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MEDITATIE

De Geopende Fontein

Te dien dage zal er eene fontein geopend zijn voor het huis Davids en de inwoners van Jeruzalem tegen de zonde en tegen de onreinigheid.
Zach. 13:1.

Nogmaals: "te dien dage".

Als eene tijdsaanduiding wijst dit op een bepaald moment in de geschiedenis des heils.

Er zal eene ure komen, waarin eene fontein geopend zal worden, zal doorbreken, met genezende kracht tegen de zonde en onreinigheid!

Of ook: de tijdsaanduiding wijst niet slechts op dat moment, wanner de fontein zal geopend worden, maar ook op den geheelen daarop volgende tijd, de periode, wanneer deze fontein geopend zijn zal en haar genezend water zal doen stroomen tegen de zonde en tegen de onreinigheid.

Het is hetzelfde moment, dezelfde periode, die ook telkens in het voorgaande hoofdstuk door dezelfde woorden werd aangeduid. En vooral zien deze woorden terug op de laatste verzen van hoofdstuk twaalf. Daar toch was er ook sprake van "dien dag". En in dien dag zou de Heere verdelgen alle Heidenen, die tegen Jeruzalem zouden aankomen. Hij zou hen zoeken te verdelgen! Maar in dienzelfden dag zou Hij over het huis Davids en over de inwoners van Jeruzalem uitstorten den Geest der genade en der gebeden. En onmiddellijke vrucht van deze uitgieting zou zijn, dat ze zouden aanschouwen hunnen God, Dien ze doorstoken hadden, en ze zouden bitterlijk weenen en rouwklagen vanwege hunne zonden, met een groote rouwklage, waarin alle geslachten Israels en toch ook ieder persoonlijk voor zichzelf zou deelnemen.

Het is de Pinksterdag, en de periode, die door dien doorluchtigen dag der eerstelingen des Geestes wordt

ingeluid, waarop dit woord "te dien dage" vooruitziet.

En het is diezelfde periode, en diezelfde dag, de ingang der nieuwe bedeeing, die ook in dit eerste vers van hoofdstuk dertien is aangeduid.

Te dien dage!

Doch er ligt ook meer in dan een eenvoudige tijdsaanduiding.

Trouwens; dit is altijd het geval met Gods tijd. In Gods tijd en in het gebeuren der dingen naar Goddelijke tijdsorde, ligt altijd allerhoogste wijsheid, volmaakte logica, eeuwige noodzakelijkheid . . .

Zoo ook hier.

"Te dien dage" was er immers eene groote rouwklage over de zonde, en een bitter weenen over de ongerechtigheid.

Dat wil zeggen: er was een dorsten naar de gerechtigheid!

En die dorst was door God Zelf veroorzaakt: Hij had den Geest der genade en der gebeden uitgegoten over het huis Davids en over de inwoners van Jeruzalem.

Zal dan die door God gewekte dorst naar gerechtigheid een dorst der wanhoop zijn, die nimmer te lesschen is?

Zal de rouwklage, zal het roepen om vergeving geen gehoor vinden?

Dat zij verre!

God, Die den dorst schept, formeert ook de fontein tot lessching van den dorst.

En te dienzelfden dage zal er eene fontein geopend zijn tegen de zonde en tegen de onreinigheid!

Waar dorst is, daar is water!

Goddelijke wijsheid!

Eene fontein!

Wonderschoon beeld!

God heeft in de schepping een beeld geformeerd van de herschepping, in het natuurlijke eene teekening ons gegeven van het geestelijke, en het aardsche wijst heen naar het hemelsche. Daarom kunnen de

dingen van het koninkrijk der hemelen dan ook geschieden in gelijkenissen.

Dat is vooral ook waar van het water.

Water is zulk een rijk beeld van geestelijke werkelijkheden. Het lescht den dorst, het verfrist den door de hitte afgematten pelgrim, het reinigt van lichamelijk vuil. Reden dan ook, waarom juist het badwater door God in Christus verordeneerd is als een heilig teeken en zegel van de geestelijke reiniging door het bloed en den Geest van Christus.

Doch onder al de vormen, waarin het water zich vertoont, is die van de fontein misschien wel het allerschoonst.

De regen verkwikt het dorstige land; de rivier, schuimend over de rotsblokken, die haren weg trachten te versperren, al voortstroomend en zich verbreedend, tot ze zich eindelijk in de wijde zee uitstort, is onweersaanbaar en majestueus; de kabbelende beek, zich kronkelend door het weiland, of zich een pad zoekend door de heuvelen, zingt het lied der ruste en der vergenoegdheid; de wijde oceaan, spiegelvlak zich uitstrekkend in de windstilte, doet denken aan het onbegrensde, of ook, bij 't woeden van den storm onstuimig hijgend en zijn baren bergenhoog verheffend, aan het onrustige hart. . . .

Maar de fontein, de uit den grond ontspringende, opspringende fontein, met haar kristallijne water, met haar duizenden glinsterende droppels, spelend in het gouden zonlicht. . . .

Zij is nog het schoonst!

Ze springt op uit den grond, ge weet niet hoe en kunt haar oorsprong niet naspeuren; en ze is beeld van het mysterieuze, het ondoorgrondelijke, het eeuwige, van den eeuwigen God Zelf: de overvloeiende Fontein aller goeden!

De fontein welt op en doet haar water uit den grond opschieten onophoudelijk, ze wordt niet moede en droogt niet op, en is beeld van het onuitputtelijke, van de diepte des rijkdoms van den onuitputtelijken God. Ze is voortdurend in beweging, ze springt op en besproeit het haar omringende veld, ze speelt en dartelt, ze glanst en schittert, en is beeld van leven, van Hem, die de Levensbron is; beeld ook van blijdschap en vroolijkheid, van Hem, bij Wiens aangezicht verzadiging van vreugde is, en in Wiens rechterhand liefelijkheden zijn eeuwiglijk. . . .

Daarom is dan ook de fontein zulk een passend beeld van de stroomen des heils, de eeuwiglijk opspringende goedertierenheden, die uit God door Christus de Kerk des Heeren toevloeien en vervullen met zaligheid!

Zoo is het ook hier.

Er zal een fontein geopend zijn te dien dage.

Eene fontein, wier water geestelijke kracht, genezende kracht heeft. Het is immers eene fontein tegen de zonde, en tegen de onreinigheid.

Zonde en onreinigheid duiden dezelfde werkelijkheid aan uit verschillend oogpunt.

Het woord in 't Hebreeuwsch voor zonde gebezigd is teekenend. Zijn grondbeteekenis is eigenlijk: het doel missen; zooals, b.v., een boogschutter, die het doelwit, waarop hij mikt, niet vindt met zijn pijl, er voorbij schiet, iets anders raakt, het doel mist. De zondaar mist het doel, niet per ongeluk, niet het doel, dat hij tracht te bereiken, maar het doel, dat hem van God gesteld is als zijn levensdoel, maar waarop hij in de boosheid zijns harten niet mikken wil, en in de verdorvenheid zijner natuur niet mikken kan. Dat doel is Gods eer. Met heel zijn bestaan God te verheerlijken, met heel zijn leven en al zijne levensacties en levensuitingen op dat doel te mikken en dat te bereiken, die eere des Allerhoogsten te bedenken, te willen, te begeeren, te lieven, te zien, te hooren, in zijn hart op te vangen, met zijnen mond te roemen, met zijne hand aan te wijzen, met zijnen voet na te streven,—dat is zijne, hem van God gestelde, roeping. En dat doel mist hij. Op dat doel mikken wil hij niet, kan hij niet, kan hij niet willen. . . .

Dat is zijne groote ellende!

En dat is tevens zijne groote schuld, die hem verdoemelijk stelt voor God, en die hij nimmer vermag te delgen!

En onreinigheid ziet op de geestelijke smet zijner natuur, de verdorvenheid zijns harten, de verduistering van verstand, de verkeerdheid van zijnen wil, de vuilheid van al zijne begeerten en neigingen, waardoor hij altijd verkeerd ziet en oordeelt over God, tegenover God staat in vijandschap, Zijn wil veracht; die averechtsche stand van heel zijn natuur, waardoor het hem onmogelijk is, om zijn eigenlijke levensdoel te bereiken.

De schuld en de smet.

De verdoemelijkheid en de dood!

En deze fontein heeft van die zonde en van die onreinigheid genezende kracht!

Ze is een fontein van genade!

Een fontein van eeuwige, alle ongerechtigheid en schuld verwinnende gerechtigheid Gods; van alle smet uitwisschende heiligheid, van alle duisternis verdrijvend licht, van alle onrust kalmeerenden vrede, van allen dood verslindend leven. . . .

Komt tot de wateren!

Die wil, die kome, en neme van de wateren des levens om niet!

Zoo toch zal de voorstelling willen zijn: deze fontein is geopend opdat we uit haar zouden drinken.

Dikwijls wordt dit anders voorgesteld. Omdat hier sprake is van de zonde en de onreinigheid, waartegen deze fontein is geopend, meent men, dat de gedachte hier is, dat we door het water dezer fontein moeten worden afgewasschen.

Wij geven echter de voorkeur aan de voorstelling

van het drinken uit de fontein. Dit is dichterbij het beeld van de fontein. In eene fontein neemt men geen bad, maar uit de fontein drinkt men. Dit is ook naar de Schrift, die immers wil, dat we zullen scheppen uit de fontein des heils, dat we tot Hem zullen komen, in Wien deze fontein geopend werd, om te drinken, en die dikwijls spreekt van het water des levens, dat den dorst van hem, die naar de gerechtigheid dorst, eeuwiglijk lescht.

Wie dorst heeft, kome tot Mij en drinke!

De fontein is geopend!

Die wil, die kome!

Geopend is deze fontein!

Te dien dage zal er eene fontein geopend zijn!

Dit ziet op een bepaalde gebeurtenis, een bepaald wonderwerk Gods, een bepaald moment in Gods werk des heils.

Immers, eene fontein wordt geopend op het moment, dat zij zich een weg baant door den grond en omhoog springt. Ze was er wel voorheen. Ze heeft niet haar oorsprong op het oogenblik, dat ze door den grond heen breekt, en haar water doet opspuiten. Maar wel wordt ze op dat moment geopend.

Zoo is het ook met deze fontein tegen de zonde en tegen de onreinigheid.

Ze is er wel.

Ze ontstaat niet op het moment, waarop ze geopend wordt.

Ze heeft haar oorsprong in de eeuwigheid! Ge kunt haar niet naspeuren. Hare oorsprongen zijn de eeuwige goedertierenheden des ondoorgrondelijken Gods. Uit de diepten des eeuwigen welbehagens van den alleen souverainen God ontspringt deze fontein. Want het heeft den alwijzen God behaagd, om de diepten des rijkdoms Zijner Goddelijke liefelikheden te openbaren en te verheerlijken, door ze alle zonde en ongerechtigheid, alle onreinheid en allen dood te doen verslinden. . . .

Om 't eeuwig welbehagen. . . .

Uit de Fontein des levens, de overvloeiende Fontein aller goeden, ontspringt deze fontein tegen de zonde.

Ze is er eeuwiglijk!

En ook was ze er wel heel de oude bedeeling door. Hoe zouden anders al de dorstigen uit den ouden tijd niet hebben moeten versmachten en omkomen, hadden ze niet in hope gedronken uit deze fontein?

Doch ze was nog niet geopend. Eigenlijk, om het beeld even uit te werken met toepassing op de oude bedeeling, liep ze onder den grond door, en wees God met den vinger aan, waar ze liep, en waar ze straks door den grond zou breken en geopend worden. Zoo deed Hij reeds in het paradijs, toen Hij beloofde: "Ik zal vijandschap zetten". Zoo deed Hij door alle

beloften aan de vaders gedaan, door alle typen en schaduwen. Soms zelfs was dit zoo sterk, dat het scheen, alsof de fontein reeds door den grond gebroken ware. Zoo was het b.v. toen het water door de rotsstenen brak in de woestijn, want immers men dronk ook toen "uit de geestelijke steenrots, die volgde; en de steenrots was Christus"

Doch geopend was ze nog niet!

Geopend wordt deze fontein "te dien dage", in de volheid des tijds!

Ze begint door den grond te breken, als het Woord vleesch wordt en onder ons tabernakelt.

Ze baant zich een weg door den ijzeren korst der zonde en des doods als God in het vleesch den vloekdoed sterft aan het schandhout. . . .

Ze springt omhoog in al de vroolijke schittering van haar levend water, als Christus ten derden dage uit de dooden in heerlijkheid wordt opgewekt, wordt opgenomen in de hoogste hemelen, verhoogd aan de rechterhand des Vaders, ver boven alle macht en kracht en heerschappij, en allen naam, die genaamd wordt. . .

En ze breekt ten volle door voor ons, wanneer die Christus, de belofte des Heiligen Geestes ontvangen hebbende, den Geest nu ook uitstort in Zijne Kerk. . .

Toen werd de fontein geopend. . . .

Om nimmermeer afgesloten te worden!

Stroomen des heils!

Komt tot de wateren!

Komt, en neemt en drinkt van het water des levens om niet!

Immers werd deze fontein geopend voor u, kerk van Christus, die dorst naar de gerechtigheid!

Ze werd geopend voor het huis van David en voor de inwoners van Jeruzalem. En dat huis van David, dat in Christus verhoogd werd in de hoogste hemelen, en daar eeuwiglijk op Davids troon zit; en die inwoners van Jeruzalem, van het Jeruzalem, dat God de eeuwen door bouwt, dat tijdelijk een aardschen vorm aannam in de aloude hoofdstad van Kanaan, dat thans boven is als onzer aller moeder, dat straks van den hemel van God afdaalt op de nieuwe aarde,—deze zijn immers niet beperkt tot de Joden. . . .

Deze zijn ook niet alle mensen!

Maar deze zijn de door God van voor de grondlegging der wereld geliefde Kerk der uitverkorenen!

Die Kerke heeft Hij lief met eene eeuwige liefde.

In die eeuwige liefde heeft Hij voor die Kerk in Christus de fontein geopend tegen de zonde en tegen de ongerechtigheid. En die Kerk doet Hij, door den Geest der genade en der gebeden, ook naar het water dezer fontein dorsten!

O! alle gij dorstigen, komt tot de wateren!

Komt en drinkt!

H. H.

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EDITORIALS

The Importance of Technicalities

Frequently the general public, and sometimes even those that ought to know better, speak with disdain about the strict observance of technical rules and methods in the deliberation upon and final settlement of any question. To them a "technicality" is so much red tape. Or, what is worse, to maintain technical principles is to them only an excuse on the part of an assembly for reaching the wrong decision. To say that a certain request was not received by an ecclesiastical gathering on the ground of a "technicality" in their mouth means that such gathering merely looked for some excuse to reject it. When a protest is declared out of order by such a meeting on the ground of a "technicality", they accuse the assembly of bad "politics". When an individual, consistory, or classis committed a technical error, and the case is brought to the attention of the proper assembly, and the later condemns the party that committed the error, it is enough to say contemptuously that the whole case was treated and condemned on the ground of a technicality, in order to make many people believe that it was mistreated. Technicalities, according to this view, are of little or no importance, and they may readily be set aside, and easily be transgressed.

Now, we would not defend the proposition that a technical rule may never be overruled, nor would we deny that mere technicalities are sometimes used to cover up an attempt to get rid of a case or to do the wrong thing. A case may be very clear, and very urgent and important, and the party involved in such a case may very evidently have the right on his side; and he may have committed a very slight technical error in ignorance of the method he should have followed in handling his case; and in such a case it may be the consensus of opinion that the technical error had better be overlooked and the case itself be treated. But this is not usually the case. In fact, it should be regarded as belonging to the extreme exceptions. Fact is, that technicalities are of great importance. They are very closely related to the moral side of any case. And although it is true that those who speak lightly of them, and who easily transgress them, may do so in ignorance of the proper rule to be observed, it is much more often the case that such transgression of technical rules is done consciously, and with the purpose of attaining to one's end right or wrong. An individual or assembly that violates technicalities is certainly guilty of mismanagement,

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and in so doing violates God's laws of justice and truth.

What is a technicality? It is a formal point of order. It concerns the technique of a case, the proper rule to be observed, the proper method to be followed in the treatment of a certain case, whether it be by an individual, or by an assembly. Technicalities are not inventions arbitrarily introduced either by the individual or by the assembly in any given case, but they are established rules, applicable to all cases alike, and always to be observed. Our Church Order is a whole set of technicalities. And they are agreed upon and laid down for a very definite purpose. They are not mere empty formalities that may just as well be dispensed with, or whose violation has no bearing upon the decision reached or the judgment rendered in any given case. On the contrary, they are rules that are adopted to safeguard the proper treatment of a case, and to assure to all parties involved that justice shall be done to them. They are based on the correct supposition that one cannot do justice in a way of injustice, that he cannot reach a right end by pursuing a crooked way; or, positively speaking, that justice and truth and love require us to walk in certain ways and to pursue certain methods in the treatment of any given case. They are, therefore, themselves profoundly moral, ethical, spiritual. The end does not merely not justify the means, but the wrong means are not conducive to the right end.

Let me give a few concrete illustrations. The well-known rule of Matthew 18 is a technicality. It requires that when a person, a brother, has sinned against someone, the latter must rebuke the former personally, before he can even take witnesses with him, and he must have rebuked him in the presence of witnesses, before he can take the matter to the church. What is the underlying principle of this technicality? Brotherly love; the desire to save the erring brother. Suppose this rule is violated. A person brings an accusation against a brother before the consistory without having first followed the rule of Matthew 18. He is refused a hearing by the consistory. The accusation may be perfectly true. And the accusing brother may be very much offended at the consistory because the latter refused to take up the case. He may even spread the report far and wide that the consistory refused him on the ground of a mere "technicality". Yet, the consistory was right, and the accusing brother was wrong. And the latter was not merely *technically* wrong, but also *morally, ethically*: he violated the law of love! He did not have it in his heart to save the erring brother, but to destroy him. And if he will but honestly examine his heart, he will discover that hatred inspired and motivated him in violating the technicality of Matthew 18. And no consistory or broader gathering should ever allow itself to be persuaded that one who violated this rule

acted in the spirit of the love of Christ. Or take the case of a person that directly appeals to classis without having served notice and a copy of his protest or appeal upon his own consistory. Perhaps, in regard to the matter of his protest the protestant has justice on his side. Yet, his protest is not received by the classis on the ground of a technicality: he did not serve a copy of his protest upon his own consistory. What may be the reason for this violation of the proper rule on the part of the protestant? It may, of course, be mere ignorance. But more often there is another reason. He refuses to acknowledge the consistory. Deliberately he ignores them. He does not trust them. He really does not live in the relation of Christian love to his consistory. He wants to expose them. He appeals to classis. But whether the one or the other motive is the reason for his action, he did not offer his own consistory the opportunity to treat his protest. And the classis refuses even to read it on the ground of this technicality. Or, take the case of the deposition of an office-bearer by a consistory. The Church Order demands that "elders and deacons shall immediately *by preceding sentence of the Consistory thereof and of the nearest Church*, be suspended or expelled from their office". The consistory violates this rule by not taking into consideration or by disregarding the judgment of the consistory of the nearest Church. The deposed office-bearer takes his case to classis, and he wins his case on the ground of a mere technicality: he was not deposed by a double consistory. Whether or not he was worthy of deposition is left an open question; the classis does not and cannot even discuss this. And the reason for the rule is very evident. Article 79 of the Church Order requires that it shall be made perfectly evident that the deposed office-bearer was worthy of deposition, and proceeds on the perfectly reasonable assumption that the judgment of one's own consistory alone cannot be regarded as sufficient, because that consistory is interested in the case, and may easily be biased. Hence, the judgment of a neighboring, disinterested, unbiased consistory is required to depose an elder or deacon.

Technicalities, therefore, are extremely important, and no individual or assembly should be permitted to violate them. And wherever they were violated, the error should be rectified, and the case should be retried according to the proper method.

H. H.

When many of our boys are leaving
To places we do not know
Wilt thou O Lord be near them
Wherever they may go.

The Question of Sunday Labor

This article is a translation of an editorial in the previous issue of our Standard Bearer. Readers who are able to read Dutch may omit this, and proceed to the next article. It was suggested to me, and it had already occurred to me, that it would be expedient to translate the article on Sunday Labor, because many that are not able to follow the Holland are deeply interested in the question. Here follows the translation:

When, sometime ago, we expressed our opinion concerning the question of Sunday labor, and declared that in our judgment Sunday work for the purpose of manufacturing defense material is permissible for the Christian in case the government demands it, we intentionally limited ourselves strictly to the question proper. The question was not concerning Sunday labor in general, nor even concerning the permissibility of working on Sunday for the purpose of making defense material; but it definitely concerned the problem whether a Christian would have to submit himself to the authorities in case they should demand of him that he work also on Sunday for the purpose of preparing war material. We were, and we still are, of the opinion that in that specific instance the Christian would have to submit to the government. Such submission would be sinful, if Sunday labor as such and under all circumstances were to be condemned, for in that case our answer would necessarily have to be that we must obey God more than men. But since this is not the case, and since works of necessity and works of mercy have always been considered proper on the sabbath, it is our opinion that also in this case we must submit ourselves to the government, and leave the right to determine whether the manufacture of defense material is so urgent that it cannot be stopped on the sabbath, and the responsibility to the government.

Even when we wrote that editorial we sensed all sorts of dangers, and expected that the question would not remain so simple as we presented it at that time. It could be anticipated that this readiness of the Christian to comply with the demand of the government would be abused. The control of such matters usually rests with the "world". And the "world" cares not at all about the sabbath. They may perceive that resting on the sabbath, or, at least, one day of the week, is a fundamental ordinance of God, rooted in creation, and that one cannot violate this ordinance with impunity. Even past experience has taught us that it is not profitable for the employer if he lets his employees work seven days a week. But the world cannot appreciate the spiritual significance and value of the sabbath. They do not understand the fact that

a Christian laborer is in spiritual need of the sabbath, and that on that day he must be occupied in a special sense with the things of the kingdom of heaven. And, therefore, in that sense they do not care about the sabbath at all. It might be expected, therefore, that the world would abuse the circumstances, and make of the war and of the need of defense material a pretext to deprive the Christian entirely of the sabbath. And on the other hand, it might be feared, too, that there would be found Christians that live on a low spiritual level, and that, once you granted them the right to work on Sunday for the manufacture of war material and at the request of the government, would, for filthy lucre's sake, intentionally look for a job that requires them to work on Sunday; and who, besides, would offer themselves for Sunday work, not only when the government demands this, but also when the employer would ask it of them for his own material benefit. It stands to reason that it is "safer" to bind the Christian in the world by external precepts, than to leave matters to his Christian liberty.

That which we then anticipated and feared is now becoming more and more reality; and that is the reason why we feel obliged to write on this subject once more and to address a word of warning to all our people. First of all, it is evident that in many a factory Sunday work is being required, not by the government, but by the employer, simply because it is for his material profit. And, secondly, a good deal of Sunday work is already being done in cases where it is very evident that there is no necessity for it as far as the war is concerned. I have in mind factories in which the men in turn work on the sabbath, but without working seven days a week. Every seven days, or sometimes even every six days, the employees have a day of rest. The only trouble is that this day of rest does not always occur on Sunday. In such cases it should be very evident that work on Sunday is not motivated by the need of speedy production of war material, but simply by the desire for profit on the part of the employer. It is more profitable for him to let his factory run through, than to stop all work on the sabbath. Such Sunday labor certainly does not fall in the category of "necessary labor at the request of the government". And it should be evident that in our former article on this subject we did not defend such Sunday work. On the contrary, it is our conviction that our people may not conform to this corrupt practice of the world, and should persistently refuse to work on the sabbath under such circumstances. If the government declares that the stress of the times demands that we work seven days a week, very well; even though we are loath to relinquish our sabbathic rest, we will be obedient for God's sake. But if it concerns merely a matter of exchanging

one day of rest for another, for the benefit of the employer, so that we do, indeed, work only six or even five days a week, but lose the sabbath and are prevented from gathering with the church of Christ, we will not allow ourselves to be led astray by the world. For, in the first place, the rule is then certainly applicable that we must obey God rather than men. Secondly, compliance would in such cases result in great spiritual injury for ourselves. And, finally, this practice will have the result that we lose the sabbath entirely, and that this way of sabbath-desecration will be continued even after the war. Hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown!

H. H.

Jesus Redeems

Radio Address of Oct. 18, 1942, over W. L. A. V.
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Jesus saves! This brief statement, which one may read now-a-days on billboards and fences, on church-buildings and automobiles, is true in all its implications, much more so than those who are responsible for its public display are willing to admit. That Jesus saves is guaranteed by His very name, for His name is not a mere, meaningless appellation, but expresses what He actually is, for it was given Him, not by His parents, but by divine command through a heavenly messenger. And the name signifies: Jehovah saves, or Jehovah is salvation. It denotes that this saviour is not a mere man, coming with a human claim that he is able to save, but God, the God of our salvation come down to us, revealing Himself to us in the face of Jesus Christ. And God is mighty to save to the uttermost, and the fact that He reveals Himself as Jesus, Saviour, is the indubitable assurance that He shall surely accomplish our salvation. And thus the name is interpreted by the angel to Joseph in a dream: "and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save his people from their sins". Matt. 1:21. Indeed, Jesus saves! Jesus as He is revealed to us in the Scriptures, Who was born in Bethlehem, Who sojourned among us for a few years and revealed the Father, Who suffered and died on the cross of Calvary, Who was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, Who was received up into heaven and became the life-giving spirit,—this Jesus saves. And there is no one with Him. He alone saves. For there is no "salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved". Acts 4:12. Salvation is not in man or angels; it is not in our own works or righteousness or religiousness,—it is in Jesus alone. Nor is there any part of salvation,

be it ever so small, in us. There is absolutely nothing we can do of ourselves that adds to, that aids Him in His work of saving us. All the work of salvation belongs exclusively to Him. And He surely saves. He does not create a possibility of salvation, He does not reveal a willingness to save, He does not establish the necessary conditions unto salvation: He *saves*! Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for he *shall save* his people from their sins."

This, then, is the true implication of that frequently advertised statement: Jesus saves. It means that He alone, without the help of man, shall surely and completely accomplish all the work that is necessary to bring a man that is utterly lost in sin and death to the heavenly glory of an everlasting righteousness and eternal life. For this is salvation. And we may consider this glorious work of grace from different aspects. For it implies, first of all, that the sinner is translated from a state of guilt and damnation into a state of perfect righteousness in which he is worthy of eternal life; secondly, that he is changed from death into life, from darkness into light, from corruption into holiness, from the slavery of sin into the perfect liberty of the children of God; thirdly, that in this state of righteousness and condition of holiness and liberty he is preserved in the midst of this present world even unto the end; and, lastly, that he is delivered from the corruption of physical death and translated into immortality and incorruptibleness through the final resurrection. All this Jesus accomplishes with infallible certainty for and in all whom He saves. He shall save His people from their sins!

Salvation, I said, is first of all a change of our state. By state is understood our legal position before God. God is our Judge. And He is not a Judge before whose bar we appear occasionally, or, perhaps, only once, at the end of time, but Who always judges us. Always we stand in judgment before Him. And always He expresses verdict. And it is that judgment of God, the verdict He pronounces that determines our state. According to that verdict of the Judge of heaven and earth we are either righteous or guilty. If He declares us righteous, we are worthy of life; if we are found guilty, we are liable to the punishment of death. Righteousness and life, guilt and death are inseparably connected by the righteous judgment of God. We should be careful lest this truth be denied or distorted, for it is one of the foundation stones of the doctrine concerning our salvation. There are many who consider this a hard doctrine. They try to circumvent this unbreakable connection between righteousness and life on the one hand, and unrighteousness and death on the other, by an appeal to God's goodness and mercy. God is too merciful and kind to inflict the punishment of death upon the guilty sinner! He will pardon him and give him life! But this is a very

pernicious error. Can a man put his hand in the fire and not burn it? Can he take poison and not be killed? Or can he indulge in a life of immorality and dissipation without ruining his body? Neither can he sin against God with impunity. God cannot deny Himself. He is unchangeably righteous and just. And since this is true, the relation between righteousness and life, unrighteousness and death, cannot be broken. Only he who according to the righteous judgment of God is in the state of righteousness is the object of His favor, and is worthy of life and glory.

Now, by nature, as we stand before the tribunal of God by ourselves, on the basis of our own merits, and by virtue of our relation to the first man Adam, we are in a state of guilt. We have sinned, and we do sin, and we increase our guilt daily. This guilt is the legal basis of all our misery. We are in the prison of sin and death, so to speak; and salvation consists in our deliverance from that prison, and our transference to the state of everlasting liberty and life. One that is to save us, therefore, must be powerful so to deliver us. He must be able to enter into our prison and lead us out into freedom. But this is not all. He must not only be mighty to deliver, but he must have the *right* to set us free. Our being in this prison of sin and death is not accidental, it is the execution of a sentence that is pronounced against us by the justice of God. Justly we are committed to the slavery the devil. It is according to strictest justice that sin and death have dominion over us. We have no right to be delivered, because we are guilty and under sentence of condemnation. If, therefore, one is to save us from this power of sin and set us free, he must first obtain for us the right to life and liberty. And to obtain that right for us he must remove the guilt of our sin; he must be able to transfer us from the state of guilt and condemnation into the state of perfect and everlasting righteousness. He must *redeem* us!

How can this be accomplished? What must be done in order to remove the guilt of sin and obtain for the sinner righteousness and life? The justice of God against sin must be satisfied. And God's justice can be satisfied only by suffering the punishment of sin willingly and in perfect obedience. This is the meaning of atonement. To atone for sin is not merely to bear the punishment and pay the penalty. The suffering of death, the bearing of the punishment must be an act of loving obedience. Such an act of perfect obedience is the sacrifice that satisfies the justice of God and removes the guilt of sin. It is the price of our redemption. And when we say "Jesus saves," we mean, first of all, that He performed this act of perfect obedience, offered this atoning sacrifice and so paid for us the price of our redemption, obtaining for us the forgiveness of sin and eternal righteousness. He accomplished this by coming into our flesh, assum-

ing the form of a servant, in order that He might take upon Himself our sins, and bear for us the wrath of God. He paid the price and atoned for our sins by His act of perfect obedience on the cross of Calvary, where He voluntarily laid down His life and tasted death in all its depth of horror. There He willingly descended into the depth of hell to satisfy the justice of God and fulfill all righteousness. And the verdict of God was rendered from heaven, when He raised Him from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is God's seal of approval and acceptance of the perfect sacrifice of the Saviour, His sentence that Jesus' death is the blotting out of the guilt of sin, and that we are justified through Him. He was delivered for our transgressions, and raised for our justification. Rom. 4:25. Jesus paid the price of our redemption.

Several questions may be asked and often are asked concerning this vicarious, substitutional suffering and death of our Lord. And it is well for us to consider them for a moment, especially since these questions are often raised in the form of objections against the doctrine of vicarious atonement itself. We shall never be able to fathom and completely comprehend this mystery of the kingdom of heaven. It belongs to those things that never arise in the heart of man, and that can be apprehended only through God's revelation. For us it is sufficient, therefore, that the Bible teaches us that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Nevertheless, we like to have something to answer those that oppose and deny the truth, and for this reason it is well that we weigh the objections raised, and attempt to remove them. The question may be asked: how is it possible that one person so bear the punishment of another that the latter becomes righteous? Can such a substitution be made according to justice? Is there not rather a double injustice involved in such vicarious suffering, the injustice of acquitting the guilty, and the other injustice of punishing the innocent? Besides, is it not a very dangerous policy to punish the righteous for the guilty and let the wicked go free, a policy that must be detrimental to all religion and ethics? Moreover, how could the death of Christ on the cross in the year 33 be sufficient to justify the many and deliver them from the guilt of sin and the punishment of eternal death? One man dies and many are made righteous. One man suffers for a few hours on the cross, and many are redeemed from eternal death. How is this possible? Where is the justice of God in all this? Yet, so the Bible teaches us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Rom. 5:6. And as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Rom. 5:19. For he hath made him to be sin for us; that we might be made

the righteousness of God in him. II Cor. 5:21. By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Heb. 10:14. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree. I Peter 2:24. For Christ also hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust. I Peter 3:18. There can be no question about the truth of this doctrine of Christ's vicarious suffering in the light of Scripture. The only question is whether we can discern a little, perhaps, of the divine reasonableness of this truth.

And then we must remember, first of all, that the statement that Jesus died for our sins is not the same as saying that one man died for another, that the righteous died for the guilty. If by an earthly court a man should have been convicted of murder and condemned to die on the gallows, and if then someone else, an innocent man, would offer himself as a substitute for the murderer, the court would never accept such a substitution. The innocent man that offers himself as a substitute is merely another individual, that stands in no legal relationship to the murderer, and who, therefore, cannot possibly take his place. But this is not true of Jesus. He is not just another man, but one who stands in a very definite relation to us. For, first of all, He is the person of the Son of God Himself, the Judge of heaven and earth, Who certainly has the right (if we may even speak thus of Him), to place Himself under the law in order that He might redeem us from the guilt of sin. But, secondly, He is also the representative head of all His own, the elect, given Him before the foundation of the world. He was ordained before the world was to be the head of all the elect, and these are chosen in Him. He is responsible for them. He represents them before the face of God. Even as the first man Adam stands as the representative of the entire human race in paradise, so Christ stands by God's own decree as the representative of all the elect in the hour of judgment on Calvary. Even as the sin of Adam is imputed to all men, so that they are all guilty in Him, so the righteousness of Christ is imputed to all the elect, so that they are righteous in Him before God. They are one body with Him as the head a legal body that is represented by the head. On the accursed tree Christ does not die for strangers but for His own, made into one body, one legal corporation with Him, that could be legally represented by their one head. For so he says: I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all. John 10:14, 15; 27-29. "Jesus saves" signifies, not that He created a certain possibility of salva-

tion by His atoning suffering and death, but that on the cross He certainly paid the price of redemption for all whom the Father gave Him, so that their sins are blotted out, and they are certainly saved.

As to the objection that it is a dangerous policy to let the righteous die for the wicked, to punish the innocent and let the guilty go free, it is not difficult to see the error of this. The objection is really a very old one. Already in the days of the apostle Paul there were those who argued that the doctrine of free grace, and of the justification of the ungodly through the blood of Christ, inevitably must lead to the conclusion, that it mattered not how much we sin. In fact, the more we sin the more the glory of the grace of God would become manifest. Let us therefore sin, that grace may abound! And, to be sure, this argument would be valid, if salvation meant nothing more than that Christ suffered and died for the ungodly in order that the latter might escape the punishment of hell and damnation and go to heaven. If among men the wicked is acquitted, the result will surely be that he will increase in wickedness. But this is not salvation. For Christ did not die for the ungodly, in order that he might continue in his iniquity and feel secure in his sin, but in order that He might obtain for him the righteousness on the basis of which he may be delivered from the power of sin and death and be made alive unto God. He saves His people from their sin! And this implies that He also delivers them from the dominion of sin, cleanses them, sanctifies them, and makes them servants unto righteousness. It is quite impossible for a sinner that lays hold on the righteousness of God in Christ to become careless and profane. A man who would argue that in the blood of Christ his sins are all blotted out, and that, for that reason, he can safely sin according to all the desire of his flesh, would thereby reveal that he never received the grace of forgiveness and justification. He is a stranger to Christ. For whom Christ redeems He also delivers; whom He justifies He also sanctifies. Thus the apostle writes: "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness". Rom. 6:16-18.

But how can the death of one be the justification of many? Is the substitution of one man sufficient to atone for the sin of thousands and millions? Is the justice of God really satisfied by the self-sacrifice of this one man? Indeed, for so the Scriptures teach us plainly. The Son of man gave His life as a ransom

for many. And in order to understand a little of this mystery of the cross of Christ, we must remember that He Who died on Calvary is the Son of God in human nature, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, co-equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost. And this makes His death so precious that by it millions are redeemed and justified. Even in the world of creatures there is a great deal of difference in our estimation of the death of one creature and of another. No one hesitates to kill a fly; but if we accidentally kill a dog we feel quite different about it; and how much more precious in our estimation is the death of a human being! But there is an infinite difference between the greatest and most honored man and the eternal Son of God! His death is of infinite value! If Jesus is not the Son of God, if the one that died on Calvary were a mere man, His death would be powerless to redeem. But now He is God's only begotten Son, God of God in human nature, Immanuel! He it is that suffered death in our stead. No, it was not in the divine nature that the Son of God died, for the divine nature is not subject to death. But in the human nature, which He had adopted from the virgin Mary, it was, nevertheless, the person of the Son of God that tasted death. And herein is the great mystery and the unfathomable mercy of God, not in that He winks at sin and pardons the sinner without satisfaction of His justice, but in that He came Himself in the person of His only begotten Son to bear away the guilt of our sin for ever. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life! John 3:16. And the death of the Son of God is of infinite value, abundantly sufficient to atone for the sins of all His people. And this is the ministry of reconciliation that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them". II Cor. 5:19.

This, then, is the first element in the work of salvation, and it is the indispensable basis for all the rest. Jesus saves! That means that Jesus reconciled us unto God through the blood of the cross and His perfect obedience. It is an accomplished fact. The sins of all whom the Father gave unto our Lord from before the foundation of the world are for ever blotted out. Salvation is not an opportunity, a possibility, a chance, but a certainty. It is not contingent upon the will of man, or upon his works; it is not even contingent on our faith. For even though we are saved through faith, we are not saved because of our faith, or upon condition of faith, but only on the basis of His perfect sacrifice. And in that sacrifice alone believers must and do find their perfect righteousness before God, the only ground of their hope. In the cross of Christ they glory! And as by faith they appropriate the righteousness of God in Christ, they are clothed with a righteousness that far transcends the righteousness

of the first Adam before the fall. For, first of all, it is a righteousness that can never be lost, it being rooted in the perfect obedience of the Son of God in the flesh. And, secondly, it is a righteousness that far transcends the righteousness Adam before the fall ever possessed, or could ever have attained, for it makes us worthy of eternal life and glory in the heavenly tabernacle of God! For, He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us *all things*? O, indeed, Jesus saves! He is our blessed Redeemer for ever!

H. H.

The Conquest of the Trans-Jordan Region and Significance

In public mourning of Aaron, the people of Israel now for thirty days have been encamped under the shadow of Mount Hor, when the command comes to them to press onward to Canaan. It means that the desert period of Israel's national existence has ended. Moving southwards round the mountains of Edom at the head of the Elanitic Gulf of the Red Sea, they turned northwards, marching to Moab, by the way of the great eastern desert. The first part of their journey was most trying and difficult. It took them through a region that was pre-eminently "that great and terrible wilderness," of which Moses afterwards spake to the people. The spirits of the people again fell and bitter reproaches rose against God and Moses. The terrible punishment which the region itself provided for such disloyalty and rebellion—venomous serpents abounding in it spread terror and death—the remedy which was provided in the "brazen serpent," raised upon a pole, are incidents to which adequate reference has already been made. From this time the trials of wilderness life may be said to have ended.

Continuing their journey, the people came to the brook Zered, a watercourse which was dry except in the rainy season—thus a wady—and which formed the boundary line between Edom and Moab. Crossing this brook they left Edom and the desert behind them and entered on the rich uplands of Moab. Precisely thirty eight years had elapsed from the time of their first departure from Kadesh-barnea. During that time all the old generation was wasted out from among the host, the hand of the Lord having been against it to destroy it from the host until all were consumed. Of this the new generation was afterward reminded by Moses. (Deut. 2).

Ere long, the marching host reached the Arnon, "the rushing river," the first stream they had seen since leaving the Nile. At present the width of its

chasm is about three miles from crest to crest. Below, at a depth of 2000 feet, its bright waters descend down to the blue waves of the Dead Sea. So, they must have crossed far to the east, where the stream is yet inconsiderable.

While the people of Israel were still encamped on the south side of the Arnon, the Lord made it known to them that He had given into their hands Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land and that therefore they should possess the land and contend with the Amorites in battle. (Deut. 2:29). And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword and possessed all his land from Arnon to Jabok. Thereupon turning north, they smote Og, king of Bashan, and possessed the land. It is these conquests to which we now direct our attention. In treating this subject, I arrange my material under the following points. (1) the region conquered; (2) the conquest of it; (3) the significance of its conquest.

1. The land of Canaan is a strip of country approximately 140 miles in length and 40 miles in breadth. It is bordered on the west by the Mediterranean Sea and on the east by the river Jordan. This is the land that was promised to Abraham and his seed. Thus as the region with whose conquest we are now occupied lies east of the Jordan, it was not included in the original promise. But the people of Israel had to pass through this region to enter Canaan. And its kings were hostile. It was in connection with this emergency that the people learned that it was the Lord's will that they should possess themselves also of this trans-Jordanic region.

It was a district of considerable size as compared with Canaan proper. Its southern boundary line was formed by the river Arnon. From there it extended for a distance of 100 miles to Mount Herman. The breadth of its northern half—the section later occupied by the half tribe of Manassah and forming the ancient Bashan—was twice that of Canaan. Its southern half—the part apportioned to the tribes of Gad and Reuben—measured barely 25 miles in breadth. This section, hemmed in between the Arnon on the one hand and the Jabbok on the other, was known to the Israel of the Old Testament as the land of Gilead, while in the New Testament times it formed the province of Perea.

The region did not include the countries of Moab, Ammon, and Edom. The Lord had forbidden the children of Israel to meddle with these peoples, told them that He would not give them their land, not as much as a footbreadth and this because He had given these peoples the country which they occupied for a possession. Thus the children of Israel, in passing through their lands, should buy meat and drink from them for money (Deut. 2). So, against these peoples, they were forbidden to engage in acts of violence, the reason being that Moab and Ammon were descendents of Lot,

Abraham's nephew, and that Esau was Israel's brother. "Ye are to pass through the coasts of *your brethren* . . . Take ye good heed unto yourselves, meddle not with them". (Deut. 2:5).

Some of the earliest known inhabitants of this region were the Emims the Anakims and the Zam-zummins. According to Deut. 2:11, 12, the Emims were many and of tall stature. The Anakims, too, were reckoned among the giants. It is probable, therefore, that the "giant" Goliath and his family were of this race. The view that these people were of the same stock, being given different names by the different tribes who came in contact with them, is in all likelihood correct. It is also held to appear probable that they came from the Aegean like the Philistines. The Emims were dispossessed by the Moabites and the Zam-zummims by the Ammonites. But shortly after the Exodus this region was overrun by the Amorites. The Amorite chieftain Og possessed himself of Bashan (Deut. 3:8), and Sihon, "king of the Amorites", conquered much of the district occupied by Ammon—almost the whole country between the Arnon, on the south, and the Jabbok, which flows into the Jordan, on the north—and the northern part of Moab; fixing his capital in the strong fortified city of Heshbon, lying about 3000 above the level of the Mediterranean, and over 4000 above the level of the dead sea, from which it is visible. According to Gen. 10:16, the Amorites were descendent from Canaan, the son of Ham, whom Noah cursed, and were thus under the ban of God. They were a powerful people and widely spread through the promised land before the settlement of the Israelites.

In its natural aspects, this trans-Jordanic region is full of interest. As to Bashan, its northern section, the product of eruption from extinct volcanoes, spread over the adjoining plains, have given to the soil that character of fertility for which it has been in all ages remarkable—in all ages, thus also at the time of its invasion by the Israelites. The volcanic soil, we are told, yields on the average, in some places, eighty returns of wheat and a hundred of barley. The mountains themselves are richly clothed with forests of various kinds of trees, among which the evergreen oak is especially abundant. It was and still is one of the most remarkable regions on the earth's surface.

Gilead, the southern portion of this trans-Jordan region, is, as has already been suggested, a narrow strip of low-lying plain along the Jordan. It has an average elevation of 2500 feet above the Mediterranean. The eastern slopes of the Gilead range are today comparatively bare of trees; but the western are well supplied with oak, terebinth, and pine. The pastures we are told, are everywhere luxuriant, and the wooded heights and winding glens, the open glades and flat meadows of green turf, present great beauty of

vegetation.

2. The conquest of this region. Humanly speaking, this was no easy task. The Amorites, as was said, were a powerful people. The city of Heshbon, in which Sihon had fixed his capital, was a strong fortified city. Edrei (Deut. 3:1), Og's capital, was in ordinary circumstances almost unassailable. It was built in a hollow artificially scooped out of the top of a hill, isolated by deep gorges from the country round (Riehm *Edrei*). Its streets may still be seen running in all directions beneath the present town of Adraha. But still stronger was Kenath, in the district called Argob (Deut. 3:4), for it was built in the crevices of a great island of lava which had split, in cooling, into innumerable fissures, through whose labyrinth no enemy could safely penetrate. Smith's *dictionary of the Bible*. Porter's *Giant cities of Bashan*. Some are therefore of the opinion that it would have been impossible for Israel to have overcome a people so strongly entrenched, but for the presence at the time of vast swarms of hornets, a plague common in Palestine, which drove the population into open ground where they could be attacked. To give to their view an air of plausibility, they refer us to a town in Joshua 24:12, called Zoreah—a place of hornets. We are told further that there is a case on record of a Babylonian army put to flight by bees, and that the Phasaleans, a Canaanitish people, were driven permanently from their homes by wasps and hornets. But, as we shall have occasion to notice, there is no need of resorting to this hornet theory to explain the military successes of the Israelites in these regions.

But there were more fastnesses than those just mentioned. So many as sixty cities "fenced with high walls, gates and bars, beside unwall'd towns a great many," had also to be taken. (Deut. 3:4, 5). Thus the task to which the people of Israel were now commanded to address themselves was one certainly adapted to excite fear or deter from undertaking. Yet there was no ground for fear at all. For the Lord had spoken "Behold I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin to possess it," and again with a view to Og, "Fear him not: for I will deliver him, and all his people, and his land, into thine hand . . ." (Deut. 2:24; 3:2). Thus they could enter upon this venture a people—the host of the Lord—who had the victory (I have given into thine hand. . .) as a people who were more than conquerors in their God. The victory was theirs ere they engaged the enemy. So, by this word, did the Lord reassure His people.

To Sihon as to the others—Edom, Moab and Ammon—a friendly message was sent, asking a passage through his kingdom. "Let me pass through thy land": so the message ran, "I will go along thy highway, I will neither turn unto the right nor to the left. Thou

shalt sell me meat for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink: only I will pass through on my feet; as the children of Esau which dwell in Seir, and the Moabites which dwell in Ar, did unto me, *so do thou unto me*, until I pass over Jordan into the land which the Lord our God giveth us". (Nu. 21:21, 22; Deut. 2:26-28). The petition was refused. Sihon would not let the people of Israel pass by him (vs. 30). Adding insult to injury, he at the head of his people even came out against Israel to engage with him in battle. The sacred narrator ends with this reaction not in the king but in the Lord. "For the Lord thy God *h*ardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as appeareth this day." (vs. 30).

Sihon's army fled and was slaughtered at a spot called Jahaz, "A place trodden down". Among the slain were numbered the king himself and his sons. All the cities were utterly destroyed and their inhabitants—the men, the women, and the children, were put to the sword none were left to remain. Thus the whole country between Arnon and Jabbok, with Heshbon itself, at once passed into the hands of Israel. Henceforth the Arnon was the boundary of their possessions only the land south of it being left to Moab.

In petitioning Sihon for a passage through his territory, Moses held before him the good example of Edom, the friendly attitude that he had adopted toward Israel. Yet according to a previous notice the attitude of Edom had been hostile. He, too, "had refused to give Israel passage through his border and had even come out against him with much people and with a strong arm". (Nu. 20:21). This apparent discrepancy can be removed. The western border of Edom, through which Israel first sought a passage, when starting from Kadesh, could easily have been defended on account of its mountainous character and few passages. This Edom threatened to do. The eastern line of frontier, on the other hand, lay wide open and could therefore be defended only with great difficulty. Hence, prudence dictated that Edom adopt a friendly attitude toward Israel on this frontier.

In order of time, the revelation of the divine purpose that Israel possess himself also of this trans-Jordan region is first and not the petition, addressed to Sihon, that he grant Israel a passage through his kingdom. For the revelation of this purpose came to the people of Israel when they were encamped on the south side of the Arnon, while the request for this passage was not made until the Arnon had been crossed. Such is the order of events in Nu. 21. Vs. 11 reads, "And they journeyed from Obeth and pitched in the wilderness which is before Moab," thus on the south side of the Arnon. According to Deut. 2:24, it was here that they learned of God's purpose. The text reads, "Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass

over the river Arnon: behold, I have given into your hand Sihon . . ." Then they removed and "pitched on the other side of the Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coast of the Amorites." (Nu. 21:13). Thus they were now on *Sihon's* eastern line of frontier and on the north side of the Arnon. This is followed by the notice at vs. 21 that "Israel sent messengers unto Sihon, king of the Amorites".

The facts of the matter then are these: Before Sihon had opportunity to refuse, God was determined to destroy him on account of his refusal. This shows that God's purpose was not conditioned by, but was sovereignly determinative of, Sihon's actions. Such is the implication of the notice that God hardened his heart. Thus the petition or command that came to him was not expressive of God's willingness or desire that he should yield. It was but the means by which he was hardened. And it was given him that he should be without excuse.

The Lord had forbidden Israel to molest Ammon, whose country bordered that of the dispossessed Sihon on the eastern frontier. So Israel next turned north and went up the way to Bashan. The revelation of the divine purpose on the south side of the Arnon makes no mention of this district. This has led some to suppose that now Israel acted upon his own impulses. The war spirit, now fairly aroused, found fresh vent in an expedition northward, so it is said. Especially the great tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manassah, whose hearts delighted in sheep and cattle far more than in agriculture, could not resist the temptation of invading a country so famed for its pastoral wealth. But this reasoning is wrong. It was Jehovah's warfare that Israel was warring, and not his own. Thus also in extirpating the Amorites of Bashan, he acted under divine necessity. All the Amorites were under the ban of God, thus also the tribes infesting this district.

The king of Og, hearing of Israel's advance, came out against him, thus forsook his fastnesses for the open plain. This, too was of the Lord. God hardened also his heart. The narrative says nothing about horns. In this crisis, Israel is assured that he is in God's way. "Fear him not," said the Lord to Moses, "for I will deliver him into thine hand . . ." All difficulties were soon overcome, for the Lord fought for Israel. Thus also this country passed into the hands of Israel.

As Israel had done with Sihon, so he did with Og and his people and his cities. All were utterly destroyed.

3 *The purpose and significance of this conquest.* A statement of purpose is found at Deut. 2:25, "This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee".

The trembling and woe of the people even when only the mere report of Israel came, answers as the echo to the dread and fear which was connected with Israel. In the final instance it was a fear not of the people of Israel as such but of Israel's God. What God was there in heaven or in earth that could do according to His works, and according to His might. The military successes of Israel in this trans-Jordan region, the amazing speed with which these successes were achieved, formed a series of wonders of Israel's God, who fought for him, wonders the consideration which struck terror to the Amorites who occupied Canaan proper, filled them with a great dread and thus utterly disqualified them for military enterprise. They were completely demoralized by the report of God's doings. What might be known of God—His power and godhead—was manifest in them. His power was clearly seen, being understood by His wonders in that land east of the Jordan, so that the witness of the conscience of the inhabitants of Canaan now was, "As to the Jehovah of Israel, verily He is the God". Thus also as a result of these works of God, His name was now being declared in the whole of Canaan. For this purpose He had raised up Pharaoh and for this very purpose He also had raised up Sihon and Og. The sacred narrator thus also associates the wonders of God in Egypt with His doings in that region west of the Jordan. "Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord, what he did in the Red Sea (did to Pharaoh and his hosts), and in the brooks of Arnon, and at the stream of the brooks that goeth down to the dwelling of Ar, and lieth upon the border of Moab." (Nu. 21:14, 15).

Finally by these wonders he provided the new generation with copious fresh evidence that He was their God, was for them, and that thus they could enter upon the conquest of Canaan proper in the assurance that the victory was theirs.

G. M. O.

Gehuwd of Ongehuwde Staat

I Cor. 7:1, 2

Men heeft, in verband met het hier boven aangegeven onderwerp, weleens gemeend, dat de Apostel in deze verzen een tegenstelling heeft willen trekken tusschen het ongehuwd en het gehuwd zijn. En al naar gelang men den nadruk veranderde trok dan een ieder aan zijn eigen eind en heeft men of voor of tegen het huwelijk positie genomen.

Bij den eersten oogopslag schijnt er dan ook wel voldoende reden te zijn, om aan te nemen, dat men tusschen die beiden, gehuwd of ongehuwd, positie moet kiezen. Het staat er toch immers, wie niet trouwt

is er zooveel beter aan toe dan de getrouwden. De nadruk valt dan vooral op het woord 'goed', dat dan een beteekenis ontvangt van zedelijk 'beter'. Het is dan beter voor den mensch geen vrouw aan te raken. Hij staat in dat geval zoo veel meer zedelijk hooger.

Waar kwam dat eigenlijk vandaan, dat men tot deze gevolgtrekking kwam? Wel, heel eenvoudig, om wat de Apostel ons zegt in het tweede vers. "Maar, om der hoererijen wil, hebbe een iegelijk man zijne eigene vrouw, en eene iegelijke vrouw hebbe haren eigenen man". De verklaring is dan, zie, het hoogste geestelijk-zedelijk leven, komt niet voor in den gehuwden, doch in den ongehuwden staat. Doch naast deze staat is er dan ook nog het huwelijk, om voor hoererij bewaard te blijven, daarom, als een soort van voor-behoed-middel, is het huwelijk dan ook ingesteld. Hieronymus, een der bekende en groote Kerkvaders, een groote voorstander van den ongehuwden staat, las dan ook het woord 'goed' van den tekst, in den zin van 'heilig'. Het was heilig als de mensch geen vrouw aanraakte.

Aldus bezien, dan blijft er natuurlijker wijze nog altijd het groote probleem over, waarom de Heere het huwelijk als een Scheppingsordinatie heeft ingesteld? En daarop is slechts tweeërlei antwoord mogelijk. Men kan dan antwoorden, met het oog op de te komen zonde, of met het oog op en in verband met het geheel der Schepping? Is het huwelijk accidenteel, of behoort het bij de Schepping? En het antwoord op deze vraag behoeft niet ver gezocht te worden.

Adam was niet compleet, totdat de Heere Eva hem tot hulpe gaf, iets dat niet geschiedde na, doch voor den val. Daarbenevens, uit het oogpunt van het geheel van den Goddelijken Raad, is het wel duidelijk, dat het huwelijk het groote middel Gods was, om dien Raad te verwerkelijken. Het lijdt dus geen twijfel, of het huwelijk is niet een instelling om der zonde wil.

Vervolgens kan de vraag gedaan, maar werd het huwelijk dan niet een noodzakelijk kwaad, nadat de zonde in de wereld kwam? Ook hierop kan het antwoord kort en afdoende zijn. Allereerst, gelijk met alle dingen en dus met het huwelijk blijven de door God gestelde verhoudingen en instellingen dezelfde. Zonder meer is de Staat (als vrucht van de scheppings-ordinantie opkomend uit het gezin) noch heilig, noch ook zondig. De dingen in de schepping gegeven, worden niet veranderd door de zonde: spijs en drank, gave en kracht, verstand en wil, zijn inderdaad wezenlijk niet veranderd, schoon direct moet toegestemd, dat zij bewegen in en ten dienste zijn gekomen van de zonde. Zoo ook het huwelijk. In ieder mensch blijft, als regel, de begeerte naar het huwelijk, uit kracht van den drift in zijn schepping gegeven.

Ook zou de redeneering van het zedelijk betere of heilige van het ongehuwd blijven, niet passen bij den inhoud van het tweede vers. Daar zegt de Apostel "Maar, om der hoererijen wil, hebben een iegelijk man

zijne eigene vrouw, en eene iegelijke vrouw hebbe haren eigenen man", iets dat niet kan beteekenen, als het nu niet anders kan, wel trouw dan maar, maar wel ke-teekent, hoewel het huwelijk geoorloofd, ja zelfs plicht moet worden geacht, daar houde men zich aan den Schriftuurlijken regel, niet van vele vrouwen, of meer dan ééne vrouw maar aan den regel van slechts één vrouw. En dit dan als de bevestiging van den gouden regel der Schrift; Dat het huwelijk afbeelding is van Christus en Zijne Gemeente—Christus heeft ook slechts één vrouw of één Bruid.

Het is bijna overbodig, om hier te zeggen, dat het eerste vers nooit bebruikt kan worden als een verdediging voor de geboortebeperving. Ook die vraag werd weleens van Christelijke zijde gesteld, of men met het oog op maatschappelijke toestanden (het niet in staat zijn een groot gezin met eere groot te brengen) hier niet een weinig grond vond voor de bovengenoemde beperking? Mijn antwoord is, wie in die vuilheid vervalt of vervallen is, late de Schrift er maar buiten, want daardoor wordt het kwaad des te erger. Voor dezulken is er slechts één weg en die is, de weg der bekeering.

Waar we vooral op moeten letten, is het feit, dat deze verzen juist voorkomen in den brief aan de Corinthiers. Wie het vijfde hoofdstuk leest zal bemerken, hoe de Apostel tegen den wellust toornde. Het was te Corinthe een vreeselijke toestand, waarin het huwelijk zich bevond. Er werd een zonde oogluikend toegelaten, die zelfs onder de heidenen niet genoemd werd. En nu heeft men te Corinthe deze vermaningen, in verband met de bestaande zondige toestanden, niet alleen gehoord, doch we nemen aan, ook ter harte genomen. Echter, men had naar het schijnt nog problemen over, die het huwelijk aangaan. En daarmede had men de Apostel in kennis gesteld.

Daarom begint hij dit hoofdstuk met de gestelde vragen te beantwoorden. Wat betreft de dingen (die des huwelijks), waarvan gij mij geschreven hebt, stem ik toe, dat er gevallen zijn, of kunnen zijn, waarin het beter is, dat men geen vrouw aanraakt. De Apostel wil echter daarmee niet zeggen, wat de regel betreft, is het beter niet ten huwelijk te nemen, of niet te huwen, maar in het bepaalde geval, waarover ge mij hebt geschreven, is het zoo, dat het zijn profijt kan hebben om niet te huwelijken. Dit beteekent allereerst, dat Paulus dus schrijft over een uitzondering, in verband met een bepaald geval (waarover ons dan verder niets meer wordt medegedeeld), en dat daarom alreeds niet als een vastgestelden regel kan gelden. Daarom, in de tweede plaats, moten deze woorden dan ook niet dienen om in het huwelijk zelf de mogelijkheid te zien van een zich begeven op een zondig pad. Er kunnen van die gevallen zijn, waarin men geheel en al den tijd moet geven aan zaken, waardoor er voor het ten huwelijk gaan geen tijd over-

blijft, welnu, in zulke gevallen, is het geen kwaad en doet het geen kwaad als men zich van het huwelijk ontrekt.

Dat is dan natuurlijk de uitzondering een uitzondering, die de Apostel zelf maakte (zijnde ongetrouwd) en dat om des Evangelies wil. Zoo nu kan het zijn, gelijk het in des Apostels leven, zoowel als in het leven van sommige dienaren Gods, noodig bleek. Maar nog eens weer, dat zijn dan ook de uitzonderingen, dat men om des werks wil zich niet door den band des huwelijks laat verbinden.

Dan is het vervolgens niet moeilijk te zien, waarom in het tweede vers de Apostel niet langer over de uitzondering, maar over de gewone regel spreekt. Is het toch waar, dat een uitzondering altijd den regel bevestigt, dan kan het niet anders of ook die regel moet gezien in zijn volle beteekenis. Meer nog. De Apostel zet die beiden, uitzondering en regel, maar niet los naast elkander, doch hij wil doen uitkomen, dat de regel moet worden gehandhaafd en de uitzondering, nooit regel moet worden. Dat toch ligt in het tegenstellend 'maar' (de) uitgedrukt. Hoe goed en profijtelijk het ook moge zijn, dat in sommige gevallen men zich van het huwelijk onthoude, laat het toch nooit regel worden. En het is gemakkelijk te verstaan, waarom de Apostel dit juist tot de Corinthiers zegt. Daar waren te corinthe allerlei uitspattingen, waardoor op het huwelijk een vlek werd geworpen. Er waren ook verschillende verzoeken tot ontucht, vooral met het oog op den afgoddienst, die hen allen bekend was en van waaruit de Heere hen had geroepen tot Zijn dienst.

Daar waren er wellicht, die zich hadden gegeven aan den bijzonderen dienst van Gods zaak en die het huwelijk als een sta in den weg beschouwden, om zich geheel en al aan den dienst des Heeren te geven. Maar daar waren ook de anderen, de over groote meerderheid. En glijk het altijd het geval is, zoo was het ook onthouding niet. En het staat toch voor alle dingen wel vast, dat het voor hen *niet goed* was, om ongetrouwd te blijven. Maar wat dan? Is het huwelijk voor zwakelingen, die zichzelf niet beheerschen kunnen? Wordt dan door het huwelijk de deur ontsloten, die gesloten moet zijn voor men zich in den huwelijken staat bevindt?

We gevoelen wel, dat we hier een terrein betreden, waarop de vragen zich vermenigvuldigen en waarop we gevaar loopen, meer te beantwoorden dan wenschelijk is, ja, wat ons zou doen schrijven, wat niet geschreven behoort te worden. Maar laat ons slechts zeggen, wat Paulus ons hier voorhoudt in dit vers.

Allereerst dan, bedoelt hij zeer zeker niet, dat huwelijksvrijheid niet gebonden zou zijn. Er zijn groote geestelijke en zedelijke gevaren ook in het huwelijk deze zijn echter nog groter in den onge-

huwden staat. En dan is de eerste regel die de Goddelijke ordinantie gebiedt deze, dat er zij slechts één vrouw en slechts één man, waaraan men verbonden mag zijn. Let er op, het gaat hier in deze verzen niet over een uiteenzetting van het doel van de instelling van het huwelijk. Het gaat ook nog niet er over wat wel het hoogste is in het huwelijk, nog minder of het bewaard blijven voor hoererij het eenigste is, waarom het huwelijk is ingesteld.

Wie schepping en scheppingsdrift saamvoegt verstaat weliswaar iets van de noodzakelijkheid van het huwelijk, maar daarmee is slechts met den vinger *iets* aangeraakt van het veel grooter geheel van het doel van het huwelijk. Dat hoogste doel is de afschaduwing van Christus en Zijn gemeente en daarin trekken de geestelijke banden waardoor men aan elkander is verbonden oneindig veel sterker, dan de natuurlijk-vleeschelijke.

Maar daarmee is toch niet alles gezegd. Let er op, hoe ook de gevaren te Corinthe, werkelijkheid waren geworden en diezelfde gevaren ook de gemeente van Christus omringen

Tegen de zwakheid van zinnelijke drift, gaf de Heere ook voor Zijn kinderen den weg te bewandelen, door Hem verordineerd. Daarin moet de Christen zijn veiligheid zoeken. En schoon dan niet alle gevaar weg is, voor wat de verdere de gedragslijn zijn zal, wordt dat niet beslist door het zoogenaamd nuchter verstand, maar door het Woord Gods. De hoogte, of ook wel het laagste peil, des geloofs beslist in dezen.

Maar in ieder geval, door te wijzen op den Goddelijken regel van 'een ieder hebbe zijn eigen man en eigen vrouw', wordt niet in een enkel opzicht aan de eere van het huwelijk tekort gedaan.

W. V.

Corporal Punishment of the Child

By corporal punishment is meant the literal use of the rod, i.e. applying it to the body so as to produce pain. In short, it means to give the child a beating. Perhaps most of us have experienced corporal punishment at one time or another, and somehow that is something which seems to linger long in the memories.

The subject deals with corporal punishment for the child, that is, under twelve or thirteen years of age. The subject is touchy enough without having to discuss the pro and con of whippings for children who are older than twelve or thirteen.

To limit myself further I should like to propose a discussion on the subject of corporal punishment from the viewpoint of the home. We could discuss the subject, for instance, from the viewpoint of the school,

or from the viewpoint of the minister (who is tempted sometimes to give the naughty boy a flogging). But we will confine ourselves chiefly to such punishment as the home or the parents find themselves interested in it. In the meantime however the general principles for the one will in many cases cover the others also.

To our subject then.

Modernism has something to say on this matter and we should be on our guard against her views. Much of today's instruction of children or "child culture" proceeds on the theory of the Sovereignty of the Child. By nature the child, every child, is good. It needs character training and character building. It must be allowed to develop itself. It must be urged to develop itself. Outsider's hands must not seize roughly upon the little something which is developing itself. If it does wrong, I quote Prof. Rugh, "The wrong-doer must in every case be the agent of its own recovery". It is its own instructor. It is sovereign and parent nor teacher may intrude upon that sovereignty with a rod. No wonder that a generation brought up thus defies all authority and tells them that they have a right to live their own life. Result: reckless pursuit of own lusts and disregard for the supreme sovereignty of God. It is important also to notice that this treatment of the child proceeds on the basis that, "No sins or crimes are committed by children" (Jacobsen, *Modern Practices in the Elementary School*). Children evidently can make mistakes, can fail in adjusting themselves to certain given situations and can suffer of lack of insight etc. but they cannot be said to commit "sin". Hence once more corporal punishment is out of order. This same movement makes no ending of scolding at "the old Puritan attitude which held that children by nature are bad and must be transformed by punishment". Note again that the modern process of child-culture proudly sweeps aside that shameful suggestion that "children are by nature bad" or that their actions could be called "sins".

Many a parent today refuses to acknowledge that his children commit what could be called sin, at least, his own children are usually not guilty of sin. Perhaps this was Eli's great mistake. Eli certainly surpassed modern culture in realizing that his sons sinned, (I Sam. 2:25), but he lapsed into it again when he failed "to frown upon them". (I Sam. 3:13). And hence he failed to treat sin as sin, even though it happened to be in his own children. We parents should not want to be guilty of countenancing sin. But that is finally where modern culture would bring us.

From the above it is evident that the matter of corporal punishment exacts from us an account of our conception of sin as well as of what action God (not society etc, but God) demands we as parents shall take

in respect to it. But as we said, Modern Pedagogy has gone one further and it has even questioned the right to inflict corporal punishment upon the child inasmuch as the child is sovereign and may not be brow-beaten into submission by some superior force.

And we might center our discussion now around these two leading factors.

Scripture very emphatically asserts that parents have the right to inflict corporal punishment. God Himself inflicted corporal punishment upon Israel when it was a child. Witness the many chastisements He sent upon them. He chastised them in love, to be sure, but He did chastise and He often beat them very severely. In Hebrews 12 Paul asserts that God chastises His children even until this very day in order that we may become partakers of His holiness. The wicked moreover are being corporally punished every day, witness the fearful wars raging in these times and it is not for nothing that God closes each one of His fearful punishments in Ezek with these words: "And they shall know that I am the Lord". God does not wink at sin. Neither shall we.

Right here I would like to inject an interesting word-study from the Bible. I would not be tedious, but follow me just a moment. Let us take the word INSTRUCTION, a word which Solomon continually uses in his school for children. The word instruction comes from a word which signifies to bind or to fetter and hence it has in it the meaning of force, restraint and constraint. From there this word goes on to mean (by parallel), reproof (as in Prov. 6:23) then rebuke (as in 13:1) and also chastisement (3:11). Instruction according to Solomon is therefore not only lectures and words, but also reproofs, rebukes, corrections and chastisements. And in immediate connection with this Solomon asserts "withhold not correction (instruction) from the child, for if thou beatest him with rod, he shall not die". (Prov. 23:13).) The word correction here is the same word elsewhere appearing as instruction. The same in Prov. 22:15, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of the child but the rod of correction shall drive it from him". Where instruction has among its tools also the rod of correction. To cite one more example: in II Tim. 3:16 instruction is rendered by the word meaning chastisement, while that same word in Luke 23:16 means literally "whipping".

This does not mean that Scripture pleads for the use of the literal rod, but I do believe that we may deduce from this that the process of God-centered instruction includes the use of corporal punishment. Hence that gives us the right to use it.

Our children are sinners. Thus we have confessed when we had them baptized and that on good scriptural grounds. And God has called the parents to bring up these children in the NURTURE of the

Lord. (Eph. 6:4). And now nurture is once again the same word elsewhere translated instruction. The parents must bring up the children in a nurture which befits i.e., is worthy of, had been commanded by and leads unto the Lord. Hence the parents in their calling to rear their by nature sinful children unto the Lord, must use reproof, admonition, chastisement. Our children must be taught that God hates sin. They must realize that sin is sin. If the simple word of address is disregarded instruction assumes the form of reproof; if that is neglected, rebuke; if that is ineffective instruction will call in the help of the rod. If the pain inflicted by the loving hand of corporal punishment may serve to promote the child's realization of God—sin—righteousness, it is useful.

If now I have said that Scripture admits and prescribes corporal punishment, and that therefore we also recognize it as a lawful if not (at times) necessary means of instruction, let me hasten to add three qualifications.

First of all corporal punishment must be used discreetly. Parents who are always seeing sin in their children and always reaching up for the stick do little more than provoke their children to wrath. Johnie had a fearful beating of his father, his only response to his brother later was, "wait until I get old and strong enough and we'll see who gets the beatings". Johnie was right I'm afraid, his father had merely triumphed over him with brute force. Father had made the mistake of taking revenge . . . and revenge is not corporal punishment, it is wicked. Not all children need corporal punishment, with some heart-to-heart talks are much more effective. Instead of giving Betty that awful spanking she should first have found out what made Betty disobey the teacher. Disobedience was sin, indeed, but mother should be discreet, she should find out what makes Betty act as she does. Jim gave neighbors boy's John a black eye. The father retaliates and gives Jim a black eye. But, is that the best way? Well, all these questions the parents will have to answer. They must learn to know their children, the make-up, character, passions, weaknesses etc., and on the basis of that administer instruction discreetly.

Secondly, they must use it IN LOVE. Any other kind of corporal punishment is unworthy of the God-confessing parent. It may not be applied in defence of our honor merely (the child has a certain honor too it would defend) nor surely may it be applied under the stress of emotion i.e. in a fit of rage. Father comes home from work tired. Jimmy tumbles his glass of milk into father's lap and father beats him with the razor strop. Foolish father. Father was angry and that is no time to handle so delicate a thing as corporal punishment. It must be love which prompts the punishment. If we neglect the love element we

provoke our children to wrath a thing against which Paul vehemently warns us in Eph. 6:4. As parents we shall have to chastise ourselves before we chastise our children. And only when we have crucified all thoughts of revenge, retaliation, hatred, personal insult, superiority complex in us shall we be able to stand up among our children as ambassadors of God toward them and apply the nurture of God to them, even if it be the rod.

Finally corporal punishment must serve the positive purpose of teaching the child to be subject to the will of God. There is nothing gained if the parent, with a big stick in his hand, have forced Jimmy to do "dad's will". There is nothing gained if Betty learns once that ma's will runs the house. The point is not that the child has to be beaten into submission before our own wills. I admit the child must learn to reverence the parents' mandates and must learn to obey, but that is only half of the matter. Hitler has clubbed the nations into submission. Our children are not conquered territory or vanquished powers. Therefore not our own wills on the fore and force that upon them. The positive purpose of punishment, if used, must be to bring the child into contact with the will of God, and by feeling the rod, learn that going contrary to the will of God brings pain and finally death (for the way of the transgressor is hard), while obeying that will brings pleasure and eternal life. For God is righteous. And God is merciful. Let the children feel the righteousness and mercy of God whom we represent in the home.

M. C.

The Ideal of Protestant Reformed Schools

That Protestant Reformed instruction for our Protestant Reformed children by Protestant Reformed teachers, sincerely dedicated to and thoroughly equipped for that task, in Protestant Reformed Schools would be *ideal* no Protestant Reformed person, it seems to me, would care or dare to gainsay.

How could this be disputed in view of what is promised when our children are presented for baptism? The question is asked: "Whether you promise and intend to see these children, when come to the years of discretion, instructed and brought up in the aforesaid doctrine, or help or cause them to be instructed therein, to the utmost of your power?" This implies, not merely that we shall indoctrinate them in the narrower sense of the word, that we shall teach them Reformed doctrine as such, but the entire "bringing" of our children, their training and education in the home and the school as well, shall be on the basis of and in the

light of that doctrine. The latter should permeate all the education, all the training, all the discipline our children receive. In view of this solemn pledge we might well ask: are we as Protestant Reformed parents as faithful as we might be in the matter of Christian education? Are we instructing and bringing up our children, and are we causing them to be instructed "in the aforesaid doctrine", that is, "the doctrine which is contained in the Old and New Testament, and which is taught *here in this Christian Church*", and that "to the utmost of our power?"

Until now and still we support the Christian Schools as they are today. We can and may do nothing else as long as our ideal is not yet realized. I, for one, can only condemn the conduct of people, who deliberately ignore the present covenant schools and surrender their children to the Godless, Christless institutions of the world, where all the instruction is principally evil, because it does *not* proceed from faith is *not* in accord with God's perfect law, is *not* to the glory of God, but *is* founded upon the institutions of men and the human imaginations of evolutionary thinking. As matters stand today, the present Christian schools are certainly the places where our children should be receiving their education.

This does not mean however, that we support the present schools as wholeheartly and enthusiastically as we should like. We do not regard them as our ideal. How can we, I submit that even our Christian Reformed brethren do not expect us to. More or less, we Protestant Reformed people are strangers in the institutions we love. Yes, here and there a Protestant Reformed man is given a seat in the board; our children attend those schools, and I thank God they may and do; we still have considerable influence in at least one school in these United States. Nevertheless, we *do* occupy a backseat; we are standing, more or less, on the outside; we cannot demand that our doctrine permeate all the instruction that is given; we cannot say from the bottom of our hearts: these are *our schools*.

The Christian schools of today are *Christian Reformed* schools. I state this merely as a fact. We can expect nothing else. Some people in our midst take exception to this statement and deny us the right to make it. Our schools, so they argue, are not church schools and we should not call them Christian Reformed. They are the schools of the parents. That however can only mean, that, *officially*, our Christian school societies have not adopted the doctrines accepted by the synod of the Christian Reformed churches. Beyond this however, it means nothing to say that our schools are not church schools. The simple and undeniable fact is, that Christian Reformed people, men who by virtue of conviction and church affiliation are committed to the pernicious doctrine of common grace,

control them; that, as an inevitable consequence, the societies are Christian Reformed societies, the boards Christian Reformed boards, and the schools Christian Reformed schools. I do not write this bitterness of heart, nor expecting that this should be different, but merely as a matter of fact. Christian Reformed men and women teach in these schools. A few exceptions to this rule do not alter the same. As a result, the doctrine of the Christian Reformed churches, the doctrine as these teachers see it and believe it, forms the basis and contents of the instruction. Either that or nothing at all! We must certainly expect, that our conscientious Christian teachers will do all they can to instruct our children in the light of the truth of the Word of God, *the truth as they see it*. We require this of them. Whatever falls short of this only brings our schools that much closer to the schools of this world. Wherefore, whatever doctrine is taught, directly or indirectly (and we certainly want doctrine at the basis of all our instruction, do we not?), will be Christian Reformed. This also implies, and that is worse, that the doctrine as we believe and confess it, will not be taught there. Our doctrine is not desired by our Christian Reformed brethren. It is regarded as heretical, unscriptural, dangerous, Anabaptistic, and what not. Worse by far than the fact that wrong principles and doctrines are instilled in the minds of our children is the fact, that what we believe to be sound Reformed doctrine, without which real education is impossible, is rejected. Against the former we might conceivably protest. We might possibly raise our voices against things that *are* taught contrary to the Word of God. But, *how shall we protest against that which is not taught?* And that is more serious, by far!

In the light of all this, how can we Protestant Reformed people be fully satisfied with the present set-up? How can we consider it ideal, that our children, whom we pledge to bring up "in the aforesaid doctrine", are instructed and trained in this atmosphere, 5 hours each schoolday, 25 hours each schoolweek, some 1,000 hours each year? Remember, it would take our children 40 years to spend as much time in catechism, under the present set-up, as they spend in the day-school in one year. The 12 years our children spend in school are equivalent, as far as the time element is concerned, to 480 years in the catechism class. It would certainly be ideal, that those 12 years, those 12,000 hours be spent in a school of our own a school where the truth we confess and love is maintained and applied wherever possible.

What truth? In broad outline, which are the points involved, the doctrine wherein we differ with our Christian Reformed brethren?

Officially these are embodied in the "three points of 1924". They who cast us out maintain, that man, by a gracious though not regenerating operation of

the Holy Spirit in the heart, is able to do that which is good in the sight of God. He can please the Lord in things natural and social and civil, in business and politics, in art and science. We believe, that man is actually depraved in all his ways. Without regeneration his every thought and word and deed, in his business and politics, his art and science, his personal and social life proceeds from the principle of sin and is enmity against God. They teach, that this good which the natural man is still capable of doing is the fruit of God's restraining grace operative in all human hearts. Actually, man never became wholly depraved. From the moment man fell the Spirit of God checked the progress of sin in such a manner, that the human race retained remnants of the good it possessed in the state of perfection. With these remnants he still works and develops and pleases God. We are convinced, that there is no such grace operative in the hearts of wicked men; that sin along with all of human life is developing until the climax is reached in the Antichrist, who is to come. Where we see the development of sin and the approach of the Antichrist, they see good. The Christian Reformed churches contend that God is graciously inclined toward all men, also the reprobates, that he has love for all, would lead all to repentance and salvation, and blesses all. We confess, that the Lord loves His people only, that His blessing is on the elect only, and that the curse of the Lord and nothing else, dwells in the house of the wicked. Don't you see how these doctrinal differences must affect all education, primary or secondary? The connection between each one of these doctrines and "Christian" instruction is not remote, but immediate and vital. I know, the day-school is not the place to develop doctrine as such. Nevertheless, all instruction, all the prayers that are offered, all the songs that are taught and sung, are rooted in, are flavored and determined by the one or the other.

In a broader sense of the word the difference between us concerns the entire field of Reformed doctrine. Only ignorance says: we differ on only a few points; let's shove them aside and cooperate on the basis of what we have in common. It would not be too difficult to point out that the doctrines of predestination and atonement and total depravity and many others are involved. More or less we differ in our conceptions of sin, of the fall, of God's counsel and providence, especially in the presentation and practical application and emphasis of all these truths. Again, don't you realize what all this means in the matter of Christian education? No, the school does not teach these doctrines as such. But, no Christian instruction is possible without them! The basis of all education is doctrine. In the latter lies the interpretation of all things.

To what else, then, can serious consideration of all these things lead them to the conviction, that Pro-

testant Reformed schools are and must be our ideal?

The school plays a major role in the whole of the training and instruction of the covenant child. Let us never underestimate its tremendous influence. With the home and the church it forms the Triple Alliance for the education of the covenant boy and girl. How essential it is that these three agencies stand on the same doctrinal foundation and work together toward a common end! And how detrimental to the spiritual welfare of the child if there is conflict between the atmosphere and education in the school, on the one hand, and in the home and the church, on the other. If a team of horses refuse to pull together in one direction nothing can be accomplished. The same applies here. And not only does the child suffer if all the agencies for its education do not stand firmly and unequivocally on the same doctrinal foundation, but by the same token these agencies become a handicap to one another, too. By pulling together and spontaneously preceeding from the same doctrinal principles, the home and the school and the church promote the welfare of the child, not only, but also of one another. The moment there is conflict, that moment a process of deterioration sets in. From this point of view the welfare of the home and the church is bound up in that of the school. To a great extent of the future of the former depends on the latter. In any consideration of the present subject the question must certainly be faced: in how far is the very existence of our church contingent on the outcome of this issue?

This importance of the school for the welfare of the child as well as the home and the church has always been recognized by Reformed educators. Therefore I stated above, that even our Christian Reformed brethren will grant us that our ideal can be no other than the one defended in this essay. Always they have stressed the point, that Reformed doctrine, the principles of "Calvinism", must permeate all the instruction our children receive. To me that means, that our Protestant Reformed doctrine must permeate all the education our children receive. And always they have emphasized, too, how important it is, that home and school and church stand on the same doctrinal foundation and build on the same Reformed principles. With the principle we fully agree. Wholeheartedly we subscribe to what a certain C. V. H. once wrote (I quote from some literature distributed by the National Union of Christian Schools): "The Christian school is the link which unites the home with the church. If we take this link out we destroy both the home and the church, but if we maintain the link we save both: Our Reformed home and our Reformed Church."

The underlying thought is pertinent here: if we maintain the link we save both, our Protestant Reformed home and our Protestant Reformed Churches.

R. V.

Pacifism

The largest body of water up this globe of ours has been misnamed "The Pacific Ocean". It received this name from the explorer, Magellan, to describe its quiet, peaceful nature; for its surface was very calm and peaceful when for the first time he looked out over its surface. Comparing with the stormy Atlantic he and his men had crossed, the name Pacific, which means peaceful, seemed very appropriate for this body of water. However, had he remained there any length of time or sailed homeward across it, we might be calling this vast expanse of water by another name today. Only at times is it quiet and peaceful; at other times it is a raging sea, stormy and tempestuous.

There is likewise an attitude of mind, a tenet, or system of beliefs incorrectly called Pacifism. Derived from the same latin word as Pacific, it has the same underlying idea of peace. But like the Pacific Ocean, which can also become the very opposite of peaceful, Pacifism, as to its nature is not peaceful, and in its exercise will never bring about peace. This we hope to make plain in this article.

Should you turn to Webster's Dictionary for a definition of Pacifism, this is what you would find: "opposition to war, or the use of military force for any purpose; especially an attitude of mind opposing all war, emphasizing the defects of military training and the cost of war and advocating the settlement of international disputes entirely by arbitration; also the system of beliefs or opinions opposing war or the use of military force."

The aim of Pacifism, plainly, is to foster peace and bring an end to all war. This goal the Pacifist hopes to reach by opposing the use of military force and in its place settle all matters by arbitration.

To this goal Pacifism will never attain and therefore is not worthy of the name, Pacifism. It is not a doctrine of peace. It does not believe in peace. It does not foster peace. The reason for this is that the Pacifist does not understand what peace is and leaves the fact of sin and man's rebellious, depraved nature out of consideration. Were peace merely that state in which there is no exercise of military force, Pacifism might attain a temporary peace. But to a permanent real peace it cannot attain. Such a so-called, temporary peace we experienced between this last war and the present world-wide conflict when Pacifism was practised to a degree by the League of Nations, although this temporary, so-called peace cannot be attributed to Pacifism. We have had such temporary, so-called peace before Pacifism was practised. But peace is more than this state in which there is no military force being exercised. It goes much deeper.

What, then, is peace? Peace is the product of love.

Peace is that state in which the thoughts and desires of individuals or groups of individuals are similar or in harmony with each other, resulting in activity which is for one another's well being. There will be and can be no peace until all men shall think and will alike. They need not have the same thoughts but their thoughts on different things should run in one line to a common goal. As the rivers east of the Continental Divide coming from different mountain tops and lakes and flowing through different states all run into the Atlantic Ocean so must the thoughts and desires of all mankind proceed in one direction to one common goal. You see, when two rivers come together going in different directions, there is confusion until they unite and flow in one direction. Thus it is in the world today. But this proceeding of men's thoughts and desires in opposite directions must cease. They must strive for the same goal. That goal must be God's honor and glory. They must all be God-centered in their thinking and willing. When this is realized, they will seek one another's well-being, helping each other to honor and glorify Him. The labouring man and the financier may think about different things and be busy with different problems, but their thoughts will harmonize and meet in God. Then there will be no strikes. The German Scientist and the French Artist, the American Manufacturer and the Japanese Fisherman will think about different things, but their thoughts will be in harmony with each other and meet in God, as all the spokes on a wheel meet at the hub. Then you will have peace, for all will be seeking the same goal, not for their individual profit and advantage but for God's honor and glory. When this is their goal, they will enjoy helping one another that God may be honored and glorified. There will then be fellowship, communion and harmony. That is true peace.

This, of course, will not be realized in its fullest realization until the day of Christ. It cannot be attained by the Pacifist. He does not even attempt to change the mind and heart. It is attained only by the Spirit and grace of Christ. His Spirit and grace alone can renew that heart and mind by turning them and centering them in God. The Pacifist fails to take into consideration that most important matter of sin. He forgets that man who rebelled against his *God* will also rebel against his fellow man. He forgets that man who killed the Prince of Peace will also kill his fellow men, and will not live in peace with his neighbor. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" This is not my question alone. This is God's question that He presented through the Holy Writer, James. Do not overlook the last phrase which declares that our lusts *war* in our members. That war the Pacifist must first bring to an end. Unless he does,

all his arbitration is doomed to failure. As soon as one nation's patience is exhausted, it will resort once more to military force.

Another thing worth noticing is the fact the Pacifism is *opposition* to military force. This brands it as being itself by nature anything but peaceful. All opposition whether military force or mental opposition is conflict, strife, discord and not peace. The seeds of war are in the hearts and minds of the Pacifist, and if he is only interested enough in the case, his opposition will take the form of physical force. It is easy to suggest arbitration if you are not personally involved and have no personal interest in the matter. But it is contrary to depraved man's nature not to resort to physical violence when the matter really touches him. Show me a Pacifist as meek as Moses, yet he in his anger struck the rock, having the people of Israel in mind. This man Moses was a regenerated child of God. What would the unregenerated Pacifist do with a people that provoked him?

Is the believer then a pacifist? Not at all; he is, instead, a Christian. To Christ he looks for peace. Of His anointing, he partakes, as His prophet whose mind is centered in God, as His priest whose heart is centered in God, as His king whose strength is exercised in this peaceful activity of honoring and glorifying God. Surely he disapproves of war and bloodshed. Surely he strives to live in love with his neighbor and does not resort to the sword when he is wronged. But he is no Pacifist. Pacifism is a human invention that disregards man's spiritual corruption and rebellious nature and belongs to the philosophy of this world. Pacifism is antichristian in that it seeks peace apart from Christ. Christianity recognizes sin and moral depravity and seeks salvation in Christ, The Prince of Peace. Pacifism is labeled with the number six hundred and sixty six, the number of man. To the seven of rest and peace it cannot attain. Therefore the believer is no pacifist but a Christian looking to Christ, the rest giver, who will lead us to the seven, the rest that remaineth for the children of God, the rest of the eternal Sabbath day where righteousness and peace shall forever dwell.

J. A. H.

The Method of Approach in Our Mission Work

By "our mission work" we naturally mean the mission work our Protestant Reformed Churches are at present engaged in. We might in a sense properly call it *church extension* since its positive purpose is

the establishment of Protestant Reformed Churches wherever there are or come to be, groups of believers that are of one heart and mind with us and wish to confess with us the truth of God's sovereign grace as we are committed to it.

Although as Churches we look forward to the time when our mission work can be extended to include labor among the "unchurched" and heathen both at home and abroad, we believe that for the present it is our calling to limit ourselves to the work of church extension. We deem it to be our God-given calling to sound forth anew the sound Reformed faith and heritage among the brethren of the Christian Reformed and Reformed Churches, to awaken them from their slumber and to return to them the joy of the Reformed faith. For the Reformed faith is definitely on the way out about us, our glorious heritage is being exchanged for the husk of Arminianism. Therefore we are not ashamed of our work, but believe it to be highly necessary.

However, the right and validity of our present mission work is not the subject of this article. That has been treated before by others in our *Standard Bearer*. The question before us now is, What is the proper method of approach in our mission work? Just how shall we go about? How must we approach the outsiders? How must the missionary make his contact?

The Method at the Beginning of our Movement

Years ago there was little need of discussing the method of approach. As a matter of fact there was next to no discussion of this subject, nor needed there be. Various individuals and groups of individuals who felt there was something amiss, who were not satisfied with the decisions of the Christian Reformed Synod of '24', of their own accord invited our leaders to come and speak in their communities. These people had heard of the "common grace controversy", read the pro's and the con's, and could understand at once if a speaker spoke on the "Three Points" and showed their errors as departures from the Reformed faith. Not infrequently halls were rented in advance, bills paid and all expenses assumed by those that invited the speaker, people gathered in groups at someone's home to meet our leaders and personally discuss with them. People were ready to come out for lectures evening after evening, and not infrequently were organized and could be organized after a few weeks persistent labor.

At that time there were more opportunities to speak than the speakers could fill. Had we then had as many ministers as we do now, humanly speaking many more churches could have been organized. Indeed, this was not God's way, and we know that His way was and always is best. Yet, looking at it from a mere human viewpoint, there was everywhere interest and readiness to listen.

That Method Has Seen Its Day

But that spontaneous method is a thing of the past. It is not 1924 and '25 anymore. It is now 1942, some twenty years later. During this time the Christian Reformed Church has deliberately forgotten the "Three Points". Not that she no longer teaches the errors therein contained, not that she has repented of them and turned a new leaf—not at all. She still defends them if you oppose, although only when she cannot help but openly defend them. For the rest the "Three Points" are forgotten. Hence, when our leaders bring them up people hardly know what they are about. They feel that something is wrong the Church, they may lament that Arminianism is rapidly gaining ground (although it is today hardly a "lamentation" anymore). People simply are not acquainted with these points, nor very much interested in them right or wrong. Groups of individuals or even single individuals rarely of their own accord ask our Mission Committee for the labors of the missionary in their midst. Those that might be inclined to do so are inclined to refrain from it for fear of getting into trouble with their own consistories. Surely, halls are not rented and expenses promised in advance. In many instances a missionary or minister would not even be able to get an audience without first establishing some personal contacts and getting people acquainted somewhat with the claims of our churches.

There are two things that should not be forgotten in this connection. The first is that since 1924 many years have elapsed, years during which people have been fed and nurtured on ideas that depart from the Reformed faith. The drift has gradually been away from Reformed truth toward the Arminianism so rampant in our American ecclesiastical world. People have been going to sleep more and more. The knowledge of Reformed truth, of the Confessions (take for example the Canons of Dordt) is gradually becoming less and less. And, secondly, the older generation acquainted with Reformed truth has largely passed away and a new generation has arisen. This new generation has been brought up in the American atmosphere, is not acquainted with the rich heritage of Reformed truth in the Dutch works, listens to Arminianism over the radio and magazines, and hears preaching which in most instances is at best a very modified form of Reformed truth. Besides, this generation is not acquainted with the history of our Churches, nor with the "Three Points", nor in many instances even with the fact that there is a denomination that calls itself Protestant Reformed.

Naturally then, there can be no need felt for our mission work. There are no requests for labor. Neither could it be expected. *No fields await us today, we must make them.* Consequently the method of approach can-

not be the method employed at the beginning of our movement. A new situation has arisen which demands a changed method. If there is to be church extension work today, we can no longer employ the methods of 1924 and '25 and the years immediately following than the methods of battle in World War I can be used in the present War.

What Method Now?

What method must we use now?

To my mind we must not at all begin our labors in any place by concentrating attention on the "Three Points". Not that the truth involved should be neglected. Nor that the doctrine has changed. But people simply do not understand if you begin with this. It seems to us the whole truth of God's sovereign grace needs to be stressed and emphasized. In my opinion this is best attained by a *positive* setting forth in lecture and sermon and literature of the Reformed faith all along the line. People are generally simply little acquainted with Reformed truth as a whole, they speak and think Arminianly even when they claim to be Reformed. The Reformed faith is on the defensive rather than on the offensive. The fundamental truths of sin and grace, sovereign predestination must be brought back as a whole. Our labor should therefore be of a generally Reformed character, rather than specifically limited to the question of common grace.

Secondly, we must go out and look for fields. We must create them. Indeed we should look for the fields where there is interest, doctrinally and practically, for the sound Reformed faith. A Reformed sense must at least be present, and then the labors must be, not only of a public character in the form of lectures and sermons, but also of a personal private nature in the form of visits to the homes, etc. That is the method we have been using more or less quite consistently the last years. For the present it is the only possible method. People must be acquainted with the truth. Naturally, this form of labor requires more time than the old method employed at the beginning. I believe it will be impossible any place at all to attain organization in the course of a month or so. There may be exceptions to this general rule, as there are to every rule. Not that I believe that the one that labors in a field must wait till everyone thoroughly understands Reformed truth, or that it is necessary to continue labor for a long period of time, but I do believe that to organize a Protestant Reformed Church today means that one must almost build from the ground up as far as sound Reformed faith is concerned. "You don't find Protestant Reformed people; you must make them" one of the Mission Committee members once said. This is quite correct.

P. D. B.

Nieuws Van Onze Kerken

Dat de geheele wereld onder den invloed is van wereld-oorlog gebeurtenissen, en diensgevolge de nare werkelijkheid meer dan ooit te voren in de geschiedenis van ons land, waarin we ook als Christenen, maar ook vooral in het bijzonder als Protestantsche Gereformeerde kerken een naam en plaats in Gods voorzienigheid mochten ontvangen, zal een ieder die niet blind is voor de werkelijkheid wel moeten toestemmen. En dat "Gods algemeene genade" hetwelk zoo mooi klinkt in dagen van voorspoed en welvarendheid zoo dikwijls wordt bewierookt, maar in deze schrikkelijke bange dagen, waarin we ons thans bevinden, toch niet wordt gezien, is dunkt me wel duidelijk. Men moet dan ook wel een zeer proefondervindelijk groot geloof hebben om dit te gelooven, en vol te houden dit te verkondigen.

We zien en hooren het dagelijks van menschen, die hun deel hebben met de werkers der ongerechtigheid, dat er geen verootmoediging is; want 't is ook nu nog, zooals het trouwens altijd is geweest, en zooals de Schrift ons dit duidelijk leert: God is niet in hun lieder gedachten, en we redden het wel buiten Hem. En als het aanstonds weer vrede wordt, dan heeft deze ijdele mensch nog geen gerechtigheid geleerd.

Kwam er onlangs niet een zondige, hatelijke stem uit het Christelijke England, dat Duitschland moest worden uitgeplunderd en uitgemoord, en de inwoners uitgehongerd? Een bewijs van weinig naastenliefde, die men toch zeker zou vinden op grond van een algemeene genade leer, in een Christelijke natie als England, en op het terrein van de Vereenigde Natiën, wier doel het toch is om algemeene vrede te geven aan een wereld, die, zoo men denkt, daarnaar verlangen uit-ziet.

De Kerk in het midden der wereld heeft dan ook zeer zeker een dure roeping en haar klank moet zuiver zijn en van compromise moet ze zich onthouden.

Als Protestantsche Gereformeerde kerken hebben we dan ook wel toe te zien, dat de lijnen zuiver gereformeerd worden getrokken en we geen menschen behagers zijn; en ik zou er aan willen toevoegen, dat wij als kerken de eenigsten zijn die dit zonder eenige tegenspraak kunnen doen. Ons motto moet dan ook zijn meer dan ooit te voren: "Zoo zegt de Schrift!" Aan dat Woord heeft een ieder zich onvoorwaardelijk te onderwerpen, en twist en tweedracht of eigenbelang moet onder ons niet worden gevonden, want het geldt ook op kerkelijk gebied: eendracht maakt macht; en 't is ook nu nog waarheid, bidt en werkt.

Zoo denkt de Eerste Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerk er dan ook over. Alles getuigt van moed en voortvarendheid. Er zijn iedere Zondag nog vier diensten; twee in de Hollandsche taal, en twee in de taal des

lands. De Hollandsche diensten worden langzamerhand minder bezocht, hetwelk natuurlijk gemakkelijk is te begrijpen. Imigratie is er niet meer, de ouden sterven, en er wordt een geslacht gekweekt dat uitsluitend Amerikaansch spreekt. Men begint dit ook in de Hollandsche Mannenvereeniging zoo langzamerhand te gevoelen. Er moesten zich meer oudere mannen bij deze vereeniging aansluiten, indien men tenminste niet van plan is zich aan te sluiten bij de Engelsche Mannen Vereeniging. De opkomst van deze beide vereenigingen kon wel een beetje beter zijn. Een levend Christen moet geen dood vereenigingslid zijn. Ook de andere vereenigingen hebben weer hunne onderlinge bijeenkomsten, en dat deze niet 100 percent worden bezocht zal er eensdeels aan liggen, dat velen in deze abnormale tijden, waarin we ons nu bevinden, 's avonds moeten werken. Dat men er geen misbruik van make, en niet versmade deze leerzame bijeenkomsten. Ook de zangvereenigingen doen hun best om vroolijk God te prijzen.

De "Ladies' Aid" maakt zich zoo langzamerhand weer gereed voor de jaarlijksche verkoop van goederen. In het voorbijgaan zou ik er wel eventjes op willen wijzen dat deze Aid wel een mooi plan heeft beraamd om onze "soldier boys" een Christmas geschenk te zenden. De eerste vergadering werd dan ook gehouden voor dit doel, en alle vereenigingen werden in hunne vertegenwoordigers uitgenoodigd hieraan deel te nemen. Dat dit plan door oud en jong wordt toegejuicht behoeft zeker niet worden gezegd. Dit is vanzelfsprekend. Een ieder gaat dit wel terdege aan. Ook dezulken die geen jongens hebben in 's lands dienst of niet zijn gezegend met dit voorrecht. De kerk van Christus op aarde is een, en die band wordt zeker nu vooral gevoeld in deze dagen van ongekende ellende en stekende smart.

De Fuller Ave. gemeente heeft dan ook al ruim vijftig in 's lands dienst, en dit getal zal aanmerkelijk vermeerderen, ook om de redenen dat aanstonds de "boys" van 18 tot 20 jaar zullen worden opgeroepen. Het is maar goed dat er veel gemeenschappelijk gebed in de gemeente voor deze ouders en kinderen ten hemel stijgt. De ouders toch moeten geloovig kracht ontvangen om deze kinderen af te staan voor 's lands diensten, en ze moeten het weten, dat er niets bij geval geschiedt, maar ons alle dingen toekomen en worden beschikt in Gods Voorzienigheid, zoodat er geen haar van ons hoofd valt zonder de wil van onzen hemelschen Vader. En de "boys" hebben het wel bijzonder van noode dat er voor hen wordt gebeden, opdat ze staande mogen blijven in de omgeving ver van huis en niet van gevaren ontbloom. Laat ons ook niet vergeten om de "boys" eens een briefje te schrijven, opdat ze het mogen weten, dat we met hen meeleven en we hunne problemen de onze maken.

Ge hebt zeker wel gehoord dat we als kerken voor

de tweede keer een Zendeling hebben beroepen? Het lot viel dit maal op Ds. C. Hanko. Het is te hopen, dat dit beroep niet met een bedankje wordt bekroond, want als Prot. Geref. Kerken zien we natuurlijk niets liever dat ook anderen met ons wandelen langs zuivere banen, en wel ten eersten de kerken, die van deze banen zijn afgegleeden, moet worden verkondigt de Souvereiniteit Gods en 's menschen diepe verdorvenheid.

Ge zijt natuurlijk blijde met mij dat er een open deur is voor ons Zendelingswerk in Randolph, Wisconsin; en waneer ge niet blij zijt dan hapert er iets, want ieder goed Protestantsch Gereformeerde broeder of zuster verheugt zich er in dat het ons als kerken goed gaat. Nu moet Randolph niet de plaats in nemen van Waupun. Dit wordt door sommigen onder ons zoo voorgesteld. 't Is dan dezelfde gemeente en men tracht weer opnieuw te organizeeren en dan onder de naam van Randolph. Ds. Hoeksema heeft dit in het verleden duidelijk aanetoond: het zijn juist niet dezelfde menschen, en 't is niet dezelfde omgeving. Zulke praatjes voeren in de verkeerde richting en is niet tot de bevordering van ons kerkelijk leven, en moeten worden vermeden. Het is te hopen dat de beroepene leeraar voor ons Zendingswerk de vrijmoedigheid heeft om het beroep aan te nemen, en in Randolph en omstreken een vruchtbare aarde mag vinden om 't Woord des Levens te zaaien. We laten het dan ook maar in 's Heeren hand, want dit is ten allen tijde en in alle omstandigheden verre weg het beste. Als we planten en nat maken, zooals God dit van ons vraagt, zal de wasdom niet uitblijven. Ik houdt me er ook van verzekerd dat er nog menig soldaat in het Christelijke Gereformeerde leger met ons vreugde bedrijft, wanneer er aan onze geledern worden toegevoegd; want ook daar weet men: 't gaat alles om de eere Gods, en niet om kerkje te spelen of ook om andere kerken te verwoesten, zooals dat ten onrechte wel eens wordt voorgesteld.

We lazen in ons "Church News" dat Ds. Hoeksema in de naaste toekomst een redevoering zal houden over Godsdienst en de Jeugd. Voorwaar een veelbeteekend onderwerp en de jeugd moet dien avond dan ook vooral tegenwoordig zijn. Het was wel goed dat ouders hunne kinderen er eventjes bij bepaalden, want zij vooral moeten staan op een goed fundament, want in hen moet ook de kerke Gods onder ons worden voortgeplant.

Bij de rede die Ds. Hoeksema D.V. zal houden, sluit zich goed aan de rede van Ds. Petter, die denkt te spreken in de toekomst over de Antithese. Dit mag tegenwoordig wel eens telkens weer worden verhandeld en vooral de klemtoon op worden gelegd in deze water en melk eeuw van onzen huidigen dag. Om uit het beginsel der Antithese te leven op alle terrein van dit veelomvattende leven is waarlijk geen kleinigheid, en die dit juweel bezit, bezit waarlijk een parel van groote waarde. Om in deze wereld te leven en niet tot haar

te behooren is een steeds voortdurende strijd die gestreden moet worden met wapenen, die niet zijn te vinden in het wapenhuis der wereld, maar alleen in Gods Woord, dat zegt: doet dan aan de volle wapenrusting Gods. En de overwinning is zeker.

De 18de October was weer iets buitengewoons voor degenen die gewoon zijn te luisteren wat des Zondags over de Radio wordt aangeboden in zang, speech, predikaties, enz. Ook de "Protestant Reformed Hour" was weer op het programma, en de Announcer kwam ons vertellen, dat Ds. H. Hoeksema in een reeks van redevoeringen het onderwerp in de toekomst hoopt te behandelen: "Jesus Saves". Voorwaar een gewichtig veelomvattend onderwerp. En het mooie er van is dat zij die zich hebben voorgenomen om naar dezen spreker te luisteren, zich verzekerd mogen houden, dat het geen mengelmoes is van alles en nog wat, maar wel de zuivere Gereformeerde waarheid. Dit ontbreekt zooveel in Radioland, en 't is zoo hoogst noodig in deze verwaterde godsdienstige eeuw.

De spreker begon op zijn eigen manier van inleiding zijn hoorders er op te wijzen, hetwelk een ieder duizend maal met eigen oogen heeft gezien: dat "Jesus Saves", u ten aanschouwe wordt gegeven op velerlei wijze aan zij en hijwegen, en daarom wilde de spreker maar zeggen: 't is de waarheid Jezus verlost, want zijn naam is Jehova-Zaligmaker; maar hij is dat niet voor allen. Al eer Hij werdt geboren, werd het Josef aangezegd bij monde van den Engel: en gij zult Zijn naam noemen Jezus. Ook in zijn kruisiging, dood, en opstanding kwam dien naam Jezus-Zaligmaker duidelijk uit. Hij zaligt en redt zijn volk, want daarvoor is Hij gekomen. De Ds. maakte het zeer duidelijk dat Jezus alleen zalig maakt en dat er niets bij is van den mensch. Geen mogelijkheid, dat hij zelf daar iets zou kunnen toe doen om die zaligheid te verwerven. God zelf heeft het van eeuwigheid zoo bewerkt. Hij redt van ongerechtigheid, en schenkt gerechtigheid. Hij verlost van zonde en schuld en doet hen deelen in de vrijheid der heerlijkheid, der kinderen Gods. Hij verlost van zonde en schuld, en maakt Zijn volk zalig want Hij is Jezus de Heere.

Ik hoop dat de lezers het mij niet kwalijk nemen dat ik niet meer nieuws schreef van onze kerken. Het werdt me niet toegejonden alhoewel ik er vriendelijk naar heb gevraagd.

S. D. V.

The Lord Almighty is my light
 He is my Savior ever near,
 And since my strength is in His might,
 Who can distress me or affright?
 What evil shall I fear?

Report of Classis East, held October 7, 1942 At Grand Rapids, Michigan

Rev. C. Hanko called the meeting to order. After the singing of No. 174 from the Psalter, he read I Tim. 4 and led in prayer.

After the credential letters were accepted and classis was declared constituted. Rev. J. Heys was called upon to preside. He speaks a few words of welcome and then gives opportunity to those delegates who are present for the first time to sign the Articles of Subscription.

The minutes of the July session are read and accepted. The stated clerk reports that he has carried out all the required correspondence.

A brief report of the Classical Committee and of the Sermon Committee are given. Both are received for information.

An instruction from the Consistory of Holland was ruled out of order by the chair.

Five protests from members against their consistory were read and received for information. Three other protests were declared out of order, since no copy had been sent to the consistory. The reply of the consistory involved was also read and received for information.

The morning session was closed with a word of prayer by Rev. A. Petter.

The afternoon session was opened with singing of Psalter No. 325 and prayer by Rev. M. Schipper.

Classis decided to place the above mentioned protests in the hands of a committee. Classis adjourns in the meantime to give this committee time to go into these matters and to prepare their advice for the Classis.

In the evening session the report of this committee is read and the following decisions were made upon the advice of this committee.

1. That the meaning of Art. 79 D. K. O requires that the action be by agreement of both consistories.

The principle involved is that a consistory is nearly always in danger of being prejudiced concerning a case in its own body. Hence the wisdom of requiring the advice and check of a neighboring consistory.

In the present case it is evident that such advice and check was necessary.

2. That if the consistory involved does not rectify its violations of our Form of Unity, namely, the D. K. O. as advised by the classis of July, it makes it impossible for itself to come to our classes with proper credentials.

Classis also decides to remind this consistory to carry out the advice of the classis held in April.

A brother registers protest against the charges that were made against him in a document that was read at classis.

A belated protest of a brother against his consistory is read and received for information.

The Consistory of Pella, Iowa requests permission to ask for collections in the various Churches of Classis East. Classis decided to grant this request.

A sister, who protested against the Classis, was advised, that the protest should go through her consistory in as far as it deals with her case.

Classis decided that the term of office for the stated clerk and for the treasurer will be three years.

From a nomination of three D. Jonker is chosen as stated clerk.

From a nomination of four the following brethren are chosen as members of the Classical Committee: Rev. J. De Jong and Rev. J. Heys.

Rev. H. Hoeksema and Rev. G. M. Ophoff are chosen as Church Visitors. Their respective secundi are Rev. P. De Boer and Rev. R. Veldman.

Classis decided that its next meeting shall be held in Fuller Ave., on Jan. 6, 1943.

Upon his request, the stated clerk is informed as to what he must write to the various protestants.

The questions of Art. 41 of the Church Order are asked in general this time.

A motion to adjourn carries.

The minutes are read and adopted. Rev. H. Hoeksema closed with thanks unto God.

D. Jonker, S. C.