

Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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DISCIPLINE

Within the Church₂

5. Church discipline

Speaking about and dealing with church discipline, we first have to make a distinction between secret and public sins. The present Church Order says in Article 74: "If anyone, having been admonished in love concerning a secret sin by two or three persons, does not give heed, or otherwise has committed a public sin, the matter shall be reported to the Consistory." This article makes a clear distinction between two cases. Either a sin is secret or a sin is public. In the case of a secret sin, the matter shall not be laid before the consistory unless admonition by one person in private and in the presence of two or three witnesses has taken place, and the sinner did not give heed to it. In the case of a public sin, the matter has to be laid before the consistory right away.

This matter is even more clearly formulated in the draft report on the revision of the Church Order to be presented to the general synod of Cloverdale in 1983, D.V. There it says in Article 66: "The Consistory shall not deal with any such matter reported to it unless it has first ascertained that both private admonitions and admonitions in the presence of two or three witnesses have remained fruitless, or that the sin committed is of a public character." The consistory first has to ascertain that both private admonition and admonition in the presence of two or three witnesses have remained fruitless! It is very important to stick to this rule. It happens too often that matters are laid before and are dealt with by the consistory, before the consistory has "ascertained" that the condition, mentioned above, has been adhered to.

The Church Order also mentions public sins. Article 75 speaks about "such sins as are by nature of a public character, or have become public

because the admonitions of the Church were despised." A secret sin can become public because the admonitions of the Church are despised. However, the consistory has to be careful that no unnecessary or premature publicity is caused by the consistory. Discipline is a very delicate matter and has to be treated within the consistory with appropriate confidentiality. We always have to defend and promote the honour and reputation of our neighbour as much as we are able (Lord's Day 43). Undue publicity can make it much more difficult for a sinner to repent and come back to the Church.

As soon as a case has been laid before the consistory in the proper way, the consistory has to begin with admonition, that means, with teaching, instruction, and training, to restore the sinner in a spirit of gentleness, according to Gal. 6:1. If there is repentance and amendment of life, the whole matter should remain within the walls of the consistory room and no further publicity should be given to it in any way whatsoever.

6. "Silent censure"

If someone obstinately rejects the admonition of the consistory, suspension from the Lord's Supper should take place. This suspension is still a confidential matter and will not be announced to the congregation. That is why it is called a "silent censure," or, as it is called in Dutch, "stille censuur." And here it is, that the public sin comes into the picture, as far as the procedure is concerned.

When someone has committed a public or otherwise gross sin, he or she has to be suspended from the Lord's Supper without delay, according to Article 76 of the Church Order. In such a case the consistory shall not wait to see whether the admonition by the consistory will be accepted or rejected, but shall suspend the sinner right away.

This "silent suspension" is not yet the so-called "first step of discipline," but rather a temporary measure. In this respect we have to distinguish two types of suspension: the so-called simple suspension and the suspension as a real punishment for one who hardens himself in sin. The latter will necessarily result in excommunication if the sinner does not repent. The former clearly has a temporary character.

It might be appropriate to mention a few examples in which such a simple suspension has to be used. Prof. G. Voetius mentions, among others, the following cases:

1. When someone, shortly before the celebration of the Lord's Supper, confesses that he has been involved in a shameful crime. Although he might confess his sin, ask for forgiveness, and promise repentance and amendment of life, he still has to be suspended from the Lord's Supper for the next one or more times to make him aware of the seriousness of his sin.

2. When someone, rightly or wrongly, is accused of a crime, and the matter is still in court. He should be suspended from the Lord's Supper until his innocence has been proven or he has confessed his sin and for a certain period of time has shown amendment of life.

3. When someone, after repeatedly promising to repent and to amend his life, time and again falls back into the same sin. He should be suspended from the Lord's Supper until he has proven his amendment of life for a certain period of time.

4. When brothers or sisters together are involved in a conflict in which they accuse each other of serious sins, while each claims innocence. In such a case the consistory has to suspend both parties from the Lord's Supper, until it has made a judgment about the question who is right and who is wrong.

In all these cases the suspension is not really a matter of spiritual punishment, but rather a precaution where matters are not completely clear as yet, to prevent the Lord's Supper from being defiled, to give the sinner time to show amendment of life, and to give the consistory time to ascertain the truth. This type of suspension has to be clearly distinguished from the suspension as a spiritual punishment.

7. Different steps of church discipline

If the discipline, mentioned above, remains fruitless, and the sinner obstinately rejects the admonition of the consistory and after repeated admonitions shows no signs of repentance, the consistory shall at last proceed to the extreme remedy, namely, excommunication (according to Article 76 of the Church Order).

In the procedure of excommunication we can distinguish three steps. The first step includes the first announcement. In this announcement the name of the sinner is not to be mentioned. Article 77 says: "In the first (announcement) the name of the sinner shall not be mentioned, that he be somewhat spared." The offence has to be explained. Often it suffices to mention only against which commandment he has sinned.

The second step of discipline is the announcement of the name of the sinner. Article 77 of the Church Order says that the offence shall be explained, together with the care bestowed upon him, in reproof, suspension from the Lord's Supper, and repeated admonition, and the congregation shall be exhorted to speak to him and to pray for him. This second announcement shall be made only after advice of a classis has been obtained.

The third and final step is the announcement that (unless he repent) the sinner "will be excluded from the fellowship of the Church, so that this excommunication, in case he remains obstinate, may take place with the tacit approbation of the Church. The interval between the admonitions shall be left to the Consistory" (Article 77 Church Order).

The draft report on the revision of the Church Order formulates it this way: "Anyone who obstinately rejects the admonition of the Consistory or who has committed a public sin shall be suspended from the Lord's Supper. If he continues to harden himself in sin, the Consistory shall inform the

Congregation of this by means of public announcements, that the Congregation be engaged in prayer and admonition, and the excommunication not take place without its cooperation. In the first public announcement the name of the sinner shall not be mentioned. In the second public announcement — which shall be made only after the advice of Classis has been obtained — the name and address of the sinner shall be mentioned. In the third public announcement a date shall be set at which the excommunication of the sinner shall take place" (Article 67).

In this whole procedure we have to keep in mind that the ultimate purpose is not to excommunicate a member, but to bring him back and to restore him in a spirit of gentleness, according to Gal. 6:1. Therefore the Church Order says that this will happen only when the sinner continuously hardens himself in sin and rejects the admonitions of the consistory.

8. Repeated falling back

The question can arise what to do when someone repents and then falls into sin again, not once but many times. It might be a matter of alcoholism, sexual misbehaviour, discontent, or theft. As long as someone really fights against sin, but through weakness falls into sin, "he must not despair of God's mercy nor continue in sin," the Form for Baptism says. In such cases the consistory has to continue with teaching, instruction, and training in godliness. It might, however, be necessary, in order to prevent the Lord's Supper from being defiled, to suspend such a person from the Lord's Supper for the reasons mentioned above dealing with simple suspension.

Still we must be very careful in such cases, because the sinner who fights against a certain sin and weakness in his life might need the strengthening of his faith by the Lord's Supper even more desperately than others. Keep in mind that the Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper says that, in coming to the Lord's Supper, we acknowledge that we are dead in ourselves, and that we seek our life outside ourselves in Jesus Christ.

However, it may sometimes be necessary to suspend such a person from the Lord's Supper for a certain period of time, to give him the opportunity to show real amendment of life. Such a suspension may well serve as an incentive to continue in the strug-

gle against a certain sin.

Another question we are confronted with very often is how the admonition has to take place when someone is unwilling to listen to the office-bearers, or when he is not even prepared to see them. In such a case a letter has to be sent, if necessary by registered mail, to make sure that the letter really is received. It is clear that this is a far cry from the ideal situation in which admonition has to take place. However, the consistory has to continue, not in haste, but with determination, also when the sinner does not agree at all with the consistory and considers the discipline to be undeserved and unjustified; even when the sinner tries to obstruct, to stop, or



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ORGANISTS AND WORSHIP SERVICE

In every Christian family, the man is prophet, priest, and king. I would rather say: king, prophet, and priest. Prof. K. Schilder once called Jan Zwart "the prophet on the organ bench." Sure, a man like Jan Zwart could be a prophet when he composed his beautiful works on psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. But I do not believe that an organist in the worship services can be a prophet. I believe that if we see the relations in the proper order, then the King is in heaven and the prophet is on the pulpit.

But what is now the function of the organist in the services? Here we confront the general opinion in Holland: the organist is supposed to *accompany* the singing of the congregation. I do not agree. I firmly believe that an organist *leads* the singing of the congregation!

I think about Psalm 42:3 and 7. In the first half of each stanza the poet is sad, depressed. The second half is praise. It is clear that there is a remarkable difference in volume between the first and the second half. Yet there are many organists who are of the opinion that both halves should be played with the same volume! I do not agree with those organists. The first half should be played soft; the second half fortissimo. It is not clear to me how an organist can call this accompaniment of the singing congregation.

Another example. Many of our

beautiful Genevan tunes are more or less unknown. If an organist accompanies the singing slowly the singing dies down. Thus, in order to help the congregation, the organist leads and plays the melody *cantus firmus*. You might say that not every organist can do that. Well, then I think they should learn it! And an organist who does not study should not be on the organ bench!

And now I come back to the organist as leader of the singing. Isn't it true that regardless whether we sing in prayer form or are praising our Triune God, we offer up our songs before His throne? And now I think about Israel. The Levitical priests, on behalf of the people, offered up to the throne of God, for example, the offer of movement. As I said before: "The King is in heaven, the prophet in the pulpit, and the priest on the organ bench."

To me, this means, that an organist has to prepare himself for the worship service, as well as a minister does. It is wrong when an organist goes to the consistory a few minutes before the service is to begin to get the psalms and *text!* An organist should know on Saturday what the minister is going to preach about the next day. If he knows the text, he can choose a suitable piece for after the sermon, and, if possible, an applicable known hymn after the service. This is the least an organist should

do, and we ask the cooperation of the ministers, in order that an organist gets the opportunity to prepare himself.

ORGANIST

P.S.

I agree 200%, if that is possible. Is it not remarkable that some young ladies achieved what all organists together have never yet been able to?

"How is that?" you ask.

These young ladies type bulletins. "Okay," they said, "I'll do it, on two conditions: First, all material in writing delivered at my home. Second; deadline Thursday evening. I want my weekend free."

Therefore, where the liturgy is published in the bulletin, the minister has to have it ready that early! Then the organist can have it in time too. Guest ministers should be called by phone in time by the clerk (organists need not pay the costs) who passes it on to the organist(s). That's not only a matter of good manners, but (more important) of good, well-prepared liturgy. But yes, it is a matter of good manners too!

MINISTER

P.S.

The organist is not a prophet, let alone a king; but what about a *priest*, carrying the "sacrifice of our lips" to the mercy seat?

to block the procedure. To a certain extent it is inherent in the matter that the person concerned does not agree. If someone agrees and feels that discipline has to be exercised in his case, the first step to repentance and amendment of life has been taken, possibly making further disciplinary measures superfluous.

If everything fails and every disciplinary measure remains fruitless, then, finally, excommunication must take place, but even that is not the last step. We always hope and pray, even after excommunication, that the sinner will repent and that he will desire to be reconciled with the Church.

Often it does not come to the ultimate step of excommunication, because the sinner withdraws him-

self from the Church. In case of withdrawal, no further discipline can be exercised. This withdrawal can take place in a direct way, but also indirectly, such as when someone moves to another place. When a member of the congregation moves to another place and refuses to ask for an attestation, even after repeated admonition to do so, he ceases to be a member of the Church, and the consistory has to announce that the member concerned has withdrawn himself from the Church by moving out without asking for an attestation. It is also possible that someone asks for an attestation but, having received it, keeps it in his pocket. This, too, means a withdrawal from the Church, although it will not be announced as

such — neither in the congregation he left, because he left after he had received an attestation; nor in the "new" congregation, because he never joined that congregation. In this respect we have to bear in mind that, in moving to another place, there is no such thing as an automatic transfer of membership. To join the congregation in the new residence has to be a personal act of the member concerned.

It has to be understood that all this counts only for communicant members. In the next part of this article we will deal with the procedure as far as non-communicant members are concerned.

Burlington, ON

W. POUWELSE
(To be continued).



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.

LONDON (ANP)

"We listened to the interview which you gave before the Czechoslovakia television with feelings of grief and bitterness," Christians who are imprisoned in Czechoslovakian prisons wrote to the American evangelist Billy Graham. The letter was published by Keston College, the English institution for research on religion in Eastern Europe. Graham visited the DDR and Czechoslovakia in October.

The writers would have liked to see that Graham spoke with the government officials about the imprisoned Christians and about other believers who, because of their faith, lost their jobs.

The letter closes with the wish that Graham may have the wisdom of which Matthew 10:16 speaks.(ND)

MOSCOW

"Christian groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses" are very active in the East-Asian part of the Soviet Union. They stir up recruits against the state. Thus a newspaper which appears in Moscow.

The Komsomolskaya Pravda, the daily of the official youth movement, wrote that in the city of Chabarowsk two Jehovah's Witnesses entered the room where the editors were and tried to win the journalists present there for their ideas.

The Jehovah Witnesses are prohibited in the Soviet Union, but it is estimated that there are several thousands of them in the country. Earlier in this century many persecuted religious groups migrated to Siberia and the Far East. Many internal exiles settled in the region of Chabarowsk.(ND)

THE DEPARTMENT of Health and Human Services of the United States has separated abortion activities from all family-planning services financed by the federal government. According to the Public Health Service Act, no federal funds may be used for "programs where abortion is a method of family planning." The new guidelines also prohibit family-planning and abortion clinics from sharing office space, personnel, publications, stationery, and medical equipment or supplies.(CT)

AN INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN theologian at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary had come under fire from Arkansas Baptists who are demanding that he be dismissed. Dale Moody, a 67-year old senior professor of theology, teaches that it is possible for Christians to lose their salvation, a position at variance with that held by many Southern Baptists. Representatives of the seminary say Moody can be dismissed only by a two-thirds vote of the trustees at their annual meeting in April. Moody received a Ph.D. from Oxford University and has studied with such theological heavyweights as Emil Brunner and Karl Barth.(CT)

THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES has transferred funds from other programs to the Program to Combat Racism in spite of repeated assurances to the contrary, a West German source charges. Rolf Scheffbuch, spokesman for a discussion group in the Württemberg Synod of the (Lutheran) Protestant Church in Germany (EKD), disclosed in November that German church tax funds contributed to the WCC budget had been transferred from the departments of world mission, evangelism, and development to the Program to Combat Racism's special fund used to support liberation movements. This runs counter to assurances made by the WCC Executive Committee at Jamaica in 1979 that the Program to Combat Racism would be financed solely by funds designated for it. The EKD is the largest contributor to the WCC, at an annual rate of close to \$1 million.(CT)

WASHINGTON (RNS)

Two dozen Catholic congressmen have signed a letter to a U.S. church leader condemning the bish-

ops' proposed pastoral letter on war and peace and saying they would expect such a statement from "agnostics," not bishops.

"Our real threat is not embodied in weapons — however gruesome modern weaponry might become," they wrote in a seven-page letter to Archbishop Joseph Bernardin, head of the National Conference of Bishops' committee which prepared a draft of the pastoral letter opposing U.S. nuclear policies. "Our real threat comes from an ideology that challenges our fundamental faith in human dignity."

"We would expect the view that no values are worth defending if a nuclear war might ensure to be espoused by materialists — those who are at best agnostic about the existence of the immortal soul and the nature of good and evil. When we read such pessimism from some of our bishops who are dedicated to the propagation of the faith, we cannot but wonder, 'What faith,' " the 22 Republicans and two Democrats wrote.(CN)

NEW YORK (NC)

The ordination of women is "only a cultural question," said Dominican Father Edward Schillebeeckx at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), held Dec. 19-22 in New York.

A principal theme of his remarks was the necessity of distinguishing the Gospel from the cultural forms in which it is expressed.

The Gospel was originally expressed in a patriarchal culture, but it is not to be identified with the ethical assumption of that culture, he said.

His interpretation of the resurrection of Christ was among points the doctrinal congregation had raised. In the AAR discussion he indicated that he considered the New Testament accounts of the empty tomb among the cultural forms distinguishable from the essential meaning of the resurrection.

Asked if discovery of the bones of Jesus were a theoretical possibility he answered affirmatively. "The resurrection was not the reanimation of a corpse," he said.(CN)

LOS ANGELES (RNS)

Religion plays a prominent role in the lives of high-school students who earn top grades and participate in extracurricular activities, a recent poll reports.

The poll by Educational Communications, which compiles and publishes "Who's Who of American High School Students," surveyed 55,000 juniors and seniors with better-than-average grades from 22,000 public, private and parochial high schools across the nation. The survey provides an insight into factors that contribute to the development of high achievers.

Home environment emerges as possibly the most important factor. The survey shows that 85 percent of high achievers are reared in homes in which both natural parents live and formal religion is practised. Nearly 45 per cent live in rural communities.

By an 84-per cent margin, high achievers favour traditional marriages and reject the use of cigarettes and illegal drugs. Only four per cent have used marijuana, and 89 per cent have never smoked cigarettes. Another seven per cent have tried smoking and quit, leaving only four per cent that smoke on a regular basis.(CN)

vO

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VAN DE GRAAF, Marietje Johanna Helena, geboren 27 november 1911, vertrokken naar Canada 27 november 1946.
IRMER, Herbert B.G., geboren 3 april 1923, naar Canada vertrokken in 1980.
MULDER, Jan, geboren 8 november 1956, naar Canada vertrokken op 28 juni 1976.
PLEIJ, Willem, geboren 28 juli 1906, naar Canada vertrokken op 10 april 1953.
VAN REE-TOPPEN, R.C., geboren 25 april 1951, laatstbekende adres te Toronto.
VERHEIJ, Adrianus, geboren 16 maart 1923, naar Canada vertrokken op 28 maart 1949.
WIJBENGA, Willem-Jacobus, geboren 23 juli 1917, naar Canada vertrokken 2 juli 1952.

De Consul-Generaal,
voor deze:-
Mevr. G. SCHNITZLER
Fgd. KANSELIER

PARALIPOMENA

"THE YEAR OF THE BIBLE"

1983 is the last year before the fearsome year "1984" which has been prophesied as the year of Big Brother and the absolute domination of antichrist over the souls of men. Mind you, this "prophecy" did not have the proper credentials; that is, they did not come from God! Anyway, it is remarkable, to say the least, that Colorado Senator William Armstrong has called upon Congress to call upon President Reagan to declare, by resolution, the year 1983 as "The Year of the Bible." I read this somewhere and cannot guarantee the truth of this information, although the mention of some new Bible translations in the same article has the ring of truth.

New Translations Keep Coming

The Bible is still Bestseller No. 1. The demand for Bibles cannot be satisfied yet. And the number of translations is growing by the year. I happen to know a bit about this because collecting Bible translations is my hobby.

There is first *The Reader's Digest Bible*, condensed from the RSV. Some have called it "a butchered bible." I call it the bible (no "B") published with an unashamed lie. The lie is in the Preface, where a contrast is made between "condensation" and "abridgement": "condensation concerns itself with every individual word of the text, every phrase, sentence, paragraph and chapter . . . By contrast, abridgement merely eliminates whole books or sizable sections of books." This bible is then presented as "condensed," not "abridged." It's a lie! Whole sections of books are simply "butchered."

Then there is *The New King James Version*, by Thomas Nelson Publishers, a totally different case. Here not a single word is left out. The peculiar character of this edition, however, is that it is a translation of a translation. Although a group of Old Testament and New Testament scholars checked the new version with the Hebrew and Greek original, it remains "a translation of a translation." I wonder if this is pleasing to God. Does it not idolize an old, revered, and venerated KJV? Is there not a "business motivation" behind the whole

seven-year undertaking? Because the KJV is still No. 1 on the Best-seller List of Bibles, the publishers hope that this new version of an old version will become the best-seller and replace all newer translations like RSV, NEB, NASB, NIV, Jerusalem Bible, and the like. Then, according to my information (I haven't seen this latest edition yet), there is the fact, I quote, "that the Lord has led in the project of offering the latest edition of the old *King James Version* with a 200 page Greek and Hebrew dictionary sewn into the end of the book." The ICC seems to have sponsored this edition.

That's (at least, I assume) three more Bible editions in one year.

Leadership Requested

This being the situation (I know about some *thirty* different translations of the New Testament — all in English, of course), is it not about time that our professors of Old and New Testaments give some leadership to the brotherhood, me included? What do we know about good and bad translations? How can we judge? Are we going to run into the danger of drowning in the multitude of translations, without ever having the chance to know Bible texts by heart? It may be, considering the not-so-nice plans for the RSV, that the New Version of the KJV is to be our refuge. I don't know; I'm just asking.

I must be careful now. I received hospitality for my "Left-overs" in *Clarion* and a guest must be polite. I read (long) articles in our beloved magazine of which I sometimes think, "What's the use?" especially when it is (often) criticism directed at "others." Pretty negative, if you ask me. More beneficial is to write about the beauties of our undoubted Christian faith; to give guidance for family worship and Bible study; and now also to inform us of the value of new Bible translations. Please let's not wait for a General Synod for that. Such a Synod is not an expert nor qualified to judge Bible translations.

With you, respected reader, I keep waiting . . .

CHRONICLER

PATRIMONY PROFILE 7

By Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

As for his position with regard to the Secession, we must state that Groen disapproved of the Secession, but he did have an open mind and defended the rights of those who did secede from the Netherlands Reformed Church. He was convinced that the articles from the criminal law used against the Seceders did not apply to ecclesiastical gatherings.

In March 1837 he sent a memorandum to the king in which he examined the policies of the government against the Seceders from a point of law. When no reaction was forthcoming, he reworked the memorandum and published it under the title *The Measures against the Seceders Judged by the Constitutional Law*.

Also of importance is Groen's promotion of Christian education. He was a defender of freedom of education and was a champion of the rights of the parents. "Parents," he wrote, "who — with or without sufficient grounds — are convinced in their hearts that the tenor of the instruction at the existing schools is un-Christian, should not be prevented, either directly or indirectly, from giving their children such instruction as they are convinced they can answer for to God. That compulsion — I say it frankly — is unbearable and ought to be terminated."

Later we shall speak of Groen's involvement in the efforts to restore the Netherlands Reformed Church and thus to bring it back, not via Secession, but from within. For the time being may the above suffice.

The Rev. Dirk Molenaar

The rest and peacefulness which the Reformed people were enjoying and the "détente" or friendly relations which resulted in a unifying trend were sometimes cruelly shattered when people stood up for the truth and exposed the false basis of such "unity." It was a unity which could only be achieved and maintained with simultaneous denial of the basic truths of the Christian faith. Schotsman came with his *Monument* for the Synod of Dort, and was maligned because of his defense of the old Reformed doctrine. Then, five years later, came da Costa with his *Objections*, causing a stir even in the highest echelons of the civil government. And, to top it off, in 1827 another booklet appeared, exposing the falsehood of the Proponent Formula and, like Schotsman, defending the Canons of Dort. It was entitled *Address to All My Reformed Fellow Believers*.

Let us read a few passages from the *Address*. Of the Proponent Formula it says, "This formula has been drawn up with so much slyness and subtlety that the wise and honest Krieger [the President of Synod, vO], unaware of any evil, did not notice it, and many after him did not understand it so speedily either. Everyone who thinks carefully about the formula put before us will see clearly that it does not

say that the Forms of our Church are in accordance with God's Word but, with preservation of the sentence as such, that one believes the doctrine which according to God's Word is contained in the Forms of our Church. The subscribing is therefore not done because one acknowledges the Forms to be in accordance with God's Word, but insofar as they are in accordance with God's Word If only the words *insofar as* had been used, it would have been obvious and everyone would have avoided damage, but now we call it sly and subtle and a secret undermining and casting away of our Reformed doctrine.

"If one is of the opinion that our Church, that our Dort fathers, have erred, all right. But why then not have a general church assembly convened and send a collected and Christian address to all Reformed members with the proposal to change the doctrine and then see who do not wish to go along with the latter and divide church buildings and possessions simply and without much ado, in that way promoting peace and love? If that procedure is not good, why then not choose another one whereby one can follow an honest course?"

Who dared to write such things? The manuscript had been sent to bookseller J.H. den Ouden in Amsterdam, but it had been sent from Utrecht, anonymously. Who was the writer? All sorts of guesses were made. One of the persons who were mentioned was professor-emeritus J.A. Lotze. We met him before. The Minister of Justice instructed the Chief or Director of Police in Amsterdam by secret letter dated June 8, 1827, "in the most thorough but at the same time least obvious manner" to inquire with the publisher who the author was and to report back to the Minister. The booklet in question "was judged to have the tenor of sowing distrust and division among the Reformed membership."

Four days later the Chief of Police of Amsterdam replied. In an extensive report he expresses the inner joy which he felt at the receipt of the Minister's request. "Among all the writings causing discord which for some years have been thrust into the world upon the instigation and example of Mr. Bilderdijk there is hardly one which, according to the general feeling, is as dangerous for the quiet and peace of the Reformed Church and can be as detrimental as that same piece which is the subject of Your Excellency's secret communication of the 8th inst."

The Chief or Director of Police summoned Mr. den Ouden to appear before him. "I asked him in a modest but at the same time very serious tone who the writer of the piece in question was, upon which, after some insignificant sentences and excuses, made for the larger part in the language of Canaan, he finally declared that he did not know the writer; that he had received the manuscript with an accompanying anonymous letter from Utrecht; that he had let some of his trusted friends, most likely Messrs. A. Capadose, I. da Costa, and P. Wolterbeek, read it and upon their advice had not had any objections to print it and publish it under his name."

Since he did not make much progress with his "modest" tone, the Police Chief "made it a little hot for him, as one puts it, of which the fortunate result was that he humbly requested permission to go home and get the manuscript with the letter, which request I granted him with a few impressive warnings." The chief could now report to the Minister that the writer was none other than the Rev. D. Molenaar of The Hague.

The Rev. Dirk Molenaar also had to endure slander and reproach when it became known that he was the author of the little booklet. A retired minister — also in an anonymous publication — accused him of spite "because he had not been appointed to any ecclesiastical board," called him a sly Jesuit, and expressed the conviction that Molenaar should be transferred "to a small village close to the border."

Not only was Molenaar slandered and maligned, he was also summoned to appear before the Director General for the Affairs of the Netherlands Reformed Church. He was told that His Majesty was greatly displeased with his publication. Perhaps even some veiled threats were made. And the result was that the Rev. D. Molenaar wrote a letter of apology to the king; he was a man of words, not a man of action. We do not say this to push him down, only to describe the situation. Although his booklet saw nine printings in 1827 alone, the immediate results were very meager.

In his letter to the king, Molenaar wrote, among other things, that he had "deep regret" having heard that publication of his booklet had greatly displeased His Majesty, "declaring that it was completely contrary to his intention and wish by such an address to cause any schism or unrest in the National Church . . . The undersigned — as he believes — known as a man of peace, making the most definite declaration concerning his good intentions, and seeing with regret that the means which he used were understood in the opposite sense, and for that reason were certainly not answering their purpose, hopes by means of this declaration to share the king's undiminished favour, giving the assurance that he will not undertake anything of which it may appear that it could disturb the rest of the church . . ."

Indeed, Molenaar kept quiet and stayed in line, and he did enjoy the king's favour, witness his being knighted in due time. The king made him a Knight of the Order of the Netherlands Lion.

Johan Willem Vijgeboom

Not all actions which looked promising had as little immediate effect as the publication of Molenaar's address. Here and there some separate groups were formed which maintained themselves in spite of opposition, slander, fines, and other means of persecution. And even when such groups did not separate from the Netherlands Reformed Church, they kept meeting mostly in private homes.

From early days on, meetings were held besides the official services. No societies such as Men's and

Women's Societies as we know them existed in those days, and believers often came together for mutual edification in each other's home.

Especially when the purity of doctrine was abandoned by many ministers and the preaching was in fact not more than a moral lesson, a learned discourse, or a superficial talk, those who adhered to the true Gospel and found support and comfort in the Reformed Confessions sought spiritual food and strengthening in what were called "exercises" ("oefeningen"). We might also use the name "lay preaching," for gradually there emerged a class of so-called "oefenaars" ("lay preachers"). Sometimes sermons were read of ministers considered truly Reformed, sometimes lay preachers spoke an "edifying word."

In those gatherings true piety was promoted, on the one hand, although, on the other hand, they opened the door for pietistic and mystic influences. The gatherings often degenerated into an exchange of spiritual experiences — with all its ill effects. Those who could tell best about their spiritual experiences were gradually considered to be examples that should be imitated. There also developed a sort of class of "upper ten" spiritual inspectors who were far beyond criticism and who judged other people's spiritual state and condition.

One of those lay preachers, Johan Willem Vijgeboom, came to Axel in the Province of Zeeland in June 1822. The Church at Axel had already been in some turmoil. Ever since the introduction of the new organization in 1816, the people of Axel showed their disagreement and discontent. They already were opposed to the Evangelical Hymns and matters did not get any better when those hymns were confirmed in 1816.

To the one thing the other was added. When the synod decided that also non-members could be admitted to the Lord's Supper, the members in Axel expressed their disagreement with that. Further, synod decided in 1817 that in the service on the Sunday before the celebration of the Lord's Supper, with the preparatory sermon, four questions were to be read which the congregation was to hear standing and to which they should respond by a "We do."

The consistory and many members of the congregation considered their objections to those things to be of a confessional nature, and Axel refused to submit in these points to the ecclesiastical regulations. This led to a conflict and, on November 12, 1818, the whole consistory was deposed, except for the minister and one elder.

The consistory acquiesced in the deposition. No thought was given to a possible secession. Besides, the minister preached old-fashioned sermons and doctrinally there was no reason for complaint. Yet there were quite a few members who came together in private homes, and, when Vijgeboom appeared on the scene in June 1822, many were only too eager to go and listen to him.

(To be continued).

BOLTS FROM THE BLUE SKY?

Liturgical Addenda

In a recently published booklet on Reformed Liturgy,¹ a plea was made to restore certain elements of this liturgy to their original form, function, and beauty. One is never too old to learn. Already now I would like to add some remarks. If a second print should be necessary in the near future, I would wait for that. But such optimism is unfounded, so I will do it in this article.

1. *The Ten Words*

In chapter 3 of this booklet, *Confession and Forgiveness of Sins*, some remarks were made on the reading of the Ten Commandments. Mention was made that sometimes it has been said, " 'Adding' the summary of the Law is not necessary, because it would mean reading the Law twice." The reaction to that was, "Then you are wiser than Christ who deemed it necessary to summarize it all in that one demand for love!"

The reading of the Law should not come as a bolt from the blue sky: just read it, period — not even a Psalm or a prayer for forgiveness. The Law should be "surrounded" by such a prayer, proclamation of forgiveness, a Psalm.

The addition is: there should also be some *variation*. I do not mean a variation that results in replacing the Covenant Law by a New Testament passage. Adding a passage that sheds New Testament light on the Law, its fulfilment by Christ, etc., would be beautiful. Maybe some other time a list of suggestions will be given.

For now, I would like to share with you what we have been practising for some time. Nothing but favourable reaction was received. But also, nothing new has been invented. We just read on a bit farther, after the tenth commandment. And is that ever beautiful! Here follow three examples:

Having read the Law from Deuteronomy 5, just continue! Let Moses speak!

"Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the ordinances which the LORD your God com-

manded me to teach you . . . ; that you may fear the LORD your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life; and that your days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them; that it may go well with you . . ." (Deut. 6:1-3).

Even more fitting and beautiful is Deut. 6:4-9; here comes the "summary" of the Ten Words in the one great commandment!

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD; and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house . . ."

But not only Deuteronomy offers these beautiful "underlinings" under the Ten Words. Already in Exodus 20, where the Law was given for the first time, Moses added the following fitting words (vv. 18-20):

"Now when all the people perceived the thunderings and the lightnings and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled; and they stood afar off, and said to Moses, 'You speak to us, and we will hear; but let not God speak to us, lest we die.' And Moses said to the people, 'Do not fear, for God has come to prove you, and that the fear of Him may be before your eyes, *that you may not sin . . .*'"

In our new Hymn 7, on the Ten Words, you hear the echo of these words.

2. *The Public Reading of Scripture*

Chapter 4 of the above-mentioned booklet deals with this Public

Reading as part of the Ministry of the Word. A very important part indeed! The oldest part of the liturgy, coming all the way from the old dispensation! The suggestion was made, first (of course!), that this Reading of Scripture should come right before the sermon; secondly, that a combination of Scripture passages should be read, especially with the preaching of the Catechism.

First this remark: However "hungry" God's people may come to church, they are at a great disadvantage compared with the preacher. He has been preparing himself all week; he has selected also these passages and read and reread them in his study. But the congregation may have the sensation that this reading comes as a bolt from the blue sky! They may have no clue why this and that passage are being read. The man in the pulpit is obliged to help his congregation in this. For him it is very easy to do just that. Say a few introductory words, why this passage was selected, what went before it, what is the special point on which the attention should be concentrated, and so on; the purpose being, only, to help the "pew" to "come along," not only during the sermon but also already during this important part of the Public Reading of Scripture. This receives an extra stress with what we call "Catechism Preaching." First read the Lord's Day, and then: "We know this from Scripture . . ."; some passages follow, and already at that moment the attention is directed to those aspects which will be in the centre of the sermon.

No bolts from the blue sky!

G. VANDOOREN

¹ *The Beauty of Reformed Liturgy*, Premier Publishing, Winnipeg, 1980.

OUR COVER

Winter Scene in Darlingford, Manitoba, courtesy of Manitoba Travel.

news medley

There are times when I love it that I am writing the news medley. Mind you, I never hate it and this will be evident from what our readers receive every fortnight. Sometimes, however, it gives a special pleasure.

The other time I mentioned that I received two cassette tapes with worthwhile music on them. This time I received a large envelope from Armadale, W.A.. This envelope contained a nice booklet commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the John Calvin School there. It was sent "with the compliments of the John Calvin School." Thank you right heartily for this surprise. I have not read every article or report as yet, but it will be understood that I did scan the pictures. Several names I recognize, but when it comes to recognizing the persons, I must admit that I succeeded only in a few instances. That I recognized one of the teachers in spite of his having grown a full beautiful beard will be no surprise to the ones who know the previous connection we had; but that I did not recognize the little boy whom I taught at Catechism Classes some thirty-eight years ago — who can take this ill of me?

One thing stood out when I looked at the picture of the total groups of students, both at the elementary and at the secondary level: How rich we are with our children and how blessed we are with the opportunities to have them taught on the basis of and in full accordance with the Word of our covenant God! We have come a far way since that first simple beginning. May we continue to appreciate these blessings, lest they be taken away from us and be given to others.

May we also bring these same riches to others, that more people may share the blessings we have received.

Efforts to this effect are being undertaken and have been for a considerable time, but the support and participation should be more general.

For many years we have had radio broadcasts, starting in the Fraser Valley and spreading to Ontario and Manitoba. Alberta had them as well.

That the response in many instances is not all that encouraging or frequent does not mean that these broadcasts are not being listened to or that they do not achieve their goal. They will be heard by many more people than we are aware of, even though we receive very few letters with questions for literature or further contact.

The Chilliwack Consistory report tells us that a budget on review was received from the broadcasting committee from which it was learned that "approximately seven replies were received about the Radio Broadcasts." This is not all that many, seeing the number of people covered by the area in which the broadcasts can be heard; yet the responses are sufficient to continue the work.

I do not know what reasons the Chilliwack Consistory had for its decision reading, "Council also is in favour of discontinuing our support to the radio broadcasts at the time the contract expires," but I certainly do deplore this decision from the heart. It is not for the \$750.00 per year which will have to come from other sources now — it certainly will come in one way or another — but it is the withdrawal of the support of the

work by one of our Consistories which I deplore so much. I hope that the Consistory will use the \$750.00 they now save per year for the *spreading of the Gospel* in some other way, otherwise it is the more deplorable that they made this decision.

It is with great joy that I read in the *Church News* of the Fraser Valley that a new committee or organization has been set up. It can be recognized by the word TORE, which is an abbreviation of Taskforce On Reformed Evangelism. Thus we have another set of initials to remember.

Anyway, what is the purpose and aim of this new organization? Let us listen to Rev. J. Visscher explaining it to the Cloverdale Consistory: "The purpose of this organization will be to stimulate evangelism. The object is to train, to translate and to publish tracts and a magazine to aid the work of evangelism."

The *Church News* contains quite an article about this new committee or organization, describing its aims and goals. "For some time already the question has been asked, 'What more can we do in the way of evangelism?' Our present activities include neighbourhood canvassing, Vacation Bible and Sunday Schools, visitation at hospital and old age homes. There is also the work of the Voice of the Church which belongs to evangelistic activity, but that is organized separately."

The "Taskforce" was officially launched at a meeting of the Home Mission Committees of the Fraser Valley. The conclusion was that much more can be done. And I agree. When it comes to the point, we are doing very little for those who live all around us. And the question bothers me more and more, "What is the reason why we see so very few 'strangers' in Church? And what is the reason why oftentimes, after they have attended services for a while, we don't see them back?" We have much to give, the greatest treasures on earth; do we display these treasures sufficiently and do we endeavour to make others acquainted with them?

The plans of the Taskforce are approximately:

"a. the *publication of an evangelistic magazine* to be produced six times a year initially and to be used hopefully by churches and home mission committees across the country;

"b. the *publication of an evangelistic Bible course*. This course will be a translation of the one that has recently been used in The Netherlands. It would be advertised in the magazine on a regular basis, as well as on the Voice of the Church. Consideration is also being given to national advertising in *The Globe and Mail* and *Maclean's*. International distribution would also be involved;

"c. the *publication of brochures and tracts*. At the present time there are any number of tracts on the market. These will be evaluated as to content and format. Suitable material will be promoted for use and new material will be commissioned. Among the present needs is a tract that introduces the Canadian Reformed Churches to others giving due attention to our history and doctrine.

"d. the *publication of an evangelism training course*. There is a need not only to produce material for external use but also to develop a course on evangelism for internal use. This course will lay a solid biblical basis for outreach. It will study the history of the church and the confessions of the church and show how they contribute to a sound understanding of reformed evangelism. It will deal with the cults of today. It will give practical advice on the nature and content of evangelism dialogue. In short, it will 'equip the saints for the work of ministry.'

"Needless to say, this is quite an undertaking. It will

require much prayer, a great deal of work, many volunteers, and some financial backing. If you feel that there is something constructive that you can contribute to this enterprise, then please do not hesitate to call one of the names listed below.

"It should also be pointed out that we have been in contact with the Federation of Evangelism Committees in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and that we have their full cooperation for this Taskforce. We may make full use of the Bible course which they have developed, of the evangelism magazine which they produce, called *Lichtstralen*, and of any other material that they have at their disposal. Naturally, every attempt will be made to utilize Canadian talent; however, we have not the least hesitation in using suitable material from abroad, especially if it is beyond our capacities to produce (e.g. the Bible course)."

As our readers can see: quite an ambitious program.

I wish the brothers and sisters much strength and, above all, perseverance. Don't count too much on cooperation. I don't wish to shoot down your enthusiasm, but be prepared to fill such a magazine yourselves; if you have to depend on the cooperation of others you might almost forget about it. That is our experience.

Further: I know what you mean, but don't think that you should speak of an "evangelistic magazine" and of an "evangelistic Bible course." You mean: a magazine especially written so that it can be used in the work of evangelism; and you mean a Bible course which can be used for those who have shown interest in the Word of God and the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ but have to be taught the very fundamentals due to lack of previous instruction. That is fine and good; but I don't think that you should speak then of "evangelistic magazine" and "evangelistic Bible course." What you are planning on and what we need is a Reformed magazine for evangelism and a Reformed Bible course to be used in that work.

I am sorry that I don't have the time (apart from the question whether I would have the special gifts required for it) to offer any help, but I do hope that the number of suitable volunteers will be so large that the work can even be expanded.

The above committee is not the only one new in the Valley.

We also read of the establishment of a Political Action Committee. As this Reformed Political Action Committee is even more in the toddler stage than the other committee which I mentioned, we shall wait for further particulars before filling you in on it.

Herewith we have to take leave of the Fraser Valley, and even of British Columbia.

Not much is to be mentioned regarding the prairies either. The Providence, Edmonton, bulletin contains this item: "We heard that our colleague Rev. S. De Bruin is unable to do his work for a while, due to illness." In connection with this, we mention also that the Rev. J. VanRiet-schoten was in the hospital with chest pains, but these appear not to have been a sign of or result of a heart attack. Carman's bulletin reveals that "last Sunday the Church looked very empty . . . the school also felt the absenteeism when 39 students did not attend classes some days."

We wish all those who are ill and cannot do their work due to illness a speedy recovery so that they can occupy their place in the midst of Church and society with renewed health and strength.

Ontario is next.

We mentioned the name Chatham already. Let me

also tell you that there were problems with excessive moisture in the auditorium and other parts of the Church building. The reason? Heating pipes were laid under the concrete floor but, since these are not watertight and since the water table became higher, water entered these pipes, with the result that the hot air carried it upstairs. At least, that's what I understood from what I read in the bulletin. Now various possibilities are investigated, such as electric heat or hot water heat.

Coming up, we reach Smithville.

Via another bulletin I informed our readers the other time already that there are plans for institution of another Church in the Smithville area. Now I received the Smithville bulletins which provide us with some additional information.

From the Short Report of the meeting held with regard to possible institution in the Wellandport-Canboro-Dunnville area it appears that the Consistory "requested the brethren to investigate the possibility of institution."

A meeting was held, with the approval of the Consistory, and there were 51 eligible voters. Of these no fewer than 49 declared themselves in favour of such institution. "After the intermission, it was unanimously decided to appoint a committee which has prepared the meeting to represent the assembly in formulating concrete and final proposals."

This committee was to report to the Consistory.

With gratitude I quote this line: "The meeting was concluded in good Christian spirit and a note of optimism."

In a later bulletin we read, "We have subdivided our committee into two parts: one looking after meeting facilities and property, the other taking care of the financial side." Both committees are reported to be busy gathering information.

And in a description of the committee work found in a subsequent bulletin it is stated, "We must prevent that institution will lead from one financially sound Church to two needy Churches." How true!

We will all agree when it is said that "much wisdom and love is required to deal with these matters in the right way." May these be given to all concerned in richest measure.

The Orangeville bulletin tells us that "One suggestion to install a PA system is referred to the Committee of Administration for study."

Whatever other news there may be will have to wait till next time.

Thank you for reading, thank you for listening.

Till we meet again.

Yours
vO

Church News

CALLED to Brampton, ON:

REV. W. POUWELSE

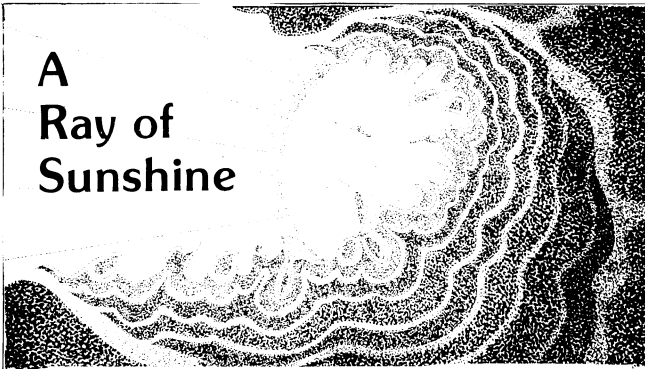
of Rehoboth Canadian Reformed
Church, Burlington, ON.

CALLED to Smithers, BC:

REV. W. HUIZINGA

of Hamilton, ON.

A Ray of Sunshine



“Arise and eat, else the journey will be too great for you.”

I Kings 19:7

Especially during the long dreary winter months many people suffer from depression. Not seeing the sunshine and feeling its warmth — this added to our regular difficulties and problems — makes us more vulnerable, and we become discouraged and depressed more easily. Most of us are affected by it to some degree.

This depression, or feeling of discouragement, can give us a very negative outlook on life. We tend to see everything through a pair of dark glasses. Things become distorted and out of perspective; they seem worse than they really are. Little grievances are blown out of proportion and small wrongdoings are magnified. When this happens, we become blind to the good things in life; kindly spoken words we do not hear; kindly deeds we do not notice. We tend to isolate ourselves, and by doing so we become very self-centered and egotistical. This is not only detrimental to a person's mental health, but it also has its harmful effects on our relationship with others. When we look at things from an isolated, egotistical point of view, we no longer see objectively. Our senses are dulled; we cannot perceive the need of others. We only see and feel our own unhappiness. This state of mind causes us to be very unfruitful in the work of God's kingdom. Our lives become stagnant. Everything revolves around ourselves. Physical annoyances are exaggerated; mental problems such as loneliness increase in severity. By our negative attitudes we push people away.

Depression can affect us at any age level, and for many different reasons. Even little children can suffer from it. They can feel very unloved and unwanted. Teenagers, in their difficult years of growing up, often feel unloved and rejected. In an article by France Klagsbrun we read how, according to U.S. Public Health Service, “. . . the rate of suicide among 15-24 year olds has risen by almost 300% in just 20 years.” During the first years of marriage, financial worries or the responsibility of bringing up children can cause depression, while in middle age the feeling of losing touch or of losing our youth and our strength can rob us of the joy of living. In old age the feeling of not being needed any longer can cause us to feel very low and dissipated.

Elijah, a man of God, who caused fire to come down from heaven in answer to his prayer, became so discouraged at a certain time that he wanted to die (I Kings 19). But the LORD sent His angel to encourage Elijah, “. . . an angel touched him, and said to him, ‘Arise and eat’ . . . and he arose, and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights.”

Can we not all sympathize with Elijah? Who of us has not experienced similar feelings? Sometimes we are ready to give up and are in need of extra strength. The Lord Jesus provided

for this need. He COMMANDED us to remember Him to go to Him for strength. In the form for the Lord's Supper the church confesses that we celebrate this supper to our comfort. By examining ourselves we must come to the conclusion that WE have nothing to offer, but that, by believing in what Christ has accomplished for us, “we seek our life apart from ourselves. We ARE MADE partakers of this heavenly food and drink, which Christ ordained only for His believers. And, from this institution of the holy supper of our Lord Jesus Christ we see that He directs our faith and trust to His perfect sacrifice, once offered on the cross, as the ONLY ground and foundation of our salvation.”

In the prayer following the form the church prays: “Grant us also Thy grace that we may take up our cross cheerfully, DENY ourselves, confess our Saviour, and with UPLIFTED head, expect our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven”

We are commanded to REMEMBER, to LOOK UP to Christ. The Lord's Supper is one of the means by which the Lord Jesus intended to strengthen the believers, to admonish them to look upwards to Christ in heaven. Our strength comes from above. This earthly journey may be very painful, but we are on the way to the promised land! From strength to strength His children go forward, until they all appear in Zion. “Therefore . . . let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus . . . who is seated at the right hand of the throne of God . . . so that we do not grow weary or faint-hearted . . .” (Hebrews 12). Elijah obeyed God's command and “he ate and drank, and went in the strength of THAT food forty days and forty nights.”

We are fed and nourished with Christ, the true heavenly bread. Therefore we do not look at external symbols but we lift our hearts up on high in heaven, where Christ is, our advocate at the right hand of our heavenly Father. This nourishment will make us go on from strength to strength. It will lift us out of our depression and it will give us confidence to continue the race that is set before us. “Come, let us then with contrite heart draw near to seek the pledges of His mercy. Remember how He bore our curse and shame; Until He comes, let us His death proclaim.” Arise and eat!

* * * * *

The Lord willing, the following brothers hope to celebrate their birthdays in March.

GERRY EELHART
6107 - 97A Avenue
Edmonton, AB T6B 1E2

Gerry will celebrate his 21st birthday on March 12. He lives in a group home and likes it very much. He attends school and workshop on a part-time basis. He loves to attend church and Young People's Society. Gerry is also very proud to be an uncle. Happy birthday, Gerry!

* * * * *

JIM VAN DER HEIDEN
R.R. 2
Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

Jim helps his father in the greenhouse full-time now and he enjoys the work very much. He also loves to read and to play his accordian. Jim will celebrate his 24th birthday on March 15. Happy birthday, Jim!

Shall we make these brothers happy and send them many best wishes for their birthdays, brothers and sisters?

Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped

These articles were translated from DIT KONINGSKIND, magazine of the Reformed Association of the Handicapped in The Netherlands.

To get acquainted

A minister asked "How can I get acquainted with a mentally handicapped person in a new congregation?" Actually a general answer is hard to give. Every handicapped person is different. A question like this understandably needs a personal answer. However, it seems fitting to me also in this column to say something about the matter. Not only ministers struggle with this problem. Also contact persons and ordinary brothers and sisters in the congregation frequently wonder how to go about it.

I believe that we often make it too difficult. Just go to the person, have a chat with him or her, say hello, or wink.

Especially a minister can let John or Grace feel that he knows they are home again for the weekend. Wave at them and they really feel that they "belong"!

A child is often content when you put your hand on its head when you enter church. Woe be to you if you would forget but once! The child will wriggle until it has attracted your attention. It's the little things that count.

And, lastly, this yet: it is of course wise to ask the parents what the child likes. They are the persons who can best inform ministers and contact persons.

Noordwijk-Binnen

H. ZIJP

Practical hints for wheelchair companions

In this booklet (published by Het

Nederlandse Rode Kruis Prinsengracht 27, Den Haag, price fl. 3,00), the following ten rules were given: —

1. When you meet a handicapped person for the first time, introduce yourself. Do not be overly obliging when they are capable of doing things for themselves. Do not right away try to help them and definitely do not take the things they can do out of their hands.
2. When you meet a friend while walking with a person in a wheelchair, and stop to talk with him, put the wheelchair in such a position that also the handicapped person can participate in the conversation without having to twist his head around.
3. When visiting an exhibition, a department store, a restaurant, etc. drive very carefully. It is especially unpleasant for a handicapped person when he, without being able to prevent it, drives against the legs of a passerby with the metal footrests.
4. When shopping, the handicapped person should make his wishes known. Sales personnel often have the inclination to turn to the companion.
5. When grocery shopping, the companion cannot take a shopping cart plus a wheelchair around. First discuss with the handicapped person if he can have a small cardboard box in his lap in which to put the groceries. It is not very pleasant to get ice cold, frozen groceries in your lap or items that tend to roll away.
6. Take into consideration that a handicapped person has a differ-

ent view of things from his wheelchair than you do! If you would like to draw his attention to something in particular, bend over and see if it can also be seen from his height.

7. It is difficult for a handicapped person to have a conversation with his companion, because he has to turn his head up and around in order to be understood (heard). Go and stand beside the wheelchair while talking. If you train yourself a bit it is also possible to walk beside the wheelchair while pushing it along. (e.g. the armrest). On a straight path this is not particularly difficult.
8. When crossing a busy road, remember well that a handicapped person feels totally at the mercy of his companion. Be extra careful. Never push the wheelchair past a parked car, but to the edge. You should go and stand beside it yourself and look to see if you can safely cross. Use a crosswalk whenever possible.
9. Also when going downhill, the handicapped person is at the mercy of his companion. High speed and a running companion who hangs on the wheelchair is alarming for the handicapped person. At a steep descent, e.g. a bridge, it is better to go down backwards. Do this also when going off a sidewalk. You will not run the risk of the person falling head first out of the wheelchair. Be careful not to let the wheelchair come down too hard.
10. When, on a walk with a handicapped person, a child looks on with interest, give the handicapped person a chance to talk with the child so that he can reduce the distance of "being different." It happens all too often that parents as well as wheelchair companions prevent children from satisfying their healthy curiosity.

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Box 411
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

His 5th birthday will be on March 3rd. He has had many operations. He was born with an open spine and still suffers from his physical handicap. His mind is good and he is a happy boy. He is the youngest of five children. Trevor would love to hear from his brothers and sisters.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

"Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves."

* * * * *

Send your requests to:

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

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

February is a DIFFERENT month.

How would you like to have a birthday only one time in FOUR years?

That is what happens to people who are born on February 29 during leap year.

For the next THREE years February has only 28 days. So their real birthday comes only once in 4 years, when leap year comes once again!

* * *

Many famous people were born in February. Here are the names of some I thought you would find interesting.

Do you share a birthday with one of them?

What do you know about the person who shares your birthday?

- Feb. 3 — Elizabeth Blackwell (1821) first woman doctor in the U.S.
- Feb. 4 — Charles Lindbergh (1902) American aviator who was first to fly across the Atlantic Ocean alone
- Feb. 7 — Laura Ingalls Wilder (1867) American author of the "Little House" books
- Feb. 11 — Thomas A. Edison (1847) American inventor
— Sir Vivian Fuchs (1908) British scientist and Antarctic explorer
- Feb. 12 — Abraham Lincoln (1809) American statesman
- Feb. 15 — Galileo Galilei (1564) Italian astronomer
- Feb. 19 — Nicolaus Copernicus (1473) Polish astronomer
- Feb. 22 — George Washington (1732) first president of the United States
- Feb. 29 — Marquis de Montcalm (1712) French general who died defending Quebec

Riddles FOR YOU:

(Thanks for sharing Busy Beaver *Linda DeBoer*).

1. What is the difference between the North Pole and the South Pole?
2. Do you know why the corn does not like the farmer?
3. What ten-letter word starts with g-a-s?
4. Why can't a man without any money be hunted by a hound dog?

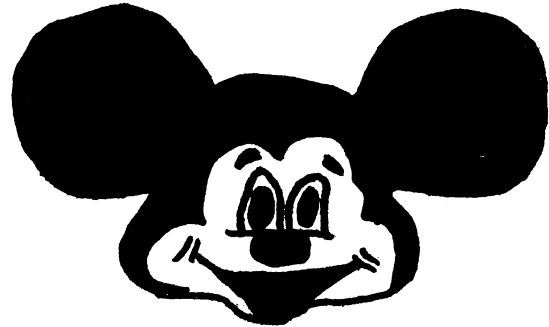
1. All the difference in the world! 2. The farmer pulls its ears! 3. automobile 4. He doesn't have a cent!

Answers:

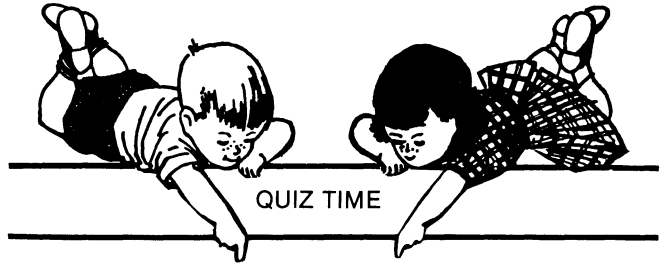
FOR YOU TO DO:

Can you find out why February usually has only 28 days while other months have 30 or 31?

Look it up, and if you write and tell us, I will send you a little reward!



Famous Cartoon Character
by Busy Beaver *Chandra Meerstra*



BIBLE QUIZ: True or false by Busy Beaver *Erica Blom*.

1. A physician wrote the Book of Acts. _____
2. Samuel had three brothers and two sisters. _____
3. Paul and Barnabas were in prison at Philippi. _____
4. Peter, Andrew, and John accompanied Jesus to the mount of transfiguration. _____
5. Cornelius was converted under the preaching of the Apostle Peter. _____
6. Samuel anointed David to be king over Israel. _____
7. Ruth was the mother of David. _____
8. Paul and Barnabas took John Mark with them on Paul's 1st missionary journey. _____
9. Lazarus, Martha and Mary were brothers and sisters. _____
10. Joshua led the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage. _____

Answers: 1. T 2. T 3. F 4. F 5. T 6. T 7. F 8. T 9. T 10. F