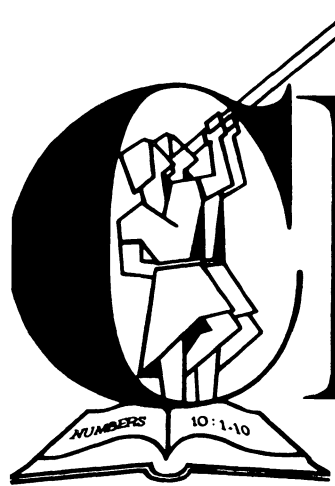


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE



Vol. 29, No. 23

November 15, 1980



Principal's Statement 1980

Eleventh Anniversary Meeting
Eighth Convocation

Friday, November 7, 1980

1. *Celebration After First Decade*

The Tenth Anniversary of our Theological College was a memorable event. On Thursday, August 30, 1979, about twelve hundred persons came together in Abbotsford, B.C. to give thanks to the LORD Who had guided us through the first decade of existence. The degree of Bachelor of Divinity was conferred upon B.J. Berends, P.K.A. deBoer, B.A., and G.H. Visscher, B.A. The professor of Dogmatology spoke about modern trends in Christology. His address was entitled, "Who Do You Say That I Am?" and dealt especially with the thought of Dr. H. Berkhof concerning the person and work of Christ. The Rev. D. DeJong discussed the subject, "Presbyterian and Reformed." The combined choirs of Abbotsford, Cloverdale/Langley, and New Westminster contributed to the joyful character of this special occasion and so did the Women's Saving Action and Busy Beavers with the presentation of their birthday gifts.

The inventive Western organizers had scheduled many and manifold activities around this first convocation in British Columbia. They transformed the Saturday into a complete "School day" and engaged members of the Faculty for seminars and workshops. In Cloverdale the Rev. G. vanDooren spoke on "The Role of Human Experience in the Preaching" and Prof. L. Selles about Revelation 20. In Abbotsford Dr. J. Faber delivered an address on "Reprobation" and Drs. H.M. Ohmann on "The Relevance of the Old Testament for Today." Labour Day, September 3, became a Fellowship Day in Crescent Park, Surrey, and everyone who studies the pictures of the tugs-of-war going on in this Wild West must have come to the conclusion that for some theologians it must have been a day of strenuous labour.

2. *Students*

The academic course 1979-80 saw Mr. Eric Kampen, B.A., and Mr. B. Nederveen enrolled as freshmen, the latter one after the successful completion of an entrance examination. The other students followed the senior program in our three-year cycle of the theological courses, although only one of them, strictly speaking, was a senior student, Mr. R. Aasman, B.A., who tonight will obtain his B.D. degree.

3. *Voluntary Help*

Under the sub-heading "Voluntary Help" we mention two persons from abroad who enlivened the academic year 1979-1980. During her one year stay in Hamilton, Mrs. A. Klapwijk of Wageningen, The Netherlands, made her time and energy profitable for our College by assisting in the sometimes tedious work for the library.

During a visit to our city, the Rev. C.J. Breen of Amsterdam lectured about the Christology of Edward Schillebeeckx, the well-known Roman Catholic dogmatician at the University of Nijmegen.

We appreciated the voluntary help of these two willing workers, Mrs. Klapwijk and Rev. Breen.

4. *Bill Four*

A special Committee of the Board of Governors, the Trustees, and the Senate paid attention to the implications

of Bill 4 in the Legislature of Ontario. Bill 4 is an Act to regulate the granting of degrees. The main stipulation reads that no person shall directly or indirectly grant degrees or provide a program of post-secondary study leading to a degree to be conferred by a person in or outside Ontario, unless the person is by a special Act of the Legislative Assembly granted the authority to grant degrees. Especially in the year 1980, now that it is 100 years ago that Dr. Abraham Kuyper spoke about sphere-sovereignty ("Souvereiniteit in eigen kring"), a Calvinist might be inclined to fight the passing of Bill 4 tooth and nail. And certainly the question arises in how far civil authorities are entitled to meddle with the affairs of the republic of sciences. Nevertheless, nobody can deny that they have a task with respect to false advertising by would-be scholars, and the fly-by-night operations of so-called degree mills. Therefore, we decided not to fight the proposed legislation and to seek public degree-granting authority, conferred by the Ontario Legislature upon introduction of a private Members Bill. The Honourable Bette Stephenson of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities assured us that it was not the government's intention to place our college in jeopardy. She wrote to Mr. C.M. Loopstra, the Trustee who acted on our behalf, the following: "By obtaining a special Act as the constitution of their College, your clients would be obtaining the legal authority to grant degrees. This would strengthen their institution by providing it with the same legal basis as any other degree-granting institution in Ontario." In the meantime, an Act respecting the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches has been drafted and it will be submitted to General Synod Smithville 1980.

It might appear as if this is a very technical, legal matter. Nevertheless, such an Act will replace our present Constitution; many of its regulations will become part of our by-laws; and the Act will grant our College a publicly authorized status. I may solicit your prayers to Almighty God for all those involved and especially for our provincial government. They are authorities whose office it is, according to Article 36 of our Confession of Faith, not only to have regard unto and watch for the welfare of the civil state, but also that they protect the sacred ministry, that the Kingdom of Christ may thus be promoted.

5. *Faculty*

Normally the Principal restricts his remarks to events in one academic year, in this case September 1979 through May or August 1980. But now that in connection with General Synod in the fall of this year, we have a November convocation, it would be unnatural not to mention the latest developments with respect to our Theological College. In the first place, I think of the students. We are thankful that five freshmen enrolled. As far as the Faculty is concerned, in my previous Principal's Statement I mentioned that the Board of Governors — upon the advice of the Faculty — appointed as temporary instructor in the department of Ecclesiology the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th., effective September 1, 1979. Now Synod of Smithville 1980 has designated him to be our lecturer Ecclesiology. Although most of you know him personally, I would like to introduce officially our new lecturer.

The Rev. W.W.J. VanOene was born March 6, 1920. After having studied at the Gereformeerd Gymnasium and the Theologische Hogeschool at Kampen, he served Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (Oud-Loosdrecht 1943-1948, Schiedam 1948-1952) and in Canada (New Westminster 1952-1970, Fergus/Guelph 1970-1974, Fergus 1974 until now).

As a minister, he became noted for his knowledge of Reformed Church polity. He was delegated to all but one of our general synods of the Canadian Reformed Churches in the past, and functioned for years as the secretary of the Board of Governors of our College.

When the possibility of further formal studies was opened up by coming to Ontario, the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene enrolled at the Toronto School of Theology (Knox College) and obtained a Master of Theology degree in 1973. His thesis was entitled, *Church Polity in the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Christian Reformed Church: A comparative study of two Dutch immigrant churches*. The book, *Inheritance Preserved*, about the history of the Canadian Reformed Churches, may be regarded as a spin-off.

Besides this work, the Rev. VanOene was editor of and contributed to the books, *Before Many Witnesses*, and *Lasting Food* (both published by Premier Printing, Winnipeg). He is also managing editor of *Clarion*. During the summer of 1980 he gave a short course for teachers about the Church History in The Netherlands during the 19th and 20th century.

His installation is added to the Program of this Convocation and on behalf of the Faculty I may welcome the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene in our midst and as member of the Senate of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

In my previous Principal's Statement I also mentioned that the Synod of Smithville 1980 would have to provide for the upcoming vacancy in the Diaconological department. However, our regulation for retirement reads that professors and lecturers may at their option retire at the end of any academic year after they reach age 66 and before they reach age 71. The Rev. G. VanDooren, M.Th., expressed his willingness to remain in service as lecturer in Diaconology until the end of the academic year 1981-1982, the Lord willing. The General Synod of Smithville now expressed the desirability that the Synod of 1983 appoint a fourth full-time professor, preferably a professor of Diaconology. We are thankful to the Rev. VanDooren, for we still enjoy the fruits of his long ministry and his willingness has given us more maneuverability in the quest for a worthy successor.

His willingness was welcome, especially because of another change in our small Faculty. On October 21, 1980, Prof. Drs. H.M. Ohmann, Lic., informed us that he had accepted an appointment as professor Old Testament at our



Rev. C. VanDam



Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

sister institution in Kampen, The Netherlands. Tonight is the last convocation and college evening that he functions in our midst as a member of the Faculty and a featured speaker. Therefore, although Prof. Ohmann will serve us during this academic year 1980-1981, sub conditions Jacobi, I will now already publicly thank him for the ten years of faithful labour in our Theological College. Synod New Westminster 1971 made no mistake in appointing Drs. Ohmann. At that time we sought for a man who especially would be capable to organize our instruction in the Hebrew language, that important instrument for God's revelation in the Old Dispensation, and we certainly found him in our colleague Ohmann. We will miss his conviviality and bellowing laughter; we will miss his readiness to serve; we will miss the presence of his wife during the ministers' workshops and other activities in and around our College. We wish them a good period of service for God's Church and Kingdom in their beloved "old country."

We are thankful that the General Synod of Smithville 1980 could immediately fill the upcoming vacancy by appointing the Rev. C. VanDam, M.Th., at Surrey, B.C. as Professor of Old Testament.

The Rev. C. VanDam was born April 7, 1946 in Zwijndrecht, The Netherlands. After having attended elementary school and highschool, he enrolled at the University of Waterloo, where he obtained a B.A. degree with high standing. Because the Theological College in Kampen did not answer his enquiries, he decided to begin his theological study at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia, but after one year he immediately transferred his credits to the newly established Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Hamilton (1969-1971). The Bachelor of Divinity degree was conferred and Neerlandia became his first congregation (1971-1974). In Brampton (1974-1979) the Rev. C. VanDam pursued his studies at the Toronto School of Theology (Knox College). Precisely in this year 1980 he obtained a Master of Theology degree. The thesis, part of the requirement, was entitled, *The Urim and Thummim: Their Place and Function*. At the moment, the Rev. C. VanDam is enrolled in a program at the Theologische Hogeschool in Kampen (Broederweg). The Lord willing, this will lead to the Doctor of Theology degree in the field of Old Testament studies. The Rev. VanDam married Joanne Buist and they have one child. Since 1979 he serves the Canadian Reformed Church at Surrey, B.C.

Beside his formal studies, some special work in the Old Testament field may be mentioned. Rev. VanDam served as

Continued on page 524.

press review

THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

In the *Outlook* of October 1980, Mrs. Laurie VandenHeuvel wrote an article about ERA. But in the title she did not write Equal Rights Amendment, but Equal Responsibilities Amendment. The reader may know that for years, there is a movement in the United States to get this Equal Rights Amendment passed by 38 State Legislatures, in order to get this amendment in the Constitution. The expiring date was March 1, 1979. But when, in that year it became clear that not enough States would pass it, the American Congress extended the deadline for ratification with another 39 months. In 1979, 35 States had given approval. It needed three more. Since then the three have not come yet. There is quite a strong opposition against it. And now Mrs. VandenHeuvel writes about this Equal Rights Amendment in connection with the fact that on November 4 the citizens of Iowa will vote "on an Equal Rights Amendment to the state constitution." This Amendment reads:

All men and women are, by nature, free and equal, and have certain inalienable rights — among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness. Neither the State nor any of its political subdivisions shall, on the basis of gender, deny or restrict the equality of rights under the law.

She says then:

At first glance, the amendment sounds generous and harmless. But a clear examination reveals that the amendment is dangerously ambiguous and broad. We are living in a time of social revolution and there is abundant evidence that the feminists and pro-abortionists stand ready to *exploit* this amendment on the federal and state levels to advance their goals. They parade the amendment as new "rights" for women when actually the amendment removes privileges from and increases the responsibilities for women.

Before this, Mrs. VandenHeuvel wrote that the Republican Party at its National Convention had removed ERA support from its platform. Presidential candidate Reagan, had given as ground for this decision, that ERA does not

really protect women, and does not promote their rights. In her article Mrs. VandenHeuvel, then, shows how ERA, indeed, does take away protection from women. Under the subheading "A Deceptive Defense of Abortion" she writes:

Abortion is one of the "rights" that feminists hope to cement into the constitution by federal and state ERA amendments. Abortion, pioneer Lawrence Lader, in his book *Abortion II, Making the Revolution* makes the following statements: "No woman can call herself free who does not own and control her own body . . . I was convinced that abortion must be completely legalized as a backup emergency measure to contraception . . . the biggest step was to demand legalization as an inalienable right of woman, protected by the Constitution's Bill of Rights.

The pro-abortionists rationalize their position by insisting that since a man does not have to bear a child, a woman must have the "equal right" not to bear a child.

Here we can see the foolishness of modern (wo)man, who lives by his/her own found "wisdom." Why not add to this nonsense: since a man can fertilize a woman with his semen, a woman must have the equal right to do the same! The author continues:

If she (a woman) finds herself pregnant, she should have constitutional protection and federal funding to abort her child. The language of the federal and state ERA amendments, are broad enough to allow this interpretation of their provisions by any court.

But there is even more at stake than the right to abort. It can also mean compulsory co-operation in abortion for those who are against it. We read:

Passage of the federal and state ERA amendment, would also jeopardize the conscience clauses which now give hospitals and medical personnel the right to refuse to perform abortions. It could in fact, make it mandatory that hospitals and personnel perform abortions.

By claiming the right to commit sin revolutionaries take away the rights of others not to sin, and compel them to sin with them. Is that liberation? Or is this slavery? The author tells us that many pro-ERA enthusiasts deny this, but says:

An amendment will be interpreted by the language in which it is coached . . . If

ERA can be interpreted to give a woman her rights to abortion . . . it *will* be interpreted this way.

Mrs. VandenHeuvel, then, shows the truth of what she says with an example. Abortion is not the only thing. There are "Other Abuses of Women":

There are other changes which could result from the passage of ERA. On a national level, it could become impossible for a woman to draw social security benefits on her husband's earnings . . .

On a national level it could become *imperative* for women to be drafted and to be assigned to combat duty. The Yale Law Journal article of 1971, one of the best sources for understanding the purposes and effects of ERA says:

1. The amendment permits no exceptions . . . women will serve in all kinds of units . . . including combat duty (p. 978).
2. Neither the right to privacy nor any unique physical characteristic justifies different treatment of the sexes . . . pregnancy justifies only slightly different conditions of service for women (p. 969).
3. It will require the military to see women as it sees men (p. 970).
4. All standards will have to be sex neutral (p. 971).

The author shows that ERA means also a "Threat to Religious Freedom":

As a result of the passage of either the national or state ERA, churches could lose their tax-exempt status for refocusing to ordain women to the offices of pastor, elder or deacon. Feminist movement NOW [National Organizations of Women, J.G.], in its leadership manual, *Revolution: Tomorrow is NOW*, states:

We demand that Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act be amended so that religious groups no longer have legal sanctions to discriminate on the basis of sex.

A constitutional amendment such as ERA would meet their demands.

Mrs. VandenHeuvel points at one more threat: "A Moral Threat":

As a result of the passage of ERA, men and women could lose privacy in restroom privileges in public places.

Women could lose the special courtesies they are shown in places where they work.

Divorce laws would no longer favor the mother in alimony and child custody rights.

Homosexuals would also be given the right to marry, adopt children and teach our children.

Many ERA enthusiasts deny that these things could happen as a result of the passage of national and state ERA amendments, but history has shown that all these changes are in the plans of those who are working overtime to effect massive social change.

Several years ago former Senator Sam Ervin, chairman of the committee on Watergate proceedings, offered *amend-*

ments to the national ERA which would allow for reasonable and beneficial distinctions for women under ERA. On behalf of women he proposed:

1. exemptions from the draft and combat duty,
2. preservation of protective labor legislation (much of which was won by the original "women's movement"),
3. preservation of laws which allow mothers, widows, or wives to remain in the home,
4. support from the father or spouse,
5. retain privacy between men and women,
6. maintenance of laws which make sex offenses against women punishable as crimes, and finally,
7. an amendment that would recognize the physiological or functional differences between men and women.

All of these amendments were *defeated!* This shows how much headway the feminist movements have made in the federal government of this country. The Equal Rights Amendment could better be renamed Equal Responsibilities Amendment because it robs women of a privileged and protected position and places on them burdens and responsibilities which have been assigned by God to the husband as protector and provider.

And that is, according to my impression, just what the feminists do not want: being protected and provided for and privileged. They are too proud for that. For this would mean: being dependent. And that goes against the desire for equality. When you depend on someone, you are not fully equal anymore. And this is the pride of the feminist: a woman is and has to be equal with men in every respect, even when it means the indecency of equality in the public restrooms. They refuse to receive "honour" as the "weaker vessels" from men (I Peter 3:7). This social revolution of the feminists and their male supporters goes hand in hand with the moral and, specifically, the sexual revolution. Men and women, boys and girls are the owners and bosses over their own bodies. They must have the right to do with it what they want and covet for their own pleasures. And thus, premarital and extramarital and children's sex, and homosexuality and bestiality and incest, and so on, is all allowable. Sinful man is his own law-giver.

ERA is the result of the pride of woman in her rebellion against God, the Creator. Proud woman fights relentlessly against all and everything in her way to reach her goal: self-exaltation: being God. Eve fell for the temptation of the devil: you will be like God; you can determine yourself what is

good and what is not good. You can be GOD. And modern men and women still fall in that temptation of the devil. At the same time it is so that God, in His anger against the unbelieving, unrepentant, ungodly, punishes them with blindness: See Romans 1:18-32:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness suppress the truth . . . For although they knew God they did not honour Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling moral man or birds or animals or reptiles.

Today the idol (still) is Man Himself, Woman Herself. And ERA, e.g., is the image. But let us read further what Paul, apostle of Christ, writes:

Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonouring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature (themselves, J.G.) rather than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonourable passions . . . And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a base mind and to improper conduct. They were filled with all manner of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's decree that those who do such things deserve to die, they do not only do them, but approve those who practice them.

Does this passage of Scripture, describing sinful man in the decadent days of the Roman empire, not also exactly describe modern, liberal men and women? Equality, as that is meant today, is not a word and a matter, inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. Equality, as understood today, comes from the French revolution, and basically from the Paradise revolution of the beginning. It stems from the devil, the liar and murderer from the beginning.


Mrs. VandenHeuvel concludes her article with a paragraph about "Needed Action."

On April 21, 1972 the Iowa State Legislature made a hasty decision to ratify the federal ERA with very little solicitation of the reactions of Iowa citizens. May the State of Iowa not make another perilous decision because of the inaction of Iowa

citizens when they face an important referendum on this issue on November 4 . . . Let those who do not face a State ERA drive please pray that the federal ERA may not receive the ratification it needs from 3 more states before June 1, 1982 in order to become law. It must be defeated for the preservation of God's revealed will as it applies to church, family and national life.

May our gracious God still have compassion on the United States and Canada, and so on and hear that prayer, in order that this country (the world) may not give itself even more in the hands, the iron, deadly grip, of the liar and murderer from the beginning. Even though we must acknowledge that we, altogether, deserve this punishing wrath of God, taking His gracious hands away from us.

Let me place over against this proud, humanistic, revolutionary, destructive drive of the evil spirit in



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

Second class mail registration number 1025.

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

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

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:
Editor: J. Faber
Managing Editor: W.W.J. VanOene
Co-Editors: J. Geertsema, Cl. Stam

SUBSCRIPTIONS:
 \$19.50 per year (to be paid in advance).
 Foreign Countries: Seamail — \$30.00
 Airmail — \$39.00

ISSN 0383-0438

IN THIS ISSUE:

Principal's Statement 1980 — *J. Faber* . . . 510
 Press Review — *J. Geertsema* 512
 General Synod 1980 (Prayer Service)
 — *W.W.J. VanOene* 514
 Prophecy Today — *Wm. Salomons* 518
 Remarks in Answer to Mr. Salomons'
 Second Submission on "Prophecy
 Today" — *H.M. Ohmann* 521
 Press Release 522
 Press Release 523
 Letters-to-the-Editor — *A.J. Hordijk* 524
 — *Martin Menken* . . 524

Ontario Women's League Day
 — *H.H.J. Boot* 525
 Bringing Home the Constitution
 — *Art Lengkeek* 526
 A Corner for the Sick
 — *Mrs. J.K. Riemersma* 527
 Our Little Magazine — *Aunt Betty* 528

General Synod 1980

Prayer Service

of General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches at Smithville.

Ephesians 3:14-20

Beloved Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ

The convening of a General Synod is quite an event in our Church life.

Of course, we realize that such is not because a General Synod is to be considered the highest ecclesiastical assembly. We have learned that the highest authority in the Church of Christ is vested in the local Consistories, the office-bearers whom the Lord Jesus Christ has given to His flock. If, therefore, anyone should arise and defend the thesis that a General Synod is the "highest court" in our Church life, he would find many opponents and, hopefully, would not find any follower.

That does not take away the fact that the convening of a General Synod is quite an event. Brethren from East and West meet together, showing therein the unity of the Churches throughout the country. Matters will be

dealt with that concern all the Churches in one way or another. Decisions taken by a General Synod can preserve the peace and continue the concord of living together within the one federation; they can also have a disruptive effect and drive a wedge between brethren and sisters of the same house.

For that reason it is a good thing that not only in the individual Churches prayers are offered up for that assembly which will begin tomorrow, but that there is also a special service in which we ask the Lord in particular for His divine guidance, for His favour, for wisdom and patience, for insight and understanding, for love and benevolence.

It is understandable that, when one is looking for a text which could give that special guidance to our prayer that we are in need of, he will think of intercessory prayers which are found in the Holy Scriptures. It is especially the apostle Paul who offered up many prayers for the Churches to which he wrote his letters. How often do we not see that he assures the believers that

he remembers them constantly in his prayers? Sometimes he confines himself to assuring them that he does remember them; in other instances he also tells them what his specific prayer for them is.

Such is the case also in the text which I have chosen for this service. When we listen to the message of that text, we can only touch upon a few aspects. One could easily preach for many hours if one wished to show fully all the treasures which are contained in these few verses. We shall, however, pay special attention only to those elements which will guide us with our prayer this evening for the General Synod which will be opened tomorrow.

Thus I preach the Word of God to you as we find it in our text. We shall see and listen to

PAUL'S PRAYER TO THE FATHER FOR THE CHURCH OF ALL AGES THAT SHE MAY RECEIVE THE FULL RICHES OF SALVATION.

I He asks that the Spirit may strengthen her;

II He asks that Christ may dwell in her;

III He asks that God's fulness may fill her.

I. When I say that Paul's prayer is for the Church of all ages, one might frown. Is it not clear, he might ask, that

PRESS REVIEW — Continued

(modern) woman the redeeming, restoring, words of the Holy Spirit:

Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, His body, and is Himself its Saviour. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her . . ." (Ephesians 5:22ff.).

Like-wise you wives, be submissive to your husbands . . . Let not yours be the outward adorning . . . but let it be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious . . ." (I Peter 3:1ff.).

"Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty" (I Timothy 2:15).

This "bearing children" must be seen in the light of Genesis 3:15ff.: the promise that the woman will bring the great Seed of the woman in the world:

Christ and His church. Thus believing women, Christian mothers may now bring seed of the woman into the world: the church which Christ is gathering for eternal life, if they continue in faith that lives by what God says, and not by what the devil proclaims, in love and holiness: dedicated to the LORD and His Kingdom and church, and in modesty: in humble obedience to the Lord, her Creator and Saviour.

Let older women "be reverent in behaviour . . . they are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be sensible, chaste, domestic, kind, and submissive to their husbands, that the Word of God may not be discredited" (Titus 2:3ff.).

And as far as the unmarried, single women and girls are concerned:

And the unmarried woman or girl is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit (I Corinthians 7:34).

Also for the single, working woman this counts. Such a redeemed, holy life

that is dedicated to the Lord and His service, and the upbuilding of His church, that seeks the LORD, not only glorifies Him, but is also rewarding for this life and the life that is to come: those who love the LORD and live for Him according to His Word, will receive the crown of eternal life with Him. And she, who has that hope will cleanse and purify "herself from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God." (James 1:12, II Corinthians 7:1, I John 3:3.)

Sisters in the Lord, young and old, resist the devil, also in the false doctrine of equality, in that rebellion against God! Be and remain humble disciples of Christ as your Saviour. And so you will be a blessing in church and nation, and, in the first place: in the family. And be aware that ERA supporters, followers of Equality, are idolaters and are and will be a curse for nations, churches, and, in the first place, for the families, if they still want one or have one.

J.G.

the apostle wrote to the Ephesians or to whatever Church this letter may have been directed originally, and does he not address them? That there is a message in these verses also for us, that is something which is beyond doubt, but does it not go a little too far to state directly that the apostle prays for the Church of all ages? Are we, e.g., included in the apostle's intercessory prayer?

Let me draw your attention in the first place to the Name of God that the apostle mentions. To whom does he address his prayer? He addresses His prayer to the Father. Yes, that is true; but it is not all! What does he say of the Father?

The apostle says this: I bow my knees before the Father, from Whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

By saying that, Paul immediately draws the Church of all ages into focus. For what does he mean by it when he states that from the Father every family in heaven and on earth is named?

There is a connection between the word for Father and the word translated by "family." Both words contain the word "pater," Father. We could say, the Father from whom every fatherhood is named; but that would not express precisely what the apostle means. We shall leave the word "family."

What is a family? That is a unit: there is one father who is the father of the children. When those children get married, they point their children to their grandfather. Sometimes there are even great-grandchildren. And all those people can trace their existence back to one father. However many people will come after that, they all descend from that one man. Thus each and every family, each and every clan, each and every tribe and nation has its own father. Such a family, tribe, or nation can be described as a group of people who have a common father, a common ancestor.

Sometimes they would rather forget about their forefather, especially when they discover that the man was of ill repute. Sometimes, however, they are proud of their father, boast of their descent from him, and show some contempt for all people who do not share that privilege with them.

Especially the children of Abraham were proud of their descent from the father of all believers. They had Abraham as their father, they assured the Lord Jesus, and they were not born

of fornication! They felt much higher than all the nations round about them. They were God's chosen people, they were the cream of the nations.

Paul himself knew a time in his life during which he spoke and acted in the same vein. He was of the tribe of Benjamin, he was a faithful son of Abraham. He faithfully observed all the commandments of the Mosaic Law. Among the children of Abraham he occupied a prominent place.

Then the Lord showed him something different. Then the Lord made clear to him that the wall of partition between Abraham's children and the rest of mankind had been broken down by the Lord Jesus Christ. Then the Lord revealed to him and convinced him of this: that the big question from now on was no longer whether one could call Abraham his father-according-to-the-flesh, but whether one was a spiritual child of Abraham. Then the Lord made clear to Paul that what mattered from that moment on when Christ died was not whether one descended from Abraham or from David or from Benjamin or from Ham or from Japeth, but whether one had God for one's Father. And Paul understood the teaching of the Lord: from now on there is but one relationship that has to be reckoned with: that is the relationship with God, that is the bond which unites within the body of Christ, within His Church. That bond is decisive for each and every family, both in heaven and on earth. The families may be scattered throughout the earth, they may even be split up so that part is on this earth and part is in heaven: all trace their origin back to God.

That's how I understand Paul's words. Some are of the opinion that the apostle speaks here more in general about the human race; others think that also the angels are included. However, I understand the apostle's words as referring to the families of those who believe in God and have been united with Him through Christ. I am convinced that that is in the line of this whole letter to the Ephesians. The apostle stresses the unity of the Church: they have come from Jews and Gentiles, and they adore God as their Father. But when they adore God as Father, then it does not make any difference where they live on earth. Then it does not make any difference from what earthly father they descend and to whom they can trace their ancestry. Then it does not make any difference either whether they have

already reached the assembly of those who have died and are with the Lord: The Church is one, for she has one Father.

That is extremely comforting, beloved, isn't it? That is a great thing that we may stand in the community of the Church of all centuries, that we are one with the Church as she existed in the past and with the Church as she is right now in heaven. Families on this earth may be torn apart and the bonds may be severed as far as that goes, the Family, the Fraternity of which the Apostle speaks is one that is scattered throughout the ages and that is spread all over the earth, part of which has already found its way into heaven. As such we may work and as such we may proceed. Thus we may be assured that our work is not fragmentary and that it is not something only for today and for this region. With our whole work and all our actions, deliberations, and decisions, we have been woven into that great pattern of the Church Universal, of the Catholic Church concerning which we make profession with heart and mouth.

That is a great comfort for all the believers. That is also of great value for the brethren who will form the General Synod. They come from a relatively small number of Churches. The total membership that stands behind them is a negligible quantity in the eyes of this world. We may make the impression that we are acting big and do so while we mean very little if anything in this world. Yet we may live and work in the sure knowledge that we are one with all the saints, the saints of all centuries. That is a comfort, that is also a mandate. It is a mandate to preserve that bond with that Church Universal, and to continue in the path of Truth, to uphold and respect, to honour and preserve the Catholicity of the Church. *that* is, the family-name of which we should be proud and which we are to remember with everything we do.

To that Father the apostle directs His petition. Of that Father he asks that the Church may be strengthened by the Spirit.

Was there any special reason why he should ask that?

Yes. The reason was that he was in prison, in bonds. That could easily cause some loss of courage with the Ephesians. If the Gospel and the truth which they had heard and which they embraced by faith was so glorious, why, then, was the bringer of those glad tidings in prison? What were they

to think of the effectiveness of the message? Was that, then, the freedom which was promised them in the Gospel and which they believed had become theirs through Christ? If that was the future they were facing, should they then not give up?

For that reason the apostle bows his knees and asks that they may be strengthened by the Spirit. He asks the Father that through the Spirit they may receive the power which they need, the might that is so necessary to continue in the path of faith and which is so indispensable for their perseverance.

We are, however, to pay good attention to what precisely the apostle is asking of the Father. He does not ask that the children of God may be spared all sorts of difficulties and unpleasantness. His prayer is not that their life may be easier than his has been thus far. Nor does he petition the Father to grant them protection against the dangers which surround them, against the hatred of the Jews and the aversion of the Gentiles.

His prayer is that they may be so strengthened through the Spirit that their inner man be protected and ready and able to wage the battle. The kind of strength and resilience which they need is not that of the body; it is that of the spirit, of the soul, of the mind, of the heart. It is that strength which will enable them to see the glory of the Gospel over and above the foul clouds of hatred and slander. It is that strength which will enable them to believe, in spite of everything, that the Gospel *is* glorious and that the promises *do* stand. It is that same strength which the apostle experienced so richly and which enabled him to sing of God's mercies even in the middle of the night. It is that same strength which made Paul write so glowingly about the beauty of God's good pleasure and the blessedness of the believers, of the solidity of the election and the trustworthiness of the salvation.

For when disappointments come, beloved, and when difficulties are being faced, when the hatred breaks loose and when misunderstanding proceeds from enmity, then it is difficult to proceed with joy and to sing of the mercies of the Lord and the grace of God. When the work seems not to succeed and when opposition is strong, then God's children need that strength in the inner man. And the Holy Spirit is the One from whom wisdom comes and power, insight and understanding.

That prayer of the apostle applies

to us today as well, beloved. For it is a prayer for the Church Universal. And as long as the Church is on this earth, she will need that inner strength which to the adversaries oftentimes appeared as a great riddle. They did not know and could not understand from where God's children received their strength and their power to resist and to continue in the path of obedience. They could not understand how they could face the pyre and drownings, beheadings and torture. They could not grasp how God's children could stand the strain and keep their heads high in the midst of grief and sorrow which overwhelmed others.

It was only by that strength which they received through the Spirit. He who works life and renews everything did renew their strength like an eagle's, taking it all out of Christ's treasures and distributing it to all who are Christ's. For that strength and power the apostle asked the Father.

When the Spirit gives that strength and when the inner man receives power to continue and to believe that the Gospel is glorious, that the deliverance is precious, and that the election is secure, we speak of that which God works. No one, however, should think that there is no activity on the part of the believers themselves.

The apostle also asks the Father that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith. He prays that they may so embrace the promise of the Gospel, in which they have received all the treasures of the Redeemer, that Christ indeed dwells in their hearts.

The word which the apostle uses here means a permanent, complete indwelling, a settling down to stay. That's what he asks for the believers with respect to Christ. May they so embrace the promise of the Gospel that the Lord Jesus Christ with all His treasures and gifts fills their hearts, that He makes His permanent home therein and then also — for that is ultimately the purpose — is acknowledged there as the Lord and Master, so that He dominates and rules every thought, every word, every action.

That's what Paul prayed for us, beloved, for you and for me: that we might so believe what God has spoken that Christ becomes more and more our one and all. In no other way can the Lord Jesus Christ dominate what we say and what we do, what we think and what we decide. That's what the apostle asks the Father for us: that we may so cleave to Christ through faith

and that His treasures may so become ours, that we no longer stumble, that we are no longer swayed back and forth, that we no longer waver, but that we are standing firm, rooted and grounded in love.

Once a famous theologian delivered a sermon which also became more or less famous on these three words: Rooted and Grounded. He developed therein his theory concerning the Church.

Those words do apply to the Church, but they do not represent the principles of the Church as an Institute and the Church as an Organism. They point to the firmness of the love in which we live.

A tree that is well-rooted may sway back and forth in the wind, it may groan when the storm comes and blows against it: the roots have gone too deeply into the earth than that the tree can be blown over. It stands there, even after the fiercest wind.

And when a building is well-grounded, well-founded, it has a good and trustworthy foundation, which will uphold it and prevent it from sagging or from leaning over.

That's what the apostle wishes to express by the imagery: that the soil in which we stand is penetrated by the roots, so that we are not blown over; and that the basis on which we stand is solid, so that we are not pushovers, but always offer strong resistance until we shall obtain the complete victory. That's what we say in our Catechism, and we uphold that confession.

When is that only possible, that we are rooted and grounded in love?

That is possible only when the Lord Jesus Christ fills our hearts completely. That is possible only when through faith we have so embraced and made our own all the treasures of Christ, that there is place for nothing else than for Him and His benefits. Then there shall also be love in our hearts, beloved, love towards God and love towards the neighbour. That love cannot exist unless we have appropriated Christ and all His benefits. And you must have experienced that too: when Christ did not dominate your hearts completely and exclusively, then the love towards God and towards the neighbour became weaker and weaker. That lasted until you saw again what love the Father has bestowed upon us in Christ the Saviour. Then the love returned and became stronger all the time. When your eyes discovered anew what riches the Father had given

to you in the Saviour, then your heart was filled with gratitude towards Him, with love towards Him and towards the neighbour. Is that not your experience?

And is that then not a proper prayer also for the brethren who together will form the General Synod of Smithville 1980, that they may be filled with Christ, that there be room for nothing else in their hearts but for the mercies of God and that thus they may be filled with love towards the Lord God, and also towards the neighbour?

In our form for the solemnization of marriage we urge the newly married couple that they may remember this one thing: that amidst all the things which can trouble and disturb us only one thing is needful. Let me use those words in the present circumstances and say that with the many things which will have to be dealt with and that with the many things that indeed can trouble and disturb the brethren, they may remember that only one thing is needful: that their hearts be the place where Christ has made His dwelling place, His permanent abode, so that there be place for Him only. Then they will also be rooted and grounded in love, not easily moved from the firm course. Then they will also be able to remain in that communion of which the apostle spoke in the beginning of our text, when he said that all family is from God, the Father of all: for then they will be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and height and depth and length of the mercies of God.

That is what might be called a paradox: to understand, to comprehend that which is ununderstandable; to see that which is invisible, to hold on to that which no one can touch without danger for his life.

Of course, when the apostle speaks of comprehending, of knowing the love of Christ, he does not have in mind an adequate knowledge and an all-encompassing comprehension. That may be evident already from that he speaks of knowing the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge. Yet: the apostle prays that we may know the love of Christ more and more. The boundaries of knowledge may then be set out wider all the time and the boundaries of that which surpasses all knowledge may then recede all the time: that very fact urges us to do our best that we may understand better all the time. There is progress in knowing that which surpasses knowledge; there is progress in seeing that which is invis-

ible; there is progress in comprehending that which is unsearchable.

That is not the privilege of one single believer. That is something which is given and achieved only within the communion of the Church Universal. With all the saints we are to know that, Paul says. Thus we can be certain that we were included when he sent up his prayer to the Father and asked Him to show His mercies through the power of the Spirit, in Christ the Lord.

And because it is a matter for the whole Church, for all the saints, therefore the apostle can ask for the fulness of God. No, that does not mean that the apostle wants the believers to be exalted to the status of divine beings. The fulness of God is the fulness of everything which God gives upon the prayer of His children. It means: all that God can give and all that God is prepared to give. It means: that upon the heads of God's children returns all that they have done in love towards God and towards the neighbour. It means that whatever is done within the community of the Church from the love of Christ, is beneficial to all: the one saint needs the other, and together the saints may know the love of Christ, the mercies of God, the power of the Holy Spirit. And when the one edifies the other, when together they strive for the ultimate that they can achieve as human beings within the sphere of the love of Christ, dominated by Him, strengthened by the Spirit, then they shall receive together the fulness of blessings, all that God has promised in His Word, all the riches of the Gospel, all the merits of the Saviour, all the treasures of the redemption. All those things will be given in rich measure, for when God opens the storehouses of His fulness, there is a beginning to receiving the riches — there is no end to it.

That was the apostle's prayer for the Church Universal. That was his prayer also for us, for you and for me today. That will also be our prayer for the brethren who will constitute the broadest assembly of the Churches. We may pray for the full measure of all God's blessings. We may do so on the ground of what the Lord had already given in Christ the Saviour.

When Christ fills the hearts, occupies the minds, directs the will, rules the tongue, judges the thoughts, steers the eye, arouses the love, then things will go well and the Churches will be edified.

And: He that has Christ through faith may ask anything of the Father. We have the promise: *all* that you ask of the Father in My Name He will give to you.

It is a glorious thing, beloved, that we all may trace our descent back to God Who has become our Father in Christ. And what kind of a Father He is, that is something we have learned to know, although we do not comprehend it. The more we learn to know about it, the more the unknown aspects multiply. The more we comprehend the more we sing that His thoughts are unsearchable and that His ways are past finding out. And yet that is no reason why we become discouraged or frustrated. On the contrary, it urges us on, and works in us the desire to join in with the apostle: From Him and through Him and to Him are all things. That's what the apostle says in Romans 11. Here, in this letter he concludes with these words,

Now to Him Who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

Yes: Amen!

Service conducted by the REV. W.W.J. VanOene.

Psalm 90:1, 8
Hymn 1 Credo
Psalm 122
Psalm 143:1, 5
Psalm 139:1, 2, 3
Psalm 13
Reading: Ephesians 3
Text: Ephesians 3:14-20



Church News

CALLED:

by the Church at Neerlandia, Alberta:

REV. J.P. VANDERWAL

of Surhuisterveen, The Netherlands.

Prophecy Today

What follows here is a reaction by brother W. Salomons of Toronto to the answer which Prof. H.M. Ohmann gave him to his submission which was published in the issue of July 29, 1978, Volume 27, page 329ff. To that answer given by Prof. Ohmann brother Salomons reacts in what follows in the submission below.

We also make a beginning to the publication of Prof. Ohmann's reply and consider the latter's article(s) a sufficient refutation of the theories defended in brother Salomon's submission. No further letters regarding this specific matter will be published, for we consider Prof. Ohmann's argumentation convincing. Differences of opinion about minor details are permissible, but the main line should be drawn firmly and distinctly. That's what Prof. Ohmann does.

vO

PROPHECY TODAY (Continuation of Vol. 27, No. 15)

13. Introduction:

The pre-millennial believes that Christ's coming precedes the setting up of a glorious kingdom of righteousness and peace on earth.

The a-millennial believes that the millennium is only a figurative expression for the complete period from the resurrection of Christ to His second coming at the end of time.

In our discussion (and I appreciate Prof. Ohmann's and Rev. VanOene's willingness for an open discussion in our *Clarion*) it is not my intention to make a big issue of pre-millennialism over against a-millennialism. However, I am convinced that the doctrine of pre-millennialism in its basic is Scriptural, while, on the other hand, the doctrine of a-millennialism in its basis carries the root that leads to modernism and liberalism. I'll be more than satisfied if I can make both Prof. Ohmann and our Canadian Reformed people aware of this. Hermeneutics (= the rules of interpretation) indeed are in the limelight nowadays. Harold Lindsay gives a clear demonstration of this in his book: *The battle for the Bible*.

14. The position of Prof. Ohmann.

On page 419 Prof. Ohmann writes:

One brother wrote me that he found it strange that teaching Pre-millennialism publicly in the Church is not allowed, whereas, on the other hand, someone is permitted to believe it. He thought it was a contradiction in the life of our churches. In answer to him I would say: "No brother, one is not allowed to teach it, nor to believe it. For you *cannot* believe it. It can-

not be part of our faith according to the Scriptures.

G.H. Hospers, in his book *The Calvinistic Character of Pre-millennialism*, writes:

The Pre-millennial idea, crude and undeveloped as might naturally be expected, was prevalent in pious circles, and dates from the days of the Apostles.

He does not hesitate to pronounce that "Pre-millennialism is really the Reformed doctrine in Eschatology." He also attributes the change in eschatological viewpoint to the influence of Augustine.

During the first three centuries the Church accepted without question or dispute the pre-millennial return of Christ. Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Papias all affirmed that there would be a millennium after the resurrection of the righteous dead when the personal reign of Christ would be established upon earth. There was no real opposition to this truth until the time of Origen. Origen adopted the allegorization of Scripture and is the acknowledged father of a-millennialism. Augustine modified Origen's allegorization and applied it mainly to prophecy. The pre-millennial return of Christ practically disappeared as the Roman church became the Kingdom, and the Pope, rule of Rome was the millennium. The Roman Catholic church is a-millennial. Prof. Ohmann goes further than the Reformed Synod of 1863. At that time one was permitted to believe it. Considering the historical developments since 1863 and the signs of the times (see my submission on page 330), I wish Prof. Ohmann would now say: "You should believe it."

It is a fact that the Synodical Reformed Churches in Holland are now a member of the World Council of Churches. I think that Synod of 1863 has a lot to do with it. Prof. Walvoord is correct in stating that "the history of modern liberalism has demonstrated that its adherents are drawn almost entirely from a-millennial ranks."

Hal Lindsay's books have been discussed in this magazine. We may not all agree with his conclusions, but is he a false prophet because he is a pre-millennialist? Or is Sir Isaac Newton right, who once declared that "At the time of the end, certain men would arise who would devote their energies to the prophetic studies and insist upon their literal interpretation in the midst of much clamour and opposition."

In conclusion I would like to ask Prof. Ohmann if this could be the situation today. In the 1920's the battle was fought between the fundamentalists and modernists. Prof. Ohmann states a few times "In present day

theology Hermeneutics is in the limelight." Is this basically the same battle but now within evangelical circles?

15. The question of Hermeneutics (rules of interpretation)

Prof. Ohmann is fully aware that our different view of the millennium center in the hermeneutics or principles of interpretation. Since we both believe that "All Scripture is inspired by God . . ." we are confronted with the need to interpret the thousand years reign of Christ (Rev. 20) Prof. Ohmann is right in stating that I am influenced, and again that my attitude is biased by pre-millennialistic views. It is only fair to state that Prof. Ohmann is influenced and biased by his a-millennial views or the non-literal, symbolic interpretation.

Since we apply different rules to the meaning of God's Word, we disagree on the position of Israel and the exegesis of Zechariah XIV. Prof. Ohmann states that in present-day theology Hermeneutics is in the limelight. Will this lead to the general apostasy in the Church of which II Thessalonians 2 speaks?

The question of Hermeneutics should therefore be first in our discussion. For the sake of the readers, I want to emphasize that this is a brotherly discussion between two Canadian Reformed brothers in Christ, and, as such, we do not question each other.

There are many remarks in Prof. Ohmann's answer with which I agree, especially when it comes to applications. However, this is not what we are discussing; we are discussing interpretation, and this is a different matter, although they are related. Inspiration — interpretation — application. My disagreement is basically with the position Prof. Ohmann takes as a result of his method of interpreting Scripture (Hermeneutics), and I would like to clarify this in the next four points.

16a. Prof. Ohmann's method of Hermeneutics.

Although Rev. Tj. Boersma claims that the beginning of Zechariah 14 has been literally fulfilled, Prof. Ohmann does not think so. On page 367 Prof. Ohmann writes:

So the prophecy has not been fulfilled so far? You wonder. So you go on to conclude, it is either/or: either these are apparently unfulfilled prophecies in Holy Writ, as modernist theologians claim; or we still have to look forward to the future to an era not belonging to the present dispensation in which we are now, nor to the great hereafter, but to an era just in between the two. I need hardly tell you that it is the representatives of Pre-millennialism who try to make us believe so.

Since Prof. Ohmann does not take *the* thousand years (please note "*the*" not "*a*") literally, I can understand that Prof. Ohmann has no answer for Hermeneutics of these verses. Since I do not believe in unfulfilled prophecies, I therefore remain a Canadian Reformed Pre-millennialist.

b. What then are Prof. Ohmann's rules of interpretation? (See p. 331.)

One approach to history, another approach to prophetic historiography, a different approach again to prophecy, another rule for poetry, and so on.

Prof. Ohmann must have felt that this method is not very satisfactory and does create problems, for he writes:

I am not talking in the abstract. Take, e.g. Gen. 1, the first chapter of the Bible, part of God's Revelation. However, those who agree upon the point differ among each other about the question, whether it is to be taken as history, or as prophetic historiography, or prophecy, or even poetry.

17. Is Reformed Hermeneutics in the limelight?

This is my question, not Prof. Ohmann's. Do we really have to ask those questions about Genesis 1. If the Scriptures do not mean what they say, why do they not mean what they say. Is it not strange that God who called light into existence with a few words should not be able to say exactly what He means. Although a number has symbolic meaning, that does not mean that it has no temporal significance. Seven days are seven days. A thousand years are a thousand years and not two thousand or three thousand years. When the prophet Jeremiah foretold that Israel would be in Babylon seventy years, the fulfillment of the prophecy showed that God meant exactly seventy literal years. In this manner Daniel understood them when he studied Jeremiah's prophecy. Therefore the big question still remains whether it matters if we interpret God's Word literally or in the allegorical sense, whether we accept its plain statements or look for a secondary meaning. Why is it that the Synodical Reformed Churches in Holland are stuck with a man like Prof. Kuitert? We know his modernistic views. Prof. Kuitert, however, states:

I do nothing strange. I work completely according to the Reformed tradition.

Hence my question: What is Reformed Hermeneutics, or should we go by the golden rule (see next point)?

C. VanderWaal's book *Hall Lindsay and Biblical Prophecy* is recommended in our circles. However, I wonder where we are going if he admits on page 110

that there were elements of Fundamentalism in the thinking of Schilder and Holwerda, strange doctrines that were untenable when held up to the bright light of Scriptures. Think of their expectation of a special "end time," a period to be dominated by a cultural-political human monster — the Antichrist.

What, Prof. Ohmann, is so strange about this doctrine? I believe in the redemptive-historical reading of the Bible, based on Genesis 3:15: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." In the struggle between Christ and Satan, the Antichrist of the "end time" will play a role (see my first submission).

18. The golden rule of Interpretation.

When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths indicate clearly otherwise.

19. A safeguard against any form of Bible criticism.

It is on the basis of the golden rule that I have written "Prophecy Today." In this article I have tried not to state any more than that which the Bible clearly reveals. In a time such as this I am pleased with what Prof. Ohmann writes on page 418, and in this respect I feel very close to him, regardless of our different opinion.

Hermeneutics is in the center of interest in the current theological debate. When I read your submission I find that it is, or ought to be, in the center of the life of our churches as well.

However, Prof. Ohmann goes on:

And that's why I do feel sorry for you, br. Salomons, who subscribe to these views. You are my brother in Christ, etc.

Well, suppose I am wrong. Then the least we can hope for is that through our discussions more interest among us will be created in this "current theological debate" and that we do get a clear understanding of Reformed Hermeneutics as a workable tool. If it is somewhat in between the Fundamentalist and Modernist approach, then who is going to decide what is literal and what is symbolic?

Prof. Ohmann then states that my submission is like the torch of the literalist, a silly sight, leading those who follow it they know not whither. A beautiful phrase, but is it true?

I would like to conclude with a quotation from Dr. Charles L. Feinberg (*Pre-millennialism or A-millennialism?*) for the following reasons:

A. He is a Professor of Semitics and Old Testament

B. He gives a clear answer on this question

C. His interpretation sounds like Prof. Ohmann's interpretation and yet he does not have the problems with Hermeneutics that Prof. Ohmann is confronted with (see 16b).

Dr. Feinberg (page 27)

Moreover, the early Christians, it can be shown, interpreted the Scriptures literally and consequently held the premillennial doctrine. Finally it is not true that the premillennialists require every single passage be interpreted literally without exception. They do hold, on the other hand, that if [and I think this word "if" is the key, W.S.] the language is symbolic, it is to be governed by the laws relating to symbols; if figurative, by the laws dealing with figures; if typical, by the laws connected with types; if literal, by the laws of non-figurative speech. How are we to know which is metaphorical or symbolic or not? The Scriptures themselves give us the key. In John 7:38 Christ is recorded to have said on the last great day of the feast that whoever believed in Him, out of his innermost being would flow rivers of living water. Then the Scripture immediately explains that reference is being made to the Holy Spirit whose ministry in this manner had not yet begun, because Christ had not yet been glorified. There is then, no mistaking the meaning of the verse. And if the Scriptures do not mean what they declare, they are valueless to us.

20. The position of Israel.

O ye seed of Abraham, his servant, ye children of Jacob, His chosen. He is the Lord our God; His judgements are in all the earth. He has remembered His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations, which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac, and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, "Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance" (Psalm 105:6-10).

Revelation 20:4-5

Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom judgment was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.

Unconditionally, God promised the land of Canaan to the seed of Israel (Gen. 13:15, Gen. 17:8, Deut. 26:15, Jer. 23:5-8, Jer. 31:31-34). See also Amos 9:15, a prophecy of Israel's permanent settlement in the holy land. This settles the Jewish possession of Israel forever, regardless of what we believe, and regardless of the Jews as such.

Under the heading "Israel, its meaning in the past and today" (page 348), Prof. Ohmann admits that the modern state of Israel plays a considerable part in the Middle East conflict. However, he then writes:

So what? Is that mere fact a part of what to me, to my brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, is the measure of faith, as God's creative, redemptive, and renewing work's are? Do I, br. S. have to regulate my faith to what happens out there? Is the modern state of Israel to you, br. S. and to me on one level with the incarnation, the death, and the blessed resurrection of the Son of God? Or even with the gathering of His Church by His Word and Spirit? Is my soul's salvation, be it partly, dependent on the weal and woe of the Jewish State? Are they that important?

My answer: Yes and No. My soul's salvation does not depend on the weal and woe of the Jewish State, but on God's promises in Christ. But if you write: "Faith in God's promise is decisive," then I will also relate this to the modern state of Israel, and take God's Word for it that the Jews are not only to return to their land in unbelief, but that the nation of Israel will also be converted to Jesus Christ (e.g. Ez. 36:24-28, Zech. 12:10, Matt. 23:38, 39, Luke 21:24, Hos. 3:4, 5, Ez. 39:28, 29). I completely agree that, in this dispensation of grace, Christ gathers His Church out of all nations, that there is no difference between a Christian Jew, Arab or Canadian — they are all spiritual children of Abraham — that they are all looking forward to the heavenly Jerusalem, that they are all strangers here, and so on. No pre-millennialist needs to be convinced of this. But at the same time I completely agree with Gal. 3:17, 18:

That the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

Now, here we have the key issue. Prof. Ohmann states that Israel has served its term, but here we are told just as plainly as the English language can tell it, that the covenant which God made with Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the end of the Egyptian bondage, cannot be disannulled by any covenant or development which arose after that. Paul specifically cites the Mt. Sinai conditional covenant, a covenant which Paul here calls "the law." In other words, if it depends on the attitude of Israel, then it is no more of a promise.

Even more so, God promised the land to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob for an everlasting possession, and it was of God's own

free grace, it was a free gift and God did not say to Abraham, "If you do so and so, I will do so and so!!" See Genesis 15. Israel could not break this particular covenant, because they never agreed to anything. And the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:29). Every time we see the rainbow, we are also reminded of the future blessing and restoration of Israel (Is. 54:9, Jer. 16:14, 15, Jer. 31:35, 36).

To sum it all up: Does God give today and take back tomorrow? And if we cannot trust God in a promise such as He made to Abraham in Genesis, how can we trust God to keep His promises to us, the gift of eternal life through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ? That is how important it is.

Now, what amazes me most in Prof. Ohmann's answer is not only certain sweeping statements he makes without any proof — this is rather easy — but certain statements as such. I will give two examples.

(i) Prof. Ohmann states (page 418) that in the final analysis it is the influence of sects that are playing nasty tricks on our br. S. With that I do not agree!! What about the Church of the first three centuries? What about Reformed theologians such as Brakel, Da Costa, Dr. J. van Andel, Berkhoff, and several others? What about . . . , and here I quote Prof. Ohmann himself (page 417):

In answer to my questions, br. S. will say, in the same vein as so many before him: "I believe this because Holy Scripture tells me so."

Pre-millennialism is Scriptural, not sectarian. It can become sectarian when abused: e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses who teach that God began to set up His kingdom in 1914, or the Seventh-Day Adventists who teach that during the Millennium (1000 years) the earth will be waste and void and the prison house of Satan, or the British Israelites who claim that the kingdom will be established in Britain and not in Palestine.

(ii) Prof. Ohmann writes (page 419), "When you call yourself a Canadian Reformed pre-millennialist, it is a *contradictio in terminis*." Is this so? Let me explain.

When I was baptized, God said: "You are my child. You are placed in the Covenant of Grace. I love you so much that I gave you my only begotten Son unconditionally for you, in order that you may have eternal life." It is on the basis of this promise of the Lord, on His Word, that I build my faith, and the certainty of faith. As a covenant child I can despise and reject these promises; then I have eternal death. This is also a promise. Then I will be a lost child of God.

In the doctrinal decisions of the general synods of 1942 and the following years, God's promises to us and our children were questioned. The question was, "Do we baptize on the basis of God's promises, or do we baptize on the assumption that if the child believes, he will receive the promises?" Thus the question was: "Is our faith dependent on God's promises, or are God's promises dependent on our faith?" From these doctrinal decisions we are liberated, since we could not in

all seriousness question God's integrity. Now this also applies to the promises to the modern state of Israel as prophesied by the Word of God. God says so, and that settles it! That is why I am a Canadian Reformed Pre-millennialist.

27. In the introduction I stated that it is not my intention to make a big issue of pre-millennialism over against a-millennialism. What then is my intention? To prove by the end of our discussion that the pre-millennial view is harmonious, consistent, and, above all, based upon the infallible authority of the Scriptures. In considering the remarks of Prof. Ohmann regarding the exegesis of Zechariah 14, he makes many observations of spiritual value and as such there is no disagreement. But here again, when it comes to the exegesis of the chapter, Prof. Ohmann is rather vague. I cannot understand why Prof. Ohmann does not want to accept the plain and simple language of the prophet Zechariah, who, inspired by the Holy Spirit, reveals to us some very real and dramatic future events. Prof. Ohmann makes it rather confusing when he asks on page 368:

Does the reader, do the members of the Church of Jesus Christ, still have to look to the future, and particularly to the modern state of "Israel" to see the prophecy of Zechariah 14 come true? Is it there that salvation will dawn upon and materialize for the Church?

If we consider the promises God made to Abraham (an everlasting covenant), then these questions are not hard to answer. The answer to the first question is yes, the answer to the second question is no. The blessing for Abraham's seed is still to come (see point 20); the blessing through Abraham is fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Like many other unfulfilled prophecies, it all hinges on the exegesis of Revelation 20. By applying the golden rule to Zechariah 14, Revelation 19, and Revelation 20, we are not going to be stuck with unfulfilled prophecies. It is not going to harm the Church either. We will then see how each piece of the "jigsaw puzzle" fits neatly into God's redemptive framework, the last piece being the reign of Christ on earth, the great finale when the earth will be full of the knowledge of God (Ps. 72:7, 8).

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when He shall have put down all rules and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. When the picture is completed, when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected unto Him, that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all (I Cor. 15:24, 28).

Wm. SALOMONS

OUR COVER
McNeil Bay, Victoria, B.C. (Photo
Courtesy British Columbia govern-
ment.)

Remarks in Answer to Mr. Salomons' Second Submission on "Prophecy Today"

Dear br. Salomons,

1. (re 13) I object to your use of the word "believe," regardless whether it applies to a pre-millennialist or an a-millennialist. A so-called a-millennialist, I should say, for I don't think the term is a success, because I don't like to see what I believe summarized in anything that is related to the millennium. I do believe a millennium, sure, since Scripture speaks about it. Scripture does so in the Book of the Revelation to John, written mainly in symbolic language; which is to be expected in a book mainly concerned with what then was future. It is the same mode of revelation you meet in the books of Daniel and Zechariah, as I pointed out to you in my articles which you must have read. The term "a-millennialism" at most reflects the viewpoint or the stand I take when it comes to an exegesis of Revelation 20. Prof. Jay E. Adams suggests the term "realized Millennialism," I learned. Prof. J. Faber prefers "nunc-millennialism," he told me. Fine with me, but I refuse to let my faith, or even my standpoint in religious matters, be characterized by the millennium only, for the reign of the thousand years is but one of the thousand or more things, I believe, of equal or more importance. But for that reason you need not call me a "justificationist" or "resurrectionist," even though I am very much attached to these truths: the justification by faith only and the resurrection of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Lord's Day 12 of the Heidelberg Catechism asks: Why are you called a Christian? That name covers everything. And please don't put me on one level with pre-millennial(ist)s. What I believe (and you, I hope) you find a summarized in Lord's Day 7, Q. and A. 22 of the Catechism, and, with regard to the pre-millennialist assumptions, I, for one, really wonder if they are a consequence of, or fit within, this frame. Or are they rather an outgrowth, a protuberance on an otherwise sound body of doctrine that is badly in need of an operation?

2. That the doctrine of a-millennialism "in its basis carries the root that leads to modernism and liberalism" is a rather easy, sweeping statement you blame me for in your submission. What leads you and other kindred spirits to posit this? You refer to Prof. Walvoord, who claims: "The history of modern liberalism has demonstrated that its adherents are drawn almost entirely from a-millennial ranks." It only required that you set up a kind of syllogism, this way (Do you know what a syllogism is? If not, look it up in an encyclopedia or dictionary.): Major: A-millennialism favours the development of modernism; Minor: H.M. Ohmann and the majority of his fellow church members are a-millennialists; Conclusion: H.M.O. c.s. (if not they themselves, then their offspring), are bound to end up in modernism. If that be true, the future of our churches would be gloomy and dark indeed. However, the suggested syllogism does not hold water for one who likes to go deeper into the matter. Even if Prof. Walvoord — I had better say here: statistics — are proven to be correct in showing that the bulk of liberal and modernist theologians happen to have their roots in pre-millennial ranks, I would ask: So what? I only yield to your claim if you show me *the inner coherence*. I mean, and I hope you can follow me, that you show me that "a-millennialism" is per se, because of its intrinsic character, bound to lead to modernism. That is immediately refuted for him who gives the matter a thought. For my "a-millennialism" (again I say I don't like the term) implies the ascension of Christ (in the literal sense of the word) and His second coming (the way He has left, Acts 1:11), a two-fold truth modernism does not agree with, and the reign of a thousand years bridges the span between these two supernatural points. The pillars of the bridge are miracles only the SON OF GOD can do, the one inaugurating, the other terminating the reign. Would a modernist be happy with that?? However, let us not beat

around the bush any longer, for something else is at stake. Modernism and liberalism have been fought by orthodox scholars of the church from the outset (whom you name a-millennials) throughout the centuries I don't boast of it. It was their bounden duty. It was and is pre-millennialism that makes such a fuss about it; and if others are impressed, I call it a propaganda stunt. At the end of the First World War, as modernism was on the decline, the pre-millennialists saw the opportunity and seized it. They could take the wind out of modernism's sails, so to speak, and did it. People who were disappointed in man's progress and at a loss with what to believe, were promised and flattered by the prospect of a-millennium which could appear any moment and would bring in its train a sort of heaven on earth with all sorts of things man's earthly-minded heart desires. Not 100% heaven yet and no longer 100% earth, but just in between, just enough to coax the ignorant — something quite fitting in a heathen mythology, a state or condition in which sin is not done away with altogether, but a disgrace for our Christian faith. Dr. William H. Rutgers wrote in his doctoral dissertation *Pre-Millennialism in America* of 1930:

The greatest factor, accountable for the wide acceptance of *Pre.* ideals is its reactionary attitude. Its program is destructive, not constructive, and as is customary to a reaction, it is negative not positive, and it immediately finds fertile soil for its seed to germinate. Moreover, it does not demand the noblest and highest in man, but moves on a lower plane, since it is easier to find and diagnose the flaws of the existing systems and conditions than it is to advance ideas which will aid in alleviating and eliminating individual and social evils As a reaction it represents an extreme, an excrescence, an outgrowth, and as such is as baneful an error as that over against which it reacts" (p. 122).

To use a business term, I would say: This article — pre-millennialism — sells well on the market. How come? Let me again quote Dr. Rutgers:

Pre. proves itself a workable, practicable religion. Of the "simply religious" it demands, not a knowledge of a whole system of doctrine, of acquaintance of denominational differences, but "simply taking God at His Word," viz., simply as *Pre.s* rightly divide the word of truth Men are not interested in hair-splitting questions of doctrine Men desire it to be shown that Christianity is a practicable religion

(To be Continued)

H.M. OHMAN

PRESS RELEASE

of the Twelfth Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia held in the Free Reformed Church Building at Armadale, W.A., from September 1 to 5, 1980.

Article 1. On behalf of the convening Church of Armadale, Rev. K. Bruning opens the Synod and requests the meeting to sing Psalm 25:2 and 6. He then leads in prayer and reads Psalm 2. He delivers his opening address and requests the meeting to sing Psalm 25:10.

Article 2. The credentials are examined and the roll is signed by the delegates. Delegates to Synod: From the Church of Albany: elder, J. Brouwer; elder, J.A. Diek; elder, H. Olde. From the Church of Armadale: Rev. K. Bruning, Rev. Dr. S.G. Huh, elder, J. Van Dijk. From the Church of Launceston: elder, H. Heys; elder, J. Hamelink; elder, J. VanderRos.

Article 3. As moderamen are elected: Chairman: Rev. K. Bruning; Assessor: Rev. Dr. S.G. Huh; First Clerk: elder, J. VanderRos; Second Clerk: elder, J. Van Dijk.

Article 4. Synod is constituted and agreement with the Three Forms of Unity is expressed by all delegates.

Article 5. It is reported that two letters and two appeals have come in. Synod invites Rev. P. Lok to sit at the meeting table as the representative of the sister Churches in The Netherlands.

Article 6. The agenda is accepted as proposed.

Article 7. Meeting hours are determined as follows: 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. In open evening sessions the following reports will be discussed: Tuesday: Mission, Wednesday: Church Book, Thursday: Correspondence Foreign Churches, Wednesday and Thursday: Remaining Reports.

Article 8. Letter from the Church of Armadale concerning the planned division of the congregation is discussed. A committee is appointed to advise Synod re the consequences for the Confederation of Churches.

Article 9. Report of the librarian of Synod is discussed. This will be continued on Tuesday.

Article 10. Rev. P. Lok addresses the meeting and conveys the greetings of the sister Churches in The Netherlands.

Article 11. After singing Psalm 26:2 and prayer, the meeting is adjourned.

Article 12. Re-opening Tuesday, September 2, 1980. After singing Psalm 131:1 the chairman reads Psalm 131. Synod meets in closed session in order to deal with appeals.

Article 13. Evening session, Tuesday, September 2, 1980. After singing Psalm 93:1 and 4 the chairman re-opens the meeting. Br. P. 't Hart, the mission worker, and Mission Committee members are welcomed and various matters discussed, including the future development of the work, the budget, the study of br. 't Hart. The discussion will be continued at a later date.

Article 14. Report of the Committee (Art. 8) is discussed and it will be continued in a later session. After singing Psalm 149:1 br. VanderRos leads in prayer and the chairman closes the meeting.

Article 15. Re-opening Wednesday, September 3, 1980. The chairman re-opens the meeting, reads Psalm 43:5 and leads in prayer. Synod meets in closed session.

Article 16. Evening session. The chairman re-opens the meeting.

Article 17. The Report of Church Book is discussed as tabled. General concern is expressed about the lack of close and effective co-operation with the Canadian Churches. Consultation would be required re the text of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Article 18. Report re training for the ministry is discussed and Synod decides to appoint new deputies.

Article 19. The revised report of the committee (Art. 8) is discussed and Synod decides about the matters of Church visitation, appeal churches and boundary lines between congregations. Convening church for 1982 is to be "Kelmescott." Armadale remains the appointing church for Mission.

Article 20. Report of librarian is discussed and the discussion will be completed when the librarian is able to attend.

Article 21. After singing and prayer the meeting is adjourned.

Article 22. Re-opening Thursday, September 4, 1980. Synod meets in

closed session to discuss aspects of the mission work.

Article 23. The Report of Deputies for Revision of the Church Order is discussed. Synod decides to acknowledge the draft of the first fifteen articles as an excellent sample of the work undertaken and to encourage deputies to be appointed to continue the work in the same manner.

Article 24. Synod decides that the Acts of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia are to be kept in the Archives of Synod.

Article 25. Synod decides that reports and books from abroad will be kept by the Librarian.

Article 26. Synod meets in closed session.

Article 27. Evening open session. A letter from the Free Reformed Teachers' Conference Meeting at Armadale wishing God's blessing is accepted.

Article 28. Letters with good wishes for our Synod and invitations to the coming Synods are received from the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Korean Presbyterian Church. Extensive discussion of the Deputies' Report to Synod covers the correspondence with the Churches in Canada, Holland, Korea, West Soemba and Taiwan. As for the intended International Conference of Churches, the need for thorough preparation was stressed. Close contacts with the Churches of Soemba, Sri Lanka and Taiwan are to be made.

Article 29. Synod is adjourned until Friday morning after singing and prayer.

Article 30. Morning session, Friday, September 5, 1980. Synod meets in closed session.

Article 31. Draft proposal concerning a study of the development of the mission work in Western Australia is adopted. Synod decides to advise the Church Council of Armadale to appoint a sub-Committee to investigate all aspects of the future development of the mission work in W.A. with particular emphasis on the Scriptural methods to be followed, work areas to be defined and optimal use of resources.

Article 32. Synod decides to appoint new deputies for the Ecclesiastical Ordinances with the same mandate as given by Synod 1978.

Article 33. Synod decides that new deputies for English Bible Translation should concentrate on the collection of data on this subject for the process of evaluation and it decides to

counsel the Churches to remain alert for unreliable translations.

Article 34. Synod decides to appoint new deputies with the mandate to maintain the contact with the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia and study developments between Dutch deputies and the Free Church of Scotland.

Article 35. Study Mission Worker: Report by deputies is adopted.

Article 36. The English Translation of the Rules of Synod is adopted.

Article 37. Appeal to Presbyterian Reformed Church: Synod decides that mandate should be carried out by new deputies.

Article 38. The Church of Launceston reports that the books have been audited and found in good order.

Article 39. Synod meets in closed session.

Article 40. The cost of Synod 1980 is apportioned.

Article 41. There is no business ad Article 41, Church Order.

Article 42. The Church of Launceston is asked to come with a proposal to the churches concerning appointment of a counsellor.

Article 43. There is no business ad Article 43, Church Order.

Article 44. Synod decides to instruct the Church visitators to bring verbal Church visitations to the Church of Launceston whenever possible.

Article 45. In anticipation of the Mission study (Art. 31) Synod decides to defer a decision concerning future financial support from Holland.

Article 46. Synod decides that the next Synod will be convened in Kelmscott, W.A. during the first week of May 1983.

Article 47. Synod meets in closed session.

Article 48. The Press Report of Synod will be forwarded to *Una Sancta*, to *Clarion* and to *Shield and Sword*, and to the *Nederlands Dagblad*.

Article 49. Evening session. Synod meets in closed session.

Article 49. Evening open session, Friday, September 5, 1980. After singing Psalm 85:3 and 4 the chairman reopens the meeting.

Article 50. The deputies are appointed and their instructions adopted.

Article 51. A draft letter to the Canadian Reformed Churches re mutual consultation for the Church Book, etc., is read and adopted.

Article 52. The chairman reads out some of the decisions which were

made in the closed sessions. a. Two letters have been received from Rev. A.H. Dekker. His objection to the validity of the credentials of the Launceston delegates was not accepted by Synod. His request to Synod not to deal with an appeal by the Church of Launceston before his comments have been considered by Synod was refused as the appeal was against a decision by the Church Council of Albany. b. Synod gives its approbation to the decision of the Church Council of Launceston, to dismiss Rev. Dekker in accordance with Article 11 of the Church Order. Rev. A.K. Dekker will be eligible for calls from sister Churches.

Article 53. Acts of Synod and Press Release are read and adopted.

Article 54. The Assessor thanks the chairman for the way he presided the sessions.

Article 55. The chairman delivers his closing address.

Article 56. Rev. P. Lok of The Netherlands is invited to address the meeting. Rev. Lok addresses the meeting.

Article 57. The chairman requests Rev. Huh to lead in prayer. The chairman then closes the Synod.

PRESS RELEASE

of the Classis Pacific of the Canadian Reformed Churches held in the Canadian Reformed Church at Smithers on Tuesday, October 7, 1980.

1. *Opening.* On behalf of the convening church, the Church at Smithers, the Rev. C. VanSpronsen calls the delegates to sing Psalm 66:1 and 4 and reads Phil. 2:12-18. He leads in prayer. He welcomes the brothers and explains the postponement of Classis from April 15, 1980 to today. The delegates of the Maranatha Church at Surrey examine the credentials and report that all is in good order and that the churches are all duly represented. There are no instructions.

2. *Constitution of Classis.* Classis is constituted. The suggested officers are appointed by Classis. Serving officers: Rev. C. VanSpronsen, chairman; Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar, vice-chairman; Rev. M. VanderWel, clerk.

Rev. VanSpronsen, by way of introduction, calls us to remember that Rev. VanderWel has received and declined a call to Barrhead, Alberta. He welcomes Rev. G.H. Visscher to his first Classis meeting. The missionaries are remembered along with their visa difficulties. Also that br. and sr. Glas have been appointed to replace br. and sr. Kuik in 1981 as mission aid helpers. It is also noted that Prof. H. Ohmann has been appointed to the seminary of our sister churches in Kampen.

3. *Adoption of the Agenda.* After an addition, the agenda is adopted.

4. *Correspondence received.* There is no correspondence received.

5. *Proposal — Smithers.* The Church at Smithers proposes two

amendments to the Classical Regulations. After some discussion they are adopted.

6. *Reports.* a) Treasurer. Report is submitted with a financial statement. A formal request is made for \$4.00 per confessing member for the year 1980-81. This request is granted.

b) Church for Inspection of Archives. The Church at Houston reports that the archives are in good order, with a few exceptions.

c) Church Visitors. The church visitors report on visits made to the Churches at Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Cloverdale, Houston, Langley, Surrey, and Smithers.

d) Committee for Needy Churches. This committee reports that it has executed its mandate in respect to the financial assistance for the Church at Houston.

The Church at Houston thanks Classis and the Churches individually for the support they have given over the past year and reports that assistance will no longer be needed.

Classis gratefully takes note of the work done by the committee, thanks them and discharges them of their duties with respect to the Church at Houston. Classis also gratefully takes note of Houston's now being able to support herself and expresses its thanks for that.

7. *Question Period ad Article 41, Church Order is held.*

8. *Appointments.* a) The convening church for next classis is the Church at Abbotsford, to be convened in April 1981.

b) Suggested officers for the next

PRINCIPAL'S STATEMENT — *Continued*

secretary of the Committee on the Revised Standard Version, appointed by Synod 1971, and distinguished himself by a careful and scholarly study of the RSV emendations of the text of the prophecy of Hosea. Of his other publications, his presentation at the Ministers' Workshop in Ontario on January 4, 1977, deserves special mention. It was published under the title "The Office of David: A preliminary look at David as *nagid*" in *Koinonia* 1/1, Spring 1978, pp. 5-19. It gave evidence of his gifts not only for the study of the Hebrew language but also for research in the field of *Historia Revelationis*, the history of God's revelation in the Old Dispensation. The Senate is thankful that God has provided us with a young man, an alumnus of our still fledgling institution, who has given proof of a scholarly disposition and whose work in the field of Old Testament theology gives good hope for the future.

6. Conclusion

The appointment of the Rev. C. VanDam reminded me of an old saying that a theological college should spin its own thread of life by preparing students who could become future teachers. When in June 1980 my esteemed colleague, and

co-worker Prof. L. Selles and I for a short while will be the only full-timers in the service of the Theological College, we will be reminded of the period 1969-1971 when the same situation existed. Sometimes we are led through narrow passes, but we are led, by the Good Shepherd. In the saying about the thread of life, there is an element of truth, but also an element of false fatalism. We do not have to spin our thread of life, but we may entrust ourselves — also for the life and future of the Theological College — to Him Who is in Christ Jesus the God of life.

J. FABER

SYNOD SMITHVILLE

Synod Smithville, 1980 of the Canadian Reformed Churches elected the following officers: Chairman: Rev. D. VanderBoom; First Clerk: Rev. J. Visscher; Second Clerk: Rev. J. Mulder; Assessor: Rev. M. VanBeveren. On Tuesday, November 4, 1980 Synod appointed the Rev. C. VanDam, M.Th., at Surrey, B.C. to be professor of Old Testament at the Theological College in Hamilton and the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene at Fergus, Ontario to be lecturer in Ecclesiology. The first will begin his work, D.V., in the academic year 1981-82, the latter in 1980-81.

J.F.

PRESS RELEASE — *Cont.*

classis: Rev. G.H. Visscher, chairman; Rev. M. VanderWel, vice-chairman; Rev. C. VanSpronsen, clerk.

c) Committee for Examinations: Exegesis Old Testament: Rev. C. VanDam; Exegesis New Testament: Rev. G.H. Visscher; Systematic Theology and Symbolics: Rev. D. VanderBoom; Church History: Rev. C. VanSpronsen; Church Polity: Rev. M. VanderWel; Practical Theology and Ethics: Rev. J. Visscher; Knowledge of Scripture: Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar.

The Coordinators, Rev. D. VanderBoom and Rev. J. Visscher are reappointed.

d) Church Visitors. Rev. D. VanderBoom (coordinator), Rev. M. VanderWel, Rev. C. VanSpronsen, and Rev. C. VanDam are reappointed, with Rev. E.J. Tiggelaar and Rev. J. Visscher as alternates.

e) Church for taking care of Archives. The Church at Smithers is reappointed.

f) Church to Inspect the Archives. The Church at Houston is reappointed.

g) Treasurer. Br. P. VanEgmond is reappointed.

h) Church for Auditing Books of Treasurer. The Church at Surrey (Maranatha) is reappointed.

i) Committee for Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry. Rev. M. VanderWel, Rev. D. VanderBoom, and br. J. deVos are reappointed.

j) Committee for Needy Churches. The brothers H.A. Berends, G. Boeve, and R. Paize are reappointed.

k) Deputies Preaching Arrange-

ments. Rev. D. VanderBoom and Rev. M. VanderWel are reappointed.

l) Delegates to Regional Synod. The following delegates were elected: Primi delegates — elders: H.A. Berends, A.C. Lengkeek, G. Vane; ministers: Rev. D. VanderBoom, Rev. M. VanderWel, and Rev. C. VanSpronsen. Alternate delegates — elders: G. Hofsink, M. Vreugdenhil, and J.F. DeLeeuw, in that order; ministers: Rev. C. VanDam, Rev. J. Visscher, and Rev. G.H. Visscher, in that order.

9. *Question Period* is held.

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

11. Acts are adopted and the press release is approved.

12. *Closing*. The chairman thanks the ladies for their work and then thanks the brothers for their co-operation. He requests the singing of Psalm 87:1, 4, and 5 and closes in prayer.

For the Classis,
E.J. TIGGELAAR, vice-chairman

Letters-to-the-Editor

Dear Rev. VanOene:

In the middle section of the second column, it says: "Ministers also made some observations, and they did it *publicly*." Rev. Stam made a surprising statement in the church bulletin of Smithville. (Since when is a local church bulletin a public publicity?) Apparently he seldom asked the congregation to sing the Credo. Here is what he wrote: "I do not really feel, that the melody blends in with the general musical style of our liturgy. Most of our hymns are in "a Genevan setting."

When I read this I couldn't help to say out loud in Dutch: "Nou breekt m'n klomp." (Whose klomp?) Rev. VanOene is doubtful regarding Rev. Stam's observation and writes: "I do not know all that much about music and the different types of music, but in my opinion the present melody (of the

Credo) is no more "Gregorian" than the melody of our Psalm 23, when the latter is sung properly without 'accidentals.' However, I leave that up to the experts and hope that we shall hear from them too!"

As you see, I have waited 5 months for somebody to repair that broken klomp! Now here is my answer: "The Creed was composed 14 years ago by a Dutch Roman Catholic organist, and Psalm 23 was composed by a Calvinist in 1543 and published in 1551.* I hope the "klomp" is repaired properly.

With brotherly greetings,
Yours sincerely,
MARTIN MENKEN

*Which does not mean a thing when the point is "What is the CHARACTER of the music?" Handel wrote both opera music and "sacred" Oratorio music.

vO



Mr. and Mrs. H. Van Ieperen of Beamsville will celebrate their 45th anniversary on November 21, 1980.

They are still enjoying good health, for which they are thankful to the Lord. The couple had seven children, with all of them residing in the same area. The Lord took home the youngest one in 1977. We hope the Lord will keep them together for many more years.

Ontario Women's League Day

It was a beautiful sunny day, when on Wednesday, October 8, 1980, a large number of ladies travelled to Hamilton to attend the annual convention of the women societies of Ontario and Grand Rapids. Many had to travel quite a distance and all received a warm welcome in the basement of the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church where refreshments were served. It was good to meet old acquaintances who had attended many previous conventions, and it was also most gratifying to see such a large number of younger members, some of whom were there for the first time. The total number was approximately 370, which was about a hundred more than at the previous convention in Hamilton, in 1970. At that time the meeting was held in a rented church but now a beautiful church building was available and the auditorium of the Guido de Brès High School could be used for our luncheon. The high school students had a day off and no doubt many were babysitting at home making it possible for more ladies to attend the convention.

Shortly after 10 o'clock Mrs. J.K. Riemersma, our president, opened the meeting and we sang the praise of the Lord with Hymn 41:1 and 2. After reading of Romans 8:28-39 Mrs. Riemersma

led in prayer. In her words of welcome the president especially mentioned visitors from The Netherlands and Mrs. J. Faber who accompanied our singing. Also the ladies from the new Burlington Society "He Leadeth Me" received a special word of welcome.

The theme for the convention was taken from Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." In the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament, we see that the Lord, Who calls Himself: "I Am Who I Am" does not change, but is always with us to the close of the age. This thought would come to expression in the topics chosen for the day.

Some announcements were made and our new secretary, Mrs. L. Hofsink was introduced as well as Mrs. R.v.d. Griendt, the new I.L.P.B. representative. The collection was to be for Bible spreading in communist countries. The outgoing secretary, Mrs. J. Dekker, read the annual report of last year's meeting in Fergus, Ontario. The president thanked Mrs. Dekker for the work done by her during the past five years. The floor was then given to the treasurer who reported on funds received from societies, how they were spent and what was left.

We then joined in the singing of our League song.

When given the opportunity to present her introduction on the Book of Ruth, Mrs. L. VanDelden started with reading Ruth 1:1-7 and chapter 4:17b-22. After a short summary in the Dutch language Mrs. VanDelden began by saying that the most important person is not Ruth, but Christ and His work of redemption. Ruth takes her place in the generations leading to Mary of whom Jesus would be born. Highlights were:

1. The weak faith of Elimelech in his leaving the land of Israel to go to Moab.
2. The growing faith of Naomi when she returns to Bethlehem and experiences the goodness of the Lord.
3. Ruth's faith which comes to expression in her confession.
4. The rich faith of Boaz who fulfills his duty as a near kinsman, in obedience to the Law.

Before the discussion we sang Psalm 116:1, 5, 9, and 10. A good number of questions were raised which were all answered by Mrs. VanDelden in a clear way with many references to other parts of Scripture. During the singing of Psalm 87:1-5 the collection was held.

Lunch was served in the high school auditorium where the Hamilton society had made everything ready. There was plenty to eat and to talk about, and everybody enjoyed themselves.

The afternoon session was opened with the singing of the national anthem. In a most comical way the Hamilton society performed five musical masterpieces. The members of the league board were asked to name the composers and Mrs. Riemersma received the first prize for guessing them all . . . wrong!

After the president read Revelation 20:1-10 the floor was given to Rev. Huizinga for his speech on Millennialism. Everybody had been given a sheet showing in diagram the division of history according to pre-millennialists and dispensationalists. Rev. Huizinga gave a brief summary in the Dutch language. In his address he started by saying that many expect a 1000 year kingdom of peace in the future. This expectation is connected with Revelation 20 where the binding of Satan for 1000 years in which the believers rule as kings with Christ, is mentioned. Some expect a double coming of Christ and a double resurrection. The first time that Christ comes He shall raise the believers who shall reign with Him on earth in the mil-

Bringing Home the Constitution

We have heard and read a lot of words about the "patriation" of the Constitution lately, but how many know what it is really all about? Is this only a matter of interest to those of us who like politics and are interested in political science, or should it be a matter of concern to every Canadian?

The opinions on this question vary from "that constitutional talk is dull stuff" to "we have now arrived at a crossroads in our history." In order to find out who is right, let's take a look at this matter ourselves.

LEAGUE DAY — *Continued*

lennium, for 1000 years. At Christ's second coming all men, also the ungodly, shall stand up to life. In addition, some also expect the man of lawlessness to appear twice, and the rebellion, the battle and fire from heaven shall also occur twice — once before the millennium and once before the new earth. We call this error in prophecy a case of double-vision. From where does this error in vision arise? Well, one of the main principles of pre-millennialists is the so-called literal fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, e.g., that this kingdom of peace lasts a literal 1000 years. For ten centuries shall Christ rule over the earth from Jerusalem (Zechariah 12, 14). He shall sit on David's throne in Jerusalem. The temple shall be rebuilt, according to Ezekiel 40-48. Peoples shall stream to Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:2-4). The spotlight again falls on Israel. If one wants to judge and oppose this pre-millennialism then the basic wrong principle must be pointed out, namely the literal explanation of prophecy. Only through their fulfillment in and through Christ can we properly understand and explain the prophecies of the Old Testament. The prophets spoke in terms and images borrowed from their contemporary Old Testament circumstances. The New Testament does the same when it refers to the age to come, for which we hope. The number 1000 is not meant literally, just as the other numbers in the Book of Revelation are not meant literally, but symbolically: 10 x 10 x 10, the fulness of the time of God to preach the gospel to the ends of the

First of all, what is a constitution? A constitution can be defined as a document which identifies the fundamental principles of a nation, determines the powers and duties of its government, and confirms the rights and obligations of its citizens.

The British North America Act, 1867, (B.N.A. Act), is regarded as the written part of the Canadian Constitution. The B.N.A. Act, based on resolutions passed at the Quebec conference in 1864, was for a large part the work of the prime minister of the Canadas

earth. Only when this is finished is Satan released so that he can deceive the nations again. The 1000 years point thus to the work of Christ after His ascension — the victorious march of the gospel throughout the whole world — and they end shortly before His coming. In the discussion on this interesting topic many questions were dealt with.

At the end of the meeting the president thanked the hosting societies for the marvelous way they looked after us. Words of appreciation were also spoken to Mrs. VanDelden and Rev. Huizinga for all their work in preparing the introductions and for dealing with the questions in such a capable manner. Mrs. J. Faber was presented with a plant as a token of our appreciation for her musical contribution. Last but not least, Mrs. Riemersma was thanked by Mrs. Ludwig for guiding the convention again in such a pleasant way. Our final song of praise was Hymn 32 and Rev. Huizinga led in thanksgiving. We were grateful that the Lord had granted us another day of Christian fellowship in which we could sing His praise and be strengthened by His infallible Word. However, there was a sadness in our going home, because when leaving the building we heard that a little baby had taken seriously ill in the nursery. It was immediately taken to the hospital where the doctor could only pronounce death. In thought and prayer we were with the relatives of this little one whom the Lord had taken unto Himself.

For the board,
H.H.J. BOOT

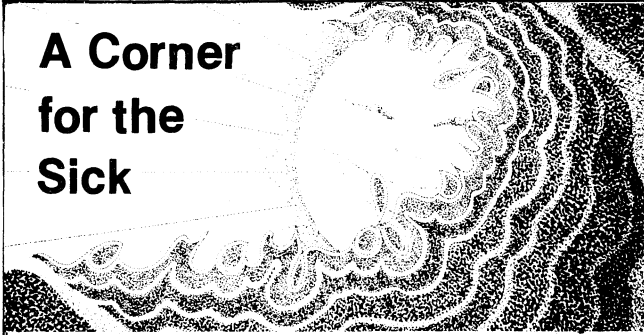
(Upper and Lower Canada), Sir John A. MacDonald. The British North America Act was the actual act passed by the British Parliament that brought the federation, the new nation Canada, into existence. The Fathers of Confederation wanted to call the new country "the Kingdom of Canada." However, the British Government, not wanting to offend the Americans, decided it should be "the Dominion of Canada." The name was taken from Psalm 72: "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

Although the people that framed the Canadian document constantly had the American Constitution in mind, we can notice significant differences between the two of them and that not only in the division of powers between the provincial (state) and federal governments. Let us have a look at the preambles to both documents and compare them. The American Constitution starts with the preamble: "We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defence, promote the general Welfare and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." Here the power originates from the people. Now look at the preamble of the B.N.A. Act: "Whereas the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have expressed their desire to be federally united into one Dominion under the Crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, with a Constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom and whereas etc. . . . Be it therefore enacted and declared by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows: . . ." In our case, in Canada, it was the Queen that was acting, by and with the advice of her Privy Council.

The division of power between the Federal and Provincial Governments in Canada are set out in the Articles 91 and 92 of the B.N.A. Act.

Ever since the time of Confederation in 1867, there has been an ebb and flow in the assertion and the exercise of power by Ottawa and the provincial governments. The new federal system established by Confederation was

A Corner for the Sick



I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. John 11:25

Jesus spoke those comforting words to Martha, when her brother Lazarus died. Martha was thinking about the future resurrection, when she said, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection. Jesus draws her attention to the fact that whoever dies in the Lord, does NOT have to wait to be made alive again, but IS alive in Him." Whoever LIVES and BELIEVES in me shall never die," Jesus told her.

It is already TODAY when we hear the Lord's voice, through the preaching of the Word, that we are made alive together with Christ. That is why the life of a Christian is never fruitless for God's kingdom. When we are alive, we are active. After we believe the preaching of God's Word — Christ's teaching, our lives cannot remain dormant, but they will bear fruit according to the many and diverse talents the Lord has entrusted to us. It is with this thought in mind that we reflect on the scripture passage, "Every branch of mine that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."

Shall we read the beautiful chapter of Peter's first letter, chapter 1:3-25? It will comfort us at all times, in whatever circumstances we may find ourselves. Let us look to Christ: "By His great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Jesus is our sure defense.

Why should we then fear or waver?

All our hope and confidence

Rests on Him, the risen Saviour

Even in our darkest hour

He will shield us with His power.

We are flesh and must return

To the dust whence we were taken,

But we from the Scriptures learn

That from death we shall awaken:

We like buried seed that dies

Shall unto new life arise.

When we hear the trumpet's sound

And the dead are raised immortal,

We shall see with joy profound

How the grave must serve as portal

Leading past all woe and strife

Into everlasting life.

Hymn 51:1, 2 & 6

Based on I Cor. 15:35-58

If you know of anyone who would benefit from a little extra attention, please send your requests to:

Mrs. J.K. Riemersma

380 St. Andrew St. E.,

Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1

CONSTITUTION — Continued

originally tilted in favour of the federal government. However at times during the history of confederation the scales were tilted the other way and certain decisions of the Supreme Court in interpretation of the B.N.A. Act have also helped to bring this along.

It is precisely this delicate balance of this distribution of powers that is one of the main factors contributing to the fact that the B.N.A. Act has never been "brought home" from London, even though Canada has become an independent nation. Like many other prime ministers before him, our present Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau favours changes in the constitution to shift more powers to a strong central federal government, whereas the provinces are jealously guarding the rights given to them under the British North America Act and try to get them strengthened rather than eroded.

When we speak about "patriation" one should not think that the old

B.N.A. Act will actually be brought to Canada. What it really means is that the actual authority over the constitution will be shifted from the British Parliament to Canada. At present the B.N.A. Act can get amended by an address to the British Parliament upon a resolution and address of the parliament of Canada. The procedure is technically simple but more and more Canadians are of the opinion that this is one of the last vestiges of the colonial times and a modern nation like Canada needs to control her own constitution.

One may ask, if the Canadian Constitution has served us reasonably well for 113 years, what is the reason now for the urgency on the federal government's part to bring the B.N.A. Act "home" in such a hurry? Certainly it is not the most important thing on the minds of most Canadians at this time. While it is probably true what the polls say, that a majority of Canadians would like to see the Constitution "brought home," it is a certainty that most Canadians are a lot more concerned

about unemployment, the economy, the energy questions, the possibility of increased taxes in the new budget, etc.

It has been suggested that the real reason why Trudeau is in such a hurry to "patriate" the Constitution, be it with or without the consent of the provinces, is to take the attention away from the fact that the Liberal government of whom he is the leader, has failed to deal with the important issues of the day. While there is no doubt that this is part of it, there are also other reasons, like the commitment he made to Quebec before the Quebec Referendum on sovereignty association, promising French Canadians a new and better deal under a new constitution. There is also no doubt in many peoples' minds that Pierre Trudeau wants to carve himself a niche in history and wants to be remembered as the prime minister who "brought the Constitution home to Canada."

(To be Continued)

Art Lengkeek

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,
I know you always like a story.
Some time ago Busy Beaver *Theodore Kanis* sent this one in.
I know you'll enjoy it!

THE SECRET PLACE

Chris' friend was on the step ringing the doorbell. Down the stairs flew Chris, coat still half open.

"Bye, Mom."

And before Mom could ask where they were going the friends were gone down the sidewalk, heads together.

"Let's go to our secret treehouse in the back of Benji Greenfield's property," said Chris.

"Remember the time we built it with Benji last summer?" inquired David.

The boys lost no time getting their bikes. Benji Greenfield was David's and Chris' best friend. Right now he was in the hospital, after having been hit by a car. Benji's big dreams were to have a brand-new bike of his own. He always had to be doubled by his friends.

The boys biked to the secret treefort, made from old planks. Soon they were making their plans.

"I know what! We should earn money to buy Benji a bike! We could collect beer bottles, sell worms, wash peoples' windows for them, then we will get enough money to buy the bike. I heard they cost 46 dollars at Best-for-Bikes Biking Goods Ltd.," declared David all in one breath.

"We'll do it together!" said Chris, "What's the time, David? A quarter to four? I'd better be heading home. See you tomorrow."

Chris slowly pedaled home. He was daydreaming so much, that once he almost drove into the ditch.

After six weeks the boys had collected enough money to buy the bike. They almost burst with excitement! They had to force themselves not to tell anyone!

Benji was turning 10 tomorrow, it was his birthday and he was in the hospital. He would not be able to have a party and to go hiking to his dear little secret fort.

The next day Benji opened his eyes. Yes, he was almost better, but not enough. O yeah, he was also 10 today. At the thought of having a birthday in the hospital he fell back against his pillows and was very sad.

Suddenly the door of his room burst open. Shhhhhhhhh . . . the nurse hastily whispered. Benji sat straight and looked with big eyes at the door where he was hearing a lot of noise. He heard snickers and whispers.

Suddenly a freckled nose poked around the door. "Happy birthday Benji!" It was his good old friend Chris.

"Oh," said Benji, "I sure missed you!"

He hardly had finished speaking when he heard his other friend, David, say, "Should I do it now?" "Yes," a nurse whispered.

A curly blond head appeared by the door and there was

David with a brand-new bike. Stars twinkled in his eyes. "Happy birthday, Benji!" he cried.

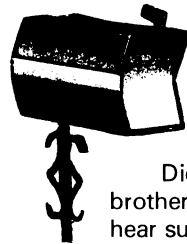
"Okay," the nurse said, "not too noisy! Benji is recovering, but he is not recovered." The boys told how they got Benji a new bike and then the nurse told them to leave.

The next day Benji had really improved. He could go home at 8 o'clock in the morning. His happiness had recovered him all the way.

The doorbell rang and there were David and Chris. "Coming to our secret fort?" asked Chris. "Yes," said Benji, and all three of them jumped to get their own bikes.

With their heads together David whispered, "Isn't it nice that we don't have to double anymore?"

And with knowing smiles the three happy friends raced each other to their good old secret fort.



From the Mailbox

Did you have a good time celebrating your brother's birthday, *Karen Stam*? I'm very sorry to hear such bad news about your Opa again. Thanks for the very nice picture, Karen.

Thanks very much for the pretty bookmark, *Margo Hofsink* and the poems, too. Keep up the good work. I guess you have lots of fun, Margo, when your whole class goes skating. Am I right?

Hello, *Diane Smith*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thanks for your entries. Keep up the good work!

I see you are very good at drawing, *Doane de Witt*. Good for you! We would love to see some of your pictures sometime, Doane, even if there isn't a contest. Bye for now.

Thanks for an interesting quiz for the Busy Beavers, *Greg Hofsink*. I'm sure they'll like it. Did you learn about space in school, Greg? Bye for now. Write again soon!

I'm glad you had such a good time, this summer, with your relatives, *Sheila Van Sydenborgh*. Did you have some good laughs before your new teacher got your names straight? Or was it just confusing. Thanks for the riddles and the quiz, Sheila.

Is the cast off your arm yet, *Edith Hofsink*? How did it feel when it was first off? Thanks very much for your contribution to the Birthday Fund, Edith. Keep up the good work!

How did you enjoy your holiday at Thanksgiving, *Clarinda Meints*? What did you do? Thanks for your pictures, too, Clarinda. Good work!

I see you've been a very Busy Beaver, *Marcella Veenman*. And I see you were thinking of the other Busy Beavers, too. Your puzzle got to me a little late for this year's Thanksgiving. But it'll keep. Don't worry! I'm glad you had such a nice holiday out West, Marcella.

Hello *Wilma DeJager*. Thanks for your entry in our Contest. Would you like to become a Busy Beaver, too? If you do, please write and tell me. Then I'll send you a membership card, Wilma.

I hope your mother is all better again, *Vicky Van Egmond*. Thanks for your drawing, and the joke, too. Write again soon, Vicky.

Hello *Mary-Ann Van Woudenberg*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thanks very much for your very neat quiz! Bye for now.