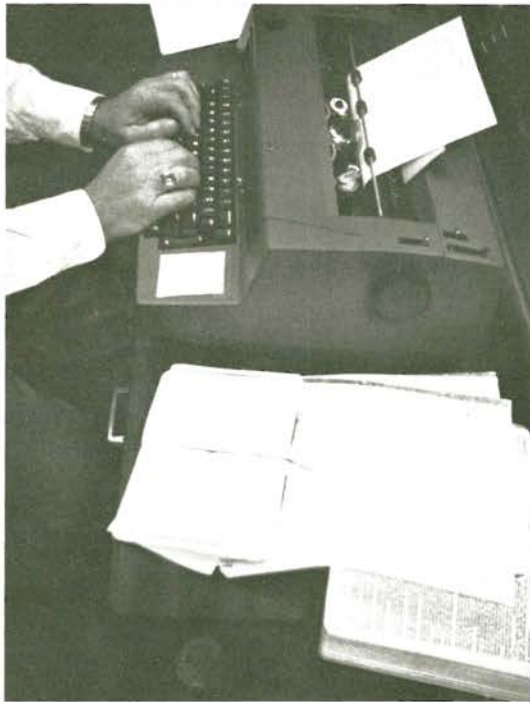


# The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE



As church of Jesus Christ in this present age we have the unique privilege and calling to defend the truth as God has entrusted it to us, as we love and cherish it in

our hearts.... The pulpit and the printed page must never grow weary of sounding the trumpet, arousing the church to battle, and warning her of the foes within and outside the gates.

See "Contending for the Faith" — page 98

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## THE STANDARD BEARER

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## MEDITATION

# Contending for the Faith

Rev. C. Hanko

*"...and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."*

Jude 3c

A small house stood at the outskirts of one of our Midwestern cities. The steps to the back porch were well worn; the planks of the porch creaked at every step. It was customary to knock on the solid wooden door and then walk in. As I entered, my eye fell first on the cook stove at the far end of the room, with the coffee pot and tea kettle moved

back from the fire. Next to the stove was a square table covered with a red and white checkered table cloth. As I took my seat between the stove and the table, I greeted the aged mother sitting across from me. Her skirt, neatly protected by a long apron, reached to the floor. Her black blouse was trimmed with white lace around the collar and the sleeves,



and her hair was drawn back from her kind, wrinkled face in a tight knot. With the aid of her small, oval glasses she had been reading a religious periodical which she received at regular intervals from the Netherlands.\* This daughter of the Afscheiding (The Secession of 1834 from the Hervormde, or State Church) still cherished in her heart the truth that had cost tears and goods back in the fatherland. She knew the pain and anguish involved in living through a reformation in the church. She had experienced the scorn and reproach of being a "secessionist." She appreciated the contact with her fellow saints across the sea, but she also felt a strong obligation to support the cause for which they had fought so bitterly. She could become quite vehement and loquacious whenever she was called upon to contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

In 1924 a small group of men met together to discuss ways and means of publishing a periodical that would serve as a banner of truth in the church world that was departing from the faith of the fathers as taught in our church Standards. This was not because of a dearth of Christian literature, for even then there were many and various church papers. Among them was a periodical that was called "Religion and Culture." As its name suggests this paper strove to bridge the gap between the church and the world, between Jerusalem and Athens, between the philosophies of men and the truth of the Scriptures. The writers reasoned that as a fruit of God's "common grace" the world with its science and philosophies could contribute toward a better understanding of the Word of God. Already then the six twenty-four hour days of Genesis 1 were brought into question. Already then the miracles of Scripture, such as the plagues of Egypt, the passing through the Red Sea and the falling of the walls of Jericho, were explained as natural phenomena. Besides, God's favor to the wicked accounted for a general, well-meant offer of salvation, whereby God desires that all men should be saved. It was exactly to counteract these heresies then running rampant in the churches, and to defend the sound doctrine of God's Word that the *Standard Bearer* was brought into existence. Once more emphasis was laid upon the antithesis between light and darkness, between the church and the world, as well as upon God's sovereign predestination and salvation solely by grace. The chief purpose of this magazine was and is exactly to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, that to God may be the glory forever.

Many more instances could be cited wherein God called men to contend for the faith of which Jude speaks in his epistle. The apostle Peter had warned in his second epistle that evil days were

coming, in which scoffers would walk in their own lusts and ungodly men would turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying our only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. Peter had spoken before of false teachers who bring in damnable heresies, making merchandise of the souls of the saints and deceiving many within the church with their false doctrines. Jude now writes to alert the church to the fact that these deceivers were already working within the church. He finds it needful to write to those who are sanctified by the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ, in order to urge them to contend for the faith entrusted to them. This same admonition comes with equal, if not with greater force today!

As more often in Scripture, Jude speaks of faith in the objective sense, just as Paul speaks of "the faith of the gospel," that is, the faith that is taught in the gospel. This is the truth as it is revealed to us in the Scriptures, as we know it, cherish it, and confess it. In that sense we also speak of the Christian faith that still lives on, in spite of fire, dungeon, and sword. To this truth we vow to be true till death.

This implies for us that the Scriptures are the infallible, inerrant, authoritative Word of God. The Scriptures were "inbreathed" by the Holy Spirit into the hearts and minds of holy writers. These writers did not follow old wives' tales, nor did they present their own theories or ideas, but they were moved, guided by the Spirit of Christ, to write the revelation of the God of our salvation in Jesus Christ as sure promises to His people.

It is our abiding comfort that this is the truth once delivered unto the saints. Jude could speak of that revelation as it came to the early church particularly through the Old Testament Scriptures. Today we have the complete revelation of God in the sixty-six books of the Bible. After the Canon of Scripture was complete there is no further revelation, not by an inner voice, not by speaking in tongues, nor by any other means. Anyone who ventures to add or detract from that full revelation must experience God's anathema (Rev. 22:18, 19). All that is necessary for us to know for our salvation and to live to God's glory is contained in the Bible (Netherlands Confession, article 2).

We share that truth with the church of all ages. Objectively, God tells us of His very Being, His eternal perfections, His own intimate covenant life within the Trinity. He reveals to us the secrets of His heart, His eternal thoughts, plans, and purposes. He unfolds before our eyes the history of His covenant from paradise to Paradise. He bestows on the heirs of salvation His immutable promises, which cannot fail. Subjectively, God works through His Word and by His Spirit in our



hearts, whereby we become new creatures, sons and daughters of the living God, so that by faith we embrace God as our Father, are assured of His promises and experience the wonder of grace that we are heirs of His kingdom, sons in His House, to devote ourselves in love to Him, dwell with Him and adore Him forever!

This faith, as it lives in the hearts of God's saints and is formulated in our Confessions, is passed on from father to son, from generation to generation. In that common faith we experience the oneness of the body of Christ, give testimony of the hope that is within us, pass the sound doctrine of God's Word on to the generations following, and stand ready to defend the truth over against all the onslaughts of the powers of darkness that seek to undermine and destroy it. Doctrine and life go hand in hand. Confession and walk are inseparably one.

Therefore Scripture exhorts us, even encourages us to contend for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints.

The fact is, that this faith is constantly being attacked by all the powers of darkness in this present evil world. The devil still goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Especially because he knows that his time is running out, he is the more determined to devise every devious plot and to resort to any fiendish tactics, often coming as an angel of light, as a preacher of the gospel, in order to undermine the truth and to destroy the church of Jesus Christ. Never before in all of history has he been so bold, so blatant in his attacks. He rallies about his cohorts within and outside of the church to question and deny those doctrines that have always had absolute certainty among us, such as, the infallibility of God's Word, the miracles, the virgin birth, the atoning death of our Savior, His resurrection and the signs of His return. Anyone who defends those doctrines is considered "old school," or branded a "heresy hunter." The antithesis between church and world is wiped out in an attempt to establish a universal kingdom of Christ here on earth, in a world that stands antithetically opposed to God and His Christ.

This is the battle of the ages, in which Satan wars against God and His Christ. As Jude points out, the enemy asserted himself already before the flood, was evident in the sins of Sodom, manifested himself in the enticements of Balaam and the rebellion of Korah. The early church suffered bitter persecution under the Roman emperors. The church of the Reformation experienced untold afflictions at the hands of the Romish Church. That battle which has characterized all of history becomes evident in an increasing measure as the end approaches.

As church of Jesus Christ in this present age we have the unique privilege and calling to defend the truth as God has entrusted it to us, as we love and cherish it in our hearts. To do so we must know and maintain our Confessions, the Three Forms of Unity. We must be able to get excited about the truth as it is part and parcel of our souls. The pulpit and the printed page must never grow weary of sounding the trumpet, arousing the church to battle, and warning her of the foes within and outside the gates. The future of the church and of our sons and daughters depends on our constant watchfulness.

This is as much the calling of the individual believer as of the church in general. Jude speaks of this contending as a hand to hand combat, either on the battle field or as a wrestling match. The enemy lurks all around us, wherever we turn. He walks into our homes through our daily papers and other propaganda. He stands in the corner of our family room waiting for us to invite him in by turning the knob of the TV or radio. He seeks access into our hearts by his whisperings within, for he knows that we are our own worst enemies. He creates a false complacency, so that all the watching virgins begin to doze and fall asleep (Matt. 25:5).

Therefore God spurs us on to contend *earnestly*, with might and main, day and night, as long as we live. No athlete, who is out to win, will waste his body with liquor and drugs or fail to exercise strenuously. No watchman on the walls of Sion may take a nap during the night watches. God preserve you and me from dead orthodoxy, from cold indifference or complacency, lest as churches we become a stagnant pool, or as individuals lose our crown. Let us with renewed determination take up the shield of faith in our left hand, and manipulate with our right hand the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Only in doing that are we a real part of the church militant here on earth. Only in that way can we be assured that we are more than conquerors through our Lord Jesus Christ!

\*This was the great, great grandmother of our present seminarian Barry Gritters, who comes from our Redlands congregation.

*Take time to  
read and study  
The Standard Bearer*



## EDITORIALS

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

# A Word About This Special Issue

As you will soon discover when you page through this issue, it is a special one, devoted this time to the subject of our distinctively Reformed publications. In the main, we aim in this issue to acquaint you, or to acquaint you more thoroughly, first, with the publication of our *Standard Bearer*, and, second, with the publication of our R.F.P.A. books—the two main branches of the work of the R.F.P.A. But when we were planning this issue several months ago, we were mindful of the fact that there are a good many other publications efforts in the circle of our Protestant Reformed Churches. We have in mind particularly the various efforts of the local evangelism committees in many of our churches, committees which in many instances not only distribute appropriate literature but also prepare and publish it. And we decided to ask Prof. Decker to gather material and information in that area and to write about it. He soon discovered that there was an abundance of information—more than enough for one article; and so only the first of his articles on that subject will appear in this issue.

The reason for this special issue is not merely to

inform you as to how our various publications come to see the light of day and reach your hands and are read by your eyes. But it is our hope that a better understanding of these things will enhance your appreciation of these publications, your use of them and your support of them. It is not our intention to brag. But there is a tremendous amount of time and effort expended in order to bring the *Standard Bearer* to your mail-box twenty-one times per year, as well as to make our attractively published books available to you. And most of that time and effort is strictly volunteer and unremunerated. There is also a large amount of money involved in paying for the production of these publications. We feel that a better understanding of what is involved should serve to induce your continued and increased support. And I am not referring merely to financial support; that, too. But I am thinking first of your support of those involved before the throne of grace, and, secondly, of your support by reading and making faithful and avid use of the literature which we make available.

We hope you enjoy this special issue.

## The Reformed Free Publishing Association and the *Standard Bearer*

Do you know that the *Standard Bearer* is older than the Protestant Reformed Churches by a few months?

And do you know that the R.F.P.A. is about a half year older than the *Standard Bearer*?

And do you know that not the *Standard Bearer* was the very first publication of the R.F.P.A., but a Dutch booklet entitled *Langs Zuivere Banen (Along Straight Paths)*?

And do you know that the Reformed Free Publishing Association was begun by a group of just fifteen men from Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo who constituted themselves a Publishing Committee,

collected \$425.00 at their first meeting, and decided to underwrite the publishing of the booklet mentioned above?

Such was the beginning of the Reformed Free Publishing Association and of our *Standard Bearer*.

It was the time of the common grace controversy in the Christian Reformed Church. The columns of *De Wachter* and *The Banner* had been closed to the Revs. H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema, so that they could not defend their views and reply to those who promoted the common grace theory among the churches. Mind you, this was months before the Synod of 1924 and still more months before the



ousting of Danhof and Hoeksema and of the Rev. George M. Ophoff, who, before the end of the year, had cast his lot with the opponents of the common grace theory. And in the Foreword of the booklet mentioned above, the officers of the newly formed R.F.P.A. explain that they organized this new organization to offer the two ministers, Danhof and Hoeksema, "support in their battle for the truth with every honorable means."

At the same time they announced that the first brochure would soon be followed by a second, because they wanted "to enlighten and inform as fully as possible all who love the truth, love purity of doctrine, and seek the good of the church, concerning the weighty doctrinal points at issue among us."

In that same foreword they announced their intention to publish in the near future a monthly magazine. This would be "a periodical which would in a simple and understandable manner instruct and assist all those interested in the development of the truths of Holy Scripture according to firm, genuinely Reformed lines, without desire for all kinds of erring sidetracks."

And so it came to pass that in October of 1924 the *Standard Bearer* was born. First it appeared once per month, but soon it became a semi-monthly magazine. In those early years, the language was mostly Dutch. The twenty-four—and for a while, thirty-two—pages were filled by just a few men, whose numbers were reduced even further when the Danhofs defected from our movement. But it was that *Standard Bearer* especially which played a large part in the origin of our Protestant Reformed Churches. First of all, the *Standard Bearer* was to no little degree the "straw that broke the camel's back" as far as the deposition of Danhof, Hoeksema, Ophoff, and their consistories was concerned. When it became plain that these men would not be silenced with respect to the Three Points of Common Grace, but would even publish their convictions abroad, the determination to oust them became final. And, secondly, the *Standard Bearer* lifted up the standard of the truth throughout the denomination, with the result that many in other places were attracted to the truth of sovereign, particular grace and joined hearts and hand with those who soon were to become the Protestant Reformed Churches.

From the outset the *Standard Bearer* was faithful to the purpose which the Publishing Committee announced and which I quoted above. To be sure, especially in those early years there was a large amount of attention paid to the common grace controversy; and there was a large part of the magazine devoted to polemics. That was in the nature of the

case. Common grace and the Three Points was the issue of the hour. It was *the* subject of discussion, not only among the clergy, but among the membership at large. This was the issue which went to the very survival of the purely Reformed faith and a sound world-and-life view. And it was on this matter that instruction and explanation were sorely needed at that time. It was small wonder, therefore, that the *Standard Bearer* was controversial. (Cf. also what Prof. Hanko writes in this issue on the subject of "The *Standard Bearer* and Polemics.") But it is striking, nevertheless, that in those early volumes of our magazine our first leaders were broad in a healthy sense. They certainly saw that the church could not be fed and instructed on mere negatives. They discerned that there was a great need for positive development of the truths of sovereign grace and God's eternal covenant of grace, that there was need for positive development of the truths of our confessions, for positive and sound instruction in Scripture, and for correct perspectives as to our Reformed world-and-life view. And so you will discover a wealth of instruction in that positive sense already in the early volumes of our magazine. Besides, from the outset the *Standard Bearer* interested itself in the Reformed scene the world over. Its outlook was never narrowly parochial, limited to the Christian Reformed and Protestant Reformed scene. American Presbyterianism, the English scene, ecclesiastical affairs in the Netherlands—all these received attention in our magazine.

Of course, there were changes. English gradually became the prevailing language and finally the only language. More writers joined the staff. Later still, our magazine began to become departmentalized, as it is today. And, as you know, in the 1960s our original editors died and had to be replaced.

But over the years the purpose and the character of our magazine, thanks be to God, have remained the same. Basically, that purpose as stated by the publishing committee in 1924: "a periodical which would in a simple and understandable manner instruct and assist all those interested in the development of the truths of Holy Scripture according to firm, genuinely Reformed lines, without desire for all kinds of erring sidetracks." True to that purpose, we of the Staff seek to inform, to instruct and guide, to warn and to call to reformation.

The *Standard Bearer*, however, is also unique in its structure and organization. Permit me to mention a few items.

First in importance is the fact that it is published by the Reformed FREE Publishing Association. People have often asked me about the meaning of that "Free." Historically, it refers to the fact that our magazine is completely free from any ecclesi-



astical control. I know, frequently the *Standard Bearer* is referred to as the Protestant Reformed paper, and even as the magazine of the Protestant Reformed Churches. This is understandable, in the light of the fact that it has always been closely associated with our Protestant Reformed cause; and it will be, too, as long as both the *Standard Bearer* and the Protestant Reformed Churches remain devoted to the Reformed faith. Nevertheless, legally and formally the *Standard Bearer* is not the paper of the Protestant Reformed Churches. No Protestant Reformed consistory, classis, synod, or synodical board or committee has any say-so over the *Standard Bearer*. A church paper must serve an ecclesiastical structure, and it must bow to the demands of the church which owns and operates it. That was what led to the stifling of discussion and the attempted muzzling of Hoeksema and Danhof in 1924. The *Standard Bearer*, however, bows to no church authority.

Still more. The *Standard Bearer* is unique, too, in that it is completely free from any domination by its supporting organization, the Reformed Free Publishing Association, or its Board. True, we could not publish without the R.F.P.A.: and if they decided not to publish the *Standard Bearer*, that would be the end of it. But as far as actual operations are concerned, the Staff and the Board operate in complete independence. The Staff controls and decides upon the contents of the *Standard Bearer* and is responsible to take care that there is a magazine to publish. The Board controls and decides

upon everything connected with publication and distribution and is responsible to see that the magazine gets published.

Still more. Every department editor is *free*. Once per year the Staff meets, makes its decisions concerning the contents, and appoints staff members. But from that point on, each department editor is free to write for his department. That means, of course, too, that each editor is also *responsible* individually for what he writes. If, for example, he writes heresy, he himself must answer for that heresy, not the editor-in-chief or the staff as a whole.

Finally, let me also point out that the *Standard Bearer* is free in another sense, though that has nothing to do with the name R.F.P.A. I refer to the fact that the *Standard Bearer* is published strictly through volunteer labor. The hours and hours of labor by the Staff are free. And let me assure you that hundreds and thousands of hours have been devoted by many of our men over the years to insure that your magazine reaches you twenty-one times per year. Do you know—to speak of quantity alone—that it requires between 50 and 60 pages of typewritten copy for every issue? And there have been hundreds of hours of volunteer labor by Board members, by my editorial assistant, Mr. D. Doezeema, and by our faithful Business Manager, Mr. Henry Vander Wal.

A question: do you value and faithfully read our *Standard Bearer*?

## From Your Business Manager

Mr. Henry Vander Wal

There is absolutely no doubt about the fact that the Editorial Staff of the *Standard Bearer* is the primary and most important department in the preparing of each issue of our publication. However, without the assistance and cooperation of the Board of the R.F.P.A., the proofreader, the printer, and other business men, the presentation of our paper would be impossible. Also, filling a small role in distributing each issue, is your Business Manager. His duties include the mailing of each issue, the mailing of renewal notices each month, and collecting the mail from P.O. Box 6064, Grand Rapids, MI 49506. They also include collecting the mail of the Publications Committee at P.O. Box 2006, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, and shipping and delivering of books to various addresses.

The following statistics concern the mailing of our *Standard Bearer*. These figures have been

compiled while mailing the October 15, 1981 issue:

*Domestic Mailing:*

To Western Michigan: 785 copies

To the remainder of Michigan and other states: 761 copies

*Foreign Mailing:* 165 copies

Canada: 40 (20 copies to Edmonton via 1st class mail), New Zealand: 30 (via air mail), Australia: 35 (13 via air mail), Singapore: 10 (1 via air mail), United Kingdom: 19, Jamaica: 7, South Africa: 5, India: 1, South America: 1, Netherlands: 8

Cost of Mailing 1711 copies:

Western Michigan: \$14.92

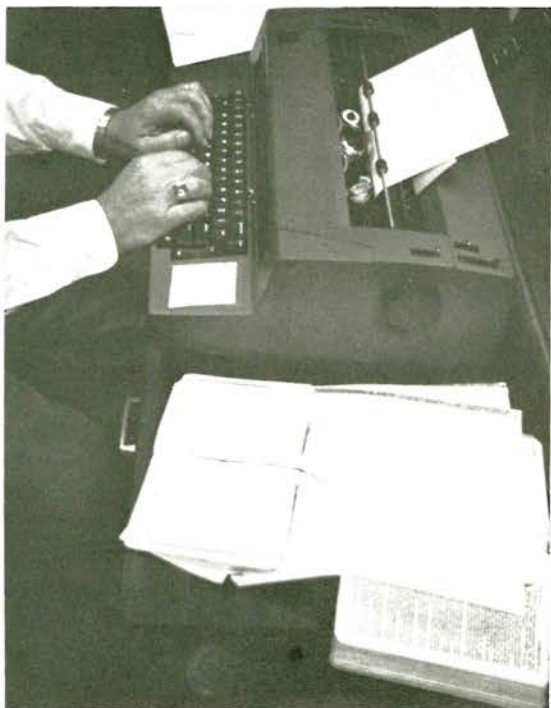
Other domestic mailings: \$27.40

Foreign mailings: \$58.57

Total mailing costs for one issue: \$100.89

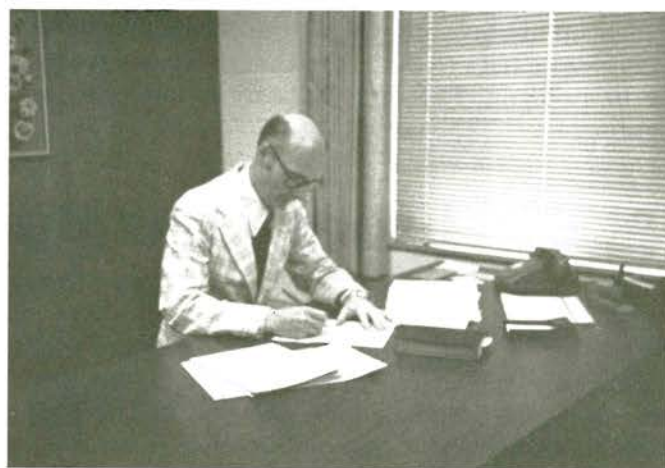


## The Making of the *Standard Bearer*



**Writing**

As the copy comes in, it is forwarded to the editor's assistant, Mr. Don Doezema. His job is, first of all, to correct and edit all the copy; so he reads each *Standard Bearer* before anyone else does. Then, a day or two before sending it to the printer, he must plan each issue, prepare copy for the cover, and make decisions in case of surplus copy, or put in an emergency call to the editor in case of a shortage of copy. On the second and the sixteenth of each month he delivers the copy for the coming issue to our typesetting service.



**Editing**



**Typesetting**

The purpose of this account is to tell you, in words and pictures, how your magazine reaches you twenty-one times per year.

First of all, each year, usually during June, when many of us are together at Synod, the Staff holds its annual meeting. At that meeting all staff members are up for re-election or replacement. At that meeting, too, plans are made for the new volume-year, which, as you know, begins on October 1. If there are to be new departments, if old departments are to be eliminated, who is to write for which department, who will be asked as guest writers—all these matters are decided upon at that meeting. After that your Editor-in-Chief must draw up a master schedule for the entire volume-year, and must inform each department editor of his assignments and of the dates on which they are due to be published. This takes place during the summer months. The rule is that every department editor must have his material in the Editor's mail-box one month in advance of publication. This is to allow time for proof-reading and editing of articles as well as for the actual publishing process.

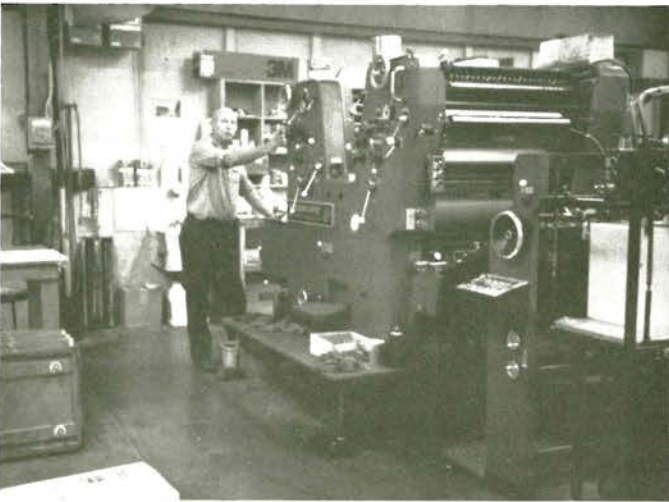
And, so long before each *Standard Bearer* goes to press, there are department editors and guest writers slaving over their books and typewriters, striving to get their copy to the Editor by the deadline.

Our typesetting service, at this time Commercial Printing Co., is responsible for four steps in the production of the *Standard Bearer*. No. 1 is typesetting. The second step is proof-reading and correcting. The third step is preparing the paste-up of all the pages of the *Standard Bearer*. And the fourth step is photography: plates must be prepared for the offset printing process.



**Paste-up****Plate-making**

From Commercial Printing Co. the *Standard Bearer* goes to Wobbema Printing Co., on the far southeast side of Grand Rapids. There the actual printing of the *Standard Bearer* is done on large, high-speed offset presses. From the press our magazine goes to the folding, stapling, and trimming machine.

**Printing****Mailing**

Finally the *Standard Bearer* is ready. Henry Vander Wal's phone rings, and he goes to Wobbema Printing to take care of the huge task of mailing. A filing cabinet with all the addressograph plates is in an upstairs room at Wobbema's. Every copy is addressed. All the copies are separately grouped and packaged according to zip codes, copies for overseas are prepared and placed in envelopes, and off to the main Post Office in downtown Grand Rapids they go. Another issue is in the mail and will soon (?) reach readers all over the world.





# The *Standard Bearer* and Polemics

Prof. H. Hanko

The *Standard Bearer* is in its 57th year of publication. This is a span of time greater than that of most religious publications. For this we have to be thankful to God Who has preserved our "Paper" through all these years.

Characteristic of the *Standard Bearer* throughout all these years is its "polemical" writings. The *Standard Bearer* has engaged in more controversies over the years than I would care to count. It has attacked anti-Scriptural views which appeared in this country and abroad. It has exposed heresy in other denominations and in our own. It has set forth the truth of Scripture over against false doctrine whenever that false doctrine appeared.

This is not to say that the *Standard Bearer* has been exclusively polemical. Countless pages of the volumes which stand on my shelf have been devoted to a positive development of the faith; innumerable articles were written to guide the people of God in their calling in the world; times without number the *Standard Bearer* has commented upon current events in the history of the nations. Think of all the writing in these volumes concerning Christian education. Call to mind the fact that all of *Triple Knowledge* and *Behold, He Cometh* first appeared in the *Standard Bearer*.

Yet without any doubt the *Standard Bearer* is polemical.

This was the original intent of the *Standard Bearer*, in fact.

In an editorial which appeared in the very first number in which Rev. Henry Danhof explained the reason for the publication of this new periodical, we find these words:

The members (of the R.F.P.A.) feel that there must be a striving for the cause of the Lord not only against the enemies who stand outside their own church fellowship, but, under the present circumstances, no less against the enemy within the gates. Therefore, they want men to raise the "standard" and instruct and lead the people of God in the strife which is inevitable and which must be fought. A need is felt for leadership in ecclesiastical questions, points of doctrine, prevalent speculations, and the practical application in life of the principles out of which people live. And although they do not plan to limit themselves in this struggle to the publication of this periodical, neverthe-

less they want "The Standard Bearer" to lead the way in this difficult strife.

These words were written in the heat of the "common grace" controversy, indeed, before the Protestant Reformed Churches came into existence.

The controversy over common grace arose in the Christian Reformed Church in connection with the "Jansen Controversy." Dr. Jansen, professor of Old Testament in Calvin Theological Seminary, had introduced into his teaching certain higher critical views of Scripture. For this he was condemned by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. Because Dr. Jansen had appealed to the idea of common grace in support of his position, that idea became a center of debate, discussion, and controversy.

From the early minutes of the R.F.P.A. we learn that Revs. Hoeksema and Danhof were co-editors with several other ministers of a paper called, *The Witness*. Revs. Hoeksema and Danhof wanted to write in this paper on the issues of common grace to show how the views, then being widely taught in the church, were contrary to the teaching of Scripture. The editorial staff of *The Witness* could not agree on editorial policy in this matter. Further, *The Banner* and *De Wachter* would not open their pages to the writings of Revs. Hoeksema and Danhof. The result was a new publication, *The Standard Bearer*.

And so the paper was born out of the need for polemics. It is not surprising that this has continued to characterize the paper until the present.

Strange to say, there is some difference of opinion about whether the *Standard Bearer* should be doing this. There are those who think it should not. That such objections arise outside of our Churches is not surprising. We live in an age when "tolerance" is the watchword. Denominations are increasingly "broad-minded" enough to include within their fellowship almost any deviation of thought and doctrine. Tolerance of every conceivable religious viewpoint is all but made a mark of true Christian love. A polemical magazine strikes a discordant note, is an anomaly among current publications. It bucks the tide, does things which are no longer polite and acceptable in contemporary ecclesiastical circles. It is a freak which attracts curious people, but which finally becomes the object of scorn and ridicule.

Sometimes objections against a polemical maga-



zine arise within our own Churches. This is strange. It ought not to be so. It arises out of a misconception of the purpose of the *Standard Bearer*; or, worse, a misunderstanding of the calling of God to us to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

It might be well, briefly, to explain once again why polemics is necessary. We must understand these things.

There are *Scriptural* reasons why polemics is necessary. Polemics is implied in the text of Jude which I quoted above. If one is to "contend" for the faith, one must fight for the faith. But if the defense of the faith involves a fight, there has to be an enemy. The enemy is false doctrine. False doctrine must be exposed, must be shown to be wrong, must be condemned. This is part of contending for the faith.

Scripture reminds all officebearers that this is their calling. Ezekiel (33:1-7) describes officebearers in terms of watchmen on a city wall. They are posted there to watch for the enemy and to warn the people of God down below of the coming of the enemy. If they do not do this faithfully, the blood of the people will be required by God at the watchmen's hands. They must do this even when the people shout from down below: "Please don't disturb our sleep by blowing all the time on your trumpets."

Jesus also did this when He ruthlessly exposed the false teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees. We must do no less.

The apostles repeatedly did this in their writings which are all incorporated in the Scriptures. Their writings are our example.

This is also part of the *antithetical* life of the Christian. God always calls His people to live antithetically in the world. That means that the calling of God's people always has a "No" and a "Yes." God's people must say "No" to sin and must say "Yes" to righteousness. They must turn away from the devil and turn towards God. They must, in disgust and horror, turn their backs upon all that is contrary to God's will and, with love and adoration, turn their faces towards Christ and His Word. It is impossible to say, "Yes" without first saying "No."

This is also true of doctrine. To speak the truth requires that the Christian denounce the lie. To defend the truth involves shooting at the lie. To contend for the faith implies destroying the lie. It can be no different. One will not say "Yes" to the truth without first saying "No" to the lie.

There are also *confessional* reasons for polemics.

Our confessions are, themselves, polemical treatises. Think of how the Canons have a negative

part to each chapter. Think of how the Belgic Confession warns against the heresies of the Anabaptists. Even our sweet Heidelberg Catechism calls the popish mass, "an accursed idolatry."

Our Church Order and Formula of Subscription require of all officebearers that they engage in polemics: "To ward off false doctrines and errors that multiply exceedingly through heretical writings, the ministers and elders shall use the means of teaching, of refutation, or warning, and of admonition..." (Art. 55). "We declare, moreover, that we not only reject all errors that militate against this doctrine..., but that we are disposed to refute and contradict these, and to exert ourselves in keeping the Church free from such errors" (Formula of Subscription).

There are also *spiritual* reasons why polemics is necessary.

False doctrine is not just a matter of intellectual error. It is not like the error  $2 \times 2 = 5$ . If you make an error like that, you might get a "B" in your math assignment instead of an "A." And, if you really do not know any better you might be cheated in the grocery store. But that is about the worst that can happen. False doctrine is a corruption of the truth concerning God. It is a violation of His holiness. It is a slap in His face. It is mud thrown at Him Who makes the heavens His throne and the earth His footstool.

The child of God cannot tolerate that. Love impels him to come fiercely to the defense of God's honor. More than his defense of the good name of his wife whom he loves and whose name is being slandered by lecherous enemies, does he rush to the defense of the Name of His God Whose truth is so carelessly bantered.

This is his salvation, for the Name of his God is a high tower, a refuge, a defense. To stand idly by while that Name is denied is to deny his own salvation.

What is true of the individual Christian is true of the Church as a whole. Faithfulness in this present world requires polemics. If the *Standard Bearer* is to be faithful, the *Standard Bearer* must be polemical.

This does not mean that the *Standard Bearer* must be exclusively polemical. It has not been in the past; it is not now. It must never be that. It must defend the faith. It must also develop it.

The *Standard Bearer* must not always be hanging out the dirty wash of the neighbors if there is evil within our own Churches. We must defend the truth within and without. Both are dangers, the former even more than the latter. This is not an invitation to "heresy-hunters" to poke in every corner of the denomination hoping to uncover some slightly



off-color remark. But Paul warned the Ephesian elders of grievous wolves which would enter the sheepfold. They still do that today.

The *Standard Bearer* must not attack persons. It must attack false doctrines. Our battle is not with individual men or their persons; our battle is on behalf of the truth of God and against every lie.

The *Standard Bearer* must be ready always to give an answer to those who ask a reason for our hope. This is true polemics and apologetics. But Peter reminds us to do this "with meekness and with fear." Meekness and fear do not mean hesitancy, shamefacedness, compromise, wishy-washy thinking and writing, and sentimental slop. Meekness and fear

do not mean, either, anger, bitterness, sarcasm, "low blows," and innuendo. Meekness and fear mean that we wage our polemics in the consciousness that it is God's grace and mercy which continually preserves us in His truth. Every part of us pulls mightily in the direction of error. God's grace is a leash to hold us back.

The *Standard Bearer* has not always done this. These are sins which we confess to God at the foot of the cross. Weakness is with us and against it we must be on our guard.

But the *Standard Bearer* must continue to contend for the faith. If God is gracious to us, it will continue to do this.

## The R.F.P.A. Publications Committee and Its Work

The permanent Committee for the Publication of Protestant Reformed Literature (P.C.P.P.R.L.) is the official name of that branch of the R.F.P.A. responsible for publishing our books. Our first book was copyrighted in 1966. By the end of 1981 we will have an even two dozen books listed in our catalogue.

How did all this have its beginning?

How does this organization operate?

The beginning, like the beginning of the R.F.P.A. itself, was very small. A group of brethren from our Grand Rapids churches, at first without any organization, began to discuss and to work toward the publication of the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema's *Reformed Dogmatics*. Originally, they had no intention of becoming involved in the publishing business. Their aim was to get one of the local publishing firms to undertake the publishing of *Reformed Dogmatics*. They soon discovered, however, that no one was willing to publish this book; presumably the reason was that there was an insufficient market for such a book, and that therefore publication would be unprofitable.

The group of men was not discouraged by this, however. Their reaction was, "If no one else will publish the *Dogmatics*, let's do it ourselves!" No money, no organization, no encouragement from experienced publishers, no assurance that the book would have a market! But they went ahead!

It so happened that *Reformed Dogmatics* was

from a business point of view one of the least likely books with which they could have begun. It was a large book. Because of the foreign languages, especially the Greek and Hebrew, it would be expensive to print. And because of its contents, it would necessarily have a limited market. But a beginning was made. Some funds were collected and pledged—enough to begin the work. A committee was appointed to inquire as to how to proceed. And the project was under way. At that point it became evident that we had to have some kind of permanent organization: after all, the book had to have a publisher and a distributor. However, rather than multiply organizations, this group decided to follow the course of becoming the book publishing branch of the R.F.P.A. And with the approval of that organization, they became such a branch of the R.F.P.A. That explains the fact that all our books are copyrighted by the Reformed Free Publishing Association, a non-profit corporation. It also explains our name as a "Publications Committee."

At this point I would like to emphasize, however, that we are not a "committee" in the ordinary sense of being *appointed* by the R.F.P.A. I think there is probably some misunderstanding on this score in the popular mind when they see bulletin announcements about a meeting of the Publications Committee. It should be clearly understood that this is not an appointed committee, but an organization which is open to membership by our people and which would welcome members who are willing to put



their shoulder to the wheel and help along with this important work. Sometimes our meetings are so small that we almost begin to fear that our organization is dying. We need as much help as we can get. So when you see a meeting announced in your church bulletin, come and join us!

But let me return to my story.

In our early years all our work was volunteer-labor. None of us knew anything about the technical aspects of publishing, however; and so we were fortunate to obtain the services of Mr. Robert Kregel of Kregel Publications, who advised us and who handled for us the entire process of publishing. Since that time there have been some changes, however. Kregel Publications still handles the marketing of our books to the general public, but we have our own Managing Editor—at present, Mrs. Eunice Kuiper—whose duties are to take care of the entire publishing process, from the time we receive an author's manuscript to the time when our finished books are finally delivered to our rented storage facility.

Permit me to mention a few more interesting and pertinent facts about this work.

First of all, we are a non-profit organization. This means that all the proceeds from sale of our books are plowed right back into the publishing work. If we are to publish new books, this can only be done with the funds which we receive from the sale of our already published books. At times this has slowed our publishing efforts considerably. There have been times when we were ready to publish books, but we had to wait because funds were not available. In fact, right now we have projects which could proceed more rapidly if only we had more money. It should be kept in mind that the costs of publishing just one new book may run from a few thousand dollars all the way up to thirteen or fourteen thousand. We have one project at present—a children's Bible story book—which is going to cost even more than that.

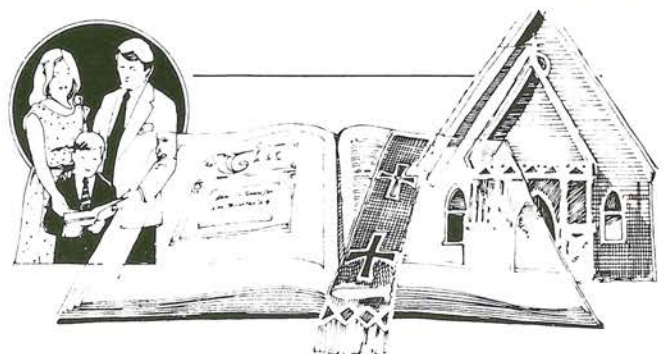
This brings me, secondly, to another pertinent fact. If our own people would purchase and read

our books on a much larger scale, the work of our Publications Committee would be made much easier financially. This is one of the reasons why we have been trying to promote the R.F.P.A. Book Club. If the Book Club membership would increase to about one thousand members, the costs of publishing a book would be just about guaranteed in advance, and the work of publishing could proceed at a much faster pace. At present our Book Club, however, has a membership of less than 400. This is disappointing to us, and also reason for concern, because it is an indication that many of our own people are not buying and are not reading R.F.P.A. books. How about you?

In the third place, neither the Publications Committee nor the *Standard Bearer* have any facilities of their own. The Publications Committee rents storage facilities, and the *Standard Bearer* has storage space at First Church. We also have no office facilities. We operate out of a post office box and a basement office in the home of our Business Manager, Mr. Henry Vander Wal, who, by the way, is Business Manager for both the *Standard Bearer* and the Publications Committee. Some day some of these arrangements will probably have to be changed, due to the fact that especially the work of the Publications Committee has expanded beyond anyone's expectations. But at present we operate, you will see, with the lowest possible overhead costs.

Finally, I would like to stress the fact that the Lord our God has greatly prospered our work. When we began in the mid-1960s, we often wondered whether our very first publication would ever see the light of day. We have been privileged not only to publish many books in less than twenty years, but we have also seen these books go to many, many readers, all over the world. And this means that the truths that are dear to our hearts, the truths of the Reformed faith, have through this means of the printed page been spread abroad throughout the world and to the instruction and edification of many souls. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable grace!

*Know the standard  
and follow it.  
The Standard Bearer*





## The Making of a Book (In Pictures)



**Editing**

Once a manuscript is ready and the Publications Committee has decided to print it, it goes to the Managing Editor. She is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the entire publishing process. First of all, the manuscript is edited and corrected by her, bids on typesetting and printing are obtained, and the production process begins.



**Typesetting**



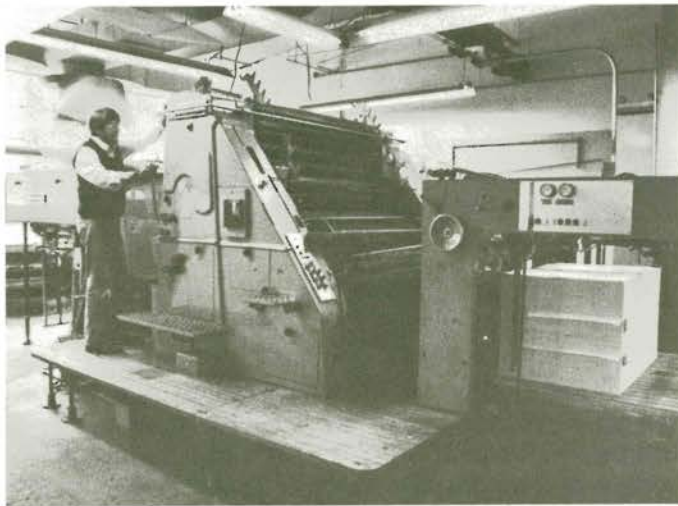
**Artwork**

The next step is typesetting. Recently almost all of our books have been typeset by Mrs. Judi Doezeema, who does this work on a part-time basis in addition to her teaching.

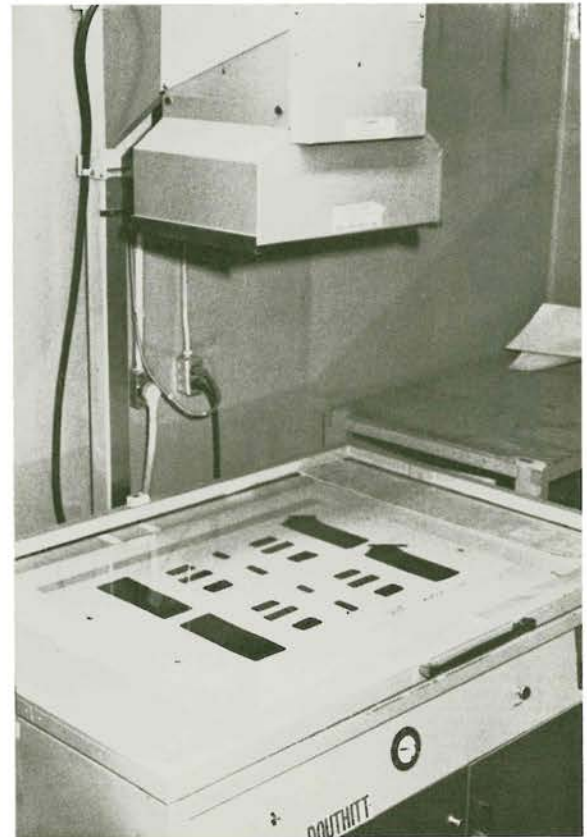
While this is going on, the wheels are set in motion to prepare the cover (if the book is a paperback) or the dust-jacket (if the book is hard cover). Mr. Jeff Steenholdt, a commercial artist and member of our Kalamazoo Prot. Ref. Church, has done all of the artwork for the last few years. We think he does excellent work in preparing attractive and artistic covers and dust-jackets. By the way, he is also hard at work on the art-work for our projected Bible story book.



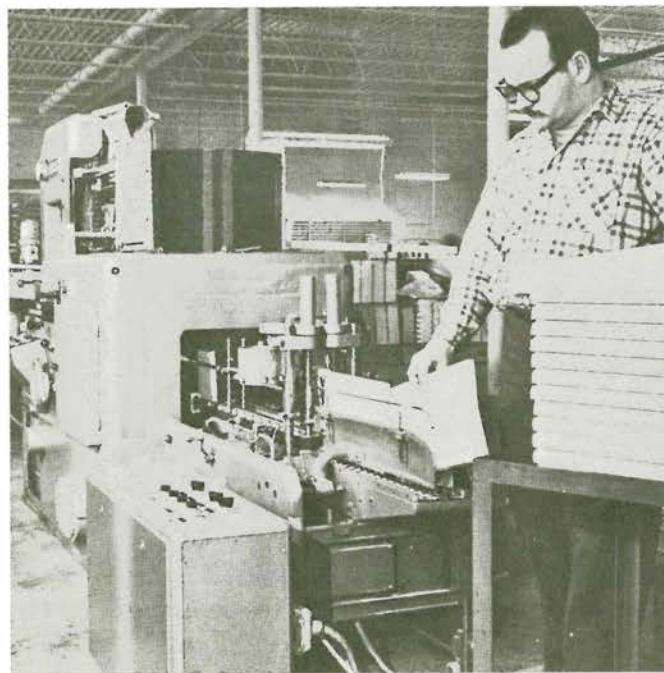
Once our typesetter has prepared the page-proofs, the Managing Editor and her assistant do a thorough job of proof-reading—striving to eliminate all typographical errors. Then the work goes back to the typesetter for final corrections. At last the "camera-ready" pages are finished. These are then shipped to one of the large lithography firms in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Here the camera work is done, plates are prepared, and the actual printing is done. Usually two or three thousand copies are printed.



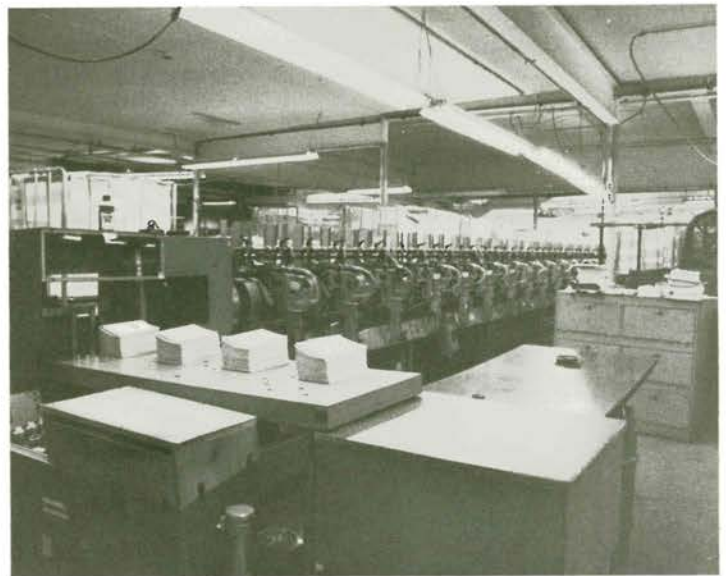
**Printing**



**Plate-making**



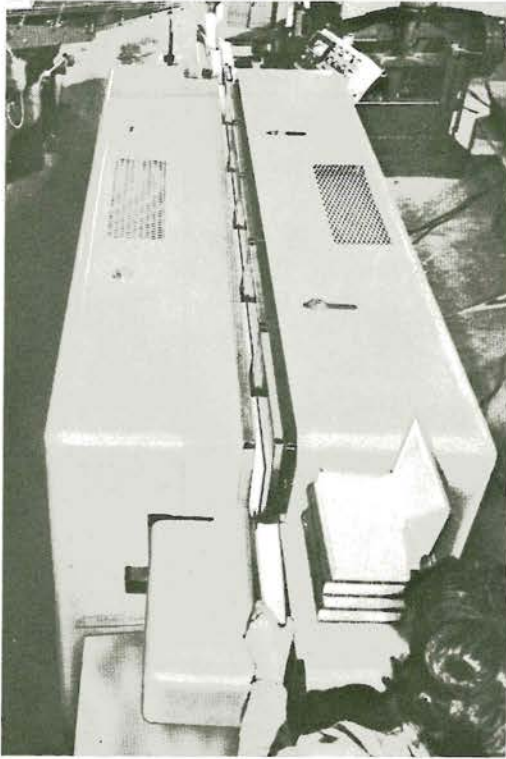
**Gluing**



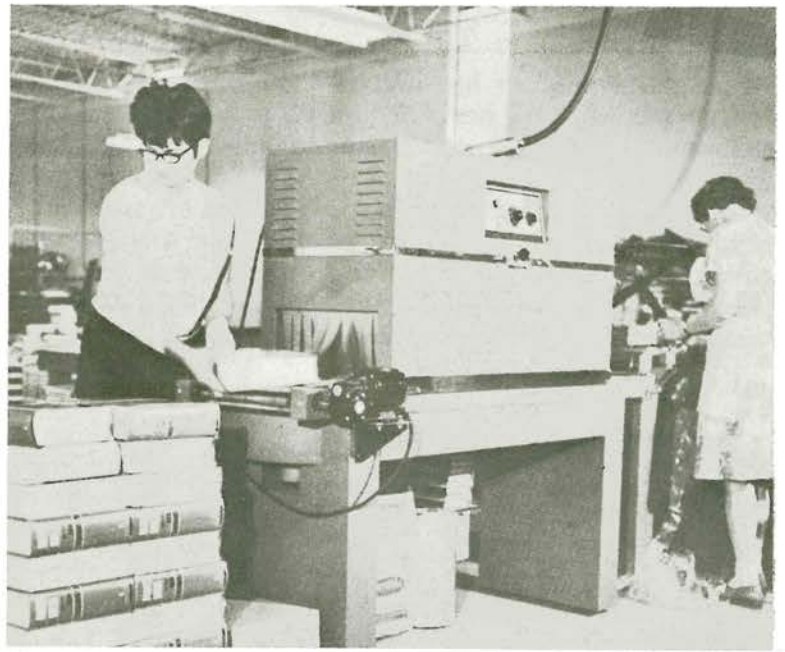
**Collating**

If the book is a paperback, the entire process is finished in Ann Arbor; and the books are shipped to our rented warehouse facility. If the book is cloth-bound, the printed folios are shipped to John H. Dekker & Sons Bindery. There the binding takes place, dust-covers (printed locally in Grand Rapids) are added, the books are shrink-wrapped for protection against dirt and moisture, and then shipped to our warehouse.



**Setting**

From that point on, the work belongs to Mr. Henry Vander Wal, who operates out of a basement office in his own home. He is responsible for

**Shrink-wrap**

supplying books to our wholesaler distributor, Kregel Publications, as well as for mailing (and billing) books to R.F.P.A. Book Club members, to others of our *Standard Bearer* readers who order them, and to various overseas book dealers.

**Storage****Henry Vander Wal at work in his office.**



# The Making of a Book

*Eunice Kuiper, Managing Editor*

"A motion is made, supported, and carried to authorize the editor to proceed with the publishing of...." So each new R.F.P.A. book has its beginning at a meeting of the Publications Committee. As soon as I receive the typewritten manuscript, I set to work. Every afternoon when my two young children nap, I collect the manuscript, dictionary, manual of style, Bible, and red ink pen, and settle down to proofread. An editor must read with an eye for many details. All punctuation and grammar must be correct. As a guide I follow *A Manual of Style*, published by the University of Chicago. This book also shows the proofreader's symbols for making corrections, proper form for footnotes and bibliographies, proper format for front pages, and just about anything else one needs to know about publishing a book. My dictionary is consulted when I doubt spellings and word divisions. I doublecheck Bible passages that are quoted for accuracy, especially as to punctuation. I check, too, for typographical errors. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of proofreading a manuscript is watching for consistency. An author or typist may begin, for example, by spelling *marvellous* with two *l*'s. Several chapters later I find *marvelous*. Both are acceptable spellings. The same is true of punctuation, capitalization, and footnote form. While watching for these mechanical details, I also must read for sense. A "not" inadvertently omitted could make a heretic of the most Reformed theologian! Finally, I must correct technical details—margins and spacing have to be even; and long, quoted passages must be indented and reduced. When I finish, I check with the author if I have any questions about clarity or if I make major changes in wording.

Next I consult with the typesetter, Mrs. Judi Doezema, who does most of our typesetting. We decide on page size, the kinds and sizes of types, how much space to leave for margins and between lines, and format for each chapter. While she is typesetting, I take care of correspondence. I must fill out and mail a form for the Library of Congress Catalog Card Number, which appears on the copyright page. I send off requests for prices on printing the book. And I ask our artist, Jeff Steenholdt from our Kalamazoo congregation, to begin the artwork for the cover.

Soon chapters start trickling back from the typesetter. Again I proofread, this time especially for typographical mistakes. And since this is the final, photo-ready copy, I check for letters that are mis-

formed, for lines of type that are slanted or uneven, and for margins that are not straight. If the author wants a textual index, I make it now. I write each reference and page number on an index card. Then I sort the stack into the various books of the Bible and order them by chapter and verse. When I finish proofreading, this copy goes to a second proofreader, usually Jeanette Clason from Kalamazoo. Then back it goes to the typesetter for corrections.

Meantime, I tie up many loose ends. I have been assembling the material for the front pages. The large type for the titles, the ISBN and catalog card numbers for the copyright page, a preface and dedication from the author, and the table of contents are all sent along to the typesetter. When she finishes, I check the corrections once more for mistakes.

By this time Jeff has sent a rough draft of the artwork for my inspection. It passes with flying colors, and I mail it back with the printed material that appears on the back cover or dustjacket. The Publications Committee meets again to decide whether the book will be hardcover or paperback, how many copies to print, and what price to charge. In accordance with their decisions I mail the typeset manuscript and the artwork to the printer. We use two printers in Ann Arbor, Michigan, who cater to customers with jobs of our size—Malloy Lithographing and Cushing-Malloy Lithographers. The pictures of the printing process in the following article were taken at Cushing-Malloy.

The printing process involves making negatives from our photo-ready copy, printing the specified amount of copies (sixteen pages on a sheet), cutting and folding these sheets into sections or folios, and gathering and stitching the folios. For paperback books they also bind, pack, and ship the books. For hardcover books they pack the folios and send them to Dekker and Sons Bookbinders in Grand Rapids. Dekkers binds the books with the cloth I select, stamps the title on, puts on the dustjackets (which I get printed locally and deliver to Dekkers), and shrinkwraps each volume with a plastic wrapper. From there the books are stored in a rented self-storage warehouse.

But I'm not finished yet. Review copies and author's copies must be distributed. Library of Congress gets a copy also. Two copies and a completed form go to the Copyright Office. A file must be



made for all the data which has accumulated. Pictures must be taken for the catalog.

Am I finished? The telephone rings, and Mr. VanderWal tells me we need more catalogs. As long as they need to be reprinted anyway, I include new and upcoming publications. This involves several trips to Wobbema Printers to check layout. Mr. VanderWal adds that we are running low on some of our books. As soon as the committee gives its okay, I'll have to set the wheels in motion to get those reprinted.

Finished now? No, the phone rings once more. My father informs me that Mrs. Meyer has several chapters typed on the next manuscript. I can pick them up any time.

The work has its frustrations—delays, lost artwork for reprints, running out to pick up copy, to mail packages, or to pick up dustjackets when I'd rather stay home. (My boys never seem to mind; they've made friends at each stop.) However, the rewards far outbalance the complaints. I enjoy the challenge of the job and the interest outside of homemaking it provides without taking me away from my children. But far more rewarding is the opportunity I have to read, not once but two or three times, the writings of our Protestant Reformed theologians. Never can I say, when the patter of little feet signals the end of an afternoon's proofreading session, that I did not grow in the grace and knowledge of my Lord and Savior.

## Our Publications and Missions

*Pastor Ron Van Overloop*

(I want to acknowledge and express public appreciation to Mr. Thomas Miersma for his thoughts and expertise on this subject. Tom, who is a senior in our seminary, has worked for Baker Book House and is currently serving on the Permanent Committee for the Publication of Protestant Reformed Literature.)

It is good that we set the proper perspective for such an article.

It is the Almighty and Holy God Who maintains and defends the truth. He gave the truth to His people in the Scriptures ("Thy Word is truth" John 17:17) and in Jesus Christ ("I am ... the truth" John 14:6). It is God Who defends and preserves the truth in all of its purity from the beginning to the end of time. And it is our Lord Jesus Christ Who, as the King and Head of His Church, gathers, defends, and preserves unto Himself a Church.

Therefore, we must not think that our efforts, programs, committees, funds, and literature accomplish this work. The work is the Lord's. He only can and will gather His Church and maintain His truth.

But God is pleased to use instruments. The Church is set up by God to maintain and defend the Truth (I Timothy 3:15). Also He has given to the Church officebearers in order to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, with a view to the edifying of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12). And God has commanded each of His children to know the truth and to give witness to that truth. We are

called to be busy in this work, expending the very best of our efforts and using all the means available to us. One of these means is the printed page. In this article we have been asked to consider the relationship which exists between missions and the publications of our churches and of the R.F.P.A. To help us we will also consider what the function is of printed material on the mission field.

\* \* \* \* \*

What is the function and purpose of literature in mission work?

In general, the purpose is either to introduce the reader to the knowledge of the truth of God's Word or to encourage and assist in a growth and development of the knowledge of that truth. Besides this, our literature specifically serves the purpose of making contact with the reader and introduces him to our churches. This introduction and contact we desire because, with the bestowal of the truth, God gives the awesome responsibility of dispensing and upholding it.

In the first place, pamphlets and books serve as a means of making an initial contact. God opens the door for us to speak to someone of the truth when He puts them in our pathway. As an initial contact the opportunities to speak of spiritual things are limited, and so a piece of literature serves well. The person may not be looking for anything in particular, but here is an opportunity for contact on a spiritual level. Our concern at this point of the relation-



ship is to get to know that person, to develop an interest in their spiritual well-being, and to develop in them an interest for the truth. We desire to lead this one to a fuller knowledge of the truth, as God has given that to us. In this initial contact we want to stimulate their interest in the truth and hopefully and prayerfully to develop the contact into an opportunity to meet again and to speak about things more fully and in depth. The purpose of a tract, pamphlet, or book is to extend the contact so the person goes home with something which will draw his attention to the truth and to the Scriptures, first of all, but secondly which will also draw his attention to us. Literature which deals with current issues or with matters which are always relevant (e.g., the home and family) is suitable for this.

Secondly, the function of literature is to instruct more fully on a specific aspect of the truth. Having a relationship established with someone on a spiritual level, you want to lead him to develop in a particular area of his knowledge of the truth. You have talked with him and have a good idea of what he believes and where the door seems open for help and instruction. This person may have shown some interest, and while he is firm in certain points and unwilling at the time to listen seriously and discuss those points, nevertheless he is willing to listen and receive instruction on another point. The purpose of the contact is to build on the truth that he holds and develop it. Because the truth of God is one organic whole, development in one area will undermine that which is erroneous in another area. In this contact, literature serves to supplement what you have said.

In light of the functions listed above, it is evident that literature is but the means to establish or to continue personal contact and spiritual conversation. Literature leads to and complements personal contact and witness. As individuals we must always be conscious of this opportunity and responsibility and not hesitate to give witness to the truth we love.

\* \* \* \*

Let us now consider what function our magazine, books, and pamphlets are performing in the area of mission work.

We speak generally first of all. Our books and magazines have been instrumental in bringing a number of people to our churches, as well as opening some doors for mission labor. However, there is an effectiveness of our printed material which is equally important and much broader than bringing people into the Protestant Reformed Churches. Our literature has received positive blessing from the Lord in touching and enriching the spiritual lives of people of God all over the world. For one reason or

another the majority of these do not contact or join our churches, but the truth is being furthered, advanced, and preserved without our being aware of it. We must become more conscious of this effect of literature. In other words, the effectiveness of our literature in particular and of religious literature in general cannot and **MUST NOT** be evaluated in terms of mere statistical results. (Insofar as that kind of thinking enters into any aspect of our literature publication and mission work, it is destructive! We have only the calling to preach and to give witness to the truth, and we must leave the increase to the Lord.) The God of all providences uses mysterious (to us only) ways to spread literature all over the world. The sovereign and electing God puts it into the hands of His people. The blessed God uses it to enrich souls and to develop them in the truth. The convicting God can use it to point out sins and lies. Pray to this God that He will continue to use and bless what we have feebly produced.

More specifically now, let us consider the books and pamphlets listed in the R.F.P.A. catalogue. One must say that, although these pieces of literature are all good as far as their content is concerned, and are useful in many ways, they are not designed to any great extent for mission work. There are some reasons for this.

Many of the books and pamphlets are directed to Protestant Reformed people. This is evident from the fact that many are but printed copies of lectures directed to Protestant Reformed people. These are very good and useful in instructing our people in the truth of God's Word, but they are not intended for mission work and therefore have limited value.

This is equally true of the pamphlets which were written for our mission work of years ago. They were directed to people who were of the denomination out of which the Protestant Reformed denomination came. The nature of our mission work is changing as we find ourselves working more and more with non-Dutch people and with those who are not of the same Reformed background and heritage. Consider some of our current fields: Singapore; Jamaica; Lansing, Michigan; and Birmingham, Alabama.

Closely related are those pamphlets which are current, but are directed at issues which are alive among Reformed churches. Their value is great, but it diminishes when they are considered in light of most of our current mission work.

Another reason why it is said that our current list of literature is not designed to a great extent for present mission work is that today doctrinal knowledge is slim. The exceptions are trained office-bearers and an occasional layman. A greater number may be acquainted with some theological



terms and expressions, but they have little or no idea what they mean. Besides this, each group of churches tends to have its own peculiar theological expressions. The phrase "the counsel of God" conveys much significance to some, but to others little or nothing. Our pamphlets and books have many of these and similar expressions. This makes them difficult to understand if these terms, phrases, and concepts are not simply and clearly explained. To the extent that these are not explained, and their meaning and significance is assumed, the literature loses its value when used outside the sphere of our denomination.

Again, let me say, that this does not decrease the overall value of these publications. They are of great worth within our churches and with those already close theologically. All that is being said now is that this decreases their value on the mission field.

Considering the book publication of the R.F.P.A. we find that we can loosely categorize them into three groups: theological, expository, and historical. The last group is of highest interest for the Protestant Reformed Churches and for those interested in the history of the Protestant Reformed Churches. These have little value for mission work except for historical information. Those books of a theological nature are very useful in spreading the truth and have been means by which an initial mission contact is created. Initially they draw only the theologically-minded. On the mission field they can be used for the purpose of introduction. Those books of an expository nature are of the most value in missions. Generally in the South there is good interest in preaching, and these works are welcomed. The value of expository books is enhanced if the terminology is not prohibitive as mentioned above.

Generally speaking, the same holds true for the *Standard Bearer*. Many articles are written specifically to the people of our own denomination. The meditations, Biblical history, and issue-oriented rubrics are of value on the mission field. The value of this periodical increases as a relationship is established in the field.

\* \* \* \*

Permit me to make some observations as to the make-up of a piece of literature which would be directly useful on a mission field.

The most useful pamphlet for any mission field would be the one that is directed to a general audience. We have a booklet on the Five Points of Calvinism that is the printed copy of lectures given to a Protestant Reformed audience. We need another publication on the same subject for a general audience which is without a Reformed background or even without a church background. This is true for

a variety of subjects. We are not to assume that literature on a specific subject will cover all people. For example, reference from the Three Forms of Unity, our creeds, are good, necessary, and understandable to those who are of the Reformed heritage. However, such references have little meaning for those outside of that heritage.

Also, a good pamphlet must be clear and simple in its language and use of terms. It must be understandable to people who have but little doctrinal knowledge or whose terminology differs from ours. We need more publications which can communicate readily to those who are not theologically knowledgeable. Such pieces of literature will have to engage in educating the reader. That is one of the functions of literature on the mission field.

Also, a publication for a general audience should present itself in a proper tone. That tone must not be violent or vehement; nor must it be wishy-washy; it must be firm and clear. Preaching must be antithetical and so must our literature. However, there is a difference between treating the non-Calvinistic reader as a Baal prophet or as an erring sheep or as a possible elect who is yet unconverted. It is not a good idea to beat someone over the head with a theological club when you first meet him. There is a proper place for tact, especially when directed to a general audience. The average pew-sitter, though wrong and sinning in his error, needs gentle leading and correction because he does not have either the knowledge or understanding. The presentation of the truth must be firm, but a firmness mixed with patience and compassion.

Closely related is the method of the presentation of the truth. I refer now to the presentation of the negative refutation of the error along with the setting forth of the truth positively. Most common in our publications is the refutation of the error before the presentation of the truth. This can be a good method where the audience already believes the truth. On the mission field it is much better to follow the method of the Canons of Dordt, i.e., first proclaim and develop the truth, and then bring in the error and refute it in light of the truth. Thus the emphasis is in the presentation and explanation of the truth rather than on the rejection of the lie. The rejection is absolutely necessary, but should not receive the emphasis in the presentation of the truth to a general audience.

A useful publication must be Scriptural. This is especially necessary with a general audience. The presentation of the truth must be well supported with Scripture quotations and references. When Scripture is used in the right manner it will speak loudly and clearly and with the authority of the



Word of God. Then the reader will be driven to his Bible to study it. Then in the mind of the reader God is the One Who sets forth the truth and Who contradicts his error. In this connection, sometimes mere quotations are not sufficient and some exposition is required. The meaning of a particular passage may be clear to one group of believers because of previous interpretation, but may not be so understood by others.

\* \* \* \*

Some observations of needs with regard to literature and missions.

Along with and besides pamphlets there is the need for tracts—a leaflet of four pages, which would present one aspect of the truth. Years ago the Mission Committee began a series of tracts entitled, "Do You Know." A pamphlet has its place, but something which could be read in five or ten minutes would be a better tool for mission work. Their purpose is not to give a complete exposition of a truth, but to present it in such a way that it arouses further interest and contact.

As a missionary who is seeking to use the publications available, I have found the need for some organization of our literature, especially the pamphlets. The R.F.P.A. has attempted to do so with a list of pamphlets in their catalogue, but for the most part this list consists only of those pamphlets published by the Sunday School of First Church in Grand Rapids. However, many of our

congregations have in the past and are continuing the printing of materials: Hope, Kalamazoo, Loveland, South Holland, and the Reformed Witness Committee in Northwest Iowa, to name only some. These varied sources of literature are good and as it should be. I am not asking for a denominational super-structure which does all the publication and distribution. Rather, there is the need for the gathering of all the materials produced so that a complete listing of all materials is made available. Then all could benefit from each other. On a regular basis someone or some organization should glean the work of each congregation and pastor for the benefit of the broader group.

\* \* \* \*

In conclusion, literature can and should play a supportive role in mission work, but not in mission work alone. We all should be ready to use various pieces of literature as means to create interest in the truth of God's Word.

The list of current publications by the R.F.P.A. is a substantial list. However, we should be ever conscious of the need to produce new materials. This is necessary as the object of our mission work changes and it is necessary in our ever-changing world. We are thankful to the Lord for the literature available. We thank Him for the positive blessings He has given to it in the area of missions. Pray that the Lord will continue to use them for the furtherance and defense of His Truth and Church.

## Protestant Reformed Evangelism

*Prof. Robert D. Decker*

We are pleased to report that seventeen of our churches responded to our request for a resume of their evangelism (church extension) efforts. In this and perhaps succeeding issues we shall report on each of these churches. We hope not only that this will make for interesting and informative reading, but also that these articles will be of benefit to the various evangelism committees and church extension committees. Perhaps various churches will gain new insights and ideas concerning this all important work.

### Lynden

We shall begin the survey in the West. Our Church in Lynden, Washington is nestled between the snowcapped Cascades and the Pacific in the far Northwest corner of the country. Lynden is not only known in Protestant Reformed circles for its

extremely beautiful location; she has a reputation also for being very active in the work of evangelism. This has not been without positive fruit. In 1965 Lynden numbered some five families; today there are forty-six families. Lynden has its own Christian School as well. Their work of evangelism, initiated by Rev. Bernard Woudenberg, is being continued under the leadership of Rev. D. H. Kuiper. Rev. Kuiper writes: "The congregation sponsors the broadcasting of one of the regular worship services over a local radio station. This is actually aired one week later by means of tape. We have had enormous response to this program. Some families have moved to Lynden and joined our church due to this contact. We hear of many, many people in Lynden as well as in far off places who are listening. A few send in contributions, which are never asked for." Lynden mails approximately



twenty cassettes per week, each containing two sermons. Some of them go as far as California. Work has been begun in the Mt. Vernon and Monroe, Washington areas (a bit south of Lynden). Pastor Kuiper has lectured there on various topics and also conducted a weekly Bible study class. Lynden is calling a home missionary to labor there. Their hope and prayer is that this work will bear fruit in the establishment of a Protestant Reformed Church. Lynden's church extension committee also operates a small "bookstore" in the church. According to Pastor Kuiper there is a good turnover of our literature, both books and pamphlets.

### **Redlands, California**

The Hope Church of Redlands sponsors the Reformed Witness Hour each Sunday over a station out of Riverside, California. Once each month the Evangelism Committee mails literature to approximately seven hundred fifty addresses. Five hundred of these are first time mailings. These are sent a pamphlet, "Is The Christian Faith Easy?" written by Rev. J. Kortering. The remaining two hundred fifty are those who have shown interest and requested to be on Redlands' permanent mailing list. To these, Redlands mails articles written by Rev. B. Woudenberg, as well as various *Standard Bearer* articles. Redlands also mails approximately twenty sermon tapes (Cassette) each month.

### **Loveland, Colorado**

Loveland too is active in Church Extension. The pamphlet or folder mentioned above, written by Rev. Kortering, is mailed to some five hundred addresses each month. The folder, it seems to the undersigned, is very attractive. It answers in simple, direct language three basic questions: What is a Christian?; Are You A Christian?; and What We (Loveland) Can Do To Help. There is ample reference to the Scriptures, a brief description of our doctrinal basis, and a detachable portion which the reader can send to Loveland. Other of our churches might wish a sample copy for possible use in their work. Loveland also sponsors the Reformed Witness Hour over one of the local stations. They are contemplating changing to a much larger station in Denver so as to cover more of the state.

### **Edmonton, Alberta Canada**

There is more than rich oil fields in Edmonton, much more! There is the First Protestant Reformed Church and its clear, faithful witness to the Reformed Truth. Every Sunday morning Edmonton's pastor, Rev. R. Moore, expounds the Scriptures on a fifteen minute broadcast. To this there is some response. A letter containing a brief summary of the Reformed Faith is mailed to five hundred homes each month. The worship services are advertised in the weekend edition of the local news-

paper. Edmonton also sponsors public lectures upon occasion.

### **Doon, Hull, Iowa and Edgerton, Minnesota**

We report on these churches together because most of their church extension work is done by a committee of the three churches. This committee, which had its origin in the stormy days of the split of 1953, is called the Reformed Witness Committee. Its constituency consists of three members from each congregation with the three pastors serving as advisors. The committee prints and distributes a pamphlet entitled, "The Reformed Witness." The committee has been concentrating its efforts recently in the Sioux Falls, South Dakota area. There has been, however, very little positive reception to the work in this city. The churches in part sponsor the Reformed Witness Hour over a Sioux Falls station and the station of Dordt College in Sioux Center.

Doon is the calling church for the mission in Singapore. This of course consumes a great deal of time and effort. Hull has its own lecture committee which sponsors a Spring lecture.

### **Houston, Texas**

The Trinity Protestant Reformed Church of Houston is very active in Evangelism. Trinity also uses some different methods from which other of our churches might profit. Rather than try to sum the material sent we will simply quote Pastor Wayne Bekkering's letter: "1) We have given a Reformation Day lecture each year. This is not unusual for our churches, but in Houston there is very little emphasis on the Reformation so this gives us a good opportunity to emphasize our distinctives. The attendance at these lectures is good with about 20 visitors each year. 2) We have used newspaper ads and articles with varying success.... 3) The Reformed Witness Hour has been aired in Houston from the beginning of our work here. The results have been disappointing. Presently we are developing radio sermons that use 28 minute excerpts from sermons that are preached in the congregation. 4) We have worked to get our books out in two basic ways. First we got five bookstores in Houston to carry seven of our titles. Secondly, we have given away a number of books to interested persons. We believe that books are a good long range extension means. For over a year we have had a Christian Discount Book Center. This organization carries most of our books as well as other good solid Calvinistic materials. This bookstore has also given away many of our pamphlets. Presently we are working to get this chain to market some of the sermon and lecture tapes of our churches. 5) We have used trial subscriptions of the *Standard Bearer* as a means to have others become better acquainted with us. 6)



We have, from time to time, held Fellowship Picnics. We invite those who have attended our lectures or who have shown interest in other ways. The next picnic that we have we are planning a Singspiration in our church in the evening. 7) Last year for the first time we had what we called, for lack of a better name, a 'Mid-Winter Faith Refresher.' It was a conference to discuss Reformed Evangelism. Rev. VanOverloop and Rev. Woudenberg were here to help us. We invited various men to our discussions during the day and we held three evening meetings that were open to the public. We had good interest and participation in this venture. 8) We have also tried to extend the witness of our church in our area by going from house to house to introduce our church and to invite people to visit. From time to time we have very nice opportunities to discuss God's truth with people. We always leave a brief statement concerning our church with the location and time of worship."

The Fellowship Picnic and going from house to house are two ways of reaching people and witnessing seldom used in our churches. From Pastor Bekkering's letter it appears that they have borne fruit. However that may be, one thing is sure, the little band of saints in Trinity Church is certainly

busy in church extension.

There was one more response to our request from Classis West, South Holland. We will include South Holland in our next article.

### NOTICE!!!

Hope Protestant Reformed Church,  
Redlands, CA.

Offering \$50,000 in notes to finance the  
construction of our sanctuary.

10 years — 10%.

(Issued in multiples of \$1000.00;  
interest annually.)

For further information call (714) 793-5461

or write: Otto Gaastra

917 Campus Ave.

Redlands, CA 92373

We ask that you give this prayerful consideration.

Yours in Christ,

Jake Jabaay, Sec'y.

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The members of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church Men's Society of Walker, Michigan, express their Christian sympathy to Mr. Milo De Wald and Mr. Alvin Rau in the death of their mother and mother-in-law.

"Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do." (I Thess. 5:11)

Home Church Men's Society  
Mr. D. Engelsma, Pres.  
Mr. J. Dykstra, Jr., Sec'y.

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The members of the Men's Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church were saddened in the loss of their fellow-member, MR. ARTHUR DE JONG. We express our sympathy to our fellow-members, Arthur H., William, Homer, Lewis and Kenneth De Jong in the loss of their father.

"The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be forever." (Psalm 37:18)

Everett Buiter, Sec'y.

### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies Aid Society of Hope Prot. Ref. Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan wishes to express their Christian sympathy to Mrs. Milo De Wald, Mrs. Alvin Rau and Mrs. John Kuiper, Jr. in the death of their mother, MRS. ELLA DE WALD.

"The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be forever." (Psalm 37:18)

Rev. R. Flikkema, Pres.  
Eilene Terpstra, Sec'y.

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

We announce the joyous celebration of 50 years of holy matrimony for our parents and grandparents, MR. AND MRS. GUS HUBER, on December 12, 1981. An open-house for family and friends will be held Saturday, December 12, 1981, from 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the Village House of New Amsterdam Village, 7905 Cottonwood Dr., Jenison, Michigan.

We thank the Lord for His watchful eye and covenant faithfulness.

Vern and Doris Huber  
Wayne and Delaine Lanning  
William and Carol Huber

Henry T. and Jane Heemstra  
and 16 grandchildren  
2 great-grandchildren

"The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shall see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel." (Psalm 128:5, 6)

### EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY

Prayerful thoughts on our high calling. (Phil. 3:14)

With loving hands have the fellow-Elders of ARTHUR DEJONG laid his earthly remains to rest. We, with the family and the congregation now comfort our hearts in the hope of the resurrection (I Thess. 4:14).

Our faithful Pastor, Rev. David J. Engelsma, preached a funeral sermon on Rev. 14:13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

May our brother's deliverance (Psa. 91:14; Joel 2:32; Col. 1:13) now serve the purpose, under God's blessing, that the family and the saints in South Holland press on in their Christian calling. (Phil. 3:10-21)

THE COUNCIL  
South Holland Protestant Reformed Church  
Edward Stouwie, Clerk



## News From Our Churches

"We must derive our goal from our basis of Christian education: the covenant of God with believers and their children. The foundation determines the completed structure that stands on that foundation. On the foundation of a chicken-coop you do not build the Sears Tower. Our aim in Christian education must be that contained in and expressed by the covenant-command of Jehovah to believing parents."

We hope the above tidbit taken from chapter five of the monograph, *Reformed Education*, written by Rev. Engelsma will serve to stimulate those of us who *have* copies to reread it, and those who do *not* have it to obtain a copy. The monograph is a result of a "mini-course" taught by Rev. Engelsma to Protestant Reformed teachers back in 1975. For those who might be interested we include the chapter headings:

1. "The Covenant-Basis of Christian Education"
2. "Scripture in the Schools"
3. "Reformed Education and Culture"
4. "The Protestant Reformed Teacher"
5. "The Goal of Reformed Education"

The reason we include this information in the *Standard Bearer* news is to get the news out that this valuable monograph is once again available... thanks to the people who see to the publication of our young people's magazine, the *Beacon Lights*. Copies can be obtained by sending \$1.50 plus \$.60 for postage and handling to: Reformed Education, 1490 Burton, S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506.

Incidentally, while you are sending to that address anyway, you might just as well send along another \$1.50 plus another \$.60 for more postage and handling and obtain the monograph by Rev. C. Hanko, *Leaving Father and Mother*. Hopefully the title gives away the subject of this one.

About one of our calling churches we learn that, following Rev. Bekkering's decline of their call, Isabel, South Dakota has extended a call to "come

over and help us" to Rev. Houck, missionary pastor in Lansing, Michigan.

Upon completion of their family visiting for the year, our Southeast Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan announced their thankfulness to God for the evidence of "a spirit of unity in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ." In that bulletin announcement they included this quote from John Calvin's writings concerning our calling to endeavor to keep the unity of the church: "This means that no increase is of use which does not correspond to the whole body. That man is mistaken who desires his own separate growth. For what would it profit a leg or an arm if it grew to an enormous size, or for the mouth to be stretched wider? It would merely be afflicted with a harmful tumor; so if we wish to be considered in Christ, let no man be anything for himself, but let us all be whatever we are for others. This is accomplished by love; and where love does not reign, there is no edification of the church, but a mere scattering."

Further concerning house visiting, from the bulletins I receive it becomes clear that there are in our churches different ways of scheduling house visitation: while some conduct their visits for all their members in the fall of the year, others visit one fourth of the congregation just prior to each celebration of the Lord's Supper, and still others seem to have it continuously.

It's too bad all of our readers do not have the opportunity to see the bulletins from around the country that are sent to me. Quite a treat it is to look them over and see what's happening in our churches from New Jersey to California and from Edmonton, Canada, to Texas. Even some of the *envelopes* that the bulletins come in are interesting—like the one bearing the burden of *four* postage stamps (each of different value) that I recently received. Obviously some of us are finding it difficult to keep up with those postal rate increases.

CK