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MEDITATIE

De Geheel Eenige Dag.

En het zal te dien dage geschieden, dat er niet zal zijn het kostelijke licht, en de dikke duisternis. Maar het zal een eenige dag zijn, die den Heere bekend zal zijn; en het zal geschieden ten tijde des avonds, dat het licht zal wezen.

Zach. 14:7, 6.

Nog eens: *te dien dage!*

Het is de dag, die volgt op de wonderlijke uitkomst door den Heere voor Zijn volk bereid door het splitsen van den Olijfberg.

Alle heidenen waren tegen Jeruzalem ten strijde verzameld. Ze hadden de stad Gods ingenomen en geplunderd, en de helft der inwoners was gevangen weg gevoerd. Doch het overblijfsel was bewaard gebleven.

En de Heere was gekomen ter verlossing!

Zijne voeten hadden op den Olijfberg gestaan, en de berg was gespleten, van het oosten naar het westen, de helft was naar het noorden, de andere helft naar het zuiden geweken, zoodat er eene breede vallei ontstaan was, waardoor het overblijfsel kon vluchten, en aan de macht des vijands ontkomen. Altijd geeft de Heere uitkomst en strijdt Hij voor Zijn volk, maar in principeel zin is de Kerk aan de macht des vijands ontkomen door het bange kruis en de heerlijke opstanding in het opvaren van den Heiland van den Olijfberg. . . .

De weg uit de wereld naar den hemel is voor altijd geopend!

En door de vallei van Gods bergen vliedt de Kerk van den Pinksterdag af tot aan het einde der eeuwen met ontzetting, gelijk als men vlood ten dage der aardbeving in Uzzia's tijd.

En ze ziet uit met verlangen naar den dag der volkomene verlossing!

Dan zal de Heere, mijn God, komen!

En al de heidenen met U, o Heere!

En dan zal het een geheel eenige dag zijn.

Te dien dage!

Wonderlijke dag!

Gansch eenige dag!

Eenig is deze dag, niet omdat het slechts één dag zal zijn, maar omdat zijns gelijke er nooit geweest is, noch ooit weer wezen zal.

Van alle andere dagen verschilt deze dag, omdat het in dien dag noch licht noch donker zijn zal. Het kostelijke, helder schijnend licht van den vollen dag is er niet, maar ook is er niet de duisternis van den stikdonkeren nacht. Het is dus een dag van licht en duisternis. Het is noch dag noch nacht. Ook is er in dezen "dag" geen afwisseling van dag en nacht. En eindelijk is deze dag geheel eenig in zijn soort, omdat het ten tijde des avonds, als het anders donker wordt, juist licht zal zijn. In den avond houdt het schemerlicht van dezen wonderlijken dag op, en breekt het licht van den vollen dag door!

Wonderlijke dag!

Hij is den Heere bekend!

Niet alsof andere dagen bij den Heere niet bekend zijn, maar deze dag kent de Heere alleen. Gewone dagen kennen wij ook. We weten precies uit te rekenen, wanneer de dag begint, en wanneer hij daalt. Maar de duur, het verloop en het einde van dezen geheel eenigen dag, zijn den Heere alleen bekend.

Dag des Heeren!

Zeker niet een dag van vier en twintig uren, maar een dag van Hem, bij Wien duizend jaren zijn als een dag, en een dag als duizend jaren. Het is een bepaalde periode in de historie van Gods werk. Want God werkt een werk in de wereld. En evenals Zijn werk der schepping een periode van dagen doorliep, zoo zijn er ook voor dit andere werk Gods, het bouwen van

Zijn huis, verschillende "dagen." Vandaar, dat de Schrift spreekt van telkens een anderen dag. Soms heet die dag ook "de ure." Zoo zouden we kunnen spreken van een "dag" in het paradijs, een "dag" tot aan den zondvloed, een "dag" der schaduwen, een "dag" der zaligheid, de "welaangename tijd" der nieuwe bedeeling, die uitloopt op den "dag des Heeren" in den uiteindelijke zin des woords. En het is op zulk een "dag," dat onze tekst het oog heeft.

Een dag in Gods wonderwerk der verlossing, waarin het noch helder licht, noch stikdonkere nacht zijn zal.

Het licht schijnt nog in de duisternis, doch heeft de nacht nog niet verdreven!

En ook van licht spreekt de Schrift in meer dan éenen zin.

Daar is het gouden zonlicht, dat elken morgen de duisternis van den nacht verwint. Daar is het licht van ons oog, die "kaars des lichaams," die het geheele lichaam wil verlichten, het licht onzer waarneming, waardoor we het licht in de schepping opvangen en in ons opnemen. Daar is het "natuurlijk licht," waardoor wij ook in onze duisternis hebben "eenige kennis van God, van natuurlijke dingen, en van het onderscheid tusschen goed en kwaad." En daar is het waarachtige licht, het licht des eeuwigen levens, der ware kennis, gerechtigheid en heiligheid. Want God is een licht, en in Hem is gansch geen duisternis, en wie Hem kent en gemeenschap met Hem heeft, die wandelt in het licht. . . .

't Is het licht, dat straks in hemelschen glans en heerlijkheid eeuwiglijk zal stralen in de Stad, die aan het licht der zon of der maan geen behoefte heeft!

Want in die Stad zal de tabernakel Gods bij de menschen zijn!

En Hij zal bij hen wonen, en zij zullen Zijn volk zijn, en God Zelf zal bij hen en hun God zijn.

En God zal alle tranen van hunne oogen afwisschen; en de dood zal niet meer zijn; noch rouw, noch gekrijt, noch moeite zal meer zijn; want de eerste dingen zijn weggegaan. . . .

En de stad behoeft de zon en de maan niet, dat zij in dezelve zouden schijnen; want de heerlijkheid Gods heeft haar verlicht, en het Lam is hare kaars. . . .

En aldaar zal geen nacht zijn!

Daar is het niet meer nacht en dag, of "noch nacht noch dag", maar daar is het volle, eeuwige dag.

Het kostelijke licht in hemelschen glans! Het is de dag, waarvan Gods volk ook thans in hope zingt:

"Maar 't vrome volk, in U verheugd,
Zal huppelen van zielevreugd
Daar zij hun wensch verkrijgen;
Hun blijdschap zal dan, onbepaald,
Door 't licht, dat van Zijn aanzicht straalt,
Ten hoogsten toppunt stijgen". . . .

Maar "te dien dage" schijnt dat licht nog niet in vollen glans!

Wel gaat het in den tekst niet over het zonnelicht in natuurlijken zin, wel ziet het "kostelijke licht" op de heerlijkheid van dien eeuwigen dag in Gods tabernakel.

Maar "te dien dage" breekt dat licht nog niet ten volle door.

Het is noch dag, noch nacht!

Eerst in den avond wordt het licht!

Vreemde dag!

't Is nacht geworden!

Eens was het dag, en toen was het licht: in 't eerste paradijs!

Neen, 't was nog niet de hoogste schittering van het licht. Hemelsch licht scheen in 't eerste paradijs zeker niet. 't Was alles aardsch daar, en uit de aarde. Geen zien van aangezicht tot aangezicht kon daar geschieden. De Heere uit den hemel was daar niet. . . .

En Adam vertoonde het beeld des aardschen!

Maar 't was toch licht! Want daar stond de mensch, geformeerd naar den beelde Gods, Gods Woord hoorend, Hem kennend en liefhebbend met geheel zijn hart en wil en verstand en al zijne krachten, en wandelend in het licht des levens. Gods vriendelijk aangezicht verspreidde daar in het eerste paradijs vroolijkheid en licht. . . .

Maar 't werd nacht!

De dag van het paradijs ging ras voorbij!

De nacht der zonde spreidde zijn donkere vlerken over Adams leven, over heel die eerste schepping, en met de donkere nacht der zonde kwam de vreeze des doods. Adam keerde zich door moedwillige ongehoorzaamheid af van den levenden God en van Zijn Woord, om de leugen te omhelzen, Satans woord te volgen, zijn eigen wil te stellen tegenover den wil van Zijnen Schepper. Zijn licht verkeerde in duisternis, zijne kennis werd dwaasheid en leugen, zijne gerechtigheid veranderde in ongerechtigheid en verdoemelijkheid voor God, en inplaats van zich met alle dingen Gode toe te wijden in heiligheid des levens, zocht hij ver van God de weelde, in de lust des vleesches, en de lust der oogen, en de grootheid des levens. En de toorn Gods werd aanstonds van den hemel geopenbaard over zulke goddeloosheid en ongerechtigheid van den mensch. Het vonnis werd aan hem voltrokken: Gij zult den dood sterven!

In de sabbat der schepping was de mensch niet ingegaan.

Hij verviel in de onrust der zonde en des doods.

't Was nacht geworden!

Maar God sprak van een anderen dag! Het zal weer licht worden! De zon der gerechtigheid en des levens, die in het paradijs onderging, zal weer opgaan, maar dan in hooger glans en rijker schittering van

leven en kennis, van heerlijkheid en blijdschap om nimmermeer onder te gaan. De eeuwige dag van het Nieuwe Jeruzalem, waarvan de eerste paradijsdag slechts beeld is, zal voor altijd de duisternis van den nacht der zonde verdrijven!

Blij vooruitzicht, dat mij streelt!

Het licht van dien eeuwigen hemelschen dag, wordt aanstonds in onze duisternis ingedragen!

In de oude bedeeing werd dat licht gedragen door de belofte. De dag was nog niet aangebroken. De Zonne der gerechtigheid was nog niet opgegaan. Het daagde nog niet in het oosten. Maar de belofte Gods sprak van den komenden dag. Reeds in het paradijs, terstond na den val, werd die dag aangekondigd en dat wel door God Zelf: "Ik zal vijandschap zetten tusschen u en tusschen deze vrouw, en tusschen uw zaad en tusschen haar zaad; datzelve zal u den kop vermorselen, en gij zult het de verzenen vermorselen." En telkens en telkens werd die belofte herhaald, verkondigd door patriarchen en profeten, gereflecteerd in de schaduwen. . . .

O, sommigen zagen, heel in de verte, van de hooge bergtoppen der profetie soms den dageraad. . . .

En de geloovigen, die in den nacht wandelden, door het geloof de belofte omhelzende, zagen de heerlijkheid van dien dag in hope, en beleden, dat ze gasten en vreemdelingen op aarde waren, die begeerden naar een beter, dat is naar een hemelsch vaderland. . . .

Maar het bleef nog nacht.

Doch ziet, de belofte gaat hare vervulling in! Met de komst van Christus breekt de dag aan. De Zonne der gerechtigheid gaat in Hem op, in Zijne vleeschwording, Zijn lijden en dood, Zijne opstanding en verhooging aan de rechterhand des Vaders. God is geopenbaard in het vleesch, tabernakelt bij ons, spreekt tot ons door den Zoon. In alle onze benauwdheden wordt Hij benauwd onze ongerechtigheden op Zich nemend, en dalend met deze in de diepste diepten der hel en des doods, de schuld uitdelgend, de zonde verwinend, eeuwige gerechtigheid en leven verwervend voor al de Zijnen; en uit deze diepten des doods en der hel wordt Hij opgewekt door de groote kracht Gods, den dood verslindend tot overwinning, en wordt Hij verhoogd ver boven alle kracht en macht en naam. . . .

De Zonne der gerechtigheid is opgegaan!

De dag is aangebroken!

En wel stijgt die Zonne der gerechtigheid ver boven lucht en wolken, buiten onzen aardschen gezichtseinder, maar de stralen van dat licht des levens worden toch van den hemel uitgestraald in onze harten door den Geest van den verhoogden Christus. . . .

De nacht is voorbij gegaan. De dag is gekomen!

En toch is het nu nog niet ten volle dag. Het licht brak nog niet ten volle door. Het is niet meer stikdonker, maar het kostelijke licht van het Nieuwe Jeruzalem wordt hier nog niet gezien. We liggen hier

nog midden in den dood. Het licht schijnt nog in de duisternis, de duisternis van ons vleesch, van zonde, wereld, lijden, dood. . . .

En nog altijd spreken we de vreemde taal van Romeinen zeven!

Want het is noch dag, noch nacht; het is nacht en dag; het is de dag, die haar licht uitstraalt in den nacht, zonder dien nacht te verdrijven.

En nog altijd zien we uit naar den vollen dag!

Den eeuwigen, hemelschen dag!

En die dag komt!

Hij breekt zeker aan!

Want deze dag, de dag van de tegenwoordige bedeeing, nu de inwoners van Jeruzalem een weg ter ontkoming zoeken en vinden door de vallei van Gods bergen, gevormd door den gespleten Olijfberg,—deze dag is ook in dit opzicht geheel eenig en wonderlijk, dat het ten tijde des avonds licht zal wezen!

Wonderlijke paradox!

Want de avond is de tijd van zonsondergang, de tijd van het aanbreken van den nacht, van de duisternis. En dan wordt het licht! Dan daagt de morgen! En hij daagt zeker! Het is met deze "dag" waarin het kostelijke licht nog niet gezien wordt, niet zoo gesteld, dat hij een worsteling vertegenwoordigt tusschen licht en duisternis, eene worsteling, waarvan de uitkomst nog in het onzekere ligt. O neen! De nacht is verwonnen! De eeuwige dag is metterdaad aangebroken. Hij moet alleen nog maar volkomen geopenbaard worden, door den nacht heenbreken. . . .

En dat geschiedt in den avond!

Niet in den avond van dezen hemelschen dag, die in Christus zijne Zonne heeft, want die heeft geen avond.

Er zijn andere "avonden". Er is een avond in den gewoon natuurlijken zin: de avond van elken zonsondergang. Er is ook een avond van ons leven, wanneer onze levenszon ter kimme neigt, en de nacht des doods zijne diepe schaduwen over ons spreidt. En zoo is er een avond van heel de tegenwoordige wereld, het einde aller dingen. Want de gedaante dezer wereld gaat voorbij!

In dien avond van alle tijdelijke dingen wordt het licht!

Dan zal de Zonne der gerechtigheid nog eenmaal doorbreken, om voor eeuwig de duisternis van den nacht te verdrijven, en haar kostelijk licht te doen schitteren. . . .

Den vollen, hemelschen dag!

Kom, o Heere!

H. H.

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EDITORIALS

Schedule For 1943-1944.

At the last meeting of the editors of the Standard Bearer it was decided to continue the publication of the Standard Bearer, as far as its contents are concerned, according to the same plan as that which was followed the last two years. The editor was appointed to assign different subjects for the ensuing year to the different writers. To this one exception was made: the Rev. G.M. Ophoff was granted the right to select his own subjects.

Undersigned will continue to write the meditations, the editorials, and the dogmatic articles, the Lord willing. And the Rev. G. Vos is still busy writing on the Psalms, and hopes to continue to do so during the coming year. It is not necessary to take up space for these in the schedule that follows.

I have not assigned new subjects to the Rev. J. VandenBreggen. If the brother wishes to write, he may do so on the subjects that were assigned to him last year.

Here follow the assignments:

Oct. 1. The Theory of Soul-Sleep, R.V.; Hymn Singing In Public Worship, P.V.; The Author Of Hebrews, B.K. Current Events, J.H.

Oct. 15. The Angels And Salvation In Christ, J.D. J.; The Objective Reality Of the Temptations Of Jesus, A.C.; The Sin Against The Holy Spirit, A.P.; Voor De Dooden Gedoopt, H.V.

Nov. 1. The Prayer Before The Service, M.G.; The Hardening Of the Heart, H.D.W.; The Certainty of Faith, G.L.; The Conscience According To Scripture, P.D.B.

Nov. 15. The Location Of Paradise, M.S.; Sick Visitation, J.B.; Article 36 Of The Confessio Belgica, L.D.; The Son Of Perdition, L.V.

Dec. 1. The Author Of Ecclesiastes, C.H.; "Gamblers" In The Form For The Lord's Supper, P.V.; Was Jonah Alive In The Fish? R.V.; Kerknieuws, S.D.V.

Dec. 15. Debate: Resolved That A Local Consistory Has The Right To Act Contrary To The Church Order, I. Affirmative B. K. Negative G.M.O. (each limited to five pages). The King James' Version And The American Revised; A Comparison, J.H.; Current Events, J.D.J.

Jan. 1. Debate: Resolved That A Local Consistory Has The Right To Act Contrary To The Church Order, II. B.K. and G.M.O. (limited to five pages

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each). Calvinism vs. Puritanism, A.C.; Birth Control And The Seventh Commandment, A.P.

Jan. 15. Why An Educated Clergy? M.G.; De "Onmogelijkheid" Van Heb. 6:4, H.V.; Communal Responsibility, H.D.W.; The Native Religion Of Japan, P.D.B.

Feb. 1. The Value Of O.T. Revelation For The New Dispensation, I. G. L.; The Central Message Of Ecclesiastes, M.S.; Crucifying Christ Afresh, J.B.; Confessionalism, L.D.

Feb. 15. The Problems Of A Christian Soldier, J. B.; The Adiaphora, L.V.; The Significance Of The Book Of Proverbs, C.H.; Kerknieuws, S.D.V.

March 1. Debate: Resolved That We Should Establish Our Own Schools Wherever Possible, Affirmative R.V. Negative J.D.J. (limited to five pages each). Street Evangelism, A.C.; Barthian Eschatology, A.P.

April 1. The Half Way Covenant In New England, H.V.; The Power Of The Young Man, M.G.; Tithing And Christian Stewardship, H.D.W.; The Value Of O.T. Revelation For The New Dispensation, II, G.L.

April 15. The Coming And Influence Of Buddhism In Japan, P.D.B.; The Minister And Himself, J.B.; The Sermon And The Word Of God, M.S.; The Excommunication Of Non-Confessing Baptized Members, L.D.

May 1. Free Masonry, C.H.; De Plaats Des Be-roouws In Heb. 12:17. P.V.; The Romish Conception Of Justification, B.K.; Kerknieuws, S.D.V.

May 15. Eten En Leven In Eouwigheid, Gen. 3:22. J.H.; Revision Of Our Psalter Desirable, A.C.; Faith In Regenerated Infants, A.P. Groanings Of The Spirit, Rom. 8:26. H.V.

June 1. The Beauty Of The Young Woman. M.G.; Pragmatism. G.L.; Christianity In Japan Today. P. D.B.; Grieving The Spirit. H.D.W.

June 15. Employment Of Mothers In War Industries. J.B.; Calvin On The Sabbath. M.S. The Best Preaching Method. L.D.; Kerknieuws. S.D.V.

July 1. Preaching On The Parables, L.V.; The Sign Of Jonah The Prophet. C.H.; Did God Suffer In The Sacrifice Of His Son? R.V.; Current Events, P.V.

Aug. 1. Debate: Resolved That Discipline Of Members That Belong To Worldly Organizations Should Be Left To The Ministry Of The Word, I. Affirmative J.H.; Negative H.V. (limited to five pages each); The Rise Of American Cults About 1830, P.D.B. Geen Roof Geacht, Phil. 2:6. G.L.

Sept. 1. Debate: Resolved That Discipline Of Members That Belong To Worldly Organizations Should Be Left To The Ministry Of The Word, II. Affirmative J.H. Negative H.V.; The History Of Christian

Instruction In America, M.G.; Natural Theology. A.P.

Sept. 15. Spoken By Jeremy The Prophet, Matt. 27:9. H.D.W.; Jesuitism, L.V.; Foreknowledge And Predestination. C.H.; The Septuagint. M.S.

The following are the Rev. G.M. Ophoff's subjects.

SACRED HISTORICAL SUBJECTS

- 1) The Conquest Of Southern And Northern Palestine.
- 2) The Division Of The Land In West Palestine.
- 3) The Building Of The Altar By The Two And A Half Tribes.
- 4) Joshua's Parting With The People. His Death And That Of Eleazar.
- 5) The Conquest Of The Tribes After The Death Of Joshua.
- 6) The Nations Remaining To Serve Israel.
- 7) The New Generation. Its Religious Condition.
- 8) The First Three Judges.
- 9) Israel's Deliverance Under Deborah And Barak.
- 10) The Oppression Of The Midianites And Gideons Commission.
- 11) Jerubbaal.
- 12) Gideon In The Field.
- 13) Proud Ephraim And The Treacherous Cities.
- 14) Gideon The Judge Who Refuses To Be King.
- 15) Abimelech, His Usurped Rule And Downfall.
- 16) Tola Of Issachar And Jair The Gileadite.
- 17) Renewed Apostasy And Punishment: Awakening And Repentance.
- 18) Jephtah's Previous History And His Recall By The Elders.
- 19) Jephtah's Conflict.
- 20) Jephtah's Vow.
- 21) Samson The Nazarite Judge.
- 22) The Opening Steps Of Samson's Career.

CHURCH HISTORICAL SUBJECTS

- 1) The Fathers On Catholic Unity.
- 2) Christian Life Against The Backgrounds Of Pagan Corruption.
- 3) Asceticism In The Early Church.
- 4) The Catacombs.
- 5) The Downfall Of Heathenism And The Ascendency Of Christianity In The Roman Empire.
- 6) The Alliance Of Church And State.
- 7) Christian Apologetics And Polemics.
- 8) Monasticism.
- 9) Organization Of The Donatists And Other Schisms.
- 11) Church Discipline.

We thought it might be interesting to introduce a

few debates into our Standard Bearer this year. The subjects of these debates are, I think, actual and debatable. When these debates appear, the readers must bear in mind that the views expressed are not necessarily representing the convictions of the debaters. Each side will, of course, try to marshall all the arguments he can to prove his point, even though, according to his own conviction he is "on the wrong side of the fence."

H. H.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

PART TWO
OF MAN'S REDEMPTION

Lord's Day VIII.

Q. 24. How are these articles divided?

A. Into three parts; the first is of God the Father, and our creation; the second of God the Son and our redemption; the third of God the Holy Ghost, and our sanctification.

Q. 25. Since there is but one divine essence, why speakest thou of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

A. Because God hath so revealed himself in his word, that these three distinct persons are the one only true and eternal God.

Chapter 1.

Faith In God.

In Lord's Days eight to twenty two inclusive we are really dealing with two symbols or creeds: the Apostolic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism, and the latter appears here as an exposition of the former. And yet, these chapters of our Heidelberg offer us much more than a mere exposition of the twelve articles of faith formulated by the early church, if by mere exposition is meant nothing more than a setting forth of the truths that are plainly and directly expressed in the *Apostolicum*. All that is developed in the following chapters of the Catechism cannot possibly have been in the mind of the early church, and clearly before the consciousness of her faith, when she confessed the truth as expressed in the

twelve articles of faith. We must bear in mind that a period of several centuries intervenes between the time of the *Apostolicum* and the composition of the Heidelberg Catechism and its adoption as part of our Reformed confessions. During those intervening centuries, the truth as it is in Christ had been the object of study and contemplation, and had been developed in detail; many heresies had arisen regarding the very truths declared in the *Apostolicum*, not only in the Romish church, but also within the bosom of the churches of the Reformation, false doctrines concerning the birth of Christ and the virgin Mary, the suffering and death of the Saviour, the atonement and good works, justification, the ascension of the Lord, the Church, and the doctrine concerning the "last things." A mere exegesis of the words of the Apostolic Confession, a symbol claimed by all the different groups of Western Christendom, Romish or Protestant, would not suffice therefore, to set forth the faith of the Reformed Churches of the sixteenth century. The great truths of the *Apostolicum* had to be developed in all their implications, in the light of Scripture, and to be defined clearly over against the false doctrines that had arisen. And it is this we must expect to find in the ensuing chapters of the Heidelberg Catechism. This must not be understood as if the Catechism arbitrarily imposes its own views upon the words of the Apostolic Confession. On the contrary, it faithfully adheres to their simple meaning. But at the same time, it gives fuller and richer development to the truths expressed. Taking the twelve articles of faith, the symbol of the early church, for its basis, the Catechism builds at the superstructure of the truth that must needs be raised on such a foundation. And it was the conviction of our Reformed fathers that the positive line of the faith of the true Church in the world runs from the confessions of the early church, not over the declarations of the Council of Trent, but over the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and that, too, as its principles are most purely set forth in the Reformed symbols. And this is still the conviction of every Reformed believer worthy of the name.

In the present Lord's Day, the Catechism calls our attention to the threefold division of the *Apostolicum*, and makes it the occasion to insert a question and answer concerning the doctrine of the holy trinity. In Lord's Days nine and ten, our instructor explains the meaning of the article concerning "God the Father, and our creation." The second part of the Apostolic Confession, that which concerns "God the Son, and our redemption," is explained in Lord's Days eleven to nineteen inclusive. And the part that treats of "God the Holy Ghost, and our sanctification" is treated in Lord's Days twenty to twenty two.

The answer to question twenty four: "How are these articles divided?" seems rather simple, and might

easily give rise to misunderstanding: "Into three parts; the first is of God the Father and our creation; the second of God the Son, and our redemption; the third of God the Holy Ghost, and our sanctification." That this threefold division is actually found in the *Apostolicum* is evident. The first article speaks of God the Father, Who is almighty, and the Creator of heaven and earth. Articles two to seven set forth the truth concerning Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, His Person and work. And the last five articles are devoted to the truth concerning the Holy Ghost, and the application of salvation to us. Yet, we all feel at once that the twenty fourth answer of the Catechism needs careful explanation, if we are to avoid the error of tritheism. The statement of answer twenty four might easily be understood as meaning that the First Person of the holy trinity is our Creator, the Second our Redeptor, and the Third our Sanctifier. And such a division of the work of the three Persons of the trinity was, of course, not in the minds of the authors of our Catechism. This is evident from the "Schatboek" I, 159, 160. Ursinus here meets the following objection: "Creation is here ascribed to the Father, redemption to the Son, sanctification to the Holy Ghost. Therefore the Son and the Holy Ghost did not create heaven and earth; neither did the Father and the Holy Ghost redeem the human race; nor do the Father and the Son sanctify the believers." And he answers as follows: "We deny the consequence which is here deduced, for creation is ascribed to the Father, redemption to the Son, sanctification to the Holy Ghost, not exclusively, i.e. in such a manner that these works do not properly belong to all persons. . . . By this distinction is merely indicated the order of operation proper to the persons of the Godhead. To the Father is ascribed the work of creation, not exclusively or to Him alone, but because He is the source of the Godhead, and of all the divine works, and therefore also of creation. For all things He did, indeed, create out of Himself through the Son and the Holy Ghost. Redemption is ascribed to the Son, not exclusively or to Him alone, but because it is the Son who immediately performs the work of redemption. For the Son only is become a ransom for our sins, He alone paid the price for us at His cross, not the Father, nor the Holy Ghost. Sanctification is ascribed to the Holy Ghost, not exclusively or to Him alone, but because it is the Holy Ghost who sanctifies us immediately or through Whom our sanctification is immediately affected." And in reply to a similar objection he writes: "The divine works are indivisible, but the order and manner of operation or working proper to each of the three persons must be maintained. For all the divine persons perform the *outgoing* works of God; but the following order must be maintained: the Father does all things of himself through the Son and the Holy Ghost, the Son does

all things of the Father and through the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost does all things of the Father and the Son through himself. It follows therefore that all the persons create, redeem, and sanctify: the Father mediately through the Son and the Holy Ghost; the Son mediately through the Holy Ghost; the Holy Ghost immediately through himself, mediately through the Son, in so far as the latter is mediator."

Similarly Dr. A. Kuyper, in *E Voto*, I, p. 168, explains the answer of our Heidelberger to question twenty four as follows: "Consequently, only and exclusively in this sense must be understood what the Catechism refers to in the familiar distinctions: of God the Father and our *Creation*, of God the Son and our *Redemption*, of God the Holy Ghost and our *Sanctification*. By this the Catechism does not at all intend to express that each of these three Persons operates *in turn*: first the Father to create you, then the Son to redeem you, and finally the Holy Ghost to sanctify you; but on the contrary that He Who created you is the Triune God, and that He Who redeemed you is the Triune God, and that He Who sanctifies you is the Triune God, so that you as a creature from your first coming into existence until your eternal state of glory, never have to do with the Father separately without the Son, or with the Son without the Father, but that you always have to do with the Lord Jehovah, with the living God, with the Eternal Being, and thus with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. However, whereas these operations of God affect you as being *creative*, and *redemptive*, and *sanctifying*, the Catechism makes a distinction, and that of such a nature, that in all the operations that concern *Creation* the *Father* is the chief worker with whom the Son and the Holy Spirit cooperate; in all that concerns *Redemption* the *Son* is the chief worker with whom the Father and the Holy Spirit cooperate; and in all that concerns your personal *sanctification* the *Holy Ghost* is the chief worker and the Father and the Son cooperate."

The above quotation may serve to show how difficult it is properly to define the truth concerning the relation of the three Persons of the holy trinity, as soon as the attempt is made to proceed beyond the simple declarations of the *Apostolicum*. They agree in this that the twenty fourth answer of the Catechism may not be understood to teach that the outgoing works of God are divided, apportioned among the three Persons of the Godhead, so that the Father creates, the Son redeems, the Holy Ghost sanctifies. God triune is the author of all His works, and that in such a way that the relation of the three Persons to one another within the divine Being is maintained and revealed in the works of God *ad extra*. Yet even so, it may be regarded as questionable whether justice is done to the meaning of the Apostolic Confession. Especially might one hesitate to explain with Dr. Kuy-

per that in each of the works of God, creation, redemption, and sanctification, one of the three Persons functions as the chief actor, while the other two co-operate. This would appear to introduce a relation of subordination into the trinity in violation of the essential co-equality of the three Persons, as well as a change into their mutual relationship with respect to the outgoing works of God. Even as it would be a serious error to teach that to the Father alone belongs the work of creation, to the Son that of redemption, and to the Holy Ghost that of sanctification, so it must be regarded as fallacious to say that the Father is chief in the work of creation, the Son in that of redemption, the Holy Ghost in that of sanctification. The truth is that, while all the works of God are the works of one God, in them the First Person is always operating as Father, the Second Person as Son, the Third Person as Holy Ghost. While, therefore, the three Persons appear as essentially co-equal in all the outgoing works of God, their personal relation to one another never alters.

If we return again to the wording of the *Apostolicum*, it certainly is evident that the doctrine of the trinity is its underlying groundwork, due, no doubt, to the fact that it gradually grew out of the baptism formula, and the instruction that was based on it. Yet, it is equally evident that it does not offer an abstract confession of the truth of the trinity as such, in such a way that the first article speaks only of the first Person, articles two to seven of the second Person as such, and articles eight to twelve of the third Person in the Godhead. This should be evident at once from the first article: *Credo in DEUM PATREM omnipotentem; Creatorem coeli et terrae*. I believe in GOD FATHER almighty (Pisteuoo eis THEON PATERA panktokratora); Creator of heaven and earth. We feel at once that we could not possibly substitute here: I believe in the *First Person* of the Holy Trinity, the Father, almighty, creator of heaven and earth. This is impossible because of the close connection between GOD and FATHER (written in all capital letters both in the Greek and Latin versions, and in the former without the definite article), but also because the attribute of omnipotence is not peculiar to the first Person, but is an essential property of the Godhead, while, besides, the work of creation must be ascribed to all the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. Nor could we begin the second part of the *Apostolicum*, treating of the Son, by substituting: "And in the *Second Person* of the Godhead, the only begotten Son." For the subject of this second part, articles two to seven, is not the eternal Word as he subsists in the Godhead, but JESUS CHRIST. And it is these two names that are emphasized in the original versions both Greek and Latin, by being all capitalized. To be sure, it is affirmed of this JESUS CHRIST that He is the only (*unicum*); or only be-

gotten (monogenee) Son of the FATHER GOD, yet the entire section speaks of this Son of God as He revealed Himself in human nature and tabernacled among us, suffered and died and was buried, rose the third day, and was exalted at the right hand of God. And although it is not so directly evident that the last part of the Apostolic Confession does not treat of the Holy Ghost merely as the *Third Person* in the trinity, but as the Spirit of Christ Who realizes the salvation acquired by the Mediator, yet the articles that follow article eight are limited wholly to the realization of the work of Christ: the church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection, and eternal life. Notice, too that the words "in GOD" occur only in the first article: they are not repeated in articles two and eight.

For all these reasons, it would seem quite in harmony with the original meaning the early church attached to the *Apostolicum* to say that it speaks of the triune God, not in the abstract, but as the God of our salvation and in relation to the believing church. The first article does not refer merely to the ontological fatherhood of the First Person in relation to the Second, but also to the Fatherhood of the one true and living God in relation to: 1. Jesus Christ, the Mediator, our Lord. (According to Scripture, He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ). 2. Creation, called forth by His omnipotent will. 3. Believers, for Christ's sake. The second part of the Apostolic Confession, does not simply speak of God the Son, in His relation to the First Person of the trinity, but of Jesus Christ, the Incarnated Word. And the third part speaks of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ, realizing the salvation accomplished for us unto all the elect. There is, according to this conception, a certain relation of subordination of the entire contents of the Confession to the First article, and particularly to the words: I believe in GOD. And we would paraphrase its meaning briefly as follows: I believe in GOD: Who revealed Himself as FATHER, and as omnipotent, in the work of creation; Who revealed Himself as REDEEMER in JESUS CHRIST, His only Son, our Lord; and Who revealed Himself as SANCTIFIER in the HOLY GHOST, as the Spirit of Christ.

Credo in Deum! The Church believes in God! It is the Church, and the individual believer that is a member of that Church, that is here speaking, and that is the only possible, the only conceivable subject of this *Credo*. The believer in Christ alone is able to say: "I believe in God," and know what he is saying. For by faith he knows the only, true and living God, Who is GOD, as He revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, the revelation that is contained in the Holy Scriptures,

and in the light of which he hears and interprets the speech of God in all His works: and knowing this only true God, he trusts in Him as the God of His salvation. In his Römerbrief, p. 18, Barth exclaims: "Gott! Wir wissen nicht, was wir damit sagen. Wer glaubt, der weiss, dass wir es nicht wissen." (God! We know not what we express by this. He that believes knows that we do not know this). But this is certainly not in accord with the faith of the Church expressed in this: *Credo in DEUM PATREM!* The believer does not mean to say: "I believe in some Unknowable One, and I know not what I say when I say God." On the contrary, in the words *Credo in Deum*, he takes the stand that God is known, because He has revealed Himself.

In this confession, "I believe in God," the Church and the individual believer declare that God is GOD. He is the transcendent One, Who dwelleth in the light no man can approach unto. He is Holy One of Israel, the Incomparable, that cannot be likened to any creature. He cannot be classified or defined. Human logic can never reach Him. In this sense, all the so-called "proofs" for the existence of God must be considered failures. No syllogism can reach out beyond its own premises, and no human premise can postulate God who is GOD. Whatever man may say about God, mere man, of himself, is sure to be a lie. Always he will make a god like unto himself, and that which he calls God is only an idol. For God is the Infinite, He transcends the finite; He is the Eternal, He transcends time; He is the Invisible, He transcends the whole world of our experience; He is the Immutable, He transcends all the flux of existence; He is not the First Cause, nor the Cause of causes, as philosophy has called its God, but He is simple Being: He transcends all causes. He is GOD.

But by this confession, *Credo in Deum*, the Church and the believer also express that He is the immanent. He is not far from any of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being. Were He merely the transcendent One, it would forever be impossible to say "I believe in God," or, at least, if we did say it, we would have to add with Barth: "Gott! Wir wissen nicht, was wir damit sagen." He would be the Unknowable of Herbert Spencer, the One Whom we must needs seek but can never find. Then we would not even be able to say, "that there is one only simple and spiritual Being, which we call God; and that he is eternal, incomprehensible, invisible, immutable, infinite, almighty, perfectly wise, just, good, and the overflowing of all good." (Conf. Belg. Art. 1). In that case all that we would say about the transcendence of God would be a mere negation. But although by its *Credo in Deum* the Church confesses that her God is not the proud conception of *Pantheism*, but that He is infinitely transcendent above all that is called creature, she does not thereby pos-

tulate an infinite chasm between God and us, so that, after the fashion of Deism, the transcendent God remains for ever outside of the world. Nor is it thus that this *Deus absconditus* occasionally speaks to us, in the "moment" when the vertical line of His Word bisects the horizontal line of our existence, and that the Church now speaks of God in the memory of that Word of God. On the contrary, *Credo in Deum*, presupposes that the transcendent One is also immanent in all things, and through all the works of His hands He speaks concerning Himself constantly, while He speaks of Himself as the God of our salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the Holy Gospel, and through the Spirit of Christ He dwells in the Church and establishes His everlasting covenant with us.

And thus it is only the believer that is able to say: I believe in God. Philosophy cannot find Him. "Natural Theology," in the sense that the natural man, either from "nature" or from himself, can present the knowledge of the true God, who is GOD, does not exist. This must be attributed, however, not to the fact that God leaves Himself without witness, even apart from the revelation of the Holy Gospel. It is certainly true that even now "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Ps. 19:1, 2. And "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Rom. 1:20. Nor dare it be said that this speech of God in no sense of the word penetrates the consciousness of the natural man. For by his "natural light" he retains "some knowledge of God." And there is, no doubt, a general testimony of the Spirit, corresponding to this speech of God in the works of His hands, and writing indelibly upon every conscience that He is, and that He is God! For "that which is known of God (*to gnooston tou Theou*) is manifest in them, for God manifested it unto them (*ho Theos gar autois ephaneroosen*). Rom. 1:19. Agnosticism and atheism are not the result of a certain natural fallacy of the human mind. On the contrary, they are the results of sin. The trouble is not "natural," but spiritual, ethical. "The fool saith in his heart, There is no God." Ps. 14:1. And the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men become revealed in this, that they "hold the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. 1:18. Man contradicts the Word of God. He holds it under in unrighteousness. He prefers to make his own God. And making his own God in the foolishness of his vain imagination and darkened heart, he makes him altogether like unto himself, or even unto birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Rom. 1:23. Hence, it is only in the Church, the sphere of the indwelling Spirit of Christ, that the Word of God concerning Himself is heard and re-

ceived by faith, and that the confession is possible:
Credo in Deum!
H. H.

The Beginning Of Papacy

According to the Reformed conception, which is the only scriptural one, the deacons, elders, and ministers of the gospel, are, as office-bearers, of equal rank; and the presbytery or college of elders (consistory) is under Christ the only and highest judicial (not merely ethical) power in the church, which is the local congregation. According to Rome on the other hand, *the church* is the sum and total of local congregations; and in this community the bishop of Rome—the pope—is, under God the supreme judicial power and the culminating point; and to his person all the other dignitaries and powers in the church—thus also those dignitaries that correspond to the deacons, presbyters or elders, and ministers of the Word in the Protestant churches—are subject. In the person of the pope these offices are united and are one. He is the supreme deacon in the church; the supreme presbyter, elder, bishop; the supreme and infallible minister of the world, pastor and teacher, father or pope. In the church on earth, he is in the place of Christ—such is the conception—and as Christ he mediates between God and man. This, in brief, is papacy or popism. This essay represents an attempt to discover its beginning.

In the apostolic churches and at the close of the apostolic age, there were, according to 1. Tim. 5:17, "teaching elders" or ministers proper, and "ruling elders." "This distinction," says Schaff, "is a convenient arrangement of Reformed churches, that can hardly claim apostolic sanction, since the one passage on which it rests only speaks of two functions in the same office." But the fact is that the apostle actually does distinguish between "the elders that rule well," and those who, in addition, "labor in the word and in teaching" (1. Tim. 5:17), so that the distinction can claim certainly apostolic sanction. If words have meaning then what this text asserts is that there were two kinds of elders in the church. That the two offices are essentially one we well understand.

In the apostolic church the "ruling elder" and the "teaching elder" or minister of the word, were of equal rank. The latter, as compared with the former, was not a higher judicial power. This can be proven. The two names "presbyter (elder)" and "bishop" are applied to both. The same officers of the church of Ephesus are alternately called presbyters and bishops. Paul sends greetings to the "bishops" and "deacons"

of Philippi, but fails to mention the presbyters because they were included in the first term. (Phil. 1:1). All the elders appear as a college in one and the same congregation. This interchange of names continued to the close of the first century. Thus, of the form of government of which the papacy is representative, there are really no traces in apostolic times. But when the church emerges from the impenetrable cloud which covers the close of the 1st and the beginning of the 2nd century, we find every Christian community governed by a chief functionary, uniformly termed its "bishop" with two inferior orders of ministers under them known as "presbyters" and "deacons"; and the title which originally was common to all the elders was now appropriated only to the chief functionary among them. He alone, in distinction from his colleagues in the service was now bearing the title of "Bishop." He may have been a common elder in the church or the minister of the word, the pastor of the flock. Certainly he was a man of superior ability and well endowed with the spiritual gifts and on this account chosen to be the head of the congregation and to bear the title of "bishop."

At first the power of the bishop over his colleagues was purely ethical. When at length it became judicial as to its character, the title "bishop," signified a new and superior office distinct from that of the presbyters (including the pastors and teachers.)

The statement was just made that there are no traces of such an office in apostolic times. Those who challenge this statement make the following points:

1) The position of James. He stood at the head of the church at Jerusalem.

2) The assistants and delegates of the apostles, like Timothy, Titus, Silas, Luke and Mark, had supervision of several churches and congregational offices.

But this proves nothing. What must be shown is that James and these assistants were *judicial* powers over the presbytery. Of this there is not a shred of evidence. As to the apostles, their functions strictly so-called is seen from the statement that Christians are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets and upon Christ as the chief corner-stone. Thus the function of the apostles was to lay, through their infallible teachings, the foundation of the church universal. With the death of the last apostle, circa 100, these functions ceased. The relation of the apostles, therefore, to the primitive churches was altogether unique. When they act or give official advice apart from their apostolic office, which they did in certain cases, they do so as elders chosen to act along with other elders who do not possess the apostolic gift. They did not join themselves as a superior judicial power to the presbytery (consistory) of the local congregation in order to complete its government. This government was completely independent of the apostolic office. It was useless therefore to appeal to this office

in support of the episcopacy (government of the church by a college of office-bearers of which the bishops are higher in rank than the presbyters or elders.) Not once do we read of an apostle deposing an elder or of his usurping the place of the presbytery by excommunicating out of the church a recalcitrant member against whom the presbytery refused to take action.

It is said by the defenders of the episcopacy that the episcopal office (the office of bishop) was the means of the confederation of the church, whether in several provinces or throughout the world. Fact is that the episopal office was indeed the means of confederation of the churches; but the means *should* have been the presbytery. What is now in the roman hierarchy the episcopate office, has no right of existence.

The episcopate reached its complete form only by degrees. In the first period it was a congregational office only. But at length the territory over which the church had spread itself was divided into districts or clerical dioceses; and in the chief city of each district a bishop was established, whence the city was called the see(from the latin sedes, meaning seat) of the bishop. In course of time the districts or dioceses assigned to the first bishops became too populous. whereupon they were subdivided, and a second bishop selected; and so bishops and diocese were multiplied according to the wants of the churches. Meanwhile the bishops of the new sees had grouped themselves around the bishops of the ancient sees.

So did the bishops fall into different ranks according to the ecclesiastical and political importance of their several seats of authority. On the lowest level stood the bishops of the country churches. The next highest rank was occupied by the city bishops. Among the city bishops towered the bishops of the chief cities of civil provinces of the Roman empire. They were called in the East *metropolitans*, in the West *archbishops*. They had jurisdiction over the other bishops of the province; ordained them; called the provincial synods and presided in such synods. Upon them devolved the care of the whole province. Above the metropolitans stood the five Patriarchs. They were the bishops of the four great capitals of the empire, Rome, Alexander, Antioch, and Constantinople, to which was added the bishop of Jerusalem. They had jurisdiction over one or more dioceses; ordained the metropolitan bishops, rendered the final decision in church controversies; presided in the ecumenial councils; published the degrees of the council; and thus united in themselves the supreme legislative and executive powers of the church.

This is the episcopate in its completed form—a form which it reached by the fourth century. What had contributed to its development was the commendations it had received from the church fathers.

Ignatius, the second bishop of Antioch, continually exhorted to obey the bishop. His epistles contain passages such as these: "If any be better known and more esteemed than the bishop, he is corrupt. It is becoming, therefore, to men and women who marry, that they marry by the counsel of the bishop. Look to the bishop that God may look upon you. It becomes you to be in harmony with the mind of the bishop, as also ye do. For your most estimable presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted to the bishop as the strings are to the harp. It is evident that we should look upon the bishop, as we do upon the Lord himself. Let all of you follow the bishop, as Jesus Christ the Father. Wherever the bishop is found, there let the people be; as wherever Christ is, there is the Catholic church. He that honors the bishop shall be honored by God; he that does anything without the knowledge of the bishop, serves the devil. I exhort you that ye study and do all things with divine accord: the bishop presiding in the place of God, and persbyters in the place of the college of apostles, and the deacons being entrusted with the ministry."

Peculiar to the view here encountered is that in it the bishop appears as the superior of the presbyters. Especially the last statement quoted is revealing. "The bishops presiding in the place of God and the presbyters in the place of the college of apostles." Yet, in this Ignatian view, the bishop still appears as the head of the congregation and not as the representative of the whole church. In a word, the Ignatian episcopacy is congregational and not diocesan.

It was Iranaeus who was the first to represent the institution as a diocesan office and as the continuation of the apostolate. Especially the bishops of those churches thought to have been founded by the apostles have worth for him. He exalts them as the custodians of the doctrine of the apostle. "If you wish," he argues, "to ascertain the doctrine of the apostles, apply to the church of the apostles."

The fundamental idea of papacy is this: Christ gave Peter jurisdiction over the other apostles, and appointed him to the task of founding His church, against which the gates of hell will not prevail. These privileges were transferrable and were actually transferred by Peter upon the bishop of Rome and upon none other. In consequence thereof, the bishops of Rome, as the successors of Peter, have always enjoyed and exercised, and always should, a universal jurisdiction over the whole Christian church, laity and clergy (including the bishops) alike. Thus, the supreme juridical power in the church on earth is the bishop of Rome. The first to clearly advocate this idea was the church father Cyprian.

Such were also the claims of the papacy. How and why, through the centuries, these claims were realized (properly they were never wholly realized) is a long story—a story too long to tell here.

Speaking now of the beginning or the seed of the papacy, this seed was the congregational bishop. The further development of this seed was the diocesan bishop or the episcopate. The development of this institution was the development of papacy. The latter is the completion of the former. G. M. O.

The Crossing of the Jordan

The two spies have returned and brought in their report. In the light of their experience they felt assured that the Lord had given into the hands of their people all the land. Immediately Joshua sends the officers of the people through the host to charge the people to prepare them victuals, as within three days they were to pass over the Jordan to go in to possess the land.

The next day Joshua and the people rose up early in the morning, loaded up, on the backs of the beasts of burden. Removing from Shittim they came to the Jordan. Here they lodged for three days, some two thousand cubits from the bank of the river. Joshua now made arrangements for the passage of the Jordan. The priests were commanded to take up the ark of the covenant and passover before the people. Having arrived at the brink of the water, they were to stand still.

As to the people, they were commanded to sanctify themselves, to turn their heart to God, in faith and trust in His promise, and in willing obedience to His commands, that they might rightly take to heart the wonder of grace which the Lord would the next day perform among them. They were told to remove from their place and to follow the ark of the covenant when they would see it carried forward by the Levites. But they might not come near the ark—there should be a space between them and it, about two thousand cubits—that they might know the way by which they had to go: for they had not passed this way heretofore. The sacredness of the ark is here not directly the reason but yet may come in as a secondary consideration, according to Num. IV:15, the ark might not be touched by anyone, not even by the Levites appointed to bear it. Uzziah died when he did this (II Sam. VI:7). Had the masses of the people crowded around the ark, those that were behind could not have seen it.

People and priests having been told just what to do the march began. When the feet of the priests that bore the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, the waters above the crossing stood still, so that no more flowed by. The waters below ran away to-

ward the Dead Sea. The waters were "cut off" above where the priests stood, in full view of the people and thus stood as a precipice immediately above the place of crossing. According to another view the waters were "cut off" very far from the place of crossing, by the city of Adam, so that all the multitude saw was a bare riverbed. The former of these two views is certainly the one to be adopted. The text reads: "The waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon a heap at or by the city Adam." This must be taken to mean that before the crossing was finished, the current ceased as very far off even to Adam.

When the priests that bore the ark were half way across they remained standing until all the people were passed over. So did the priests with the ark form the dam, so to speak, by which the rushing waters were restrained and piled up in a heap.

Joshua set up two sacred memorials, one in the midst of the river and one on the Western shore in Gilgal. Each was formed of twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel. The stones were carried to their resting place by twelve men selected from the twelve tribes.

When the generations to come should ask what the stones meant, the fathers were to reply: "Israel came over this Jordan on dry land, for the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan from before us, until we were gone over: that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever." (4:21-24).

But the miracle with which we now deal was performed directly for the benefit of the present generation. Thereby they should know that the living God was among them, and that He would without fail, drive out from before them the enemy. (3:10). The living God—the God who is "the conscious, independent, sovereign and free Creator and Ruler of all things, of whom, and in whom and for whom all things are." The Lord of the whole earth; and this because He is the Living God. Life belongs to His very essence. Living is He in the same that He is the foundation of His own being and the fountain of His own existence. And it is the Jehovah of the Hebrews, thus our Saviour, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, also is the Living God. For He prepared for His people a way through the Jordan. The waters did not overflow them. They were not destroyed. This was His work. For the priests with the ark remained standing in the midst of the river, until all the people had passed over. Now the ark was the symbol of the presence of God among His chosen people. On the cover of the ark God sat enthroned; and from this place He spake with Moses. Further, here was the place of true atonement for the people, where the blood of atonement was sprinkled on the cover of the

ark, once in the year, on the great day of atonement, by the highpriest. To this Paul refers when he calls Christ the true mercy-seat, whom God set forth before all the world, as a manifestation of His righteousness, for those who through faith in the efficacy of Christ's reconciling death, approach the New Testament place of atonement (Rom. 3:25).

Thus, Jehovah's restraining the waters of the river was a work of mercy that was done on the grounds of an atoning sacrifice by blood.

The miracle had significance for Joshua personally. It indicated that the Lord would be with him as He had been with Moses (3:7).

The passage of the people through Jordan took place on the tenth day of the first month (ch. IV:19), thus it is the same month as formerly the departure from Egypt. Both were immediately before the Passover. In the valley of the Jordan the harvest had already begun. At this season the water of the river stood high. The sacred narrator makes mention of this (ch. 4:15). This was so much more proof of the help of the "living God."

The event of the crossing of the Jordan has typical significance. The setting of the sun of righteousness in Paradise was the commencement of a terrible night, the night of sin and of the revelation of God's wrath from heaven in a river of judgments. The way to Canaan looks through this flood—the Jordan of the sufferings and tribulations of this present time. Another way there is not, and the tribulations of God's people—those which they have in common with all mankind—are greatly augmented by the ill-treatment afforded them by the world.

But let us not fear. The Lord has redeemed us by name. We are the Lord's. The waters will not overflow us and we be destroyed. We will safely reach Canaan's shores (Isa. 43:1, 2). For Christ was raised unto our justification. He is at God's right hand. To Him has been given all power in heaven and on earth. He stands in the midst of the Jordan on behalf of His people. He rolls back the rushing waters of God's wrath from them but only in the sense of course, that the judgments of God, the sufferings of this present time do not destroy their faith and thus not in the sense that they are spared of this suffering.

G. M. O.

NOTICE

Classical Committee of Classis East makes the following Classical appointments for the Protestant Reformed Church of Randolph, Wisconsin:

Sept. 5, Rev. L. Vermeer; Sept. 12, Rev. A. Petter; Sept. 19, Rev. B. Kok; Sept. 26, Rev. J. Heys; Oct. 3, Rev. P. De Boer; Oct. 10, Rev. R. Veldman.

Als Van Eenigen Geweldigen Gedreven Wind

(Psalm 68; Tweede Deel)

Toen we de vorige maal iets schreven over dezen psalm hebben we gezien, dat zijn hoofdthema uitgedrukt is in de eerste vier verzen. God zal opstaan en Zijn vijanden vermorzelen; en: De rechtvaardigen zullen van vreugde opspringen voor Gods aangezicht.

En in de verdere verzen tot en met vers vijftien beschrijft de zanger de groote werken Gods in het verlossen van Zijn volk, dat vergeleken wordt bij de zwakke weduwe en de armzalige weezen. Zóó is Israel door God verlost. Ook zal zij nog verder verlost worden. De groote verlossing wacht op den oordeelsdag.

In de verzen 16 en 17 leest ge een tegenstelling tusschen den berg Basan en de berg Sion. De eerste was gelegen in het Noorden; de andere was de berg waar Jeruzalem op gebouwd was. De eerste mocht zich verheugen in hoogte en zijne dalen in groote vruchtbaarheid; doch de laatste was door den Heere begeerd om aldaar te wonen. Op Sion kwam de heerlijkheid Gods: daar was het koningshuis en de tempel; daar woonde de Heere tusschen de cherubim; daar werd het bloedig offer geduriglijk geplengd. Doch de eerste wordt hier voorgesteld als vertegenwoordiger van alle wijandige machten die jaloersch waren op Sion. Doch dat was goddeloos. Sion had zichzelf niet verkoren. O neen. "God zelf heeft dezen berg begeerd ter woning, om, aldaar geërd, Zijn heerlijkheid te toonen. En ofschoon de trotsche bergruggen van Basan zich verheffen—De Heer die Sion verkozen heeft, die trouwe houdt en eeuwig leeft, zal hier ook eeuwig wonen!

Dan volgt een opsomming van de groote daden des Heeren die Hij aan Israel gedaan heeft, of nog doen zal.

Staande in het licht Gods bezingt de profeet eerst de heirscharen des hemels. Dat zit vast aan hetgeen hij gezegd had van de woning Gods in Sion. We merken reeds op, dat Hij woonde in Sion tusschen de cherubim, tusschen de engelen die op het verzoendeksel der arke Gods afgebeeld waren. Die twee engelen vertegenwoordigden de heirscharen des hemels. En die heirscharen zijn "verdubbeld in getale!"

Neen, we kunnen de engelen niet zien. Er zijn slechts weinige onzer broederen die de heirmachten Gods gezien hebben. Daaronder zijn Henoeh, Elisa en zijn knecht, Jesaja, de herders in Bethlehem's velden en Johannes. Doch verreweg de meesten van ons hebben nooit de engelen Gods gezien. Welnu, hier hebt ge een beschrijving van Gods legers: Gods wagens zijn tweemaal tienduizend, de duizenden verdubbeld. De Heere is onder hen, een Sinaï in heiligheid.

Wanneer we dit lezen komen we onder een machtigen indruk. Stelt het U voor: duizenden en tienduiz-

zenden van helden zooals de aarde er nooit een kende. Simson mag zijn duizenden verslaan en David zijn tienduizenden. Doch één engel van dit Goddelijke leger versloeg in één nacht 185000 strijdbare helden. Over wat machten en krachten beschikken die helden des hemeis? Hier op aarde worden soldaten en matrozen vaak vergeleken bij het ruwste en meest goddelooze. Doch bij hen is een Sinaï van heiligheid. God is onder hen. Hun kracht is Godes kracht.

En die machtige legerschare is ons geschetst als een achtergrond voor de groote daden Gods. In dat verbond wordt er nu gesproken van het opvaren des Allerhoogsten. "Gij voert ten hemel op vol eer!" Doet het U niet denken aan een andere psalm, waar ons geschetst wordt hoe de Heere Jezus Christus opgevaren is in de hoogte, terwijl de legerscharen des hemels Hem begeleidden? En toen Hij bij de poorte des Hemels aanlandde, riepen zij het elkaar toe: Wie is toch deze Koning der eere? En het antwoord was immers: De Heere der *heirscharen*, die is de Koning der eere!

Dat opvaren Gods is de grootste daad geweest die God ooit deed. Die daad is het fundament van het eeuwige Koninkrijk Gods.

"Gij zijt opgevaren in de hoogte!"

Neen, dat kunnen we zomaar niet toepassen op God als God. God vaart nooit op in de hoogte, want Hij is overal, ten allen tijde. Daar kan geen sprake zijn van hooger gaan van God of van neerdalen van God, Hij is overalteenwoordig en dat onveranderlijk.

Stond er daarom niet meer, dan zouden we ons eenvoudig buigen en zeggen: we begrijpen er niets van. Doch er staat meer. En uit hetgeen dat volgt kunnen we leeren, wat de Goddelijke bedoeling is van den aanvang van vers 19. Er staat verder: "Gij hebt de gevangenis gevankelijk gevoerd; Gij hebt gaven genomen om uit te deelen onder de menschen, ja, ook de wederhoorigen om bij U te wonen, o Heere God!"

Nu zien we het. De Heilige Geest wijst ons hier naar al het werk, dat God gedaan heeft in Jezus.

God is opgevaren in de hoogte! Dat is Jezus Christus, God uit God en toch ook waarachtig mensch. Neen, we kunnen hier niet begrijpen. Wat is er dat wij door en door kunnen begrijpen. Doch wij kunnen er iets van zien en bewonderen. Jezus Christus is God in onze natuur die Zijn arme Israel bij de tichelseenen weghaalt. Hij was eerst nedergedaald in de gevangenis van Zijn volk en door Goddelijke kracht had Hij die gevangenis gevankelijk weggevoerd. Die gevangenis is de gevangenis der zonde en des doods, der verdoemnis en der eeuwige Godsverlating. Doch Hij kon van die gevangenis niet gehouden worden. En waarom niet? Omdat Hij de openbaring was van Goddelijke liefde. Hij heeft Gode het rantsoen betaald. En de gevangenis van Zijn volk was niet meer.

Bovendien, Hij heeft ook gaven genomen.

Ja, wij waren van de gevangenis verlost, doch wat

nu verder? Wij zijn zelf nog ellendig en zondig, jammerlijk en naakt. Neen, we behoeven niet tot in alle eeuwigheid verdoemd worden. Doch waar moet het heen?

Dat bezingt de dichter verder, als hij zegt: Gij hebt gaven genomen om uit te deelen onder de menschen, ja, ook de wederhoorigen om bij U te wonen, o Heere God!

En dat is de zaligheid van Gods volk! Zij mogen bij God wonen!

Zoo zien we dat hier een groot werk Gods bezongen wordt tot zaligheid van Israel. En dat werk is tweeledig: Hij nam de gevangenis gevankelijk en overwon haar. De eeuwige verdoemenis heeft eeuwig uit. En, ten tweede, Hij nam gaven. Die gaven deelde Hij uit in wedergeboorte en geloof, rechtvaardigmaking, heiliging en verheerlijking; een nieuwe aarde en nieuwe hemel waarin gerechtigheid eeuwiglijk zal wonen. En een plaats in het Nieuwe Jeruzalem.

Voorts zingt de dichter van al die gaven in 't bijzonder.

Hij zal U een lied in den mond leggen. Hij roept het U toe dat Gij den Heere zult loven voor al die gaven.

Luistert maar!

"Geloofd zij den Heere, dag bij dag overlaadt Hij ons. Die God is onze zaligheid. Sela."

Dag bij dag overlaadt Hij ons. Wat zullen we hiervan zeggen? De tijd zou ons zekerlijk ontbreken om deze tekst ten volle uit te putten. Waar zullen we beginnen en waar zullen we eindigen?

Neen, Hij geeft ons niet juist genoeg voor elken dag. Hij overlaadt ons. Dat wil zeggen, er is veels te veel. Ik moet hier denken aan een conclusie der ongeloovige wetenschap. Er zijn mannen die uitgerekend hebben hoeveel zonnelicht er op aarde valt en hoeveel langs de aarde heen in het onmetelijke lucht-ruim verloren gaat(?). En dan verbaast het ons als we de proportie lezen. Er is veels te veel van alles. Let op de vruchtboomen. En vooral op de aarde onder de boomen. Soms is de aarde bezaaid met vruchten die afvielen en nooit gebruikt worden. En toch is er meer dan genoeg overig. Zoo is het ook met ruimte en tijd. Wat al ruimte voor het holle van den voet. Wat lange tijden geeft God. En brood en water; kleederen en huizen.

Tot hiertoe bleef ik nog op aarde. Doch let er op, dat het laatste gedeelte van den tekst ons toeroept: Die God is onze zaligheid. En dan zien we, dat het aardse beeld is van het hemelsche. Ik sprak van de zon die haar licht met stroomen naar de aarde zendt. God overlaadt ons met het zonnelicht.

Doch zoo doet Hij ook in het geestelijke. Hij overlaadt ons met Zijne liefde en gunst; met Zijne lieflijkheid en vergevende genade. Er zijn oceanen van gaven in het geestelijke leven, in het leven van het Koninkrijk Gods.

Daar zal de zanger verder van gewagen.

Hij zegt immers: Die God is ons een God van volkomene zaligheid. En bij den Heere zijn uitkomsten tegen den dood!

Wat heeft dat al duizenden en tienduizenden van arme stakkerds vertroost. Ik hoor het hen nog zeggen, neen, zingen: Hij kan, en wil, en zal in nood, zelfs bij het nadren van den dood, volkomen uitkomst geven!

Waarlijk als Gods volk niet zoo zou zingen, zoo zouden de steenen spreken. Daarom de oproep: Ge-loofd zij de Heere!

Bij den Heere, den Heere, zijn uitkomsten tegen den dood! Ja die dood is de boodschapper der verschrikking. Hij is de rechtvaardige straf op de zonde. En hij is de eeuwige verdoemenis voor al wat goddeloos is.

Doch bij den Heere, den getrouwen verbondsGod zijn uitkomsten tegen dien verschrikkelijken dood. En dat is Jezus, die ten hemel voer, vol eer!

En weest toch niet al te bang van Uwe vijanden, want alles komt terecht. Luistert maar: Voorzeker zal God de kop Zijner vijanden verslaan, den harigen schedel desgenen die in zijne schuld wandelt.

Hier hebt ge een eigenaardige beschrijving der goddeloozen. Zij wandelen in hunne schuld. En ze weten het ook. Zij zijn het volk dat zodoende schuld met schuld vermeert. En al oordeelt en veroordeelt God hen in 't diepste hart, zoo geven zij er eenvoudig niet om. Ze wandelen voort in hunne schuld.

Hoe geheel anders gaat dat met Gods volk. Als God zegt: Gij zijt die man! dan zeggen zij: O God, wees mij zondaar genadig!

Doch de Heere vergeet niets. Hij zal de kop Zijner vijanden verslaan. Doch Hij heeft van Zijn volk gezegd: Ik zal wederbrengen uit Basan. O voor tijd en wijle moeten we in Basan wandelen. En soms vertoeven we in de diepten der zee. Daar komen al de baren en golven over ons arme hoofd. En is Israel in smarten. Doch hier wordt een schoone toekomst voor dat volk geschetst. God zal wederbrengen uit Basan. En Hij zal wederbrengen uit de diepten der zee. Dan zal Israel zijn lust aan zijne haat'ren zien!

En het voorspel is daarvan in de geschiedenis gezien.

Ga met mij en we zullen luisteren naar de zangers en de speellieden bij de Roode Zee. Daar bracht Gods volk zijn lof tot den Heere, omdat Hij hen uit Egypte en uit de diepten der zee had doen komen. De zangers gingen vóór, de speellieden achter, in het midden de trommelende maagden. Ja, Mirjam mocht er ook aan te pas komen. Zij riep de vrouwen op, om met de mannen, God te loven.

Zult gij dan niet den Heere loven?

Luistert naar den zanger, hij zal het U vertellen. "Looft God in de gemeenten, den Heere, gij die zijt uit den springader Israels!"

Daar hebt ge Uw roeping.

En dan worden zij opgesomd, de helden des Heeren, Benjamin de Kleine vindt ook een plaats onder de vorsten van Juda.

En gaat nu maar niet roemen op Uwe sterkte, want het is God die sterkte geboden heeft. Onze kracht is altijd Godes kracht.

En als het goed gaat met Gods kerke op aarde, dan is het altijd om Uwes Tempels wil, o God!

Dan moogt ge schelden het wild gedierte, doch in den naam des Heeren. Zóó sprak ook Deborah, die wilde dat Meroz uitdrukkelijk gevloekt zou worden, omdat zij niet gekomen waren tot de hulpe des Heeren met de helden.

Daarna ziet de dichter de tijden des Nieuwen Verbonds. Hij zal het U verhalen hoe prinselijke gezanten uit Egypte zullen komen, Moorenland, ja, alle koninkrijken der aarde zullen psalmzingen den Heere!

En het einde staat in het teeken des hemels: God is sterk en moet geloofd en geprezen worden.

God is vreeselijk uit Zijn heiligdommen. De God Israels, die geeft het volk al zijn krachten.

Dat dan alle menschen-eer en menschen-roem afgesneden worde en de gansche kerk leere knielen en aanbidden voor Gods aangezichte: Looft den Heere, mijne ziel.

G. V.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The 15th of August we commemorated the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents,

MR. JOHN DYKSTRA

and

MRS. JOHN DYKSTRA — Steigenga

We pray that the Lord may be with them the remainder of their pilgrimage.

Their grateful children:

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Dykstra

Miss Jennie Dykstra

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Dykstra

Bernard

Alida

Julia

Boreas

Elizabeth

John Jr.

Frank

Richard

Ruth G.

Theressa E.

Shirley A.

Grand Rapids, Michigan. 2 Grandchildren.

A Call To Advance

As you have noticed from your programs, this is our eighteenth Annual Field Day. It is therefore, in the first place, a day upon which we owe God our deepest gratitude for what He has done for us as a denomination in the past year. Today is a day of celebration, of rejoicing, of relaxation, but first of all it is a day that demands thanksgiving. Since we as Protestant Reformed Churches in this vicinity have been in the habit of having a field day on the 4th of July from year to year this day should be the Thanksgiving Day of the Protestant Reformed Churches, for God again has richly blessed us since our last annual Field Day.

From the other viewpoint, that we celebrate our 18th Annual Field Day today, must be a cause of disappointment for those who wished our movement to a sudden end, and who secretly and inwardly wished that this thing would blow over. It has not blown over. Today we celebrate our 18th annual Field Day, we number nineteen congregations more than we did when we began these annual Field Days. We have grown. We have been blessed by God, and do therefore owe Him our deepest gratitude.

Yet, sad to say, our Protestant Reformed Churches face a peril today that is greater than any they ever faced before. This peril or danger will be greater each time we celebrate our annual Field Day if we continue in the direction we now are going. There was a time shortly before 1924 and immediately following that the terrible lie of Common Grace was boldly and vigorously maintained in speech and print. We with equal boldness and force opposed this lie. We turned to God's word, we became stronger and stronger in the faith, and we grew in the grace and knowledge of Christ. Those were wonderful days and we were spiritually strong and vigorous. But now, sad to say, we have lost our first love, and we have become careless and indifferent. *Yea, we have begun to compromise!* Perhaps I may even say we have been compromising for some time. If this were our first, second, or third annual Field Day, I could not say this, but here it is our 18th annual Field Day and we still are surrendering or giving our children to be taught by those who believe that the gospel is a well-meant offer of salvation to all men. Is that not compromising. But it still is taught, not as openly as before, but it is taught to our children in school. Are we not compromising with this lie if we subject our children to it five days a week and for quite a few hours each day?

If present conditions remain, we may celebrate our 19th, 20th, 25th and even 30th annual Field Day, but there will be no reason for our separate existence as

a denomination. Our children receiving these false doctrines in school will feel perfectly at home in any church that has Arminian tendencies. They will accept what they are taught in school. You know, as well as I do that when a denomination becomes indifferent, the parents also individually exercise no concern over the instruction their children receive. How many of our Protestant Reformed parents today make a practice and serious endeavour to find out regularly what their child is taught? Not very many, I am afraid.

It is because of this that I would like to call your attention this evening hour to, "A Call To Advance." We as a Protestant Reformed church must advance and establish a school of our own for our children. My speech is suggested by the command of God that came to Joshua when Israel was across the Jordan and had not as yet entered into the land of Canaan. Israel had come all the way from Egypt, had crossed the Red Sea, came through the wilderness and conquered all who opposed her. Moses was dead, and Joshua had been appointed in his place. Israel has conquered all the land east of the Jordan and can see already the land God promised her. Then the call came to Joshua, who, apparently, was very hesitant to lead Israel, "Arise, go over this Jordan." I see a striking similarity between Israel at this time and our Protestant Reformed churches today. We, too, have come far. We began with the modest beginning of three congregations. Now we number twenty-two congregations. Our movement has spread from Michigan to Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana and California. We began with combined consistory meetings, then formed a Classis and now we have two separate Classis and a Synod. We have come far, but there is still a sphere into which we can and must advance. The call comes also to us today, "Arise, go over Jordan." Let me call your attention to what I have in mind as we consider this call to advance. I would, first of all, call your attention to the task unto which we are called; in the second place to the requirement for heeding this call; and finally to God's promise to us if we heed it.

Let us first consider the situation as it was with Joshua and Israel in order that we may have the right picture before our minds. For Joshua, the call, "Arise, go over this Jordan," means that he must lead Israel unto Canaan. Canaan, as you know, was the typical heaven. Here God would reveal Himself to His people most clearly through types and shadows. He revealed Himself to Israel in Egypt, in the wilderness, and all through her journey, but in Canaan, Israel was to have the richest foretaste of heaven. Here more clearly than ever before God would show His love and grace to His people.

At the time when this call came to Joshua, how-

ever, Israel was still outside this promised land. She had not yet attained to God's promise. Rueben, Gad and one half the tribe of Mannaseh whose portion were on the east side of the Jordan had attained the land God promised them, but the other nine and one half tribes still had not attained to God's promise. May Joshua be satisfied? He may not. Israel is a nation, a whole, and not until all the tribes have received their promised share may Joshua be satisfied. He must arise and go over the Jordan. On the other side God's temple will be built. There He will reveal Himself most clearly to His people.

It was no easy task unto which Joshua was called. It was not a question of a few men crossing this Jordan. That could have been done. The two spies whom Rahab saved did cross the Jordan, but all Israel, women and children, cattle and goods, as well as the men, must cross that Jordan. To make it seem even more impossible, Jordan at this time was a swollen, swiftly flowing river. Apparently it could not be crossed.

Still more, having once crossed, Israel's troubles are not over. They only begin. Now Israel must fight against all the inhabitants of the land. Israel, without horses and chariots, must fight against well-armed nations who boasted of horses and chariots, and dwelt in fenced cities with high strong walls. An exceedingly great task confronts Israel. Yet God says to Joshua, "Arise, go over this Jordan."

The similarity between Israel at this time and our Protestant Reformed churches today is very striking. We, too, are still on the east side of Jordan as far as our children are concerned. There still is room for us to advance with this doctrine God has given us to preserve. There still is a richer sphere of instruction unto which we can lead our children. Indeed, the older generation and we who have been through the struggle in 1924 and have been brought up in this truth, we have attained to this richer communion and fellowship with God. Our foretaste of heaven's blessings is rich. But what of the nine and one-half tribes, the coming generations who are not taught this truth in school? May we be satisfied just because we have this truth? No more than Joshua might be satisfied may we be today. The call comes also to us, "Advance, arise, go over this Jordan!" Joshua hesitated a short while, but we have been here on the east side of Jordan some 18 or 19 years. Is it not time for us to cross?

We must heed this call. Oh! I know, we do have Christian Schools today, but that does not solve the problem. Past experience has proven this. You can have a 100 per cent Protestant Reformed school board, and if everyone of those men, himself, is 100 per cent Protestant Reformed, the best you can do is to prevent any outward Arminian teaching in the Bible les-

son. Even then, you will find your children coming home singing Arminian hymns. You can put a stop to it, you can prevent these things, but never can you make one who believes in Common Grace teach your child God's Sovereign Grace. Never can the best school board in the world make one who does not see the sovereignty of God, in science, in history and in geography, teach your child to see these things. It cannot be done. You may prevent Arminian doctrine in the Bible lesson, but you will never have science, history and geography and related subjects taught your child as you would like to have them be taught.

The cost should not be considered. Think once again of Israel. Many of her finest young men would die in battle when Joshua heeds this call. Well, beloved, you will not be called upon to give up your life in order that we may have a school of our own. The financial cost, then, cannot be compared or computed.

Nor must we be concerned over the conditions under which our children will receive their instruction. If we could have a modern, well-lighted, well-ventilated building, that would be fine. No one would desire this any more than I would, but we must not be too concerned over the physical. The things spiritual come first, and if we have a school of our own less modern and with ventilation and lighting facilities not up to present day standards, we must not be too quick to consider the material and forget the spiritual which comes first. Perhaps, our children because of poor lighting will need to wear glasses. Still is it not worth it that they see good spiritually? Perhaps the conditions will not guarantee that our child will remain in good health, but does it not mean much that they grow up spiritually healthy? Our Seminary meets still today under very adverse conditions with its poor lighting and poor ventilation. Do we hear anyone say, "Let's not have a seminary; let us quit?" Of course not. We are only too glad that we do have one. I don't mean to say we must be careless about our children's health. We may not do this, but nevertheless we must be more concerned with their spiritual needs than their material. Would you not much rather see your child wear glasses than to have him be an Arminian? But that is not the choice you have to make. It is not as bad as all that. Today with our modern schools, with their approved lighting and ventilation, the number of children that are forced to wear glasses and the number of cases of tuberculosis and other contagious diseases is as great and even greater than when all the schools were what today would be termed decidedly unhealthful and even perhaps would be condemned. Many of us gathered here, no doubt, have attended such schools in our childhood days. Did we suffer for it? You can make too much of these things and be too concerned about the mater-

ial. But, on the other hand, do we dare to answer this call of God and say, "Yea, Lord I will cross the Jordan when thou shalt show me a nice place on the other side. It looks so wild. If thou wilt show me a nice park or garden, something beautiful, I will go over this Jordan?" Do we dare do that? If we do, we are not worthy of the name Protestant Reformed. Then we deny God's sovereignty in our walk of life; for then, when the Sovereign God calls us, we assume the right to refuse, and thus exalt ourselves. The Reformed churches always were satisfied with modest beginnings. Are we as a Protestant Reformed denomination too proud for this? Shame on us if we are.

Nay, beloved, if we do not have a Protestant Reformed school of our own in the near future, it will not be because we do not have the money. It will not be because we do not have the necessary Protestant Reformed teachers. It will not be because there is no need. Shall I tell you what the cause will be? It will be because we are *sick*! It will be because we are too weak! That will be the reason. We are too sick and weak spiritually. It was not without reason that when God commanded Joshua to advance, He told him three times to be strong and of good courage. Three times, mind you, he must be told to be strong. The meaning is, of course, that he must be spiritually strong. He must be strong in faith, in hope and in love. That is the requirement. Joshua must believe with all his heart that God will give them the land across the Jordan. Joshua must with a strong yearning look forward to the fulfillment of God's promise. Joshua must love, with an intense love, to dwell in the land and there enjoy the foretaste of the heavenly blessings to come. Unless he is spiritually strong, he will not arise and go over the Jordan. That same thing holds true for you and me. Spiritual strength is required. We must be firmly convinced that the doctrine God has given us is the truth. We must hope unwaveringly for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring us to the eternal land of rest and to have our children there with us. We must love that truth that we have received. If we do, we will hurry up and establish a school for our children.

If we are spiritually weak, we will become discouraged at the slightest little things, and many are the things which have a tendency to discourage. It was so with Joshua. He had to lead a rebellious people. Was he not one of the twelve spies whose report Israel rejected? Did he not see the rebellion of Israel? Such a people he must lead. Then there was the Jordan, greatly swollen. Why not wait until it recedes? Besides, the picture is different than at the Red Sea. Now no one is pursuing them. They have conquered the whole section east of the Jordan. Why not stay here? No lives would be lost. Here they have

peace. Similarly there are many things which would discourage having a school of our own. First of all the lack of interest manifested in the present movement is enough to discourage us. Then there is the financial burden. Most of the children will have to come to school by bus, leaving earlier in the morning than at present and coming home later at night. These things would be discouraging and will be unless we are spiritually strong. But if we are spiritually strong, we will be of good courage and we will advance. Faith, hope, and love are powers in us, forces that will not let us remain idle. They will make us arise and go over this Jordan. Joshua was spiritually strong and did heed God's command. Our forefathers were spiritually strong and crossed the Atlantic Ocean that in this country they might worship God according to the dictates of their hearts. If we are spiritually strong, we will see to it that our children are instructed in the truth. We will advance. We have advanced into the fields of missionary work. Let us also do so in respect to the instructing of our children. I might say here that it is so easy to be concerned with someone else's children and not with our own. We are so eager to do missionary work. Far be it from me to suggest that we quit doing so. We must do missionary work, but is not our first calling, even before we begin to work with someone else's children, to provide for our own? If our denomination is spiritually strong, we will advance in all the fields God opens for us.

Really, beloved, there is no reason for discouragement. God gives us a very rich promise. To Joshua then, and to us now, He says, "Be strong and of good courage. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." He holds us in His hand. We have His promise that He will not let go. He will not relax His hold. He did not relax His hold but took Lot and brought him to safety. Neither will He forsake us and He will not cut us off from His love and grace. That is His promise. We confess to believe in His Sovereign grace. Are we now all of a sudden afraid that He will take this grace from us after having given it to us for so long?

Why are we afraid to cross this Jordan? Look at the church in any dispensation. Has God ever forsaken His church? Did He ever leave her in the lurch? Consider our own denomination. Has God ever left us in the lurch? You know He did not. We are celebrating our 18th annual Field Day. Is this in itself not a manifestation that He has not failed us nor forsaken us as a denomination. We have grown and spread out. He has even enabled us to reach a larger sphere by means of the radio.

A moment ago I said it will not be because of financial reasons nor that we have not the necessary teachers to have a school of our own. I'd like to come

back to that for a moment. Has God not always, in the past, given us the finances we needed for any cause worthy of the name Protestant Reformed? Have we ever been prevented from advancing as a denomination because of the money problem? You know we have not been. God has not left us nor forsaken us, but even right now gives us enough wherewith to finance a school of our own. He also has given us the talent and ability. We have many very capable young men and women with the talents and abilities necessary to teach in such a school. God has not left us nor failed us. Arise, then, go over this Jordan!

Do you believe this promise of God? Are you strong in the faith? Do not give me your answer now. Give me your answer by having a Protestant Reformed school of our own in the near future.

J. A. H.

Speech delivered by the Rev. John A. Heys at the 18th Annual Field Day of the Protestant Reformed Churches, July 4, 1943 at Ideal Park, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Value of Apologetics

Even though this subject may sound at first out of the range of the interest of most of our people I have no doubt that our interest is nevertheless aroused. Because this subject of Apologetics does not appear upon the curriculum of our theological school we would ask the question is there someone who believes that there is a place for such a special course in our school and wishes to contend for such in our Standard Bearer? I would therefore immediately state that the purpose of this article is not to point out the value of Apologetics in order to urge its introduction as a special course of study among us. However, it may also be that some of us do not see any value in Apologetics at all, who think that it is contrary to Scripture. For that reason you may also question whether anyone among us would contend for Apologetics. If your interest is herewith aroused to follow me further as I will try to show that there is value in Apologetics when understood correctly.

Let us first understand what we mean by Apologetics. Apologetics has been defined in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics as the Christian defense against non Christian. Another definition states it this way "Apologetics is that branch of theological study which has for its object the science of defending Christianity against the assaults of the enemies." (Encyclopedia of McClintock and Strong). However the difference of opinion that obtains about

the science of Apologetics arises from the difference as to whether it should be limited to a defense only and how that defense of Christianity should be made. For that reason we must elaborate in our definition of Apologetics.

The word is derived from the Greek word "apology" which means, defense. However when we speak of the science of making a defense or Apologetics we do not merely limit it to a defense in that narrow sense. A. Kuyper in his Encyclopedia of Theology shows that although the word apology refers in the narrow sense to a defense and although in the early church Apologetics consisted mainly in a defense against paganism, nevertheless it also partakes of the character of an attack. It is both defensive and offensive, thetical and antithetical. So it is with the Word of God itself. The Word of God is not only a revelation of the truth but also a condemnation of the lie. Any true defense of the Bible and Christianity, which is founded upon the Bible, necessarily contains such an antithetical witness.

Another point we must make answers the question, against whom is Apologetics directed? Usually, historically, the enemies against whom apologies were made were the non-Christians, unbelievers. However, we all realize that the enemies of Christianity are not limited to those professedly unbelievers. The foe is also within. The enemy comes also in sheep's clothing. There are heretics within the church against whom she is called upon to fight. The history of the revelation of God shows that the truth has always had its enemies within the very covenant sphere in which it was made. The study or science or preparation for an attack against these enemies within and without was divided into two branches. There is, on the one hand Apologetics which concerned itself with the unbelievers directly, and on the other hand Polemics which concerned itself with heretics within the church.

We may leave this distinction as is. However, now the point of difference comes out. Is there a real essential difference between the two enemies and therefore in the method of defense and attack? The answer to this brings out the difference of opinion about Apologetics. And we can say that essentially there is no difference between the two enemies of the truth. Whether they say that they believe in God and His Word or not, they remain essentially enemies of the truth. The one within the church is more dangerous and must be attacked more often. And this attack requires much preparation because of its subtlety. This may not appear in controversies within the church immediately, but ultimately the issue appears and remains, the truth of the Word of God. A careful study of the controversies within the church will prove this. Examples may be cited here. We refer first to the controversy in apostolic times. At first it was a struggle with the leaders of the Jews who contended

that Jesus was not the Christ. The apostles defended Jesus as the Christ of the Old Testament Scripture. Finally when the Jews persisted in their denial, and even though they maintained that they were Abraham's children, the apostles plainly declared that these Jews had not the truth and even that they were dogs. It was plainly shown that the Judaizers taught that which was not of Christ. In the second place, if we would look at the struggle of the Reformation fairly we would judge that it was the question of the Word of God overagainst the word of man. If we would look at it narrowly we probably would call it polemics, that is, a controversy against those who profess to maintain the Scriptures. Nevertheless, the Roman Catholic Church insists on other authority outside of the Bible and maintains that it is equal to it. This with the insistence upon works as a basis for justification is nothing less than a denial of the authority of the Bible and its teachings. In the final analysis we can say that the point in all controversies is just exactly a question of God's Word versus man's word. Therefore it is so all important to continue the fight for the cause of God in all controversies and never say it is useless.

In order to see the value of apologetics we ought to see how important it is to make an apology, a defense. It is an admonition in the Word of God, that we are to make apologies. We have this in Philipians 1:7, "Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel ye all are partakers of my grace." And in verse 17, "But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel." Here the word defense, or as in the original "apology" is used by the apostle Paul with reference to his calling. We know too how he always made his defense of the gospel. He defended the truth overagainst Judaism as well as paganism. He entered the synagogues as well as the market place in Athens. His speech on Mars hill is a most marvelous defense of the truth overagainst paganism. We are admonished in 1 Peter 3:15 to be ready always to make a defense. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

In the history of the church since the apostolic times we find much apologetic work. There are the early Apologists like Justin Martyr and Origin which were of a philosophical nature and were directed against the early Greek attacks against Christianity. Augustine's work, "The City of God" is considered by some to be of an apologetic nature. In the Middle ages there is the work of Thomas Aquinas, "Summa Contra Gentiles." In the period of the Scholasticism we have the distinction between faith and reason.

This distinction worked havoc with the defense of Christianity was not really a defense, but a giving of ground to man. Under the influence of philosophy apologetics was considered necessary to an introduction to theology. And faith in the revelation of God rested upon man's reasoning it out first.

In a way, at the time of the Reformation, we can consider the works of the Reformers as apologetic in the good sense of the word. They are defenses against Roman Catholicism. Some place Calvin's "Institutes" in the class of apologetics. In his introduction, his letter to King Francis, Calvin makes his defense for the appearance of his work to the king of France. This work, however is of a different nature than the usual works of apologetics.

In our modern times the works of apologetics make the same mistake as Scholasticism. They first investigate to determine whether the data and teachings of Scripture are in harmony with their reason and then they humbly accept the Scripture. They place reason overagainst faith. They proceed upon the same error of modern philosophy which began with Descartes. Descartes first doubted before he built up his system of philosophy. The modern apologete of the Bible does the same. He first proves the truth of the Bible from his own experience and reason in order to convince the unbeliever. This is a fatal concession to unbelief.

In our evaluation of Apologetics we must see of course very clearly that the modern method and idea is contrary to Scripture. In our defense of Scripture we do not set ourselves up as judges overagainst it. We bow before the sovereign authority of the Scripture itself. The Bible contains its own proof and evidence. It demands faith in its truth and hope in its promises.

And in our defense or apology of the Bible we must not fear. It is not our defense. It is God's work in us. By God's grace we shall always have that conviction and courage to defend the truth and to testify against the lie. So we are admonished in 1 Peter 3:15. The translation "be ready always to give an answer to every man" is in the original, "be always ready toward an apology." But in our defense of our faith we do not examine ourselves whether we have the faith and hope, but we defend it through an antithetical confession.

However one final question about the science of Apologetics. Are we to take the attitude that we need not be trained in the task of defense? And thus are we to discourage the study of Apologetics? I think no one of us discourages training in theology. For that same reason no one should discourage the study of Apologetics understood in the Biblical sense.

We can profit from the study of the history of Apologies in the first place. We can see the dangers

and our calling in such an historical research. It is another question whether this subject can be treated more in detail in our school. Up to the present time such material has been incorporated in our dogmatical instruction.

More specifically we can conclude that such a special training, along with and under theological training, will sharpen the theologian and make him a better witness. It will also serve to confirm the faith of the believers in the face of modern attacks. And as far as unbelievers are concerned the same fruit as the preaching of the Gospel will obtain. There will be a power of conviction proceeding from the working of the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and so that every mouth may be stopped.

L. D.

Randolph Organized

On the evening of August 17th, 1943, another congregation was added to our Protestant Reformed Denomination. In the neat little Congregational Church building of Randolph, Wis. where our Mission Committee had sponsored services for over a year, eight families were organized into a congregation.

Small indeed is the beginning of this little group, but we believe there is promise that this new addition to our Churches will grow and ripen into a stalwart in our ranks.

Each Sabbath, for over a year, the Word of God had been proclaimed by ministers and students to those whom the Lord brought to hear it. Besides, during this period personal work of some of our ministers was conducted in this vicinity, the purpose of which was to enlighten those who would receive them into their homes. And the Lord has opened the hearts to receive that precious truth which is the peculiar heritage of our Protestant Reformed Churches. Because of this, we are glad and thankful to Him Who has given us to see fruits upon the labor performed.

It is well known especially to those of our Churches in Classis East that through a suggestion coming from the consistory and minister of the congregation at Oaklawn, mission work was begun in Randolph and environs. When the Mission Committee learned of those in this territory who were interested in the truth, it immediately asked the consistory of Oaklawn to allow its pastor to work in this territory to determine the advisability of continued effort. The consis-

tory of Oaklawn gladly cooperated, with the result that the Rev. C. Hanko reported that the field looked good and advised that more concerted effort to canvas the field be put forth. Shortly after this, the Rev. H. Hoeksema was asked to work with the Rev. Hanko in this vicinity. The report of this work also proved to be very favorable. The Mission Committee then decided that not only should our ministers and students speak the Word on the Sabbath, but should also try to organize a society where all could come to discuss the Word of God and the problems that were raised due to the differences of especially the Christian Reformed and Protestant Reformed Churches. This work also bore fruit in a deeper understanding of the doctrinal differences and of the Word of God in general. Besides, we have no doubt but that these meetings tended to mould the interested parties concerned almost without exception into the group that was organized.

When the Synod of 1943 decided to instruct the Mission Committee to do still more work in Randolph and encouraged the Committee to make diligent attempt to organize there, the Committee decided to ask both the Rev. C. Hanko and the Rev. B. Kok to spend three weeks in this territory. This time also the consistories of both Oaklawn and Hudsonville gladly acceded to our request and the result shows that eight families signified their desire to be organized into a congregation.

The date having been set, the Committee decided to go to Randolph to carry out the organization proper.

Since the Revs. Hanko and Hoeksema had labored hard in this field, they were asked to be present at this meeting and take part in the organization service. The latter because of circumstances, could not attend.

As was said, only eight families had requested organization. Therefore it could be expected that not a large audience would be present.

After the Rev. M. Schipper had conducted the preliminaries and the Rev. A. Cammenga, a committee member from the West, had led the meeting in prayer, the Rev. B. Kok preached a brief sermon on the text found in Isaiah 43:21. He emphasized especially that the formation of the body of Christ was entirely the Lord's work, and that the purpose of this formation was the praise and glory of God, and that this purpose would surely be realized. This was applied very effectively to the formation of the little group at Randolph. No one was left in doubt at this meeting as to the identity of the Creator and Former of this new congregation. It was a product not of man or a group of men but of the heavenly Artificer Himself Who would also realize His own glory in and through the little flock now organized.

Then those desiring organization were asked to hand in the certificates of dismissal from the Church-

es they left which the committee recognized and accepted.

There were three young men, heads of three of the families, and members by baptism in the Churches they left, who asked for the right to profess the Name of the Lord at this meeting. These young men had been labored with on more than one occasion and were instructed to see that should they desire to affiliate with our Churches they should also be willing to publicly make profession of their faith. They did desire this. The Committee, therefore, before the meeting questioned these young men at length and decided to accept their confessions and grant them the right to make their public confession after the members of the congregation had been given opportunity to bring lawful objections against them. They were found to be of good repute and above reproach. Hence, they were asked the usual questions, and after they had properly answered were exhorted to continue in their confession and were given the right to vote for office-bearers who would form the first consistory of our Randolph Protestant Reformed Church.

The Committee recommended that two elders and one deacon be chosen. The congregation adopted this recommendation and without much delay chose its leaders. The Rev. C. Hanko then read the form for ordination and duly installed the brethren in their respective offices.

After singing the two verses of Psalter number 370, the Rev. J. De Jong closed the service with thanks to God.

Immediately after the service, the congregation and visitors enjoyed refreshments in the basement of the Church and spent a few moments discussing and speaking about matters related to this joyous occasion.

And so we could return home with joyful hearts, elated over the fact that our Covenant God had not only given us an open door in Randolph, but that He also had called into existence by His mighty, creative Word a people for Himself who shall show forth His praise.

We congratulate you, sister congregation at Randolph, and welcome you into the fellowship of our Churches. May the Lord prosper you in the way of faithfully living the truth you have learned to love, and shall be called upon to continually profess in your community. "Keep that which thou hast, which has been committed unto you;" and "be faithful unto the end that no one take your crown." We hope sincerely that the Shepherd of Israel will presently send unto you an under-shepherd to lead you further into the pastures of the truth, and that others who as yet have not joined with you will see the necessity of being like-minded with you in order that you may be encouraged in your work.

The Mission Committee,
per M. Schipper.

Reply to the C. L. A. Secretary

Esteemed Editor,

In his article in the August issue of the Standard Bearer, Mr. Gritter still fails to show that there is an essential difference between the stand of the CLA and the worldly unions on the matter of the strike. No one denies that there is a difference of degree, since the CLA is quite conservative in condoning the strike, allowing such a strike only as a last extreme and without any accompanying acts of violence, such as destruction of property, etc. Yet essentially they too maintain the strike. And to that I raised objections. The readers will recall that I compared their form of striking with a toy gun hold-up, which is nonetheless a hold-up.

Mr. Gritter makes the strike as they approve of it seem so entirely innocent. He prefers the Dutch word 'stakin' to our word 'strike', although I am rather sure that the word 'staking' in its accepted meaning leaves an equally bad taste in the mouth of any Hollander who opposes the principle of the strike. He adds: "The CLA accepts the right of the 'staking' without the bad implications of the strike. Such cessation of work would not be approved of unless there was a real injustice and until everything within reason had been done to secure justice by other means. It would have to be entirely peaceful. There could be no interference with the right of others to work. And the employer would have the right to hire others. But the employees who had ceased to work, in protest against an injustice, would have the right to acquaint prospective new employees with their grievances and by such moral persuasion try to influence them not to *interfere* with their legitimate pursuit of justice. That is the CLA stand."

But even so he cannot deny that the employee maintains his claim to his job. He does not break his relation to his employer by quitting his job. He regards himself as still in the lawful employ of his employer. In the meantime he refuses to work, demands that his machinery shall stand idle and denies anyone else the moral right to take his place. He is still in the service of his employer, but refuses to work. He keeps his job, but does not fill it. He uses moral persuasion to prevent anyone from stepping in his place. And the evident purpose is to exert pressure on his employer to gain the end which he considers just. His aim, collectively with all the other employees, is to place the employer in such a position that he is forced to comply with their demands. If he fails in this the strike has proved a failure.

Our discussion has simmered down to the question: just what is the relation between the employer and the employee. Is it a relation of mutual contract or a re-

lation of authority and obedience. If it is simply a relation of mutual contract, in which the employee sells his time, his talents and his ability to the employer, I can conceive of the possibility that the employee has the same rights and obligations as the employer. Neither one has more or less. They stand on an equal basis and can make their demands as equals. If the CLA wants to take that position their stand on the strike might be justified on this score.

But if the relation of employer and employee is essentially the same as that of parent and child, husband and wife, magistrate and citizen, a relation of authority and subordination, the two can never face each other on an equal basis. If the employee is a servant of his employer he owes him his time and his talents and his honest effort as long as he is in his employ. He may not maintain his position and at the same time refuse to work. To do so is an act of insubordination.

The latter, not the former, is the plain teaching of Scripture.

For that reason I can appreciate the fact that Mr. Gritter reminds us of other examples of Scripture where the relation of employer and employee is brought to the foreground. Especially in these times when all respect for authority is rapidly being lost from sight, the example of Abraham and his servants and of Boaz with his workers is of extreme importance.

Abraham ruled over his servants with the authority of a king, even called them to go out to battle with him when he found this necessary. Since he expected Sarah to call him "my lord" he surely did not expect less than that of his servants. In those days the relation of authority and insubordination was very strong. Try to imagine in our day, that a family of eleven boys, ranging from the ages of 45 to 29 and all married, as was the case of Jacob's family, would obey their father who threatened to starve them by refusing to have them go to Egypt for corn, just because of a certain preference for his youngest son. Today boys and girls of 13 to 15 years already begin to take offence when their parents lay down the law to them. But this age has lost its true respect for those in authority in every sphere of life.

The case of Boaz and his workers is also very interesting. We read: "And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee." (Ruth 2:4) We cannot fail to note the difference between his greeting to his workers and their greeting to him. He greets them as their employer and wishes the gracious and sustaining hand of the Lord upon them in their labors. They conscious of their relation to him as servants, wish the Lord's blessing upon him. If this is their heartfelt desire they will also show this in their labors, even as he

must bring this wish into practice in his relation to them. Both have this in common that they are interested first of all in their mutual spiritual welfare. Such ideal conditions are only possible when both the employer and the employees are truly Christians. Would that we had more of this attitude in perfect uprightness among those that call themselves Christians.

But Scripture is always very definite on this score, that the relation of the employer and the workingman is one of authority and obedience. Even when it speaks of the laborer working for wages, so that he is worthy of his hire, the relation to his employer does not change one mite. God still demands of him that the servant shall be subject to his master, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, in singleness of heart as fearing God. 1 Pet. 2:18, Eph. 6:5, 6. Col. 3:22.

And since this is the case, a strike is an act of insubordination. The workingman may present his case, a strike is an act of insubordination. The workingman may present his case to his employer, even in company with his fellow workers, but he may not strike. He may not hold his job and at the same time refuse to work, may not resort to revolt or extortion to gain his ends, no matter how just his case may be. When every attempt fails he can still appeal his case to the highest Bar of justice, the supreme Judge of heaven and earth, according to James 5:1-11, but he must leave his case there. He may not take the law into his own hands. Notice what James says in in the tenth verse of this chapter, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience." Or does not Mr. Gritter believe that the righteous must also suffer in this world just because they refuse to take matters in their own hands and refuse to avenge themselves against wicked injustice? We have the example of Christ Himself. Was there ever a man who had a more just cause than He as He stood guiltless before Pilate? Did Christ as a last extreme take matters into His own hands, or did He subject Himself to those in authority, even though they were steeped with iniquity and submission meant death? Also Paul suffered every form of injustice in the hands of the Jews and in the power of the Roman law, yet he never did more than appeal his case to Caesar.

Too bad that at the close of his article Mr. Gritter bemoans the waste of time on what he calls an "academic, abstract discussion of the strike question." I heartily agree with him that great issues are at stake. Even greater than he presents. For our problem is not simply "how we as Christians will be able to continue work without affiliation with sinful organizations." The time will come when it will prove utterly impossible to continue work under any and all

conditions. But the more serious problem is how we are to maintain our Christian principles in the midst of a wicked world, especially we upon whom the end of the ages has come. That demands an untiring discussion of true, Christian principles and of a life that is in harmony with them. Are we spiritually strong enough to face the true issues as they are? And are we ready to sacrifice all for the sake of our principles? I would suggest that the CLA take up these various matters for a discussion in their meetings.

But, Mr. Editor, our discussion has taken up much space in the Standard Bearer, and I, as far as I am concerned, am willing to let the matter of the strike rest here, lest we overtax the patience of the readers.

Accept my thanks once more for the allotted space.

C. H.

The Christian Reformed Synod On Labor Unions

From *The Grand Rapids Press* we learn that the last held Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches adopted certain "principles" *in re* labor unions. Here follows the entire article as it appeared in *The Press*:

"In a special session Thursday evening at Calvin College the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church adopted principles governing relation of its members to labor unions.

"The labor question, considered by synodical gatherings since 1883, came before the present assembly for complete formulation of standards. Principles adopted were suggested by a committee which has studied the problem three years: Dr. Ralph Danhof of Holland, vice president of synod; Prof. Louis Berkhof, president of Calvin seminary; John VanVels, active in the Christian Labor association, and Dr. Garret Heyns, state corrections director.

"The principles adopted are as follows:

"1. Church membership and membership in a so-called neutral labor union (CIO and AFL) are compatible as long as such union gives no constitutional warrant to sin, nor shows in its regular activities that it champions sin.

"2. The Biblical doctrine of corporate responsibility and the Biblical teaching of the Christian's separation from the world make it imperative for members of neutral labor organizations to discontinue membership if such unions whose common practices are clearly in conflict with the principles of the word of God.

"3. The doctrine of corporate responsibility does not imply that membership in unions which have en-

gaged in sinful practices of itself makes one liable to ecclesiastical censure; however, when members of the church render themselves guilty of acts that are contrary to the word of God, the usual application of the rules for discipline shall be made. Corporate responsibility may render one worthy of ecclesiastical discipline but the degree of guilt must be determined by the local consistories.

"4. Consistories and classes should take careful note of the practices of labor organizations in their respective communities to determine whether membership in the church and membership in such organizations are compatible.

"Synod approved the Christian Labor association, with headquarters in this city, for moral and financial support from the church."

As our churches are deeply interested in the union question, we hope to discuss these decisions of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches.

H. H.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. John Piersma, who was declared candidate for the ministry by our last Synod, has requested suspension of his candidacy. The Synodical Committee has acceded to this request and announces to our Churches that Mr. Piersma is no longer eligible for a call.

The motives given by Mr. Piersma for his action necessitates the Synodical Committee to announce that Mr. Piersma is no longer licensed to preach in Prot. Ref. Churches.

The Synodical Committee
Rev. M. Gritters, Pres.
Rev. A. Cammenga, Secr.

IN MEMORIAM

On August 6, 1943, it pleased the Lord, to take out of our midst by sudden death, our beloved husband, father, son and brother,

CORNELIUS WIERDA, Jr.

at the age of 49 years.

We feel the loss keenly, but we are comforted by the assurance that he entered the rest, which remaineth for the people of God.

Mrs. Cornelius Wierda, Jr.

Frances Wierda

Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Wierda, Sr. and Family