock and roll is designed to enable someone "to let it all hang loose" and vault away into a vacuum without morals.

Rock and roll is a rejection of the rather placid swing-music of the postwar big band era. But even more, it is a traumatic breakaway from the traditionally quiet morality of the American countryside. It is one pulsating, reverberating beat, in which the harmonious relation between rhythm, melody, and lyric is utterly destroyed. Words degenerate into unintelligible sounds; greasy grunts and spasmodic screams mingle with the sweat and the leather on writhing bodies. It is a musical revolution so intense that ex-rock entertainer Bob Larson called rock "the Devil's Diversion" and considers the birth of rock "the day that music died." More than being a sub-culture, rock is an anti-culture, destructive for true art and morality.

Here truly satanic impulses become profoundly evident. Rock and roll rode a crest of brutal sexual inhibition and exhibitionism, which easily sparked manifestations of mass hysteria. Guitars and microphones became sexual playmates in a heated crossfire between performer and audience. Elvis was suitably nicknamed "the Pelvis," because he gyrated a blatant sexuality into scores of sobbing sweethearts, and not without reason did the television producers of the Ed Sullivan Show cut him off at the hips. Even in the simple lyrics of early rock, as R. Meltzer indicates in his book, *The Aesthetics of Rock*, there was a "hidden and disguised obscenity" while later rock deals with "overt obscenities." Here the

Circumspection...

sexual emancipation of today finds it seething source.

This immoral display of sexual inhibition is the result of a cultural pessimism which was already prevalent in the Negro Blues music. There is an overwhelming feeling of tragedy and a sense of obscure fate in many rock lyrics. Why not live it up today, if the Bomb explodes tomorrow? Rock and roll breathes a "heroic" acceptance of unchangeable destiny and results in a "devil-may-care" attitude. This pessimism, in turn, breeds a bold arrogance, reminiscent of the German philosopher Nietzsche, who deemed all morality to be a form of subtle slavery. This arrogance brings forth the violence which erupted at so many rock concerts. This arrogance returns today in a dreadful form in the "punk rock" phenomenon of decadence and self-mutilation.

It is clear that we are then far removed from the Gospel of salvation and the service of God. Rock music is mere rebellion, and does not even offer a hint of solution to the many questions of our troubled times. Therefore it is fully anti-Christian.

The music, popularized by Elvis Presley, is anti-Christian in its very

form, because it destroys the given harmony which must exist between rhythm, melody, and lyric. The apostle Paul exhorts the Church at Philippi to think of "whatever is gracious," and he uses the word "euphonic," well-sounding in itself, balanced, and therefore pleasing to the senses. One can hardly call rock and roll euphonic.

This music is anti-Christian in its very content, because it does not reckon with God's providence over and command in all things, but makes man a law unto himself. Because rock contains no analysis whatsoever of the misery of man, it cannot and will not point to deliverance in Christ or the gratitude which we owe the Lord for this redemption. Rock and roll reveals the heart of our deformed culture: rebellion against God.

True music does not scream out noisily in arrogant defiance, but rings out melodiously in praise to God, "Come hear, all ye who are God-fearing, I will declare what He has done" (Psalm 66). Such music is lasting, but rock and roll will once, like Elvis, pass away.

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).

Cid.



school X crossing

The growing number of Canadian Reformed Schools damages the prospects for unity between the Christian Reformed Church and the Canadian Reformed Churches. This is the opinion of Rev. J. Tuininga, writing in *The Outlook*, which is bleaker with each issue. In reviewing Rev. W.W.J. VanOene's *Inheritance Preserved*, the Christian Reformed pastor states that working toward unity with the Canadian Reformed Churches should have priority. He does so in spite of the fact that he considers the Canadian Reformed Churches and its "leaders" to hold to introverted, myopic, immodest and isolationist views. To desire unity with a group of people possessed of such unattractive traits demands respect and admiration. In the Canadian Reformed Churches, where *The Outlook* is read by a growing number and developments in the Christian Reformed Church are followed with sympathy and understanding for those who are trying to fight off the paralysis of apostasy, Rev. Tuininga's opinion deserves thoughtful consideration.

It is undeniably true that the separate existence of Christian and Canadian Reformed Schools has raised the hackles of many Christian Reformed Church members. In Hamilton (Ontario), for example, there are two elementary and two secondary schools (Christian and Canadian Reformed) less than 3 km. apart. Their separate existence is considered a typical example of what Canadian Reformed myopia, introversion and isolationism can accomplish when it is present in especially large and aggressive quantities. Admittedly, this situation has not contributed to the paving of a "road to unity." Christian Reformed Church members, burdened by the high cost of their private education, feel quite irritated when passing the Stone Church Road site of the two Canadian Reformed Schools. Are these not a million dollars worth of arrogance and holier-than-thouism that mockingly invite retribution rather than blessing? Should those responsible not cower in terror at the realization that they are hindering Christ in His Church gathering work? Indeed if Rev. Tuininga is correct (and others with him) then *that* would be the appropriate reaction.

This is not the kind of accusation we should lightly pass by. The consequences of being wrong are horrendous.

There is the hint of a suggestion in much of the criticism leveled against the growth of Canadian Reformed Schools, that Canadian Reformed people have invented the outrageous notion that disunity among Reformed believers will have its effect on cooperative Christian education. But also in this respect there is nothing new under the sun. Reformed believers were confronted with nearly identical issues a hundred years ago, agonized over them, examined their consciences, attempted compromise solutions and tasted bitterly of defeat.

In J. Kuiper's *Geschiedenis van het Christelijk Lager Onderwijs in Nederland* (History of Christian Elementary Education in Holland), published in 1897, we find the comfort and consolation of historical precedent. The author of this book, written so shortly after the cataclysmic events of 1834, 1869 and 1886, chronicles with secretarial precision the course of events of those days. Many of the chapters quote directly from the minutes of important meetings of various school associations. In chapters 71 and 72 we come across events surrounding a Christian School which on its Board appears to have had a large number of "Afgescheidenen," members of the Secession or Christian Reformed Churches. Groups of "Dolerenden," people who were leaving the Dutch Reformed (State) Church in the Eighties, had been permitted the use of the school building to conduct church services. This school is receiving support from the "Vereniging voor Christelijk Nationaal Schoolonderwijs" (The Association for Christian National School Education). At a "zeer gewichtige" meeting on June 2, 1887, in Amersfoort, this issue is at length debated. Charges one delegate (they all appear to have been ministers), "The school(s) are being used to destroy the Dutch Reformed Church and I will not pay a penny for a school that undermines my beloved denomination!" Another is of the opinion that the school buildings have always been used for evangelization purposes. "But

this is not evangelization, this is church ruination!" counters a third delegate. A calmer voice now proposes that there must first be evidence that the *instruction* given at the school is not in harmony with the constitutional documents of the Association. This prompts someone to say that the instruction must expose the disastrous decline in the Dutch Reformed church and that the use of the school building by the Dolerenden is consistent with Reformational teaching. Then someone with a nice appreciation for legalities proposes that the whole issue be disposed of because the Association in its Constitution recognizes only two Reformed "factions," the Afgescheidenen and the Dutch Reformed (Herformden) and these Dolerenden do not even exist as far as the legal documents are concerned.

Therefore, since the Dolerenden are constitutionally non-existent, the problem is non-existent. But of course this problem, an "accommodation" problem, is not so easily solved. The meeting demands a reply to the question of continued support to a Christian School which has violated the principle of impartiality. Thus there appears on the tables the breathlessly awaited Compromise Solution. After amendment, this proposed solution would have forbidden the use of Christian Schools by either of the warring parties in a denominational conflict, but would have permitted such use by seceding groups which had acquired legality by adopting formal church status. The Compromise Solution is however defeated. The debate shows that most people criticized it for its ambiguity. Does the Solution condemn the struggle of the Dolerenden? Reply: The Dolerenden are not permitted the use of the buildings. But once the Dolerenden have congregated into a church confederation and obtained legality? Reply: Then they may use the school building. Conclusion: The Solution encourages the Dolerenden to hasten their departure from the Dutch Reformed Church and become "new" churches. And for some the condemnation is not severe enough, for others the encouragement not clear enough. The proposed solution is rejected. Many leave the Association and support for its annual collection declines.

For more than a hundred years now the problem with cooperative Christian education has been the stubborn emergence of an "accommoda-

tion" problem. In 1887 it revolved, on the surface, around the use of the classrooms on the Sunday. Would the Dolerenden be given a roof over their head or would they be evicted in the name of organizational impartiality? Today the Christian Schools in Canada and the U.S. have to face up to a not-so-new variant on the age-old accommodation problem. A letter to the editor of *Calvinist Contact* of May 27, 1977 asks whether concepts such as covenant and kingdom are no longer to be accommodated in the classrooms of the Christian Schools. It demands to know whether the promises made at baptism have no longer any implication for Christian education. What we have here is an accommodation problem concerning classroom use between 9 and 4 on weekdays. The conservatives in the Christian Reformed Church ask, "Where are we going?" (*The Outlook* August 1977) and this same group asks that question of their beloved schools. Which of the warring factions in the Christian Reformed Church will the Christian School provide a roof over its head for? Can they find some formula by which accommodation is achieved for all? The demand for scrupulous impartiality is nearly impossible to fill. The people of 1887 saw right through that carefully worded motion which, appearances aside, encouraged the Dolerenden to form instituted churches, whereupon they would be allowed the use of the school buildings. The Christian School movement, while ostensibly closing its eyes to the struggles in one of the supporting denominations, would have briefly opened one eye to give the Dolerenden an enormously encouraging wink. That brief flutter of the eyelid was too much for some and too little for others.

Christian education is extremely vulnerable when it must accommodate a number of "views" and "persuasions." The deep divisions which church struggles cause do not magically close up in cooperative Christian movements. To pretend otherwise is incorrigibly naive and historically unsupported. It is part and parcel of the Reformed experience to have only *modest* expectations of cooperative Christian enterprises. As divisions widen, the common denominator must of necessity grow smaller and smaller. When some 25 years ago the "Vrijgemaakten" realized that the waters of the Atlantic had failed to wash off the consequences of the schism of 1944



45th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. Jan and Teuntje Van Middelkoop will celebrate their 45th Wedding Anniversary, the LORD willing, on September 30, 1977, with their children and grandchildren. They were married in Berkel, The Netherlands, on September 30, 1932, and immigrated to Canada in 1952.

They now attend the Church at Brampton, Ontario and are retired and both enjoy good health. They live in Etobicoke, Ontario.



they, with varying degrees of intensity and pain, sensed that this would affect their children's education. Their senses had been sharpened by the experiences of dissolution of the decade past and no amount of idealism or deliberate eye-shutting naiveness could entirely and always hide their sense of foreboding about cooperative Christian education. Here earlier, there later, Canadian Reformed Schools made their introduction. In the light of what has happened and is happening in the Christian Reformed Church and (its) Christian Schools, and the "dolefulness" of *The Outlook* in identifying the stages of their decline, one would least expect *there* to read condemnatory statements about the Canadian Reformed Schools. The terrible accusations of Rev. Tuininga are "addressed" to schools and teachers which, at great cost to a small supporting community, desparately try to preserve educational institutions in which the influence of the Reformed faith is total and undiluted. Only rancour could name that development myopic, isolationist and inverted, when *The Out-*

look and Rev. Tuininga have acquired a reputation for their strong defense of that Reformed faith.

There is (and are) plenty that deserve criticism in the Canadian Reformed Churches. A lack of modesty, arrogance, pride, spiritual myopia and a host of other sins stalk us all and would lay claim to our "best" works. While we may not invite risk or injury we could be less enamoured with the building of unnecessarily high or thick walls. Yet the act of preservation always requires isolation of one kind or another. If isolation is an unscriptural concept, Mason jars are contraband.

The Canadian Reformed School which today, under God's blessing and guiding hand, preserves a foothold for the education of Reformed believers' children, is not an obstacle but an inducement to the unity of all who are of the Reformed faith. May God yet show to many that the alleged myopia of a few of His children turns out to have been the farsightedness of the Spirit in preserving His Church.

J.J. Kuntz

WHO GOVERNS THE CHURCH — continued from page 386.

Scriptural government, disobeys Christ. For the "Body" does not rule the Head, but the Head rules the Body in the way He has determined.

SAFEGUARD

It could happen, and it has happened, that assemblies make wrong, unscriptural decisions, disobeying the Head of the Church. Such was the case during the Liberation when some (undoubtedly impressive but nevertheless unscriptural) ideas of Dr. A. Kuyper were elevated to Church doctrine. Then "synodocracy" results. It could happen that consistories demand unjust things, and "consistoriocracy" results. Ministers can gain wrong influence and "dominocracy" results. That would be hierarchical indeed, for *hierarchy* is not constituted by government *per sé*, but by any government which goes against or beyond Scripture, the Confession, and the Church Order.

What then? Well, there is a basic, golden rule in the Scriptures: we shall be more obedient to God than to man, Acts 5:29. Men are fallible, God's Word is perfect. And the introduction of special offices does not do away with the office of all believers! It remains the task of the members, though not called to govern, yet placed in the office of believers, to examine every decision made that regards them. And if any wrong decision is taken, the path is open to an appeal on the basis of God's Word, and said decision is *not* binding if it conflicts with that Word.

This, you see, was an essential matter in the Liberation. No unscriptural bindings! It was a Liberation according to Article 31 of the Church Order, which is an effective safeguard against hierarchy of *any* kind. For the Church is Theocratic. God's Word alone has the final authority to which all members must submit themselves.

On the other hand, if men appointed to govern do come with the clear command of Christ, obeying them is a submission to God Himself. The safeguard of the Church Order is not a "democratic implant" but a "theocratic principle."

THE CONGREGATION'S ROLE.

What is then the task of the congregation with respect to the government of the Church? First, it is to recognize the divinely given organization of the Church. This order: Christ rules

PRESS RELEASE

of the Classis Ontario North held in Thornhill, on September 8, 1977.

1. *Opening.* On behalf of the convening church, Brampton, the Rev. C. Van Dam calls the meeting to order and the delegates sing Psalm 111:1, 2. Philippians 2:1-11 is read. The brethren are welcomed, especially Candidate H. Versteeg who is present for the peremptory examination and the Rev. J. Mulder who has accepted the call to the church at Toronto.

2. The church at Toronto reports that the credentials are in order. Burlington West has an instruction.

3. Classis is constituted. As chairman, the Rev. Cl. Stam; clerk, the Rev. C. Oly; assessor, Rev. C. Van Dam.

4. The agenda is adopted. The Rev. P. Kingma and the Rev. W. Huizinga arrive to serve as deputies for Regional Synod. They are heartily welcomed.

5. *Peremptory Examination.* Candidate H. Versteeg delivers a sermon proposal on John 3:1-12. This sermon is amply discussed and there are no objections to continue the examination. Rev. Van Dam examines the candidate on the exegesis of Psalm 2 and Rev. Oly does the same for Ephesians 2. After enjoying an excellent lunch, Classis re-convenes and the Rev. Oly examines br. Versteeg on the knowledge of Holy Scripture, followed by Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene's examining him on the doctrine of the church. Next are the examinations on ethics, conducted by the Rev. Cl. Stam, church polity by the Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene and the Pastoral disciplines by the Rev. Cl. Stam and the Rev. C. Oly.

After the examination, Classis goes into executive session and decides, after also having heard the favourable advice of

the Church through legitimately chosen and appointed office-bearers, men "full of the wisdom of the Spirit" (Acts 6). This recognition includes a hearty acceptance of all Scripturally-founded decisions, an obedience to God, and not to men.

This recognition does not undo the calling to be active in the office of believers; to be involved in the examination of all decisions in the light of the Scriptures; and, if it should happen that any assembly rides off the track, to bring this to the attention of those first responsible; to go the way of appeal if there is no adequate response.

The Church is no hierarchy. Therefore it cannot be a democracy. The Church is the Body of Christ, governed by Him in the way He has appointed. Let us keep it that way.

Cl. STAM

the deputies ad Article 49, Church Order, to admit Candidate H. Versteeg into the ministry of the Word and sacrament. Br. Versteeg is informed of this decision and signs the Form of Subscription. The chairman expresses the gratitude of Classis on this occasion and Candidate Versteeg and the church at Toronto are congratulated. Classis offers its prayers to the Lord for the Candidate by singing Psalm 119:13 in a slightly altered form.

6. After taking note of all the relevant documents, Classis approves the calls of Candidate Versteeg for the mission field and the Rev. J. Mulder to the Church at Toronto.

7. Burlington-West asks for advice in a matter of church discipline. Advice is given.

8. *Reports.* a. The following schedule for Classical preaching arrangements is adopted (for 1978, the Lord willing): January 15 — the Rev. J. Mulder; February 5 — the Rev. Cl. Stam; February 26 — the Rev. C. Oly; March 19 — the Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene; April 2 — the Rev. C. Van Dam; April 16 — the Rev. J. Mulder; April 30 — the Rev. Cl. Stam; May 14 — the Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene; May 28 — the Rev. C. Oly; June 11 — the Rev. C. Van Dam; June 25 — the Rev. J. Mulder.

b. A report is submitted by the Committee for Needy Churches dealing with a request by the Church at Ottawa for Classical aid in calling and maintaining a minister. This report is deferred to the next Classis since not all the consistories have had an opportunity to discuss the matter.

9. The following *appointments* are made: Archives: Ebenezer Church, Burlington; Inspection archives: Church at Brampton; Treasurer: Br. H. DenBroeder, Toronto; Auditing: Article 19, Church Order: the church at Fergus; treasurer: the Church at Toronto. Needy Churches: Church at Orangetown.

Appointed to serve as delegates to the upcoming Regional Synod are the Revs. C. Oly, Cl. Stam, C. Van Dam, and W.W.J. Van Oene. Elected to serve as delegates are the elders J. Bol, M. Buist, J.J. Knegt, G. Nordeman. Alternates appointed are elders B.J. Harsevoort, H. Vis, W.H. DeVries and M. Kamphuis, in that order.

10. Question period ad Article 41, Church Order, is held followed by the personal question period.

11. *Next Classis.* Convening church for the next Classis to be held, D.V., on Wednesday, December 14, 1978, is Burlington Ebenezer. The suggested officers are: chairman — the Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene; clerk — the Rev. Cl. Stam; Assessor — the Rev. C. Oly.

12. Censure ad Article 43, Church Order, is not needed.

13. The Acts are adopted and the Press Release is approved.

14. The chairman, the Rev. Cl. Stam, requests the singing of Psalm 87:1, 2 and leads in prayer of thanksgiving.

For the Classis, C. VAN DAM

mission news

Newsletter # 21

Dear brothers and sisters,

So, the monthly newsletter falls this time to the pen of Joanne. You may have noticed that this one is a little later than usual, but that couldn't be avoided. You will understand when you get our July newsletter!

Actually, the month of June passed by very quickly for us. We spent a normal week in Manggelum, then on the 8th flew via Kouh to Sentani for a two week break. On the second lap of our trip we enjoyed the spaciousness of the "Nomad," a new plane for the M.A.F. It is in Irian Jaya for earthquake relief, but whenever possible it shuttles "barang" (goods) to various posts. We flew on the "back-load," and besides us and the pilot the plane was empty. Bram sat in the cockpit, and Emily and I sat in the back. Between us was a big empty space, (usually filled by a 3000 pound load). Once we were in the air, Emily could play, and I could walk up and down from my seat to the cockpit. Quite a difference from being strapped down in the floatplane.

While in Sentani we did various things; like working off the shopping list that had been growing for six months, visiting a patient from Kouh at the Jayapura hospital, unpacking a part of Dr. Louwerses outfit (it was released from customs during our stay), and introducing our 14 month old daughter to the city, the car, the ocean, and lots of people. Also during our stay the M.A.F. had its annual conference. We made new friends, and one evening babysat (with the help of an Indonesian couple) the entire group of M.A.F. kids while their parents had a banquet. Needless to say, we had a

busy, but thoroughly enjoyed, time during our 2½ week stay.

Getting back to Manggelum after our vacation took longer than we expected. Due to our names having slipped off the flight schedule for the week of the 20th-24th, we had to wait 'til the next week, and on Monday the 27th began our flight back home. We did it in stages; first of all, via Wamena (a M.A.F. flight center in the mountains — Baliem Valley) by wheelplane. Then on to Yawsekor. This is the M.A.F. flight center for all the stations south of the mountains. After lunch at Yawsekor we loaded the floatplane, and headed off towards ZGK territory. The weather had gotten quite bad, and the clouds were very low. Of course we had to fly under the clouds to be able to see where we were, but flying that low doesn't enable the pilot to see very far. The landmarks he usually goes by were almost all invisible. We flew straight through till we met our Digul River, then followed it to Kouh. After a short wait in Kouh to see if the weather would clear up, we flew on to Kawagit. The weather worsened steadily, and when we landed in Kawagit we realized that it was impossible to go any farther. The river was very high and fast, and towards Manggelum the weather looked still worse: rain and low dense clouds. Our pilot, Joe Hoisington, asked if we preferred to stay in Kawagit or Kouh, and since Kawagit is closest to Manggelum we stayed there. The next flights scheduled for our area were on Thursday the 30th, so finally after three weeks we were home again. The Manggelumers confirmed our decision of Monday not to go further; the river was not safe to land on, on that day.

You see, not much news for June. So, I would like to write a little about part of my work here in Manggelum, namely, the clinic. I am busy for an hour to an hour and a half each morning, with various types of things. Of course, Sunday is restricted to those who have to take medicine, and all the rest waits til Monday. To give you an idea of what kind of things I run into, I'll try to break them down

into groups. The biggest division is between the sick ones who swallow medicine, and those with wounds and sores that must be treated.

Of the "pill swallows," the thing I run into most is fever. Since this is almost certain to be from malaria, the 1st thing they get is a three-day malaria cure. At the moment, we are having a run on diarrhoea medicine; there must be some kind of a bug in the village. At times many people come complaining of coughs. With the kids, it's generally just a cold, but the older ones get it from smoking too much combined with sitting too long beside a smoky fire. There is also TB in this area, so I have to watch for people who cough a lot. For many of the people here, it's a real problem to swallow a pill. They aren't "medicine oriented" like we are (aspirin, Bufferin, Roloids, etc.), and that bitter malaria medicine is not sugar-coated either.

The wounds and sores come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, with various causes. The people here are often troubled with boils, I really sympathize with them. Also I regularly get wounds caused by running into a piece of wood; machete cuts, and sometimes an axe cut. The odd time I get a burn case too. Most of the time these are not too bad, but I have had three or four little ones burned quite badly due to negligence on the part of the mother. The house-fire is the center of the home, and someone sleeping close to it could easily roll in. These burns take very long to heal, and give the kids a lot of pain. At the moment (July) I am waiting to hear about one of these, a three-month old boy from Sawagit who was burned very badly. I treated him here daily for two weeks, and everything was going as well as could be expected. Then all of a sudden the mother and child disappeared. We sent a man to Sawagit to ask her to come back, but haven't seen her yet. She has no doubt gone to her gardens in the jungle.

A big problem is the people who don't wash properly. Teaching people to be clean is not easy. The government probably had this in mind when they set the school rule of shaving the pupils hair off regularly. The parents who live in the village have caught onto this idea too, and it is not unusual to see "bald" heads in the church building on Sundays. Often, though, the mothers will bring a preschooler who has many sores on his head. The first thing I tell them to do is

Prof. H.M. Ohmann's Article:

HOW DO WE AVAIL OURSELVES OF HAVING THE OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY IN OUR BIBLES?,

will continue in the next issue

to shave the child's head, then come back for treatment.

This lack of cleanliness leads us to a problem too. We like to sell the people clothes, but till they understand that they have to keep things clean it causes problems: Schoolboys with only one pair of pants hardly ever wash them. It would mean going without them for a little while!! Women with a dress and men with pants generally wear them till they fall apart. The new one they buy goes over the old one! For the women, this is also what they often do with their grass skirts, the new one on top of the old one. This often causes sores on their legs. I watch for this at the clinic and teach them to throw away the old ones, and they respond quite well. At the moment we are in a rainy season, and when the weather is wet and cold hardly anyone washes him/herself. Many times I hear from the mothers that they haven't washed their kids because the kids don't want to be washed. That earns them a little talk on discipline. Often I hear, "There is no soap." To that I reply "Bring me some firewood or food this afternoon, and I will sell you soap." That is the only article I sell at the door whenever they ask for it (also the odd razor so that they can cut off their children's hair, allowing me to treat those heads). If the people come to the clinic dirty I send them to wash first before I treat them.

Well, enough about the clinic for now. If you have any questions about it, feel free to write, you know our address!

While in Sentani we did receive some sad news. Andrew Dresser's system rejected the kidney donated by his mother. We ask you all to remember him and his family in your prayers.

Please remember Janet Velvis too. She has received word that she will be allowed to go back to Kawagit to work. The doctors aren't satisfied yet though, so we still have to wait a while.

We three are blessed with good health. Emily is doing very well too. She is learning her first words now: some Dutch, Wambon, English, and Indonesian. What more could you ask for?

Greetings from your
brother and sister
in the Lord,

BRAM and JOANNE VEGTER

A Chat on Churches

or

"PRAATJES BIJ PLAATJES"

During the 16th and 17th centuries many Dutch poets have composed short verses on pictures which depict everyday life. They not only described in rhyme the different trades of baker, miller or shoemaker, they also meditated on these peoples' work. Some of them even contained worthwhile lessons.

A similar urge hit me when, in the July 2, 1977 issue of *Clarion*, four pages of our Magazine were devoted to church buildings. Twenty-six of the 29 buildings in use by the Churches were shown as they look from the outside.

One thing struck me, namely that most of these buildings show a certain similarity. There is some difference in roofline, the pitch of the one is higher than the other, but that is only a minor difference. One of the recently completed (New Westminster - No. 5) has roof-beams that stick out almost into the ground and the impression is given that the whole building is "hanging by the rafters." It gives indeed a special effect and character to this building. There are some with an entrance-hall as a separate part of the structure (4; 11; 14; 15; 17; 24). Others, apparently, are built with the entrance-hall as part of the main building. There are only a few that, as far as can be judged from a picture, lack a basement. The majority has a basement which in most cases is used for meeting halls, catechism classes, etc. Is this the result of a certain planning or do finances play a role? In some cases the acreage on which a church is built provides enough room for such facilities "above ground." Building costs however must have spoken the last word.

Apart from these details we can see that practically all buildings have the form of a rectangle. The only exception being, as far as I know, the building of the Toronto Church. The main auditorium is square with the pulpit in one of the corners and the pews around it.

Before saying more about this point, I want to include in this chat that I found the "steeple" an interesting feature. In one of the issues of "Canadian Reformed Magazine" the thesis has been defended that a

Reformed Church ought to have a steeple. And indeed, we find quite a few among these buildings which are crowned with such a structure. At this time I am not talking about the function of the steeple in Protestant Church building. It only struck me that there are nine buildings which show a steeple. To these nine who have a "regular" one I may add the Ebenezer Church at Burlington where we see a protrusion on the roof which can hardly be called a steeple when compared to the size of the roof. In the numbers 11, 14, 19, 21, and 23 we find a "nartex," which is a hall or room built in the form of a tower. Indeed an impressive number of "kerktorens," but no bells. Even the rooster which adorned the steeple in Houston has disappeared.

The previously made remark that there is much similarity in buildings is substantiated by the (pictured) facts. An acquaintance of mine who leafed through this issue of *Clarion* asked whether all these Churches used the same building plan or employed the same architect. It must be admitted that there is nothing wrong with having many church buildings that look alike. Some even as two drops of water. It allows us, however, to ask the question: Do we as Canadian Reformed Churches show a *style* in the houses of worship with a certain principle behind it, or are we not too much concerned about the appearance? I do not believe this to be the case. I am convinced that in many cases the help and advice of an architect has been sought, but it cannot be denied that some buildings are completely identical in the main lines (see the pictures of Smithers and Coaldale; Neerlandia and Houston; Hamilton and Chatham).

D.V.

FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of *Clarion* was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on September 19, 1977.

PRESS RELEASE

Official press release of the Regional Board meetings held on August 15th and August 29th, 1977.

The summer is usually not a very good time to meet and at both our August meetings we missed a few members due to the holidays. We hope that in years to come we can do away with any meetings in July and August and have all the school business attended to before the summer. Let me mention some of the decisions the Board took at these two meetings.

1. The official commencement exercises for the first graduating students will take place, the LORD willing, on October 28th in the new auditorium.

2. We appointed br. H. VanBeelen from Groningen, The Netherlands, as teacher of English, effective August 1, 1978.

3. Br. C. Walinga of Hamilton will be asked to take charge of the refinishing of some of the second hand desks we bought.

4. Br. H. Bruinsma of Hamilton was appointed as caretaker of our school, effective August 22nd, 1977.

5. The brs. J. Schutten and A. Van Egmond have been delegated to represent the Board at the official opening of Emmanuel Christian High School in Guelph on September 6th.

6. The Board decided to charge individual students for any willful damage done to the school. In case the vandal cannot be found, the damage will be paid from the funds of the student body as a whole. Each student will be required to pay a deposit at the beginning of the year. This deposit, minus the money required for repair of damages, will be refunded at the end of the school year.

7. Due to some delay in the construction of the building, school will not start on September 6th, but on Monday, September 12th. School hours are from 8:55-3:30.

8. The provisional agenda for the official opening of the new building on October 1st, was accepted by the Board. The Secretary was pleased to report that br. P. Jongeling from Amersfoort, The Netherlands, a former member of Parliament, has accepted our invitation to be present at the official opening. We understand that br. and sr. Jongeling will be here during the last week of September and the first three weeks of October.

9. The President and Secretary were authorized to enter into a contract with Langdon Coach Lines Limited in King City for the transportation of our Toronto, Brampton, and some of our Burlington students.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Guido de Brès High School,

A.J. HORDYK,
Secretary.



Part of the crowd attending the opening of the new Guido de Brès High School. (Photo courtesy Arie J. Hordyk, Burlington, Ontario.)

REV. R.F. BOERSEMA INSTALLED



On Sunday August 7 Rev. R.F. Boersema was installed as a missionary of the Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church of New Westminster, B.C. It was a day of joy and thankfulness to the Lord who had heard the many prayers and who in His way blessed the efforts to find a successor to Rev. C. Van Spronsen in Brazil.

Installation took place in the morning service by Rev. M. Van Beveren who administered the Word of God in accordance with 1 Corinthians 3:10-21 and as text was chosen verse 11: "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

In the afternoon service Rev. R.F. Boersema made his inauguration and administered the Word of the Lord in accordance with Romans 15: 1-21 and as text was chosen Psalm 117. Theme of the sermon was: All nations are called to praise the Lord 1) on account of His mercy 2) on account of His truth.

Early September Rev. Boersema has departed to Holland for studies and hopes to return to Canada in the month of December to prepare for his departure to Brazil with his family early March 1978.

Rev. C. Van Spronsen intends to return to Canada summer 1978.

Puzzle No. 22



our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

I know you all read *Our Little Magazine* every time, but do you read other things in the *Clarion*, too, sometimes? Of course most of the articles are meant for adults, but I was thinking you can read the mission reports. Have you tried it?

It's interesting to read about the missionaries and their work, isn't it? People in Irian Jaya live so differently from the way we do. Brazil is such an interesting country!

It makes us very happy, doesn't it, when we read how the Lord turns people to Himself and how the church of the Lord Jesus grows. Mission work is so very important. The Lord Jesus told the apostles "Go ye . . . and teach all nations." People all over the world must be taught to be His disciples.

That's why we are thankful when we read from the mission reports that the mission work goes on. And that's why we are thankful, too, for the two new missionaries we have — one for the churches in western Canada, and one for the churches in Ontario and Grand Rapids.

Do you collect money for mission work at school? Do you pray that the Lord will bless the mission work?

* * * * *

Quiz on Mission Countries

1. The capital of Brazil is _____ .
2. The largest river in Brazil is the _____ River.
3. Most people in Brazil belong to the _____ Church.
4. Our missionaries in Brazil live in _____ close to the city of _____ .
5. Some of the things that we buy from Brazil are _____ beans, _____ beans, and _____ nuts.
6. Missionaries in Irian Jaya usually travel by _____ because land travel is so hard.
7. The people of Irian Jaya with whom our missionaries work live in the _____ .
8. Most people in Irian Jaya worship their _____ .
9. The missionaries in Irian Jaya preach and teach but they also help run _____ and help the sick in a _____ .

* * * * *



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Rona Kleefman*. I'm glad you like to read *Our Little Magazine*. That shows you're a real Busy Beaver. Thank you for the quiz, too! Keep up the good work, Rona.
Hello *Nancy Van Raalte*. Nice to hear from you again.

To answer your question, Nancy: you may stay a Busy Beaver as long as you like. But when you feel you've "out-grown" the Club, please let me know.

Yes, thank you, I had a very nice holiday, *Linda Knol*. And it sounds to me as if you did too! What did you like best? The swimming, I think. Right?

Thank you for a nice chatty letter, *Nellie Knol*. Glad to hear you had such a nice holiday. Are you happy to be back in school?

Sounds to me as if you've had a really good time, this summer, *Florence Visser*. Are you happy to be back in school now, though? Bye for now. Write again soon, Florence.

Hello *Sharon Knol*. It was nice to hear from you again. You've really enjoyed swimming this summer, haven't you?

Thank you for a very pretty card, *Jennifer Jelsma*. Did you enjoy your stay at the cottage?

Glad to hear from you again, *Benita Tamminga*. The way you sent in your answers was just fine, Benita.

* * * * *

What shall we wish for all the Busy Beavers celebrating their birthday in October? Why, of course, the same we wish all the Busy Beavers every month again! Have a very happy day with your family and friends; may the Lord bless and guide you in the year ahead. What else could we ask for?

Many happy returns of the day, Busy Beavers!

Michael Krabbendam	Oct. 2	Hendrika Plug	Oct. 15
Jeffrey De Boer	3	Carl Oosterhoff	18
Cathy De Jong	7	Marieke Geertsema	19
Anita Tenhage	7	Clarence Oosterhoff	19
Irene Vande Burgt	8	Carolyn Paize	23
Marian Van Dyk	8	Jeanette Bikker	28
Diane Beukema	10	Melanie De Gelder	29
Harriet De Jonge	10	Patsy Linde	29
Kathy Stol	12	Marian Linde	31
Bernice Louwerse	14	Joyce Welfing	31

* * * * *

Did you enjoy your puzzles and quiz, last time? Here are the answers!

Father, Mother, Son

1. Abraham, Hagar, *Ishmael*; 2. Salmon, Rahab, *Boaz*; 3. Eli-melech, Naomi, *Mahlon*.

Bible Bargains

1. b; 2. a; 3. b; 4. b; 5. c; 6. c; 7. b; 8. c; 9. a; 10. b.

Have you sent me your "First Day of School" finish-the-story? Do it right now, all right?

And next time, Busy Beavers, I hope to be able to announce the names of the WINNER in our BIG SUMMER CONTEST!

"See" you then! Good-bye for now.

Yours, Aunt Betty.

OUR COVER

Pilot Pond with Pilot Mountain (9,690 feet), Banff National Park, Alberta. (Photo courtesy Miss Anne Schnieders, Drayton, Ontario.)