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MEDITATION

Order My Steps

*Order my steps in thy word: and let not
any iniquity have dominion over me.*

Psalm 119:133.

Thy Word!

Exalted theme!

Higher than the heavens, deeper than the deepest sea, inexhaustible in the riches of its contents!

Quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, purer than crystalline water rising fresh from a fountain and sparkling in the golden sunlight, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. . . .

Mighty in its effect, accomplishing that which it speaks; calling the things which are not into existence, holding the universe in its embrace, establishing the heavens; bringing light out of darkness, righteousness out of corruption, life out of death; converting the soul, giving wisdom unto the simple, rejoicing the heart; promising and fulfilling what it promises, faithful and true; enduring for ever. . . .

The living and abiding Word of God!

Of it the poet sings!

Let others sing of men and mighty deeds, of wars and deeds of prowess, of the glory of arms, of horses and chariots, of man's ingenuity and power, of human inventions and accomplishments,—the poet chooses the exalted and glorious Word of God for his theme.

Is it surprising that he cannot find the end of his song, that it seems as if he repeatedly expresses the same thing, while to the carefully observing reader, who shares a little in the inspired author's love of that Word of God, it becomes evident that he ever discovers a new aspect of his theme, new riches, new bliss, new sweetness which he must still extol in his song? Had

he not discovered that there is "an end of all perfection, but that God's commandment is exceeding broad"? Small wonder that, having once chosen that Word of God as the theme of his song, he continues to sing as if he cannot find the end!

Jehovah's testimonies are wonderful: therefore the author's soul keeps them.

Understanding and light the words of the Lord give to them that enter into them.

And so the psalmist greatly longs for these words, for the commandments of his God. He would know them, possess them, hide them in his soul, with great longing and panting, he opens his mouth for them. . . .

He deeply realizes his sinfulness and imperfection in the light of the Word of God, and it is a cause of profound sorrow to him: "rivers of waters run down my eyes, because they keep not thy law."

From all oppression of evil men He desires to be delivered, that he may keep the precepts of his God.

He longs to be liberated completely from all dominion of iniquity.

And for direction of his steps by the Word of Jehovah he prays.

Let not any iniquity have dominion over me!

Order Thou my steps in Thy Word!

Blessed Word of God!

Deliver me from evil!

Let not any iniquity have dominion over me!

Such is, and must needs be, the cry of him in whose heart has shone and does shine the discerning light of the Word of God.

Does he not, in principle, to be sure, but then in deepest principle, in the depth of his heart whence are the issues of life, love that Word as the revelation of the living God, and of the will of Jehovah to him? And does he not, as he knows and loves that Word, discover in its clear light the iniquity of his nature, his incapability to do any good and inclination to every iniquity? And must not, then, inevitably arise from

that new principle of life that has been wrought in his heart, and according to which he knows and loves the Word of God, arise the longing cry: "Let not any iniquity have dominion over me!"?

O, let us not misunderstand this prayer, as if it were the cry of one that is still under the dominion of sin!

It is not!

The dominion of iniquity is of such a nature that one that is in its power never cries for liberation. He is in full agreement with his own enslavement. He loves his subjection. Willingly he serves his lord. Would you free him, he would cling to his bonds. Would you separate him from his master, he would seek and run after him again.

He that committeth sin is a servant of sin!

A slave, yes, but a willing slave!

And so, the prayer: "let not any iniquity have dominion over me," is the cry of the liberated!

But it is the prayer of the free that is ever on the alert against the lurking enemy, that realizes deeply that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

For the child of God is, indeed, free. He is not under the law, but under grace: sin shall not have dominion over him. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made him free from the law of sin and death. He is in Christ Jesus; he is a new creature; old things, the things of the dominion of sin, have passed away, behold, all things have become new! But the old lord of sin is ever near, and is extremely jealous of his former dominion. He does not readily relinquish his right to rule. He consistently, stubbornly, refuses to abdicate. Always he conspires to regain his former dominion, to subject his former slave into captivity once again. And this would appear to be easy. He dwells in the same house with his former subject. He operates in his members. He finds a strong ally in the old nature of the believer. He did, indeed, lose his right to rule; and, in principle, he also was deprived of his power. But he is not yet completely cast out, cannot be cast out until, through death and resurrection, he will see his former slave escape him, finally and forever, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Moreover, everything seems to be in his favor, and to support his attempt to regain his former dominion. The "world" is full of the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and conspires with him to bring the redeemed and liberated believer into bondage of sin once more. The devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. . . .

Very near, encompassing him on every side, is the Christian's former lord!

And realizing his precarious position, and loving his newly acquired liberty, and hating the dominion of sin with a perfect hatred, and realizing that in his own strength he can never fight the battle to the end and have the victory, conscious, in fact, of the always im-

pending danger that he will yield to the persuasive pleading, or succumb under the oppressive hand of his former master, he prays: "O, let not iniquity have any dominion over me!"

Iniquity!

By this very word he expresses how thoroughly he has come to know the corrupt rule of that former lord and how he loathes and despises that dominion.

For "iniquity" is vanity, emptiness.

Iniquity is, according to the meaning of the Hebrew word thus translated, that which is void of any positive good. It has no positive aim, it tends not to the glory of God, it yields no positive fruit. Even though the sinner, under the dominion of iniquity, imagines that, in pursuing the pleasures of sin, he strives after a positive good; though he seeks riches and honor and pleasure and delight, though he "enjoys the pleasures of sin for a season," he only deceived himself, and the end of it all is more bitter than death. That apparently pleasing lord of sin is a cruel, faithless, deceiving tyrant: the wages of sin is death!

Any iniquity!

For, though all iniquity is principally alike, it assumes different forms: pride, lust, covetousness, maliciousness, deceit, envy, hatred, vile affections, adultery, idolatry, lying, slander, enmity against God and hatred of one another, strife, debate, war, contention, covenant breaking. . . .

But why even attempt to complete the list?

As manifold as human life in the world, as the issues of the human heart, is the horribly corrupt nature of the dominion of iniquity!

And the liberated child of God, though, no doubt, aware of the fact that he is inclined to yield to one form more readily than to another, according to his peculiar character and position in the world, abhors them all.

He deeply realizes that to yield to any particular form of iniquity is to become enslaved once more to its entire dominion.

And he hates it all.

No particular sin he tries to hide, to nourish in his bosom, to hold in his right hand.

Let not iniquity have dominion over me!

Deliver me from evil!

From all evil!

And lead me, O, my God!

Search me, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wickedness in me; and lead me. . . .

In the way everlasting!

Order my steps in Thy Word!

That is the positive content of the prayer of the liberated child of God. For, while he abhors and eschews the dominion of iniquity, he has a new delight

in the law of the Lord. The testimonies of Jehovah are wonderful to him. Their goodness he has tasted. Sweeter than honey they are to him. The entrance of Jehovah's words gave him light and understanding such as he can find nowhere else. They afforded him spiritual discernment of spiritual things. In their way he found forgiveness and deliverance, mercy and grace, life and fellowship with God, joy and pleasures for evermore. . . .

He found *God*, the God of his salvation!

In Him is now his delight.

His statutes he desires to keep.

In the way of His commandments he would run.

And so, he prays: "Order my steps in Thy Word."

A very familiar figure of speech underlies these words: that of comparing man's whole life, from the viewpoint of its spiritual-ethical direction, to a way in which he walks. Only, the psalmist views his walking in the way of Jehovah's precepts, not as a whole, not with a bird's eye view, but rather in detail, with respect to all his particular and individual expressions and manifestations of his life in relation to his God. For he speaks, not of his way, in general, but of his steps on that way, in particular. And by these "steps" he refers to his actions. These are manifold. They are as various as the fulness of human life in relation to the world about him, before the face of God. They refer to his thoughts and aspirations, his inclinations and desires, his joys and his sorrows, the deepest stirrings of his inner life. They denote the expression of all these inner motions and emotions, in seeing and hearing and speaking, in touching and tasting and handling, in all his walk and conversation. They refer to his active personal life, and to his activity in relation to the whole outside world: in the home, in society, in the church, in the state; to his walk in relation to his wife and children, to his brothers and sisters, to his fellow children of God, to men in general; in business and industry, in the school and in the shop, in private and in public. . . .

My steps!

Order them in Thy Word!

The original might be translated by: Order my steps *by what Thou sayest*.

Let all my life, let my every action, let every step I take on life's way, let every thought I think, every emotion that arises within my soul, every choice I make, every aspiration I pursue, every inclination of my heart, every glance of my eye, every favorable inclining of my ear, every word I speak, every act I perform,—let it be motivated and directed by what Thou sayest unto me!

For, indeed, this ordering of our steps is realized then, and then only, when it pleases God to speak to us!

Indeed, in a sense we have His Word in the Hebrew

Scriptures. From them we may learn in which direction the Word of God would order our steps. And yet, indispensable though those Scriptures are; and though it is certainly true that, in order to have our steps directed by what God speaks to us, it is absolutely necessary that we search those Scriptures, and that we live in daily and constant contact with them; and though it must be maintained, lest we become hopelessly lost in the quagmire of mysticism, that God never speaks to us apart from those Scriptures,—yet it remains ever true that God can only speak His own Word.

We cannot lay hold of it, unless it please Him to speak it to us!

Never can it become a power within us, an irresistible power, an all-motivating power in our deepest heart, directing all the issues of our life, unless, through the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, it pleases Him to cause that Word to become a fire in our bones.

Then, and then only, we are called out of darkness into His marvellous light, once, again, constantly.

Then we carry it in our hearts; may, then it overpowers us, so that we willingly and with delight of our inmost heart, subject ourselves to it, and love it, obey it.

Then it becomes the motivating power in the very center of our existence directing all the issues of our life.

Lead me, O my God! Lead me, day by day!

Direct my every individual step by what Thou sayest!

Order Thou my steps!

Humble expression of dependence!

Here all proud self-will and self-reliance ceases!

I am weak, prone to halt and to stumble, inclined to seek the former dominion of iniquity; and not for a moment can I stand, not one step am I able to take in the right direction!

Forsake me not, O, my God!

H. H.

Under the shadow of Thy throne

Thy saints have dwelt secure;

Sufficient is Thine arm alone

And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood

Or earth received her frame;

From everlasting Thou art God

Thou art God

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EDITORIALS

The Liberated Churches In The Netherlands

By this time, we have received so much material about the separation of the "liberated churches" in the Netherlands, material in the form of papers, official documents, and letters, that we can proceed quite confidently with our discussion, are in a position to state the facts objectively, and to formulate motivated conclusions about the whole matter.

In fact, the material is so abundant that not only would it be quite impossible to reproduce it all in our paper, but it is even somewhat difficult to decide where to begin our discussion. But some order must be introduced into this chaos in order to give our readers as complete and intelligible a picture of the controversy and secession as possible. We shall, therefore, attempt to do this under three heads, viz.:

I. The doctrinal decisions adopted by the synod of the Reformed (Gereformeerde) Churches in the Netherlands in 1924, their meaning and their binding force.

II. The actions of this same synod from a church-political aspect, and the stand of the "liberated churches" over against these actions.

III. The doctrinal position of both factions, but especially of the "liberated churches," particularly with respect to the question concerning the covenant.

Here follows a copy of the decisions regarding the well-known doctrinal differences. These decisions were adopted by the synod of Utrecht in 1942. I will copy them literally in the Holland language, and then translate them for our readers into English.

"Aangaande de algemeene genade:

1. Dat God (Die aanstonds na den val begonner is Zijn Kerk te vergaderen die Hij van zonde en dood en vloek verlost) al wordt Zijn toorn over alle goddeloosheid en ongerechtigheid der menschen geopenbaard (Rom. 1:18), nochtans over de gevallen wereld in deze bedeeeling nog niet de volle straf der zonde brengt maar terwijl Hij haar in Zijn lankmoedigheid verdraagt, Zijn zon doet opgaan over boozen en goeden er aan heel de menschheid goed doet van den hemel (Matt 5:45; Handel. 14:17);

"2. dat Hij ook in den mensch nog kleine overblijfselen der oorspronkelijke scheppingsgaven er eenig licht der natuur heeft doen overblijven, al is het ook, dat dit alles ter zaligheid gansch onvoldoende is en de mensch zelfs in natuurlijke en burgerlijke zaken

dit licht niet recht gebruikt (Nedl. Geloofsbel. Art. 14; Dordtsche Leerr. III, IV, Art. 4);

"3. dat deze overblijfselen en weldaden niet slechts moeten dienen om den mensch alle onschuld te benemen, maar ook om de zonde in haar doorwerking tijdelijk te beteugelen, en om te bewerken, dat mogelijkheden, in de oorspronkelijke schepping gegeven, nog in de zondige wereld tot ontwikkeling komen;

"4. dat God hierin aan boozen en goeden, aan rechtvaardigen en onrechtvaardigen ongehouden goedheid bewijst, die onder ons met de naam 'algemeene genade' of 'gemeene gratie' wordt aangeduid, maar wel te onderscheiden is van de zaligmakende genade aan hen, die van den Vader aan Christus zijn gegeven."

Translated:

"Concerning common grace:

"1. That God (Who, immediately after the fall, began to gather His Church, which He delivers from sin, death, and the curse), even though His wrath is revealed over all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Rom. 1:18), yet, does not bring, upon the fallen world, in this dispensation, the full punishment of sin; but, while He bears her in His longsuffering, causes His sun to rise over the evil and over the good, and does good from heaven to the whole of mankind. (Matth. 5:45; Acts 14:17);

"2. that He also left to man small remnants of his original creation-gifts, and some light of nature, even though all this is entirely insufficient unto salvation, and man, even in things natural and civil, does not use this light aright (Netherland Conf. Art. 14; Canons of Dordt III, IV, 4);

"3. That these remnants and benefits must serve, not only to render man without excuse, but also to bridle the course (working through) of sin temporarily, and to cause that possibilities, given in the original creation, may still be developed in the sinful world.

"4. that, in this, God shows to (or bestows upon) the evil and the good, the righteous and the unrighteous unbounden goodness, which, among us, is denoted by the name 'general grace' or 'common grace', but which must be well distinguished from saving grace to them whom the Father gave to Christ."

I cannot refrain from inserting here the remark that I cannot understand how the editor of *The Banner* could claim that the above decisions by the Netherland Churches are essentially the same as those adopted by the synod of the Christian Reformed Churches in 1924. Even at first glance, the differences stare you in the face, and that, too, on essential points. For instance, the above decisions:

1. Do not speak of a favorable attitude or disposition of God toward the reprobate; the decisions of 1924 do.

2. Do not speak of the "well-meaning offer of salvation" and the preaching of the gospel as common grace; the decisions of 1924 do.

3. Do not speak of a gracious operation of the Holy Spirit restraining sin in the individual; the decisions of 1924 do.

4. Do not speak of civil good or righteousness which the unregenerate can do; the decisions of 1924 do.

5. Do declare that the natural man cannot use the "natural light" aright even in things natural and civil; the decisions of 1924 don't.

6. Do speak of the gifts and remnants as providing an opportunity for the development of the original creation ordinance: *a la* Kuyper; the decisions of 1924 don't.

But more about this later. We must now continue our report of the decisions of the Netherland synod.

"Aangaande het genadeverbond:

"1. dat het genadeverbond van zulk een fundamentele beteekenis voor het geloofsleven is, dat zoowel de prediking als elke andere arbeid der Kerk ervan behoort uit te gaan, en dat iedere voorstelling of praktijk moet gemeden, die aan de beteekenis van Gods verbond tekort zou doen;

"2. dat de Heere in de belofte des verbonds ongetwijfeld toezegt de God, niet alleen van de geloovigen, maar ook van hun zaad te zijn (Gen. 17:7; doch in Zijn woord ons niet minder openbaart, dat zij niet allen Israel zijn, die uit Israel zijn. (Rom. 9:6);

"3. dat daarom—overeenkomstig hetgeen de synode van Utrecht (Acta art. 158) uitgesproken heeft—"het zaad des verbonds krachtens de belofte Gods te houden is voor wedergeboren en in Christus geheiligd, totdat bij het opwassen uit hun wandel of leer het tegendeel blijkt"; al heeft de synode daaraan ook terecht toegevoegd, dat dit 'geenszins zeggen wil, dat daarom elk kind waarlijk wedergeboren zou zijn';

"4. dat de Kerk ook haar ten Avondmaal toegelaten leden naar ditzelfde oordeel der liefde heeft te beschouwen en te behandelen.

"5. dat het met de waarachtigheid Gods strijdt, zulk een tweeheid in de Schrift aan te nemen, dat zij aangaande dezelfde zaak ja en neen zegt en eenerzijds de volharding der heiligen leert, anderzijds dat wedergeborenen kunnen afvallen en verloren gaan;

"6. dat men niet minder feil gaat door een valsche tegenstelling te maken tusschen een eeuwig verbond en een verbondsbedeeling in den tijd; en door de spreekwijze der Schrift, om de leden der Kerk in het gemeen geloovigen te noemen, aldus op te vatten, dat alle kerk-

leden geloovigen zijn, maar dan "geloovigen in den tijd" en daarom nog niet in den Raad Gods'; wat in strijd is met de Schrift, die de leden der Kerk in het gemeen evenzeer aanspreekt als 'uitverkorenen naar de voorkennis van God den Vader.' (I Petr. 1:2 Vgl. Col. 3:12; Ef. 1:4-5)."

Translation:

"Concerning the covenant of grace:

"1. that the covenant of grace is of such fundamental significance for the life of faith that the preaching as well as all other work of the Church must proceed from it, and that, in presentation or practice, everything must be avoided that minimizes the significance of God's covenant.

"2. that in the promise of the covenant the Lord undoubtedly pledges to be the God, not only of believers, but also of their seed (Gen. 17:7); but that He reveals no less in His Word that they are not all Israel that are of Israel (Rom. 9:6);

"3. that therefore—in accord with the declarations of the synod of Utrecht 1905 (Acts of Synod art. 158) — 'in virtue of the promise of God, the seed of the covenant must be considered regenerated and sanctified in Christ, until, as they grow up, the opposite appears';—although the synod rightly added that this 'does not at all mean to say that, therefore, each child is truly regenerated';

"4. that the Church must conceive and deal with the members that are admitted to the Lord's table, according to the same judgment of love;

"5. that it is in conflict with the veracity of God to accept such a duplicity in Scripture that, in regard to the same matter, it says yes and no, and teaches, on the one hand, the perseverance of the saints, and on the other, the possibility that the regenerated fall away and be lost;

"6. that it is no less erroneous to make a false contrast (distinction) between an eternal covenant and a covenant-dispensation in time; and when Scripture calls the members of the Church as a whole believers to understand this as meaning that all church members are, indeed, believers, yet only 'believers in time' and not necessarily 'in the counsel of God'; which is in conflict with Scripture, which addresses the members of the Church in common also as 'elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father' (I Pet. 1:2; Cf. Col. 3:12; Eph. 1:4, 5)."

As a matter of information, I may remark here that synod, in 3 above, refers to the frequently mentioned but little known "Conclusions of Utrecht" that, after forty years, appear once more in the limelight of the present controversy in the Netherlands. These "Con-

clusions" were originally designed as a compromising declaration regarding various points of doctrine (supralapsarianism and infralapsarianism, mediate or immediate regenerations, eternal justification, presupposed regeneration) that were a constant source of debate and friction between the two main factions of the Reformed Churches of that time; those of the "Afscheiding" of 1834 and those of the "Doleantie" of 1886, united synodically in 1892, but remaining locally quite distinct and long known as A and B. These conclusions were never added to the Confessions, but were definitely meant as a compromise statement to create peace and harmony. The Christian Reformed Churches adopted these same "Conclusions" at the Synod of Muskegon, 1908. Our churches never adopted them officially, nor is there any occasion for adopting them, seeing that the points of doctrine regarding which they express themselves, are not in debate among us.

"Aangaande het zelfonderzoek:

"1. dat onder de bediening van de sleutelmacht, die Christus aan zijn Kerk heeft toebetrouwd, eischt, dat in het midden der gemeente tot een ieder uitga de ernstige vermaning tot het zelfonderzoek ook aangaande de vraag of hij waarlijk in Christus gelooft (Heidelb. Catech. antw. 84);

"2. dat dit zelfonderzoek ongetwijfeld in het verbond der genade zijn uitgangspunt behoort te nemen, maar daarom door den doop niet minder noodzakelijk gemaakt wordt, aangezien niet ieder gedoopte het ware geloof bezit;

"3. dat de vermaning tot zelfonderzoek niet in strijd is met den oproep tot geloof en bekeering, maar veeleer als een onderdeel daarvan is te beschouwen, en daarom nooit naar den achtergrond mag dringen de vermaning om zijn vertrouwen alleen te stellen op de offerande van Jezus Christus aan het kruis, waarheen Woord en Sacrament ons geloof als op den eenigen grond onzer zaligheid wijzen (Heidelb. Catech. ant. 67) en dat de sterking des geloofs door de werking des Heiligen Geestes het allereerst hiervan te verwachten is;

"4. dat dit echter niet uitsluit, dat de christen van zijn geloof ook wordt verzekerd uit de werken (Heidelb. Catech. antw. 86) en in het algemeen uit het waarnemen van de kenmerken der genade, die door Woord en Geest in Hem worden gewerkt (Dordtsche Leerr. I, 12:V, 10)."

Translated:

"Concerning self-examination:

"1. that the administration of the keypower which Christ has entrusted to His Church, among other things, demands that each one in the midst of the

congregation is earnestly admonished unto self-examination also in respect to the question whether he truly believes in Christ (Heidelb. Catech. answ. 84) ;

"2. that this self-examination must, no doubt, take its startingpoint in the covenant of grace, but does not, on this account, become less necessary through baptism, seeing that not every one that is baptized possesses the true faith ;

"3. that the admonition unto self-examination is not in conflict with the exhortation to repentance and faith, but is much rather to be viewed as a subdivision of the latter, and, therefore, may never press into the background the admonition that one must put his confidence only in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross, whither the Word and the Sacraments direct our faith as to the only ground of our salvation (Heid. Cat. answ. 67) and that from this first of all, the strengthening of our faith, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, is to be expected ;

"4. that this, however, does not deny that the Christian is also assured of his faith out of good works (Heid. Cat. answ. 86) and, in general, by the distinguishing marks of grace wrought in him through the Word and the Spirit (Canons of Dordt, I, 12 ; V, 10)."

We recall here that the question concerning self-examination was one of the points of controversy in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands before the war. Some insisted that to examine oneself was to doubt the promise of the covenant. Hence, the above declarations.

"Aangaande de onsterfelijkheid der ziel :

"1. dat, naar Schrift en belijdenis, bij het sterven van den mensch zijn lichaam wederkeert tot stof, maar zijn ziel, hetzij in de gemeenschap met Christus zaligheid genietend, hetzij in de rampzaligheid lijdend, voortbestaat, totdat zij op den jongsten dag, wanneer de dooden zullen opstaan, wederom met haar lichaam vereenigd wordt, en de geloovigen naar ziel en lichaam eeuwige zaligheid zullen ontvangen, de ongeloovigen daarentegen zullen worden overgegeven tot een voortbestaan in eeuwige rampzaligheid, welke waarheid vanouds ook wordt uitgedrukt in de leer van de onsterfelijkheid der ziel ;

"2. dat daarom moet gehandhaafd worden, dat de ziel des menschen, ofschoon op wonderbare wijze met het lichaam een eenheid vormende, nochtans iets eigen is, en van het lichaam dermate onderscheiden, dat zij daarvan kan worden afgescheiden en afzonderlijk bestaan."

Translation :

"Concerning the immortality of the soul :

"1. that, according to Scripture and the confession, when a man dies, his body returns to the dust ; but his soul, whether in communion with Christ enjoying eternal salvation, or suffering in desolation, continues to exist, until on the last day, when the dead shall be raised, it is reunited to exist, until on the last day, when the dead shall be raised, it is reunited with the body, and the believers shall receive eternal salvation, while the unbelievers, on the contrary, shall be delivered unto a continued existence in eternal misery ; which truth, from of yore, was expressed in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul ;

"2. that, therefore, it must be maintained that the soul of man, although in a marvellous way constituting a unity with the body, nevertheless has something proper to itself, and is distinct from the body in such a way that it may be separated from the latter and exist separately."

The "immortality of the soul" was another point of debate in the Netherlands before the war, as we remember. This controversy was largely a matter of terms. In the above decisions, synod, evidently, designed to maintain the phrase "immortality of the soul" in the old, philosophical sense of the word. She would have served the cause of the truth better, it seems to me, if she had defined the terms "soul" and "immortality" in the light of Scripture. But about this later.

"Aangaande de vereeniging van de beide naturen in Christus :

"dat wie zou willen leeren, dat in de vleeschwoording de eeuwige Zone Gods zich zou hebben verbonden met een menschelijke persoon, uiteraard in strijd zou komen met hetgeen in Art. XIX der Nederl. Geloofsbelijdenis wordt uitgesproken : 'Wij gelooven, dat door deze ontvanging de Persoon des Zoons onafscheidelijk vereenigd en tezamen gevoegd is met de menschelijke natuur ; zoodat er niet zijn twee Zonen Gods, noch twee personen, maar twee naturen in eenen eenigen persoon vereenigd.' "

Translation :

"Concerning the union of the two natures in Christ :

"that whoever would want to teach that in the incarnation the eternal Son of God united Himself with a human person would, in the nature of the case, come into conflict with what is expressed in the Netherland Confession Art. XIX : 'We believe that by this concep-

tion, the person of the Son of God is inseparably united and connected with the human nature; so that there are not two Sons of God, nor two persons, but two natures united in one single person.' "

Note here the hypothetical form of the declaration: "whoever would want to teach. . . would come into conflict." Although Dr. V. Hepp, as we recall, accused Dr. Vollenhoven of the heresy referred to above, the heresy of Nestorianism (two persons in Christ), he failed, to say the least, to prove his indictment. This is probably the reason why the synod expressed itself in this hypothetical manner.

No decision was made as yet concerning the "multiformity of the church."

H. H.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Two.

Of Man's Redemption

LORD'S DAY XVIII

1.

The Fact Of Christ's Resurrection. (cont.)

To give the answer that the people believed the report of Mary that they had stolen the body of the Lord, as some do, would be too superficial, and surely unscriptural, an interpretation of the words "and believed." If that had been the meaning of the evangelist he must needs have added: "the words of Mary." No, but he believed that Jesus had risen from the dead. The words that follow: "For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead," do not contradict this explanation. To be sure, they did not as yet understand the Old Testament prophecies concerning this marvellous resurrection. For a clear understanding of these scriptures they must wait until the promise of the Spirit had been fulfilled in them. Had they understood these Scriptures, as Peter did the sixteenth Psalm on the day of Pentecost, John would have had no need of the sight of the empty grave and the linen clothes to convince him of the resurrection. Now he saw, and believed. Perhaps, we may add: "the words of Jesus concerning His own resurrection." Somehow these linen clothes reminded him of what the Lord had spoken concerning the resurrection on the third day. And thus the apostle was led to believe.

But why should the position of the linen clothes

have this faith producing effect upon the apostle John? Must we answer that the apostle found the grave in perfect order, and that the linen clothes were neatly folded and piled up, even the napkin that had been around the Saviour's head in a place by itself; and that thus John concluded that this was the work of the Saviour's hand, and that He had risen from the dead? This would hardly be sufficient evidence for the resurrection. For any human hand might have unwrapped the body of the Lord. Besides, what would have been the sense of neatly folding all the linen clothes, in which the body of Jesus had been wrapped; and, above all, what would be the meaning of the statement that the napkin was found lying alone, in a place by itself? There can be but one answer to the question why the position of the linen clothes was sufficient to make John believe: they were found in the exact position and shape in which they had been wrapped around the body of the Lord.

We must remember that, on that gloomy Friday evening when the body of our Lord was stored away in the sepulchre of Joseph, even though the sabbath drew nigh, the burial of Jesus had really been completed. About this fact the apostle John informs us: "And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury." John 19:38-40. Rev. A. Edersheim describes this burial according to the manner of the Jews as follows: "It was in the court of the tomb that the hasty embalment—if such it may be called—took place. None of Christ's former disciples seem to have taken part in the burying. John may have withdrawn to bring tidings to, and to comfort the Virgin-Mother; the others also, that had stood afar off, beholding, appear to have left. Only a few faithful ones, notably among them Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, the mother of Joses, stood over against the tomb, watching at some distance where and how the Body of Jesus was laid. It would scarcely have been in accordance with Jewish manners, if these women had mingled more closely with the two Sanhedrists and their attendants. From where they stood they could only have had a dim view of what passed within the court, and this may explain how, on their return, they 'prepared spices and ointments' for the more full honors which they hoped to pay the Dead after the Sabbath was past. For, it is of the greatest importance to remember, that haste characterized all that was done. It seems as if the 'clean linen cloth' in which the Body had been

wrapped, was now torn into 'cloths' or swathes, into which the Body, limb by limb was now bound, no doubt, between layers of myrrh and aloes, the head being wrapped in a napkin. And so they laid Him to rest in the niche of the rock-hewn new tomb. And as they went out, they rolled, as was the custom, a great stone—the *Golel*—to close the entrance to the tomb, probably leaning against it for support, as was the practice, a smaller stone—the so-called *Dopheq*. It would be where the one stone was laid against the other, that on the next day, Sabbath though it was, the Jewish authorities would have affixed the seal, so that the slightest disturbance might become apparent.”¹)

In this connection, we wish to call special attention to the fact that according to Edersheim, “the manner of the Jews” regarding burial, implied that the body

1) Life and Times of Jesus, II, 617, 618.

was wrapped, limb by limb, in separate swathes or cloths. It is these cloths that marked “the place where the Lord lay” on the resurrection morning; and that drew the special attention and excited the wonder of the two apostles that went to inspect the grave upon the report of the Magdalene. What else can it mean than that these linen clothes still lay there, in the empty grave, in the very shape in which they had been wrapped around the body? They had not been disturbed. In the light of this explanation we can understand why the angels call special attention to the place where the Lord had lain. That place was clearly marked by the position of the linen clothes. Then, too, we can understand why the separate place of the napkin that had been around Jesus’ head received special attention, and was considered worthy of special mention, for, in case this explanation is adopted, that napkin would naturally lay by itself, somewhat apart from the rest of the clothes. And then only are these linen clothes significant: they testify to the wonder of the resurrection on the third day. Lazarus had come forth from the grave, still bound in the linen clothes in which he had been buried; but Jesus had truly *risen*, and in His glorified, spiritual body, He could leave His burial garments in the very position and shape in which they had been wrapped around His body, limb by limb. That is the testimony of the linen clothes!

But other factors must be considered to explain that, while the disciples were wholly unprepared for the wonder of the resurrection on the third day, they were convinced of its truth, and became faithful witnesses of the risen Lord.

There is, of course, the message of the angels that waited for the women in the vacated grave. The spoken Word of God always accompanies the “Word that came to pass.” It was so at the incarnation of the Son of God: heavenly messengers point to the wonder of Bethlehem. How otherwise would men have recognized the fulfilment of the promise in the Babe in the

manger? Angels appear when, immediately after the ascension of our Lord, the amazed disciples still stare into the heavens. And the same occurs at the resurrection of Jesus from the dead on the third day. Had the resurrection of Christ been similar in character to that of Lazarus and others, there would have been no need of this message from heaven: Jesus Himself might have awaited the arrival of the women and convinced them that He was alive. But now, the Lord had risen, yet He was with them no more. He had advanced into the sphere of the spiritual, the incorruptible, and the immortal. The wonder must be explained, must, at least, be announced, before the Lord could even appear to the disciples. They must become prepared for the glorious gospel of the risen Lord. Unto this preparation serves the evidence of the vacated grave. But added to this, in a sense negative, evidence, is the resurrection gospel that was preached by the angel at the grave: “He is not here, for he is risen!” That brief message, in connection with the evidence of the empty sepulchre, and connecting itself, too, with the words Jesus Himself had spoken to them when He was still with them, certainly prepared the hearts and minds of the witnesses for the wonder of meeting the risen Lord as He would appear unto them.

And this appearance, on manifold occasions, and in different forms, constitutes the final link in this chain of evidence by which the first witnesses became convinced, both of the reality, and of the wonder of the resurrection of their Lord. Even on that first day of the week, He shewed Himself to His disciples several times. He appeared to Mary Magdalene, to the women returning from the grave, to Simon Peter, to the travellers to Emmaus, and to the gathering of the disciples without Thomas. A week later He appeared again to the disciples as they were gathered, and manifested Himself particularly to Thomas. Some time later He was seen by seven of the apostles at the Sea of Tiberias. He shewed Himself to a large number of the disciples on a mountain in Galilee, to James alone, and, finally, to the disciples on the Mount of Olives, when He departed from them into heaven. And also these manifestations, for such they were, convinced the disciples of the reality of the bodily resurrection of the Lord, yet also of the “otherness” of that resurrection. He was real, their risen Lord, for He shewed them His hands and His feet, and the very imprints of His crucifixion; and He ate in their presence to convince them that He was no mere “ghost.” And yet, He was different. He was no longer with them in earthly fellowship: Mary Magdalene must not touch Him. Only occasionally, He appeared from His resurrection sphere to manifest Himself to the disciples. He would suddenly stand in their midst, while they were assembled with closed doors. And also this “otherness” of the risen Lord the disciples faithfully recorded,

exactly as they experienced it. They thought that they saw a ghost. At the Sea of Tiberias "none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord." John 21:12. On the mount in Galilee "they worshipped him: but some doubted." Matt. 28:17. Through all this experience, an experience which, when they had received the Holy Ghost was sealed in them, and also clearly understood in the light of the Old Testament Scriptures, so that the last vestige of doubt was removed, the disciples became fully prepared to become witnesses of the resurrection, and to proclaim to all men: "The Lord is risen indeed!"

H. H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Wicked Deed of the Gibeathites and the War Against Benjamin

As was said, the final section of the book of the Judges is formed of three examples of the lawlessness that characterized the age of the judges. The last example recorded, and to which we now have regard, is that of the infamous deed at Gibeah in the tribe of Benjamin. The narration of this crime, too, is prefaced by the notice that there was no king in Israel, the thought conveyed being that, on this account, the infamy at Gibeah could take place. Also this history concerns a Levite. There was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim." Bethlehem lay to the south of Ephraim, so that the "side of" or, as the Hebrew text has it "the hinder parts" of Ephraim's mountains. Here is where the Levite was a resident, when he took him a concubine out of Bethlehem Judah. That the woman stood to him in the relation of concubine warrants the assumption that he already had a wife. Else he would have taken her to be his wife. The newly acquired mate, by whose beauty he had been smitten—why else should he have fetched her way from Bethlehem—turned out to be an unfaithful spouse. "She played the harlot against him." The meaning may be that she committed adultery not by illicit intercourse with another man, but by returning to her father's house with a view to effecting a permanent separation. She went home not for a visit but to stay. She was not disposed to be willing to live with him. She had ceased to love her husband or her sensuality was not satisfied with him. If this interpretation is correct, the sacred writer, in branding her doing "Whoredom" anticipates the teaching of Christ to the

effect that whoso putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, commits adultery. Only here the offender was the wife. But it is more likely that the sentence "and she played the whore against him" means that she actually committed adultery. Especially when viewed in the light of her terrible end.

She had already remained away four whole months, when the Levite set out to induce her to return. This favors the other view. If she had committed actual adultery, would he have put her away? It would seem so. The Levite spake friendly to her or, as the Hebrew text has it, according to her heart, and they became reconciled. May this not indicate that the reason she had deserted him, was that he had been treating her with too little consideration and not that she had ceased to love her husband? If so, the other view would have that much more support. The notice that she brought him to her father's house indicates that the first meeting of the two had taken place perhaps in the field, where in the moment of his arrival, she was occupied in some manner not revealed. The woman's father was overly glad to see the man and extended to him an uncommon hospitality, why, the narrative does not say. Perhaps he was giving expression to a wish for reconciliation. Though the Levite wanted to depart soon, he allows himself to be detained for three days which he spent eating and drinking with his host. On the fourth morning he would go but his host urged him first to take a morsel of bread. He still might have taken his leave. But his host besought him to linger on and even to tarry all night. So they ate and drank. But in the evening the Levite rose up to go nevertheless, but his host demurred and he lodged there again. The next morning he rose at early daybreak. Everything was in readiness for the start but at the invitation of his host the Levite prolonged his stay until the afternoon. He makes the impression of being carnal. It speaks not well for him that he cannot resist a good table. But at last he was determined to leave. His host even would detain him now. "Behold," said he to his guest, "the day draweth toward the evening, I pray you, tarry all night; behold, the day groweth to an end, lodge here, that thine heart may be merry; and tomorrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go home." But no amount of coaxing on the part of the man, this time could make the Levite change his mind. Though the sun was rapidly declining, he set out upon his journey. It was not the part of wisdom for him to leave at that hour. What we have in this scripture passage is a striking picture of irresolution. Evidently the Levite felt obliged to depart soon after the reconciliation. Perhaps duty called or it may be that he had no time to spare if he was to rest upon the sabbath at home. Yet he defers. His lusts for the pleasures of the table are too strong. The father-in-law may have meant well in overwhelming him with food

and drink and pressing invitations. But it was not becoming to Levites to be swayed from the course of duty by such matters.

Once on his way, the Levite has haste. The sun already was going down, when he came over against Jerusalem, he, his two beasts of burden, his servant and his concubine. His servant advised that they turn into that city, and lodge there. But the Levite feared that he might be plundered, as the city at that time was still inhabited by the Jebusites, a non-Israelitish people. Fearing that in this place the rights of hospitality might be violated, he pressed on in the hope of reaching one of the Israelitish cities farther on, Gibeah or Ramah. To Gibeah they came, just as the sun went down upon them. It was necessary to lodge there all night. But he was soon to discover that he could not have done worse had he lodged in the heathen city. Now Gibeah belonged to Benjamin. The Levite came to rest in the square of the city, expecting to be taken into the house of one of the residents. But no one took notice of him. Sojourning in Gibeah at the time was an old man who also was of mount Ephraim. Coming in from the field, and seeing the Levite, who had already made preparations to pass the night in the street, he went to him with good intent. He did not share the inhospitable disposition which characterized the inhabitants of the city. That they had failed to receive the stranger portended no good. Love to the stranger was commanded by law (Deut. 10:19). It was doubtless the result of astonishment that anyone should want to spend the night in Gibeah, out of doors, that the aged Ephraimite asked, Whence art thou? Whither goest thou? The city probably had acquired a bad reputation and was being shunned by travellers. The Levite's reply was an invitation for the old man's hospitality. It was a plea that he show him mercy by granting him for the night the shelter of his home. "We are passing," says he to the ancient householder, "from Bethlehem Judah, but we dwell on the nether side of mount Ephraim, and thence we came. He refrained from divulging the reason of the journey. But, on the other hand, he did tell the man that he was a Levite by making the statement that "I walk with the house of God," that is, with the tabernacle". The implication of this manner of speech is, that the tabernacle had no fixed place of abode and that, when moved, the Levites, in particular the levitical priests, went along with it. The Levite of our story used this form of speech to reveal his dignity. For he sought hospitality and nothing could be worse than the refusal of it to a minister of God's house. He understood this, was aware that the fact of his being a Levite, if only known, would work greatly for his benefit. He also let it be known that he was well provided with provender for his beasts of burden and with food and wine for himself and his companions in travel. Thus it was only

shelter that he needed. The entertainer should be at no expense. He called himself "his servant" and his concubine "thy handmaid". The old man was glad to be his host, and assumed responsibility for all his wants. His one thought was that the Levite lodge not in the street. "So he brought him into the house, and gave provender unto the asses: and they washed their feet and did eat and drink."

As the Levite and his host ate and drank, "the men of the city, sons of wickedness" assaulted the house and shamelessly avowed their pederastic purpose. They say to the master of the house, Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him." This well-known euphemism, as words of their lips, is an expression of shameless effrontery. The Levite they would compel to co-operate with them in committing that sin at which the apostle strikes when he says, "And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men, working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet" (Rom. 1:27). It was this same lustful abomination that formed the curse of heathendom.

The master of the house went out to these "sons of wickedness", and remonstrated with them, "Nay, my brethren, nay, I pray you, do not so wickedly; seeing this man is come into my house, do not this folly." But these savage men would hear no reason. So the host offered them his virgin daughter to do with her as they might choose, if only they would spare the man. The parent would sacrifice his child on the altar of the lust of debased men in order that a guest might go forth unmolested. Israel's law did not require that certainly. It was an Arab custom. Sparing his daughter, this host, as assisted by all who were in his house, the guests included, should have fought to the death those men of Gibeah, seeking pleasure in the violation of nature. But the host was not called upon to make the sacrifice. They would not have his daughter. Hereupon the Levite led forth his concubine, and she satisfied the wantons, doubtless because she was beautiful and because she was a stranger. And they abused her all night till day-break. Letting her go, she came to the man's house, where she fell down at the door. Here it was where the Levite in the morning found her with hands upon the threshold. He ordered her up as he wanted to resume his journey. But he got no response. She was dead. It is remarkable that she should come to this terrible end, seeing that she had played the harlot against the Levite. That was divine retribution. But those "men of wickedness" were none the less guilty.

There is a conspicuous agreement between this history and the one that occurred in Sodom in the days of Lot. The aged Ephraimite was a comparative stranger in Gibeah, just as Lot was in Sodom. The

latter had guests in his house and likewise the former. The Sodomites surrounded Lot's house and demanded the surrender of his daughters in the same way that the men of Gibeah did here. Lot proposed to bring them forth and the aged host made an identical promise. But the dissimilarities are equally obvious. Lot's guests were angels, who frustrated all evil designs. Here the host received a frail Levite who stood helpless over against the assaults of the violence of depraved men. The men of Sodom were "wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly," but the men of Gibeah had greater sin, for Israel had God's law, which punished such crimes with death (Lev. 22:13). Yet in Gibeah the violence involved directly only the "men of the city, certain sons of Belial," but in Sodom it was the men of the city, both old and young, all the people from every quarter" that compassed the house.

* * *

It was a terrible morning when the Levite found his concubine on the threshold dead. Had he given up all idea of recovering her as hopeless or may he have entertained plans for rescuing her in some effective way. Or is it just to suppose that he went on his way without a thought of what had become of his unhappy companion and was reminded of her only by stumbling upon her dead body? It is difficult to determine with certainty from the data on hand just what was his attitude. That he had delivered her up in order that he might be spared, instead of fighting to the death in saving her from the violence of the mob, was not to his credit certainly. Whatever may have been her sin, he had wanted her back again, and she had been willing to be reconciled to him. It is difficult to make out this Levite. He makes the impression of being weak and heartless. True, he now brought to the attention of the whole nation what the men of Gibeah had done to her. But it is not at all certain that he was acting out of right principle. He may simply have been giving expression to a great rage aroused by the consideration that he had been deprived of a desirable concubine.

The Levite now cut the corpse into twelve pieces and sent them out in every direction, and, of course, accompanied the pieces by a message the content of which is given at chap. 20:4-7. They who bore the pieces told what had been done to the concubine by the men of Gibeah. Saul sent forth the pieces of a divided ox accompanied by the message that "Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen." But the Levite sent a divided woman and thereby intimated that, if the evil were not exterminated in Israel, the tragedy that had befallen his concubine might overtake any woman in Israel. The woman cut in pieces made the report of the wicked doings in Gibeah terribly real before the minds of the people.

The tactics of the Levite had effect. There was a wave of popular indignation so great that by it nearly the whole tribe of Benjamin was swept into eternity. The tribes were horrified. All that saw said that there was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt until this day. And their last word was, "Consider of it, take advice and speak your minds" (chap. 19:30). All were agreed that the criminals had to be made to atone for their crime. Then all the children of Israel went forth and assembled as one man from Dan even to Beersheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the Lord in Mizpah (chap. 20:1). That is, not all the people promiscuously but the representatives of the tribes. They hastened to Mizpah, called hither by the high-priest to Jehovah, with all the men of Israel able to bear arms, a huge army of "four hundred thousand footmen that drew the sword, presenting themselves in the assembly of the people of God." The Levite was also on hand and they asked the man to tell them "how was this wickedness?" And the Levite told his terrible story in the ears of his countrymen. And in more than one respect his story is remarkable. "I came to Gibeah that belongeth to Benjamin," such were his words, "I and my concubine to lodge. And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and beset the house round about upon me by night, and thought to have slain me: and my concubine have they forced, that she is dead."

He refrains from revealing that to pacify those wantons he had brought out to them his concubine. His language seems calculated to leave the impression that his concubine had been torn from his side, snatched from his very arms. It would not have sounded well had he told them that he, himself, had delivered the woman to the lusts of the violent. In presenting his charges, he was careful to avoid such language as would bring him under a cloud.

The charges lodged against the men of Gibeah were indeed that terrible as to justify the verdict that there was no such deed ever done or seen in Israel. This may have been true. But what was being overlooked was that things just as bad and perhaps worse had been taking place all along. And the reference now is to Israel's spiritual whoredoms, their temples and idol-worship filling the land even then when those words of censure were being spoken. And there was no repentance. Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. And yet, when they heard the Levite's story, the tribes are loud in denouncing the deed, and their indignation knows no bounds. As aroused by a Levite mourning the loss of a concubine, who had played the harlot unto him even, the tribes rise up as one man and gather unto the Lord at Mizpah. But they do not put away their own abominations. That was their hypocrisy. But the Lord will show them.

The people of Israel now took action. But all the

400,000 men of Israel, referred to in the second verse, do not proceed against Gibeah of Benjamin, but only 40,000 of that number. This is plainly stated in verses 9 and 10 (of chap. 20). The tenth verse states that what was taken is ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, thus 40,000, "to fetch victuals for the people, that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel." So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city—the 40,000—knit together as one man. The mention of the 400,000 in verse 1 and 17 is only designed to point out the enormous superiority of the other tribes, in the means of war. Benjamin, who numbered but 26,000 (verse 15) would have shown no resistance, with all the 400,000 men of Israel in the field.

While the 40,000 men of the tribes marched against Gibeah messengers were sent throughout all the tribe of Benjamin, who demanded to know "What wickedness is this that is done among you?" They insist that the Benjamites disown the deed by surrendering the guilty. But the Benjamites were defiant. They refused to comply. Instead they prepare for war. Their reaction can have but one explanation. They were indifferent toward the atrocity in Gibeah and they were too proud to allow themselves to be told to root it out. Rather than hearken unto the voice of their brethren, they would run the risk of war, and shield those sinners in Gibeah. The reaction of this tribe shows to what a pass conditions—political, social and spiritual—had come in the nation. So the Benjamites gathered themselves together to go out to battle against the children of Israel.

G. M. O.

THROUGH THE AGES

Monasticism

As was said, Monasticism passed through four stages of development. During the first stage the ascetics were unorganized and continued to dwell among men. During the second stage they withdrew from the society of men, even from the society of one-another, and took their abode in the wilderness. This form of monasticism is known as *anchoretism* from the Greek "anachoreo" to retire from human society). During the third state of development, the ascetics organized to form congregations of ascetics or monks. This form of monasticism is known as "coenobitism"

from the Greek "koinos bios" *common life*. The final stage of development was reached when the separate congregations of monks organized to form monastic orders. These, as was said, were unions of a number of cloisters under one rule or common government.

As to anchoretism, it did not take long before the deserts of Egypt were peopled with anchorites. This was due to the great influence its founder, Anthony, had with his generation. What was sought in most cases is fame upon earth and reward in heaven through the works of men. As to the Coenobitic type of monasticism, its founder was Pachomius, an Egyptian and contemporary of Anthony. Born in 292, he was the offspring of heathen parents. As a soldier in the army of the tyrant Maximian, he contacted the Christians in Thebes. By their kindly treatment they won him for their faith. After his discharge from the army, he spent several years with the hermit Palemon. Pachomius tells us that in the year 313 an angel instructed him in a vision to establish in upper Egypt a congregation of monks. He did so, and a century later it numbered fifty thousand members. Coenobitism stood much closer to a normal way of life. In the first place it took cognizance of the social instinct in man, of his need of the society of his fellows. Besides, its rule called for spiritual exercises not only but also for manual labor such as agriculture, boat building, basket making, mat weaving by which the monks earned their own living and supported the poor and the sick. But they had to live three in a cell. Though together at the table, they had to eat in silence with their faces veiled. Such was the rule as fixed by Pachomius. Though this form of monasticism stood closer to a normal way of life, it still had its dangers. Men like Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory, Jerome, Milus and Isidora, added to their spiritual exercises theological studies, and thus turned an institution that is inherently evil to their advantage. But most of the monks had no liking for such studies and spent the time not needed for their exercises and labors in brooding over gloomy felings or sank into the coarsest image worship. Their sexual cravings, which could not be repressed, externalized themselves to them in female forms, pleasing and seductive, which appeared in their dreams. And their soiled conscience and fear of death peopled the desert with swarms of demons. Their excessive asceticism degenerated into unnatural vice and often ended in madness and suicide. These same saints, who denounced the marital state as inherently unclean, were themselves disturbed by unchaste dreams, which defiled their imagination.

The great reformer of Western monasticism was Benedict of Nursia, born about 480. Having studied for a brief time in Rome, he took up the hermit life in a cave east of Rome. Later he founded a monastery on the hill of Monte Cassino about midway between Naples

and Rome. His famous rule, known as the "Benedict Rule" contains in it the following elements. At the head of each monastery stands an abbot, who is elected by the monks and who must be implicitly obeyed. In weighty matters he consults with the brethren of the congregation but in minor matters with the older members only. The formal entrance into the cloister must be preceded by a trial of monastic life of one year, but once admitted his vow is irrevocable. The life of the cloister consists of alternation of spiritual and bodily exercises. Four hours must be devoted to prayer, singing of psalms and meditation and seven hours to manual labor in the field or in the house or, instead of this, to the training of children. Also, some fixed time must be spent in reading each day. The individual monk must possess no personal property; the fruits of his labor go to the common treasury, and he must avoid all contact with the world as harmful to the soul and engage in works of love. This rule was characterized by great moderation and good sense in its requirements as to food, labor and discipline. The monk was allowed to eat much better. He even received daily a flagon of wine, and the mode of life, though simple, was without extreme rigor and thus not at all uninviting for the average earnest man. Not so many years later also learning was joined to the monastic life, after the example set by a monastery founded by Cassiodorus, a retired high civil officer, in lower Italy. The Holy Scriptures, the works of the church fathers and even the ancient classics were now copied and studied. The result was that, in course of time, Western monasticism became the asylum of learning, which, in Anthony its founder, it had despised, and the conservator of the literature of antiquity.

The Benedict rule rapidly spread. By the time of Charlemagne, it had spread all over Europe. And as the monasteries grew in numbers, the separate congregations of monks united to form monastic orders.

Monasticism was always regarded as a lay institution. Says Jerome, "The monk has not the office of a teacher, but of a penitent, who endures suffering either for himself or for the world. Some monks shunned the office of bishop, others coveted it. With few exceptions the abbots of monasteries were ordained priests under the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese. Later the popes made them independent of the jurisdiction of the bishops and thenceforth they were the spiritual armies of the pope.

It was especially this improved monasticism, the benedictine type, of which history reports that it raised its voice against the worldliness and frivolity, in the church of the big cities; showed hospitality to the wayfaring and liberality to the poor and the needy; was a prolific seminary of the clergy and trained divines like Chrysostom and Jerome; fostered profoundest theological discussions, like the tracts of Anselm,

and the Summa of Aquinas; produced the best books of devotion, and sacred hymns; promoted the education of the people; transcribed the Bible and the works of the church fathers, sent forth missionaries, and gave to the church some of its best bishops and popes. Yet monasticism, as an institution was evil. It stood for an unscriptural view of life and of the world, and for an unscriptural way of life. Its motive was sinful. Thus, as an institution, it was a bad tree and bore fruit after its kind. It defused a low opinion of family and marital life, and thus exerted a demoralizing influence on the people, who came to regard themselves as the profane vulgarians of the world. It substituted for salvation by grace through faith in Christ a freak holiness as a meritorious ground of life everlasting. Hence, in the sixteenth century it was the bitterest enemy of the reformation. This opposite kinds of operation of the monastic institution has perplexed many who attempted to correctly evaluate it. Says Dean Milman, "It is impossible to survey monasticism in its general influence, from the earliest period of its inworking into Christianity, without being astonished and perplexed with its diametrically opposed effects. Here is the undoubted parent of blindest ignorance and the most ferocious bigotry, some times of the most debasing licentiousness; there the guardian of learning, the author of civilization, the propagator of humble and peaceful religion." The monastic institution in its operations need not perplex us. *As such*, it was an evil institution and, as operative through the carnal seed and the flesh of the true church in it, it brought forth after its kind; and this fruit was evil. But those Benedictine monasteries housed also many a true believer, who, despite their affiliation with the monastic institution, brought forth fruit after their kind, and that fruit was good.

Monasticism, however mighty as a movement, was not without opposition. The Christian statesmen and emperors, like Valens, were of a mind that the monks would do better, if they placed themselves at the disposal of the state for military and civil service rather than shut themselves up in cloisters to spend their time there in idleness. The defenders of heathenism, like Julian, reviled the monks for their fanatical opposition to temple and idol-worship. And as the monastic institution stood as a perpetual protest against the frivolity and worldly-indulgence of the carnal seed in the church, it was hated by this seed. But monasticism also was being opposed on purely biblical grounds among others by Jovinian, Helvidius, Vigilantius and Aetius. The most important of this class of objectors was Jovinian, who was himself a monk but whose eyes, like those of Luther, were opened to the defects of monasticism and to the futility of its aim, by his own experience. In a work, written in Rome before 390, he attacked monasticism in its basic conceptions. According to Jerome,

he defended these four propositions: "1. Virgins, widows, and married persons, who have once been baptized into Christ, have equal merits, other things in their conduct being equal. 2. Those who once with full faith are born again by baptism, cannot be overcome by the devil. 3. There is no difference between abstaining from food and enjoying it with thanksgiving. 4. All, who keep the baptismal covenant, will receive an equal reward in heaven. In defence of his first proposition, he directed attention to the institution of marriage by God Himself before the fall at Gen. 11:24; to the sanction of marriage by Christ at Matt. 19:5; to the life of wedlock of the patriarchs before and after the flood, of Moses and the prophets, Zacharius and Elizabeth. He appealed further to the apostles, particularly to Peter, cited Paul's exhortation to marriage, his requirement that the bishop and deacon be the husband of one wife; and his advice to the young widows that they marry and bear children. In refutation of these arguments, Jerome is so crassly unfair and places marriage in a light so disgraceful, as to offend even his friends. Jovinian's defence of his second proposition approaches the Augustinian and Calvinistic doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. This third point is directed against the great value placed upon fasting, with reference to Rom. 14:20, where the apostle affirms that all things are pure; and to I Tim. 4:1-5 where Paul warns Timothy that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. . . .

Helvidius, of whom little is known, wrote a work before 383, in which he refutes the Romish doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary the mother of Jesus. He holds the marriage state in equal honor with that of virginity.

More is known of Vigilantius a Presbyter in Spain. He was a man of true but somewhat vehement zeal, and of literary talent, who directed in the beginning of the fifth century a polemic against asceticism with all its concomitants such as fasting, virginity, vigils and the honoring of the graves of the martyrs. Jerome replied also to this work, opposing to its argumentation not reasoning from the Scriptures, for he had none, but sarcasms, ridicule, and revilings. Here follows an example of his tactics: "There have been monsters on earth, centaurs, syrens, leviathens, behemoths. . . . Gaul alone has bred no monsters (Vigilantius was originally from Gaul), but has ever abounded in brave and noble men,—when, of a sudden, there has risen one Vigilantius, who should rather be called Dormitantius—meaning sleepy—contending in an impure spirit against the spirit of Christ, and forbidding to honor the graves of the martyrs; he rejects the Vigils—only

at Easter should we sing hallelujah; he declares abstemiousness to be heresy, and chastity a nursery of licentiousness. . . . The innkeeper of South Gaul (the father of Vigilantius was an innkeeper) mingles water with the wine, and would, according to ancient art, combine his poison with the genuine faith. He opposes virginity, hates chastity, cries against the fastings of the saints, and would only against jovial feastings amuse himself with the Psalms of David. It is terrible to hear, that even bishops are companions of his wantonness, if those deserve this name, who ordain only married persons deacons, and trust not the chastity of the single." Vigilantius, too, did not mince words in denouncing the superstitions of his age. To illustrate, he called the Christians who worshipped the bones of deceased saints "ash-gatherers and idolaters."

The Presbyter Acrius, too, opposed by the written word the laws for fasting as a curtailment of Christian liberty. He also denied the superiority of bishops to presbyters, for which he was persecuted by the hierarchy.

G. M. O.

IN HIS FEAR

Off To School — The Covenant Way

The Christian School.

There are some things which a Christian parent should simply find it impossible to do. Sending his children to the public school is one of them.

The public school is the school of the world. It is established, supported and controlled by the world. In all its instruction and discipline and life it bears the stamp of the world. There the fear of the Lord has no place and the only wisdom men know is that of the fallen and blind sinner. There stones are offered for bread and serpents for fish. There our covenant Jehovah is deliberately expelled from his own domain, the Lord's Christ is crucified afresh and the Word of God is denied and mocked. Therefore we said: sending his child to the public school is one of the things which should not even enter into the Christian's mind to do. Nor should the favor of the Lord be expected in that way. "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just." Prov. 3:33.

We are deeply grateful, therefore, as we see our children prepare and depart for school, that it is to one of our Christian schools that they may go. Unsatis-

factory as the present situation is for us as Protestant Reformed people and churches, we could and would choose no other course. In the Christian school our children are in the care of those who confess to believe in God and in Jesus Christ our Lord and who are therefore concerned not only about their material but also their spiritual welfare. There our children are taught the necessity and value of prayer, and there they are instructed in the knowledge of the Word of God. There the vain and evolutionistic philosophy of the world is rejected and the Word of God is confessed to be "the lamp before our feet and the light upon our pathway."

However, apart from the actual instruction our children receive and their association with other children of Christian parents, there are many other reasons why Christian parents can impossibly follow another course than that of sending their children to the schools of the covenant. Our children must learn, also by example and experience, that no other principle may ever be defended than that the children of the covenant must be trained in the way of the covenant. We may not raise a generation that gradually loses all love for the principle of Christian education as such. We dare not kill this ideal in the minds and hearts of our children by sending them for whatever reason it may be to the schools of the world. Our Christian schools, as such, as institutions, are testimonies for the truth overagainst the lie of the world. On that foundation and with that in view they were established many years ago. They are the emblems of God's covenant. They are part and parcel of the life of the Christian. I know, that all this does not make good a spiritually and doctrinally defective education, but even as our children pass through the portals of our Christian schools they are taught that they are a different people, a unique people, a people that "shall dwell in safety alone." The very fact that they attend a Christian school teaches them, that we may not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, that righteousness has no fellowship with unrighteousness and light has no communion with darkness, that there is no concord between Christ and Belial and that he that believeth has no part with the infidel. Nothing may stand in the way of instilling into the hearts of our children this all-important lesson.

As long, therefore, as our ideal has not been reached we should and shall most certainly patronize and cooperate with the schools we now have. Of this there should be no question in the minds of any of our people.

Not our Ideal.

All this does not mean, however, that as Protestant Reformed people we can or may be content with the present situation. I'm sure that even our Christian

Reformed brethren understand this, especially their leaders and educators, better, obviously, than many of our own people. This has nothing to do with loving the institutions wherein we ourselves were raised and instructed in years gone by. As such we do love our Christian schools and the Christian churches also, I may add. Therefore it is in no way of malice or prejudice or from other ulterior motives that we oppose them. God forbid! But, the Christian Reformed churches and with them the Christian schools have apostatized from the truth. They have departed, and that most seriously, from the ways of our fathers. And where the truth is involved, sentiment is no factor. Therefore we must oppose these churches and can find justification for no other course than that of whole-hearted commitment to the principle, that the only Protestant Reformed way is that of establishing our own schools.

For so many reasons, basic all of them, it is simply impossible, it seems to me, for devoted Protestant Reformed people to be happy about things as they now are. After all, whatever is contrary to the truth as we believe it is the lie, is it not? It should be, for us. In as far as the Christian Reformed churches and schools teach a conception of God that is in conflict with ours they are teaching the lie and feeding their people and children stones for bread. In as far as the well-meaning offer of salvation and all that doctrine presupposes and implies lies at the foundation of the education our children receive, subtly permeates the prayers our children hear every day, the songs they learn to sing, their Bible instruction, etc., in so far that education is rooted in the lie. In as far as the doctrine of "the good that sinners do" underlies and permeates the instruction in the school, in that measure the instruction is not according to truth. Again, in as far as the teacher is committed in her own soul and mind to the pernicious doctrine of common grace, believes it, practices it, teaches it, whether directly or by implication; in as far as she conceives of God, of the world, of man and of all things in that light; in as far as she sees and interprets current events from that point of view;—in exactly so far she is incapable of teaching the truth. What Protestant Reformed person can possibly deny this?

We and our Christian Reformed brethren differ on so much that is fundamental. It is not merely a question of common grace and the "three points" in the narrow sense of the word. Because of these we differ more or less on well nigh every doctrine,—the doctrines as such as well as their proper place and emphasis. It stands to reason that our view of any given doctrine, and the more basic the doctrine the more this will be the case, must have its effect on our entire doctrinal outlook. The one gives color and perspective to all. Let me illustrate. It may be that as

long as the Christian Reformed brethren speak only of the counsel of God, election, reprobation, the fall of man, depravity, atonement, etc., they speak much the same language we do. But, if overagainst these truths they place and stress "another side, a side which is vastly different and "seemingly" contradictory, then, surely, that "other side" will affect and color the above-mentioned doctrines too. You may believe in reprobation. However, if you also believe in a love of God for all, your view and emphasis of reprobation does not remain the same either. Thus your view of limited atonement will certainly be affected by your conception of the well-meaning offer of salvation, your emphasis of total depravity will be dependent on your view of the good the unregenerated are still able to perform, etc.

In the light of all this, how can the present set-up be anything but unsatisfactory to any who is really Protestant Reformed?

A time to ask Questions.

It is well, now that the school season has again set in, that we ask ourselves some pertinent questions, questions that must be answered as in the presence of the Highest. After all, we are not accountable to man, but to God. What will the Lord have us do? That is the question that should answer all others for us. Nothing else matters. The school issue is not a personal one, a matter that can or may be determined by carnal bias or mere fleshly sentiment. It is a question of the glory of God, of His covenant and truth and of the spiritual welfare of our children. With these things in mind the following questions are asked. With these things in mind they must be answered.

Are we as Protestant Reformed people satisfied with having our children instructed in Christian Reformed schools?

Are we giving due heed to the mandate of Deut. 11:18, 19, "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up"?

Are we training up our children "in the way they should go"?

Are we consciously fulfilling our baptismal pledge? Has the "aforesaid doctrine" priority in our hearts and lives and are we teaching it to our children "to the utmost of our powers"?

Can non- and anti-Protestant Reformed people properly instruct our children? If they cannot it is our solemn duty to establish our own schools. If they can, then what place is there at all for doctrine, for the Reformed truth, in the Christian school? That they

can must be the position of them who oppose the establishment of our own schools. When we call these teachers non- and anti-Protestant Reformed we are not stooping to name-calling. By the same token we are anti-Christian Reformed, of course.

Can a church ultimately survive whose doctrines are either ignored or denied, directly or by implication, in all the daily instruction of the children?

Can our churches expect to prosper and develop if *the very doctrine that occasioned our separate existence* lies at the basis of all the daily instruction our children receive? Can they, really? They who oppose our own schools must assume the position that they can.

If "common grace" is not an isolated doctrine that has little or nothing to do with the education of our children, but definitely a world and life view, does it not follow that it will color and determine all the instruction that is given in the school? Is not every prayer as well as all instruction and interpretation of world events determined by one's world and life view?

If common grace, including the "3 points", is such a dangerous doctrine as we have always maintained it to be, how can we entrust our children to them who are committed to that error? If it is not, why should we separate at all? Is it not time to consider possible reunion with the Christian Reformed churches?

If doctrine is not basic to all education, why have Christian schools at all? If it is fundamental, how can we be content with any but our own Protestant Reformed doctrine?

Can our children be expected to grow spiritually and in denominational love and loyalty on a diet that is in constant conflict with itself? Can we expect them to develop clearcut conceptions when they hear one language on Sunday and another during the week, one language in church and home and another in school?

If it is true that home and church and school depend on one another for their welfare and growth, can we be happy with the present situation? If not, what have Christian leaders been maintaining all this time?

Many more questions could be asked, no doubt, along these same lines. However space does not permit and these should suffice for the present.

Think them over,—prayerfully and daily. That, certainly, is the least we can do.

R. V.

Search me, O God, and know my heart,
Try be, my thoughts to know;
O lead me, if in sin I stray,
In paths of life to go.

FROM HOLY WRIT

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it.” — John 14:12-14.

Christ’s departure from His brethren was to them a tremendous mystery. They believed in Him as the Messiah. Their conception of the Messiah was earthly, however, and they could not understand that their Lord must depart from them through suffering and death. This explains their troubled hearts whereof the Saviour speaks in verse one. And this also explains why Jesus comforts them in the chapters 14-16 of this gospel according to St. John.

According to the immediate context of our text, Jesus is the revelation of the Father, and whosoever hath seen and known Jesus hath seen and known the Father. Inasmuch as Christ Himself is Immanuel He is God in the flesh and therefore God revealed. And because He is God revealed He speaks and does the words and works of God. God worked in and through Him. He spoke the words of the Father because His words were words of life. His works, too, were works of life. He gave life to the dead, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the mute. His works, which were works of life, were works of the Father because the Father is life and there is no darkness in Him. He that hath seen the Christ hath therefore seen the Father. His disciples, however, and all God’s people shall do the same works; yea, they shall do greater works than these, inasmuch as Christ goes unto His Father.

What does Jesus mean when He tells us that we shall do the same, yea, greater works than His? It must be self-evident what is meant with Jesus’ works. Jesus’ works are His miracles. We read in verse 9: “Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?” It must be conceded that He had been with them only three years. However, these years had been so full that, if the apostles had narrated all the happenings, the world would not be able to contain all the books. What a multitude of works Jesus had wrought! We need but recall the host of miracles recorded for us on the pages of Holy Writ. Besides, these works were works of the Father. Satan does not perform *these* works. He does not give life, appease hunger, give sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf. The devil works destructively. God’s works are works of life. And we

must bear in mind that the emphasis here must not be laid on the quantity of the Saviour’s works but on their character. They were works which manifested the Father, as the Father of light. Only God makes alive, gives sight to the blind, enables the deaf to hear and the lame to walk. The works of the Saviour were therefore those works or miracles which revealed God because all these works operated directly against the curse of sin and manifested the Father as Life and Light.

But what does Jesus mean when He teaches us that we shall do the same works, yea, greater works than His? Must we seek the fulfillment of these words among those who believe in Divine healing? They profess to accomplish miracles. They would regard Divine healing as an earmark of the true Church and pride themselves in their giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, etc. Does not this word of God teach us that we shall perform the same works? However, it must be evident that this explanation of Jesus’ words is utterly impossible. It is true that the apostles performed miracles after Jesus’ departure. However, we may note, in the first place, that the apostles certainly never exceeded the Lord in this working of miracles. Christ certainly performed more wonderful works than they. But, in the second place, this text does not refer to the apostles alone but to the entire church. The expression, “He that believeth in Me” is too general to be limited merely to the apostles. All the believers are meant here. And they shall not only do what Jesus did, but they shall exceed Him, do more. What, then, does the Lord mean in this text?

To understand this saying of our Lord we must bear in mind the character and significance of Jesus’ works. His works were fundamentally signs and therefore transitory in character. This does not mean, of course, that they were not real. But it does mean that the miracles of Christ, performed in this earthly, physical sphere, were not the reality but merely signs, symbolic forms. It was not *the* purpose of the Saviour, e.g., merely to cure the earthly sick. His miracles were a transitory form and direct us to His real, spiritual significance.

Christ’s miracles were earthly symbols of the wonder of Divine grace. Scripture itself leads or directs us to His real, spiritual significance.

Christ’s miracles were earthly symbols of the wonder of Divine grace. Scripture itself leads or directs us to this thought. Do we not read that the Kingdom of Heaven occurs through miracles and parables? This Kingdom is heavenly. These miracles are earthly. Hence, they are but earthly symbols of their spiritual reality. Whenever Jesus performs a miracle He gives us a picture of that which actually takes place in the real, spiritual-heavenly Kingdom of Heaven. Only in light can we understand the miracles of our Lord.

God's grace, we know, is that Divine wonder, whereby the Lord delivers this accursed creation, through sin and death, into the eternal, heavenly glory. God's grace is that wonderful power of God whereby the Lord, through sin and darkness, realizes His eternal and heavenly tabernacle. Jesus Christ Himself is centrally this wonder of Divine grace. In Him God makes dwelling among us, descends into our midst, realizes His own Kingdom, so that it is literally true that, in Christ, God, through our sin and death, establishes our eternal glory. This Jesus is exalted at the right hand of power. And it is He who, by His Spirit, causes spiritually the dead to live, the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, the dumb to speak. Of this actual power of the grace of God, *the* wonder of grace, Christ's miracles are but signs and symbols.

This enables us to understand why we shall not only do what Jesus did but perform greater works than His. What works shall we perform? The wonder of grace has been poured out into our hearts. We, who are spiritually dead and blind and deaf and dumb and lame, are enabled by this power of grace to live and see and hear and speak and walk. We are enabled to fight the good fight of faith against sin and unrighteousness. These are the works which characterize the people of God. And they are works of God also because they testify of and manifest Him. These works glorify God, our Father, Who is in heaven.

It is for this reason that we hear Christ say that we shall perform greater works. Indeed, we shall do the same works, not because we shall perform earthly miracles, but in the sense that we shall perform actually and spiritually what Jesus did symbolically. For this reason our works shall be greater. In the measure that the reality is greater than its symbol, its shadow, our works are greater than Christ's. His works were symbols. Our works are their corresponding reality.

The assurance that we will perform these greater works is, first of all, expressed in this text in the words: "Because I go unto My Father." These words must not be understood as merely conveying to us a temporal thought. The implication, then, would be, that, inasmuch as Jesus is going to His Father and His disciples remain behind, Christ's time to perform miracles will be cut short but they will be able to continue. In the light of what we read in this chapter we can definitely assume that this cannot possibly be the meaning of these words of the Lord.

Jesus goes unto His Father. Jesus here is the Mediator, Who, according to His human nature, is the Head of His people, Who came to suffer and die that we might live. Neither need we be in doubt how He goes unto His Father. The entire context in John 14 throws light on this point. Jesus goes unto His Father in the way of the cross. For He is the Head of the

elect who by nature lie in the midst of death. Without that people He cannot conceivably be glorified. Our glory and that of Christ are inseparable. And whereas He is the Head of a guilty people He can go to the Father only in the way of the cross, in the way of the perfect and complete satisfaction of the justice of God. That Jesus goes to His Father implies therefore that He will suffer and die for us, completely satisfy God's justice, and consequently be seated in the right hand of power and glory.

This explains why Christ's going to His Father is the basis for the assurance that we will do these greater works. Fact is, at the right hand of God He will receive glory and honor and be exalted as Zion's Head, having merited that glory through His suffering and death. And He will therefore be able, as our life-giving Head, to call us out of darkness into light and enable us to work the works of God through the power of His grace.

Secondly, we may be assured that we will perform these works because thereby the Father will be glorified in the Son. This is the Divine purpose of our good works and therefore constitute a sure guarantee for our performance of them. God is glorified in the Son. This occurs within the Trinity inasmuch as the Son, being the Image of the Father, manifests the Father. This also applies to Christ as Mediator. Christ manifested the Father in all His words and works. But then it is also true that the Father is glorified in the Son in and through the Church. This not only implies that the glory of the Father has been poured out into the Church through the Son. But the Church will also glorify the Father through the Son, inasmuch as the Son is eternally for us the revelation of the Father. And inasmuch as the Father will be glorified in us, through the Son, because our works will reveal Him, being works of light and life, we may be assured that, upon Christ's going to His Father, we will perform these greater works, because the heavenly Father will glorify Himself.

Finally, how shall we be able to do these greater works? The text directs us to this thought, in the first place, in the words: "He that believeth on Me." This needs little explanation. We must believe into (thus literally the text) the Christ. Faith into Christ is that operation by grace whereby we spiritually reach out unto the Saviour and thus live out of Him. We must live out of Christ to be able to perform the good. We have no life in ourselves.

Secondly, the possibility for the doing of these works is expressed in the words: "And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name that will I do. . . . If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it." To ask, or pray, in Jesus' Name implies, firstly, that we ourselves must be in Him. It implies, secondly, that we consciously, in all our thinking and willing, move

about in His Name, His revelation, and that therefore the content of our prayer be in harmony with that revelation. Then we shall desire the things of the Kingdom of Heaven. And, thirdly, this implies that that Name, that revelation of Christ, His cross and resurrection, is the ground of our prayer. If we believe in Him, seek God in prayer in the Name of Christ, seek His Kingdom and the glory of His Name, God will work through us, for thereby He will be glorified and this Divine purpose is always realized.

H. V.

(Speech delivered Aug. 29, 1945 to the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies).

PERISCOPE

AN APPRECIATION

Under the Book Review column in *The Banner* of September 21, we found the following:

FIVE BOOKS, by the Rev. Herman Hoeksema; namely, *The Royal Sufferer*, *The Amazing Cross*, *The Mystery of Bethlehem*, *In The Sanctuary*, and *Whosoever Will*. Published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich.

The first two volumes are books for the Lenten season. The titles of the chapters of *The Amazing Cross* are as follows: (They follow).

These two books are among the very best that I have read on the general subject of our Lord's suffering. They have the following commendable characteristics:

1. They are deeply devotional and practical.
2. They stress the divine, not the human aspect; that is, we are made to see Jesus as our Lord who voluntarily laid down His life, and not as a mere martyr, however virtuous or courageous.
3. They are expository; that is, they seek to delve into the meaning of the text. This is lacking in almost all Lenten volumes.
4. The style is very clear and very simple. The thought is generally rich and original. All in all, a fine piece of work!

All of this does not mean that we endorse every statement in these two books. The books, nevertheless, are two of the finest Lenten volumes we have seen. We have read them with delight.

This is true also with respect to that fine little volume: *The Mystery of Bethlehem* (Christmas meditations). Though the themes are old, the manner in which Rev. H. Hoeksema treats them is original. This book, too, is worth reading. It is excellent in every respect.

The purpose of *Whosoever Will* is set forth in the Preface in the words:

"As the title of this book may suggest to those that understand, the following pages are intended to set forth the inseparable connection between the certainty that 'whosoever will may come', and the truth of God's sovereign grace: the former is based on and rooted in the latter."

No one, it seems to the reviewer, can disagree with this purpose. In a country filled with Arminianism, it is necessary, indeed, to set forth the true relation between the "whosoever" truth and the doctrine of divine, sovereign grace.

With the general trend of this book every truly Reformed believer will be in hearty agreement. Yet, when the author on page 148 and 149 absolutely rejects any form of the double-track theology, I cannot follow him. Both Scripture and our confessions teach that in a certain sense the gospel of salvation is presented sincerely and earnestly even to those who perish. If the author means to deny that, I must disagree.

One of the finest books is the one on *The Lord's Prayer*. Title *In The Sanctuary*. On the whole, this book is a gem. It is so very practical, expository, deeply devotional, and original in the best sense in which that term can be used. I consider it one of the best books on that subject on which so very many books have been written. My only regret is that on pages 17, 18 the author has not made his meaning more clear. Does he mean that in time of war, the believer has not the right to pray for the return of peace and that in time of sickness he should not pray for physical recovery? Or does he mean to warn us against a refusal to submit to the will of the Lord in all things? If the latter—and the pages can be read thus—then we are in hearty agreement. We feel, however, that the author might have clarified his meaning a little. Let the reader judge for himself. Here are the author's own words: (Here follows quotation from pages referred to above. W.H.)

After all, a prayer to will God's will does not exclude a petition for peace or for recovery from illness. We hope that it was not the intention of the author to exclude such petitions, but that his purpose was to warn us against thoughtless and rebellious prayer.

We have tried earnestly to give a fair, impartial review of these books. All in all, we regard them to be five worth-while volumes. We congratulate the author and the publisher.

The reviewer is the Reverend Professor Wm. Hendriksen of Calvin Seminary. We believe he has succeeded, and very nobly, in his effort as expressed in the last paragraph above. We wish to thank the professor for his rich praise and objective consideration of these works. We feel that a review of this type gives us, who live in the constant fellowship of the truth proclaimed in these works, an even greater appreciation of God's grace in revealing it unto us; and of the author whom He has used as a means to that end. We hope that Professor Hendriksen will continue to inform his readers of other works by the same author; notably the volumes on the Heidelberg Catechism.

Incidentally, personally, we were more than a bit surprised to read this tribute. A few years ago we were actively engaged in the Radio work from which these books result; as they were all originally Radio addresses. At that time we visited the *Banner* office seeking to purchase advertising space for our Radio program, featuring these lectures. On our first visit we were received by the business manager who felt that our request might be granted. A few days later we returned to make definite arrangements and were once again cordially received, this time by the Editor-in-Chief. After a few minutes of conversation, however, he had quite discouraged us from buying the advertising space we desired. And now we get it free!

Once again we thank the Professor for his gracious words—and courage!

SAN FRANCISCO

While on the subject of *The Banner* we would like to comment on another article appearing in the September 7 issue, in the department conducted by the Rev. E. J. Tanis: The World Today, and written under the title: Barnhouse Condemns Charter. We appreciate the consistency which we find among the Christian Reformed brethren for in *The Young Calvinist* of October, we find a similar comment under the title: Tragic. We quote from *The Banner*:

“BARNHOUSE CONDEMNS CHARTER. — The Rev. Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse, pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, has nothing but condemnation for the San Francisco Charter of the World Security Organization. He wrote the following in *United Evangelical Action*: ‘Had we been writing the headlines for the San Francisco meeting we would have put in largest type, “NATIONS RAGE” and then with the initial letters in capitals, “People Imagine Vain Things.” The Ten Commandments have been in the world for three thousand five hundred years and look at the world. The Sermon on the Mount has been in the world for two thousand years and look at the world. Yet there are some people so foolish that they think that the San Francisco Charter will do in six months what the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments failed to do in centuries. The answer is that they are deceived. If righteousness is come by the law Christ is dead in vain. (Gal. 2:21). Just as truly we could say, if righteousness should come by the Sermon on the Mount, Christ is dead in vain. Even more truly, if righteousness and a just peace come by any thing that man does Christ is dead in vain.’

We will not even go along with those people who say: “At least give it a trial and show good will toward it and trust and pray that the United Nations may bring about some sort of peace for a time at least.” From the very start we hail it as godless, as a child of illegitimate alliances, born lame and due to die in the further catastrophes that come upon the earth.”

In part the Rev. Tanis' comment is as follows:

“Dr. Barnhouse writes as if all the delegates at San Francisco, including such men as Stassen, Vanden Berg and Smuts, were substituting the San Francisco Charter for the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. That was never in the minds of those men and probably not in the minds of most of the delegates. If anything they were trying to apply the second table of the law to international relationships. (Italics mine; thinking of opening “prayer” at San Francisco. W.H.) The real Calvinist also believes that during the centuries which precede the coming of Christ, the Lord restrains the wickedness and lawlessness of men in various ways. . . . No Calvinist believes that this will bring the eternal kingdom of God. . . . but. . . . he believes that it is more than worthwhile to create a more stable international order.”

The Editor of *The Young Calvinist*, emphasizes and clarifies a few of these points when he writes:

“Typical of the attitude assumed by some well-meaning but sadly mistaken Christians is the one expressed by Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse we deeply deplore the statements made in the article. We thank God for what was accomplished in San Francisco and we pray that His blessing may rest upon it. Not to appreciate and support earnest attempts to establish a more stable and durable international order is contrary to Christian principles and ideals. To write the way Dr. Barnhouse did is tragic.”

Our comment is as follows:

1. We wish to be counted amongst the “well-meaning but sadly mistaken Christians” by giving our whole-hearted approval to Dr. Barnhouse's expression of San Francisco and the Charter.

2. Rather than being merely “well-meaning but sadly mistaken” we maintain that this is the position of a wide-awake Christian who has a good understanding of the Truth of Scripture. Notice that Dr. Barnhouse quotes Scripture to support his contention rather than to philosophize after the manner of this world; and many more passages could be added. A thought just strikes me: perhaps, the Editor of *The Young Calvinist* would like to arrange a mass meeting of Christian Youth at which a debate could be scheduled on the proposition: Resolved, that it is the Christian's calling to pray for God's blessing on the work and efforts of the San Francisco Conference. Our Young People would welcome the opportunity of disproving that resolution. Let's fill one of our large auditoriums of an evening and give the proceeds to relieve the Christian Brethren in the Netherlands, or some other worthy cause!

3. We maintain that the heart of Calvinism is not synthesis but antithesis. And that the true Calvinist proclaims, therefore, that Christ's kingdom is not of this world but in heaven, and that the Christian's call-

ing is to seek the Kingdom of Heaven; that Christ came not to bring peace but the sword and that to the end there shall be wars and rumors of wars; that is this world we have tribulation but in Christ alone we have peace for He has overcome the world; that He prays not for the world but reproves the world of sin and righteousness and judgement; that the curse of God is in the house of the wicked while He blessed His people with peace that passeth all understanding; that we are called to take heed that we be not deceived and go after them which are false Christ's but put on the Lord Jesus Christ; that presently through the sorceries of the great men of the world all nations are deceived but the elect of God have been sealed; that in the midst of it all *we look unto* Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith through whom the world is crucified unto us and we unto the world!

4. Finally, we maintain that "to appreciate and to support earnest attempts to establish a more stable and durable and international order" such as emanates from San Francisco, is to promote the cause of anti-christ!

Brethren, be not deceived!

W. H.

ANNIVERSARY

On October 5, 1945, our beloved parents,

MR. PAUL REGNERUS

and

MRS. TENA REGNERUS—Boersma

celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary.

We, their children, extend to them our most sincere and hearty congratulations, and it is our sincere prayer that the Lord may continue to bless them in His love and mercy.

Their grateful children:

Mr. and Mrs. J. Kampstra

Mr. and Mrs. S. Beyer

Mr. and Mrs. C. Regnerus

Mr. and Mrs. L. Regnerus

Mr. and Mrs. B. Regnerus

Cpl. and Mrs. R. Regnerus

Mr. and Mrs. J. Tuinstra

Cpl. and Mrs. G. Regnerus

Sgt. and Mrs. C. Tuinstra

22 grandchildren.

11035 So. Spaulding Ave.
Chicago, Illinois.

Stedfastness and Our Young Peoples' Societies *

Your invitation to be present at this convention and to deliver the inspirational address I value highly. It is a cause of happiness and joy to me. First of all, the very fact that another convention of our Young People's Societies was convoked reveals that the societies themselves are still alive and active, and that our young people, I take it, are interested in the things of the kingdom of God. For, not to be entertained chiefly, but to be edified has been and still is the main purpose of these conventions. And in this I rejoice. Then, too, there is a personal, a more or less sentimental reason why your invitation was to me a cause of happiness. I consider it a signal distinction, when one's own life's sun stands well Past Meridian, to be invited to speak, and that, too, to deliver an inspirational address to a convention of those whose life's day has hardly reached mid-morning. And, lastly, I am particularly happy that you selected me once more to deliver this address, because by this time you ought to know what you can expect of me in the line of inspirational addresses. According to a certain standard for this kind of speeches, I would consider myself the least fit, and, therefore, the least eligible, to meet the requirements for this sort of addresses.

The word "inspirational", you know, contains the well-known term "spirit." And it is a striking fact that in almost all languages, as far as I know, such as the Hebrew *ruach*, the Greek *pneuma*, the Latin *spiritus*, this word signifies air, breath, wind, as well as the spirit of God or man. Perhaps, it is due to this that many inspirational speakers, speaking for conventions or revival meetings, appear to consider it their special task to deliver "airy addresses," preferably hot; windy speeches, that are calculated to appeal to, and to sway the emotions, but that leave behind them nothing but emptiness, or, what is worse, when the emotional appeal of these addresses is very violent, only doctrinal havoc and destruction. You are aware that this is not my conception of a truly inspirational address. To me an inspirational speech recognizes that other meaning of the word "spirit", according to which it refers to the Spirit of God, and to the spirit of man as it is renewed by the indwelling Spirit of Christ. Your reborn spirit I seek to reach. But this reborn spirit can be "inspired", not by mere emotionalism or empty sentimentalism, but only by the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. And that Word of God is able to "inspire" you, not by a direct appeal to your emotions, but only through your thinking mind. Truly inspirational, then, in the Christian sense of the word, is an address that stands in the service of the

Spirit of Christ, to inspire some of the contents of the Word of God into the regenerated spirits of the audience. It is thus that I conceive of my task to-night.

My subject was assigned to me. The theme of this convention is "Stedfastness." But this time, I was asked to speak, not simply on the theme in general, but to bring it in connection with our Young People's Societies. I must, therefore, first of all, explain to you the meaning of the Christian virtue of stedfastness; secondly, demonstrate how this gift of grace may be cultivated and strengthened; and, lastly, show how our Young People's Societies may be instrumental in cultivating this virtue.

From the outset, I wish to emphasize that this convention by its present theme is expressing its interest in spiritual stedfastness. One can speak of stedfastness in a general, a natural sense of the word. Then it is a matter of stability of character that reveals itself in the constancy wherewith one pursues his life's aim, the steady direction of his life's course, without permitting himself to be discouraged by difficulties that are met, or to deviate from his course by obstacles in the way. But with this natural stedfastness in the pursuit of natural aims and ideals we are not now concerned. On the contrary, we are interested in spiritual stedfastness, in stedfastness which is a gift of grace, and which becomes manifest in a constant seeking of the kingdom of God, alway and everywhere, in spite of opposition. Stedfastness, as we now conceive of it, is spiritual stability.

In more than one way, Holy Writ speaks of this spiritual virtue, and exhorts believers to be stedfast. In Psalm 78:8 ff. we read of carnal and rebellious Israel that their "spirit was not stedfast with God." And this is explained as revealing itself in the fact that they turned back in the day of battle, even though they were armed; that they kept not the covenant of the God, and refused to walk in His law; that, in the desert, they lusted after carnal things, and trusted not in God, Who daily supplied all their needs. And once more the covenant idea is brought to the fore in this connection, when in the thirty-seventh verse of the same psalm it is said that they were not "stedfast in his covenant." In Acts 2:42 it is said of the first New Testament converts that "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine," where the Word of God is indicated as the sphere in which believers must be stedfast. I Cor. 15:58 contains the well-known exhortation to be "stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," where stedfastness is further characterized as immoveability, and the sphere of stedfastness is indicated as "the work of the Lord." In I Pet. 5:9 believers are exhorted to resist the devil, "stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren in the world," that

is, they must not deviate from the course prescribed by faith, in spite of the attacks of the devil, and of the persecutions by the world. But also in other ways scripture emphasizes this calling to be stedfast. It admonishes us to be faithful even unto death, to hold that which we have, to persevere unto the end, to be rooted in Christ, and not to be like children, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.

Fundamentally, then, we may say that Christian stedfastness is that virtue of believers according to which they stand firm in the covenant of God. The central idea of this covenant is that of friendship. And our part in the covenant of friendship is that we love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength, that we cleave to Him, trust in Him, forsake the world, and walk in a new and holy life. To do this constantly, without wavering, without being tossed to and fro, without deviating from the way of truth and of the precepts of our God,—this is stedfastness. It refers, therefore, both to our inner life, and to our outward walk and conversation. As to our inner life, it means that our mind is established in the truth of the Word of God. We know the truth as it is revealed to us, and delivered unto us through the Church of Christ in the world, the truth concerning God and man, concerning Christ and salvation, concerning the kingdom of God and things to come, concerning God's everlasting covenant with us and our calling as being of the party of the living God. We know that truth with the knowledge of a living faith in Christ, and our minds are fixed in it, so that we do not waver, and we are not tossed about with all kinds of false doctrines. We do not halt between two opinions. For us this means that we are unwaveringly established in the Protestant Reformed truth. It means that we are firm in our confidence in the God of our salvation, so that we trust in His promises, and no matter what may come, we believe that He shall give us all things with Christ. It means that we are stable in our will and all our desires, so that we are not cast about between the love of God and the love of the world, but have a constant inner delight in doing the will of God from the heart. And it means that our hope is firm, so that our hearts go out for the things that are above, not the things that are on the earth. And thus being stedfast in our inner spiritual life, we will also be stable in our outward walk and conversation. Consistently we will confess the truth as it is in Christ, and never waver. Steadily we will pursue the path of God's precepts in the midst of the world without deviating from it to the right or to the left. In brief, as the word itself indicates, we have taken a firm stand, we have taken up our position in the covenant of God, and in that position we remain fixed no matter what powers of opposition may rise against us!

For let us not forget that Christian steadfastness is an antithetical idea. It presupposes that there are forces of opposition that constantly attack us, and aim to remove us from our position in the covenant of God. These forces are within us, for we have but a small beginning of the new obedience, and all that belongs to our old nature is against us. According to that old nature, our mind is opposed to the truth of God, rejects it, and follows after the lie; and our will is motivated by enmity against God, and lusts after the things of the world. And these forces are also without. For we have our battle not against flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities, against spiritual wickedness in high places, against the devil and his host. And these powers of darkness assume a very concrete form in the evil influences in and of the world with which we needs come into contact every day. This contact is especially close in our modern times, now the world is considered smaller than half a century ago, literal isolation becomes more and more impossible, and the radio brings the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life into your very home. There is the sinister influence of all kinds of false doctrine, that comes to you in speech and sermon, in song and story, and which encroaches upon you at almost every turn of your radio dial. There is the temptation of the world, whereby it offers you a good position, better pay, honor and glory, or amusement and pleasure, if you will but become unfaithful to the covenant of your God. And there is also the power of the world to make your position in the world impossible, to deprive you of a job, to inflict upon you deprivation, reproach, suffering, and even death, if you insist to maintain your stand and to be faithful to the good confession. All these evil influences are operative in the world now, and the Word of God forewarns us that they will become stronger as the Day of Christ approaches, until the time comes that you will be able neither to buy or sell, unless you will adopt the sign of the beast. And if all signs do not fail, we are on the eve of these things, and we are approaching them the faster as the time of the end draws nearer. And steadfastness is that Christian virtue according to which we remain faithful to the covenant of our God, stand firmly as of the party of the living God, in the midst of all these opposing forces, and thus fight the good fight even unto the end that no one take our crown.

Now, this steadfastness is first of all and principally a spiritual virtue, and as such it is a gift of grace. It goes without saying that one cannot cultivate this virtue, unless it is present in the heart to start with. Just as you cannot cultivate the art of music where there is no musical talent, or the art of teaching unless there first be teaching ability; so it is impossible to cultivate the virtue of steadfastness unless it first be present as a gift of grace. This, of course, excludes

the natural man, whose position is outside of, and contrary to the covenant of God. But I mean to apply this truth also to the regenerated child of God, to the believer in Christ Jesus. We can make a distinction between faith and the steadfastness of faith, between the grace of being received into the eternal covenant of God, and our being steadfast in that covenant. And the point I now wish to make is that not only the faith, but also the steadfastness of faith is a gift of grace. If faith, as a gift of grace, were not inherently steadfast, no amount of cultivation or training could make it so. But now it is different. For it is given unto us by grace, not only to believe in Christ, and to be of the party of the living God, but also to remain steadfast in that faith and in the covenant relationship.

H. H.

(To be continued)

IN MEMORIAM

In the early morning of September 20, 1945, it behooved our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom to take from us our darling baby,

RICHARD ALLEN

at the age of 6 months.

His little life was but a road of suffering, yet it is not for us to question, Lord, what doest Thou? We believe God has a purpose and His way is best. We find great comfort to know that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be revealed to us, and one day we hope to meet him again in that better land.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Slot and Joyce Ardythe.

IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, hereby wishes to express its heartfelt sympathy to our brother-elder, Harry Bloem, in the loss of his father,

HENRY BLOEM

May the Lord of all grace comfort the bereaved by the assurance that he was called to his eternal home in glory.

The Consistory of the First
Protestant Reformed Church

H. Hoeksema, Pres.

G. Stonehouse, Clerk.

Report of Classis East — Convened Oct. 3, 1945 at Grand Rapids, Mich.

Classis East convened at Fuller Ave. October 3, 1945. Rev. W. Hofman, who presided at the last meeting of classis, had charge of the opening exercises. After the singing of No. 251 from the Psalter, he reads I Cor. 2 and leads in prayer. The credentials are read and received. Classis is declared constituted and Rev. B. Kok is called upon to preside.

Opportunity is given to sign the Formula of Subscription. The minutes of the preceding classical meeting are read and approved. Rev. G. M. Ophoff and D. Jonker are given advisory vote.

The answer of Hudsonville to the request of the last classis is read and received. Classis advises Hudsonville to further straighten out these matters and bring a report of their reactions to the next classis.

An instruction from Oak Lawn, asking that classis make a ruling expressing, that elders who are delegated to classis are entitled to a remuneration for the loss of daily wages during the sessions of classis, is read and received for information.

Classis decided that each consistory shall make provision for the payment of the wages that are lost by the elders delegated to classis and that the consistories can appeal to classis for reimbursement of same.

The committee appointed at the last classis in re the matter of needy brethren in the Netherlands reports, that they now have addresses to which goods and money can be sent. They also brought out in their report that there is more need for clothing, shoes, underwear, etc., than for money. They recommended to classis, that this matter of relief be taken care of locally, by our societies for

example; and that the local church shall then decide to which address the goods shall be sent. Attention was called to the fact that 100 pound boxes can be sent by freight via the Holland American Line.

The recommendations of the committee were adopted. The committee was also continued, so that the consistories can contact this committee for further advice in these matters. The address of this committee is: Rev. J. D. De Jong, 1304 Maude Ave., N. E., Grand Rapids 5, Michigan.

Elder H. Meulenberg and Rev. W. Hofman were appointed to make the necessary arrangements for classical appointments requested by the Second Prot. Ref. Church of Grand Rapids.

The following schedule was prepared by the committee and adopted by classis: Oct. 7, Rev. J. D. De Jong; Oct. 14, Rev. W. Hofman; Oct. 21, Rev. J. A. Heys; Oct. 28, Rev. H. De Wolf.

After the reading of the minutes, classis adjourned till 1:30. Elder P. Knossen closed the morning session with prayer.

The afternoon session began with the singing of the Holland Psalm 89:1, and prayer by Rev. H. Veldman.

Protests of two brethren against the action of their consistory are read and received for information. The answer of the consistory is read and also received for information.

Classis decided to appoint a committee to study these matters and asks them to bring a "well motivated" report to our next classical meeting. The following committee was appointed: The Revs. H. Hoeksema, G. M. Ophoff, and R. Veldman.

Classis elected the following Church

Visitors: the Revs. A. Petter and J. A. Heys; alternates: the Revs. J. D. De Jong and B. Kok.

Two members had to be elected to the Classical Committee. The Revs. R. Veldman and H. Veldman were chosen.

Out of the following nomination: D. Jonker, Rev. M. Gritter and Rev. B. Kok, D. Jonker was chosen or re-elected as stated clerk.

The questions of Art. 41 of the Church Order were asked of the various consistories and answered satisfactorily. South Holland asks for advice in a discipline case. Classis advises, that if South Holland has an opinion of their own in this matter, to proceed.

The minutes of the afternoon session are read and adopted. A motion is carried to adjourn. Rev. G. M. Ophoff leads in the closing prayer.

D. JONKER, Stated Clerk.