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MEDITATION

Risen, Not Yet Ascended

Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

John 20:16, 17.

Mary!

Rabboni!

Touch me not!

I have not yet ascended. . . .

But I ascend!

Also this, that the risen Lord was not the ascended One, the disciples must learn to recognize, and that, too, before anything else was revealed unto them concerning the reality of the resurrection of their Lord: reason, perhaps, why this manifestation to Mary precedes all other appearances, and why Mary is enjoined to return to the brethren with the message: "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."

Ever new, and ever more profoundly marvellous, is the revelation of the risen Christ.

For, to disciples that did not anticipate His resurrection, least of all the resurrection on the third day, although He had so plainly spoken to them about it, the Lord must reveal Himself. The reality of His resurrection must be established in their minds and hearts, that they may be His witnesses, and go forth into the world with the message of salvation: "The Lord is risen indeed!" Yet, the "otherness" of His resurrection must also be impressed upon them, and they must recognize that, by rising from the dead, He

had not returned to them to reestablish the former mode of communion in His earthly flesh. And, finally, they must clearly understand that His resurrection did not mean that He had already ascended. Glorious though that resurrection was, it was not *final*: He must still ascend.

And various were the means through which this full and clear revelation of the risen Lord was accomplished.

There was the silent testimony of the empty tomb, that had been opened for inspection by the angel of the Lord who, very early on that wonderful first day of the week, had rolled away the stone from the sepulchre, and "sat on it." For that vacated tomb was witness not only of the reality of Jesus' resurrection, seeing that He had departed in the body, but also, by the "place where the Lord lay," and the mystery of the linen clothes, lying still in the very position in which they had been wrapped around the buried Lord, of its wonder and otherness.

There was the vision of angels, waiting in the tomb for the women who, in the early morning after the sabbath, had come, prepared with spices and ointments, to perform a final service of love upon the dead body of their Master. They, these heavenly messengers, had preached to them the first resurrection gospel: "He is not here, for He is risen!" And the women had left, utterly amazed, yet filled with great joy because they that had come to seek the dead had found the living One.

And, finally, there were the manifestations of the risen Lord in person, ten of which are recorded.

Nor were these appearances all the same. On the contrary, each differs from the others, and reveals a certain aspect of the resurrection of our Lord. Each has its own peculiar meaning, teaches its own lesson. How different is His revelation to Mary from that of Thomas! To the former He says: "Touch me not!" The latter He invited to touch Him.

All, though differing in detail, carry the double message: He is risen from the dead, yet He is not with us as before.

And they are all introduced by the manifestation to the Magdalene, warning them that, though He is risen in glory, He has not yet ascended.

Resurrection and ascension are inseparable: I ascend!

The one must follow the other.

Yet, they dare not be confused: I have not yet ascended!

Wonderful revelation!

Mary!

Rabboni!

Touch me not!

I have not yet ascended!

But I ascend!

And who could have been better adapted to receive this particular aspect of the revelation of the risen Lord, or who was more in need of it, than the Magdalene?

She, more than any other of the disciples, was attached to her Lord, to His earthly appearance. Her soul cried out for that peculiar form of fellowship with Him to which she had become accustomed, and which she had now lost. She longed to be with Him, to touch Him. . . .

All her movements and actions, on that early morning of the resurrection day, testify to this strong longing of her soul.

With the other women, she had left her home that morning for the tomb in Joseph's garden, to finish the embalming of the body of her beloved Master, though, unknown to her as well as to the other women, this had been accomplished quite properly and thoroughly, by Joseph and Nicodemus, on that sad sabbath eve of the burial. On the way, they had become anxious about the heavy stone that had been rolled in front of the sepulchre to close its entrance. But even from a distance they had noticed that the stone had been removed, and that the grave was open!

For the Magdalene this had been sufficient evidence!

She proceeded no further with the other women, but immediately drawing to the conclusion that they had removed the body of Jesus, she ran to the disciples, and reported: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him."

Peter and John had hastened to the grave to verify this report. They, too, must inspect the empty tomb, and behold the wonder of the linen clothes, and the false report of the Magdalene must be the means to draw them thither. They see, and believe.

More slowly Mary had followed. To the empty tomb, to the body of her Lord she is irresistibly drawn.

She arrives in the garden after Peter and John had inspected the grave, and had departed. Alone she was with the sorrow of her soul, and the anxious question that troubled her mind, concerning the whereabouts of the body of her Master.

Little we know about Mary.

The name Magdalene only informs us that she was from Magdala. We do know, however, that the Lord had mightily delivered her out of great misery: from the torment of seven devils He had saved her. And ever since, her life had been completely devoted to her Saviour. To follow Him as He traversed the land, to serve Him in His earthly needs, had been her delight. The service of love had been her very life. Without this service she was lost. To be with Him, to see Him and hear His voice, to prepare His food for Him when He was hungry, and provide a place of rest when He was weary, and thus to give expression to the gratitude that filled her heart,—that had been the joy of her soul.

O, to be sure, deep in her soul she was interested in the things concerning the kingdom of God. No doubt, she had loved to listen to the Master, as the words of eternal life flowed from His lips. But she had not understood much of His teaching. About any particular conception of the redemption of Israel she was not deeply troubled. To what He had said about His suffering and death, and His resurrection on the third day, she had not paid too much attention. To Jesus, in His earthly appearance, as she knew Him, she was attached, and if only she might be with Him, her soul was satisfied.

Such was the form her love of the Master had assumed hitherto.

This may explain her attitude on that memorable first day of the week.

For with the death of Jesus, the object of her love and interest had been taken away from her. All that was left was His dead body. To perform one last act of love upon that body was now her sole comfort. Hence, her persistent search for that body. She speaks of the body as if it were the Lord in person. To Peter and John she reports: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre." In answer to the question of the angels: "Woman, why weepest thou?" she states: "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Her whole mind is concentrated on the body of her Lord. For nothing else she has a thought. The appearance of the two angels, sitting in the sepulchre, evidently does not strike her as strange or extraordinary. And "the gardener," too, she supposes to be well acquainted with her trouble: "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Nor does it seem absurd or improper to her

that she will take the body of her Lord back to its place in Joseph's tomb.

O, the other women, too, had been attached to their Lord in His earthly appearance. They, too, had come to perform a last service of love upon the dead body.

None of them had been mindful of the words of their Master concerning His resurrection on the third day.

But all this was especially true of the Magdalene. She must see and touch and serve Him once more! Though it be only in His body!
Her Lord!

Mary!

Rabboni!

Touch me not!

I have not yet ascended. . . .

But I ascend!

Blessed revelation!

For a revelation of the risen Lord it was indeed.

She did not know Him. Seeking the dead body of her Master, she did not recognize her living Lord when she met Him face to face.

Having replied to the question of the angels that were in the tomb, she turned about, attracted, probably, by some sound behind her, "and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus." She supposed Him to be the gardener.

Nor must this failure on her part to recognize Jesus simply be explained from her sorrow, or from the fact that her exclusive concentration on the dead body of the Lord blinded her eyes. O, she would have known Him at once, no doubt, had He appeared as she had always seen Him before His death.

But the Lord had risen. He was different. In "the likeness of sinful flesh" she had known Him; in the glory of immortality He had come forth from the grave. Instead of corruption there was now incorruption, instead of weakness power, instead of dishonor glory. The "psychical" body had been changed into the spiritual body.

And even this does not explain Mary's failure to recognize Him, still less the fact that she supposed Him to be the gardener. Evidently, she did not see Him in His resurrection glory: for this she had no eyes. Nor did she behold Him as He appeared that same evening in the company of the disciples, who thought that they saw a ghost. Purposely, He appeared to Mary, as the "gardener" that she might not recognize Him at once. She must, indeed, know that He had risen from the dead, but from the outset she must learn, too, that He was "other", that His resurrection did not open the way to the same association and fellowship as before, and which she craved with all her soul.

"Woman, why weepest thou?"

"Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away."

"Mary!"

Already Mary had turned her attention to the grave once more, but at the sound of her name, there is instant recognition, and turning herself she is ready to fall down, and clasp His feet, exclaiming: "Rabboni!"

Not by the sight of the eye, but by the sound of His Word, addressed personally to her, she found the risen Lord!

Thus it must needs be henceforth. The former fellowship was severed, never to return.

To be replaced by the higher fellowship of the Spirit, through the Word.

Glorious revelation!

Mary!

Rabboni!

Touch me not!

I have not yet ascended

But I ascend!

This, too, Mary must still learn.

Would she, the impulsive Mary, who had so readily concluded from the distant sight of the open grave that they had taken away the body of Jesus, not now at once infer that all was finished, that He had already ascended, and that He had now come again to take her to Himself, that she might also be where He is?

Had he not spoken thus before His death?

Was not this hope, the hope that, if she could no longer enjoy the former fellowship, she might at once stay with Him, with the glorified Lord, and return with Him to the house of Father, in her heart, as she was about to embrace Him?

Touch me not!

Make no mistake, Mary! It is not thus, that I have already ascended to the house of my Father, and that I have now returned, in order to take thee with me into glory. The former fellowship is severed. The final fellowship in glory is not yet come. I have not yet ascended and returned.

But I do ascend!

Tell my brethren that I have risen, but must still ascend. Tell them that I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God!

In those words there is the promise of a new and altogether glorious and blessed fellowship, that will be established through His ascension, and before the final return in glory!

By His Spirit, through His Word!

Mary!—Rabboni!

H. H.

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EDITORIALS

Het Mysterie

Under this title, the Rev. L. Doekes, continues his discussion of my "De Geloovigen en Hun Zaad," in *De Reformatie* of March 8, 1947, as follows:

"De Geloovigen en Hun Zaad"—dat thema interesseert ons buitengewoon vanwege onze strijd in de laatste jaren. En wat Ds. H. Hoeksema in zijn onder dien titel verschenen brochure opmerkt, is de moeite waard. Afzonderlijk wil ik de aandacht vestigen op enkele punten in zijn betoog, waarover wij ons zeer verblijden.

Daar is allereerst het sterke verzet van Ds. Hoeksema tegen een verbondstheorie, welke zich baseert op "twee lijnen", die de Schrift ons zou voorhouden en die wij met ons verstand nooit zouden kunnen vereenigen: de lijn van Gods souvereiniteit en die van onze verantwoordelijkheid. Uit den treure is ons in de laatste jaren door onze tegenstanders voorgehouden, dat wij tekort deden aan het mysterie van Gods verbond. Wie in feite weigerde, het lijnenspel te aanvaarden, stond voor hun besef met de waarheid der Schrift op gespannen voet.

Een geliefkoosde term van prof. Hepp: "single-track-theology" (enkelspoor-theologie) geeft uiting aan het verwijt, zooals dat telkens aan ons is geadresseerd. De inleiding tot de vervangingsformule omschrijft het in dezen vorm: "dat bij de belijdenis aangaande het genadeverbond zoowel de onveranderlijkheid van Gods raad als de verantwoordelijkheid des menschen tot haar recht dienen te komen; dat elke poging, het hierin liggend mysterie te verklaren, noodzakelijk aan de eene of aan de andere zijde der waarheid geweld zal aandoen; dat de kerk zich derhalve tevreden zal houden met een eenvoudige uitspraak des geloofs" (2-4). In dienzelfden geest schreef Ds. H. J. Spier zijn brochure: "Het Mysterie van Gods verbond" (vgl. ook zijn artikel in no. 1 van "Bezinning").

Mysterie, dat is tegenwoordig de krachtterm van de synodale voorvechters. Het liep met dien "mysteriëndienst" zoo ver, dat zelfs prof. Berkouwer zich geroepen voelde, een waarschuwing daartegen te laten hooren. Maar ondertusschen is het verwijt blijven staan, dat wij het mysterie van Gods verbond zouden hebben aangerand.

Van zoo'n vlucht in het mysterie moet Ds. Hoeksema echter niets hebben. Hoor hem uitvaren tegen de Chr. Gereformeerden in Amerika: "En zegt nu niet, dat we hier de eene lijn hebben en dat de andere die

van de eeuwige verkiezing en der onwederstandelijke genade is. Want die twee lijnen sluiten elkaar eenvoudig uit. De beide te willen handhaven is onmogelijk. Het is de goocheltoer, die de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken trachten te maken" (pag. 73). Of een ander citaat: "En als men er dan op wijst, dat men op die wijze toch Gods Woord metterdaad Remonstrantsche taal laat spreken, voegt men u toe, (dat) dit de eene lijn van Gods Woord is, terwijl de andere die der vrijmachtige verkiezing en der souvereine genade is! En als men dan blijft volhouden, dat die twee elkander toch volkomen uitsluiten, dat God niet welmeenend aan kan bieden, wat Hij nimmer bedoelt te schenken, dan komt men brutaalweg met den dooddoener (!L.D.), dat dit een mysterie is en dat we die dingen ook niet moeten willen begrijpen!" (77). Terecht concludeert Ds. Hoeksema: "Zoo kunnen we elke poging, om de Schrift te verstaan, wel opgeven. Zoo kunnen we de Schrift alles laten zeggen, onder het vrome opschrift, dat de verborgene dingen voor den Heere zijn. Och zoo mogen we zeker niet met Gods Woord handelen. Wij hebben wel terdege de roeping om het Woord van onzen God te bepeinen tot dat we het verstaan. En ofschoon we volgaarne toestemmen, dat er mysteriën zijn, dingen, die voor ons eindig verstand nimmer te doorgronden zijn, omdat onze God ondoorgrondelijk is, toch houden we ook vol, dat we in de Schrift eene openbaring Gods vinden, die zich bij ons denken en ons verstand aansluit, en die we wel kunnen verstaan. Houden we vol, dat die Schrift niet leert, niet leeren kan, dat zwart ook wit is, dat God niet en ook wel genade wil schenken aan dezelfde personen, dat Hij aanbiedt, wat Hij niet wil schenken" (78).

Over de kwestie, waarop Ds. Hoeksema hier doelt, hopen we nader in te gaan. Maar we merken hier met vreugde op, dat hij, hoewel het mysterie van Gods werken door hem (en door ons) volmondig erkend wordt, toch door en door afkeerig is van een gemakkelijke vlucht in het asyl van het mysterie. Wij zeggen: met recht. De theologie van het mysterie, van den verborgen God en de verborgenheid van Zijn werk, heeft haar tienduizenden al verslagen, en is nog dagelijks bezig, slachtoffers te maken—in Hervormden kring en ook bij hen, die voor eenigen tijd nog met ons waren vereenigd. Het ergste is, dat dit beroep op het mysterie dienst doet als grof verwijt tegen Gereformeerden, die ten volle de geringheid van hun inzicht belijden, maar die bij voorbaat weigeren, zich met den dooddoener van het mysterie naar huis te laten sturen. De Schrift is nog altijd doorzichtig in zichzelf. En wie een poging om haar te verstaan wil blokkeeren met het "mysterie", bedroeft den Heiligen Geest, en maakt ruimte voor geestelijke schizofrenie.

Een tweede bijzonderheid in de opvatting van Ds.

Hoeksema is zijn besliste afwijzing van de theologie van Dr. A. Kuyper ten aanzien van den doop. Van een veronderstelling daarbij wil hij niets weten. "Iets te veronderstellen, waarvan we zeker zijn, dat het niet in overeenstemming is met de werkelijkheid, zooals die is geopenbaard in Gods Woord, en zooals we die door de geschiedenis en door de dagelijksche ervaring leeren kennen, is ten eenenmale onmogelijk" (33) (vgl. pag. 57).

Minder positief is zijn houding ten aanzien van 1905. Hij zegt althans: "ook de Utrechtsche conclusies laten de eigenlijke zaak tamelijk onbeslist. . . Veel hebben we aan deze uitspraken niet daar ze negatief zijn en tamelijk onbelijnd. Doch ze kunnen dienen om aan te toonen, dat na alles wat er geschreven is, geen scherpe en belijnde voorstelling bestaat in betrekking tot het zaad der geloovigen" (32).

Zoo zijn er nog meer dingen te noemen, waarin wij met vreugde opmerken, dat Ds. Hoeksema met ons van meening is, dat Dr. Kuyper's theorie over den doop als een mislukking moet worden beschouwd, en dat ook 1905 geen "klaarder licht" heeft gebracht. Hij zoekt zijn kracht dan ook in de taal van Schrift, Belijdenis en Doopsformulier, en wijst slechts terloops op de gegevens der vroegere Gereformeerde theologie.

Hoe hij zijn eigen opvatting ontwikkelt, en daarbij positie kiest tegenover anderen, zullen we nagaan in een volgend artikel. Voor dezen keer besluiten we met dit citaat van den schrijver: "En dan moet hier aanstonds worden opgemerkt, dat er over deze zaak onder Gereformeerden zelf geen eenstemmigheid heerscht, en dat het metterdaad niet kan worden gezegd, dat er een verbondsbeschouwing is, die zich uitsluitend den naam van Gereformeerd heeft verworven in onderscheiding van andere beschouwingen" (7) Zoo denken wij er ook over. Maar onze bestrijders waren van een andere meening.

En dat kwam ons te staan op verlies van ons ambt en onzen goeden naam—tenminste, in hun oogen.

Here follows the translation of the above article of the Rev. L. Doekes:

THE MYSTERY

"De Geloovigen en Hun Zaad" (Believers and Their Seed, H.H.) —in this theme we take extraordinary interest because of our struggle in the last years. And that which, under this title, the Rev. H. Hoeksema observes is worth while. In this separate article I would like to call attention to some points in his argumentation that caused us great joy.

First of all there is the strong opposition of the Rev. Hoeksema against a covenant-theory that bases itself on "two lines" which Scripture is supposed to present, and that are supposed to be irreconcilable by

the human mind: the line of God's sovereignty and that of our responsibility. Again and again, it is alleged by our opponents, during the last years, that we fail to do justice to the mystery of God's covenant. One who, in fact, refused to join this double-track game had, according to them, a quarrel with the truth of Scripture.

The charge repeatedly raised against us is well expressed in the term "single-track-theology," deeply cherished by prof. Hepp. The introduction to the substitute-formula circumscribes it as follows: "that in the confession concerning the covenant of grace both, the immutability of God's counsel and the responsibility of man, must be maintained; that every attempt to explain the mystery implied in this must necessarily force the truth one way or the other; that the church, therefore, must be content with a simple declaration of faith" (2-4). In the same spirit, the Rev. H. J. Spier also wrote his brochure: "The Mystery of God's Covenant" (cf. also his article in No. 1 of "Bezinning").

Mystery,—that is now-a-days the slogan of the synodical leading fighters. This "mystery-worship" even went to extremes to such an extent that prof. Berkhofer felt himself called to sound a warning against it. But in the meantime, the charge that we violated the mystery of God's covenant still stands.

Of such a flight into the sphere of mystery the Rev. Hoeksema must have nothing. Hear his sally against the Christian Reformed in America: "and do not say now that this is the one line, and that the other is that of God's eternal election and efficacious grace. For those two lines are simply mutually exclusive. To maintain both is impossible. It is the magic trick the Christian Reformed Churches attempt to perform" (p. 73). Or again: "And when one points out that, in that case, the Word of God is made to speak Arminian language, they retort that this is the one line of Scripture, while the other is that of free election and sovereign grace! And if one insists that these two exclude each other completely, that God cannot offer well-meaningly what He never intends to bestow, they impudently cut off all further argument by reminding you that this is a mystery, and we must not try to understand things!" (77). Correctly, the Rev. Hoeksema concludes: "In this way we may as well abandon every attempt to understand Scripture. Thus, under the pious pretext that the hidden things are for the Lord our God, we can make Scripture say anything we please. But thus we surely not deal with the Word of God. We certainly have the calling to meditate upon the Word of God till we understand it. And although we gladly admit that there are mysteries, things we can never fathom with our finite mind, because our God is unfathomable, yet we maintain that in Scripture we have a

revelation of God that is adapted to our mind and mode of thinking, and which we can understand. We maintain that the Scriptures do not teach, and cannot teach, that black is also white, that God will and will not give grace to the same persons, that He offers what He does not intend to give" (78).

The question itself, referred to here by the Rev. Hoeksema, we hope to discuss later. But we note here with joy that, although he wholeheartedly acknowledges the mystery of God's works (even as we also do), the easy seeking of refuge in the asylum of mystery is repulsive to him. The theology of the mystery, with its theory of the hidden God and the hiddenness of His work, already has slain its ten thousand, and continues daily to make its victims—in "Hervormd" circles, but also among them that till recently were united with us. The worst is that this appeal to the mystery must serve as an indictment against Reformed men that are fully conscious of the humble limits of their understanding, but who refuse to be frightened with the bogey of the mystery. Scripture is still in itself perspicuous. And he who would block the attempt to understand her with an appeal to "mystery" grieves the Holy Spirit, and makes room for spiritual schizophrenics (brain splitting, frenzy, H.H.).

Another detail in the conception of the Rev. Hoeksema concerns his determined denial of the theology of Dr. A. Kuyper in respect to baptism. He will have nothing of a presumption here. "To presume something of which we are certain that it is not in harmony with reality as revealed in the Word of God, and as we learn to know it from history and from daily experience, is utterly impossible" (33) (cf. p. 57).

Less positive is his position with respect to 1905. He says, at least: "also the Conclusions of Utrecht leave the matter rather undecided. . . . These declarations do not offer us much since they are negative and rather vague. But they may serve to demonstrate that, after all that has been written, there is no sharply defined conception of the seed of the covenant" (32).

More things might be mentioned from which we notice, with joy, that the Rev. Hoeksema is, with us, of the opinion that the theory of Dr. Kuyper concerning baptism must be considered a failure, and that also 1905 did not shed clearer light. Hence, he seeks his strength in the language of Scripture, Confession, and the Form for Baptism, and refers only in passing to the data of Reformed theology in the past.

How he develops his own conception, and thereby takes position over against others, we hope to show

in a following article. For this time we conclude with a quotation from the author: "And then we must remark from the outset that there is no unanimity of opinion concerning this matter among Reformed people, and that, indeed, it cannot be said that there is one single covenant view that merited the name of Reformed in distinction from other views" (7). We are of the same mind. But our opponents were of a different opinion.

And this cost us the lost of our office and of our good name,—in their eyes, at least.

Thus far the Rev. Doekes.

The reader will notice that the brother calls attention, first, to those matters on which we agree. The "mist" is coming yet.

However, especially what the Rev. Doekes writes about the false application of the term "mystery" concerns an important principle of interpretation of Scripture. I, too, rejoice, that he agrees with me in this respect.

For the rest, we will wait with our discussion until we read more of what our brother has to say.

H. H.

THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Two.

Of Man's Redemption

Lord's Day XXII.

2.

The Resurrection Of The Body. (cont.)

The same passage from the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians to which we already referred above in proof of the identity of the resurrection body and our present body, may also inform us with respect to the difference between the two. It teaches us, first of all, that through the resurrection our bodies will be delivered from all the effects of sin and death: "it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power." vss. 42, 43.

Our present bodies are "in corruption". In the sphere of corruption they exist. By this we mean that they are corruptible from within, and that they are subject to forces of corruption from without. In our present world that is under the curse, there are several forces of corruption that tend to destroy the

organism of our body. All kinds of tiny bacterial organisms find their way into our lungs and bloodstream from without and disintegrate the body. And the latter is subject to them. For the body is corruptible. It cannot successfully resist their destroying power. Even the science of medicine, bent upon discovering these disease germs and upon counteracting their corrupting influence in the body, in last analysis, stands helpless over against them. It cannot fight death. This process of corruption has its inception at birth. For "in corruption" we are born. It continues during the whole of our earthly life, so that "dying we die." In many different diseases it reveals itself in various ways. And it is finally completed when the body gives up the struggle against these forces of destruction, and is entrusted to the grave, where the Word of God is fulfilled literally: dust thou art, to dust thou shalt return. Indeed, "it is sown in corruption." In the sphere of corruption we are brought into the world. "In corruption" we exist as long as we live. Corruption we breathe, eat, and drink. And "in corruption" we are buried.

But it is raised in "incorruption." The body of the resurrection is subject to these powers of corruption no more. It is immune. It has the victory. Incorruptible it is. Nor is there in the kingdom of God any power of corruption from without. The inheritance that is preserved in heaven for us is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." I Pet. 1:4. There will be no disease germs in the eternal kingdom. In the sphere of incorruption, in which no one shall ever say anymore "I am sick," the body will be raised. For it will be made like unto the glorious body of Christ. It is beyond the possibility of corruption. In the resurrection death has no dominion. It can never enter there in any form. Hence, "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21:4.

But there is more.

"It is sown in weakness." In part, this is already implied in the corruptibility of our body. But it expresses this idea from a slightly different viewpoint. It means that our bodies have but limited strength, and that they must succumb to death even apart from the forces of corruption that violently destroy them. The measure of that strength is "threescore and ten," or "fourscore years." Ps. 90:10. "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so it flourisheth." Ps. 103:15. And, indeed, when the blasting wind passeth over it, it is gone. But even when the hot wind does not violently break its tender stem, it cannot last. For a while it blooms, but its vitality is limited: soon it loses its beauty, and it withers away. Thus it is with man in his present state. The strength of his physical organism is limit-

ed. And there is nothing to renew it. In the first paradise there was the tree of life from which he might eat and perpetuate his existence. But from it he was separated. And in the present world there is neither "tree of life," nor "fountain of youth," by means of which he may renew his strength. He is like a candle that burns itself out. For a while he may appear in youthful strength, but soon he begins to bend under the burden of years, and he inclines toward the grave. The "evil days come," and "the years draw nigh" in which he says: "I have no pleasure in them." The sun, and the light, and the moon, and the stars are darkened, and the clouds return after the rain; the keepers of the house tremble, the strong men bow themselves, the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the window are darkened; the doors are shut in the streets, the sound of the grinding is low; he rises up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music are brought low, he is afraid of that which is high, and fears are in the way; the almond tree flourishes, the grasshopper is a burden, and the desire fails. All this reveals the weakness of the body, and leads to the day when the silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl is broken, the pitcher is broken at the fountain, the wheel is broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth. Eccl. 12:2-7. Our earthly house collapses over our head. For "it is sown in weakness."

However, it is raised in power. The body of the resurrection shall never be wanting in strength. It draws from a source of unlimited power and vitality. It will not gradually deteriorate. It shall renew its youth like the eagles. Always there will be strength for the task. Just as in the resurrection no one shall ever say: "I am sick", so no one shall ever complain of being weary or exhausted. The source of this ever renewed and ever youthful strength is the risen Lord. With Him the risen saints are united. From Him, Who is the Son of God, they draw their power. In everlasting youth they shall stand in the house of God to serve Him day and night.

Thirdly, "it is sown in dishonor." The present body is without its original glory and beauty. No longer is it an instrument for the reflection of the image of God. Sin and death, corruption and disease, have left their marks on its appearance. As an instrument of unrighteousness it is in dishonor. It is fundamentally ugly. The truth of this becomes more and more apparent as old age approaches. By many artificial means men, and especially women, attempt to give their bodies a superficial beauty. And even the repulsiveness of the dead body in the coffin is covered, to an extent, by the undertaker's art. But all these attempts are vain. We know and, by all these superficial attempts to beautify the body, confess that "it is sown in dishonor." And all our aprons of fig leaves

cannot hide the fact that it has lost its original beauty and glory.

Through the wonder of the resurrection, however, it will attain to glory. All the effects of sin and death will be erased from its appearance, and it will be clothed with a perfection of beauty that is far greater than the glory it enjoyed in the state of original righteousness. For it will be made like unto the most glorious body of Christ. The image of the heavenly will reflect. As an everlasting instrument of righteousness and holiness, it will serve the manifestation of the likeness of the Son of God. It is raised in glory.

But there is still another difference between our present body and that of the resurrection.

To this the apostle refers when he writes: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

Already we remarked that "spiritual body" must not be understood as in opposition to "material body." In the text, it stands over against "natural." And the literal rendering of the word that is translated "natural" is psychical. Our present body is psychical, by which we understand that it is adapted to serve as the instrument of our present, earthly soul. For "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living soul." Through his present body man lives an earthly life. He is strictly limited to the earthly sphere of existence. He has an earthly eye, and perceives earthly things; an earthly ear to catch earthly sounds. He is bound to the earth, and craves food and drink. Spiritual realities he cannot perceive, nor have direct communion with them. The heavenly things are hid from him. Even in as far as he can know about them and apprehend them in his present earthly, psychical state, he can do so only through the means of earthly symbols. Through the Word that is heard with our physical ear we have knowledge of and fellowship with God, and apprehend spiritual and heavenly things. And that Word addresses us in earthly terms. On the earthly plane of our present "psychical" existence God reveals Himself to us. In anthropomorphic symbols He speaks to us concerning Himself. We cannot see Him face to face. Even the risen Lord, in His glorious body, must "appear" to His disciples in order to convince them of the reality of His resurrection. Angels and heavenly things lie beyond the scope of our experience. We have an earthly soul, and in our "psychical" body we live an earthly life. And with regard to things spiritual and heavenly, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," we walk by faith, which is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for, not by sight.

"It is sown a natural body."

But "it is raised a spiritual body." The body of

the resurrection will be wholly subservient to our glorified spirit, and to the indwelling spirit of Christ. By it we will be able to inherit the kingdom of God, which flesh and blood cannot inherit. In that new and eternal kingdom we shall see God face to face, we shall behold Christ and always be with Him, and we shall have direct contact and fellowship with the things that are heavenly. With new eyes we shall see the things that are now unseen, and with spiritual ears we shall apprehend the things that now lie beyond the scope of our hearing. For "there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." I Cor. 15:45-54.

Such is the glorious resurrection.

It is the reunion of the glorified spirits of the saints with their glorified bodies, in the heavenly sphere of incorruption, power, glory, immortality, and spiritual things, to inherit the kingdom of God.

3.

The "Millennium".

In the *Apostolicum*, there follows immediately upon the article concerning the resurrection of the body that about eternal life: "And the life everlasting."

The Catechism explains this article as follows: "That since I now feel in my heart the beginning of eternal joy, after this life, I shall inherit perfect salvation, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, and that, to praise God therein forever."

No room is left here for the millennium theory.

According to the view of the Chiliasts, we must

expect, first, the coming of the Lord in the *rapture* together with the "first resurrection"; shortly afterward, the coming of the Lord in the *revelation* and the resurrection of the "tribulation saints"; thereupon, the glorious reign of the Lord upon the earth in the millennium; and finally, the resurrection of the wicked, the last judgment, and the eternal state.

In our explanation of the nineteenth Lord's Day, we offered a partial criticism of this view. In this connection, it may not be superfluous to make a remark or two about the expectation of a millennium, or a glorious reign of the Lord, with His saints, upon the earth, for a thousand years.

According to premillennialists, this millennium is to be a reign of Christ upon the earth, not on the new earth in the new creation, but upon this present old earth. Christ is to return, after the great tribulation, bind Satan and overthrow his power, destroy all ungodly government, and establish a kingdom of righteousness and peace for all the nations of the earth. He shall reign in person, with the Church, sitting on the throne of David, with Jerusalem, which shall be restored to its former glory, as its capital, and in the midst of His kingdom-people Israel, the Jews, that shall be converted and regathered in the land of their fathers. And all the nations of the world shall enjoy a period of peace and blessedness under the dominion of the King of kings.

In a work of this nature, we cannot give space to a detailed examination of all the Scriptural passages upon which this theory is supposed to be based.

Suffice it to say, first of all, that we, too, believe in a literal return of the Lord, when He shall destroy Satan and all the powers of darkness, establish His own dominion, and reign with His people over all the works of God's hands. Premillennialists frequently assume the attitude that they only believe in the second coming. This is absurd. But we believe in only one coming, at the end of the world. We believe that, at that coming, the present world will be destroyed, its fashion shall pass away; new heavens and a new earth will be created, and in that new creation Christ shall reign, and we will reign with Him, on the new earth, under the new heaven, and that, too, not for a thousand years, but for ever and ever. We believe the coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

Secondly, in general it may be remarked that many of the passages in Scripture which, according to the premillennialists, teach the millennium, simply have reference to the everlasting kingdom of glory that shall be ushered in at the second coming of our Lord.

But it might be well to look a little more closely into the Scriptural passage that, on the surface, appears to speak literally of the millennium. I have reference, of course, to the passage in the twentieth

chapter of the book of Revelation. This may be called the *locus classicus* of the millennialists. The very term *millennium*, i.e., thousand year period, is derived from this passage. The question now is, whether this passage actually teaches that Christ shall reign, with His saints, in their resurrection bodies, for the period of a thousand years, on this old, unrenewed earth.

Our answer is emphatically that it does not.

For this answer we offer the following grounds:

1. The highly apocalyptic character of the book of Revelation forbids us to read this passage as if it simply literally recorded what shall take place. It was in the vision that John "saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season." No one, not even the premillennialist, thinks of applying a so-called method of literal interpretation to these words. In fact, a strictly literal interpretation would refute the very theory which the Chiliast seeks to establish. If this passage is to be read as history, it follows that the so-called millenium commenced at the time when John saw the vision on Patmos, *for he saw an angel come down and bind the devil at that very moment*. No one insists upon such a literal interpretation of the passage. What we have here is a vision, a highly apocalyptic vision. And a vision dare not be interpreted as if it were a mere foretelling of events as they shall actually take place. It would not be interpreting the passage, but doing violence to Scripture, if we should paraphrase this passage as follows: "Then shall an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and he shall bind the devil a thousand years." Such a paraphrasing of the text entirely disregards the fact that the passage is in the form of a vision.

H. H.

CALL TO SYNOD

The Consistory of the Protestant Reformed Church of South Holland, Illinois being designated as the calling Church by the last Synod, herewith notifies our Church that the Synod will meet in South Holland on Wednesday, June 4, 1947. The Pre-Synodical Prayer-Service will be held on Tuesday evening at 7:45, when the Rev. G. Vos, president of the last Synod will deliver the sermon.

L. Bruinsma, Clerk.

CHURCH POLITY

Dr. Ridderbos and Article 79

Let us now examine what remains of Dr. Ridderbos's attempt to prove with the Church Order that Classis (Synod) rightfully deposes office-bearers. It is the doctor's exegesis of Art. 79 of the Church Order to which we next have regard. The article reads,

"When Ministers of the Divine Word, Elders or Deacons, have committed any public, gross sin, which is a disgrace to the Church, or worthy of punishment by the authorities, the Elders and Deacons shall immediately by preceding sentence of the Consistory thereof and of the nearest Church, be suspended or expelled from their office, but the ministers shall only be suspended. Whether these shall be entirely deposed from office, shall be subject to the judgment of the Classis, with the advice of the Delegates of the (Particular) Synod mentioned in Article 11."

The doctor's interpretation of this article is contained in the following excerpts from his pen,

"De broeders (Schilder group) meenen, dat volgens Art. 79 de schorsing en afzetting niet anders mag geschieden dan door den kerkeraad met de naastbijgelegen kerk, of (ingeval van afzetting van een predikent) door de Classis; bij de Synode zou zulk een zaak alleen mogen komen in den weg van appél of hooger beroep.

"Het antwoord hierop is, dat Art. 79 niet bedoelt te zeggen, wie ambtsdragers mag schorsen en afzetten, maar enkel bedoelt, dat de kerkeraad het niet mag doen zonder hulp van de naastbijgelegen kerk en dan bij predikanten nog niet verder mag gaan dan de schorsing."

Translation:

"The brethren (Schilder group) suppose that according to Art. 79 this suspension and deposition (of officebearers: Ministers, Elders, and Deacons), may not take place otherwise than by the Consistory with the neighboring church or in the event of deposition of a Minister by the Classis; a case of this kind may come to Synod only in the way of appeal.

"The answer to this is that Art. 79 does not purpose to say who may suspend and depose office-bearers, but only means that the Consistory may not do it without the help of the neighboring church and that, if the offender be a minister of the word, it even may go no further than suspension."

The doctor continues:

“Er zijn voorbeelden aangehaald uit de historie ten bewijze, dat dit van ouds de opvatting in de Gereformeerde kerken hier te lande is geweest. Het meest sprekende bewijs hiervoor is wel het feit, dat de Dordtsche Synode van 1618, die wat den ouden tijd betreft het laatst de kerkenordening heeft vastgesteld, zelf ambtsdragers heeft afgezet; deze synode zal toch wel zelve het best hebben geweten, in welken zin de door haar vastgestelde Kerkenordening (daarom de Dordtsche Kerkenordening) moet worden verstaan.” *Kerkscheuring*, p. 23.

Translation:

“Examples have been quoted from history proving that of old this has been the conception of the “Gereformeerde” Churches here in this land. The most telling proof of this is the fact, certainly, that the Dort Synod of 1618, who as far as the times of old are concerned, was the last to fix, render permanent, the Church Order, itself deposed office-bearers; this Synod certainly would know best in what sense the by-itself-fixed Church Order (therefore called the Church Order of Dort) must be understood.”

Let us reply to this. As the doctor intimates, the Synod of Dort did not originate the Church Order, but it fixed, rendered it permanent, by revising and approving it as revised. In so far as the Church Order was corrected and amplified by the Synod of Dort, it is Dort's Church Order. Let us now concentrate on the statement of the doctor to the effect that the Synod of Dort knew best in what sense its Church Order must be understood. Were what the doctor in this statement asserts true, we should be driven to the conclusion that we have no Church Order worthy of the name and that the fathers of Dort were either a deceitful or a stupid and incompetent people. The doctor's statement there must be pronounced untrue. It certainly must be maintained that we know in what sense the Church Order must be understood just as well as the Fathers of Dort did. But is this possible? It is not only possible; it is a fact. This I repeat, must be maintained. I shall explain. Being on the street, you ask a fellow pedestrian for the time of day. He replies, “It is three o'clock.” Certainly you know just as well as your informer what is meant by that statement. For he expressed himself in clear and un mistakeable language. And being an honest man, who is in the habit of saying just what he means, you, too, know as well as he, just what *he* meant by that statement.

Certainly the fathers of Dort were that kind of people. They were honest and God-fearing men and competent theologically and linguistically, thus men

who said what they meant and meant what they said, and communicated the thoughts of their heart in clear and understandable language. It means that we know, can know, if we so desire, as well as they what is meant and what they meant by the articles of their Church Order, thus know in what sense the Church Order is to be taken. To adopt the opposite view is to say that the Church Order is a collection of equivocal and on this account dark deliverances at whose meaning we must guess and of whose meaning therefore no one can be sure, thus a collection of rules in which men may read just what they please and with which they can go in any direction. If that were true, the Church Order were a fraud and its authors fraudulent men. But the Church Order is not a fraud; it is a trustworthy production of honest and trustworthy ecclesiastics.

Dr. Ridderbos does not deny this, of course. Yet he reasons as though the Church Order, definitely Art. 79, emits an uncertain sound. Taken by itself it may mean one thing as well as another. Hence, the thing to do is to allow the Synod of Dort to explain the article to us. This may be well said. But the difficulty is that the Synod of Dort gave us no handbook on the Church Order, explaining its supposedly doubtful articles.

If so, to what purpose is it to say that we find ourselves under the necessity of allowing the Synod of Dort to tell us in what sense the Church Order must be taken? To no purpose whatever. Besides, if the fathers of Dort had been spiritually and intellectually incapable of providing the churches with a Church Order by itself interpretable, on what ground could it be maintained that they would have been spiritually and intellectually capable of supplementing their production with an interpretable handbook.

The thing is that the Church Order by itself is most competently interpretable and that therefore we do have a Church Order worthy of the name. Now this is what the doctor denies by his assertion that the Synod of Dort knows best in what sense the Church Order must be taken. And though the Synod did not provide the churches with a written handbook on the Church Order explaining its doubtful articles, it did nevertheless, according to the doctor, speak its mind on the Church Order. It did so not by the written word but by an action according to which it deposed a number of Arminian ministers. By this doing, the doctor has it, the Dort Synod revealed to the churches just how it wanted Art. 79 of the Church Order understood. It told us that it is not the purpose of this article to say who may depose office-bearers, the Consistory or the Classis (Synod), and that therefore as far as this article is concerned, Classis, too, as well as the Consistory may depose office-bearers. According to the doctor then the Synod

of Dort after all did supply the churches with a handbook on the Church Order.

But the doctor's contention raises questions. How does he know that deposition of office-bearers by the Dort Synod had that significance? He does not know, of course. The doctor is simply conjecturing, that is, guessing at the thing. Now certainly to be of service to us a Dort handbook explaining the doubtful articles of the Church Order should be made of sterner stuff than conjectures. Somebody else has just as much right to conjecture that the Synod of Dort in deposing those Arminian ministers meant not at all to shed light on its supposedly equivocal Church Order but even knowingly went contrary to the Church Order all in the feverish haste to free the churches as speedily as possible of Arminian ministers. This is not a bad conjecture either, considering the treatment the fathers afforded those ministers after having deposed them. They put them on wagons and conveyed them out of the country. They wanted to free the churches of that pernicious influence just that bad. Assuredly, we have not to do here with a baseless conjecture. It is just as good as that of the doctor's. Evenso, we must not make the grave mistake that the doctor makes. He reads his conjecture into the Church Order and thereby declares that by itself it is not interpretable. We must understand that a conjecture is but a guess and that therefore it may be wrong. We may not allow it to rule over the exegesis of the Church Order.

Let us consider that what is at stake here is the whole Church Order. The question is whether we have a Church Order worthy of the name. We do, but then the Church Order by itself is competently interpretable. Hence, we have not nor do we need a Dort handbook to explain its equivocal articles; for its articles are not equivocal—dark, uncertain, enigmatical—but they are plain and honest statements of honest men. To read our own conjectures into the Church Order is to silence it. Silencing the Church Order is very wrong. The Church Order must be allowed to speak and as its interpreters we must be willing to hear its voice, which is clear and understandable.

Dr. Ridderbos silences the Church Order. For he reads into it his own conjecture. And he accuses those who reject his conjecture for what it is—a conjecture—of undermining the authority of Classis and Synod and thus also of the Church Order by hair-splitting arguments.

The brother in Sioux Center, Iowa, wrote me another letter in which, he, too, calls my attention to the fact that the fathers of Dort themselves deposed office-bearers, ministers of the gospel. And he lets me know that, quoting him, "I have come to the conclusion that you think you know the purpose of the

Church Order and its articles better than the fathers of Dort by whom they were composed." Then the brother goes on to relate that shortly after the adjournment of the Synod of Dort several particular synods in the Netherlands went to deposing ministers of the Word, in large numbers. Sixty ministers, he writes, were deposed by the particular synod of Leiden, eight by the North Holland Synod and several more by the Synod of Utrecht. Arminian ministers they were. It means that after the adjournment of the Synod of Dort, the Reformed Synods continued in that way the work of ridding the churches of Arminian ministers. So the brother wants to know if I think that my understanding of the Church Order excels that of the fathers of Dort. In a previous article he asked me if I thought I had better understanding of the Church Order than then late Dr. H. Bouwman of the Netherlands. (Also this doctor, it will be recalled, wrote a monumental work on Reformed Church Polity). But the brother hasn't repeated that question, the reason being, it must be, that it appeared that there are three doctor Bouwman's discoverable in that work of the doctor on "*Gereformeerd Kerkrecht*,"—3 doctor Bouwman's, each at variance with the other respecting the question whether Classis rightfully deposes office-bearers. The brother understands, no doubt, that one cannot very well build on an authority so violently in conflict with himself. But now he calls my attention to the doing of those Synods. The brother does not understand. He, too, forgets that the Church Order *by itself* is most competently interpretable and that, if not, we can have no Church Order. The brother, too, wrongly imagines that the Synod of Dort left us a handbook in which it explains in what sense the Church Order must be taken, and his charge is that I ignore the light that the Synod in that book shed on its doubtful sentences and thus behalf as though I understand the Church Order better than its authors. I hope that when the brother reads this article he will see his mistake.

I repeat, the Synod of Dort gave us no handbook on the Church Order. Especially must we refrain from labelling "Dort's Handbook on the Church Order" what those Reformed Synods, about whom the brother writes, did after the Synod of Dort adjourned,—they deposed office-bearers and that is what Reformed Synods are still doing. To give to these doings the status of a "Dort's handbook on the Church Order" is ethically wrong. For that these doings deserve to be thus labelled is even more of a baseless conjecture than the deposition of office-bearers by the Synod of Dort. And we may not read our guesses into the Church Order. Why don't we study the Church Order and in connection herewith the Confession and the Scriptures? Are we afraid of the Church Order? afraid that an exegesis of the Church Order in

obedience to the laws of exposition might turn out disastrously for our theory?

I repeatedly have made the statement that the Church Order by itself is most competently interpretable. Let us see now how very true this is. We go back to Art. 79, cited above. This article states literally,

1) That the consistory shall suspend and expel (depose) office-bearers.

2) That the Consistory shall not engage in this action without the advice of the neighboring Church, in the event the offending office-bearers be elder or deacon. If the Minister of the Word offend, the sentence of deposition must be subject to the judgment of the Classis with the advice of the Synod.

The article in clear and unmistakeable language posits the right to depose office-bearers in the Consistory. It does not state that this is also the task of Classis (Synod). The only right with which it vests the Classis (Synod) is that of serving the Consistory with advice. The article plainly settles the question who, according to the Church Order, shall depose office-bearers. Its answer is that this shall be the task of the Consistory. But the doctor (Ridderbos) will not have it so. He maintains that it is not the purpose of Art. 79 to say who may depose office-bearers, the Consistory or the Classis (Synod), and that therefore, of course, it does not. The sole purpose of this article of the Church Order, according to the doctor, is to say that the Consistory shall not engage in this action without subjecting its sentence of deposition to the judgment of the neighboring church and to that of the Classis and Synod in the event the offender is a minister of the Gospel. But the article does not purpose to say, the doctor tells us, that the Consistory *only* may depose office-bearers and that Classis and Synod must refrain from this action. There is this question. How does the doctor know that it is not the purpose of Article 79 to say who may depose office-bearers? How does the doctor himself say that he knows? He admits that what tells him is not the article itself but his Dort Handbook on the Church Order—that doing of Dort Synod whereby it deposed those Arminian ministers. This certainly is a confession on the part of the doctor that if he had not that handbook to consult and to go by it would be but fair and right for him to conclude that Article 79 does very actually declare that the consistory only shall depose office-bearers.

We see now what happens to the Church Order when divines go by that handbook. The Church Order is very actually silenced. Of course, the fathers of Dort so could have worded Art. 79 as to cut short all argument as to just what it teaches. These fathers somehow could have worked in a clause reading, “The Consistory *only* shall depose office-bearers.” And

no doubt the fathers would have worked into the article some such clause, could they have foreseen that divines would arise in the churches who were going to play hocus pocus with the Church Order. However, if churchmen are determined to read into the Church Order their own theories, that is precisely what they would do, though the articles of the Church Order were written in language ever so pointed. The proof of this is the Holy Scriptures. Holy Writ is plain. Yet what have not men been making of the Scriptures!

But even without that clause “the Consistory *only* shall depose office-bearers” it will be seen that Article 79, if interpreted in the light of the Church Order (not in the light of that imaginary handbook) very emphatically declares that the Consistory *only* shall depose office-bearers and that the Classis (Synod) shall refrain from this action. Is not the statement “Christ died for his elect” very actually equivalent to the statement, “Christ died not for the reprobated? It is, and why so? Because *reprobate* and *elect* are two terms mutually exclusive. Likewise the two terms *Consistory* and *Classis* (Synod). They stand for different entities. As we saw in a previous article, a Consistory, according to the Confession and the Church Order, is an ecclesiastical council each and every member of which is chosen by lawful election of the *one local brotherhood* subject to it. A Classis, according to the Confession and the Church Order, is an ecclesiastical organization of delegates—ministers and elders—each of whom is chosen by lawful election not by the sum and total of churches that delegate to the Classical assembly and that in their totality constitute one congregation, but only by the one church represented by each. Hence, the Church Order and the Confession sharply distinguish the two. And they deposit all key-power—the right to administer the word and the sacraments and to exercise Church discipline (the three cannot be separated) in the consistory only. Who can cite one article from the Confession and the Church Order, according to which Classis (Synod) too, shall administer the word and the sacraments, and exercise Church Discipline (the three cannot be separated). Nobody can. Thus according to Church Order and the Confession, the Consistory and the Classis (Synod) very actually are two radically different entities. Therefore the statement of Art. 79, “the Consistory shall depose office-bearers,” certainly is equivalent to the statement, “Classis (Synod) shall not depose office-bearers.”

So it appears that a proper exegesis of the Church Order proves the conjecture of Dr. Ridderbos wrong and the other conjecture right,—proves that the Synod of Dort in deposing Arminian ministers must have knowingly gone against its own Church Order. For Article 79, as interpreted in the light of the *Church*

Order, certainly forbids deposition of office-bearers by Synod (Classis). That the Fathers of Dort went against their own Church Order can be explained. It has already been explained. Their haste to purge the Churches and the land of Arminian ministers was just that feverish. The Synod of Dort did wrong, of course, in deposing office-bearers. But what must be said to the credit of the fathers of Dort is that they did not flood the land with brochures in which they attempted to argue the crooked thing straight. This is a phenomenon of today. If there were in existence such brochures, Dr. Ridderbos would have made use of them. Now all he can come with is a baseless conjecture.

There still remains something of Dr. Ridderbos' argument that we have not yet examined. We will do so in the next article. Thus far the doctor has proved nothing. Fact is that already he has lost the whole argument. For I have proved that according to Art. 79, Classis (Synod) shall not depose office-bearers.

G. M. O.

SION'S ZANGEN

Jehova Regeert

(Psalm 97)

O dat we de les leerden uit dezen kostelijken psalm. Er is geen titel boven dezen psalm geschreven, doch we mogen hem gerust een kleinood heeten. Een gouden kleinood. En waarom? Deze psalm spreekt uitsluitend van God en Zijn grootheid. Nauwkeuriger: van Jehova en Zijn glorieuze regeering. Hij is echt theologisch: het draait alles om God.

Hoe geheel anders schijnt alles toch!

Het eene geslacht komt, en ziet het andere geslacht gaan: en er schijnen duizende verschillende vorsten en koningen, czaren en keizers, sultans en sha's, presidenten en dictatoren, en allen regeeren! Ze geven hun bevel en duizenden en nog eens duizenden achten zich gelukkig of sterven in smart en klachten. Elk geslacht kan het zien: er is een chaos en verwarring.

De mensch, de zonde, de duivelen schijnen te regeeren inplaats van de Heere.

En toch is het waar: De Heere regeert!

Als we dat niet meer gelooven kunnen, dan is er niets dan smart op deze wereld.

Ook wordt het al erger.

Het is op 't heden erger dan toen Mussolini snoefde en Hitler raasde. We hebben den vrede niet gewonnen na de bloedige jaren die pas achter ons liggen.

Er komen donkere, zeer donkere jaren.

Doch de Heere regeert!

Laat de aarde zich verheugen en de eilanden blijde zijn! Het is de Heere Zelf die ons dit toeroept door Zijn Heiligen Geest. Het is eeuwig waar.

En, o, als we slechts oogen hebben om te zien en harten om op te merken, dan kunnen we ook wel zien, dat het zoo is en niet anders. De Heere heeft eeuwen verleden gezegd: "Ik toch heb Mijn Koning gezalfd over Sion, den berg Mijner heiligheid!" Psalm 2. En toen die Koning van God kwam, zeide Hij: Mij is gegeven alle macht in den hemel en op de aarde! Ge kunt er van op aan. Het is zoo.

De Heere regeert: ge kunt het zien in het zijn en het voortbestaan der dingen. De dwaas zelf moest het toch zien? Als men hem zou zeggen, dat het schepsel zichzelf continueert, dan lacht hij U uit. Een horloge kan zichzelf niet op gang gooien, noch ook kan het steeds maar voortloopen, zonder de veer op te draaien! En zie nu eens rondom U! Alles beweegt, roert zich, haast zich en draaft; alles beweegt zich en roept en kreunt, zingt en schreeuwt, jubelt en schaterlacht; alles beweegt en de werelden rollen voort in het ontzaglijke heelal, in groote duisternis of temidden van duizelingwekkende golven van licht: ik vraag U: is het niet duidelijk, dat de Heere regeert?

De Heere regeert: ge kunt het ook zien in het wasen van den Anti-christ. Het wordt steeds goddelooser, vuiler, leelijker hier op aarde. Ook wordt men driester in zijn goddeloosheid. In de middeleeuwen randde men de Schrift en de getrouwen nog aan. Nu niet meer. Men heeft niet dan spot, hoon, verachting voor wat nog spreekt van God. Of erger nog: men heeft Hem vergeten! Ja, ik kan zien, dat de Heere regeert. Hij zeide het ons op het laatste blad van Zijn Woord: die vuil is moet nog vuiler worden. En ze worden erg vuil vandaag. De eindelijke openbaring van den vuilden Anti-christ zal niet lang meer op zich laten wachten. Hij staat aan de deur van het wereldgebeuren.

De Heere regeert: ziet ge het niet? Hebt ge nergens Zijn volk gezien, op de kniën, in het stof, in tranen en berouw, doch ook met stralende oogen die zijn brandende hart vertolken: hij staat in vlam en vuur vanwege de liefde Gods. O ja, de Heere regeert, want ik zie nog het wonder der wedergeboorte, der bekeering, van het geloof en de heiligmaking. Of denkt ge, dat er ooit één mensch naar God zou vragen en Zijne sterkte, als Hij niet regeerde? Ge kent het antwoord.

De Heere regeert: want ik zie Jezus, met eer en heerlijkheid gekroond. En ik zie, dat Hij aan 't komen is. Hij komt snellijk. De teekenen van Zijn komst vermenigvuldigen zich. Hij blijft niet lang meer uit.

Verheug U dan, o aarde! Verblijdt U, gij eilanden! Daar wordt het volk van God mee bedoeld. Want dat

is U woonplaats. Hij heeft Zich een volk geformeerd: die zullen Hem loven! Al werd hun getal kleiner bij het voortschrijden der eeuwen.

Rondom den regeerenden Heere zijn wolken en donkerheid, gerechtigheid en gericht zijn de vastigheid Zijns troons!

Het eerste verklaart het laatste: die wolken en donkerheid zijn Zijn gerechtigheid en gericht. Zoo zult ge gelezen hebben, dat Jezus, als Hij straks komt om te oordeelen, op de wolken komt. Hij brengt Zijn recht en gerechtigheid met Hem.

Gerechtigheid is vast. Zij is deugd die Zijn troon vast doet zijn.

Ge kunt dat al op aarde zien. Als ge slechts een beginsel van die gerechtigheid hebt in het leven der heiligmaking, dan zijt ge als de leeuw zoo moedig. De martelaren hadden de overwinning op hun beulen en rechters. Er zijn er geweest die de oogen der martelaren niet konden verdragen. Als ge voor een eerlijk en oprecht mensch staat met leugen en bedrog in de ziel, dan komt de blos van schaamte onwillekeurig op Uw gelaat. De eerlijke en oprechte is dan kalm en bezadigd, rustig en stil, wat er ook met hem gebeure, doch zijn belagers zijn onrustig en wild: ze missen de gerechtigheid.

Gerechtigheid is die deugd, waardoor God in al Zijn aanbiddelijk leven in harmonie is met het hoogste goed. Als Uw gedachte, woord en daad in overeenstemming is met hetgeen waarlijk goed is, dan zijt ge recht. En die maatstaf van het hoogste goed is God. Hij is dus in Zijn gerechtigheid in volmaakte overeenstemming met Zijn aanbiddelijk Wezen.

En die God is vreeselijk in Zijn regeering wanneer ge kwaad zijt, wanneer ge U zet tegen Hem. Luistert maar: "Een vuur gaat voor Zijn aangezicht henen, en het steekt Zijne wederpartijders rondom aan brand!"

Dat vuur van God: hoe vreeselijk! Paulus kende God en Hij zegt van Hem, eerst: Want onze God is een verteerend vuur! En dan ook: Vreeselijk zal het zijn te vallen in de handen des levenden Gods!

En dit is het smartelijke: dat vuur is de eeuwen door voor Zijn aangezicht henen gegaan, en men lette er niet op. Het stuk Zijn wederpartijders rondom aan brand, en men achtte het niet. Men kan gerust de vreeselijke beelden zien van Mussolini en zijn bijzit, die aan hun beenen opgehangen zijn, en toch voortvaren in de goddeloosheid. De wereld kan de millioenen van slachtoffers des Heeren zien in dezen laatsten krijg en toch luidkeels roepen: Er is geen God! De heele wereld zal straks in brand vliegen, en vlak voor het einde, als de menschen die het goddelooze voorhoofd hebben, zullen lijden vanwege Gods vuur, dan zullen zij zich naar den hemel keeren en Hem vloeken en lasteren, Die de blijdschap des hemels is.

Neen, de mensch ziet Hem nog niet, zooals Hij straks zal regeeren met Zijn vuur, dat onuitblusselijk is. Doch als de Heere ten finale zal komen met Zijn verteerend vuur, dan zullen zij Hem zien en luidkeels tot de bergen en tot de heuvelen schreeuwen. Doch dan is het te laat, voor eeuwig te laat. Dan zullen ze allen in brand gestoken worden, zegt de tekst, rondom in brand. Let op dat *rondom*. Ik moet er niet inkomen. De hel is al vuur. En dat vuur zijn de vuurvlammen des Heeren.

En dat vuur heeft ook Zijn volk iets te zeggen. Evenwel, het is een sprake die getuigt van groote zaligheid. Er was een gezicht van tongen als van vuur op den Pinksterdag. Het was het zaligende, louterende vuur van Gods onbegrijpelijke liefde voor het kuddeke Zijner discipelen.

Dat vuur is blijven branden. Het zet nog steeds onze harten in brand. De Emmausgangers spranken er van zelfs vóór den Pinksterdag: Was ons hart niet brandende in ons, als Hij tot ons sprak op den weg en als Hij ons de Schriften opende? Geliefden, kent ge die vuurvlammen niet?

En zoo was het altijd. Wat voor de goddeloozen eeuwige angst en kommer was, was voor Gods volk ongekende zaligheid. O, dat roode Meer! Het was de scheiding van het bange Egypte voor Israel, doch het was de dood voor Farao's helden.

Zijne bliksemen verlichten de wereld, het aardrijk ziet ze en het beeft.

En nog bekeeren zij zich niet.

De wereld heeft heel wat van dat bliksemen gezien. Ik denk hier ook aan Israel bij Sinai. Daar bliksemde God ook. Doch het was de bliksem Zijner liefde voor het volk, dat Hij Zich verkoren had. Toen heeft men gebeefd.

Er is tweeërlei beven.

De eene beeft als de slaaf onder de zweepslagen van Zijn wreeden meester. Het is het beven der haat.

De andere beeft vanwege de vrees des Heeren die rein is. Het is het opblikken der liefde, vanuit de laagte tot den Hoogsten, den Allerhoogsten God.

Ja, de wereld heeft de bliksemen van Gods oorlogen gezien in de bange jaren van 1939-1945, en millioenen van harten hebben gebeefd, maar er was geen beven der liefde tot God. Men voelde de slagen, doch men verhardde zich.

Maar het volk van God heeft gebeefd voor God en zij stamelen tot Hem: Gij zijt mijn God, U zal ik loven, verhogen Uwe majesteit! Ze zijn ter school gegaan bij Paulus: Werkt uws zelfs zaligheid met vrees en beven, want het is God die in U werkt!

We zullen nog éénmaal beven, maar dan zal het voor eeuwig zijn: als we het bliksemen van Gods eeuwige liefde zien in de nieuwe dingen. En het zal een beven zijn van puur genot, het popelen van niet in te houden wederliefde: en ze begonnen vroolijk te

zijn.

De bergen smelten als was voor het aanschijn des Heeren, voor het aanschijn des Heeren der gansche aarde!

Het staat er tweemaal. Het aanschijn des Heeren. Wat mag het wel zijn?

Iemand's aanschijn is zijn gezicht, zijn zelf-openbaring.

Welnu, Gods aanschijn, dat is, Zijn Zelf-openbaring, is, eerst, de schepping. Ge kunt het zien aan de dingen die gemaakt zijn, dat God ze gemaakt heeft. De hemelen vertellen zijn lof en het uitspansel vertelt U, dat het Zijner handenwerk is. Ik weet, dat ge dat eerst leert zien, wanneer de Heilige Schrift U geschonken werd in 't diepe hart, maar dat was toch de scheppingsgedachte Gods. De schepping leerde Adam en Eva, dat God er is en hoe en wat Hij is. De schepping is Zijn aanschijn.

Ge moogt zelfs wel zeggen, dat de historie ook Gods aangezicht is. Want de historie is de ontrolling van Zijn radend hart.

Maar nooit heeft God Zich zóó laten zien, als op de glooïing buiten Jeruzalem. Ik heb het oog op Golgotha. Jezus Christus is het aanschijn Gods bij uitnemendheid. Is iemand eerlijk, dan kunt ge het op zijn gelaat lezen. Welnu, God is de eerlijkheid zelve: als ge op Jezus staart, dan ziet ge het binnenste hart van God. Al Zijn goedheid, lieflijkheid, gerechtigheid, heerlijkheid, wijsheid en almacht, ziet ge in Jezus Christus, aan het kruis genageld. Zou het daarom zijn, dat Paulus bij zichzelf voornam om niets te weten, dan Jezus Christus en Hem gekruist? Of ook, dat daarom de hemelen in het midden van den troon tot in alle eeuwigheid een lam zullen zien, staande als geslacht?

Ziet ge dat, dan smelt ge weg.

Daar spreekt de tekst ook van.

De bergen smelten als was voor het aanschijn des Heeren, voor het aanschijn des Heeren der gansche aarde.

Vrage: wie kan Jezus zien, zooals Hij voor ons cog ten voeten uit geschilderd is, en niet wegsmelten?

Doch ook hier: er is altijd een tweeërlei uitwerking van al Gods openbaring.

Er is een wegsmelten in eeuwige angst en smart in de vlammen der hel. Toen God zag op de helden van Farao, toen zijn zij versmolten van grooten angst. Toen God's aanschijn blikte op Korach, Dathan en Abiram, toen zijn zij weggesmolten in de vlammen die hen opslokten.

Maar er is ook een wegsmelten in groote liefde en aanbidding. Dan smelten de oogen in tranen van innig zielsgeluk. Dan smelten de harten weg in aanbidding van dat lieflijke Wezen. Dan roept men al maar: Halleluja! Halleluja!

En de dorpelen der deuren bewogen zich en het

Huis wordt dan tot in alle eeuwigheid vervuld met rook, met de rook van des Heeren heerlijkheid.

Zij juichen, ook zingen zij; want de Heere regeert!
G. V.

IN HIS FEAR

The Gospel and Our Social Life

The Gospel, we have seen, touches on the whole of our social life, not with the purpose of supplying the world with a social science, but with the purpose of supplying the redeemed with grace to reveal themselves as God's party in this world. The reason why Scripture touches on social things is not in the social things themselves, but lies in the purpose of sanctification of the redeemed. Hence the Gospel is socially spiritual, and spiritually social. That is, the Gospel is ever spiritual and of spiritual content, also when it speaks of social things.

For that very reason the social science of Scripture was written for the spiritual minded person, and only the spiritually minded man can appreciate and practice it.

From this follows two things:

Walking in Sanctification.

First of all the redeemed themselves must be careful to walk in that sanctification in every phase of social life. The saints will constantly experience that proud man has invented a social science of his own, or concocted one by mixing up part of what God saith and part of what man saith. The saint will find moreover that the natural man is constantly practising his own brand of social science. Whether this be in the sphere of business, labor, industry, politics, or marriage, man has a social science which is of private interpretation. The saint must beware that he does not identify himself with or yoke himself to such as practise these corrupt things. Neither must the saint allow himself to be guided by the question as to what produces the best results in a material way. Also in these things it will be true that the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and exalteth itself against the Word of God. The saint must not become a Pragmatist or a Materialist. He must be spiritual. If his interest is purely material, or if his interest is what works the best, or if his only question is, what do the rest do, he will discover that the wicked prosper, at least temporally, and the social science of the wicked will seem to yield better results than that of the Word of God. No, the

saint must take to heart the Word of God, he must follow it and obey it, and dare to practise it in spite of what the multitudes do or in spite of what seems to yield material reward, yea, in spite of the indictment of modern man that the Bible doesn't work out in today's world.

It does "work" . . . if you think spiritually and if you desire sanctification.

Then it even "works" if servants obey their masters, and even then when the masters are froward.

If you think carnally, Scripture's social science never works. It is foolishness to the carnal mind. Every bit of it is foolishness.

Holding Forth our Social Science.

The redeemed, however, have the right and the calling to preach the sociology of Scripture to others, and not only acquaint them with it but also, in the Name of the Lord, demand that every one shall practice it. The Word of God holds for all, all must bow before that Word.

Therefore we sing:

"How long ye earthly judges, will ye pervert the right,
How long shall wicked persons, have favor in your sight?"

And again:

"Let rulers fear their ruler, their Judge let judges fear".

Or:

Kiss the Son, lest o'er your way,
His consuming wrath should break,
But supremely blest are they,
Who in Christ their refuge take".

And:

"Thy truth before the king of earth, with holiness I will speak."

If now all men bowed before that Word of God, if the masters, and the laborers; the husbands and the wives; the rulers and the subjects; they who represent capital as well as they who represent labor, if they all bowed before that Word, the Kingdom of God would appear.

But that would mean that all men lived out of the principle of regeneration. And this is not the case. Grace is not common. Neither is regeneration common. In this perverse and corrupt world we are far, very far from the Kingdom of God. There is a vastly different kingdom making its appearance, it is the kingdom of man.

In this present world mankind falls apart into two camps: the regenerate and the unregenerate. These two live out of two vastly different and entirely opposite principles. Some live out of the principle of grace,

others out of the principle of sin. There is no sphere wherein the regenerate can drop a little of his regenerative quality and the unregenerate can adopt a little of the regenerative quality and thus unite. Nay, the two ever stand opposed.

Hence, in spite of our summons, the greater part of the world laughs at the sociology of Scripture. . . . simply because it lives out of the principle of sin. Many churches do not want the sociology of the Scripture except insofar as they can bend it to their liking. Colleges and universities in general do not want its sociology, our marriage bureaus do not want it, our workmen do not want it, our masters do not want it, the Unions, to be sure, do not want it, neither has the C.L.A. convinced me that it wants the sociology of Scripture.

Danger and Difficulty.

Instead therefore of finding an eager market for Scripture and its highly spiritual brand of sociology, we discover that we "are not of the world" and the world knows us not. The danger is that we shall seek to adopt a sociology which the world knows, and which is of this world. This is what we do if we treat the married state as men treat it today. Reno thrives on a sociology which not God but man has dictated. Our prisons are full of inmates brought up on the scheme of sinful men. What we see in the labor world today is the outgrowth of a social science evolved by sinful men. The danger is that we, saints, allow ourselves to adopt this social science.

Our difficulty is this: the wicked reject the social science of God's Word, the saints believe and practise it, result: endless oppression, conflict, confusion.

Just because others reject the Word of God we shall not do it. If the husband rejects what the Word of God commands of him in HIS place, the wife may not reject the Word of God which applies to her in HER place. If the husband should be cruel and froward, the wife is called to be in subjection to her husband. . . . Scripture does not instruct her to take the train to Reno. If the Master should be cruel and froward, the laborer looks in vain in Scripture to find excuse to rise up against his boss, take charge of the factory with a strike and beat the boss into the dust. Just because the boss does not bow before the Word of God, the laborer may not invent some new way of treating his boss. If the men in the high places be wicked men who refuse the Word of God, we, the subjects, are not excused from that Word of God which calls upon us to be subject to the higher powers.

In spite of how others treat the Word of God, and consequently in spite of how they manage the social affairs, and in spite of everything that others may do, our sanctification consists exactly herein that we continue in the Word of God and that our behaviour in

society be controlled entirely by what the Lord saith to us.

Let me explain more fully.

Because the government refuses to obey that song we sang to her on the other page, we are nevertheless called to obey them in all things legitimate. The moment we rise up against the government, the moment we adopt the polity of the French Revolution, in spite of what success we may think we have, sanctification has ceased and corruption has entered into our lives. Whether our form of conduct improves our natural state. . . . Scripture is not interested. Scripture is interested in having you walk in sanctification, in newness and holiness of life. Because the rich lay up treasures where God's Word says they should not lay up treasures, and they oppress the poor, that does not give us license to jump up at the throats of the rich. The moment we do that sanctification has ceased and we corrupt ourselves. Then Scripture would say it were better to let the wages which they hold back, cry into the ears of God Sabaoth, than that we should take things into our own hands and act as if we were to take vengeance. If the matter of vengeance comes up, remember that God taketh vengeance, not you. Just because capital has the power, and labor was captured in its net, that does not give labor the right to fly upon capital and claw out its eyes. Just there sanctification ceased and corruption operates. No matter how much it may seem that retaliatory and so-called self-defense measures justifies your social conduct, and your well being requires it Scripture contradicts you and tells us that it is not interested first in economics nor our economical well-being, but in sanctification.

Thus, then, Scripture portrays us the way of sanctification through today's tangled social perversion and blessed is the man who has the stamina of faith to dare apply the social science of Scripture to the social conditions of nineteen hundred and forty-seven.

(To be continued).

M. G.

IN MEMORIAM

The Mary-Martha Society of the Manhattan Protestant Reformed Church hereby wishes to express their heartfelt sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. M. Vander Molen, in the loss of her mother,

MRS. FRANK WESSELS (Jonksma)

May the God of all grace comfort the hearts of the bereaved and bless them through this way of suffering.

The Mary-Martha Society,

Mrs. H. Leep, Vice-Sec'y.

Rev. C. Hanko, Pres.

FROM HOLY WRIT

O. T. Quotations in the N. T.

The first O. T. quotation to which we would call attention is that recorded in Romans 10:5-8.

This beautiful and instructive passage is a quotation from two different passages and two different books in the O. T., namely, Lev. 18:5 and Deut. 30:12-14.

The passage in Romans 10, calling for our attention reads as follows: "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law on this wise: *That the man which doeth those things shall live by them*" (Lev. 18:5).

"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise: *say not in thine heart: Who shall ascend into heaven?* (that is to bring Christ down from above) or, *Who shall descend into the deep?* (that is to bring Christ up from the dead). But what saith it? *The Word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart,* that is, the Word of faith, which we preach." (Deut. 30:12-14).

* * * *

The general thrust of the passage in Romans 10 is perfectly clear. The apostle Paul is here substantiating the truth of the Word of God, that Christ is indeed the end, the *telos* of the law. It had never been the purpose of God in giving the law, thus the apostle would instruct his readers, that this law should be the way to salvation and righteousness. Whoever, therefore, seeks righteousness in the way of *doing* the law must needs fail. Indeed, all, who sought and still seek salvation thus, have not obtained what they sought after. For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified before God. Romans 3:20; Gal. 2:16 and Psalm 143:2.

Salvation is not and never has been by works of law, that mere man performs, be he Jew or Gentile. It always was and still is merely by faith in Christ Jesus. There is no other way. None other name is given under heaven. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. They, who are of faith, are the children of Abraham, are the heirs according to the promise!

The law came 430 years after the Promise. It did not and could not change the terms of the Promise, the will of the Testator. The Promise is not by works, but solely by faith, that it might be of grace.

Such is the general thrust of this passage. Salvation by faith alone is the underlying promise of the

apostle here. But that is not all the apostle would teach his readers in this passage. The writer to the Romans also shows conclusively in this passage, what this principle of salvation by faith alone means for those, who will not subject themselves to this great work of the Almighty God. Not subjecting themselves to grace, but willing to establish their *own righteousness* they oppose God. Always do they resist the Holy Spirit at every turn of the way of life. Because of the blindness of unbelief they are ignorant of God's righteousness. They know not, neither do they seek the one and only righteousness of God set forth in the Cross of Christ, who is the propitiation of God for sin.

What did they not see? They failed to see, that Christ is the *end*, the *telos* of the law. And so they stumbled at the Rock of Stumbling, laid by God in Zion.

In passing we should note that when Paul here tells us, that Christ is the *end* of the law, he employs in the Greek the term "telos". Now "telos" in its usage in the Bible has a twofold sense. It may refer to the end, the *purpose* of things. In this case it would then indicate that the sole purpose of the law was *Christ*. The law must lead man to be a pedagogue to Christ. Everything pointed to Him. And this usage of the term gives a very good sense here. It would mean that all that the Bible tells us about the law in all its demands unto salvation only has sense when viewed in relationship to its divine purpose, namely, to lead to Christ. When, therefore, Israel seeks to establish its own righteousness, being ignorant of God's righteousness, this is due to their not knowing the Scripture, neither the power of God's efficacious Promise. Always Christ was the end of the Law. And always Israel in establishing their own righteousness has a purely blind zeal. Zealous of God they are, but not according to the knowledge of those who though under law, see Christ as the end of the law.

Of course, the term "end of the law" can also refer to the *abolishment* of the law. Christ has come. He has died, was nailed to the accursed tree. When men nail Him to the cross, He in obedience to the will of the Father, and taking all our curse upon Himself, nailed the law, as the handwriting against us, to the tree. And so the commandments contained in ordinances have been abolished in Him. Thus the apostle writes to the church at Ephesus.

These two interpretations of the term "and of the law" are not at odds with one another. They are the same reality of the work of God's grace in Christ considered from different aspects. The view that makes "telos", end, to refer to God's saving purpose in giving the law, to lead to Christ, looks at God's work from the viewpoint of the *contemplated end*. The interpretation, insists that "end" means that Christ is the abolition of the law views this same work of God from the viewpoint of the purpose attained. When

this purpose is attained the law has served its intended end and is made to be ineffective.

Now, for him who believes, Christ is the end, the "telos" of the law in both senses of the term. The believer in the O. T. Dispensation, who by faith obtained the promises, said: Christ is the end of the law. Thus He had peace. The law drove him, as it were, into the arms of God's mercy. And this mercy is alone in Christ. And the believer in the N. T. Dispensation, be he Jew or Greek, says: for me, as believer, in my believing in Christ crucified, the law was abolished for me. Christ is, for both the believers of the O.T. and of the N.T., the end of the law.

It is a great tragedy, yet, it is dreadful reality, that the unbelieving Jew, not submitting himself to the righteousness of God, perishes in his sins. He understands neither the Scriptures nor the power of God!

* * * *

How the Scriptures should be understood Paul tells us in this quotation. Earlier in this essay we remarked that we have here in Romans 10:5-8 two quotations.

In the one, Lev. 18:5, the apostle tells us what *Moses writes!* In the other, Deut. 30:12-14, the apostle underscores: *What the righteousness out of faith says!* The righteousness out of faith *speaks*, it *confesses* out of the heart! Just what this twofold contrast, drawn here by the apostle, implies, we hope to point out presently. However, before we do so, there is another question that calls for an answer, which we will here consider. It is the question of *quotation*.

Does Paul in quoting Deut. 30:12-14 and setting it here in the context and argument of Romans 10 give the real sense of the passage as intended by Moses, when he spoke these words to Israel in the plains of Moab? Or, does Paul in quoting this passage, very handily give a slightly different rendering to the text, so as to permit him to prove his point in Romans 10?

At first flush one is inclined to conclude that the latter of the two given alternatives is here the case. The question would then in Rom. 10 not have the sense *intended* by Moses, but the one *given* by Paul. And there are expositors who insist that such is the case. They make the following observations:

In the first place, attention is called to the alterations given by Paul to the text. Moses writes in Deut. 30:13: "Who shall go *over the sea* for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Paul writes: Who shall *descend into the deep*? And the latter adds: that is to bring Christ up from the dead! Two elements here, it is pointed out. 1. A change of the wording. 2. Interpretation which the literal sense of the passage in Deut. 30:13 hardly allows.

Also it is pointed out, that the *contrast* of Romans 10. between what "Moses writes" and what the "right-

eousness of faith *confesses*", as stressed by Paul is not evident in either Deut. 30:12-14, or in the entire address of Moses to the people. Fact is, that what is evident is, that Moses in these chapters (Deut. 29, 30) exactly tells the people what they *must do* to live and not die. It is argued, that Deut. 30 gives much more of the principle of works, than it does of the righteousness of faith. And, therefore, Romans 10:6-8 gives us not Moses' sense of Deut. 30:12-14 but Paul's free rendering. At best it is conceded, that this passage in Deut. 30:12-14 contains "an allegorically and typically prophetic description of this righteousness of faith".

What are we to say of this argumentation? Is this reasoning to the point and factual?

First of all, we would point out, that, to play out Paul overagainst Moses in this particular quotation, hardly befits those who have reverence for the Scriptures. Rather than accuse the writer of a free rendering of the text to suite the case here, it behooves us to make a careful study of the facts. This we should do, especially here, since Paul is here proving from the Scriptures, that Christ is indeed the *end*, the *telos* of the law to *everyone* that believeth. And surely this He must also have been to Israel in the plains of Moab. With this text the whole case stands or falls.

Secondly, it is quite evident, that the apostle deems what Moses says as the end of all contradiction. Paul appeals to Moses here to substantiate the truth, that also in the O. T. Dispensation Christ was very really present in His death and resurrection, be it then in the shadows, and that of these shadows Christ is the fulfillment, and, therefore, He is their *end*. If this is not the teaching of Moses, but merely the free rendering of Paul, then Paul did not prove from the Scriptures directly, that, what Christ performed in his death and resurrection, is attested to by the law and the prophets.

Rather than criticize Paul we do well to humbly listen to the Word of God here. For the Spirit of truth is here telling us by the pen of Paul what He had in mind when through Moses He spoke to Israel in Moab's plain.

It is true that there are here elements introduced by the apostle, which are not so *evident* in Deut. 30:12-14. However, this does not mean that Paul introduced them. It merely means that these elements were very really and *implicitly present*. Only they were not, because of the manner of God's revelation and the nature of the shadows, *explicitly stated*.

Thus understood, we are in a position to examine the implication of the contrast not only as found explicitly stated in Romans 10 of what "Moses writes" (describes) and the "righteousness of faith confesses" but also, as this is very really implicitly present in Deut. 30:12-14, when compared with Lev. 18:5.

G. L.

PERISCOPE

Niemöller

The Rev. Martin Niemöller's speech making tour of the U. S. officially ended in the latter part of March. Pastor Niemöller spoke to capacity audiences in 53 cities in the U. S. under the auspices of the Federal Council of Churches. Throughout his stay in America two questions have been raised time and again. The first deals with his relation to the Nazi regime under Hitler. It is well known that in the early part of the War he had offered his services to Hitler as a submarine captian; in which service he had distinguished himself in World War I. It is further established that Niemöller, and the German Churches generally, did not oppose Hitler's rise to power but encouraged it, in the beginning at least. The second question concerns the Rev. Niemöller's affiliation with the liberal Federal Council. How is it to be explained that he, Niemöller, who desires and expresses himself as an orthodox preacher can be friendly with the Council which is liberal and modern to extremes? Time and again in his addresses Pastor Niemöller emphasized the great truths of the Sovereignty of God, the Divinity of Christ, the resurrection, Election, the importance of the Scriptures for the life of believers, etc.; practically all of which the Federal Council has discarded and deny.

A fair and interesting answer to the first question is given by *Time* magazine in its issue of March 24.

We quote:

"Since he first arrived in the U. S. in December, Pastor Niemöller has been quoted and misquoted by his defenders and detractors on almost every phase of his relation with Naziism. The feeling against him has focused on the fact that his opposition to Hitler was on religious, rather than on political grounds. Few have understood that for a traditional Lutheran, religious grounds are the only valid ones for opposition to the state.

Martin Luther's troublesome teaching on the relations between church and State is largely based on Paul's words in Romans 13: 'For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.' Civil authority, however evil or foolish, said Luther, must be opposed only when it encroaches on the spiritual realm: And you must know that from the beginning of the world there

was rarely a prince who was wise and even more rarely one who was pious. They are usually the biggest fools and the worst criminals upon earth. . . . It pleases the divine will that we. . . . be unto them humble subjects, as long as they do not overreach themselves and wish to be shepherds instead of executioners."

The second question has been answered in various ways. Many were quick to label Niemöller "a wolf in sheep's clothing", since his association with the Federal Council was his own condemnation. It was suggested that he was merely another prophet of modern ecumenicity and church union. Calm reflection and judgment, however, would seem to point out discrepancies in this explanation. Certainly, according to reports, his public expressions reveal him as maintaining the fundamentals that the Federal Council has rejected. This, undoubtedly, also explains the fact of his cool reception in America by many groups in the Federal Council.

As a suggestion and possible answer to the problem we offer the following; which is in part, Niemöller's own. After the war the Germans and everything German, including the Church, were considered outcasts and held to be mutually responsible for the Germany of Hitler. It is certainly true that the "Church" in America and elsewhere "prayed" for the Allied cause and so doing actually condemned and denied the "holy catholic church" as it was represented among our enemies, especially Germany. After the war, therefore, all of Germany lay in disgrace; under the ban of God and man. In that situation the World Council of Churches, of which the Federal Council is a subsidiary, invited the German Churches into their fellowship. The Germans, naturally, responded like a drowning man would grasp a life preserver, even though it might turn out to be a rock. Though this may not be the last that can be said it does shed a bit of light and expresses a charitable attitude. Perhaps, some of our brethren across the sea can shed a bit more light! Let's hear from you!

* * * *

Ecumenicity. . . .

Everywhere, in our day, one hears of it. The newest movement is to unite the theological seminaries of our country. To accomplish this goal an "Inter-seminary Movement" has been organized. At the present time four books are being circulated among all seminaries which are to be the basis for discussion and teaching among the students. Next June, at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, it is expected that 1,000 seminary students from 125 schools will meet to consider the "crisis in which a divided Protestantism now stands in relation to the secular culture of our time";

whatever that may mean. The "grip of sectarianism" and "petty denominationalism" will be decried and one great Church in which unity and numbers are stressed will be held up as the ideal to which these seminary students shall work.

Shades of the false prophet! But for its tragic results, one would pass over such plans as but another of the many vagaries of human philosophy not controlled by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

The above information is from an editorial in *The Southern Presbyterian Journal* of March 15. The writer, Dr. L. Nelson Bell, comments as follows: "As desirable as ecumenicity may be, we believe the history of the Christian Church proves without controversy that the things which make a Church strong and which makes it effective in its work in the world is what it believes, preaches and lives. These foundation doctrines of Christianity are fixed, not by decree of man but by the Word of God itself." And in closing he makes this pertinent remark: "It is our observation that the strongest advocates of 'ecumenical theology' do not find room in their ecumenical fold for those who feel led by the Spirit to 'earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints'. Herein lies food for thought."

* * * *

A New Plan. . . .

A few weeks ago we called attention to a plan for reunion of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (North) with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (South) and also pointed out that there was much objection to the merger. Recently a new plan of union was drawn up which replaces the older form and will be submitted to the general assemblies of both denominations in May. The revised plan supposedly adds provisions relating to organization of synods and tenure of property which had caused differences between the two groups.

It is evident that the new plan will postpone the final action of merger for another year, at least. Resolutions will be recommended to transmit the revised plan to the presbyteries for a year's study, and then be taken up by the general assemblies in 1948. If favored by presbyteries the general assemblies will approve it in 1949, and the first general assembly of the reunited church will meet in 1950.

According to the *Southern Presbyterian Journal*, the situation is not greatly changed by the revision. Although the new plan will not be made public until the meeting of the General Assembly in May, there is still sufficient reason to oppose the union, according to Mr. Randolph B. Lee. In an open letter in the *Journal* of March 15, he asks and answers the following ques-

tions: "Are we ready to liquidate the Southern Presbyterian Church?" The implication is that any "union with a Church having five times the membership of our Church can mean only one thing: the absolute and complete destruction of our beloved Church." Two questions follow to which the Southern Church must answer with an unqualified negation, according to the writer. They are: "Do we see eye to eye in questions of important Doctrines, and in the interpretation and application thereof?" and, "Are the interests, problems and the way of thinking of our people similar to those of the Northern Church?" His next two questions and answers point out that the history of the Northern Church reveals no regard for Churches with whom it has previously united and only a desire to be large and strong in numbers, without regard for right or merit of united groups. The writer closes by maintaining that it is his conviction that the preponderant desire of the membership of the Southern Church is to remain separate. "Open your eyes, you Southern Presbyterians, you with your glorious heritage. Get busy and help us defeat this movement, the only possible result of which, will be the absolute destruction of our beloved Southern Presbyterian Church."

* * * *

v. S. Views U. S. . . .

Under this caption we hope to write a series of articles. Mostly they will be a translation of what appears in *De Reformatie* under the title "Uit Amerika". Mr. Van Spronsen, the writer, with whom many of our readers are familiar and, perhaps, have heard speak, has been in the U. S. for several months. He has written a series of articles containing his impressions of us and the U. S. Much of the material is simply interesting, but much of it is also pertinent and contains valuable truth as it teaches much needed lessons. It's always interesting to know what others think of us and especially so when the commentator is of kindred faith. We expect to transcribe what Mr. Van Spronsen has written without comment but may slip in an observation and remark occasionally. Before we begin, it might be well to state that our ability as translator is limited and if Mr. Van Spronsen or any of our readers notice that we misquote him, accept our apologies and feel free to point it out for correction.

Mr. Van Spronsen begins his series by stating that at the time he first arrived in the U. S. the campaigning of the November elections was in full swing. He speaks a bit about the Democrats and Republicans and the attitude which we Americans assume toward politics and then goes on as follows:

"Of one thing I am firmly convinced: that in

America, which is generally regarded as the land of democracy, it is but a step from democracy to dictatorship. The trade-unions are under the control of one man, and whatever he decrees, comes to pass. The Americans do not think for themselves, and have no guiding principle to lead them in thought and action. Essentially the American is like a herded animal who is lost in the mass, and yet understands nothing of the mass-psychology. The American democracy consists merely of externalities; they pride themselves that all may have the same food on the table as the capitalists; they glory in the fact that they do not have to remove their hat in the presence of the boss, but can speak to him and call him by his first name. As a classic example of democracy in America, it is pointed out that there are no class-distinctions on the trains and steamers. In the same way they express what a great privilege is theirs, over other people's, since each home has its own bath-room and every workman, of average means, has his own automobile. Naturally these are things which make life pleasant and agreeable and reveal a radically different aspect than life in the countries of Europe; superficially at least. What most Americans of Holland origin forget, however, is that in Western Europe, and especially in the Netherlands, things have change a great deal in the last 30 years. But whenever anyone digs a bit deeper into the American psychology of life (*volkspsyche*) he finds that essentially American life is governed by a staid uniformity; a uniformity of which Dr. Kuyper once said that it is the curse of modern life. It is a uniformity that extends to weary one, as he travels through the various states. All the cities are built on the same uniform plan. All hotels are of one type, both within and without. All houses are just alike. All house arrangements are in the same style. All stores bear the same stamp. It is all very practical and convenient but wearisome through uniformity. And this uniformity stigmatizes the American; it stifles his individuality and personality."

Mr. Van Spronsen goes on to admit that it makes us a strong nation of boundless opportunities and gives us a standard of living higher than any other. But there are serious drawbacks on the debit side, he claims. He begins on these in his second article from which we quote in the following issue.

W. H.

My way in life which Thou shalt choose,
I know will be the best;
And through the trust I have in Thee,
My heart will find its rest.

The Grace Church Of Kalamazoo

In an article which appears in the *Banner* of March 21, 1947, the consistory of the Grace Christian Reformed Church (formerly the congregation of the Reverend H. Danhof) acquaints the readers of the *Banner* with the installation service of their pastor, the Rev. G. Gritter. We would quote the following excerpts from that article which we believe should not pass unnoticed:

"On November 1, 1945, the Grace Christian Reformed congregation was officially united with the Christian Reformed denomination. Measures were soon taken to obtain a new pastor so that the congregation could enjoy the normal activities of a well established Christian Reformed Church. . . . The sermon was delivered by the Rev. John Gritter, older brother of the pastor. He spoke convincingly on Jeremiah 23:28: 'What is the chaff to the wheat?' He developed the theme that God communicates His word to His prophets, and the faithful prophet *must* convey this word to the people without adulteration. As the mixing of wheat with chaff spoils the wheat, so God condemns the mixing of truth with error. The application is obvious. . . . We would be remiss if we did not express our sincere appreciation also to Rev. Henry Danhof, our emerited pastor, for his services in the midst of the congregation for many years. It is our prayer that he and Mrs. Danhof may enjoy the evident fruits of their labors and God's manifold blessings in the sunset of their lives. We acknowledge with thanks the many friendly messages and expressions of good will which we received from faithful friends within the denomination who felt that the ideal of true Christian love is best developed in unity—unity in Christ!"

This official statement of the consistory should certainly dismiss any doubt which might exist as to the identity of this congregation. It is a normal Christian Reformed Church. To be sure, it should be superfluous to call attention to this rather obvious fact. However, the undersigned knows of members in that congregation who have maintained the impossible position that the reunion of this congregation with the Christian Reformed Church has occurred upon the pre-1924 basis. It has been declared that this reunion has been effected on the condition that this congregation was to continue in that interpretation of the truth which has characterized her and which has been taught her since 1924 by the Rev. H. Danhof, yca, that the pastor which they called was not at all obliged to preach and to teach the official doctrine of the Christian Reformed Church. Well may these members now sit up and take notice when they

read this official declaration of their own consistory. We will not at this time inquire into the meaning of the word "normal" in the above statement to which we now refer. Did the congregation until now lead an abnormal Christian Reformed life? This would be true. We must remember that this congregation had always remained a Christian Reformed Church. The name implies this, does it not, "The Protestant Christian Reformed Church." A protesting Christian Reformed Church is surely a Christian Reformed Church. As such this congregation had certainly led an abnormal life. Be this as it may, the consistory now declares that "the congregation now enjoys the normal activities of a well established Christian Reformed Church." A normal Christian Reformed Church is surely not a church which belongs to the Christian Reformed denomination but continues in her own interpretation of the truth and that in opposition to the teachings of the Church whereof she is a member.

My second observation is based on the installation sermon which was delivered on the evening of January 28, 1947. I do not wish to criticise the sermon. To the contrary I would emphasize his remarks. How important it is that the preacher of the Word of God convey the word of God to his hearers without adulteration! The chaff must not be mixed with the wheat, the lie with the truth. Such is the calling of every preacher of the gospel, also of the Reverend G. Gritter. It seems to me that I can easily hear the Reverend Danhof preach on this topic, in 1924 and during all the years which have followed. How the former shepherd of this flock would proclaim unto his hearers that the chaff must not be mixed with wheat, the lie with the truth! And very boldly and clearly this minister would expose this chaff, this lie. He would call attention to the Three Points of 1924. He would denounce the teachings that the gospel is an offer of salvation, grace to all that hear, that sin is checked within the life of the individual sinner, that the natural man can do good before God without the regenerating operation of the Holy Spirit. I can hear him say, as he said in 1924, that, before God and His Church, he cannot remain silent, but that he must expose the errors which the Synod had adopted in that fateful year. And now? How the times have changed! The Rev. J. Gritter preaches on this text in Jeremiah at the installation of his younger brother. He declares that his younger brother must not mix the chaff with the wheat. But, when he speaks of the chaff and the wheat he surely means that the Three Points belong to the wheat. Has not this congregation begun to enjoy the normal activities of a well established Christian Reformed Church? Does this not imply that the Reverend G. Gritter will preach and teach the congregation as a true servant of the Christian Reformed Church and that he will therev

fulfill his pledge when, for example, he signed the Formula of Subscription? The chaff has become wheat. The lie has become the truth. The Three Points have become the pure gospel of the Word of God. How is it possible that the entire congregation can swallow this corruption of the evening of Jan. 28, 1947?

My third remark is based upon the joy of the consistory because of the attainment of the ideal of true Christian love which is best developed in unity, the unity of Christ. These are high-sounding but empty words indeed. It is quite evident from the rest of this article of the consistory that the unity which has been achieved is the unity of the Christian Reformed Church. True unity, of course, is the unity whereof the apostle speaks in the fourth chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians. The true unity in Christ is surely a unity in the truth. A denial of the truth is certainly also a denial of the Christ. Be this as it may, this unity of the Grace Christian Reformed Church is a unity of the Three Points. This congregation will henceforth cooperate to the fullest extent (she intends, does she not, to "enjoy the normal activities of a well established Christian Reformed Church"?) with the Christian Reformed Church in the proclamation of the gospel, also as expressed in the official teachings of 1924. And by cooperating in that manner with the Christian Reformed Church she will more and more experience that "blessed unity which is the requisite for the development of true Christian love." This, if you please, is the official statement of the consistory. But, I pray, what, then, have we here? This congregation could have had this unity twenty three years ago. Then the Christian Reformed Church gave birth to the Three Points and declared them to be the true expression of our Confession. Then the unity between this congregation and the Christian Reformed Church was destroyed. By whom? By the Christian Reformed Church, upon the basis of this article of the consistory? But, the unity which has been achieved is a unity of the Three Points. Hence, the one who wickedly broke this "blessed unity" is none other than this congregation with her consistory and her pastor. One may well call this statement of the consistory unbelievable. The Rev. H. Danhof stands indicted here by his own consistory of the sins of schism, and we know what our Communion Form declares of those who raise discord in the church as well as in the state. In 1924 the Reverend Danhof, together with his consistory and congregation, declared that not he but the Christian Reformed Church was the cause of the breach, that not he but the Christian Reformed Church had departed from the truth of the Scriptures, and that therefore not he but the Christian Reformed Church had committed an act of schism. And now the consistory expresses its joy upon the attainment of

the true expression of Christian love which is best developed in unity. If this statement of the Grace Christian Reformed Church means anything the Reverend H. Danhof should cover his face in shame, and the entire congregation should confess her grievous sin of having committed the sin of schism upon which, we read, the wrath of God abideth.

My final comment is based upon the consistory's expression of appreciation to the Rev. H. Danhof for his services in the midst of the congregation for these many years. I am sure that the Rev. Danhof felt highly flattered when he received this word of appreciation. The consistory and the congregation certainly showed him their appreciation for the services which he rendered in the midst of that congregation. I know of no more miserable way to show appreciation to a pastor than by repudiating whatever he has taught. The consistory is very appreciative to Rev. H. Danhof. For what? For his emphasis upon the truth which they now reject. He has labored among them these many years. He preached against the Three Points. Fact is, he preached against the Three Points even while the negotiations for reunion were in progress. He was deposed by the Christian Reformed Church because of the emphasis which he laid upon the truth. And what does the consistory do now? They thank him for his many labors and, at the same time, politely tell him that from now on they will be instructed in the very things which the Rev. Danhof has condemned and exposed as the lie ever since 1924. We may well be dumbfounded because of this expression of appreciation. Is it serious? A tree shall be known by its fruit. It is mockery to thank a pastor for all that he has done and at the same time reject the very things for which he stood.

God will not be mocked. The action of the Kalamazoo Classis which negotiated this treaty of peace has been done. Her actions are known to the Living God. The actions of this congregation with its consistory are also known to that Living God. We, the now existing Protestant Reformed Churches, loved our Mother Church in 1924, did not seek the schism, loved the Church and the unity of the Church, and therefore protested against the teachings of the Three Points which we believe must undermine the very foundation upon which this unity rests. The stand of the Christian Reformed Churches is again plainly revealed in the same Banner of March 21, page 380, in the article of Martin Lamaire and the footnote of the editor of the Banner. We wish and pray that many in the Grace Christian Reformed Church may see the error of their ways, may continue in their struggle for the truth for which they suffered and sacrificed in 1924-1925, and stand shoulder to shoulder with us unto the glory of Christ, the King of His Church, Who loves the truth and hates all rejection of it. H. V.