



Clarion
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The Schools Start Again

The Schools Start Again

The summer holidays belong to the past. School has started again. Ten months of education for the youth of the nation lie ahead. Thankfulness for such opportunities should fill our hearts. Many children in many a nation are deprived of a proper education. We, with our children, live in a country where school education is law, and where that education is provided.

We must be grateful for this situation, because (and as long as) the education laws leave us as parents the freedom to determine the kind of school education for our children. Can Christians be thankful when they are compelled to surrender their children to a humanistic, communist school education? Our governments still maintain the right of parents to give their children the education of their choice. As Reformed parents we are free to provide a Reformed school education for our children. We have reason to be grateful, indeed, for the goodness of our God.

Some time ago, in a letter to the editor of a daily paper, I read the remark that the state has to provide for its children. And if it is not able or willing to do so, it has to allow abortions. Here the state is considered responsible for the children, because they belong to the state and not so much to the parent(s) anymore. God's Word teaches us differently. Parents receive children. Therefore, parents are responsible for their children, also for their education. It is a terrible situation when parents shake off their own responsibilities and hand them over to the state. When the state, then, becomes totalitarian, it is the fault of the people.

Enmity in Education

Christian parents, who live by the gospel of redemption in Christ, receive children as a gift, a heritage from the LORD and for Him as seed of the woman. They also accept the responsibilities and duties that God connects with this gift. They know that the antithesis which God put in paradise, after the fall in sin, also must be maintained with respect to the school education of their children. They accept that also on this point they have to work with the truth of the spiritual enmity between woman and serpent, between woman seed and serpent seed, between Christ and Belial, between faith and unbelief, between righteousness and unrighteousness: between a truly Christian, Scriptural, Reformed education and a humanistic, so-called public education.

This spiritual enmity, this antithesis, exists not only between church and world. The Bible also puts a clear antithesis between true and false prophecy, between true and false church. False prophecy often compromises with the world and denies the antithesis in its consequences or even in its entirety. It promotes world conformity. Together a false church and the world often turn their hostility against true prophecy. Together the Roman empire and the Jewish people fought Christ and

His church (Acts 4:25-27). Both false prophecy and world have a dislike for the truth of God.

When God gave a reformation of the church through Luther and Calvin, these leaders promoted the establishing of schools where the teaching conformed to that of the church. The Synod of Dordt, 1618/19, in its seventeenth session, on Friday, November 30, made the following decision:

"In order that the Christian youth from their tender years be diligently instructed in the foundations ["fundamenten"] of the true religion and be filled with true piety, this three-fold manner of catechetical instruction must be observed. In the homes by the parents; in the schools by the teachers; and in the churches by the ministers, elders. . . ."

About the teachers it is stated that only those can teach

"who are members of the Reformed Church, who are adorned with testimonies of an upright faith and a pious life, who are well-trained in the doctrine of the catechism, and who show with their signature that they agree with the confession and the catechism and promise with holy sincerity diligently to instruct the youth entrusted to them in the foundations of the Christian religion according to this manner of catechetical teaching."

This same principle of the unity in education between home, school, and church was maintained after the Secession in The Netherlands. The return to the Word of God and the obedience of faith in the church brought along the return to God's Word and the doctrine of the church also in school education. The people of the Secession built their Reformed schools beside their Reformed churches, over against the existing Christian schools. In 1860 the *Society of Christian National School Education* was set up in Holland. It was an interdenominational society for which especially Groen Van Prinsterer worked hard. The foundation for this society or association was vague: "the unchangeable truths." This and other controversies caused three ministers of the Secession churches to set up an organization of their own in 1868: the *Association for Reformed School Education*. Someone reacted: That is a mere Secession business. Oh, that miserable churchism!" However, a firmly Reformed school education was placed over against a vague general Christian education. The basis was not some vague, unchangeable Christian truths, but the Reformed Standards. One of the founders wrote: "We are Reformed and desire back for our children what was taken away from us by the liberals: Reformed Schools; for we desire for ourselves the Reformed doctrine and for our children Reformed education. The Christian National School Association does not provide that."

Questions and a Wish

Is it true that more and more children in our churches are being sent to a public school, or a general Christian school,

LABOUR RELATIONS. 4

12. Authority, power, and leadership

In modern sociology a discussion is going on about the meaning of and the difference between authority and power. To have power means that someone is in a position to force others to act the way he prefers or that he can use his influence to change the course of the events according to his desires. To have power means to be in control and to have influence. To have authority, according to these sociologists, means that someone has moral supremacy and that he is accepted in his position by his environment, by his colleagues, or by his subjects. A well-known sociologist recently stated that authority means: accepted leadership.

The first part will be clear and most people will agree with it. A position of power means that someone can force others to submission and obedience, no matter whether he has legal rights or not. A hijacker and a terrorist have power; they can force people to do everything they wish, taking the risk of killing others or being killed.

However, the second part can have far-reaching and unforeseen consequences. If we define authority as an accepted position of leadership, the matter of authority becomes questionable and depends on the attitude of the public and the acceptance by the subjects. A police officer can use power, but he has authority only when his position is accepted by the people. A teacher can have a powerful position but having authority means that he is accepted by the students. Parents can punish their children, but they have to show their authority in making their position accepted. According to this theory the legality and legitimacy of someone's position depends on the reaction of the public or the subjects.

It is certainly important for someone who has authority and who is in a high position that his policy and his decisions are accepted by his subject. We can even call it a matter of moral authority that a teacher develops a good relationship with his students and manages to make his students accept his decisions. Parents who yell at their children all the time without any result are not doing a proper job. It is really important for someone in authority to make himself accepted by the people. However, that does not take away his legal right. Even when students cannot get along with their teacher or when children do not agree with their parents, they still have to be obedient. They can never derive from that the right to go their own way. In other words: the authority of parents, teachers, and governments does not depend on *acceptance* by the people. It is a mandate given by the Lord. That is what the Bible teaches us and that is what we can learn from Lord's Day 39. We have to show all honour, love, and fidelity to all those who are set in authority over us. We have to submit ourselves with due obedience to their good instruction, *since* it pleases God to govern us by their hand.

According to our confession the legitimacy of authority does not depend on acceptance by the subjects. We believe that authority is given by the Lord. He has set some in authority over us. That is why we reject this modern definition of authority as "accepted leadership."

We have to make a distinction between power and authority, but instead of using the definition of the modern sociologists, I prefer to use the definition given by the late Prof. B. Holwerda.¹ He makes a distinction between the Biblical (Greek) words *dunamis* and *exousia*. *Dunamis* can be translated by

while a Reformed school is available? Is it true that the reason given is that the parents cannot afford a Reformed education (while they often can afford that other teacher for their covenant children: the purely humanistic Mr. Television)? Is it true that they use the argument that the level of public school education is much better and of a higher standard? (If that is so, there is something wrong that needs changing.) Is it true that school society meetings are badly attended, because the members are no longer really interested, except when something exciting seems to come up?

Do we still hold on to our principles? Do we seek to maintain the unity in education between Reformed Churches, Reformed homes, and Reformed schools? Is that still a principle for us, based on the Word of God (e.g. Deut. 6:6, 7)?

At the beginning of the new school year, I express the wish and prayer that the Lord may graciously bless the education

of the youth of this nation: may He grant a return also in education to His Word; that the Lord may graciously keep open the eyes of parents and youth who have no choice and can only follow secular (higher) education so that this may not lead them astray; that He may graciously bless all Christian education in such a way that it is not vague but clearly Scriptural, confessional; that He may grant all Reformed teachers the wisdom and insight into the Reformed doctrine so that they are able to teach that doctrine and educate in accordance with it; that the students may be built up in the true doctrine of God's Word as confessed in our Reformed standards and in a truly God-fearing life in obedient love for the LORD, our faithful God, who made His covenant with Adam and Eve in paradise and will maintain it for ever in all eternity, in Christ.

J. GEERTSEMA

“power,” the actual position of power, used, for instance, by a burglar, a gangster, or a hijacker. It indicates the ability to force others to do something, to be obedient and submissive. *Exousia* indicates a mandate, given by the Lord. It refers to an office, a task and responsibility to govern and rule, as, for instance, is the case with parents, office-bearers in the Church, and the civil government. That is a completely different approach from that of modern sociology. That is a concept, concurring with the Word of God.

For our purpose we should like to add one more category and that is what we will call “leadership.” For clarity’s sake we are going to use the following definitions:

Authority is based on a mandate given by the Lord to certain office-bearers, officers, or parents.

Power is based on the availability or the use of means to enforcement.

Leadership is based on a mutual agreement and subject to voluntarily accepted rules.

As far as the first category is concerned, the Bible teaches us clearly that the Lord has given authority to our parents, to the office-bearers in the Church, and to the civil government. Lord’s Day 39 speaks in the first place about the authority given by the Lord to our parents. Romans 13 shows us that the Lord has given authority to the civil government. Hebrews 13:17 teaches us clearly that we have to submit to the office-bearers who are set to keep watch over our souls. As far as this authority is concerned, we have to submit ourselves because it pleases the Lord to govern us by their hand. Even when we think they are unreasonable or when we do not agree with them, we have to bear patiently with their weaknesses and shortcomings (Lord’s Day 39). There is but one exception in which we can refuse to obey and can oppose the authority, and that is when obedience should bring us into conflict with the Word of God. If that should be the case, we have to be

more obedient to God than to men.

The second category, called *power*, is also clear. When we are forced to do something, it can be better to give in, although there is no legal right or authority at all. That is not a matter of required obedience, but it is rather expedient to do so in the actual situation, at least as long as it does not bring us into conflict with the Word of God. If, for instance, a robber threatens you with a gun and asks you to hand over your purse, you had better give in, otherwise he might kill you or at least hurt you. If he asks you to do something that goes against the Word of God, you have to refuse. If they ask you to renounce your faith or to deny your Saviour, you have to say no, even if it would cost you your life. Unions use power when they call for a strike to force a company to give in. A company uses power when it tries to lower the wages of its employees in a time of underemployment. The employees have no choice but to accept it, because they cannot find another job.

Quite often real authority and power go together. The government is in a position to enforce the laws. Parents can use discipline to force their children to obey the rules. It also happens that someone has authority but no power to enforce the rules. Police officers can have all the right in the world, but they may be unable to enforce the law in some situation as during demonstrations of a great crowd. Parents may be unable to make their children obey the rules, although they have the authority, that is, the legal right, to do so.

It will be clear that, according to the definitions we have stated above, there is a great difference between authority and power.

The third category which we have mentioned above is leadership based on a mutual agreement and subject to voluntarily accepted rules. That is oftentimes the case in labour relations in our actual social situation. As we have said, there can be a position of power on either side, but that is not specific for this situation. A relationship of authority and obedience is also involved, but this authority is not in the first place based on a direct mandate, given by the Lord, but it ensues from a voluntarily established agreement.

An employee has to listen to and to obey his employer within the limitations of his labour contract. A subcontractor has to follow the instruction of the contractor or the architect who is in charge. The contractor on his part has to follow the instructions of his principal. All these relations of authority, obedience, and submissiveness are not in the first place based on a mandate given by the Lord, but rather on a contract or agreement.

Some labourers do not have a real labour contract with their boss but they get paid per unit of work: a painter may be paid per square foot; a bricklayer, per thousand bricks; a truck driver, per mile; and a salesman, per product sold. The way in which they are subject to the leadership of their employer or principal makes quite a difference, but they all have the responsibility to live up to the rules of their contract. The one might have a say over the other, but it is all within the limitations and according to the rules of their agreement. It does not really matter whether it is a written contract, a verbal agreement, a rule based upon tradition, or a gentlemen’s agreement.

That brings us to the next point and that is the question whether, in these cases, we have to do, in the first place, with the fifth commandment or rather with the ninth commandment.

— *To be continued*

Langley, BC

W. POUWELSE

¹Prof. B. Holwerda, *De crisis van het gezag*, Groningen, 1947, p. 10.

Presbyterian Matters

WHICH WAY WILL THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GO?

In its report to the forthcoming synod of Cloverdale, the Committee for Contact with the OPC writes about the relation of the OPC with the PCA (Presbyterian Church in America).

In 1981 the PCA General Assembly invited the Reformed Presbyterian Church Evangelical Synod (RPCES) and the OPC to join it. This invitation had to be ratified not only by the General Assemblies of the RPCES and of the OPC, but also by the presbyteries of these three churches. The "joining and receiving" of the PCA and the RPCES was ratified and became a fact. But so many presbyteries of the PCA were not in favour of receiving the OPC that the necessary three-fourths majority in favour could not be reached. With difficulty a two-thirds majority in favour had been reached at the OPC General Assembly, but when the vote of the PCA presbyteries showed a negative result, further merger talks were stopped.

In its report to Synod, our Committee for Contact with the OPC writes:

There are no proposals from either the OPC or the PCA to come to an eventual union. The dismissal of Prof. N. Shepherd from Westminster Theological Seminary, and his departure from the OPC, was seen by some as a removal of an obstacle for the PCA to invite the OPC to join them. However, no invitation to join or requests for union have thus far been entertained by either side.

This should make the OPC more inclined to intensify its contacts with the American/Canadian Reformed Churches.

However, the situation has changed. The General Assembly of the PCA of this year decided to send a new invitation of "joining and receiving" to the OPC. Again, this decision must be ratified by three fourths of the PCA's presbyteries. If this happens, the invitation will go to next year's General Assembly of the OPC. And if the OPC General Assembly is in favour, it will go to the OPC presbyteries for final approval.

In *The Presbyterian Journal* of June 29 a report on this decision and on the preceding discussion is given. This is interesting information. Part of it I take over here.

Still, there were a number in the PCA who had voted in 1981 for the OPC invitation who this year backed off. They argued that

it is too soon to raise the issue again.

All apart from how they voted the first time around, several delegates here said the year-old PCA-RPCES merger needs more time to solidify.

"In the Old Testament," said the Rev. Donald E. Hoke of Knoxville, Tenn., "a man was given a year off after he got married, and wasn't required to go to war. We ought to learn from that."

The Rev. James M. Baird Jr. of Coral Gables, Fla., attempted to defer the whole matter until at least the 13th General Assembly two years from now. He argued that more time is required to consolidate the gains achieved through the PCA-RPCES joining and receiving.

Ruling elder John Spencer, from Birmingham, Ala., also opposed the invitation, but made it clear that "my reasons are purely administrative." He argued that adding the OPC with its various committees would produce an unmanageable snarl while the PCA is still fine-tuning the merging of previous RPCES agencies and committees into its work.

But the most vigorous speech against the OPC came from a former OPC minister, the Rev. Kent T. Hinkson of Spring, Tex. He said the OPC had a "47-year history of major divisive disputes." He said the recent controversy over Westminster Seminary's former professor Norman Shepherd had been resolved "parliamentarily, but not substantially." And he argued that an invitation to the OPC would certainly bring division in that church, and perhaps even cause "the destruction of the OPC."

The Shepherd controversy surfaced again when the Rev. O. Palmer Robertson, professor at Covenant Seminary, introduced a motion in support of the invitation to the OPC but only if a lengthy statement about the Shepherd controversy prepared by the Westminster Seminary board of trustees was attached to the invitation.

Further, Dr. Robertson wanted the OPC and the PCA to merge through a more traditional "church union" plan rather than the simplified "joining and receiving" process. Both of Dr. Robertson's proposals were defeated.

All that and more apparently failed to dissuade commissioners here from re-issuing the invitation.

Arguing for the invitation, for example, were the Rev. James K. Workman of Cary, N.C., also a former OPC minister, who said his years persuaded him "the OPC is not controlled by a controversial spirit"; and the Rev. Bill Rose of Selma, Ala., who said simply: "When it's in the Bible, it's Biblical. And it's in the Bible to seek closer fellowship with those we agree with."

A former RPCES leader, the Rev. Franklin S. Dyrness, admitted that "there are cer-

tain problems in the OPC. But I haven't found perfection here either." Dr. Dyrness reminded commissioners that a demonstration of love for the brethren is still Christ's prescribed means of showing that we are His disciples.

Probably the most telling argument for the invitation, however, came from the oldest member of the Assembly. He was the Rev. William A. McIlwaine, former missionary to Japan who is three months past his ninetieth birthday.

Dr. McIlwaine . . . demonstrated twice the energy of delegates half his age as he said, "The OPC has for years been sub-



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IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial — The Schools Start Again	364
— J. Geertsema	364
Labour Relations — W. Pouwelse	365
Press Review — Presbyterian Matters	367
— J. Geertsema	367
Bible Translation Number One Hundreds	370
— G. VanDooren	370
Paralipomena — "Treat 'm Like Kids . . ."	371
— Chronieler	371
News Medley — W.W.J. VanOene	372
A Ray of Sunshine	376
— Mrs. Riemersma	376
Patrimony Profile ²⁰ — W.W.J. VanOene	377
Can Measures and Weights or Time in the Bible Be Translated? ³ — A. Zuidhof	379
Press Releases	381, 382
Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty	383

jected to unjustified abuse from the outside. Yet the OPC, because of its clear stand for truth through the years, is the reason for the present existence of the PCA.”

Dr. McIlwaine said that in some respects the PCA is more of an association than a denomination, with many local congregations enjoying the benefits of the relationship without carrying their part of the load or feeling a need to cooperate with the rest of the church.

In *New Horizons in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church* of August/September 1983, the official OPC magazine, the following information is given in a report on this year’s General Assembly of the OPC.

Mr. Galbraith presented the report of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations. Of greatest interest was the current status of the Presbyterian Church in America with regard to the OPC. Since the PCA general assembly was held after that of the OPC, no formal action regarding possible merger or joining and receiving was before our Assembly. The Committee did suggest that, if a new proposal regarding union was forthcoming from the PCA, the OPC should wait until all action had been taken by both the PCA general assembly and its presbyteries before considering the matter afresh.

This information shows that the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the OPC expected such a new invitation. The next two years will show what the outcome will be. But I must say that I do not notice that the OPC is “more inclined to intensify its contacts with the American/Canadian Reformed Churches.”

SHALL WE REBAPTIZE OR NOT?

That was another interesting matter discussed at the General Assembly of the PCA.

At issue was how the church ought to view “previous baptisms,” especially the baptisms of people who only later in life became believers and who now consider that their earlier baptisms might have been “invalid.”

The issue had been referred last year to a special study committee which came back to the Assembly here with a divided report.

The majority of the committee . . . argued in their report that some baptisms should be viewed as invalid. Much of the discussion, both in the report and the debate which surrounded it, focused on Roman Catholic baptism. Admitting that the prominent theologian, Charles Hodge, defended Roman Catholic baptism as valid, the committee said it found Hodge’s views inadequate — and that by using parallel arguments, Mormon and Unitarian baptism might also be said to be valid.

The committee asked the Assembly to take a bigger view of the subject. “It is not only the doctrine of the sacrament itself that is in view,” said their report, “but also the

question of the doctrine concerning the church as one faithful or degenerate with respect to the Gospel.” If the church administering the sacrament is apostate, suggested the committee, the sacrament itself is at least suspect, if not altogether invalid.

The rejection of the historic Hodge position sparked vigorous debate, and several commissioners said the committee was misinterpreting Hodge. Further, they said, the whole issue should be left more to the discretion of individual sessions who could interpret separate cases according to their own merits.

The Rev. DeWitt Watson of Cincinnati said, “We’re walking through a mine field on this issue. We’re trying to decide here in this room which individual churches are apostate and which ones aren’t, and which ones may baptize in such a manner that we ought to accept it. It’s too complicated.”

Following up on the Watson position, ruling elder Kenneth Ryskamp . . . moved to postpone the issue so the committee could give a fuller report to next year’s Assembly. Although the Assembly, on a relatively close 300-242 vote, commended the committee’s study to presbyteries and sessions, it chose not to adopt the committee’s recommendations which would, in effect, have declared Roman Catholic, Mormon, and Unitarian baptisms all to be invalid.

Earlier, the Assembly had rejected the minority request of committee member John Thompson, a ruling elder, simply to adopt a series of straightforward answers on the subject which had been proposed last year. That report would have made any re-baptism a rare occurrence.

The Reformed Churches have always accepted baptism administered in the Roman Catholic Church, but not baptism by a sect. The Mormons and the Unitarians cannot baptize in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit as the Triune God because they deny the doctrine of the Trinity. Sometimes this question: “Shall we rebaptize a convert who has been baptized in a Roman Catholic Church?” can be a valid question, especially in a mission situation, where a baptism in a Roman Catholic Church is surrounded with much superstition and means so little to the people.

TOTAL ABSTINENCE REJECTED

Also this information I give to the readers of *Clarion*. Like the previous items, it comes from the same issue of *The Presbyterian Journal*:

By a nearly 2-1 margin, the 11th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) here rejected overtures from two presbyteries which would have put the PCA in a position of recommending total abstinence to all its people.

Central Carolina Presbytery and New River Presbytery from Virginia had both asked the Assembly to adopt a 1977 statement of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES), which recom-

mended total abstinence not on the basis of Biblical teaching but as “a matter of prudence.”

The 1977 statement of the RPCES said that “churches and presbyteries must not make total abstinence a requirement for membership or office as a matter of principle,” but did allow congregations to make such a requirement for officers “as a matter of prudence.”

The issue came to the Assembly here as a fascinating test of the impact of the RPCES on the PCA with respect to an issue which always produces sharp division and strong feelings. . . .

For the majority, the issue was not so much the propriety of drinking but whether the Bible and the Confession allow the church to bind the consciences of its people on the issue.

Said the Rev. John Mason, missionary appointee to Kenya under Mission to the World: “The Bible is not just a rule of faith and practice. It is not even just *the* rule of faith and practice. Our Confession says it is the *only* rule of faith and practice. And it isn’t just a rule of faith — it is the *only* rule of *practice* as well.”

Most vigorous in speaking for the total abstinence position was the Rev. Robert Hoyle, director of Hebron Colony and Grace Home, Christian rehabilitation centers for alcoholics near Boone, N.C. “I’ve had 4,000 graduates,” said Mr. Hoyle, “and now 400 of them are dead. Of those, 200 have been suicides. We sit here and argue about these details, but the use of alcoholic beverages is simply sinful.”

Ruling elder Woody Woods, an airline pilot from Elgin, Ill., said that if the Assembly voted to recommend total abstinence because of the abuse of alcohol, it should similarly recommend total sexual abstinence because of the much worse abuse in that area of life.

In the end, the Assembly simply re-adopted — by a vote of 395-200 — an earlier PCA statement encouraging local churches to “teach and counsel as to the sin involved in the intemperate or escapist use of any part of creation,” to teach and counsel love and wisdom with reference to individual decisions about alcohol, and to “proclaim and embody the reality of the work of the Holy Spirit in the bond of vital fellowship within the body of Christ, which is the Biblical antidote to the intemperance and escapism of our day.”

WHO CAN BE ADMITTED AS GUEST TO THE TABLE OF THE LORD?

This matter was discussed at the General Assembly of the OPC. I take this information from the above-mentioned issue of *New Horizons*.

The majority of Wednesday’s business was devoted to the complaint from several members of the congregation against the session of Covenant Church in Burtonsville, Md. dealing with the principal issues surrounding the session’s administration of the Lord’s Supper to visitors.

The complainants held that visitors

should not be permitted to participate in the service of Communion unless they are members of another OP church, and are able to present a letter of standing. On the other hand, the Burtonsville session permits visitors on their own recognizance to participate in the Lord's Supper if they are baptized communicant members in good standing of an evangelical church (as precisely defined in a bulletin insert). They also require participants to fill out a communion card.

The complainants rejected this approach on two grounds. First, by permitting visitors to decide for themselves whether or not they may participate, the elders are guilty of surrendering the keys of the kingdom entrusted to them according to Matthew 16. But secondly, the complainants believe that elders only have jurisdiction over the local congregation which they serve, and therefore have no business serving the Lord's Supper to those outside the congregation unless permission (jurisdiction) is given to them by the session of the visiting member (hence the need for a letter of standing).

The advisory committee of the Assembly dealing with the issue recommended that the complaint be denied on the grounds that the session had not abandoned its authority in discipline but was properly exercising it. The complainants had asserted, but not established, that failure to provide formal certification from an individual's session constituted sinful negligence.

The debate continued into the evening. Finally, at 7:30 p.m. the Assembly voted to deny the complaint — with only one audible dissent. A subsequent attempt to erect a study committee to consider the issue was, after brief discussion, unanimously rejected.

In this connection I would like to pass on a few quotations from *Bij Brood en Beker* (With the Bread and Cup), a book about "the doctrine and use of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament and in the history of the Western church."¹ Dr. W. van't Spijker wrote the third part: "The Practical Part," about "The Classical Form for the Lord's Supper." On page 369ff. he tells us:

At the meeting which was of so great significance for the formation of the Dutch Reformed churches, the Convent of Wesel (1568), the following was determined regarding admission to the Holy Supper of the Lord: No one shall be admitted to the Holy Supper of the Lord except those who have made public profession of faith and submit to the discipline of the church. . . .

The Synod of Dordrecht of 1974, a so-called provincial synod, but one which had great influence, very meaningfully arranges the congregation around the Lord's Supper. The institution of a new congregation practically came down to a celebrating of the Supper of the Lord together. When there is no "form" of congregation, the Lord's Supper shall not be administered. Where there are no elders and deacons,

there shall also be no Lord's Supper table. The ground is that these office-bearers have to supervise both the receiving (into the congregation) and the governing of those who are admitted to the table. . . .

The participation in the congregation manifests itself at the table of the Lord. Joining the congregation, in fact, means the same as celebrating the Lord's Supper. . . .

It cannot be denied that in this way the Reformed churches consciously have chosen a church-orderly model that for centuries would remain typical for the Reformed tradition. It is a structure of the churches which does not have an "open table. . . ." The background is clearly that of pastoral care for the whole congregation. For her there is the command of Christ: Do this in remembrance of Me. In order to educate her to that obedience of faith there is the pastoral service which seeks a functioning of the body of Christ in living spiritual strength. One cannot break the one bread except in the one congregation. One cannot bless the one cup, except together as the one body of the Lord which lives through the blood that was shed.

PRESBYTERIAN MERGER

The last item in this Press Review regards the merger of two large Presbyterian denominations in the United States. *New Horizons* (same issue) reports:

In Atlanta a separate but significant action took place among representatives of the Presbyterian Church US and the United Presbyterian Church USA. They voted to merge their denominations into one new Presbyterian Church (USA). They had broken into separate churches in 1861.

Both churches were generally considered to be theologically liberal, but the PCUS represented the more conservative element. Although its "Brief Statement of Belief" will be used by the new church, all the confessional documents of the two preceding churches will be the confessional documents of the reunited church. In particular, the UPCUSA's Confession of 1967 will continue to have status in the new church. In the words of OPC pastor Calvin K. Cummings, this Confession fails to "affirm the full inspiration of Scripture, the substitutionary atonement or the bodily resurrection of Christ."

Historically the OPC developed out of the UPCUSA, and the PCA out of the PCUS. The two liberal denominations succeeded in uniting; whether the conservative churches will do so remains to be seen.

The Presbyterian Journal (same issue) reports:

On its first full day of legislating, the Assembly approved the appointment of a seven-member committee to "study the causes of questions, misunderstandings, and suspicions," surrounding the World and National councils of churches. The body went on to reaffirm the purposes of the two ecumenical organizations and the church's participation in them. The action

came in response to a request from five presbyteries asking for an investigation of charges that have recently been leveled against the policies and politics of the NCC and WCC.

The Presbyterian Journal also informs its readers of the following.

Abortion on demand received the full support of the new Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) in the first combined Assembly of the denomination.

Said the Assembly: "As Presbyterians and as U.S. citizens, we have a responsibility to guarantee to every woman the freedom to reproductive choice."

The Assembly also declared that "medical intervention should be made available to all who desire and qualify for it, not just to those who can afford preferential treatment."

The Assembly also:

- affirmed the 1973 Roe versus Wade decision of the U.S. Supreme Court decriminalizing abortion during the first two trimesters;

- opposed attempts to limit access to abortion by denying funding or passing restrictive legislation; and

- opposed all measures that would "restrict full and equal access to contraception and abortion services to all women, regardless of race, age, and economic standing."

This shows what kind of church unity we have to do with here. It is unity in what God calls evil. Further comment is not necessary.

J. GEERTSEMA

—*Bij Brood en Beker*, onder redactie van Prof. Dr. W. van't Spijker a.o. DeGroot, Goudriaan, 1980.

Bible Translation Number One Hundred₃

An Evaluation of the New King James Version

Varia Continued

At the end of the second article we noted that the NKJV abolished "Thee" and "Thou." During the Ministers' Workshop, where these remarks were first presented, we had quite a discussion about this, as well as about the use of capitals. I would like to pass on some elements of that discussion for the benefit of the readers.

4. Capitals

First, then, the fact that the NKJV introduced capitals galore. "Introduced," because they were *not* in the original KJV. Now all pronouns used in connection with the Lord receive a capital. They are strewn in abundance all over the NKJV. I repeat: the KJV, though highly revered, did not use them. And it should be added that that KJV used "thee" and "thou" also for man. Conclusion: in this respect it did not differentiate between God and man — just as the Mennonites still address each other, even their children, with "thee" and "thou." Obviously I have always been somewhat mistaken with my liking for that distinction between "thou" and "you." Never too old to learn

During the discussion certain things were noted. First, there is no disrespect in using "you" for the Lord. Second, we cannot prevent or stop the development towards "you" in our own circles. It's coming! Third (but now I stop numbering!), it would be nice if on one and the same day we all could switch over to the use of "you," and at the same time drop most of those capitals which clutter the picture of the page and are not necessary at all. We do not want the situation which exists in many churches, where the old KJV is read with the greatest reverence, but where right after that they address God in their prayers with "you" and "you" and "you."

But what about our *Book of Praise*? It seems that, possibly by the urging of a vocal minority, to which we usually give in, the "final" edition will be obsolete by the time it becomes available. In contrast to the 1974 *Book of Praise*, now lots of capitals are used, not only in the rhymed psalms and hymns, but also in the ("modernization of") creeds, liturgical forms, and other parts of the complete *Book of Praise*.

Time is too short to come to a common opinion without mutual accusations. If, however, this change-over is called for, let it be done to preserve the unity in (public) worship. (P.S. Let no one pick on a single word or expression in this pas-

sage and "go after the ministers." It is all my personal, possibly subjective, summary of a discussion.)

5. Poetry

A minor point: the NKJV, in distinction from the KJV, prints poetry as poetry, which is laudable. I sometimes found it a hindrance that every line in this poetry starts with a capital, as though a new sentence starts. But who are we to complain? We do the same in our *Book of Praise*

6. Directly Messianic?

The abundant use of capitals can get you into trouble when translating. Although translating is always also interpreting, interpretation should be kept to a minimum. But now, in the NKJV, we find capitals, not only in Psalm 110, but also in Psalms 2, 16, 21, 22, 72, and possibly some more.

The point is, according to common opinion Psalm 110 is the only "*directly Messianic*" psalm. David does not speak about himself here but about "*my Lord*." That is the Messiah, as is proven by the fact that this Psalm is the one most-quoted in the New Testament. Possibly Psalm 2 must be understood in the same manner, but that is debatable. And certainly, psalms like 22 and 72 speak first about David's troubles (22) or David and his son Solomon (72), which then is fulfilled — "full-filled" — comes to full meaning and reality, in our Lord Jesus Christ. The use of capitals in such psalms takes away the "perspective," the redemptive-historical perspective of such psalms, and betrays a tendency towards "Biblicistic interpretation." Conclusion: capitals should have been left out in psalms like these.

NKJV an Improvement of KJV?

This question also came up. Some examples may serve to clarify the issue. In *II Chron. 35*, mentioned before, we find the repeated expression: "my brethren the lay people." KJV had (v. 5): "the families of the fathers of your brethren." A. NOORDTZY translates, "de zonen van het volk; volksgenoten" (translation: the sons of the people). To my surprise I found "lay people" also in RSV and NIV. One wonders: Is this a legitimate term for the time before Pentecost? Whatever the case may be, I do not like it.

Joel 2:29 is translated, not according to the Hebrew original, but according to the LXX or *Septuagint* (Greek translation of Old Testament). Peter (Acts 2) quoted this popular Greek text in "My manservants and My maidservants." This may

sound a bit more pious, but the original is plain: "slaves"; even upon them the Holy Spirit would come!

John 14, 16. The well-known word *Paraclete*, though in KJV given as "Comforter," is now rendered by the weaker and colourless term "Helper." One wonders why??

II Chron. 19:8. "Jehoshaphat appointed some Levites and priests for *controversies* (!). Certainly not an improvement; cf. RSV, "to decide disputed cases"; NIV, "to settle disputes." That's what was meant!

I Thess. 1:6 proves to me that the scholars often listened to the old KJV rather than to the original Bible text. Instead of giving the proper sense of *mimētai* as "imitators," the KJV "followers" is kept.

Finally, in *Romans 4:25* the KJV twice had "for": ". . . who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." This makes good sense; but the NKJV, without any reason, replaces "for" by "because," creating the impression that our justification is the cause of Christ's resurrection. That may have suited Dr. A. KUYPER with his idea of "eternal justification," but no one goes for that any longer. Others have (even better): "because of our offences and for our acquittal."

Well, the respected reader may get tired; so does yours truly, typing all this during the June heat wave But it was necessary to come to a responsible conclusion.

Conclusion

In three articles we could discuss only a "fragment" of the NKJV, and of possible criticism against it. This criticism was the main part. It does not take away the PRO: the NKJV is a faithful rendering in the sense that it shied away, far away, from any form of Bible criticism and other modern ideas. All contributors had to sign a declaration that they accepted fully the inerrancy of the original text of Scripture. Here and there the introductory brochure may talk somewhat mystically about the presence of the Holy Spirit, so that "the end result [of NKJV] is more than the sum of the contributions of many." This may be taken with a grain of salt. But here we have indeed the work of men who humbly submit to the divine authority.

As to the CONS, I prefer to say it in the words of others, with whom I must agree in the main.

In *Christianity Today*, April 22, 1983,

some reviewers of the NKJV are quoted. JACK LEWIS questions whether there will be a market for the New King James Version. "The diehard KJV people won't use it, and young people prefer to read the Bible in modern English." FEE and METZGER, two well-known scholars in the field of manuscripts, etc., wonder about "the wisdom and accuracy of the title." Our three articles have in fact done the same. Was it wise to speak about a *New KJV*? Is it, indeed, a *New KJV*? They also object to the capitalization of pronouns for the deity: "even the KJV does not do that." DONALD CARSON: "The NKJV isn't modern enough, and is too awkward and heavy. It may be a half-way house for some KJV readers, but . . . they will move on . . ." L.R. KEYLOCK, the author of the C.T. article, adds: "The major objection of the authors is its [NKJV] dependence on a textual tradition most scholars feel is outdated: The *Textus Receptus* used by the KJV translators. They feel the "eclectic" Greek text of *Westcott-Hort* is closer to the original."

I repeat: I am in no way able to take a responsible position in the battle around the many manuscripts of the New Testament. Others should write about this, be it in popular terms (if that is possible)! But I keep remembering that the choice to stick with the old *Textus Receptus* was motivated by the desire to stay as close as possible to the (old) KJV. Such a desire may be understandable, but scientific it is not.

And so, having read the NKJV for about six months, my wife and I gladly return to our RSV, the 1971 improved edition. Dr. KEYLOCK wrote, "Most scholars admire the accuracy of the R.S.V., but feel it is now dated." All right, then, "dated"; he doesn't say "outdated." All translations are "dated." Of greater value for us should be that "most scholars admire the accuracy of the Revised Standard Version." For that reason we did not and do not need this *New King James Version*.

G. VANDOOREN

P.S.

To prevent a possible accusation that I did not quote *all* expert reviewers mentioned in *Christianity Today*, it should first be mentioned that the question as to what manuscripts are the best ones is still an open question. Second, "FARSTAD is enthusiastic about the future of the NKJV: Along with the NIV, it has a good chance of being one of the two top Bibles." It would be strange if such voices were not heard with the appearance of the NKJV. But we should not close our ears to the arguments given by the others. VanD.

PARALIPOMENA

"TREAT 'M LIKE KIDS . . ."

After Pentecost

I've always been told that the real difference between the times before and after Pentecost is that after Pentecost God's children are no longer children! In the olden days God treated Israel like a child. He gave them a picture book in all those ceremonies and detailed prescriptions about how to do this and how to act that way. But He also gave them a promise: there comes a time when you will all be grown-ups. No one needs to tell you any longer about this and that; you will all know. Jeremiah said this and John later repeated it: "You all have the Holy Spirit and you all have knowledge."

Pentecost denied

That didn't last long. Already in the New Testament we read that believers should have been able to digest solid food but that they had to be fed milk. And thereafter . . . , in no time it was all Old Testament again: a separate clergy that knew everything and the lay people who had to be told everything, because they knew nothing. They were even forbidden to read the Bible and got a picture book instead. The Catechism fulminates against that! God will not have His people taught by dumb images but by the living preaching of His Word. I like the Dutch better: instead of "his people" it has "his Christians." That makes you think of Lord's Day 12: a Christian is no less than a prophet, priest, and king!

Reformation

The Reformation did away with all those images in the church and with treating God's people like little kids. That was its strength. Common believers became witnesses and thus also martyrs.

Kids Again?

It would've been a surprise if it had lasted. It didn't. If one wants to place the blame somewhere, he should not, I think, start by accusing consistories and the like. If consistories treat their members like kids, it may well be that the members are guilty. The saying goes, "Every nation gets the government it deserves." When I think of Poland, I say no! That people has been sold down the river by Roosevelt and Churchill (and many others). But, in general, it is true, also in the church. If hierarchy sticks up its ugly head, it

may well be the fault of the church people. If that is the case, consistories may be tempted to treat them "the way they deserve it." But, if we are treated according to what we deserve, we had better blow up the whole business before it gets worse.

If a congregation shows tendencies of acting like immature children, consistories should double their efforts to treat them like grown-ups! Just as parents should teach their teenagers responsibility and a growing maturity.

What are you talking about?

You may well ask that. Why this would-be theological dissertation?

Some very common and practical things that I have stumbled over. Maybe you say that my examples are proof of childishness. But now that we have come this far, I had better mention some.

In some local churches the members do not get the weekly bulletin before the service (as in most places, if my information is correct), but after the service. Why did consistory members, who themselves get it before the service (!), decide thus? As a guardian over the kids they said: "People might read the bulletin when they should be listening to the sermon . . ."

"Let's not publish next week's services!" I remember something like that from the old country. We had more than one minister, but there was the danger of "nalopen" (= following) because the people liked the one minister more than the other. Here in Canada I have heard: "If there is a reading service next week, let's not publish it in advance; some people may stay home . . ."

A third and last example. I have been taught that consistory meetings are public, except when cases of discipline are discussed. Members may attend. The reports of consistory meetings, therefore, should be so clear that people can learn what was done in and by the consistory from the bulletin. Now it is often cryptography. "The less they know the better . . ."

By the way: in Biblical times even disciplinary cases were dealt with in public! If you want a mature congregation, don't treat them like kids, even though some . . . , but we said that already.

CHRONICLER

news medley

As in other years, so this year we heard from more than one, "Now we are going to read about your holiday experiences." And again: as in other years we have to disappoint those among our readers who expect something like that. Of what advantage is it to you whether we tell you that we stood amazed anew at the greatness of our Father's works in creation? We did feel very small when driving through the mountains, we did enjoy the relaxed driving on divided highways, we did rejoice when we saw the fields covered with wheat and flax, when we smelled the honey coming from flowering rape-seed fields and drank in the aroma of the evergreen forests. Would this not be everyone's experience as long as the eyes are open and the ears unplugged, as long as the sense of smell is not dulled or almost totally annihilated by the constant use of nicotine?

I recall that, in 1971, we were standing at the Theodore Roosevelt Park in North Dakota. The smell of honey coming from wild mustard and other flowering plants was overwhelming. I said to someone standing beside me, overlooking the scene, "Ah, what a delicious honey-smell!" He looked at me as if I was an extra-terrestrial being and replied that he did not smell anything. When he spoke I smelled the tobacco contamination coming out of his lungs and knew enough.

Anyway, what would it benefit you if I told you what we saw and experienced? Would you get any richer if I described that we saw a large city lying in the deep distance while we were standing on the top of a mountain; that we saw young people courting and elderly people still holding hands as if they were young; that we observed elderly women who had painted themselves extravagantly and acted as if they were young girls; that we watched the pecking order among the birds and chuckled at a gopher having the hiccups?

Meanwhile I thank you for the interest shown in our well-being and experiences. Thank you also for the encouraging words which we were allowed to hear during our holidays and for the urging to continue the good work. Among the good works the news medley occupied an important and almost dominating place. There will be some changes in our *Clarion*, but you can be assured that the news medley will remain for as long as I am able to write it. If all the wishes come true, this will be for a long time to come. However, we don't know and will see.

It will be well over a month too late when brother and sister E. Dykema of Burlington read that we congratulate them on the occasion of their fortieth wedding anniversary on July 30th, but we are certain that they will as yet accept our congratulatory message. It was not ill will which made us write about them at such a late date, and they know that. We wish them the Lord's blessing for the future as well, knowing that the future is in our Father's hands as was the past! They experienced this in the past and we are certain that they will continue in this same faith. Faith does not put us to shame because of its contents.

Even earlier than that was the celebration of the fortieth wedding anniversary of brother and sister A.B. Hamer, also of Burlington. They had their feast on the 15th of July. I learned of it from the Burlington bulletin. Our acquaintance goes back many years, in fact to the days at the elementary school. It was the good old Hanseatic city of Kampen that had the privi-

lege of having us both as elementary school students at the same school. It is only very seldom that I can mention something in this vein, and this was a beautiful opportunity which could not be left unused. Anyway: our heartfelt congratulations with this happy event, and our best Christian wishes for the future.

Before I could continue this medley, it was time to go to bed; and then there was another day. Another day brings with it a trip to the Post Office to unlock the secrets of the mailbox. There was *Clarion!* And this famous and illustrious magazine informed us of a few other wedding anniversaries which should be mentioned here and receive due attention.

Two couples celebrated their forty-fifth wedding anniversary. They are brother and sister J. Huizinga of Burlington (formerly of Edmonton) and brother and sister A. Roodzant of Orangeville or — more precisely — Shelburne. The latter couple celebrated on August 12th, the former on August 24. Due to the holiday season which reduces staff at the printing shop and makes it harder for contributors to fill their quatum, two issues were combined, and for this reason we cannot pay attention to these anniversaries before they are there. Both couples may be assured that their joy is shared by us within the communion of saints. Of both I could tell a few things, but usually the gentle ribbing is done sufficiently at anniversary parties, and for this reason I shall refrain from revealing any secrets, although I know only a few.

Our readers know that we make exceptions for ministers. They don't have to wait till they celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary before finding honourable mention in our column.

This time it is for the Rev. and Mrs. Van Beveren that we make an exception. No one will take it ill that we make an exception, for they are exceptional people, different in many respects from other ministerial couples. The advertisement mentions that they have been "servants and partners in the Kingdom." This certainly is true and correct and it is with great joy that we offer our congratulations. I happen to be Rev. Van Beveren's successor in Fergus — as he, incidentally, was mine in New Westminster! — and frequently hear remarks about the work that he did in the congregation. Both he and Mrs. Van Beveren may be assured that their labours are remembered with gratitude towards the Lord and that the wishes of all the brothers and sisters accompany them on their further pathway. They had their difficulties and disappointments, their questions and struggles as every married couple has them, and their way has not been easy, but their strength and help is from the Lord. May His face spread its light before you in the future as well.

Before we continue with news from the Churches I express my thanks for the cassette which a brother gave me on which a concert was recorded given by combined choirs and a few soloists. Since I am going to make a few remarks, I will not tell you where the cassette came from and where the concert was held. I am not going to refer to persons but to phenomena.

First, however, my compliments to all who took part in the concert. The voices were well balanced, I found, although it is clear that some of the sections have too few members which makes the sound somewhat "thin," and this is especially the case in the male section. It was noticed most when the male voices were heard alone. All four voices blended well and this is difficult to achieve especially when there are not too many members.

The remarks which I should like to make do not concern the choirs but the audience.

In the first place: would it not be wise for our choirs to provide handkerchiefs as an appendix to the program, so that people can hold them before their mouth when they have to cough to muffle the sound? A hamper could be put at the exit

so that, after the concert, the used or unused pieces of cloth can be returned therein. The loud coughing is most disturbing and it is clear that no effort was made to stifle the explosions. When will our people learn to do this, especially when a concert is recorded — something which is the case with most of our concerts nowadays?

In the second place: will the parents please leave their children at home when these children cannot be kept quiet? Much of the tape is ruined by the constant chattering of a child.

It is nice for a choir when many come to listen.

It is understandable that members of the congregation wish to attend such a concert.

It is laudable when they get their children accustomed to good music at as early an age as possible.

But when these children do not listen when told to keep quiet — because they are too young to understand what is going on and to benefit from it — they should be brought to a place where they do not disturb a concert. It is most distracting for the mother — she does not hear half of the concert because of the squirming and muttering child she tries to control — and for the director, the choir, and the soloists. Singing and directing as well as playing demand concentration and full attention. There should be no distraction in the form of a child or children that cry or talk, stand on the pew and move from the one to the other. The audience is annoyed by this as well. They came to listen to the choir, not to a child.

I am certain that I speak on behalf of all participants and all audiences by making the above remarks. It is still early in the season and concerts are not yet imminent. Don't forget it when the time is there.

The activities which did take place during the summer were largely confined to Vacation Bible Schools. They were held in various places and the attendance was oftentimes encouraging. To mention one place: Burlington reported an attendance of 63 children on the first day, seventy on the second day, of whom forty-six were "outsiders."

The contacts which the Rev. Kingma has with various groups in the United States have been increased by one. Rev. Kingma writes in *Pro Ecclesia* about a visit which he brought to Burtonsville, Maryland. A phone call received from the Orthodox Presbyterian minister there occasioned the trip. This minister felt that he could no longer continue to live and work within the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and therefore asked our brother to come over to discuss the situation and to enlighten him further regarding the Canadian Reformed Churches.

As a result of this visit and the knowledge gained from it, the Grand Rapids consistory decided to "send another appeal to our Synod to rescind the decision that the OPC is a true church, since they allow for open communion table in their churches as so clearly became manifested in the issue dealt with in the OPC church of Laurel."

Our medley is not the place to enter into extensive discussions of all sorts of proposals sent to general synod. My first impression is to say, "Something which happened in 1983 does not necessarily prove that a decision in 1977 was wrong." Much can and does happen in the space of six years, for better as well as for worse. Compare simply the dates 1937 and 1943. However, we'll see.

The Grand Rapids Consistory also decided to send a letter "to the brothers and sisters from Florida who requested assistance from the church of Grand Rapids, now that classis has requested the church of Grand Rapids to investigate the possibilities of instituting a church in Palmetto, FLA. in accordance with articles 38, 39 of the Church Order."

Coming up a little we stop over in London.

The London consistory decided that "the practice of the minister and elder at the church exit will be discontinued."

45th Wedding Anniversary



Brother and sister B. Van Huisstede of Guelph, ON, will celebrate their 45th Wedding Anniversary on the 21st of September 1983, D.V. They were married in Utrecht, The Netherlands and emigrated from Eindhoven in Brabant, The Netherlands to Canada in September 1955 with nine children. Besides their 10 children, the Lord gave them 25 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. Both are enjoying good health.

This appears a wise and welcome decision.

This past summer I had to walk the aisle, so to speak, preceded by the "serving elder." Originally, if I recall well, it was the intention that the minister and the "shaker" should stand at the door to speak to anyone who might express his desire for this. In practice, however, it is only the minister who stands there, for the "serving elder" disappeared as fast as the rest of the members. The poor minister had to wait till everyone was gone, and the caretaker started closing the doors. Then this poor minister had to walk back to the consistory room to change, pick up whatever he left there before the service, and was about the last one to leave the parking lot. Those who shook hands and talked with me were but for one exception the ones who were happy to meet again after a year's absence, but we could have done this just as well in the normal way, as I have never had the custom of disappearing as fast as possible after the conclusion of a service. I like talking to the brothers and sisters, but then rather in an informal way.

It does not say what the reasons were that brought the London consistory to their decision, but to me it appears to be a wise decision.

Another decision of London: "The consistory's prayer after the afternoon service will be reinstated."

A last item from London: "Consistory is of the opinion that deacons could be called on to read a sermon in a worship service."

I mention this decision because the question may arise in more vacant churches whether such would be allowed. I recall from the days of my youth that sometimes the principal of the school was asked to read a sermon because — in the opinion of the consistory of the vacant church — he was the one who was best suited for this work, speaking clearly and distinctly and being able to present the needs of the congregation in prayer before the Lord in a decent and orderly manner. That consistory was so wise as to consider the interest

nourished and the Word of God must be brought to them in such a manner that at least they can understand what is being said. Thus the consistory looked around for the brother who, in their opinion, would read in a manner most edifying for the congregation.

We should prevent what I was once told in the old country. An elder read a sermon on the words of our Saviour that everyone who would hear His words and not do them was to be compared to one who built a house on sand. The members who talked to me about it said, "All we could understand of all his mumbling was the repeated, 'And great was the fall of it!'"

Mind you, this applies not only to elders reading a sermon. I have also heard members say that they would rather hear brother so-and-so read a sermon than listen to the Reverend so-and-so deliver one.

Let us all remember that the people come to listen and to be fed with the Bread of life and that they have to live on it for a whole week. Sometimes, when someone tells me that the message was clear and comforting, I reply, "That's what you came for."

Yes, and now I have to tell something about Fergus. Hold on, it isn't all that bad.

The consistory decided to purchase four acres of land around the church property, so that we can expand the parking lot and the green area around church building and parsonage. This was made possible by the purchase of eighteen acres of land adjacent to the church property. If all the details can be straightened out and no snags are encountered, it is expected that on the remaining fourteen acres a senior citizens home can be erected and that we can consolidate the instruction of our children at school by bringing them all together in a new building which is to accommodate all grades. These are bold plans, but the opportunity appears to be there and we are thankful for it. You may hear more about it in the future.

With this good news we bid farewell to Ontario and move on to Coaldale.

We know that the Rev. Van Spronsen is working among our native population. However, we should not think that the Indian population is neglected in other parts of the country. The Coaldale Home Mission Committee hosted its first annual Native Youth Bible Camp. What I read in the bulletin so far was about the preparations for this camp. Perhaps we may receive a report with pictures for *Clarion*. If not, then I expect that at some future date I can quote from the bulletin and tell you more about the experiences.

Another point which had the attention in Coaldale was the growth of the congregation. One bulletin tells us that "a committee is appointed . . . to study projected growth of the congregation in connection with the size of the church building." You know already what my solution for this "problem" would be. Definitely no balcony and no larger church building but another church.

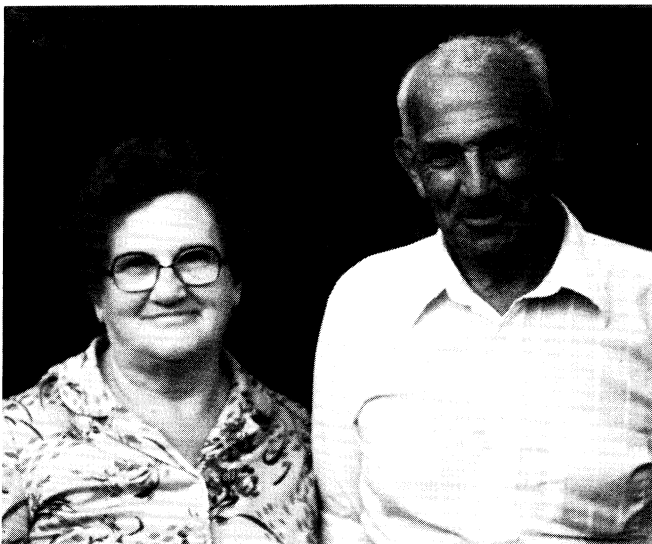
The following bulletin contains this section.

COMMITTEE CHURCH-GROWTH

In a previous Short Report mention was made of a committee appointed to look into the seating capacity of the church building. The Christian Reformed Church at Lethbridge is showing interest in our property and is discussing the possibility of coming up with an offer. The congregation will be kept informed of the developments. The reason of the church-council's interest in an offer from the Christian Reformed Church is to increase the number of options to solve the above mentioned problem.

The same bulletin contains an extensive report on Church collections. It is too long to quote in our medley and is perhaps more suited for Rev. Geertsema's column of "Press Review."

45th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. Roodzant were married on August 12, 1938 in Berkel and Rodenrijs, The Netherlands. They emigrated with seven children, in May 1952. Their destination was the Chatham area. In 1953 they moved to Brampton - Georgetown where they resided for eleven years before moving to Toronto. After Mr. Roodzants' retirement in August 1978, they moved to a brand new beautiful home in Shelburne, ON. Mr. and Mrs. Roodzant are both enjoying good health. Mr. Roodzant keeps busy with his big beautiful garden and Mrs. Roodzant spends her time making many different crafts. Since retiring, they enjoy the Florida sunshine every winter and have done some travelling across Canada.

and well-being of the congregation first: the brothers and sisters come together just twice a week. Then they must be fed and

Let me pass on to you the conclusion to which the brothers came.

Considering the above, the committee recommends to discontinue Church collections as of January 1, 1984.

Another favourable development. I know congregations where dark prophecies were uttered about tremendous loss of income and about the necessity of re-instituting collections for "the Church" because voluntary contributions alone would never work! These clouds have disappeared since long, and everything goes smoothly.

You will be interested in the progress of the building activities of Immanuel Church in Edmonton. Here is the latest report I received via the bulletin.

The first residents in the building are still there tweeting to their young ones. These are the sparrows. Another family are feeding offspring for the second time and they are Mr. and Mrs. Robin. Some barn swallows have been flying in and out, but we are unaware of any nesting. Hopefully all these who are using the building will be gone before the building can be closed in.

Even the swallow finds a nest. . . .

Before we move on to the Valley — the Fraser Valley, that is — I would like to say something about what I found in a bulletin of one of the churches regarding an attestation.

I mean the following notice. "A letter was received from . . . Church concerning a baptismal attestation received from us for a member who refuses to attend the worship services in spite of many admonitions, and for that reason the attestation could not be accepted."

Two things have been mixed up here: accepting an attestation and accepting a brother or sister on the ground of this attestation.

An attestation must always be accepted when coming from a sister-Church.

The contents of this attestation can be such that a consistory feels obligated to decide that — on the ground of the attestation — the brother or sister cannot be accepted as a member of the Church. Such a decision can be taken only once an attestation has been accepted and taken at its value as a testimony given by the consistory of a sister-Church. It belongs intrinsically to the living within a federation that testimonies from fellow-members in the federation are accepted. Such does not even require an express decision to that effect. Only when an attestation is — wrongly — considered to be sort of a transfer-paper can the question come up whether to accept it or not. Acceptance of an attestation does not automatically mean acceptance of the member. This depends wholly on the contents of the testimony.

Yes, we are going to the Fraser Valley.

The Rest Home matter appears to be making progress. Let me pass the whole passage on to you.

On June 20, 1983, Langley City Council held the final reading regarding R.M. 6 zoning for our Rest Home property on 54A Ave. and received approval. Now we have to wait for the O.K. from the Highway Department and indications are that there seem to be no problems but only waiting for "Rubber-Stamping."

We as Board are grateful it went so far so good, but this does not mean smooth sailing from now on; there are a lot of hurdles to overcome. Since we are now entering the field of high financing and complicated rules and regulations, do not be surprised when a Board member taps you on the shoulder for financial and technical know-how, advice, or assistance. We as Board members hope you can help us in this project for building a Rest Home.

In conclusion we mention something from the Okanagan Valley. For the holidayers this comes too late, since the holidays

40th Wedding Anniversary



The Lord willing, Mr. and Mrs. N. Terpsma hope to celebrate their 40th Wedding Anniversary on September 19, 1983. Mr. Terpsma immigrated to Canada with his family in 1910 and moved to Neerlandia in 1911. Mrs. Terpsma immigrated to Canada with her family in 1928 and moved to Neerlandia. They were married in 1943 at Neerlandia, and have resided on the homestead ever since. They were blessed with five children, whereof one daughter was taken in infancy to be home with the Lord. They now have seven grandchildren. Both are in good health and enjoy their retirement years.

are practically over and those who are really interested will have found out anyway; in order to be complete, we write it as yet.

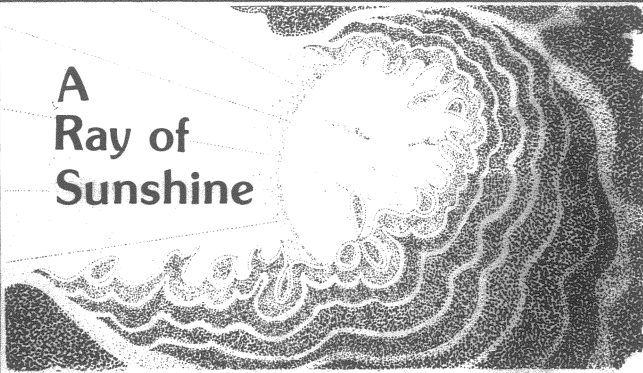
The church building which was being used by the brothers and sisters in the Okanagan Valley was no longer available since it was going to be torn down. I was told, however, that they found another location which appears to fill the need even better. This was the more or less enthusiastic testimony of some who went there this past summer. Some future *Church News* undoubtedly will tell us more and then I can tell you more.

At the moment I have run out of news items and, besides, we have to turn off the light in order not to run up too high an electricity bill while, at the same time, the eyelids seem to work like magnets pulling towards each other. In spite of this, there are surprisingly few typing mistakes, but these will be corrected in Winnipeg anyway.

It was a long medley, but after a long absence we have many things we are to tell each other, don't we? See what comes next time.

Cheerio.
VO

A Ray of Sunshine



"It is for discipline that you have to endure He disciplines us for our good that we may share His holiness." Hebrews 12:7, 10.

At one time or another we all are in need of special encouragement — we lose hope if we are left to ourselves. We could not endure if we did not get some positive encouragement. Criticism, when given in a negative way, and when heard too often, makes one lose heart.

The Bible gives criticism also, but it is given in a positive way. We are first encouraged by being urged to look at all those Christians (they are called witnesses) who have won the race, and then we are urged to "lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely." This criticism, or pointing out the cause of our discouragement, reveals that the writer of the letter to the Hebrews was very much aware of his own weaknesses, as well as that of the Hebrew Christians. He knew they needed to persevere. He did not question whether their difficulties were real or imaginary — he knew that the Lord disciplines His children whom He loves. That is why he writes, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by Him. For the Lord disciplines whom He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives," Hebrews 12:5, 6. "We are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (I Cor. 11:32).

This chastisement is not always the same for everyone. God knows our weaknesses and our wayward hearts. He knows how to keep each of us on the right track. The passage in John 15 about the pruning of the tree shows us that it is a privilege if we are being pruned — it means that we are fruitful, but need to be more fruitful still "Every branch that does not bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit" (v. 2).

Calvin writes, "Whatever be the kind of tribulation with which we are afflicted, we should always consider the end of it to be, that we may be trained to despise the present, and thereby stimulated to aspire

to the future life. For since God well knows how strongly we are inclined by nature to a slavish love of this world, in order to prevent us from clinging too strongly to it, he employs the fittest reason for calling us back, and shaking off our lethargy." And, "The whole soul, ensnared by the allurements of the flesh, seeks its happiness on the earth. To meet this disease, the Lord makes his people sensible of the vanity of the present life by a constant proof of its miseries. Thus, that they may not promise themselves deep and lasting peace in it, he often allows them to be assailed by war, or to be disturbed by other injuries. That they may not long with too much eagerness after fleeting and fading riches, or rest in those which they possess, he reduces them to want, or, at least, restricts them to a moderate allowance, at one time by exile, at another by sterility, at another by fire, or by other means. That they may not indulge too complacently in the advantages of married life, he either vexes them by the misconduct of their partners, or humbles them by the wickedness of their children, or afflicts them by bereavement We duly profit by the discipline of the cross, when we learn that this life, estimated in itself, is restless, troubled, in numberless ways wretched Our desire of a better life should increase."

The psalmist of Psalm 73 confesses, "But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked;" and he found no resting-place until he entered the sanctuary, and considered the latter end of the righteous and the wicked.

It is God's love that keeps us from going astray. He gave His only Son to save us. We should look to Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith, and run the race with perseverance. "It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons" (v. 7). "It is the Spirit Himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him" (Romans 8:16, 17).

*"Be still! what God in His good pleasure
To you in wisdom may impart
Is given you in perfect measure;
Thus be content within your heart,
To Him who chose us for His own
Our needs and wants are surely known."*

* * * * *

Send your requests to:

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

PATRIMONY PROFILE 20

By Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

Rev. Scholte himself wrote a letter to the Classical Board as well, and it is well worth quoting here for the larger part. Scholte expressed his amazement at the fact that preaching and baptizing were the reasons for his suspension. The suspension itself did not come as a surprise and had been expected by him for some time; it was the reason why that astonished him. Was I not entitled to do that as an ordained minister? Would it not have been extremely impolite to refuse the invitation by the Consistory? Does not Paul write in Philippians 1 that he was happy that the Gospel was being preached anyway, even though some did it from impure motives?

"I am prepared to bear all reproach and scorn, but to leave off preaching the Word of my eternal King because people forbid me to do so without showing to me from the Word of God that I have rendered myself unworthy of the ministry entrusted to me — that is something which I neither can nor may do.

"Once I have wholeheartedly answered, 'I do,' before the countenance of the Almighty in the midst of the congregation to the question 'Whether I did feel in my heart that I was legitimately called by God's congregation and therefore by God Himself to this holy service,' and I still stand in that same feeling. I can therefore be bound by the Word of God alone, and for that reason I must reject your suspension and, according to the example of the apostle Paul, Acts 19:9, depart from you. And since the congregation over which the Holy Spirit has made me a pastor and teacher, has unanimously declared, by its signing with their own hand, that it secedes from the present Church Board, I remain as pastor and teacher in that charge and in that place where the Lord has brought me. I testify once more in the Name of the Lord that my communion with you ceases as of now, until, with me, you reject everything which conflicts with the infallible rule of God's Word."

The Classical Board declared that Scholte broke his "holiest promises" and, "considering that the suspended minister H.P. Scholte in no way has the authority arbitrarily to secede from the Netherlands Reformed denomination," decided that his suspension was to be "with the total loss of his salary" and also to refer the matter to the Provincial Church Board of North Brabant. This was on November 7, 1834.

A week later Scholte replied. "Gentlemen," he wrote, "if anything happened or if anything should happen to serve me as a confirmation of the justness of my step to secede from the Netherlands Reformed Church Board, your communication of Nov. 7 undoubtedly will occupy an important place among all that. Is there anything that can confirm more that you wish to introduce an unbearable

coercion of conscience of that you are eager to do evil?" I certainly believe that by my step your whole plan miscarries, but that's what happens to everything that is not based on the only Cornerstone. "If you were really convinced that you had the truth on your side, you would not be so angry but say, acquiescing in the will of the Lord, 'They were not of us, therefore they have departed from us.'

"I wish to give account of my behaviour before another court than yours, and before that court you all will have to appear but, if you do not repent, it will not be so easy for you there as in a meeting of the Classical Board."

Is it an offense and rebellious misconduct "that in Uirum I pointed out to an oppressed congregation in the midst of all persecution to look upon the Lord alone and to leave their temple of stone rather than dishonouring God by their actions; that I directed their attention to Him who still will be a Sanctuary for His people and who will come again to deliver all His own out of all struggle and suffering, and to receive them into His everlasting glory; that, after the Church had been closed by the police by order of Assessors and Churchwardens, . . . under God's sky I pointed the gathered multitude to the only and immovable ground on which we may approach the throne of grace, and that because a Counsellor did not want it. . . ."

However interesting it would be to relate all events and to copy all correspondence exchanged in Scholte's case, we cannot do so: our story would become too long. There is one thing that should be related. That is Scholte's stand in the matter of a church federation. He was basically an independentist and went his own way. The difficulties in which he became involved in the Seceded Churches, which resulted in his suspension in 1840, were a result of that.

From Pella, Iowa, he wrote, among others, the following words. "Looking back by the light of God's Word on that which in The Netherlands is called the Secession, and of which the history of its origin is now again printed and distributed, I say that I am convinced from the fulness of my heart that, as far as I am concerned, that step was unavoidable if I did not wish to become unfaithful to the Lord who had put me in the ministry of the Word.

"I do not feel any accusation or blame about the practising of communion with other Seceders either, since that was based in my heart on the truth of the communion of saints, and I never harboured or showed any aversion to non-seceded believers.

"I do, however, feel sorrow about the ecclesiastical actions which followed after the Secession. Looking back upon the past, I believe that I would have done better, according to the light then already given to me by God in His Word, by not entering into such an ecclesiastical junction as was formed. I should have realized that that which I had discovered regarding those whom I shall call Dordrecht-minded at least rendered a probing of the nature of that disposition necessary. I knew with certainty that it had never been nor was my intention to stop at Dordrecht. I knew with certainty that it had been engraved into my heart to proceed towards perfection and I was fully convinced that that perfection was not obtained at Dordrecht. I believe that, as far as I am concerned, I would have done

better by simply continuing with preaching and baptizing and keeping communion with the believers in the breaking of bread and in prayer without associating with an ecclesiastical organization. I would have saved myself and others many unpleasant things. The only thing I can plead is that I assumed a similar intention to be in the hearts of my fellow-seceders, namely, in everything to acknowledge the supreme authority of the Word of God and to regulate the communion of Christians according to it. Oftentimes I have heard the remark that here down below we cannot expect a perfect Church. I have never denied this, but at the same time always declared that it is our Christian duty to strive for perfection, and that cannot be reasonably denied by someone who confesses to believe that the apostles wrote through the Holy Spirit."

Anthony Brummelkamp

From his early youth on, Anthony Brummelkamp desired to become a minister. His desire was strengthened by the impression which he had about ministers in general. "That a minister was pious in his childish estimation, and that only looking at him was sufficient to fill a child with awe and reverence is most closely connected with his choice to become a minister. How am I saved? Who can be saved? But ministers are! Even though it is a difficult, almost impossible task for men, ministers are saved. Oh, that I could become a minister. These and similar thoughts and sighs, however unfounded, filled his heart." That's how Brummelkamp himself describes his youthful aspirations.

He saw his desire fulfilled. At the age of 17 he went to Amsterdam to attend the *Athenaeum*, and in 1830 he enrolled in Leiden's university. His contact with other students is indicative of his own disposition.

Who were his friends? "Three of our friends had passed their exams and were already ministers of the Word: C.D. Louis Bähler, G.F. Gezelle Meerburg, and H.P. Scholte. Three were still left: S. van Velzen, A.C. van Raalte, and the undersigned, when suddenly from the northern part of our fatherland a voice was heard which seemed to be well-suited to spare nothing, to attack the disease in its very heart, and to cause the bomb to burst." That voice was the voice of Hendrik de Cock.

Brummelkamp was already a minister when he met de Cock for the first time. He had expected his colleague to have the appearance of a fierce warrior, afraid of nothing, but exactly the opposite was the case. It was clear to Brummelkamp that the harsh words which de Cock had written against false teachers and unfaithful ministers proceeded from his love to the Lord.

Brummelkamp became a minister in Hattem. However, he had been there only a short time when he noticed that "the administration of holy baptism did not take place according to the institution of Christ and the rules given to us by the apostles. All parents did bring their children for baptism, but many only out of custom, or because they were of the opinion that this was to give their children a name; ministers simply baptized all children that were brought to church without concerning themselves with that or speaking with the parents beforehand.

"Already in the third consistory meeting I tabled a proposal in that matter. I desired that those who were not members of the congregation and yet wished to have their children baptized should contact the minister beforehand and see to it that a member of the congregation be present at the baptism of their infants as a witness. The consistory, however, wanted to see that delayed for a while."

In connection with this decision Brummelkamp remarks, "This delaying and waiting for a while, which then as well as later was proposed many a time by the consistory, under the guise of seeking the best for the congregation, afterwards appeared to me to be nothing else than an effort to bring me, too, into that same state of lukewarmness and tardiness in which the vast majority of the meeting was."

A proposal to exercise discipline was "rejected although the meeting declared that it was convinced that I was not wrong, since, as it was said, they feared that it would not bring any benefit. This theme, always new and always old, certainly had a paralyzing energy."

The Rev. Anthony Brummelkamp also came to the conclusion that all who remained under the Boards actually stood on the side of the persecutors of de Cock and Scholte. He decided to send an address to the general synod with four requests, but he did not send it immediately.

First he informed the consistory that he would no longer baptize children of non-members unless there was a member present as a witness. On Sunday, June 14, 1835, he preached on Psalm 51:16, and the theme was "Profaning the Signs and Seals of the Covenant." In that sermon he also informed the congregation of his decision.

Thus the coming Sunday was being looked forward to with great apprehension. During the week preceding it, Rev. Brummelkamp heard of "great joy with the unbelievers." The parents of two newly-born infants were rumoured to have been "bought" to come with their children to have them baptized. They did come to the service and had no witness with them.

"After the sermon I requested the father and mother whom I knew as members of the congregation by name to rise, hear the form, and answer the questions. After that, I baptized their child, let the others remain sitting there, and everything was completed in deepest silence. In deepest silence, I say, until the service had ended, for immediately after that one or two gentlemen pushed towards the front with very vehement declarations and statements, that they would take up the cause of the unfortunate people whom I had treated so badly there. While all the people remained standing in tense expectation, I replied that my house was open for them and that I would gladly receive them to discuss it with them, but that it was not proper to do so at that moment. As I learned afterwards, they lodged a complaint against me with the Classical Board."

—To be continued.

Can Measures and Weights or Time in the Bible Be Translated?₃

The NIV and the Volume of the Molten Sea

We have already dealt with the NIV a number of times, and in this section we will start to scrutinize the conversions in the footnotes on the molten sea. One reason for this is the fact that the NIV has some standing among us and many members of the churches probably own a copy. Another reason is that the combined footnotes of I Kings 7 and II Chron. 4 give us a complete conversion of the Biblical dimensions to metric and US measure, except for the handbreadth. For this unit a conversion is given in a footnote on Ezek. 40:5. The actual figures in the footnotes given by the translators are approximate, as they indicate, but they do provide the reader with an insight into their thinking.

Earlier we had a brief look at the way the NIV translators approximated the cubit and the handbreadth in the footnotes on Ezek. 40:5. Isolated, these approximate lengths give the reader a feeling for the size of the cubit and the handbreadth. On the other hand, if we add the 0.5-m cubit and the 8-cm handbreadth together, we get a seven-handbreadth cubit, 58 cm long instead of 51.8 cm. The error is 12%, almost a full handbreadth! With the imperial/US length measures the translators had better luck. The long cubit, derived from their approximate figures, is 1½ feet + 3 inches = 21 inches long instead of 20.4 inches. This results in an error of just under 3%. (Converted to metric, 21 inches is equal to 53.34 cm).

Let us now check what can happen with this kind of unscientific rounding. If this 12% oversized cubit is used in volume calculations, like those for the molten sea, we get a 40% error in the final result!

This is easily seen. Assume a cube with sides of one metre. The volume is one cubic metre or $(1\text{ m})^3 = 1\text{ m}^3$. Increase the length of a side by 12% to 1.12 m. The result is $(1.12\text{ m})^3 = 1.40\text{ m}^3$.

But this is only the beginning. Let us consider the volume as it is recorded in both descriptions. The NIV, in I Kings 7:26, literally translates: *It held two thousand baths*, with a footnote "That is, probably about 11,500 gallons (about 44 kiloliters); the Septuagint does not have this sentence." In II Chron. 4:5 the translation is as follows: *It held three thousand baths*, with the footnote "That is, about 17,500 gallons (about 66 kiloliters)." The vol-

umes in the text, 2000 and 3000 baths, are correct. It is a different story with the footnotes which express the volumes in US gallons and kilolitres. We will concentrate on the kilolitre conversion; it is the easiest one to follow. (Note that 1 kilolitre = 1 cubic metre.)

According to the NIV translators, 2000 baths = 44 kilolitres and 3000 baths = 66 kilolitres. This works out to 22 litres per bath, the widely accepted value. As far as the arithmetic is concerned, there is nothing wrong with these conversions. But the translators, with one bold stroke of the pen, so to speak, solve an age-old problem. What do they basically suggest with these two conversions? Nothing less than the existence of an error in the Scriptures! You may wonder why converting 2000 baths to 44 kilolitres and 3000 baths to 66 kilolitres would introduce an error. The point is that, just as a fact is a fact, a litre is a litre is a litre, while a bath in Kings is not necessarily equal to a bath in Chronicles. The sea, as described in Chronicles, has the same dimensions as in Kings. As the calculations show, 2000 baths of 22 litres = 44 kilolitres would about fill it to the brim. It is impossible to store 66 kilolitres in the same space!

Many investigators in this field have searched for a solution to the 2000/3000 baths problem, including this writer. As you may remember (now that it is mentioned again), one article in the series on the molten sea had as title: "Two or Three Thousand Baths — or Both?" The solution, proposed then, was a smaller bath after the Babylonian exile of about $\frac{2}{3} \times 22.8 = 15.2$ litres. This solution found support in the archaeological world and has been published in *The Biblical Archaeologist*. It is not claimed that this is the last word on this 2000/3000 baths controversy. Nevertheless it has been shown that a logical solution is possible, and it also shows that extreme care is needed when it comes to conversion of Biblical measures and weights.

The NIV and the Septuagint

It is difficult — to guess what the NIV translators had in mind with their reference to the Septuagint in the footnote on I Kings 7:26. Were they thinking that the 2000-bath value in this text was a later addition and maybe incorrect? Whatever reason they may have had, they should

have been more careful! The Septuagint translators did not only omit this sentence but also introduced a change in I Kings 7:23: *its circumference [was] 33 cubits*. At the same time they kept 30 cubits in II Chron. 4:2.

Was this an early attempt to "correct" the text? It is quite possible, because if we take 33 cubits for the circumference, $22/7$ for π (the Greek value), and ignore the rim and the thickness of the wall, while keeping the height at 5 cubits, we find for the volume $433\frac{1}{8}$ cubic cubits. With the cubit equal to 0.525 m, this works out to 62.7 kilolitres. Using the 3000-bath volume of II Chron. 4:5 it finally results in a bath of 20.9 litres, a fairly close value. (See box and below for details.) Why the translators did not change the circumference to 33 cubits in II Chron. 4:2 is a puzzle. If they had done that too, they would at least have been consistent, although not correct, of course! It cannot be correct because the translators left the rim-to-rim diameter of ten cubits unchanged in both accounts, although the rim is not mentioned in II Chron. 4:2. Again, forgetting about the rim, as many investigators did in the course of time, we find a calculated circumference of $22/7 \times 10 = 31.4$ cubits instead of 33 cubits (I Kings 7:23). The figures in the Septuagint just don't make sense. One question remains. Why did the translators choose 33 cubits? Most likely because $33 \div 22 = 1.5$, which results in the following easy calculation:

In the box we have the formula: $(C^2 \times H) \div (4 \times \pi)$. This formula represents the most common way cylindrical volumes were computed in ancient times. Only measurements of the circumference and the height, as well as a value for π , are required.

Inserting the values mentioned above leads to a simple calculation when using $22/7$ for π . The following result is obtained: $(33^2 \times 5) \div (4 \times 22/7) = 433.125 = 433\frac{1}{8}$ cubic cubits.

As mentioned above, this finally results in a bath of 20.9 litres. There is nothing wrong with these calculations themselves. Nevertheless it is the old story: figures don't lie, but they can be fixed to support a lie. This is what appears to have happened. First the translators increased the circumference to 33 cubits. Then they took the for-their-times modern value of $22/7$ for π and deleted 2000 baths from

I Kings 7:26. Everything then fell neatly into place, and, moreover, the Greek scientific community of Alexandria may have been impressed with their use of $22/7$ for π !

Another difficulty connected with the problem we are discussing is the value of the *metretes* in the Septuagint. In II Chron. 4:5 the Greek text has *metretes* for "bath." Earlier in these articles the *metretes* was introduced as a measure equal to the firkin of 9 imperial gallons = 40.9 litres. This is about twice the capacity of the bath found above. Therefore it is likely that the Septuagint translators used *metretes* in its original meaning of measure in a general sense without a fixed value. We can only speculate, but if that is the case and the arithmetic supports it, the "reconstruction" of the text makes sense, mathematically speaking. However, by not changing everything to agree with their calculations, the person or persons who took care of the mathematics gave it all away!

Note: It should be mentioned here that the conversion of the bath in the Septuagint is rather puzzling, to say the least. In I Kings 7:38 forty baths is converted to forty *chous*; in II Chron. 4:5, as we have seen, the conversion is to *metretes*; and in Ezek. 45:14 the *kotule* is used three times. The relationship between these Greek measures was the following:

1 *metretes* = 12 *chous* = 144 *kotules*

Looking at these figures, one cannot help wondering whether the Septuagint translators knew what they were doing.

It is obvious that the Septuagint cannot be trusted as far as measures and weights are concerned.

More Conversions in the Footnotes of the NIV

To calculate the volume of the sea we need three of the recorded dimensions: the measured circumference of thirty cubits, the height of five cubits, and the wall thickness of one handbreadth. In the NIV the circumference conversion is found in a footnote on I Kings 7:23 where we read: "That is about 45 feet (about 13.5 meters)." The height can be found in a footnote on II Chron. 4:2. We read there: "That is about 7½ feet (about 2.3 meters)." The estimated wall thickness, as already mentioned, appears in one of the footnotes on Ezek. 40:5. There we find: "That is about 3 inches (about 8 centimeters)." Again, for simplicity's sake, we will only deal with the metric conversions.

First of all, let us investigate whether these conversions are correct. As before,

we have to conclude that they are not very precise. But the main error is that the six-handbreadth-long common cubit is used instead of the temple cubit of seven handbreadths. The second source of errors is the generally poor rounding off of the numerical values. The cubit, computed from the circumference, is $13.5 \div 30 = 0.45$ m, fairly close to the accepted value of 44.4 for the common cubit. Turning to the height, we find 5×0.45 m = 2.25 m which the translators rounded off to 2.3 m. A more accurate calculation would have resulted in 5×0.444 m = 2.22 m. As the six-handbreadth cubit was used, we divide by six to find the length of one handbreadth: $0.45 \div 6 = 0.075$ m or 7.5 cm. The translators rounded off again and 8 cm was taken for the length of the handbreadth. A correct calculation leads to $44.4 \div 6 = 7.4$ cm.

The tabulation in the accompanying chart shows that the volume, as computed with the dimensions given in the footnotes, amounts to 29.9 m³ or 29,900 litres. Dividing by 2000 baths we find for the bath a value of 14.95 litres, and if we use the 3000 baths of I Chron. 4, the bath would measure only 9.97 litres. Both values are much smaller than the 22-litre bath used for the volume calculations in the NIV footnotes, resulting in 44 and 66 kilolitres, respectively.

It is possible, of course, that the NIV translators did make some approximate calculations. Let us grant them the benefit of the doubt and assume they fell into the same trap many investigators in this field got caught in. If they ignored the rim and the wall thickness, their diameter would be the outside rim-to-rim diameter of 10 cubits. This would lead to a diameter of $10 \times 0.45 = 4.5$ metres. The translators took 2.3 m for the 5-cubit height. Therefore the 5-cubit radius of the rim should also be converted to 2.3 m. This leads to a simple calculation of this volume.

In the list of equations we have the following formula for volumes: $V = \pi R^2 H$. Inserting the values for radius and height obtained above results in $V = 3.14 \times 2.3 \times 2.3 \times 2.3 = 38.2$ m³ or kilolitres for this maximized volume. This is a lot closer to the 44 kilolitres of the footnotes, but the derived bath is still only $38,200 \div 2,000 = 19.1$ litres instead of 22 litres.

This is a dishonest calculation because all numbers have been "maximized" to obtain a closer result. Nevertheless it is an example of what has been done to make the figures fit the facts more closely in the case of the molten sea. We do not know, of course, whether the translators

of the NIV actually made an attempt to calculate the volume from the dimensions. Most likely they copied some figures from a Bible handbook and did the rounding off themselves. After all this "figuring with numbers," we should finally arrive at some conclusions.

How to "Translate" Measures, Weights, and Money

You will understand by now that I do not recommend the introduction of conversions into the Bible text itself. As shown in these articles a lot of research needs to be done before it should even be considered if we want — as we should — to conserve the text accurately. Even if scholars in the field seriously went to work to shed light on the remaining problems, it is very doubtful that generally acceptable solutions could be found for every difficulty. This is true not only for measures and weights, but also for the field of ancient technology in general, and no doubt for other fields of human activity too. Yet, if the scholars, instead of producing more translations, had spent their time thoroughly researching problems and unknowns in the Scriptures, we might know a lot more than we actually do.

What should be done then? Over the years there have been many suggestions. We will consider two because they deal with the subject we are discussing.

The late Prof. B. Holwerda, in his book *Populair Wetenschappelijke Bijdragen* (p. 107), suggests that a translation should have a number of lists with explanations and maps as study aids. He mentions a list of theological words; a list of archaeological terms, including measures and weights; and also a series of maps. This appears to be an ideal way. No conversions in the text will be needed and a list of terms can be more detailed than footnotes. It is regrettable that in most new translations this is not done. Some RSV editions have it, but the list of words is not complete as far as measures and weights are concerned.

In *Christianity Today*, in a review of the NKJV New Testament, Walter A. Elwell discusses coins, weights, and measures. He remarks that the KJV "has been accused of misunderstanding and mistranslating the Roman coins, weights and measures mentioned in the New Testament." And he goes on to say: "The NKJB does a very bad job of straightening this out. They state a principle in their introduction. 'Words representing ancient objects, such as *chariots* and *phylacteries*, have no modern substitute and are necessarily retained' (p. iii). If this principle had been consistently applied to the

PRESS RELEASE

of the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia, d.d. 14th May 1983 till 24th May 1983.

Article 1: On behalf of the convening church, the church in Kelmscott, the Rev. Dr. S.G. Hur opens the meeting in a Christian manner and addresses the brothers delegates in which address he refers to the origin of the bond of Reformed churches being established in Emden 1571 A.D. All churches are legally represented.

Article 2: Executive is elected. Chairman: Rev. K. Bruning; Assessor: Rev. L.J. Joosse; First Clerk: br. S.H. Terpstra; Second Clerk: Rev. K. Jonker.

Article 3: Chairman takes office and declares Synod constituted. Agreement with Reformed Standards is made manifest.

Article 4: The provisional agenda is discussed and adopted. A question whether a letter of the classis of the Reformed Churches in Australia has been sent to our Synod or to the local churches will be dealt with during the Monday morning session, another letter of the Rev. K. Jonker is added to the agenda.

Article 5: Schedule of the meeting is adopted, being 9.00 - 12.00 — morning session; 2.00 - 5.00 pm — afternoon session and 7.00 - 10.00 pm — evening session. Doctrinal matters will be discussed first, which pertains to the Bible translation and Churchbook.

In the second instance church government will be dealt with, which pertains to Church Order and in the third place matters about the churches abroad and thereafter the mission will be tabled. After adoption the chairman adjourns the meeting.

Article 6: The meeting is reopened by the chairman on Monday morning 16th May 1983 and the matter of the Bible translation is tabled.

Article 7: It is decided to receive the Rev. G. van Rongen as an advisory member of Synod.

Article 8: Greetings from sister churches abroad are received and read; namely from the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands.

Article 9: Having dealt with the report on Bible translation, Synod decides to recommend the use of the Revised Standard Version to the churches for the public worship service.

Article 10: The Synod makes a start with the treatment of the Revised Church Order. The deputies have completed their work and the Articles 1 up till 34 are adopted except the new article in evangelism. Deputies will be instructed to report on this article to the next Synod analysing its base, its aim and its use. The meeting is informed that the letter of the classis of the Reformed Churches in Australia is meant for the local churches.

Article 11: During the Tuesday sessions the Liturgical Forms are tabled and the deputies are instructed to pass proposed recommendations on to the Canadian deputies and inform the Australian local churches about the decision of the Canadian Churches. The Psalm section is adopted.

A proposal to adopt the entire Hymn section of the proposed Canadian Book of Praise is rejected and the number of hymns recommended by the deputies is adopted.

Article 12: The revision-report of the Church Order is tabled once again and dis-

cussed at length. The Synod adopts the proposal regarding Art. 35 - 81 of the Revised Church Order except its linguistic phrasing. A Synod-committee is appointed so as to go through the language of the articles.

Article 13: Matters concerning the Church Order:

Deputies report to Synod on ecclesiastical ordinances regarding a colloquium doctum and re a second calling of ministers.

The resolution and proposal of deputies is adopted. Furthermore, a request of the church in Albany re subscription forms for ministers, elders and deacons is adopted.

Those new forms over-rule the current forms and uniformity in this respect is deemed necessary. Deputies ad Art. 19 (Training for the ministry of the Word) have tabled their report and Synod decides not to raise funds unless necessary.

Regarding the report of deputies for correspondence with the government, Synod decides to appoint a committee so as to have rules for correspondence formulated. Proposals re adherence to the rules of synods are adopted so as to have the rules reconfirmed. It is also decided that a committee will be instructed to publish a booklet for the Church Order and forms re some articles of the Church Order.

Article 14: Reports of deputies for correspondence with sister churches abroad are tabled. The assessor is asked to chair the meeting. Having dealt with the way deputies have handled the invitation for the Constituent Assembly of the International Conference of Reformed Churches, Synod discusses at length the proposals on the future conference which will be held in September 1985. Several amendments are brought forward in respect to the constitution of this conference. Some are adopted. The general report of deputies concerning the sister relationship with churches abroad and contacts with other churches are also discussed. It is confirmed that the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland and the Free Church of Scotland are true and faithful churches. It is also acknowledged that the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Taiwan is a true and faithful church of our Lord Jesus Christ. The sister relationship with the Canadian Reformed Churches, the Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands, Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in South Africa and the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa) is continued and contacts with the true and faithful churches will be intensified whilst contacts with the Reformed Church in Japan and the Dutch Reformed Church in Sri Lanka will be intensified. Deputies are instructed to investigate whether they can be accepted as true churches. Deputies are also instructed to investigate whether new contacts can be arranged because of Christ's command to seek for unity with those who are faithful to His Word.

After having acknowledged that the participating member churches of the Constituent Assembly for the I.C.R.C. are true and faithful churches and after having adopted some amendments and an addition to the Constitution of the future Conference, the proposals of the deputies regarding the conference and membership of this conference are adopted and Synod decides to join this conference.

Article 15: A request of the Church in Albany to clarify the function of a classis-

coins, the confusion would have been cleared up. . . ." The reviewer referred to the New Testament only. The quoted remark, slightly changed, can be found on p. v of the preface in the completed NKJV Bible. [NKJB is now NKJV.]

As the reviewer states, the KJV translators generally did a poor job in the case of money, measures, and weights. But none of the modern translators of the more common versions did a very good job either. It is probably impossible to get it straightened out now, but the best solution would be to retain the original names with explanations in footnotes and/or appendices. In case an English word does exist for a measure, that word should be used. For instance, "cubit" is the translation for *ammah* (Hebrew) and *pechys* (Greek). In earlier times "penny" was an acceptable translation for *denarion* (Greek), as argued earlier. Today "denarius" would be the right word. This procedure would prevent the introduction of errors in the text, and up-to-date explanations would enable readers to obtain an idea of the size and value of the coins, measures, and weights where this is possible. When nothing is known about the value of a unit, for instance the *kesitah* (Gen. 33:19, Josh. 24:32, Job 42:11), this could be stated and a remark added that it may have been a unit of weight for silver.

The next article will deal with time and timekeeping in the ancient Middle East. This will take some time, for more study is required. The subject is more complicated than one would expect.

A. ZUIDHOF

Neugebauer, O., *The Exact Sciences in Antiquity* (Dover Publications, New York, 1969).

The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament and Apocrypha, With an English Translation (Samuel Bagster and Sons Limited, London).

Tenney, M.C., General Editor, *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Volume Five, "Septuagint and Weights and Measures" (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1977).

Zuidhof, A. "King Solomon's Molten Sea," II Technical Details in the Biblical Record (*Clarion*, Vol. 26, Year-end Issue, 1977); IV Mathematics, General (Vol. 27, No. 4, 1978).

Zuidhof, A. "King Solomon's Molten Sea." III Volumetric Capacity. *Clarion*, 1978, Vol. 27, No. 1; VII Two- or Three Thousand Baths or Both? Vol. 27, No. 20; VIII Common or Temple Cubit? Vol. 27, No. 23.

"King Solomon's Molten Sea and (rt)." *Biblical Archaeologist*, Summer 1982.

church is adopted, the request of the same church to investigate the possibility of establishing two classes of our churches is defeated.

Article 16: Reports on the mission work in the past are tabled and after a discussion in which dissatisfaction is voiced re confining of the aim of mission, Synod takes note of the actions that were taken to abandon the mission field and of the termination of the employment of the full-time mission worker.

Article 17: Church visitation reports are dealt with in a closed session. After re-opening the public session the duty of church visitation is discussed and Synod decides to have the visitations conducted verbally in Launceston every second year. The decision whether also elders can be appointed as visitors is deferred.

Article 18: The contacts with the Presbyterian Church in Eastern Australia are reported and explained by the deputy br. A.H. Terpstra. Synod decides to instruct deputies to investigate whether these churches can be recognized as true and faithful churches of our Lord and they are to report to next Synod.

Article 19: Future mission. After deliberations Synod decides to appoint deputies so as to have investigated the possibilities of a future mission field in or outside Australia.

Article 20: The committee which was to look into the matter of the Revised Prayer — section of the Book of Praise recommends the use of these formulated prayers for use in the church services.

Article 21: A request to appoint deputies and instruct them to arrange a meeting with deputies of the Reformed Churches in Australia to have a discussion on the event of the Liberation is not adopted. As for the Presbyterian Reformed Churches in Australia the deputy recommends not to continue contacts with them. This recommendation is adopted.

Article 22: The Synod archives are discussed because of the reports. The archives are re-organised and the appointed church in Albany was therefore not able to have its task performed, which is acknowledged by Synod.

Article 23: The church in Armadale is appointed to realise assets and invest the proceeds of the mission till a decision will be made about the future of the mission task.

Article 24: The acts of the special ecclesiastical meeting in which br. K. Jonker was examined will be published together with the acts of this Synod.

Article 25: The books of the treasurer are found to be in good order according to the report of the Church Council in Kelmscott and the sharing of Synod costs is settled: Armadale and Kelmscott 30% each and Albany and Launceston 20% each.

Article 26: Appointments and instructions are tabled and adopted.

Article 27: Question period according to Art. 41 of Church Order and personal question period are held. Question is raised whether Art. 11 of Synod 1978 can be adhered to.

The Rev. G. van Rongen addresses the meeting on behalf of the Dutch sister churches.

Article 28: The acts of Synod are adopted.

Article 29: Press release is adopted and censure according to Art. 43 C.O. takes place.

Article 30: Chairman concludes the meeting with an address and closes the Synod 1983 of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia.

REV. L.J. JOOSSE
Assessor e.t.

PRESS RELEASE

Board meeting of the Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped.

The meeting was opened with the singing of Psalm 138:1, reading of Ephesians 4:1-16, and prayer.

The minutes of the April 29th meeting were accepted as received.

The board approved an approximate expenditure of \$775.00 for a tarp for the summer camp.

A committee of three board members was appointed to go over and request further information, if necessary, from the eight responses to our ad which had been placed in *Nederlands Dagblad* for foster parents for our future "foster-type" home.

H. Faber entered the meeting and presented the Draft Resolution of the Board of "Anchor" CRAFTH to incorporate. This proposal was accepted by the board and will be presented to the membership at the next membership meeting. He also gave some suggestions re: immigration with regard to possible out-of-country hiring.

A meeting will be arranged with the vice-chairman of "Dit Koningskind" who is at present in Ontario.

The next board meeting is scheduled for June 3 and the membership meeting for June 24. At the membership meeting the incorporation aspect will be decided and a budget presented.

Tapes of the combined choir are available from K. Brouwer.

Some questions were raised about the tax receipts which were issued.

* * *

Board meeting of the Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped held on June 3, 1983, in Hamilton.

We opened the meeting with singing Ps. 97:1. Br. Brouwer, our vice-chairman, read Matt. 21:33-46 and led us in prayer. The agenda was established. The minutes were accepted.

The committee for contact with Holland gave its report on the applications received for house parents. Contact will be made with "Dit Koningskind" and Dr. Faber re: interviewing the applicants.

Next we voted for a new chairman and recording secretary Brother J. Witten was chosen as chairman; he accepted the position. Sr. H. Nobel was chosen as recording secretary and she also accepted the position.

Agenda for the membership meeting which is to be held on June 24, 1983, was set up.

Next the tentative budget for the Foster Home was brought to the floor by br. Sipkema and was discussed at length.

Question period was held. The next meeting will be held July 8, 1983. Br. Sipkema closed the meeting in prayer.

MISS H. NOBEL

OUR COVER
Summer scene.

Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

One Dundas Street West
Suite 2106, Box 2
Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3
Phone: (416) 598-2520

OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

CORMIER, J.C., geboren 8 juni 1945, laatst bekende adres in Nederland, Zwaluwstraat 82, Nijmegen, naar Canada vertrokken op 1 december 1981.

VAN ELST, Mevrouw J., geboren 31 oktober 1945, laatst bekende adres in Nederland, Zwaluwstraat 82, Nijmegen, naar Canada vertrokken op 1 december 1981.

LUBBERTS, Geesje, geboren 11 oktober 1923, laatst bekende adres in Nederland, Dalerstraat 33, Erm, naar Canada vertrokken op 5 mei 1958.

MEIJER, Liefert, geboren 16 juni 1918 te Enschede, laatst bekende adres in Nederland, Walhofstraat 73b, Enschede, naar Canada vertrokken op 24 april 1952.

SCHEURKOGEL, Arend, geboren 3 juni 1918, laatst bekende adres in Nederland, Groenedijk 23, Dordrecht, naar Canada vertrokken op 26 april 1952.

SLIK, Jan Pieter, geboren 11 juli 1918, laatst bekende adres in Nederland, Kerkweg 2, Ter Aar, naar Canada vertrokken omstreeks 1953.

SPAPE, Petrus H., geboren 1 juni 1918 te Tilburg, laatst bekende adres in Nederland, P. Vingboonsstraat 63, Tilburg, naar Canada vertrokken op 13 september 1951.

VRIESEMA, Mevrouw W., laatst bekende adres in Canada RR #6, Peterborough, ON K9J 6X7

WALLET, Bertum, geboren 24 juli 1918 te Utrecht, laatst bekende adres in Nederland, Ooievaarshorsweg 2, Leusden, naar Canada vertrokken op 19 juni 1953.

DE VINK-KORVER, Wilhelmina, geboren 1 augustus 1924 te Nieuwer-Amstel, laatst bekende adres in Nederland: Nw. Karselaan 30, Amstelveen, naar Canada vertrokken op 18 februari 1983.

DE REE, Gerardus Pieter Zacharias, geboren 5 februari 1926 te Amsterdam, laatst bekende adres: Binnen Bierkade 21b, 's Gravenhage, naar Canada vertrokken op 27 oktober 1950.

ROGGE, Uildrik, geboren 7 juli 1878, naar Canada vertrokken op 26 mei 1910. Eventuele afstammelingen van de heer Rogge.

VAN DER STOEP, Willem Jan, geboren 5 maart 1908, laatst bekende adres: Prins Hendriklaan 5, Soest, naar Canada vertrokken op 30 januari 1958.

VEENHOF, Stoffel, geboren 7 mei 1917 te Rhenen, laatst bekende adres: Franseweg 71, Elst, naar Canada vertrokken op 17 januari 1962.

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

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Do you remember we had a little opinion poll about DADS a little while ago?

Here is what some of the Busy Beavers wrote:

"I think MY Dad is the greatest because he works very hard to put food on the table, clothes on us, and gives us a lot of treats."

Busy Beaver *Angela Brouwer*

"I think my Dad is the greatest because he plays with us and sometimes he says yes when my Mom says no. And I love him very much."

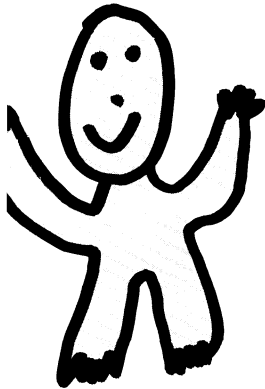
Busy Beaver *Rosalin Swaving*

"I think my Dad is the greatest because he does a lot of work, so that he will get some money and buy some meat and some other good foods. He cares for me. He will play games with me and my brothers, even though he is a very busy man. He teaches me fun games too!"

Busy Beaver *Sylvia Van Bodegom*

"I think my Dad is the greatest because: he makes things for us. He takes us to the beach every year and I love him very much."

Busy Beaver *Katrina De Jong*



"My Dad"
by Busy Beaver *Katrina De Jong*

FOR YOU TO DO

1. Make a SEED COLLECTION.

- See if you can find:
- parachute seeds
 - shooting seeds
 - hooked seeds

2. Make a GLUE picture.

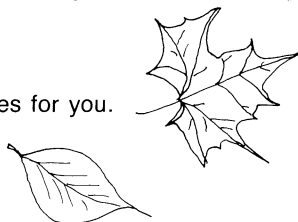
First make an OUTLINE on your paper.

Fill in this outline with a thin coat of glue. (Cover your working surface with a newspaper!)

Then sprinkle seeds of different shapes, sizes, and colours to make an interesting picture.

3. Don't forget to press your prettiest leaves between paper towels in a big fat book. They're great for making all kinds of different prints!

Here are two examples for you.



From the Mailbox

Hello, *Mary-Lynne Kottelenberg*. Thank you for a nice chatty letter, and your quiz, too. I see you're keeping very busy! Have you made friends with the new girl in your class already, Mary-Lynne? I'm glad you had such a good holiday.

What an interesting bus trip you made this spring, *Anne Kottelenberg*. And how is your calf coming along? Do you have to show it this fall? Have a very nice last year at your school, Anne. Thanks for the jokes!

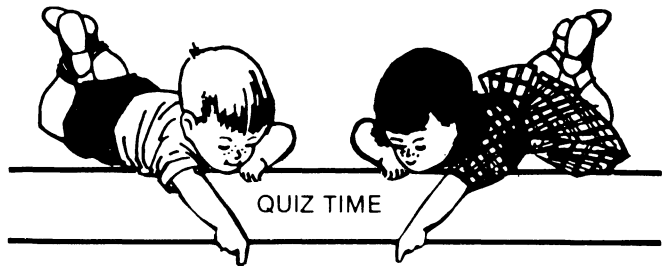
Jokes For You

from Busy Beaver
Anne Kottelenberg

Ned: This match won't light.
Fred: What's the matter with it?
Ned: I don't know! It worked all right a minute ago!

Rob: I didn't sleep well last night.
Bob: Why not?
Rob: Well, I plugged the electric blanket into the toaster by mistake and I kept popping out of bed!

Glen: Do you know what Danny Dee was doing this morning?
Len: No, what?
Glen: He was standing in front of the mirror with his eyes closed so he could see what he looks like when he's asleep!



- | | |
|--------|---------|
| 1. - L | 7. - O |
| 2. - E | 8. - H |
| 3. - F | 9. - S |
| 4. - T | 10. - V |
| 5. - R | 11. - D |
| 6. - G | 12. - I |

$\frac{12}{1}$	$\frac{1}{7}$	$\frac{7}{10}$	$\frac{10}{2}$	$\frac{4}{8}$	$\frac{8}{2}$	
$\frac{1}{7}$	$\frac{7}{5}$	$\frac{11}{3}$	$\frac{3}{7}$	$\frac{5}{8}$	$\frac{8}{2}$	$\frac{12}{9}$
$\frac{6}{7}$	$\frac{7}{7}$	$\frac{11}{11}$				

from Busy Beaver *Robert Van Middelkoop*