

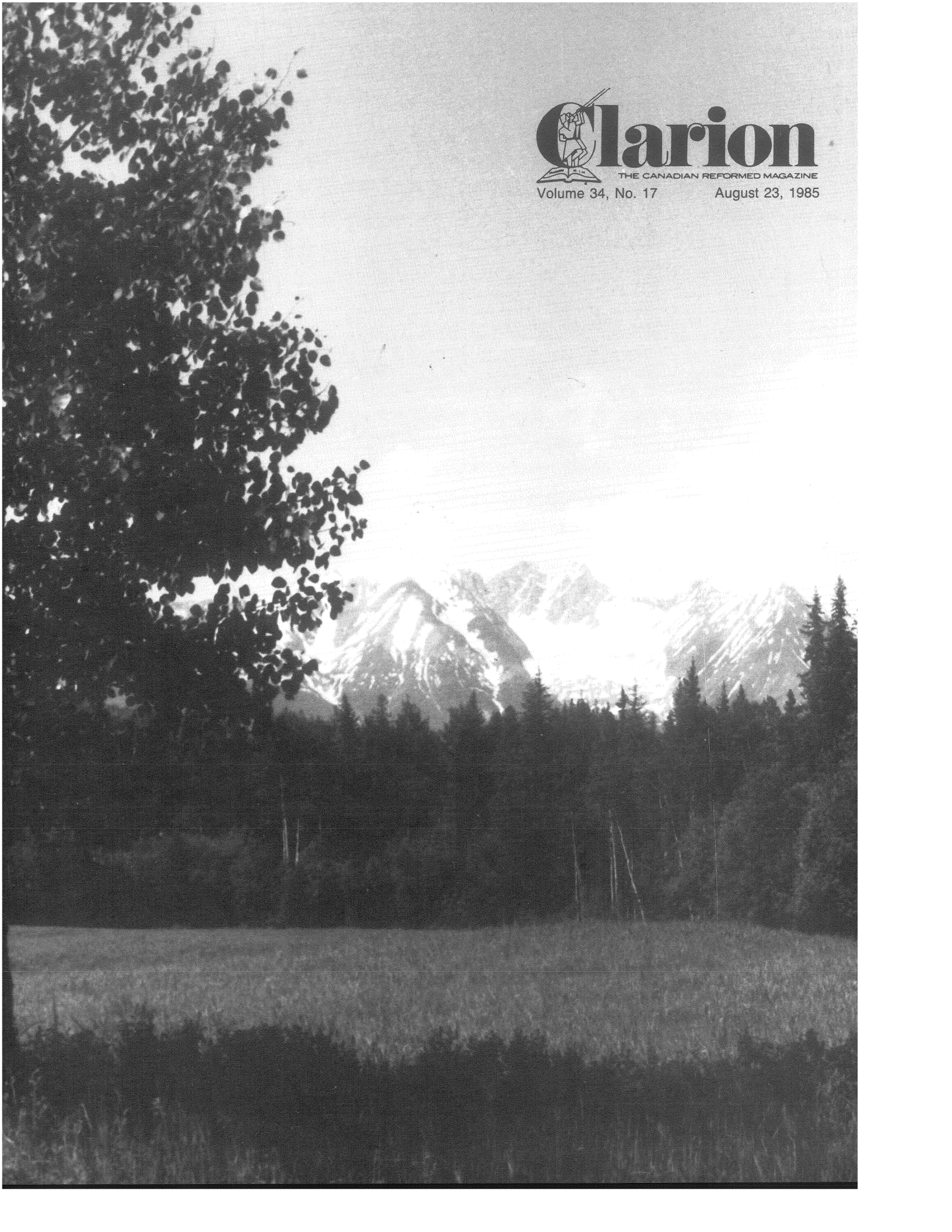


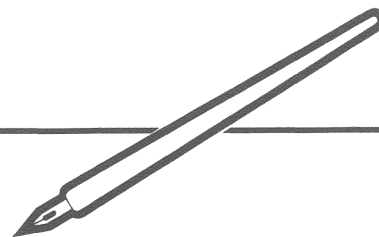
Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 34, No. 17

August 23, 1985





Schools open their doors again

The beginning of September means that the school doors swing open again. Teachers and students start a new season of education. This education is not only a matter of facts, numbers, dates, and so on. It is also a matter of outlook on life, of philosophy. It is therefore a matter of the antithesis which God put in paradise after the fall in sin. Genesis 3:15 (“I put enmity between you, Satan, and this woman, and between your seed and her seed”) shows that there are basically only two different groups of people: those who believe in the only true God and love and serve Him, and those who don’t.

This enmity implies that there are also basically only two contrasting outlooks on life. The one is God-centered, the other is man-centered. The one is Biblical, the other is in conflict with the Scriptures. A teacher who does not believe in God (Father, Son, and Spirit) as his God and who does not accept the Scriptures as the infallible and inerrant Word of God, is not able to teach his subject in the light of creation, redemption, and sanctification, something a God-fearing, believing teacher will constantly endeavour to do, whatever his subject is.

That is why Article 21 of our old Church Order read: “The Consistories everywhere shall see to it that there are good teachers who shall not only teach the children reading, writing, languages, and arts, but also instruct them in godliness and the Catechism.”

I like this article. It shows so clearly the Reformed principle of unity in education in church, home, and school. Members of the church who received children from, and therefore also for, the LORD promise their God, on the occasion of the baptism of these children, that they will bring them up in the fear of the LORD and in the doctrine of the church.

This article, coming from the Synod of Dort, 1618/1619, is in accordance with the teachings of Luther and Calvin. After the Secession in 1834 when people returned to the Reformed doctrine, this old Article 21 Church Order became a leading principle again. In a book about the development of Reformed schools after the Liberation in 1944, we read: “Simple church members like D. Hoksbergen of Wilsum, elder of the Church at Kampen, and F.A. Kok, elder of the Church at Dwingelo, wrote concerning faithfulness with regard to the baptism promise and the necessity of Reformed education.”¹

School education can be seen as an extension of the education at home. God-fearing parents seek a school education that is in line with the upbringing at home, as much as is possible. There can, sometimes, be circumstances that make it impossible for Reformed parents to provide a Reformed school education for their children. But those circumstances never diminish the validity and the power of that principle. There will therefore always be a striving toward the realization of that principle by seeking ways that can bring about a change in the circumstances. For they acknowledge their children’s God-given covenant right to receive an education in which the fear of the LORD and the doctrine of the church (that is: of the Word of the LORD) is the dominating factor.

This principle is built upon the foundation of the Scriptures.

I only have to mention that well-known text, Deuteronomy 6:4-9: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD; and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children” We have here the two elements of godliness and doctrine: you shall love the LORD and you shall carry the words of the LORD in your heart. Of course these two can be distinguished from each other, but not separated.

This text not only shows us the principle of Reformed or Christian education in church, home, and school as a matter of the covenant between God and His people, including parents and children. This text also teaches us that the education of the children of the church is a covenantal matter in another respect. Speaking about the covenant obligation that Israel as His people has the calling to love the LORD and to keep His words, and that Israel has to teach these words of godliness also to its children, the LORD does not address only the parents. He addresses Israel as a whole. He speaks to His people. His people have to teach their children. We agree that that in the first place means the parents. But this does not take away the fact that Israel as a whole, as people of the covenant, is addressed.

This teaches us that the education of the children of the covenant is not just the responsibility of the parents as such, but that it is also the responsibility of the people as a whole. We are all responsible for the Christian or Reformed education of the children of the church.

If it is true that children in the church are covenant children, and if we want to take that word *covenant* serious, then certainly one of the consequences is that we are all responsible for the Reformed education of the children of the church. And if we as covenant people together accept that responsibility, we also will together put our shoulders under our Christian schools. Grandparents support parents for the education of their grandchildren. Young people who join the workforce step in as well. It is also on the basis of the covenant that all the members of the congregation(s) seek to express their communion, their belonging together, their joint responsibility, in being members of the same school society. Old and young, married and single, grandparents and parents, young people and pensioners, as that one people together desire to take care of the lambs of the flock. We care for those lambs. We do not want them instructed by those who belong to the seed of the serpent. We all want the children of the church to be instructed in godliness and to learn the doctrine of the church, which is the doctrine of salvation.

Is there anyone who says: “No, I do not want the children in the church, of which I am a member too, to receive an education at home and in school that instructs them in godliness and in the doctrine of the Scriptures. I want these children in the covenant to receive a secular, humanistic, worldly education in the school”?

But if we, then, are all in favour of Reformed education

for the children of the church, because it is a matter of the covenant for us, should we, then, not also step together and remain together to help each other in the realization of our desire? The more we all step in and share the burden, the lighter the burden will become. And, actually, is serving the LORD, the God of ISRAEL, a burden? Is standing beside each other as members of "ISRAEL" and supporting each other as brothers and sisters of the same house with the same principles really a burden? Is taking care of the little ones together a burden? How can it be a burden for those who rejoice that the LORD has given them a place in His covenant of grace on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ?

Do we maintain our Reformed principles, our joy in the God of the covenant, and therefore also our Scriptural loving care for each other?

Godliness — that is joy in the LORD and in His people, as well as holding on to Scriptural doctrines expressed in Reformed principles — should remain the foundation under our Reformed schools.

J. GEERTSEMA

¹J. Kamphuis, et al, *Door Hem Het Amen*, Gedenkboek van het gereformeerde onderwijs sinds de Vrijmaking (De Vuurbaak, Groningen, The Netherlands) p. 14.

The unmarried state₁

1. Full-fledged members.

In some previous series of articles we have dealt with different aspects of marriage. We have paid attention to the way people get to know each other and enter into the married state. We also have looked at the other side of the medal. Not every couple lives happily ever after. Divorce does take place. In a third series we have discussed some aspects of a growing family and the responsibility for the size of the family.

Such series of articles are often the result of practical questions, brought forward by readers, or they are the result of cases dealt with in the practice of pastoral care. We never mention specific cases in a recognizable way, nor do we refer to persons in such a way that they can be identified by the readers, although many statements are based on experience, and some readers may feel that their personal questions are dealt with and answered.

Also this series is initiated by specific questions of readers and partially based on experience in dealing with certain cases.

We will pay special attention to the position of brothers and sisters who never enter into the married state. What is their place in our community, especially within the communion of saints? Do they have a legitimate, fully accepted place or are they treated as special cases? Are they to a certain extent incomplete members? Are they weird and exceptional persons with whom you cannot even discuss the problems of everyday (family)-life? Are they to be treated with pity because they are so lonely or are they to be envied because they have such an easy life



without the care and concerns of a family? A matter of fact is that they often are treated and feel treated that way, instead of being accepted as full-fledged members of the church.

Sometimes an unmarried man is not considered eligible for the office of elder or deacon, because the apostle Paul says in 1 Timothy 3:4 that an office-bearer "must manage his own house well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way" and in verse 2 that a deacon must "be the husband of one wife." That is, of course, a wrong exegesis of this text, because the condition "the husband of one wife" in this respect does not mean a minimum but a maximum. It means: not two or more wives, as very frequently happened in that time, but only one. And the condition "keeping his children submissive" does not mean that someone who has no children should be excluded for that reason. We all know that there are ministers who remain single

and even one of the most prominent apostles, Paul himself, was unmarried.

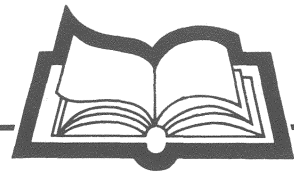
The basic point is that all members of the congregation have their own specific task, mandate, and responsibility. They all have their own capacities and restrictions, their own gifts and talents, no matter whether they are single or married, whether they have a large family or no children at all. The most important thing is that everyone uses his or her talents and gifts readily and cheerfully in the service of the Lord, to His glory and for the benefit and well-being of other members. (Compare Lord's Day 21, Answer 55.)

Based upon this principle we will have a closer look at the position of unmarried members of the congregation.

2. Why unmarried?

A variety of reasons can be adduced, why someone stays unmarried, and often-

— continued on page 373.



“And Saul was consenting to his death.”

Acts 8:1a

From Death to Life

There is hardly anything more curious in the book of Acts as the incidental reference to Saul which Luke makes in order to close his account of Stephen's noble death. Why does the camera recounting the monumental events of the beginning keep focusing on this young man at this point? After all, he was only the slave of the persecutors, one sitting by and minding their garments.

Yet for those who confess that the Holy Spirit is also responsible for the order of the accounts, and that He always has a reason for how He has things done, this sentence is not simply a curious, passing note. In fact, short as it is, it keeps echoing like a sounding bell throughout Paul's life, and permeates all his actions and his letters. We can also see that although this account of Stephen's martyrdom ends on the note of death, it is full of life. The Holy Spirit has already set one apart who will follow Stephen's footsteps. And this short sentence tells us where he comes from, and what forms the key to his whole ministry, life, and work.

To see this we only need recall that with Stephen's trial, the Lord makes His *final* appeal to the Jewish Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. This was now the third time that one from the circle of the new community of the Nazarene stood before their council. Yet also with this final, forceful appeal, they respond with the same hatred and hostility against the Lord Jesus and His servants. Stephen's death represents, in effect, the *total rejection* of the Lord Jesus in Jerusalem. This is the point at which the final decision falls, and wholesale persecution sets in. And Saul is clearly marked on this side — he, too, chooses for the side of the obstinate, and hardened, totally rejecting the Messiah and His apostolic representatives.

So we meet with a curious situation as this young Hebrew man is introduced to us. He is young, full of energy, full of life; Stephen is the older man, at the point of death. Saul's life is ahead of him, while Stephen's life comes to an end. Yet in actual fact, matters are reversed. Stephen enters eternal life, but this young man is pictured as totally dead — with a heart as dead as a stone.

Yet the great reversal, the change from Saul to Paul, from death to life, is already anticipated here. The description of that change in Acts 9 builds on what Saul saw and heard here. He saw Stephen crying out in anguish. Above all, he *heard* the Word which Stephen administered. When, some days later, Stephen's vision becomes Saul's, these events still live with him, and they continue to live with him

throughout his ministry. Indeed at his own trial in Jerusalem, he can only recall the moment with sadness in his heart, Acts 22:20; yet it is precisely at that moment that he is cut off and the assembly rises up in a furious rage against him! Stephen's end is as it were repeated here.

Paul's own aborted trial at Jerusalem is descriptive of the pattern that set in after the great change in his life. From one consenting to the death of the believers, he became one who willingly submitted to a similar death time and time again. From the first day a life of suffering was announced to him, Acts 9:16, to the last moments of his life on earth, II Timothy 4:6,17, the rule was the same: “I die every day,” I Corinthians 15:31. Yet through all the descriptions of this continual existence of suffering and hardship, II Corinthians 4:6,11, the theme of resurrection and the power of a new life keeps breaking through. Dying daily, he continually rose victoriously in Christ Jesus the Saviour.

And the key to it all rests in the few closing words at Stephen's death. For he belonged to those who had resisted the Spirit and hardened themselves in unbelief against the anointed King. He belonged to the circle of total rejection! Yet the Lord spared him — miraculously delivering him from the stupor of blindness that hung over him. He was like a “brand plucked from the fire,” like one risen from the dead. So he also calls himself “one untimely born,” I Corinthians 15:7.

All this puts one stamp on Paul's whole life and ministry: *grace alone!* And this theme fills his life and letters. Indeed, it is only one like Paul, a “brand plucked from the fire” that could write Romans 9-11, describing the rejection of the Messiah by the Israel of the flesh. He writes it all with Stephen's prayer in his heart, Romans 10:1!

How the love shines through — both to his countrymen, and to the Gentiles! Only he could address his brothers, according to the flesh, with such compassion and love. And in Him, Christ continued to speak! In Paul we have our example to follow. For are we not all as brands plucked from the fire? Nothing can take away this starting point in our own lives. Yet it should drive us to a similar life of self-denial, a life of self-sacrifice, so that while the physical dies in us more and more, the spiritual, tried and purified by fire, rises up with ever new and greater strength in Him — and that still, at the end of it all, the whole is stamped by the same words: *by grace alone!*

J. DEJONG

The unmarried state — continued.

times it is a combination of reasons not always clearly to determine.

Most boys and girls get engaged before they are twenty and get married between the age of twenty and twenty-five. That is the ordinary course of events. Past that age it is more difficult to find a partner for life. Why? For a variety of reasons. The younger people are more spontaneous in asking and in establishing a relationship. At a younger age there are more potential partners "available." Because most young people have made their choice before they are twenty, after twenty-five there is not that much "left." Moreover, those who are still single at that age are sometimes considered as somewhat odd. That makes it even more difficult to come to an engagement. Still there can be all kinds of respectable reasons why someone remains single for many years. It is not always a matter of not being interested or not yet interested in a lasting relationship, although that might be the reason in some cases. It can be a matter of being too critical first, and refusing some "changes," hoping for a more desirable partner, with the result that one finally is left without a lasting friendship. However, we as Christians have to see the hand of the Lord in bringing together husband and wife as by His hand. That is what the Form for the Solemnization of Marriage says and that is what we confess as a reality. Although that does not take away our own responsibility. The Lord brings together but He wants us to work and to accept our own task and responsibility. No one should just sit idle, waiting until the Lord "brings" a partner to him, while in the meantime complaining that there still is no one. To pray and to work is an instruction which counts for every area of human life, including the choice of a marriage partner. In the same way as someone who is engaged with an unbeliever should not blame the Lord for "bringing them together," so someone who sits idle and waits should not complain that the Lord did not "bring" him or her a partner.

Another factor can be that people are living in a small congregation and have little choice. We all agree (at least we should recognize) that a marriage has to be based upon a unity of faith in the Lord and that no partner should be sought outside the church. The apostle Paul says in II Cor. 6:14 "Do not be mismatched with unbelievers." However, the inevitable consequence is that people in a small congregation have little choice and opportunity to find a friend. Let us not ignore or overlook this part of the problem and let us try to help them in this respect as much as we can, for instance in organizing, in an appropriate way, regular con-

tacts between young members of our congregations.

A last reason we like to mention is that some are very disappointed in contacts they have had with members of the church. Too often we hear young people complain about the moral standards they were confronted with during a first date, and who are turned off by such an attitude. Also in this respect there is lots of work to be done by the parents in keeping an eye on the attitude and moral standards developed and applied by their children. A lack of communication in this respect can cause lasting damage and a way of life which is contrary to the Word of God. Ignoring or denying this reality only makes things worse.

3. The position of unmarried members.


How do we treat unmarried members? That is an important question! Too many cases are known in which unmarried people are hurt because they are dealt with in a wrong way. It does not always happen on purpose. Most harm is done unintentionally. No one likes to be singled out or to be treated as an exception. We do not know why a certain person never got married, nor do we know why a couple has no children. In general it is none of our business, as long as the people concerned do not talk about it themselves. During a home-visit it can be brought up, but in general we should show discretion and not curiously interfere in these matters. Still we have to treat such people as full-fledged members of the church. That may sound obvious

but it is not so generally practised. We like to point to a number of rather unpleasant experiences which can be avoided if we are a little more thoughtful about the position of our fellow members.

Sometimes certain jobs are assigned to single persons because they have lots of time on their hands anyway. That might be true in some cases, but as a rule unmarried people have their own way of life and are not less busy than other people. They do not have to worry about the same things but they may have other things to do which are not so obvious for people who have a family. We should respect them in the same way as we do others and leave it up to them how they spend their time and set their priorities. They should share in the work in the congregation in the same way as all other members. Not more and not less.

We also have to watch the way we are talking about our brothers and sisters. It hurts when single persons hear remarks about their holiday trip like "they can easily go wherever they want, because they have neither chick nor child." It might be true that such people can spend more money on a holiday trip than parents who have a large family, but lots of them would prefer to be surrounded by their own family, if they had one, rather than to spend their time with strangers in a more expensive holiday resort.

Another thing is the private life of such members. They are frequently asked to come over for a visit, to drop in or to baby-sit, but they do not receive much company. It is nice to be invited to come over to someone's place and to be



Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Published bi-weekly by Premier Printing Ltd.
Winnipeg, MB

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES	Regular	Air
FOR 1985	Mail	Mail
Canada	\$23.50	\$41.50
U.S.A. U.S. Funds	\$25.75	\$40.00
International	\$34.50	\$57.00

Advertisements: \$5.00 per column inch
Second class mail registration number 1025
ISSN 0383-0438

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welcomed as guest, but it is often felt as a sad thing to be always guest and never host or hostess, to depend on others and to have little privacy. It would be very much appreciated if we visited the single members more often. That counts for those who are unmarried as well as for those who are widowed.

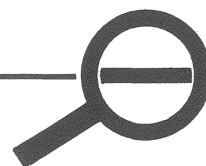
The next point of consideration is the conversation. When married people are together, especially married women, they often talk about their children and the raising of children. Two aspects have to be kept in mind in this respect, in order not to hurt the feelings of others unnecessarily. In the first place, we have to acknowledge that single persons as well as people who have no children, although they have no personal experience in rais-

ing their own children, certainly can have an opinion which is worth to be considered. An "outsider" can sometimes judge more objectively than someone who is fully involved in a matter. It hurts, it is unreasonable and does not show a Christian attitude, if we let them feel in one way or another that their opinion is of no value. Remarks like "what do you know about it" or "you can talk easily about it because you have no children" are out of order. Let us treat our brothers and sisters in a fair and respectful way, and avoid hurting others unnecessarily. In the second place, we have to be careful that we do not avoid certain issues because single persons are present. We have heard about cases where a couple expects a baby, tells all their friends about

it, but not a very close friend who happens to be unmarried, or a couple that has no children. It happens also that marriage problems are discussed among friends, but that the conversation stops as soon as a single person walks in, making him feel left out as not being part of everyday life. Such an approach is often meant to avoid a painful situation, namely, not to discuss these matters in the presence of single people because they are not familiar with these things. However, to be left out of such areas of human life is often felt as an even more painful experience. No one wants to be treated in a special way.

— To be continued
W. Pouwelse.

PRESS REVIEW



More decisions of the OPC General Assembly

We promised to come back on a few issues that were to be discussed at the 1985 General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). Besides the decision to continue membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES), which received attention in the previous issue of *Clarion*, there was the matter of the invitation to join the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA), the question of women deacons, and the problem of child communion. No final decisions were made on these issues. Further study was considered necessary. What was decided follows here.

The PCA Invitation

New Horizons in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the OPC magazine, Vol. 6, No. 7 (Aug./Sept. 1985), reports on this point:

The joining and receiving with the PCA was the major matter of concern in the area of ecumenicity. The Ecumenicity Committee advised the Assembly that it would be distributing a report on this matter very soon. This will be followed by a recommendation for action by the end of the year so that the question can be brought to a vote at the 1986 General Assembly.

If next year's General Assembly votes in favour of this invitation, the twelve presbyteries will discuss it and vote on it. If

eight presbyteries vote in favour, the matter will go to the 1987 General Assembly for a final vote. If seven of the twelve presbyteries vote against joining the PCA, the invitation will be declined.

Not every one is in favour. The *Presbyterian Journal* of June 19, 1985, reporting on the same matter, informs its readers that

The Dakotas Presbytery, extending from Texas to North Dakota . . . , [is] viewed as opposed to "joining and receiving." (By the way, this large presbytery was divided into two separate presbyteries.)

The *Presbyterian Journal* added the following remark:

There was little sense of urgency evident about the PCA proposal. OPC statistics were encouraging, showing a growth rate of 2.9%, the highest O.P. rate in at least the last ten years. There seemed to be general satisfaction with the denomination's home missions, foreign missions, and Christian education programs. Then, too, there was the focus on God's blessings entailed in the coming year's 50th-anniversary observance.

Will the next General Assembly and the presbyteries vote to discontinue the OPC in its fiftieth anniversary year? If the report of the committee proves that the OPC and PCA stand upon and maintain the same basis, such a positive vote is demanded by the Word of the LORD.

Women in Office

Regarding the matter of "Women in Office," *New Horizons* gives the following information:

The concerns expressed by delegates about the report of the Committee on the Hermeneutics of Women in Ordained office were varied. Some expressed that we already had determined a biblical position, and that it needed no further study; others urged that we should never fear to study Scripture further on any particular issue; a few argued that such a study was necessary in order to have a strong, clear apologetic for those who ask questions even though our position may not be changed by further study. A concern was expressed that we find ways to encourage the fullest use of the gifts of women in the church.

The end result of several hours of debate was the pending matter being re-committed to the Committee, the study committee being enlarged by two members, and the Committee being asked to include exegesis of biblical passages relevant to this matter in its report to the 53rd General Assembly.

I am inclined to agree with those who argued that the OPC has already "determined a Biblical position," and that therefore there is no need for further study. And as for the concern expressed to "find ways to encourage the fullest use of the gifts of women in the church," I suggest to the committee not to forget to emphasize the intensely important church-building and church-preserving work of those women in the church who bear and bring up their children as covenant children of the LORD in a truly Christian family, where the mother takes good care of her family according to what the apostle Paul writes in Titus 2:4, 5. Here Paul instructs young

married women with a family to be *domestic*. We should regard this a Christian virtue.

Herewith I do not intend to say that believing women should not be involved in various activities in the congregation. Children have to learn from the example of their father *and mother* that it is important to be actively involved in church life. Nevertheless, creating a good home, and being there for husband and children, also very much means using her motherly, womanly gifts in the church. And once again: a woman does not need the office to be active in and for the church.

One more remark is in place. We should also express our concern to find ways to encourage the fullest use of the gifts of men in the church. All this emphasis on women's activity in the church has the danger that we forget that all the men in the church no less have the calling to involve themselves actively in church life; e.g. in participation in society activities and so on.

In one of the previous issues of *Clarion* (Vol. 34, No. 12), I took over the first information on this matter as it appeared in the May issue of *New Horizons*. It was information regarding the report of the study committee. In the August/September issue of this magazine, a reaction on the formulation of this information was printed. This reaction came from the committee itself. Since I made the readers of *Clarion* acquainted with this information, it is only fair also to give the correcting reaction of the Committee. It reads:

The article, "Women in Ordained Office?" (May issue), attempted to summarize our Committee's report to the 52nd General Assembly. We appreciate very much the consistent record of fairness in articles in *New Horizons*; unfortunately, this particular one did not accurately represent the thrust of our report.

Indeed, the impression is left that we are challenging the position of the OPC on the matter of women's ordination. This is absolutely not the case. We merely ask the church not to assume that our traditional view is the only one that takes the Bible seriously.

The summary also suggests that our report places great emphasis on the "progressive character" of revelation and on the principle of divine "accommodation" to cultural patterns. Your readers should know, however, that the attention devoted to those topics occupied a small part of our lengthy report; that the materials in question were really excerpts from a document produced by a committee of the Christian Reformed Church; and that said document gave a much more balanced treatment of the subject than your summary suggests. In particular, we emphatically reject the possible inference that the church may need to go beyond the

canon in deciding the question of women's ordination.

Finally, we did not recommend that "this matter be pursued by another Committee." On the contrary, we recommended that the present Committee be continued, and that *in addition* a new committee be elected to study the question of how women in our church "can make fullest use of their gifts under the present Form of Government." It may be worthwhile pointing out that none of the members of our Committee has suggested that we revise our present Form of Government.

George Cottenden, Harvie Conn, Moises Silva
Committee on the Hermeneutics of Women in Ordained Office

The editor, indeed, did misunderstand the recommendation concerning "another Committee." Readers will be hard pressed to assess the concern expressed in this letter, because in an unusual move the GA directed that the Committee's (admittedly preliminary) report not be recorded in the minutes of the GA. However, a copy no doubt could be obtained from the stated clerk or from a commissioner who attended GA. Editor

The present Form of Government allows only communicant male members of the OPC to become officebearers. On the basis of what is quoted above, I am confident that the next General Assembly will leave it the way it is.

Paedo-Communion

The third matter was that of children (*paedo*, from the Greek word *pais*, child) participating in the Lord's Supper. *New Horizons* reports:

The question of whether or not covenant children can participate in the Lord's Supper before they publicly profess faith in Christ came to the General Assembly from the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic and was related to the ministry of Hailu Mekonnen to the Ethiopian community in Washington, D.C. On the basis of using Scripture as the only guide, Mr. Mekon-

nen has worked with the Kidane-Hiwot Chapel regarding erroneous beliefs stemming from the Coptic Church of Ethiopia. With regard to the Coptic historical belief in paedo-communion, Mr. Mekonnen could not find clear biblical teaching to refute this practice. After Mr. Mekonnen's appeal to the Presbytery for help in this matter, the Presbytery granted permission for him to serve the Lord's Supper to children, gave him a set of guidelines and voted to ask the General Assembly to study this matter. An appeal by several members of the Presbytery in April brought a reversal in the Presbytery's decision.


The Assembly and advisory committee dealing with this matter evidenced great pastoral concern for Mr. Mekonnen and his work. Ed Urban pointed out that this work can be considered as a continuation of our former mission in Ethiopia. Larry Vail was elected from the Assembly and Mr. Urban from the Presbytery to accompany Mr. Mekonnen to the Kidane-Hiwot congregation to express the Assembly's pastoral concern in this matter.

A committee of three was elected to study the issue of paedo-communion and report to the 53rd General Assembly.

This decision was in accordance with the recommendation of the committee. It is good to read that the decision of the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic was reversed. And I understand that the General Assembly supported this reversal, but in its pastoral care decided to charge a committee to provide *more* exegetical grounds for maintaining the practice that non-communicant children do not partake of the Lord's Supper.

In this connection I would like to make the remark that I am not so happy with the formulation of the first questions regarding baptism and the Lord's Supper in the revised Heidelberg Catechism. Question 69 now reads: "How does holy baptism signify and seal to you that the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross *benefits* you?" And Question 75 says: "How does the Lord's Supper signify and seal to you that you *share* in Christ's one sacrifice on the cross and in all His gifts?" I underlined the words *benefits* and *share*. Hereby we must notice that the sacrifice of Christ is the subject of the verb *benefit*, while *you* is the subject of *share*.

The old version reads: "How is it signified and sealed unto you in holy baptism that you *have part* in the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross?", and "How is it signified and sealed unto you in the holy supper that you *partake* of the one sacrifice of Christ . . . ?" The words *have part* and *partake* precisely express the difference. When you *have part* in something, your own active participation is not required. It just says that it is there for you. But when you *partake*, you are actively in-

CHURCH NEWS 

As of September 15, 1985 church services at:

BETHEL CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCH in TORONTO, ON,
will start at 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCH at ANCASTER, ON:
Afternoon worship service begins at 3:30 p.m.

volved. You *do* something. You *take* part in it with the activity of faith. Although the new formulation does not deny this difference, the old wording appears clearer and more direct to me.

J. GEERTSEMA

Victory of Christ in Korea

There is one more item in the issue of *New Horizons* from which I quoted the above information, which I would like our readers to share with the readers of the OPC magazine. Ted Hard tell us:

Recently some things have shaken the Buddhist world in Korea. An influential monk, while in prison on a trumped-up charge, read the Bible and was converted. Sunghwa Kim is a personal friend of mine and is now a student at Korea Theological Seminary where I teach.



Mr. Kim with the Book and his own books.

In the short year or so that he has been a Christian, Mr. Kim has published two books exposing Buddhism and urg-

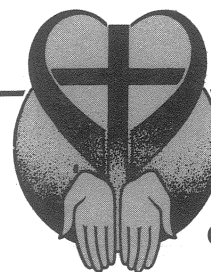
ing belief in Christ. This has severely shaken the Buddhist community, causing 500 monasteries to close and five million Buddhists to be affected — either by physically relocating or by distancing themselves from their previous faith. And some have even come to Christ, we are told.

These figures are mind-boggling! But the newspapers have published these things. And Kim's latest book, out only a few weeks, may cause more waves! (Most affected so far is the Pure Land Buddhist sect in Korea.)

Only a few months ago I noticed a newspaper item in which leading Buddhists acknowledged publicly that Christianity has now outstripped them in numbers in Korea. This admission is truly significant.

The victorious work of Christ goes on. Let us rejoice together.

J. GEERTSEMA



CRWRF

The Somalia connection

Somalia is a tiny East-African nation that has known the darkness of oppression, hunger, and homelessness over the past decade. It is an impoverished country still housing hundreds of thousands of refugees from the war-torn Ogaden Valley, men, women, and children who have fled drought and Ethiopian Marxist aggression. (The Aug. 15th/81 issue of *Clarion* dealt in more detail with the history of this troubled situation.)

Recently, the executive of CRWRF met with Michael and Oetje Madany, a couple who have dedicated the past several years to helping others in Somalia. The Madanys work as agriculturalist and nurse respectively through World Concern, a small organization that requires them to raise much of their own finances to meet living expenses. Being impressed with their Christian commitment and the worthwhile work they do, we decided to send a one-time gift of \$1,000 towards their support.

Here follows a report they supplied that introduces them, their roles, and the country God has led them to work in.

History of mission work in Somalia

Up until the time the first missionaries arrived 90 years ago, Islam had been the sole religion of Somalia for nearly a millennium.

From 1897-1935, missionaries from the Church of Sweden (Lutheran) worked in Ital-

ian-controlled southern Somalia. They were ejected by Mussolini in 1935, but not before they had about 300 converts. Many of these Christians fled to neighbouring Kenya but some remained until the arrival of Mennonite missionaries in the mid-1950s. Sudan Interior Mission also entered Somalia at this time. Both the Mennonite and SIM missionaries established hospitals and schools. After Somalia received independence from Italy and Great Britain in 1960, the missionaries were still allowed to stay. However, a change in government in 1969 led to Somalia entering into close alliance with the Soviet Union. Mission properties were nationalized and by 1975 all missionaries had left the country. A handful of the 200 or so Somalia converts continued to meet for worship in the capital city of Mogadishu.

Shortly before the Ogaden war of 1977, the Somali government expelled nearly all the Russians and Cubans from their country. Relations with western nations improved and a large number of relief organizations (including many Christian agencies) entered Somalia in 1980. They were responding to the serious refugee crisis brought on by the victory of the Soviet-backed Ethiopian army over the Somali forces. Some of these Christian groups were able to reestablish contact with the scattered pockets of Somali Christians. At present, since the main crisis has abated, there are only five Christian groups still working in the country: Christian Refugee Aid, Swedish Church Relief, Eastern Board Mennonites, Christoffel Blinden Mission and World Concern.

World Concern

World Concern is a small, evangelical, inter-denominational relief and development organization with its headquarters in Seattle, Washington. Sister organizations also exist in Canada, South Korea and Australia. World Concern first entered Somalia in February 1981. At that time, their work was focused on providing relief (especially medical care) at the Halba Refugee Camp. By November 1983, training of local health workers had been so successful that the medical program was turned over to Somali staff. Work at the camp continues mainly in the field of agricultural extension. In 1983 it was decided to also work on projects of a development (rather than relief) nature with resident (as opposed to refugee) Somalis. A plan was made for a health/agricultural/community development project centering around the leprosy hospital in Jilib.

Personal background

Oetje Madany (*nee* van der Vegte) is a citizen of The Netherlands and is trained as a nurse. After nearly ten years experience in various kinds of nursing work in The Netherlands, Oetje went as pediatric nurse to work with Cambodian refugees in Thailand in 1980. Following a furlough, Oetje moved to Somalia in April 1981 to work for World Concern (on secondment from TEAR Fund, Holland — The Evangelical Alliance for Relief).

Michael Madany was born in Canada but grew up in the USA. His training is in

range management, especially with regard to livestock rearing cultures in the Third World. Michael went to Somalia in 1982 to teach range management at the Faculty of Agriculture, Somali National University and at an adjacent Agricultural Secondary School. Because of uncertainties about the future of this program, he resigned in April 1984 to join World Concern.

We met each other in 1983 in Somalia and were married in The Netherlands in January 1984. Our membership papers are with the Reformed Church (Gereformeerde Kerk, Vrijgemaakt) Sauwerd, The Netherlands. Both of us feel a commitment to work within the Muslim world, in particular Somalia, in order to witness for Christ. During our time in Somalia we were privileged to be able to share our faith with a number of Muslim friends and acquaintances. Also, we developed strong relationships with some of the Somali Christians in addition to attending worship services and Bible studies with them. We both have studied the Somali language and are of medium proficiency.

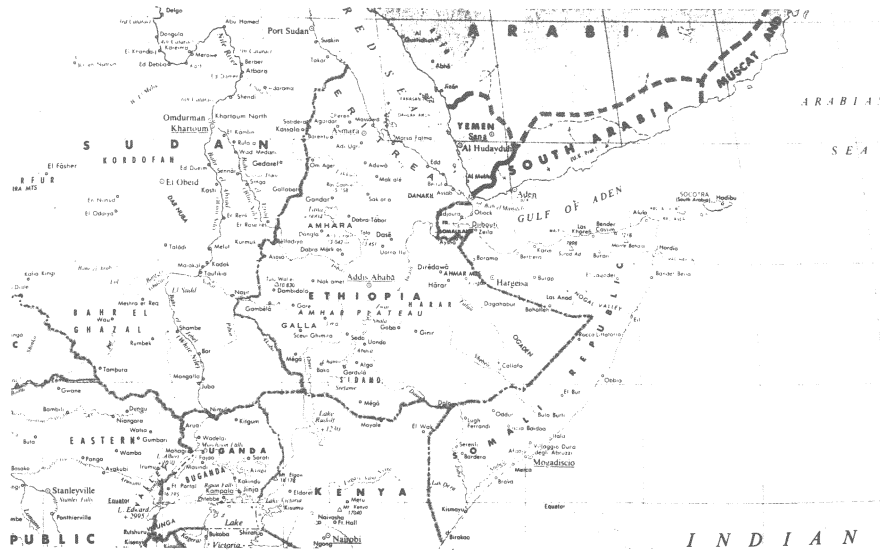
Details of the Jilib Project

The Somali government requested that World Concern become involved at the leprosarium near Jilib, in southern Somalia. World Concern has signed a contract for two years, with the possibility of extension for five years.

Oetje will work as a nurse together with a Dutch midwife and an American lab technician. Health care will focus at first on the 320 leprosy patients and their families (altogether about 2,000 people). It will include improvement of the ongoing curative care and beginning preventative care in the following ways: immunization, mother/child clinic, sanitation and nutrition. Also, health education for basic health care for community health workers (CHW's) and traditional birth attendants (TBA's) will be stressed. This will be given to both veteran workers who have been working at the clinic for many decades and the group of young CHW's and TBA's that will be taking over positions as the first group retires.

Specific work at the leprosarium will be to start active and relapsed leprosy patients on their new treatment. World Concern will be providing the necessary (and very expensive) drugs for the hospital. Special training will be given to both CHW's, TBA's, the leprosy patients, and their families in the care and treatment of the disease.

The leprosarium is located in an area that was formerly a large island in the Juba River. After the completion of training work at the leprosarium itself, we would hope to expand our activities to the rest of the 30 villages on the former island. Another aspect of health care is to try to improve the health situation of a small group of Somali Christians living 40 miles south of Jilib. They are the remnant of the converts made by the Swedish missionaries 50 years ago. They are ostracized by their fellow villagers and are living in extreme poverty. Nevertheless,



they remain true to the faith (despite only sporadic contact with missionaries in the last decade) and refuse to return to Islam.

Michael will work as team leader/agricultural advisor on the project. He will supervise the work of the team and give special attention to the agricultural aspects. A Somali and an Ethiopian refugee, both trained in agricultural extension, will do much of the work with farmers from the leprosy patients' villages. The establishment of fruit and nut crops and vegetable gardening will be emphasized. Michael will also do surveys of outlying areas in the general region around Jilib to see potential for future World Concern projects pertaining to range management, forestry and veterinary care.

Conclusion

At present, there are three ways in which the Gospel may spread in Somalia. The first is by the daily Somali language broadcasts of SIM from radio station FEBA in the Seychelles. The second is by person-to-person contact by Somali Christians. There are probably less than 50 people in the country (population 5 million) who would openly identify themselves as Christians. There are also many secret believers who fear persecution by family and neighbours. The third is by foreign Christians like ourselves, working within the country.

At the present time the Somali government respects the constitutional right of all of its adult citizens to follow whatever religion they wish. However, no religion other than Islam may be propagated. From our experience, and the experience of other Christian workers in Somalia, we know that the government tolerates "low-profile" evangelistic work such as personal witnessing. In the capital city (and other towns) Somali and foreign Christians are free to meet together for worship. Importation of Somali Bibles from Kenya has gone on by private individuals and has not received any discouragement by custom inspectors at the airport. Thus, in Somalia in 1984, there is a remarkable toleration for Christianity not seen in many Muslim lands. This could change, but our prayer is that God will keep the doors

open and that more labourers will come to this neglected field.

We see our work as having two parts. First, to do the work for which we are officially in the country — health, community and agricultural work among the leprosy patients. But of equal importance is our "spiritual-development" work: to witness whenever possible to co-workers and friends about our Lord Jesus Christ and to help strengthen the Somali Christians in their faith. By sharing with them our rich Reformed heritage, we hope to see them grow in faith and obedience as they struggle to follow Christ in a hostile society. We believe that the same Scriptural principles rediscovered by our forefathers in the Reformation are of great relevance to the embryonic church in Somalia today.

We chose to work for World Concern because its evangelical statement of faith did not contradict our own beliefs (especially in the area of the baptism of believer's children). Other organizations involved in Somalia have an equally conservative statement of faith but also prohibit discussion of infant baptism. We feel it is the best organization at the present time to associate with in our work in Somalia.

We are glad that young people such as the Madanys use their professional skills for the benefit of those less fortunate. Perhaps there are more in our midst who have a calling to similar work — work that may not pay much in tangible terms, but whose rewards are nonetheless invaluable. We at CRWRF are not large enough to send out our own personnel directly, but perhaps we could help direct you to a field of service. Think about it.

RUTH MEERVELD

Gifts for the work of CRWRF may be directed to:

CRWRF
PO Box 793
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y3

All gifts are gladly received. Donations of \$10.00 or more will be issued a receipt for tax deduction.

The most impressive feature of our new Theological College building is the library.

Especially the women in our churches will be interested in the following *Library Report* — June 1985.

In the summer of 1984, the College had the help of Miss Margaret VandenBerg in the library. Margaret performed preliminary cataloguing on much of the backlog, which was then checked by the Associate Librarian. Inventory was completed that summer and the many problems and inconsistencies in the shelflist have since then been rectified, usually by recataloguing the item in question. The missing book list was widely circulated, and many items were recovered, with the result that there are only 91 items on our current missing book list. Again, this is a small number for a collection this size and considering the library has been operating for sixteen years.

In September, the first scheduled library orientation was held. For one hour the Associate Librarian covered the basics of using the library and looked at some specialized reference tools. No orientation will be held this year in view of the fact that there will be no freshman class.

Throughout this past academic year, the library has been also very fortunate in receiving some volunteer help from Mrs. Alice Kroeze, the wife of one of the students. She is willing to continue to spend a few hours per week in the library, and will begin to undertake the updating of our sermon index. This index was begun some years ago, but unfortunately was abandoned for lack of manpower. In spite of its limitations, this index is still well used by many students, and by updating it we hope to increase its usefulness.

Through the fall and winter, many hours were spent finalizing the library layout for the new College building. Several draft layouts were considered until one was chosen that provided optimum expansion room and also met with the approval of the architect with regard to floor loading requirements. Once the layout was finalized, the shelving and furniture was determined and ordered.

Planning the actual move was the next undertaking. Careful planning ensures a reduced workload after the move, so every detail was worked out on paper, right down to how many inches of books were to be put on each shelf. Before moving day, Miss Teresa Bouwman packed approximately four hundred boxes of books,

and on May 21st, students began moving the packed boxes and empty shelving units to the new building where the books were reshelfed on new shelving units. The empty boxes were sent back to the old College where the packing of books continued (about another two hundred and fifty boxes), while the old shelving units were reassembled in the new library in order to provide space for unpacking. With such a coordinated effort, the entire library was moved in one day, and the reshelfing was completed within two days.

Our new library is a great improvement over the old facilities. Now all of the materials can be housed in one large room in proper order, and there is ample room for expansion, study, and library staff. The new design includes a periodicals reading section, a reference area, a study area with the Bible commentary sets, a circulation area, as well as the main collection. The reference section is a new concept for this library, and it is hoped that both faculty and students will find it of benefit. It consists of a separate collection of essential reference works, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks, periodical indexes, concordances, lexicons, different Bible versions, atlases, and bibliographies. Items for this collection were identified by the faculty with the use of guidelines drawn up by the Associate Librarian, and the entire reference collection has now been recatalogued and housed in its new quarters. The collection is located close to the card catalogues and circulation/reference desk, and should provide quick and ready access to items that are in high demand.

The new circulation/reference desk will provide a working area for the library staff member and will also serve as an information center for users who might need reference assistance. Its location at the entrance to the library makes it visible to those entering who may require immediate assistance, and may even serve as a reminder to those leaving the library that their books should be signed out!

The current periodicals are now nice-

ly displayed in alphabetical order in new specially built shelving units that have room for several back issues in the storage area behind the display shelf. The earlier back issues are located in pamphlet boxes on several rows of shelves behind the display units. In the old building, for lack of space, not all current issues could be displayed, and back issues were in the basement.

The collection itself has grown by 468 books over the past year (625 last year), from an accession number of 13,750 to 14,218. The balance sheets at May 31, 1984 showed the assets in library books as \$88,923. This has increased by about \$9,800. Included in our acquisitions this year have been several items purchased from Rev. G. VanDooren and a gift from the library of the late Dr. L. Praamsma. Amongst our purchases were *Origen's Hexapla* (\$165), *The Temple Scroll* (\$300) and several volumes of the *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* (\$675).

Reading the library report of June 1984 brings to mind all those projects and plans that were underway at this time last year together with the realization that much remains to be done, especially with regard to the investigation of automated procedures in our library. The recommendations for the direction to be taken in computerization have still not been placed before the Library Committee. This is due mainly to the fact that the planning of new facilities, and the various tasks associated with the actual move itself as well as the daily upkeep of the library took up all of the time that the Associate Librarian was able to spend on library work. This makes it evident, as has been put forward in past reports, that a full-time library staff member should be the eventual aim of the College. Such a person would be able to handle various library projects (such as automation, sermon indexing, recataloguing, etc.) in addition to the daily maintenance tasks. In the meantime, an attempt will be made for some progress in these matters, even if it means allowing the daily work to lag behind somewhat.

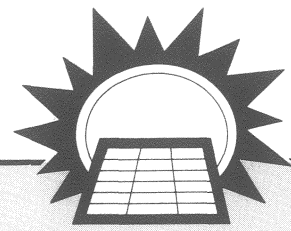
In conclusion we may express our thankfulness for the ability to accomplish these varying tasks over the past year. We are especially thankful for our new library facilities, and trust that they will be of increasing benefit to those who study and teach in our College.

J. FABER
MRS. J. MARRAN
Associate Librarian (Reporter)

OUR COVER

Hudson Bay Mountain,
Smithers, BC.

Photo courtesy Jack Vanderveen



Dear Readers:

A sincere thank you to all of you for your encouraging words. The Lord has granted me full recovery from my operation for which we are very grateful.

I am sure that the special attention I received helped to make me feel better faster. I thank you from the heart. I now realize the more what it must mean for our "calendar" brothers and sisters to receive so much attention. I would also like to say thank you for all the cards my husband and I received for our 30th wedding anniversary. They really did come "from all over." Thanks brothers and sisters.

This time I will take it easy yet and quote a poem, which has comforted me many times. I, too, felt "carried" through this whole ordeal of illness. The future belongs to God and in Him I trust. "It is well for us that He ruleth."

"Footprints"

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand: one belonging to him, and the other to the Lord.

When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life.

This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me.

The Lord replied, "My son, My precious child, I love you and would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

Author unknown

From our mailbox:

"I would like to thank all the brothers and sisters from near and far for all the cards I received on and after my birthday. I am still getting them. Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness, Thank you!"

Sr. Jenny Hansman

On our Calendar for September we have:

MARY VANDEBURGT

2789 Lehman Road
RR 1, Abbotsford, BC V2S 1M3

Mary hopes to celebrate her 29th birthday on September 11. She has many hobbies such as: singing in the choir, hiking, swimming and playing games with the handicapped at the summer camp. She also keeps herself busy at home on the farm. Have a happy day, Mary!

PAUL DIELEMAN

307 Connaught Avenue
Willowdale, ON M2R 2M1

Paul will turn 16 years old, the Lord willing, on September 29. How is your piano playing coming along Paul? Could you send us a picture of yourself — I only have one when you were only nine years old. Have a super day, Paul.

It's not fortune or fame
or worldwide acclaim
That makes for true greatness,
you'll find —
It's the wonderful art
of teaching the heart
To always be thoughtful and kind!

Helen Steiner Rice

Send your requests to:

MRS. J.K. RIEMERSMA
380 St. Andrew Street East
Fergus, ON N1M 1R1

Report on the Women's League Day in the Fraser Valley

On Wednesday, June 26 the ladies of the Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church of Surrey had the privilege of hosting the 22nd Annual League Day for the more than 180 attendees.

During the morning session our chair-lady, Mrs. Aat Onderwater introduced the speaker, the Rev. C. Bouwman who spoke to us on the topic "The Holy Spirit." He said that too much emphasis is placed these days on the Holy Spirit and experience. He pointed out that we should come to grips with the central task of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit received His mandate from the exalted Christ — we must not separate the two. In order to understand His activity, we must first know His identity as being the third person of the Holy Trinity, that He is of the one and same essence, majesty and glory with the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit is seldom mentioned in the Old Testament because the Lord was not yet pleased to reveal the Spirit more fully. Not until Pentecost was the Spirit revealed because Christ had not yet been fully revealed. The Holy Spirit's task was to apply the benefits of the death of Christ to believers. We must see the Holy Spirit's task in the light of Christ's exalted position, just as a floodlight is used at night to light up a building. Without the Spirit as a floodlight, fallen man cannot see the Redeemer.

The Spirit's task is Christo-centric. Without Christ there would be no salvation; without the Holy Spirit this salvation would not be ours. The Holy Spirit could not do these things if He wasn't God. His identity makes His work possible.

Being a Christian is synonymous with having the Spirit or being filled with the Spirit. Repentance guarantees the presence of the Spirit (Acts 2:38, 39); by keeping His commandments we abide in Him, and He in us (I John 3:24).

The fruits of the Holy Spirit in us are love, joy, peace, patience, etc. (Gal. 5:22). The Spirit opens our eyes and the natural result is that we do, speak and live as Christians. Our enthusiasm for God is part of being filled with the Spirit. In closing, Rev. Bouwman spoke a few words of

warning and encouragement. He said that one need not rely on emotion to know that the Spirit is indeed near. We may at times fail to sense the presence of the Spirit but then we must use the means available, i.e., reading of Scripture, worship, use of the sacraments, etc.

We should remember that the Holy Spirit was not given so we can look to Him but so that we can look to Christ. In fact, we grieve the Spirit if we look into the floodlight rather than at the building.

In the afternoon session, chaired by Mrs. Janey VanSeters, a speech was presented by Mrs. Mary VanVeen entitled, "Death — the 'Uncomfortable' Reality." In her introductory remarks she pointed out that in the past death was expected, familiar, and dealt with much more easily than it is today. People generally died at home where they were cared for by those close to them. In modern times we separate the dying in hospitals, the elderly in group retirement homes or personal care centers, and there are medical personnel and funeral directors to assist and even take over when death is expected. Thus we are spared the necessity of direct confrontation.

First the speaker dealt with the question of what it means to die. Death and sin belong together — death is the consequence of sin and is not to be treated lightly, for although we know in faith that it is but a doorway to eternal life in our Lord Jesus Christ, that door is of darkness, not light. The faith in which we have comfort, strength, and a sure knowledge sustains us and we know that with God we are never alone.

The dying may experience a number of fears, not just of pain, suffering, and uncertainty, but also of helplessness, and separation from loved ones and their future. Saying "don't you worry" is not enough; sometimes concrete help is needed to comfort and reassure the person.

There are five stages in the dying process. The first stage is called denial, a typical reaction when someone learns that he is terminally ill. The second stage is rage and anger. Instead of bringing the anger to God and confessing our weak-

ness to Him, often the anger is vented on those surrounding us. If we read of how Job ranted against God in his suffering, we are almost shocked, yet God understood and revealed much of Himself to Job, comforting and blessing him.

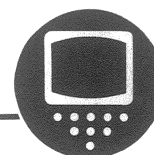
The third stage is one of bargaining. Two examples of bargaining out of Scripture are Hezekiah's, when fifteen years were added to his life, and Hannah's bargain for Samuel. The fourth stage is depression or "preparatory grief." In terminal illness this stage is a preparation for death, by making final arrangements, preparing others to take over tasks, settling affairs, etc. This leads to the final stage, called acceptance or waiting. Usually this time is very short and occurs just before death, although sometimes it is prolonged such as in cases of coma, unconsciousness, or what is called a "long death-bed." Generally it is characterized by a quiet acceptance.

Death finally comes and God's own passes into eternal glory with Him. No more tears, pain, or suffering. We rejoice for their gain and mourn for our loss at the same time. We have God's promises to sustain us and strengthen us in the time to come.

Mrs. VanVeen reminded us that initial support for those left behind sometimes dies out as time passes and it is easy to forget that loneliness and grief may take a long time to pass. A widow or widower sees nothing but loving couples sharing their worship, a mother sees other mothers holding their children, a baptism provokes tears at the thought of a baby who has died. We don't always see these things so quickly, but we should. We should remember that an understanding smile, a kind word, a gentle touch, an invitation to dinner or an evening's visit all help.

Both the morning and afternoon speech were followed by good discussion. League Day 1985 was a stimulating and joyful day. We are thankful that we once again had the opportunity for study and fellowship.

A. VANDER MOLEN



Canadian Reformed School Society formed in Calgary, Alberta, June 6, 1985.

The meeting opened with the reading of II Timothy 3:1 — 4:4 and prayer. All those attending gave their unanimous consent to form a Canadian Reformed School Society.

An organizational board consisting of br. H. Van Delden (chairman), sr. A. Ostermeier (treasurer), and br. B. Winkel (secretary) was elected by a free vote. Included in their mandate is the drafting of a proposed constitution and bylaws.

A committee, consisting of, sisters T. Bikker and A. Oostenbrug was appointed to organize a Saturday school for the coming season.

The first general meeting of the society is scheduled for September 19, D.V. to approve the proposed constitution and bylaws.

The chairman of the new board closed with prayer.

For the board,
B. Winkel

“Anchor” Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, July 19, 1985

The meeting was opened in the usual Christian manner by the chairman.

The minutes were approved as presented. A letter from Mr. W. Zomer is read and discussed along with the reply drawn up by the executive board. Mr. Zomer is hesitant about starting in a temporary accommodation. The board feels that the need in our families is too great to wait for a permanent building.

The summer camp committee reports on a great camp. The committee is commended on a job well done.

The students of the John Calvin school in Smithville had a work-a-thon and made \$1451.00 for our brothers and

sisters. A big “thank-you” to you all, hard workers!

An outgoing letter to a member is read and approved.

The press release is read and approved. After a question period the meeting is closed with prayer.

E.J. DEJONG

International Reformed Conference in Edinburgh.

Note from the editor

Although ample information regarding the coming International Conference of Reformed Churches in Edinburgh has been provided for the readers of *Clarion*, we publish also the official “Press Release,” as it was received from the office of the organizing church in Scotland. It contains some more news besides what is known already.

J.G.

An International Conference of Reformed Churches is to be held in Edinburgh from September 2nd to 10th.

About 50 delegates are expected from Australia, Canada, Indonesia, Ireland, Korea, The Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States.

The Free Church of Scotland is acting as host to the Conference and the meetings will be held in the Free Church Assembly Hall in Johnston Terrace.

The Conference will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, September 2nd with a service of public worship conducted by the Rev. Donald Lamont, a former Moderator of the Free Church General Assembly who was involved in the initial planning of the venture. The formal opening will take place on Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. when the Rev. Professor A.C. Boyd, Moderator of the last General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, will welcome delegates and preside over the initial business.

The organisers are hoping that the

Conference will appeal to ordinary church-goers and the general public as well as to clerics and theologians. The evening meetings have been arranged with this in mind. Each evening two delegates will give brief accounts of their Churches and of Christian life and work in their own countries. These will be followed by a series of lectures on current ecclesiastical and theological issues. Discussion of the matters raised in the lectures will occupy the remainder of the evening and be continued the following morning. Afternoons will be devoted to business matters.

The evening meetings will begin at 7:30. The provisional programme is as follows:

Tuesday September 3: The Doctrine of the Church in the Reformed Confessions. By Dr. J. Faber, Canada.

Wednesday September 4: Piety in the Book of Psalms. By Professor H.M. Ohmann, The Netherlands.

Thursday September 5: The Sacraments in Relation to New Life in the Spirit. By Professor D. Macleod, Scotland.

Friday September 6: The Doctrine of the Covenants and Reformed Theology. By Rev. John N. Macleod, Scotland.

Saturday September 7: It is hoped to leave Saturday afternoon free for delegates to be taken on a tour of places of historical interest. The evening session will be popular and devotional but the details have still to be worked out.

There will be no meetings on Sunday so that ministers attending the Conference will be free to accept preaching engagements in local churches.

Monday September 9: The Exercise of Inter-Church Relations. By Rev. J. Visscher, Canada.

Tuesday September 10: Closing Address.

For further information, contact the Rev. Donald Macleod [Telephone: (031) 226-5286].

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE



Hello Busy Beavers!

Someone has an interesting story to share with us. It's Busy Beaver *Sylvia Sikkema*.

“This year I was in Grade Six. On May 27 there was Grade Seven day. The Grade Sixes went to Emmanuel Christian High School in Guelph. We went there to get used to the school.

I went and things were a whole lot different than in Maranatha. School started at 8:20 in the morning! We had a bit of Science in the morning and then it was break time. Break time was 10:15 to 10:30. At ten thirty I decided to look in the gym. There was the high-jump material in the corner. I went and jumped on the foam. My shoe got caught in the rope and I fell backwards. When I fell I broke my arm. I cried and cried. The

Food Facts

Mm - melon

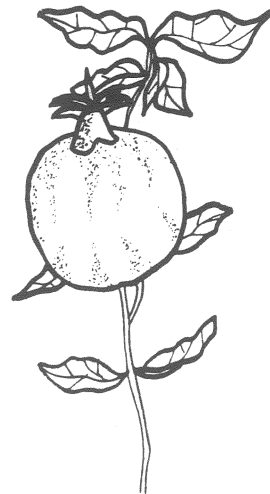
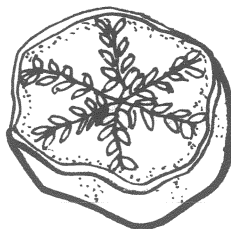
(Numbers 11:5)



Special Interest: Melons are members of the gourd family. In this large family, besides watermelons and muskmelons, you have pumpkins, squash, gourds, and cucumbers. Melons are eaten fresh. The seeds can be dried up to make jewellery. Watermelon seeds can also be dried and eaten.

Pp - pomegranate

(I Samuel 14:2)



Special Interest: In the Southern United States they are not only grown for their fruit but also for their showy orange-red blossoms. Because of their special structure they can be eaten raw although they are mainly used for making juice.

teacher took me to the hospital. There I waited almost all day long. At 6:30 my cast was put on. The doctor said it had to stay on for 6 weeks but during the sixth week he would be in Vancouver. I had to go to Fergus to get it X-rayed during the fifth week. My arm was all better so they took off my cast. That was last week Wednesday."

All's well that ends well! I know you'll be very careful when you get in that gym again, right Sylvia?

FOR YOU TO DO

Here are some fun fall things-to-do.

1. Collect colourful leaves. Try to get as many different kinds as you can. Go on a leaf treasure hunt with your friend! When you come back place the leaves between layers of newspaper. Put some heavy books on top. In ten days they'll be beautiful dried leaves!

2. Collect as many seeds as you can. Mount them with glue on a piece of light cardboard. With a pencil and ruler make lines under each kind of seed. Then with your markers print the names of the seeds.

3. Make a seed 'n glue picture. Make an outline picture. Just for example: a girl with an umbrella. Spread a thin layer of glue all over the umbrella. Now sprinkle one kind of seed all over the glue. Now do her skirt and so on with different kinds of seeds. Let it dry very well before hanging. Have fun!



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Tim Verhey*. We are happy to have you join us. I'm glad you had such a good time at camp. I hope you find a pen pal soon. Be sure to write and tell me when you do, Tim!

And a big welcome to you, too, *Adrian Bartels*. Which animal at the zoo did you like best, Adrian? Will you write and tell us? Bye for now!

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Alex Sikkema*. Did you get your swimming badge? I hope you had lots of fun on your birthday, Alex. Bye for now. Write again soon.

Of course you may join the Busy Beaver Club *Julia Dokter*. We are happy to have you join us. Will you write and tell us about your hobbies and where you live?

I really liked your story *Pearl VandeBurgt*! Keep up the good work! Be sure to enter our next story contest Pearl! And thank you very much for the games, too. It's a little late for this summer. But they'll keep, right?

How did your two camping trips go, *Pauline De Rooter*? And how do you like it back in school? Thanks for the quiz, Pauline. Bye for now.

Hello *Kerri Roodzant*. Congratulations on passing! Keep up the good work! Did you enjoy your holidays, Kerri? Thank you very much for all the puzzles and quizzes!

And thank you very much for the crossword puzzle *Melanie Werkman*. It was nice to hear from you again. How did you enjoy the summer, Melanie? Did you enter our Big Contest?

How did your arm feel when the cast came off, *Sylvia Sikkema*? And how do you like your new school? Did you have a good summer holiday, too? Thanks for the puzzle, Sylvia.

Sounds to me as if you had a lot of swimming fun, *Peter John Sikkema*. Did you get your swimming badge this year? Thanks for the puzzle, Peter John. Write again soon.

Hello *Debbie Jagt*. I see you have been very busy. Thanks for all the things-to-do, Debbie. What did you do all summer long? And are you happy to be back in school?

How was your sister's wedding day, *Alice Van Woudenberg*? What part did you like best? I think you got a very nice birthday present, Alice. Did you use it lots this summer?

Hello *Shelly VanderHorst*. It was nice to hear from you again. Did you have a good summer, too, Shelley? Thank you very much for the interesting puzzle!

How did your "Church Squares" turn out *Amy Hofsink*? And how did you like your trip to Quebec? What part did you like best? Will you write and tell us, Amy?

Hello, *Jennifer Siebenga*. Thanks for your pretty letter. Did you eat lots of raspberries, too? And how are you at using your new glove? What do you like best in your garden, Jennifer?

Sounds to me as if you had one terrific time going to your uncle's wedding, *Chad Pieterman*! That was quite a trip you made. How does it feel to be back in school now?

Congratulations on your award, *Jeanette Barendregt*! I'm really proud of you. And I can understand you being a little shaky and confused! And I think you spent the gift money very wisely, Jeanette!

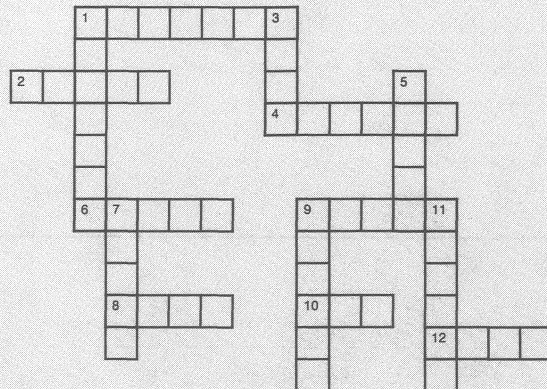
Hello, *Walt Bartels* (or was it *Michelle* who wrote? You didn't say.) I'm glad you had such a nice trip to the zoo. Thanks for the picture. Write again soon.

Busy Beavers we need a pen pal for:

Tim Verhey (age 7)
1776 Sunny Creek S.E.
Kentwood 49508
MI USA

Quiz Time!

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Down

1. Something that is sweet and everyone likes.
3. An animal that baas.
5. Something that tells time.
7. A thing that hee haws.
9. What always follows you.
11. What you put on a horse when you go horseback riding.

Across

1. You take tents when you go ____.
2. What you sleep in when you camp.
4. Slow as a ____.
6. What do you wear on your feet?
8. What do you find on the beach?
9. What do you wear on your feet?
10. An animal that barks.
12. The opposite of short.