

THE STANDARD

Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XX

SEPTEMBER 15, 1944

NUMBER 22

MEDITATIE

Gij, Die Wedergeboren Zijt!

Gij, die wedergeboren zijt, niet uit vergankelijk, maar uit onvergankelijk zaad, door het levende en eeuwig blijvende Woord van God.
I Petr. 1:23.

Gij!

Gij, wedergeborenen!

Niet in het abstrakt over het dogma der wedergeboorte, maar over zeer concrete, persoonlijk bestaande, wedergeborene, maar in deze wereld levende mensen, handelt dit woord.

Wel werpt het ook licht over het mysterie der wedergeboorte. En wel leent het zich gereedelijk tot grond voor eene discussie over deze gewichtige waarheid. Doch het doet dit alles eigenlijk slechts op indirecte wijze. En direktelijk spreekt het menschen toe, die niet alleen reeds van de wedergeboorte gehoord hebben, en er al iets van verstaan, wat zij inhoudt, maar die ook uit ervaring van haar kunnen meespreken.

Gij, die wedergeboren zijt!

U, zoo wil de apostel zeggen, sprak ik toe, in al hetgeen ik tot hier toe schreef, met name van af het dertiende vers, en vooral ook hetgeen ik in het onmiddelijk verband heb gezegd. Want ik vermaande u, dat gij zoudt opschorten de lendenen uws verstands, dat gij zoudt nuchteren zijn, en volkomenlijk hopen op de genade, die u wordt toegebracht in de openbaring van Jezus Christus. Ik waarschuwde u, dat gij niet gelijkvormig zoudt worden aan de begeerlijkheden, die tevoren in uwe onwetendheid waren, maar dat gij heilig zoudt worden in al uwen wandel, gelijk Hij, Die u riep, heilig is. Ik drukte u op het hart, dat gij, als degenen, die den Rechter van hemel en aarde tot een Vader

aanroept, in vreeze den tijd uwer inwoning zoudt wandelen, vooral ook met het oog op Hem, die u door Zijn dierbaar bloed verlostte. Ik heb u toegesproken als menschen, die hunne zielen gereinigd hebben in de gehoorzaamheid der waarheid, door den Geest, tot ongeveer broederlijke liefde, en vermaande u om elkander vuriglijk lief te hebben uit een rein hart. . . .

Doch dit alles sprak ik tot u als wedergeboren menschen. . . .

De apostel had dit alles maar niet geschreven aan de wereld in het algemeen, of ook aan een groep menschen, die in de wereld als Kerk bekend stonden, maar zeer bepaaldelijk aan wedergeboren menschen, en dan wel met nadruk aan menschen, die wedergeboren zijn uit onvergankelijk zaad, en door het levend en eeuwig blijvend Woord van God.

Ach, indien dit niet zoo ware, waren immers al zijne vermaningen en opwekkingen tot eenen heiligen wandel zonder eenigen grond.

Gewone, natuurlijke menschen, ook de allerbraafste, kunnen deze dingen niet verstaan, nog veel minder in praktijk brengen.

Ze raken hen niet.

Ze kunnen de dingen van het koninkrijk Gods niet zien.

Maar de door den apostel toegesprokenen zijn wedergeboren. En in die wedergeboorte ligt de mogelijkheid voor al deze vermaningen, haar subjectieve grond.

Gij, die wedergeboren zijt!

Wedergeboren!

Wonder der verlossing!

Mysterieuze vrucht van de genade des Geestes!

Voorwaar, voorwaar, zeg ik u: Zoo iemand niet wederom geboren worde, hij kan het koninkrijk Gods niet zien!

Doch hoe kan dit? Kan iemand dan voor de tweede maal geboren worden? De "leeraar in Israel" verstond deze dingen niet. En laten wij ons toch niet al te gemakkelijk inbeelden, dat wij in dit opzicht veel verder zijn gevorderd dan Nicodemus.

We verstaan, 't is waar, nu onze Heer gestorven is en opgestaan, nu Hij is opgevaren ten hemel en de levendmakende Geest is geworden, beter dan Nicodemus, dat het zoo moet, en dat zonder de wedergeboorte er geen contact zijn kan met de dingen van het koninkrijk der hemelen. Dat koninkrijk is geestelijk, en wij zijn vleeschelijk; dat koninkrijk is van boven, en wij zijn van beneden; het is hemelsch en wij zijn aardsch. En wij zullen met den leeraar in Israel dan ook niet vragen, of iemand, om wedergeboren te worden, dan andermaal in zijner moeders buik moet ingaan en geboren worden. Ach neen, dat zou niet baten. Al ging hij ook duizendmaal weer in zijner moeders buik in, hij zou nog altijd "vleesch" zijn. Wat uit het vleesch geboren is, dat is vleesch. En we moeten uit de Geest geboren worden om in het koninkrijk der hemelen te kunnen ingaan.

Maar ook bij dit meerder licht blijft de wedergeboorte toch een Goddelijk mysterie.

We kunnen er, door vergelijking met onze eerste en natuurlijke geboorte, iets van stamelen, doorgronden kunnen we dit mysterie niet.

Want de wedergeboorte is zeer werkelijk eene geboorte!

Ze is eene geboorte, niet zoo, dat er naast den natuurlijken mensch een geestelijk mensch komt te staan, naast den eersten mensch een tweede, naast den ouden mensch een nieuwe, naast den aardschen mensch een hemelsche; noch ook zoo, dat heel de eerste, oude, natuurlijke, aardsche mensch verdwijnt, en hij nu geheel en al plotseling herschapen is in eenen tweeden, geestelijken, nieuwen en hemelschen mensch; maar wel zoo, dat er in dien eersten, natuurlijken, ouden, aardschen mensch, het beginsel van een nieuwen mensch, eene nieuwe existentie, een nieuw leven, gewrocht wordt, en dat dit beginsel, deze inwendige nieuwe mensch, nu gaat heerschen over den eersten en ouden mensch, totdat deze wedergeboorte in de opstanding uit de dooden haar volmaking heeft ontvangen.

Want wedergeboorte is opstanding uit de dooden!

Ze is wel waarlijk eene geboorte, maar dan uit de baarmoeder des doods!

Ze is eene radikale hernieuwing, radikaal in den zin, dat door deze geboorte een nieuwe persoon, eene nieuwe existentie, een nieuw leven tot stand komt, en ook in den zin, dat deze nieuwe persoon alsnu in eene nieuwe wereld ingaat. Alles in beginsel en wachtend op de eindelijke opstanding uit de dooden.

Door de eerste geboorte komt een persoon ter wereld, beladen met schuld, onder den toorn Gods, gebonden in banden des doods; door de tweede geboorte wordt de persoon van schuld verlost, voor God en door Hem gerechtvaardigd, en uit banden des doods bevrijd. Door de eerste geboorte ontvangen we een bedorven bestaan, een verduisterd verstand, eenen verkeerden, tegen God opstandigen wil, een hart, dat in verwaten vijand-

schap zich tegen God verheft; een bestaan, dat tot niets goeds bekwaam, tot alle kwaad geneigd is; door de tweede geboorte ontvangen we in beginsel een geestelijk-zedelijk gaaf bestaan, een verlicht verstand, een wil, die zich in Gods wil verlustigd, een hart, dat Hem mint en vreest. Door de eerste geboorte zijn we uit de aarde aardsch, met een aardsch lichaam en eene aardsche ziel, aardsche zintuigen en aardsche begeerten, een aardsch leven, dat aan alle zijden door de aarde is beperkt; de tweede geboorte is van boven, en doet ons uitgaan naar de hemelsche dingen, in hope verlangen naar de eindelijke aanneming tot kinderen, namelijk de verlossing onzes lichaams. Door de eerste geboorte gaan we in de tegenwoordige wereld in, en worden we met duizend banden aan deze wereld verbonden; door de tweede geboorte gaan we het koninkrijk Gods in, worden we burgers van den hemel, zien we de dingen, die niet gezien worden, en komen we in contact te staan met die dingen, die "geen oog gezien, geen oor gehoord heeft, en in geen menschenhart ooit zijn opgeklimmen."

Wedergeboren!

Nogmaals, voor de tweede keer, geboren!

Geen ander mensch wordt in de wedergeboorte geschapen, maar dezelfde mensch wordt radicaal, tot in de wortelen van zijn bestaan en leven, herboren.

Uit de baarmoeder der verdorvenheid geboren in de sfeer der onverderfelijkheid.

Uit de duisternis des doods in het licht des levens.

Uit diepten der hel tot in de hoogten des hemels.

In de eerste geboorte staan we voor God als den Schepper, Die de dingen roept, die niet zijn alsof ze waren; als den souverainen Heer, Die op ons toornt en ons verdoemt.

In de tweede geboorte kennen we God als den Machtige, Die de dooden levend maakt, en die ons in eeuwige liefde verlost!

Goddelijk wonder!

Wedergeboren!

En zooals we door onze eerste geboorte welbewust met ons natuurlijk leven in deze tegenwoordige wereld worden ingedragen, zoo staat de wedergeboren mensch met een bewust en nieuw leven in het koninkrijk Gods.

Maar, vergeten we het niet, dit bewuste leven der wedergeboorte komt op *uit onvergankelijk zaad!*

Er is over de waarheid der wedergeboorte, met name ook over dit woord van God in Petrus, niet altijd gelijk gedacht en gesproken. Met name liep het verschil vaak over de vraag, of de wedergeboorte middelijk dan wel onmiddelijk moest worden gedacht, dat wil zeggen, of iemand wedergeboren word zonder dan wel door het Woord Gods. En deze controvers zou nog niet zoo ernstig geweest zijn, zoo men dit "Woord Gods" niet had gebonden aan de prediking, en er niet mee bedoeld had Gods Woord, zooals dit door middel van het woord

des menschen tot ons komt en ons menschelijk bewustzijn toespreekt. Want nu werd het de vraag of het wonder der wedergeboorte gebonden is aan het woord, dat zich tot ons bewustzijn richt door de Schrift en in de prediking. Gaat de roeping door de prediking des Woords aan de wedergeboorte vooraf, of is het juist andersom, zoodat de wedergeboorte aan alle heeren van het Woord door de prediking voorafgaat en verondersteld wordt?

Hier moeten we, gelijk dit ook in dit Woord Gods in Petrus gedaan wordt, wel onderscheiden.

Want we kunnen en moeten, op grond der Heilige Schrift, metterdaad onderscheid maken tusschen eene wedergeboorte in den engeren, en eene wedergeboorte in den ruimeren zin des woords. Niet, dat spreekt wel vanzelf, alsof deze eigenlijk twee wedergeboorten waren, want de heele wedergeboorte is één. Ook niet zoo, alsof deze onderscheiding ons zou mogen voeren tot de voorstelling, dat de wedergeboorte in den engeren van die in den breederen of ruimeren zin metterdaad in de praktijk des levens te scheiden waren, zoodat iemand in den engeren zin wedergeboren zijn kan voor twintig, veertig, of misschien zestig jaren, zonder ook maar één sprankje van leven ooit te openbaren, ook al leeft hij al dien tijd onder de verkondiging des Evangelies. Maar wel zoo, dat, gelijk de natuurlijke geboorte van een kindje een proces doorloopt, waarin te onderscheiden valt tusschen de ontvangenis en het gebaard worden, we ook in betrekking tot de geestelijke geboorte onderscheiden kunnen tusschen het allereerste begin, de allereerste inplanting van het nieuwe levensbeginsel, het "zaad der wedergeboorte," en de ontwikkeling en ontplooiing van dit zaad tot in de geboorte van den welbewust levenden mensch.

En met deze onderscheiding voor oogen kan er immers geen twijfel aan bestaan, dat de wedergeboorte in den engeren zin eene onmiddellijke, soevereine, vrije daad Gods is, niet gebonden aan de prediking des Woords, maar direkt door den Geest in het hart gewrocht.

Dat dit zoo is, wordt bevestigd door het wonder werk der genade in kleine kinderen, tenzij we zouden willen aannemen, dat de wedergeboorte der kleinen moet wachten op den tijd, dat de prediking vat op hen heeft. Maar dit is ook duidelijk uit dit Woord Gods door Petrus.

O, er kan geen twijfel aan bestaan, of de apostel heeft het over de wedergeboorte in den breederen of ruimeren zin. Hij spreekt immers tot wedergeborenen menschen, die zich der wedergeboorte bewust zijn geworden: "Gij, die wedergeboren zijt!" Hij heeft het over de volle wedergeboorte, die niet in het verborgene des harten schuil bleef, maar die als waarachtig leven en licht in het bewustzijn der wedergeborenen hare wondere werking van verlossing en bevrijding deed gevoelen.

Doch, laat ons niet voorbij zien, dat de apostel schrijft, dat deze volle en welbewuste wedergeboorte ontsprong uit *onvergankelijk zaad*.

Dat zaad was dus eerst.

En dat zaad is het allereerste beginsel des levens, dat God in onze harten inplant, soverain, vrij, onmiddelijk.

Het is de kiem der wedergeboorte, gewrocht doordat we in het diepst van ons bestaan in aanraking worden gebracht met den levenden Christus.

Het is onvergankelijk, onverderfelijk.

Door onze eerste geboorte, ontkiemend uit een vergankelijk zaad, ontvangen we een vergankelijk, en ook metterdaad verdorven bestaan.

De kiem der wedergeboorte is een kiem van opstandingsleven!

De dood heerscht er niet meer over!

Het is een beginsel van eeuwig leven!

Onvergankelijk zaad!

Door het Woord!

Let op de onderscheiding: uit onvergankelijk zaad, door het Woord.

Want ach, als er met iemand, die dat zaad der wedergeboorte in het diepst van zijn bestaan ontving, niet meer gebeurde, nimmer zou hij tot het licht des levens komen, en uit zijn doodstaat opstaan.

Uit onvergankelijk zaad, ja, maar ook door het Woord wordt een mensch wederom geboren. Zooals de regen en de zonneschijn het zaad in de waarde middelijkerwijs gesproken doet ontkiemen, zoo doet God, Die de dooden levend maakt, het in 't harte geplante levensbeginsel der wedergeboorte ontspruiten en tot bewust leven komen door het Woord, zoodat hij werkelijk uit de dooden opstaat, en in het licht des nieuwen levens begint te kennen en te willen, te lieven en te loven den God zijns levens.

Alleen maar, vergeten we het niet, ook dit "door het Woord" ziet op een Goddelijk wonder.

Het wil niet zeggen, dat ge iemand, die het zaad der wedergeboorte in zijn hart draagt, nu maar een bijbel moet geven, en hem opwekken moet om de Schrift ijverig te lezen, en dat dan als vanzelf door dat leven der Heilige Schrift het zaad des levens ontkiemen zal. Het wil ook niet zeggen, dat van het oogenblik af, dat een mensch het zaad des levens in zijn hart ontvangt, een prediker het verder wel af kan. Al las zoo iemand ook heel zijn leven de Schrift, en al luisterde hij ook elken dag naar de beste predikers, het zou niet baten!

Het levende, eeuwig blijvende Woord Gods alleen kan het doen!

Door de Schrift, ja; door de prediking, zeker!

Maar God spreekt Zijn eigen Woord!

Levend, krachtig, blijvend!

Wonder der genade!

H. H.

The Standard Bearer

Semi-Monthly, except Monthly in July and August

Published by

The Reformed Free Publishing Association
1101 Hazen Street, S. E.

EDITOR — Rev. H. Hoeksema

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Communications relative to subscription should be addressed to MR. R. SCHAAFSMA, 1101 Hazen St., S. E., Grand Rapids, Mich. All Announcements and Obituaries must be sent to the above address and will not be placed unless the regular fee of \$1.00 accompanies the notice.

Subscription \$2.50 per year

Entered as second class mail at Grand Rapids, Michigan

EDITORIALS

The C.L.A. and The Strike

From the Secretary of the C.L.A. I received the following contribution:

THE C.L.A.'S CONCEPTION OF THE STRIKE

Dear Mr. Editor,

I have read with a great deal of interest your articles in the July 1 and August 1 issues of the Standard Bearer concerning the C.L.A. and the Strike Question. I trust that my article, published in the August 1 issue, has in part at least answered some of your objections.

However, upon reading and re-reading both writings I can well understand that there may be some who are still not fully satisfied. And, if I may be so frank, Mr. Editor, that is not due to my presentation of the C.L.A.'s position but to your insistence upon fighting the position of the unchristian unions and presenting it as if that is the C.L.A.'s position, which is not correct.

You have given a definition of the strike in the July issue which we do not accept. It may pass as a fairly good description of the strike as used by the unchristian organizations but it fails entirely in giving a fair indication of the C.L.A.'s position. Allow me to give a definition in accordance with my writings on the subject, as follows: The strike, as upheld by the C.L.A. is a united cessation of work—resorted to after every other means to gain justice has been fully exhausted—on the part of a group of workers on a job or in a position to which they in the meantime retain a moral claim, for the purpose of attaining an end justified by the Word of God.

I think you will admit that that is a definition in harmony with our position, and vastly different from that of the worldly organizations. And it should be clear that when you attack the strike as you defined it you are not hitting the C.L.A. at all.

Furthermore, you insist upon avoiding any comment on the moral claim which the worker has when he strikes again an injustice, and you persist in emphasizing that the striker claims that he is legally still an employee and therefore by his refusal to work for his employer is in rebellion against authority.

In regard to that moral claim I would like to ask you very openly, whether or not you believe that a worker who leaves a job because of an injustice by the

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Rev. A. Petter

employer which he has refused to remove has such a moral claim to that job or not? We believe that it is entirely in harmony with Christian principles that he has. It is high time that a little more emphasis be placed upon the obligations of the employer toward the employee.

And what about this legal claim? In my previous article I made clear that the C.L.A. takes the position, in harmony with the labor laws and the position of the courts, that when a strike is called for a reason not covered by a State or Federal law the employees technically quit their jobs. They then have no legal claim to their jobs. If they did have they would claim their wages while on strike. That is the case in our land when employees strike because of a violation of an established law. In that case they retain a legal claim and the courts will uphold their right to wages lost. I made clear also that the C.L.A. does not justify such strikes but insists that obedience to the law be sought through the proper authorities.

As far as I know no Christian labor leader has ever taken the position that workers who strike against an injustice have a legal claim to the jobs they have vacated. In the Netherlands, where the Christian organizations were highly developed, the leaders always insisted upon an "opzeg-termijn" before a "werkstaking" went into effect. The "termijn" was the period of time given to the employer before the "opzeg" of the employer-employee relationship. There, too, as here, emphasis was placed upon "het zedelijk recht" of the workers to be re-employed in the jobs which they had left in protest against the injustice of the employer. That moral right is the one strong claim they have. When the workers leave their jobs the employer-employee relationship is technically broken. They have no right to re-enter without the employer's permission. It is therefore only by insistence upon recognition of their moral claim that they can hope to exert sufficient influence upon the employer to compel him to remove the injustice and offer them re-employment.

With that your entire argument about rebellion against authority falls by the board, and I could here end this reply. But there are a few inconsistencies in that presentation to which I also would like to call attention. In the July 1 issue you quoted very freely from the Epistle of James, concerning the slave or servant and master relationship. And then you state: "I know quite well that in modern society the relation of master and slave does no longer subsist. And I am not pleading for its return. We have the relation of employer and employee, *according to which the latter freely sells his time and labor for certain wages, and with definite qualifications as to hours and labor conditions.*" (I underscore. J.G.) When you wrote those words you threw overboard at least 95% of the

effectiveness of your lengthy quotations from James. For, you admit that today the relationship is a business relationship in which the employee sells and the employer buys labor under definite conditions. Therefore the only authority which the employer exercises is this: that he may demand that the employee live up to the conditions of the contract. That is all. And that is something entirely different than the authority exercised by the slave masters of the time of James, who exercised the authority of ownership.

Nevertheless I do agree that there is not in our day the recognition of authority which there should be. The C.L.A. knows that full well, and for that reason stresses proper recognition of authority such as the employer has the right to exercise. And we too stress that such authority must be submitted to for God's sake, who has instituted it and demands obedience. But that is based upon the principles of authority as taught throughout the Scriptures and not upon the admonitions of James to slaves and servants.

One more point I would like to stress in conclusion. That is, that you, Mr. Editor, have fallen into a grave error if your conclusions concerning submission to injustices are correct, which I do not accept because of the changed relationships which you yourself have very ably stated.

This is the error: You have repeatedly stated that a worker can quit his job, that this is his right, etc. And that is undoubtedly true. But, in the August issue you ask the question what an oppressed workingman may do—what redress he has—if he has exhausted all legal means to obtain justice, but has failed? Your answer is that in such a case the believer in this world is to suffer wrong, patiently. Which means, of course, that he may not even quit his job! To say that he may would be inconsistent. Yet you have repeatedly said that the worker has the right to quit, without any qualifications.

I do not know how you can square that, I cannot. But I do know where the trouble lies. That is in the faulty idea that Christians must submit patiently to economic or social injustices which are imposed upon them in common with unbelievers. I believe that Christians must submit patiently to oppression which comes upon them because of their Christian confession, until the time when God will strike down in His fierce wrath the oppressors of His people. Such oppression is suffered even now by those who suffer the loss of good positions because of their refusal to join the C.I.O. or A.F.L. In that we believe. But, we also firmly believe that it is the Christian's duty to oppose with all legitimate means at his command the sinfulness in the world about him, which includes the social-economic realm.

J. Gritter, Sec'y C. L. A.

REPLY.

There is in the above article, as far as I can see, nothing which Mr. Gritter did not write before, though in different words. There is no progress in our discussion. I will, therefore, be brief and to the point in my reply.

1. Mr. Gritter thinks that he is frank, when he accuses me of fighting the position of the worldly unions, and falsely presenting it as the position of the C.L.A. He thinks it must be due to this, if some of our readers are not satisfied about the position of the C.L.A. I am of precisely the opposite opinion. If Mr. Gritter did not satisfy our readers, it is only because he desperately attempts to show that there is a principal difference between the worldly unions and the C.L.A. in regard to the strike, while there is no such difference at all.

2. The brother writes that the C.L.A. does not accept the definition of the strike I offered. I still think that there is no principal difference between that and the definition Mr. Gritter now offers himself. I do not at all admit that his definition is "vastly different from that of the worldly organizations." The same is true of the worldly unions. For the C.L.A. a strike is such a cessation of work "resorted to after every other means to gain justice has been fully exhausted." The same claim is officially made by the worldly unions, as I have abundantly proved. The position of the C.L.A. is that in the meantime the strikers retain a moral claim to their job. The worldly unions make the same claim. The C.L.A. wants to call a strike only to attain a justified end. The worldly unions would say nothing else. That Mr. Gritters gives it a religious coloring by adding "justified by the Word of God," does not make any principal difference in the case, because it is always the union that is the sole judge whether an end is justified, and that acts upon its own authority. I may add here that the C.L.A. means to employ picketing to enforce their moral claim to their job. The worldly union does the same thing. I think that Mr. Gritter may safely submit his definition to some worldly union, and find that, principally, it will meet with no objection. Let Mr. Gritter offer proof to the contrary by quoting from the official statements concerning the strike in the constitutions of the worldly unions, as I have done, that we may see the vast difference of which he speaks. As it is now, he simply confirms what I have written on this matter.

3. Mr. Gritters asks me "openly, whether or not you (I) believe that a worker who leaves a job because of an injustice by the employer which he has refused to remove has such a moral claim to that job or not." My answer is: a. When an employee leaves his job, he quits; his employer has the perfect right to employ others; the one that quit his job has no

moral claim to it whatever. By cessation from work he gave up his claim. b. In case of a strike the injustice is such solely according to the judgment of the striker. Mr. Gritter should write: "because of what the worker conceives to be an injustice."

4. My argument that a strike is rebellion does not "fall by the board," nor did I contradict myself, as Mr. Gritter claims. Even though the employee is not the slave of his employer, it is evident that he owes obedience to his employer during the time that he is employed. As long as he claims to have a moral right to the job, he is under moral obligation to work for his employer. To claim that morally (that is, by the way, according to the will of God) someone is our employer, and to refuse to work for him, is plain rebellion. Mr. Gritter seems to think that it is possible to speak of a moral right to a job without the moral obligation to work. I deny this.

5. Mr. Gritter believes that he knows "where the trouble lies. That is in the faulty idea that Christians must submit patiently to economic or social injustices which are imposed upon them in common with unbelievers." But Mr. Gritter does not state the issue correctly. The difference between him and myself is this: he insists that a Christian, when he cannot obtain what he believes to be his right in the legal way, he may take the law in his own hands, be the judge in his own case, and attain his end by force; my position is that the Christian may use all divinely instituted means at his disposal to obtain justice, but that he may never take the law in his own hands, be the judge in his own case, and try to employ force to gain his end. If he cannot gain his end except by employing force and taking the law in his own hand, he must suffer if necessary.

Mr. Gritter cannot quote the Word of God in favor of his position. I challenge him to do so. He never did. My position is emphasized throughout in Scripture.

Mr. Gritter's position is simply that of the hopeless class struggle.

It is anti-Christian.

H. H.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Acts of the Synod of 1943 have been sent to the various consistories. There are a number of copies left that can be sold for 25 cents per copy. We also have some copies left of the preceding years. So if you send \$1.25 you can get all the Acts of Synod from 1940 to 1944.

D. Jonker, stated clerk.

My new address is: 1239 Bemis St. S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich.

Christian Liberty*

It is needless to say that I consider it a great privilege which I value highly that at this fourth Young People's Convention I have been invited once again to deliver the inspirational address. I gladly accepted the invitation, and only hope that the joy may not prove to be *all* mine. Those who conceived of the possibility of convoking this convention at this time and under the present circumstances deserve, I think, a word of commendation for their courage, and a vote of thanks for the effort they have put forth to make this convention possible. And, before I enter upon the discussion of my theme for tonight, I wish to mention that one can hardly attend this gathering without being deeply impressed by the absence of those young men that have been called to the service of our country in connection with the present world upheaval, that otherwise would have been with us tonight, and the thought of whom is constantly with us.

I have been asked to speak on the convention theme: Christian Liberty. It is not, of course, my task to make any special and particular application of this theme, but to draw a few general lines, leaving the discussion of particular phases to others. The theme is a timely one. Perhaps, it would always be timely to an extent, for always men jealously watch over, and are willing to fight to the death for what they conceive to be their freedom. But this would seem especially true today. It is said to be in the interest of liberty that we have entered the present global conflict. Of liberty we hear a good deal. And who has not heard of the "four freedoms" and does not know what is meant by them? What, then, could be more timely, especially since also the Scripture has a good deal to say about this precious and highly valued boon, than that we give ourselves account of the meaning of liberty in the true sense of that word?

The theme assigned to me, however, is not simply "Liberty" in general, but more particularly "Christian Liberty." The adjective appears to point to a distinction. It denotes that we have in mind a certain definite kind of freedom in distinction from other kinds. And it may be in the interest of a clearer understanding of our subject from the outset that we place ourselves before the question: just what distinction is denoted by this qualifying term? Does it mean to distinguish this particular kind of liberty to be conceived as coordinate with, though distinct from, such freedoms as political, civil, economic, religious liberty? Evidently not. To speak, for instance, of political liberty, economic liberty, civil liberty, religious liberty. . . Christian liberty, would be like classifying the books in my library as red covered, green covered, black covered, and. . . theological books; or

like dividing automobiles into blue, green, gray automobiles and. . . Fords. It is evident that Christian liberty cannot be classed with other kinds of freedom, that it rather refers to the essential character of all true freedom, in whatever form it may appear. What, then, is meant by the qualifying term "Christian?" Does my theme intend to distinguish between Christian and non-Christian or anti-Christian liberty? This is hardly conceivable, for non-Christian liberty is no liberty at all. Essentially, there is here in this present world only one kind of liberty, and that is Christian freedom. I take it, then, that the term rather intends to refer to the specific nature of a Christian's freedom in this world, in distinction, for instance, from the freedom of Adam in Paradise before the fall, and from that new form of liberty which will be revealed in perfection, in the new heavens and the new earth, in which righteousness shall dwell.

It may be expedient, as we make a few remarks about this important subject, first of all, to give ourselves account of the idea and the meaning of liberty. What is freedom? In the world about us, especially, too, in our own country, the philosophical, humanistic conception of liberty is rampant, a conception that largely hails from the French Revolution of 1789. It conceives of liberty merely as a relation of man to man. By it is meant that state and position of every individual man, in which he can live and act and move and develop according to his inner nature and ambitions, without restraint, without improper interference from without, and by his fellowmen. It is said that all men are created equal, and the emphasis in this statement is not on their being created, but on their fundamental equality. It is emphasized, moreover, that all are endowed with certain inalienable rights, and again, all the emphasis is intended to fall on these rights, rather than on the being endowed by the Creator. Every man has the right to live, to work, to enjoy himself in this world and partake of the fruits of the earth to the greatest possible extent: he is entitled to the pursuit of happiness. And freedom is that state in which he is able to maintain and enjoy those rights without interference from without, each man, of course, according to his ability and in his own position in society. Freedom from want is the state in which man can enjoy the abundant earthly life. Freedom from fear means that he can live his own life without having to be afraid of the tyranny of the oppressor. Freedom of worship denotes that he is entitled to worship or not to worship, to serve God or idols, to confess God or deny Him. Freedom of speech signifies that he may without restraint express his own free thoughts without fear of the law.

With respect to this humanistic conception of liberty, we make the following remarks. First of all,

we may notice that a proper conception of God is eliminated from this notion of liberty. It does, indeed, speak of the Creator, but only to maintain that all men have certain inalienable rights, which they received from Him. That liberty is, first of all, and fundamentally, a proper relation to God and His will concerning us and all things, is overlooked or denied. This is, of course, a fundamental error. It is quite impossible to arrive at a true conception of freedom without its being determined by the knowledge of God as He has revealed Himself to us. Secondly, and in close connection with the above mentioned error, we may notice that all the emphasis in the humanistic conception of freedom is on the rights of man in relation to his fellowman, and that, too, as conceived and determined by man himself. That true freedom is not only, and not chiefly, a question of rights, but rather a question of obligation, that, in fact, it is based on the obligation of love; and that it can exist only there where this obligation of love is fully met,—that is completely forgotten. Thirdly, it is also evident that this humanistic notion of liberty the reality of sin is denied. This was inevitable, seeing it speaks only of the Creator, and of the inalienable rights with which He endowed all men. Had it conceived of the proper relation of God to man, it would also have spoken of an inalienable and unchangeable obligation under which man is placed by the Creator, rather than of man's rights; and it might have come to the acknowledgement that before God man, the sinner, who has utterly failed to meet his obligation, has no rights at all in the presence of God. Now, however, the philosophic and humanistic conception of liberty boasts of man's rights as if sin were not a terrible reality. And, finally, we may also notice that this notion of liberty is wholly of this world, and wholly ignores the awful fact of death. That man lives in the midst of death, and that in the prison of sin and death there is not even the possibility of liberty has no place in this conception. The free man is he who, in his prison of sin and death, insists on and is able to maintain his rights over against all encroachment upon them by his fellows, and thus can attain to the highest possible enjoyment of this world and its life!

The result of this philosophy as it works out in actual life are inevitable, and they become more and more evident in the world as it develops. What can you expect? Man is the standard and measure of his own liberty. The liberty he seeks is not determined by the will of God, but by his self-conceived rights. It is not rooted in the law of love, but in the desire and ambition to maintain oneself. It ignores and denies the fact of sin. The result is constant strife, the class-struggle, revolution, the denial of authority, divorce, war, the destruction of the home and of society. On the one hand, there is a constant

attempt to throw off every yoke of oppression and restraint by the government, a striving after the ideal democracy, a government by and for and of the people; but on the other hand, as each individual and social group insist on their own rights, and strive after the highest possible enjoyment of worldly goods and happiness, there is felt the need of more and more governmental restraint to keep these striving factions within limits and under control, and in spite of ourselves we are constantly drifting in the direction of the all-mighty State. And never has the world been in such a state of disruption as in our own day. Even as there is no peace for the wicked, so there is no liberty apart from God!

For a correct conception of true freedom, we must proceed from the fundamental principle that God is the Lord, and there is no Lord beside Him. He is God. He alone is sovereignly free, and He determines all freedom for the creature. God is self-determined. He is not limited or determined by any law above Him, by any power outside of Him; but only by His own, infinitely perfect Being. Hence, God's freedom, and His only, consists in this that He doeth whatsoever He pleaseth. And whatsoever He pleases is good because it is He that wills it.

In this sense, the creature is never free. In a certain sense, it can, indeed, be said also of the creature that his freedom is the state in which he may live and act as he pleases, provided, however, that it always be added that he must please to do the will of God, and to live and act within the boundary of His law. For the sovereign God determined for all creation, and for every creature in its own position in the whole of that creation, its own boundary. That boundary is the law for that creature. Within the limits of that law it must live and move, and those limits it dare not transgress. Moreover, this God-determined boundary for the existence of every creature is not arbitrarily imposed, but is in complete harmony with the inner nature, the "name" of the creature. Thus there is a law for the fish that it shall move in the water, for the bird that it shall spread its wings in the wide expanse of the heavens, for the tree that it shall be rooted in the ground. There is a law for your lungs to breathe, for your heart to beat, for the blood that courses through your veins, a law for the mind of man to think, and for his will to choose and to determine. Every creature has its own law, and that law, that boundary of its existence, is in harmony with its very nature. And, therefore, freedom for the creature always means that, according to the tendency or desire of that inner nature, it can exist and move and develop without restraint from without, within the limits of the law of God.

The law for man as a moral being, is that he shall love God with all his heart and mind and soul

and strength. That is the inalienable obligation of man before God, the boundary of his existence, within which he must move and act and find his liberty, and to transgress which means death. And this demand of the law of God is in harmony with his very nature. For God created man an intellectual, volitional being, so that his very nature is adapted to reflect the image of God. And, therefore, true liberty for man is that state in which man from the innermost recesses of his nature, that is from the heart, is able to fulfill this inalienable obligation of the love of God in all his life and all its relationships.

Now, if this is the very essence of liberty, its indispensable condition, the natural man is not free, but in bondage. Man was, indeed, created with true liberty. For he was placed under the sacred obligation to love the Lord his God with his whole being; and he was endowed with the right and the power to fulfill that obligation. For he was created in the image of God, in true knowledge of God, perfect righteousness, and spotless holiness. He could love the Lord with his mind, with his will, with his heart, and with all his strength. He was placed in the position of God's friend-servant. He enjoyed the liberty of dwelling in God's house, entering into His blessed fellowship, and tasting the goodness of the Lord. It is true that his liberty was not the same as Christian liberty. Not with the highest form of freedom was he endowed. For he could fall. His freedom for that reason is often described negatively as the freedom not to sin, which implies that by a determination of his will, he could also despise his freedom, transgress the law of love, and deliver himself over into the prison of sin and death. And this is what happened to him, and in him to all mankind. He transgressed the law of love, became guilty, the object of the wrath of God, and a slave of sin. Such is the bondage of the natural man. In a formal sense he is still free, that is, he always acts as an intellectual volitional being, the conscious and willing subject of all his actions. But he cannot, and will not, and cannot will the good. Not only this, but he has lost the very right to liberty. Legally he is a slave of sin, in the bondage of corruption and death. The inalienable obligation to love the Lord with his whole being still remains upon him. But he cannot meet it, not because he is prevented by some outside force, but because his inner nature is become corrupt. For knowledge there came darkness, for righteousness perversion, for holiness enmity against God and consecration to the devil.

But in Christ there is liberty. He is the liberator. For, first of all, He is perfectly free. He is the Son of God in human nature. He is not with the entire human race under the sentence of death. The guilt of Adam could not be imputed to Him. And, although He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, He was with-

out the defilement and corruption of sin. Hence, He could meet perfectly the obligation to love His God, and that, too, under the wrath of God against sin, and in the depth of death and hell. What is more He was able and in a position to perform this perfect act of love, to bring this sacrifice of perfect obedience, not for Himself, but for all those whom the Father gave Him. For He has been ordained the Head of His Church in God's eternal good pleasure, so that He could represent them in the hour of wrath and judgment, and being the eternal Son of God, He was able to add infinite value to His sacrifice. And this He did on the accursed tree. There He brought the perfect sacrifice by which He obtained the right to deliver His people from the bondage of sin and death, and set them free for ever. But there is more. Christ is the liberator, not only because He merited the right to deliver them, but also because He was raised from the dead, exalted to the right hand of the Father, and given the promise of the Spirit. That Spirit He poured out into His Church, and through that Spirit and by His Word He liberates His own. Hence, where the Spirit of the Lord is, and nowhere else, there is liberty indeed!

But let us notice now the distinctive character of Christian liberty. First of all, this freedom of the Christian is distinct, even from Adam's original liberty, in this respect that while the latter's freedom was grounded in man's will, Christian liberty is rooted in Christ. Not in himself is the ground and source of the liberty of the Christian, but in Christ his Lord, and the Christian stands in this liberty by faith only. Secondly, and in close connection with the first point of distinction, the Christian's freedom cannot be lost. The liberty of the believer is resurrection-freedom, deeply and firmly rooted in the lordship of the Son of God. It is transcendent, victorious. Death hath no more dominion over Christ, nor over His own. The liberty of the Christian is expressed in the "non posse peccare," the not being able to sin or to fall into its bondage ever again. And the third point of distinction is that the inalienable obligation of the love of God has been accentuated, and that in Christ the Christian is enabled to meet that accentuated obligation. To be sure, the obligation is still the same: it is to love the Lord our God with all our heart and mind and soul and strength. But in Christ it is now so accentuated that we must be willing to suffer with Christ in the world, and to lay down our lives for one another. For so Christ revealed the love of God to us. And belonging to Him, we too, must be willing to suffer, even unto death, in the love of God and for the Lord's sake. And in this respect, too, the humanistic conception of liberty prevailing in the world stands in direct and sharp antithesis to Christian liberty. The former speaks of and insists on human rights, wants

to maintain those rights, fight for them, destroy the neighbor for them; the latter speaks of the sacred obligation of the love of God in Christ, and is willing to sacrifice itself and to suffer in the service of that love!

In that liberty the Christian is called to walk in the midst of the present world, until he shall enter into the perfect liberty of God's eternal tabernacle. In that world he must reveal his liberty, bring it into practice, walk as a freeman. And in that world he moves and lives in the midst of various relationships to the neighbor; his position, his person, his most intimate life of human love, his goods, his name. And in that world he finds all kinds of ordinances, and powers instituted by God. There is the relation of parents and children, of master and servant, of employer and employee, of magistrate and subject. In all these various relationships he must walk in liberty, i.e. not insist on his own rights and follow his own will, or even the dictates of his own conscience, but do the will of God, and meet his alienable obligation to love the Lord his God in Christ Jesus his Lord. He must not love God abstractly, but very concretely in this world. He must not love God *and also* his neighbor, but he must reveal the love of God in the love of his neighbor. The general result of this walk in true liberty, as a servant of the living God in Christ, will be that he will always seek the true well being of his neighbor; and that he will be subject to all the ordinances of men as unto the Lord. He is not a revolutionary. He does not cause disruption. He is truly the peace-maker in the world. He does not employ force to insist on his right. Even when he goes to war, he does not fight in hatred of his neighbor, but in subjection to the powers that be, for the Lord's sake. Walking in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, he strives to bring into practice the principle of the love of God in every domain of life.

Such is the practice of Christian freedom.

It means that he fights with a good and free conscience against sin and all the powers of darkness. For this he may have, he will have to suffer. In the world he shall have tribulation. The world will reproach him, persecute him, and lying speak all manner of evil against him, if only he walks in liberty. He may be deprived of his name, his position, his very place in the world. But even so, the believer dare not change his course. Still he continues to walk in liberty. And he is willing to suffer for Christ's sake, following in His steps. And he leaves his cause, which is the cause of the Son of God, to Him that judgeth righteously, and that shall surely give him the victory in the day of Christ. Then he shall receive the eternal reward. In God's tabernacle he shall forever walk in perfect freedom, without being troubled

by the ignorance of foolish men. That will be liberty indeed!

H. H.

*Speech delivered at the recently held convention of our Young People's Societies in Grand Rapids, Mich.

The Jubilee of Christian Liberty *

For quite a while I have known the main theme of this convention, namely, Christian Liberty; but I confess that I have had no little difficulty in finding a sub-head under this general theme. One of your committee members, in charge of this convention, suggested I speak in Christian Liberty and Amusements. For a while I thought seriously on this subject, but for more than one reason, I did not go through with it, chiefly, because the subject did not appeal to me at all. Certainly it is hardly necessary to speak to you on worldly amusements and Christian Liberty. That subject is no matter of debate among us; and it seems to me that every one of you could entirely anticipate anything I could say on that subject. It is simply a matter of record that real Christian youth is not interested in the laughter and thrill of those that travel to eternal perdition. We certainly do not begrudge them their silly amusements of the show, the cards, the drink and the dance.

And yet, it is exactly because of this possible sub-head of worldly amusements that I arrived at the treatment of the subject I have finally chosen. Thinking on the idea of amusement it was but one step to the idea of jubilation, which is the heart of my talk to you tonight. Hearing in fancy the loud laughter and singing of the godless, the thought came to me in question form: What have *we* to laugh about? What is *our* thrill? Where is *our* great joy and rejoicing? It was then that I thought on the great Jubilee of God's people. A jubilee that is inaugurated in this dispensation and which shall last unto all eternity.

You have at once seen the connection of my subject with the general theme of the convention. They are related as cause and effect. We are jubilant because we are set at liberty.

The first Scripture which I read and studied gave me my starting point and largely supplied that which I hope to tell you this evening. I would mold my theme and division in the following proposition: I would speak on THE JUBILEE OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY; and see first of all that this Jubilee is sounded from out of the Lament of Death; then I would point out to you how we are jubilant after the Chief Musician; and finally say a few words on

our Jubilee and characterize it as a great rejoicing unto the Symphony of Heaven.

It is really necessary that we pause awhile and see the horrible background of our Christian Jubilee. This dark background is painted in awful colors in Scripture and I also found it in that portion of Scripture to which I alluded a while ago: Leviticus 25:1-17. I will read just one verse of that portion, a verse which contains the very heart and core of the Christian's Jubilee. It is verse 10 and I quote: "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family."

A careful study of this verse in its setting has shown me that you may find everything in it necessary to the expounding of the Jubilee of Christian Liberty. It goes without saying that we will follow the time-tested method of explaining Scripture with Scripture.

You will remember that I would set out by speaking of our Jubilee as we will enjoy it on the background of an awful Lament, the Lament of death. This I will prove.

The Holy Word emphasizes that this fiftieth year shall be a jubilee unto Israel. The word Jubilee is really of Hebrew origin, in fact, it is almost literally Hebrew even in its present form and is derived from the word for to well, to flow copiously as of rain. For that reason there are forms of the same root which mean river, flood and deluge. The name deluge in the history of Noah and the destruction of the first world is derived from the same word as Jubilee. It means the sound as of surging waters that are poured out. You might say that Jubilee means the sound as of many waters. I would kindly ask you to remember that definition. We will refer to it again.

But why should this fiftieth year be likened unto a shout and a sound as of many waters? The answer is easy. It is because of the great joy that came to these people after a very sore and great lament. I called it the Lament of death.

Now it seems to me that the fact of the lament is very evident. The people to which this jubilee referred to first of all were the Hebrews that had become slaves. They lost their person, their possessions and their land. They had become bondmen and bitter was their lot. Some of them had been in bondage for 49 years. And now, all of a sudden, all is restored to them again. They received their person, their possessions and their land. We can easily imagine the great shouting of joy which was heard throughout the land when this great year of the Jubilee rolled around. It would be as it were a deluge of sound, a great outpouring of gladness and rejoicing through-

out the coasts of Israel. Liberty was proclaimed out the land.

Now this slavery of Israel and all the attending evils are typical. They reveal the natural state of the sons and daughters of Adam. And for that reason there is the awful Lament of death on every side.

Oh, I know that this statement sounds rather trite, and yet I am convinced that no one realizes it enough. There are several reasons for this. We have heard it said so often that we are a miserable race, that this earth is a vale of tears, that it hardly makes any impression on us any more. Then too, we are a race of shallow men and women. We do not live deeply at all, as we are by nature. Most of our misery is not even felt. And much of what is felt we gloss over and act as though it does not exist. We are by nature very conceited and try to tell ourselves and others that it is not so very bad after all. But I assure you that if we saw for one moment the awful misery attendant to the human race, we would cry out our eyes in sadness and sorrow.

But let us listen to God's evaluation of the slave.

Even when things run their normal course, man is in a sorry state. For: "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not." Job 14:1, 2. Also this I read in God's Word: "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field so he flourishes. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." Ps. 103:15, 16.

How much louder and poignant is the cry of the mortal when God's hand begins to press down harder upon him in the course of history! For such is the case. It proceeds from the breaking of seals to the trumpets of judgment and from these to the outpouring of the vials of God's wrath which is fulfilled in them! (Revelation of John).

For instance, will you try and give expression to the great lament attending this global war that is tearing and cutting and destroying the race of men and women? It is the increase of pressure upon the man of sin. And the result is more sorrow.

Listen to this: "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." Or this: "Therefore shall her (Babylon, the world.) plagues come in one day, death and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire. . . .and the kings of the earth. . . . shall bewail her. . . .standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, Alas!" Rev. 16:21; and portions of Rev. 17:8-11a.

But you will say: That is all well and good, but how about her song and her laughter, her rejoicings

and the wonderful thrill of sinners?

I would say: Do not be deceived! Here is God's evaluation of that: "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness." Prov. 14:13.

The proper expression of man's life is the lament of death that is gnawing incessantly at his vitals and he lives in a very vale of tears. That is the truth. Everything contrary to that evaluation of man's life on earth is the life of the devil and would tend to deceive you.

What might be the cause of this awful dirge of mankind?

The cause, my friends, is not in God or creation. Man was created free, at liberty and therefore happy and rejoicing as the day was long.

You will have heard it explained in the keynote speech yesterday and therefore I will not enlarge on this. Suffice it to say that man was happy in his freedom because he was created in the sweet bond of God's covenant. To walk after the law of liberty in Paradise was his delight and Eden reflected such untold happiness. Life for man was a wonderful song of gladness.

No, the cause is certainly not in God. You must seek for it in man. He caused his own dirge and lament of death. It is because he broke the bond of the covenant in Paradise and became wholly miserable. That action is endorsed by us, by man, by every man. The Holy Spirit in Psalm 2 will tell us: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us!"

Yes, but because of the fact that man was created a covenant creature, he at once entered into another covenant, an agreement with the devil. We hear of this through Isaiah: "Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." Isa. 28:15.

The results?

The awful result is that we are in captivity by nature. And our cords that bind us are the cords of our own sin; the prison that encompasses us is the prison of our own death, our spiritual death, our hatred against God! Listen to the testimony of the Holy Spirit: "His own iniquity shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sin." We are in the prison of death by nature, wherefore Paul tell us that Christ had to quicken us "who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1.

That slavery is spiritual and from within. In the

inmost heart and mind of the sinner he is bound, bound to corruption and sin. And this slavery is so dreadful that although he cries out in terrible agony from age to age, he does not know or realize that he is in bondage of corruption, that he is a willing slave of the devil and of sin, doing Satan's will all his days.

That is the reason for his awful dirge, his continuous lament. Henceforth this sorry world is a vale of tears whichever way you look at it.

And no one knows this better than the Christian. When heavenly light shines in his heart he recognizes the truth and his real state and condition. Then we hear his lament in tones of sorrow and groaning. Then he says: O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!?

Now this is the Gospel, that, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Chief Musician appeared upon the stage of history and that he entered our prison and entered into our dirge of sorrow and misery.

First of all, you know that he entered *our* prison, not into the prison of all. Some, most of mankind, are delivered as also the devil and his hosts, into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment. At that time in history their lament will be augmented into the wailing of eternal damnation in a place where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

But Jesus came into the prison of death and into the wailing of his sheep for to deliver them, for to set them at liberty and for to cause them to sing His song of eternal happiness, the song of the Lamb.

That He did this is an act of strictest justice.

That is plain when we consider that Jesus is the Chief Musician. He is such from all eternity. God ordained Jesus from all eternity to be the Head, the King, the Chief of all the children of God whom He foreknew in Divine love and lovingkindness. All God's people were given to Jesus and henceforth He is responsible for them. If they are in the prison of sin and death it is His calling to bring them out, to deliver them and put a song into their heart and mouth. That was the commandment which Jesus received of the Father. (John 17).

And so He entered into our captivity, last Christmas 1943 years ago. But, entering hell willingly, as an act of love, He walked ever in perfect liberty.

And straightway He began to cry and to weep and to groan with groanings that never were fully uttered.

Because God laid on Him the iniquities of us all. He cried and cried all the days of His flesh because that prison and captivity, those bands and cords are expressed into the awful phrase: The Burden of the Wrath of God! And the result is the awful Dirge of Jesus, the Chief Musician. Even before His birth we read of it in prophetic language: The sorrows of hell compassed Me and the snares of death prevented

Me! Or this: All Thy waves and all Thy billows have gone over Me! Rally, young people, if you would have a commentary of this Dirge of Jesus, read Psalms 22, 25, 42, 43, 69, 77, and 88. Or attend to this one verse in Hebrews 5: "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared. . . ." They all tell you of the lament of Jesus. All the cryings of the saints of old which we find recorded in the Old Testament, are so many songs of sorrow of Jesus, lived before in a small measure by His saints. But He fulfilled them when He came and suffered and died. Doing such He led captivity captive, a captive in His train.

And make no mistake, never will you be able to fathom the awful suffering Jesus suffered in order to free you from prison. The prison of eternal damnation straightened Him so horribly that we hear that terrible cry from a great distance on Calvary's hill: My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me??!

And miracle of miracles! Jesus was delivered from that prison of death. He could not be holden of death (Note the figure of the prison and the bonds). Peter testified of it before the Jews: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains (must be: cords) of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.

But why? If the wicked that shall bear the burden of the wrath of God must stay in that prison forever, and if Jesus suffered also the burden of the eternal wrath of God, how could He arise from that terrible distance?

The answer is, first, because He suffered and died and cried as an act of loving obedience! As such He satisfied the demands of God for us. The answers which we failed to give He has given; the punishment for the wrong answer of Psalm 2 He suffered for us substitutiously. And, second, His Godhead sustained Him in all that suffering and dying and groaning so that He could finish the work that is eternal. Hallelujah!

Yes, Hallelujah! That is the beginning and the end of a wonderful song. Jesus arose! He arose and appeared leading our captivity and singing as He went. The human nature of the children which He took along to hell and damnation He still carries, but glorified, enhanced in beauty and wonders.

And the lament is changed into a hymn of praise, the hymn of liberty. It is the Jubilee of Christ. A while ago I referred you to the words of Peter where he testified to the raising of the Lord Jesus. Well in the same connection we read, and remember that Jesus is speaking of the result of His own resurrection: Therefore did My heart rejoice and My tongue was glad!

Henceforth, wherever you see the Christ of God you will hear Him singing His song of deliverance. Primarily, therefore, the Jubilee is the Jubilee of Christ. He is the Chief Musician. Therefore also we read that all our singing will be the singing of the Song of Moses and of the Lamb.

Now you will recollect that I spoke of the root meaning of Jubilee. That it is the shout and the sound of many waters. Come with me to Patmos, to John the Apostle of the Lamb. He saw heavenly visions. And suddenly he heard a voice as the sound of many waters. He heard the jubilee of Christ! And well might Jesus sing His song of praise of God. For He had set Him free. He was a slave and the Lord gave Him a name that is above every name in this world and in the world to come. He sank lower than the most despised man on earth, but at the time John saw and heard Him He was the King of kings and the Lord of lords. On the cross He was naked and all His possessions were taken away. But now He inherits the Kingdom and possesses all things with all His sheep. There was no land anymore for Jesus, not even the one foot square He needed to stand. They nailed Him to the cross and there He hung between heaven and earth. But now He is the heir of the world, a new world in which righteousness shall dwell. Yes, we can see it that Jesus has His jubilee. We can hear it in His voice when He testifies of it to John: I was dead and behold, I live for ever! The voice of many waters, the song that sounds as the deluge of praise, the Song of the Lamb, the Great and Chief Musicians.

He has the eternal pre-eminence, He is the First in salvation, in redemption, in the Kingdom, in the bosom of God!

And in that bosom of God He sings His song of adoration and makes music on the harp of God.

And this is our Gospel, that Jesus is the Chief Musician so that He may instruct us in the singing of His song.

For He has set us free. There will be echoes to the song of the Lamb that will make heaven musical forever.

For the prophet testifies: "And I will cause you to pass under the rod and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." Ezekiel 20:37.

Of that covenant we also read in the Scripture which I took as my starting point. The Jubilee is in the fiftieth year. It is the year that follows, that is the result of the seven sabbaths of years, that is, seven times seven years are fulfilled. Now we know that seven is the number of God's eternal covenant. It is the sum of three and four, God and man united, knit together in the bond of love and friendship. And that we find here a sabbath of sabbaths, a multiplication of the holy number seven means undoubtedly the

excellence of the restoration in Christ. Adam was happy in the seven of God's covenant, but we are far happier in the seven times seven in Christ. Our happiness is augmented, enhanced, multiplied and exalted to the highest heavens. Adam loved God and was loved in return for he dwelled in the garden of delight; but Jesus is loved and it is proven for He is in the bosom of the Father. And we know that we shall be where He is, so that our bliss extends to the heavens above.

And so we are jubilant. And well we might.

We have our Jubilee and we sing the song of the Lamb for He hast set us free. No longer are we slaves of sin doing the will of the devil. O no, but we will to do the will of God. When we see that will we sing: Oh how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day!

We have our Jubilee for our possessions are restored but multiplied by grace and wondrous love. We are hung about and permeated with spiritual graces, with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus the Lord. We have beauty for ashes!

Sing, sing forever your song of Jubilee for He will give the land to thee, o inhabitant of Zion. You are restored to your family, that means that you may go to the Home of God! Is there anything sweeter? Does not the sound of the heavenly Home awaken the most adoring thoughts?

Yes, the results are the song, the symphony of Heaven.

I know it, I know it, your voice breaks and that very often. And yet, the first editions of that song are given to all the elect. And we sing that song out of the depths of our hearts.

It is a song that is new. The world has never heard it before. It is not the old song of paradise. That song is old and gone forever. I cannot sing the old songs anymore. But we will sing a new song to Jehovah for the wonders He has wrought.

It is a song that is victorious, heavenly, glorious.

And so I have spoken to you of the glorious Jubilee of Christian liberty. Yes, for we listen to the voice of Jesus and exhibit in principle the love and obedience that is His. Therefore, we often read that the church received the faith of Jesus. It all flows to us from the Chief Musician.

We heard the voice of Jesus say: Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest (the Sabbath) unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

It is the burden of God's eternal Covenant, which is true liberty, whose Jubilee shall make heaven musical forever.

G. V.

*Speech delivered at the recently held convention of our Young People's Societies in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Abimelech, His Usurped Rule and Downfall

In treating this subject, we must set out with once more directing attention to Gideon's doing of making an ephod from the donations of the people. The ephod, as has already been explained, had a highpriestly significance. It was a special sacred garment worn by the highpriest. With it was connected the Urim and the Thummim through which the people could contact God and to which the judges and rulers in Israel could thus apply, through the highpriest, for divine direction in any national crisis and in the management of the affairs of the state. This explains the consecration of such a garment by Gideon. "Jehovah shall rule over you," was his retort to the people on the occasion of their offering him the hereditary kingship. His resolve was that Jehovah be the only and supreme monarch and that in every crisis and at all times the nation be ruled solely by His will. From the spoils of the war with Midian, Gideon therefore made an ephod; and to this instrument he would continually apply for divine direction as judge. He would thus, as judge, not usurp God's place. Certainly, it must be conceded that Gideon meant well. His doing was a declaration that the Lord, and not any human ruler, was to be honored. Yet there are good scriptural grounds for taking the view that the doing was wrong. Firstly, Gideon preserved his ephod in his own city, in Ophrah. (He *preserved* it there. He did not, as we read in the English version, *set it up* in that city. This translation is faulty. It proceeds on the foundation of the view that Gideon made an image or a statue and erected it in Ophrah. As Keil remarks, the word found in the original is nowhere used of the erection of an image). Now the seat of common worship at that time was Shiloh, in Ephraim, and thus not Ophrah. There in Shiloh stood the tabernacle, and there was preserved the already existent ephod especially designed by Moses for the highpriest. Gideon's ephod was thus spurious. It was, so to say, an opposition ephod. There was no need of it at all. That desired divine direction could be had by applying to the ephod in Shiloh. That the priestly family of that day may have been in a state of decline was no excuse for avoiding it. That the sanctuary was located in the territory of proud Ephraim was likewise no excuse. It is true that doubtless Gideon was not purposing to raise Ophrah to the position of a seat of common worship next to Shiloh; and to set aside the established priesthood. Yet his whole doing tended to produce precisely that result. For he himself must have continued to serve the altar that he had built, and by directly consulting his

ephod he established himself as a kind of second high-priest in the land. The result was that the mind of the people was diverted from the priesthood in Shiloh and concentrated on Ophrah particularly upon Gideon and upon his house where the ephod was preserved. What Gideon had neither calculated on nor wanted now took place. "All Israel went thither. . . ." From far and near they went in crowds to Ophrah. And the notice that they went thither a whoring after Gideon's ephod tells us that they forsook Shiloh and the God of Israel who dwelt there and the ministers of God who there served His altars. What they did is to exchange Jehovah as their object of worship for the idol with which Gideon, in his sinful thoughtlessness, had provided them. The ephod became to them an object of idolatrous worship. If they already had been paying divine honors to Gideon, they now make room in their hearts for his ephod. In this dumb thing, associated as it was with the house and the person of their hero, they put their trust. This deflection of the people indicates that the Lord disapproved of Gideon's doing. God was here punishing Gideon's sin with sin. The sinful adulation of the people had a bad effect on Gideon. It diminished the spiritual stature of the man. Seeing the deflection of the people, he, without delay, should have put away his ephod, rebuked the idolatry of the people, and returned with them to Shiloh. This he failed to do, as far as can be known from the sacred narrative. He assumed to their idolatry a more or less passive attitude, accepted their sinful and exaggerated interest in his person and continued in their midst his career of a spurious highpriest. More must be said. Returning to his own house, Gideon ordered his life on the plane of an oriental lord. For he multiplied wives to himself. This is evident from the notice that he had seventy sons of his body begotten. Besides, he also had his concubines one of whom was taken from among the apostate women of Shechem—that filthy sink of Baal-worship—and who bore him the usurper Abimelech. The Lord had strictly forbidden the leaders in Israel to multiply unto themselves wives, that their hearts turn not away, Deut. 17:17. It is also revealing that he should have a son bearing the name Abimelech. The name means, "my father is king." But the name may also be interpreted to mean, "Father of a king." That the name was given to this son not by the friends and sympathizers of this concubine but by Gideon himself at this son's birth or later on as a surname, is certain. The language of the text allows no other view. The Hebrew text reads, "And his concubine that was in Shechem she bore to him, also she, a son and he—mark you, *he*—named his name Abimelech." (Judges 8:31). The pronoun *he*, certainly, can be made to apply only to Gideon. Also the pronoun *she* in the text just quoted is repeated for emphasis.

"*She* bore to him, also *she*, a son. . . ." The sacred narrator, it would seem, expresses surprise that Gideon should take to himself a concubine from Shechem and that such an unprincipled woman should be the mother of one of his sons. Doubtless, she was not even an Israelite but a descendant of the pagan Hamor, the father of Shechem, the defiler of Dinah, the only daughter of Jacob. The city of Shechem had been built by Hamor and named after this son. Thus it would seem that Gideon fell into the identical sin into which king Solomon was to fall. Gideon, though on a vastly smaller scale than Solomon, loved strange women. He loved and married that heathenish woman in Shechem. And the fruit of that union was Abimelech, the godless usurper. As to the name Abimelech, if, "My father is king," is the right interpretation, the giving of this name would seem to indicate that Gideon now stood out in his mind as a kind of emperor in Israel and that the thought that the people had wanted to crown him king was now rather sweet to him. If, "father of a king," is the right interpretation, Abimelech's bearing this name might indicate that he was a person of a lordly bearing and majestic demeanor so that Gideon, beholding him, had concluded that, of all his sons, he was eminently qualified to carry on, as a kind of emperor, after Gideon's decease. However interpreted, this name, as given to and born by this son, would seem to form a blot on Gideon's career. It seems that Gideon was no longer small in his own eyes as he had been at the time when the Lord called him. Yet, for all this, he was a true believer. In his better days his faith had achieved great things, wherefore he was also included by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews in that great cloud of witnesses by which we are compassed about. What his deflections indicate is that, despite his towering faith, he was but a sinful man, thus only a type or shadow of the true deliverer of God's people—Christ Jesus still to come. The last thing that the sacred narrator tells us of this remarkable man is that he died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezites.

To Gideon, these deflections of his—his making him an ephod, his preserving it in his own house, and the resultant idolatry of the superstitious people that his doing inspired—became a snare, a veritable death-trap. But it was not until after Gideon's death that this trap sprang and claimed its victims. Then took place the murder of all Gideon's sons save two, namely Jotham, the youngest of them, who escaped, and Abimelech the perpetrator of the terrible deed. But let us quote Scripture here. "And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house"

(Judges 8:27). This is what happened. The continual flocking of the people to Ophrah to see their hero, and the public demonstrations of the superstitious esteem in which they held him and his family, aroused the jealousy and envy of the men of Ephraim. They suspected him and among one another, accused him and his sons of wanting to establish themselves as permanent rulers in Israel. And apparently they had reason. His making him an ephod and his putting the thing in his own house had the appearance of a scheme to lure the people to Ophrah and to focus the minds of his countrymen upon his person and family. And what had he done at any time to quell their vile and wild enthusiasm? If his motives were pure, if his heart was right with God, why did he not worship with them in Shiloh? Why was he silent while they made a caricature of faith through whoring after his ephod? And what need had he of that ephod with a highpriest in Shiloh? So they doubtless reasoned among themselves and ostensibly with considerable justification, it must be admitted. Fact is that through the course he was following, Gideon laid himself wide open to the attack of his enemies. His doing looked that questionable that they easily could use it as a pretext for the extermination of his house after he had died. "What is good, whether all the sons of Jerubbaal, three score and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you?" This was the question with which Abimelech approached the Shechemites in Ephraim. The implication of this question is that the sons of Gideon were planning on partitioning at least northern Canaan and establishing themselves as kings in their respective districts. Yet it is certain that any real evidence on which to ground this suspicion was wholly lacking. The only one of Gideon's sons who was lusting after power was this Abimelech. And he imagined that the lust that burnt in his own bosom rioted in the bosom of them all. So, once in power, he was resolved to slay them in order to clear the stage of all opposition. But for this slaying their was no need. These brethren were unambitious, inoffensive and godfearing men. The good trees in Jotham's parable were Gideon and these brethren. They refused to be elected. They would not exchange what they already possessed for the vain glory of a forbidden royalty. The olive tree will not forsake his fatness wherewith by him men honor God and their fellowmen; the fig tree his sweetness and good fruit; and the vine his wine, which cheereth God and man, to wave (Hebrew, go up and down) over the trees. So spake Jotham. And he spake for himself not only but for his brethren and for Gideon his deceased father and for every god-fearing judge in Israel. These brothers, too, were men of right principle. Jehovah was Israel's king. But the demand of the people was for a king other than the Lord, a

ruler to deliver them from the results of their sinful individualism—every man did what was right in his own eyes—to free them from the bitter fruits of their apostacy, but a ruler at once willing to allow them to follow their individual wicked impulses, and ready to walk in the ways of sin as their companions, and serve with them in Baal's temple. Thus the kingship that *they* had to offer was a vile thing. Woe unto the man who should accept. That man certainly would lose his fatness and sweetness. He would be killed by the wrath of the Almighty and driven by His curse into everlasting desolation. Of these facts and truths the good men in Israel had understanding. They perceived that the way of life was the way of obedience to God, of loving submission to His will and rule. They perceived that, to be delivered from all their troubles, the people, instead of clamoring for a king, must repent of their sins and return to their God.

Indeed it is true that the kingship that those apostates in Israel had to offer was a vile thing. The kingship that the world offers a man is always a vile thing, as vile as the kingship that the devil offered Christ.

With the exception of Abimelech, the sons of Gideon, to return to them, were not bent on lordship. The statement was just made that they were meek and inoffensive men. When Abimelech's seventy rogues lay violent hands on them, they offered no resistance (so far as can be known from the sacred narrative); and subsequently the seventy of them were led to one place, as sheep led to the slaughter, and there slain on one stone. Jotham, the one son who escaped, hearing of the doings at Shechem—after the killing in Ophrah the Shechemites gathered together and made Abimelech king—got himself on mount Gerizim and pronounced the rabble, assembled in the valley, cursed of God. And God also rendered all the evil of the men of Shechem upon their heads, Judges 9:57. And the sacred writer makes special mention of it that it was the curse of Jotham that was come upon them. Thus the conclusion is warranted that Jotham had cursed not in carnal wrath but in the name of God under the impulse of a true loathing of their terrible deeds. Thus the view according to which these sons, after the death of Gideon, connived at the worship of Baal around, were thus a sadly degenerated, enervated, luxurious, utterly feeble race—this view would seem to run contrary to what little we know of them from the sacred narrative. No statement occurs upon which to ground such a view. The renewed apostacy of the people could no more be laid to their charge than the blame of the previous Baal-worship in the northern tribes could be laid on Gideon when he was still an unknown hero in his father's house. As we shall see, one of the reasons that Abimelech was successful in inciting the Shechemites to slay in cold blood these

sons, is that they were hated on account of their being the offspring of a man who had uprooted the Baal-worship in Ophrah and through whose influence the devotees of Baal had gone into hiding and had remained more or less in hiding all the years of his judgment. These sons must have been hated because they were known as having stood with their father in his opposition to idolatry. After Gideon's death, they did nothing to alter men's opinion of them. Rightly considered, Abimelech's war on the house of Gideon was, at bottom, a war of the apostate Israel against the faithful in the land—the faithful as headed and represented by these seventy sons. They died for the sake of Christ's name.

In the attempt to realize his vile ambition, Abimelech did the wise thing. But his wisdom descended not from above, but was earthly, natural, devilish. Abimelech went to Shechem, for there he could hope to gain an audience for his diabolical scheme. Shechem lay in Ephraim; and the jealousy of proud Ephraim and its claim to the right to take the leading part in public affairs, if not to determine the course of the other tribes, was long-standing. In Shechem resided Abimelech's mother and her family. In this place was still found the lineal representatives of the pagan Hamor, the original founder of the city in the days of Jacob. Doubtless Abimelech's mother was of their extraction. They formed the heathen element of the place and were thus worshippers of Baal. Under their influence Shechem had become the centre of Baal worship. There was found the covenant Baal (Judges 9:4). Doubtless the word covenant in this name indicates a union of the original inhabitants with the apostate Israelites. All this was conducive to the achievement of Abimelech's purpose.

Arriving in Shechem, he did the expected thing. He conferred with his mother's brethren and with the family of her father. They could serve him excellently for they had much influence with the mass of citizens. And he was a stranger in Shechem. So he desires of them that they speak in the ears of all the men of Shechem, "which is better for you, that seventy men, all sons of Jerubbaal, rule over you, or that one rule over you. . . ." (This is the order of the words in the Hebrew text—the order from which the English version departs). To be noticed in this speech is the antithesis which is between "seventy" and "one" and secondarily between "sons of Jerubbaal" and "your bone and flesh." The seventy men are all sons of Jerubbaal but he, on the other hand, is of their own kin. Thus anticipating the objection of the Shechemites that he, too, belongs to the hated house of Gideon, the destroyer of Baal, Abimelech excludes himself from that race and wholly identifies himself with his mother's family. He thus let it be known that, though the offspring of Gideon, he disowns the

man as his father and is against his God, that thus his heart is with his brethren in Shechem and that their devil-god is the deity of his choice. His words proved effective. They take the man to their bosom without once holding it against him that he comes from the house of Gideon. It mattereth little, seeing that he has broken with Gideon's God. "And their hearts inclined to follow after Abimelech; for they said, He is our brother."

Let us understand these men well. Abimelech would have them know that the seventy, all sons of Jerubbaal, were determined to establish and maintain themselves as lords or imperators in the land. (As has already been observed, that was a terrible lie. It was only true of Abimelech). Do they wish to be shackled to seventy such tyrants? Certainly, that would be insufferable. Let them then consider that he, Abimelech, has parted company with the seventy. He is not of their party but of the party of Baal. He chose to stand alone and thus made it possible for them, the Shechemites, to choose between the one and the seventy. In fact, they must choose, as they cannot serve two masters, the seventy and him the one. They must realize also that in choosing the one, they find themselves under the necessity of slaying the seventy and that, standing with the seventy, they likewise shall have to dispose of the one. For there are two masters here. And their interests clash. Both have their hearts set on one and the same throne. Hence, the master rejected must be destroyed, if the master selected is to reign in peace. For the losing party in this contest, unwilling to acquiesce in his defeat, would inaugurate an insurrection, in the attempt to unseat the party triumphant, so that, with the defeated candidate at large, the position of the winning party in Shechem would not be secure for a moment. So, for the good of the land, the defeated party must be put to death without any compunction of conscience.

The fallacy in Abimelech's reasoning was his contention that the people were obliged to choose between him and the seventy. Fact is that, as the judgment was not hereditary, they should choose neither the one nor the seventy. But of this the Shechemites were willingly ignorant. They insisted that they were in dire need of a king. But in the present situation, to choose them a king was to decree the death either of a lone scoundrel or of seventy innocent and upright men. But Abimelech was careful to instruct his relations to tell the people that they should bear in mind, when casting their vote, that he was their bone and flesh. They did remember. They followed Abimelech; for they said; He is our brother. It would not do for them to put to death their very flesh, though he were the biggest scoundrel in the world and though the seventy were ever so noble, upright, and unambi-

tious. So, Abimelech being their flesh and bone, there was nothing left for them to do but to decree the death of the seventy. It was indeed a terrible task to which they assigned themselves, but a task so unavoidable as ghastly and terrible. It was for the good of the land, of the kingdom of God, that is of Baal's kingdom. So they must have reasoned among themselves. Doubtless, they succeeded pretty well in justifying themselves in their own eyes. They were not unrighteous men, but just firm and resolute citizens. It may be that they even went about the task of dispatching the seventy with a heavy heart and with tear dimmed eyes. For the capacity of the natural man for self-deception is colossal.

The choice having been made, the Shechemites deem it imperative to proceed at once to Ophrah to make away with the seventy. These sons, hearing what was going on in Shechem, might start a civil war. This, they say, must be avoided. For they are patriotic men. The interests of their country and people lie close to their heart—very close! So they hasten to the house of their idol to supply Abimelech with the silver wherewith to pay off the thugs who are to assist him in the performance of his noble deed! As accompanied by these persons—their number is seventy—Abimelech goes to his father's house in Ophrah, and slays his brethren, the sons of Jerubbaal, the sons of Baal's opponent and the champion of the cause of God. One son escapes, Jotham the youngest of the seventy.

So did the snare that Gideon, through his ill-directed zeal, had set for himself, soon claim its victims. However terrible the crime and guilty the perpetrators, Gideon and his house were here being punished for their folly—the folly of preserving in their house that ephod. Even so, the guilt of the murderers was none the less great. God cursed them by mouth of the one son that had escaped.

Abimelech is now made king; and there is much rejoicing in Shechem. But on the summit of mount Gerizim, at whose base the rabble assembled, there has appeared the figure of a man. He is speaking to them. "Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. . . ." A hush falls on the jubilating multitude. Who is the man? It is the voice of Jotham! As he speaks his parable, it must seem to them that he has risen from the dead and returned to them from the tomb. Was he not slain with the rest of his brethren?

G. M. O.

CLASSIS EAST

will meet in regular session D.V. Wednesday, October 4, at 9 A.M. at Fuller Ave.

D. Jonker, stated clerk.

The Jesuits

The Jesuits, an order or society of Roman Catholics, can perhaps best be appraised and judged if we go back to its origin and see how this almost fanatical organization began its history. Even more than for instance Reformed people bear the mark of the Reformation under John Calvin, thereby causing them to be called by the name Calvinists, so the Society of the Jesuits has throughout its history, borne the mark and stamp of its founder and leading spirit, Ignatius Loyola. It is therefore important that we take a glimpse into the life of the founder of the order of Jesuits.

Ignatius Loyola was born in the year 1491, the last of 13 children, three of whom fell in the foreign wars of Spain. We mention this because the whole family consisted of fighters, who preferred fighting to debating. And this fighting nature was also characteristic in Ignatius Loyola, who often discarded his clerical robes for the breastplate and sword and buckler. In fact the first great desire of Loyola was to become famous as a soldier. At the age of 28 however he was wounded and lamed for life, and gradually his ambition changed so that his chief desire became to be a great saint of the church. Two things now characterized his life. First he became possessed by a desire to get near to God and be at peace with Him. For this purpose he entered a monastery and by fasting and scourgings, prayers and confessions he sought vainly to give his conscience rest. Then he cast himself upon the mercies of God and trusting in God, he claimed to have found forgiveness and peace for his soul. He was therefore received to be of willing service to God. This sounds much like the history of Luther. However, another thing characterized his life at this time, which caused him to differ radically from Luther, namely, he believed without question that the Church was ordained of God to represent God among men. He firmly believed that, even as in military, the soldier must be strongly disciplined and show absolute obedience so also the soldier of Jesus in this world, must show absolute obedience to the God ordained authority, namely unto the Church. To serve God, meant for Loyola to serve the church and her interest, and true religion meant blind submission to the church. So Loyola assumed a militant attitude in the church and the conviction grew in him, that he was called to fight against all enemies of the church and to use all his tremendous energies to build the church and cause her to expand and grow. He studied at the University of Paris, and with his keen insight into human nature which he possessed, he choose out nine companions, fellow students, all of whom came to be men of extraordin-

ary power and ability. Loyola was the leading spirit, but the other nine were young men who saw his vision, were filled with his convictions, and vowed to fulfill his purposes. Thus the society of Jesus was formally organized in 1540 with these ten men as members. This society grew rapidly, even though at first only picked men were admitted to its membership roles. But the power of influence exerted by Loyola, and his ardent zeal, as well as his great designs for the regeneration of the church attracted many followers, including both laymen and priests.

It is perhaps best to know the condition of the church at this time. It was the time of the great Protestant Reformation, which was indeed undermining the very foundations of the old Church of Rome. Many thousands of people had been led by reform leaders, out of the Roman Catholic Church, to organize their own protestant churches. Whole kingdoms were being torn from the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church, and its subjects were being instructed in the teachings of the Reformation. The nominal head of the Roman Catholic church, was the Pope and thousands were denying his authority and rejecting him. And the spirit of the reformation was everywhere breaking away the very authority of the church and its leaders, so that the very existence of the R.C. church was threatened in many parts of the then known world. If you add to this the fact that within the bosom of the R.C. church itself not much was being done to correct the evils within the church, thus laying herself open to further attack by the protestant reformers. O yes, the Reformers were persecuted and the enemies of the R.C. church were thus fought, but within the church itself nothing was being done to correct wrongs which admittedly were evils.

Into the above described conditions of the Roman Catholic church, the society of the Jesuits, threw themselves with the zeal and energy and militant fervor of their leader, in a fighting attempt to erase the evils, rejuvenate the church and thus bring to naught the work of the Reformation. However, we must remember that the purpose of the society was to further the interests and fight the enemies of the Roman Catholic Church in every possible way. Consequently and yet ironically, the Jesuits aimed at reformation within the sphere of the Roman Catholic church and yet were the greatest enemies of the Protestant Reformation. The protestants were the greatest enemies of the church according to Loyola and his society of Jesus.

The aims of this counter-reformatory movement were fivefold, which were taken up into the constitution of the Jesuits. First of all and primarily, the society aimed at the instruction of all the children of the church, in all the elements of faith and duty. The

Jesuits believed that the Protestant movement was made possible largely by the ignorance of the people, and whereas the R. C. church was not doing much to correct this awful condition of ignorance, the Jesuits made it their chief aim. Later the instruction in faith and duty was also given to large groups of older church members. Schools were opened for both children and adults, and the society also infiltrated into the higher schools of education, even the Universities and thus brought new life into the R. C. church world. Needless to say that through this method of education, the Jesuits became very dominant in the R. C. Church, and this church also became instilled with the same spirit of Counter-Reformation. And all this education was given for the purpose as they stated: "To advance souls in Christian life and doctrine, and of propagating the faith as well as works of charity."

A second article in the constitution of the Jesuits stated that all members, "must give an unconditional vow of obedience to the Pope, by which the members are to be so bound that they must immediately, without any schuffling or excuse, undertake whatsoever His Holiness commands appertaining to the progress of souls and the propagation of the faith, whether he sends us to the Turks, or to the New World, or to the Lutherans, or to whomsoever He sends, be they infidels or Catholics." This of course made of the Jesuits a strong missionary society, devoted to bringing the message of the R. C. to as many as possible, also outside her own circles. In fact all the missionary honors of this period belong to the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestant churches did almost nothing worth mentioning to give the gospel to non-Christian peoples. Of course the main reason for this was that all the energy and strength of the Protestants was spent in the struggle for its own existence. But the R. C. Church extended her boundaries greatly during this period, chiefly through the Jesuits. In fact one of the first companions of Loyola in the society he founded, was the well known Francis Xavier, who went the very first year the society was formed to far away India, where he worked about 4 years. Such progress was made by him and a few helpers that soon large numbers of missionaries had to be sent to complete the work he had begun. And from India, Xavier went to Japan and within two years he laid the foundation of a Japanese Church which grew very rapidly. Xavier died as he was undertaking the gigantic work of bringing the R. C. message to China. But even in China the work was carried out by other Jesuits with the same zeal, so that many hundreds of Jesuit missionaries were summoned to that far Eastern country. This missionary campaign of the Jesuits took them to our own North American continent also. Especially in the French possessions in

North America and in Paraguay, the Jesuits campaign was pushed with great vigor and devotion. These Jesuits worked and sacrificed with a courage and fidelity unsurpassed. It was therefore too, that in almost all the countries where the Jesuits worked they built up the church very rapidly, even though, as Roman Catholic historians admit, this growth was not always so substantial, proving that their methods were often mistaken.

The third article of their constitution deals with the prompt and constant obedience of a subject to his superiors, even as Jesus acknowledged to His superior, namely, to His Father in heaven. Unquestioned loyalty to the Pope became a pass word into the society of Jesus, so that it may be truly said that organization of the Jesuits was a system of absolute, instant obedience, enforced by constant discipline.

The fourth article deals with the poverty to be practiced by the members of the Jesuit society. Literally we read: "To avoid all contagion of avarice, none may acquire title to property, real or income property." This of course fits in perfectly with the aim of the society to reform the church from within by exercising self-control and self discipline, something which indeed was hardly practiced anymore in the R. C. Church prior to the founding of the Jesuit order.

Finally the society also had an article written declaring against all music in their worship or in their meetings. This was later rejected by the Pope and thus there is worship with music, in most of the Jesuit churches, also those of today. But again in this article is betrayed the desire to deny oneself many things for the purpose of devotion exclusively to the ideal of counter-reformation within the church.

When we appraise this movement of the Jesuits we do well to regard it as not merely a movement of repression, but it included a genuine awakening of religious life in the Roman Catholic Church. Among both clergy and laity there was in many places a revival of Christian faith and zeal. But historically and in its further advance it represented a movement against the Protestant Reformation. Roman Catholicism stood at its lowest level perhaps about in 1560. Protestantism had indeed conquered many countries and seemed on the verge of conquering more territory in parts of the German Empire where hitherto the papacy had retained its power. However in 1566 the R. C. Church began taking the offensive under Pope Pius V, a fighting Pope, and thus with the powerful aid and under the guiding power of the Jesuits, it was enabled to strike back with tremendous force. For the Jesuits were also an order which worked upon the influential of the land, such as rulers and kings, this being especially the case with the German Emperor and the kings of France and Spain. It was

mainly through the work of the Jesuits that the latter two countries were made solidly Roman Catholic, even unto this day.

But counter-reformation movements are bound to die in the end for the simple reason that when God causes a Reformation-through-separation to take place, then a counter-reformation within the falling church is out of place. It cannot meet God's approval. God then commands: "Be ye separate and have no fellowship with the works of darkness." It is our firm conviction that when the church of Jesus Christ falls away and begins to depart, either in word or in deed, from the truth as it is in Jesus, that everyone is duty bound to repent of this and must strive to bring reformation about inside the church. But when that church has become so corrupt that it no longer tolerates the reforming element, and excludes them from her communion, as did the Roman Catholic Church in the 15th and 16th century, then there is no longer room within her bosom for reformation. And the very fact that Loyola and his followers stayed within the R. C. Church organization, were tolerated there not only but also were allowed to gain the ascendancy proves that they were not Reformation children. They opposed the reformation. They were enemies of God's people as these people of God were expelled from the church for the testimony of Jesus Christ. And before the door of the Jesuits must lay the charge that they are directly responsible for the persecution and death of many children of God. They possessed much zeal, but it was a zeal not after God but after the heretical church. They loved the Roman Catholic Church above God. "Come out from among them and be separate" remains the calling at all times, also today, for all those who desire sincerely the reformation of the church, and that church no longer tolerates true reformation.

L. V.

IN MEMORIAM

The Protestant Reformed Men's Chorus, at their first meeting of this season, decided to express their sympathy to Mrs. John Swart in the loss, through death on a foreign battle field, of her husband

JOHN SWART

He, with us, was wont to sing unto the praise of our God. We still do it imperfectly, while we believe that his voice now mingles with the heavenly chorus where never a note of discord is heard.

D. Jonker, Pres.

D. Ondersma, Sec'y.

Speech in Behalf of Our School Movement *

Not so very long ago I spoke at one of your meetings which was held in the parlors of our Fuller Ave. church. I feel that I owe you some sort of apology. At that time, during recess time, some of you asked me whether I thought that your society was guilty of a lack of enthusiasm, when I asked and tried to answer the question: Why the delay? However, that thought did not live in my soul, but I also wish to remove any doubt which might possibly exist. And, in the second place, before I speak to you for a few moments, I am glad that I need not discuss at this time the matter of our moral obligation. The editor of our Standard Bearer has very aptly treated that subject about two months ago.

As a Protestant Reformed people we are characterized by a two-fold distinctiveness. Actually but one outstanding principle characterizes us. We believe that Zion is the people or the party of the living God, who owe their existence exclusively to the sovereign grace of Jehovah in order that all glory and praise may be the Lord's, as it is beautifully expressed in that well-known passage of Rom. 11:36 where we read that all things are out of, through, and unto the Lord, unto Whom be all the praise and glory. We may view this one outstanding truth from a two-fold point of view. In our so-called ecclesiastical life, as in the preaching of the Word, we emphasize, according to the Holy Scriptures, election, man's utter depravity, particular atonement, the efficacy of grace, and the certainty of our ultimate salvation, otherwise known as the perseverance of the saints. In short we may state all this briefly by declaring that salvation is from the beginning to the end from and through our God alone.

The practical aspect of this same truth is that we must walk, with our children, as a separate people of that living God in the midst of the world. To preserve this practical aspect of the truth we fought some twenty to twenty five years ago. The now famous Three Points may indeed be regarded as having been brought into the world by those who love synthesis rather than the antithesis, amalgamation with rather than separation from the world. Worldly and carnal-mindedness is always the mother of heresy—1924 was no exception. And it is only from the practical aspect of our antithetical calling that the place and importance of the school can be rightly understood. We with our children whom the Lord has given us must walk antithetically in the midst of the world. It is surely the calling and task of the school to prepare our children for their place in the midst of

the world, in distinction from the church which prepares the same children for their future place in the sphere of the church. Our children have been receiving their instruction from those who advocate the very principles we reject. On this particular point there is no doubt among us, also among those who do not warmly advocate a school of our own. The Christian schools are surely controlled by those churches who expelled us some twenty years ago. Must we, then, not also be Protestant Reformed in the instruction of our children?—the very heart and fibre of our cause will stand or fall on the basis of your answer to this question. The antithetical instruction of our children is of paramount importance, of such importance that there is no time to lose.

In the second place our calling is clear and undebatable. We may debate this question, pro. and con., but the matter of the instruction of our children and the nature of that instruction is undebatable. We do not and may not decide what the content of that instruction shall be. Just as we may not decide whether we shall have Christian schools at all, so also we may not decide what the content of that instruction shall be. This has been decided for us. The Lord has not only commanded Israel that they must instruct their own children, He has also laid down the rule for us as far as the content of that instruction is concerned. This is clearly stated in the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, where the people of the Lord are instructed to hear that the Lord their God is one Lord, Whom we must love with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. Hence, our calling is clear. On this point the Lord has not left any doubt. We must not only instruct our children. But we must ever hold before them that the Lord *our* God is *one* Lord, one in Himself and therefore one in all His dealings with the children of men, that we must love Him and Him alone with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. Our children must receive Protestant Reformed instruction. This is also our baptismal pledge when we vowed before the Lord and His Church that we will instruct and help instruct our children in the doctrine of this Christian Church. And, inasmuch as we, as parents, cannot ourselves provide our children this instruction, it is therefore our calling to organize into a society in order that they may receive this instruction according to the Word of God.

In the third place I would emphasize that this can only be done by organizing into a Protestant Reformed school society wherever possible. We must certainly understand that cooperation with others, as far as the instruction is concerned, is wholly impossible. The argument of the editor of the Standard Bearer is surely pertinent in this respect. To cooperate with others in order that the schools of our day may be as pure as possible will result in the loss of our posi-

tive Protestant Reformed principles. At best, the result will be negative. We may gain the concession that they will not instruct our children arminianism but does this necessarily imply that the content of that instruction will be distinctly Protestant Reformed? The best that we may expect is a colorless instruction devoid of all distinctiveness, of all lines of demarcation. That is all that we could hope to obtain. But this, my friends, is looking at this possibility with the greatest optimism. Cooperation with others is impossible. We do not, we will not cooperate with the lie, with the principles of synthesis and worldly amalgamation which we rejected some twenty years ago. They must see things our way, or else. . . !

Only then can we fulfill our baptismal pledge, carry out the Lord's command, and safeguard our Protestant Reformed cause if we continue to develop and expand the cause for which you stand. It is twenty years ago this year that we were rejected by those churches among whom we formerly held a name and place. Not long ago we commemorated this event at our annual Field Day held in Ideal Park. Twenty long years we have testified against their heresy of "Common-grace" as taught in the churches wherein we formerly had a name and place and as set forth in the Christian schools of today. Twenty years have passed by and in the meantime at least 2 of our generations have been instructed in that dangerous world and life view which we heartily oppose. All we need do to be convinced that the schools of today are controlled by the Christian Reformed Churches and that their conception of the Scriptures is taught there is read their annual report of the yearly gathering of the Union of Christian Schools. Twenty years already we have denied our children that which the Lord demands we bestow upon them, namely, to instruct them in the doctrine of their own Christian church. You have made a beginning to fulfill that covenant obligation. May our God grant that others in our churches may understand the calling wherewith the Lord calls them and the blessed privilege which is ours to bestow upon the seed which God has given us an instruction which is based upon the Holy Scriptures, the privilege which is ours while it is day before the night cometh when no man can work. And may God continue to bless you and give you grace and strength to carry on, that we may speedily have a school of our own in order that the cause which we represent, which we believe to be God's cause, may be safe-guarded also for our children, and that God's covenant may therefore be continued with us and with our children.

H. V.

*Speech given at a picnic of the auxiliary of our school movement.

Natural Theology

Since the above term is historically a shifting conception an attempted definition must serve provisionally to bring our discussion under way.

We may, then, provisionally define it as the knowledge or system of knowledge of God derived from a reflection upon nature (embracing man himself, creation, and history) or an attempt to form such a system. And our interest in the discussion shall not be from a neutral History-of-religion viewpoint, but an approach and evaluation from the viewpoint of Reformed Theology.

The main material for such a discussion may be found in the well-known standard Theologies of Calvin, Brakel, Ch. Hodge, Kuyper (Dict. Dogm., Encycl. Uit het Woord, III and Bavinck). However the old sources of Reformed and Catholic theology are very desirable. Besides these there is very valuable material in the newer writings such as Schilder "Heid. Catech." Van Til's Thesis on "Common Grace," p. 66-87; Dooyeweerd, *Wijsbegeerte der Wetsides*, especially Vol. II, 214-259, 474-534 though this entire titanic work has rather direct bearing on the subject. Since the validity and value of this Natural theology is even today an unsettled question, it appears that not only the various spokesmen differ in their evaluation, but that they evaluate differently also the historical course of the conception. Bavinck (Dogm.) in his characteristic "dogmengeschichtliche" method shows its general acceptance from Justin Martyr (d. 166) to Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) and the highest point of theological development in the middle ages.

The Reformation brought a new development in this question as it did in so many other questions, and perhaps shows best the various phases of the problem. The Roman Catholic Theology, boldly admits and confesses a twofold theology (Dogmatic Decrees of the Vatican Council, Apr. 1870 chap. IV and Canon II, see Schaff, *Creeds*, Vol. II, p. 234ff.) but in its Papal Syllabus of Errors 1864 plainly shows that the two are dualistically left unrelated (same p.213). Luther, we may recall from some of his little-known Ninety-nine Theses that appeared in our S.B. some time ago, strongly opposed the natural ability and integrity which Rome still assumed in the natural man. But Luther and his followers also lose the problem by a dualism, for on the one hand they admit that natural man may have some little obscure glimmer that God is, and he may keep a little of the law, yet in things spiritual and Divine he can have or think nothing good. See J. Mueller, *Chr. Doct. of Sin II*, p. 227ff). This we may observe introduces the distinction between saving and non-saving knowledge; the two spheres can even be held as contradicting

each other and so, of course, the entire problem is really destroyed and we lose contact with it. These are very familiar appearances to us as Prot. Ref. people also today.

In Calvin Bavinck finds also a trace of dualism between natural and supernatural revelation, which I cannot find in the places he refers to in the Institutes but he finds Calvin to be saved from extremes by his doctrine of Common grace, which may also be questioned because Calvin is operating with the very valid distinction between natural gifts and spiritual virtues.

Continuing from Calvin the value of Natural Theol. becomes more and more accepted, first as a help, then as a fore-portal, then as an independent Theol. and finally in German Rationalism and English Deism, as a substitute for Scriptural Theology. (See also Kromming Chr. Ref. Tradition, p. 46ff).

Now to this we must immediately add that according to Schilder, (Heid. Cat. p.74-77) even Bavinck's evaluation of the attitude which the Reformers took toward Nat. Theol. is hardly a true picture, is just a little flattering and lenient and that Bavinck (and Kuyper) were just a little too modest in the estimation of their own advance over the Reformed Fathers. And to this we may add that Bavinck's own construction in which his theory of common grace plays a great part can hardly be harmonized with the Ref. Confessions and with the Scriptures.

But now, behold, after Schilder has intimated the over-modest estimation of these men regarding their appreciable advance over the fathers, Prof. Van Til devotes a solid discussion to show how these sons have themselves not been able to stay clear of the old false, rationalistic, Rom. Cath., type of natural theology (Proceedings, Calv. Phil. Club, 1941, p. 66-87).

However, we must not overlook, I believe, that while the fathers struggled with the theory of Inborn Knowledge theories of the rationalistic philosopher, Descartes (flourished, 1635-50) drove them to correct their views on this phase, the sons labour with the question under the aspect of the spiritual, and virtuous, the depravity or relative integrity of the natural man (Bav. Dogm. I:290-291; Kuyper, Gem. Grat. I:246ff, II:16, 296ff).

From this historical sketch it may appear that it is precisely the elements or the theory of Common Grace that repeatedly becloud the issue and lead to conclusions that are contrary to Scripture.

After this introduction it will be plain that no opinion may claim to be the Accepted view of the Reformed and we may attempt to discuss a few of the principles, and perhaps we can profitably discuss the material under four stages. 1, the Knowability of God, 2, knowledge from nature, 3, knowledge from Scrip-

ture, 4, knowledge through regeneration.

We do not need at all to consider the question, whether, if it pleased the Exalted one to hide Himself, we could still establish a contact with Him. But the Knowability of God, in fact, has been denied following Kant especially by the English philosopher, Hamilton, (d. 1856) and the Biologist, Herbert Spencer, (d. 1903). Spencer in his book *First Principles*, speaks throughout in the basic first part of the UNKNOWABLE and speaks of an inexorable logic by which he has proved that God is such, (p. 30-31), and Christian Theologians have sometimes sought their defence against this manner of argument by simply conceding it and speaking of "the Agnostics inexorable logical proof." Now it may be questioned whether such concession is necessary wise or valid. For in the first place it must not escape us that to know "unknowableness" about God were already to know something about Him. But further Spencer finds it quite convenient to say several important things about God. He is the Power which the Universe manifests to us (p. 38), He is the Cause of our religious feelings (104 Ultimate cause through which all things consist 92-96). But now after Spencer has said these several things that all imply relation to the creature, he uses as his main term in his "inexorable logic" the term "Absolute," implying the absence of any relation to any possible other being. One wonders if such "logic" is really meant seriously, and is not mere child's play. It surely seems of little profit to enter into such a sport of words.

But it is undoubtedly of importance for our knowledge of God, to consider whether logic could ever prove any such a thing. We may answer to this immediately by reminding that if true logic could prove an untruth all knowledge would for us become impossible. But we must add that our knowledge is not so "inexorable" as we boast it to be. Recall the logic of Paul's opponents who suggested that the logical conclusion of gratuitous justification was the freedom to sin, but Paul proves that the only logical conclusion is to live in holiness. Rom. 6:1. 15 Volumes have been written on the fallacies of logic, in method, definition, equivocation, generalization etc., etc. And so we must not blame "unfortunate human logic" but our unfortunate use of it. For it is exactly here that logic causes its trouble. We neglect to avail ourselves of all the facts and draw unwarranted conclusions. If Spencer's Absolute means the absence of all and any relatedness then we cannot use the term at all. Has not God according to His eternal council purposed a creation that should stand in relation to Himself. Has he not stamped his name on all the works of His hands. For although God could have withheld His knowledge as He indeed did toward the brute creation (which is not of course a lack of relations)

He has been pleased to make His name in creation legible to us, His image bearers.

But the unbeliever will not consider all the facts, yea, he will deliberately ignore the greatest of all the facts at hand, the great record of God's work in the world which was recounted by many faithful witnesses, and established by many infallible proofs, a record which tells of tremendous mysteries and wonders, inconceivable to any man, and then gives an explanation and solution of these things satisfying to any reasonable man. How can man unwilling to consider such facts, still speak of the conclusions of logic. But the Christian cannot dispense with logic. Even the axioms and the intuitions, require logic to operate with them although in a measure often unconsciously. Theology is a logical deduction from the materials in Scripture. The arguments of the Holy writers and of Christ Himself is full of logic. And Scripture even argues that he who reveals Himself must be the true God (Ex. 9:14; I Kings 18:24, 36:20; 28).

Dr. Kuyper has characterized the Testimony of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer receives the truth of Scripture as the power whereby our deepest idea regarding ourselves is changed from conflict with the central testimony of Scripture to a spiritual acquiescence thereto (Encycl. II 505). This becomes the corrective for man's "inexorable logic."

We may not advance a step from the Knowability of God to the Knowledge from nature. Here is perhaps the proper stage for the discussion in the narrow and strict sense. It is generally conceded that there is an inborn knowledge of God. But what is meant by knowledge? Is it merely the ability to know or also a content of knowing? Especially did the great theologian Voetius struggle with this problem when he was driven in his controversy with Descartes to define the conception. The latter taught that the beginning of all knowledge lies in knowing the existence of self to be a reality. "I think, therefore I am," and from this self-knowledge man could also know the existence of God (Calkins: The Persistent Problems of Phil. 17ff). The great Voetius with the Reformed violently rejected this idea and maintained that Inborn knowledge could only mean a faculty, a power, an aptitude of the mind to know when it comes into contact with revelation.

This raises the next question, how much can man know about God from nature. This question may lead us to study the heathen world, their religions and philosophies, but in such an examination it must remain rather uncertain just what the great heathen philosophers meant with God, eternal good, personality, and also the possibility remains that they had some glimmerings of special revelation through Israel's dispersions.

We do better therefore to turn to Scripture and

there we undoubtedly have reference to a natural revelation and knowledge. See Ps. 19:1-5 of the Revelation. And the better method of interpretation requires that the use of a part of this passage in Rom. 10:18 is not to borrow poetic words but to enforce an argument, that Israel did indeed know, even from nature.

A. P.

(To be continued)

NOTICE, CONSISTORIES

Classis meets the last Wednesday in Sept. in the Edgerton Church. Usual time. Those desiring lodging please contact Rev. G. Vos.

M. Gritters, stated clerk.

IN MEMORIAM

On the 14th of August the Lord in His infinite wisdom took out of our midst our beloved father and grandfather

ADRIAN HIRDES

at the age of 72 years.

His pilgrimage is ended; and we may believe that he has entered into the rest that remaineth unto the people of God.

Mr. and Mrs. William Hirdes

Mr. and Mrs. John Hirdes

Mr. and Mrs. John Boersma

Mr. and Mrs. Neal Hirdes

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Hirdes

Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Hirdes

Zeeland, Mich. R.R. No. 1

and 20 grandchildren.

IN MEMORIAM

The consistory of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church hereby wishes to express its sympathy with one of its members, the Mr. Stephen Holstege in the loss of his brother,

BERNARD HOLSTEGE

who was killed in action in Normandy, France, on the 9th of June, 1943, at the age of 27 years.

May the Lord, who doeth all things well, comfort the bereaved relatives with His grace and Spirit.

Bernard Kok, Pres.

T. Miedema, Clerk.