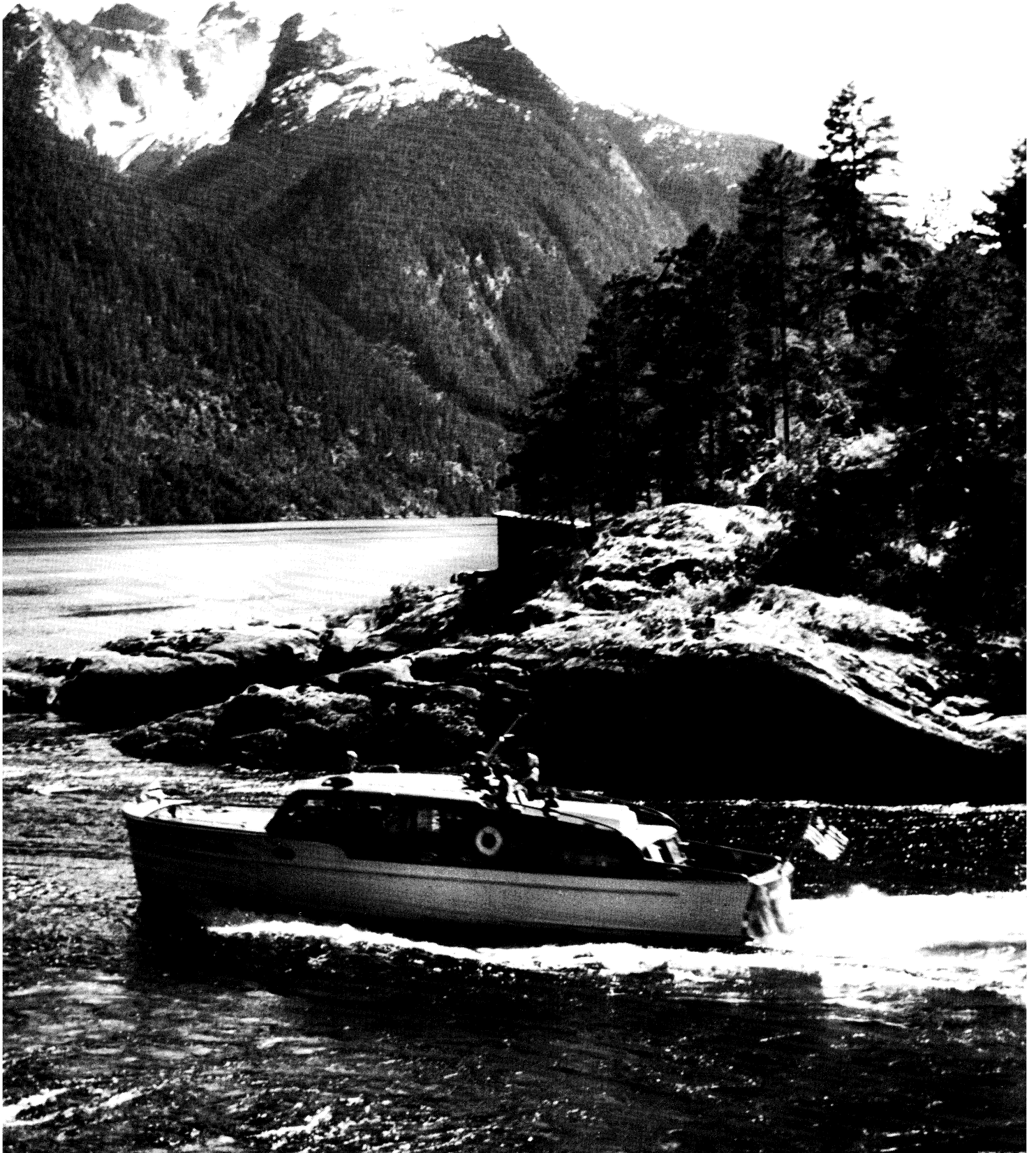


 **Clarion**
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May children partake of the Lord's Supper?³

Proclamation

Especially I Cor. 11:26-29 is important in connection with the question whether children are allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper. This passage is placed in the framework of the whole pericope of the verses 17-34, in which the Apostle Paul points to the misuses in the Church at Corinth with respect to the Lord's Supper. Overagainst these misuses Paul shows the great importance of the Lord's Supper. What is actually the celebration of the Lord's Supper?

In verse 26 Paul says that it is a *proclamation*: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." The apostle does not use in this sentence an imperative, in the sense of "you *have* to proclaim the Lord's death," but he gives a description of the celebration of the Lord's Supper: "You *are* proclaiming the Lord's death." But that means also that one must be aware of what he is actually doing when he celebrates the Lord's Supper.

Then, *faith* is supposed in the one sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ! I quote here the majority report of the Christian Reformed Church (Agenda for Synod 1986, p. 355): "... that sacramental eating and drinking will be a proclamation of the Lord's death until He comes (I Cor. 11:26) . . . without such proclamation no true celebration of the sacrament can take place at all. That is what made the Corinthian celebration so horrifying. In Corinth what should have been a holy meal had turned into a common (literally, a profane) meal. The solution of that horror in Corinth lay in restoring the essence of the meal, a proclamation of the Lord of the covenant and his glory. The covenant is fulfilled in Christ not only by His death and resurrection but also by his 'proclaiming light to His own people and to the Gentiles' (Acts 26:23). The Lord's Supper continues that covenant celebration and declaration of Christ's light and so makes any meaningful partaking in itself a public declaration of faith in Jesus Christ."

That proclamation of the Lord's death has to do with the public profession of

faith, which is not yet made by the children of God's covenant!

Examination

There is another important word in I Cor. 11:26-29, namely, what is said in verse 28: "Let a man *examine* himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup." That self-examination means actually that the people ("a man" — but that means here: everyone who wants to partake of the Lord's Supper) have to *test* themselves. A similar expression is already used by the Apostle Paul in the same chapter, namely, in verse 19: "in order that those who are *genuine* among you may be recognized." But also this term has to do with *faith*. I quote Calvin's commentary on this text. Calvin rejects the Roman Catholic idea that this self-examination has to do with auricular confession. He explains the word as follows:

But now it is asked, what sort of *examination* that ought to be to which Paul exhorts us. It is an *examination* of such a kind as may accord with the legitimate use of the sacred Supper.

You see here a method that is most easily apprehended. If you would wish to use aright the benefit afforded by Christ, bring faith and repentance. As to these two things, therefore, the trial must be made, if you would come duly prepared. Under repentance I include love, for the man who has learned to renounce himself, that he may give himself up wholly to Christ and His service, will also, without doubt, carefully maintain that unity which Christ has enjoined. At the same time, it is not a perfect faith or repentance that is required, as some, by urging beyond due bounds, a perfection that can nowhere be found, would shut out for ever from the Supper every individual of mankind. If, however, thou aspirest after the righteousness of God with the earnest desire of thy mind, and, humbled under a view of thy misery, dost wholly lean upon Christ's grace, and rest upon it, know that thou art a worthy guest to approach that table — *worthy* I mean

in this respect, that the Lord does not exclude thee, though in another point of view there is something in thee that is not as it ought to be. For faith, when it is but begun, makes those *worthy* who were *unworthy*.

Already in the *Didachè* ("The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles"), dated from the end of the first or the beginning of the second century, it is said that the people have to partake of the Lord's Supper after having examined whether they are reconciled with God and with their brothers, so that the celebration of the Lord's Supper may be pure and not be defiled (ch. 14).

Our fathers understood the meaning of this self-examination very well when they stated in the *Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper*:

In order that we may now celebrate this holy supper of the Lord to our comfort, we must first rightly examine ourselves.

True self-examination consists of the following three parts:

First, let everyone consider his sins and accursedness, so that he, detesting himself, may humble himself before God. For the wrath of God against sin is so great that He could not leave it unpunished, but has punished it in His beloved Son Jesus Christ by the bitter and shameful death on the cross.

Second, let everyone search his heart whether he also believes the sure promise of God that all his sins are forgiven him only for the sake of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ and that the perfect righteousness of Christ is freely given him as his own, as if he himself had fulfilled all righteousness.

Third, let everyone examine his conscience whether it is his sincere desire to show true thankfulness to God with his entire life and, laying aside all enmity, hatred and envy, to live with his neighbour in true love and unity. That is a good description and elaboration of what was already said in the days right after the apostles. It is to be summarized in one sentence: true self-examination means to know and to profess your sin

and misery, your deliverance in Christ, and your thankfulness.

It is not remarkable that these three words are exactly the three parts of the Heidelberg Catechism? So, to be able to examine ourselves we must know the Heidelberg Catechism, we have to be instructed in the doctrine of the church, just as had been promised by the parents of the children of the covenant at the baptismal font.

If we compare the explanation of our self-examination with the contents of the Heidelberg Catechism, we can understand the better the answer to Q. 81: "Who are to come to the table of the Lord?" (in the old Latin version of the Heidelberg Catechism the formulation is: "Who are *allowed* to go to the Lord's table?"): "Those who are truly displeased with themselves because of their sins and yet trust that these are forgiven them and that their remaining weakness is covered by the suffering and death of Christ, and who also desire more and more to strengthen their faith and amend their life." What else is this than: those who know and profess their sin and misery, their deliverance and their thankfulness?

That means very clearly: instruction in true faith has to precede the access to the Lord's Supper!

Discernment

So the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians concerning *proclamation* and ex-

amination in connection with the Lord's Supper and both words have to do with *faith*. But that is also the case with the third word used by the apostle in this respect, in the same passage; he writes in verse 29: "For any one who eats and drinks without *discerning* the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself."

There are commentaries which say that "the body" is just the body of the church. For instance, James B. Jordan writes in his *Theses on Paedocommunion* (1982, No. 17): "Discerning the body for the child may be translated as 'obey your parents.'" But that is wrong. The apostle uses here a strong word that actually means "to make a decisive distinction." The word is often used in connection with "to be able to discern good and evil," and that is to be applied to mature people.

I quote again the majority report for the Christian Reformed Synod 1986:

This means, first of all, that those who come to the table will need to discern that *this meal is not just a Sunday morning snack* but is, in fact, a participation *in the body and blood of Christ* given for the life of his people (I Cor. 11:25-26). Anything other than a recognition of the giver of the heavenly food and drink will bring destruction rather than life through the eating (I Cor. 11:30), the same destruction that fell on the Israelites who failed to discern God's gift in the heaven-sent quail (Num. 11:33; Ps. 78:30).

As indicated earlier, this discernment of the body will include recognizing that *being part of the body of Christ means being part of the body of believers*. Participants in the supper will receive true nourishment when they recognize the unity they share with others in the covenant community as a result of partaking of the one loaf (I Cor. 10:17), the one Lord Jesus Christ. Partaking meaningfully will require a true discernment by each participant that in holy communion Christ himself is feeding his people — and that of those fed people, I am one (cf. Heidelberg Catechism, Q. & A. 54).

So also the third word used by the Apostle Paul has to do with *faith*, and also with *instruction* in faith.

Now some reason that a child can believe in a childlike manner and that this must be enough to admit it to the Lord's Supper. That is not the way of thinking of the Apostle Paul, for he used strong expressions which are only to be applied to what is promised by the parents of the children of God's covenant: "to instruct their child in the doctrine of the church, as soon as he or she is able to understand, and to have him or her instructed to the utmost of their power!"

— To be continued

K. DEDDENS

Entertainment₂

3. Organizing a party

Although most people like to go to a party, few are able to organize a party in a nice and fitting manner. To entertain a group of people is not always easy, and not everyone is able to put together a program. That applies to wedding parties, to anniversaries, and to entertainment programs during a study weekend of the Young Peoples Societies. No one wants to use only the outworn old things, which have been used so often before. Still coming with something new and original is not easy either. Sketches can be nice, but who is able to write them? Many books with sketches can be bought, but often the contents leave much to be desired. Either they are boring, because they are used too often, or they are of a disputable moral value. The nicest thing is when



the people themselves put something together, using actual information about the participants, which shows a good sense of humour in the way we explained in the previous section. Especially during a wedding or an anniversary party there

are many opportunities to organize a program without the use of outworn sketches. A well-known element in such sketches is called "roasting." Bantering remarks are made about people in the audience, especially about those who are the sub-

ject of the party. Such sketches can be a real display of a good sense of humour, at least as long as the bantering remarks are of a mild nature. It should never go to the point where it causes embarrassment for others. The rule should be kept in mind that it is nice to have fun with others, but that it is less admirable to make fun or laugh at other people. It should never go at the cost of others. For

tainment. But again, it should never go at the cost of others. In some games the main point seems to be to make a fool of someone else. During a party it seems that people are supposed to accept humiliation and embarrassment, or at least that they do not show their feelings of disappointment. Others seem to enjoy such situations. However, also here applies that we should not make fun at the cost

his book "A living member of the Church" about certain customs in one of his congregations. At the end of a party the boys are supposed to take the girls on their back and while piggyback riding they have to dance around, pretending that they are carrying them through the rising waters of the sea to safety. As the water rises, the dresses have to be raised higher and higher. These kind of games seem to be appreciated, according to the amount of alcoholic drinks that have been consumed.

It is perfectly clear that such games should not have a place in a party program among Christians. Locally there may be differences, and other games may be favoured, but the same underlying tendency can be noticed in many cases. It is nice to have fun, to be glad and to rejoice, but the Christian lifestyle should always be maintained. During a party the same moral standards should be applied as during everyday life. It should not happen that the next day people feel ashamed about what took place during the party.

Still it happens. Customs may be different and other games may be played than the Rev. J. W. Smitt describes, but the main point remains the same. It happens that later on the guests admit that they did not feel happy with it, and do not enjoy or condone such entertainment, but still it happens and few have the courage to stop it.

It is very important to have a good Master of Ceremony during such a party. The M.C. should, before the party, go through all the sketches and the games, and simply cut out everything that does not fit in the program. That is a great responsibility for the M.C., and not always a rewarding job, because some seem to enjoy these bad elements in the program. Still it is a first requirement for a good party with a real Christian style.

To avoid that the impression may be given that all parties are bad, it has to be mentioned that there are many nice parties and good M.C.s. Some have learned the hard way how to keep things on the right track. It is exactly because we are thankful for these good programs that we are mentioning these things. It shows that a party can be held in an appropriate way. The Bible teaches us clearly that we are allowed to, and have to enjoy life and all the good gifts the Lord has given us. We have to be glad and rejoice. We have to show it also in our parties. Jesus Himself went, as one of His first public activities, to a wedding party and contributed to the success of the party.

By warning against wrong customs we hope to encourage people to improve their entertainment programs and make them comply with the Biblical standards.

PROVERBS 23:29-35, 24:1,2

Who has woe? Who has sorrow?

Who has strife? Who has complaining?

Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes?

Those who tarry long over wine, those who go to try mixed wine.

Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder.

Your eyes will see strange things, and your mind utter perverse things.

You will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, like one who lies on the top of a mast.

"They struck me," you will say, "but I was not hurt; they beat me, but I did not feel it.

When shall I awake?

I will seek another drink."

Be not envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them; for their minds devise violence, and their lips talk of mischief.

some it seems difficult to draw this line. You should always consider whether you yourself would appreciate to be treated that way and whether the person concerned can appreciate your remarks. You might appreciate things which others don't. It is a sad thing when people enjoy embarrassment caused to others.

The same applies to games, played during a party. Many nice games can be played and some people are very inventive in organizing this form of enter-

of others: Even worse are the games in which people are supposed to do or to accept things which in normal life are considered inappropriate or in conflict with moral standards and good behaviour. Sometimes the impression is given that, the closer the borderline of moral unacceptability is reached, or even passed, the more fun it is. Blindfolded people are expected to do or tolerate things, which under normal circumstances would not be tolerated. The Rev. J. W. Smitt writes in

4. Abuse of stimulants

We have mentioned already that during a party the moral level of the entertainment sometimes goes down in the same rate as the number of alcoholic drinks which are consumed goes up. Therefore it is important to watch also this aspect. Alcoholic beverages are often seen as stimulants of joy and happiness during a party. There is a certain truth in that. In Ecclesiastes 9:7 we read: "Go, eat your bread with enjoyment, and drink your wine with a merry heart." In chapter 10:19 we read that "wine gladdens life." In 1 Tim.5:23 the Apostle Paul gives Timothy the advise: "No longer drink only water, but also a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments."

We can certainly not say that the Bible forbids the use of alcoholic beverages. With the use of other drugs as stimulants it is a different story, smoking of cigarettes included. It cannot be denied that smoking of cigarettes forthrightly endangers life. The thousands of people who die every year because of lung cancer, caused by smoking, are clear evidence. Those who still try to defend this habit and pretend that it is not dangerous, are fooling themselves. The example of a heavy smoker who has reached an old age does not prove anything, because there are many more examples of people who died young because of heavy smoking. The fact that some survived a serious accident does not prove that it was not dangerous. He who has visited a cancer clinic and has seen the misery caused by smoking related lung cancer, realizes what heavy smokers are doing. There is reason to be thankful that an increasing number of people are becoming aware of this threat and quit smoking.

With alcoholic beverages it is a different story. The Bible does not forbid the use of it. On the contrary. We are allowed to use this gift of the Lord. However, after having said this we have to add that, although in the Bible the use of wine is mentioned in a positive way, it is also, and much more frequently, mentioned in a negative way. Already in Genesis 9 we read about the abuse of wine and the devastating consequences of drunkenness. Throughout the whole Bible we find the warnings against this sin. Many lives have been destroyed by the abuse of alcohol. Of course, every gift of the Lord can be abused or used in a wrong way. That has to make us as Christians cautious. For alcohol this is especially true. Seeing that so many lives have been destroyed, that families have fallen apart, and that young people have been lost, it is understandable that some people prefer to abstain completely from alcohol. We do not need it after all. If it becomes

a threat, we have to fight this danger. If people are not able to use it in a moderate way, it may be better to stay away from it. During parties and entertainment evenings some might lose control. They lose control over their drinking habit and use too much. They also lose control over their discretion. They cannot distinguish between good and evil anymore. That

"what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry." He admonishes us "not to join them in the same profligacy." That is clear language. It is quite a list. Licentiousness and passions means having uncontrolled manners, especially with respect to sex and hatred. Carousing is making merry

“. . . in our joy, gladness, cheer, and in our parties, we have to show our own lifestyle.”

causes a dangerous situation, and those who are in charge of organizing a party have to be aware of it.

Excessive drinking takes place. Not only during weddings and anniversaries, but also during sports events and after official school functions. I do not like to point to one particular case. I have information available about Eastern as well as Western Canada and about the Netherlands. The same phenomenon can be found everywhere. What happens in the world does not leave church members untouched. Many a party has turned sour by the use of alcohol. That should not happen among Christians.

The Apostle Peter warns us not to do

by drinking large amounts of alcohol. Profligacy is shameless immorality. It is certainly to the point that the apostle mentions these things. We are not immune to the dangers which are threatening the world.

We are allowed to have fun, to organize parties, to cheer, be glad, and rejoice. The Apostle Paul has shown it very clearly in his letter to the Philippians. He refers to it sixteen times in a very short letter. We are allowed to rejoice. However, also in our joy, gladness, cheer, and in our parties, we have to show our own lifestyle.

W. POUWELSE



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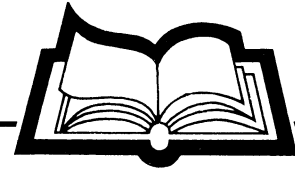
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“For thus the LORD said to me: I will quietly look from my dwelling like clear heat in sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.”

Isaiah 18:4

Stillness Before the Storm

Besides giving us an intriguing description of the LORD Himself, the prophet Isaiah also tells us something about His way of doing things in the world. The LORD adopts a certain strategy of action, a style of working characterized by the simile, “clear heat in sunshine.” But what is it that the LORD will do, and what is said about His way of doing things here?

Our own experience aids us in gathering clues. Everyone has at one time or another experienced those moments when everything appears very still — too still, one could say. As quiet as it may be, there is also uncertainty in the air. One somehow senses that what is there cannot last. And sure enough, often a period of still heat is only the sign of the unleashing of a good storm.

So it is with “a cloud of dew” on a hot day in late summer. Cool, damp gusts of winds which seem to be out of place in the heat of the day are a sure sign that rapid changes are coming, changes often accompanied by lightning and thunder. Again, one can perceive these occurrences as signs before the storm.

That this is also what is meant in the passage is evident from the context. Messengers of Ethiopia have traveled to Judah and Israel in order to consolidate forces and make alliances against the threat of Assyrian invasion. The whole world is in a state of unease. The threat of destruction looms, and nations no longer feel safe. A spirit of hustle and bustle rules, and a climate of conflict, mobilization, and impending disaster fills the air. And Israel and Judah join forces in this uneasy climate.

But what does the LORD say of it all? “He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD has them in derision” Ps. 2:4. The LORD sits in His temple, and watches the busy troop movements below. He sits at rest, as one completely above and in control of the situation. Yet He is not aloof, as if He only has a mild interest in the situation. Rather, He is intensely involved, watching every movement. It is as if He, as a participant, also watches the battle in order to choose the exact moment of His offensive. Sitting above the turmoil, He can choose the perfect moment to act. Perfect timing is on His side.

And when does He enter the scene? Precisely at the unexpected moment, that is, the moment when the enemy almost sees victory in view. He lets the planning of men coming to its point of harvest, and then, as He says, “before the blossom is over” He comes with the force of His mighty judgment. He lets the man who has rejected Him climb to

the apex of his aims and goals — only to swiftly bring him to ruin just before the climax of his objectives.

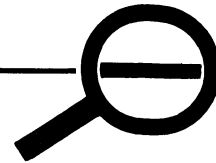
Such is the way the LORD works, not simply in the days of Isaiah, but all the time. Today, too, He often seems to have forsaken the world. Some speak of His absence from the world, others hold that man has murdered Him. And as the Preacher says, when judgment is delayed, “the heart of the sons of men is fully set to do evil,” Eccl. 8:11. Many find it hard to accept a God who allows Auschwitz and Hiroshima. And so they say, “Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers have fallen asleep, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation,” II Pet. 3:4. Why should one expect any change in patterns that he sees as being thousands and even millions of years old?

But the LORD is still present today, and His presence is like “clear heat in sunshine.” The climate of uncertainty which He allows apostate man to build is also a tool in His hand for the testing of His own, and the gathering of His Church. And we may be sure that He will intervene at the right time. So He did when He sent His only Son in the world; so He did when He had Him crucified for us. “While we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly,” Rom. 5:6. He reaches in at the critical moment, and effects His judgment, proving His justice and mercy, His longsuffering, kindness and love to all the world.

But all this tells us how we must live. We know that the church will be spared through judgment, as John also witnessed in his visions on Patmos. He saw that the church was saved, but “only as through fire,” I Cor. 3:15. For all those becoming impatient, and joining hands with the reckless and inhuman unbelief of the world will be cut off. “But those who endure to the end will be saved.”

So He enjoins upon us all to cultivate constant hope, and to look forward in eager anticipation for the day of His coming, the day when all wrongs will be set right, and the cause of Christ will be announced and proclaimed as the only way of truth in the world. Then the tower of godless culture — having come to the point of near-completion — will be broken down and destroyed. And the new life will begin in which we may see Him, our sovereign God, who has all things in His hand, and who as “clear heat in sunshine” always does the right thing for His own — at the right time.

J. DE JONG



Irian Jayan refugees

Because of some changes in the editorial committee of *Clarion*, it has fallen upon me to take care of the Press Review for the time being, a task which I gladly undertake because it forces me to increase my reading. You will notice that everyone has his own specific approach to this column. My approach will be mostly to let the quoted articles or portions of articles speak for themselves, with only little commentary of my own.

This time I would like to devote our entire space to (parts of) a report sent out by the Refugee Service of the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service of the World Council of Churches (July-August 1986). I quote from this report, not because I want to promote the World Council, but because of the information in the report itself. The report speaks about "Irian Jayan Refugees," and our readers will immediately consider that Irian Jaya is a prime area of Reformed mission work. The unstable political situation in Irian Jaya and the problems surrounding the refugees from Irian are dangerous for the mission work itself.

In early 1984, the government of Papua New Guinea was confronted with the unprecedented arrival of thousands of Irian Jayans. The Irian Jayans asked for protection and assistance, claiming they were fleeing a troubled political situation in their country. The numbers grew to 8-10,000 refugees who settled along the 800 kilometre densely-forested border in seventeen camps. The remote location of the camps, all but one accessible only by small plane, has made the provision of relief and food extremely difficult. But even more difficult than the delivery of relief has been the question of the future of these refugees. The governments of Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Australia are all worried about the impact of the refugees on their foreign policies in the region. The churches in the region, all concerned about the refugees, are sensitive to the political issues involved. The complexity of the situation requires careful analysis and sensitive response. This report examines the background of the Irianese refugee situation and the governmental and church responses to the refugees.

The background. Today's difficulties in resolving the question of the border crossers stems from the troubled colonial history of the island of New Guinea and its division by Dutch, British, and German colonial rule. The subsequent difficulties of decolonization led to the separation of Melanesian people in Irian Jaya from those in Papua New Guinea. In the early 1960s approximately 2,500 Irian Jayans moved across the border into Papua New Guinea which became independent in 1975. Two camps were established for some of these Irian Jayans. In 1981, the PNG government closed these two camps due to alleged pressure from local landowners. These refugees were granted permissive residency status in Papua New Guinea and flown to Port Moresby in UNHCR-chartered planes. The granting of permissive residency status meant that the refugees were no longer entitled to receive UNHCR assistance. Many of these refugees continue to live in difficult conditions as employment possibilities and relief services are limited.

The refugees today. In 1969, Indonesia's takeover of former West Dutch New Guinea was completed when a United Nations-supervised plebiscite resulted in a strong support for the region's remaining with Indonesia. However, from the beginning this union with Indonesia came under attack from the OPM (Organisasi Papua Merdeka, the Free Papua movement.) The OPM carried out military actions against the Indonesian government which responded by sending troops. Although guerrilla attacks have remained sporadic, Indonesia maintains a military contingent of 3,000 troops in Irian Jaya. While occasionally tense, the situation in Irian Jaya remained relatively stable until the mid-1980's.

At that time, as part of its development programme, the Indonesian government initiated a trans-migration scheme to move people from overcrowded Java to Irian Jaya. Irian Jaya, the size of Spain, has a population of only 1.2 million while Java, a third the size of Irian Jaya, has 100 million inhabitants. In the government's 1984-1989 development scheme, the movement of 500,000 people from Java to Irian Jaya was planned. For the largely Melanesian population of Irian Jaya this plan had cultural as well

as political and economic consequences. Many Irian Jayans feared not only losing their land, but also their cultural identity as a result of such massive population movements. Violence increased, the OPM became more active, and the Indonesian government responded with force.

In early 1984, Irian Jayans began crossing the border in large numbers into Papua New Guinea. Some claimed that they were fleeing Indonesian military repression, others spoke of their fear of OPM reprisals while others indicated that they left because of the general violence and rumors of killings. The border divides people of same tribes.

For the democratic government of Papua New Guinea, this influx of refugees has caused serious problems. The government of PNG wants good relations with its large neighbour of Indonesia. At the same time, the cultural solidarity among the populations of the border region mandate a hospitable response. The Indonesian government maintains that developments in Irian Jaya are a domestic — not a regional or international — concern and has been reluctant to allow international scrutiny. The government has repeatedly said that while it will deal firmly with OPM activists, the majority of border crossers will be allowed to return. Moreover, Indonesia has charged that the camps in PNG serve as guerrilla bases for attacks on Indonesian territory.

For Papua New Guinea, the issue of the Irian Jayans has caused both domestic and international problems. While initially accepting the border crossers, the PNG government talked of both compulsory and voluntary repatriation schemes but few of the Irian Jayans wanted to return. Initially, the PNG government regarded the border crossers as a bilateral issue between Indonesia and PNG although UNHCR has been involved in administering the camps with substantial financial support from the Australian government. Some of the camps, notably Blackwater camp, are highly politicized. In some cases PNG has deported Irian Jayans, justifying the deportation by saying the individuals were OPM guerrillas. In October 1985 the deportation of 12 Irian Jayans led to rioting and violence in the Blackwater camp.

Australian involvement. In July 1985, five Irian Jayans arrived in Australia directly from Irian Jaya. The initial reaction of the Australian government was negative. Chris Hurford, Minister of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs explained the cabinet's initial decision not to allow the five men to stay. "The cabinet's decision is based on the fact that granting permanent residence to people who travel five kilometres from the shores of PNG to the Australian island of Boigu would encourage hundreds, and possibly thousands, of them to do the same." The Australian Council of Churches, along with other groups, criticized the government's action while stating that it "recognizes the destabilizing and potentially explosive nature of the present situation in Irian Jaya and considers that the situation must be handled in a slow and sensitive manner."

After considerable debate, the Australian government announced first that it would seek third country resettlement for the five Irian Jayans and later — when no such placement was found — that they would be allowed to stay.

The issue of the Irian Jayans has stirred widespread debate in Australia. Australia, a traditional resettlement country for refugees, nonetheless finds the question of accepting refugees from Irian Jaya an extremely sensitive one. Relations with Indonesia have been difficult in the past and there is concern that accepting the Irian Jayans may complicate foreign relations. There is also the fear, common in other Western countries, that Australia will lose control of its borders. At low tide, it is possible to walk the 3.5 kilometres from PNG's coast to the Australian island of Sabai. The government

of Papua New Guinea wants Australia to take more responsibility and scoffs at Australia's reluctance to accept a few refugees when thousands are receiving assistance in PNG.

This is not the first time that Australia has been confronted with the arrival of refugees seeking first asylum. Refugees fleeing East Timor before the 1975 violence and boat people from Vietnam arriving in 1976 were welcomed by the Australian government. But the situation of the Irian Jayans is more sensitive than these earlier refugee movements. Given Australia's foreign policy initiatives in the region and given growing anti-foreign sentiment in the country, there is a reluctance to take actions which might encourage more Irian Jayans to come.

The churches. The churches in both PNG and Indonesia are concerned about the refugees. Many of the refugees are Christians. Some, with the help of mission and relief organizations, have built their own churches. The Evangelical Christian Church of West Irian, which joined the World Council of Churches in 1967, is the largest denomination in Irian Jaya. At the camp in Vanimo they are a majority of the refugees.

Presently the Lutheran, Anglican, and Roman Catholic churches in PNG are ministering to the refugees and in 1984 CICARWS issued an appeal for funds to support the work of the local churches. Contacts between the churches in Indonesia and PNG only began in 1984 and in September-October of that year the churches of Indonesia made a goodwill visit to PNG, including visits to the border regions.

In December 1984 a workshop was

held to determine what the churches can do for border crossers. Contacts between the churches in the region have steadily increased. Representatives from GKI Irian Jaya, Evangelical Christian Church in West Irian visited the Australian Council of Churches in August/September 1985. In November 1985 a tripartite meeting of the Melanesian Council of Churches, the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI), and the Australian Council of Churches recommended the establishment of a standing committee of the three councils. The first meeting of this Standing Committee took place in Port Moresby in February of this year while the second meeting in July addressed the subject of "The Ministry of the Churches in Facing the Needs of the Border Crossers." This tripartite standing committee endorsed the importance and urgency of pastoral ministry to the people in the border camps as an expression of Christian solidarity.

Our own Reformed churches are trying to help the refugees from Irian Jaya. You may remember that Rev. K. Bruning spent some time in Papua New Guinea to work among the refugees. A missionary is being sought by our Australian sister-churches for this purpose. Let us pray that a suitable and willing person be found, and that the political and social situation in that area does not hinder the proclamation of the Gospel and the gathering of the Church of Christ.

CL. STAM

COLLEGE CORNER

Principal's Report — 1986

1. College evening

Two special occasions marked the thirteenth convocation and sixteenth anniversary meeting on Friday, September 27, 1985. The first was the official opening of our new building, the second the farewell address of the Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene, M.Th., lecturer emeritus in ecclesiology. He made a few remarks on the place and character of our Church Order under the title "With Common Consent." The Master of Divinity degree was conferred on Mr. Arthur VanDelden, B.A.,

and the honours degree of Bachelor of Divinity on Mr. Garrelt Wieske. Rev. VanDelden now serves the American Reformed Church at Lynden, Washington and Rev. Wieske the Canadian Reformed Church at Lincoln, Ontario. The enthusiasm of our brothers and sisters, great and small, manifested itself also in the attendance of an Open House that because of the interest was extended.

2. Academic home

The year 1985-86 was characterized

by a smooth transition of the teaching and learning process of four professors and eleven full time students in a new environment. Our academic home is clearly divided in two areas: the higher level is the *study* area and the lower one is the *teaching* region. On the higher level are the office, the library and, to no one's surprise, the study rooms of the professors. The location of the class rooms, the conference room and the lounge is on the lower level. This clear and almost logical division makes for a pleasant, while quiet work environment. The new parking lot

at West 28th Street gives easy access to the class rooms. We installed hitching posts in the arcade on the lower level, not for horses but for the bikes of students and even faculty. The distinction of lower and upper level is not as clear cut as that of, for instance, nature and grace in scholasticism, for the professors *descend* regularly in order to give their lectures and drink their coffee on the lower level and the students *ascend* regularly in order to visit the library and pay their fees in the office. But these words may be sufficient to indicate that the first academic year in the new building made us even more thankful for the premises than we already were last year at the opening. Let me also mention the good work of the landscapers and of our cleaners, Mrs. Ghelms and her children.

3. Students, programs and lectures

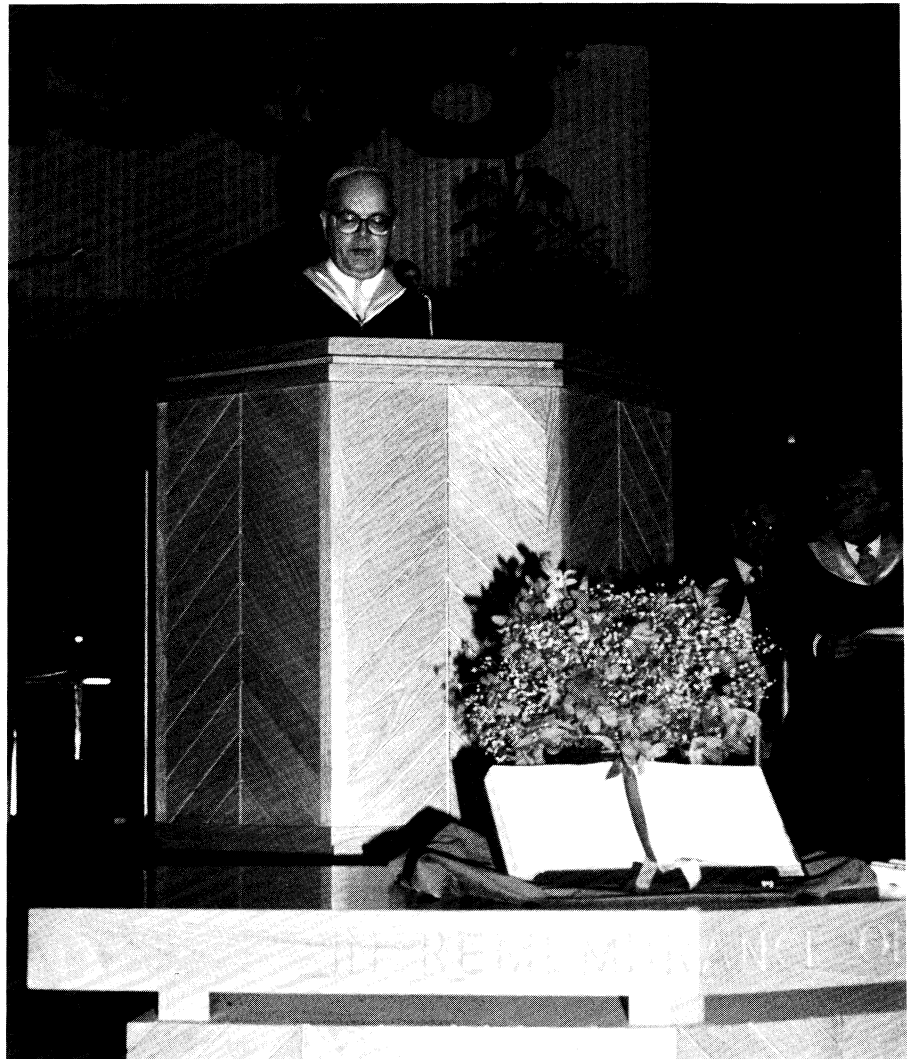
No freshmen enrolled. Mr. Kenneth Kok, M.Th., graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary, registered for a so-called ecclesiastical year. Besides the eleven full time students, there were fifteen part-timers. The lectures for the full-time students were those of the Senior Year. Messrs. P. Feenstra, G.J. Peet and R.A. Wynia fulfilled the requirements for the degree of Master of Divinity. Although there were no freshmen, the College offered a course Symbolics I (Creeds and Confessions) as a three hour Tuesday evening course during both semesters. The fifteen part-time students were enrolled in this course. Among them were four students of the Teachers College, since this institution had prescribed this course for its one year program.

During this academic year a two-year program was established leading to a diploma in theological studies. Prospective students for this two-year program are those who benefit from a general theological training, without study of Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

Moreover, a special one-year missionary program was instituted so that, for instance, future missionaries receive their additional training under the supervision of the Faculty.

Apart from these new programs, the Theological College offered twelve lectures for the general public, six about the Book of Leviticus and six about mission and ecumenism. They were well attended. In this way the faculty wanted to show its gratitude for the new facilities and its ongoing desire to make the Theological College even more fruitful for the life of the churches.

Upon invitation by the student body the principal spoke about the International Conference of Reformed Churches Edinburgh 1985, and Mr. Rick Plantinga,



Prof. Dr. J. Faber delivering his Principal's Report

a Ph.D. candidate, dealt with the life and teaching of the Dutch missiologist Dr. Hendrik Kraemer.

In this summer one of our students, Mr. L. Roth and his family, were afflicted by the sudden death of an infant son. Our college community grieved, and at the same time was, together with the Roth family, comforted by the God of the covenant whose way is perfect and whose promise proves true (Ps. 18:30).

4. Faculty

From students, programs and lectures we come to the Faculty. The academic year 1985-86 was memorable, not only because it was the first year in our new building but also because it was the last year for Professor Lubbertus Selles. On April 20, 1986 we commemorated his 45 years in the ministry of the divine Word. On May 2, he gave his last lecture in the presence of his wife, the Faculty and the students. It was at the same time the conclusion of the course New Testa-

ment Exegesis in which passages of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Book of Revelation had been studied. Special emphasis was placed on the redemptive-historical significance of the letter to the Hebrews and the deviating views on the Apocalypse. The last lecture dealt with Revelation 17 and especially with the perennial problem of the identity of the great harlot. Prof. Selles chose for a covenantal-ecclesiastical exegesis. He sought the solution of this problem not in a political identity of the harlot, but in her existence in apostasy within the framework of God's covenant and church. It was a fitting conclusion for his work as professor and showed the continuity with his publications as minister, on the basis of which Synod Orangeville 1968 had appointed the Rev. L. Selles as the first professor of New Testament at the newly established College of the Canadian Reformed Churches. On May 16 a social event took place in which our College community, enlarged by the ministers of Ontario — among whom were several



From l-r: Prof. Dr. C. VanDam, R.A. Wynia, Prof. L. Selles, P. Feenstra, Prof. Dr. J. Faber, G.J. Peet, Prof. Dr. K. Deddens

former students — showed something of the warm appreciation for the labours of our departing brother and his wife.

Now we have come to the public farewell in this convocation of September 1986. Our words will be few. We thank our colleague for his work as Professor of New Testament, vice-principal, secretary of the Faculty, registrar and dean of students. The simple enumeration of these functions indicates the important place occupied by Prof. Selles within our small College community during the first seventeen years. The Lord our God may grant Prof. Lubbertus Selles and his wife Geraldine good retirement years and thereafter the unfading crown of glory, when they enter into the joy of their Master.

Synod Burlington West 1986 appointed the Rev. J. Geertsema of Surrey, BC, Professor of New Testament and we welcome him wholeheartedly into the Faculty. We do so with the words of the Apostle Paul, expecting our new colleague to expound "the gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all nations." (Rom. 16:25,26).

Another memorable event with respect to the Faculty is the promotion

of Prof. C. VanDam to *doctor theologiae*. On June 5, 1986, he defended at the "Theologische Hogeschool" (Broederweg, Kampen, the Netherlands), a thesis entitled, *The Urim and Thummin. A study of an Old Testament means of revelation*. (Kampen: VanDenBerg, 1986, 2 vols.). Prof. L. Selles represented our College at this solemn and festive occasion. We gladly express again our joy and happiness to our Professor of Old Testament and his faithful co-worker, namely his wife Joanne.

5. Board of governors

General Synod 1986 appointed the Rev. M. Vanderwel and the brothers H. Buist and C.G. Heeringa governors. The first one replaces the Rev. J. Geertsema and the last ones are the successors of Mr. M. VanGrootheest and Mr. A.J. Hordyk. Mr. C.M. Loopstra and Mr. H. Kampen are now respectively chairman and treasurer of the Finance and Property Committee.

With this changeover again a period came to an end. The term of Mr. VanGrootheest and Mr. Hordyk was almost as long as that of Prof. Selles. A day after his appointment, namely on Thursday, November 28, 1968, they became members of the Committee of Administration

of the newly established College. Both Mr. M. VanGrootheest and Mr. A.J. Hordyk were especially involved in the purchase, maintenance, and renovation of our premises. We thank the brothers for their many years of labour of love.

General Synod Burlington-West confirmed two new bylaws relating to the academic regulations and the operation and function of the Senate.

6. Office and library

After five years in the office Mrs. Teresa Jongsma was succeeded by Miss Catherine Mechelse. She joined our staff as a recent graduate of the Library Technician's programme at Niagara College in Welland. She assists Mrs. J. Marren, our Associate Librarian, and functions further as administrative assistant and secretary. We hope that Miss Mechelse will enjoy her multi-faceted function. During this summer of 1986 she was helped by Miss Joanne Bartels. Assistance and help were needed since during this academic year we received a generous offer of Mrs. G.J.D. VanderWaal-Braaksma of Pretoria, South Africa. She donated the library of the late Dr. C. VanderWaal under the condition that a separate list of the VanderWaal collection should be established.

Our own Women Savings Action

proved again indispensable. The ladies were approached by a newly established Library Committee. They gave the monies necessary for transport and insurance. Moreover, and even more important, they donated \$22,500 for an IBM AT computer, a NEC Spinwriter, Wordstar and library software programs and for the costs of conversion to the Library of Congress system. Mr. L. Kampen of Toronto was our competent consultant for the computer purchase. During the summer of 1986 our office started the composition of a short title list of our complete library and of an accession list of the Vander-Waal collection.

This collection means a valuable addition to our holdings in the field of German and Dutch exegesis of the New Testament, especially the book of Revelation. Moreover, it contains several sixteenth and seventeenth century rare books, among others a 1569 commentary of Musculus, a 1598 booklet of Beza, a 1606 Hommius'

edition of Ursinus' *Thesaurus* and a 1612 Geneva edition of Calvin's *Institutio*. We are very thankful for this donation of the library of a gifted and industrious theologian who in 1974 visited our institution and with whom we were connected by the common situation of Dutch immigrants who live with the blessing of their reformational inheritance and under the obligation of the cultural and missionary mandate.

7. Contacts

Understandable is that in this year there was an intensive relationship with our sister institution in Kampen. Further there was twice some academic contact with Redeemer College in Hamilton. The professor of Dogmatology spoke for the pre-seminary club on the concept of the true church in Reformed Confessions and participated in a conference. He responded

to a paper by Dr. W.H. Velema of Apeldoorn, entitled *The Normative Use of Scripture in Reformed Ethics*. Dr. Velema also visited our college.

8. Conclusion

Because of the retirement of our colleague Selles and the departure of some of the first trustees my thoughts wandered back to Synod Orangeville, 1968. I conclude in 1986 with the wish addressed by that Synod's Chairman to the newly established college:

May from its gates come forth a steady flow of well-trained and thoroughly Reformed candidates for the Ministry, that the Churches of the Lord be provided with faithful shepherds and be preserved in the unity of the true faith, in order that the Son of man, at His coming, may find the faith on the earth.

J. FABER

Theological College Report

Fourteenth Convocation and Seventeenth Anniversary

The place for the Fourteenth Convocation and Seventeenth Anniversary of our Theological College was again the Bethel Gospel Tabernacle in Hamilton. Once again we were impressed with the building and its functionality, with the efficiency of the sound system and the closeness of speakers and listeners. What we were very unpleasantly "surprised" by was the whimsical nature of the instrument which was used to accompany the singing. If ever the failure of such an electronic instrument to be a fit companion to the congregational singing was demonstrated, it was this evening. However, we do not want to ride any hobby horses, but a report has to be factual and correct.

The brothers and sisters arrived by various means. Chatham had even chartered a bus to be present this evening, something which — in our opinion — was mainly due to the fact that one of their ministers, Prof. L. Selles, was delivering his farewell oration because of his retirement as professor of New Testament studies at our College. This shows partly the strong bond which exists between our retired brother and the Church which he served for many years while still in active service as a minister of the Gospel.

Was it because of this "farewell address" that the building was fuller than was the case last year and that there

were approximately nine hundred brothers and sisters present this evening? We heard rumors that the collection yielded some seventeen hundred dollars, which amounts to almost two dollars per person.

No, we do not measure the love towards the College by the money that is collected, but we do see the love towards the College also in the faithfulness with which this institution is supported financially. We'll come back to this later on.

Opening

The opening was done by the president of the Board of Governors, the Rev. J. Mulder.

In connection with the topic for Prof. Selles's farewell address, the President read Hebrews 13:1-22, upon which he led us in prayer.

In a brief address, he welcomed the brothers and sisters who had come from practically all regions of our country in

which Canadian Reformed Churches are found. He noted that there were more in attendance this year than last year and expressed his thankfulness for the interest shown in our College. This is an institution for the Churches and by the Churches. It is, therefore gratifying that all Churches are represented here. Rev. Mulder expressed the wish that we might have an edifying and pleasant evening together.

Rev. Mulder repeated the request not to smoke in or around the building or on the parking lot. Unfortunately, our people still have to be reminded of this time and again.

One Church sent a letter with congratulations: it was the Church at Winnipeg, which sent greetings and congratulations to the College, to the Rev. Geertsema and to the Graduates.

Yes, here we remember that it may also have been the installation of the Rev. Geertsema as successor to Prof. Selles which prompted the members of Chatham's Church to be present in such large numbers.

In Southern British Columbia the rumor goes that, if you wish to teach at the College, you should become a minister of the Maranatha Church in Surrey. We might say the same about the Chatham Church.

The various points of the program were not announced, except the point "music." Dr. Faber, upon having finished reading his "Principal's Report," an-

OUR COVER

Skookumchuk
at Princess Louisa Inlet, BC

Photo courtesy:
BC Government



The newly installed Prof. J. Geertsema is congratulated by the President of the Board of Governors

nounced that the duet piano and recorder was to be replaced by a duet for two recorders.

Since we may expect that a copy of the "Principal's Report" has been sent directly to *Clarion*, we are not going to mention the contents of this address.

What I do wish to mention here is that I doubt the wisdom of having musical interludes inserted in the program. Mind you, this is *no* reflection on the particular piece of music that was enjoyed this evening. It was rewarded with applause and this was well-deserved.

My point is the insertion of such an interlude as such.

It is my experience that every year the speakers are urged and almost forced to make the solemn promise that they shall confine their speech to a duration of no more than twenty minutes, because the program is always so full and the

brothers and sisters should have an opportunity to congratulate the graduates after the Convocation. Besides, this is one big family reunion, when brothers and sisters from various places meet each other, exchange news and other information. This time the Convocation was over at 10:30, and the result was that several brothers and sisters left without going into the hall where the social hour was held. This is to be deplored, and for this reason I would advocate to dispense with musical contributions in any form, except during the taking of the collection. The people come to attend a Convocation, not to listen to a brief concert, however enjoyable this may be in itself.

Farewell address

The farewell address of Prof. Selles was entitled "No Lasting City," a title which was taken from Hebrews 13:14.

At the moment of this writing it is not known whether Prof. Selles will make this address available for publication. Let us, therefore, mention a few points.

Prof. Selles began with giving examples of the various situations in which people remind each other that "we have no lasting city here." He then proceeded to examine whether the use of these words is justified indeed with a view to the meaning in the text from which the title had been taken. He traced various explanations of these words and presented us with his conclusion which he substantiated by a careful exegesis. Neither Judaism as such is meant, nor this world, as if "outerworldliness" was advocated in this text, but the "here" is this life, the life in this dispensation, in which we are looking forward to the appearing of our Saviour and the beginning of the life in a purified world.

At the conclusion of his address Prof. Selles added a "personal word," as he called it.

At the Synod of Orangeville 1968, the Synod where he was appointed as professor of New Testament, all the Churches were represented, and he always felt very strongly that the Churches had appointed him and that they were standing behind his appointment with their prayers and their willingness to support this institution. At that Synod he neither expected this appointment nor aspired to it. He did take up his task in the faith that God who calls is also faithful in giving the strength and the ability to fulfil the task given.

It would not be hard, Prof. Selles said, to give you this evening a list of failures on my part, but I shall not do this, for we are assured that the Lord has fulfilled His promises. To Him therefore be all praise and thanksgiving.

A word of thanks was also directed to the brothers and sisters who stood behind the work at the College.

Prof. Selles also expressed his great gratitude for the wonderful cooperation which had existed within the Faculty right from the beginning. Since there is only a small faculty, we see much of each other and learn to know each other quite well. The main thing is that there was always an earnest desire to serve the Lord in all we did and this makes for good cooperation.

What is needed is that the teachers at our College are also encouraged. They seldom hear that their work is appreciated, and they need this. Prof. Selles also expressed the wish that the services and the experience of the faculty members might be used more frequently and amply by the Churches. They have been placed in a position of trust. Let this trust also be shown in that they are consulted whenever this would be advisable.

Your reporter adds here the wish that this experience may be enjoyed by our people through publications which are the fruit of seventeen years of teaching at our College.

Graduation

Upon the singing of Hymn 56: 1,3,4, the ceremony of conferring the degrees upon the graduates was next.

For the last time, Prof. Selles introduced the graduates by mentioning some particulars from their lives until this very moment.

Dr. Faber declared the brothers Magistrum Divinitatis (actually I should say "magistros" — this for those who might criticize my Latin) and Dr. Van Dam draped the hood over their shoulders. To each of the graduates a text was given along as a last farewell from the College to guide them on their further way.

The graduates are: Mr. Peter Feenstra, minister-elect of the Church at Guelph, Mr. Garnet Peet and Mr. Richard Wynia.

This part of the evening was concluded with the singing of Psalm 135:1,9,10.

Installation

It was a full evening, for now we witnessed the installation of the Rev. J. Geertsema as professor of New Testament to take the place which had become vacant by the retirement of Prof. Selles.

The President of the Board of Governors read the form for the installation of professors of theology, or members of the faculty. To the questions which were asked the Rev. Geertsema replied in a firm voice, "I do with all my heart."

Rev. Mulder then read the Form of Subscription to which Prof. Geertsema affixed his signature.

The singing of Psalm 134:3 concluded this part of the evening.

Presentation

What is a Convocation or College Evening without a speech by Mrs. L. Selles? Right from the start she was active in supporting the College, not only by being a faithful help to her husband, but also by "heading" the Women's Savings Action. Year after year she was there at the Anniversary Meetings or Convocations as the mouth and representatives of the sisters in the Churches who faithfully had been collecting small change or larger bills as an extra help to the College. This year was no exception, although we were sort of saddened by her statement that she was going to retire together with her husband.

No, we do not begrudge her the retirement, but we certainly will miss her, although the "old guard" is gradually disappearing. With the retirement of Prof. Selles the only one left of those appointed

in 1968 is Dr. Faber. We are to realize that a younger generation is taking over. This attests to the faithfulness of the covenant God.

The first thing, Mrs. Selles said, that someone asked her when she arrived this evening was, "Is your speech funny?" Her speech was not funny, but went over the blessings which the Lord has bestowed upon our College community and the Churches therein during the past seventeen years.

Mrs. Selles promised us that she would give us her written text, and for this reason we shall not mention more from what she said. Hopefully, this text reaches us in time so that it can be included in this report.

One thing should be mentioned as yet.

The Women's Savings Action contributed a considerable amount towards the library facilities in our new building, and also donated moneys for the computerization of the library. For this reason we did not expect any further cheques this evening.

However, since Mrs. Selles did not want to miss the gracious hand-kiss she always received from Dr. Faber, she was going to present the College with a cheque this evening, too. It was a cheque in the amount of \$5,000.00. And all this thanks to the saving of pennies and nickels by many of the sisters within the Churches. Yes, that's what we are back to, Mrs. Selles said, pennies and nickels, for the considerable obligations towards Church and School make it very hard to maintain donations of large amounts for this purpose. Yet, if only pennies and nickels are being saved faithfully, it is surprising and amazing how much can be achieved.

Closing

The Rev. J. Visscher, vice-president of the Board of Governors, closed the evening with prayer, upon which Hymn 65 was sung and the recessional followed.

It took a long time for all who wished to congratulate the graduates, their wives and other relatives before they could shake hands with them. When we left close to midnight the last ones had just achieved their goal.

Then the sometimes long way home had still to be undertaken.

It was well worth it.

It is my sincere wish that I have enabled our readers to get a fair impression of what so many would have loved to attend but were prevented from witnessing.

In all likelihood, someone else will take care of these reports in the future.

It was a great pleasure to be able to provide you with some impressions.

VO

Consulaat-Generaal Der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

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

OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

VAN DE BERG, Johanna Inge Maria, geboren op 18 april 1944 laatstbekende adres in Canada: 95 Vancoy Road, Winnipeg, MB.

BIERMAN, Daniel, geboren op 28 december 1923 te Amsterdam, laatste woonplaats in Nederland: Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken met onbekende bestemming. Betrokkende was gehuwd met Helena Krop.

BOEKESTIJN, M., geboren op 11 augustus 1921 te Schipmuiden.

BROUWER, John H., geboren op 11 augustus 1956, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Abeelstraat 69, Winterswijk, naar Canada vertrokken in april 1986.

VAN BRUGGEN, Hidde Antonie, geboren op 22 juni 1956, laatstbekende adres in Nederland, Hunzestraat 4, Den Helder, naar Canada vertrokken in 1984.

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



Classis Ontario South has declared:

GARNET J. PEET

eligible for call in the American/
Canadian Reformed Churches.

ADDRESS:

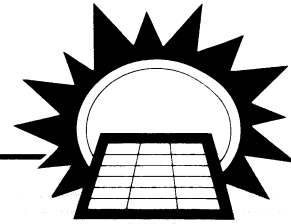
5 Rockwood Place, Apt. 14
Hamilton, ON L8N 2G3
Phone (416) 525-6113

NEW ADDRESS:

Secretary Board of Governors of
the Theological College of the
Canadian Reformed Churches,

REV. CL. STAM

RR 4
Fergus, ON N1M 2W5
(519) 843-3016



“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, Rejoice.”

Philippians 4:4

Dear brothers and sisters,

Is that not asking too much and even somewhat unreasonable, that we should rejoice always, under all circumstances, however trying and difficult they may be? We all have our ups and downs. The Preacher knows about it too, when he writes there is a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, (Eccl. 3:4). The Lord Jesus himself wept at the grave of His friend Lazarus and He also cried out His anguish in the garden of Gethsemane, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death, (Mark 14:34).

The Apostle Paul who writes this letter to the Philippians knows very well what suffering, pain and sorrow is all about.

Yet he rejoices! And he tells us to do likewise. For the circumstances of our life should not determine the condition of our hearts and minds. But the reliable promises of our God! Paul does not speak here of a superficial, skin-deep feeling of joy, which disappears as soon as things go wrong. No, he urges us, to rejoice in the Lord. That means to be thankful and happy because of what the Lord has done for us. Always again concentrating on that great mercy by which He has made us His own with body and soul, knowing also that He preserves us for the unfading inheritance, we can and do indeed rejoice even when life is hard on us. For we know that the Lord is at hand! He will sustain us. Perhaps He does not take the burden away, but He certainly will carry us through with our burdens. Therefore Paul also urges us to have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.

Then the peace of God which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord, (Phil. 4:6, 7).

Sometimes I walk in the shadow,
Sometimes in sunlight clear;
But whether in gloom or brightness
The LORD is very near.

Sometimes I walk in the valley,
Sometimes on the mountain’s crest;
But whether on low or high land,
The LORD is manifest.

Sometimes I walk in the desert,
Sometimes in waters cold;
But whether by sands or streamlets
The LORD doth me enfold.

Sometimes I walk in green pastures,
Sometimes on barren land;
But whether in peace or danger,
The LORD holds fast my hand.

Anonymous

Our birthday calendar:

As far as I know only one of our Sunshine friends has a birthday in the month of November. She is

WILMA VANDRONGELEN
31827 Forest Avenue
Clearbrook, BC

Wilma will be 29 years old on November 3. She is mentally handicapped. I am sure she will really appreciate it, if you send her a card.

Congratulations, Wilma!

Greetings to you all! Send your requests to:

MRS. J. MULDER
1225 Highway 5, RR 1
Burlington, ON L7R 3X4

Report of the 53rd General Assembly OPC 1986

The undersigned was asked to represent the Canadian Reformed Churches at the fifty-third General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, held at Eastern College, St. Davids, PA.

Of particular note was that this General Assembly marked the fiftieth anniversary of the OPC and special events were held in celebration of this occasion. Your delegate, however, did not participate in this celebration, but attended the latter part of the Assembly, namely, from Saturday, June 14, through Tuesday morning, June 17, 1986. The assembly was scheduled to adjourn at noon, June 18.

Just when I arrived, the great debate of this assembly was about to begin. The proposal of joining and being received by the Presbyterian Church in America (the "J & R" proposal) was discussed in sixty-seven speeches. It received twenty votes short of the two-thirds majority required in order to send the proposal to the twelve presbyteries (seventy-six pro, sixty-eight votes contra). Those who were opposed to the proposal argued, *inter alia*, against the method. They preferred the form of a "negotiated merger." The resolution now adopted proposes meetings of representatives of the OPC and PCA "to continue to consider . . . how we may achieve at the earliest possible time that full unity that is both our shared obligation and hope."

For your information, I may add that a week later the fourteenth General Assembly of the PCA voted in favour of re-issuing the "Joining & Receiving" invitation. This proposal must be approved by three-fourths of the PCA presbyteries in the coming year to complete the formal invitation in 1987. We may conclude that a merger of the OPC and PCA will probably not take place during the eighties of this century.

There were two reports on paedocommunion (partaking of the Lord's Supper by children). The majority argued against, the minority in favour. The Assembly referred both reports to an enlarged committee for further study.

The Report of the Committee on the hermeneutics of women in office took the position that "I Timothy 3:1-17 suggests that 2:12-13 prohibits women specifically from exercising the teaching and ruling

functions reserved to the office of elder." On the other hand, on the basis of the study of the Biblical teaching on the identity of woman and of the role of women in the early Christian community, it encourages the sessions "to search out ways to recognize, nurture and utilize the rich and diverse gifts given by Christ to the women in their congregations." This Report was approved. The Committee is continued in order to complete work on the section concerning women and the office of deacon.

The Report of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations related a statement on "Fugitives from Discipline," proposed by NAPARC (the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council). Corollary to it was the recommendation "that a congregation seeking to leave a NAPARC church to affiliate with another NAPARC denomination be received only after it has complied with the requirements of the form of government of the church from which it is separating, and the receiving church shall be responsible to see that this is done."

No less than five pages of this Report were dedicated to the International Conference of Reformed Churches. The conclusions about Edinburgh 1985 are as follows:

1. The obvious desire of all participants to be faithful to their commitment to the Reformed confessions unless they are proven to be un-Biblical, rather than try to evade the confessions as is being done in some RES churches, made Christian fellowship easy and satisfying.
2. There was also, on the part of some, a certain smugness that would discourage vitality in both doctrine and church life, as well as a degree of unawareness of needs and opportunities for witness and service in today's complex world.
3. The next meeting of the Conference being scheduled for 1989, a year after the next RES meeting, and there being no way for a church to be received between meetings, there is no urgency for our church to give active consideration to membership in the ICRC at this time, though its activities should be carefully observed in the meanwhile.

This part of the extensive Report also describes the differences among the churches in the ICRC:

- a. The differences between churches adhering to the three forms of unity and those adhering to the Westminster standards in the area of church government or polity. The continental churches see only the local congregation as the church, whereas Presbyterians recognize the church as existing not only locally, but also regionally, nationally, and universally; thus the insistence of the continental churches that they are federations of churches and not church; e.g. the Canadian Reformed Churches, and not the Canadian Reformed Church. The continental brothers feel that we presbyterians hold to a form of hierarchicalism whereas presbyterians feel that they tend to congregationalism.
- b. This difference in church polity also results in a difference in the ultimate goal of interchurch relations. For the Reformed churches the goal is one national church with sister churches (or churches in correspondence) in other countries. The goal of presbyterians is that of one worldwide presbyterian/Reformed church.
- c. Another area of difference within the churches is the covenant. Because of the disruption in the Netherlands which occurred in 1944, the Liberated churches have a highly articulate doctrine of the covenant and see it as a teaching of Scripture which has far-reaching implications for Christian life and thought. One of the Scottish speakers spoke of the danger of using one doctrine as the "architectonic" framework for the whole of theology.

Also the background of the different rules of correspondence was sketched in this Report:

The Article 31 churches have held to the idea that there can be only one true church in each nation, based on the distinction in Article 29 of the Belgic Confession. The Westminster Confession in Chapter 25 recognizes that distinction between the true and false church but confesses also that the true churches are more or less pure, recognizing that true churches have degrees

of purity. This complicates the whole matter for us. The Liberated churches have drawn strict rules of correspondence with other churches based on their understanding of the distinction in the Belgic Confession. They are now beginning to question the suitability of those rules for all circumstances of interchurch relations. An instance demonstrating that is the membership of two Irish churches and two Australian churches in the ICRC. They are also finding that presbyterians have not been bound by such restrictive rules. When I addressed the General Assembly on Tuesday morning, June 17, your delegate related the main contents of the deci-

sion of our last General Synod with respect to the OPC. I used the opportunity to elaborate on the Scriptural and historical background of our "highly articulated doctrine of the covenant . . . as a teaching of Scripture which has far-reaching implications for Christian life and thought." I tried to show the connection between this doctrine of the covenant — with its promise and obligation — and the doctrine of the church and its discipline. In the meantime the allegation was corrected that we teach "that there can be only one true church in each nation." There is a distinction between "can" and "should." As within the covenant there is only one bride of Christ, so there should be only one true

church in each nation. Several commissioners expressed personally their appreciation for the continuation of the contact between the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The total membership of the OPC at the end of 1985 was 18,502, comprised of 12,634 communicant members, 5,549 baptized children, and 319 ministers. The number of churches increased by three during 1985 to a total of 171. The next General Assembly will be held, D.V., June 10-18, 1987, concurrently with major assemblies of the other churches of NAPARC at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI.

J. FABER

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE



Hello Busy Beavers,

It was early Saturday morning. Two friends hurried together down the sidewalk in the bright morning sun. One carried a backpack. The big roll bag of the other bounced and bounced on its shoulder strap as they talked and talked with their heads together. Their eyes sparkled with excitement!

Who are "they?"
Where are they going?
What will they do?
What happens?

YOU finish the story, Busy Beavers!
Start with the beginning I gave you in the box above.
Make up your very own story. Think about it, plan a bit, write it out, enter it in our FINISH THE STORY CONTEST.
Send it to: *Aunt Betty*
c/o *Clarion*
Premier Printing Ltd.
1249 Plessis Road
Winnipeg, MB R2C 3L9

FALL THINGS TO DO

Fall is such a busy time for everyone!
People are busy harvesting crops.
Animals are getting ready for winter.
Here are some real fall activities for you, Busy Beavers.
Maybe you could try them all!

1. Press the prettiest leaves you can find. Put them between layers of newspaper or paper towels under some heavy books. (They're great for making prints, decorating bookmarks or birthday cards, or for collections.)
2. Collect different seeds, for example seeds in pods, parachute seeds, seeds with hooks. Can you think of a pretty way to mount them to show them off?

3. Make a seed picture!
Draw the outline.
Spread glue on one part. Then sprinkle one kind of seed on the sticky glue. Let dry.
Put glue on another part and sprinkle DIFFERENT seeds this time.
Repeat till your picture is finished.
Have fun!
Lots of success!

OCTOBER

Another month is nearly gone.
All the Busy Beavers with an October birthday are looking forward to a happy day and . . . ! Here's wishing you all "Happy Birthday" and "Many happy returns of the day!" May the Lord bless and keep you all in the year ahead.

Jodi Hamoen	1 Karin VanderVeen	17
Agnes Timmerman	1 Anne Van Laar	18
Robert Van Middelkoop	1 Cheryl Vande Burgt	21
Nicole DeHaas	2 Carmen Van Middelkoop	21
Terri-Lynn Schulenberg	3 Marilyn VandeVelde	22
Vanessa De Jong	6 Pauline de Ruiter	28
Corinne Schulenberg	7 Henry Moesker	29
Kim Vis	7 Tonya Beintema	30



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Joanne DeBoer*. We are happy to have you join us. I see you are a real Busy Beaver already, sending such a nice letter and riddles, too! Thank you. Write again soon, *Joanne*.
Hello *Donald Woltjer*. It was nice to hear from you again. I hope you will do well playing football. Remember you have to uphold the family honour, as well as the honour of this club! Bye for now, *Donald*.
Thank you for the puzzle, *Leona DeHaas*. I'm glad you enjoyed your holidays so much. And I'm curious how you did in

your swimming lessons! Be sure to write and tell us if you got that maroon badge!

How is "Perky" doing, *Laura Breukelman*? And how did you do in your swimming lessons? I'm glad it didn't rain much while you were camping, *Laura*. Bye for now. Thank you for the picture!

What an exciting holiday you had, *Marilyn Vandevelde*! But I see you were happy to be home again doing things there. Write again soon, *Marilyn*.

Thanks for the jokes *Angela Mans*. I think the Busy Beavers will enjoy them. Have you moved already, *Angela*? If you have, write and tell me your new address and then we can ask for a pen pal for you, all right?

Did you get your red badge for your swimming lessons, *Jodie Bouwman*? I'm curious to hear! Sounds to me as if you had a real fun holiday, *Jodie*! Thank you for the puzzle.

You had a very interesting holiday, *Debbie Jagt*! I hope you have lots of pictures to make a scrapbook of your trip. I bet your parents enjoyed it, too!

KNOCK-KNOCK Jokes
from Busy Beaver *Angela Mans*

Knock-knock.

Who's there?

Yukon.

Yukon who?

Yukon lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink.

Knock-knock.

Whose there?

Lion.

Lion who?

Lion only gets me a spankin'!

Knock-knock.

Who's there?

Thistle.

Thistle who?

Thistle be my last knock-knock joke!

Quiz Time!

ANIMAL WORD SEARCH

from Busy Beaver *Judy Bysterveld*



Look for:

- | | | |
|-------|---------|--------|
| dog | rabbit | sheep |
| horse | rat | owl |
| chick | frog | bee |
| cat | octopus | bear |
| mouse | lion | walrus |
| duck | giraffe | bug |
| fish | pig | turtle |

One of the Busy Beavers wrote in a letter this:

"God has made a beautiful world. If only people would keep this world clean. The Lord is the Almighty One!"

Bye for now, Busy Beavers.

With love from your
Aunt Betty

FALL PICTURE by Busy Beaver *Marjorie Barendregt*

