

THE STANDARD BEARER

To our beloved pastor, Herman Hoeksema, V.D.M. do we on this twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination to the ministry, extend our sincere congratulations. His concecrated efforts for which we humbly acknowledge our covenant God, have given us, a purer and more profound conception of the Reformed truth, particularly the mysteries of human depravity and sovereign grace

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From title page of album.



This Photograph of Rev. and Mrs. Hoeksema was taken in their garden, the morning after their 25th anniversary celebration

THE STANDARD BEARER

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This September 15, 1940 number of our Standard Bearer is dedicated to Rev. H. Hoeksema in commemoration of his ordination as a minister of the gospel on September 15, 1915, just twenty-five years ago.

The Reformed Free Publishing Association and the 25th Anniversary Committee have cooperated in bringing to you this memorial number containing all the speeches delivered at the celebration held in Rev. Hoeksema's honor on August 15, 1940 at John Ball Park.

Rev. Hoeksema's Anniversary Celebration

On Thursday, August 15, we, as a Protestant Reformed people, came together at John Ball Park, Grand Rapids, Michigan, to commemorate Rev. Hoeksema's 25th anniversary as minister of the Word of God. Surely, no greater privilege and no greater work can be bestowed upon mortal man than to preach the Word of God. Ordinarily this is an event worthy of remembrance. And when a minister of the Word of God has labored 25 years in his chosen work, this event is usua'ly celebrated in some form or another. Fact is, the Bible is the Word of God, the infallible, Divinely inspired record of the powerful, efficacious, effectual Word of God, which the Lord speaks and only can speak in the hearts of His people. To be a minister of that Word implies that God has chosen, called him to proclaim that Word, has commissioned him to preach His truth, and that therefore through his preaching of the same it pleases Jehovah to edify, strengthen, and confirm His people. Therefore we declare that the preaching of the Word of God is the highest possible calling unto which mortal man can be called. However, the celebration of August 15 was not any such ordinary event. Rev. Hoeksema is not merely a minister of the Word of God, but upon him the task had been laid, not only to preach that Word. but also to defend it against heretical interpretations of the same within the very bosom of the churches wherein we formerly had a name and place. Doing

so, and being consequently barred from the fellowship of these churches, he continued to proclaim the truth, and today is acknowledged, together with Rev. G. M. Ophoff, to be the spiritual leader of our Protestant Reformed Churches.

Ordinarily we have our annual Field-Day on the Fourth of July. This custom we have observed as Protestant Reformed Churches ever since 1925. This year, however, was an exception to this rule. consistory of the Fuller Ave. Protestant Reformed Church, because of Rev. Hoeksema's 25 years in the ministry, deemed it proper to celebrate this event. Because of the pastor's vacation this celebration could not be held on the fourth of July. Of course, our annual Field-Day, proceeding as always from the Standard Bearer, could have been held regardless. However, two field-days in one season was considered too much of a good thing. Hence it was arranged between Fuller Ave.'s consistory and the Standard Bearer to cancel our annual July Fourth affair, and substitute for it the celebration of Rev. Hoeksema's anniversary. And so this celebration, proceeding from Fuller Ave.'s consistory, but also observed by all our people in general, took place on August 15.

The setting of our celebration was ideal. Firstly, the Lord gave us a beautiful day, partly cloudy and warm. Then, in John Ball Park we enjoyed a beautiful layout, particularly if we bear in mind the nature of the day. We had the Park practically to ourselves. This, of course, was possible only because the celebration took place on a day other than a holiday. would be impossible to hold our annual Field-Day in a public park on a holiday because of the many others who would be present and milling about. On this occasion, however, the setting was ideal. The committee had made arrangements for 1500 seats between the speakers' stand or band-stand and the pavilion. This number of seats, however, proved to be far from sufficient. For, although the celebration was sponsored by, proceeded from the consistory of our Fuller Ave. Church, it was truly a Protestant Reformed affair, also in the sense that many of our churches, inasfar as possible, took part in it. It seemed to me that almost all our people were present. Fuller Ave., Roosevelt Park. Creston, Hope, Grand Haven, Hudsonville, Byron Center, Holland, Kalamazoo, South Holland, Portland-

all were indeed well represented, with the exception of South Holland, which, however, is some 175 miles distant from Grand Rapids. Also the ministers of Pella and Doon, Revs. Lubbers and Van der Breggen were among us. From the viewpoint of numbers it was, we believe, the most successful undertaking staged by our churches of such a nature since the "good old days" of 1925. And, to make one more remark as far as the setting is concerned, the celebration was to some extent a reunion, particularly for the congregation of Ful er Ave. Rev. Hoeksema had been absent from his church, had been vacationing since June 30. Only two days before the celebration he had returned from the east. Hence, he had not as yet appeared in his pulpit at Fuller Ave. Therefore we remark that this field-day also partook to some extent of the nature of a reunion.

The main festivities of the day were to begin at 3:00 P. M. Rev. R. Veldman of Fuller Ave. was chairman of the day. There were sports and games for the children earlier in the afternoon until 3:00 P. M. It it, of course, not my purpose or task in this article to give a resumé or synopsis of all the speeches which were given. These speeches appear in this special issue of our Standard Bearer and can be read by all our people. I will, however, devote a few lines to explain why each speaker spoke. Six speeches were delivered, three in the afternoon and three in the evening. Promptly at 3:00 P. M. the chairman of the day opened the day's festivities by reading a portion from the Scriptures and a word of prayer. The first speaker of the afternoon was the undersigned, who spoke as representing the Standard Bearer. It is, of course, understood that this celebration of Rev. Hoeksema's anniversary bore a special character. To this I have already called attention in the foregoing. This will explain the nature of the several speeches which were delivered. Following the undersigned, Rev. De Jong of Hudsonville spoke in the Holland language in connection with the birth and truth of our Protestant Reformed Churches. The afternoon program was concluded by Rev. Kok who spoke as representing our missionary activity. After supper the evening program began at 7:00 P. M. And what an inspiring scene greeted us at this time! Although the afternoon attendance had already been above expectation (we must remember that the celebration took place not on a holiday, and that therefore many could not be present because of their work), the evening attendance surely exceeded all expectations. The committee had arranged for 1500 seats. Only 1500 seats. Now I do not know whether this number constituted the limit which could be had. Fact is, it proved to be wholly insufficient. Various estimates have been given of the number of people present. Some have ventured to place the figure at 4000. However, I think that we can safely and conservatively place the attendance figure at 2500. The first speaker of the evening was Rev. Ophoff who represented our Theological School. He was followed by Rev. G. Vos of Redlands. Because Rev. Vos himself could not be present it had been arranged to have his speech given to us by transcription. This proved to be quite a novelty. His voice was clearly recognizable. I assume that Rev. Vos represented the older (not oldest) element in our midst, who had lived through the struggle of 1924. The final speaker of the evening was brother S. G. Schaafsma of Ful er Ave., who represented that congregation. He had been chosen to speak because he, at the time of the conflict, had served as clerk of that consistory.

In connection with this program we would make a few miscellaneous remarks. Firstly, all the speeches bore an historical character. The committee had arranged this purposely because of the character of the celebration. Also, a loud-speaker had been provided which very effectively facilitated matters not only for the speakers but also for the audience. Moreover, the program was interspersed with singing by the audience and a few vocal and musical selections. Besides this, two fitting telegrams were received and read from our congregation of Hull and Edgerton, relative to Rev. Hoeksema's anniversary. Finally, Rev. and Mrs. Hoeksema appeared on the speaker's stand. The "dominee" spoke very fittingly and was presented a beautiful album and a financial gift. The program was concluded with a word of prayer by Rev. M. Schipper of Roosevelt Park.

Describing this celebration and giving my own personal impressions of the day two features must receive Firstly, in connection with the speeches emphasis. which were given, I wish to remark that, recognizing the gifts and talents which God has bestowed on Rev. Hoeksema and grateful unto him because of the unique place which he occupies in our churches, the celebration did not fail to give all glory and praise to God from Whom alone all blessings flow. To be sure, Rev. Hoeksema has done a tremendous amount of work among us. As Protestant Reformed Churches we are indebted to him. Unflinchingly he stood for the cause of God's sovereign grace, has indeed explained and opened the Scriptures unto us. And inasfar as he was called of God to defend and hold fast unto the faith once delivered unto the saints and that through him we all were led into a clearer and better insight of the Scriptures, we express unto him our profound gratitude. Therefore he occupies a large place in our heart and life. Yet, recognizing the fact that man is a mere mortal and that what we are and do we are and do only by the grace of God, our celebration did not degenerate into hero-worship, but gave all glory to God. I can certainly affirm that this was characteristic of the entire day. Moreover, this is, of course, the outstanding feature of the day. A higher and more outstanding characteristic is inconceivable. Then we

are and will remain secure as Protestant Reformed Churches, if we continue on this high level and persevere in that high calling whereunto we are called, namely, to proclaim the virtues of Him Who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light, for out of Him and through Him and unto Hm are all things, now and forever.

My second chief impression of the day was that the commemoration was spontaneous. It was real. I could not understand how anyone, present in the evening, could escape this impression. It simply forced itself upon you. In this connection I must again remind our people of that stirring climax of the day when that beautiful album was presented to Rev. and Mrs. Hoek-What a moment it was when the chairman asked the audience to sing the doxology in the Holland and English languages while the reverend and his wife stood on the platform! It was a singing in which the audience found it difficult to take part. And it was also difficult for Rev. Hoeksema to speak that which lived in his soul. Besides, it would have been more difficult still for him to speak had he been able to see the audience which he could not because of the lateness of the hour. Surely, the celebration was spontaneous. And, according to his own words, that which impressed him so profoundly was the large, the unique p'ace which he occupies in the hearts of all our people. This was the beautiful and fitting climax of a day well spent. And thereupon we returned home, giving thanks unto God, I am sure, for all the blessings which He has so richly bestowed upon us.

H. Veldman.

Rev. Hoeksema's Anniversary and our Standard Bearer

We have gathered here today, as Protestant Reformed brethren and sisters, to celebrate Rev. Hoeksema's 25th anniversary as minister of the Word of God. Surely, no higher calling can any mortal have than to be minister of God's Word. The connection between this anniversary and our Standard Bearer is not difficult to see. Of these 25 years he has labored now almost 16 years as Editor-in-Chief of our wellknown semi-monthly standard of the truth of the Holy Scriptures. Besides, the Standard Bearer surely represents his untiring efforts in the proclamation of the sovereign grace of God which we love. Hence, as president of the Board of our Standard Bearer, I, in the name of the Standard Bearer, wish to congratulate Rev. Hoeksema upon this joyous occasion, his 25th anniversary in the ministry of the gospel. Ana, furthermore, I wish to express to him the gratitude of

our paper, our hearty appreciation for all his labor which he might ever willingly do by the grace of God.

It is well at this time to refresh our memory with respect to the birth of our Standard Bearer. Why do we have our own paper? At times the answer has been given that the Standard Bearer came into being because the reverends Danhof, Hoeksema and Ophoff were cast out of the Christian Reformed Churches. This, of course, is not true. It had been determined to print a theological paper of our own already before the Kalamazoo Synod of 1924. The birth of our paper and the case of Dr. Jansen are historically inseparably connected. At the Christian Reformed Synod of 1920, Prof. Jansen, notwithstanding the grievances brought against him at that time by the Calvin seminary professors, had been upheld. Or, to state it more correctly, he had not been condemned. The Synod declared that the charges brought against him had not been proven, that therefore it had not been shown that the professor was guilty of anti-Scriptural and anti-reformed teachings. This decision of Synod, of course, was anything but satisfactory. It was merely negative. And the churches, because of its negative character, would never be able to be at ease with respect to the instruction of Prof. Jansen. To this Rev. Hoeksema called public attention shortly after the Synod of 1920. He wrote that the synodical decision was merely negative, and contended that Synod could have arrived at a positive declaration if they only would have properly examined the teachings of Prof. Jansen. To this charge of Rev. Hoeksema Dr. Jansen replied. However, instead of answering the charges, accusations of our leaders, he wrote that the reason why Rev. Hoeksema had written against him as he did must be sought in the difference between them relative to "Common Grace". However, during the years, 1920-1922, the professors of Calvin, apparently because of personal hostility against Dr. Jansen, supported the reverends Danhof and Hoeksema. And at the Synod of 1922 at Orange City, Iowa, Prof. Jansen was finally deposed.

This, however, did not restore peace to the churches. Prof. Jansen, to be sure, had been deposed. But his friends became active. They now assumed the offensive against Revs. Danhof and Hoeksema, and in favor of Dr. Jansen. The deposed doctor's accusation, that Revs. Danhof and Hoeksema did not believe in "Common Grace", was again revived and brought to the fore. Especially the Rev. Jan Karel Van Baalen was active in this respect. Brochures were written by both parties. At this time, in the fall of 1923, our men, directed by means of "De Wachter" a request to their opponents, asking that a meeting be held to settle all differences between them, if possible. This request remained unanswered. Also at this time, our men sent an article to "De Wachter" for publication, in which they stated their objections against the

teachings of Prof. Jansen. However, the Publication Committee refused to publish this article unless it were changed, and added that a long discussion was not desirable. This is the historical occasion of the birth of our Standard Bearer. When it had become evident that Revs. Danhof and Hoeksema stood alone, that the church papers of the Christian Reformed Churches were closed to them, it was decided to print our own paper, in which our convictions with respect to God's absolute sovereignty could be published and set forth.

If now we are gathered here today truly to celebrate Rev. Hoeksema's 25th anniversary in the ministry of the Word of God, we can do so by rededicating ourselves to our wholehearted support of our Standard Bearer. This we will do, this we must do if we truly appreciate that which he, by the grace of God, has meant and still means unto us. Surely, we will not trust in an arm of flesh. This, however, does not mean that we should not be grateful to God for that which we, as Protestant Reformed people, have enjoyed through the efforts of our leaders. Today we remember Rev. Hoeksema not merely as a man, but as one who by the grace of God has led us into a clearer insight of the truths of God's Word. If then this appreciation lives in our hearts, the Standard Bearer will indeed remain our standard, our emblem, our bearer. I do not say this merely because I would speak a good word for our paper. But I do say this because it is well at this time that we pause and reflect and rededicate ourselves unto the principles for which we fought some 16 years ago. At that time we demanded this paper because it was our desire to be witnesses to the truth so precious to us. At that time we were filled with enthusiasm to such an extent that the financial burden connected with our own paper was a mere trifle. At that time we read and reread the articles, so that the desire was expressed that the monthly appearance of our paper was not sufficient. And in the light of the reaction among our people, the manner in which our paper was received, we can understand a statement of Rev. Hoeksema in one of his letters to the brethren in the west: "Het is heden eene lust om te leven". I am afraid that conditions among us have changed. The Standard Bearer today has at times a hard row to hoe. The financial obligations appear at times a burden. This should not and need not be. Hence, let us on this occasion repledge ourselves to the cause we hold dear, rededicate ourselves to the Standard Bearer, as our emblem in the midst of the world and of Zion. Let us support our paper, not only financially, but also as the symbol of our faith and struggle, that God's Name may be glorified and we may continue to be an actively protesting people in the midst of the world.

I thank you.

H. Veldman.

Wij Protestantsch Gereformeerden

Waarde Broeders en Zusters:

Wij zijn hier vandaag bijeengekomen in feestelijke stemming om te gedenken de groote daden Gods over onze kerken en met name te gedenken wat God onze kerken heeft geschonken in den persoon van den jubilaris, Ds. H. Hoeksema. Van harte felisiteeren we den jubilaris met zijn vijf-en-twintig-jarig ambtsjubileum en het is onze wensch en bede dat indien het met Gods wil kan bestaan de Heere hem nog een reeks van jaren voor onze kerken moge sparen.

De jubileum commissie heeft o.a. ook mij verzocht om hier een korte toespraak te houden bij deze gelegenheid. Ik heb mijn gedachten op papier uitgewerkt en hoop u die voor te lezen, om voorts hier en daar al lezende een enkel woord aan het geschrevene toe te voegen.

Waar moest ik over spreken bij deze gelegenheid? De commissie oordeelde dat mijn onderwerp diende van historischen aard te zijn. Ik zou b.v. kunnen spreken, zoo oordeelde men, over het onderwerp: "Waarom Protestansch Gereformeerd". Na over deze wenk nagedacht te hebben kwam ik echter tot de ontdekking dat Ds. Hoeksema een pamphlet geschreven heeft onder dezen titel. Het zou dus heel gemakkelijk voor mij zijn om u dat pamphlet voor te lezen. Ik denk echter niet dat dit de bedoeling was van de commissie, en ik betwijfel ook of deze vergadering daar wel mee tevreden zou zijn, niettegenstaande het feit dat het pamphlet waardig is om gelezen te worden en ik er hier en daar ook nog gebruik van hebt gemaakt. — Ik heb echter als onderwerp gekozen: "Wij Protestansch Gereformeerden".

Het kan de bedoeling van de commissie niet zijn geweest dat ik een breed historisch overzicht zou geven van onze kerkelijke strijd. Het is al even onmogelijk om de Drie Punten in den breede te bespreken en te weerleggen. Daar is het thans de gelegenheid niet voor en daartoe ontbreekt mij ook den tijd. Ik moet mij dus in alle opzichten beperken en heb mij daarom dan ook voorgenomen om slechts enkele grepen te doen uit de geschiedenis. En in verband met mijn onderwerp: "Wij Protestantsch Gereformeerden", wil ik uwe aandacht bij drieërlei hoofdgedachte bepalen.

- I. Hoe zijn wij Protestantsch Gereformeerd geworden.
- II. Wat beteekent het om te Protestantsch Gereformeerd te zijn.
- III. Hoe kunnen wij Protestantsch Gereformeerd blijven.
- I. Er was een tijd dat niemand onzer Protestantsch Gereformeerd was in den kerkelijken zin des woords, ook de jubilaris Ds. Herman Hoeksema niet. Een

zeventien tal jaren geleden hadden de meesten onzer hun kerkelijk onderdak in de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk, sommigen behoorden tot de Reformed Church, en enkelen, waarvan ik er één ben, waren toen leden van een der Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland; en er waren er zeker ook enkelen onder ons die destijds behoorden tot nog een ander kerkgenootschap. Niemand onzer had toen echter nog ooit gehoord van een Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerk. Zijn die kerken dan zoo maar uit de lucht gevallen of als paddestoelen uit de grond opgeschoten? Was het een nieuwe kerkelijke beweging die niet in eenig verband stond met de geschiedenis eener andere kerk? Neen, zoo staan de zaken niet. Wel zijn wij Protestantsch Gereformeerden een nieuwe kerkelijke groep, slechts zeventien jaren oud, maar toch bogen we op een heele geschiedenis van eeuwen, en de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk hier in Amerika is onze moederkerk. Hoe een en ander mogelijk is en hoe deze vork in den steel zit zal verder wel duidelijk worden.

Hoe zijn wij Protestantsch Gereformeerd geworden? Ik zal uwe aandacht niet vragen voor de onmiddellijke voorgeschiedenis van onze kerken die zonder twijfel moet gezocht in de destijds veel besproken Jansen-zaak. Wel dient in dit verband echter te worden opgemerkt dat de jonge, veel-belovende, stoer-Gereformeerde en bij velen hooggeachte Ds. Herman Hoeksema een voorname rol speelde in de beschuldiging en eindelijke veroordeeling van Dr. Jansen en zijn modernistische beschouwingen. Doch dit slechts in het voorbijgaan.

In onze gedachten gaan we echter even terug naar de Synode van de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk, gehouden in Kalamazoo, 1924. Deze synode had met het probleem der Gemeene Gratie te worstelen. Gemeene Gratie kwestie werd op deze breedste vergadering der kerken gebracht door middel van classicale instructies, protesten enz. De synode heeft toen heel wat gedelibereerd maar kwam ten slotte dan toch tot aan finaal besluit dat uit vier stukken bestond. Het eerste stuk bevat de Drie Punten. Het tweede stuk geeft het oordeel der synode over de beschouwingen der leeraren Danhof en Hoeksema. In het derde stuk richt de synode een vermaning aan de beschuldigden, Danhof en Hoeksema, en aan de kerken als mede tot de kerken een Getuigenis. En het vierde stuk bevat een verklaring, waarom de synode geen uitspraak wilde doen in betrekking tot het stuk der Gemeene Gratie, noch ook een commissie wilde benoemen, om meer bezonderlijk deze zaak in studie te nemen." (S. B. Deel II, bl. 13).

De korte inhoud der drie punten is als volgt: Punt I leert: "Dat behalve de zaligmakende genade Gods die Hij bewijst aan de uitverkorenen ten eeuwigen leven er ook nog een zekere gunst of genade is die God bewijst aan Zijne schepselen in het algemeen." — Deze

zin kent elk Protestantsch Gereformeerd mensch, en bij dezen tijd ook al het Wachter-lezend publiek, wel van buiten. Punt II leert: "Dat God door de algemeene werkingen Zijns Geestes, zonder het hart te vernieuwen, de zonde in haar onverhinderd uitbreken beteugelt". De natuurlijk mensch is, dank zij deze beteugelende werking des Geestes, heel wat beter dan ge eigenlijk zoudt verwachten. Punt III leert, en dat natuurlijk in nauw verband met en als gevolg van Punt II, dat de onwedergeboren mensch burgerlijk goed kan doen, dat ook werkelijk goed is voor God."

Het dient echter te worden opgemerkt deze synode eischte geen onderteekening van de Drie Punten, eischte zelfs van de betrokken broeders H. Hoeksema en H. Danhof wier Schriftbeschouwing op sommige kardinaal Gereformeerde punten, men hiermede had veroordeeld, geen enkele belofte of schuldbelijdenis.

De teerling was echter geworpen. De voornoemde leeraren gevoelden zich gebonden voor God en hun geweten om de Drie Punten die wezenlijk het hart der Gereformeerde waarheid aantasten te bestrijden op alle mogelijke en wettige manieren. En toen traden de Classes Oost en West der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken tusschenbeide. Wat de synode niet had durven bestaan dat deden de Classes. Men eischte van de betrokken leeraren stilzwijgen over of onderteekening van de Drie Punten. Aan deze Classicale besluiten konden de betrokken leeraren zich echter ook niet onderwerpen, en dat om des beginsels wille. En toen vond al heel spoedig plaats wat vandaag nog een zwarte bladzijde is uit de geschiedenis der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk, namelijk de schorsing en kort daarna afzetting uit hun ambt van de bovengenoemde leeraren met hunne respectieve kerkeraden door Classis Oost en West. We zouden heel wat bijzonderheden kunnen aanhalen uit de geschiedenis om dit alles verder en breeder toe te lichten, doch dit ligt thans buiten ons

De respectieve uitgeworpen kerkeraden vergaderden tezamen voor het eerst op 29 Jan., 1925. Men besloot om zich te beroepen op de synode van 1926. Ruim een maand later, 6 Maart, werd de tweede gecombineerde kerkeraadsvergadering gehouden en op deze vergadering besloot men tot voorloopige organizatie als gecombineerde kerkeraden, op de basis van de "Acta van Overeenkomst". In deze Acta spraken de drie kerkeraden, Kalamazoo I, Hope en Eastern Ave. onder anderen uit: a. "Dat ze als hun gemeenschappelijke basis aannamen de Drie Formulieren van Eenigheid en de Kerkenorde van de Gereformeerde Kerken. b. Dat men gemeenschappelijk zou appelleeren op de Synode van 1926. c. Men sprak uit dat men zich vereenigde als kerkeraden met het doel: (1) Om zich te beroepen op de synode van 1926 in betrekking tot de actie van Classes Grand Rapids Oost en West. (2) Om besluiten te nemen betreffende die zaken waarbij men

gemeenschappelijk belang had. (3) Om gemeenschappelijk te besluiten aangaande die dingen die betrekking hebben op het geven van informatie en advies aan anderen die buiten de organizatie van de kerkeraden stonden." Men was tot deze stap van voorloopige organizatie gekomen, en dat wel in dezen vorm: 1. Omdat de synode de drie ongereformeerde punten had aangenomen. 2. Omdat de Classis het recht van discussie en interpretatie van de Drie Punten aan de veroordeelden ontzegde. 3. Omdat men uitgeworpen was uit de gemeenschap der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken. 4. Omdat men zich niet mocht onderwerpen aan de besluiten der Classes, betreffende de afzetting enz. 5. Omdat velen buiten de respectieve gemeenten ook niet konden berusten in de Synodale en Classicale besluiten, beide uit leerstellig en kerkrechterlijk oogpunt.

Deze vergadering besloot ook om Ds. H. Hoeksema aan te stellen als de persoon: 1. Die de belangstellenden buiten eigen kring zou inlichten betreffende de dingen die hadden plaats gegrepen. 2. Om de leerstellige beteekenis der Drie Punten te verklaren en toe te lichten. 3. Om belangstellenden in kennis te stellen met eigen actie in de Acta van Overeenkomst. 4. Om met hulp en advies te dienen degenen die zich bij ons wilden aansluiten als afzonderlijke gemeenten.

Uit deze besluiten blijkt dus duidelijk het leerstellige standpunt der uitgeworpenen, alsmede dat de uitgeworpen broeders onmidde!lijk overtuigd waren van de noodzakelijkheid van zendingsarbeid.

Het gevo'g van een en ander was dat spoedig daarna op onderscheidene plaatsen gemeenten werden georganizeerd. Officieel heeten onze Kerken toen nog Protesteerende Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken.

Het beroep op de synode van 1926 werd van de hand gewezen, gelijk verwacht kon worden. En zoo kwamen onze kerken dan tot permanente organizatie op de Gecombineerde Kerkeraadsvergadering van Nov. 1926. Onze kerken organizeerden toen als Classis en de kerken noemden zich Protestantsch Gereformeerde Kerken. De complete organizatie van onze kerken greep natuurlijk plaats verleden jaar door de splitsing van de eene Classis in Classis Oost en West, en onze eerste Synodale vergadering werd gehouden in Mei 1940.

En zoo zijn wij dan historisch Protestantsch Gereformeerd geworden. Wij hebben niet een ander kerkverband gezocht noch gewild, maar men heeft ons daartoe gedwongen. Wij konden niet Gereformeerd zijn in de Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerk. En nog pas dezen zomer heeft de Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerk haar standpunt van 1924 en 1926 gehandhaafd door op onze vermaning en ons verzoek afwijzend te beschikken, uitsprekende dat de officieele besluiten dier kerk aangaande onze twist met moeder kunnen worden gevonden in de Acta der Synodi.

Aan dit kort geschiedkundig overzicht dient, vooral bij deze gelegenheid, nog één ding te worden toegevoegd. Onder de voorzienige leiding Gods is het de jubilaris geweest die het leeuwenaandeel heeft gehad in het ontstaan, het voortbestaan en het nog zijn van de Protestantsch Gereformeerde Kerken. De geboorte van onze kerk laat zich niet denken zonder Ds. Hoeksema. Hij stond in het voorste gelid in de voorgeschiedenis, in de hitte van den strijd en in de groei, ontwikkeling en vastere fundeering van onze Kerken. We willen niet roemen in menschen en we mogen niet de daden bezingen van het schepsel dat minder is dan niets en ijdelheid, maar wel danken we onzen God voor wat Hij onze kerken in Zijn vrijmachtig welbehagen in den jubilaris heeft geschonken. Groot was het werk Gods dat Hij door Ds. Hoeksema voor onze kerken heeft willen tot stand brengen. Daar danken we God voor, ook vandaag.

II. Wat beteekent het om Protestantsch Gereformeerd te zijn, wat gelooven die menschen eigenlijk en wat voor leer houden ze er op na? Het maakt heel wat verschil aan wien ge deze vraag stelt, een vijand of een vriend, iemand die het weet of die het denkt te weten. Als al onze menschen hier eens een zuiver antwoord op konden geven dan hadden we al heel wat gewonnen. Helaas, de ervaring leert mij dat dit echter niet het geval is. Zooals dat met iedere beweging het geval is zoo is het ook ons vergaan. In den loop der jaren hebben zich menschen bij ons aangesloten niet uit beginsel maar uit bijoogmerken, en ook wel om heelemaal geen bepaalde reden, althans men zou er zich zelf geen rekenschap van kunnen geven. Nu kan iemand die niet Protestantsch Gereformeerd is en zich toch bij ons aansluit het nog wel worden. En dat gebeurt ook meer dan eens. Maar er zijn en blijven ook altijd menschen in eigen kring, en die zullen er hier ook wel zijn, die van die soort aanhangers zijn, men weet zelf niet waarom. Men heet dan wel Protestantsch Gereformeerd maar men is het niet, de vlag dekt de lading niet. Een meelooper, 'k denk hier nog niet aan tegenwerkers, een meelooper kan u moeilijk zeggen wat het beteekent om Protestantsch Gereformeerd te zijn en wat nu karakteristiek Protestantsch Gereformeerd is.

Er zijn heel wat Christelijk Gereformeerde menschen die u op de vraag: "Wat zijn Protestantsche Gereformeerde menschen, wat leeren die lui," zouden antwoorden: "Dat zijn eigenlijk menschen die in de grondwaarheden Gereformeerd zijn, doch met een sterke neiging tot eenzijdigheid." Zoo ongeveer heeft de Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerk haar oordeel officieel over ons uitgesproken. Als ge dan echter begint na te vorschen en te vragen dan is er nog al heel wat eenzijdigheid, zoo veel dat men kan die menschen in een goeie Gereformeerde Kerk niet gebruiken.

Er zijn ook heel wat menschen uit eigen kring en

daarbuiten die zeggen: het kenmerkende van Protestantsch Gereformeerde menschen is dat zij de Algemeene Genade loochenen. Nu is het natuurlijk waar, dat doen we. Maar dat is toch feitelijk iets negatiefs en als ge niet meer zegt dan zegt ge nog weinig. Immers de vraag doet zich onmiddellijk op: "Als ge niet in algemeene genade gelooft, wat gelooft ge dan we!." Wij moeten dus nog meer zeggen, en heel wat ook.

Wij noemen ons zelf Protestantsch Gereformeerd. Is dat nog iets anders dan Gereformeerd? Ja en neen. Neen, omdat wij ons daarmee historisch plaatsen op de basis van de Gereformeerde Kerken der Reformatie van de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw gelijk de leer dier vaderen ligt uitgedrukt in de Gereformeerde belijdenisschriften. In dien zin hebben we al een heele geschiedenis achter de rug en beroepen ons telkens weer op de vaderen. Anderzijds is het toch ook zoo dat er heel wat Kerkgenootschappen zijn die officieel staan op de basis van de Gereformeerde Kerken der Reformatie. Denk in dit verband maar aan de Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, en hun naamgenoot hier in Amerika, de Oud-Gereformeerden hier te lande, en in het oude Vaderland, de Hongaarsche Gereformeerde Kerken, de Reformed Church of America. enz. Allen Gereformeerd, en allen beroepen zich op de Gereformeerde vaderen. Maar zijn die menschen nu ook a'lemaal Protestantsch Gereformeerd, nog afgedacht van het feit dat ze tot een ander kerkverband behooren? En het antwoord is: Wel neen, dat volgt daar heelemaal nog niet uit. Men mag het zelfs nog al graag eens voor stellen dat de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland precies hetzelfde leeren als onze Kerken. Nu is dat natuurlijk ook niet waar. Ik kan een beetje uit ervaring spreken, want ik ben groot gebracht in de Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland, en voorts is het vooral de laatste jaren uit de Gereformeerde Pers in Nederland wel duidelijk geworden dat vele Gereformeerde menschen in de Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland niet belijden en zouden willen belijden wat wij belijden.

Maar vraagt ge: wat dan, worden we dan nog ongereformeerd? Neen, maar we zijn Protestantsch Gereformeerd, en dat "Protestantsch" moet er wel terdege bij. Zeker, we zijn uit de Gereformeerde lijn voortgekomen, we hebben de aloude Gereformeerde belijdenis lief, we beroepen ons voor vele dingen op de Gereformeerde vaderen. Maar er is toch meer. We zijn vooruit gegaan in de Gereformeerde lijn, we hebben door strijd en worsteling vorderingen gemaakt in de Gereformeerde leer. Wij nemen als Protestantsch Gereformeerd Kerken niet alleen een geheel eenige positie in, maar we zijn ook in den ouden Gereformeerden koers vooruit gegaan. Leerstukken die bij ons b.v den nadruk ontvangen en waarvan wij overtuigd zijn dat we er een duidelijker, klaarder Schriftuurlijk-Gereformeerder voorstelling van hebben dan onze vaderen die in het algemeen hadden, zijn o.a., 1. De leer van Gods absolute souvereiniteit, zonder dat we door een achterdeurtje het dualisme weer binnen halen. 2. De leer dat de genade particulier is, zonder een Arminiaansch aanbod of een Pelagiaansche bekeeringsprediking en met de handhaving van de volstrekte verantwoordelijkheid van den mensch. 3. De totale verdorvenheid van den mensch, zonder dat we hem toch nog weer een beetje opknappen door een zekere dosis algemeene genade. 4. Onze geheel bijzondere en zoo in alle opzichten Schriftuurlijk-Gereformeerde verbondsbeschouwing en alles wat daarmee in verband staat. 5. De voorzienigheid Gods, ook in betrekking tot de zonde. Deze, andere en aanverwante leerstukken heeft het Gode vergunt ons een inzicht in te geven gelijk onze vaderen en andere tegenwoordig zich noemende Gereformeerde Kerken dat niet hebben. En het is tevens karakteristiek Protestantsch Gereformeerd. vooral hier in Amerika, dat wij temidden van het veranderde kerkrecht vasthouden aan het aloude Gereformeerde beginsel van de plaatselijke autonome kerk en dat een meerdere vergadering geen hoogere macht Door dat de Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken dit aloude beginsel verlieten hebben ze ons in 't verleden veel onrecht aangedaan en het ontstaan onzer kerken verhaast.

We zouden nog meer kunnen noemen doch laat het voorgaande voldoende zijn om duidelijk te maken wat het beteekent om *Protestantsch* Gereformeerd te zijn.

Wij Protestantsch Gereformeerden hebben een eigen taak, een eigen nuanceering, een geheel eenige Schriften levensbeschouwing die ge, althans in die mate en graad, vergeefsch zoekt in andere kringen van belijdende christenen, ingesloten de Gereformeerden in den breederen zin des woords.

Ik moet kort zijn, maar ik moet dit toch zeggen: Dat wij Protestantsch Gereformeerd geworden zijn in onze Schrift-, levens- en wereldbeschouwing, hebben we naast God aan den jubilaris te danken. God gaf den jubilaris een diep inzicht in de Schrift en hij a's niemand anders in onze kringen heeft de Gereformeerde beginselen van het Woord gezien, gegrepen, ontvouwd, toegelicht in woord en geschrift. En toen begonnen wij, door de werking van Gods genade ook te zien, te denken, na te praten en met hem meer en meer positief belijden dat deze beginselen waarlijk de zuivere Gereformeerde leer zijn. En dat heeft niet Ds. Hoeksema bewerkt, maar dat heeft God gedaan.

III. Ik ben toegekomen aan mijn laatste hoofdgedachte: "Hoe blijven wij Protestantsch Gereformeerd". In het licht van wat reeds gezegd is en ook met het oog op de mij toegemeten tijd, kunnen we kort zijn. Een volk dat zijn geschiedenis niet kent heeft geen echte vaderlands-liefde; een kerk die haar geschiedenis niet kent heeft geen kerkbesef. En met het kennen van onze geschiedenis bedoel ik het kennen dier geschiedenis als het werk en de wegen Gods waardoor Hij onze

kerken tot het aanzijn riep om de zaak van Zijn verbond te vertegenwoordigen in deze wereld. Onze kinderen moeten inderdaad weten dat onze wordingsgeschiedenis was niet een kwestie van kerkje-spe'en maar van beginsel-worsteling waarin het ging om de handhaving en voortplanting van de aloude Gereformeerde leer der souvereine genade.

In de tweede plaats, wij moeten de Gereformeerde beginselen kennen. En dat is alleen mogelijk door ze in liefde te bestudeeren. Wij moeten inderdaad kerkelijke leiders hebben die voorop gaan, die ons onderwijzen, die naspeuren de rijkdom der Schrift, de beginselen voor ons ontvouwen. Maar we hebben hier allen een taak overeenkomstig het ambt aller geloovigen. Als wij kerkleden aan de 'sit-down strike' gaan. ons niet laten onderwijzen, ons de specifiek Protestantsch Gereformeerde beginselen niet indenken, niet doen aan zelfstudie, zoodat het Gereformeerd beginsel 'part en parcel' van onze ziel wordt, dan geeft al het preeken, praten, schrijven, onderwijzen, niets. — Ken uw geschiedenis, ken uw beginsel. Wij moeten de Gereformeerde hoofdwaarheden kunnen droomen, en in betrekking tot alle probleemen en vraagstukken goede Gereformeerde voelhorens hebben. Als we spreken van wij Protestantsch Gereformeerden dan moeten we ook weten wat dat inhoud, anders dan zijn we gelijk aan een luidende schel en een klinkend metaal.

In de derde plaats, we moeten het immer weer als een voorrecht achten en de zegen Gods over ons dat wij Protestantsch Gereformeerd zijn. Dat is niet aan ons te danken, dat ligt niet aan den jubilaris, maar dat is het werk der genade Gods in ons. Dat wij zulk een rijke waarheid hebben, dat hebben we aan God te danken die ons gaf verlichte oogen des verstands om die waarheid te zien, te kennen en lief te hebben.

In de vierde plaats, we moeten de Protestantsch Gereformeerde waarheid beleven. Adeldom verplicht. De grooter de geestelijke schatten de grooter is ook onze verantwoordelijkheid. Het is voor ons vaak nog niet zoo moeilijk om het beginsel te zien en om de lijnen door te trekken, maar heelaas als het op het beleven aankomt dan komt de moeilijkheid ook. Het moet worden erkend dat het beleven van het Protestantsch Gereformeerd beginsel ontzettend moeilijk is en dat wordt ook nog hoe langer hoe moeilijker. De moeilijkheid doet echter niets af aan den eisch: 'Zijt daders des Woords.' Leer en leven behooren bij elkaar. En laat ons toch nooit een ongeregelde levenswandel goed trachten te praten met de dooddoener: "Och, ziet u daaruit blijkt zoo duidelijk dat we nog maar een klein beginsel van de volmaakte gehoorzaamheid bezitten." Als wij ons Protestantsch Gereformeerd noemen dan moeten we ook als Protestantsch Gereformeerden leven, dat verwacht de buitenstaander niet alleen, maar dat verwacht, dat eischt God ook van ons.

God eischt een verbondsmatig leven en een verbondsmatige opvoeding.

Tenslotte, om Protestantsch Gereformeerd te blijven daartoe is ook noodig dat we onze beginselen propageeren door het woord, door geschrift, door onzen wandel in de wereld, door zendingsarbeid buiten onze kringen.

Bekwame onze God ons tot die taak. Spare Hij den jubilaris nog voor jaren tot het welzijn onzer kerken. Beangstigend veel heeft God aan Ds. Hoeksema geschonken. Beangstigend groot is zijne verantwoordelijkheid. Zij deze jubileumdag voor hem en ons nog een inspiratie en een spoorslag om voort te gaan op het eens betreden pad. De Heere make ons getrouw in alle dingen en Hij geve ons genade om te volharden ten einde toe. En wie roeme, ook vandaag, die roeme in den Heere.

Ik heb gezegd.

Rev. J. D. de Jong.



1900-1940

On September 20, 1940, the Lord willing, our dear parents,

CORNELIUS PASTOOR

and

ANNA PASTOOR nee Doezema

hope to commemorate their 40th wedding anniversary.

We, their children extend to them our loving congratulations and acknowledge God's blessings. It is our hope and prayer that they may be spared for each other and for us for many years.

Their Children:

Mr. and Mrs. Theo. Helmus
Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Pastoor
Mr. and Mrs. Wm. C. Pastoor
Mr. and Mrs. Otto Huizenga
and 12 Grandchildren.

812 Sherman St., S. E. Grand Rapids, Mich.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The new address of the Treasurer, Mr. R. Schaafsma, is 1101 Hazen St., S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan, telephone 34774.

Rev. Hoeksema's Anniversary and its Significance for our Churches

It is indeed an occasion for great rejoicing that has brought us together here this day. It is approximately twenty-five years ago that our highly respected, and greatly beloved brother in Christ, the Rev. Herman Hoeksema, was called and ordained unto the ministry of the Word and of the holy sacraments. In him the Lord has given unto His Church an outstanding and able minister of His Word, and equipped him with singular gifts wherewith to labor in that ministry. By the grace of God he did not squander or bury the ta ents entrusted unto him by his Lord, but labored faithfully and diligently in the calling unto which his Lord had called him. Even the boldest enemy would not dare to deny that he has spent himself in diligent service. He has always and uncompromisingly applied unto himself the saying, which he often he'd before us as students, "het is beter om te verslijten dan om te verroesten." We, as Protestant Reformed Churches, and especially we who are now his co-laborers in the ministry of the Word, have greatly profited by his instruction, and feel that we owe him a great debt of gratitude. Therefore it affords us great pleasure to extend to him our sincere and heartfelt congratulations on this twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination to the ministry of the Word of God, and add the hope and prayer that the Lord may continue to spare him for many years for his family and for our churches.

Our joy, however, is tempered with a feeling of sadness. The churches for which he had prepared himself to labor in the ministry, and in the which he was also called and ordained unto that ministry, and which at first did not fail to recognize his many promising talents by bestowing upon him many distinguished and signal honors, ruthlessly and cruelly cast him out, when he was still on the very threshhold of his career. They sought to silence him long before he had reached the zenith of his latent powers. He, who was hailed as a great and outstanding leader, was soon despised as an outcast. We may well ask, why this sudden and abrupt change of attitude on the part of the Christian Reformed Churches? Why did the churches, in the which he was so signally honored, heap upon him their enmity, their hatred and scorn, which finally led to his shameful deposition? Was it because he became a heretic and sought to inculcate false doctrines? Indeed not! Even the very Synod of 1924, which laid the foundation and basis upon which he was ultimately suspended and finally deposed, was forced to confess that he was fundamentally reformed, and to this very day there is none who would dare to deny this. The very opposite was true. Just because, according to the 'Formula of Subscription', he so courageously, unflinchingly, and uncompromisingly fought against the heresies of Arminianism and worldliness, and defended the truths of God's absolute sovereignty, and of the antithesis of sin and grace, he heaped upon himself the scorn and enmity of the unfaithful and luke-warm Christian Reformed Churches.

Time does not permit us to go into detail, but let us briefly review the history of this case. It was a turbulent world twenty five years ago, when the Rev. H. Hoeksema was ordained into the ministry of the Word of God. Then, even as today, the world stood upon the threshold of a world-wide conflict. Then, as today, political, economic, moral and spiritual foundations were being shaken. In the midst of this turbulent world the Christian Reformed Churches, which for years had doctrinally been very weak, were being threatened with a stream of humanistic Arminianism, and of worldliness. Doctrinally, the truth of God's sovereign grace was being sacrificed upon the altar of Arminianism with its passion to save souls for Christ, so prevalent in the American church world, and the truth of the Antithesis was giving way to a synthetical attempt to amalgemate the church with the world, Jerusalem with Athens. Spiritually and morally there was a spirit of worldliness, which at that time was beginning to reveal itself, and now has reached a stage of overwhelming proportions, as became evident at their last synod, in connection with the investigations of Calvin College. It was the firm conviction of the Reverends Hoeksema and Danhof, and they based their convictions upon the Word of God, that in Common Grace, which at that time was but a prevalent theory, but since 1924 has become part of the official and accepted doctrines of the Christian Reformed Churches, in the wellknown 'Three Points', lay the fundamental cause of much of the worldliness and doctrinal unsoundness of these churches. because they warned against this theory of Common Grace, which virtually denies the truth of God's sovereignty and of man's total depravity, and which principally denies the truth of the Antithesis and lays the foundation for the amalgamation of the church and the world, and therefore refused to submit to the heresies contained in the 'Three Points', that they were suspended and finally deposed. No not because they were unreformed, neither because they were in disagreement with our Reformed standards, which we as Protestant Reformed Churches still maintain and love, but they were deposed because they were in disagreement with the heretical 'Three Points'.

Yet, also in this sad history, we acknowledge the Sovereign grace of our God. Even as Joseph said unto his brethren, thus also we as Protestant Reformed Churches may say, "they thought evil against us, but God meant it unto good". It was in the last analysis not man, but it was God that called the Protestant Reformed Churches into being, even though this does not leave the Christian Reformed Churches without

God realizes His eternal purposes, also in respect to His church, even through the wickedness and corruption of men. Thus it is always in the history of the church. It often seems as though the enemy harms the cause of God's kingdom in the midst of the world, but in reality they are but means whereby God realizes His eternal purposes. Heresies within the church have always inspired the militant church to a greater exercise of her faith; and worldliness within the church, has always spurred the faithful to greater watchfulness and prayer. If there had never been a heretic as Pelagius, a hierarchy of Roman Catholicism, a false teacher as Arminius, then there would never have been an Augustine, a Luther, a Gomarus or a Synod of Dordt. Even so the heresies contained in the 'Three Points' were a challenge to the Rev. Hoeksema and his colleagues. How firmly, heroically, and uncompromisingly they met this challenge to defend the truths of God's sovereign grace and man's total deprayity is a matter of history, and it is our hope and prayer that he as well as all of us may be faithful even unto death.

Rev. B. Kok.

Rev. Hoeksema's Anniversary and our Theological School

It is now 25 years ago that Rev. Hoeksema entered upon his career as minister of the gospel. It is this event in the life of our brother that we now commemorate. Rev. Hoeksema, as we all know, did not begin his ministry in the denomination of Protestant Reformed Churches. This cannot be, as 25 years ago the denomination of Protestant Reformed Churches did not exist. Our brother began his ministry in the denomination of Christian Reformed Churches. first charge was the Christian Reformed Church of 14th St., Holland, Mich. It was this congregation that instrumentally vested him with the office of minister of the gospel 25 years ago. This congregation was served approximately four years by him when he received and accepted a call to the Eastern Ave. Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids. When this congregation became the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Rev. Hoeksema had been a minister of the gospel approximately ten It means that the first 9 or 10 years of Rev. Hoeksema's ministry were spent in the denomination of Christian Reformed Churches and that he has been a minister in the denomination of Protestant Reformed Churches 16 years. Yet what we now commemorate, brings to mind the entrance of our brother upon his career of minster of the gospel approximately 25 years

It means that we bring to remembrance not merely that 16 years of service of our brother in the denomination of Prot. Ref. Churches, but also that preceding 9 years of service in the denomination of Chr. Ref. Churches. Why should we take no notice of these preceding 9 years? Why should these years be obliterated from our memory? They should not, certainly. They should be included in our contemplations, as we'l as the 16 years of ministry that followed them. For these preceding 9 years had great significance for our brother in particular, and for us all in general. These years belonged to the formative period of our brother's career as minister of the gospel. It was during these years that his eyes were opened to the fallacies of the common grace philosophy. It was during these years that he was prepared for that good fight, the fighting of which resulted in his and our expulsion from the fellowship of the Christian Reformed Churches. It was during these 9 years that he was joined as pastor to that brotherhood—the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids and his present charge—that by the mercy of God stood by him and fought with him from the beginning of that strife until the present time. So I say again, these first 9 years must not be excluded from our meditations today. To exclude them would be to take the stand that Rev. Hoeksema first began to exist for us when he, together with his consistory and the loyal members of his congregation were expelled from the denomination of the Christian Reformed Churches. And this stand is wrong.

And yet, however true it may be that these first 9 years of the brother's ministry should not be ignored, it is to these last 16 years of his ministry that we give greater attention. For these last 16 years comprise a period during which our brother's service especially concerned us. This period was ushered in by the following events: The expulsion of a number of officebearers, including Rev. Hoeksema, from the fellowship of the Christian Reformed Churches. The three congregations, Eastern Ave., Kalamazoo and Hope, Riverbend organizing on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity and temporarily adopting the name of Protesting Christian Reformed Churches. The reorganization approximately a year later of these same churches and a few others on the basis of these same forms of unity and the adoption by this new organization, federation of churches, of the name Protestant Reformed. There were still other events, namely, the opening of our School, and the formation of the Reformed Free Publishing Association, for the purpose of publishing The Standard Bearer. Of these events the outstanding one, the one of greatest significance is the coming into being of the denomination of Protestant Reformed Churches.

Now in this our denomination, federation of churches, our brother, the Rev. Hoeksema, occupies a

large place. In this federation of churches, he is and has been during the entire period of its existence, the leader—the leader in every one of its departments of activity. There is, to begin with, the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, the brother's present charge. He was the one to shepherd this flock during this entire period and until recently the only one. Then we have our Standard Bearer, a bi-monthly periodical. Of this publication he is and has been Editor-in-chief during this entire period. The lion share of the material that has appeared on the pages of this magazine came from his pen. Then we have our Theological School. He is one of the instructors in this school of ours. How large than the place which he has occupied in our circles during this period. And how manfold his labors. How numerous the duties of his office. How great his service.

Now it is especially this service which we this day commemorate. The commemoration of this service is the delightful task to which we resolved to address ourselves when we decided to celebrate the brother's entrance upon his career of minister of the gospel. Now as this service cannot very well be separated from Rev. Hoeksema, it follows that what we say of this service of our brother's ministry in our midst, concerns our brother, the Reverend Hoeksema, must necessarily reflect upon his person. To speak well of this service, rendered by our brother, is to speak well of him. To voice our appreciation of this service is to voice our appreciation of him. To honor this service is to honor him. To set forth the significance of this service is to set forth the significance of him. To thank and to praise God for this service is to praise and thank God for him. This being true, would it then not be better for us to keep silence of this service altogether. In other words, is it right for us to voice words of appreciation of a man and to that man's face. Is it right for us to recognize publicly the worth of a man, recognize the worth of a man in that man's hearing and to his face. And my answer: Yes, this is right. The apostle Paul set forth the worth of his colleagues to their faces. His epistles are interspersed with words of appreciation about his co-laborers in the kingdom. And some of these words were addressed by him directly to these laborers. In the 16th chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans I come upon passages which read, "Greet Priscilla and Aquilla, my helpers in Christ Jesus; Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I gave thanks, but a'so all the churches of the Gentiles." And again, "Salute my well-beloved Epenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ." And again, "Salute Andronicus and Junia my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me." And again, "Greet Mary, who bestowed much labor upon us." And in what glowing terms did Paul speak of Timothy's devotion to Christ and

His church. To the church at Philippi Paul wrote this about Timothy, "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with his father, he has served with me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently." Paul, it is plain, knew how to appreciate his fellowworkers. He recognized the worth of these workers. and did not deem it unbecoming to set forth their worth by the written and spoken word when there was occasion for this. Why should it be wrong to esteem and recognize the worth of a man of God? So far from the truth it is that such a doing on our part is wrong, that it is the will of God that we do esteem and recognize the worth of his servants. For consider that these servants are His gifts to us,—gifts which He bestows in His love and mercy. Thus not to esteem these servants, to be unwilling to know and to recognize their worth is to despise God's gracious The apostle understood this. He thus knew gifts. and recognized the worth of his fellow-laborers. And to his recognition of their worth he also gave expression.

We should notice however, that what Paul did not do is to glory in man, glory in these fellow-workmen of his, end with their spiritual powers and talents in these laborers. To the contrary, Paul gloried in God, in the cross of Christ. He ended in God with the talents and spiritual capacities of himself and of his fellow-laborers. Attend once more to this word from his pen, "Greet Priscilla and Aquilla my helpers in Christ. . . ." Mark you, the apostle calls these Christian people his helpers in Christ. The phrase in Christ speaks volumes. It tells us that Paul by the mercy of God took cognizance of the fact that in themselves, apart from Christ, Priscilla and Aquilla were nothing, that of all their gifts, Christ, in whom all fulness bodily dwells, was the seat and channel, that thus Priscilla and Aquilla were God's workmanship, created unto good works in Christ Jesus. And therefore Paul's esteeming his fellow-laborers, his recognizing their worth, his giving expression to this recognization was indeed a good work—a work in which God could and did delight. For Paul's esteeming his fellow-laborers was at bottom an action that consisted in his esteeming, glorifying and praising God, not man but God.

Let us now return again to ourselves. We have congregated here to commemorate the ministry of our brother, Rev. Hoeksema. We shall recognize, acknowledge, and concentrate upon the worth of this ministry in our midst, the worth of this ministry for the cause of God as we are privileged to represent it. Doing so, we do a good work. For our brother is God's gift to us, and it is God's will that we appreciate His

gifts to us, know their true value. Not to do so is sin. However, we may not and by the mercy of God will not glory in man. We may not end with our brother and with his endowments in him. To do so would be to deify, to worship a mere man. And how sinful this would be. For man in himself is nothing. God is all. We must end with our brother, with his ministry and gifts solely in God. And this by His mercy we will do. We will consider that apart from Christ, God's servants are nothing. We will consider that God's servants, that our brother is God's creature created unto good works in Christ Jesus. And doing so, our concentrating upon our brother's ministry, our setting forth the worth and significance of this ministry by word of mouth will be a good work indeed because at bottom it will be a work consisting in our praising and adoring God for what He gave us in our brother.

These remarks of mine thus far made, you must regard as forming a kind of introduction to my speech that now follows, and not only to my speech but to all the rest of the speeches to be given this afternoon and in this evening. In congregating in this place to commemorate the past ministry of our brother, we must realize what we do and have a clear understanding of the meaning of our doing. For consider once more that we are to speak about a man, about the ministry of a man and set forth the worth of that ministry. Therefore when I set myself to the task of preparing an address for this occasion, the question arose in my soul whether the act of commemorating and celebrating the ministerial career of a servant of God might not be an act that as such is wrong. Might it not be an act that of necessity involves us in the sin of glorying in man. However, thinking into the matter. I quickly perceived that the act as such is not wrong, that the act can indeed be a good work in that it can be done to the praise of God. And when done by God's believing people, who end with all that they are and possess in God, it is a good work, not of course a work uncontaminated by sin, but a work essentially good. That this might be plain to us at the outset, I made these remarks.

Let us now concentrate on our brother's ministry, service, and on that part of it which he performed in our Theological School. I was asked to confine myself to this part of his service. Let me then set out with the statement that we have a school. As has already been said, the opening of this school, our theological seminary, was one of the events that ushered in a new period in the life of our brother and in the life of us all. Yes we have a school where young men are trained for the office of ministers of the gospel. For as Protestant Reformed people, we believe in a trained ministry. Let us direct our attention for a moment to our school. There never has been and is not now anything about our school that renders it

attractive to the flesh. Our school always has been small and is small today. Judged by the standards of the world, it is and always has been without form and stature. At the time of its establishment it had but three instructors. A year later this number was reduced to two. Since then this number has not been increased. Our school has but two instructors today, as we all know. From the time of its establishment, our school has been without a building of its own. Most of the time, the instructors, since the establishment of our school, have been meeting with their students in a basement. At present instructors and students come together in the basement of Fuller Ave. Church,—a very good basement indeed, but still a basement. Perhaps we should speak here of church parlors. Our school has always had a small number of students. Most of the students who came to our school since the day of its establishment were persons without a colledge training. Thus judged by the standards of the word, our school is not great, has little significance. More must be said. In the eyes of men, but let me be more specific, in the eyes of our opponents, our school is an object of hatred and ridicule. As is our churches, our Standard Bearer and our Missionary minister, so our school, — it is a thorn in the flesh of our opponents. They would be glad should our school disappear from the face of the earth. And this has its explanation. Our school was born out of strife, our of controversy. To be specific, our school was born out of the common grace controversy, —a controversy that resulted in our expulsion from the fe'llowship of the Christian Reformed Churches. Then we came into being as a denomination of Protestant Reformed Churches. As churches, we resolved that we had to have a school, a theological seminary of our own,—a school uncontaminated, as to its instruction. by the pernicious philosophy of common grace. We fe't that such a school was indispensible to the wellbeing of our churches. It was simply out of the question, that we permit our own men, our own aspirants to the office of minister of the gospel, to receive their training in an institution, school, other than our own. We felt that should we permit this, we as churches would have no future. For we felt and knew that none of these other schools measure up to even the chief and fundamental requirement of a safe seminary, namely, soundness of doctrine. We felt therefore that we needed a school of our own,—a school controlled and supervised and ruled by ourselves, by our own churches. Well, God has given us such a school,—a school of our own. And we insist that our school be reformed, thoroughly reformed in its instruction, that this instruction be given in complete agreement with our reformed confession. And we can't be too vigilant. For the men who are to fill our pulpits come from this school. It stands to reason therefore that the deterioration of our school in life and

doctrine would necessarily go hand in hand with deterioration of life and doctrine in our churches. our school must be a bulwark of the truth, as we possess it in Christ and as we give expression to it in our reformed confessions. Well, it is our conviction that our school has, from the day of its establishment been a stronghold of the truth. It is our conviction that our school is still a stronghold of the truth. Certainly, its instructon is unmixed with the pernicious philosophy of common grace. That instruction is truly reformed. And this precisely is the secret of strength of our school. Therefore our school has significance and influence despite what men, our opponents may think and say about it. In their hearts our opponents well realize that our school is an institution to be reckoned with. They are afraid of our school, as they are also afraid of our Standard Bearer and of our churches, and let me add, of our missionary minister whom we now have in the field. They are afraid of our school. They fear it. And they hate it. Also our school is a thorn in their flesh. This is fact—a fact which we tell with sorrow in our hearts. We certainly do wish that it were not so for their sakes. Our school is hated and dreaded because of the character of its instruction, because in that instruction God appears as a being Who is God and none else. And therefore, such is our assurance, our school is an object of endearment to God. He has blessed our school and is blessing our school as His very own gift to us. And the evidence of this is that our school is what it is, a stronghold of the truth. And I don't think that I would be overshooting the mark should I say that our school is the stronghold of the truth in this land of ours. Let us then be grateful to God for our school. Let it be also an object of endearment to us. Let us love our school and support it through our prayers and material gifts. Let us realize what God gave us in our school.

Well, our brother, Rev. Hoeksema, teaches in our school. He has done so since the very day of its establishment. He is one of its two instructors. And the place he occupies in our school is large indeed. For our school he, as God's workmanship, had great significance. What is that significance? Let me state this in few words. As God has made him, prepared him for us, for our churches, and in particular for our school, so God through him, our brother, has made our school, has made it to be what it is. This is not saying too much. What I say is the truth. Through him, God has made our school, and thus has made, formed, the ministers who occupy our pulpits. On account of the talents and capacities with which God has so richly endowed our brother, this is precisely his significance for our school. The branches of study which our brother teaches in our school are of all the branches taught there, the most important. I think now of such branches of study as dogmatics. And for the teaching of these branches of study, God had eminently qualified

him. I need not enlarge on this certainly. And with what zeal has he given himself to our school during all these past years. We may say this. As has already been explained, it is God's will that we value what He gives us in His servants. And saying this, in setting forth the significance of our brother for our school, we mean not to glory in man and we do not. Man is nothing. God is all. And his servants are His workmanship, I say it again. We therefore glory in God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and praise Him for what He gives us in His servants. And this is what we do as believing people through our commemorating the ministry of our brother. We say to God that we are grateful to Him for His gifts and end with them in Him. And of course it is our wish and prayer that our brother may be spared many years also for our school. Our school needs him. Yet, of course, this must not be interpreted to mean that God is dependent on him for the keeping of our school in its present state. God is dependent on no one for He is God and being God He creates His own instruments and agents. He cares for His own cause. And the cause which we are as school and as churches may represent is His cause, so we need have no worry. Yet we should understand that this does not mean that should God take our brother from us, He would raise up in his stead a man that measured up to his stature. Therefore our prayer and wish is that our brother may be spared for our school for many years to come.

> I have said, Rev. G. M. Ophoff.

A Voice out of the Congregation

Mr. Chairman, Guest of Honor, Brothers and Sisters:

The committee of arrangements for this festive gathering requested me to say a few words at this meeting and speak for the congregation.

In the past I have noticed that at special occasions our pastor, who otherwise is an expert in extemporaneous speaking, writes out his speech and partly reads what he has to say. And as this occasion is of a special nature, I presume that you will allow me to also read what I have to say.

In the first place let me begin with a word of congratulation. Our congregation is very happy in extending to you Rev. Hoeksema its most hearty congratulations on this your 25th anniversary as a minister of the Gospel. At this same time we express our earnest hope and desire that it may please the Lord our God to spare you, and to give you strength and power so you may be enabled to continue in this glorious task of preaching the Gospel.

We thank you most heartily for all your efforts and patience to unfold unto us as a congregation the mysteries of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, so that we may grow in His knowledge. We thank you for all what you have done for us in the past and we pray that the Lord in the day of His coming may give you the reward of a faithful servant.

Above all we give thanks unto our faithful covenant God for the great gift He has given unto us as a congregation in giving unto us such a faithful servant. And as we have learned also through your ministry that we never should end in man nor glorify him for his deeds, we would end this congratulation with the well-known words, Soli Deo Gloria.

However as God usually makes use of means to work out His plans and to impart His wisdom unto us creatures of His hand, so it has pleased Him also in this case to use Rev. Hoeksema for the welfare of His congregation at Fuller Ave., and for the furthering of His Kingdom at large. And it must be considered a great privilege to be deemed worthy to serve in this capacity and to be allowed to carry on this work for 25 years.

No doubt when you look back and review the way of these 25 years, you will confess that weakness and much shortcomings characterized your labor, for we are such imperfect servants. Nevertheless much joy has been experienced throughout these years for our God gives joy already in this life to his faithful servants and in the great day of His coming the crown of glory.

Since practically 21 years of your ministerial career has been spent among us of the Fuller Ave. congregation, it cannot be considered amiss that we somewhat review these 21 years, at least the committee must have had this in mind when they asked me to give somewhat of an historical sketch. I will try and comply with this request.

It has been my privilege to know Rev. Hoeksema for some years before he came to Grand Rapids as pastor of the then Eastern Ave. Chr. Ref. Church. Even when he was a student and lived on Sherman St.. I lived across the street from him. And even later when he was in his last year at Calvin he one day became my next door neighbor when he moved into the apartment over Trompen's Store on Eastern Ave. At that time I did have no idea that later on I should become even more intimately acquainted with him. For a few years after Rev. Hoeksema entered the ministry and accepted the call of 14th Street Church in Holland, Mich., we somewhat lost connection with him. However by way of The Banner we kept in touch with him and it did not take very long before the Church at large found out and recognized the gifts and talents which God had bestowed upon this young preacher. And so when Eastern Ave. became vacant it was no wonder that Rev. Hoeksema was placed on

trio and was called by this church. Between parenthesis, no doubt, you will allow me to mention a little incident. At the time when Rev. Groen had a physical breakdown and was trying to recuperate at Harderwijk. I was delegated with an other brother elder to visit Rev. Groen and to convey the greetings of the consistory to him. On the way over to Holland many topics in connection with Rev. Groen and the congregation were the subject of our discussion, and questions such as, 'how soon will we be placed before the possibi ity of having to call another minister, and who would be the man who could fill Rev. Groen's shoes.' I well remember that this elder said to me, I have gone over Het Jaarboekje three times already and examined every name. I came to the conclusion that the only man for Eastern Ave. is Rev. Hoeksema from Holland. He combines several of the qualifications required for a man such as we need. He is a good speaker, a young man, strong and vigorous and ambitious. I served with him on a committee of our last Synod and became somewhat acquainted with him; he not only possesses the above named qualities, but he is also modest and a hard worker." How a man that gave such recommendation could later oppose Rev. Hoeksema as he did, has been a riddle to me.

It was not long after this discussion took place, that Eastern Ave. was placed before the actual fact of having to call a pastor. Rev. Groen had received his emeritization on account of disability and the consistory made a trio which was duly presented to the congregation, and Rev. Hoeksema was called, practically by a unanimous vote. I remember very well that the consistory decided to pay a visit to Rev. Hoeksema and the entire consistory one evening boarded the Holland Interurban and called upon Rev. Hoeksema, pleading with him to accept the call. Before long we received his reply notifying us that he accepted our call. Consistory and congregation were happy, and glad that the man of their choice had accepted the call and thanked God that He had prospered their work.

Word came that Rev. Hoeksema would come soon. due to family circumstances. The parsonage was made ready and under supervision of Mrs. Harry Van Dam and Mrs. S. G. Schaafsma the furniture was unpacked and arranged in the parsonage; a dinner was prepared and in the late afternoon Rev. Hoeksema and family They were welcomed at the station by a arrived. committee of the consistory consisting of Harry Van Dam and myself, and taken to the parsonage. were happy and were anxiously waiting for the further necessary steps which should unite us as a congregation and pastor. During the week prior to Feb. 29, 1920, Rev. Hoeksema was duly installed as pastor of Eastern Ave. Rev. Tanis, Rev. R. B. Kuiper and Rev. J. Vander Mey participating in the services, and on Sunday, Feb. 29, our new pastor preached his inaugural sermons. and no doubt many of you remember the stirring sermons on the topics: "I'll Cry", and "Ik Wil Dat Gij Weet." They struck the right note and the congregation was happy and thankful that they had received a new pastor. Days of joy in the service had arrived and the thorough method of preaching and teaching of the pastor were very beneficial to the congregation. And again the same thing happened to which I referred a while ago. Some of the consistory members who lauded and praised the pastor and his preaching the most, were ready a few years later to stone and crucify him.

Peace and prosperity ruled for a while. Several improvements were made and both congregation and pastor became acquainted with each other and the bond of love between both grew and became strong, a fact to which the happenings of 1924 can testify. The mentioning of this year fills our hearts with sadness. In order to give a somewhat complete picture I am compelled to mention this year, however I will not relate what happened during that period. I am intimately acquainted with this dark period and wish that I could forget about it. We can say thanks unto God that we survived the storms of that dark time, which sometimes appears to me like a nightmare. And He who is faithful unto the end kept us united. Our earnest prayer is, O God, send now prosperity. That he who is faithful may preserve us in the bond of love, could it be for many years to come, unto the glory of His name.

I thank you.

S. G. Schaafsma.

NOTICE

The beautiful photograph of Reverend and Mrs. Hoeksema which is reproduced in this issue of the Standard Bearer will be made available to those desiring to have one.

The picture is very attractively mounted and measures 11x13 inches. It will be sold at cost for the nominal sum of 55ϕ .

Grand Rapids people may order from:

- A. Van Tuinen, 839 Gibson S. E., Phone 55506
- S. De Vries, 700 Alexander S. E.
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People living outside of Grand Rapids will kindly order from their local pastor (including 10¢ for cost of mailing) for convenience in handling payment and mailing of the picture.

The Transcribed Speech

Mr. President, Rev. and Mrs. Hoeksema, Beloved in the Lord:

It would not do to begin my speech somewhat on this order—On this joyful occasion I am very glad to be in your midst, and as I look upon your smiling and happy faces, etc., etc. No, that would be the wrong approach. The truth of the matter is that I am about 2,500 miles away from you as I speak these words, and I am looking into a little instrument which seems to have a great power to embarrass me. Moreover, I am far from looking into any smiling or happy faces. The room where I am recording these words is empty but for my solitary presence. Even the technician is hiding himself in another part of the building, and I must carry on alone.

However, the occasion is a joyful one and I can assure you that although I am absent in body, I am with you in spirit, even though I cannot join in your speaking, singing and listening pleasure, there, where you have a glorious day of wonderful spiritual communion. I hope, nevertheless, that my recorded voice will somehow, in some way, interpret the hidden joyous feeling of thanksgiving and gratitude that fills my heart. For it is a joyful occasion. Exulting in our covenant God, we commemorate the fact that He gave His servant to us, His church, for lo these many years. It would be base ingratitude to both God and man to let this day pass unnoticed. It is altogether proper that the day be set aside for all your feasting, speech making, hymns and psalms and spiritual songs, making melody in your heart.

Rev. Hoeksema and family, when I say these things, I do not speak for myself alone. My voice must be regarded as representative. I speak for my family, my consistory and my congregation. Before the latter knew my person, they had already thankfully enjoyed the contents of at least some part of these 25 years of love's labor in the vineyard of Christ, which we are now commemorating.

I happen to know that the very sound of Redlands has a peculiar charm for the Reverend Hoeksema. What he accomplished there more than eight years ago will never be forgotten, neither by them nor by him. Spiritual bonds were laid by our God through the ministry of the Word and conversation that tended to Godliness, such as will challenge time and space, enduring for all eternity. Therefore I would emphasize that my voice is now Redlands' voice of hearty felicitations.

I had thought of including a word of warning for all of us on this glad day, for there is an ever present danger lurking on every corner on days such as these. The inclination of the heart of man is evil from his youth. He will exalt the creature before the righteous face of the Creator. We hear and see and read of examples of si'ly hero worship on every side in the life of the godless world. Yes, they have their jubilees, but they exult in man. They are jubilant in the creature that is but dust and ashes, while the praises of Jehovah are alien to their banqueting hall. Moreover, they even make a very poor job of their creature-exaltation. Who has not vexed his righteous soul because of the ill-hidden hypocrisies and hollowness of all this praise of man. "Hail, fellows! Well met!" Yes, indeed. But they stab one another in the back at every opportunity. And what else can they do, where they are burdened with the terrible inheritance of evil and corruption? Can an Ethiopian change his skin or a leopard his spots? They hate God and they hate their brother, who is made in the similitude of God. No, a jubilee in the world is an evil spectacle of sham friendship, a laughable caricature of true appreciation, a vain show of would-be thanksgiving and gratitude. Therefore, even at its best, it is corrupt. While He, who ought to be the main object of all jubilees, namely the God of our salvation, is silently harvesting the harvest of wrath reserved for the day of reckoning.

I was going to sound a voice of warning, therefore, but I desist. It is not necessary. I might even go so far as to state that the idea could be wrought into a fitting speech for today's jubilee, to show that if our people have learned one solitary thing throughout the 25 years ministry of Rev. Hoeksema, then it is certainly this inspiring conviction and confession: Jehovah is God! Jehovah is God! Praise, magnify, and glorify Him alone.

And now what shall I say? You may ask of me to give a historical account of these 25 years of the Rev. Hoeksema's ministry. The material, gifts and talents, out of which historians are molded, are sadly lacking in my makeup. If I were to attempt such a historical sketch, I am sure that the results would be incomplete and fragmentary. First of all, I have not known him that long, and secondly, I lack the historical data necessary for such an undertaking. About twelve or thirteen years ago, I began to gather all the pamphlets, brochures, and books which he had written alone or in collaboration with the four professors and the other ministers, or, which he wrote together with the Rev. Danhof. But from time to time good friends of mine revealed that they needed this material more than I. For they borrowed it and forgot to bring it back. The last blow to my collection of the Hoeksema material was struck when Dr. Schilder took the greater part of it to the Netherlands. Well, I am sure that he needed it more than I, and the positive fruit of this friendly robbery was shown in his subsequent writings. Even aboard ship on his return to the Netherlands, he quoted from one of my former brochures. But my collection of these works was on its last legs.

No, I could not write a Hoeksema history. At least, it would not be a history in the accepted sense of the word. However, let no one think that the more than twenty years of his acquaintance have been without positive fruit for me. I smile when I say these words, and I know that you forgive me. You see, the Rev. Hoeksema is a man who manages to make his presence felt. And this is especially true with men and women whom I will call kindred souls. At any rate, if ever any man was molded by the influence of another, it is I. I cannot conceive of myself as I am today, if God had not made his way to cross mine. A little of that influence I would sketch.

It must have been in the year 1916 or 1917 that I first heard and met him. He delivered a Christian School speech on Deuteronomy 6, verses 6 and 7, in the Third Reformed Church of Kalamazoo. After the speech I said to my friends, "This is what I have waited for all my conscious spiritual life." In those days and at those places they fed us husks that the swine would eat, and not the heavenly bread of life. In this first speech of Rev. Hoeksema, I listened to the first throb of God's covenant life, and it fell upon my thirsty soul like cooling streams refresh the desert land. If I may so express myself, it brought me to rest and tranquility. And that rest and harmony has increased through the years.

At different occasions I have written about the 'oude stem', and you must bear with me. Such effusions are the fruit of history. Yes, the sound of that voice, and I speak spiritually, partook of the eternal, the glorious. It witnessed and testified of the covenant of God's eternal love and frendship. A voice than which there was none more spiritually melodious. Nowhere did we hear such spiritual exposition of the Word of God.

I remember when I met him the first time in Grand Rapids. I wanted to make him understand what he had done for me and what I thought of him. I expressed myself rather strangely and yet correctly. I said, "Do you know, Rev. Hoeksema, why I enjoy your sermons so? It is because you speak like the prophets and the evangelists of Scripture." You see, beloved, sound Biblical preaching carries conviction. It is the only preaching that the Holy Ghost can use for the application of the Word of God in the heart.

While he was at Holland, Michigan, I attended Calvin College. At that time all I heard of him was the one solitary speech in Kalamazoo, of which I spoke to you some time ago, and yet the influence was of such a nature that when the other students heard me in our usual debates, one of them said, "There is one book among many which you have great need of reading," and that book is Kuiper's 'Gemeene Gratie'." (In passing, I may relate the significant fact that this student, later a minister in the Christian Reformed Churches.

became apostate with respect to the faith of his fathers, and now serves the world exclusively.) And that influence has increased through the years. He became my pastor for five years and for an equal number of years he became my professor. The truth of God which I had seen at Kalamazoo, like a glorious shining shaft of brilliant light that shed luminous rays in our abject and dolorous twilight or semi-darkness, became through the years such a wondrous power in my life that I live to sing and to speak of it in the midst of the congregation of God.

No, I cannot write a history of the Rev. Hoeksema's 25 years of ministerial work. All I can do is testify in your midst that he is a man, who through the grace and the gift of God which is in him, can and does make his influence felt for good. This seems a trite saying, but yet I am certain that kindred souls among you, and God give that they comprise the whole multitude, will respond, will acknowledge that this so-called trite saying is fraught with deep and effective truth. Let me tell you that at every occasion when a visiting minister of our churches would come to Redlands, whom my people had never heard before, the congregation would exclaim, "They all speak the same language." though each has his own characteristic way of presenting the truth, it is all one tongue, one message, one glorious truth we are preaching. And so it is. We are stamped with the stamp of what I would call a Godexalting an all-sin-condemning theology.

It goes without saying that all this influence for good is properly the work of God's grace operative in today's guest of honor. That is the way I like to look at him and judge of him. For judge of him we must and we will. In this connection the question arises, What is the reason for today's jubilation? Many of our brethren in Christ live, struggle and die without the benefit of a day like this. Why are we, as Protestant Reformed Churches, commemorating this jubilee? A very interesting question that. It was naturaly the first question presenting itself to me for an answer when I heard from afar that I was supposed to speak on this occasion, and I have answered it in part, in fact I have come very close to a very definite and complete answer at the end of the other side of this record. But we will try to complete the record, so to speak.

I might put the question in this form. What is the divine idea in the gift of this man's 25 years of life and work? We may ask ourselves, What is God's message to us on this joyful day? It certainly means more to us than the fact that he accomplished 25 years of ministerial work. That happens to very many ministers. On such days the consistory comes to the parsonage. They drink some coffee, make a few complimentary remarks, and we go on with our work. No, I feel instinctively that we have something special

here and I will try and present it into words. are those who would say we celebrate today because God gave us in the Rev. Hoeksema a great exponent of Reformed polemics. It was particularly in that field that he came to the notice of the inhabitants of Zion. And then we will hear the record speak. How he fought against the enemies of Christian instruction. how he slew his thousands in the Bultema case. They will tell you of his victories against higher criticism in the famous majority report and later of his articles in the papers when he attacked and overcame the Jansenites. And, finally, they will point with pride to the gigantic strugle of this servant of God against this terrible lie, later laid down in the infamous Three Points. His polemics were read far and wide. His very name is connected with the name of this heresy. Some even think that he concocted these lies. And as it was with the heresies mentioned above, so it always was with any other deviation from the truth. would be the first to raise his voice against such wandering from the pathway of the Reformed confession. And I will admit that his work in that field has been Herculean. But it is not the deepest reason why we thank God today.

There are others who will point with almost pardonable pride to his labors in the field of journalism. Was it not Dr. Schilder who charmed our hearts when he spoke of the evolution of a distinct literature of the Protestant Reformed Churches. And as I write these lines, I glance at the 15 volumes of the Standard Bearer and smile. Yes, the pride of those people is pardonable. He did a great work in writing those many pages. I ought to know. But, no, I do not think that even there we have struck at the root of our great rejoicing.

Well, then it must be his great gifts as an orator. Is it not true that some Calvin students were warned not to go to his church because of his terrible drawing power and the fatal charm of his personal magnetism? Even apart from such distorted testimonies, is it not true that he can preach the Word of God like none in our circles, and then I would embrace all the Reformed Churches in my comparison. And then I would agree that we certainly thank God for Rev. Hoeksema as a pulpit orator of great power and eloquence. He has charmed us all, and yet I would take issue with those who would single out this fine gift as the one outstanding reason why we are thanking God today and every day for his gift in this man.

Oh, no, the field is broad, and I have not come to the end of possibilities. I hear a veritable chorus of voices that will point out to me his remarkable gift to exegete the Word of God. It has become proverbial among us to say, "When you take issue with him, be absolutely sure of yourself, because he is usually right." And I assure you, beloved friends, that I know whereof

I speak. Also, here I would agree with all those voices that his gift to open the text, to lay bare the thought of the Word of God, dwells in him as in no other of my acquaintance, either in this age or by our books in former ages. I may say that he is a man mighty in the Scriptures and I am sure that none will contradict me. Even his avowed enemies have told me face to face that none can exegete the Word of God, to their knowledge, better than he. God gave him a very strong logical mind, and we, ministers of the Protestant Reformed Churches, benefit much more from that gifted mind than we realize ourselves. And therefore I agree that for that reason, he is a gift of God to us. I will even go much farther than that. He is a gift of God to the church of God at large in this field. His exegeses will live after him, and I am persuaded to believe that he will receive his due after his death much more than now.

But if you will appreciate the past and the present aright, with respect to the question at hand, you will agree that even here we have not arrived at the real reason why we are thankful to God.

Neither is it in the field of dogmatics. It is true that on many points and dogmas there has arisen much more light through his work and thoughts. we see much clearer the beautiful conception of the grace of God than in the second decade of this century. This is especially true of the development of the dogma of the covenant of grace. We see now clearly that the covenant idea is the substratum of the whole house of God, whose picture we admire in the first earthly paradise, whose type we heartily welcome in the entire history and offer-cultus of Israel, whose earnest we have within our hearts through the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Builder of that house and who laid its foundation in His own precious blood and whose full realization shall cause us to sing everlastingly. The house of God, whose central idea is found in God's own covenant life! And so it is with many dogmas. He made them live for us at school, he taught them, not as dry as dust system of man-made distinctions and definitions, but he taught them as the system of living truth, that was constantly fed from the Word of God. The charge that he made dogmatics to rule over his exegesis is base and false. The very opposite is true. Still, my friends, we have failed to find the one satisfying answer to our question, for even his great gift in the field of dogmatics is not the deepest urge of our gratitude today. No, there is a distinct reason for our jubilee.

As I see it, the answer is found when we make a comparison between our lives today and say 20 or more years ago. It will not be easy to do this, for we are forgetful creatures. I have made a comparison and have done so often. And I find that the Rev. Hoeksema has been used by our covenant God to make us more

God-conscious. And the Lord has done so through him by endowing him with all the gifts and talents enumerated above. These gifts, in the various fields enumerated, are and never were an end in themselves. They serve and have served to bring the church to the consciousness of the great Other, the Triune God, the covenant God of His people, who sha'l surely requite the evil and reward the good, Who always doeth His good pleasure, and Who shall glorify Himself in the Son of His right hand, Who shall stand with many brethren eternally before His glorious face.

This is the deep note of gratitude in my soul; to wit, that my God would use His servant to bring me ever closer to a hallowed contemplation of such everlasting beauties of holiness, in order that they might praise God forever. And I am persuaded that I hear many echoes voicing like sentiment and conviction out of your hearts and the hearts of your children.

And terrible as it may be, it is also the reason why he is so cordially hated by many others who would rather make out a case for a wicked man than for the living God, Who is blessed forever. But hatred and all manner of wickedness, which he had to taste notwithstanding, this servant of God shall continue to do God's work. More correct would it have been if I said, God shall continue to work in our midst through him. For that is the way it is. And for how long? We do not know. We hope and pray that it may be for many years to come. And when the struggle is over and the battle on earth ended, we know that he shall enter into the rest which remaineth for the children of God, and receive the reward of a faithful servant. There we, and all God's people, shall see still clearer what he has shown us through His servant, that, namely, salvation is the Lord's. And we shall live always God-consciously, for He shall be all in all.

In conclusion, beloved, I would like to have you all sing the wonderful Dutch Psalm 89, the 8th verse.

Gij toch, Gij zijt hun roem, de kracht van hunne kracht;

Uw vrije gunst alleen wordt d'eere toegebracht;

Wij steken 't hoofd omhoog, en zullen d'eerkroon dragen,

Door U, door U alleen, om 't eeuwig welbehagen;

Want God is ons ten schild in 't strijdperk van dit leven,

En onze Koning is van Isrels God gegeven.

I thank you.

Rev. G. Vos.

Een Kort Feestverslag

Zoo was dan eindelijk de gewichtige dag aangebroken; n.l. Aug 15, de dag, die niet licht zal worden vergeten door ons Protestantsche Gereformeerde volk; indien er tenminste eenigszins wordt meegeleefd, en met ons de waarheid wordt beleden en beleefd, die we sinds '24 op grond van Gods onfeilbaar Woord mogen verkondigen, leeren, en ook mogen uitdragen naar buiten door onzen zendeling, die tot dit schoone, rijke, en ook zichtbaar kenmerkend vruchtdragende werk, door ons als kerken werd beroepen.

De commissie van zes die door den Fuller Ave. Kerkeraad was aangesteld om de plannen te beramen voor dezen blijden feest- en gedenkdag, mag dunkt me dan ook we' worden gefilisiteerd voor dit welgeslaagde werk en goed uitgewerkt program; en allen, die hebben meegewerkt tot het volbrengen van dit moeiljk werk worden vriendelijk door de commissie bedankt voor de welgewaardeerde bezigheden. Ds. Veldman werd gekozen als "Chairman" voor den dag, en het moet worden gezegd: hij heeft zich er moedig doorgeworsteld, en zich goed gekweten van zijn taak. Ook heeft het ons aan spel en vermaak niet ontbroken; er was iets voor jong en oud. Nadat de 'games' waren afgespeeld begon dan ook het eigenlijke waar het om was begonnen. Ds. Veldman liet een Hollandsche psalm zingen en opende met gebed.

Na een kort inleidings-woord werd Ds. H. Veldman verzocht de vergadering toe te spreken. Hij deed dit in verband met onze S. B. Zijn Eerwaarde heeft ons één ding goed duidelijk gemaakt n.l. dat de S. B. een goed werk deed en doet voor de zaak van Gods koninkrijk als een geheel, en meer in het bijzonder voor ons als een Prot. Geref. Kerken-groep. Waarschuwend hief hij den vinger op, en maakte een ieder er opmerkzaam op dat onze eerste liefde niet meer zoo vurig is, en dat dientengevolge onze S. B. kwijnt onder deze verschijnselen van minder liefde voor de zaak van Gods koninkrijk in ons kerkelijk leven. Ook stipte de spreker in het voorbijgaan eventjes aan dat hij, wiens 25 jarig jubileum we mochten gedenken, veel van zijn gaven en talenten, die hij van Zijn Zender in rijke mate mocht ontvangen, heeft besteed in Zijn dienst ook als Redacteur van dit ons blad.

Ds. De Jong, die optrad als tweede spreker, gaf een overzicht meer in het algemeen, wat eigenlijk de jubilaris, Ds. Hoeksema, voor ons is en bedoelt te zijn als Prot. Geref. gemeenten. Hoe hij ons de volle raad Gods heeft en nog verkondigd, en vooral het drie punten stelsel door hem is weerlegd als ongereformeerd, en een plantje is dat op gereformeerde grond nimmer zal kunnen groeien: want God bewijst nu eenmaal geen genade aan alle menschen; Hij stuit de zonde nu eenmaal niet, en de goddelooze doet niet het goede voor God in het burgerlijke leven. Een ieder,

die niet blind is, ziet dit wel in het drama, dat word afgespeeld door den voortreffelijken kultuur-mensch.

Onze Zendeling, Ds. B. Kok, sprak een woord in verband met de Zending die door ons wordt gedreven. Hij sprak het uit: dat als Prot. Geref. Kerken het onze taak in de eerste plaats niet is om aan te kondigen en duidelijk te maken, waarin zij die ons niet meer dulden in hun midden, afdwalen, doch in de eerste plaats hebben te brengen en te verkondigen het Woord Gods, zuiver, opdat het goed duidelijk mag worden, wie God is, en aan wien Hij zijn genade bewijst, ook in de prediking van dat Woord.

Het was intusschen half vijf geworden en onze bal-spelers stonden ongeduldig te wachten voor het teeken, dat het spelen een aanvang zou nemen, want men wist het zeer goed, 6 uur was de bepaalde tijd voor de avondmaaltijd, en daarom moest de "scrubteam" zich haasten.

Intusschen was de menigte aangezwollen tot een tame'ijk groote hoop, en toen dan ook door de spreekbuis was aangekondigd dat de maaltijd een aanvang zou nemen, en 'sHeeren zegen werd ingeroepen ook over spijs en drank, was er geen ruimte genoeg aan de tafels, die gereed stonden voor 1500 hongerige magen. Dat het zoo'n groote menigte zou worden had ook de committee niet op gerekend. Dat was een kruis! Ge moet weten, er was "free coffee" beloofd bij de maaltijd. Er was echter maar voor een duizend droge tongen gezorgd. De committee vraagt verontschuldiging, en daarmee is dan ook het bedreven kwaad weggenomen. Het werd over het algemeen nog al goed opgenomen; hier en daar zag men dan ook eentje met een kruikje voor bron-water. Nu bron-water is levend water, en beeld van het water dat Gods volk toevloeit uit den eenen, waren Levensbron.

De avond-bijeenkomst werd geopend met gebed, en vervolgens gaf de feest-leider het woord aan Mr. S. G. Schaafsma, die meer in het bijzonder sprak in naam der eerste gemeente, en in het algemeen in naam van ons Prot. Geref. volk. Spreker waardeerde het, dat ook hij iets in het midden mocht brengen bij deze gelegenheid. Hij had meer in het bijzonder persoonlijke omgang met Ds. Hoeksema gehad. Hij kende hem niet alleen als persoon, als buurman, als leeraar, maar mocht ook dienen als ouderling onder de bediening van dezen hoogstaanden en in onze kerken voornamen man. Hij bekende ook één geweest te zijn van degenen die een ferme stoot gaf om Ds. Hoeksema te bezitten als leeraar van Eastern Ave. gemeente. Het beroep werd uitgebracht, en de dominee kwam tot blijdschap van jong en oud. Gods Woord werd recht verkondigd. Het bleek echter al spoedig dat sommigen de waarheid niet wilden. Werd eerst het hosanna uitgeroepen, 't was nu kruis hem!

Vervolgens beklom Ds. Ophoff het podium. Zijn rede was meer in verband met onze School. De spreker wees er op: dat niet alleen de broeder een man was van groote beteekenis voor onze kerken in het algemeen, dat hij niet alleen uitmunt a's schrijver, redenaar, en predikant, maar ook als pofessor een vooraanstaande plaats neemt, en ook op dit gebied de Prot. Geref. Kerken ten zegen is. De spreker liet echter goed uitkomen, dat niet een mensch moet geprezen worden, maar dat alle eer toekomt aan onzen God, ook voor alles wat Hij ons schenkt in een man als Ds. Hoeksema.

Het was intusschen donker geworden, en daarom hoog tijd voor het bijeenverzamelen der gelden. De co lecte bedroeg de som van \$78.92, hetwelk bestemd was voor de S. B. Ik hoorde zeker iemand naief zeggen: dat het wel een beetje eigenaardig was, dat voor een gelegenheid als deze de collecte bestemd was voor de Vaandeldrager. Dit is echter wel goed te verklaren. De commissie kwam overeen met de R. F. P. A. board, dit te zullen doen, om de eenvoudige reden dat elk jaar met ieder "field-day" dit ook geschiedt, en dit jaar komen we niet tezamen als field-day broeders en zusters van één huisgezin.

Ds. Veldman gaf vervolgens het Woord aan Ds. Vos van Redlands, California, die aanwezig was en toch ook niet in ons midden, want Redlands ligt zoo'n 2500 miles van Grand Rapids verwijderd. De dominee leverde een "Transcribed Speech". Nu het was wel des meesters stem, en wel zoo duidelijk, dat ik hoorde een kleine kleuter, achter me, zeggen: "Waar is nu toch die Ds. Vos?" Hij sprak met bezieling wat Ds. Hoeksema in het verleden voor hem was geweest. Dat hij nog nooit zoo de Schrift hoorde verklaren. Hij sprak dan ook de wensch uit, dat Ds. Hoeksema nog vele jaren mocht worden gespaard voor onze kerken.

En nu gebeurde er iets dat zeker niet alle dagen geschiedt. Nadat er een einde kwam aan spel en vermaak, aan het zingen van psalmen en geestelijke liederen, aan de vele gelukwenschen, die werden uitgesproken, en de redevoeringen, die werden gehouden te eere van onzen jubelaris, werd deze verzocht naar voren te komen. In het schemer-donker beklom hij de trappen van het spreek-gewelf, en onder plechtige stilte van een schare van 2500 menschen sprak onze Chairman een waardeerend woord en presenteerde hem een mooi Album, waarin de namen zijn te vinden van leden van alle onze gemeenten. Ook ontving hij een klein presentje van \$100. Er werd bij vermeld, dat een ander \$700 was bijeenverzameld voor het uitgeven van groote en kleine werken, die D. V. in de toekomst van de hand van Ds. Hoeksema zul'en verschijnen en waarnaar met verlangen wordt uitgezien. Een ieder, die meeleeft, gevoelde echter, dat er iets haperde. De Ds. stond daar zoo alleen. De juffrouw werd uitgenoodigd zich bij haar man te voegen. Ze werd vereerd met een prachtige verzameling van bloemen.

Daar stond nu het tweetal, hetwelk aller aandacht trok; en ik ben verzekerd dat er bij vernieuwing liefdebanden werden gelegd, die niet licht worden verbroken. 't Klonk nu van aller lippen, spontaan, vroolijk, uit het hart gegrepen; Dat 's Heeren zegen op u daal. . . . en meer in blugger tempo, Praise God from whom all blessings flow. . . .

Voor de eerste maal sprak de jubelaris, en stortte zijn hart uit, overstept van dankbare erkentelijkheid voor de hulde hem toegezwaaid. In de 16 jaren die hem werden vergund door zijn Zender met vrucht te mogen arbeiden in het midden van Fuller Ave. gemeente, heeft hij die gemeente liefgekregen; en hij sprak de wensch uit, dat de Heere hem nog vele jaren voor deze gemeente mocht sparen. En hij kwam ons het voor de zoovee'ste maal aanzeggen: dat niet hij de eere moest hebben, doch alleen God de Heere die dit alles heeft gewrocht.

Dankbaar keerde een ieder huiswaarts, en deze dag wordt door ons Prot. Geref. volk niet gemakkelijk vergeten.

Ds. Schipper had het voorrecht deze feest-dag te sluiten met dankzegging.

(De commissie verzocht me een kort verslag te geven van dezen dank- en jubel-dag. Ik deed dit op mijn eigen wijze. Nu ik het nog eventjes rustig overlees bemerk ik, en gij met me, dat de volmaakthed nog niet is bereikt. Ik ben echter blij dat de lezers ook menschen zijn.)

S. De Vries.

IN MEMORIAM

Thursday, August 22, our heavenly Father took unto Himself our beloved husband, father and grandfather,

BERT STEIGENGA, age 60

Although we grieve sorely because of our loss, we can, nevertheless, rejoice in the fact that our departed one is now with his Saviour, whom he loved and served.

Mrs. B. Steigenga
Peter
Mr. and Mrs. J. Steigenga
Mr. and Mrs. C. Pastoor
Lucille
Edith
and 6 grandchildren.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

NOTICE

The annual meeting of the R. F. P. A will be held in the First Protestant Reformed Church, Thursday evening, September 26. From the following nomination two board-members will be chosen: H. Knott, Wm. Koster, R. Newhouse and A. Wychers.

Rev. H. De Wolf will be the speaker at this meeting. Subscribers are urged to be present as important business matters will be discussed.

The Board.

Response

My dearly beloved people!

I feel that it would be quite impossible for me to give expression to all that is in my heart at this moment. I am simp'y overwhelmed by all the expressions of your love and appreciation which you finally symbolized in these tangible presents. I feel that this day was of great significance in my life, especially because I have felt, you have made me feel, the bond of love in Christ that unites us. I can only express my heartfelt gratitude to the committee that worked so hard to prepare this day, and to you all who cooperated to make the day the complete success it actually was. Thanks, too, for these beautiful tokens of your appreciation. I know that my wife joins me in this, and wants me to express her thanks to you for the beautiful floral piece with which you remembered her personally. She is worthy of it. A strong support she was to me, especially in times of storm and trouble. Often when I was discouraged and "in the dumps", it was she who by her word of faith was the means to lift me out.

If you should ask me what impressed me most deeply today, and what I appreciate most highly, I would answer, that it was the spontaneous expression of your love and my sincere response to it. I have felt deeply that your love finds a very ready response in my heart. It is very easy to join you in the prayer that was so often expressed today, that it may please the Lord to allow me to labor still another twenty five years in your midst. And this is especially true of my work in the church of Fuller Ave., for of all my work I still love it most. I am constrained to labor in different fields, to be a professor, an editor, a lecturer; but at heart I am still a preacher.

For the same reason I could have thought of nothing that you could have given me on this occasion in the form of a present, that I would value more highly than this beautiful album, with the names of all our people in their own handwriting. In the future, I think, I will sometimes peruse the contents of this album, linger over all these names, and recall this celebration of my twenty-fifth anniversary.

The thought was expressed repeatedly today by the

various speakers, that we do not celebrate this day in order to glorify mere man. Of that I am glad. I can assure you that on my part there was not the slightest inclination of heart to boast in the flesh. One thing always has been a great marvel to me, and it has become rather more marve'lous as the years passed by, that God can and will use a sinner like myself to preach His Word to His people, and that through this preaching by a sinful man He will speak His own Word and accomplish His purpose of salvation. How then could we feel inclined to glory in self? The glory is a'll His, not ours.

I feel, finally, that it is but proper that I express a few words of appreciation and thanks to others, who in the past have been a source of comfort and strength to me. Stormy years, these twenty five of my ministry were, even from the very beginning. There are some people here, who were members of my first charge in Holland, Mich., who reminded me of a certain speech I delivered to that congregation before I accepted their call. They expressed their desire to have me repeat that speech on this occasion. I could not very well fulfill their wish, of course. But certainly, that speech was the beginning of a period of storm and strife. It was a fight for the truth; of this I feel convinced even tonight. But in all these years, especially the last sixteen, there were those that faithfully stood on our side. I wish to express my thanks to my consistory, especially to the consistory that was deposed with me in 1924, but also to the consistory of my own church through all these years. They have been a strong support to me. I wish to remember our brother, the Rev. G. M. Ophoff, who I often feel is not appreciated as he ought to be. He is staunchly Protestant Reformed, is a faithful brother, and has proved himself to be a diligent laborer in the cause of God's Kingdom. I wish to express to my own congregation in Fuller Ave. that they have always been very good to me, and that their prayers and their attitude toward me in the past have been a comfort to me. And, finally, in wider sense, thanks to you all for your loyal support in my labors and strife!

May God make the memory of this day a blessing to you and to me! To Him be all the glory only and forever!

Rev. H. Hoeksema.