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This periodical is owned and published by Reformed Fellowship Inc., a group of ministers and laymen who hold to the Reformed faith. Its purpose is to give sharpened expression to this faith, stimulate the doctrinal sensitivity of those who profess this faith, help promote the spiritual welfare and the purity of Reformed Churches, and further the interests of all Kingdom institutions of Reformed caliber.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Christian Education and Christian Missions, in the light of our Reformed Faith, are the subjects to which special attention is being given in this issue.

Dr. Edwin H. Palmer, who writes on the recent manifesto of the Reformed Church in America on Christian Schools, is the pastor of the Christian Reformed Church of Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Mr. Raymond J. Geerdes, author of an incisive and frankly critical article on the adverse opinions or trends that jeopardize our Christian schools, is the principal of the Christian High School of Ripon, California.

Henry J. Kuiper seeks to shed light on the Reformed approach to Christian mission work and explains what bearing it has on the issue that confronts the Christian Reformed Church in connection with the proposed "Theological College of Northern Nigeria."

Katie Gunnink, who writes on "Calvinism and Passion for Souls" is a graduate of Calvin College and of the Reformed Bible Institute. She has been on the Faculty of the latter institution for a number of years. She is well known in Christian Reformed circles as a writer of Bible outlines, a leader of Bible study classes, and an authority on matters pertaining to Vacation Bible Schools.

Rev. Gerard Van Groningen makes a plea in his article on "Cracking the Southern Barrier" for more devotion to mission

work among Spanish-speaking people, in this country as well as in other lands, for more emphasis on the use of the Spanish language in this work, and on giving instruction in that language to present and prospective workers. Mr. Van Groningen is a graduate of Calvin College, a minister in the Christian Reformed Church, and has recently accepted a call to serve in the newly organized Reformed denomination in Australia to which not a few Dutch families have emigrated from the Netherlands. Before his departure for that distant realm in the South Pacific he took an active part in the work of translating the Old Testament for the Berkeley version of the Bible.

Rev. Leonard Greenway needs no introduction to our readers who are members of the Christian Reformed Church or the Reformed Church of America. For the benefit of those subscribers who belong to other denominations we state that Dr. Greenway began his ministry in the Reformed Church, then taught Bible for a number of years in the Grand Rapids Christian High School, and is now in his second Christian Reformed charge, the Bethel Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

This is the first issue of *Torch and Trumpet* which features poems by Mrs. Lalia Mitchell Thornton of Elmira, New York. Her poems have appeared in several of our nationally known magazines. She has been contributing verse to *The Banner*, official organ of the Christian Reformed Church, for many years.

Christian Education and the Reformed Church in America

EDWIN H. PALMER

IN 1957 two major denominations made sharp attacks against Christian schools. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. adopted an 11,000-word document which now stands as its official statement on this subject. The Synod of the Reformed Church in America, although not adopting a report of its Board of Education on this matter, did direct that the report "be sent to every pastor in the church for reading, reference, and study." It would be worthwhile to evaluate each report and compare them, but for the present we will examine only one, that of the Reformed Church, since we are more closely involved with this denomination.¹ We will present only some of its major reasons for opposing Christian schools.

1. One of the report's chief arguments is that public education is not "God-less" (p. 11).

A careful analysis, however, would reveal the contrary. It is true that some states permit and require the reading of the Bible, as the report suggests. But that is to be done without comment and in some cases without the modulation of the voice (if that is possible!). Surely two minutes of Bible reading do not make the education of the whole school day Christian. It is also to be admitted that there are many devoted Christian teachers in the public school system who set fine examples for the children. But it still is a fact that the law forbids any teacher, whether Jewish or Roman Catholic or Reformed, to integrate the daily subjects with their concept of God and religion. For to do so might offend a pupil of another or no reli-

gion. To use the language of this report, "The school must respect the individual conscience and faith of each child, not forcing upon him beliefs which are offensive to his parents." In other words, it is not possible for the teacher to teach that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are God, or that they created the world out of nothing, or that they caused the whole human race to descend from Adam, or that all of our ignorance, sorrow, pain, suffering, and violence are due to Adam's sin, or that the ultimate answers to deep-seated problems in history, economics, civics, literature, etc., are to be found *only in the Bible*. No, to do so would be "to force upon the pupil beliefs which are offensive to his parents." Therefore, according to the ideals of this report itself, public education must not contain any teaching about the Reformed and Biblical conception of God. This is just another way of saying that it must be God-less and Christ-less.

2. The writers of this document feel somewhat the truth of the charge that public education is secular and God-less, for they spend some time trying to show how they think it is possible to combine religion with public school education (pp. 11-14). Their solution is to teach "objectively" "about religion."

What an affront to God! To present the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as one of many possibilities next to the atheistic or Unitarian or Jewish conception of God; to present atheistic evolutionism on the same par with Christian creationism! There is only one God, and one correct answer to the evaluation of evolution, Marxism, revolutions, the American Revolu-

tion, the Civil War, capital punishment, private property, Milton's poetry, and a host of other matters that are raised daily in the classroom. And the sovereign God demands that he and his infallible guide, the Bible, be not presented as one of many solutions to these innumerable problems, but as the only solution. Anything less is an affront to him and his revelation.

3. This report repeats a favorite argument of the secularists when it says that Christian and private schools would foster divisiveness in our democracy and jeopardize the unity of the American melting pot.

It is true that a Christian education will teach the child that Christianity alone is true, that Jesus is the only name under heaven whereby men can be saved, that the Bible alone has the final and true answer to the basic issues of life, that there is an infinity of difference between the thinking of the Christian and non-Christian, since one is directed toward the only true God and the other away from it. It is true that Christianity will cause some divisiveness, just as churches do, and just as Jesus intimated when he said: "I came not to bring peace, but the sword." But this type of divisiveness is essential. The Christian may never pretend that Christianity is not absolute in its answers even if the Jew or atheist or secularist is offended. We may not compromise the truth for the sake of the melting pot. Before we do that, may the melting pot melt! We would not think of compromising our churches for the sake of unity by forcing a united church. Neither must we do it in the case of education, whose goal is to teach

¹ It is possible to buy this report for \$.25 from The Board of Education, Reformed Church in America, 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

4. One of the most amazing arguments used in this document rests on the false thesis that Christian school adherents believe that Christian schools are essential for salvation. Having set up that straw man, this document proceeds to attack it. It says: "The question at this point is not whether parochial education may be helpful, but whether it is essential. And this, we must utterly repudiate..." "Our Reformed theology absolutely forbids us to say: 'Unless you send your child to a parochial school he cannot be saved.'"

We say this argument is amazing because it is a caricature and thorough misunderstanding of the Christian school position. Christian school adherents simply do not teach that Christian schools are necessary for salvation. To say so is putting in their mouths words which they would reject. It is not even essential for a person to go to church to be saved. Only faith in Christ is necessary, and that can be had apart from the church or school. The spending of so much space on this misrepresentation of the Christian school position is indicative of the bankruptcy of the report's logic in its attack on Christian education.

5. Another caricature of the Christian school position is found in the report's representation of the Christian school adherents as "running away" from the world, as "seeking to save its life by withholding its message from a perishing world," as isolating themselves from the world in contrast to Jesus who became a friend of publicans and sinners (p. 33).

Not only is this a caricature of the Christian school position, it is the diametric opposite. Nothing could be further from the truth. The purpose of Christian schools is not that the children should run away from the world, but precisely the contrary: that they may go into the world. Its goal is to equip innocent babes in Christ with an armor and sword so that with the Word of God they can take the offensive and make conquests for the kingdom. The Chris-

tian school knows that our strength in going into the world is not to be found in ourselves apart from God, in the power of the unregenerate mind, in the so-called "neutral" education of public schools, where the instruction is independent from God and the Bible. Rather, it knows that our power in conquering this world is in God and his revelation, the Bible. Therefore the Christian school attempts to give its covenant children the only armor with which it can defend itself against the wiles of the devil and by which it can master the world. Its goal is not to flee the world, but to go into the world with the best equipment possible: the Word of God applied to every realm of life.

6. The most fundamental error that seems to underlie this whole report is its assumption that there are "large areas of common inheritance" between the Christian and non-Christian (p. 34). While the report pays lip service to a "qualitative difference between the Christian and non-Christian world view and philosophy of life," it negates this to a great extent when it makes the amazing assertion that "even in the area of interpretation and value judgment, there is the entire inheritance of western civilization, which is ours in the American Republic, with its emphasis on the Fatherhood of God, the value of the human personality made in the image of God, the quest for truth, the dignity of the human conscience, and the validity of the moral law" (p. 34).

If ever the difference between the Christian and non-Christian reveals itself, it is in this area of interpretation. It is only out of the utmost naiveté that one can assert that the interpretation of the Fatherhood of God is an inheritance common to the Christian and non-Christian. To be sure the Modernist believes in the Fatherhood of God, and the Bible-believer uses the same term. Yes, both have the same term in common. But for the one the term is a symbol for the attitude of God toward *all* men regardless of their sin or their acceptance of Jesus as their Savior. For the Bible-believer, however, the

term is a symbol for the attitude of God toward only those who have renounced their sin and accepted the substitutionary sacrifice of the second Person of the Godhead for themselves. There is no common inheritance at all, but a chasm that separates the two. Differences precisely as great can also be shown for each of these other examples that the report has given and which we quoted above. Thus there is no common idea between the believer and unbeliever on such matters as the Fatherhood of God and the validity of the moral law. To say that there is is to make an abstraction of these terms, focusing the attention on mere vocabulary symbols — words — and to ignore the light-dark difference between the Christian and non-Christian interpretation of these words.

If there were an agreement between the regenerate and unregenerate in areas of "general education" and this "entire inheritance of western civilization," then the thesis of this report might have some validity. But there is no agreement. The public schools purposely leave out God, the Bible, and the Christian interpretation from education so as not to offend the neighbor. This may not be done. We are not to confine God to Sunday School, church, or a few hours at the home. Our sovereign God demands that we boldly and frankly confess him in *all* of life, that we teach our children that nothing can be truly understood apart from his revelation, the Bible. He says: "I want your church, your home, but also the school. I want those crucial character- and mind-forming years of your children, when their thoughts are being molded by their teachers. *All* is mine. Church and home — yes. But also the school. Not a part, but the whole."

For the above-enumerated reasons, we believe that it is not Biblical to follow the advice of this report by putting Christ only in home and church instruction, but taking him out of the school curriculum. Instead of a God-less, Christ-less, and Bible-less instruction, all of education should be God-centered, Christ-centered, and Bible-centered.

Should a Reformed Church Do Reformed Mission Work?

HENRY J. KUIPER

WE COULD phrase the above question more forcefully and meaningfully. We could ask: "Can a truly Reformed Church refrain from doing Reformed mission work?" That formulation would imply that any Church which is truly Reformed would do violence to its convictions and impulses by not doing mission work which is distinctively Reformed? That is our position. We hold that it is impossible for a Church which is thoroughly Reformed to be satisfied with its mission work unless that work bears the Reformed stamp.

Let us state our reasons for the statement just made.

* * *

There are two propositions which we shall lay down and offer to our readers for reflection.

Our first proposition is that a truly Reformed Church wants to be Reformed in all it does—in all its preaching, teaching, and all other activities.

The reason for this is that being Reformed does not consist merely in holding to certain doctrines. To be Reformed means to be a Calvinist, and Calvinism is not merely a comprehensive system of doctrine but a world and life view which puts its stamp on all our thought and activity.

It can be said that the term Reformed is just as wide as the term Christian. Reformed teachings are not special teachings which some have added to Christian truths believed by all true followers of Christ. Reformed doctrines are identical with Christian doctrines. Calvinism, as Warfield put it, is Christianity in its purest conception; also, we may add, in its widest implications. If it is true that we must be Christian in all we believe and do, it is also true that we should be Reformed in all our

convictions and actions. A Reformed Church is truly Reformed only in the measure that it wants and seeks to be Reformed in all its teaching and in all its activities, not the least its mission activity.

When we stated that the term Reformed is just as wide as the name Christian, we did not imply that those who are not Reformed are not Christians. There are Christians who do not hold to our Reformed system of truth in its totality. But their type of Christianity is for that reason less consistently Christian. Moreover, every true Christian is Reformed, though not always consistently, *in his basic attitudes and beliefs*. All true Christians believe, for example, that God is sovereign, that sinners are saved only by grace through faith, that Christ is Lord as well as Savior, and that the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God. One cannot really pray without realizing his complete dependence on God in all things.

Our second proposition is that there is a Reformed approach to mission work and that this determines both the nature of what is preached and taught and the methods that are employed in preaching and teaching.

First, The Message

NO SOCIAL GOSPEL

To be Reformed means to stress the fact that the gospel is the message of salvation for lost sinners. The Church that is Reformed in its mission work seeks to save the souls of men from sin and eternal ruin. The true gospel is not a social gospel. This so-called social gospel teaches that the task of the Church is primarily to improve the world here and now through slum clearance,

providing better housing for the underprivileged, fostering civic righteousness, and endeavoring to abolish war.

There is, of course, a social side to the gospel. That is, the gospel has social implications. The truly Reformed or Christian missionary will not be indifferent to the economic and social plight of those with whom he labors, but his primary purpose will be to save the souls of men. Some very telling things are said about the folly of overemphasis on social betterment by the Church of Christ in an article by Miss Viola Cameron in our next issue.

Let it not be said that our Church is in no danger of going in a liberal direction with its mission work. That danger is very real, even for missionaries of the most orthodox Churches. This is particularly true of those who labor as home missionaries among the poor and underprivileged. Foreign missionaries, too, who are called to bring the gospel to aborigines and all who live in more or less primitive surroundings are under daily and heavy temptation to spend a large share of their time and energy in the alleviation of physical distress and the improvement of social conditions. The missionary who is Reformed in heart and head will not fail to resist this temptation.

NO DILUTED GOSPEL

The truly Reformed missionary will eschew the Fundamentalistic as well as the Modernistic conception of the missionary message. He will not only stress the need of personal salvation; his presentation of what that salvation is and what it requires will also be distinctive. He will proclaim with all possible emphasis that salvation

is from start to finish the work of God's grace, not of man himself. He will preach the remission of sins through the atoning blood and the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross and the need of regeneration through the work of the Holy Spirit.

All truly Christian missionaries, even those who are not Reformed in their theology, will preach this gospel of divine grace, but none will preach it as consistently as he who is Reformed. He will preach in season and out of season that sinners are hopelessly lost apart from Christ because they are the objects of God's eternal wrath, and not only sick but dead in sin; that because of this desperate situation they cannot save themselves and have not the will to be saved by believing in Christ apart from the Holy Spirit. Such a missionary will not teach that it is "up to the sinner" to determine whether or not he will be saved; that God can do nothing for him unless he takes the first step by accepting Christ; and that he must believe before he can be regenerated. This is plain heresy. It conflicts with Scripture and robs God of his glory for our salvation. The truly Reformed missionary will teach that the sinner, to be saved, must *pray*—not only that he may be forgiven and cleansed but also that God may give him the faith that is needed to appropriate the blessings of salvation.

SUCCESS NOT DETERMINED BY STATISTICS

What has just been said implies that no Church which is truly Reformed will seek to dictate to the Lord how many should be saved through the preaching of the gospel. Advance estimates of the number of converts in an evangelistic campaign are to be abhorred. But there is another implication; namely, that we should not seek to gauge the success of our mission work by the number of converts which the Lord is pleased to add to the church.

We hold that it is an error to conclude that we have been derelict in our mission zeal from the fact that only 552 persons were added to the membership rolls of our Christian Re-

formed churches in 1957 through our evangelistic work at home. It is hardly Scriptural—Reformed, let us say—to judge our faithfulness in evangelism by the number of converts we have made. Do we judge the faithfulness of a pastor by the number of annual professions of faith in his church? Perhaps some of us do; but is this proper? After all, it is God, the sovereign God, who determines how many or how few will be saved by the preaching of the gospel. If our numberers were right, we could also be justified in pronouncing our Church very faithful in its mission work if, let us say, 8000 had been added to our churches in one year through evangelistic work—regardless of how they were taken in, regardless of the methods used. Such a large figure would not be proof positive of our mission zeal. In fact, it might indicate that we had been letting down the bars. Let us not be charmed by the fallacy that the success of our mission work and the strength of the Church are to be measured by the number of those whom we receive as members.

Please remember, we do not claim that we should be indifferent to the results of our preaching and teaching. Nor do we assert that our churches are as diligent as they should be to win the unsaved for Christ. It may very well be that if we had been more diligent, more would have been won for the Kingdom. But we protest against drawing conclusions concerning the degree of our evangelistic zeal from available statistics.

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

The Reformed missionary preaches Christ but he also preaches the need of faith in Christ. More than that, he also explains what that faith really is.

True faith is not merely the acceptance of Christ "as our personal Savior." It is to be deplored that this formula is sometimes used by Reformed people. True enough, all who sincerely believe accept Christ as their personal Savior. But we do not find this formula in the Bible; it does not state fully what saving faith real-

ly is. This faith is not only acceptance but surrender and commitment. The true believer accepts Christ as his Savior and surrenders to him as his Lord. We must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved. This is the biblical formula used scores of times in the New Testament. It means that we must believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord. What that signifies is explained beautifully in Lord's Day 13 of our Catechism: "Why do you call him *our Lord*? Because he has redeemed us, body and soul, not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood, and has delivered us from all the power of the devil, *and has made us his own possession.*" "Lord" means Savior, but it also means Master and King. The truly saved have this comfort, not that Christ belongs to them, but that they belong to him, with body and soul, in life and death, and are no longer their own (Lord's Day 1).

Every pastor, missionary, and personal worker knows that there are some who want to be saved from the guilt and the penalty of sin but not from its allurements and power; who want the assurance of eternal safety without the surrender of their souls and bodies to the control of Christ the Lord. The number of those who want Christ only as their "personal Savior" is larger than of those who are ready to receive him as Lord. For that reason we fail to preach a full and a true gospel if we define true faith as being merely the acceptance of Christ as our personal Savior.

A truly Reformed Church and a truly Reformed missionary preach the Lordship of Christ, not merely his Saviorhood. That Lordship, according to Scripture and our Catechism, includes his Saviorhood. If we say that Jesus Christ is Lord we have said it all. For as Paul says, no man can say that Jesus is Lord except through the Holy Spirit.

Reformed Mission Methods

According to our second proposition, there is not only a Reformed presentation of the gospel message; there are also Reformed methods of doing mission work.

There is much to be said on this score. Let us confine ourselves to three matters that fall under this head.

AVOIDING UNDUE PRESSURE

First, the missionary who believes in the irresistibility of saving grace, who holds that salvation is from beginning to end the work of God, will not feel constrained to exert undue pressure on those to whom he brings the gospel. That this is done in Arminian circles is common knowledge. The missionary is indeed under divine obligation to be urgent in his preaching and to plead with the unsaved to believe and be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20). However, he will not feel the need of an altar call or any other emotional device to persuade men to accept Christ on the spot. He holds suspect the methods used by modern organized evangelism which, under the glare of newspaper publicity, is often more concerned about "results" than about genuine conversions.

Says Reed Sanderlin, in words recently quoted in *The Banner*, on the futility of such mission methods: "We employ any method which might add another name to the church roll with the idea that the end justifies the means, and after we have reaped the results of the shallow living and thinking on the part of those whom we have added to our number, we then complain about the lack of concern, the indifference, and all the other evils of the 'enlisted' but 'missing in action.'" How true!

EMPHASIS ON THE FAMILY

Second, the truly Reformed missionary believes that God is interested in saving families, not merely individuals. He cannot forget the oft-forgotten conclusion of Paul's challenge to the penitent jailer at Philippi: ". . . and thou shalt be saved, *thou and thy house*." Our God is a covenant God. He wants to add families as well as individuals to his Church. The missionary who is deeply convinced of this truth and its implications will labor as much as possible with families. He will repeatedly enter non-Christian homes and seek to win them for Christ. If he finds that

the door to the hearts of the parents remains closed he will seek permission to labor with the children, knowing that God often works covenant-wise in reverse, so to speak, using the child to reach the parent, and not only the parents to gain the children. In both cases the Lord employs the family tie to break down the heart's resistance to his Word.

It is erroneous, therefore, to condemn "child evangelism" on the ground of the covenant doctrine, or on any other basis. Yet no missionary does his full duty by assuming that the parents of the children under his care in the Sunday school and the catechism class can be neglected because of their apparent indifference and hardness of heart. No Reformed missionary in any field will fail to spend much time in visiting non-Christian homes, especially those whose children he is already able to reach.

EMPHASIS ON TEACHING

Another very important and typically Reformed method of approach for the missionary is teaching. Jesus charged his disciples to preach the gospel but at the same time to *teach* them to "observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." A number of times we read in the book of Acts that Paul "reasoned" with Jews and Greeks concerning the way of salvation. His appeal was to the intellect as well as to the emotions and the will.

Actual experience in mission chapels and home mission fields in general is that those who have become interested in the gospel are eager for instruction in the doctrines of Scripture. Yet modern evangelism is sadly remiss in this matter. It wants quick results, statistics. It herds the weak-willed into inquiry rooms and from there hurries them into church membership. Converts receive scant instruction or none at all in the fundamentals of the gospel, unless perchance the churches with which they affiliate insist that a certain amount of catechetical training must precede full membership in the church.

The Reformed missionary is a teacher as well as a preacher and personal worker. He begins to teach as

soon as he begins to preach. For it is impossible really to preach the gospel without teaching, in a very simple and elementary way to be sure, those doctrines which are the substance, the skeleton, of that gospel. He cannot preach Christ without explaining who Christ is and who God is — the One who sent his Son. He cannot preach Jesus without explaining what "Jesus" means. He cannot explain salvation without teaching what salvation is and includes. He cannot preach the Cross without explaining the meaning of the Cross. He must explain the atonement and its nature, without necessarily using all the theological terminology which the Church uses to shed light on this doctrine.

The Reformed missionary believes that there is no gospel without doctrine. He also understands that Reformed doctrine does not consist of certain profound or disputed teachings added to the simple gospel. Reformed doctrine is that gospel in its undiluted purity. It is impossible to preach the gospel, no matter how simply, unless it has a doctrinal strain and substratum. Every gospel message is certain to have a doctrinal flavor, whether that flavor be Reformed, Arminian, Lutheran, or something else.

A Mystery

All that we have written so far has a bearing on the issue that confronts our Church in connection with the proposed Theological College of Northern Nigeria.

We have tried to find a satisfactory explanation of the reasons why the congregations in our Nigerian field whom our Synod has recognized as a sister-Church seem so intent on being co-sponsors of that proposed school. We have not found an answer that satisfies us. We are still mystified.

There would be no mystery here if, on the one hand, we could assume that our missionaries in Nigeria *are not really concerned about being Reformed in their message and methods* and about helping to establish churches which bear a Reformed stamp. But we may not assume this. We ought to take for granted that the men and women whom our Church has sent to that field love our Re-

formed doctrine and teach it, be it ever so simply. But this leads to our puzzlement. For it has been our observation over the years that mission converts who were brought to Christ and instructed in the Bible by Reformed missionaries love the Reformed faith in so far as they understand it; and let us add that sometimes they have a clearer comprehension of our doctrines and a deeper appreciation for them than many of our own people. Yet we are told that the members or officers of the churches in our Nigerian field insist that their future ministers shall be trained in a seminary, or theological college, as it is called, where the teachers will be of various Christian persuasions: Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Reformed, etc. This mystifies us.

One possible explanation is that our missionaries on that field, for the sake of not putting a confessional stamp on their converts and the churches organized among them, *have refrained from being distinctive in their message*, soft-peddling the Reformed interpretation of the gospel. We hesitate to accept this explanation. For it would really mean that the gospel has not been proclaimed faithfully in that field.

Another explanation is that *Rev. Edgar H. Smith*, with his peculiar inter-denominational background — he served the United Sudan Mission before our Church took over part of its field — and *Dr. Harry R. Boer*, with his known lack of interest in confessional and denominational distinctiveness, *have persuaded the leaders of the native Church that a united seminary is demanded* by their close contact and fellowship with the other Christian groups around them. The fact that the Rev. Mr. Smith was elected chairman of the board of governors of the proposed school and that Dr. Boer is to be its principal shows how prominently they have been identified with the movement for an inter-faith seminary.

We do not know whether this is the proper explanation. But if it is we are still mystified and perplexed. We must assume that both men mentioned above are Reformed in their doctrinal convictions. How then can they think with composure of the fu-

ture of our Nigerian sister-churches, knowing that their future ministers will receive their training at the feet of Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, and Pentecostal teachers, as well as one Reformed teacher? Do they not believe that the Reformed character of any Church whose leaders receive their training at such a school is jeopardized, in fact doomed? How can they justify any course of action which is bound to have this consequence?

Perhaps there are other possible explanations. The mystery remains, as far as we are concerned. The Christian Reformed Church has the right to know why it is that Reformed missionaries, whom it sent out with the mandate to teach and to promote the Reformed creed, can plead and work and even seek the support of our Church for an institution which is sure to undermine the Reformed faith.

Rev. Edgar H. Smith writes in his "Postscript" (The Banner, July 25) that our brethren in Nigeria are unwilling to be cut off from fellowship with other Christians in their land with whom they have had close association in the past — unwilling to withdraw from those "with whom they have enjoyed so much blessing" as being "no longer fit to be consorted with." But how in the world could their refusal to participate in a united seminary be regarded as implying: "Now you are no longer fit to be consorted with?" That might be the case if a united seminary had already existed and our group had already cooperated with the other groups in the matter. But so far there has been no cooperation with the other groups in the training of future ministers; in fact, so far our Mission has had its own school at Lupwe where native pastors have been trained in the vernacular. Rev. Edgar Smith has been the teacher in this school and Dr. Boer stated at Synod that he had spent 9 months of his two-year stay in Africa teaching at this same school. This institution was not in any sense a united or ecumenical venture. And now we are told that if our Church refuses to participate in an entirely new venture, of an inter-denominational character, our native churches there will be turning their backs on

their Christian brethren in the other groups! How strange!

There is one other significant circumstance, concerning which we have just received first-hand information, which makes us wonder still more why some of our missionaries on the field are so insistent that a new, inter-faith school shall be started at Bukuru for the training of native pastors in the English language. There is already a training school for future pastors in the Tiv field at Zaki-Biam, where Rev. Peter Ipema is giving instruction in the Tiv language. Three or four students are completing a two-year course. In 1959 the school will introduce a four-year course which, it is hoped, will be taken by 15 young men. This school will be a truly indigenous institution, supported by the Tiv churches. We all remember how ardently Dr. Boer defended the indigenous principle in his pamphlet on our Indian field. The Tiv school therefore should have his wholehearted support. But why establish another non-indigenous school of an inter-denominational character when it will not be needed by the largest of our fields in Nigeria, the Tiv area?

We could go on and ask more questions. The mystery mentioned above is not solved. We have no satisfying answer to the question why the brethren Smith and Boer are so passionately determined to enlist the support of our Church for the proposed Theological College of Northern Nigeria *unless* it is this, they have once identified themselves with the cause and dread to lose face before the other Christian groups in their fellowship. We can, of course, understand that if our Church withdraws altogether, this will be embarrassing for them. For this, our Church (Synod) will be partly to blame. We leaped before we looked. But it is also true that a larger measure of devotion on the part of these men to our Reformed heritage and more concern about the future Reformed character of the native churches would have prevented them from making commitment to an institution which in the end will cause the blackout of our Reformed witness in our Nigerian mission field.

Calvinism and Passion for Souls

KATIE GUNNINK

IN one of the 1950 issues of the *Evangelical Quarterly* there appeared an article on "Calvin's Missionary Message" by J. Van Den Berg from Ottoland, Holland. The article attempted to show from missionary history the relationship of Calvinism to missions. At the conclusion of the article there appeared an arresting statement which we quote: "We have come to the end of our historical survey, in which only some crucial points in the development of Calvinistic missionary thinking could be mentioned. If we venture to draw a conclusion from it, we would say that Calvinistic missionary activity was at its height when there was perfect harmony and unity between the theological (pertaining to the knowledge of God—K.) and soteriological (pertaining to the knowledge of salvation—K.) line in Calvinism. Where the theological line is emphasized at the expense of the soteriological there looms a secularized Calvinism which in its desire to fight the wars of the Lord on the broad front of life loses its passion for souls, but on the other hand a one-sided stress on soteriology leads to a sterile mysticism which is quite passive with respect to the missionary task."

Why Are We Lacking in Passion for Souls?

The reading of Mr. Van Den Berg's survey and concluding statement naturally leads us to self-examination to determine whether or not we have at present that passion for souls that belongs to a balanced Calvinism. The term "passion for souls" is not a term used often in Reformed circles, and it was a bit refreshing to see a Calvinist

use it. I often wondered why it was not used more often, and when an opportunity presented itself to discuss it in various ladies' societies we brought up the subject of our Reformed emphasis and a passion for souls.



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The reactions, opinions, and suggestions were varied and enlightening. The first question that suggested itself was, "What does it mean to have a passion for souls?" It was a bit hard to define precisely at first, but all felt that it had to do with a saved person's earnest desire to have others know about the Lord and be saved. In its broadest sense it might mean a deep concern for the soul's welfare of our fellow men. In this sense a pastor might have a passion for the souls of his flock, the Christian school teacher might have a great concern for the spiritual well-being of his pupils, and a parent might be deeply interested in the spiritual nurture of his children. However, usually we associate the term "passion for souls," in its narrowest sense, with feeling a deep compassion for the plight of the lost.

Some ladies felt that the term was not used much among us because we stressed the glory of God rather than the salvation of souls. To have a passion for souls seems to suggest that our greatest missionary motive was the salvation of men rather than the honor of God. As if there were a kind of irreconcilable antithesis between a passion for souls and a passion for God's glory.

Other ladies felt that the doctrine of election might almost unconsciously make us feel that it would do little good to become really concerned about a lost neighbor because God must work in his heart first. There must be readiness and willingness to sit down and talk about the way of salvation if the sinner makes the first move and comes to us seeking for light and guidance. Then there would be evidence that the Spirit is working in that man's life. But to go out and talk to just anybody, knowing man's inability to believe and his natural hardness of heart, hardly seems to warrant the effort.

There were those of us who confessed that we often talked to an unbeliever merely from a sense of duty. We knew it pleased God when we witnessed for him and we also felt a responsibility for the soul of our fellow man; so we tried hard to discharge this obligation by speaking to him. Whether or not this stranger to the covenant of grace believed the message did not matter. Our concern was to wash our hands with respect to this man's soul and discharge faithfully the watchman's duty. This sinner, at least, can never come back at us in the judgment day and say, "You never warned me." That it is our duty to witness is certainly true, but to talk to a man about his soul's need only from a sense of duty is not yet having a passion for souls.

There were ladies in the societies who felt we didn't have a passion for souls because spiritual things were not real and vital to us, and our children never caught the vision of white harvest fields at our very door steps because there was so little evidence of love for God and the neighbor in our homes. In line with this

thought there were some who said that in their homes they were never brought up to think in terms of their neighbors' souls and their salvation.

Paul's Love for Souls

All of this discussion came about when we studied the example of Paul in his passion for souls. In that great chapter of Romans 9, where Paul expounds so clearly the great doctrine of God's sovereign election, he begins with an anguished sob, "...I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Can any of us understand this kind of passion for souls? And that in the light of what Paul presently says about God's sovereign decree of election! Paul realizes that they are not all Israel that are of Israel because God sovereignly chooses some and passes others by. But at the same time Paul would gather them all together and weep over them and supplicate for them, and so earnestly desire their salvation that he could wish, if that were proper and right and possible, to be accursed from Christ for their sakes.

Christ's Yearning to Save the Lost

We have a grander example than Paul. Who can fathom the infinite compassion of Jesus when he sat on the mount outside of Jerusalem and sobbed with heaving sobs of sorrow over impenitent Jerusalem? This was the Jerusalem that was so calloused and depraved that she crucified the Son of God on the accursed tree. But how earnestly the Lord desired her salvation, and there was no one with such a passion for God's glory as he. Could we sit beside the Lord on the mount and feel just a wee bit of that passion for souls? Understand in some small degree that yearning of his heart for the lost souls of men? Why are we so indifferent about the eternal welfare of our neighbors? Is it because we have never been made aware of our great responsibility toward them? Paul says in Romans 1:14, "I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and

the foolish." Paul felt a great obligation toward his fellow men. He was indebted to bring them the gospel of saving grace. Paul makes us feel that our neighbors have a right to expect us to be interested in their souls since we have the great treasure of the gospel. To keep the day of glad tidings to ourselves is doing our fellowmen an injustice.

A Defect in Our Training

Is it possible, as Mr. Van Den Berg suggests, that we have stressed the theological line of Calvinism at the expense of the soteriological? Can we talk much about God and his glorious attributes and very little about the Lord Jesus and his wonderful salvation for sinners? Have we emphasized the precious doctrines of God's election and sovereignty to such an extent that we have neglected the whole doctrine of our human responsibility to our neighbor?

To some of us the awareness of our neighbor's lost condition was brought to our attention by incidental contacts with Fundamentalist brethren. They impressed us with their zeal to make Christ known to those outside. To others of us mission interest came in other, rather incidental ways: through a missionary-minded school teacher, or a missionary who spoke at a mission rally. Wonderful as these sporadic impressions are to the minds and hearts of our children and young people, may the church depend on such haphazard and incidental influences to impress upon our young people and children their supreme calling in life to be light-bearers in the world?

Do we give sufficient systematic instruction in our human responsibility to witness so that *all* of our young people feel that they are in the world to propagate the faith? Are the goals for teaching doctrine clear to our children and young people? Is it only to prepare them for church membership? Are we content when we have safely anchored our young people in the harbor of the church? Have we felt that the goal of our indoctrination program has been reached when they have made their confession of faith in

the church? In that case we are then in danger of making the church an end in itself, forgetting that the church is in order to the kingdom.

If the church is the supreme agent for the advancement of the kingdom, then our training must not lead merely to church membership, but to kingdom work. In some Korean churches one of the stipulations for church membership is that a convert shall first seek out another unsaved person and bring him into the church. We may not agree with the requirement but the emphasis is clear. A member of Christ's church must be a kingdom worker and earnestly endeavor to be a witness in the world.

We realize that work in the kingdom is broad in scope and includes all God-honoring professions and occupations. It has to do with claiming all areas of life for Christ, but how can that be done unless we witness concerning Christ and his salvation? When we talk vaguely about establishing Christ's rule in every area of life without presenting Christ to the hearts of men as he is revealed in the Scriptures, are we not guilty of "a secularized Calvinism which in its desire to fight the wars of the Lord on the broad front of life loses its passion for souls"? We say that to enter legitimate professional and occupational spheres of life as Christians is good Calvinism, but to talk to people about their soul's salvation sounds pietistic, and smacks of Fundamentalism. Speaking about passion for souls is regarded by some as being foreign to the spirit of Calvinism.

Would it seem so odd to express a deep desire for the salvation of sinners if in the teaching ministry of the church every one of our children would be impressed with his responsibility to tell others about the Lord Jesus? One might object that you cannot develop a passion for souls by sheer indoctrination. Such a passion should come spontaneously. It should arise naturally out of a living union with the compassionate Christ. This is true, of course, but we could say that also about our prayer life. That too should arise naturally out of the regenerated heart, and yet we indoc-

trinate our children and young people in the nature and practice of prayer. Jehovah's Witnesses indoctrinate their children in the specific field of propagating their faith and they are very effective propagandists. So do the Communists and they are also very effective. But we are content with occasional and incidental influences to make our children aware of their responsibilities to propagate the precious gospel.

Perhaps we still have to work out a theology of missions that can be used to teach our boys and girls the fundamental basis, reasons, and practices of witnessing for Christ. We have talked much about changing the attitudes of our church toward those

who are without. One good place to begin changing attitudes is in the minds and hearts of our youth. The home is indeed a most effective agency for this, especially in the way of parents' example; but it would seem that the church should find room in its teaching program for systematic instruction to train our children to be confessors of Christ in the world. The church is our mother, and a mother does not train her children to nestle in her bosom all their days, but to be thrust into the world and do the world's work. So the church must prepare her children to carry out her supreme program, namely, to make Christ known to men. If it were precisely the thing we were trained to do, it might not

seem so strange that Calvinists can have a sincere and intense interest in the salvation of others.

There is, moreover, one truth that gives the church a real starting point in this training program. It is that the believer is anointed a prophet, priest, and king. This means not only that he is appointed by God to proclaim the gospel, but also that he is qualified to do so by the Holy Spirit. Thus no believer can say he has no aptitude or talent for being a witness for the Lord. If we would exercise ourselves more diligently in this three-fold office, I think we would discover that there need be no conflict between having a passion for God's glory and a passion for souls.

The Future of Our Christian Schools

Are These Schools in the "Spring of Hope" or the "Winter of Despair"?

RAYMOND J. GEERDES

Growth and Crisis

CHRISTIAN education is on the move in our circles. The latest Annual of the National Union of Christian Schools reports 207 schools with a total enrollment of 40,754 pupils, staffed by 1500 full-time teachers. Everywhere new buildings are being occupied and others are being constructed. New societies are formed and schools begun. There is new enthusiasm, new purpose, and new energy.

In spite of this healthy growth and energy the cause of Christian education is involved in a crisis from which its healthy emergence in the years to come is much in doubt. It recalls Dickens' famous opening lines from *A Tale of Two Cities*, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of

belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair. . . ."

Christian education is truly in crisis. Internal problems of curriculum, teacher recruitment, building programs, and finances are but a small part of the total picture. There are increasing signs of internal dissensions over the nature, purpose, and even the basic reason for Christian education itself among our own constituency. Among Protestant Christians a serious cleavage over this issue is increasingly apparent. Subtle political, economic, and social pressures are building up and becoming more numerous in the actions of state legislatures, accrediting agencies, and social pressure groups.

The attacks and pressure on Christian education at first glance seem so widespread and divergent, so cross-current and perplexing, that many

may be lulled into believing that there is no attack at all. The front is indeed fluid, but the enemy is very real. The first thing we must do is to recognize the danger, then analyze the situation and unify our defense.

This article, then, will attempt to show that dangers do exist, that they come from within and without, and that there is one significant way to meet these various attacks. The enemy may not be united, but there is a unifying principle in his attack. The survival of our Christian schools in the second half of the twentieth century depends on how well we define and locate our enemies, and how well we prepare to defend ourselves.

I. INTERNAL TENSIONS

Dr. John De Vries on Science in Education

Some of the internal tensions of Christian education were brought into sharp focus and conflict during the California Christian Teachers' Institute held this past year at Redlands, California, October 24 and 25. The main speaker at the Institute was Dr. John De Vries of Calvin College.

In a series of three lectures Dr. De Vries explored the role of science in Christian education. Some of the current tensions and problems in this area were handled openly and honestly.

The dominant theme of Dr. De Vries' lectures, however, was the sharp cleavage between the Christian's and the non-Christian's basic premises in the approach to science. Dr. De Vries clearly demonstrated that the non-Christian scientist, although loudly professing complete impartiality and open-mindedness, actually has twelve basic *a priori* prejudices in his approach to science. The so-called "scientific method" presupposes the nonexistence of God, and nature is used in a self-contradictory fashion.

In opposition to the non-Christian approach to science the Christian, according to Dr. De Vries, must clearly recognize that he begins with basic presuppositions. He presupposes the sovereign God of the Bible and a created universe.

Such refreshing concreteness from a scientific scholar, recognized in both Christian and non-Christian scientific circles, is heartening indeed at a time when covenantal Christian education seems threatened from within and without.

The Approach of Dr. James Daane

In direct contrast to this concrete antithetical approach to epistemology and Christian education was a lecture given at the evening banquet of the California Christian Teachers' Institute by Dr. James Daane, pastor of the Los Angeles Christian Reformed Church. Dr. Daane's two main ideas both stood in direct contrast to the approach of Dr. De Vries.

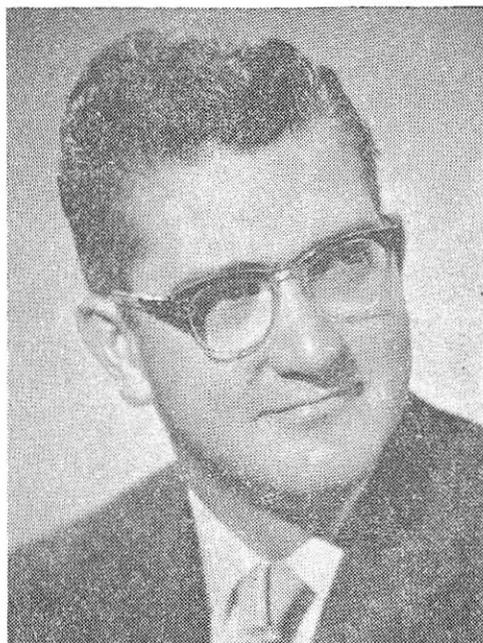
In the first place Dr. Daane contended that one great danger of Christian education was that our schools lacked rapport with American society and that our children were losing their contact with the American scene. He implied rather directly that our schools were the result of immigrant isolationism, and were the products of fear—the fear of contamination by American life, kept alive by the psychology of withdrawal.

The solution offered by Dr. Daane to this grave danger was for our schools to seek involvement with American society. Dr. Daane contended that when such involvement was accomplished we would then truly have a correct philosophy of education and our schools would be

the finest schools in the country.

Dr. Daane was later questioned as to whether this involvement in the American scene could not be more easily accomplished by sending a child directly to the public schools. The reply was that this could very probably be true. Dr. Daane later admitted that perhaps Christian school teachers also could better achieve this type of involvement by becoming public school teachers.

What have we here? Is this involvement or suicide? Do we have here a distinctive Christian school philosophy with which to exert a tremendous influence on American society and education at a period when American education is being reevaluated as to its aims, purposes, and accomplishments?



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Or do we have here a weak conformity and submergence for its own sake? Do we have here any real purpose to maintain our schools, or to propagate them where they do not exist?

Dr. Daane's second point was that our schools should be further separated from our churches and left to seek their own "peculiar objectives." Dr. Daane did not develop this point as specifically as the first, but he clearly implied that the school and church should be allowed to drift apart. The impression was clearly created that this point of separation should be far enough to relieve the church altogether of the burden and embarrassment of establishing or maintaining a Christian school.

It is painful to bring so personal a

criticism to public attention. Yet I would feel derelict in my duty not to challenge publicly so insidious and also so public an attack on the principles of Christian education. It is also public knowledge that the Los Angeles Christian school has closed. Perhaps certain extenuating circumstances enter in. Yet one cannot help wondering to what extent the publicly expressed philosophy of Dr. Daane helped to bring about this sad fact.

School and Church

The contention that the school and church should be completely separated may relieve the embarrassment of defending our schools to liberal Christian friends. It may be equally distressing to some also to explain why our Church is so narrowminded as to exclude lodge members from our communion unless they are willing to give up their lodge membership previous to joining the church. This seems, however, to be a sort of immigrant complex in reverse and is based on expediency rather than basic principle.

Our schools are not parochial schools, yet our churches are directly responsible for their establishment and maintenance. The reluctance of some ministers and churches to accept this responsibility is a continuing concern. Article 21 of our Church Order is very explicit as to the obligation of churches to support Christian schools. "Consistories shall see to it that there are good Christian schools where the parents have their children instructed according to the demands of the covenant."

Article 41 of our Church Order further states that at the regular meetings of Classis the following specific questions shall be asked by the president to the delegates of each represented church: "Does the consistory diligently promote the cause of Christian day schools?"

Our leaders are clearly obligated to support actively Christian education (*Acts* 1892, Article 23, p. 12). "All our leaders and people are urged to lend this cause their whole-hearted moral and financial support" (*Acts* 1932, Article 59, p. 42). Synod even went so far as to recommend that the support or lack of support of Christian educa-

tion should be given weighty consideration in connection with determining a man's fitness or qualifications for office-bearer (*Acts* 1934, Article 162, p. 167).

This clearly obligates ministers and elders vigorously to support our Christian schools, as demanded by our Church Order (Article 21). It is also clearly the obligation of Classis (Article 41) to be vitally concerned when one of its member churches seems to have taken a contrary position on the Christian school principle. Many ministers and churches have clearly accepted their responsibility towards the school, while others continue to drag their feet.

II. CLEAVAGE IN PROTESTANTISM

Let no one be deceived. The issue of Christian education is coming to a head. Protestantism in general is beginning to take sides. On one hand, American Fundamentalism is embracing the movement with vigor under the able direction of Mark Fakkema, Educational Director of the National Association of Christian Schools. The movement has the backing of the National Association of Evangelicals and emphasizes the evangelical approach. Although we welcome the enthusiasm and the evangelical warmth of this movement, we maintain with vigor the truly Reformed position of Christian education as being a covenantal responsibility owed to our sovereign God.

Dr. Cornelius Van Til of Westminster Seminary has stated the issue with great clarity and distinction in his pamphlet *The Dilemma of Education*. On page 27 he states:

"The difference therefore between the Arminian position and the Reformed Faith is not limited to a few minor details. It is rather an all-inclusive and all-persuasive difference. What is the significance of the difference for education? It means that the same criticism that we have made of the Roman Catholic position applies here. With Romanism, the Arminian view accepts a principle of interpretation for human life which comes in part from man himself. Then we have no fully intelligible philosophy of

Christian education. We cannot clearly show that the non-Christian view is wrong. We cannot maintain that God must be active in education; we cannot show why education should be Christ-centered."

Although we welcome with enthusiasm the sincere contribution of the N. A. C. S. and the N. A. E. in the field of Christian education, we must base our concepts of Christian education clearly on a distinctive Biblical foundation. Yet we must look on our N. A. C. S. friends as Christian brethren united with us in the defense of Christian education against such recent attacks as the official statements published by the Reformed Church in America's Board of Education and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America's Board of Christian Education resolution.

These two reports are in many ways parallel and similar. Both are of recent origin, and they constitute official statements proposed by the official Boards related to education and adopted officially by the controlling authorities in both churches.

Opposition to Christian Schools by the Reformed Church and the Presbyterian Church

The statement of the Reformed Church was officially adopted by the Synod of 1957 and this body directed that it be sent to every pastor in the Church for reading, reference, and study. It was similarly adopted by the Board of Education of the Reformed Church at its April, 1957, meeting.

The statement of the position of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America on education was first adopted by its Board of Christian Education and submitted to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church on May 14, 1957. It was officially adopted by the General Assembly.

It is hoped that these statements will be carefully studied and replied to in detail by leaders in the Christian Reformed and in other Churches as both reports so directly challenged our most basic convictions as regards the purpose of Christian education. Here one can only attempt to sketch the problem. Both of these statements

require careful considerations and replies, but it is undeniable that they constitute a major attack on the purpose and nature of Christian education.

In content the material covered and the general conclusions of both reports are similar. The Presbyterian report is divided into five main headings. Part I, "Among Free Peoples," deals with the public schools and attempts to define the mission and function of the public school in America. Part II is entitled "Religion in the School Curriculum." Part III is entitled "Parochial and Other Week-day Schools," Part IV, a "Two-Way Conversation," and Part V, "Challenge to Presbyterians."

The statement of the Reformed Church in America also has five major headings. Part I, called the "Problem Stated," discusses private and parochial schools and church-related colleges. Part II deals with "Public Education." Part III is entitled "Parochial Education in the United States" and considers the stand of Roman Catholic, Lutherans, Jewish, Christian Reformed, and the Reformed Church in America. Part IV is called "Theological Presuppositions of Education" and Part V is the "Summary and Recapitulation."

Both documents, while acknowledging the right to establish private and parochial schools, strongly defend the public school as the legitimate means of education. Both statements do some quick adjustment in defense of their support of public schools as the appropriate mode of instruction, on one hand, and the demand, on the other, that the church and the home take up the "slack" and overcome the secularizing influence of the school, which neither will fully admit is present. Does not the great stress on the need of the home and the church to meet the shortcomings of the public school imply the recognition by both statements that such secularizing influence does exist?

Another inconsistency in these attacks is the attempt to justify Christian education on the college level where justification has been rigorously opposed on the elementary and secondary level. Under the heading of

"Church-related Colleges" the report of the Reformed Church attempts to justify this inconsistency. "This means that many who feel no restraint in sending their children to public schools at the primary and secondary level are committed to the view that high education should take place within an atmosphere that is permeated by the Christian spirit." The reason for this point of view is twofold. "First of all, the child during the years of attendance at primary and secondary schools is normally sheltered within the home. The parents and the church are therefore able to discharge their responsibilities in leading the child into a richer apprehension of God's grace through instruction and example, the importance of which cannot be overestimated."

The second reason for justifying Christian college education is as follows: "the primary and secondary education is for the most part concerned with giving the child basic equipment. It is desirable that attitudes, habits, and patterns of thought are established long before a youth enters college. However, the rational ordering of life, the relating of things to one another in a comprehensive scheme, ordinarily take place at a more advanced age" . . . "During the years of primary and secondary schooling the responsibility for helping the child to grow into a knowledge of these truths of the spirit belongs to church and home. With the advance into adulthood, the mind of the young person comes to grips with the claims of Christianity and of Jesus Christ who stands at the center." Thus the conclusion is drawn that Christian colleges are warranted, but not Christian elementary and high schools.

III. CHRISTIAN REFORMED REACTION

In an editorial in *The Banner* of November 29, 1957, editor John Vander Ploeg analyzed this statement of the Reformed Church in a general way in an editorial entitled, "Van Raalte's Anchor of Hope." Editor Vander Ploeg's comment on some of the reasoning of this statement was: "one finds it difficult to believe that the writers can really be serious about this. But apparently they are in dead

earnest." Those of us actively engaged in the Christian school movement as teachers, board members, or parents find the unbiblical reasoning of the Reformed Church statements on the reasons for rejecting Christian elementary and high schools while embracing Christian colleges difficult to take seriously.

The lines are becoming more apparent. The Reformed Church in America and the Presbyterian Church have officially rejected the Christian school movement. Although the Christian Reformed Church is officially committed to Christian education on all levels, and the National Union of Christian schools has had a phenomenal growth in enrollment and in number of schools, we must recognize that our schools are under attack.

Even as we hope there will be many in the Reformed Church who do not accept the official position of their Church and who will continue to participate actively in the Christian school movement, so there are those in the Christian Reformed Church who essentially reject our basic stand on Christian education and who feel a deep-seated sympathy with the official position of the Reformed Church.

A Letter by Rev. Hugh A. Koops

Dr. James Daane has presented a position which comes very close in spirit to the statement of the Reformed Church. It is significant also to note that *The Banner* of January 10, 1958 published a letter in the "Voices in the Church" section by Rev. Hugh A. Koops. Rev. Koops was very disturbed by the editorial, "Van Raalte's Anchor of Hope." Rev. Koops challenged the editorial on grounds that it strained Christian charity. But any careful reading of the editorial confirms the impression that *The Banner* editor was extremely charitable and tactful, and if there be belligerency it was not on the part of Rev. John Vander Ploeg. A strange paradox becomes apparent in these discussions. Sometimes it seems as if those who would criticize our basic positions are allowed unrestricted license, while those who defend our basic principles are sorely criticized. Does

the Reformed Church, I ask Rev. Koops, have the undisputed right to make so basic a challenge to our principles, motives, and practices in Christian education without the Editor of our official church paper, and all of us, coming to our own defense? To ask the question is to answer it. It is hoped that others, with charity but with devastating logic, will answer this specious statement and reaffirm Scriptural principles.

IV. ATTACK ON COVENANT AS JUSTIFICATION FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

But more significant still is the basic reason for Rev. Koop's criticism of our editor. He agrees essentially with the position of the Reformed Church, and he disagrees essentially with the position of the Christian Reformed Church. At the center of the attack of the Reformed Church and of Rev. Koop's argument is the attack on the doctrine of the covenant as justification for Christian schools. Says Mr. Koops: "The second feature of the editorial which I found extremely disconcerting was the very weak argumentation for Christian education. Surely, the doctrine of the covenant alone does not demand a separate school system."

This then is the central point, this matter of the covenant and its interpretation. This is the central point of the statement of the Reformed Church which concludes that, "we caution against the acceptance of any interpretation of the covenant which prescribes the type and quality of education. We cannot conceive of the covenant as yielding built-in patterns of education determining in a specific manner its method, form and content."

The question is not whether the covenant has "built-in" patterns which demand Christian education, or whether the covenant "alone" demands a separate school system. These are negative distortions of a positive commitment. The question is this: Does our distinctive Reformed view of the Sovereignty of God, as borne out in the Covenant of Grace, and as reflected in our total world and life view, require a positive commitment to Christian education?

The traditional stand of such men as Professor L. Berkhof has been a resounding and unqualified yes. In a booklet published by the National Union of Christian Schools in 1934, entitled "The Cornerstone of the Christian School, or the Covenant of Grace and its Educational Implications," Prof. Berkhof defends with great clarity the proposition: "Show me a person who believes in the biblical conception of the covenant, and I'll show you a person who believes in the Christian school."

The National Union of Christian Schools in its pamphlet, "Four Reasons," states the following: "The two basic teachings of the sovereign Kingship of God over all of life and the Covenant of Grace require the Christian school." Our Church Order also recognizes the demands of the covenant in requiring consistories to establish good Christian schools.

It would seem that the burden of proof falls on those in our circles who want to say, in agreement with the Reformed Church, that the covenant does not "demand" Christian education. Certainly they have complete freedom to discuss this matter thoroughly and to evaluate our conclusions. If they continue in their rejection of our position, especially as ministers pledged to our church polity as well as our creeds, then two honorable procedures are open to them. The first is to try by every legal means to change our position. The second is, after failing to achieve this, they fully commit themselves to our position or seek communion elsewhere where they can be entirely honest. At the same time we welcome into our communion all those who agree with our whole-hearted commitment to Christian education as demanded by God's covenant promises.

V. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ATTACKS

Another consideration enters here. Unless our schools are clearly established from principles which are integral and basic to our religious commitment we shall eventually lose them by default; and if we should survive our own waning interest, we would finally succumb to subtle social pres-

ures and even to political persecution. This is to say that unless we clearly establish our schools as being an essential outgrowth of our religious faith, and which would establish them as coming under the First Amendment, the religious freedom clause, we cannot indefinitely maintain them against increasing opposition.

Professor Jellema and Zylstra Versus Prof. De Koster

That such increased opposition is coming is obvious to anyone who is a careful observer. The opposition will develop along two lines. The first attack will be attempts to compel us to add a bewildering maze of life-adjustment courses under the pretext of conforming to standards. Holland Christian High School recently lost its accreditation with the North Central Association of Secondary Schools because it refused to water down its curriculum with certain vocational and life-adjustment courses. Fortunately editorials in the *Saturday Evening Post* and the *Chicago Tribune* and comments in *Time* came to their defense. There remains in our people a persistent belief that our secondary schools must discipline the mind. It was this "formal discipline" that the late Dr. Henry Zylstra and Dr. Harry Jellema expanded so eloquently in their writing and speaking. With their efforts our secondary schools have defined our educative tasks in these terms, and away from the life-adjustment, vocational readiness, schooling vs. education type of thinking.

It was somewhat distressing then to read the article, "Education for Freedom," by Lester De Koster in the February issue of the *Reformed Journal*, which strongly advocated a return to the vocational approach to education. What Mr. De Koster said so eloquently would better apply to the trade school, the business college, the industrial arts school. But please let us not attempt to divert, transpose, or undermine our Christian secondary schools from their primary task, as defined by Drs. Jellema and Zylstra. We cannot run off two-headed in opposite directions and still do our primary

task. I am happy this attack on the primary role of Christian education was adequately answered by Ronald Jager in the *May Reformed Journal*.

Witness the new school laws in Ohio and Pennsylvania with their restricting regulatory details with regard to procedures, curriculum, and facilities. The problem here seems to be one of conforming to impossible demands which radically alter the character and content of our schools, or threaten to put them out of business.

Again, it is significant to note that the parochial schools receive special considerations and exemption in Ohio and Pennsylvania under the new law because the legislatures obviously fear a violation of the First Amendment. Other "private" schools are thrown together, including private schools for religious purposes, for high-handed regulation. These, the legislatures seem to assume, do not fall into the First Amendment sanctuary.

In our own state, California, a constitutional amendment will be found on the next ballot in the general election in November which, if passed, will make it lawful to tax any religious-sponsored and non-profit educational institution below the college level. A group which calls itself "Protestants United Against Taxing Schools" is fighting the issue for all the religiously-sponsored Protestant schools in the state. No difference is made in the proposed California amendment between parochial, or First Amendment schools, and other religious schools. However, were the law to pass, the job of getting it revoked by judicial review of the Supreme Court would be infinitely more strongly grounded in unassailable constitutional precedent if the First Amendment can clearly be invoked. "The power to tax is the power to destroy." If this law is adopted here, and not set aside by the courts, more states may eventually expect the same. With the tax weapon over us we are putty in their hands. We can be tinkered with by officials, imposed upon by agencies, regulated by unseen and possibly hostile men. They could bleed us to death if this amendment to California's constitution is passed.

VI. WHAT ABOUT PAROCHIALISM?

We are frightened by parochialism, yet our schools are necessary applications of church polity, as we believe they are of our distinctives in theology. We have nothing to fear by tying our schools closer to our churches. Personally I prefer the present society-control system. But I sincerely agree also with Dr. John H. Bratt in his address before the National Union of Christian Schools' Convention at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, last summer. Dr. Bratt drove the issue home when he commented, "My personal preference runs in the direction of the present society-control arrangement, but should the movement be impeded by non-participation and hampered by lack of resources in its constantly expanding demands, I would concur in a return to parochialism, convinced that it is the better way to promote the Kingdom of God."

Rev. Bernard E. Pekelder, in an article entitled "Church, Christian Schools, and Finances," printed in the February issue of the *Reformed Journal* and originally given before the Eastern Ministers' Conference, reaches substantially the same conclusions as does Dr. Bratt for the same reasons. Says Mr. Pekelder, "But does the church have financial responsibilities toward the school? I suggest it does. Let us not be frightened by the specter of parochialism. If the church must promote Christian education and encourage its support by the parents, then it cannot divest itself of financial involvement."

VII. FIRST AMENDMENT AND PAROCHIALISM

To Dr. Bratt's and Mr. Pekelder's reasons for considering a possible return to parochialism could be added the serious possibility that we cannot maintain our schools politically unless they are tied closely and clearly to our churches where the First Amendment gives them sanctuary. The implications of our Reformed principles as touching the First Amendment was clearly and logically worked out by Rev. Leonard Verduin in his recent article in the *Reformed Journal*, "Reformed Theology and the First

Amendment." As Reformed Christians we can certainly give this article our unqualified support, but we must also use it to protect not only our right to worship but also our right to educate under our distinctive theology.

The famous "Oregon Case" is an illustration to the point. In 1922 the state of Oregon by initiative proposed and adopted a law which required that all children between the ages of 8 and 16 who had not completed the eighth grade had to attend *public* schools. Under this law private schools were practically abolished.

The Roman Catholics brought this act before the court, and in 1925 the United States Supreme Court unanimously set the law aside as unconstitutional. Note the lapse of time. Judicial reviews take time even when successful, and were we faced with a battery of adverse legislation, we could lose our schools in the process of getting these laws reversed.

It is also noteworthy to consider the bases for the Supreme Court's judgment. The court decided that the law violated the substantive meaning of the "due process" clause that appears in the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendment. These clauses state that the government may not deny anyone "life, liberty, or property without due process of law." The 1922 Oregon law was reversed, not on the overpowering argument of the First Amendment, which protects religious freedom, but on the Fourteenth which protects life, liberty, and property. The court decided that this law violated the right of parents to direct the upbringing and education of their children. It also held that the law denied private schools teachers and administrators of their liberty to make a living in a vocation "long regarded as useful and meritorious."

This decision was grounded on substantial reasons, but not on *the* reason that this law interfered with legitimate rights of freedom of religion as granted by the First Amendment. It is hoped that some attorney or political scientists in our midst will seriously study this question and advise us as to what our schools can do for protection. Perhaps the problem of legalizing payments of tuition as legitimate

tax deductions for our parents can be actualized only through the First Amendment.

VIII. CAN WE DEFEND OURSELVES?

There is but one solution to the "gathering storm" of criticism, protest, and attack on our Christian schools. That solution is to ground our schools more firmly in our distinctive faith and all its implications. Only then can we face realistically the opposition from within the framework of Protestant Christianity as expressed by the official statements of the Reformed Church in America and the Presbyterian Church. These statements are all the more agonizing because they come from within the framework of the so-called Reformed Protestant community. We truly wish we did not need to walk a lonely road away from those whose creeds and doctrines have the same origins and basis as ours.

Even more alarming is the growing demands of those within our own denomination who would drive church and school apart, and who would challenge the presuppositions of our covenant responsibilities in subordinating this important sphere of life to the demands of God's Kingdom. This is certainly the "unkindest cut of all."

The answer to both these sincere but misdirected groups of critics is a reaffirmation of our joint purposes in our schools and churches. As the Rev. Mr. Pekelder explained in the above-mentioned source, "Christian schools must go on, providing for the education of our children whose parents are committed to Christian education. The churches must go forward, extending their witness and broadening their evangelistic program."

Only this joining of hands by church and school will also give the protection of the inviolate First Amendment necessary to guard us against the growing attacks upon our schools from the society around us by restrictive and subversive controls, perhaps by abolishment itself.

Perhaps this joining of hands by church and school need not lead to outright parochialism. Perhaps adequate solutions may be found within the present framework of society control. But the church must act also.

The embrace must be mutual, for mutual purposes and goals.

Just how we finally define our entire philosophy is important, but not compulsory. *Our embracing the cause of Christian education is primarily an act of love, a total commitment to our total faith, as a Communist would embrace his commitment and his faith.*

We must begin with the eternal sovereign God. We must by all means believe that the covenant "demands" our schools. But again here it must not be a watered down sovereignty, or a "dynamic" and fluctuating covenant. Such ideas are neither biblical nor will they sustain our churches, much less our schools.

There may be those who would argue, as does the Rev. Mr. Koops, that "It is not the duty of the school, even the Christian school, to lead this child to Christ. This is the duty of the church." We would not greatly argue this point except to agree with Dr. Henry Zylstra who in the chapter on "Christian Education" from a *Testament of Vision* declares, "I honor the teacher who, when she has reason to suppose that a pupil or student is not a Christian, drops whatever she is doing, her arithmetic, or geography, or history lesson, to press the Gospel message upon him. That teacher has her values in the right order. She puts first things first."

Nor can we escape the Covenant of Grace in defining our commitment to Christian education. This is certainly the "cornerstone of the Christian school," as Professor Berkhof so majestically stated. Nor do we fall back on the covenant because our homes and schools are not doing the job, as our N. A. C. S. friends sometimes suggest, or as our Reformed Church friends do when they imply that the home and school are alone sufficient. Let the trilogy of home, school, and church stand, each fully itself, yet all united.

Neither may we neglect the commitment to our school as a Kingdom necessity. The mandate to build the Heavenly City, the *civitas dei*, must be given its rightful place. But none of these stand in abstract isolation. All are part of a unity, a whole.

Our schools need not succumb to the divergent and diverse attacks that are being directed against them. Having located the enemy we must draw together in a continuous closed circle as a group of Conastoga wagons of an immigrant train anticipating an Indian attack. This closed circle con-

The winds of liberalism are blown out and now the storm of neo-orthodoxy beats upon us. Few liberals have repented for those sterile days or asked forgiveness for having led men astray. Many liberals have slipped into various forms of neo-orthodoxy. . . . But just as liberalism had misread history, neo-orthodoxy was rea-

tains those things that we value most: our covenant concept, creeds, biblical theology, world and life view, Kingdom consciousness, and unity of purpose in church and home and school. Once our wagons are drawn together the direction of the attack matters little. Let the arrows fly!

soning entirely from history and the social scene. The neo-orthodox thinker was making the mistake of forgetting that the Word of God speaks to us, and that a doctrine is to be believed because it is according to Scripture.

MAURICE O. MAHLER in
Christianity Today

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CRACKING THE SOUTHERN BARRIER

GERARD VAN GRONINGEN

THE sound barrier has been cracked; in fact, the jets continue to do it again and again. Oil companies advertise their success in cracking the octane barrier by solar refining. The color barrier in the United States between whites and blacks is under constant attack and there is an increasing number of indications that it, too, is cracking.

Many barriers remain to be dealt with, however. One of these is the barrier to the south of us — the barrier between the America of the United States and the America of the Spanish-speaking world. More specifically, it is the barrier between the Reformed world of America and the Spanish-speaking folk in the Americas.

You may wonder if there really is a barrier between these two worlds. I cite an example. Recently, in Michigan, a conference of mission workers among Spanish-speaking folk was held, attended by from 80 to 90 of such workers. Fewer than ten of these could speak Spanish! What a barrier between these mission workers and their subjects.

Another example can be cited. In a certain area in West Michigan the Christian Reformed Church is carrying on a program of evangelism among Spanish-speaking migrants. A Spanish-born worker was engaged to meet with these folk, both publicly and privately. He was greatly overburdened by excessive work demands. Yet there was hardly a person on hand to aid him. Some were interested but their interest caused the mission worker an added burden — that of teaching Spanish to interested helpers.

Is there a barrier between the Reformed world as we know it and the Spanish-speaking world? Let me ask

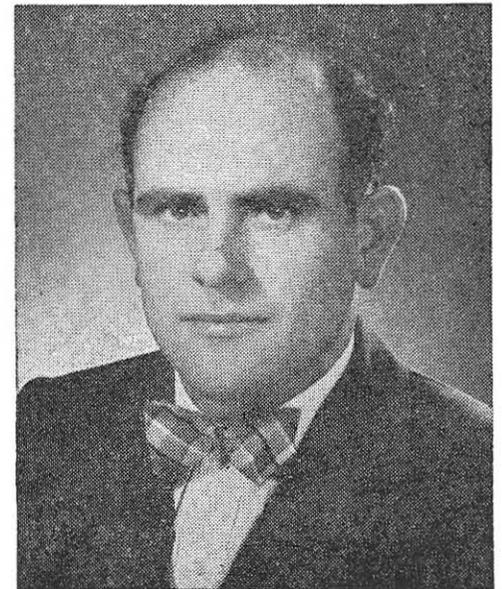
you: How many people do you know who are able to communicate in Spanish? What has been done to bring the Reformed Witness to the Spanish-speaking world by means of literature, radio programs, etc.?

This is the problem; it is the barrier. We are increasingly thrown into contact with the Spanish-speaking masses of today's world but these contacts are, in the main, of little value, often detrimental, because of the language barrier between the parties facing one another. They are unable to communicate with one another intelligibly, fruitfully, and in mutual friendliness. It is of great importance that we as a Reformed people, having a God-given mandate to be a blessing to all nations (Genesis 12:3), not only learn the Spanish language but also learn to know, understand, and appreciate the Spanish-speaking men, women, and children in their own peculiar cultural environment.

Consider a few additional factors confronting us today.

First, the Spanish language is said to be spoken by more people in North and South America than any other language, including English. In the United States English is spoken by the majority of people, but Spanish is second.

Second, the great majority of the Spanish-speaking people in the world are our neighbors. These people are not all in Europe; by far the greater part is in America — in Central and South America. An ever-increasing number of these Spanish folk are moving north and are settling down to be our very next-door neighbors *in the States*. Third, the Spanish folk love their language and their culture. Proudly they cling to it. Parents teach their children the Spanish language



GERARD VAN GRONINGEN

and customs, and these children, so instructed, are not one bit ashamed to learn and to speak their ancestral language. (How unlike many children of European descent!) In fact, the Spanish folk make a determined effort to maintain their language and culture. If we are to communicate successfully to them we will have to do it via their cultural and linguistic media. If we insist on using our own we shall remain unfruitful, a light under a basket, an unsavory salt.

Fourth, in the last number of years Spanish migrant laborers have been brought to our very back doors by our government and the governments of Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, etc. A chart, prepared by the United States Department of Labor, informs us that in 1956 104,000 migrant laborers went to Texas, 100,900 to California, while New Mexico and Arizona received 38,500 laborers. Christian Reformed Michigan welcomed 11,200 Spanish migrant laborers, Minnesota 800, Washington 900, New York 1,100, and Florida 10,300. Many of our Christian Reformed centers are in

those fertile agricultural areas where the bulk of these migrants labored. Many of these migrants were surprisingly ready to receive Scriptures and other religious literature, and to listen to the preaching of the gospel. They also demonstrated a real readiness to listen to those who could and *would* communicate with them in their language.

Additional facts could be cited. But let us rather seriously assess the situation and ask ourselves: Why should we break this barrier between the presently isolated Reformed Witness and the Spanish-speaking masses in the Americas? The basic answer is obvious. We have a message of redemption and life to communicate to these people. But there are other compelling reasons also. Let us state them briefly.

(1) There are what we shall term the cultural reasons. We should, we must, learn to live with and be a blessing to the Spanish on the *social level*. The Reformed witness speaks to society at large; it has a tremendous message for the social situations and specific problems that Spanish society faces. Catholicism and Paganism have proved to have been void of a message for Spanish society.

Think also of the *economic situation*. A business man stated one aspect of the situation not long ago. This man, a business executive in a branch office of an international firm, said, "In our work we find that the foreign language we have to contend with most, and will increasingly have to deal with, is the Spanish language. If I were to attend school again, I would consider the study of the Spanish language and culture of greatest importance." It is an inescapable fact that the Spanish-speaking part of the Americas is becoming an increasingly important economic factor in our present business world. Then, too, it is the Reformed witness that speaks sense to the business world. The Reformed witness is God's message to the world at large. The Spanish business man needs it badly.

Then consider how the Spanish-speaking Americas are coming to the fore *politically*. The Roman Catholic Church, nationalism, communism and

other such forces have been shaping politics in the Spanish-speaking countries of America. As a Reformed people, we should have removed the barrier before this, so that we could effectively communicate with and influence these people who are now in the throes of political transformations and adjustments. Our southern neighbors are groping desperately — while we retain God-given light behind the barrier existing between us.

The Spanish folk are awakening to the value of education for every sphere of life. Again, think of the wonderful opportunity to influence this mighty molding force of young lives.

(2) There is the *psychological* reason. We must break down the barrier between the Reformed world and the Spanish-speaking people in order that we as their fellow-creatures may learn to know and understand each other better. Let us not deceive ourselves. It is of basic importance that we learn a man's language and a man's way of life if we are to understand and aid him. A man's language is a main road into his inner being, into his heart, his life. A man's culture is the external manifestation of his inner life, his thoughts, his imaginations, in short, his whole person.

(3) As stated before, the *religious* reason is the basic one. We have a message to tell the Spanish-speaking world. It is a message of redemption and life, a message of peace and hope. Many of the Spanish-speaking people are providentially open to the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God in whom God was reconciling the world to Himself. Our limited contacts made with the migrant Spanish-speaking laborers already give evidence of this fact. But unless we understand the Spanish-speaking person psychologically and culturally, unless we evince an interest in him in his various spheres of life, our preaching and teaching will remain rather unproductive, to say the least!

There is a barrier between the Reformed world in America and the Spanish-speaking world. Its existence is realized by a few. More of us are increasingly becoming aware of it, and are becoming concerned about

it. But it is disheartening to see so little enthusiastic response by many Reformed leaders to the challenge in the South. Various reasons might be given. Many of the Reformed folk are of Dutch origin. The Spaniard made himself a hated man to the Dutch. But, surely, we may not let prejudices based on past history be a reason for maintaining this barrier.

There is another possible reason which can be applied equally to many other aspects of life. There is a lack of desire to be a channel of real spiritual, moral and material blessings to one's fellowmen. Too many are concerned about self and their own pet projects. Could it be that our love for our God is so limited that our love for man is wholly self-centered? Greater devotion and consecration to the Lord are in order. We must cultivate a greater willingness to serve our fellowmen.

Another specific reason found in our own Reformed fellowship is in the educational realm. The barrier between us and the Spanish world continues to exist because our educators do not classify the Spanish language and culture as *Classic*. Anything non-classic should not be introduced in our high schools and colleges, we are told. It seems as if some educators, even Reformed educators, are so concerned about the classic past and the dead classic languages and the present *intellectual* discipline of the few who are exceptionally gifted that there is little or no place in their thinking for the actual situations and present needs of the entire present-day world in which we live and in which and to which we must speak. Granted, a disciplined intellect is of utmost importance for communication, but it is only one of the requirements. A real understanding of the world in which we live today and a mastery of the means of communication *used today* are equally important.

The barrier to the South is real. It must be dealt with by us if we are to be deserving of the names Christian and Reformed. Let us face the situation. Let us meet the challenge. By God's grace and power and led by his Spirit, let us be up and doing!

God's Workmanship

LEONARD GREENWAY

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them."
EPHESIANS 2:10

"NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast." For we are God's workmanship! The wonder of the workmanship, therefore, is something for which God is to be praised. He accomplished it, not we.

All creatures are God's workmanship, for he is the one Creator. The universe did not produce itself. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. All things were made through the Word; and "without him was not anything made that hath been made" (John 1:3). God not only made what is, he planned it as it is. The material creation is the thought of God made palpable to us. So writes Edmund Spenser:

*What time the world's great Work-
master did cast
To make all things such as we now
behold,
It seems that he before his eyes had
placed
A goodly pattern, to whose perfect
mould
He fashioned them as comely as he
could.*

God also has a workmanship of grace. Believers are his new creatures in Christ Jesus. The Greek word translated "workmanship" literally reads "poem." Christians are God's poems. In Paradise man was a perfect poem. The divine artistry had produced a work of beauty. Every line answered God's purpose. Every expression harmonized with God's will. Alas, there occurred a marring

of those beautiful lines. The harmony was gone, and God was grieved. But he was not frustrated. The marred workmanship was re-made — a work of grace in Christ Jesus. Do we see the full beauty of this restoration in this sinful world? No, but we shall see it one day. "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is" (I John 3:2).

Created in Christ Jesus. He is the environment, the atmosphere of that divine working. Even as we were chosen in him, so is our nature reconstituted in him. "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold they are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).

Created for good works. Not of works, or *by* works, or *because of* works, but *for* works. And they are good works — works which the divine Worker regards as good, works that serve his purpose, which is the glory of his name. These works result from the operation of grace. They are the fruits of that new nature given us in Christ. By first making the tree good he makes the fruit good. Hence, the good fruit proves that the tree has been changed. Good works are the proof that grace has operated and that a new man has been created in righteousness and true holiness (cf. Ephesians 4:24).

These good works originate with God — "God afore prepared," says

Paul. That a Christian should do good works is not optional with him. How can it be when "God afore prepared" them? The way of obedience was in the divine determination from eternity. That we should walk in that way has been settled by God. We are elect unto obedience as we are elect unto salvation.

All is of God in salvation and sanctification! We love him only because he first loved us. Do we have holy aspirations? They are of him. Do we long to be like our Lord? That longing is of him. Do we speak the language of edifying Christian exhortation to a fellow sinner? Let us not commend ourselves. It is God's Spirit that blesses us with the glow of devotion and endues us with courage boldly to speak of Christ or to promote his cause in the world. Even in prayer we need him, "for we know not how to pray as we ought" (Romans 8:26).

*With mercy and with judgment
My web of time he wove,
And aye the dew of sorrow
Were lusted by his love;
I'll bless the hand that guided,
I'll bless the heart that planned,
When throned where glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.*

PRAYER

Father in heaven, thy will be done. Work in us and through us thy loving and wise purpose. Take the clay, and form it as thou wilt. Cause us to look to thee for everything, and to rest in ourselves for nothing. Amen.

Book Reviews

Centennial Reflections:

In the Mirror, An Appraisal of the Christian Reformed Church, by John H. Kromminga, President of Calvin Seminary. Guardian Publishing Company, Hamilton, Ont., Canada.

I Will Build My Church, by Thea B. Van Halsema. International Publications, Grand Rapids, Mich.

The Centennial year has occasioned the writing of these books. *I Will Build My Church* is a brief history of the first century of the Christian Reformed Church. To give the Christian Reformed Church its meaningful place among the branches of the Christian Church, the history is traced through Augustine, Luther, and Calvin. For the layman who thinks of his Church as suspended in a temporal vacuum, this rootage and perspective will be very helpful. Tracing the line through the Secession of 1834, the migration of 1846, and the break with the Reformed Church in 1857, the author gives a vivid picture of the "pilgrim fathers of the West." The difficult point of the reason for the break with the Reformed Church is neatly handled by allowing for human frailty on both sides. One is made to sense the feeling of incompatibility which was perhaps the deepest root of the separation.

The rest of the story is largely one of growth, Americanization, and the development of school and mission. Here again a few well chosen facts, interestingly and accurately presented, give a vivid and amazing full picture of the Christian Reformed Church. The book is helpful and should be in our homes. Our children will enjoy reading it.

The other side of the story of the Christian Reformed Church is reflected in *The Mirror*. By the author's own confession, this is a critical evaluation. The President of Calvin Seminary recognizes that true self-analysis may prove painful. Undoubtedly the author would agree that God has done great things for us. He is, however, concerned with several serious problems which face the Church he serves and loves.

Prof. Kromminga sums up the contemporary scenes in four chapters:

"Alone and Together," "One and Many," "Faith and Action," and "Church and Neighbors." These are prefaced by a brief historical essay on "Roots and Soil." In the tension of their migrant history in which "they were torn between the desire to retain their distinctive character and the desire to realize their new potentials" lies the secret of the position of the Christian Reformed people. Thus we are reminded that our problems are indeed related to a wider American setting. This broader perspective should help us understand ourselves.

Our central problem as a Christian Reformed Church is true Americanization. The two key words are "isolation" and "conformity." Historically isolation and even isolationism have dominated our thinking. Language and protectionist mentality have isolated us from the country of our adoption. The Church, however, can not be saved by separation. On the other hand, mere conformity is the equivalent of destruction. The danger of conformity is theological bankruptcy: "The Christian Reformed Church is lost if it conforms." To resort to an aggressive evangelism would be fundamentalistic. The full approach to our environment requires a larger contribution to the religious and social life of America.

The second question is one of conformity within the group. On the one hand, the author notes a kind of wooden oneness. Such absolute similarity results from and produces superficial agreement. On the other hand, we should not become sectionally or doctrinally divided. The difference between the older U.S. and later Canadian churches is not as great as some suppose. The spirit and fruits of the Doleantie are fortunately found in both groups. Moreover, love will unite us without insisting on absolute uniformity.

In the chapter on faith and action the question is asked: Does our faith always require the particular forms of organization and action which are traditional? We should apply this ques-

tion anew in the areas of theology, church organization, schools, labor, and mercy. Here we are essentially facing the problem of isolation in action. "Much of the vast activity carried on within the denomination lacks imagination and perspective." The separate Christian Labor movement is found most wanting.

But what of our relationship to our church and un-church neighbors? Again the problem of isolationism must be faced. We are becoming more mission-minded. Here is real improvement. However, more can be done. The official relation with the other churches is less encouraging. The break of the Christian Reformed Church with the N.A.E. was regrettable. The World Council deserves more careful study. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod should be made more effective, especially in letting its voice be heard on world problems.

Prof. Kromminga has indeed taken a long, hard look in the mirror. The disconcerting results, revealed in love, should be received in love. It took courage to raise these problems and it will take courage to do something about them. To have asked these questions is not to have answered them. The primary motive for separate Christian action, it seems to me, has not been protection but obedience to the Word and the development of basic principles. Isolation has often been the price paid both in the Netherlands and in America by a sincere Calvinism. Are Christian principles more acceptable today?

This book is another of the many signs that the Christian Reformed Church is moving into a new era. It is an era marked by Americanization in several ways. There is a more genuine concern for witness, an effort to let our light shine. It seems, however, also to be characterized by a growing impatience with the thinking of A. Kuyper which has dominated the past fifty years. As we look into the mirror many questions arise. Let us seek to answer them in the light of the Word of God. LUBBERTUS OOSTENDORP

The Society of the Future:

H. van Riessen, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, 1957. \$4.95. 320 pp.

A work of major importance, *The Society of the Future* represents the approach to sociology of a prominent member of that school of philosophy led by Herman Dooyeweerd. Van Riessen, a professor of philosophy at the Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands, has analyzed the conflict between freedom and security in current society in terms of Christian philosophy. More than that, the book is a sober analysis of current society in terms of its own impulses, its Utopian ideologies, science and technique, all seen from the perspective of Christian eschatology and sociology. Our conception of the society of antichrist will inevitably color our philosophy of history and cannot be disassociated from our sociology, while our Christian concern for the Kingship of Christ obligates us to work towards a radically different society.

Van Riessen's analysis of Utopia is especially telling. His survey, extending from Plato to Orwell, is prefaced by the comment, "The Utopians are driven by homesickness for the lost paradise, and long for the new earth. Their dreams are utopias, 'never to be realized,' because they seek a road to such a paradise that does not pass along the station of the fall into sin. In their flight to a new earth, they forget that there is first a scroll to be opened; and that only the Lamb which was slain can break the seals thereof (Revelation 5)" [p. 38]. The rebellion of modern depictees of the end of Utopia, such as Huxley and Orwell, is futile because they lack the truth of sin and grace, and, for all their horror of tyranny, "their conception of man is the picture of a creature whose life demands tyranny. But the Orwells do not understand man. They do not know who or to what end he is. Therefore they are nothing but the rebellious gravediggers of Western civilization" (p. 67).

Currently, science and technique are pushing society into a collectivist future, but Van Riessen refuses to believe that such a society is necessarily our predestined fate. His book is written in order to forewarn and arm

Christians against assenting to such a society, and, by their failure to act, being party to its creation. He discusses at length and brilliantly the present and future in terms of labor, automation, science, technique, cybernetics, and the selfishness and arrogance of modern secular man. His familiarity with conditions in the United States as well as in Europe makes the account all the more invaluable. His discussion of the error of planning is most pertinent; commended as a scientific ideal, planning becomes, in the area of human relations, the source of rigidity and death to initiative. Man, by trying to make the state heaven on earth, makes it a living hell. "The defenders of planning operate with the shadow of what man ought to be. They would establish a stable society that would make man forget that his life is a continuous death, a fact understood even by the existentialist Heidegger. By providing man with security, he can take a nap and abandon the security of the faith in Jesus Christ. What is desired is a planned world that is no longer in need of God's providential guidance" (p. 185). But, Van Riessen asserts, if Revelation is correct, then successful planning is impossible. The success of the planned society is at best derivative and imitative, as witness Russia, busy catching up with the West but unable to give new cultural perspective. The society of the future is a hell paved with good intentions and born out of a desire to plan man's way into paradise apart from God. "The Antichrist will not just fall out of the blue sky. He will start with exactly such good intentions as Mannheim's elite" (p. 219).

The collectivist society is not being created by science and technique, Van Riessen holds, but by man's spiritual nihilism, which gives birth to mass man. Mass man, mistakenly asserted by socialism to be the product of poverty, is rather the product of spiritual death and false security. "His milieu is where cares have been *taken away* and removed; where security provided from without has released the tension of the bow of freedom. Security is the need of mass man. . . The mass man can appear only if in such an en-

vironment the process of spiritual disintegration has also reached its final stage" (p. 175).

Against all this, Van Riessen sets the concept of sphere sovereignty. Within Reformed circles, there have been two approaches to this concept. First, as Van Riessen observes, 70 years after Abraham Kuyper established the Free University on the principle of sphere-sovereignty, "many of his spiritual heirs now snicker or become incensed at the mere mention of sphere-sovereignty" (p. 69). Second, many who profess sphere-sovereignty as an article of faith hold it abstractly and in isolation from the realities of modern life. Their Calvinism is content to sit on the side-lines, passing judgment on the current scene in terms of an ideal unrelated to the situation. This is not Van Riessen's approach and the importance of his study is two-fold: first, its excellent analysis of society, and, second, his ability to relate specifically the structural principle to society. It is not our purpose here to go into the details of this analysis, but its importance is very real, and it deserves the careful study of all serious-minded Christians. This relation of Calvinism to contemporary life is too significant to be by-passed by the churches. This is a very important book.

One point more needs to be noted. American readers are once again indebted to David Hugh Freeman for his work as translator; our American theological literature is richer for his services. ROUSAS J. RUSHDOONY

CARILLONS

The carillons ring softly now,

Across the pink of day-dawn skies;
I stand upon the mountains' brow,

With fields spread out before my
eyes,

And wooded hills, and rivers fair —
Beauty and charm beyond compare.

The carillons ring far below,

Their music softened, 'til it seems
It is the strain that angels know,

Between their Home and my poor
dreams

Of what the Heaven-land must be,
That waits sometime to welcome me.

LALIA MITCHELL THORNTON
Elmira, New York

Attention Church Societies

We take pleasure in informing the members of the various societies in our churches that Dr. William Hendriksen has agreed to continue his BIBLE OUTLINES for Torch and Trumpet this season.

It will be a source of gratification to all who studied last season's OUTLINES on the Second Coming of Christ that Dr. Hendriksen will again deal with the general theme of THE LAST THINGS. This year the lessons will discuss Scriptural material regarding the INTERMEDIATE STATE — the state of the soul after death.

Here follow some of the questions which Dr. Hendriksen will discuss, not exhaustively but suggestively — so that there will be plenty of room for discussion by the members at the society meetings:

Is Man's Soul Immortal?

Is the Soul of the Believer Immortal in a Sense in Which the Soul of the Unbeliever Is Not Immortal?

When Does the Soul of the Believer Enter Heaven?

Are the Redeemed Souls in Heaven Conscious?

Shall We Know One Another There?

Will There Be Progress in Heaven?

What Is Meant by "Sheol", "Hades", "Gehenna"?

Are There Degrees of Glory and Punishment?

Are All Who Die in Infancy Saved?

Will There Be a Second Chance?

What Will Be the Final State of the Wicked?

What Will Be the Final State of the Saved?

* * * *

Those who subscribe for Torch and Trumpet through their Society (Men's, Women's, Young People's, Mr. and Mrs., etc.) will receive this thought-provoking magazine for \$2.00 per year (the regular price is \$3.00). At least five in your society must subscribe.

The magazine will be delivered to each subscriber's home. Send in your subscription through one person.

The first four of these Outlines will appear in the October issue. This issue will be mailed to our subscribers **before** October 1.

Send all subscriptions and checks to The Reformed Fellowship, 63 Jefferson Avenue, S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Those who wish to avail themselves of the special price to societies of \$2.00 must send in their subscription money in advance. Do not send it personally but through your secretary or whoever will be charged with sending in subscriptions.

Please do not send currency since letters with currency sometimes fail to reach their destination. Send check or money order.

Please read these directions carefully. If you have any questions, feel free to write the Managing Editor, Rev. H. J. Kuiper, 2401 Paris Avenue, S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan. But send your subscriptions and checks to The Reformed Fellowship, 63 Jefferson Avenue, S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

May our societies have blessed and fruitful meetings this season as they discuss those Scripture portions which tell us about **the life after death** and which shed light on current heresies that bear on this important theme.

H. J. KUIPER, Managing Editor

ARTHUR BESTEMAN
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Aug. 56

TEENERS' CORNER

LEONARD GREENWAY

Our Christian Schools and Florida Vacationers

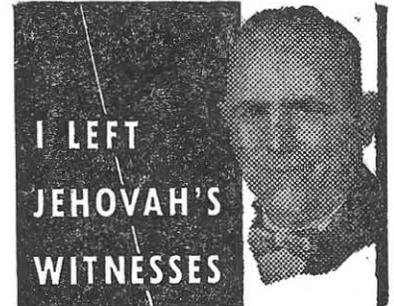
Question:

Do you think it is fair for Christian School teachers to take it out on us kids because we went to Florida with our parents for a three-week winter vacation? We asked them for assignments in advance so that we could keep up with our classes. They gave us some work to take along, but said it was impossible to give all the assignments ahead of time. When we returned and found we were pretty far behind, they did not help us much to catch up.

Answer:

Writing as a former Christian School teacher who had to face this problem repeatedly, I want to say, first, that students generally do not realize all that is involved in preparing such assignments in advance. It isn't only a matter of assignments as such. The classroom explanation of lesson material can hardly be given in advance. When these sun-tanned boys and girls return from their southland excursion, they usually require considerable special attention to enable them to catch up with their classes. School teachers generally are overburdened with routine responsibilities so that they do not have the time to give to these winter vacationers. To excuse them from some of the assignments is not fair to the rest of the class.

Now that you bring up this question, what would you and other children think of a revision of our traditional school terms that would allow for a winter vacation beginning, let us say, with the Christmas holiday and extending through the month of January? That would bring the second semester to a close about the middle of July, leaving approximately six weeks for summer vacation. Isn't that a long enough vacation for most children?



Read this amazing and interesting story in *Thirty Years A Watch Tower Slave, Confessions of a Converted Jehovah's Witness*. \$2.95. At your bookseller or Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich.

PRAYER

I like to pray, for I believe
That prayers are heard;
I know that, asking, I receive.
I have His Word.
Our pleas find welcome, always will,
If they are suited to God's will.
I like to pray, for I am sure
That prayers are good;
They help me troubles to endure
If understood.
I trust in prayer, I know I can
If mine conforms to Heaven's plan.
I like to pray, then strength I gain
And joy and peace;
I know my prayers are not in vain
And bring increase.
And blessings follow if I pray,
Seeking fulfilment in His way.

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