



Clarion

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The Confession Concerning the Church: “Consensus or Confusion?”²

FROM WHERE THE CONFUSION?

If the above is, briefly, the *consensus* of our faith concerning the Church, from where, then, does the confusion result which I indicated earlier? Now we come to the *consequences* of this confession.

When we established our Canadian Reformed Churches in this country, why did we do so? We believed that we did so as an *act of obedience* to the Word of God. We did so in order that the marks of the true Church in preaching, sacraments and discipline would continue among us. Had not the Christian Reformed Church chosen for the synodical hierarchy in The Netherlands?¹⁸ Realizing that all obedience is by grace alone, the Canadian Reformed Churches gratefully recognized and claimed as true Churches to be the faithful continuation of what the Reformed Churches had been.

Where we saw the “marks” adhered to elsewhere (e.g. in 1946, in *De Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken* — the Free Reformed Churches in Canada) we extended the hand of fellowship in a plea for unity. Where we no longer discovered these marks, we spoke in accordance with our confession of “false Church.” Still we appealed to those who had rejected us to turn back from their way so that the unity and fellowship of faith might be restored. Furthermore we sought contact with Churches of which we learned that these wished to adhere to the Word of God. I think in this respect of the Korean Presbyterian Churches and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. So it cannot be said of us that we thought we were the only true Churches in the world or that we were not concerned about the disunity with others. But we held on to a basic demand: the Church is gathered in the unity of the true faith and any legitimate ecumenical striving may never be at the *cost* of the Truth. Is it wrong to ask of others that “all things are managed according to the pure Word

of God and all things contrary thereto are rejected”? (Art. 29).

Also, we learned that where the unity in the *Church* is broken, the basis for cooperation falls away in other fields of life, e.g. in education.¹⁹ A simple question may suffice to prove this point, “How can our children sit together during the week engaged in Bible study and mutual prayer, while on Sunday each go their own separate ways?” Or perhaps better, “How can we *cause* our children to be instructed in the doctrine — as it is taught *here* in this Christian Church — in an interdenominational school where this very doctrine is not safe? And in the least, any cooperation in such matters — no matter how this was achieved — may not be covered with the cloak of the “communion of saints.”²⁰

So we accepted specific consequences: seeking unity where possible according to the norms of God’s Word, and rejecting cooperation which bypassed the basic calling: unity in the Church. This tended to isolate us, perhaps, from the much larger churches around us and some even took the conclusion that we considered ourselves to be the only ones going to heaven whereas all others were destined to perish. There was much criticism from the outside, but in the course of time criticism arose also in our own ranks concerning this “strong” stand. A number of years after the Liberation a substantial party (under Rev. B.A. Box a.o.) returned into the bosom of the Synodical churches. The same tendency towards greater recognition and cooperation became apparent in the sixties in The Netherlands. One of the leaders of this movement, Rev. B.J.F. Schoep reasoned as follows, “It is really not necessary to make such a point of restoring the unity between the Reformed believers, because all believers *are*, in principle, *one* in Christ.”²¹ So it was not so difficult eventually for Rev. Schoep to make the step back to the Synodical churches, for if you *are* one, you may as well *be* one. Prof. J. Kamphuis at the time reacted as fol-

lows: if we *are* one even with believers who are members of a false church, then we may as well scrap Article 28 of the Belgic Confession where we are admonished to break from the false church and join the true one!²²

A KEY POINT?

Perhaps here we come to a key point in all the controversy. No one will deny (at least I will not) that there are believers outside of our churches and/or sister-Churches. But the question is: is each believer by that fact a member of the true Church of Christ, the assembly of which Article 28 speaks? Similarly, do we have “communion” with these believers which are not members of the true Church of Christ? The question is only seemingly complicated when some remark that the Latin version of Article 27 of the confession says that the church is the gathering of *all* true believers. Certainly, Christ will gather *all* believers in His time and way, but does this mean that every believer is *ipso facto* a member of the true Church of Christ? Is there such a thing as “automatism” in this respect?

Apparently not, for Article 28 (realizing the sinfulness of men) states that we *must be* members and not stand on our own or with those who are not of the Church. In my understanding, the entire Article 28 becomes superfluous if we say that every believer (no matter where he/she lets him/herself be gathered) is by implication a member of the true Church of Christ and that the communion with them is therefore a *fact*.

Do we in this way not “become stuck” with those believers outside the Church? If they are “believers” are they then not, according to Lord’s Day 7 of the Heidelberg Catechism, “ingrafted into Christ and thus partakers of all His benefits?” Are they then not also members of His *body*, the Church? How can one be a member of *Christ* and not of His *body*, thus a part of the *communion* of saints? Rev. D. de Jong con-

cludes, "what it all comes down to, congregation, is, that not *one* true believer *is* excluded from this communion of saints, and *may* be excluded from it, nor may exclude *himself* from it. Because it *is* this way, it also *must be* this way. It is impossible to be united with the Head of the Body, without sharing in all His treasures and gifts. That's the promise of the Gospel, the promise of the communion of saints, which I *must preach* to you."²³ In effect, Rev. D. de Jong teaches that *all* believers (wherever they are) *are* members of Christ and one another and must therefore *recognize* and *practice* this communion.²⁴ There lies the basis for cooperation in the Christian Schools: it is simply a practicing of the *given* communion of saints. Certainly, my colleague deplores the disunity at the table of the Lord — he says that it is a "sin before Christ's face" — but nevertheless maintains, "instead of denying the communion of saints with the other believers who do not go with us, we practice the communion of saints with them by employing *our* gifts readily and cheerfully for the advantage and salvation of these *other* members." In summary this line of thinking goes as follows: every true believer is ingrafted into Christ, therefore a member of His Body, therefore a part of the communion of saints, and therefore we must exercise this communion.

True, Rev. D. de Jong admits that all is not perfect, but he comforts us with Lord's Day 44, "Even the holiest men, while in this life, have only a small beginning of this obedience."²⁵ The Committee appointed by Classis Alberta-Manitoba summarizes it this way: if we cannot experience the communion of saints at the Lord's table, the "highest level," we should not deny, but practice the communion of saints at a "lower level."²⁶ The introduction of a "higher" and a "lower" level in the communion of saints is certainly a puzzle to me, but it does explain an apparent reluctance to support and promote Canadian Reformed Schools. If we proceed to build our own schools, instead of practicing communion, we are breaking it, and it is then no wonder that others will never come to join us at the Table of the Lord.²⁷

What to say of all this? Let me put down some remarks in point form.

1) Lord's Day 7 states that "only those who are by a true faith ingrafted into Christ and receive all His benefits" are *saved*. It says there that *faith* is necessary for *salvation*. In Lord's

Day 21 we confess how Christ gathers His *Church* in the *unity* of true *faith*. This does not preclude the possibility that someone believes in Christ but does not maintain the unity of the Church. Although Lord's Day 44 (speaking about our obedience to God's Law) states that no one *can* keep God's Law perfectly in this life, this may not be used as a cover-up for disobedience, for it is added that we must with "earnest purpose" begin to live "not only according to some but according to *all* the commandments of God," also the command to be one. We are still to "strive after perfection."

2) Is it possible that someone believes in Christ but (yet) is not a member of His *true* Church? This is where the whole construction of Rev. D. de Jong stands or falls. Prof. Dr. K. Schilder has written that this *is* possible. I mention this because Rev. de Jong so extensively quotes from Schilder in his mentioned sermons. Schilder makes the daring statement that God can even gather from a deathbed a believer who during his life still was "in the grip" of the false church. But, adds Schilder, let us not confuse God's infallible work of gathering with *our* responsibility to live according to the revealed *norms*.²⁸ Prof. Dr. C. Trimp has written (to quote another professor) that the Church is not the immediate "faith-unity" of all true believers but the gathering of these believers. He dared indeed to distinguish between "believing in Christ" and "coming to the Church."²⁹ For this reason, again, Article 28 is in our Confession. Prof. Trimp does not want to separate the two, but certainly wishes to distinguish between the one and the other.

3) If *all* believers, regardless of where they let themselves be gathered, form the Church or the communion of saints and are *one*, we have indeed, I am afraid, in essence the theory of the invisible Church, even if the term is rejected. If we are *one* in principle, it must become clear, not only, e.g. with respect to the schools, but also in worship, despite the remaining differences. What is one in principle must be one practically, and we should not hide behind "higher" and "lower" levels in the communion of saints. Every Canadian Reformed School is then a bulwark of "sectarianism" and we

might even ask ourselves whether we were allowed to organize separate *Churches* to start with. Should we not have recognized and exercised the communion of saints elsewhere not long before, and then not half-way but *all the way*?

4) When Lord's Day 21, Question 55 speaks about the "communion of saints," it speaks about "believers, one and all." Are these believers scattered throughout various denominations? I say no, for these believers have been qualified in the first question and answer of the same Lord's Day as being gathered in the *unity* of the true faith. Communion means: being together and sharing together all that Christ has earned for



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Questions about Liturgy

us. Christ constitutes this communion in His blood and this communion is expressed concretely at the Lord's Table, where it is *seen* that we are one body, because we all partake of the *one* bread, I Corinthians 10:17. And who are those "other members" which are mentioned in this answer? Rev. D. de Jong says: believers who do not go with us. The text used to substantiate this is I Corinthians 12:21, "And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee . . ." But Paul speaks here to the Church at Corinth, a local, visible Church with its office-bearers and members! And he admonishes them that they do not exercise communion among themselves.³⁰ Paul does not say here: go and exercise communion with all who *claim* to be Christians (elsewhere we read the contrary, "test the spirits") but exercise communion with those of your own local Church. He speaks of "you," the concrete Church at Corinth; so with the words "other members" our Catechism simply means those with whom we have been gathered in the unity of the true faith, first locally, and then in all the Churches with which we have the same unity of faith. To construe it otherwise is not only confessionally strange but also exegetically wrong.

5) We are told to go out and practice the communion of saints and to join ourselves in (whatever?) endeavours with believers elsewhere. I think our Confession tells us that it is exactly the *other way* around. Let *all men* join the true Church of the Lord and thus exercise the communion of saints. If we must go out looking for believers, we'll be busy indeed. What we must do is: *be* a true Church (and living members of it) and thus a salting salt so that others will notice and will say, "We want to go with you for we see that the Lord is with you."

I am sincerely afraid that such constructions ("higher" and "lower" levels, e.g.) may cause a breakdown of the Reformed consensus concerning the Church. We may and must be concerned with believers elsewhere, but we shall not imagine communion where it is not and thus break communion where it is. Will we adhere to the simple consensus or give way to confusion? The existence of our Churches will be in the balance.

CL. STAM

INTEREST

The articles on Reformed Liturgy must have been read with interest, because I received many expressions of appreciation. No wonder, because for truly Reformed people the public worship services lie at the centre of their lives.

Also some questions were asked. The postscript by our managing editor contained such a question and the request to answer it in our magazine. There may be more questions. We would gladly receive them and try to answer them. This would give us the opportunity to go a bit deeper into certain aspects and details of our beautiful Reformed Liturgy.

"THOU" OR "YOU"?

A brother wrote that he was "accused" of a lack of respect for our God by addressing Him with "you" instead of "Thou." He himself is not at all aware of such disrespect, and wants to hear my opinion.

Those who insist on the use of "Thou" and "Thee" as a proof of our deep reverence for the LORD, usually point to the *King James Version*, and must be happy that some newer translations, like the RSV, NASB, and even the New English Bible, have retained the "Thou" in addressing the Most High.

This fact proves that several translators hesitated to drop the "Thou" for God, although they did not

continue the custom of the King James which uses "thou" and "thee" also in addressing man. The New International Version (NIV) went "all the way" and dropped all the "thous," also in speaking to God. The NIV is not alone in this respect.

One should, however, not overlook the fact that the King James could be used as an argument for addressing God with "you." First, this classic translation did not use capitals! The Committee for the *Book of Praise* has given in to the many requests to use capitals when speaking to and about God: "Thee, Thou, His, Him . . ." etc. So did the Committees working on the second part of our Church Book. I fear that after a number of years all this use of capitals will have to be changed, simply because it has become obsolete. Those who requested this went even farther than the King James!

Secondly, the same King James *did not make any difference* in addressing God or man. It was always "thou" and "thee." The logical thing would have been: if you drop the "thou" for man, drop it also for God. Only some Mennonite groups maintain the "thou" for both.

The conclusion must be that it is not proof of irreverence when one speaks (in prayer, singing) to God as "you." A growing number of churches and individual members have adopted this use.

Having said this, I must add that, personally, I am glad that the English language enables us to make a difference in speaking to God or to man by providing us with a "you" and a "thou." I assume that the above-mentioned translators of RSV, NEB, etc. were of the same opinion. I myself, although not condemning the use of "you" for God, have maintained this custom of "thou." I am, however, also of the opinion that this difference between "thou" and "you" is proof that we are, in this respect, in a period of transition. The NIV has left this period behind, although this will be a reason for many, also for our churches, not to adopt this translation for official use, whatever merits this translation may have.

NOTES:

¹⁸ Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, *Inheritance Preserved*, page 69ff.

¹⁹ G. Visee, *De Gemeenschap Der Heiligen*, 1949, page 26.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, page 27.

²¹ Joh. Francke, *op. cit.*, page 38.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Rev. D. de Jong, *op. cit.*, page 24.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, page 30.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, page 25.

²⁶ Committee Report, page 3.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, page 10.

²⁸ K. Schilder, *De Kerk* (III), pages 249 and 250).

²⁹ Joh. Francke, *op. cit.*, page 39.

³⁰ G. Visee, *op. cit.*, page 6.

One may accuse me of a lack of consistency, but this only reflects the situation we are in: transition. Some go all the way, others still go only half way, but from a linguistic point of view there is no essential difference. Witness: the King James Version!

“THE NAZI-SALUTE IN CHURCH?”

The same brother also writes about the fact that Rev. VanOene discovered during his holiday wanderings that some (young) ministers speak the blessing, salutation (and benediction?) with *only one hand* lifted up and stretched out. The former says, “This reminds me always of the ‘Hitler-groet’ during the War.” The latter asks, “Is this taught in our College?”

Because my task is to teach *Liturgics*, the question is directed to me. Let me start with answering this first. No, it is not taught at our College. I cannot even remember that it ever was an issue, although it will be from now on, with a view to Rev. VanOene’s experience. I cannot remember that I ever brought it up (because for me it is a matter of fact that *both* arms and hands are lifted up when the minister, on behalf of the LORD, blesses His congregation). Nor do I remember that a student ever brought it up or said that he planned to lift up only the right hand. If that had been the case, I would certainly have made it an issue, and would have taught what Scripture has to say in the matter. So we will do that now.

Let me start with the “experts” in Liturgy. Rev. VanOene’s remark has sent me digging. We have quite a collection of books on Liturgy in our College. Several authors do not even discuss it, because, as their references to Scripture prove, they take it for granted that the minister, in blessing God’s people on His behalf, follows the biblical example. Others mention it as a matter of fact. A.W. BLACKWOOD, in *The Fine Art of Public Worship*, 1939, writes, “While the people bow down as a symbol of their readiness to receive God’s manifold grace, or else stand with bowed heads, the minister’s hands are uplifted as a symbol of God’s blessing,” p. 55. G. HUEBER, in his paper, *The Place of Blessing in Christian Worship*, in the Symposium *The Biblical Doctrine of Worship*, p. 350ff., refers to Aaron and his sons: “The priest would declare the blessing with uplifted hands. . .,” and he then quotes Leviticus 9:22, “Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people

and blessed them.” There is no reason to doubt that Aaron’s sons since that day have always lifted up both their hands to bless Israel.

Our Saviour did the same. Before He ascended to heaven, “lifting up his hands, He blessed them” (Luke 24:50, 51). He passed this on to His apostles, and they passed it on to the office-bearers in the centuries to come. For them the mandate is the same as for the Old Testament priests, “So shall they put (or: lay) My Name upon the people of Israel,” Numbers 6:27.

Although we realize that the “laying on of (my) hands” is not the same as blessing the congregation in Christ’s name, it means something that Scripture always speaks of “hands,” Acts 8:18, II Timothy 1:6, 4:14; Hebrews 6:2.

The same brother who was accused of a lack of respect by saying “you” to God, wrote that, in defending the custom of lifting up only one hand, someone told him that this fits the first blessing, which is called the “salutation” in distinction from the “benediction” at the end of the service.

This, however, is no valid argument. It is true that we call it the “salutation” in distinction from the closing blessing, but it is a blessing nevertheless (Dutch: *zegengroet*). The difference between the two is aptly described by Dr. A. KUYPER in *Onze Eeredienst*. The salutation is directed to the congregation as a whole, and (as G. VAN RONGEN remarks in his *The Liturgy of the Covenant*) summarizes what is going to happen in the worship service. The benediction, at the moment the believers return home to their work and life, is addressed to each and everyone in particular by the world, “is with you all.” But both are

blessings or benedictions. They are not pious wishes or prayers, as some authors suppose. According to them the hands of the ministers should be lifted up with palms upwards, as was the prayer attitude in olden days: “Let my prayer be counted as incense before thee, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice,” Psalm 141:1. In blessing the congregation the palms of the hands are turned downward, to symbolize the pouring out of God’s peace, grace, and love upon His people.

Several authors stress (as we did before) that the “Amen” should be spoken by the congregation, as was done by Israel in tabernacle and temple (Van Rongen); even a threefold “Amen” (A. Kuyper). Our brother remarked, “Some parts of what you wrote will never come true, because of the ‘conservative’ character of our church people.” No, brother, they are not “conservative”; then they would in liturgical matters return to the Reformation and to what is really *old*. Instead, many rather cling to the pietistic damage (as RAYBURN calls it in his *Come, Let Us Worship*) done to the Reformed Liturgy. We trust, however, that they are open to Biblical and Reformed arguments. Without this trust we would not have written about the beauty of Reformed Liturgy.

G. VANDOOREN

P.S. The lifting up of *one* hand is more fitting for making a solemn vow or taking the oath. Some ministers also use this custom at the end of a wedding ceremony, which is not a church service, therefore no “official” (Dutch: *ambtelijke*) benediction, but a solemn wish or prayer (Dutch: *zegenbede*: prayer for blessing). From such occasions the salutation and benediction should be clearly distinguished, also in the symbolic act of lifting up *both* hands.

Numbers 6:22-27

The LORD said to Moses, “Say to Aaron and his sons, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, The LORD bless you and keep you: the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you: The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace. “So shall they put My Name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them.”

press review

THE REFORMATION RE-FORMED BY MYSTICISM

THE MONASTERY OUT — THE MONASTERY IN.

October 31 is Reformation Day. On that day of the year 1517 Luther published his ninety-five theses against the abuse of indulgencies. And from that day on Christ led the movement of the Reformation of the Church further and further. There was growing insight into the truth of the Word of God and increasing discernment of the evils of the Roman Church. The Reformation broke with those evils and led back to the obedience of faith, that is, obedience to the Word of God. One of the consequences of the Reformation was the disappearance of the monasteries. In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* John Calvin devotes a whole chapter to the vows of monks and nuns in the monasteries. It is Book IV, Chapter XIII.

From this chapter I quote here the beginning of paragraph 17: "Now, then, let us see the nature of the vows by which the monks of the present day are initiated into this famous order. First, as their intention is to institute a new and fictitious worship with a view to gain favour with God, I conclude from what has been said above, that everything which they vow is abomination to God. Secondly, I hold that as they frame their own mode of life at pleasure, without any regard to the calling of God, or to His approbation, the attempt is rash and unlawful; because their conscience has no ground on which it can support itself before God; and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23)." Calvin means that conscience cannot find any ground in God's Word on which to base itself for the vows and the way of life in the monasteries. It is a self-found, self-willed kind of religion not prescribed by the Word of God, and therefore not approved by the Word of God. Now I quote from an article by Dale Cooper and another one by Hilda De Vries in *The Banner*, the "weekly publication of the Christian Reformed Church" of September 22, 1980. In the first article

we first read that all kinds of people have given up a worldly vocation.

choosing rather to live the rest of his (their) days as a contemplative monk — poor, chaste, obedient, and (until Vatican II) silent — in the Abbey of Gethsemani in Trappist, Kentucky.

After this we read:

And then, there we were — forty-three Calvin College students and a lone professor — who had . . . been embraced by angelic-faced Brother Bruno . . . Why had we come here? Formally, to complete the Calvin College interim course, "Thomas Merton: Man of Prayer, Writer, Social Critic." But infinitely more important, like Merton himself, we had really come in order to find, through solitude, God alone. Many have asked me, . . . : What's a Calvinist like you doing in a Roman Catholic monastery? Why introduce these students to quiet solitude and monastic contemplation?

After the author has said that a full answer for starting this "annual spiritual pilgrimage" is complex and hard to give, he writes that he "shall attempt to explain at least in part." The first reason or goal is the following:

In their quest for closer intimacy with God, Western Christians, Protestants especially, I am convinced, have overlooked the rich vein of Western contemplative writings that has flowed just beneath the Christian church's surface for so many years. College students, as a result, are almost totally ignorant of the profound devotional and contemplative meditation of saints like Augustine, Johan Tauler, Julian of Norwich, Ruysbroek, Luther, John of the Cross, William Law, John Bunyan, Thomas Merton, and so many other spiritually gifted figures. I resolved, therefore, four years ago, to begin reading some of these writings with my students. In our reading we eventually met Thomas Merton, former twentieth-century jet-setter, so seared by secularism's destructive winds that he finally became a Christian in 1938, and later joined the contemplative Trappist order of monks in 1942. Reading Merton was a fascinating and heady experience To cap off our intensive several weeks' reading, we journeyed to Gethsemani, there to live the monastic life for a week.

I would like to give some information about the persons whose names are mentioned. Augustine is the well-

known church father of around 400 A.D. Luther is also well-known. John Bunyan (1628-1688) was the Baptist preacher and author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, an allegory about the experiences of the believer on his way to heaven. William Law (1686-1761) was a devotional author, who stressed the spiritual experiences of believers. Johan Tauler (c. 1300-1361) was a German mystic and preacher who had influence on the young Luther. Julian of Norwich (1340-1413) was an English mystic, who lived most of her life in a cell built to the wall of the Norman church of St. Julian in Norwich; so she lived in almost total solitude. She had a series of "revelations" on May 8, 1373, which she recorded in a book together with many meditations on these "revelations." Ruysbroek (1293-1381) was a Flemish mystic. And John of the Cross (1542-1591) was a Spanish mystic. The reader understands that the last four mentioned here were Roman Catholic. They lived before the Reformation, with the exception of John of the Cross.

Mysticism is a movement that entered the church via Gnosticism and Neo-platonism. This mysticism is the basic element in Buddhism and other Eastern religions and preaches redemption as the union of the human soul or spirit with God. The way to this union with God is that one gets loose from the earthly things and from all that is natural and material. One has to get away from all that belongs to this natural life, and, through prayer, meditation, and contemplation, become spiritually one with God. Here the basic contrast is that of nature and body over against the soul or spirit and God. Or: nature over against grace. That is also the basic Roman Catholic contrast. The Bible, however, and Reformed thinking, have always maintained that the true contrast is sin and grace. Nature and body cannot stand over against God Who is the Creator of both, and in Christ also the Redeemer. God does not redeem His children from this earthly life in the body, but He redeems them with their earthly life here on this earth already from the guilt and the power of sin; He sanctifies that life here on earth in its earthly relations for Him.

So there is a basic difference between Reformed, Biblical thinking and mysticism. Mysticism has also done harm to the movement of the Reformation. And it was precisely mysticism which formed an impediment to

joining the Reformation. But let me continue with the article.

Another goal of our study was to discover . . . how at home contemplation and meditation are in the Reformed tradition. Alas, so many have overlooked the importance, in his writings, of what John Calvin calls "piety," an attitude of awe and reverence born out of meditating on God's goodness toward us. This godliness thoroughly infused Calvin's life of prayer, as well as his writings. Hence, we Calvinists journeyed to Gethsemani, not merely to be casually ecumenical, politely ignoring the differences that obviously separate us from Roman Catholics, but also to become the better Calvinists thereby.

I dare say: if John Calvin could have read this, he would not have believed what he saw. Let me quote from the same Book IV, Chapter XIII, what he writes in paragraph 1 about the monastery vows: "Moreover, that the very grievous mischief introduced by such vows may be more apparent, let the reader attend to the principles formerly laid down. First, we showed (Book II, chap. VIII. sec. 5) that everything requisite for the ordering of a *pious and holy life is comprehended* in the law. Secondly, we showed that the Lord, the better to dissuade us from devising new works *included the whole of righteousness in simple obedience to His will*. If these positions are true, it is easy to see that all fictitious worship, which we ourselves devise for the purpose of serving God, is not in the least degree acceptable to Him, how pleasing soever it may be to us."

Of course, Calvin was not against a life in close communion with God. He showed how necessary it is for God's children to live a pious and holy life with God. Calvin was aware that meditating on what God says in the Bible is a must. But this is a meditating on what God reveals as His holy will for our Christian life, in order to become more and more obedient in our earthly calling. Calvin did not mean going into a Roman Catholic monastery to learn to contemplate, and through mystic contemplation to become one with God. What Calvin meant was in accordance with Psalms 19 and 119, and Psalm 1: meditating in love on God's law, His precepts, His commandments.

Before I come to the last reason of chaplain Cooper for visiting a monastery with his students, I would like to quote part of what Hilda De Vries wrote. She says that they as female students went to the nuns, and participated the very first day also in the Compline, the final worship service

of the day. She reports:

As I sat in the balcony above the nave, listening to the songs and chants of the monks, I was filled with an overwhelming sense of the presence of God. This feeling was to occur again and again as I spent time in Gethsemani. It is awesome to realize that this community and the people in it have isolated themselves from society in order to lead better Christian lives. They live in an atmosphere where the thought of God is always present . . .

It is obvious: feeling and experience of feelings is the dominating thing. Together with the isolation from society. It reminds us of the old ways of the hermits in the wilderness, and of Julian of Norwich who isolated herself in her cell from society to live a so-called better Christian life. John Calvin would ask: where in the Bible does God command such an isolated life? Obedience is better than such self-devised worship.

But there is another important point. Cooper wrote: "not merely to be casually ecumenical." "Not merely." But it was included. We also read the following from him:

The intensity of our fellowship, the pain of theological differences notwithstanding, was sheerly amazing. Our stay coincided with the worldwide Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. For this unity the brothers, and we too, ardently prayed . . . To be sure, few of us Protestants are prepared to become Roman Catholics, for much of their understanding of the Christian faith we cannot accept — the papacy, mass as a re-presentation of Christ's sufferings, absolution by a priest, Mary as co-Mediatrix of grace, purgatory, veneration of saints, images and relics, and so on. But "the central feature of Cistercian spirituality," as Abbot James Fox reminded us, "intimacy with Jesus." And that intimacy instantly moves out to embrace other Christians and strives to accord them their full dignity as genuine brothers and sisters in Christ. We experienced love in action.

And Hilda De Vries writes:

But as we began to study Thomas Merton and the contemplative life, it was obvious that we were studying something much deeper and more basic than any doctrinal differences between Catholicism and Protestantism. The contemplative prayer, which is an intimate dialogue with God, not a monologue directed toward Him, is considered by many Christians to be the highest form of prayer. It is very similar to meditation, since it involves shutting out the world around oneself in order to concentrate solely on God. It follows the words of the Psalmist, "be still and know that I am God."

I could not find this text. But I ask myself the question, when the writers of the Psalms speak about being still be-

fore God, does that, then, mean: be still in the meditative contemplation of the mystic in a monastery, or is this being still the opposite of a rebellious speaking against God and God's doing. "Be still," as Psalm 62 and 131, is the surrender of an obedient child that goes along with his heavenly Father, without rebellion. Let us listen further:

Yet, as I soon found out, these Roman Catholic monks and nuns, regardless of doctrinal differences, do consider themselves to be our brothers and sisters in Christ. Then, too, I learned that Merton traveled a spiritual journey and came to live in a communion with God that few people ever attain. His lifestyle was so drastically reversed that he separated himself from the routine of daily living in order to dedicate himself completely to God . . . As we stood there, declaring our unity in Christ and praising God for it, the doctrinal differences between us assumed a different proportion. During the course of our stay in Kentucky, many of our various theological beliefs came up for discussion. We realized that there did exist some major differences in doctrine and emphasis. Yet, through all our disagreement and debate on these issues, we never lost our sense of oneness with these people.

And she ends by saying how helpful it is to remember:

It is helpful to remember the peacefulness that radiates from each person there. It is helpful to remember the awesome awareness of God's presence. It is helpful to remember the humility and self-sacrifice of each sister and monk. It is helpful to remember the great faith displayed by their lifestyle. And in remembering all this . . . my view of God comes back into focus. And my magnified perspective of my busyness shrinks back to size.

In my opinion, not the lifestyle of others, but the Word of God, should lead us.

But now the point of that ecumenism. Here we have mysticism that unites while doctrine divides. And although the term is not used, one could call this: "communion of saints" beyond the boundaries of denominations. But would Calvin agree? Or rather: Does God ('s Word) approve this?

It sounds and looks so nice: unity in Christ, although there are still doctrinal differences. And is it not such a good thing that the experience of that mystical oneness in Christ puts those doctrinal differences in "a different proportion?" That different proportion means, of course, that the differences become less important.

Mr. Cooper mentioned a few

things: Mary as co-Mediatrix with Christ as Mediator: Mary suffered and earned salvation for us together with Christ. Our Reformed Catechism asks: "Do such, then, believe in the only Saviour Jesus who seek their salvation and welfare of saints (including Mary as co-Mediatrix) of themselves (including: leading a better Christian life in a monastery), or anywhere else (including: the mass, the relics, indulgencies, paying to have the mass celebrated for those in purgatory)?" The Answer is: "They do not. For though they boast of Him (Christ) in words, yet in deeds they **deny** the only Saviour Jesus" (Lord's Day 11).

Mr. Cooper mentioned the mass as a re-presentation of the sufferings of Christ. Let me remind the reader of Lord's Day 30, Question and Answer 80, of the same Reformed Standard, dealing with the doctrinal difference between the popish mass and the Lord's Supper; we confess there that "the mass, at bottom is nothing else than a **denial** of the one sacrifice and passion of Jesus Christ, and an **accursed idolatry**." And I would also like to point to Lord's Day 35. The Question there is: "What does God require in the second commandment?" The Answer reads: "That we in no wise make any image of God, *nor worship Him in any other way than He has commanded in His Word*."

What is between Rome and the Reformation is not simply some doctrinal differences as such, but the very Word of God, and the obedience to that Word. How can there be unity between obedience and disobedience, between true worship and idolatry, between confessing Christ as the only and complete Saviour and denying Him, in fact, as such? Must we not say that that unity can be **felt**, not when the Reformed Confession, not when the Word of God, but when mysticism leads people? Mysticism never could really work with God's Word and commandments. It allegorizes God's Word. Mysticism undermines and denies the Reformation. Let us be glad and thankful for our Reformed Confession, and let us maintain it. It binds us to the Word of God in true obedience.

Now I come to Mr. Cooper's third reason for visiting the monastery with his students at Calvin College. He writes:

But the uncertain future facing my students forms the major reason why I introduce them to contemplation. It can steel them for what appear to be tough

days ahead. Great saints, from the psalmists onward, have always perceived that, except for the unshakable reliance upon God that continual intimacy and openness with Him produces, we will most certainly fail in our world of action.

And *The Banner's* editor, Andrew Kuyvenhoven, writes in an editorial:

Mysticism and monks don't elicit good and approving feelings from me. Perhaps you, too, raised your eyebrows when you saw that, in this issue, Calvin College Chaplain Cooper and student De Vries describe how they went to Kentucky to look at the monks and nuns, and to think about God. Nevertheless, I must remind myself very often that the main goal of my life is *not* to know the church and to be able to talk about God. My goal is to know Him and to enjoy God forever. Disapproval of ancient monasteries and modern community farms notwithstanding, no one can face the busy world if he or she does not have time to be alone with God. A person cannot be strong among people, unless she or he is weak before God.

Disapproval and yet publishing. It describes the situation. But is this the right way to lead churches and teach them to abide by the truth and keep the commandments? Besides, should we not say that our goal must be to obey God's revealed will, to acknowledge Him as our King, and to hallow His Name by that obedience? This is what Christ teaches us to pray in the Covenant prayer.

One last remark. With the editor and the writers I also am of the opinion that there is great superficiality and an

enormous lack of spiritual depth with many, many Christians. I see that also in the Canadian Reformed Churches. There is an intense need for a life, seven days a week, with God and for God through the Holy Spirit. There is a lack of seeking the LORD, of being open for His Word. But this spiritual emptiness should not be filled with mysticism. It must be filled with genuine piety that binds itself to the Scriptures. And this life with God is a continuing conversion, with true repentance, from sin. True conversion or the turning of man to God is the mortification of our old man. That is a heartfelt sorrow that we have provoked God with our sins (including doctrinal sins), and more and more to hate them and flee from them. It is also the quickening of the new, regenerated man, which means a "heartfelt joy in God through Christ and with love and delight to live according to the will of God in all good works." And good works are "only those which are done from true faith, according to the law of God, and to His glory, and not such as are based on our own opinions or the precepts of men." (Lord's Day 33, H.C.).

It is a must that we seek God daily, personally, and as families. We must seek Him in daily worship, in prayer, and in reading and studying, in meditating (if you wish) on what God says in the Scriptures. We must take the time for it, or make the time. But let it be — as I said — like we read it in e.g. Psalm 19 and Psalm 119. J. GEERTSEMA

Psalm 119:1, 4

1. How bless-ed are those up-right in their way,
 Who keep the LORD's de-crees with ded-i-ca-tion
 And in their walk of life his law o-bey.
 How blest are those who with de-ter-mi-na-tion,
 Whole-heart-ed-ly, seek him by night and day
 And look to him for guid-ance and sal-va-tion.

4. How can a youth preserve his way, O LORD,
 And keep it free of evil and transgression?
 By guarding it according to Thy Word:
 O let my heart be wholly Thy possession,
 That by thy servant sin may be abhorred.
 Let me not stray, denying my confession.



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.

NEW YORK (RNS)

The faculty of Union Theological Seminary here has denounced the recent comment of the Rev. Bailey Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, that God does not hear the prayer of a Jew.

In a resolution adopted by 25 of the 30 faculty members of the interdenominational institution, they said, "We believe that the God of justice and love responds to the prayers of people of diverse religious traditions. We deplore the denial of the inherent dignity of all God's human creation." (CN)

RICHMOND, VA. (RNS)

Southern Baptist foreign mission officials are worried that a remark made by the denomination's president that God doesn't hear the prayers of Jews may hurt their work in Israel.

The comment by the Rev. Bailey Smith was broadcast in the Jewish state on the eve of Yom Kippur, the most solemn observance of the Hebrew calendar.

"As it was broadcast, the statement itself has the potential of doing great harm to the friendly relations developed between Baptists and Jewish Israelis over the years," reported James V. Smith, SBC Foreign Mission Board representative in Israel for 25 years. (CN)

WASHINGTON (RNS)

Average immigrant working families, after about 10 years in the U.S. begin earning more than native-born fami-

lies, and initially pay more taxes and receive less public services than the native-born, research for a federal commission shows.

The studies also found that children of immigrant families, after initial disadvantages, tend to overtake children of native-born Americans in academic performance as measured by percentage of children finishing college and years of completed schooling.

"We tend to attribute more problems to immigrant groups than is warranted from what we have seen in their rapid upward mobility in our society," said Prof. T. Paul Schultz, an economist and demographer at Yale University, who conducted the research with Prof. Julian L. Somin, economist at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (CN)

AMERSFOORT (RES NE)

In spite of strong objections from Rev. P. den Butter (Hamilton, Ontario) who addressed the Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (CGKN) on behalf of the Free Reformed Church of North America (a sister church of the CGKN), the CGKN General Synod decided to enter into ecclesiastical fellowship with the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Den Butter's objections centered on theological and ethical developments within the CRCNA. The Synod also decided to establish relations with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland and the Eglises Réformées Evangéliques de France.

HILVERSUM (RES NE)

The Evangelical Broadcasting Organization (EO) in The Netherlands, is now ten years old. In celebration of its tenth anniversary, the EO is sponsoring a "Strategic World Conference for Evangelical Communicators."

The theme of the Conference is "The 80's and Beyond . . ." It will focus on the use of mass media to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the years ahead. Some of the speakers are Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer, Dr. C. Everett Koop, and Prof. Dr. A.E. Wilder Smith. Pastor Georgi Vins, Bishop Festo Kivengere from Uganda, journalists Malcolm Muggeridge and Dr. Tim La Haye will also present papers.

The Conference will be held in Amsterdam from October 27-30, 1980. Convener is EO Director Dr. Bert

Dorenbos, who stated: "This is a working conference for evangelical media people. We can do much more in upgrading the existing potential of evangelical broadcasting by sharing skills and experiences, and in cooperating in multi-media projects."

GRAND RAPIDS (RES NE)

Both the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America have withdrawn from the membership of the RES. The actions were taken shortly after adjournment of the quadrennial assembly of the RES in Nimes in July. The reason given in both instances was that the RES did not disallow dual (WCC/RES) membership.

The RES . . . decided not to press for a vote on this thorny issue but appointed a committee to study the matter once more with a view to reaching a final decision in 1984.

AMSTERDAM (RES NE)

A five-person committee has effectively blocked the appointment of the German Old Testament scholar Dr. W. Dietrich of the University of Gottingen to the Theological Faculty of the Free University (VU). Dr. Dietrich was appointed by the VU Board of Trustees to fill the chair vacated by the retirement of Prof. Nic. H. Ridderbos some years ago. Prof. Dietrich is Lutheran.

Almost from the beginning of the Free University, 100 years ago, a contract between it and the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands contained the stipulation that theological professors at the University must belong to the Reformed Churches. A five-person committee "to maintain contact" serves as a watchdog to see that the stipulation is followed. Some years ago the committee went along with the appointment of the non-Reformed Austrian Dr. K.U. Gabler to teach Church History. This time, for no other reason than that there were no special circumstances that warranted the appointment of a non-Reformed professor, the committee balked. University officials have acquiesced. Writing about this in *Trouw*, A.J. Klei said: "Wouldn't it have been safer if they had gotten this Lutheran at the VU? It does sometimes happen that Lutherans believe a lot more than Reformed deputies dare to imagine."

AMSTERDAM (RES NE)

In 1970 there were still 18,300 Remonstrants in The Netherlands. In 1980 this number had shrunk to 12,000. Leaders of the Remonstrantse Broederschap (Remonstrant Fraternity) also known as Arminians, are deeply disturbed about this one-third drop in membership in just ten years.

* * *

SEATTLE (RES NE)

Recently Evangelical Presbyterians voted favourably on a unique procedure to merge with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). Under the proposal, adopted by a 157-4 vote, members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, would simply en masse join the PCA. This procedure would sidestep protracted negotiations for merger. The Evangelical Synod numbers 20,000 members, the PCS 75,000.

Several smaller Presbyterian and Reformed fellowships in the USA have given consideration to a similar proposal as was voted on by the Evangelical Presbyterians. All of these groups are affiliated with the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC).

* * *

In the United States the place of sex education in the public schools has become a hot debate between various church and secular groups. Both would agree, however, on the need for *some* kind of education: nearly 50 percent of the nation's 10.3 million women, ages 15 to 19, have had premarital sex, according to a new study by John Hopkins University professors Melvin Zelnik and John F. Kantner. As described in *Newsweek*, the study showed that most of the social pressures for remaining a virgin "have disappeared." The researchers' 50 percent figure on sexual activity is double that in their 1971 study. (C.T.)

vO

OUR COVER

Bow Valley, Banff, Alberta. (Photo Courtesy, Alberta Government.)

The Canadian Scene₃

But what happened in British Columbia in the meantime? The Hudson's Bay Company had greatly expanded its fur empire on the west side of the Rockies. Three forts and three men dominated British Columbia in the turbulent years before British Columbia was designated a Crown colony in 1858. They were Fort Langley and George Simpson, Fort Vancouver near Portland, Oregon, and John McLoughlin, and last but not least Fort Victoria and H.B.C. Governor James Douglas who became known as the father of British Columbia. The Columbia River was the original route for the fur trade to the coast and Fort Vancouver was the unofficial capital of Oregon Territory. It was held jointly by Britain and the United States, but after many American colonists settled in the territory, the U.S. increased its pressure, and it was finally agreed that the forty-ninth parallel would be the official border, just as it already was on the east side of the Rockies.

In 1858, gold was found in British Columbia, and, when word got out in San Francisco that the Hudson's Bay Company had deposited gold in the mint there, the miners in California left their played-out goldfields and headed north by the thousands. Governor Douglas took over the administration of authority on the mainland. A few months later Queen Victoria legalized it by officially appointing James Douglas governor of British Columbia. The name was picked by the Queen herself. Dr. John McLoughlin died a year before the birth of British Columbia. He had become an American citizen and would later be called the Father of Oregon. If you visit Portland, you can still see Dr. McLoughlin's house. It has been restored and preserved and is a National Historic site.

The goldseekers did not only come from the south, but from the east as well. These people who travelled by wagon train suffered incredible hardships crossing the mountains. Some did find gold and struck it rich, others did not, but nearly all stayed in the Pacific colony. The population by this time had increased tremendously, and the interior was opened up. Most of

British Columbia's trade and other communications were in a north-south direction and many of its citizens were Americans. John A. Macdonald recognized the danger that British Columbia might join the United States and offered a promise to build a Trans-Continental Railway if British Columbia would join confederation. On July 20, 1871, B.C. became a province.

Sir John A. Macdonald had begun his nation-building program by purchasing Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1870, largely to block possible American expansion. Rupert's Land consisted of the prairies and the N.W.T. This move, however, did not go over too well with the existing population, the French-speaking Métis who were mostly of mixed French Canadian and Indian racial origin. Even the English Canadian settlers were none too pleased with the prospect of an influx of new settlers from Ontario. The Metis led by Louis Riel revolted. The government subdued this first Riel rebellion and then created the Province of Manitoba in 1870. Louis Riel had to seek refuge in the United States; he had lost the battle but had gained responsible government for Manitoba. Nearly one and one-half million acres of land were set aside for the Metis, and the English and French languages were to receive equal status. Louis Riel was so popular that he easily won a seat in the Canadian Parliament in 1873. But he was afraid of arrest and could not take his seat. The following year he was re-elected without appearing in his riding of Provencher. He lived in exile as a teacher in Montana with his wife and family, and had become an American citizen. Meanwhile, the prairies had seen an influx of mostly English-speaking Protestant settlers, and the Métis, who lived off the buffalo herds, had followed the remnants of the herds into the area of the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers.

The federal government was so preoccupied with the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway that there was no time to listen to the Metis grievances. Their leader, Gabriel Dumont, and three other Metis rode

more than 600 miles to ask Riel to lead them. They needed a leader that would be heard. For six months Riel worked on a list of the grievances and the needs of Whites, Métis, and Indians. It was sent to Ottawa, the secretary of state acknowledged receipt, but John A. Macdonald claimed he never received it and Riel got no reply. The English withdrew their support of Riel. They wanted no part in an actual rebellion. The Métis proclaimed a provisional government and ordered the North West Mounted police out of the country. Of course, the government could not tolerate this and took military action. At first the Métis defeated the N.W.M.P. at Duck Lake and the Cree Indians also joined the rebellion. Dumont, with his buffalo-hunt tactics, was a brilliant military leader. Riel walked around the battlefield just carrying a wooden cross. The Métis suffered defeat at the battle of Batoche, and Riel was captured and sentenced to death for high treason. He died on November 16, 1885. Sir John A. Macdonald had said: "He shall die though every dog in Quebec bark in his favour." Macdonald grossly underestimated the strength and depth of feeling among the French Canadians. By refusing to commute Louis Riel's death sentence, he destroyed the strength of the Conservative Party in Quebec. On the south side of the Provincial Legislature Building in Winnipeg there is now a statue of Riel with the inscription: "I know that through the grace of God, I am the founder of Manitoba."

This was a sad part of our history. Even though the cause may be just, Canadians have traditionally rejected the way of revolution. Sir John A. had promised that a railway to the West Coast would be built within ten years of B.C.'s joining confederation. The job was completed in fifteen years, and it was one of the largest construction jobs ever undertaken. In addition to providing a link with the Pacific Coast, it also opened up the prairies for settlement. Until that time the settlers had been either French or English-speaking. Fourteen hundred families of German-speaking Mennonites settled in Southern Manitoba; there were Icelandic immigrants, there were Hungarians, Swedes, Germans, Ukrainians, and people of many other nationalities. They all came to their newly-adopted country by train and for a large part settled on railway land. The Prairies were finally settled, and Alberta and Sask-

atchewan became provinces in 1905.

Canadian nationhood was further strengthened under the prime-ministership of Sir Wilfred Laurier from 1896-1911. During the Boer War he resisted British demands for participation in the war. Finally, he agreed to equip a volunteer force not to exceed one thousand. Later, others followed and Lord Strathcona raised and equipped a force of mounted rifles known as the Lord Strathcona Horse. Sir Wilfred was in a difficult position because he was caught in the middle between the English and the French-speaking people. The first group wanted more Canadian involvement and the second wanted none.

In 1903 the country became involved in a border dispute with the States over who owned the Alaska Panhandle. At that time Britain, responsible for foreign affairs, suggested that an international commission, consisting of three American and three British representatives, settle the dispute. Britain appointed two Canadians and one Englishman. Predictably, the three Americans voted for their claim, and the two Canadians for theirs. President Theodore Roosevelt had warned that, if the decision went against the U.S., it would take the Panhandle anyway. The English representative voted with the American side, because he did not want to see England get into trouble with the U.S. over a matter that was of no concern to Britain. The Canadians were furious, and Laurier resolved that Britain would never again give away Canadian territory. He established the International Boundary Commission to resolve any future disputes.

Canada's involvement in the First World War was a staggering effort. From a total population of only eight million, Canada sent 628,462 enlisted men, and of these 60,661 lost their lives. Of the many battles in which the Canadians fought, four were outstanding: Ypres, the Somme, Vimy Ridge, and Passchendaele. Canada's outstanding war effort gave her increased international stature. Canada was represented at the Paris Peace Conference by her own delegates, signed the Treaty of Versailles on her own behalf, and in 1920 joined the League of Nations along with, but independent of, Great Britain.

The years between the two World Wars saw everything from a general strike in Winnipeg, to the prosperous twenties and the hungry thirties. The world-wide great depression hit

Canada severely and shook the foundations of the nation. Especially the Prairie provinces were hard-hit because of their dependency on the export of grain. The grain prices went from \$1.60 a bushel in 1928 to \$0.28 in 1932, and the crops were poor because of the drought.

Then came the Second World War; Canada entered the war on September 10, 1939, only one week after Britain, in order to signify Canadian autonomy. At first, the government decided to concentrate mainly on economic contributions of food, raw materials, and goods, in order to avoid the conscription issue that the French Canadians hated. After the invasion of the Low Countries and France, the reality became clear to Canadians. Again the war effort was impressive. Out of a population of about twelve million, over a million served in the Canadian army, and 41,770 of them died in action in Europe. Canada emerged from the Second World War as a modern industrial nation. Her tremendous war effort had given her international recognition as a middle power. She took an active part in the United Nations and subscribed to the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949 for the defence of western non-Communist nations.

It is now taken for granted by many of us that Canada is an independent nation and has control over its own foreign and domestic affairs. This is indeed so, but that was not always the case. At the time of Confederation (1867), Canada was still in many ways a British colony. It had no citizenship of its own, no supreme court, no flag, no national anthem. Britain completely controlled foreign policy, and the British parliament could disallow any "repugnant" legislation.

We already mentioned Sir Wilfred Laurier's part in strengthening Canadian nationhood during the Boer War, the Panhandle dispute, and the first part of the First World War. This was continued by Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden and Prime Minister Mackenzie King. Mackenzie King found, at the 1926 Imperial Conference in London, that other British Empire leaders had the same goal of cutting the dependence on London. The recommendations contained in the Balfour Report concluded that Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa were autonomous communities, freely associated as members of the

Continued on page 498.

news medley

"Aha! There I got ye," one of the brethren here in Fergus exclaimed after he had read our previous News Medley.

What was the basis for his triumphant exclamation?

When writing about our constitution, I used the word "repatriation" instead of "patriation." And yes, I had to bow my head in shame because of that slip of the typewriter. Of course, a slip of the typewriter is a slip of the mind, and we cannot blame a "soulless" instrument for a wrong word. Although I and my typewriter are very close, yet there is not such a relationship that it corrects mistakes. However, enough about that. It proves anew that what I write is being read and that it is read with the same benevolent criticism which is found with yours truly when he reads the various bulletins.

Speaking about bulletins, in some of them we find already mentioned that Prof. Ohmann has been appointed professor Old Testament at the Theological College of our Netherlands sister Churches. It is called an honour for him and for our own College. Yes, I agree with that. Our brother had till November 1st to come to a definite decision and to make it known. Contrary to rumours, on October 14, 1980, no such definite decision had been made known as yet. I say this because I heard from one of my colleagues that in the far West the wildest rumours go around. There are too many rumours and too many of us lend their ears to rumours. This summer visitors from the West already told here in Ontario that Prof. Ohmann was going to be appointed in Kampen. That must have come from The Netherlands, for otherwise I would not know how people could get that idea. And when our brother was appointed, one of the members of the Fergus Church said to me, "I knew already in May that the appointment would be made." All this is a riddle to me. It is the more proof that the Dutch saying is true: "One person's secret is known to God alone; two persons' secret is known to everyone."

Meanwhile, the expectation has been expressed in one of the bulletins which I received that our forthcoming Synod will have to appoint a professor Old Testament. According to the *Nederlands Dagblad*, one of the Kampen professors has said that he was not all that worried about our ability to find a replacement. Apparently they feel quite at ease in this respect and do not share the feeling at all which was expressed in a letter that I received: in that letter David's action was quoted: he took the one little ewe lamb. (Let no one make a comparison between "little ewe lamb" and professor Ohmann!)

If our brother accepts the appointment, we shall miss him, for he has acquired quite a place in the midst of the Churches, not in the last place by the speeches which he gave here and there, in which the Scriptures of the Old Testament became more alive and relevant to our every-day life.

Since I am speaking about persons anyway, I mention the Rev. M. Werkman. Apparently he suffered a recurrence of the fainting spells which he had a few years ago, and has to take a month's rest. We wish him the patience to take that rest indeed, and express the wish that it may enable him in

due time to take up his work where he had to drop it for some weeks.

The Rev. H. Scholten, according to my latest information, is doing as well as may be expected in the given circumstances. The Rev. Stam states in the bulletin that the promises of the Lord will undoubtedly be his rod and his staff. That is also our wish.

And to conclude our personal remarks, Mrs. W. Loopstra fell seriously ill and was rushed to the hospital. The latest I heard was that she was in intensive care and that her condition was very grave. It is deplorable that these lines are read several days after they have been written, in some instances even two or more weeks, so that we cannot give you the latest information. Let us remember the Rev. Loopstra especially in these trying days.

The news from the Churches individually is not all that copious. The ladies in Ontario will, in all likelihood, provide us with a report on their League Day held recently in Hamilton; and the young people in Ontario are not used to letting us share, via *Clarion*, their experiences at their study weekends. Let me say that they had such weekends in Lincoln and Hamilton. May these gatherings bear rich fruit for the regular work of the societies.

Other activities which are revived in these days and months of the year are the sales and bazaars, or whatever name may be given to them: they all amount to the same thing. They are well-proven means to gather in some extra financial support for various causes, among which the schools are the primary beneficiaries. Grand Rapids, just to mention them, reports a profit of \$628.68. I wonder how many men from the Internal Revenue Service were around to skim the cream off the milk! Anyway: what is left is still worthwhile.

The mere mention of schools makes me think of what I read in the *Family Post* of Smithville: "A fence will be erected between the school property and the neighbour's vineyard." Most likely our young brothers and sisters did not realize that only when one was *hungry* one was permitted to take and eat when walking *through* a neighbour's vineyard, but that one was not allowed to take some bunches of grapes along. The new fence will remind them constantly of the difference between mine and thine, although the temptation will remain to consider the "grass" on the other side of the fence much greener than the gravel on which they are allowed to seek their recreative activities.

In the same Smithville bulletin I read the following little note.

Perhaps here a little note: attestations should be requested at least two weeks before moving so that they can be duly signed and handed out and not sent afterwards. In more than one instance lately the requests were put in somewhat late and this is not only incorrect but also cumbersome.

It does happen quite regularly that on Sunday morning in the Consistory room one of the brethren says, "So-and-so requested 'his' attestation to such and such a Church." When we ask when the brother is going to move, it sometimes appears that that has already been done, or that it is the next day. Then — in order to accommodate the brother — an attestation (not "his" attestation) has to be written between the two services, so that it can be signed by chairman and clerk of the Consistory and can be given to the one who requested it.

At times the same happens when one requests a travel attestation. It was known already that a trip to The Nether-

lands was in the offing (reservations were made quite a few months before so as to take advantage of the discount available) but on the Sunday before departure the request is made for a travel attestation. There are exceptions, mind you, but that's how it oftentimes goes.

We have the custom of typing an attestation in each individual case. We don't use printed forms, as we never use the words "as far as it's known," for we think that that is silly. A physician who writes "As far as I know this man is healthy," would hear, "Then you had better make sure by examining the person!" However, that's not what I wished to stress in this case. What I do wish to support is the remark in Smithville's bulletin that attestations should be requested well in advance. Asking for an attestation well in advance also shows that one takes one's Church membership seriously. And that is a good thermometer.

The Home Mission Committee in Burlington West inserted a special newsletter in the bulletin and from that I quote regarding the broadcasting.

The program continues to be aired each week on three radio stations in Ontario as well as one in Coaldale, Alberta. London is still working on getting free air time on a local FM station. Although we sometimes become discouraged when we don't get response from listeners for a long while, yet we are convinced that God's Word will not return empty.

A few weeks ago I ran into a person who attended our services for quite some time. He moved to a neighbouring town and now goes there somewhere. He asked me whether we have a radio broadcast on Sunday mornings. I said that we do, and his reply was, "Yes, I listen to it every Sunday." More people may listen than we realize. The Day will reveal it.

We have no more news to be mentioned from Ontario. And there is only one bulletin from which I wish to quote for today. That is the Edmonton bulletin.

More than once I tried to keep you up to date in the matter of splitting or institution. I am sorry that I cannot give any definite news as yet. That every aspect will be considered thoroughly becomes evident from the following.

Council spent considerable time discussing a report of the Advisory Committee appointed by Council January 21, 1980, to investigate a possible splitting of the Congregation and a related proposal. Because of the late hour, this discussion was suspended without any major decision having been taken at this time.

One is never too old to learn something new. That's what I thought when reading this passage in the Edmonton bulletin.

From now on the Consistory members will receive a photocopy of my attendance list every first Monday of the month. This list also shows the frequency of last season's attendance for every student. The Elders in turn will then contact all those who are delinquent.

Although personally I would not be in favour of doing what is described in the above passage, I do plead for a regular communication between the minister and the elders also in this respect. When the brethren go out for family visiting, it is very important that they know whether the children of a family attend catechism classes regularly and whether they learn their assignments. If they ask the minister unexpectedly, he may have a general idea about the students' attentiveness and progress, about their attendance and cooperation, yet it is difficult to remember everything exactly when one has more than eighty students and sees them for one hour per week in that capacity.



Hendrik Bouwman and Grietje Wiersma were united in marriage on November 25, 1940 in Sneek, Friesland, The Netherlands. In July 1952, they emigrated with their five daughters and one son to Canada. The destination was to be Windsor, Ontario. However, upon arrival in Halifax, this was changed to Orangeville, Ontario instead. Here, on the outskirts of Orangeville, they resided for one year during which time also their sixth daughter was born. In the summer of 1953, the Bouwman family moved to the Fergus-Guelph area since Mr. Bouwman had found work at the Ontario Agricultural College (now the University of Guelph) in Guelph. He was employed here for 25 years until his retirement in December 1978.

Mr. Bouwman and his family were among the first families of our church to settle in this area and when the church was instituted in 1956 at Fergus-Guelph, Mr. Bouwman served as one of its first elders. He was also actively engaged in the establishment of our own Canadian Reformed School.

Presently, Mr. and Mrs. Bouwman are living in Guelph and are enjoying their retirement in good health. They are very grateful for all the blessings the Lord has bestowed upon them during all these years. All their seven children are married and they have 24 grandchildren, all of whom are members of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A mere attendance list would not "fill the gap" that exists. Then I would be more in favour of having "report Catechism Classes" on the agenda of the Consistory meetings. Think about it, I would say.

CANADIAN SCENE — *Continued.*

British Commonwealth of Nations. The final details were worked out at the next Imperial Conference in 1930. The Statute of Westminster became law on December 11, 1931. Canada had achieved final independence and had obtained, in a peaceful manner, everything the Thirteen Colonies achieved through the American revolution in 1776.

This is, I believe, one of the basic differences between Americans and Canadians. Revolution just isn't our style. Let me quote Frank Underhill, who wrote: "The mental climate of English Canada in its early formative years was determined by men who were fleeing from the practical application of the doctrine that all men are born equal and are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . . . In Canada we have no revolutionary tradition."

Indeed, conciliation, and not confrontation, has been the Canadian way — from the days of Champlain's seeking alliances with the Indians ("Our sons shall wed your daughters and henceforth we shall be one people"), to the Fathers of Confederation's settling their differences at the conference in Charlottetown to the day we achieved final independence at the Statute of Westminster. We have seen that even the rebellions in our history were often followed by compromise.

We cannot look at the Canadian Scene without looking to the South. We have already seen that their way of achieving independence was not ours. Canada also has never attempted to be a melting pot the way the United States has been, where one had to become an American as soon as possible. In Canada there was always room for more cultures. The French culture in Quebec has survived for centuries. Ukrainians have brought their own culture from the Steppes of the Ukraine in Russia to the Canadian Prairies.

You have all heard the cliché of the longest undefended border; yes, it is true, with a few exceptions, that Canada and the United States have enjoyed excellent relations. As Canada's dependency upon Britain and the Empire decreased, we have grown more and more dependent upon the States. Our economy is so dependent upon the American one that a slowdown in the economy in the U.S. has immediate repercussions in Canada. We need the American investment; we depend al-

most totally on the States for our national defence. The influence of American culture on Canada has been growing immensely. We watch American T.V., read American books and magazines, sing American songs, and see American movies. Will Canada ever be annexed by the United States? One thing is for sure: we could never defend ourselves against the Americans if they did attack us. England certainly would not send any troops to help, and France would not either. It is even doubtful whether the Canadian people themselves would now be willing to take up arms to defend our southern border. If Canada would break up, it would most certainly fall into American hands sooner or later.

Canada, historically, was a partnership of two races: English and French. Due to large scale immigration from other countries, Canada has now a large segment of the population whose mother tongue is neither English nor French. The late John Diefenbaker was always a good advocate for the rights of those Canadians (approximately one third) whose ancestors were neither English nor French. Sometimes this tended to be forgotten in all the talking about Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Still, we as Canadians that were either born in Holland or are of Dutch descent should be careful not to narrow our vision to the scope of some of our fellow citizens who say: Let those Frenchmen in Quebec learn to speak English just like we did!

I would like you to ponder upon these words spoken by Governor General George Vanier in a New Year's

message in January 1967: "The measure of our unity has been the measure of our success (in the past). . . . If we imagine that we can now go our separate ways within our country; if we think that selfish interests can now take preference over the national good; if we exaggerate our differences or revel in contention; if we do any of these things, we will promote our own destruction. [Canada owes it to the world to remain united, because] . . . no lesson is more badly needed than the one our unity can supply, the lesson that diversity need not be the cause for conflict but on the contrary may lead to richer and nobler living. Let us open the windows and the doors of the provinces. Let us look over the walls and see what is on the other side. Let us know one another and that will lead to understanding. . . . I pray God that we may all go forward hand in hand. We can't run the risk of this great country falling into pieces."

I hope that our discussions tonight may contribute something towards a better understanding of our Canadian heritage and our fellow-Canadians. I also hope that discussing our political heritage may make us appreciate the privilege God gives us that we may live in a country that has shown a love for law and order and respect for authority rather than just a love of freedom. May our prayers be increased for Her Majesty, the queen, and her house, and all those who are set in authority over us. The Fathers of Confederation picked the name "Dominion" for the country they had made. *A mari usque ad mare*. . . . from sea to sea. The words are taken from Psalm 72:

* * * * *

*"Give the king Thy justice, O God, and Thy righteousness to the royal son!
May he judge Thy people with righteousness, and Thy poor with justice!
Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness!
May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor!
May he live while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!
May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth!
In his days may righteousness flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more!
May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. . . ."*

A.C. LENGKEEK

Guelph Receives Its First Minister

September 14 was an important date for the congregation of Emmanuel Canadian Reformed Church at Guelph. On that Sunday, Candidate Aasman was ordained to the ministry, and the Church at Guelph received its first minister since its institution which took place on January 1, 1974. Rev. VanOene, our counsellor during this time period, preached in the morning, using as text, I Timothy 6:20 and 21: "O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, for by professing it, some have missed the mark as regards the faith. Grace be with you." The theme of Rev. VanOene's sermon was, "Paul's command to Timothy to guard what had been entrusted to him." The following points were dealt with:

I. Timothy is commanded to do it because of the nature of the deposit;

II. Timothy is able to do it by avoiding what deviates from it;

III. Timothy has to do it, that benefit may be derived from it.

That which has been entrusted to Timothy is, briefly speaking, the Word of God, the proclamation of the Gospel, the doctrine of the Church, all that is involved in the Scriptures and what the Church has summarized from the Scriptures. In this very same letter, Paul already speaks of "confession." Since the Word of God is and remains God's Word, Timothy — and the ministers of the Word — has to guard it, for he will have to give account to the One whose possession the deposit is and remains. Thus ministers are guards who keep the treasure and protect the citizens.

This guarding is necessary because many attacks are launched against God's Word. That was already



A few wise words from the chairman of the Consistory, Br. S.W. Wildeboer.

the case in Paul's days. Read what he says about the efforts to look between and behind the lines as it was done by the people busying themselves with genealogies, or by the people who claimed that the spiritual resurrection had already taken place and that therefore no resurrection was to be expected. You have to explain things in a spiritual sense. Does that not remind us of "new hermeneutics" which also looks for a meaning behind the meaning, which reads between and behind the lines, and which claims that simple reading of Scripture does not make us get its message? Only when the minister of the Gospel stays away from those things and refuses to become involved in them, can he guard the deposit and work fruitfully. What is at stake is the inviolate character of God's Word. When the Word of God is not preserved inviolate, the ministry of the Gospel has lost its sense and meaning.

That is the reason why people are complaining far and near and why church buildings become emptier all the time. It is tried by all sorts of means to revive interest. Modernization of the services and of the manner in which the message is brought, is advocated. However, the very cure is not seen, namely, a return to the inviolate character and the authoritative message of the Word of God! It becomes evident every time anew that whatever deviates from the infallible Word of God is unable to fulfill its claim and promise. Paul saw it in his days already: what the false teachers brought was empty, without contents and therefore without effect. Only when the Word of God is honoured fully, can the preaching bring



what it proclaims and will the effect be experienced by God's children. Only when the faith — that is what the Church believes — is upheld and adhered to, will the Bride of Christ be prepared to meet the Bridegroom. All other theories and doctrines are empty and deceptive.

Rev. VanOene concluded his sermon with the following directive to the congregation. "Therefore, your minister will be a real blessing to you only when he guards the deposit which today is entrusted to him and when you receive his word as such. Then you remain in the path of the catholic Church (the "faith"), and then the assurance at the end of Paul's letter is applicable to you as well: "the grace (is) with you *all*."

After the sermon, the Form for the Ordination of Ministers of God's Word was read. The reply to the various questions came convincingly from Br. Aasman with the words, "I do with all my heart."

In the afternoon, Rev. Aasman conducted his first worship service as minister of the Church at Guelph. For his inaugural sermon he chose as a text, II Corinthians 5:18 to 21. "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of

God." The text dealt with the fact that Paul found it necessary to defend his apostleship not for personal reasons, but in order to safeguard the gospel of Jesus Christ. Rev. Aasman spoke about the fact that God reconciled us to Himself in Jesus Christ. This reconciliation is: I. accomplished in the work of Christ; II. entrusted to the preaching of the ministry.

Rev. Aasman stated that central to Paul's ministry was the gospel that God has reconciled us to Himself in Jesus Christ. Reconciliation is the removal of a barrier or an obstacle that holds two people apart and the restoration of a good and rich relationship. Man destroyed the beautiful relationship in Paradise by putting up the barrier of sin. He could do nothing to remove it. However, our Lord could remove it by the work of His Son. Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, was made to be sin for our sake. He took our sin and the incredible burden of God's eternal wrath and justice on His own shoulders. In turn, the Lord imputed to us the righteousness of Jesus Christ so that we could again live as His children.

If Corinth did not recognize Paul's apostleship, then it would have to reject the gospel of reconciliation. The preaching of reconciliation is essential to God's work of reconciliation. It is entrusted to those who preach. Preachers are also ambassadors for Christ. Therefore it is the duty of those who preach to declare the message of reconciliation faithfully and precisely. It is also the duty of those who hear this message not to reject it. For then they reject Jesus Christ and His gospel of reconciliation.

Rev. Aasman concluded by saying



A fitting present for our new minister.

that as long as the message of reconciliation is always proclaimed and heard in the congregation of Guelph, then we will show that our only safety is in the mercy of God, as it is manifested in Christ, in whom every part of our salvation is complete. We are reconciled in Christ to God the Father, by His great mercy and grace!

This marked the end of a beautiful and memorable Sunday. During both services, we were once again reminded of God's providence and care for His people — something that is so easily taken for granted. It also marked the beginning of the work of Rev. Aasman in Guelph. May he continue "to guard the deposit which was entrusted to him," with his ordination to the ministry of the Word!

On Wednesday, September 24, the Guelph congregation officially welcomed into their midst Rev. R. Aasman and his family. This joyous occasion was reflected in the mood of the evening, as various representatives and societies made presentations through speech, song, pictures, and skits.

The evening was opened by one of the organizers, Mr. E. Dokter. After congregational singing and prayer, the president of the YPS "Forward in Faith," Tony Lodder, reflected on how the whole congregation had looked forward to this event. Guelph had been without a minister so long that they could really appreciate one now. However, Tony pointed out one problem that the YPS had. "How do we ap-



Entertainment from the young people.



... and an obvious reaction.

proach a minister as young as ours?" This adjustment will occur quickly.

The YPS then set the tone of the evening with their stirring voices. All members were appropriately dressed in blue baseball shirts. After a warm-up by singing the scale and "Down Upon the Swanee River," they launched into their original song entitled, "Here in Guelph there is a Church" to the tune of Old McDonald's Farm. Their last stanza was:

Here in Guelph there is a Church
E-l-e-i . . . Oh
The Aasman family came to town
E-l-e-i . . . Oh
With a Reverend here
and his wife over there
Here a kid, there a book
Everywhere a grateful look,
Here in Guelph there is a Church
WELCOME AASMAN FAMILY!

Mrs. F. Westrik, president of the Women's Society "Watch and Pray," then came up to express the gratitude of this society for receiving a minister. Then with the help of Mrs. H. Meerveld and Mrs. H. VanDooren, the ladies showed a series of sketches that represented a member of the Women's Society. The audience had to guess who it was. Upon the correct answer, the person came up with a small gift and presented a short poem. Mrs. Aasman was given enough *koek* and other goodies to take care of the first week's shopping.

The Guelph Choir, under the direction of Mr. J. Scholten, sang selections from the old 100th Psalm and from the "Nativity of Christ." The choir did a re-

markable job after only two weeks practice.

Mr. A. Lodder spoke on behalf of the Men's Society "Emmanuel," pointing out that his society was the first one to use this name. He stated that they were not an "Old" Men's Society, a stereotype that seems to have kept membership down the last few years.

After a short respite for refreshments and fellowship in the Church basement, the program was continued with the singing of Hymn 64, stanza 2. Mr. G. Lodder spoke on behalf of the Fergus-Guelph School Society. He asked Rev. Aasman for his support in the upbuilding of this important task. The schools supported by this society take up the time and effort of many people.

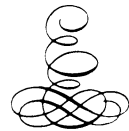
Under the direction of Mrs. R. Knot, a Dutch skit was presented, depicting the various people that could be found in a congregation. This very humorous skit made Mr. S. Wildeboer comment that he had a tough act to follow. He spoke on behalf of the consistory and pointed out the need that our congregation has had for a minister. He also thanked Rev. VanOene for the help and guidance that he provided over the years. He spoke for both the Rev. Aasman and the congregation when he exhorted us to follow the Scriptures and work together.

Mr. E. Kampen, the other organizer of the evening, focused our attention on the presentation of the gift for Rev. Aasman. Not to be outdone by the previous speakers, he spoke on behalf of the whole congregation when he stated that we had to underline the

previous words with something more tangible. Since the role of the minister is to be a pastor and a teacher who deals with the needs of the congregation, Mr. Kampen asked, "How can we help the minister prepare his sermons?" This was quickly answered when a comfortable desk chair was wheeled in. Rev. Aasman "tried it on for size" and found it very suitable.

After a few more selections by the choir and a solo by Mrs. Knot, Rev. Aasman expressed his thanks in two ways. He first thanked the congregation for the welcome evening, for the joy that was present, and for the gifts that he and his wife had received. He expressed the advantage of a smaller congregation by being able to get to know so many members in a short time. Secondly, he expressed his thanks as a pastor and teacher, an ambassador for Jesus Christ. It was a task at which he would work hard. He concluded by asking God's blessing for himself and the congregation.

After the singing of Hymn 41, stanzas 1 and 4, Mr. N. VanDooren brought this happy occasion to a close with prayer.



Announcement

The Canadian Reformed Teachers' College Association has been able to hire a principal for the Teachers' College. This person is Mr. T. Van der Ven, who is at present "headmaster" of the John Calvin School of Armadale, Australia. The duties of this person will commence, the Lord willing, on January 1, 1981 to prepare course outlines and do other necessary work so that the Teachers' College may open its doors for students in September of 1981. Students interested in becoming teachers of our schools are invited to apply.

We hope and pray that the visa may be granted to the Van der Ven family. This should not be taken lightly for at present it is not easy to obtain this document.

Give your support in word (prayer) and deed (donating).

THE C.R.T.C. BOARD

Where is the Ignorance and the Hatred

The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith is a Jewish organization, "founded in 1913 'to stop the defamation of the Jewish people . . . to secure justice and fair treatment to all citizens alike.'" Regularly they send com-



Church News

DECLINED:

the call extended to him by the Church at Barrhead, Alberta:

REV. M. VANDERWEL

of Abbotsford, B.C.

* * *

REV. A.H. DEKKER — ELIGIBLE FOR CALL

The Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad has received the following information from the Deputies for Correspondence (Australia), with the request to bring this matter to the attention of the Canadian Reformed Churches:

"We must notify you that the Synod approved the decision of the Church council of Launceston (Tas.) to dismiss Rev. A.H. Dekker as minister in that congregation; and stated that Rev. A.H. Dekker is now eligible for a calling from one of the Sister-Churches."

The address of Rev. A.H. Dekker is:

37 Chung Gon Crescent
Launceston, Tas.
Australia 7250

For the Committee,
J. VISSCHER, Secretary

munications to the press and we are included in that.

This time the League is upset because of some remarks made by a Southern Baptist minister. That minister stated namely that "God Almighty does not hear the prayers of Jews." I shall give you the complete quote, as given in one of the letters which the League received from Southern Baptist ministers.

It's interesting to me at great political battles how you have a Protestant to pray and a Catholic to pray and then you have a Jew to pray. With all due respect to those dear people, my friend God Almighty does not hear the prayer of a Jew. For how in the world can God hear the prayer of a man who says that Jesus Christ is not the true Messiah. It is blasphemous! It may be politically expedient because no one can pray unless he prays through the name of Jesus Christ. It is not Jesus among many; it is Jesus and Jesus alone. It is Christ only.

Apart from the language "my friend God Almighty" I must say that the basic statement as made by Dr. Bailey Smith, President of the Southern Baptist Convention, on August 22, 1980, is absolutely correct. It is correct not because Dr. Smith says so, neither because I agree with the statement which Dr. Smith made, but because the Lord Jesus Christ Himself said so.

The remark by Dr. Smith may have shattered a false dream of unity-in-spite-of-differences, that is only beneficial.

"No one comes to the Father, but by Me," the Lord Jesus said, John 14:6. "He who does not honour the Son, does not honour the Father who sent Him," John 5:23. "It is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say that He is your God. But you have not known Him; I know Him." John 8:54, 55. These are only a few of the many places from Scripture that we could quote to show that everyone who does not go to God via the Lord Jesus Christ has no access to Him.

It is a phantom to think that the God whom we worship is the same god that the Jews and Muslims worship, or that the Buddhists call upon.

The God of the Old Testament is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the same One as the God of the New Testament. It is self-deception to assume that the god whom the Jews worship is half the God whom we adore, or that we worship the LORD God more completely than the Jews do.

That has nothing to do with anti-Semitism; that is our simple faith and our simple obedience to God's Word, our taking seriously what we read in the Holy Scriptures. It is that truth that is being more and more obscured nowadays for the sake of outward unity.

We would say with the apostle Paul, "If I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted?" Galatians 5:11. In that case, the apostle writes, the stumblingblock of the cross has been removed! In the same vein we would say, "If there is so little, if any, difference, then, why are Jews who become believers in Christ so totally rejected by their families and ostracized?" Jews that take their faith seriously cut off completely any member of the family that embraces the Christian faith. I can only respect them for that, although they are completely wrong. At least they are aware of the basic difference. They not only are aware of it, they also draw the consequences. Then, at least, we know what we can count with and what we face.

The League's reaction is as follows:

New York, NY, Sept. 19. . . . The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith today made public critical reactions of Baptist leaders to the statement by the president of the Southern Baptist Convention that "God Almighty does not hear the prayers of Jews."

Theodore Freedman, director of ADL's Program Division, said the League has been receiving calls and letters from friends in the Baptist community expressing the profoundest dismay at the statements made by Dr. Bailey Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, regarding Jews. Some have shared with ADL their letters to Dr. Smith.

Mr. Freedman pointed out that ADL's Interfaith Affairs Department has been engaged in dialogue with Southern Baptists on such topics as the Jewish roots of Christianity, the Jewishness of Jesus and the Disciples, and the linkage between Christian beliefs and anti-Semitism. He called Dr. Smith's remarks "anti-Semitic and of the kind which for centuries has provided the underpinning for the persecution of Jews in the name of God."

The letters received by ADL are attached.

One cannot but remark that anti-Semitism is *not* the fruit of the Christian faith; it is partially an offshoot of misinterpretation of the true Christian faith. We have never denied what the Scripture teaches us that salvation is from the Jews, John 4:22. Those are words spoken by our Redeemer Himself. And anyone who knows his own sinfulness and sins will refrain from blaming the Jews and hating them because they are Jews and because the Jews brought the Lord Jesus to the cross. If we had not fallen into sin in our first father, Adam, such would never have happened nor ever been necessary. Calling the words of Dr. Smith "anti-Semitic" betrays a profound ignorance of what the true Christian faith is.

A profound ignorance is also to be noted with those who wrote the letters of which copies were attached. Since those letters have been sent to us, and the communication was marked "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE," we feel free to quote a few passages from them. We shall spare the writers the mentioning of their names, lest their shame becomes the greater.

Of the statement of Dr. Smith one writer says,

His statements are not only untrue, unscriptural, and unkind, they are also, as you know, far removed from the teachings and spirit of the Jesus whom he pretends to serve. . . . Dr. Smith has joined himself to the nefarious company of Haman, Hitler, Arafat, and Khomeini. They are not the People of God. . . . However, I do wish Dr. Smith would pause at least long enough to realize that Jesus was a Jew — a loyal and faithful Jew. Does that mean that God would not hear him? And what of Abraham and Moses, Isaiah and Jeremiah — and all the hosts of faithful ones who have enjoyed the fellowship of the Lord?

The writer? A professor of Religion! Poor students!

Another quotation.

Thank you for sending to me the quotation by ayatollah Bailey Smith. It is another painful reminder of this man's ignorance. . . . To say that God does not hear the prayers of a Jew is more than infringing upon the sovereignty and prerogatives of God, it is self-idolatry (playing god). . . . If God does not hear the prayers of a Jew, then he does not hear the prayers of Bailey Smith.

Another quotation reads:

How could I remain faithful to a God who would listen responsively to right-wing extremists who baptize bigotry, materialism and reactionary politics in the name of

Christ, while that same God refuses to hear the cries of a devout Jew whose whole life has been committed to love, justice and mercy for all people? . . . I cannot conceive of a God who would eagerly listen to Jerry Falwell and Bailey Smith but who would not tolerate a prayer from such great souls of the recent past as Martin Buber or Abraham Herschel.

From another letter comes the following passage.

Such a statement is just as Pharisical for you as the one the Pharisees spoke in John 9:31.

The next step of such an unbiblical indictment is that "My friend God Almighty does not hear Catholics because they have made Mary a mediator equal to Jesus Christ." Is this not "blasphemy" by your reasoning? How long will it be then before yet another statement is made: "My friend God Almighty does not hear anyone's prayer who isn't a Southern Baptist because WE ALONE worship God in spirit and in truth doing His will perfectly enough to be heard by Him."

A last quote.

I would even go so far as to say that it is pure and simple heresy, and is highly reminiscent of something Marcion would say! . . . I don't know who taught you your Christian faith, but whoever it was, he or she failed miserably to make you sensitive or even a Christian about these concerns. . . . We do have our differences with Judaism concerning the messiahship of Jesus. *But no true Christian doubts for one moment that both Christians and Jews worship and pray to the same God and that He hears them.*

One would need a lengthy brochure to refute all the ignorance and false oppositions, inaccurate statements and accusations which are made in the above mentioned letters.

Is it not remarkable that all sorts of invectives come so freely out of the pens and typewriters of people who consider the words at issue so terribly wrong and so utterly rejectable? They themselves apparently have much more freedom and leeway than the man against whom they spew forth their poison. People who are so friendly and cooperative when it concerns others become oftentimes venomous when they turn against those who are closest to them.

Anti-Semitic statements and actions should be refuted. I still remember some of my Jewish friends who lost their lives in Hitler's concentration camps. But what hurts me more than that is the fact that they did not have the Lord Jesus, and thus did not have the Father.

Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

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OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

BLOM, Willemijntje Hendrika, geboren te Rotterdam op 18 januari 1954, naar Canada vertrokken in 1980.

VAN ELDERT, Jan Teunis, geboren op 9 december 1946 naar Canada vertrokken op 5 januari 1979.

JUMELET, Adriaan Jacob, geboren te Breda op 21 augustus 1915, naar Canada vertrokken in 1953.

LAVOOY, D.J. laatstbekende adres te Toronto, Ontario.

VAN DER LUGT, Ronald, geboren te Amsterdam op 19 januari 1959, laatstbekende adres te Vancouver.

PRATTENBURG, M.J. laatstbekende adres te St. Catharines, Ontario.

FREIJSER, A. geboren op 30 mei 1901 te Hulst, naar Canada vertrokken in 1927.

VAN DEELAN-TREFFERS, Patricia, geboren op 9 december 1959 naar Canada vertrokken in 1979.

DONOVAN, John F. laatstbekende adres te Toronto, Ontario.

DOLMAN, Willem Hendrik, geboren op 1 mei 1946 te Rotterdam.

ERIKS, Jan Peter, geboren te Alkmaar op 30 juli 1954 naar Canada vertrokken op 7 mei 1980.

HAAN, Roelof Willem, geboren te Leek, naar Canada vertrokken op 25 maart 1952.

HOLST, Casper Hendrik, geboren op 5 mei 1921, naar Canada vertrokken in 1954.

DE JONG, A. geboren op 17 mei 1915, naar Canada vertrokken in 1952.

KUSTER, H. laatstbekende adres te Brantford, Ontario.

VAN DER LAAN, E.M. geboren op 10-02-1955, naar Canada vertrokken op 4-1-1978.

MULAS-HERWIJNEN, M. geboren op 6 juni 1942 te Schoorl, laatstbekende adres te Weston, Ontario.

VAN VEEN, Petrus Gerardus, geboren op 20 juli 1915 te 's-Gravenhage, naar Canada vertrokken in 1980.

BERKEVELD, A.F., geboren op 4-10-1934, naar Canada vertrokken in 1960, vermoedelijk B.C.

De Consul-Generaal, voor deze:
MEVR. G. SCHNITZLER

vO

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

When you'll be reading this I don't know!

Things sure get mixed up when mail workers strike.

It's very sad so many people are disappointed when the mail doesn't come through.

All because the mail workers are not satisfied with their work.

How sad for us, but also sad for the workers!

It made me think of Joseph.

Do you know why?

Do you remember how hard Joseph worked, first at Potiphar's house and later in the jail?

It wasn't because he was paid so well.

It wasn't because he had a family to work hard for.

Joseph worked hard and cheerfully because he knew God expected that of him.

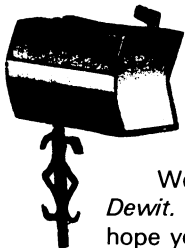
Joseph knew that wherever the Lord puts you, you have to do your very best.

Let's always remember that.

All people should realize that.

Before we say another word let's first congratulate all those Busy Beavers who celebrate a November birthday. We wish you all a very happy day with your family and friends! And we wish you, too, God's blessing and guidance in the year ahead.

Tanya Harlaar	November 1	Leona Dam	November 15
Geraldine Tamminga	3	John Linde	15
Paul Mulder	4	Bernice Vandenbos	17
Jennifer Van Woudenberg	8	Debbie Vandergugten	17
Sharon Kieneker	9	Arno Moeliker	20
Carla Griffioen	10	Cathy Van Delden	21
Julius Wierenga	10	Lorinda Barendregt	22
Joanne Lodder	11	Glenda Bulthuis	24
Lucy De Boer	12	Charles Doekes	27
Michelle Van Egmond	12	Annette Van Andel	28
Bernice Van Overbeeke	14	Sylvia Foekens	30
Brian Bosch	15		



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Mary Ann Dewit*. We are happy to have you join us, and we hope you'll enjoy participating in our Busy Beaver activities. Right now you can still send in entries to our Cartoon Contest, *Mary Ann*. Just look a few issues back and you'll see what it's all about. Write again soon.

I'm glad you like your new school, *Alan Janssens*. Have you gotten used to climbing the staircases? Thank you for

the riddles, *Alan*. The Busy Beavers will enjoy them, I'm sure.

Hello *Annette* and *Les Haan*. Thank you for your entries in the cartoon contest. It was nice to hear from you again.

Riddles for You

from Busy Beaver *Alan Janssens*

- Which has more legs — a horse or no horse?
No horse had eight legs, but a horse has just four.
- In what month do women talk the least?
February — because it is the shortest month.
- If Washington's wife went to Washington while Washington's washwomen washed Washington's woollies, how many W's in all?
There are no W's in "all."
- What's the difference between a sewing machine and a kiss?
One sews seams nice and the other seems so nice.
- What's the difference between a busdriver and a cold?
One knows the stops and the other stops the nose.

QUIZ TIME

Word Search Puzzle on Psalm 23

by Busy Beaver *Darlene Lodder*

P	R	B	N	V	A	L	L	E	Y	L	G	V	R	M	O
R	A	E	X	Z	L	D	C	H	O	S	V	X	E	H	V
E	A	S	B	D	A	E	H	C	D	U	E	F	S	G	E
S	B	I	T	I	J	F	E	A	R	R	K	L	T	M	R
E	N	D	O	U	G	O	O	D	N	E	S	S	O	P	F
N	L	E	Q	R	R	R	S	L	T	L	U	V	R	W	L
C	L	X	Y	Z	A	E	B	C	L	Y	D	E	E	F	O
E	E	G	H	I	J	V	S	S	X	O	Z	U	S	P	W
M	W	V	N	K	G	E	E	H	R	Q	W	B	W	O	S
R	D	V	I	D	P	R	E	P	A	R	E	S	T	E	S
E	A	L	R	L	C	H	P	Z	U	Z	M	P	O	S	U
A	N	O	I	N	T	E	S	T	X	L	N	A	Y	U	D
Z	Z	L	E	M	G	X	T	O	S	K	A	C	C	O	L
S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	P	N	C	A	A	R	H	S
R	I	G	H	T	E	O	U	S	N	E	S	S	E	C	B
E	N	E	M	I	E	S	O	K	O	H	O	I	M	L	D

Can you find all these words?

presence	shepherd	valley	forever
dwelt	righteousness	surely	oil
prearest	enemies	fear	anointest
house	evil	follow	overflows
mercy	beside	goodness	head
soul	pastures	restores	

Have you all sent in your entries to the Cartoon Contest, Busy Beavers?

If you were planning to, and haven't yet, will you do it right away, please?

Then we can see who the winners are.

And maybe you can see some entries, too!

Bye for now.

Hope to "see" you next time!

Yours,
Aunt Betty