



Clarion
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

VOL. 31, NO. 1

JANUARY 8, 1982

Theological College Act 1981

Together we entered the year of our Lord 1982; the end of the previous year marked the termination of my leave of absence; and the beginning of 1982 also means the resumption of my editorial duties for *Clarion*. It is always stimulating to begin a new year and a fresh period of labour with a pleasant issue.

The pleasant issue to which I want to draw some public attention is embodied in an Act of the 32nd Legislature of the Province of Ontario. It is the *Act respecting the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches*. Introduced as a Private Bill by the Hon. Mr. George A. Kerr, member for Burlington South, the Act was passed by the House and received Royal Assent on December 18, 1981.

What made this day such a memorable day for the Canadian Reformed Churches and their Theological College? Let me refresh your memory. In March 1980 the Hon. Dr. Bette Stephenson, the Minister of Education in the Province of Ontario, introduced Bill 4, An Act to Regulate the Granting of Degrees. On that occasion she remarked that it would serve the public interest to limit the operation of universities and degree-granting institutions in Ontario to those that have charters from the Legislature. "Prospective students should have the insurance that any degree program offered in Ontario has legal and academic credibility . . . This bill would not encroach upon the fundamental freedom of people to operate educational institutions. It would, however, ensure that the Legislature would have to be convinced of the educational soundness of the institution before it could grant degrees." It is clear that the Minister of Education who at the same time is Minister of Colleges and Universities, wanted to exclude so-called degree mills, institutions that only gratify the vanity of the victims and the lust of money of the organizers. Therefore, according to the Minister, degree-granting authority had to be conferred by the Legislature where applicants had to make a public presentation. The government was prepared to support Private Bills provided that the applicants had the resources to operate a sound academic institution, had the support of the community they intend to serve, and were not seeking government grants. Bill 4 would not be proclaimed into law until all affected institutions had received sufficient time to prepare Private Bills.

In this situation the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees formed a committee with the mandate to seek the incorporation of the College by means of a Private Bill in the Ontario Legislature. A draft was submitted to the General Synod of Smithville, 1980, and this Synod approved of the actions. The joint Boards were charged to pursue the matter and to serve the next General Synod with proposals as to the amendment of the present Constitution, if the Private Bill would become an official law of the Province of Ontario.

To make a long story somewhat shorter, this last thing now has happened on Friday, December 18, 1981. Let us read the Preamble of the Act and see its purpose:

Whereas the Canadian Reformed Churches, an unincorporated federation of reformed churches in Canada, hereby represent that they maintain an insti-

tution of higher learning in theology for the training for the ministry, known as the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches; that it is desirable that the said College be incorporated and that the College be given the authority to grant degrees in theology; and whereas the Canadian Reformed Churches hereby apply for special legislation for such purposes; and whereas it is expedient to grant application; Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows . . .

It would take too much span of space and attention to go through the whole Act. But let me mention some interesting points. The object and purpose of the College is described as the advancement of learning in theology for the training for the ministry of the Gospel. "The College shall be carried on as a Christian institute of theology whose basis shall be the infallible Word of God as interpreted by the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort as adhered to by the churches."

Not unimportant is the fact that the government of our College underwent a change. Instead of two Boards — Governors and Trustees — there is now one Board consisting of eleven Governors: six ministers as in the previous Board of Governors, and five other brothers as in the former Board of Trustees. Governors are to be elected or appointed by Synod in such a manner as may be described by the by-laws of the College, for a term of three years. No governor shall serve for more than nine years consecutively. No person may be a governor unless he is a member in good standing of one of the churches and a Canadian citizen.

These last two regulations impose a restriction compared with the former Constitution. As far as the first limitation is concerned, it is good to remember that Synod 1980 took note of the fact that no retirement schedule exists for the members of the Board of Trustees. It asked the Board of Trustees to consider such a schedule and to come with proposals to the next General Synod. One can reason that the new regulation, now made with a view to incorporation, is at least in line with the wish of Synod Smithville 1980. There can be no objection of principle against the fact that also the former Governors are subject to a retirement schedule. Precisely because ministers and other brothers now together constitute the Board of Governors, it is good that one rule is valid for all: "gelijke monniken, gelijke kappen"; all are equal and no one is more equal than others. This does not exclude the possibility that in the by-laws provision will be made for at least two committees of Governors: one for academic affairs and one for material matters. We may expect that in the future the cooperation between "curators" and "trustees" will be even better than in the past now that they form one body for the final decisions.

The other limitation is the requirement of Canadian citizenship for governors of our Canadian institution of higher learning. The churches can no longer elect or appoint a governor who is not a citizen of Canada. In my opinion, also this regulation does not place an unbearable

restriction upon the life of the churches and their Theological College. Most ministers are already Canadian citizens and the earnest desire to become governor of our Theological College may even help to overcome a psychic barrier. If anyone aspires to the office of governor he desires a noble task.

More important is the manner in which the churches control their theological seminary. In our circles the slogan "For the Church, by the Church" — *Voor de Kerk door de Kerk* — is well-known. It expresses the conviction that the church itself should regulate the training for the ministry of the Gospel. Does the figure of the Board of an incorporation not clash with the principles of our Reformed polity and with our conviction concerning the ecclesiastical character of a Reformed theological seminary? Let us see.

In the description of the basis of the College we read already a reference to the confessions "as adhered to by the churches" and we noted that the governors are to be elected or appointed by Synod. Further, the Board of Governors has the power, among other things:

- d. to appoint, *in accordance with the policies established by Synod*, members of the faculty who are in full accord with the basis of the College
- e. to promote, suspend and remove and to grant tenure and leave of absence to members of the faculty *in accordance with the policies established by Synod*
- f. *subject to the direction and approval of Synod*, to establish, maintain, change and terminate faculties, schools, institutes, departments, and chairs within the College.

The clauses that I underlined are the main stipulations for the relation between the churches and the Theological College. Although in the future it may be preferable to speak about the *designation* of a professor by Synod and his *appointment* by the Board of Governors, this is only a matter of phraseology. The churches in their general synods set out their policies for appointment and removal of professors or lecturers; they give direction and approval for the entire structure and organization of this school of the churches. Let me add that according to other sections of the Act the General Synods are to receive the Report of the Board as to the operation of the College, to appoint auditors and to consider the audited financial statements. A Synod also has to confirm or reject any by-laws passed by the Board that under this Act require confirmation by Synod.

Given all these regulations, I as a minister in the service of the Canadian Reformed Churches am convinced that the rights of these churches with respect to their Theological College have been safeguarded. In this way we could seek incorporation via an Act of the Ontario Legislature with a good conscience.

Our readers will understand that I saved another important aspect for my last remarks. The question must arise: What does this Act mean academically? We now have a legal basis for the College as a degree-granting institution. But what does the Act stipulate about the powers of the Senate and especially about its degree-granting power? Well, let me quote Section 10, Article 3f, in which it says that the Senate has power

to grant the degrees of Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Divinity and Master of Theology.

In the past our Senate had once granted the degree of Bachelor of Theology and in the present we confer the Bachelor of Divinity degree. We have not yet conformed to the academic trend in North America to grant the degree of Master of Divinity (M. Div.). Those who *after* having obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in an accredited University or College, complete *four* years of

theological study at our institution should be entitled to receive this M. Div. degree. It is therefore not impossible that in the near future the Senate will decide to replace the B.D. degree with the degree of Master of Divinity. Now we do not only have the legal right to do so, but we are even authorized to grant the degree of Master of Theology (M. Th.). In the same manner as the M. Div. degree is comparable to the degree "doctorandus (nieuwe stijl)" at our sister institution in Kampen, the degree of Master of Theology should be equivalent to "doctorandus (oude stijl)." At the moment such a program is not being offered at the Theological College in Hamilton but the fact that the Act acknowledged our right to grant this degree provides us with sufficient room to grow academically during the next decade(s).

In the joy of the moment, however, we should not forget that this *legal* authorization does not automatically mean an *academic* recognition by other institutions. The University of Toronto, e.g., does not have to recognize a B.D. degree of the Theological College in Hamilton, even though this College has the legal authority to grant this degree. In the light of this circumstance, we may be thankful that three academic institutions responded favourably upon our request to address the Minister of Education in Ontario on our behalf: the Theologische Hogeschool van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Broederweg, Kampen), Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids, and Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. The manner in which they expressed their recognition of our academic standing has warmed our hearts and should be acknowledged publicly.

Together with my colleagues Prof. L. Selles and Prof. C. Van Dam, I attended the meeting of the committee of the Ontario Legislature in which the Hon. Mr. George A. Kerr introduced the Private Bill in the presence of representatives of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. When my eyes gazed upon the splendor of the Legislature Building and when my ears picked up the sounds of the smoothly flowing procedure my thoughts wandered. How satisfying the course of events must have been to our Trustee, Mr. C.M. Loopstra, LL.B., whose juridical skills had guided us through the sometimes muddy waters of Queen's Park in Toronto. Behind the son I saw the figure of his father, the first President of the Board of Governors at the opening of our Theological College in 1969. My thoughts wandered to those Reformed immigrants of the late forties and the early fifties who had come to this country and sometimes were treated as if they were displaced persons. Now the cause of "their" Canadian Reformed Churches and of "their" Theological College found an official recognition by the Legislature of the Province of Ontario.

To upright souls that seek thy face

Thou givest glory, truth, and grace (Ps. 84).

My thoughts wandered from Toronto to Warsaw. These were the days in which a Canadian provincial government dealt with a small Theological College of Reformed Churches, while in Poland martial law was being applied against those who had sought to obtain a bit of national independence from international communism. Should we not be grateful to the Lord for the country in which we live and for the opportunities that are graciously granted to us in the year of our Lord 1982? Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil, Ephesians 4:15, 16. But let us also not forget the intercessions and thanksgiving for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way, I Timothy 2. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.

J. FABER

The Belgic Confession on the Church Declared Obsolete

In last year's October 26 issue of *The Banner* the Rev. A. Kuyvenhoven wrote an editorial about "The Church and the Churches" in connection with Reformation Day. I would like to react to this mainly because of the article itself, but also in connection with a remark of Prof. H.C. Hoeksema in an editorial in the *Standard Bearer*, in which he reacts to the same *Banner* article. Let me first give the contents of the article. The author starts with saying:

The great benefit of the Reformation was the rediscovery of the gospel. But the great disadvantage of the Reformation has proved to be the splintering of the church.

After having stressed the necessity of thankfulness for the rediscovery of the gospel of salvation-through-grace, which thankfulness must be shown in believing and obeying the message of the gospel, the author writes:

Nor may we close our eyes for what happened after the Reformation. The church had an artificial unity before that time, but it has suffered a genuine disunity ever since. Today nearly any "preacher" can "start a church."

Under the heading, "The Intent of the Reformers," he writes the following:

The Reformers never intended the church to be divided in many groups and branches. Luther expressly told his followers that he did not want his name to be attached to the church. But millions who honor the man have disregarded his wishes. And Calvin valued the unity of the church as highly as any ecumenical enthusiast. In a time when there are again grumblings among us about breaking the unity, we would do well to hear John Calvin say: ". . . it is extreme arrogance in us, if we presume immediately to withdraw from the community of a church where the conduct of all members is not compatible either with our judgment or even with the Christian profession" (*Institutes*, IV, i, 18). "Extreme arrogance" he calls the

behavior that can be so piously defended.

The Reformers had not given up on the church: they had not decided to start a new fellowship. But they attempted to re-form the church according to its only standard, the Bible. Their main grief was that, in the church, human authority had taken the place of Christ's. They wanted to get rid of the popish hierarchy. The church had to live under the grace and the law of God.

Then, in a short summary under the heading, "True or False," the Rev. Kuyvenhoven shows the thinking of the Reformers and the meaning of the Reformed Confessions about the church:

Two of our confessions date back to the time of the Reformation. Therefore they reflect the Reformers' belief in the one universal church that has always existed in the world and shall always continue to exist, because this holy assembly has an eternal King. The Reformers, and our confessions, do not think of the one holy and universal church as a thing that is hidden from human eyes and known to God alone. No, they said that the one true church was visibly present. There is also a false church, they said. And they meant the Roman church. Believers don't belong in it, they warned. It is our duty to join ourselves to the true church ("and outside of it there is no salvation"). Nor is it impossible to discern the difference between the true church and the false church: where the true gospel is preached, where the sacraments are rightly administered and discipline is exercised, there is the church. There is no excuse for those who have the Bible and who say they cannot find the true church. "These two Churches (the true and the false) are easily known and distinguished from each other." (See Belgic Confession, Articles XXVII-XXIX and Heidelberg Catechism, L.D. 21.)

In my opinion, we have here a good

rendition of the meaning of our confessions. I would like to make the remark here that there is a difference between the belief of the Reformers about the church and the confessions. It is certainly true that the writings of the Reformers can shed light on the meaning of the confessions made in their days. But, as such, the beliefs of the Reformers were never officially adopted as the doctrine of the church, but the confessions were. In the confessions we are not dealing with certain views or opinions of Christian people in a certain time. In the confessions the Reformed churches have officially stated: this is the true doctrine of God's Word. And so, in Articles 27-32, the Reformed Churches say: here we confess the truth of God's Word concerning the church.

But let us listen to what the editor of *The Banner* wrote further under the next heading, "Denominations":

The views of the Reformers are no longer ours. And the kind of thinking about the church that is recorded in the Belgic Confession is no longer functional in the Christian Reformed Church. How could it be! If we took it literally we would not only have to confess that our own little church is the true church, but that all other churches are false. All Christians in the United States and Canada would be in default for not joining our church, because it is Christ's church. None of us makes such claims. To be sure, there are a few, even smaller Reformed churches, that on the basis of the Belgic Confession declare every church except their own a "false" church; but such reasoning under today's historical conditions leads to "extreme arrogance," as Calvin would say.

Today we call our church a "denomination," a modest and neutral label we give to every church. This perfectly innocent sounding term betrays a theology (or lack of it) that has no resemblance to the language of Paul, the church fathers, or the Reformers.

After this an explanation is given of the word "denomination." It means: that which has a name, a *nomen*. The word was first used for money. And from there the government began using it as a neutral term for the different churches, for convenience's sake.

Then we read:

Our thinking about the church has been so affected by the culture in

which we live that, in speaking about the church, we don't speak biblically and confessionally, but we use civil and neutral terms.

Then, under the next heading, "Theologians needed"; the article continues:

Most of our church members have no clear doctrine of the church. They have the notion that there is one holy and universal church of Christ that is invisible. In reality there are many denominations and one ought to respect all of them. No denomination can claim to be true to the exclusion of the others. The argument is about the question which denomination is better, or purer, or friendlier, or more active, or more mission minded. And such an argument is possible because there is basic agreement that all groups are but denominations of one church.

But the Bible knows no denominations. The holy and universal church is a reality in the present world and its unity is one of its essential qualities.

The Confession says that the church is the work of the gathering Son of God. Next to the sheepfold where Christ gathers his own, there is a den of robbers. Everyone has the obligation to bow under the yoke of Christ and say no to the pseudo church.

These different strains of teaching are confusing to the people of God. Theologians have tried to make "denominationalism" acceptable by giving the phenomenon nice names (such as "pluriformity"). These efforts attempt to explain the reality as we find it, not the norm as it has been revealed to us. We need some serious, biblical teaching on the unity of the church and how to live with denominationalism.

In a last paragraph the readers of *The Banner* are urged to do two things "meanwhile"; in the first place, to pray for the unity of the church; and in the second place, to insist that the church of which they are members

"behaves, in faith and in practice, as the local revelation of the one holy and catholic church of Jesus Christ. We must be impatient with any extras and intolerant of any shortcomings."

I have quoted almost the whole article so that the reader can check me when I come with my comments, and to do justice to the editor of *The Banner*.

Before I come with my own remarks, I would like to let the readers of *Clarion* read some of the comments of

Prof. Hoeksema in the *Standard Bearer* of Nov. 15, 1981. After having quoted the paragraph under "True or False," and the first part of the paragraph, "Denominations," Prof. Hoeksema indicates the departure from the views of the Reformers, which is Kuyvenhoven's "good right," he says, because these views and statements "do not constitute binding doctrine in any Reformed church." However, to take such a step is "very bold and audacious" and

should not be taken lightly, and certainly not without careful study and examination. But here no grounds are even offered. We have simply the bold statement, "The views of the Reformers are no longer ours."

But the second statement is terribly serious: "And the kind of thinking about the church that is recorded in the Belgic Confession is no longer functional in the Christian Reformed Church."

That this "kind of thinking" is no longer functioning in the CRC, for the most part, I could well believe. This would mean that many do not believe and actually maintain what the Confession teaches on this subject. Probably there are many who do not know or care. Ignorance of the creeds today is simply appalling!

But the Rev. Kuyvenhoven does not say that. He says that the kind of thinking recorded in the Belgic Confession is no longer "functional," that is, serving a function, in his denomination. By editorial fiat he simply writes off an entire segment of the Confession, and he does so not only for himself but for the entire Christian Reformed Church!

I ask how can this be?

In the first place, how can this be in the light of the fact that the Rev. Kuyvenhoven has undoubtedly signed the Formula of Subscription? Does that subscription mean anything, or is it an empty formality?

In the second place, is the procedure of gravamen no longer necessary? . . .

But in the third place, not only is the procedure of gravamen passed by; but the matter is simply decided — without procedure, without study, without synodical decision. Simply by editorial decree!

I do not say that I disagree with what Prof. Hoeksema writes, but it does not satisfy me. Even though he writes more (on which I hope to come back in the next article), in my opinion, Prof. Hoeksema does not deal with Kuyven-

hoven's real point, which is the ground for his observation and statement that in the Christian Reformed Church the thinking of the Belgic Confession is no longer functional. That ground and real point is that the situation of today differs totally from the situation in the 16th century. For *The Banner's* editor the matter is not so much to say that we can no longer speak of true and false church, but, first of all, that we do not have the situation today of the 16th century with *one* true church (the church of the Reformation) and *one* false church (the Roman church).

This is the more clear from a second editorial in *The Banner* of Dec. 7, 1981, written in reply to critical reac-

Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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

Second class mail registration number 1025.

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

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

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: J. Faber
Managing Editor: W.W.J. VanOene
Co-Editors: J. Geertsema, J. DeJong

IN THIS ISSUE:

Editorial — J. Faber	2
Press Review — J. Geertsema	4
From the Scriptures — J. DeJong	7
International — W.W.J. VanOene	8
Social-Political Magazine	9
School Crossing — Nick VanDooren	10
News Medley — W.W.J. VanOene	12
Public Worship — G. VanDooren	13
Professor Shepherd Dismissed	15
Press Release — A. Witten	16
Press Release — J. Mulder	16
Press Release — H. VanLuik	16
Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty	17

SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 1982

Regular Mail Subscription Rates

Canada	\$20.75
U.S.A.	U.S. Funds \$23.25
International	\$31.25

Air Mail Subscription Rates

Canada	\$37.50
U.S.A.	U.S. Funds \$37.50
International	\$52.50

tions from Christian Reformed readers to the first article. He writes:

I will try to say more clearly what I had in mind.

The Reformers and the Belgic Confession know two churches, one true and one false. They also know some sects, but these have no right to the name "church."

Can one know the difference between the true and the false church? Yes: "These two Churches are easily known and distinguished from each other" (Art. 29).

Today nobody thinks in terms of two churches — real, down-to-earth churches — of which one is true and the other false, and nobody would say it is easy to distinguish between the two. In the October editorial I said that we surrendered this point of view with finality when we adopted the word "denomination."

Let me enlarge a bit on our use of the word "denomination" because it reveals much about our shift from a confessional way of speaking about the church to a "practical" or a "neutral" one.

The word "denomination" is completely in [It] even made the Church Order when we revised it in 1965 "ministers from other denominations" (Art. 8b).

Under the heading, "Is the true church visible?" the questions whether the Confession does not show "that the Reformers thought of one universal church" as "known to God alone," pointing to the seven thousand faithful believers in the days of Elijah, and whether it is not "obvious that they did not regard themselves as the visible continuation of this true church," are answered as follows:

No, my friend, the Reformers did not mean that the true church was invisible; and, yes, my friend, they considered themselves to be the continuation of the true church within Israel. The writers at the time of the Reformation constantly push the distinction between the true and the false church back into the Old Testament

At the same time, the Reformers did not teach that all who held membership in the visible, true church were indeed God's elect (hypocrites mixed with the good, Art. 29) Neither did the Reformers say that in the false church, where Christ was hidden by the popery, no true Christians were left. But those children of God were told to come out of the

false church and bow "under the yoke of Jesus Christ" (Art. 28).

I think we can again say that our Confession is rendered here in a correct way. That is what it says and means. But now today's situation creates a difficulty in applying and maintaining the Confession:

Today there are more sects and churches than we can count. All Christian churches we call *denominations*, which is merely a word. The Bible does not know denominations, the confessions do not recognize them, but they belong to reality. We cannot think of the church without thinking of denominations. . . .

As for *sects*, we don't quite know how to handle that term. What one generation or country calls a sect, the next age or country may call a church. The Methodists used to be a sect in Germany but a church in England. The Baptists were a sect in the Netherlands but a church in the USA.

Most evangelical Christians in North America don't believe that the true church is visible, as our Confession says. The churches are regarded as free, religious organizations, sometimes a help, more often a hindrance to the far more important matter of personal faith and godliness. Evan-

gelicals are quick to point out that the biblical teaching about the church, for which Christ died, refers to a mystical union of God's children, and interdenominational family of all real Christians. The real church, they say, is invisible.

Rev. Kuyvenhoven says, then, that Reformed Christians ("we") meet these evangelicals with a confession that speaks of the three marks of the true church as confessed in Art. 29; that these marks are important also today, but are "very formal signs of the true church." We must not forget that Art. 29 also speaks of the marks of true Christians. The editor does not want to throw the confession out. He says:

If the Reformed churches would take their confession seriously, they would now say in their own words what they believe concerning the church of Christ. Such a new confession would not invalidate the Belgic Confession, but it would articulate the same faith in a situation that was unimaginable at the time of Guido de Brès.

That was the end of the second article. In a next article I hope to come with some comment.

J. GEERTSEMA

O God, our help in ages past

Psalm 90: 1 - 6

St. Anne

William Croft, 1708

1. O God, our help in a - ges past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shel - ter from the storm - y blast,
And our e - ter - nal home.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

. . . *He will be the stability of your times* . . . Isaiah 33:6a

Enduring Stability

Isaiah stands next to God's people in the face of imminent destruction. In the presence of death and annihilation, Isaiah intercedes for his countrymen with a cry of deliverance: "O LORD, be gracious to us; we wait for Thee." The mighty power of Assyria stands at the gates of the holy city, and there does not seem to be any hope left. Isaiah's prayer is a cry from the depths — a cry filled with the intensity of struggle.

It does not take long, however, before his prayer becomes a *prophesy*. It's almost as if Isaiah sees the LORD answering his prayer before he has finished with it. While Isaiah is still praying, he hears the LORD coming, and the LORD shows him the great victory that He will bring about. He prophesies the LORD's defense of the holy city, and His faithfulness to His people. He will defend Jerusalem, and fill Zion with justice and righteousness. He will prevent the foundations of the holy city from being destroyed. And Isaiah hails His coming as a time of renewed stability.

The word used for "stability" here is closely related to the word used in the Bible for "faithfulness," "steadfastness" — the words have the same root. The concluding "Amen" of our prayers comes from the same root as well. That root points to certainty, steadfastness, solidity. However, that solidity is the solidity found in the Word of the covenant. God brings stability to His people because He is faithful to His *covenant*. He confirms His promise made in the beginning that His people will always be cared for, and never lack.

And the LORD has fully manifested His faithfulness to the covenant in the coming of Jesus Christ, His only Son. He came to give a new foundation to Jerusalem, His Church — a foundation which can never be shaken. His coming and substitutionary work for us forms the stability of our times. In the moment of prophesy, Isaiah sees *Him* coming to deliver His people, and make good God's covenant with man. That is why Isaiah's words reach beyond his own history and his own time, and speak directly to our time, and to the Church in the world today.

Our times have been aptly characterized as times of instability. The economy has become much more volatile than ever before, and the eighties have been

hailed as a period of increased stress on our socio-economic foundations. In the flux of the modern world with its high rate of change, people have begun to look for things that are more lasting and meaningful. Men search for stability and certainty in tumultuous times.

Isaiah's words certainly still apply. In fact, the situation he lived in forms a telling reflection of the situation the Church faces today. Increased instability is coupled with the ever-growing threat of total annihilation. The eighties have witnessed the return to the arms race, and the re-emergence of hostilities that were only slightly hidden in the *detente* period. A new time has broken through — a time when men and nations show us their true colours.

All these things add up to a very uncertain future — from a human point of view. Changing epochs only add to the instability and uncertainty in the world. And we know that present economic woes and greater degrees of uncertainty stem from one source: men have tried to build a world of prosperity and certainty *without* the LORD of life. But that is not possible. And the LORD sends His judgments upon a world which has refused to seek Him and acknowledge His sovereignty in all things.

Precisely because of this, the Church may not expect a sudden shift to increased economic stability. Indeed, God's judgments will continue to work. Yet Isaiah says, "He shall be the stability of your times . . ." That is the LORD's promise to the Church through changing years, and changing epochs. In the face of uncertainty, *He* is our certainty. In the face of instability, *He* is our stability. He will protect and deliver His people — in prosperity or adversity. He will fill Zion with glory — in war or in peace. He will cover His people with His favour as a shield, and in all that happens He will protect them.

That is why we must place all our *trust* in Him, too. He is faithful to the one covenant — and seeks that sort of faithfulness among His children. In changing times, we must see the LORD as the stability of our times, and build on the sure foundation of Christ, Mediator of the covenant, Head and cornerstone of His Church. He rules creation from on high, and leads and governs ages and times — leading all things to the full breakthrough of His time, in which we will reign with Him, and God will be all in all.

J. DEJONG



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.

The American Council of Christian Churches adopted resolutions opposing the "Religion of Humanism, Mormonism, Deprogramming, Communist Oppression, a condensed RSV Bible, and Government Accreditation of Christian Schools." The following resolutions were adopted by the ACCC:

HUMANISM

WHEREAS, the religion of Humanism: DENIES the inspiration of the Bible, the reality of God, the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Bible account of creation;

BELIEVES that there are no absolutes of right and wrong and that moral values are self-determined and situational;

BELIEVES in sexual freedom regardless of age, including premarital sex, homosexuality, lesbianism and incest;

BELIEVES in abortion, euthanasia (mercy killing), and suicide;

BELIEVES in equal distribution of wealth by government, the removal of the American free enterprise system, disarmament, and the creation of a one-world socialistic government;

AND WHEREAS, humanism has become a new religion propagated not in Sunday schools, but in Monday-through-Friday schools; not by uncertain voluntary church collection, but by compulsory, government tax collections; and not by godly preachers, but by government teachers acting as "change agents" rather than as traditional educators;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Council of Christian Churches meeting in Portsmouth, Ohio, October 27-29, 1981,

urges parents to inform themselves and others concerning the religion of humanism and to examine their children's library and textbook materials for immoral anti-family and anti-American content;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge Bible-believing churches to establish, support and expand Christian schools so as to return to the kind of education that made America great and to offset the evil results of the new anti-God government education."

Concerning Mormonism the resolutions state, among others: "A most subtle false religion is Mormonism of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints."

Re Government Accreditation of Christian Schools, the resolutions say, among others: "It is impossible for a Christian school to accept accreditation from the government. To accept their 'recipe' is to end up with their product."

The Condensed Bible by Reader's Digest meets with the following resolution:

"We . . . warn the publishers of Reader's Digest that they are committing sacrilege against God when they tamper with His Word, the Holy Bible. God has magnified His Word above all His name (Psalm 138:2). 'Is not My Word like as fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?' (Jeremiah 23:29). His Word is forever settled in heaven where no one can pervert or destroy it. But woe to those that attempt it on earth!" (CN)

* * *

LONDON (RNS)

The General Synod of the Church of England has approved the ordination of women to the diaconate, beginning in 1983.

The new women deacons will be called "reverend" and be able to officiate at certain liturgical celebrations, including marriage.

The Anglican Church since 1962 has had women serving as deaconesses, but they have not been ordained by the laying on of hands and are considered juridically to be in the lay state. (CN)

* * *

WASHINGTON (RNS)

Dr. C. Everett Koop, a conservative evangelical Christian opposed to abortion, has been confirmed as Surgeon General by the U.S. Senate.

He was approved by a vote of 68-to-24 over protests by opponents

who feared he would use the influential post as the nation's chief health officer to promote his anti-abortion views.

Dr. Koop, 65, a prominent pediatric surgeon from Philadelphia, was appointed earlier this year by the Reagan administration to be deputy secretary of health.

Dr. Koop, a Presbyterian elder, was chief of surgery at Philadelphia's Children's Hospital and professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He is an internationally acclaimed leader in pediatric surgery. (CN)

* * *

SHANGHAI (EP)

Forty-six people were baptized at the Protestant church in Shanghai on August 4, bringing to more than 240 the number of Protestants baptized since the city's five churches were reopened in 1979, the New China News Agency reported recently.

The 62 Protestant denominations that were represented in mainland China before the communist takeover in 1949 have now been merged into one official church, the agency said. (COM.)

* * *

PRETORIA

The Regional Synod of North Transvaal of the Reformed Church in South Africa (the "Dopperkerk") declared that the Free Reformed Church "fourteenth avenue" (the congregation of which the late Dr. C. van der Waal was a minister for many years) will not be permitted to be received into the federation as a congregation.

The Regional Synod came to this decision because it had to judge a number of objections to a decision of Classis Pretoria-Central. This Classis decided to grant the request of the "fourteenth avenue" to be received as a *congregation* into the federation of the "Doppers."

The Regional Synod of North Transvaal, in its decision, did not pass any judgment about the possibility of individual members belonging to the "fourteenth avenue" joining the "Doppers." (ND)

* * *

LUNTEREN, THE NETHERLANDS

By a large majority the Bentheim General Synod of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (GKN) declared that the church's pronouncements on social issues are binding on the churches. In dealing with the matter, the Synod faced three related issues: the authority of

ecclesiastical pronouncements on social issues, the frequency with which they should be made, and the conditions which such pronouncements should meet.

All pronouncements of the church assemblies, including those on social issues, have authority, the Synod said. They possess a binding force and are subject to change. To be truly ecclesiastical matters, issues must be such beyond all reasonable doubt, (e.g., concerning creed and church order); or must relate directly to the church, (church budgets and theological questions) or to matters which significantly influence church life, and concerning which the church, as the proclaimer of the Gospel truth may not fail to declare the promise and demand of the Lord. This includes ethical issues.

According to the Synod, whenever critical developments occur in society the church should announce as concretely as possible God's liberating demand and promise, but only if it has first determined that

- such witness on the issue at hand has not been or could not be made by Christians active in various life zones, or if their witness was so weak that it requires the support of a church assembly;
- the church's witness is clearly evangelical so that the congregation can readily sense that it articulates their sentiments, and
- the church is not venturing into an area beyond its competency and concerning which it cannot make a good judgment. (RES NE)

* * *

PHILADELPHIA

After little debate, the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARP) and the Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC) were provisionally approved for membership in the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) at its annual meeting here. The Korean Church consists predominantly of Korean-born people who have moved to North America. The denomination now has seven presbyteries and more than seventy congregations. The ARP application for membership has been pending for several years, being held up by the questions about the ARP's position on biblical inerrancy.

Present member denominations of NAPARC, in descending order of size, are: the Christian Reformed Church (CRC), the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), the Re-

formed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA). In 1982, the PCA, OPCS, RPCES, and the RPCNA will hold their general assemblies at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, concurrently with the Christian Reformed Synod. (RES NE)

* * *

VIENNA

"The doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church and that of the various groups of Pentecostals shows many points of agreement which are more important than the still existing differences." This is stated in an official declaration which was issued at the end of the ninth conference between leading representatives of the

Vatican and of the Pentecostal groups in Vienna.

The main point of the discussion was the veneration of Mary. According to the information the Romish members of the conference came to the conclusion that "Mary receives more and more attention also in the preaching and the sentiments of the Pentecostal churches." The Pentecostals, on their part, stated that the intercession of Mary, as taught by the Vatican, "in no way puts into doubt Christ's office as the sole Mediator."

For five years discussions have been going on between the two sides. The next conference will be held in the United States. The leader of the Pentecostal delegation in Vienna was David du Plessis, who is known as "Mister Pentecost." (ND)

vO

A Reformed Social-Political Magazine

We are taking up such a small corner, not because we have little to say, but because we have little time, busy as we are with our first issue. In the previous CLARION we promised an outline of that issue. Well, here are some items:

- *The year of our Lord 1981, a review of world events, showing the flow of history in a number of sketches as the return of the Lord has come one year closer — Researched by the editorial committee.*
- *Reflections — Pieter Jongeling — Kanttekeningen translated with his permission.*
- *A review of the book WORLD CHALLENGE by Jean J. Servan Schreiber — by Harold Ludwig.*
- *Reformed Education — A Divine Commission — by Tony Vander Ven.*
- *Around the Kitchen Table — by Femmie Vanderboom.*
- *On tiptoe through the world of words — (A Look at Love in Lit.) — by Cornelia Meliefste.*
- *The King's Way — A novel for the young at heart — by Ewoud Gosker.*

All that and more in our first issue.

Look out for it!

school X crossing

School Introduction No. 2

Timothy Canadian Reformed School in Hamilton receives the spotlight this month. The school opened in September 1973 with 35 pupils and 2 full-time teachers (Mr. E. Gosker and Miss H. Schuller). The new building had five classrooms; two were finished and used as regular classrooms, another was classified as a finished all-purpose room.

During the next number of years the school experienced a steady growth. A brief overview reveals the following:

1974-75

- enrollment: 54 students
- three full-time teachers
- Miss C. Faber joins the staff

1975-76

- enrollment: 58 students
- Mr. P. Groenwold and Miss J. Kingma replace Miss Schuller and Miss Faber

1976-77

- enrollment: 62 students
- school library begins to operate
- Miss F. Bartels is added to the staff as a teacher-aid in Gr. 1-3

1977-78

- at the beginning of this school year, major changes take place:
- Miss Kingma replaces Mr. Gosker as principal (Mr. Gosker returned to The Netherlands)
- Mr. Groenwold moved to the West
- Mr. H. Nobel, Miss T. Bouwman, and Mrs. B. Horlings join the staff
- teaching conditions are greatly im-

proved (no more "triple grade" situations and the remaining classrooms are finished)

- enrollment now stands at 64

1978-79

- the enrollment remains at 64, and only two changes are initiated
- Miss G. Terpstra replaces Mrs. Horlings as full-time teacher
- the principal receives a *full day per week* for her administrative duties (More about this later)

1979-80

- enrollment: 78 students
- Mrs. P. Broekema replaces Miss Bouwman
- a formal Home Economics program is started for girls in Grades 5 to 8 (Mrs. C. Stieva becomes the Home Economics teacher)

198-81

- enrollment: 80 students
- the principal was granted a leave of absence with Mr. Nobel becoming acting principal
- Mrs. VandenBos and Mr. J. VanderJagt join the staff

1981-82

- enrollment: 97 students

This large increase in the primary grades made the separation of Grade One and Grade Two possible. A fifth full-time teacher (Mr. S. Venema) was added.

The present staff at Timothy is as follows:

- (a) Mr. J. VanderJagt
 - Grade 1 (22 students)
- (b) Mr. S. Venema

- Grade 2 (18 students)
- (c) Mrs. M. VanLuik
 - Grades 3, 4 (20 students)
- (d) Miss J. Kingma
 - Grades 5, 6 (16 students)
 - Principal
- (e) Mr. H. Nobel
 - Grades 7, 8 (21 students)
 - Vice-Principal
- (f) Mrs. Y. DeBoersap
 - substitute teacher for the Principal
- (g) Mrs. C. Stieva
 - Home Economics

The school also depends upon the valuable help of volunteers. Three ladies operate and maintain the library. This library, by the way, is financed by the Ladies' Auxiliary. Three other ladies assist several times per week in the Remedial program of the school.

Future plans indicate further expansion before the 1982-83 school year.

We wish the staff, board, parents, and the entire supporting community the Lord's blessings in their efforts to provide a Christ-centered education for the children of the Canadian Reformed Church in Hamilton!

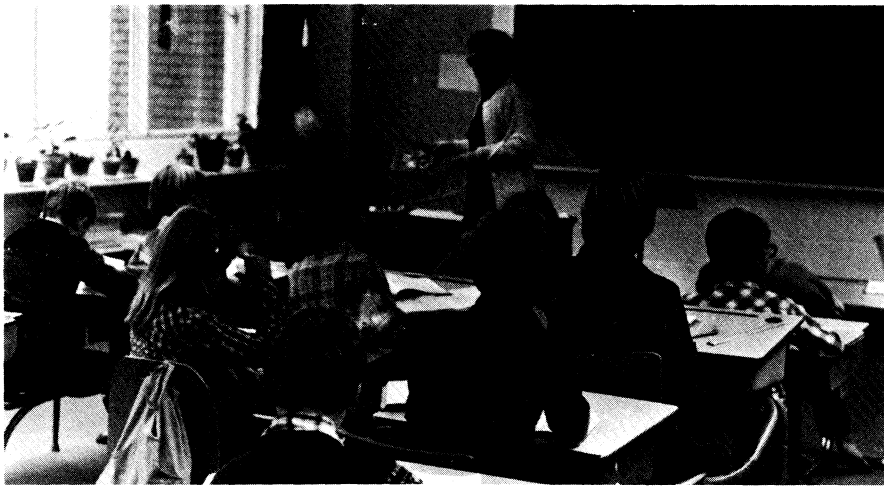
"Time Off"??

At a recent convention, I heard two principals discussing how much "time off" they had from their classroom teaching. I'm sure that they knew what they were talking about, but I wonder if many other people do. Too often this "free time" is considered to be a period when the principal can relax in his/her office, make a few telephone calls, or reflect on a difficult board meeting the night before.

Needless to say, this is not the purpose of a principal's administrative time. It is his responsibility to see to it that the school runs smoothly on a daily basis. Keeping "the finger on the pulse" probably best captures the essence of his duties and responsibilities. This could never be done adequately before or after school — it takes time *during* school. The principal should have an ample amount of administrative time to make regular classroom visits and to supervise the educational program. The best investment the board can make towards a good school is to grant its principal sufficient time to undertake these responsibilities. Granted, it might be difficult to obtain a substitute for the principal. If this is the case, it should



Mr. Venema and Grade 2 students.



Miss Kingma and Grade 5 and 6 students.

be the board's aim to solve this problem as soon as possible.

"Time off?" — not very likely in a place where educators and boards see the importance and necessity of a school that runs smoothly and aims for high standards.

Parent-Teacher Interviews

We're in the season of report cards and parent-teacher interviews. This vital home/school contact needs much preparation and consideration.

The following article comes from the Home and School bulletin of John Calvin School in Burlington. The second contribution is simply a list of suggestions which I picked up some time ago at a Principals' Conference. Hopefully, you'll find them useful in your local situation.

* * *

You have received your children's report card and invitations for the interviews of Dec. 1 and 3. We are confident that these get-togethers between parents and teachers will again generate an excellent attendance. While we have attempted to establish closer communications between the school and the home with regards to the programs your children follow (Meet the Parents/Teachers Night of Sept. 24 and the subsequent Program Progress reports in the Home & School), this is the time to zero in on the individual achievement of the children. Some suggestions are listed to make these interviews more productive in terms of deriving the maximum benefit from them for your children:

Before the Interview:

- * Talk to your child about his work at school. Find out what he likes most about his teacher and about

school in general. By discussing school progress with your child on a regular basis, you won't be surprised during the interview.

- * Write down the questions you want to ask the teacher.

During the Interview:

- * Ask how your child is getting along generally, before you get down to specifics. Then ask: Is he completing his assignments on time? Does he have friends? How does he compare academically with others?
- * Express your child's needs. Tell the teacher how he responds at home, how you encourage him to do his work, and what kind of discipline you have found the most effective. Ask the teacher how he/she handles your child. Together you should be able to help the child work to his/her potential.
- * If you experience difficulties at home you can appreciate the mammoth task a teacher has coping

with the instructional program, while ensuring the cooperation and participation of approximately 30 pupils. Comments like "I know, we experience the same at home" won't do! Ways and means to ensure close cooperation between home and school to eliminate such problems should be worked out. If the teacher expresses disappointment with your child's behaviour, ask for specifics and how you can help.

- * By working together with the teacher, you accomplish the most for your child. Accept compliments about your child's work and conduct with grace and pass them on to your child. This may set the stage for continued or a further improved pattern in your child's progress.
- * Inquire about subjects that have presented problems for your child. Ask how the teacher has tried to help the pupil to overcome this and how you as parent can help.
- * Share experiences with previous teachers which you know have been advantageous for your child. This may open up new avenues for the teacher of which (s)he has not thought.
- * Arrange for a mutually-acceptable manner of communication. This may require regularly scheduled telephone calls, get-togethers, or homework booklets.

As parents you are your children's advocates. Be able to speak openly and understandingly about them and their needs.

Please realize that their teacher spends the daytime trying to meet these needs of a whole class. A word of encouragement would be greatly

Continued on page 14.



Grade 1 students at work.

news medley

"He did it again!" a sister exclaimed when she was reading the news medley in the much appreciated and highly praised Year-end issue of our precious *Clarion*. And she refused to continue reading. Now, this was too bad, for she missed quite a bit by not reading on.

What did he do again? That was the question which you will ask; it is precisely that question which her husband asked. The answer?

"He slams people over Dutchisms and finishes by using poor English himself."

Her husband decided to write me a letter, and I wish to thank both my brother and sister for their interest, for their best wishes (mutually: the Lord's blessing upon family and labours also in 1982!) and for their criticism. It won't hurt either of us that I cannot agree with the criticism this time.

Let me say, first of all, that it has never been my intention to "teach English." I have to be taught too much myself than that I should be able to teach others. What I do is simply pass on what I have been taught, that so the instruction which I have received personally may be rewarded with even ampler fruit than my teachers could have envisaged. I myself am very happy when Dutchisms in my writings are pointed out, and the only thing I take ill of people in this connection is that they did not tell me sooner but waited so long before approaching me. When, on one of the last Sundays I spent in the Fraser Valley as the minister of New Westminster's Church, one of the brethren from one of the neighbouring Churches pointed out a mistake I made frequently, my only reaction was, "And you waited seventeen years before telling me this?!"

What was the "poor English" I was using myself?

Our sister "suggests that it is wrong to say, 'The family A' is *no* English'; it should be '... is *not* English.' "

Although I hesitate to disagree with my learned sister, I have to do so in this case. If "English" were used as an adjective, "no English" would be wrong; however, I used it as a noun, and as far as I know a noun can be modified by "no" as well as by "not." Apparently it is a matter of personal preference.

The New International Version will not be considered archaic in its language, I presume, and this gives me boldness to quote from it. In Psalm 15, e.g. I read, "And has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbour no wrong and casts no slur on his fellow man."

Of someone who is accused of serious misdemeanours, we may say, "He is no criminal," but when using this word as an adjective, we have to say, "This is not criminal, it is even worse than that!"

For the time being I remain convinced that it was not poor English I was using there, but proper language. Meanwhile, I commend myself into the true brotherly love of all readers and ask them to tell me when I'm wrong.

From the above mentioned Year-end issue I learned about the fiftieth wedding anniversary of brother and sister Hummel in Lethbridge, Alberta. We could even see their

picture on one of the pages covered by the news medley. Whether the printer always prints the pictures on one of those pages in order that the readers may read the medley when looking at the pictures or may see the pictures when reading the medley is something we shall leave undecided. In any case, you could not miss them. And via our medley I wish to offer our congratulations to our brother and sister on this happy occasion. The time in the Fraser Valley lies quite a few years behind us, but will still be remembered. May blessings be your inheritance.

There was quite a stack of bulletins to work through this time, but the harvest is not all that abundant and rich. I do not think that it makes much sense to mention a forty-fifth wedding anniversary celebrated last August about which I learned just this morning from a collection of bulletins sent in bulk, covering the last half year.

I mentioned the Fraser Valley in the second last paragraph. Let's continue with Church life there.

In the previous *Clarion* issue we also could see a photograph of brothers and sisters gathered together in Abbotsford's new "Annex." In the beginning of December we showed the new acquisition to ourselves and to brothers and sisters from the Valley Churches, the Rev. VanderWel wrote. As mentioned before, I saw the rough shell this past summer, and am convinced that there is ample room now for all activities within the Church at Abbotsford and even in the Valley as such.

Abbotsford also had a meeting where the Rev. Van Spronsen was to speak on "The Home Mission Project among the Natives." I do not recall having read that Abbotsford made a decision on Smithers' request for support of such an undertaking. The Church at Langley made the following decision, "After having heard the Congregation, the Consistory decided to support the work on a collection-basis, without going into an agreement. It is decided to have one collection per month for this cause."

Personally, I would be very hesitant to proceed if there were no firm agreement and commitment from the sister-Churches to support the work by an agreed upon amount. I can well understand Langley's decision. If a Consistory is not firmly convinced that a certain cause is direct "Church-work," and yet wishes to support it, the only way open is to give the Congregation the opportunity via collections to show in how far they favour that specific work. As far as I can see it, such work would be direct "Church-work," and my only considerations would be whether this is indeed the most pressing task, whether this is indeed the proper area, and whether the Congregation will be able to carry this additional burden.

The Surrey Consistory heard an extensive report from their committee which visited the Mission field in Brazil. The result of listening to this report was that "a committee is appointed to further study Mission expansion A report is expected to be submitted by the end of April 1982. No further expansion will take place for the time being until a decision is made and the furlough of our missionaries."

We skip the prairies altogether this time. Too cold at this time of the year!

A warning which may well be taken to heart by each and every Church is one we found in the bulletin of the Ebenezer Church in Burlington.

A breakin in one of the boxes in the back of the Church is reported. The Consistory urges everyone involved to abide by the longstanding policy to empty these boxes

after each service, and to use cheques as much as possible. Payment can be stopped on cheques but cash is untraceable.

More and more break-ins in Church buildings and homes are reported nowadays. Even our College building did not escape that development. During the Christmas holidays it was broken into, and the police think that it was done by younger children, judging by the fingerprints. The spoil was not all that large, but nevertheless it is a deplorable thing. If only we could publicize that one should not expect rich spoil to be present in Reformed Church buildings and institutions!

In the same bulletin we read about our College the following from the hand of the Rev. M. Van Beveren.

You may have heard by now that by a special act of the Ontario Legislature our Theological College has been granted the legal status of a degree granting institute of learning. We should be thankful that from now on the Ontario government will recognize the degrees conferred upon our theological students who successfully finish their studies at the college. That does not mean, of course, that other academic institutions will recognize our degrees right away, but the decision is an important step forward. And, to use the words of Dr. Faber, the fact that the act even acknowledges the right to grant the degree of Master of Theology — although at the moment such a program is not being offered — provides the College with sufficient room to grow academically during the next decade.

In the neighbouring Church at Hamilton, the Consistory decided “to finish construction of the balcony in the church building and to use the present building fund to finance this expansion.”

It is not often that we pay attention to celebrations of 25th anniversaries. This time I wish to make an exception. Brother C. Ouwersloot — who in previous years was much involved in the matters of the *Canadian Reformed Magazine* — celebrated the completion of his 25th year as printer of the bulletin of Smithville. He retired as such at the same time, and now enjoys a well-deserved rest as far as this task is concerned. There will not be many among us who reached or will reach such a milestone, and it is worth mentioning that brother Ouwersloot did reach it. Congratulations!

We conclude our journey this time in London.

As of January 1, 1982, the Revised Standard Version will be used in the worship services. There are not many Churches left now that still use the King James Version.

London also pondered the question whether separate meetings should be held by both the Elders and the Deacons. They came to the following conclusion.

The consistory again discusses the role of the deacons within the consistory. It was re-stated that although elders and deacons have different responsibilities within the church consistory, it is essential that full cooperation be maintained. Therefore the deacons will continue to be part of and meet with the consistory.

I am happy with this conclusion and decision and hasten to pass it on.

Concluding this first medley in 1982, I express the wish that many more may follow. May the Lord bless you all in this year which is a Year of our Lord, another phase in the prelude to the everlasting joy. vO

PUBLIC WORSHIP*

Is worship dried formality
Undressed of real vitality?
Is it a boring, tedious game
called: “Public worship in Christ’s Name?”
Am I a pharisee, a fake,
Conforming for tradition’s sake
When Sunday after Sunday I
go twice to church. Do I know why?
Why sit I here, for I feel not
confronted with a LIVING God.
Is my dull gaze reflective part
of my impassive, empty heart?
I scan the pews, if I may trace
one genuinely eager face.
One face that may reflect to me
the Gospel’s *Power* and *Melody*
Immune, untouched I sit; I hear.
Words . . . phrases float into my ear
But where’s the thrill —
the impact — sword —
inspiring Power of that Word?
The Power to break the Pharisee,
the hypocrite, the fool in me
The Power to make me see “the other”
for HIS sake as my sister, brother.
The Power to pry my inner sense . . .
exposing each untrue pretense.
The Power to trim, prune, strip me clear
from worthless things, I hold too dear.
The Power to make my restless soul
feel free . . . unloaded . . .
sin-cleansed . . . whole . . .
as if I feel Christ say to me:
“you have been healed by touching Me. . . .”
. . . I wonder, rising from my seat
if preachers feel the same defeat
. . . I pain myself, as I file out:
“What is TRUE worship all about?”
. . . When home, I questionably review:
“Is it the pulpit or the pew?”
. . . In my complexity I probe
“We ALL need touch the Master’s robe!!”
O Spirit, make that Word sound New!
Give us rebirth! PULPIT and PEW!

* This poem reached me along a detour, and is meant as a reaction to my articles on Pulpit and Pew. The author wants to remain anonymous, but it may be good to state that the poem was born *before* the articles were published. Poetically it underlines certain things that I wrote in prose.

G. VanDooren

SCHOOL CROSSING

— Continued from page 11.

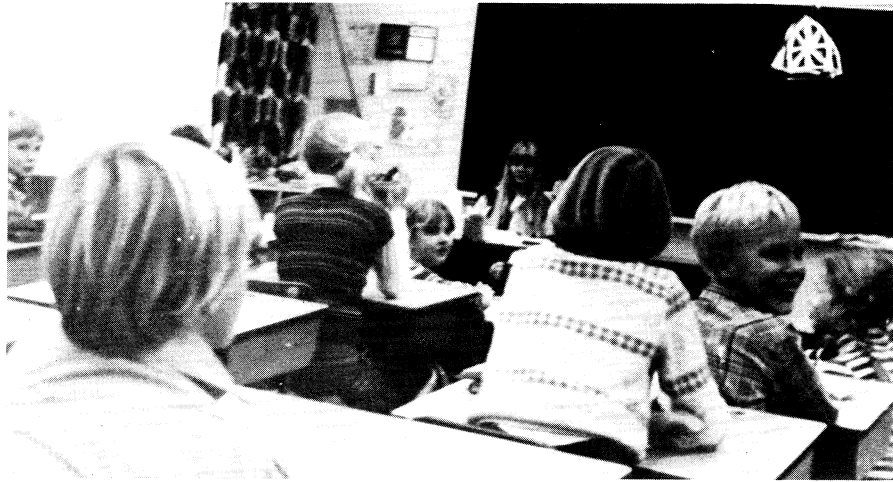
appreciated. This may aid in establishing a bond of mutual trust.

* * *

DO REMEMBER THESE DON'TS

To avoid the potholes and pitfalls waiting to trip you up, keep in mind these important conference DON'Ts:

1. DON'T hide behind vague generalities. "Johnny's having difficulties with arithmetic. He needs your help." What kind of difficulty? Does he have trouble with fractions? Long division? And exactly how should the parent help? Always be specific.
2. DON'T ask prying questions if the parent or teacher is obviously reluctant to answer. As one parent said: "I don't mind telling almost anything, but I don't like to be asked."
3. DON'T let the desk form a barricade between the teacher and the parent. It sets you up as a superior authority figure. Use two or three chairs grouped together or sit around a table. The individual conference is a partnership, so don't let the presence of a desk break up the partnership feeling.
4. DON'T show disapproval. Parents have as much information to share as teachers do, but any sign that you disapprove of what they say or do, makes them stop talking and listening.
5. DON'T argue. DON'T argue. DON'T argue.
6. DON'T confuse each other with too many suggestions at one time. Concentrate on one or two things that can be done to help the children. Similarly, teachers, don't confuse the parents by trying to show them every piece of work



Mrs. Van Luik and Grade 3 and 4 students.

done in the past months. What you don't show at the conference, the parents can look over at home.

7. DON'T forget to leave the lines of communication open for further conferences either in person or by telephone. "We made a good beginning today, but we need more time to talk together, and see how our new ideas are working to help Johnny."

* * *

GENIUS AT WORK

The artist bent over his easel
And took up his palette and brush
He sketched in the curve of an outline
In colours all vivid and lush.
I watched him add highlights and shadows
With deftness and delicacy
Convinced that no Reubens or Titan
Worked with greater absorption
than he.
He splashed on a bit of ripe crimson
He blended in scarlet and maize.
Then at length he leaned back from
the canvas

And appraised it with critical gaze.
Slowly he turned and presented
That completed creation of his.
"See, teacher! My picture all finished.
Now help me decide what it is."

(from an American
Christian School bulletin)

* * *

A Final Request

Please remember to do your part in making this column a success. It depends on school bulletins, articles regarding schools and their history (I have three — who is next?), and letters or articles forwarded by teachers, parents, or other interested persons. Let's become more acquainted with the many aspects which make our schools operate successfully. Hopefully, the number of submissions will increase during the next few months.

Yours, in His Service!

NICK VANDOOREN
Emmanuel Christian High School
57 Suffolk Street W.
Guelph, Ontario N1H 2J1



Grade 1 students.



Grade 1 student.

Professor Shepherd Dismissed

In its meetings on November 20 and 21, 1981, the Board of Trustees of Westminster Theological Seminary dismissed Associate Professor of Systematic Theology Norman Shepherd from his position, effective January 1, 1982. Shepherd will continue to receive salary until June, 1983. The Board has provided for a full hearing before a five member Board-Faculty committee to report to a February 11, 1982 meeting.

Shepherd joined the Westminster faculty in 1963. He graduated from Westminster Theological Seminary in 1958, received a Th.M. there in 1959 and then studied in Amsterdam and Gottingen before returning to teach at the seminary. In 1975 some of the distinctive views of Professor Shepherd became evident. The faculty since then has been involved in discussions growing out of his statements regarding justification by faith and doctrines related to the covenant. Although both the faculty and board had previously found that Shepherd's position does not contradict the system of doctrine taught in Holy Scripture and summarized in the Westminster Standards, they also had urged him to develop less provocative language and different means of argument, less open to misunderstanding, in presenting his proper concerns.

When criticism of Shepherd's views persisted, and then became public in May of 1981, the Board appointed a committee to visit the seminary and interview all interested parties in an attempt to resolve the differences in the seminary community. This committee received 29 written replies to questions, met with all faculty, key administrators and students and explored in depth what has proved to be an extremely complicated situation.

As a result of the committee's report the Board acted in two ways.

1. It requested the signers of a May 4, 1981 letter, which was critical of Shepherd and past actions of the Board and which was widely and publicly circulated, to consider the possible damage caused by the letter to Shepherd and Westminster Seminary and to make all possible amends.
2. It removed Shepherd from his teaching position. In taking these actions, the Board also formally

confessed its failure to deal with the matter in a way that fully honors Christ and covenanted to work towards restoring unity. The Board also adopted a statement to clarify the grounds for removing Shepherd.

"Mr. Shepherd is removed from his teaching position at Westminster Theological Seminary on the ground that 'the Board in its mature judgment has become convinced that such removal is necessary for the best interests of the Seminary.' The Board makes no judgment whether Mr. Shepherd's view as such contradict or contravene any element in the system of doctrine taught by the Westminster Standards. Rather, the Board judges that, partly through its own indiscretions, partly through the indiscretions and at times one-sided allegations of others, partly because of deep inherent problems in the structure and the particular formulations of Mr. Shepherd's views, partly because of Mr. Shepherd's manner of criticizing opponents as non-Reformed rather than primarily incorporating their concerns more thoroughly into his own position in response, too many people in the Seminary community and constituency and the larger Christian public have come to judge that Mr. Shepherd's teaching appears to them to contradict or contravene, either directly or impliedly, some elements in that system of doctrine taught by the Standards. The Board judges that the controversy over Mr. Shepherd has reached such dimensions and such tangled complexity that it appears unresolvable.

"The Board regrets, therefore, that it must remove Mr. Shepherd in order effectively to distance the Seminary from a controversy which otherwise might go on indefinitely. The Board pledges itself to try to make clear to the larger Reformed community the true grounds for its present action, in order that Mr. Shepherd's name may not be unjustly damaged beyond what has already happened."

Postscript

Because our readers have shown their interest, we publish this News

Release of Westminster Theological Seminary as far as it concerns the dismissal of Professor Norman Shepherd and we do so in unabridged form. RES News Exchange added to its summary of this press release: The impression given is that Norman Shepherd has become the scapegoat, or at least the victim, of a regrettable course of events. I sadly agree.

J. FABER

Letters-to-the-Editor

Dear Mr. Editor,

I hope that the majority of the readers of *Clarion* realize that Mrs. J. Tillema's article in the Nov. 20 issue of *Clarion* makes no contribution to "the question of women's voting rights."

In my opinion this article is below the calibre one would expect from articles in *Clarion*. It is not that there should never appear any humour in *Clarion*, nor that there should not be room for articles that express a different viewpoint from others (quite the contrary), but this article by its lack of logic could damage a healthy brotherly discussion about the topic of women voting in the church.

It is very possible that I do not understand the article well, but I think Mrs. Tillema's logic can be compared to the following example: Father gave some food to his children. Johnny and Jane began to fight because Jane took some of Johnny's meat. Susan and Linda made a mess of the dining room because they started a potato fight. Now father no longer gives food to his children and peace and harmony has returned to the home.

Sincerely,
RALPH BOERSEMA

Church News

DECLINED to Chatham, Ont., and Burlington-West, Ont.:

REV. J. DE JONG

of London, Ont.

* * *

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Canadian Reformed Church
of Brampton
P.O. Box 533,
Brampton, Ontario L6V 2L4

* * *

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Canadian Reformed
Church at London
Mr. K.J. Temple, clerk
99 St. Clair Court,
London, Ontario N6J 3W1

PRESS RELEASE

of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Canadian Reformed Teachers' College, held on December 4, 1981, at Guido de Brès High School.

After Christian opening the minutes of the previous meeting are read and adopted and an agenda is established and proceeded with.

The organization and structuring of the part-time "Diploma Reformed Education" are reviewed. During the next few months, through contact with the various appropriate organizations in our midst, further refinement to this program will be made.

A discussion regarding a possible application from a non-Canadian Reformed student takes place. Resolved is, to apply Art. 6 of the Constitution which reads "Enrolment is open to members of Canadian Reformed Churches. Enrolment of others is subject to the approval of the Board of Governors." More specifically, to complete this person's admission procedure, the governors will be asked to vote on a motion which states that the applicant should be "on the way to becoming Canadian Reformed."

The advertisement for a full-time lecturer for the 1982-1983 academic year has resulted in a letter from a qualified person asking for information.

Correspondence showing interest and commitment from the local Teachers' College committee in Brampton is received and acknowledged.

Tax receipts for contributions received before the end of this year will be processed by the treasurer.

The financial situation is reviewed and shows no immediate cause for an increase in fees. However, concern continues to be expressed about the lack of support from a number of congregations.

The Property Committee is commissioned to purchase additional "hardware" for the Library.

With the use of the principal's report the second term of this academic year is reviewed and a timetable is finalized.

Finally it is noted that an encouraging number of prospective students have taken up contact with the principal.

For the Executive Committee,
A. WITTEN

PRESS RELEASE

Classis Ontario North, December 10, 1981.

1. After Christian opening the credentials are examined and classis is constituted: Rev. M. van Beveren, chairman; Rev. R. Aasman, clerk; Rev. J. Mulder, vice-chairman.

The chairman welcomes the brothers and remembers Rev. W. Pouwelse who cannot be present for health reasons. He

also expresses the hope that Rev. J. De Jong may accept the call from the church at Burlington-West.

The agenda is established.

2. The church at Ottawa requests classis to re-affirm the commitment of \$10,000.00 made by Classis March 15, 1978, with a view to calling a minister.

This request is judged to be admissible and after discussion it is granted.

3. a. Reports of church visitation are submitted. The following churches have been visited: Burlington-West, Brampton, Ottawa.

b. The church at Guelph submits a report re the fund for needy students (Art. 19, C.O.). The churches are urged to meet their obligations: \$2.00 per communicant member for 1981, \$2.50 for 1982.

4. Preaching arrangements are made for the vacant churches of Brampton and Ottawa.

5. The church at Orangeville submits a report with regard to the financial arrangements for the Rev. C. Olij according to a decision of Classis, June 26, 1980. The report is discussed and advice is given.

6. Instructions. a. The church at Burlington-West asks about cancellation of the Sept. '81 Classis. Classis states that the convening church of Guelph acted according to the regulations of Classis Ontario North, Art. 4.

b. The church at Orangeville asks advice as to a disciplinary matter. Advice is given.

7. The necessary appointments as to classical examens, needy students and churches, archives etc. are made.

8. In the question period ad Art. 41, C.O. the church at Guelph asks and receives advice in a disciplinary matter.

9. In the personal question period a question is raised as to travel expenses for classis: 24¢ per mile or 15¢ per km may be claimed.

10. Preparation next classis: convening church is Orangeville; date: March 11, 1982, at 9:00 a.m.; place: Toronto church building; officers: Rev. W. Pouwelse, chairman; Rev. M. van Beveren, clerk; Rev. R. Aasman, vice-chairman.

11. No censure ad Art. 43, C.O. is necessary.

12. The Acts are read and adopted and the Press Release is read and approved.

13. The chairman expresses the appreciation of classis for the excellent way some sisters of the church of Toronto provided the brothers with meals and refreshments.

14. After thanksgiving by the chairman, Classis is closed.

For the Classis,
J. MULDER, vice-chairman e.t.

PRESS RELEASE

CANADIAN REFORMED HOME FOR THE AGED INC.

During the past few months the steering committee, appointed by the Board, has been very active. After discussions with officials of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) the flurry of activity increased dramatically. We were given indications a Home for our older brothers and sisters could be built. A feasibility study was the first step to be undertaken. Much work had to be done. A questionnaire was prepared and distributed and the results analyzed. This was then presented to the officials of CMHC. We had two weeks of waiting and were then pleasantly surprised. We received permission to build a 15 Unit Home on our property beside the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church in Hamilton. A timetable was set by CMHC of steps to be taken by us. As soon as one step is completed another one or more are added. This keeps the project going at a good tempo.

The building committee has visited an architect for preliminary discussions on building plans. This will be followed by more meetings.

The steering committee has visited officials at City Hall to obtain requirements for zoning and building permits.

More studies will have to be completed and presented to officials. Start up funds have been made available to us to

pay for expenses incurred.

The board is very pleased with the results so far. It now seems that after many frustrating years we are finally on the road to establishing a Home for our brothers and sisters. Barring unforeseen circumstances the Home may be ready sometime in the fall of this year.

For the Board,
H. VAN LUIK

OUR COVER

Fishing dock in LTVCA Conservation Area, Thames River, Chatham, Ontario. (Photo courtesy Keith Sik-kema.)

Did you already pay for your 1982 subscription? Do not delay! Avoid unnecessary administrative costs.

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,
Happy New Year to you all!
I know it's a little late.
But better late than never, right?
This year, too, I hope we'll have some really good times "meeting" here on these pages of Our Little Magazine.

I hope you'll enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities as much as I enjoy receiving your mail!

And you know the Busy Beavers really like the puzzles, and poems, and quizzes, and stories, too, that you share with them.

We all like to hear from you, so please send your letters to:

Aunt Betty
Box 54,
Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W7

Busy Beaver *Pauline Lodder* wrote a poem to share with you. Here it is:

Making Faces
Making faces is lots of fun,
Even when you bite into a bun;
When you are mad you look very mean,
When you are happy you look just keen,
When you are asleep you look quite neat;
And when you are nice you are just sweet!

Thanks for sharing, Pauline.

BOOK LOOK

A while back Busy Beaver *Henriette Bosscher* sent me a BOOK LOOK. Here is what she wrote:

The title is *Heidi's Children*. It was written by *Charles Tritten* and published by *Collins*.

This book is about little girl who always screams and cries when she gets angry or doesn't get her way. When Heidi took care of her it never happened. Her name was Marta. She loved to live on the Alm but this summer she couldn't because the Alm-Uncle was too old to climb the mountain. One fall morning the Uncle died. Heidi was with him. Marta again had the fit.

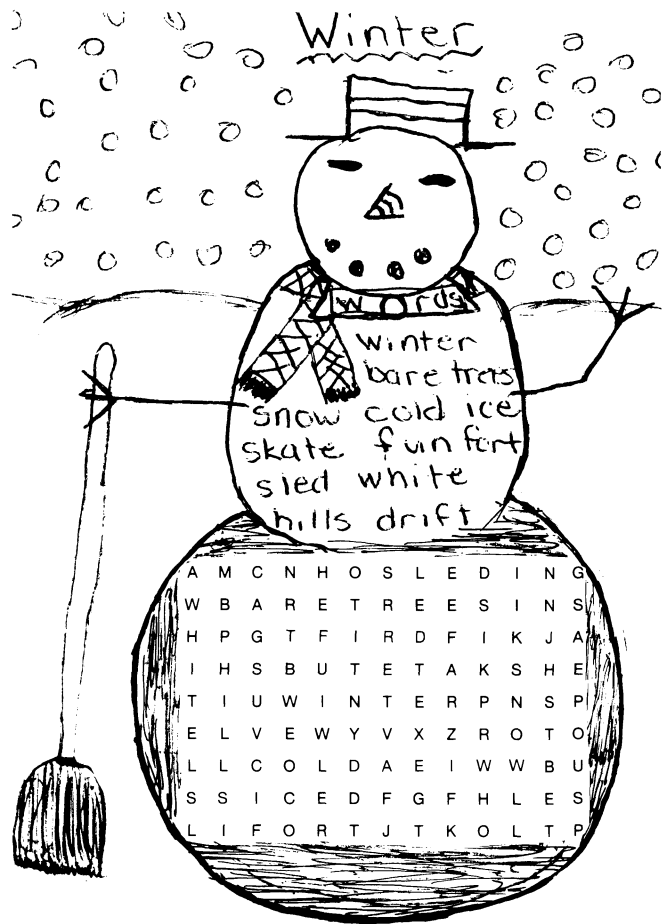
Heidi had a pair of twins whose names were Tobias and Martali. When they got older they were called Marta and Tobi. Marta's parents came one day and Marta thought they were going to take her away. Her parents said,

"Only if you really want to come, you may."

Heidi took Marta to a garden one day, and told the story of how she had gotten a cross she had from her sister Jamy. Marta thought this over and went to her parents after all.

I hope you will enjoy this book if you read it.

Busy Beaver *Cynthia Oosterveld* has a winter word search puzzle for you to do. Can you find all the words?



QUIZ TIME

How Many?

1. the _____ tribes of Israel
2. the _____ Commandments
3. the _____ Gospels
4. " _____ days shalt thou labour and do all thy work."
5. _____ barley loaves and _____ small fishes
6. _____ pieces of silver
7. And He was there in the wilderness _____ days, tempted of Satan.
8. No man can serve _____ masters.
9. This is the interpretation thereof; the _____ baskets are _____ days.
10. the _____ churches which are in Asia

Put an End to It

Complete the group by filling in the blank space correctly.

1. Shem, Ham and _____
2. the Scribes and _____
3. Matthew, Mark, Luke and _____
4. Jonah and the _____
5. gold, frankincense and _____
6. David and _____
7. Sodom and _____
8. he (John) did eat locusts and _____