



# Clarion

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# Shedd and Bavinck

William G.T. Shedd, *DOGMATIC THEOLOGY* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1980), three hard-cover volumes: I-546 pp., II-803 pp., III-528 pp.

Herman Bavinck, *THE DOCTRINE OF GOD*, translated by William Hendriksen (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), paperback, 406 pp.

Continuing my book review editorials, I mention the name of Dr. William G.T. Shedd. His *Dogmatic Theology* has been republished by Thomas Nelson in three hard-cover volumes. I say republished, not only because of its first publication in 1888-1894, but also because Zondervan already reprinted the work in 1969. Shedd's standard work has really become a classic and must still be used in colleges and seminaries.

Reformed theologians who work in the tradition of Herman Bavinck and Abraham Kuyper feel themselves bound to Louis Berkhof's *Systematic Theology*, while in Presbyterian orthodox circles Charles Hodge probably still has priority, and not only because of his age. Nevertheless, Shedd's *Dogmatics* has been revised again.

The interest reaches farther than the regions of Presbyterianism. This is evidenced by the fact that the Zondervan edition was introduced by M. Eugene Oosterhaven and the latest reprint has an introduction by Edward E. Hindson. Oosterhaven is the dogmatician of Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan, and belongs to the Reformed Church, while Hindson teaches in a Baptist college in Lynchburg, Virginia. We gladly combine the data from these two introductions to answer our first question: Who was William G.T. Shedd?

Shedd was born in Acton, Massachusetts, on June 21, 1820. He came from a solid New England Puritan background. At the University of Vermont he was especially under the influence of his professor of philosophy, James Marsh, who was a student of Coleridge. Oosterhaven quotes, and Hindson repeats, that Marsh impressed upon Shedd "the consistency of the peculiar doctrines of the Christian system with reason, and with the true principles of philosophy." They speak admiringly about Shedd's philosophical system and inclination; they mention the logical basis that so obviously marks the style of Shedd's writings. Although I am fully aware of the necessity of some basic knowledge of the history of philosophy — especially in order to perceive the influence of wrong philosophy in the development of the Christian doctrine — I am afraid of overbearing philosophers in dogmatics. The closer the dogmatician sticks to Scripture, the better he can unfold the riches of the dogma as formulated by the church. A glance into Shedd's *Dogmatic Theology* convinced me that the philosophy of Plato made a strong impact, alas.

At Andover Theological Seminary, Shedd was formed into a representative of the "Old School" system of theology. After having served a Congregational church, he became professor of English literature, sacred rhetoric, and church history. Because the confessional

consciousness of the Presbyterian Church was much to his liking, he exchanged the latitudinarian Congregationalist community for the more strict Presbyterians. For twenty-eight years he taught at Union Theological Seminary in New York, mainly in the field of what North Americans now call "systematic theology" and what in Shedd's own words is rather to be denominated as "dogmatics."

I read with pleasure that Shedd constantly held up lofty ideals of the minister's intellectual life. A minister should not be content with the average intellectuality and an ordinary culture, but continue "the daily, nightly and everlasting study of standard authors." In 1895 John de Witt of Princeton Seminary described Shedd as "by far the most speculative Calvinistic theologian the American Church has produced." Oosterhaven in 1969 lauded his happy combination of the historical and speculative spirit, and even judged that no comprehensive treatise written on the whole range of systematic theology had appeared in English by so able a scholar as Dr. Shedd or written with such penetrating insight and fidelity to Scripture as his. Hindson, in his introduction to the new Nelson edition of *Dogmatic Theology*, writes that Dr. Shedd's fidelity to the inspiration of the Scripture and the certainty of genuine salvation will thrill the heart of every Bible-believing scholar. The sections on the doctrine of Christ and of redemption are singled out for special praise. His emphasis on the deity and impeccability of Christ is superb — Christ was unable to sin because of His godhead — and his teaching on the vicarious atonement of the Mediator was in direct opposition to the encroaching liberalism of his day. The same controversy must explain the discrepancy in the discussion of heaven and hell in the section on Eschatology (the doctrine of the last things); in contrast to three pages on the doctrine of heaven, Dr. Shedd spends nearly ninety pages on the doctrine of hell.

During my theological training in The Netherlands, I did not hear too much about Shedd's *Dogmatic Theology*. I came across his name in a famous brochure by Dr. S. Greijdanus, *Toerekeningsgrond van het Peccatum Originans* (Amsterdam, 1906), and also Herman Bavinck mentions Shedd in connection with the theory of realism. It is the theory that the ground of the imputation of Adam's sin to us was not the covenant of Paradise, but our physical bond with Adam; we were in the loins of our first father when he sinned, and we ourselves sinned in him. It is interesting to study Shedd's contribution itself; he devotes 260 pages to the doctrine of man of which nearly 100 pages deal with the topic "original sin." Hindson writes that Shedd wrote the third volume in 1894 as an updated explanation of his views. He realized that the great difference between his view and that of the other Calvinistic theologians of his day was his concept of the self-determined and responsible fall of mankind in Adam. "This makes original sin to be really and literally guilty

and condemning in every individual who is propagated out of the species,” he wrote, “instead of only nominally and fictitiously so.” Dr. H. Bavinck, however, reasoned that the original sin is not physical, and therefore it can be built only on the federal or covenantal unity of mankind. It is not sufficient to explain original sin by way of physical propagation, for it is dangerous to materialize the concept of sin. “Het zoogenaamde realisme, b.v. van Shedd, bevredigt niet, noch ter verklaring der zonde uit Adam, noch ter verklaring van de gerechtigheid uit Christus” (G.D. II, 548). According to Bavinck, Shedd’s so-called realism does not satisfy as explanation of the sin in Adam or of the righteousness in Christ. In the third volume Bavinck mentions Shedd and Greijdanus at the same time and formulates a little bit more cautiously that this realism as such (“zonder meer”) is insufficient to explain original sin. All men were comprised in Adam as their representative, but not in a physical sense. Bavinck maintains the parallel between the first and the last Adam also regarding the ground of the imputation of sin and of righteousness. He is of the opinion that Shedd’s theory cancels out the concept of imputation and that man would be guilty not only of the first sin of Adam, but also of all his sins, if Adam’s transgression had been ours in the realist sense. I am tempted to go into the details of this interesting debate. Although K. Schilder in his *Heidelbergische Catechismus* did not mention Shedd, he gave much attention to Dr. S. Greijdanus’ realist opinion with respect to the forensic basis of the imputation of Adam’s first sin, and he tried to combine or synthesize Shedd, Greijdanus, and Bavinck.

Shedd’s peculiar theory had implications for the description of Christ’s work and His relation to those who are His own. Bavinck alleges that Shedd makes the imputation of Christ’s righteousness dependent on regeneration and conversion. He stresses that Romans 6-8 follow after Romans 3-5 and warns that in Shedd’s theory the subjective redemption would replace the objective atonement and reconciliation.

A last example of a different approach in dogmatics between Shedd and Bavinck is the efficacious calling. Shedd uses the term “regeneration” in the strict sense of the beginning of the new life and he asks the question, “What is man’s relation to regeneration?” The answer is that his agency is not in regeneration itself, but in the work of *conviction*, which is preparatory to regeneration. “When the Holy Ghost finds this preparation [attentive reading and hearing of the Word, and prayer, J.F.], then he usually intervenes with his quickening agency” (*Dogmatic Theology*, II, p. 525). I have the impression that Shedd is influenced by Jonathan Edwards and the Puritan theology of the eighteenth century revival, and that Bavinck discerns in it a deviation from the strict Augustinian, Calvinistic line of thought.

The mention of Bavinck in comparison with Shedd reminds me of the fact that I still have to announce the paperback edition of *The Doctrine of God*, written by Herman Bavinck and translated by William Hendriksen (Baker Book House, 1977). As our readers possibly know, it is taken from the second volume of Bavinck’s masterwork. The publisher calls this authoritative work a model of exhaustive and balanced Biblical exegesis. “Careful historical presentation, painstaking effort to do justice to both sides of a question, and always a wealth of Biblical material make *The Doctrine of God* an unusually accurate and comprehensive volume.” I can only agree. The balanced way in which Bavinck deals with the intricate debate between Supralapsarianism and Infralap-

sarianism — about the supposed order in God’s eternal decrees — is sublime. Schilder considered them the most beautiful pages in Bavinck’s whole work. One can only express the wish that besides the reprinting of the complete *Dogmatic Theology* of Shedd we may receive a complete translation of Bavinck’s *Reformed Dogmatics*.

Although I could now compare the doctrine of God in Shedd and Bavinck, I would like to stress their common weakness. In the discussion of God’s attributes of perfections one is struck by the influence of wrong philosophical concepts. We confess, e.g., that God is a *spiritual Being*. Bavinck starts off with the remark that “God’s simplicity very naturally leads to the discussion of God’s spiritual nature, since all corporal things are composite” (p. 175). Shedd begins with the remark, “The words of our Lord to the Samaritan woman, ‘God is a Spirit,’ John 4:24, although spoken for a practical purpose, are also a scientific definition” (I, p. 151). Apart from being amazed to find a scientific definition in Holy Scripture, we are astonished by the way in which Shedd — a real disciple of Plato here — places spirit and matter over against each other. The invisible, immortal, and intelligent mind of man is called “like in kind of the Divine nature” (p. 155), and the incarnation is explained in a metaphysical manner: “Hence in order to have communication with his embodied creature, man, the Supreme being assumes a form . . . . For this reason, ‘The Word became flesh . . . .’” (p. 153).

When we read this philosophical approach to the doctrine of God’s spirituality, we are reminded of the progress that has been made in exegesis since Shedd and Bavinck wrote their dogmatics standard works. Now we give to John 4:24 a redemptive-historical exegesis and try to keep the explanation free of philosophical concepts such as the contrast between spirit and matter. We are thankful for these reprints, but we may not stand still and always look back in our Christian thinking about God’s wonderful, inexhaustible truth.

J. FABER

## Article XV Original Sin

We believe that through the disobedience of Adam original sin is extended to all mankind; which is a corruption of the whole nature and a hereditary disease, wherewith even infants in their mother’s womb are infected, and which produces in man all sorts of sin, being in him as a root thereof, and therefore is so vile and abominable in the sight of God that it is sufficient to condemn all mankind. Nor is it altogether abolished or wholly eradicated even by baptism; since sin always issues forth from this woe-ful source, as water from a fountain; notwithstanding it is not imputed to the children of God unto condemnation, but by His grace and mercy is forgiven them. Not that they should rest securely in sin, but that a sense of this corruption should make believers often to sigh, desiring to be delivered from this body of death.

Wherefore we reject the error of the Pelagians, who assert that sin proceeds only from imitation.

*From The Belgic Confession*

# press review

## Psychic Healing I

In *Family-Post* (the church bulletin for the congregation of Smithville) of January 11 and 18, the Rev. Cl. Stam wrote about "Psychic Healing." Almost all of the first article I will quote here:

Lately we have been hearing impressive accounts of almost incredible healings performed by a group of missionary-doctors in the Philippines. Some people in our area came back healed of various illnesses, and, since the positive effects seem unmistakable, others are preparing to go.

The various accounts are rather contradictory and therefore also somewhat confusing. Some say the healings are done by accredited surgeons, others claim that the miracles are performed by clergy. Some believe it to be a Seventh Day Adventist or Baptist movement, while others claim it to be non-denominational. Some believe it to be a form of "faith-healing," while others consider it purely as an "operation." There are those who think that the success rate is 100%, while others will tone this down to a much lower percentage.

Here I have a first question. Even those who seem closely involved do not seem to have clear and hard facts which concur with one another. The version of the one is altered by the other, and, having spoken with many, I find myself asking the question, "Where does fiction end and truth begin?" I know that people whose medical situation, humanly speaking, seems hopeless will in desperation seek almost any possible cure, and I can appreciate this. I can understand that we inquire into other paranormal treatments. But is it not so that, before we COMMIT ourselves to any form of treatment, we should first examine whether this is in keeping with the Word of God? After having conducted various interviews, I find the evidence submitted more disturbing than reassuring.

This form of healing goes by the general name of "psychic healing." This means that it lies outside of the sphere of KNOWN physical processes, and is more a matter of the soul or the MIND. In other words, it can be described as being "supernatural."

More about this later. The procedure seems to be as follows: the patients are treated in stages, with approximately nine encounters or appoint-

ments with the healer(s). The "surgeon" enters into the body through the pores of the skin, without the use of a scalpel or any medical instrument. This act (and the accompanying operation with the prevention of infections) is made possible by the fact that the healer has "laser-beams" in his hands. After the "operation" is performed, the hands are withdrawn, there is some show of blood, but the pores close without leaving a scar.

I have been told repeatedly that it is not so much a matter of faith-healing of miraculous nature — "they are not miracle doctors"; it is in essence a real operation. The patient has to convalesce afterwards and even be rehabilitated, just as after any "normal" operation. In any case, the clear results dispel any doubts: it really works, and that in the end is what counts. Who am I to argue? I wasn't there.

It sounds fantastic! In particular that the "surgeon" enters the body through the pores of the skin. But read on, till you hear more at the end.

For starters, we should be on guard for two extremes here. In the first place, whatever seems "supernatural" (and therefore for many abnormal) is by that fact alone not necessarily WRONG. There are phenomena which go beyond our present understanding of natural things. The late Prof. Dr. K. Schilder, e.g., spoke appraisingly of the telepathic powers of a certain Rubini and said, "There is more in nature than we know. The more we learn to know it, the clearer it will become that we may leave 'the spirits' out of it" (*Om Woord en Kerk*, II, p. 201). We should not immediately direct such things to the realm of the occult or black magic. On the other hand, a healing process with supernatural implications which has amazing success, is not by that fact CORRECT. The success of a thing does not make it LEGITIMATE.

One can achieve much practical success with a procedure which, in principle, is wrong. We are to investigate the SOURCE or background out of which a thing is done, and especially so when the matter has "religious" overtones. Something can indeed be out of Satan, even though it is presented as a matter of God. Will Satan not show himself as an "angel of light" and will his activity not be with "all power and pretended signs and wonders . . ." (See, e.g., II Thess. 2).

I think we can agree with the Rev.

Stam and with Prof. Dr. K. Schilder. However, as said, we should be very cautious. And, precisely because "something can indeed be out of Satan," we should rather stay away from paranormal matters and methods than become involved in them. But let us listen further to what Rev. Stam tells us:

Now the psychic healing in the Philippines is termed an "operation." This tends to bring it out of the sphere of "faith-healing" and gives it a more "scientific" pretense. The question is whether this pretense is correct. Is it really an "operation"? Mystics and occultists frequently come with scientific claims to make their dealings more acceptable. The Transcendental Meditation movement claims to be a scientific movement and not a "cult." The Christian Scientists claim the same. Yet this is a cover-up of deceit, for these are definitely sectarian groups which misuse the Word of God and the Name of Christ for false religion. So it could also be that we are faced here with a sectarian cult which uses the name of Christ but in practice denies Him.

Much evidence points in that direction. Although it appears to be a missionary post (according to some sources) the emphasis is clearly on HEALINGS (by psychic means) and not on PREACHING. The healing is the prime activity, the reason-for-being. Whenever the healings become goals in themselves, we have a typical sectarian position. In the Scriptures the miraculous healings take in a secondary position or a supporting role to the preaching of the Word. In the Philippines there is a morning service and prayer-hour, but this is designed towards successful healing. The people who go there (from all over the world) do not go to HEAR about Christ's redemptive work (as proclaimed in the Scriptures), for then they might as well stay home. They go *strictly* to be HEALED. It fits very well in a time in which people will not believe "unless they see signs and wonders" (see John 4:48). I have even been told that the "sermons" preached there lack "depth" (more milk than solid food); why then are the healings so effective? Does the miracle govern the Word instead of vice versa? When the hand of the healer is more powerful than the voice of the preacher, something is wrong.

What concerns me more, however, is the "prayers" which are used before and during the treatment or operation. Here we can truly see whether it is in accordance with Scripture or not. Someone was so kind as to provide me with the texts of these prayers (I hope these are accurate).

*"Prayer before Treatment"*

O Almighty Lord, here I am to witness and feel your hands, the warmth of your love, and the radiance of your power.

Show me your love and mercy, that this operation which I am to receive will be successful, that I may live longer and continue serving my loved ones and those who need me.

Through your precious hands I submit therefore myself, with the hope that I may find for myself a rejuvenation that would help me to carry on my existence in this cosmic world.

I trust in you, my Dear Lord . . . and so thy will be done . . . .

I will not make many redactional comments (e.g., where is the word "AMEN"?), for I may not have an exceptionally correct version. I would like to make some comments on the CONTENTS of this prayer, keeping in mind what we confess in Lord's Day 45: "What belongs to such prayer as GOD is pleased with and will hear?" The answer gives us three characteristics:

- 1) that from the heart we call upon the one true God only, as He has revealed Himself in His Word, for all that He has commanded us to ask of Him;
- 2) that we right thoroughly know our need and misery, in order to humble ourselves before the face of His majesty;
- 3) that we be firmly assured that, notwithstanding we are unworthy of it, He will, for the sake of Christ our Lord, certainly here our prayer, as He has promised us in His Word.

Where in this prayer is any reference to GOD'S WORD and promises? As a matter of fact, the Lord is not even specified by NAME, and, in the light of what follows, this becomes important. "My Dear Lord" says nothing, for when the Beatles used a similar connotation, "My Sweet Lord," they meant Krishna, the Hindu god. The prayer does not speak of humility and unworthiness, and even at that decisive moment before the treatment, there is no confession of SINS. The prayer does not contain "firm assurance," but only "the hope for rejuvenation." And what does this expression mean: "that I may find for myself a *rejuvenation* that would help me to carry on my *existence* in this *cosmic world*"? These are not words from Scripture, but they sound more like terms out of the Hindu religion, or oriental philosophy. The reason "to live longer" does not speak of the glorification of God's Name but "to serve my loved ones and those who need me," a rather horizontalist approach. And where is a pleading on the one sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST, in whose Name we shall conclude our prayer? Does this prayer meet the requirements set out in God's Word, so that He is pleased with it and will HEAR? Judge for yourselves.

What follows, however, is much more serious, I'm afraid. Included in my documents was a "sacred MANTRA," (presumably) to be recited during the operation. A "mantra" is a sacred formula directed to a HINDU GOD, a for-

mula to which even magic powers are ascribed. In his book, *The Domain of the Snake* (HET DOMEIN VAN DE SLANG), Dr. W.J. Ouweneel writes, "Mantras are used so that occult powers can enter the body and break through *matter*" (page 176). This would explain why the body tissue "opens" to the healer's hand. The text of the mantra is as follows:

BABA MAM KEVALAM (3x)  
PARAM PITA BABA KIL.

The translation given with this reads as follows:

GOD ME (NAME) ABSOLUTE  
ATTRIBUTE EVERYTHING TO GOD  
AND VICTORY IS A SURE  
GUARANTEE.

I have submitted the text of this "mantra" to a scholar in the Sanskrit (Hindu) language. He termed it "vague" and is presently determining the meaning of certain words. It has to do with a person becoming conscious of his UNITY WITH THE ABSOLUTE (the divine), a mystical melting-together with "god." Certainly, even disregarding the Hindu background — which is impossible — this "prayer" cannot be termed even remotely Christian. It is downright heathen.

The question arises: How can Jesus be proclaimed and the LORD'S PRAYER be prayed ("Thy will be done") alongside this heathen mantra? This would seem to be a typical form of SYNCRETISM, a mixing of religious elements not uncommon in present Hinduism, a phenomenon not uncommon also in areas like the Philippines. Jesus is named; but one might in effect be calling upon a Hindu IDOL. Even if one does not pray this himself, he/she is still in the presence of this prayer and partakes in it, since it forms an essential part of the operation.

Even the quote from the LORD'S PRAYER ("Thy will be done") is out of place. That is not a petition for *resignation* (Lord, do what THOU wantest to do, healing or not) but a petition for activation, "Grant that we and all men may renounce our own will and . . . OBEY Thy will." "Thy will be done" is not so much that GOD shall do whatever HE wants, but that WE shall more and more do what He wants. Thy will be done? "This is the will of God, your sanctification" (I Thess. 4:3).

I could make more comments, but I must wait also for further information from sources in The Netherlands. I have been in contact by telephone with Dr. Ouweneel, and he has promised to find researched material. To me this much has become clear: the effect of the healings is undeniable, at least for the time being. But the MANNER in which this is done (not only the "psychic" aspect, but even *more* the prayer and the mantra) is, as far as I can presently determine, NOT in accordance with the Word of God. If it is

not occultism ("black magic") it certainly is *syncretism* (a mixing of religions).

Rev. Stam writes: "the effect of the healings is undeniable." But he adds, cautiously: "at least for the time being." And what can a person say when he hears about the healing results firsthand, and is even told the positive reaction from official medical authorities?

The name of Dr. W.J. Ouweneel is mentioned here. He teaches philosophy at the Evangelical College in The Netherlands. His field of study at the University in Utrecht was biology. For those who can read Dutch, I can recommend his book, *The Domain of the Serpent* (*Het Domein van de Slang*). The subtitle is "Christelijk Handboek over Occultisme en mysticisme." It is a *continued on page 68.*



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# *A Reformed Social-Political Magazine*

*What follows is the text of a speech given by Rev. B.J. Berends on his and Mr. G. Kuik's tour of the churches in Western Canada.*

As promised in the past, we would like to keep you informed about recent developments. So far, we have published the speech by br. De Vries which we hope was of interest to you. As you know, the reason for br. Boersema's and br. De Vries's visit to Canada was to help us set up a Reformed magazine. They gave us the assurance that the Board of *Nederlands Dagblad* (N.D.) would consider it a privilege to serve us with the fruits of their labour.

Our trip through parts of the eastern United States and Canada was the result of a previous contact between the management of N.D. and br. G. Kuik on December 18, 1979. This was followed up by a letter dated February 7, 1980, in which br. J.C. Boersema, general manager of N.D., described the difficulties involved. He concluded his letter with some important questions concerning editorship, production, promotion, cooperation, etc.

One of the questions was: Who will ultimately be responsible for the publication of such an English Reformed magazine? To this letter, br. Kuik responded that it was his opinion that:

- a) A resident editor is a must;
- b) All translation must be done in Canada (i.e., of N.D. copy);
- c) If br. Kuik would be involved to any extent, and if it would be published at Premier Printing Ltd., then the central office should be located in Winnipeg;
- d) The content of the magazine should be positive and Reformed and appeal to Reformed and Presbyterian circles.

The next development was the arrival of br. Boersema and br. De Vries, who, after meetings in Carman and Winnipeg, made an investigative tour through parts of the U.S.A. and Canada, accompanied by br. Kuik and myself. On November 4, we had a meeting with the following ministers of the Christian Reformed Church at Sioux Center, Iowa: P.Y. De Jong, Fennema, Kloosterman, Piersma, Sittema, VandeKam, and VandenHeuvel. On November 6, we met with the following ministers in Chicago: Arnold, Leetsma, and Werkman. These ten "concerned" ministers were very positive in their response. They would certainly welcome a Reformed magazine dealing with social-political issues from a Biblical and Confessional viewpoint. They also gave us the assurance that they would promote it, among other things, by making the 6000 subscription list of *The Outlook* available to introduce and circulate the proposed periodical. These "concerned" ministers, especially the younger ones in Iowa, also expressed interest in closer contact with the Canadian Reformed Churches. It is our hope that this magazine may be instrumental in showing that the outlook on the whole of life is directly related to the faithfulness of God's people with respect to Christ's gathering-work and that life given by God is one and that His Word ought to permeate all our thinking, initiatives, and actions.

After receiving a warm endorsement from our brothers in Grand Rapids, we moved on to Ontario. Various meetings were held there: in Burlington and in

Lincoln with members from different congregations; with the delegates at General Synod; with the staff of the Theological College; and with some more concerned members of the Christian Reformed Church, among whom were Rev. Sikkema and the well-known P. Speelman of Speelman's Bookstore in Toronto. The latter two spoke with sorrow about the present trend in the Christian Reformed Church. They mentioned specifically the deformational trend in committees and societies such as CJL, the AACS, and the CLAC. Under the influence also of Dutch scholars, they have moved more and more away from a Biblical and Confessional approach to life. One spoke of that dangerous contagious disease: horizontalism.

The reactions to the purpose of our visits were mixed. One was enthusiastic; the other, sceptical. Many questions were asked — questions, we are sure, you also have and which we hope to answer shortly. One remark made at the College stands out: do not wait too long; there is still an older generation now which can promote a magazine that endeavours to deal with the whole of life from a Biblical and Confessional point of view.

Taking it all together, the four travellers were quite satisfied with the response. Over a good supper and breakfast in Buffalo, a tentative *plan de campagne* was drawn up; then our ways parted. Br. Boersema and br. De Vries returned via Philadelphia and New York home, while the Manitobans drove back to the centre of our beautiful country, Canada.

A preaching engagement in Neerlandia and Barrhead was scheduled for December 14. The suggestion was made to use this opportunity to inform the congregations in the West about the proposed magazine, and to see whether there would be a fair number of members who would support and promote such a Reformed magazine.

Well, as some of you know, plans to carry out this suggestion did not materialize. We did not show up, but there was a good reason for that, as you may have guessed. Just before leaving, we phoned Holland, and, in short, we concluded that the message from there was: Wait, do not speak until we have had a meeting with the N.D. foundation. This meeting was scheduled for January 27.

We immediately cancelled all the meetings. However, since br. Kuik had committed himself on other matters, we still travelled together to Neerlandia. On this trip, we came to the conclusion that we had not sufficiently taken to heart that remark in br. De Vries's speech: "We can help, but you have to do it." Here we were waiting for action in Holland while action in Canada was called for.

The result was the founding of a Foundation consisting of five members and an advisor. We immediately informed N.D. by letter, duly emphasizing that we were ready to take full responsibility for the promotion and production of the proposed magazine and that we looked forward, not only to the fruits of their labour, but also to a close cooperation, in order to come to the earliest possible publication of a Reformed magazine in the English language.

In order to facilitate matters, the Foundation



expressed the wish to N.D. to receive br. Kuik as its representative at their January 27 meeting. In telephone conversations, it became clear that this visit would be very much appreciated. Just before br. Kuik left, a note was put in *Clarion* announcing the formation of the Foundation and a tentative schedule of visits to the churches in the West, since a Classis was scheduled for February 17 and a few days would be available between this meeting and my preaching appointment in Barrhead. This gave us another opportunity to visit some of the churches in the West together.

Already via a telephone conversation with br. Kuik from the January 27 N.D. meeting, the Foundation was informed of the proposal of N.D. to consider both the Canadian and the N.D. Foundations as co-owners of the proposed magazine. Sixty percent of the control would rest with N.D., while the remaining forty percent would be in Canadian hands. This picture was enhanced by the assurance that the journalistic centre would be in Winnipeg, Canada. The editor, associate editor/translator, and executive director would have to reside there, in order that, by working together, we would be assured of success. (This would bring about a close cooperation between editor, associate editor, and executive director. They together would look after the daily affairs of the magazine, and, as far as matters of a more general nature are concerned, would give account to the Canadian Foundation. An added advantage of stationing this operation in Winnipeg would be its central location, namely, in the centre of Canada and more or less in the heart of North America.) The 60/40 percent arrangement was suggested to ensure that this would not become a Canadian or North American Reformed magazine, but an international one.

The Canadian Foundation could not commit itself, of course, since this information was relayed to it by the one member who had received the telephone call.

Then came what we considered a major change. Due to the fact that the appointment of an editor would play an important role in the success of this proposed magazine, a complete turn-about came with respect to the structure which had just recently been adopted by the N.D. Foundation. One of the journalists of N.D. volunteered to take this English Reformed magazine in hand, and he made it clear that it was not necessary, nor desirable, to have this journalistic centre in Winnipeg, Canada, but that he as editor, with an English-speaking assistant, would stay in Holland, and that the magazine would then be printed in Canada. North America would be just one of the English-speaking regions, and, with a few journeys on his part through North America, plus contributions from some people living there, this continent would be sufficiently represented. In two telephone conversations with N.D. staff members, the need to follow up on this last proposal was emphasized.

On February 3, br. Kuik returned from The Netherlands. He reported on his meetings with the N.D. Foundation and on his meetings with the above-mentioned journalist (as well as other staff members of N.D.).

The Foundation decided to forego making any decisions until the promised telex with a detailed plan had arrived, so that, with all the information at its disposal, it could make a responsible decision. The Foundation met on Saturday, February 7, and decided to reject the latest proposal. To the best of our knowledge, this proposal was not known, nor approved by, the N.D. Foundation.

A telex has been returned, and at present the brothers in Holland are considering the proposals of the

Canadian Foundation. We also decided not to wait any longer, but to come and involve you and to ask you for your opinion on the basic question: Do we want a Dutch journalistic centre to determine the input (no doubt, Reformed input) into a magazine appearing in English-speaking countries, or should we look forward to very-much-appreciated support in The Netherlands, to the fruits of N.D.'s labour, in order to come to the establishment of an English journalistic centre right here in Canada? Certainly, the Lord has endowed our Dutch brothers with gifts and experience which have accumulated over a period of thirty-five years, but, in our opinion, it would be wrong to conclude that this experience and these gifts should remain in Holland and that we who now have the English language as our mother tongue should be without any substantial input with respect to the direction and content of the proposed magazine. We are looking forward to benefitting from the fruits of their labour, in the way of research and copy as well as other support, in order that we, brothers with the same spiritual background and roots, but who now speak a different language, can set up an English Reformed magazine in an English-speaking country. We agree with N.D. that such a magazine should have an international character and should not be confined, as far as its scope is concerned, to matters or subscribers in North America only. But what would be more logical than to start with and to base such a magazine in Canada, since that is the country where the largest group of their English-speaking brothers and sisters live and work. We are sure that it is not the intention of N.D. to hoard and reserve the Reformed analysis of God's world and what takes place in it only for those of the Liberated Churches. Neither is it our intention to confine this magazine to the Canadian Reformed Churches. That would be uncalled for, even though the link between this magazine (because of its authors), and the Church of Christ (of which they are members), can never be denied. This magazine, also, must be conducive to the gathering work of Christ.

The ultimate aim of the Canadian Foundation is to come to an independently operated magazine. For this reason we feel that it is imperative that the Canadian Foundation has a leading voice in the affairs of the magazine, and, consequently, ought to have at this time a sixty percent controlling interest, while the N.D. Foundation, because of its important input, has the remaining forty percent. The basic reason for this proposal is that the reading public — mainly second generation immigrants — do not want a Dutch or translated Dutch magazine, but rather an English magazine. This has been pointed out to us on many occasions during our tour with br. Boersema, br. De Vries, and br. Kuik. Also, the editorial address must be in Canada or success will be denied. We noted that the people we met here in North America look forward to a magazine which gives a truly Reformed analysis of world events in the English language. We are also of the opinion that the people who are to run the daily affairs of the magazine and do the translation and writing of articles, will have to live here. Only in that way will they be familiar with the flavour, nuances, and culture of North America. The people here react to certain events taking place in the world differently and perceive these events from a different vantage point than the people in Holland or Europe.

Finally, we would like to pose this question: "Are you prepared and willing to put your shoulders under this endeavour to come to a magazine that will deal with political and social matters from a Biblical and Confessional point of view?" ■



News items are published with a view to their importance for the Reformed Churches. Selection of an item does not necessarily imply agreement with its contents.

#### WELLINGTON, N.S.

A minister of a small church group in New Zealand managed for twelve years to present as his own products sermons of a colleague. An elder discovered it and initiated proceedings at the consistory. The minister confessed his sin before the congregation, but in spite of that the consistory deposed him. He now is

#### PRESS REVIEW — continued from page 65.

publication of Buijten & Schipperheijn, Amsterdam. An interesting book, even though he may go too far, sometimes, in saying "no" to paranormal things. Those who cannot read Dutch could benefit from a book written by Dr. John Warwick Montgomery, *Principalities and Powers*. Its subtitle is: "A New Look at the World of the Occult." It is published by Bethany Fellowship, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

More comments could be made, said the Rev. Stam. May I add here another reference to what the Scriptures tell us? I must think here of what we read in Acts 19 about the seven sons of a certain Sceva. They were exorcists, and tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for their occult (?) practices. But the Lord made their effort futile. He showed that His gospel must not be mixed with anything else: He allows no form of syncretism.

But let us read on.

"What does God require in the FIRST commandment?"

"That I avoid and flee all idolatry,

delivering milk, which he also obtains from others . . . (N.D.)

\* \* \*

Denmark has the highest suicide rate in the Western world, followed by two other Scandinavian countries, Finland and Sweden. 1979 Danish statistics show that almost twice as many people took their own lives as were killed in automobile collisions. The Danish suicide rate is 26 per 100,000 of the population, as compared to the American rate of 13 per 100,000. Niels Juel-Nielsen of Odense University is leading research into the causes of suicide in Scandinavia with its high standard of living. According to a Reuters report, he cited as causes the complex nature of urban life; unemployment; Denmark's social welfare system, which he says can destroy personal initiative; a decline in spiritual values; materialism; and the breakup of the family unit in moving from an agricultural to an industrial society. (CT)

\* \* \*

Those wondering how much attention people really pay to witchcraft and the occult might consider this: in 1980, there were 208,302

sorcery, etc., and that I rightly acknowledge the *one true God*, trust in Him alone, expect all good from Him only . . ." (Lord's Day 34).

A final question. We do not share in Hindu beliefs. Are we *responsible* for the beliefs of those who heal us? For example, am I responsible for the fact that my doctor might be an atheist? No, but then again, my doctor does not claim to have his powers FROM GOD, nor does he treat me in the NAME of God! Whenever *that* claim is made, and I submit to such a treatment, do I not place myself UNDER his powers? May we submit ourselves when it is highly questionable whether such powers are out of the one true God as He has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ according to the Holy Scriptures? Shall we let a "mantra" be spoken for our healing? . . .

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

I would rather have more clear investigation in the light of God's Word than that we plunge ourselves into things of which we know too little. And what we know is not encouraging.

This is the end of the first article. The second will come next time, the Lord willing, to keep you in suspense, as they say.

J. GEERTSEMA

buyers of the *Handbook of Supernatural Powers*, which gives directions for casting spells; 91,846 people bought the *Magic Power of Witchcraft* at \$9.98 each; and there are 16,842 members of the Circle of Mystic and Occult Arts Bookclub, which is owned by Prentice-Hall publishing company. In addition, some 86,000 people paid \$8.40 each for genie-in-the-bottle good luck charms, and 339,660 people subscribed to horoscope services, paying between \$4 and \$10 each. The available mailing lists of names of people involved in the occult now stands at 3.8 million. (CT)

\* \* \*

Jesus Christ is not God and Christianity is not the only saving faith, says Dr. John Hick in the January 21 *Christian Century*. Dr. Hick is professor of theology at Birmingham (England) University and Danforth professor of religion at Claremont (California) Graduate School. His article appears in the *Christian Century's* "How My Mind Has Changed" series. (CN)

\* \* \*

#### MANAGUA

The Roman Catholic vicar of Managua, Bosco Vivas Robelo, has called upon the Roman Catholic priests who accepted political functions after the fall of dictator Somoza, to terminate those positions. Robelo pointed to a decree by Pope Paul VI and John Paul II in this respect. Among those priests who have political functions are, among others, the Minister of Education Ernesto Cardenal, his brother Fernando Cardenal, a Jesuit priest who leads the campaign against illiteracy, and the foreign minister Miguel d'Escoto. (ND)

\* \* \*

#### THE HAGUE

The Roman Catholic Party Netherlands (RKPN) has requested the pope to excommunicate publicly all Dutch Roman Catholic politicians who have given their cooperation or are giving it or will give it to the proposed law of the Dutch government concerning abortion.

According to the RKPN this law will legalize that which according to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church is murder. The party made the request to the pope at the initiative of the sympathizer with the RKPN, A.F.C. Brosens of Haarlem. He requested, with the support of the



RKPN, the Netherlands bishops a month ago to proceed to the excommunication of above mentioned politicians, but did not receive an answer from cardinal Willebrands, the chairman of The Netherlands Bishops Conference. That made the RKPN decide to turn to the highest authority in the Roman Catholic Church. (ND)

\* \* \*

#### HANNOVER (EPD)

At the end of 1979, some 42.8 percent of the population of the German Federal Republic and of West Berlin were members of the Evangelical Church Germany (EKD); that is 26.3 of the 61.4 million population. In that same year almost 100,000 members resigned (9.2 percent fewer than in 1978) and 28,000 became a member (3.3 percent more). That appears from the statistics 1979, added as an appendix to the magazine for ministers of the EKD.

The number of evangelical couples who had their marriage "confirmed" rose by 1.6 percent to 69 percent, a total of 90,000 couples. On the average one-and-a-half million children, young people, and adults attend a service: almost six percent of all EKD members. (ND)

\* \* \*

#### KAMPEN

For the year 1981, an amount of eighteen guilders per member will be needed for the Theological College in Kampen. Last year the amount was seventeen guilders and eighty cents.

The preliminary budget for the year 1981 amounts to Fl. 1,923,300. The budget was dealt with at the latest meeting of the governors, trustees and faculty. (ND)

\* \* \*

#### STUTT GART (EPD)

The Greek-Orthodox priest Evangelos Skordas of Athens who was brought into court because contrary to tradition he used a translation of the Bible in modern Greek during mass, saw the case dismissed. That happened although the ecclesiastical authorities permitted only the use of the old "koinè-Greek" translation for liturgical use.

In his judgment, the judge declared that reading of the gospel in modern Greek is not doing any harm either to the state or to the church. According to the judge, a modern translation achieves only that the church comes closer to the people. The Athenian press calls the sentence an historical event. Already in 1901 publication of the New Testament in the contemporary Greek

caused quite some commotion. That translation is the "dimotiki" produced by the Greek Bible Society, and is very well understandable for the common people. (ND)

\* \* \*

The Protestant Church in Mexico now accounts for 3.5 percent of the total population, up from 1.8 percent in 1970. That is what preliminary returns from the official Mexican 1980 census show. According to the census, Mexico's total population

reached 67.4 million people last year, 2.4 million of whom are Protestants. Evangelical church leaders believe that for various reasons, official figures tend to understate their numbers, principally because census takers in some cases assume everyone is Roman Catholic without actually asking the question. The 1980 census shows more than 88 percent of Mexicans as Roman Catholic, down from a 96 percent figure a decade earlier. (CT)

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## Bringing Home the Constitution

"A GREAT ACT OF NATIONAL WILL"

"In this complex and turbulent world, Canadians can no longer afford to have fundamental aspects concerning the nature of our country left unresolved and uncertain, to feed confrontation, division, and disunity. We are summoned to a great act of national will: we must take unto ourselves and for our children, the ultimate responsibility for the preservation of our country."

As was expected, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau moved to bring the Constitution home unilaterally after the failure of the First Ministers Conference. The above words were spoken to the nation in a news conference in October 1980, when Trudeau outlined his constitution package. The only thing that was surprising to most political observers is that the package had been softened so much. It appears that the Prime Minister has listened to his legal and political advisers that warned him to be more cautious. Trudeau had wanted a preamble to the constitution that proved to be very controversial. It was left out of the package. Also gone was the tough set of language rights he wanted in the new document, rights that would extend to provincial services, all the courts, and even to the workplace. When questioned about this by a reporter, Trudeau said: "Ah, you make me nostalgic, we have lost ground in the past ten years, clearly." All that was left of French and English language rights was education rights "where numbers warrant." The Prime Minister had also insisted on constitutional guarantees for a Canadian common market; these guarantees were also conspicuously absent.

These omissions, however, failed to pacify most of the provincial

premiers, who are becoming afraid of being unable to stop Trudeau. Were there any winners? Well, the big winner was obviously Premier William Davis of Ontario who reaped his reward for being the federal government's loyal, and sometimes only, supporter on the idea of immediate constitutional change. Trudeau has rewarded Davis by inserting the phrase: "where numbers warrant" in the clause dealing with minority language education rights. This should be a big help to Davis who has to face an election soon.

As a result of some clever horse trading with the New Democratic Party, the Liberal government won the N.D.P. over to Trudeau's side of the constitutional debate. In return for N.D.P. support, the government agreed: to confirm the jurisdiction of the provinces with respect to exploration, development, conservation, and management of resources; to give the provinces concurrent jurisdiction with the federal government in the field of inter-provincial trade in resources; and to give the provinces the right to levy indirect taxes in the field of resources. Saskatchewan's attempt to levy indirect taxes on potash produced in the province had been overruled by the courts and the new concession on indirect taxation should help secure the support of Saskatchewan's N.D.P. government and Premier Allan Blakeney. Even at that, the support of the N.D.P.'s western members of Parliament can only be luke-warm because of western alienation and distrust of the Liberals who have become an endangered species west of Winnipeg. We hope to write more on that topic of "western alienation" some other time.

ART LENGKEEK

# First Reformed Mission Workers Congress in Brazil

This article about the first “Brazilian Congress” is not an *official* press release, but more an impression of the three days we were together in São José da Coroa Grande (October 7-9).

On the 6th the Boersemas welcomed Rev. and Mrs. Oldenhuis, Rev. J.P.C. Simpelaar, and Rev. P.W. van de Kamp at the airport in Recife. For the latter two, it was their first visit to the Northeast; for the former, their last one, since they will go back to The Netherlands in December.

I said that this article will not be an official press release. This was what we decided at the end of the congress. Curitiba would make a press release for the Dutch Reformed press and we for the Canadian one. Of course, we made minutes (in Dutch) which are sent to the sending churches of Surrey and Assen-Zuid. These minutes are agreed upon by all of us, but Curitiba is not responsible for this press release.

## WHY NOT BEFORE?

This question was dealt with by the Rev. P.W. van de Kamp in his article for the mission magazine of our Dutch sister churches (which is a magazine of all the 7 sending churches). I think that it is worth a look at his article and his answer to the question “Why not a congress before?”

He first points to the great distance between the two mission fields: approximately 3,000 km. between, Curitiba in the southern state of Parana, and São José da Coroa Grande/Maragogi in the Northeast. Although 3,000 km. in Canadian eyes is nothing, this distance certainly was an obstacle to holding a Brazilian congress besides the Latin American congress. Especially in the period when Rev. Van Spronsen was the only missionary on our field, it was not easy to leave the field for an extra congress.

Talking about periods, Rev. van de Kamp further points to the fact that we can perhaps talk about a second stage of the mission work in

Brazil. In Curitiba, as well as here, there is a second generation of missionaries who could take over the work of the pioneers. While pioneering missionaries do not hold congresses, the time seemed to have come now to start with a specific congress about common Brazilian matters.

After approximately ten years of mission work, it became more and more obvious that a Brazilian congress would be of great value to all of us. On both mission fields we have worship services for many years now already. For those gatherings you need — to mention one thing — a Portuguese translation of the Apostolic Creed. This translation has been made. To come to a definite wording of such a translation, however, it is good to consult colleagues who also have to work with it. Another thing is the use of Psalms in the worship services. We have to make rhymings, but two persons can rhyme better and more than one can. At a certain moment, one has to decide which translations and rhymings are good enough for the worship services. The more people participating in that work, the better. And so the first congress of Reformed mission workers in Brazil came about.

## BESIDES THE CONGRESS

Brazil is a huge country, but, fortunately, there is one language spoken by all Brazilians. This meant for our congress that the participants from Curitiba could also communicate with people of the congregation in São José and with other people who come to church. Therefore we made room for our guests to meet the people here.

Our guests came on Monday evening around 1900 h. One hour later we already had a meeting in the church in São José where we could present our guests to the people of our church. Rev. Boersema explained why we had this congress, and our colleagues also spoke some words to the congregation. After the meeting there was an opportunity to have more informal talks with our people.

On Tuesday we were busy with the congress matters — meetings in the morning, afternoon, and evening — and also on Wednesday morning; but on Wednesday afternoon we visited Maragogi, first the church building, then two families. This gave the “Curitibans” opportunity to see something of Maragogi. On Wednesday evening we again had a meeting in the church in São José. The brothers from Curitiba talked about their work and we about ours. Of course, we sang a lot, and so we all were in a good mood. All “our people” signed a letter which we would give along with the colleagues, a letter in which we asked the prayers of the community of Curitiba for the congregation in São José and for the work in Maragogi, also, regarding the visa problems.

Late Thursday morning the congress could be closed. The same day the “Curitibans” left us for the return trip.

## WHAT DID WE DO AT THE CONGRESS ITSELF?

We saved the most important thing for the end of the article. What matters were dealt with? There are actually too many to report on all of them extensively. The following issues were important:

1. We talked about matters relating to church federation. It is not very correct to use the term “church federation” already, because such a thing does not exist at all on our mission fields. On the other hand, however, mission work aims at the planting of churches. When, in the future, churches can be instituted in Curitiba, São José, and Maragogi, it should not be the missionaries’ fault that these churches do not know each other. It is true that the making of a church federation has to be a matter for the Brazilian churches themselves, but missionaries can make preparations for that process. Cooperation with colleagues on other fields in the same country is very important in this

*Continued on page 77.*

# Books

## "A Love Affair with the Book of Psalms"

Ronald Barclay Allen, *Praise! A Matter of Life and Breath; Praising God in the Psalms* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers), 245 pp., paperback, \$5.95.

Another publication, coming from the quarter of "the evangelicals," as a proof of rediscovery of the riches of the Reformation. The word "Another" points back to R.G. Rayburn's *O Come, Let Us Worship*, reviewed in *Clarion*, 1980, page 288. Rayburn seriously criticized his fellow-evangelicals for neglecting the liturgy, and wrote a beautiful volume to win them over for biblical corporate worship.

Allen attempts to do the same with regard to the Psalms, and the singing of Psalms. He calls this book, and having written it, "a love affair with the Psalms" (p. 20).

Part I, seven chapters, deals with "Getting to Know the Psalms," while the second part gives a detailed explanation of a number of Psalms. The opening remark (p. 9) sets the tune for the whole book. "It is my conviction that evangelical Christianity has suffered greatly because of its antipathy toward the past. Its anti-historical stance has cut it off from the great treasures of the church. This has been true in the area of theology, pastoral care, hermeneutics and worship."

Dr. Allen is professor of Old Testament language and exegesis at Western Conservative Baptist Seminary in Portland, Oregon, and thus well-qualified to write about Hebrew poetry in general ("one-fourth of the Old Testament is poetry," p. 49), and on the Psalms in particular. The book is filled with learned information on how the psalms were "born," how they were composed, what the particulars are of Hebrew poetry, what different kinds of psalms there are, and so forth — too much to mention in a review. Only a few remarks may underline our appreciation of the book.

Under the heading, "The Stereo in your Bible," Dr. Allen discusses the well-known parallelism in Hebrew poetry, and calls it "stereometrics." In a note: "I first discovered this happy word in Gerhard Von Rad's *Wisdom in Israel*, 1972." A "happy" word indeed. Dr. Allen then continues to distinguish five forms of this parallelism, about the same as N.H. Ridderbos mentions in his commentary on the Psalms, *Korte Verklaring*, 1962. Then we get a very fine analysis of the "dual origin" of the Psalms in chapter 7, "How did we get the Psalms?" The term "dual" stems from the fact that the Psalms are different from prophecy (although there are prophetic elements in them), from

wisdom literature (although there are fragments of this kind in the Psalms); they are responses to God's acts and to earlier revelations. Human responses, and yet, as responses they are inspired as well as all other parts of Holy Scripture.

The third remark points to Dr. Allen's untiring stress on the praise of God being a matter of *life* and *breath*. The theme of the whole book is:

"Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Hallelujah! (Ps. 150)." There is no true life without praising the LORD for His greatness, for what He is and what He does and has done. But this praise only becomes real praise when it uses *breath*, i.e., when we sing His praise and sing it aloud!

Thus the book is a noble and strong plea for singing Psalms, instead of so many man-centered, pietistic, subjectivistic hymns which are still so popular in "evangelical" circles.

Yet, there is something lacking in this plea. Dr. Allen seems to be ill-informed about the history of Psalm singing. On page 22 he states, rightly, "The Psalms are *music*. That is, they are the lyrics for the hymns of ancient Israel. The Church of Scotland, or Scots Kirk, has maintained this tradition by singing rhymed and metered versions of the Psalms in her hymnbooks." That is all. He seems not to know of the centuries of Psalm singing on the unequalled Genevan Tunes in various languages in Europe, like French, Hungarian, and Dutch. And, obviously, he knows nothing of what the Canadian Reformed Churches have accomplished in the course of twenty-five years: a complete Psalm book on these Genevan Tunes.

This review, which will come to the attention of Dr. Allen, may be a stimulus for him to continue his "love affair with the Psalms" by becoming informed about what has been done in this field, and thus promote the use of the *Book of Praise* in the circles for whom this book was written in the first place! We will send him a copy.

G. VANDOOREN

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*Who Controls Your Child? Preparing your Children to win the Battle for their Minds*, by Orley Herron; published by Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1980; hardcover, 194 pages; price \$7.95 (American). Reviewed by Hank VanDooren, Burlington, Ontario.

Dr. Herron is president of the National College of Education in Illinois. Accord-

ing to the book jacket, he is one of the outstanding educators in America. The book presents a short summary statement of Dr. Herron's extensive knowledge on the subject, along with his personal experiences as a family man, and his convictions as a Christian. Unfortunately, in attempting to let all of these dimensions flow through his subject matter, Dr. Herron's presentation does not reach the level of a scholarly paper, nor does it represent the best Christian perspective on the subject.

The focus of the book is children. And what else is new? Well, the uniqueness of the book is not that it provides further ideas on how to handle your child, but that it exposes some of the new conditions children face today and in the future. Probably from a vantage point of working within a segment of American public education Dr. Herron has seen many worrisome developments. He addresses the issue of the evils of child abuse, the effects of the media, and the destructive influence of new family patterns. In all of this he is concerned that the child is being devalued to a junior adult — someone to be left to fend on his own, while adults go ahead to meet their own selfish needs.

Dr. Herron is convincing in his argument that the biggest struggle in the eighties and beyond will lie in parents' beginning to care again for their children, and not just to brush them aside. This is not a return to the child worship of earlier years, but mainly a return to parent's meeting their obligations.

Who helps parents understand their obligations? Dr. Herron feels the Church should play an important role here, and he means this in the sense of parent-training courses and adult education activities which become part of an overall programme. The precise details of the Church's taking this on are not spelled out, but it certainly provides food for thought.

In summary, the book does not stand out as presenting profound ideas on raising children. It is in fact a mixture of a lot of views from personal experience, some academic research, and a general but vague Christian framework. Where the book has some value is the way it explains some of the trends. Whether these trends are becoming visible in our Church life is hard to say. We do not always examine ourselves that closely in regard to how we relate to our children — at least not publicly. Yet, it would do no harm to have a sense of what appears to be going on around us. The book is recommended with some qualifications.

H.C. VANDOOREN

January 1981

## OUR COVER

*Fraser Valley near Chilliwack, taken from Mount Shannon, December 1980. Photo courtesy of A.C. Lengkeek.*

# news medley

Anyone browsing through previous volumes of *Clarion* is well able to keep abreast of the newest news. What I mean by that cryptic sentence is this: When you see that a brother and sister celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary five years ago, and when you know that they are still alive, you can surprise them by saying something about their forty-fifth wedding anniversary even though they themselves do not wish to have any special attention paid to it.

I do not wish to claim that I always look through old *Clarions*. I sometimes avoid it on purpose, for it makes me long for the olden days, when we had more people contributing, when we had a greater variety of articles, and when ministers apparently were not as "overworked" (?) as they seem to be nowadays. It is not all that good for someone's blood pressure to reminisce on the past in that respect, and especially when you get older, you have to watch the gauge the more carefully. Don't worry, recently my physician declared that my blood pressure was excellent, so I don't seem to have suffered too much from it. But I would rather keep the pressure normal, you see.

Anyway, I did look in the volume of five years ago, and there discovered that the Rev. and Mrs. G. VanDooren celebrate their forty-fifth wedding anniversary on February 27th; a few days later our brother will have been a minister of the Gospel for forty-five years. On the occasion of the fortieth anniversary I wrote a special article about that. This time I shall confine myself to some remarks in the News Medley.

That we congratulate them both right heartily with the fact that the Lord grants them this day is a matter of course: how could we fail to rejoice together when such a blessing is received? Not only has the Lord kept and left them together for that many years, He also grants them a reasonable state of health which enables them to take part in all the work which is still to be done by them. They are and remain active in Church work. Rev. VanDooren still preaches practically every Sunday; he does his work at the College with great faithfulness and dedicates many hours to it, constantly updating his knowledge and upgrading his lectures. The Lord has left him the gift of understanding and we cannot notice anything of a deterioration of his mind, even though he is approaching the age of the strong ones. That is a blessing not only for the two of them, but also for their children and grandchildren and, not to forget that, for the College.

They will not be at home on the day itself: they are holidaying right now, escaping the snow and the cold for a few weeks. And when they come back, there won't be a big celebration either. The fortieth anniversary was celebrated in an elaborate manner; from then on things are done in a much simpler way. We can, however, be certain that the gratitude is there and that it is no less than five years ago; on the contrary, especially when you see others being taken away who are in the same age bracket, then you realize the more that each and every day is an "extra" which shows only the mercy and faithfulness of our gracious God and Father.

We express the wish that our brother and sister may be spared for each other, for their children and grand-

children and for the Churches for many years to come, although we know that they will follow the Father gratefully whithersoever it pleases Him to lead them.

We remain in the personal sphere for a minute.

From the Toronto bulletin I learned that "Mrs. Vegter intends to come to Canada with Joshua. They stress in the cable that it is no emergency but something which needs to be done." Apparently the youngest Vegter child needs some medical treatment which will prevent possible damage to his kidneys. If I understand things well, the trip to Canada cannot be undertaken until a re-entry permit has been received, for otherwise Mrs. Vegter might come to Canada and not be able to rejoin her husband and other children in Irian Jaya.

This shows us again that we are to remember the mission workers in our prayers. What we consider a routine matter, namely, going to see a specialist and having a treatment or surgery in a hospital means for them a trip halfway around the world or more. And if it had been an emergency, where could they have gone so fast? We can show our gratitude for the work that is done by them no better than by remembering them in our prayers and by paying our contributions for that work faithfully. Time and again I read pleas from mission aid committees who via the bulletins request the Congregation please to pay what is expected from them so that also the work of mission aid can be continued. Is it not a shame that that has to be done? The least we can do is contribute faithfully and willingly and . . . in time.

The treasurer of the mission aid in British Columbia is happy, for his plea for funds has been heard and complied with. "After months of worries our treasurer must now be the 'happiest' man in the country. Reason: the money is flowing and rolling in. Since our last M.A. Newsletter and appeal \$38,610.06 has come in. We are very thankful for that. The churches have generously replied to our appeal. Please keep in mind how much we will need in the future. Please keep it coming."

"We have also received overwhelming support from the churches for a second Mission Aid couple in Maragogi." That is the place where the Rev. Meijer is working. From a report by the Surrey Consistory we quote the following.

"It was decided to recommend to Council that a replacement for the Kuiks be found first, then some time later the second couple would be sought. This recommendation was passed on to and accepted by Council. Now as the time for the Kuiks' return is fast approaching, Council asked the Mission Aid to investigate the possibilities for the sending of such a second worker. Mission Aid corresponded with all the churches in Western Canada and received very encouraging replies, as can be read in their report in this issue. Consequently Council gave its approval."

We are in the West now anyway, so we might as well report further on the events there.

It will be restricted to two Churches: the one at Chilliwack and the one at Langley. We have received a few photographs which will be published in this issue as well: one of the Seventh Day Adventist Church building which the Chilliwack Church used from the date of its institution to the end of 1980, and one of the "new" Church building which they now may call their own, previously belonging to the Mennonite Brethren. Although the Chilliwack Congregation had their first service in this building on January 1, 1981, the official "opening" will take place on February 27. We do not doubt that we shall receive an

enthusiastic report on that festive occasion. Too bad I can't be there to have a look and participate.

And as far as Langley is concerned, "the building committee reports further on the progress of the new church building. Target date for completion is April 1, 1981 . . . . It is decided . . . to have covered seats in the pews." "The comfortable pews," so to speak. "A letter from the organ committee with information about the feasibility and possibilities of building a pipe organ in the new church building, together with specifications and estimated costs, is read and given in discussion. After a lengthy discussion, it is decided to give a mandate to the committee: a. to draw up a contract not exceeding a proposed price of \$25,000.00, and b. not to sell the cabinet organ before the contract is signed."

I presume that the cabinet organ is the one which the Church at Cloverdale purchased as its first pipe organ, which later on was used by the Surrey Church before their organ was completed in the new building and which now, apparently, is scheduled to serve the Langley Church in their new building until something better can be obtained.

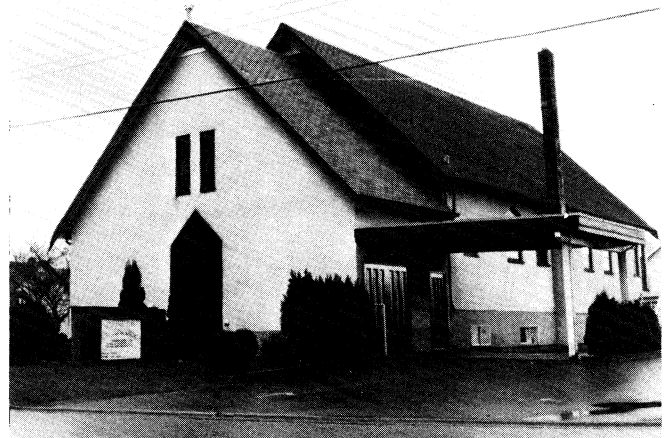
Is it necessary to say that I am very happy with the latter decision? However, nothing else could be expected, seeing that the other Churches in the Valley have a pipe organ. Then Langley cannot stay behind.

For visitors to Coaldale (perhaps you are planning on dropping in during your holidays this summer) the following warning may be advantageous: "The police warns the congregation that there will be no more warnings given out on the 30 kilometer speed zone on 13th Street from 20th Avenue up to the Church." I presume that similar assurance applies to the other speed zones in Coaldale, but that there the warnings ceased long ago, to be replaced by documents which state facts and figures. Anyway, I thought it to be wise to pass it on to you, for some people are late even during their holidays . . . .

In Winnipeg another transaction has been going on which I still do not understand in spite of the fact that a friendly brother sent me a diagram and some dates and figures. Anyway, I understand this much, that good contact and good report with the civil authorities and with the citizens and companies round about us always bears fruit for the Church. As for the good report with the civil authorities, that is something which we have to see to, as promised in our Church Order. Some years ago the Church sold part of the property which it had purchased to the City of Winnipeg for a reasonable amount which helped the Church considerably in its financial position. Now another strip apparently has been sold after a long time of negotiations and deliberations, which is even more favourable to the Church. That's how I understand it. If I am wrong I shall be happy to be enlightened on this subject.

Yes, and that will then be all about the Churches in the West. Which brings us to Ontario.

Let me, for a change, mention something about Fergus. You know I never advertise our own Congregation, and you can rest assured that we indeed are aware of our shortcomings and of the things which are to be improved. We tried to do that, among others, by deciding "to organize a binder which is to circulate among the brethren. One week is set as the period which each office-bearer is permitted to keep it. In this manner all office-bearers can take note of what comes in, and we do not use valuable time at Consistory meetings with reading all sorts of documents which are worth to be read



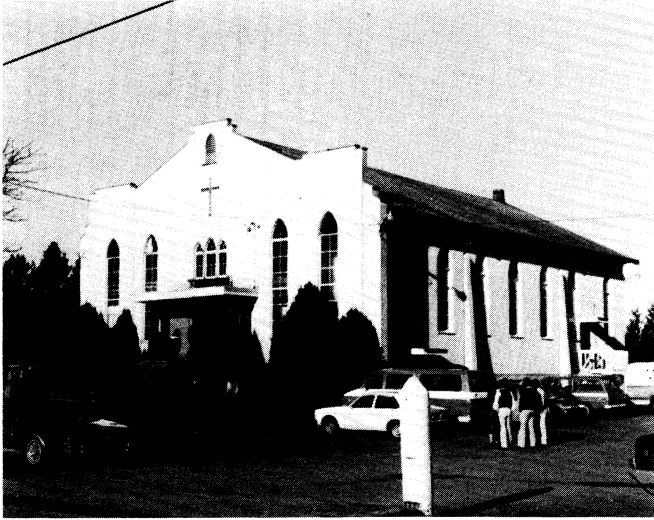
*The Seventh Day Adventist Church building, used by the Chilliwack Church ever since its institution.*

*(Photo A.C. Lengkeek)*

by each one." The occasion for that decision was a document which we received concerning the work done in Spain. We thought it to be too long to read at the Consistory meeting and at the same time not of all that great importance to us, at least not directly. Yet the brethren wished to take note of the contents. Why, it was asked, do we not circulate it among the brethren? But: experience teaches us that pieces which are given "into circulation" disappear after two or three weeks and are never seen again. Thus we decided to put them into a binder, and start circulating that binder alphabetically, adding pieces as they come in and taking out pieces when all the office-bearers have read them. We'll see how that works.

In Guelph the possibility of expanding the pipe organ was discussed. No decision was made as yet, but I would not be surprised if the work will be undertaken shortly. It is a nice little organ, but could use some additional stops. The provisions for that are present on the console and it will make it much more pleasant for the organists when they have more combinations at their disposal.

In the Smithville bulletin, the Rev. Stam pays attention to the strike by non-medical hospital workers. He wrote those lines in connection with the return home of a sister who had undergone surgery. She could come "home from the hospital even before her birthday, and could therefore celebrate this fact in her own surrounding. Yet this does not mean that it was the right time for her to be released; the hospital simply could not keep her (and other patients) because of the STRIKE of the (non-medical) hospital workers. Although we are happy that our sister could return home, the reason why is not encouraging. It remains a disturbing fact that the Unions will go to any length in order to force their own interests, be it even at the cost of others, sick people and handicapped included. We even note the fact that this strike was ILLEGAL from the start. In order to reach a goal, a union will encourage its members towards unlawful acts. Even the so-called Christian union (CLAC) has now incorporated the strike clause. If there is any tendency among us to become somewhat more relaxed with respect to union-membership, this should again show us that such



*The newly acquired Church building of the Chilliwack Church. The first service was held in it on January 1, 1981.  
(Photo A.C. Lengkeek)*

membership is incompatible with the Word of God. Let us (continue to) refrain from being part of any such organization."

From the Toronto bulletin we learn that the point of contributions by young members is not confined to one congregation only, but that it is something which has the attention everywhere. We did speak about that too, some time ago. Now we read in the Toronto bulletin: "During the question period, the methods used to encourage newly confessing [what is meant is "communicant"] members to commence with regular voluntary contributions was raised. It appears that there is no consistent practice re envelope distribution to these young brothers and sisters and that the matter deserves greater attention from the families, those confessing their faith, and the consistory."

I would underline the word "families" in the above quotation. That's where everything begins. And the Consistory can say whatever it wants, and those who profess their faith can have the best of intentions, but if they haven't been taught in the families, the efforts are most likely to remain fruitless. Parents should teach their children that they are to contribute to the Church of the Lord according to what they earn. I know that there are parents who teach (not "tell") their children that they should start contributing when they have a paper route. I know of children who came and asked for a set of envelopes and who donated one dollar per month of the perhaps twenty that they made on their paper route. They increased their contribution according to the increase in their income. It is from those members that we can expect the most for the Church when they grow up, get married, and have children of their own. If the children do not learn to give at home, they think that they won't have to contribute until they have made profession of faith or have paid off their hot rod, all their insurance premiums, their traffic fines, their hockey expenses and the money they need for dropping in at MacDonald's or Mother's Pizza. Then the Consistories can go and pay extra visits to them, and do their best to convince the members that they have their obligations towards the Church of Christ, but it will be of little effect in those cases where the parents have not taught as they promised they would and

where the parents have not given the good example. That's what I have seen in the years of my ministry, and I do not think that the experience of the other office-bearers is different from mine.

There are, I am happy to say, also cases where the children did not continue in the wrong way of the parents and show the proper attitude. We should not generalize and I stress that. I am happy that the Toronto report gave me the opportunity to bring this point (again) to the attention of our readers. Are we not all involved in this?

One last quotation from the Toronto bulletin. The Consistory received a letter from a family which before belonged to the Christian Reformed Church and now is assembling together with other former members of the Christian Reformed Church for the same reasons as we mentioned about a year ago regarding families in Listowel. I think that I should pass on to you what that family wrote and what the Consistory decided.

"Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

We wish to share with you our thankfulness to God for the grace He has shown us in the fellowship we enjoyed during the brief time we worshipped with you. We are particularly grateful for the preaching of God's Word. May it ever hold back the waves of conformity and compromise . . . ."

The Consistory decided, "A letter will be sent to them and to the other former members of the Christian Reformed Church who attended the church services for some time, to establish and keep further contact with them now that they have started to worship separately in the Woodbridge area."

We can certainly be thankful for the awakening with some in the Christian Reformed Church, and we are grateful for the fact that the Canadian Reformed Churches are recognized as faithful Churches of the Lord, who wish to do nothing else but to continue in the path of Truth. And the fact that those who have broken with the Christian Reformed Church because of the modernizing trend in it and the open deviation from the faith in the inerrancy of the Scriptures meet separately does not have to disturb us. We do, however, express the heartfelt wish that that action may not result in the formation of another "denomination" which becomes the umpteenth one among the many that are in existence. Then the "cure" would almost be worse than the malady. I have been assured personally by some of the brethren that that is definitely not the intention. May they be able to keep the goal in view: the unification of those who stand on the old proven basis: the inerrant Word of the Lord as summarized in the Reformed Confessions. It may take some years before that goal is realized; that does not matter, as long as it is kept in view and as long as every effort is directed towards it.

Perhaps I should use the opportunity to reply with facts to some suggestions which have been received in the past. Some who criticise the manner in which I write the medleys stated that a medley "should contain only news, no comment."

In the first place: this medley is completely my own idea, not a copy of anything existing. Lately I have noticed that some others try to imitate it (with omission of my "mistakes" of course), but when I set it up, I did not follow any example. Thus I am the only one who can decide what should and what should not be in the medley. I have the "copyright" on this venture, so to speak.

But in the second place, I am wholly prepared to show you what you would get if I followed the suggestion



## Letters-to-the-Editor



Dear Mr. Editor:

The Board of Governors of the C.R.T.C. feels compelled to reply to the "Letter-to-the-Editor" from br. A.J. Hordyk of Burlington, Ont. (Year-end issue 1980, *Clarion*). Although br. Hordyk wanted to express his concerns "tongue-in-cheek," we feel that his letter is damaging and not true to the facts, the result being that he is opposing a good Reformed cause.

Br. Hordyk writes, "Our local elementary school felt rightly, . . . etc."

We never had contact with any local elementary school, but we did have contact with all local school societies via their Boards.

Anyone having followed the development of the Teachers' College can know that the initiative came from the school societies via the League.

All societies, Burlington included, have expressed themselves as being in favour of our own teachers training. The matter of supporting it financially via the society did not meet approval everywhere. For this reason in several congregations a separate association has been established, e.g. in Burlington.

Br. Hordyk writes further, "It seems to me that many suggestions to governors and members are being ignored."

Why does br. Hordyk not tell the readers of *Clarion* why it "seems" like that to him. Now it is a very suggestive but negative sentence which proves nothing.

We can assure br. Hordyk that all suggestions have been considered, none have been ignored. However, if suggestions have not been taken over, may we then say, "It seems to me that they are being ignored?"

Where does br. Hordyk get the idea that "This College intends to deliver teachers, who by any educational standards of this country are unqualified?"

In the Information paper from the Steering Committee, dated September 2, 1977, you can read on page 3, #3 "how high we set our goal." Maybe we set our goal a bit too high, but surely this could not have given br. Hordyk the idea that we did not or do not care about a high standard.

Neither the Steering Committee nor the Board of Governors of the Teachers' College has ever said or written "that the secular universities cannot be used by our young people." We regard our new ministers and others very highly.

How can br. Hordyk say, "Our High-schools will never benefit from the Teachers' College"?

Does he know what ways the Lord will open or not open for us? Our first priority, however, is the elementary schools (see information paper, page 3 #1). If the Lord will grant us the opportunity to start our own Teachers' College maybe He will also grant us the opportunity to expand in the future.

Our aim is to train young people to become well-qualified to teach our children. If they are not qualified to teach in the eyes of the Provincial Governments, then it should not be because of their standard of education but because of our College's not (yet) being recognized by the Governments. We surely hope to obtain recognition of the Diploma obtained at our College (see information paper, page 4 #9).

If br. Hordyk's concerns stem from "information" received from individuals, would it not have been more proper to verify this information with the official Board of Governors instead of writing a letter-to-the-Editor?

For the Board of C.R.T.C.,  
E. KAMPEN, Chairman

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, U.S.A., invited Dr. J. Faber to give guest lectures as Professor of Systematic Theology for the first semester of the academic year 1981-1982.

He is asked to teach a regular course in Dogmatics and an elective course on a topic of his choice. He will further conduct a graduate course (Th.M.; Th.D. level) in the theology of John Calvin.

With the approval of the Board of Governors and in consultation with the Senate of the Theological College, Dr. J. Faber accepted this honourable invitation. The Board of Governors, therefore, granted him a leave of absence from September 10 till December 5, 1981.

During this leave of absence Prof. L. Selles will be acting principal and arrangements have been made to guarantee the continuity of the instruction at our College.

For the Board of Governors of the  
Theological College of the  
Canadian Reformed Churches,  
M. VAN BEVEREN, Secretary

\* \* \*

CALLED to Orangeville, Ont.:  
REV. J. MULDER  
of Toronto, Ont.

### NEWS MEDLEY — continued.

to give only "news." When people suggest that, they forget that even the selection of news is subjective and can be very tendentious. Here will follow what you would have received if I had given "only news."

Rev. and Mrs. VanDooren will celebrate their forty-fifth wedding anniversary on February 27th. A few days later Rev. VanDooren will celebrate his forty-fifth anniversary in the ministry.

Mrs. Vegter and her youngest child will come to Canada for medical reasons.

It was decided to send a second Mission Aid couple to Brazil.

The official opening of the Chilliwack Church building is set for February 27.

As tentative date for the completion of the Langley Church building is set April 1. A contract for a pipe organ may be signed.

The police in Coaldale will no longer issue warnings to speeders.

In Winnipeg another transaction involving Church property was concluded.

Fergus decided to circulate documents received in a binder.

Guelph considers the possibility of expanding their pipe organ.

In Smithville a sister was sent home early from the hospital because of a strike of non-medical personnel.

The Toronto Consistory discussed contributions by young members.

The Toronto Consistory received a letter from former Christian Reformed members, thanking them for the fellowship enjoyed. The Consistory will continue to keep in contact.

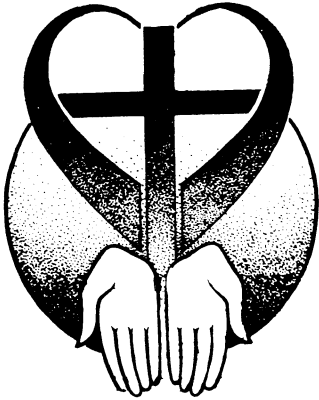
\* \* \*

Considering everything, I think I'll continue in the old way.

Cheerio,  
VO

# Canadian Reformed

## World Relief Fund



### One Such Little Child

There are few things more beautiful than the genuine smile of a little child. Our children are our most valuable "possessions," entrusted to us to love and cherish, to teach and prepare for life. Each one is created in the image of God and within each one is tremendous potential.

Yet millions of children born in the third-world countries know nothing but hardship and suffering. We can give our children proper nutrition and care, even special attention and gifts. But only industrialized countries can afford to pamper their young. The other 230 million children are caught in their own personal race against death. Many die before they reach their fifth birthday. Many more suffer physical handicaps and mental deterioration due to lack of adequate nutrition.

We can thank God that our children were not born into such situations, and thank Him, too, that we ourselves have not known malnutrition and homelessness as children. But . . . is that the end of it?

With knowledge comes responsibility. In our global village, suffering and hardship are usually no longer a secret (except under political regimes which seek to keep it so). It is easy to ignore or to forget about the needs of others, to restrict the term "neighbour" to those within our local Church community, but, do we dare? Starving children across the oceans are our neighbours too, and love for our Lord must compel us to reach out to them. Scripture even warns us, "If you refuse to listen to the cry of the poor, your own cry for help will not be heard" (Prov. 22:9).

The answers to world hunger are not simple. The reasons for the crisis are often complex, and the magnitude of the problem seems overwhelming. But, children don't starve by the millions. They starve one by one. And that's how they must be reached: one by one. We are thankful that as Canadian Reformed people we, too, may play a small part in helping the needy children of this world, not only through giving food and medicine, but also through teaching them about the Bread of Life.

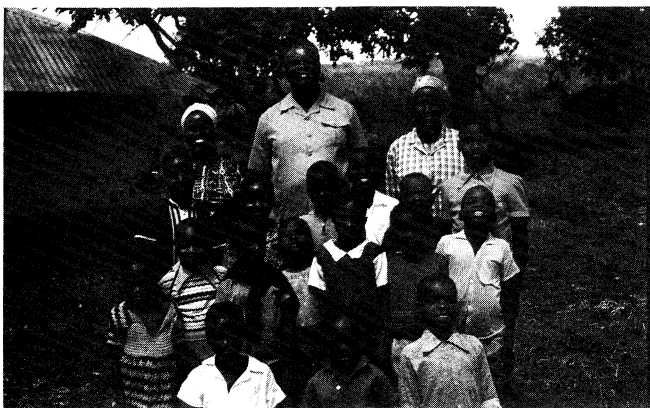
One of the projects that the Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund is committed to, as many of you know, is the *Achego Children's Home* in Kenya. The home, which began operations in August 1979, is fully supported by CRWRF. Until recently, it provided *twenty* impoverished, homeless children with adequate food and shelter and with a Christian upbringing. The home is under the care of the African Inland Church in Kenya, an or-

thodox church which does not belong to the World Council of Churches. CRWRF sends support through "Foundation Save a Child" (Stichting Redt Een Kind) in Holland and has regular correspondence with their secretary, Mrs. Rookmaaker. Following a trip to Kenya last July, Mrs. Rookmaaker commented favourably on the conditions and atmosphere in the home and told us about the possibility of expanding our assistance, without additional building costs, since the home can house up to forty children.

At the last General Membership Meeting in November, representatives from the local congregations, together with the Executive, decided to expand efforts and add the *twenty more* children the home can accommodate. These children, it was decided, would be added one by one, as finances permitted. Well, the Lord has allowed that dream to be realized much sooner than any of us anticipated. At present, the Children's Home staff is already caring for all *forty* children!

How were the initial funds raised so quickly? Well, Thanksgiving collections designated by several congregations for this purpose provided a healthy sum, and we are thankful for these. The support of CRWRF-West, which will take responsibility for five children, is also a great help. Then, we received additional funds from some of our Primary Schools who are faithfully collecting to help the Kenyan children. Finally, the arrival of some unexpected, substantial gifts has given us sufficient funds to go ahead and add the twenty children. We are very thankful for all of these special gifts and for those of you who support this work regularly. We pray that the Lord may enable you to continue giving regularly (remembering the increased number of children in the home), so that these children will have a brighter future.

As you look at your own healthy, happy little ones in the weeks and months to come, please remember these children in Kenya, who without your aid have nothing. The more we all give, the more we can expand and



*The first children who entered the Achego Children's Home. Standing behind the children are home director, Mr. Moussa, and staff.*

**CONGRESS** — *Cont. from page 70.*

respect. Therefore we made arrangements with regard to a close cooperation between the missionaries in Brazil. We will try, e.g., to hold an annual Brazilian congress (every second year in combination with the Latin-American congress).

2. Related to the foregoing was the discussion about teaching materials. We preach the same gospel and teach the same doctrine. It is obvious, then, that we are going to exchange existing materials and to divide the production of new material. We made the first arrangements for it.

3. Saying "the missionaries teach the same doctrine" means that the Brazilians in São José/Maragogi and in Curitiba learn the same doctrine. That means, however, that they should have this doctrine at their disposal. What is more convenient for this than the confessions we have? The translation of the confessions into Portuguese was one of the most important issues of the whole congress. For the greater part, we could come to a conclusion about the Portuguese text of the Apostolic Creed, also in Brazil a time-consuming matter. There are also Portuguese translations of the Nicene Creed and

of the Athanasian Creed available. We will discuss them at a future congress.

Regarding the Heidelberg Catechism, there are some Portuguese translations, but they are poor, especially with regard to their contents, since the translators changed or left out some passages. Although these translations are not completely useless, we would like to have a good, reliable translation. Rev. J.T. Oldenhuis already did much work on it. The congress decided to finish the translation of the Catechism as soon as possible. This work has priority.

Besides this, we will work on a translation of the Belgic Confession. There is no translation of it, as far as we know. We divided this work, too.

Since our manpower is limited, we decided to leave the translation of the Canons of Dort for a while. Maybe we can first make a summary of this Confession, since it is an important confession for the Brazilian world. At the next congress we will discuss the work on the Canons again.

4. Another issue was Bible translation. There are several Portuguese translations, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. One of the Protestant translations is used very much, also on our fields. Still, the big

question is: "Is this translation really the best one?" We have some doubts about that. We decided to work on a comparative examination of several translations. At a future congress we will have to discuss this matter again.

5. We also spent some time on matters of liturgy. We did not come to many decisions yet, but with regard to the rhyming of the Psalms we decided to continue the work. We already have some Psalms in Portuguese. We made a simple working arrangement: Curitiba works on Psalms 1-75 and we on Psalms 76-150. But the work itself is not simple!

6. One of the matters discussed at the congress was the relation to Brazilian churches. Especially the relation with the Korean Presbyterian Church at São Paulo was dealt with. This church is a sister church of the Dutch sister churches. The colleagues of Curitiba, therefore, have contacts with them. For us, as Canadian missionaries, the situation is a little bit more complicated; but it is, of course, no problem that Curitiba maintains the contacts with that church and reports on it at our congresses. At the next congress we will talk about the relation with Presbyterian churches. We have already divided the work of preparation for that discussion.

7. We spent a fair bit of time on the matter of a joint church magazine. The conclusion of the discussion was that São José/Maragogi will make a church magazine/bulletin in January 1981. Curitiba will make some contributions for it. It will be an experiment. Curitiba made a bulletin in August in connection with the coming of the church visitors from Assen. It was their first bulletin, a bulletin to serve their community. The experiment of January 1981 will be a church paper for both communities.

It will be clear that a congress is also useful for informal talks, but I am not competent to report on them. We did a lot of work during this short congress, but much had to be postponed. We hope to be able to have the second Brazilian congress in March 1981, some days before the third Latin-American congress starts. We all enjoyed this first Brazilian congress — it tasted like more.

More important is, of course, that we could do our work for the upbuilding of (future) churches of Christ in Brazil. That makes a congress meaningful.

November 1980  
P.K. MEIJER

**WORLD RELIEF FUND** — *continued.*



*View of cookhouse and large water tank at back of home. The tank supplies all of the home's water.*

reach out to a few more of the not just thousands, but millions, who are suffering.

Think about it before throwing that extra dollar away on sweets, a hamburger, cigarettes, that little "extra." Perhaps we can do without once in a while and give those few dollars that can mean so much elsewhere. If every communicant member in our churches gave just \$10 a year, we could do *three times as much* as we

are doing now! Many things we need can wait. But these children, whose bones are being formed, whose senses are being developed, whose beliefs are being formed, cannot wait. To them we cannot answer, "Tomorrow."

R. MEERVELD  
for the Executive Committee,  
C.R.W.R.F.  
P.O. Box 793,  
Burlington, Ontario L7R 3Y7

# Farewell to the van der Ven Family



*Mr. and Mrs. van der Ven pictured in front of John Calvin School in Armadale on the occasion of the farewell function.*

Last year's "break-up day" at our John Calvin Primary School was somewhat different compared to previous years due to the fact that our departing principal, Mr. T.M.P. van der Ven, was in our midst for the very last time.

At 1:05 p.m. on Wednesday, December 17, some 214 Primary school children were seated in the shade of the towering gum trees, which were silent witnesses of this final school function. The assembly was opened with the singing of Hymn 52, stanza one, after which the M.C. for the afternoon welcomed everyone present, especially the van der Ven family. (Only son William was absent; he was already packing his bags!)

The role of a school principal was explained to the children by comparing the school to an ocean liner, where a captain is required to take the lead and responsibility of "sailing the ship." It was pointed out that Mr. van der Ven was about to board his

third ship, the to-be-opened Teachers College in Canada. The fact was reiterated that Mr. van der Ven seemed to be attracted by "ships" which are about due for their maiden voyage, that is, John Calvin Primary School in Launceston (Tasmania), John Calvin High School in Armadale, and this year, the Lord willing, the Teachers College in Canada. Isn't it wonderful how the Lord uses sinful people as instruments in His hand! As such we may be thankful to Him for what He has given us in Mr. van der Ven.

The Grade Six students then entertained us for some forty minutes. The audience really appreciated their contribution which was comprised of singing songs, playing recorder, reciting poetry, and performing some humorous plays. After that all throats were "oiled" with refreshing ice creams provided for students and staff.

After everyone had resumed their

respective seats the van der Vens were taken by surprise when they heard a few hundred voices singing various farewell songs which had been rehearsed many a time behind closed doors and windows. The final song, sung by all children, was written by our infant teacher Miss J. Eikelboom. It was sung to the tune of "All things bright and beautiful," and it reads as follows:

Oh dear family van der Ven,  
We wish that you would stay;  
But we are not worried,  
That you will go away.  
There is a church in Canada,  
The Lord lives there as well.  
Please write us a long letter,  
There will be lots to tell.  
And we have a present,  
It's very nice, you'll see!  
We hope you both will like it,  
Just for a memory.

The oldest boy, William Groenewold, and the youngest girl, Trynda Swarts, presented the van der Vens with a genuine kangaroo skin, which had all the names of the children written on the back for a lasting memory. Also the other Australian souvenirs presented will undoubtedly go on display in their new home in Canada.

Mr. van der Ven then addressed us and thanked everyone for those fantastic gifts, ensuring us that Australia will remain in their memory for a long time to come. "Although we might be separated by oceans we may be one in faith. Our prayers ascending will unite before God's throne."

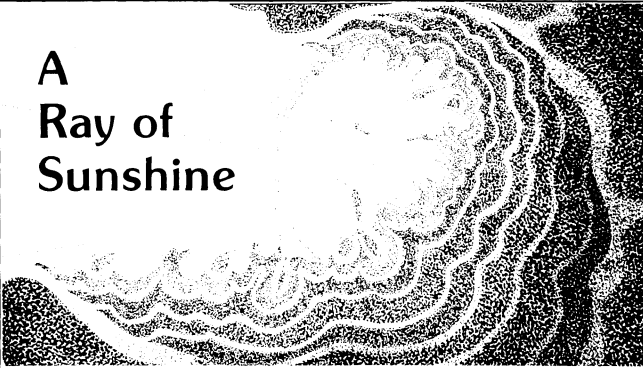
Presentation of Bibles to the "graduating" Grade Six students followed, after which Mr. van der Ven was asked to lead us in prayer and thanksgiving.

D.P.



*The van der Ven family accompanied by the staff of the Primary School.*

## A Ray of Sunshine



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It was brought to my attention that many people mentioned in our "Corner" are not sick, and therefore do not actually belong there.

The suggestion was made to have a separate corner for the handicapped. After much thought, and after asking advice from our Managing Editor, I have come to the conclusion that the best way to correct this would be to change the heading of our "Corner." The purpose of our "Corner" is to help, strengthen, and encourage those who are ill, lonely, or handicapped, physically and/or mentally. We should not cut up this corner into several segments. Therefore I would appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to use your discretion in choosing the right cards and messages. I can only supply you with the limited information which I receive, but I will try to make clear to you, in the best possible way, in what manner we can be of help to the brothers and sisters mentioned in our "Corner."

I am sure that there are others in our congregations whose names have not been sent in, but who would also benefit from some encouraging words. It is up to you to bring those members to my attention. I will gladly send in their names, but I must insist on having the permission of the person involved. It really helps when I am able to publish their age, hobbies, and a little about their circumstances. I would also like to repeat the request to send me updated information, address changes, etc., for our "Birthday Calendar."

Sometimes I receive communications from people who have been mentioned in our "Corner." When it is encouraging news, I like to pass it on to you, dear readers. It is through your thoughtfulness and willingness to respond to our requests that brothers and sisters are being helped and encouraged.

From Mr. H. Werkman I have received such encouraging news. Along with his best wishes for the New Year he wrote: "My wife has improved in the course of the year 1980, as far as her health is concerned. Since May, she was able to go to church in the mornings rather regularly after two years of absence. In addition she attends Women's Society meetings once in a while." Mrs. Werkman has been feeling "under the weather" during the last few weeks. She is troubled by infections, causing her blood sugar level to be unstable. Maybe some extra attention would encourage her, and her husband as well. Mr. Werkman lives by himself, but faithfully visits his wife in the Nursing Home.

### MRS. H. WERKMAN

Chateau Gardens N.H., Room 520,  
310 Oxford Street W.,  
London, Ontario

Brothers and sisters, let us remember the elderly, and sometimes very lonely, brothers and sisters among us. They need our special attention during the long winter months.

We have also received a letter from Liz Koning's father, wherein he mentions, "she has received many cards. It is impossible to thank all the senders. You might be able to do this via CLARION. We believe in the communion of saints." Sincere thanks, Bert Koning.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Lord willing, the following brothers will be celebrating their birthdays in March. Please mark them on your 1981 Calendar.

### GERRY EELHART

Box 32, Site 18, R.R. 5,  
Edmonton, Alberta T5P 4B7

Gerry hopes to celebrate his 19th birthday on March 12th. Since March 1980, he has been living in a group home in Edmonton. He attends an Academic School and works part-time in a workshop. He attends church every Sunday. He knows the Lord wants him to be there; he also feels that he belongs to the teenage group at church. Gerry is the proud uncle of seven nieces and nephews.

\* \* \* \* \*

### JIM VANDER HEIDEN

R.R. 2,  
Smithville, Ontario L0R 2A0

Jim helps his father in the greenhouse full-time. His 22nd birthday will be on March 15th. His problem is of an emotional nature. His thank-you note last year showed that he really appreciated the attention for his birthday.

Shall we surprise our "birthday" brothers with many best wishes, brothers and sisters, and shall we not forget to "visit" our lonely members by remembering to send them a card or letter?

"It is in loving,  
not in being loved,  
the heart is blessed;  
It is in giving,  
not in seeking gifts,  
we find our quest;  
Whatever be your longing or your need,  
that give;  
So shall your soul be fed,  
and you indeed shall live."

Taken from: *Apples of Gold*

Send your requests (with permission of the person involved) to:

Mrs. J.K. Riemersma  
380 St. Andrew Street E.,  
Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1

# our little magazine



## From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Carol Witteveen*. We are happy to have you join us. Do you help look after the little calves on your farm. And how do you like your piano lessons, Carol? I'm glad you had such a nice birthday, *Linda De Boer*. I see you've been a real Busy Beaver thinking up puzzles for us! Thanks, Linda. Write again soon.

Sounds to me as if you had a good time during your holidays, *Wilma Meerveld*. And soon it'll be time for a break again! Thanks for the poem and puzzle, Linda. Are you keeping a sharp lookout for that first robin?

Hello, *Cynthia Oosterveld*. Looks to me as if you've enjoyed winter! I guess your chicken pox are long gone, right? Thanks for the puzzles, Cynthia. Keep up the good work!

You've been very busy, too, *Brenda De Boer*. Good for you and thanks for the puzzles. You and your sister plan to keep us all busy, I think! Are you planning to enter our Early Bird Contest, Brenda? Bye for now.

### QUIZ TIME

Code Quiz by Busy Beaver *Cynthia Oosterveld*.

V - 6	B - 18	8	3	1	6	12	11	7	12
S - 4	N - 10								
M - 2	E - 12	3	1	14	16	18	12	9	15
I - 8	T - 11								
H - 7	P - 13								
U - 5	A - 15	7	12	7	15	4	7	12	15
C - 9	R - 14								
L - 3	D - 16								
O - 1	Y - 17								

2 17    6 1 8 9 12    15 10 16    2 17  
 4 5 13 13 3 8 9 15 11 8 1 10 4

### GUESS THE PLACE

by Busy Beaver *Linda De Boer*

- Shadrach, Meschach, Abed-nego,  
In the fiery furnace were cast;  
God's mighty deliverance was seen  
As they come from the burning blase.    Answer:
- Naaman was a mighty man,  
Though stubborn, he did yield;  
In this river seven times he dipped,  
From leprosy he was healed.    Answer:

### PROPHETS OF THE BIBLE

(unscramble the names of the prophets)

by Busy Beaver *Brenda De Boer*

- Hasaii \_\_\_\_\_
- hearjime \_\_\_\_\_
- zeelike \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Busy Beavers,

How do you celebrate birthdays at your house?  
 Do you get to have your favourite supper?  
 Does your mother make a special cake?  
 When do you get your present?  
 And do you get a specially decorated chair?  
 Every family has its own way of celebrating birth-  
 days.

Why do we celebrate?  
 Because we are thankful, of course!  
 Thankful that the Lord gave us each other.  
 Thankful that He gives us life and health.  
 Shall we think of that each time we celebrate a birth-  
 day?

Also on "ordinary" days?

\* \* \* \* \*

### FOR YOU TO DO

- My best birthday ever!  
 Do you have one like that? One that you remember and like best of all?  
 Tell us about it. Will you?  
 You know where to send it, right?
- February was the birthday month of many very famous people. Here are the names of four of them. Can you match their names to what they are known for?

- |                |                               |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Galileo     | e. composer of the "Messiah"  |
| B. G.F. Handel | f. father of modern physics   |
| C. Mendelssohn | g. father of modern astronomy |
| D. Copernicus  | h. composer                   |

\* \* \* \* \*

"Happy Birthday" and "Many happy returns" to all the Busy Beavers who celebrate their birthday in March. All the Busy Beavers join in wishing you and your family and friends a very happy day celebrating, and may the Lord bless and guide you in the year ahead.

Stephanie Louwerse	Mar. 2	Jolette Moeliker	Mar. 21
Lyndon Kok	4	Marjorie Smouter	22
Anne-Marie Jonker	6	Debbie Aikema	23
Gerald Schoon	7	Heather Bergsma	24
Joanne Oostdijk	9	Wayne Breukelman	26
Angela Wiersema	9	Irene Hoeksema	27
Carolin Boeringa	10	Charles Slaa	27
Hilda Jongsma	11	Gordon Van Woudenberg	28
Jacqueline Riemersma	13	Carolyn Irene Hoeksema	29
Joanne Doekes	15	Marianne Hart	30
Valerie Kleefman	15	Henrietta Beukema	31
Michael Bosch	17	Mary Van Woudenberg	31
Henriette Bosscher	21	Jane Wieggers	31