



Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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Ministrantes in Follis *

De dominee dei stait op stoul,
 Dei het'n togoa aan,
 En preken, dat ons domie kin,
 Doar waitje hail nait van.
 Aans meester achter t'örgel zit,
 Din stoan ie glad verboasd,
 Lest trok hai aal registers oet,
 De muren borsten hoast.
 Moar poestentreder Lutje Derk,
 In zien ofziedighaid,
 Dei bringt de haile dainst op gang,
 Dei heur of zain ie nait.¹

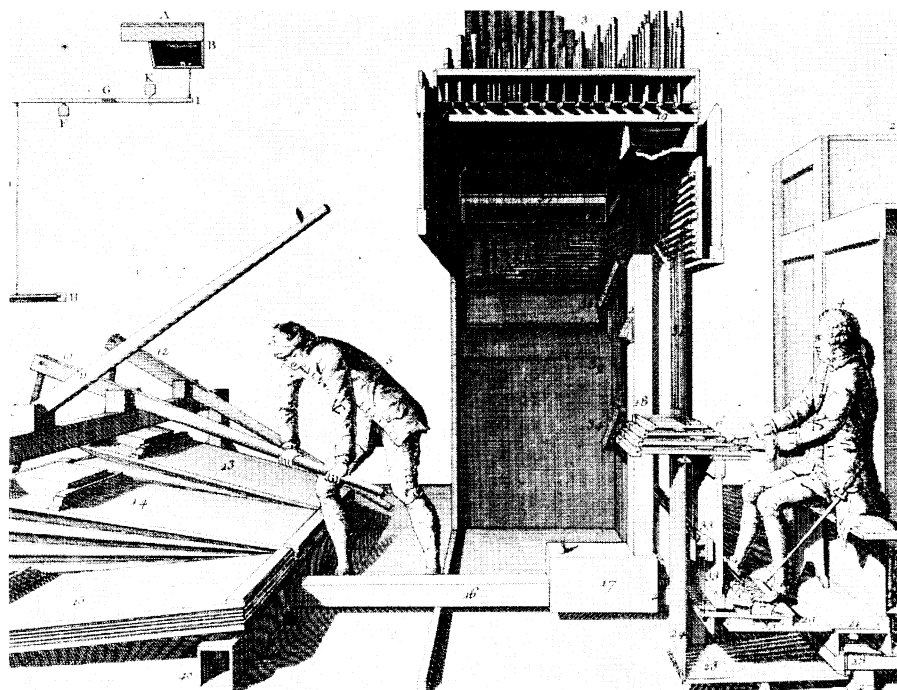
TRANSLATION:

The minister stands on the pulpit
 And wears a gown.
 You wouldn't believe
 How well our minister can preach.
 When the teacher plays the organ,
 You're really surprised.
 The other day he pulled out all the stops
 And the walls nearly crumbled.
 But Little Derk, the organblower,
 Who sits off on the side,
 Gets the whole service underway
 And him you don't see or hear.

The modern organist no longer
 needs to engage the services of such



In the bowels of the organ — Organ at Halberstadt, Germany, 1361.



The organist and blower — Dom. F. Bedos, "L'Art du Facteur d'Orgues," Paris, 1766-78.

men as Lutje Derk to play the organ. He simply switches on the electromotor and is furnished with an ample and steady supply of wind. With the application of electric power to organblowing, the colourful era of the organblowers, or *ministrantes in follis** as they were called in dignified Latin, came to an end.

Since the invention of the pneumatic-organ, strong men were needed to fill the lungs of the organ so that under the hand of the organist it could bring forth the "exquisite melody" and the "far resounding clang." The Chronicler Wolstan who lived in the time of Bp. Ethelwold (936-980) gives the following account:

Such organs as you have built are seen nowhere, fabricated on a double ground. Twice six bellows are ranged in a row, and fourteen lie below. These, by alternate blasts, supply an immense quantity of wind, and are worked by seventy strong men, labouring with their arms covered with perspiration, each inciting his companions to drive the wind up with all his strength, that the full-bosomed box may speak with its four hundred pipes which the hand of the organist governs.²

The sight and sound of seventy men, if indeed there were that many, must have been a rather unedifying spectacle. It should, however, be remembered that medieval men and women appreciated the entertainment value of the organ. A change in attitude ("the organ must be an ornament to the church and a help to godly singers"³), the improvement of the organ in general, and the wind supply in particular, banished the organblowers from view. They no longer shared the limelight with the "pulsator organum."⁴ Hidden in the bowels of the organ, although their services were just as indispensable for the performance of music, they became faceless and nameless. It is precisely that anonymity that irked the headblower in Thomas Hardy's novel *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876):

'I never seed such a man as Mr. Julian is,' said the headblower. 'He'll meet me anywhere out-of-doors, and never wink or nod. You'd hardly expect it. I don't find fault, but you'd hardly expect it, seeing how I play the same instrument as he do himself, and have done it for so many years longer than he. How I have

indulged that man, too! If 'tis Pedals for two martel hours of practice I never complain; and he has plenty of vagaries. When 'tis hot summer weather there's nothing will do for him but Choir, Great, and Swell altogether, till yer face is in a vapour; and on a frosty winter night he'll keep me there while he tweedles upon the Dulcianner⁵ till my arms be scrambled for want of motion. And never speaks a word out-of-doors.'

In keeping with lesser status their remunerations were also reduced. The organist of the 14th century received 2 cr. 3 alb; the calcant⁶ 1 cr. 3 alb. The blower's wage was a respectable 57% of that of the organist. Evertje de blaaster of the 16th century was already down to 30%. By 1841 de balgentreeder pocketed a mere 10%. With the decrease in monies invariably came an increase in duties. The magnificent "pompeur" became an ecclesiastical joe-boy. The organ blower of Moordrecht, among other things, had to be present early, provide a light for the organist, bring him the list of psalms to be sung (orgelbriefje), keep the pumping mechanism in good working order with soft soap ("groene zeep"), assist the organbuilder with all the tuning, and help keep order during the worship service. All that for fl. 20 a year. No wonder the man objected:

Dear Sirs!

The undersigned respectfully requests a raise in his organblower's pay. The remunerations, although I have always resigned myself to this, are so little that I truly can no longer continue to do the work. fl. 20 a year for the regular Sunday, holiday, and weekday services, plus the services rendered with the tuning of the organ, are too little in my opinion. I kindly request you to raise my wages as much as possible.

Hoping for a favourable decision, I am
Your Servant

T. DE ROTTE⁷

Other members of the fraternity of organblowers objected less formally, but more effectively to imagined or real slights. They simply quit pumping at the most inopportune moment. Such was the case in Katendrecht. The bellows there were leaky and faulty. The blower's complaints were ignored. The only course of action which seemed to be open to them was a "strike." The consistory did not take very kindly to such behaviour. The strikers were summarily dismissed, and other blowers were appointed for less money, but not before the bellows were fixed. In Amsterdam, the blower, after the customary strokes for a cer-



Women's Lib. — Engraving of Israel van Mecken, 15th Century.

tain psalm, quit. Unfortunately the organist had not finished playing and the rather elaborate postlude fizzled out like a damp squib. "I am accustomed to give so many strokes for this psalm and we are long past that number; that's enough!" was his comment. In one big city church the organist, after working the calcant, received no air. Upon investigation he found the three slightly inebriated blowers drinking to the health of the minister, the caretaker, and Peter Dathenus "Who had invented the singing of psalms." Then there was the principled organblower who at the height of the "hymn battle" of the previous century refused to pump a hymn. "From my legs there will never come a hymn," he said.

I'm sure that these "characters" among the blowers were in the minority. The majority of them were dedicated men who, service after service, year after year, faithfully played their instruments. Perhaps the epitaph of a certain Peter Knust put the role of the organblower in the right perspective.

Hier ruht Peter Knust
Gott zu ehren hat er gepust
Bis er selbst den Pust bekam
Und ihm Gott den Pust benahm.⁸

Translation:

Here rests Peter Knust
To the honour of God he pumped
Until he himself received a blow
And God took his breath away.

Quite something, isn't it!

Pumping to the honour of God.

Filling the lungs of the organ so that the "sweet strains of praises could swell from Zion's court."

Come to think of it, that's what it is all about: to use our gifts and talents to the glorification of God and the edification of man.

S. VANDER PLOEG

**Ministrantes in follis* — Those who operate the bellows (translation: Rev. J. Mulder.)

¹ Hajo Janssonius, Gedicht'n. The Hague.

² From "The Art of Organbuilding," George Ashdown Audsley. New York, 1905.

³ Arnold Schlick (c. 1445-1516)

⁴ Organist; lit. organ beater.

⁵ Dulcianner — Dulciana is a narrow scaled stop needing very little wind.

⁶ Calcant — organblower.

⁷ Orgelblad, July/August 1967.

⁸ Henk de Jong, Kerkeheren/Kerkekechten, Wageningen.

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press review

SYNOD 1977 OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Last time in this column I gave an impression of the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church via a report which I quoted in part. This time I would like to give an impression of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) by taking over parts from a report of that Synod in *The Outlook* of August. It was written by the Rev. John H. Piersma, who was a delegate himself. At the end of his report he writes: "These are *personal* reactions." This is evident right from the start. We read:

If I had to characterize the '77 synod I'd say that it was not marked by decisive and courageous action. Many issues were dealt with procedurally rather than substantively. Those who were prepared to debate the issues surrounding the ordination of Dr. Allen Verhey or the gravamen registered against the doctrine of reprobation as stated in the Canons of Dort never really had a chance to speak their minds. These things were pushed off rather than faced — in my opinion, to the possible hurt of the churches.

I don't really know how best to present the full spectrum of synodical actions and decisions. I have decided simply to record the actions of every day (skipping some that are of little importance to a report like this), and to append a brief note here or there. It seems to me that we of *THE OUTLOOK* will have to spend a great deal of time during the next months on some of these on-going controversies, and so perhaps this will give us a kind of introduction to the discussions which no doubt lie ahead of us.

Rev. Piersma follows "the actions of every day" of Synod. I will leave this out, since I am giving only parts from his report. On page 2 and 3 we read this:

Another "hot debate" surrounded the matter of the appeal of Classis Grand Rapids East regarding the Synodical Deputies' Report concerning the propriety of Rev. Terry Hager's work with the Community Counseling and Personal Growth Ministry, "an ecumenical program" in Grand Rapids. The issue was simple: May a CRC minister work for an organization which has a doctrinally un-Reformed and unbiblical basis and statement of purpose? One of the delegates, Rev. Jacob Eppinga (LaGrave Ave. CRC,

Grand Rapids) was also a delegate to synod. In a most lucid and convincing way he defended the decision of the deputies not to approve of this ministry but nevertheless the majority of delegates voted to overthrow their recommendation and to approve of Rev. Hager's affiliation with this project. I thought this was a very clear indication of a radical shift in the conception of corporate responsibility which, in my opinion, is a strong feature of historic Reformed ethical thinking! According to more than a few voices, one can work with and even for any organization "if only one is free to do his own thing."

If one can work with any organization, being free to do one's own thing, does that mean that one is also allowed a place while pointing out to that organization the things that are against the Word of God? And is that not a must, if one works within such an organization? We continue:

That the CRC has entered upon a new kind of relationship with the Reformed Church in America was indicated repeatedly. On pp. 435 ff. of the Agenda we find An Evangelism Manifesto drafted by a committee composed of ten members, five from the CRC, five from the RCA. Its key word is *kingdom*. This was adopted "as a guideline for further study and action by the churches, classes and denominational agencies."

It is good that the writer points out the fact that the key word is "kingdom." In these days we hear so much talk about the "kingdom." But many use this "kingdom" idea in a liberal way, whereby the "kingdom" becomes an earthly, human kingdom of this world. With the foregoing about the cooperation between the CRC and the RCA (Reformed Church in America; which can be compared with the Hervormde Kerk in The Netherlands) also the following is connected:

A very important decision was the one which advises "the consistories, under normal circumstances, to grant transfer of membership rather than a certificate of dismissal to members seeking to affiliate with a church in ecclesiastical fellowship." This had real significance primarily for members of the CRC asking to go from the CRC to the RCA. In the past we have "dismissed" such members because we felt that the RCA was not a denomination whose practices (open com-

munion, doctrinal liberalism, indifferences to church discipline, permissiveness with respect to lodge membership, rejection of the Christian school) did not warrant *approval* on our part of the joining of that church. (This has never meant that CRC attitudes denied the existence of thousands of dear and sincere Christian brothers and sisters in Reformed churches, nor the fact that certain Reformed congregations and pastors were obviously concerned to hold fast to Reformed principles and practices.) *The important consideration* here is the fact that under the influence of that powerful Interchurch Relations Committee we are now importing into "ecclesiastical fellowship" all that we used to reserve for "church in correspondence." I think the Reformed Church in America ought to serve us as a good example here: all letters of membership from them, so far as I know, bear the superscription: Certificate of Dismissal. Still more: it seems that some among us are determined to break down the moral defenses of the CRC against the differences represented by the RCA church polity, tradition and practice. No wonder that we are losing members to the RCA at an alarming rate. Why not?

The reader remembers that the CRC has traded in the "church in correspondence"-relation (an ecclesiastical sister-church relationship like the one we maintain) for a much broader "ecclesiastical fellowship"-relation. No longer being strict with oneself will show in not being strict with respect to others either, and vice versa.

Revealing is also what the report says about the Dutch delegate from the Gereformeerde Kerken, Synodaal. Here it is:

It was interesting to hear the greetings from representatives of churches with whom we are in ecclesiastical fellowship. Dr. Rietveld, senior pastor in The Hague, represented the *Gereformeerde Kerken*. He delivered a moving address which was, in my opinion, full of dangerous suggestion. Addressing himself to the uneasiness which many in the Reformed world community feel about developments in his church (to mention the names of Baarda, Kuitert, Augustijn, Wiersinga is enough!), he pleaded for recognition of the fact that everything today (including moods) is changing, that we don't know how the church of "the new world" will be led by the Spirit to do its business, that the Spirit has more ways than church discipline to accomplish His purposes, that 'legalism' (which I understood to be the way of the churches in the past, and of somewhat backward churches like the CRC in the present) is not a good solution to current problems, that truth always triumphs in the end anyway (don't panic!), etc. This

Continued on page 446.

“POLITICS” (II)

During his recent Canadian trip, Mr. P. Jongeling, ex-member of the Dutch parliament for the Reformed Political Union, advised us to set up local political study societies, and to work towards the formation of a national league. Undoubtedly this good advice is being followed up, and some local societies will have come into existence already in various places.

Immediately, however, when setting up these societies, we are being confronted with certain matters which need to be clear from the start. Some important questions must be answered so that locally we do not go in different directions, but will be able to find one another nationally when the occasion arises.

The prime question is: What is to be the basis of these local societies? I do not mean which practical program shall be followed — that can differ locally — but rather the principle-foundation on which all the members shall be required to stand. The answer is then really quite simple. Shall it not be the same basis which we have in all other organizations; namely, the unity of faith? Any political organization worthy of our support and participation must be a confessional society, and thus it must be: the Word of God, truthfully confessed in the Three Forms of Unity.

I do hope we can all agree on this. There can be no “sphere sovereignty” in life. There are not various, equal spheres, each with their own basis. The same Word of God and the one confession holds true in all fields of life, also in the sphere of politics. The same confession which moves us in Church and in education will also motivate us in public life. The full necessity and the complete validity of this basis has been amply argued in The Netherlands when the Dutch Reformed Political Union was set up in 1948, e.g., in such important publications as *De Ene Grondslag (The One Foundation)* by Rev. P. Francke and *Christus en de Volkeren (Christ and the Nations)* by P. Jongeling. It will be extremely useful to take note of these publications when organizing our own study societies.

I know that some might prefer a broader basis in our particular Canadian situation, but I fail to see the ne-

Circumspection...

cessity of such a move. I would even consider this to be a dangerous step, for the basis would then be broader in certain areas (e.g., politics) than in others (e.g., Church and education). We should not create an unwarranted rift in life. And, in reality, this foundation should not deter but attract others, for if these others are truly willing to conduct Reformed politics with us, they will certainly come to a hearty acceptance of this one foundation.

Connected with this is another question: Who shall be admitted to

ty of true faith experienced at the table of the Lord, that we are together active in other fields of life. This viewpoint is fully Scriptural and confessional, in my opinion, for “I believe one holy catholic Church, the communion of saints.”

Does this mean that only and exclusively members of the Canadian Reformed Churches can be members of these local political societies? Well, the rule stands, and possible exceptions only confirm the rule. Ultimately, the Dutch society leaves the membership matter to the local societies, and the possibility is apparently there for others to join. Even then, however, the condition does exist that such people accept the Three Forms of Unity and on that basis are seriously prepared to discuss their church membership. For the rule remains that the one foundation is not only to be accepted in politics, but also in every other area of life.

We cannot have “open societies,” for it has been proven (e.g., in The Netherlands in the Anti-Revolutionary Party) that continually concessions and accommodations must be made, and, in the process, confessional principles are sacrificed. Then, in the end, the original basis is lost, and Reformed politics made impossible. If we go in that direction, I’m afraid we’d better not start at all. The Dutch association, therefore, has at times been forced to eliminate local societies consisting of members who had gone over to other denominations. Let us be clear about this from the start, and thus save ourselves many difficulties.

We are to engage in confessional politics. Also here: life is a unity before God. To obtain information on the above-mentioned publications and other relevant works (in the English language also!), you might write to the “Groen van Prinsterer Stichting,” Van Persijnstraat 17, Amersfoort, The Netherlands. I have been informed that this foundation is gladly willing to give assistance.

The Lord bless your efforts.

Cid



Groen van Prinsterer
“Dutch Reformed Parliamentarian”

such a society? Let us in this respect also learn from others who have preceded us in this field. The Dutch association has this rule: the membership of the local societies is open to members of the Reformed Churches (Liberated). In other words, church unity is important for organizational unity. I may quote br. Jongeling: “The confession of the Church also speaks about the Church of the confession!” It is from out of the Church, as the mother of believers, in the uni-

PRESS REVIEW — Continued.

message gained a standing ovation from synod.

The words of Dr. Rietveld are revealing, I said, of what is going on in the Synodical churches in The Netherlands. Times are changing. Do the norms of the Word of God change with them? It seems that many think so. It is also clear that in the way quoted above the Holy Spirit is disconnected from His (normative) Word, and that in fact the Holy Spirit is "used" to endorse the errors, deviations, and unfaithfulness in the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands. And it is a bad thing that this "message" receives "a standing ovation." This is revealing as well. I am sorry I have to say this.

The Verhey Case was at the Synod again as well. The reader will remember that at his classical examination Dr. Verhey expressed as his view that doubt about the historicity of the speaking of the serpent in Genesis 3 and of the earthquake in Matthew 28 should be possible and should be allowed. In the report we read:

The Verhey Case: this matter was handled, in my judgment, in a very strange and almost casual way. My reactions are predicated on the conviction that Dr. Verhey's views are very wrong, and that it is not really tolerable for a confessionally Reformed church to allow its office-bearers to hold to the kind of things he so brilliantly, candidly and vigorously teaches. The advisory committee's report to synod was marked by such sentences as: "Theology is a special study, with its own language and experience. We must give our theologians trust and room to do their work obediently before God. But the church that gets worried about certain results of doing theology may properly ask how a theological method functions within a Reformed understanding of the nature of Scripture." Such observations mean something which frightens me, or they reveal a strange lack of appreciation for what our kind of church has always understood by theology within and upon the basis of the right of the church authoritatively to express in her dogmas that which all must believe.

Much more will be written about these things. The decisions taken leave the whole matter of Dr. Verhey's views in the hands of his consistory (Neland Ave., Grand Rapids), which has a committee working on these matters (Dr. Spoelhof, Professor Bandstra and C. Kromminga). Some asked for a synodically appointed committee. And for obvious reasons. After all, the Neland Ave. consistory formally declared already on June 1, 1976

that "Allen Verhey was at the time of his examination, and is now, firmly committed to the sound doctrine of the scripture as set forth in the Reformed confessions and the doctrinal deliverances of the synod of the CRC." If I were Verhey I would like very much for such a consistory to adjudicate my case!

The Synodical Reformed churches in The Netherlands are being followed at a distance. A firm "no" is not spoken. We do not hear a "no" either in the next matter, one that has been at several synods in a row: objections of Dr. H. Boer against the doctrine of reprobation as confessed in the Canons of Dort. The article of Rev. Piersma says this about the matter:

The H. Boer gravamen against divine reprobation as taught in the Canons of Dort occasioned some debate, but the results were not very encouraging to people convinced that the Canons are a true and faithful representation of the Bible. The main decisions taken were as follows:

"that Synod accept the confessional-

revision gravamen of Dr. Boer as legally before synod."

"that synod publish Dr. Boer's gravamen in the Acts of Synod 1977 and declare that it is before the churches for their consideration."

"that synod appoint a committee to receive the reactions of individuals, consistories and classes, to study the gravamen in the light of Scripture, and to advise *the Synod of 1980* (italics mine, JHP) as to the cogency of the gravamen and how it should further be dealt with by synod."

Please note the time schedule proposed, and you will realize that synod felt that this matter could comfortably be left in the synodical mill for a long, long time. Doesn't that already say something?

I would say: it indeed does say something.

One matter that I left out but that I will deal with in a future "Review" is a decision on the "Dance Issue." This matter receives ample attention in the September issue of *The Outlook*.

J. GEERTSEMA

Ministers' Workshop

Twice a year the ministers in Ontario as well as the students at the Theological College meet together in the college for a workshop. It is a long, three-hour trip from Chatham to Hamilton, for example. So we try to make it worthwhile.

At our last workshop on June 6, Prof. H.M. Ohmann spoke to us on the topic "How to Avail Ourselves of the Old Testament." Since we have been able to avail ourselves of the benefits of this speech in *Clarion* in past issues, I do not need to give you an outline of it. However, we will pass on some of the points which came under discussion.

The recently published book of J.W. Smitt, *Opdat Vervuld Zal Worden*, came under discussion. Another colleague asked whether we do not run the danger that our preconceptions end up in our conclusions in our sermons. Our method or principles determine the conclusion. Or is there not the danger that ministers try to discover something new and ingenious? When redemptive-historical (heilshistorisch) preaching made its entrance, was there not the danger that the min-

ister took an attitude of, "I see what you do not see"? As you can tell from these questions, the ministers scrutinized themselves thoroughly. While speaking about preaching from the Old Testament, a natural question to be raised was how important the concept of the covenant was. Our learned professor gave adequate answers. If he did not, his colleagues either came to his rescue or they "pounced" on him. A very interesting question which aroused much good discussion was, "How much did the patriarchs know about Christ?"

During lunch break the ladies took care of our bodily needs. As usual, it was a hearty meal, and we enjoyed the hour of fellowship.

In the afternoon a number of questions were aired and discussed. The first one concerned the use of the lot in the election of office-bearers (in case of a tie vote). Only in Acts 1 do we find the lot used in appointing an office-bearer. Is this not a special case? After Pentecost can the church not rely on the Spirit to guide and to enlighten them in these matters? And if

the lot is used to elect a person, is it then proper still to announce the name of the person chosen by lot to the congregation for approbation? And finally, if the lot is eliminated, how can a tie be broken? Should the oldest be chosen or should the consistory decide since it must give leadership? These questions were submitted for consideration. As you can understand, many worthwhile and also sad experiences were given as illustrations in order to substantiate one's viewpoint. Generally speaking, it was felt that the lot could be used and even with good results in particular cases. However, it was left undecided whether one could ask a congregation to approbate (approve or bring in lawful objections) to a person elected by lot.

The pastor's role in evangelism then came up for discussion. Of course, the role of preaching stands central, also in this respect. In the preaching a pastor must underline the fact that each member is a Christian who as a prophet must confess Christ before man, and as a priest must be willing to sacrifice himself for God and for his neighbour, and as a king fight against every form of evil with the Word of God.

The next workshop is to be held on January 9, 1978. Rev. J. Geertsema will speak in the morning on the topic, "The Covenant and the Sermon on the Mount," while Prof. J. Faber will continue his studies on the creeds, this time on the Athanasian Creed and its peculiarities. Prof. J. Faber and Rev. W. Huizinga will see to it that the first issue of the ministerial paper finally sees the light of day. By the way, it was named *Koinonia*, the Greek word for "fellowship."

And that is all for this time.

For the workshop, W. HUIZINGA

CORRECTION:

In the previous issue of *Clarion*, a paragraph in Prof. H.M. Ohmann's article, "How Do We Avail Ourselves . . .," contains an annoying printer's error. The second paragraph in the second column on page 418 should have begun like this: "This has put its stamp on the spiritual life, the train of thought, in the circles of the men of the Secession. In the current series we wonder: How did the Church of the Secession avail itself of having the Old Testament history in the Bible?"

Writer and readers please accept our apology. THE PUBLISHER



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.



*Dr. Carl McIntire
"loses friends . . ."*

Dutch Free Reformed Synod

Hoogeveen, The Netherlands. With a slight majority (28-23), the Synod of the Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands (Free Reformed) decided to terminate the membership of these Churches in the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC). Already for some time now, there were no objections against the organization of Dr. Carl McIntire, which these churches joined in 1951. The Free Reformed Synod was of the opinion that the ICCC shows "structural faults" which lead to the domination by a few persons. The Synod was also convinced that the ICCC was rather "one-sided" in its struggle against communism, and used earthly methods to battle ungodly ideologies.

On the other hand, the Synod urged the local churches to continue local contacts with the Unaffiliated Reformed Churches (Buiten Verband).

Despite protests from North American Free Reformed ministers C. Pronk (Grand Rapids) and P. den Butter (Toronto) the Synod decided to accept the Christian Reformed Church's offer of "fraternal relations." This relation would include exchange of delegates at major assemblies, pulpit exchange, and mutual admittance to the Lord's Supper. The North American delegates argued that the Christian Reformed Church maintains the same relationship with the Reformed Churches Synodical, and that there is an "increasing Scriptural criticism" within the Christian Reformed Church. Free Reformed professors,

however, were not "pessimistic" about the deformation in the Christian Reformed Church.

EPISCOPALS SPLIT

St. Louis, Missouri. At a recent congress in St. Louis, approximately 2000 dissidents of the American Episcopal Church (Anglican) decided to found a new church in protest against the "mother church's" decision to admit women into office and to accept a new Prayer Book. The new church will take the name "Anglican Church of North America," and will total approximately half a million members.

METHODIST-LUTHERAN TALKS

Epworth, Georgia. During the month of December, there will be an International Congress for discussion between the Methodist and Lutheran World Associations, to be held in Georgia. The talks are meant to determine how a continuing dialogue could best be set up. The Lutheran World Association already has such contacts with the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches.

TIES RE-ESTABLISHED

Hamilton, New Zealand. The Synod of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand has replaced its presently suspended sister church relationship with the Reformed Churches (Synodical) in The Netherlands by a new category: "Correspondence Church." This seeks to re-establish ties, but requires that transferring members and ministers first undergo examination. (RES NE)

CI. STAM

school X crossing

With this column we travel into the rugged interior of British Columbia, into an area spotted with place names like Kiskegas, Kitwanga, Nanika, and Nanina, to a town with the rather uninspiring name of Smithers. How unfortunate that our people in that region decided not to settle around towns such as Quick, Ootsa Lake, or Vander Hoof. All of these names would have looked so much more exciting and romantic for Churches than that common: The Can. Ref. Church of Smithers. Would it not have added a special frontier-quality to our Churches' Yearbook to have come across the Can. Ref. Church of Kiskegas? The only people who have shown any imagination in that respect are the brothers and sisters who settled around Chilliwack. Nearly all other place-names in our Churches are nicely respectable and totally colourless.

The name of Smithers may be uninspiring, but the school bulletins of its Can. Ref. School, "Ebenezer," are not. Fortunately for Smithers' Ebenezer, there is someone there who with exemplary faithfulness mails out school bulletins. That same person apparently took Rev. M. Werkman, the previous columnist, to task for not making mention of Smithers frequently enough. Since I have no desire to arouse *Mrs. Ann Penninga* to renewed heights of fury, I hereby submit an entire column based on school bulletins from Smithers going back to June 1977. In this effort I will employ that time-honoured method known as the "Dutch-Agricultural," which in its native language is known as "te hooi en te gras."

School boards are apparently dealing, with greater frequency than before, with requests for admission by parents who are not Canadian Reformed. Frequently the Society's constitutional documents will contain a clause which explains that such "other" enrollment is entirely at the discretion of the Board. In order to avoid complete arbitrariness in dealing with such cases, and to give some direction to the Board's discussion of such applications, more than one Board has given thought to drawing up guidelines or

policy papers on this issue. In Smithers the following proposed guidelines were placed before the Society:

Applications for enrollment of children of parents who do not qualify for membership of the school society shall be handled by the board, using the following guidelines:

The parents of these prospective students must desire biblical education for their children according to the Reformed standards of doctrine, and must agree to abide by the constitution and by-laws of the school. In case the board cannot decide unanimously on the application for such students, the matter may be placed before a general membership meeting upon request of the minority in the board.

Another problem which Smithers' Board has tackled, one with which also other School boards are confronted, is the matter of nominations. In Smithers the proposed solution is:

Nominations for board member shall be submitted in writing 20 days prior to the election meeting. All nominations must be signed by two members of the society and bear the signature of consent of the nominee. After the slate has been drawn up there will be no further nominations allowed from the floor.

These are tough rules that, I believe, other Boards would like to introduce, but so far have not, for fear that members will accuse them of taking away their participatory opportunities, and a nominee's signature of consent is usually difficult to get.

A rule which would probably not be popular with many teachers among us is the one which proposes that full-time staff become advisory members only, without a right to vote.

The Ebenezer school has had remarkable success this year in obtaining staff applications from The Netherlands. There were at least six, possibly seven, applications from Dutch teachers. This at a time when we are being cautioned against any reliance on The Netherlands as a possible source for Reformed teachers. The staff at Ebenezer now consists of *Mr. M. Moeliker*, Principal; *Mr. W. Den Hollander*, *Mr. J. Plug*, *Mr. W.J. Kanis*, and the two new arrivals from The Netherlands: *Miss T. Vroom* and *Mr. K. Jagersma*. In addi-

tion there is a part-time staff of three for the teaching of Physical Education, Typing, and Needlework.

The Principal has set aside Monday evenings for those who wish to speak with him, and he will be in the school for this from 7:00 to 8:00 o'clock. This, especially for the larger schools, might be an excellent way of reducing the strain upon the Principal who must often devote so much of his time, at all hours of the weekday and weekend, to answering parents' queries.

The nicest are often the littlest touches, and to that category belongs the following: The typist of Ebenezer's bulletin types at the bottom of each page, in the right hand corner, the first word that appears on the next page and underlines it. This makes reading a bulletin, especially if it (be)comes unstapled, a lot easier.

It's difficult to say from here, but it would seem that the Smithers' Board may be a little less than enthusiastic about the idea of receiving government grants. Their bulletin carried an article, written by a Victoria (B.C.) business man, who is introduced as an "outsider." In the article a dire warning is sounded against accepting government grants because it would effectively eliminate the freedom with which the private schools operate. According to that author:

(B.C.) Education ministry mandarins are now gearing up policies which tell private school headmasters what to teach, how to teach it, when to teach it, what texts to use, what time to spend on courses, what size to make the classrooms, what equipment to purchase, what forms to fill in, what the school hours must be, how to keep attendance, whom to enroll and not to enroll, what size to make the playground, and what survey test to write.

In various bulletins of the Smithers' school, there is reference to a Bill 33 and a brother who is making a study of it. Perhaps with his cooperation and that of others involved with our Canadian Reformed Schools in British Columbia, more can be written about this issue in future *Clarions*. Of particular interest would be the attitude of B.C.'s F.I.S.A. (Federation of Independent School Associations) and the response to this organization from our Canadian Reformed Schools.

All the way from Australia, by way of Smithers' bulletin, is the following quotation. It was taken from an address originally given by Rev. K.

Bruning of Armadale (W.A.) at the opening of the Reformed High School there.

Protection is not the first or main point of the (School's) programme. The School has the task and the calling to educate God's children in such a way, that they may become faithful people; capable, wise, and skilled workers in this country and this State. It is the task of the School to equip the youngsters for this scriptural and positive aim It also means that you cannot shut your eyes for the evil spirits and philosophies which are in the world. You cannot be silent at School about all sorts of evil systems and teachings; our children must know in which world they have to live and work. *We must avoid a false idea of isolation* [emphasis mine, J.J.K.]. The School is not a cloister with big concrete walls to destroy every contact with the world outside. The School should have clean windows at the world, and give wise and well considered answers to the modern and apostate ideas.

These are timely words in Australia, we may expect. They would seem to be not altogether out of place in our Churches. The isolation from which the Church derives strength is the isolation she is willy-nilly driven into by the hostility of the world. It is not that isolation which the Church at times seems to pursue with a kind of vigour that serves to hide her insecurity.

What do the children of Smithers like to be when they grow up? One would like to be a big truckdriver with a small plane. Another young man wants to be a doctor; one girl a nurse. Another young lady wants to be a police woman and work on the computer that links Smithers with Ottawa. There is one youngster who wants to be a poet and another who would like to be the pilot of a muffler-less bush plane. Other occupations mentioned are teacher, housewife, mechanic, and hairdresser. One youngster writes: "I like to be misr nobody."

Two features about Smithers' bulletin are particularly helpful to someone as far removed from the scene as I. First, there appear in every bulletin (sometimes several) brief reports of Board meetings. By means of these it is quite simple to trace the development of certain decisions and keep abreast of all new business before the school and society. Second, each issue of the bulletin contains a brief financial report. At a time when it is becoming more and more difficult to make the ends of Reformed education meet, these brief financial statements

serve as frequent reminders to the members that a Treasurer awaits the clink of coin in the coffers.

Much more could be written about Smithers' school: about its rulers, 140 of them, and how they all seem to have disappeared; about its typewriters and how the students must supply their own; how it nearly enrolled a student from Hong Kong, but then decided to let Guido de Brès High School in Ontario have that honour(able gentleman). But you will have heard enough to know that in Smithers all is well with the school.

The waters of the Bulkley will be running cold by now. Perhaps also this winter moose will appear around the school building in Smithers. Snow will

have fallen by now perhaps, and snow shoes and skis are coming out of storage. A young poet will try to catch creation's beauty in verse, and a young police woman dream of identifying a sinister visitor to town with her computer. A daring mountain rescue will be performed by a young pilot in a bush plane minus muffler. And the dreams and aspirations of youth are corrected and channeled by the painstaking efforts of teachers who, in fidelity with the parents, are to educate these children to a purpose that soars above the highest mountain and runs wider than the broadest river: The glory of the Name of God.

J.J. KUNTZ

A Ship Aground is a Beacon at Sea

(Een Schip op een Zant, een Baken in Zee)

*Port! hard a-port! starboard your helm! look out!
See what our neighbour in the Schuyt's about!
Upon a sand-spit there, as sure as day,
He's hard and fast; right in the course we lay!
Give her a good wide berth, my mate, that we
Clear well the sand-tail where those breakers be.
They'll never pole her off — to strive in vain;
With ebbing-tide as now, there she'll remain:
And should the wind chop round and blow to shore,
She'll break her rudder, or get damage more.
Reader! look well to this, and let it be
A caution in life's voyage unto thee.
The skipper who describes a ship aground,
No beacon needs to guide, nor lead to sound:
And truly prudent is that man alone
Who by another's fault can mend his own.*

*Many who have themselves but little skill
To shape their course where peril may accrue,
Avert full oft the greater share of ill,
Who take example from what others do.
For youth, than this, there is no better school;
For men, no milder discipline and rule,
Than well t' observe, and weigh with prudent care
The acts of others from the fruit they bear.*

JACOB CATS, 1577-1660
Trans. R. Pigot (1860)

Editorial Information

It does not happen very often that the editorial committee has the opportunity to have a meeting. We did have one shortly after the Convocation which was held on the ninth of September. When you have the opportunities, you have to make use of them. That's what we did.

In the first place we reviewed the course followed thus far and we did not see any reason why we should change that course. Although we were aware that we are far from perfect and that much remains to be desired, we come to the conclusion that, generally speaking, no change was required or even desired by the majority of the readers. Since we conducted the survey more than a year ago, the reactions which we have received from our readers do not show a different picture than the survey which we reported in the Year-end issue of 1976.

Besides reviewing the past we also discussed and made plans for the future, and we decided to inform our readers extensively about these plans, for we should like to invite all our readers to use their influence and connections to promote the well-being of our magazine and the edification of the membership.

From various readers we received the request whether we could not insert a column "Meditation." We decided to try it. A letter has gone out to various ministers requesting them to take care of one month per year, which means two "meditations" or popular-exegetical articles per year. We have good hopes that they will accede to our request and accept our invitation on your behalf.

We do not insist on "meditations." In the course of the study for the sermon-preparation every minister "discovers" certain things which he would love to share with others and which are not suitable for working into a sermon. The ministers who have been asked to take part in this undertaking will have the right to give a popular-exegetical article instead of a meditation. As long as our insight into the Holy Scriptures is improved by what is presented, we shall be happy and grateful for the cooperation.

The present columns will be retained. We shall also try to add some columns for which our readers have asked or which we consider to be beneficial.

There is in the first place a special corner and column for our sisters, a column in which cooking, sewing, etc., are discussed, in which hints can be given for the better preparation of meals, questions regarding all sorts of problems which pop up with the fulfilling of the daily task in the home. Perhaps we shall have to content ourselves with a once-a-month appearance of such a column, but as long as we have a start, we have no worries about the continuation. If you have any specific questions, send them to us, and we shall try to find a sister who is capable of taking care of this. We have been looking around for a contributor in this field and are not without hope. Our readers are the ones who have to provide work for such a contributor. Do you have a tip for housewives? Send it to us. Have you discovered an easier way of doing certain things? Let's hear it. Do you have a special recipe which is well-loved by the members of the family? Let's have it; we'll publish it for the benefit of all families.

We do not doubt that you understand what we mean. It will also make the magazine become more attractive and interesting.

Could we not make something of this column?

What we have sorely missed for quite a number of years is a political forum, a column in which the events of the day are discussed and analyzed. During the last couple of years the political awareness has been growing among us, and plans have been made to establish political study societies.

We have decided to make a serious effort at inserting such a political column. We have sent a request to one brother to provide us once a month with a review of the political events at the international level, and we have done the same for a review of the national political happenings and developments. We have not yet received a reply to our request, but our readers

know in any case that we are working on it.

A few issues ago we made mention of a column for the sick. No reaction has been received to those remarks; and yet we should like to have a corner for our brothers and sisters who have been ill for a long time or who would like to have some contact because they feel lonely. There may be names that have to be mentioned of those who have suffered a great loss, and so on. Briefly: there should be a column for the big Family in which the brothers and sisters see the unity of the believers where ever they may be.

We have found a sister who would be willing to take care of this column, but she cannot do it without the help of our readers. Inform us of any lengthy illness, whether it concerns a young member or an older member. If possible, give some particulars.

The column "Church News" could be used far better than it is being used. Sometimes members complain that they read the Church News from Canada in the Dutch press weeks before they finally see it mentioned in *Clarion*. That is partly caused by the fact that our magazine has to be mailed a full week before the official date of issue, and even then we experience more than once that it takes two weeks for the addressee to get it. Partly, however, it is caused by a lack of cooperation on the part of the membership. If anyone knows that his or her minister has received a call, why not write a brief note to that effect to Premier Printing and mail it right away? And if a minister has made a decision, or if you know that he has made a decision, why not send a little note to Winnipeg, informing them of that decision? Our printer oftentimes tries to find out by means of phone-calls whether a decision has been made, or whether rumours concerning a call are correct. Our readers would make things much easier for the publisher if they informed him right away of important events or decisions in the life of the local Church.

Our readers would also benefit from a column dealing with music. We were thinking of a column in which new records are discussed and evaluated. A request has gone out to a

brother who is knowledgeable in this field. If you would know of anyone else who could help us in this area, please let us know.

Special articles and topics, too, had the attention of the editorial committee. A few brethren in The Netherlands have declared themselves willing to contribute one or two articles on specific topics. For this we are thankful. We have requested others who are capable to contribute two or three articles on topics from their special field in the course of the 1978 volume. It is obvious that we should not mention any names, since they have not yet had the opportunity to reply to our letter.

Of all the above decisions and plans we wish to inform our readers so that they may see that it is our constant endeavour to improve our magazine and to serve the membership better. For this work, and in order that this goal may be achieved, we need the cooperation of all and every one, especially of brothers and sisters who have made special study of such things as may be considered of interest to our readers. When we wish to do so, we can make any topic interesting. The main question is whether we all are willing to employ our gifts readily and cheerfully to the advantage and salvation of other members.

That is our endeavour.

We hope for a good and broad cooperation.

May the Lord our God strengthen us in this endeavour and cause us to succeed to the edification of His Church and the glory of His Name.

vO

Church News

Called:

Candidate:

E.J. TIGGELAAR

of Hamilton, Ontario to Guelph, Ontario.

Accepted: REV. J. VISSCHER

of Coaldale, Alberta to Cloverdale, B.C.

PRESS RELEASE

of Regional Synod, held in the *Rehoboth Canadian Reformed Church* at Burlington West on September 21, 1977.

1. Rev. C. VanDam, on behalf of the convening Church at Brampton, calls the meeting to order. Psalm 92:1 and 2 are sung, followed by the reading of Romans 12:1-12 and prayer. The delegates are welcomed. The brs. J. Nordeman and C. Walinga are requested to check the credentials. Rev. P. Kingma requests permission to leave the meeting because of the sudden death of a member of the Church at Smithville. This request is granted. The brs. Rev. J. Geertsema and W.D. Meester phoned in that they would arrive some time later.

2. The credentials are found to be in good order. The following delegates are present: From Classis Ontario North the ministers: Rev. C. Oly, Rev. Cl. Stam, Rev. C. VanDam, and Rev. W.W.J. VanOene; and the elders: J. Bol, J.J. Knegt, J. Nordeman, and B.J. Harsevoort, alternate for Br. M. Buist. From Classis Ontario South: the ministers Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. W. Huizinga, Rev. P. Kingma, and Rev. M. Werkman; and the elders: M. Hofsink, K. Linde, W.D. Meester, and C. Walinga.

3. Election Officers results in: Chairman, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene; clerk, Rev. W. Huizinga, and assessor Rev. C. Oly.

4. Regional Synod is constituted.

5. The agenda is adopted.

6. Incoming Mail. a. A letter from Br. M. Buist, stating that he due to circumstances is prevented from attending Synod. He notified his alternate.

b. A letter from the Church at Coaldale, Alberta, convening Church of General Synod, requesting to receive the names of the brethren delegated to this Synod as soon as possible.

c. A letter from the church at Burlington West with an overture to Synod in regard to a decision of Classis Ontario North re: Contact with the Korean Presbyterian Church at Toronto. During the discussion of this overture the brethren Rev. J. Geertsema and W.D. Meester arrive at Synod. Regional Synod decides that this appeal is inadmissible on the ground that Regional Synod 1976 has dealt with the same matter (cf. Acts, Article 9).

7. There are no instructions.

8. Reports. A report from Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, q.q. convener of the Committee re: Mortmain, Charitable uses and Religious Institutions (see Regional Synod 1976, Acts, Article 6b). Synod receives this report and discharges the committee.

A report from the treasurer of Regional Synod, Br. J. Schuller, R.I.A. who also requests to be relieved as a treasurer.

A report from the Church at Hamilton on auditing the books of the treasurer of Regional Synod. The records were found to be in good order. Synod, expressing its thank-

fulness for the work done, decides to grant the request of Br. J. Schuller to be relieved of his appointment as treasurer of Regional Synod.

A report from the Church at Brampton re: checking the archives of Regional Synod 1976. Not all the necessary documents were available. The clerk of that Synod will be requested to check his personal archives.

The deputees ad Article 49, Church Order of Classis Ontario South report their supervision of the peremptory examination of Candidate H. Versteeg at Classis Ontario North, held on September 7, 1977 at Thornhill, Ontario. This report is received by Synod.

After recess for lunch, roll call is held. All delegates, except Rev. P. Kingma, are present.

9. *Appointments.* For treasurer Regional Synod Br. P.L. Schuller, 35 Oriole Crescent, Grimsby, Ontario (phone: 945-8952).

Auditor: Church at Lincoln.

Archives: Church at Toronto.

Checking of archives: Church at Brampton. Every five years, starting this year, a thorough check will be made.

Deputies ad Article 49, Church Order: for Ontario South: Revs. C. Oly, W.W.J. VanOene and Rev. Cl. Stam (secundus); for Ontario North: Revs. J. Geertsema, W. Huizinga, and M. Werkman (secundus).

Nominated as Governors for the Theological College are: Revs. P. Kingma, J. Mulder, W.W.J. VanOene as primi and the Revs. J. Geertsema, W. Huizinga, Cl. Stam as secundi.

Delegates General Synod 1977 at Coaldale, Alberta. Elected are: as primi ministers: Revs. J. Geertsema, W. Huizinga, C. Oly, and W.W.J. VanOene; as secundi ministers: Revs. P. Kingma, Cl. Stam, C. VanDam, and M. Werkman (in that order);

As primi elders: Brs. J. Bol, J.G. Feenstra, B.H. Harsevoort, and C. Walinga; as secundi elders: Brs. P.J. Scholtens, A. Vandersluis, L. Rozema, and H. VanderVelde (in that order).

Convening Church next Regional Synod (1978): the Church at Chatham.

10. Personal Question Period. Some use is made of it.

11. Censure ad Article 43, Church Order is not necessary.

12. The Acts are read and adopted.

13. The Press Release is read and approved.

14. The chairman thanks the delegates for their cooperation, requests to sing Psalm 108:1 and 2, and closes the meeting with prayer.

For the Regional Synod,
C.OLY, Assessor i.t.

OUR COVER

Bluenose II. Photo courtesy Nova Scotia Communication and Information Centre.

news medley

This time we are going to start far, far away, all the way in Korea. That's where, at the time of this writing, the Rev. D. De Jong is travelling, talking, conferring, gathering information and all the other things which are connected with and involved in being an emissary. Upon the request of the World Relief Fund in Ontario and the Korea Relief Fund in Edmonton, the Rev. De Jong went to Korea for a ten day trip which certainly will not have been a holiday. On the contrary, he will need a holiday after he has come back.

Although I would have liked to see two brethren go there (in the mouth of two every word shall be established) yet I am happy already that one brother went to Korea to investigate matters there in person.

For many years now we have been sending money to Korea in support of orphanages and, in the case of Churches in Ontario, for the support of widows and orphans of deceased Korean ministers. The correspondence is oftentimes frustrating. You ask questions but do not get an answer to them; you ask for a report on how the money is spent and how the spending of the money is checked, and a deadly silence is the only reply. In the best cases you get an answer which reveals just as much as the one who does answer wishes to let go. Never is any information volunteered. And the cheques go across the ocean at regular intervals, year after year after year. Our latest Newsletter from the World Relief Fund here in Ontario attests to such frustration and feeling of facing a wall. For that reason I am happy that finally someone goes there to have a look and to try to get an answer to questions. Rev. De Jong received instructions and a list of questions, we read in Edmonton's bulletin. Hopefully we shall get some clarifications now.

His visit is also used by the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad. The Rev. M. Van Beveren tells us in the Valley's **Church News**: "With a view to their report on contact with the Presbyterian Church in Korea our Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad used the opportunity to request Rev. De Jong to obtain some first-hand information."

Let's land on the West Coast and tell you a few more particulars about the Churches in British Columbia.

The Consistory report of New Westminster tells us, "The chairman reports on correspondence with minister in the Netherlands about prospect for second missionary in Brazil." Although it does not say whether this minister himself would be the prospective candidate for that "position," I have the impression that that is indeed the case. And then I am twice as grateful for this contact. In the first place it is good to have a second missionary in the field (I shall come back to that later on) and in the second place, I am firmly convinced that one who goes into the mission work should have been in the ministry for several years before he goes out into the heathen world there to be faced with all the "problems" which a minister here faces, increased by the number of specific situations which occur only in the mission field.

I am grateful for it that there are brethren who lovingly and with dedication give themselves for the task of preach-

ing the Gospel to faraway heathen and who do so without the benefit of an experience as a minister of the Gospel in the homeland. But it would make it much easier for them to answer many questions which will come up once they are there, if they had had the experience of working here in a Church, learning, no, not the "tricks of the trade," but at least the "routine" (in the good sense of the word) in the Congregation. Every colleague will agree with me that especially those first years are very fruitful for one's ministry. The benefit which a young minister reaps from the experience of wise elders, their good counsel and their wisdom cannot be evaluated highly enough. To go into the mission work straight from the College, armed with only a few extra courses and special preparatory instruction but without the benefit of practical work in the congregation appears to me to be an almost impossible task.

This, as every one will understand, I hope, is no reflection on anyone personally. I only express my hope that in the future we shall grant our brethren who have expressed the wish to enter the ministry of bringing the Gospel to the heathen the time first to serve a Congregation here for at least three or four years before sending them out to faraway regions. This may mean an interruption in the work faraway, but in the long run it can only be beneficial in every respect.

That's why I am happy that Rev. Van Beveren's correspondence was with a minister of the Word.

And now that I am speaking of mission work and missionaries anyway, let me mention that the two Burlingtons as well as the Hamilton Church are intending to ask Toronto to release them from their commitments to Toronto in order that they may send out a missionary on their own.

Apart from the question whether these Churches should be released at the present time — now that there is no prospect, as far as I know, of seeing the newly created vacancies filled — there is the question whether or not first of all Toronto should send out a second missionary to work together with the Rev. H. Versteeg.

Release of the three above mentioned Churches would result in an increase in contributions for the other Churches who continue their support for Toronto while the Churches that were released from their commitments to Toronto would not be able to use their own contributions, at least not for the purpose for which they were freed from their obligations. And the only reason why they were released was that they wished to send out a missionary on their own. Morally they would be allowed to use their (former) contributions to Toronto only for their own mission work; but for as long as that work has not been begun (for lack of a missionary) why, then, burden the other Churches with increased contributions? That is a question to which I know no answer. And then I also ask whether it would then not be better when Toronto would look for a second missionary in harmony with the example which our Saviour set when sending out His disciples and the seventy, and the example of the Antioch Church which was commanded by the Holy Spirit to separate Paul and Barnabas for the work to which He had chosen them.

I realize that the amount which we set aside for the mission work is very low. I should like to pass on to you what I read in the Hamilton bulletin. The Consistory took note of a report regarding the feasibility of starting their own mission work. "Even without help from other Churches this would represent a cost of less than \$3.00 per week per communicant member. It is pointed out that our present contributions to mission work amount to \$0.30 per week per communi-

cant member. This seems an unacceptably low amount."

Indeed, when we figure things out on a weekly basis, it is a trifling amount. And we certainly should increase it. Although I do not wish to forget all the other contributions which are being asked of our membership. Taking together what is being asked for the maintenance of the ministry of the Gospel, for the care of the needy, for the mission aid, for the maintenance of our schools, I come to a weekly average which is quite high. An amount of fifty-five to seventy dollars per week would not seem to be far out. Those are things which we are to take into account when figuring. There are not a few among our membership for whom just another two dollars per week could be the straw that brings the camel's back close to the breaking point.

True, we should never be content with the present level of contributions and we should also bear in mind that, if every one without exception would be faithful and not leave it up to just a few or the more faithful ones, we would see a dramatic increase in income for the Church and a lightening of the burdens for many among us.

All those things will have to be considered. I just give some points to ponder and to take into account with the weighing of the pros and cons.

Hamilton published more. The committee which was charged with studying the whole matter of mission work came with a report which led to the above remarks. They are requested to continue their studies and, before any other steps are to be taken, "The Church of Toronto should be contacted again, with a request to release us from our obligations to the mission work of that church."

Further, Hamilton decided to support the radio broadcast work of the churches of Burlington. That work of radio broadcasts received another shot in the arm when on the League Day of the Women's Societies "a collection was held for 'The Voice of the Church,' resulting in an amount well over \$200.00." That's what the Rehoboth bulletin tells us. And since we are there now anyway, let's have some more news from there.

They had a Thanksgiving Collection, which was also for "The Voice of the Church." No amount has been mentioned as yet, so I don't know how much that yielded. The Rehoboth Burlington Consistory also instructed its mission committee "to study East's proposal carefully and to report their findings to us and also to the Congregation." Those proposals are, as you'll recall, the proposal to conduct the mission work together with the Church of Burlington-West.

As a result of the visit by Mr. P. Jongeling and the various speeches which he delivered here and there, there seems to be some political activity in the making. The Rev. Cl. Stam, at least, reports in the bulletin that "Various members have approached me in connection with the organization of a local Political Study Society."

With the coming of the winter season the family visits are also beginning to be made. In this respect the elders sometimes experience quite some difficulty in making arrangements for the visit. "Some elders," Rev. Stam writes, "make 12 phone calls without results, and the appointments made are sometimes cancelled." Such things should not happen among us.

As for a "theme" for the family visits, various Consistories did discuss the question and some did give some guidelines for the visits during this season. In Burlington-West they were of the opinion that a "strict theme was considered inadvisable" but they did decide that special atten-

Continued on page 454.



It was a joyous event when in the evening of September 16, 1977, Candidate H. Versteeg was ordained as missionary of the Church of Toronto. The service was conducted by Rev. J. Mulder who opened the Scriptures at Psalm 136, this great song of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord. All ministers present took part in the laying on of hands when Candidate Versteeg was ordained with the beautiful words of the form for ordination.

For his inaugural sermon Rev. Versteeg had chosen II Corinthians 2:14-17:

But thanks be to God, Who in Christ always leads us in triumph, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word; but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

The message was that the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ is a triumphant ministry and that in this ministry God speaks through us, and we speak in Christ.

God is at work through us and this gives all of us strength and consolation. In a way we are all missionaries, instrumental in spreading the fragrance of the knowledge of God everywhere. We, in the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, are the aroma of Christ to God. This preaching is a delight of God and fully acceptable to Him. It is to go out to all peoples, tribes and nations.

tion should be given to Family Worship. In Brampton they will pay special attention to "The Holy Spirit and our Sanctification." The Brampton Consistory had no objections to the Burlingtons going on their own in the matter of mission work.

Before we move on, I should like to pass on the following quotation from the Ebenezer Burlington bulletin. "For the past 4 or 5 years, the young people in Burlington have been visiting the Grace Nursing Home on Plains Road. Although in its beginnings, this visit was strictly social, it has now become a time when we can share with the aged some of the hope that lies within us." It is nice to learn time and again that our members (and then especially the young people) show mercy to others and give them Christian compassion.

We are jumping back and forth a little, from the one Church to the other, but then, we should not establish a rigid pattern. That takes the "liveliness" out of things, I think. Back, for a moment, to Brampton. With one sentence I was thinking, "How's that again?" Judge for yourselves: "We wish you a blessed time and an eventful safe return in our midst." And in order that no one may think that I am after certain bulletins only, what about this in the **Family Post** under Lincoln: "At the Classis last Wednesday, candidate E.J. Tiggelaar passed his examination and was admitted to the ministry in the Churches." That's the newest in the field of Church Polity, I thought: someone who has not even been declared eligible for call nor has received a call, admitted to the ministry. We'll count that among the stumblings to which even a good horse may sometimes fall a prey.

We have almost exhausted our supply of news in Ontario. Just a few items from Toronto.

There is in the first place the information that an attempt will be made to acquire two more boards for the front wall in the main auditorium on which the Scripture passage to be read can be mentioned and the text for the sermon. I have an idea that I know what that is for. Toronto was always used to having the whole liturgy for the Sunday printed in their bulletin, which each one could take before the services started, so that the worshippers knew what they would have to sing and what the sermon would be about. That is nice, but there is just one drawback: That means that the sermons will have to be fully prepared before the bulletin is printed. At least: the whole liturgy has to be selected by Friday evening at the latest. I think that colleague Mulder has the very same difficulty which I have: I myself do not select the liturgy until after the sermon-preparation has been completed, which may be early Sunday morning, sometimes between two and three, sometimes slightly before midnight. No one, I'm sure, will appreciate it to be phoned in the middle of the night to write down what psalms will be sung, which Scripture parts will be read. I am perfectly willing to give anyone who wants to know a call as soon as I have written those particulars down. They'll have to take a big risk!

I admire the colleagues who start their sermon preparations — according to the rules! — on Monday morning. I have great respect for such an obvious self-control and I have never been able to produce that virtue. Perhaps laziness. Besides, when all the particulars are mentioned on Psalm boards in the main auditorium, I, for one, cannot see the necessity of having the whole liturgy printed in the bulletin. I sympathize with my Toronto colleague.

One of the points which, unfortunately, have to be dealt with periodically by the Consistory is the point of voluntary contributions. The Toronto Consistory decided that the treasurer will "provide the Ward Elders each year in September with a list of contributions made the previous year

and the current year up till September by the families and single members of that particular ward."

We have adopted the rule that the whole matter of contributions shall be a topic of discussion at the Consistory meetings once every two months. We appointed two brethren who together will decide which names shall be passed on to the Consistory for further action. If those two brethren are of the opinion that a brother or sister does not contribute according to what the Lord gave to him, they mention name and amount at the meeting of the Consistory, and the elders then take further action. The advantage of this method is that not of every one the amount contributed is known; further, we don't have to wait till September, for every two months we automatically have the point on the agenda; and thirdly it is not **necessary** that the elders know exactly how much each family or single person in their section contributes. It is no shame to know it or to have it known, but you know the Dutch saying: " 'tGeheim van één weet God alleen; 't geheim van twee weet iedereen." (One man's secret is known to God alone; the secret of two is known by all.)

Landing in Winnipeg, we admire the easy way in which the brethren there accomplish things. "A redistribution of wards was made up, during a coffeekick." Perhaps it wasn't as easy as it seems to have been. Some preparation, I think, preceded that coffeekick.

The selling of flowers and plants was a success as may appear from the following: "From the Flower People. After a most successful summer of selling bedding plants, we report now that a profit of \$2,700.00 was made . . . We hope to increase our profit even more next year by selling small trees, shrubs, perennials and the like." From their profit the "Flower People" donated the bulk to the school. Some \$200.00 went to the "organ fund" which, as far as I know, no longer exists. At least it is defunct by now, for we read in the report on the Consistory meeting that "A cheque for \$200.00 was received from the flowerstand people, for the benefit of the organ fund. It was decided to close the account, and add the money to the church account."

Other activities are reported by the Birthday Committee. One of the activities of that committee is, I presume, to send you a birthday greeting for which a donation is expected. Those donations are put to good use. The kitchen in the Church building is outfitted from the proceeds. Thirty-seven yards of material were purchased for table cloths to be used when dinners are given in the basement; and, finally, "a lace tablecloth has been ordered for use in the church for the occasion of weddings." Happy birthday to you.

Civic recognition came in the form of a request for permission "to use the Church building as a polling station, during the civic elections on October 26th." It was granted.

We did already say something about Edmonton. A few more things. If anyone should think that there are no ministers available for call, he would do well to check the list which the members of the Edmonton Church gave to the Consistory. No fewer than forty-seven letters came in and together these letters brought no fewer than fourteen names of ministers to the attention of the Consistory. They come from Australia and Canada, from South Africa and The Netherlands. The Consistory decided, among others, that a single nomination will be presented to the congregation to vote on.

It is about time that we come to a close. The organ in Smithers will be about ready by the time you receive this issue. From a brother from Smithers who was visiting here I got a drawing showing the appearance of the Organ. There

was also a specification of the stops. Although I do not know much about it, it looks like a very nice instrument to me. The organ contains a total of 545 pipes of which there are 36 made of wood (oak) and 509 made of an alloy of zinc and tin. The Consistory decided to send a letter "to the Consistory of Carman, Man., with the request to release the Rev. J. Van Rietschoten for a preaching engagement, and to be present at the dedication of the new organ, near the end of October." That is a nice gesture, one which will most certainly be greatly appreciated by the Rev. Van Rietschoten who himself is quite adept at the organ.

We conclude our trip in the Valley.

The Senior Citizen Resthome Association was requested by the board to consider various possibilities how to deal with the property they have. It should be considered, the Board proposed, whether they can go together for a High

School building and for a Church building for the Langley Church. I have the impression that the Board are in favour of such a combination. It is important, they say, to have a rest-home close to a Church building so that elderly members can walk to Church instead of being dependent on a ride from someone. And as for a school building, would it not be nice, they ask, when the elderly people can see their grandchildren go to the High School? Another argument and, perhaps, the most forceful one, is that combining things is the most economical way of arranging, organizing, and operating things.

And with these wise remarks still ringing in our ears we part.

Till next time, the Lord willing.

vO

Books

How to be Born Again by Billy Graham, published by Word Books, Waco, Texas. Reviewed by Gerry Denbok.

When publishers decide on the size of the first-print run for a certain book, they must express their faith in the potential of this book. Well, Word Incorporated, Billy Graham's new publisher (it used to be Doubleday) expressed this faith when they decided on the largest first-print run ever in clothbinding (for a non-fiction book): 800,000 copies. This, of course, does not indicate quality, and time will tell whether Word was correct or not.

As the title indicates, this is another "How to" book: to become what one is not yet — a book to give the directions to be followed. It is intended for those who know that they are not yet born-again, and for those who want to instruct others in this "how to."

The basic approach of the book is sound, in that it follows the basic three steps of Scripture as expressed in our Heidelberg Catechism: "Misery, Redemption, Thankfulness." Billy Graham calls these: "Man's Problem, God's Answer, and Man's Response." And in speaking about "regeneration or rebirth" Dr. Graham avoids a narrow view also (page 10): "this new birth may happen in all kinds of ways, it may seem to happen over a period of time, or in a moment." He also avoids the perfectionist error, when he states (page 23): "But the peace of God is not the absence of tension or turmoil, but peace in the midst of tension and tur-

moil" He rejects the quest of religious experience for its own sake when he quotes the late Dr. Rookmaker (page 23): "Man today wants to experience God. It is not faith of knowledge which is the keyword, but experience." Graham also warns for neo-orthodoxy which is secretly introduced everywhere, even using the classical Christian terminology, such as "born again," "Messiah," "Christ," "redemption," etc., and admits that even theological terms, such as "evangelical" and "Infallible Bible," are rapidly losing their former meaning (page 61). And he does not confuse "sincerity" with "faith" (page 62): "Nothing could be more grossly wrong than the old cliché that 'any religion will do, as long as you are sincere.'"

Worthwhile is also the very short, but to the point, reading of what he calls the "X rays," the Ten Commandments (pages 73-75). I found chapter seven (starting on page 95) the best of the book. It is entitled: "The Man who is God." In this chapter Graham shows that the "Attributes of God" also belong to our Lord Jesus. Jesus was and is the supreme manifestation of God. God is Holy — Just — Mercy — Love — Omnipotent — Omniscient — Omnipresent. On page 119 he explains the difference between "pardon" and "justification" with a good illustration. And he does not give ground to pentecostal and charismatic claims when he clearly states on page 173: "when you were converted the Spirit of God immediately came to live in you."

This book liberally quotes from many authors, and hopefully will encourage readers of this book to read some of these authors for themselves: Rookmaker, Guinness, Lewis, Schaeffer, and Packer.

Nevertheless, this book is not Reformed. It is no accident that Graham repeats (the obvious truth!) which has been stated by many other non-Reformed Evangelicals before him: "The new birth is not just being reformed, it's being transformed." The Book is basically Arminian in its approach, even though Graham, who stands with one foot in Baptist and with the other in Presbyterian tradition, tries to avoid identification. He speaks of a "point of decision" (page 10), and "At the end of the service she was born again" (page 25), and on page 57 he says: "I am convinced that when a man sincerely searches for God with all his heart, God will reveal Himself in some way."

On page 158, the little word "almost" jumps at the Reformed reader: "If we had to repent without God's help, then we would be almost helpless." On page 160, "I open the door of my heart to Him" and again on page 162: "And finally it is your decision." On page 172 he contradicts the Reformed (Scriptural) view of infant baptism: "When you were converted, God adopted you as His son or daughter."

I recommend this book to the discerning reader, who is able to sift the chaff from the wheat. There is certainly a need for a book like this, one that is readable for those who are totally unfamiliar with the teaching and vocabulary of God's Word, but without the faults mentioned above.

G. DENBOK

Women's Convention in Burlington

In spite of cold fall weather, several hundred women prepared for a day of warmth and fellowship in the communion of saints. Our sixteenth annual convention was held on Wednesday, October 12th, at Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, Burlington, Ontario. Although we were in the same church building as last year (for the convenience of the school gym), our hostesses this year were from Rehoboth Church.

After warming up with coffee, the ladies start to file into the church, where the organist is already busy at the organ. Our president, Mrs. J.K. Riemersma, opens the meeting. We sing together Psalm 146:1, 2, and 3, after which she leads in prayer. Before her opening speech she reads to us Romans 12:9-21. In her welcome Mrs. Riemersma mentions several special guests, since there are people from Holland, mid and western Canada, as well as several gentlemen. The organist, Mr. vanderVeen, gets a special welcome. She wishes us all a blessed and joyful day, as we could sing of in Psalm 146. If we look to the Lord, the God of Jacob, for help and guidance, He will provide for all our needs, and we can rejoice in Him. A new society is also welcomed, it is "Rejoice in the Lord" of Rehoboth, Burlington. May they be stimulated to study more and more, which is the purpose of our societies. A letter of congratulations is read from our sister societies in The Netherlands.

The announcements follow: 1. Mrs. J.K. Riemersma has been re-elected as president. She accepts this in humbleness and thanks the membership for the confidence they have placed in her. 2. The collection for the day is to go to the radio broadcast "The Voice of the Church," as voted by the majority of the societies. 3. There is a book stand at the convention with study material.

Mrs. J. Dekker then gets the floor to read her report of last year's convention, which always brings back memories. It is followed by the financial report by our treasurer, Mrs. G. Stieva. The roll call shows that about 312 members are present.

We all join in the singing of our

League song, after which Mrs. Riemersma gives the floor to Mrs. W. Jager for her introduction on the Beatitudes. She shows us in her essay how God cares for His people. He blesses those who are mourning, hungry, meek, merciful, etc. (Matthew 5:3-13). She explains each of these conditions in detail, and the blessing that comes as a result. If we have the fruit of the Spirit and follow Christ's teachings, then we will be able to rejoice and be glad, for our reward is in heaven (verse 13a).

A lively discussion follows, in both languages, which did not seem to bother either president or speaker too much. The collection is held before we sing Psalm 146:4, 5, 8 in closing of the morning session.

We leave the church auditorium for the school gymnasium where a delicious lunch was prepared by our hostesses. Cold salads, "broodjes met kaas en vlees," fruit, coffee and tea are enjoyed by all, amid much chattering.

As the afternoon session starts we give a special welcome to Mrs. Mulder, who is in our midst for the first time. We then sing our national anthem, "O Canada." A note of entertainment is provided by the ladies of Burlington, who take to the pulpit a series of large letters, scramble them each time, to test the knowledge of the audience about the names of kings in the Bible. It shows that a lot of people can think very fast. Mrs. Riemersma thanks them for this game and then introduces our speaker for the afternoon, Rev. Cl. Stam, but he is asked to remain "below" the pulpit first. Mrs. Zuidhof, the vice-president, goes over to him to hand over a big, heavy bag, full of money from the collection, \$276.63. Rev. Stam accepts this very thankfully for the the radio broadcast.

After a few remarks in a light-hearted vein, Rev. Stam starts on his topic for this afternoon, "Song of Solomon," or, as he prefers, "Song of Songs," or even better, "Hooglied." To his captive audience he explains how this is a song, perhaps, to Solomon, as it portrays just the opposite of Solomon's life with his many wives. These are a series of wedding songs which show the all-encompassing love of

husband and wife, who are also brother and sister in the Lord. Only in this way can a marriage be full and satisfying throughout the years. It is a lasting love that portrays the love of Christ for His church. The speech is a stimulation to go home again, to devote ourselves to our husbands, family, the church, the Lord.

Afterwards we sing Psalm 24:1 and 2. Following that we have the discussion, during which we learn a bit more again. Mrs. Riemersma introduces Mrs. Versteeg to us, and we wish her the Lord's blessing on their work in the mission field. Many thanks are in order, first of all to Mrs. Jager and Rev. Stam: we have enjoyed them very much. Thanks go to our hostesses, the organist, and everyone who helped make the day a success. Mrs. Zuidhof speaks for us all as she thanks Mrs. Riemersma for leading our meetings so well. We sing Psalm 111:1, 2, 4, after which Rev. Stam closes with prayer. Mrs. Riemersma closes the meeting. We can go to the school once more to get coffee and goodies to sustain us on our way home. It has been a wonderful day, and we can indeed rejoice in the Lord after such a day.

A.M. BERGSMA,
Secretary

Books

W.G. De Vries, K. Schilder als Gevangene en Onderduiker, "De Vuurbaak," Groningen, 1977. Fl. 24.50.

This book has some good points.

This book as a whole does not serve the real interest of the Churches, nor does it promote the reputation of the man, part of whose life it tries to describe.

This book made me decide, as soon as I have the time, to go through all my correspondence which, as a true packrat, I have saved for years and years, and to destroy most of it, especially from those files which contain the letters exchanged with brethren whom the Lord has already taken up to Himself thus freeing them in His mercy from all difficulties and also from all their weaknesses which should not even have a chance of being made public posthumously.

vO

mission news

NEWSLETTER # 23

Dear brothers and sisters,

August is the big holiday month here, mainly due to Independence Day, which is celebrated on August 17th. Also this year many people gathered in Kouh again, the government center for this area.

We, too, went down to Kouh this year, mainly because the government appreciates our presence, but we also had several things to talk over with other ZGK folks in Kouh. Because a plane-connection didn't work out, we left Manggelum by boat on a rainy Saturday afternoon and arrived 1½ hours later in Kawagit, where we stayed for the weekend. It was good to meet others of the ZGK family again, and to be able to talk certain things over. The following Monday we said farewell to the van der Lugt family, who were going to Sentani and then on to Holland for a period of furlough. They finally could leave, five days after was planned! That same day we continued our trip to Kouh, another 2 hours by outboard. We stayed in Kouh till Saturday. In Kouh various activities were held in honour of Independence Day; games, dancing, etc. I even enjoyed watching a real "Dutch" soccer match! On the 17th a feast dinner was held at the home of the Camat (chief of this district) for all the government representatives, teachers, and missionaries. Due to a plane delay we could only be flown out of Kouh on Saturday. (You'll notice that fairly often the plane is unable to come on the day scheduled, due to flying elsewhere, or just because of bad weather.) So on Saturday Joanne and Emily could fortunately be flown to Manggelum, a 25-minute flight. The undersigned, plus the head teacher from Manggelum and a guide from Kawagit, went by boat. It took us 4¼ hours to reach Manggelum. Do you see the difference?!

From the 23rd till the 30th we had a visitor again in Manggelum: the nurse Miss Corrie van Driel, from Kouh. In that week all kinds of needles were given to people who needed them. Further we carried out a thorough examination of all the school kids present here. Approximately seventy-five kids

were examined. Corrie got both of us involved in it as well: Joanne started with checking the weight and height; measuring the upper arm and looking for a B.C.G. scar (B.C.G. is a vaccination against tuberculosis). Then Corrie took over and checked all kinds of things: hair, eyes, ears, teeth, coughing, etc. She also examined heart, liver, and spleen or milt. After that they came to me to have their finger squeezed and pricked in order to check their hemoglobin (the colour of their blood). Maybe some other time we'll say some more about the results of these examinations, so that you will get a picture of what is common around here among school-age kids. Corrie was also able to take care of a couple of patients that otherwise would have had to go to the clinic at Kawagit. It was a hectic week, but very worthwhile, and enjoyable as well.

Also during this week, the people were returning again to the village from their holiday. Usually it is very difficult to get the people back to the village again after a month like August. Last year we had no people around until the end of September! So, this time, at the end of July I asked the people who worked here (approximately 65 men/women) if they could return after four weeks. That would give them plenty of time to go and work in their gardens in the jungle. It worked out pretty good. We had many more people here at the end of August this year than last year, and so we could start working again after a four-week break.

Most of these people work at the strip-site, which is cleared for 450 meters now (100 meters to go). That doesn't mean we're almost finished. Now we can only see where we are supposed to work! I borrowed a chainsaw from our ZGK technician, Mr. Kees de Wolf in Kouh. With it I plan to cut down the heavy logs and tree trunks that are still laying around everywhere on the strip-site. After those logs, etc., are rolled off to the side, we will try to get all the roots out. Further there is then still a 4-inch thick layer of black earth to be taken off — so more than enough work to do yet, as you can see.

We also have a nice team of about eight men who are steadily cutting/sawing materials for Versteegs' house. It has been hard in the past to make up some sort of program with these people. When we needed them, there were only two or three of them around! The others were off in the jungle, and no one really knew when they would come back. It was difficult for Bapak Victor (the man from Kouh who supervises this group) and me to make any plans. Right now we are setting up more regular work, so that all of us know what's up and when! It has worked very well so far, and we have a more steady output now as well, which is good.

Regarding the present guru situation: Guru Abner from Sawagit has been transferred to another village named Waliburu, North of Kawagit. He has married one of his school girls in Sawagit in a manner that was not approved of, and, together with Reverend Zandbergen, we decided that it was better that he didn't stay and work in Sawagit any longer. We are in the process of getting another teacher into Sawagit, but are encountering some problems. Some unjustified rumours are going around about the teacher we have in mind. Others say: "We don't want him for he is from another tribe." Further only a handful of people were in the village on the two times I visited, which makes it hard to talk about it together. We agreed that after a holiday-week in the middle of September, the people would gather, and I would come again. So let us hope and pray that it may still work out. The teacher-evangelist from Manggelum is presently on holidays. Finally, after more than five years of service, he is off for several months. Their second child, as also the first child of the Heyokubun teacher and his wife, was baptized recently in Kawagit by Reverend D.J. Zandbergen. Presently we have a young man from Kawagit named Saul Domuno helping us out with the Sunday stories and also in the lowest grades in school.

Concerning the head teacher here: due to an official appointment he is about to receive, he will most likely leave us within several months. We hope that some favourable solution may be found for the kids who are presently in Grades 3 and 4. It would be good if they could somehow finish 6 grades.

In the beginning of September
Continued on next page.

About Organists and Pulpiteers

Although "pulpiteer" may not be the most honourable name for a preacher, in combination with the organists the term seems acceptable.

Having been an organist for a number of years, the present writer happens to know something about that peculiar race whom we name after the instrument they play.

Having been a pulpiteer for many more years, he feels entitled to say something about the relationship between these two groups, of which, according to some, the second group may be even more peculiar than the first!

Leaving the judgment about the preachers to others, we may, indeed, call the organists a special kind of people. This speciality they share with all musicians, even with all artists. Although at special moments it may be true of us all, as far as organists are concerned, the rule goes, "Everyone thinks his own geese are swans."

Sure, other things may and must be said about them, too. Organists are all too often taken for granted. They serve as an ornament. The great majority of church-goers never even come to think about what may be involved in being or becoming a good organist. How many prayers are sent up from them, even from the pulpit? Yours truly feels guilty in this respect.

Not only are they being taken for granted by the congregation, who talk or eat peppermints during the organist's prelude or postlude, but also by the consistories. Playing the organ must be "a work of love," they

MISSION NEWS — Continued.

Miss Janet Velvis arrived in Sentani again from Holland. As you will probably remember, Janet is the nurse from Kawagit who went to Holland for a further medical examination after being involved in a plane-crash here. Janet will be flown to Kawagit on September 14th, D.V. Also the pilot from that same plane-crash is back here and flying again. Isn't that marvelous? Our God is a gracious God! And on this happy note we'll leave you again.

Till next month,
BRAM and JOANNE VEGTER

say (or think). Whether the good man had to take expensive lessons and needs to refresh himself by buying new music — he should be only thankful that he *may* play the organ. Remuneration of organists is not our strongest point.

So much in order to get the organists on our side.

Yet, they are a peculiar race. You will hardly ever have heard an organist praise one of his colleagues. If there is a plural of organists in a congregation, quite some strife is going on behind the scenes. An organist will not too easily vacate his place for a guest organist.

Well, they are just human, as we all are; but with them it seems sometimes to be more obvious. People, even consistories, are oftentimes scared to make some critical remarks about the share of the organist in the liturgy of public worship. The keys of the organ may be thrown at you; an ultimatum, even a threat of breaking away from the church, may escape the musical lips. (Mind you, we mention only things that have already happened.)

Of course, there are all kinds of organists. You have the humble ones, humble not only because they are aware of their limitations, but also because they are deeply impressed with the serving character of their organ-playing. All they really want to do is to undergird the congregational singing, and, by their choice of music and way of playing, to support the message from the pulpit.

Others seem (I say, "seem") to consider it their task to treat the congregation to weekly organ recitals before and after the service, and even before and after and (of all things!) in between the singing of the congregation. It may happen that one only hears the organ, while our God wants to hear His people. In the past this must have been so overpowering and disturbing that, for some time, organs were banned from the church buildings.

One may wonder why these re-

marks are being made. One may even wonder whether yours truly has a beef against our esteemed brethren the organists whose work hardly ever receives due appreciation.

Be it far from me.

Having been asked what should be done if an organist is tempted to deliver organ concerts (on the Lord's Day), the answer was: that's a matter for the "pulpiteer." Without denying that consistories appoint organists, possibly giving a mandate with certain rules, hopefully even adding some remuneration, yet, the preacher is the appointed leader of the liturgy. He is responsible, once the service has started, that everything runs "smoothly," or better, that every element of the covenantal liturgy is presented in such a way that it can be pleasing to the Lord and serves the edification of His people. If collecting the offertory takes (far) too much time, the preacher should insist that a better method be found and applied. If acoustics are miserable (as often is the case) he may demand that provisions be made that every word of the sermon can be heard by everyone.

Similarly, if he is of the opinion that the organist is way beside the mark of his role, he is the one who should establish such good relations with the organist(s) that they do not jump over the fence if he criticizes them for playing too loud, too slow, too fast, and so forth. He is the man who should tell the organist that it is liturgically wrong to "interrupt" the singing of the congregation by long-winded interludes. And the organist will have to listen and to comply. Just like that.

Before my esteemed brethren, whose problems, etc., I happen to know a bit, jump at me with a 16-foot trumpet, two more remarks in closing.

The man in the pulpit should know, at least, a bit about organ music, church music, its function, and so on. That is to be part of his training. Otherwise he hardly has the right to say anything about and to the organist.

Secondly (and with more stress): a preacher does great injustice to "his" organist(s) if he is the cause of the organist's not knowing what to play before he sits down behind the organ. That is no good, my brethren preachers! You may demand cooperation from your organist, but make it pos-

sible for him (or her) then, to prepare for such cooperation. Let them know in time, not only what will be sung, but also what the sermon will be about.

Experience has taught me that, in the pulpit, you may receive wonderful support from your organist; but also the contrary: he may upset you, hinder you, so that, after a thundering postlude and final cord, you can hardly begin your sermon.

Conclusion: a two-sided, brotherly striving after good harmony, understanding, and cooperation between preacher and organist will only benefit the liturgy, and thus its purpose: the glory of God and the edification of His people.

G. VANDOOREN

P.S. For those who still can read Dutch — and I assume most of our organists can — here is an “educational” poem on the organist, taken from *Glas in de Zon* by E. Ijskes-Kooger.

De Organist

Zijn hoofd, aandachtig naar 't klavier gebogen
deint zachtjes mee, in wiegende cadans.
Zijn mond vertrekt, en in zijn donk're ogen
komt langzaam een diepe, blijde glans.

De jongens op de voorste banken kijken
geamuseerd naar zijn verwarde haar,
dat hij een enk'le keer poogt glad te strijken
met een verstrooid, maar reeds vertrouwd
gebaar.

Hij domineert niet bij het begeleiden;
maar krachtig steunt hij de gemeentezang.
Zijn voorspel is maar kort, en heel bescheiden:
de preek duurt immers ook niet meer zo lang.

Een enkeling blijft bij de uitgang dralen,
want voor de organist de kerk verlaat
looft hij zijn God met juichende koralen
De Here luistert, de gemeente praat.

Letters-to-the-Editor

TOWARDS CONGREGATIONALISM?

Esteemed brother,

One never knows — it may have escaped your scrutinizing News-Medley eye — but I read something somewhere that disturbed me a bit.

Leaving out names and places (I am only interested in the principle involved), I read that a consistory, studying overtures sent by churches to General Synod, decided to “endorse” a certain proposal of a sister-church.

One must always think the best of one another; so, that consistory may have meant nothing more than “yes, we agree with that proposal.” Yet, *Webster* tells me that “endorse” means more (the reader think only what it means when he endorses a cheque!). To “endorse” means to “give approval,” to “sanction.”

One understands that if *that* would be the meaning and purpose of sending copies of synod-overtures to the churches, we would have no need of (general) synods anymore. Let just all churches or consistories “endorse” or not endorse; count the noses and the majority walks away with the victory.

I would not have written about this (what I hope is only an) “incident,” if I had been deaf in recent years. I re-

member synods where we had long discussions, even “fights,” but we kept on talking so long that we could finally convince each other and take decisions unanimously.

I also remember more recent synods (I think I once called a very recent synod the “9-7 and 7-9 synod . . .”) where some hardly listened to the defense of the opposing opinion. Whatever one would say, it was already decided beforehand. I thought that was a real loss.

Whatever “Congregationalism” further may mean, it also means that local congregations do not recognize any binding decisions by major assemblies as we do (see Church Order, Article 31, usually misread, as you have repeatedly pointed out). My question is: “Is not a consistory doing synod’s work by ‘endorsing’ such proposals, as said above?”

No one would deny that it is a consistory’s right, even duty, in case an unbiblical, un-Reformed overture was sent in, to submit to synod some counter-arguments.

But “endorsing”? No, I can’t see that that fits within the set-up of our Federation as laid down in the Church Order.

Suppose that from that consistory

one, even two, members, a minister and an elder, have been chosen by the Regional Synod to go to General Synod! Do these brethren, then, go there to speak for their consistory? Do they (one never knows . . .) maybe have a “binding mandate,” not from the assembly that chose them (Regional Synod) but from their consistory, to vote for that proposal?

Does not a credential speak a different language? Delegates are mandated to deal, discuss, decide on all matters according to the Word of God and the Church Order?

At Synod they are not going to “defend” the stand of their consistory, or something like that; they are going to think for themselves, study the matter (also decisions of previous synods), and then listen to pros and cons and do their utmost to contribute to a unanimous, God-pleasing decision.

Again, I *do* hope that it’s just an “incident” and not a “symptom.” In case of the latter, I fear a loss of Reformed character of our Federation.

You are better qualified to point out what is wrong and right in this matter. I do hope that you find time to write a substantial P.S. to this letter before you leave for Synod. I know that, at Synod, you will oppose any slide in the direction of Congregationalism. Thank you!

G. VAN DOOREN

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Do you know where November got its name?

Maybe you know that the ancient Romans had a different calendar from ours. In the old Roman calendar November was the ninth month of the year. It took its name from "novem" the Latin word for "nine." November is now the 11th month of our calendar but it still has its old Roman name.

Did you ever read the poem called "I like the grey November day"? November days are often grey, aren't they? The woods have lost their blazing autumn colours. The ground is bare. The trees are bare. The birds have flown south and the chipmunks, snakes, and frogs have disappeared. It looks as if all of nature is going to sleep. Soon it will be winter. Are you looking forward to it?

We all like a story, don't we? So let's have story time! Here is Busy Beaver *Helena Onderwater's* story:

The First Day of School!

Jim's new lunch pail swung wildly from his handlebar as he biked quickly down the road. Suddenly when he got closer to the school he saw a tiger in the middle of the road. It chased him all the way home.

Then he started for school again. And when he got closer to the school he saw a lion in the middle of the road. The lion chased him all the way home, too.

Then he started for school again. When he came closer to the school he saw a bear in the middle of the road. The bear chased him all the way home.

When he got to school he was late. The teacher asked him why he was late. And he told the teacher about the tiger and the lion and about the bear.

Thank you for the story, Helena!

And now we have another one! This one is from Busy Beaver *Elaine Bisschop*. Thanks also to you, Elaine.

The First Day of School!

Jim's new lunch pail swung wildly from his handlebar as he biked quickly down the road. Suddenly, when he got closer to the school, a little girl stepped lightly on to the road. Jim was going so fast that he could not control his bike. He yelled at the little girl, who, frightened, ran to the sidewalk. Jim's bike swerved and turned. Then it swung into the sidewalk. Jim sailed headlong into the cement. Poor Jim. He dusted himself and took his bike to school. There he washed himself off and went into the classroom. It had not been a good start for the school year.



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Mirjam Vander Bruggen*. We hope you will really enjoy being a Busy Beaver, and will join in all our Busy

Beaver activities. Write again soon, *Mirjam*.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Sylvia Poppe*. I'm glad you're enjoying *Our Little Magazine* already. That shows you're a real Busy Beaver. Do you help out on the farm, too, *Sylvia*?

And also a big welcome to you, *Jackie Nyenhuis*. We hope you'll enjoy being a Busy Beaver, too. What do you like best about your Grandpa's store, *Jackie*?

Have you received your membership card already, *Marie Huttema*? Be sure to keep it in a very safe place! We hope you'll enjoy being a Busy Beaver. Welcome to the Club!

Thank you for your letter and the riddles, *Theodore Wierenga*. Did you help get the crop in? Yes, thank you, I had a very nice Thanksgiving Day. Did you? And yes, we will be having another contest sometime, *Theodore*. Bye for now.

QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Theodore Wierenga* has two riddles for you. Are you ready?

1. What is black and white and read all over?
2. What walks on four legs in the morning, two legs in the afternoon, and three legs in the evening?

Answers: 1. A newspaper; 2. A man, because when he is young he crawls on all fours, when he is grown up he walks on two legs, and when he is an old man he walks with a cane!

New Testament Bible Book Names

M										
A										
R										
K										
J										
U										
D										
E										
A										
C										
T										
S										

Thanks to Busy Beaver *Sylvia Jans* for this puzzle!

And Busy Beaver *Rona Kleefman* has Bible Book names for you to:

UNSCRAMBLE

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. VLETCIUSI | 6. UDXOES |
| 2. MTAITNE LANOS | 7. HIJEEMRA |
| 3. ZKAHIEEH | 8. LEMASU |
| 4. HJSOAU | 9. IESEGNIS |
| 5. BNSMEUR | 10. RUMYNOETED |

Answers next time!