

1883

[1883] Handelingen van de Synodale Vergadering der Holl. Christ. Geref. Kerk,
gehouden te Grand Rapids, Mich., den 23 Mei, e.v.d., 1883.

TRANSLATION:

**ACTS OF SYNOD
OF THE
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

ASSEMBLED AT GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

May 23, ff., 1883

Note to the reader: This translation has not been corrected and will be found to be inaccurate in some instances. The reader should consult the original Dutch editions before quoting from this volume.

The Acts of Synod of the Sessions held on May 23, 1883, and the days following at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

An address by the Rev. W.H. Frieling, the President of the Sessions of 1882.

After the opening devotions, consisting of the singing of Psalm 133, and scripture reading, John 14, the Reverend addresses the delegates as follows:

My dear Brothers: Since it is my duty to open the Sessions, as the President of the previous Synod, I now do so by wishing you all a hearty welcome.

Our beginning is in the name of the Lord; the progress we make is in his fear; the results should redound to the honor and glory of God, to the welfare of his Kingdom on earth, and for our peace of mind and heart.

Do we cast a backward glance on the twenty seven years, of our existence as a Church in a strange land, we may surely then erect an "Ebenezer" or as it were, a pillar of succor, and cry out, "To this time the Lord has been our help!"

With a consideration of the number we had left behind at the time of our origin, our number seemed very small indeed, and in addition to this, we were woefully lacking in talents and strength, and with much opposition, and right in the midst of the group that had returned (to the Reformed Church) and from the group we had left, as a result of which we were subject to both verbal and written abuse.

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The backsliding group was the object of criticism by the Mother Church of the Fatherland, in that its actions were judged very improper.

My dear Brothers: had the Lord not kept us standing in the midst of this struggle, we would long since have succumbed under the weight of this load. But convinced in our minds that our doings were also those of the Lord's, and that our actions were in accord with his everlasting Word, as well as the Articles of Confession of the Reformed Church; it gave to us both the courage and the confidence, that the Lord in his good time would set all matters right, and this he has done.

Our small number has increased greatly. The weaknesses and the impotence of our Church have been strengthened in both material and spiritual ways.

Talents and capabilities have increased, especially thru the establishment of our Theological School, now with a Faculty of two, and a student body of fifteen. The number of Ministers has increased. When I appeared upon the scene, four ministers completed the number of servants in the Church, and now we number thirty, with the hope that the number will increase during the year. To the brothers, the Ministers whom we have added to our ranks this year we extend a hearty welcome, including Brother Smidt at Ridott, and we wish them all a blessed season of labor in their Congregations. We were saddened by the passing of the Brother, the Rev. W.H. Van Leeuwen, Emeritus, and by the fact that the Rev. Coelingh was released from his ministerial duties at the Church in Overijssel, for financial reasons.

Our Church is taking on a new significance, historically, here in our country as well in the old Fatherland, as the Acts of the recently held Synod in Zwolle inform us. The number of Congregations is increasing, membership in the Congregations is increasing by leaps and bounds, due, no doubt, to the large number of Emigrants coming into our country. We can see the blessing of the Lord on the work of evangelization, a cause for peace, union, and love in the midst of the Congregations.

Again, my Brothers, important matters will be presented for discussion, in doctrine and in Church government, in correspondence, in Mission matters, in Primary and Secondary education, etc. Let us in these matters show a unity of purpose and belief, in less important matters, long suffering, and above all, may the Spirit of brotherly love be present in our hearts. Should we not take these spiritual blessings into account?

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Many eyes are turned upon us; the eyes of the Lord, the King of Zion, look down upon us, the Church which has sent us here as delegates of this Synod, has turned its gaze our way, as well as the members of the various Congregations with their Consistories.

and in addition both friends and foes are watching us and taking note of the manner in which we are fulfilling our calling. Soon the decisions will be put into print and be distributed thruout the land and be judged by every one. Let us therefore be wakeful and guard what has been entrusted to us most carefully, in which case we need not be ashamed of the future. Let us uphold the honor of the Lord; he shall then care for us both materially and spiritually. Let this be so.

The Synodical Sessions now begin after the opening devotions.

Art. 1. Mandates are read and surrendered and the Delegates are present.

Note: From now on the list of delegates will be omitted from the Acts, as of minor note in the translation of the Synodical decisions. For anyone interested they may be found on page 3 of the Acts of this Session, 1883. (The Translator, A.B.Lewen.)

Art. 2. The officers of the Synod: The Rev. J.H.Vos, Pres.
" " R.T.Kuiper, V.P.
" " G. Hemkes, Clerk
" " L. Rietdijk, Asst. Clerk

Art. 3. The President addresses the Assembly with a few well-chosen words, and at the same time extending a special greeting to the Rev. W. Smidt, of Ridott, who has come over to our Church from the Reformed denomination. He also requests the co-operation of the brothers, delegates, for an orderly discussion of matters to be discussed, and with his eyes fixed upon the Lord, he ascends the praesidium.

Art. 4. Before the Synod begins its deliberations, the President reads the Formula of Subscription, from the General Principles; and asks in accordance with the usage of the Netherlands Reformed Church, a hearty agreement by all the delegates of the formula, which is answered by a very audible "Yes".

Art. 5. A Committee is chosen to review the Articles of the Synod of 1882, and to report at the beginning of the next day's session, which Articles must be discussed. The committee consists of the following: The Rev. Prof. G.E.Boer, H. Vander Werp, J. Noordewier.

Art. 6. Seeing that the Rev. Baron has a request, and seeing that he desires a speedy consideration of his request, since the Reverend can stay no longer than necessary,

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he is asked to present his request. The Reverend requests complete emeritation because of the infirmities of age.

After the discussion of this, and after a committee has discussed his financial status, the Synod grants him his emeritation. He is to receive an annual stipend of \$200.00, and since there seems to be a difference of opinion between him and the Consistory of Pella, the Synod judges that that matter has been rectified, and thus it will not go into the matter at this time. This is left to the Reverend and he is granted an honorable emeritation, which he gratefully receives. And after extending a blessing to the Assembly, the Reverend takes his departure, the Synod bidding him Godspeed, and while standing they sing Psalm 134:3.

Art. 7. A request comes to the Synod from the Classis Grand Rapids, as follows: The Synod institute better means to keep the Emeritus Fund in existence. Brother Gelok informs the Assembly that the Fund is dwindling slowly. Since it is not a pleasant thought to those departing from this life to feel that their survivors will become destitute, this request is considered not only timely but also a Christian gesture. The Synod reminds the delegates of the general rule of Article 13, of the Church Order of Dort, formulated in 1618-1619, which reads as follows: Should it occur that some ministers thru age, illness or otherwise, be incapacitated and unable to carry on their duties; they will nevertheless not be deprived of the honor of their office as servants of the Lord, and thru the Congregations which they have served, they will be amply cared for in their needs. (and this applies to their widows and their children also.)

Art. 13. The Minutes of the Wednesday P.M. Session are read and accepted.

Art. 14. The R^{vs.} Hulst and Noordewier are now asked to read the reports they have been asked to prepare for accepting into our denomination a single Congregation, a/without a Minister and, b/ for accepting a Congregation with a Minister.

Both plans are voted upon and accepted and read as follows:

A UNION OF A NON-CHRISTIAN REFORMED CONGREGATION WITH THE HOLLAND CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

In each Classis there exists a Committee, whose duty it is to treat with a Congregation wishing to join the Holland Christian Reformed Church.

a/ A Congregation without a Minister.

Should a congregation desire to bring about a union with our Church, it will present its request to the above mentioned Committee, expressing its desires, and this Committee will then contact the Consistory of the applying Church, to ascertain the reasons for the application, that all may be clearly understood. If the Committee considers the request to be a valid one, a day is set with the Consistory of the applying Church, on which day the union can be completed. At this gathering the following questions are asked. Now the six questions, found in Article 69 of the General Regulations are asked. When these have been answered, the Committee states that the union of the with the Holland Christian Reformed Church is complete

b/ Ministers alone or Congregations with their Ministers.

1. Should a Minister alone wish to come into the Church, the Synod decides that he will be accepted according to Art. 83 of the General Regulations.

2. Should a Minister and his Congregation desire a union, then the procedure under "a" will hold; the Minister will be dealt with according to "b".

Later or rather as speedily as possible these Churches will regulate their affairs with the State at the earliest opportunity, according to the laws of the State.

Art. 15. The Rev. C. Hoeksema comes into the Assembly and asks to be heard. The Rev. reports that at the request of a few friends from New Era, Mich. he had journeyed there and fourteen families had requested to be organized into a Church, either as a branch of the Montague Church or as an independent Church. The President informs the Reverend that he approach the Classical Committee of Grand Rapids Classis for information on the proper way to proceed in this matter.

Art. 16. A request for Classis Holland is presented to the Synod as follows: Classis Holland states that because of the number of subjects in which students must be examined, as well as the task and the responsibility of testing those who are preparing for service in the Church; would it not be better if the Curatorium were increased in membership by one half, instead of the four and eight set-up of the present?

In connection with the above the Curatorium puts this question to the Assembly: Will the Synod keep in mind the decision in Art. 29, page 12 of the General Regulations, which states that one representative will be present at the Examinations from each Classis, to share in the work involved, as well as taking upon itself the responsibility with the Curators in the carrying-out of the Examinations? However, should it prove inconvenient for those Classes at a great distance, then the Synod will give that Classis permission to choose an alternative from Classis Michigan.

This is thoroly discussed and then the question is put to the Assembly: Shall the present number of Curators be increased by one half? The Assembly sanctions this. The Rev Noordewier retires from the Curators this year, making it necessary to appoint five persons. The following are chosen: The Revs. L.J. Hulst, L. Rietdijk, J. Noordewier, and thus a Trustees W.H. Frieling, H. v.d. Werp, curators.

Art. 17. The Committee on the review of the Minutes of the previous Assembly reports: Article 32 is up for discussion, concerning the Committees which have been appointed to investigate the State laws, and in connection with the Congregations of our Church.

Mr J. Garveling and A. Riddering, as Trustees, report briefly that in the States of New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and Dakota, Congregations may organize so that their property is safeguarded by State law, in conjunction of a two third majority of the Church Members. The desirability of being recognized by the same name, is discussed, and the delegates from other States shall induce their Congregations to organize and incorporate, and that, under the new name of the Church: The Holland Christian Reformed Church. The State has no control nor jurisdiction over the internal affairs of the Church and thus all matters are regulated according to the rules of the Church. The Church can however demand the right of protection from the State.

Churches which wish to organize according to the State laws of their own individual States, are referred to the following Committee: J. Garveling, A. Riddering, W.H. Van Leeuwen, Professor G.E. Boer, and Rev. L. Rietdijk.

Art. 18. The delegate from Classis Iowa, the Rev. Smidt, from Ridott asks the Synod for permission to organize German Churches, following the rules of the Old German Reformed Churches, with a tentative continuation of the use of the German Psalmody. After the discussion on this request, the Synod, (Since the Lord has stated that the Gospel be preached to all peoples) not only grants the requests, but commends the Reverend for his efforts among the German population, and on the basis of Reformed principles. He may thus proceed with his work, preparing Groups for organization and using the Psalmody as he requested.

Art. 19. A period of Devotions and intermission.

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Art. 20. Classis Holland proposes that a second Professor be appointed for the Theological School, and in connection with this the proposition of the Curators is also discussed. Since the work of the Assistant Vos has met with favor, the Curators and the Trustees ask that Mr. Vos be made a Professor. The President now steps down and asks the Vice Pres. to take the Chair. The Synod now goes into executive Session, and because of the personal interest of the President in this matter, he absents himself at the request of the Synod. The Rev. Prof. Boer remains and is asked to express an opinion on this. The Professor favors the appointment of a regular Professor, although he can see the point of view of the Curators and the Trustees; but he adds that the subjects the new Professor would teach must be designated.

After a lengthy discussion on this problem, the Synod decides that, because of the youth of the Assistant Mr. Vos, altho his work has been very satisfactory; nevertheless prefers to call and ordain a Minister from the Netherlands for the Professorship, from the Christian Reformed Church, and from a nomination made by the Synod, and should there be a decline, the Curatorium be empowered by the Synod to call another from the same Nomination. The Synod reappoints the Assistant Mr. Vos for the time being until the newly appointed professor arrive, and his remuneration is increased to \$600.00, to go into effect on Sept. 1, of this school year. Should the brother not be able to continue, the Curators are empowered to choose someone to take his place.

Art. 21. The Rev. Vos resumes his duties as President. The visitors may also return.

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The Clerk and his assistant read the decision of the Synod concerning the matter of Art. 20 above. The question is now put: Will the Curators make a decision, and that from a Synodical nomination; or shall the choice be made by the Synod? The Assembly decides that the Synod complete this now. Therefore a number of names of Ministers in the Chr. Ref. Church in the Netherlands are read, and of these six names are chosen for nomination. A trio is now made from these, and of these one is to be chosen. After the election, Dr. A. Brummelkamp has been chosen, a Minister in Groningen. His salary is set at \$1300.00 and the costs of transportation will be paid. The Letter of Call will be written and signed by the officers of the Synod, and in addition to this a letter will also be sent.

Art. 22. Committees are chosen to audit the Books of the various funds.

Art. 23. Devotional Period and Intermission.

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Friday Morning Session.

Art. 24. The report of the various funds follows: pp. 12,13, Synod of 1883
(Financial Reports will be omitted)

Art. 25. The Rev. Meinders wishes to resign as General Treasurer. This request is granted and the Synod thanks him for his services. The Rev. Noordewier is chosen in his place.

Art. 26. The Treasurer of the Student Fund asks if students receiving aid from this fund need pay tuition. The Synod replies, "No".

Art. 27. Brother Gelok reports that the Spring Str. Church receives only \$50.00 annually for the rental of the second floor to the Theological School; this amount is increased to \$100.00

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Art. 28. The Rev. Rietdijk asks that he may resign as Comptroller. The Synod grants his wish and the Elder P. Heyboer is chosen to succeed him.

Art. 29. The Rev. Prof. Boer asks if he must continue to send copies of the "Wächter" to the Netherlands personally, which he has done. This may be discontinued. A Committee is chosen to regulate this; it will check the mailing list, and necessary deletions will be made. The Revs. Boer, Vos, and Hemkes will act as a Committee for this.

Art. 30 Arranging the schedule for the School year for the Theological School is left to a Committee. The members are: the Rev. Noordewier, with Elders Gelok, and Heyboer. The Classical Committee is included in this, and they will report to the Trustees.

Art. 31. The Revs. Frieling and Hulst are reelected as members of the Synodical Committee.

Art. 32. Closing and Opening Devotions and Intermission.

Friday P.M.

Art. 33. The Rev. Frieling reports the receipt of \$10.00 for Bible distribution among the Heathen. The Rev. Noordewier reports \$2.86. The decision is to send this sum to the Netherlands, so that the monies may be used as the givers intended. The Chinese, Japanese and other heathen peoples are the recipients of these Bibles.

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Art. 34. It is decided that all the Treasurers of the various funds meet a day previous to the opening of Synod and show their accounts for audit to the Curators and the Trustees. In the years in which Synod is not in Session, this will be done prior to the Examinations.

Art. 35. The Rev. Kuiper asks release as Treasurer of the Dollar fund.
The Rev. L. Rietdijk is chosen.

Art. 36. The Committee on Foreign Missions reports that it has sent the sum of \$680.00 to the Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands; \$40.00 to the Theological School at Veldhuizen, Graafschap, Bentheim; \$21.25 to the Rev. Frieling for Bible distribution. The Synod is asked what is to be done with the funds collected this year. It is decided to send a note of \$500.00 to the Missionary Council in the Netherlands, and to leave the balance in the Treasury.

Art. 37. Classis Hudson has a matter for discussion:
a/ The Synod establish a rule for the Church on how it should deal with persons who are Members of a Labor Union, and that an investigation be made to ascertain if there are any members of the Chr. Ref. Church found to belong to said Unions.

The delegate from Classis Hudson, the Rev. H. Tempel, reports that the Consistory of the Church at Rochester considers the membership in such an organization as contrary to the Word of God, to a Christian's conscience, and to the welfare of the Church. After a prolonged discussion of this, Synod points to Article 65 of the General Regulations, and for the rest, she feels opposed to them as well as the Organizations of Capital. Yet in all instances, no ironclad rule can be laid down. However the rulers of the Church must be vigilant in matters of this kind, which seemingly are in opposition to the Word of God, and to the rule of the Church.

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b/ A request for Tracts for the youth of the Sabbath School. Tracts by Philips of the Netherlands are recommended.

Art. 38. Classis Holland requests that the Synod should return to the previous system of Assembly, and should this be too costly, then to institute a biennial Synod. From the discussion of this, it appears that the former method of Assembly was preferred. Then also the Synod will meet every two years.

The Synod recalls the former method of delegation to its Assembly, and states that the Synod will meet biennially, and then Congregations with Ministers will send two delegates, while Churches without Ministers will send one elder. This will solve expensive Transportation costs.

Art. 39. The Consistory of the Church at Cincinnati makes a request for the distant Congregations; that after a Counsellor has been present at a Congregational Meeting for the purpose of calling a Minister, that in case the one called declines, the following Congregational Meeting be conducted by the Consistory. It is a financial burden to have a Counsellor present at each meeting if the distance is great. Calls can also be unnecessarily delayed. The discussion ends and the decision. The rule is that the Counsellor be present, but in special cases this can be taken care of by correspondence with the Counsellor.

Art. 40. The Rev. Greve asks the Synod if a letter had been received from the Stated Clerk of the T.R.P.D. Church,, by the Clerk of the Synodical Committee. Since he has not, the Rev. Greve conveys the greetings from said Church to ours. A communication, no doubt, will be received later.

The Rev. Greve also states that he had visited Clymer, N.Y. where eighteen persons, formerly members of the Reformed Church had seceded from it. They now expressed a desire to unite with the Christian Reformed Church. The question is asked, how, and when, and by whom? The matter is referred to the Classical Committee of Classis Hudson.

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Art. 41. Closing and Opening Devotions

Monday Morning Sessions.

Art. 42. The President reads an attestation from the Consistory of the Rev. Van Dijke, from Zeeland in the Netherlands. The Alpine Ave. Consistory asks how such an attestation should be considered, accepted or not. After a discussion, the Synod decided to accept same. Then the parties interested, can be questioned and if they agree with the principles of the Church; if they do they shall be accepted.

Art. 43. The question is raised if it would not be desirable at the next Synod to hold the Sessions and the Examinations simultaneously, i.e. the third week in June, 1885. This plan is accepted.

Then, should the Synod meet in Grand Rapids again, since the travelling expense is less coming to Grand Rapids, than going to Chicago; since, by far, most delegates live in Michigan. The Synod agrees that Grand Rapids is the logical place for the next Sessions. If the Lord wills it and we live.

Art. 44. The president considers it very fitting, that during the next Synodical Sessions the Spring St. Church have preaching services by visiting pastors, who will be invited by

the Consistory. The Synod sanctions this and the matter is left to the Consistories, whom they desire to ask. It is also to be desired that at a following Synodical Session the Minister who most recently came over to our Church, conduct services in the Spring St. Church during the week.

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Art. 45. A discussion of Classical Sessions in connection with the Synod. The question is asked if the Classical Assemblies could not be held during the first of May, in a year in which a Synod meets; since there is difficulty in preparing all the matters for the Agenda otherwise. The Synod judges this to be very desirable.

Art. 46. The Synod expresses itself as considering it desirable to have another copy of the Yearbook printed.

Art. 47. Since the term of service of the Home Mission Committee is at an end, a new Committee must be chosen. A motion is passed that four men be chosen; three from Classes Illinois and Iowa, and one from Classes Holland or Grand Rapids. The brothers chosen are: The Revs. T. Vanden Bosch, and W. Smidt for a period of four years; the Revs. Broene and Rietdijk, for a period of two years. The Revs. H. Bode and R.T. Kuiper are to be alternates.

Art. 48. The Report of the Synodical Committee is read and accepted. (Suppl. I)

Art. 49. The delegates who were chosen to go to the Synod at Zwolle, the Netherlands, in 1882 report. (See Suppl. III)

Art. 50. Devotions and Intermission.

The Monday, P.M. Session.

Art. 51. The report of the delegates to the Netherlands is accepted by the Synod. The President thanks the delegates for the report, and all the labors connected with the trip, in the interest of the Holland Chr. Ref. Church.

Page 19. The delegates in turn, express their appreciation to the Assembly for the love and trust of the Church in them, for the prayers uttered in their behalf, and in spite of the fact that their task was carried out with failings and weaknesses, they are pleased at the satisfaction of the Synod.

Art. 52. It is decided to publish the report of the delegates in the "Wachter" and also a portion of the Minutes of this Session, and in the Synodical Report, all the Minutes of the Assembly with the above named report. The Committee for this work consists of the Officers of this Synod.

Art. 53. The delegates had asked the Synod at Zwolle to take note of the Emigration from their country, and if a large group were leaving at one time, whether a Student or a candidate could not be sent with them. The Synod had meant not to become involved in this matter, but rather leave this to the Churches for a solution. It is called to the attention of the Synod that there is a grave danger to emigrants, especially in the large cities, to become estranged from the Old Reformed Church and its Doctrines. The Synod advises that a circular be composed, stating all that is necessary for those coming to America to know, and that these circulars be spread thruout the Congregations in the Netherlands. After a discussion of this matter, the Officers of the Synod are mandated to prepare a dodger or a list of instructions, and to send this on to the public dailies in the Netherlands, "The Trumpet, The Call" etc. The Rev. Hulst is advised to insert an article in the "Wachter" now and then on this matter.

Art. 54. A request from the Classis, Grand Rapids: The Synod will consider the matter of Home Mission work. The extended Mission area is to be considered, and the means of procuring Mission workers for this; and this is decided:

a/ The Synod will support Douglas, So. Dakota in the calling of a Minister,

and in the building of a parsonage, and the Synod will then contact the Missionary Committee for the purpose of calling a minister, whose labors will be in Douglas as well as in Charles Mix, and the surrounding areas. The question arises how much the Synod will offer toward the building of a parsonage. Four hundred dollars will be loaned for a period of four years without interest. The salary will amount to \$200.00 until the Synod meets in 1885.

b/ A communication from Oostfriesland requesting the Synod for financial support in the calling of a minister, to which the Synod agrees, with the stipulation that he also visit Rotterdam, Kansas. The sum of \$200.00 is set aside for this Church until the Synod of 1885. As to the arrangement of the work for the Minister to be called, the Consistory with the Home Mission Board will see to it.

Art. 55. The calling of a Missionary Pastor is next up for the attention of the Synod. And it is felt that there is a general need for same. Six ministers are named for this and the Rev. P. Schut is chosen from this group, at present the pastor at Kellogsville, Mich. The salary will be \$600.00. Travelling expenses will be paid, as well as \$150.00 for house rental. If this call is declined by the Reverend, the Mission Committee in conjunction with the Synodical Committee, will consider one of the other five men, the Revs. Vanden Bosch, Ekster, Kuiper, Greve, Smidt. The labors of the Missionary Pastor are regulated by the Home Mission Committee.

Art. 56. From the communications received, there is a request to discuss the matter in connection with the Congregation at Ackley, Iowa, and to report on this. The Revs. Rietdijk, Vanden Bosch, and Noordewier, are the Committee to report on this.

Art. 57. It is reported that the Transportation expenses for this Session are as follows:

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For Classis Grand Rapids, \$100.00; Holland, \$80.00; Illinois, \$45.00; Hudson, \$40.00
Iowa, \$35.00.

The Session ends.

Tuesday Morning Session.

Art. 58. Devotional Period.

Art. 59. The Minutes of the two previous Sessions are read and approved.

Art. 60. The Committee (See Art. 56) reports on the contents of the letters, as well as a protest from the Congregation at Ackley, Iowa, which had been previously considered by Classis Iowa. The point in question at Ackley was the location of the Church. A motion is made that the delegates relate the entire matter to the Assembly. The Rev. Smidt reports in detail, in the name of the delegates from Iowa, and on behalf of the Committee of Classis Illinois, the Revs. Vanden Bosch and Broene, who had attended the Classis at Ackley, and it really comes down to this: that the Congregation of Ackley and the Consistory of the Congregation, because of the troublesome question of the relocation of the Church, and thru various other circumstances, had been dissolved by Classis Iowa, and after that had been reorganized, with the choosing of a new Consistory. Ten families living north-east of the Church, were taken into the Church, and there were besides twenty-two families who were in favor of relocating the Church, and then in addition ten families who had not voted nor protested. After a discussion of this, the Synod comes to the conclusion that there is no reason for them to take such a stand against the actions and the decision of Classis Iowa, and that of the Committee from Illinois. Nevertheless it sanctions the actions of Classis Illinois.

Art. 61. Devotions and Intermission.

Page 22. The Sessions of Tuesday P.M.

Art. 64. The request of Classis Holland is brot up for discussion, in connection with Article 42, of the Acts of 1882, namely that the Synod in its deliberations, consider

the conducting of English services by the Brothers from the East, so that many of the younger people may be kept for the Church and remain true to its doctrines.

After a discussion on this the decision is that a communication is to be sent to the Brothers as follows: Our Synod recalls a matter in which we were not able to take any positive action before this time, namely the preaching of the Brothers from the East in our area in the English language; and after a more careful consideration we appreciate the offer and we would gladly see you make contacts with the Consistories of the Grand Rapids Churches, and thus follow up this matter.

Art. 63. Rev. Hemkes presents a request to the Synod that the Synod appoint another person as Editor of the "Wachter" since he has too much work to give his best efforts to the publication. After a discussion of this, the Synod would like to have the Reverend continue in his work, but to lessen his editorial labors, two brothers as associate Editors shall assist him. These ministers are the Revs. L.J.Hulst and R.T.Kuiper. The Rev. Hemkes is to receive \$125.00 for his work, and the assoc.-editors, \$100.00 each, and this annually.

Art. 64. In reading certain communications to the Synod, the following must be discussed.
a/ A letter from the Church at Pella, containing a protest against the pastorate of the Rev. J.L.Fles, as the minister of the Zeeland Congregation, because of his expressed opinions not in accord with Holy Writ, in connection with some points of Eschatology, in his Question Book, which after being printed was made public, and these opinions have not been retracted.

The decision: The Rev. Fles has satisfied the Classis Holland in this respect.

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Moreover the Clerk will send a communication to the Consistory at Pella, explaining the entire matter.

b/ A letter from Alto, Wisconsin containing a request for funds for the construction of a Church there. Classis Illinois agrees to permit an offering to be taken by the Churches for said purpose. It is decided that after the Revs. Douwstra, and Noordewier have filled their Classical appointments there, they will investigate matters and then report to the Rev. G. Broene to the end that a general offering may be taken for this purpose.

c/ a letter from Cincinnati, requesting Synod to cancel the \$40.00 for School Assessment, and further to give the Congregation release of such a payment for the period of one year, since they are again desirous of calling a Minister. This request is granted.

d/ From Oostfriesland: This Congregation had requested two Classical supplies, and these were agreed to; and one had been fulfilled, but not the other. The Congregation requests that the other be carried out. Classis Iowa reports that the Rev. Bode was to have gone to Oostfriesland, but that he was detained by domestic problems. Now the matter had been settled. The Synod refers the Church to Classis Iowa.

Art. 65. Classis Grand Rapids: Is it in conformity with the Church Order that a person is beyond the realm of discipline of the Church, if such persons cancels his membership while under censure? The Synod remains by a previous decisions in the General Regulations, Article 65, "the Synod can take no further action concerning such a person since he is now outside the Church.

Art. 66. Classis Holland asks Synod to express an opinion, in regard to a certain Mr. D.M., if he may hold his child while presenting it for Baptism? The circumstances of this are brought to light: Mr. D.M. at the age of 17, had carried on illicit relations with a young lady, and had been, by legal means, compelled to marry her. The alternative was a \$500.00 fine, or a term in the Jackson Prison.

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His attorney also informed him, that if he married and did not live as man and wife, after a certain period of time, the marriage could be annulled. He followed this advice and the above took place. The Consistory at V.... considers this union unlawful, and declares it to be Adultery. The person involved would make a confession to the Consistory and in public. The wife in the first marriage set-up married again, and later, D.M. also married.

From this union there was a child, and the question now is: May this father hold the child when it is presented for Baptism? The Synod considers the first marriage as a legal marriage, and as a result of this he may not hold his child at Baptism.

Art. 67. Classis Holland asks how Mrs. N.N. should be dealt with, the wife of Mr. N. who states that she left her husband in the Netherlands because he committed adultery. The Consistory had made inquiries from well-informed sources, where Mrs. N.N. had lived with her husband prior to her leaving him. Everyone contacted there stated the above to be the truth, altho it could not be proved positively. The discussion leads to this decision: That this woman, since she had left her husband without due process of law, and had been accepted by the Church as a member, may retain that status; but the Consistory shall do all within its power to see to it that the separation be made legal.

Art. 68. The Synod considers the problem if it were not feasible, in view of the German Congregations in our Church, to take steps toward supplying those Churches with German pastors. In regard to this matter the delegates from Classis Iowa are mandated to state this: That the Synod appoint a Committee to ascertain how much advantage German Congregations can receive from the Theological School at Veldhuizen, Graafschap, Bentheim. The Synodical Committee is appointed for this.

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Art. 69. Classis Grand Rapids raises the question on an expression in Art. 59 of the General Regulations viz. "In so far as you have learned and confessed these!" After discussing this it is decided to let the matter stand as it is now expressed.

Art. 70. The delegates chosen to be present at the autumn session of the Classis Hackensack, in October, 1883 are the Revs. v.d. Vries and Greve.

Art. 71. The question is asked if everyone could not come to a general understanding in regard to the celebration of the holidays. It is thought to remain by a former decision.

Art. 72. In regard to the second Professor who has been called, it is necessary to state the department in which he shall teach. The Curators shall decide this in conjunction with the present professors.

Art. 73. Copies of the General Regulations and the Acts of Synod, as well as the Church Order of Dordt, 1618-1619, and the five Articles against the Remonstrants, are still available at the Bookstore for only \$.20 per copy.

Art. 74. The remarks of Farewell by the President. Since all matters have been discussed and the sessions have come to an end, the President turns his thoughts to his assisting officers, the Professor of the Theo. School, and to all the delegates and addresses them thus:

My dear Brothers; Since we have now ended our deliberations ---You are well aware of this--- we find much cause for gratitude, but also many reasons for humility. Our thanks to God, who called us to this Assembly and for the accomplishment of this great work.

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For five days, he has granted us the strength and the mature deliberation for the completion of this task. Many decisions have been made, which, if followed by the blessing of the Lord, can redound to the honor and glory of his name, as well as to the welfare of the Church. We could clearly feel that we were under the power of the Truth, and in the belief once delivered to the Saints. The order at the Sessions and the love for the work were safely guarded as far as we know, altho opinions often differed. The Lord was in our midst, and he clearly showed that he still desired dealings with us. We have made marked progress in our work, which was shown in both our Theological School and in our Home Mission Work. May the Lord bless both these undertakings.

We also have a special regard for each other. In the name of the Synod, I acknowledge my

indebtedness to both my Clerk and his Assistant, for all the work they have completed with such care and diligence, and with so much patience. My thanks to the Vice President who so faithfully stood at my side, and to the Professor for his valuable advice and his additional assistance. The delegates are to be thanked for their work their patience, their support, and their co-operation with me, their President, and this includes all the other Brothers, tho they are not present at this late hour, for their co-operation in minor matters thruout the sessions.

And yet, we find ample cause for humility in the tasks accomplished, and this humility is especially applicable to him, whom you have chosen as your President. It is not necessary to take a chance with his weaknesses; he recognizes them all too well himself and you, no doubt also perceived them in passing. Since you have demonstrated your long suffering toward him, he thus can more freely beg your pardon, if he inadvertently has offended anyone of you. Also with you the show of humility will not be entirely lacking, since we must all be convinced that there was not always the necessary lucidity in the arguments presented. The desire to speak or to refrain from speech often went beyond bounds; so that even during the Sessions, it was made plain to us that we showed ourselves fallible.

May the Lord forgive us our sins, cleanse us of all unrighteousness, and crown our efforts with his blessings, and that in spite of our imperfections.

My Brothers, I now bid you farewell. Return to those most dear to you, and to the Congregations, entrusted to your care, as well as the many tasks that are yours in the Lord's Kingdom.

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May he bless you on your way, and cause you to bring in an abundant harvest, suitable for your divine Sender. May he--- our combined wish--- often cause us to assemble here for this very same purpose, with still a more abundant blessing. But should this not be, and we are taken from this life before the next session; may he then assemble us in the Congregation of the righteous, before the throne of the Lord, and among the number already purchased by his blood.

Art. 75. The Rev. Smidt now asks for the floor, since he has a matter he wishes to divulge. At the beginning of the Sessions, he was welcomed by the President officially, but was not given an opportunity to respond at that time. He now, therefore, expresses his gratitude, and states that the words of welcome, addressed to him by the President, were firmly established by the consequent actions of the delegates. He was uplifted and invigorated by the Sessions, and is very pleased to have been a part of it.

Art. 76. The Synod will convene on the third of June, 1885, D.V. and the Sessions are ended by appropriate Closing Devotions by the President, the Rev. J.H.Vos.

The Report of the Synodical Committee to the Synod of May 23, 1882, and the days following.

Brothers in the Lord:

1. Your Assembly during a previous session of our Church, had delegated the Revs. Rietdijk and Boer to the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands. Professor Boer could not fulfill his task as a delegate, so his alternate, the Rev. R.T. Kuiper went in his stead. The brothers, delegates had been requested to meet with the College Professors and others, for the purpose of acquiring a Pastor for Home Mission work in our Church; and they were mandated to call such a party as soon as possible, but all attempts ended in failure. Upon their return, the Committee received the following communication.

To the Synodical Committee of the Holland Christian Reformed Church in the United States of North America.

Our dear Brothers in Christ, Greetings: The delegates sent to the Synod of the Chr. Ref. Church in the Netherlands, which was held in 1882, thru God's goodness arrived safely, and during our stay experienced both friendly and fraternal intercourse in our contacts in and outside of the Synodical Sessions. The friendly spirit and purport, which were in evidence in the Church

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and in its inner growth and development, which the Lord had granted here, were a truly satisfactory sight to our delegates. A report of their doings will be in order at the next Session of the Synod. One matter for your consideration, was the necessity of calling a Home Missionary. It is a well known fact that our last Synod was thoroly convinced of the need of a Home Missionary in the place of the Rev. T. Vanden Bosch, and that it decided to place the responsibility of a call in the hands of the delegates. (Art. 65, June, 1882.) The form of the Letter of Call was received by the delegates at the end of July.

We are sorry to inform you that we, as delegates, could not decide on a candidate altho we used the best means at our disposal to carry out the mandate of the Synod. Your delegates requested the opportunity to place the matter before the Professors of the School at Kampen, which request was granted, that they submit a list of names of persons whom they thot suitable for the work. They promised to submit a list at the earliest opportunity. This was on the 12th of July. On the 6th of August, no list had been received. We also approached Ministers without stating the advantages to our Church. What one person recommended, the other opposed. In the meantime one of the delegates had become acquainted with the Rev. John of Blackwall, So, Holland. At last, we seemed to have found the suitable person. After considering him for a time, we asked others what they thot of the Rev. John. When we sent a letter to the College Professors, they stated that they could recommend no one. We found out very little concerning the Rev. John since few seemed to know him. The time for the opening Session of the Synod was approaching, and we had accomplished nothing. Many more parties were contacted, yet it did not feel as if we were prepared for calling anyone as a Home Missionary. Now, you, nno doubt, ask what our opinion of the Rev. John was.

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The qualities necessary for a Home Missionary, and our judgment of the Reverend, inclined us to give him a Call.

He was in the prime of life, approximately 40 years old, had a small family, two children, thus four all told, and a German by birth. A knowledge of German would be a valuable asset to him in his work among the German population in our Church, and also among those from Oostfriesland, now living in the far West. He is quick and very suitable for work among our people, and proficient in both the German and Dutch Languages. For some time he labored as a Missionary among the Germans living in the Netherlands, and a few years ago joined the Chr. Ref. Church in the Netherlands.

He is now one of their Ministers and seems to stand firmly in the Netherlands Ecclesiastical Doctrine; was successful in a Church in Vlessingen, and is now blessed in his labors at Blackwall, a Church which was practically "on the rocks" but is now in a flourishing condition. His community and his Classical colleagues speak well of him and in general, he is respected and loved, and also has a good reputation.

The things which prevented us from calling him: 1/ Since there was no opportunity for interviewing anyone else, we considered the interview of one prospective candidate not enough. 2/ There was very little to judge him on since he had been in this charge so short a time. 3/ We feared that he might not be so suitable for the work there as he was right here. 4/ No one who knew him could tell too much about him. He was not a person given to study. Should he labor in a Church, a change every two years would be advisable. This was not in his favor. 5/ He stated to us that, at present, he would not consider a Call, tho how he became aware of this; we know not.

Therefore, since he had been in Blackwall so short a time, and was laboring there with good results, we considered it useless to call him. As a result of all this, we desire that you and the Home Mission Committee consider all this, and we hope that you will inform the Mission Committee of the above, and that you complete this project with all the necessary co-operation, and may also speedily obtain the suitable person, as was the desire of the last Synod. May the

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Fruitful labors of the Rev. T. Vanden Bosch be soon followed by a worthy successor, for a blessing to God's Kingdom on earth, and for a general Congregational rejoicing. Thru the watch care of the Lord, we arrived safely in New York, on the twenty fourth of September, after a journey of fifteen days.

The Lord be thanked for his mercy, my fraternal greetings,

Your brother in Christ,

Pateron, October 12, 1882. L. Rietdijk.

2. Your Committee was ordered by you to ascertain the state of health of the Rev. Baron, temporarily emeritated and residing in Pella, Iowa. The Committee interviewed the Consistory of the Church at Pella, and submits a written report.

3. A communication was received from some members of the Congregation at Ackley, protesting against the action of the Consistory and Classis Iowa, which was brot to the attention of the Synod.

4. A letter from Oostfriesland concerning a Classical supply by Classis Iowa, promised but not fulfilled.

5. A written correspondence has been maintained by the Committee with corresponding Churches.

6. Our Committee informs the Synod that according to a remark by Mr. Garveling, there is a typographical error in the papers of Incorporation of the Church, which was not present in the copy of the Incorporation which the Classis had received. In the copy the word "property" appears, yet in the printed form the word reads "proper." The Committee in conjunction with both the Holland and Grand Rapids Classis, entrusted Mr. Garveling with the task of seeing to it that this error be removed by the State.

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Both the House and the Senate at Lansing joined in rectifying this error, and thus it was corrected to the satisfaction of all concerned.

7. Seeing that Mr. Garveling has undertaken the task of investigating the Laws regarding Church Incorporations of other States viz. New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, and Dakota, in which States Congregations can be so organized that the property is so safeguarded by a two thirds majority of the members of a church; the Committee and the Trustees thot it expedient and proper to present a short report at the Assembly.

We pray that the Lord may be in your midst, guided by the grace and light of the Holy Spirit.

The Committee,

W.H.Frieling, Gr. Rapids; R.T. Kuiper, Graafschap; G. Hemkes, Vriesland, May, 1883.

SUPPLEMENT II

Following a decision of Classis Grand Rapids, of the Holland Christian Reformed Church of America, held on Nov. 1, 1882, in conjunction with a Committee of Classis Holland, of the same Church, which stated that a Meeting, with some delegates of the Dutch Reformed Church dealing with their union with the Christian Reformed Church, for which they petitioned, was to be held.

THE MEETING HELD AT GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN ON THE 14TH OF NOVEMBER, 1882.

Art. 1. Representatives from the Classis at Grand Rapids:

The Revs. Vos, Noordewier, and vander Vries, with Elder Gelock.

From Classis Holland:

The Revs. Hemkes, v.d.Werp, Kuiper, with Elder Heyboer.

Petitioning Delegates:

The Revs. Duiker, Hulst, Elders Lahuis, Lanning, Meidema.

(The Revs. are delegates from Grand Rapids, the Elders, from Zeeland, Drenthe, and Montague, in the same order)

Art. 2. At a motion by the Rev. Kuiper, the Rev. J. H. Vos is chosen as President. He accepts this task and opens the Meeting with devotions.

Art. 3. At the suggestion of the President, the Rev. Kuiper is to act as the Clerk. He accepts this task and is seated.

Art. 4. Since the Rev. Boer was teaching in the College Classroom, the meeting is held in the Consistory room of the Church.

Art. 5. The Rev. L.J. Hulst now rises and stated that he and his colleague desired this Meeting, as the result of the assembly of eight seceding Reformed Churches, which assembly was held in Grand Rapids on the 26th of October, and at which session six Churches decided to join the Christian Reformed Church; that they knew very well how the Church had arranged to accept entire Congregations into its midst, but up to this time they had dealt together, And now they wished to join in a body; also they had copies of the manner in which they wished to join; all these having been discussed in a meeting in Grand Rapids.

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These were found to be satisfactory and thus they were now applying for admission to the Classical Committee. The Rev. Hulst states that possibly due to a misunderstanding, one of the six, East Saugatuck, or Fijnaard had dropped out and had joined Classis Holland. But the delegates of the other five Congregations had met this morning once more and all were still in favor of the decision made at Grand Haven, and now wish to bring this desire to fruition. The Reverend now presents his reasons as follows;

THE ARTICLES OF UNION

We the undersigned, as leaders of the Congregations which have recently left the Reformed Church, and for reasons well known, present ourselves herewith in order to effect a union with the Holland Christian Reformed Church, and for the following reasons.

a/ The Netherlands Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Church Order of Dordt, 1618, 1619, are standards accepted by both Churches; the liturgy and the Church Order of Dordt, followed by the Christian Reformed Church of the Netherlands, regulate the usage in both of our Churches. Thus in this we are one.

b/ Your earlier departure in the eyes of some of us, was a sign of imperfection, and a longer stay by us, in your Church was looked upon with disfavor by some. We wish to forget the past and wish to consider only the future, and from now on refuse to mention anything which has gone before.

c/ Naturally there are here and there minute differences in the form and manner of doing things, and we propose that all these which are not of a fundamental nature in connection with our union, be left to the individual Churches for their own decision.

No doubt, time will eventually erase these differences.

d/ In the places where we both have churches and where the Church can support a Minister, there those Congregations will continue as two Congregations, two members of one body, and where one of two Churches has unattached members, there they should be asked to join the original Congregation.

My dear Brothers: We have presented these Articles to our Congregations, and they have been sanctioned and accepted by them.

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to be united with you in one body. We hope you are as pleased with our petition, as we shall be if we are accepted by you. This petition needs only the acceptance by your Church, for, after all are we really not all one, unless we choose some other type of homage.

This petition has been delivered this day by the Congregations: Coldbrook, Grand Haven, Zeeland, Drenthe, Montague.

Art. 6. After hearing the desires and the proposals of the Brothers, the Classical Committee deems it expedient to meet and to discuss the petition, and to consider to what extent they may proceed in the granting of the request.

Art. 7. Since the Classroom in the College area is now available, the members of the Committee assemble there, while the other brothers remain in the Consistory room of the Church. This was more conducive toward a prayerful attitude, and a more secluded area for the consideration of so important and weighty a matter.

Art. 8. Both Committees now, being advised by Professor Boer and the Rev. Schut, hold a serious discussion, which shows that all understand the situation thoroly, but they did not consider an immediate acceptance as the course of action which had to be followed in so important a matter.

Because,

a/ Some of the Brothers were of the opinion that the five Churches could be accepted according to the rules formulated by the Synod of this year, since one could either give no answer or a doubtful one, if the acceptance were not according to these rules; and that in deviating from these prescribed rules, it would be very difficult to convince the Congregations of our Church, if any other course were followed. Thus they would gladly see that the Brothers in their decisions remain by the Synodical rules; and failing in this they would rather see the decision postponed until the next Synodical gathering, for a more favorable conclusion of the matter or an official sanction on the actions of the Brothers.

b/ Others thought that the Committee had the right to

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deal with the brothers and end the matter at once, since the circumstances were different, because the Brothers who desired the union, did not petition as separate Congregations, as the Synod had designated by their decision; but these Congregations now wished to join in a body, for which the Synod had made no provision, and thus no rule could be broken.

In fact the Committee pictured itself as sitting as a Synod, and weighing the petition before it, and that no mistake would be made in accepting the petition of the Brothers, and the Committee felt that it was acting in the spirit of the Synod, considering that the facts were different, if the principle matter were kept in mind, and if the truth and the welfare of the Church would not come out on the short end.

c/ After much discussion in which all had taken part, an agreement was finally reached. that: 1/ the Brothers be questioned why their Congregations could not have decided to join according to the rules laid down by the Synod of this year.

2/ and in case these reasons are found to be satisfactory, then we shall again meet as a Committee, for the purpose of discussing and judging if they could be accepted in some other way.

Art. 9. The Brothers were summoned. They had been joined by a Mr. Keppel from Holland, by B. Veneklassen from Zeeland, P. Koster from Coldbrook, H. Herrema, E. Saugatuck, and all enter and are seated. Mr. Keppel states that he is not a delegate from the Session held in Grand Haven, on October 26, nor is he a delegate from Holland, but he has only come out of interest in the proceedings. He asks if this is satisfactory to the Committee? No one sees any objection to his presence, but it rather gives the Committee pleasure to have him and the other brothers present and they are welcomed.

The President now puts the question labelled Article 8, c, 1 to those petitioning.

The Rev. Hulst takes the floor and replies that it was not because of any

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objection to the contents of the six questions, which should have been the rule in an effective union, but because one knew that the representation, which according to Synodical decision, had to be effected at the beginning of the consideration of the union, would otherwise have seemed strange and likewise opposed by many of them.

For example, On the two previous Sundays it had been announced at both services, and at that time the members questioned each other whether this one or that one, naming elders, were now recognized as legal office bearers in the Church, etc. One noticed that a few took offense at this, and it was feared that some would remain behind, and since it was considered that this objection was only due to a formality, in which there were some things that could be overlooked, they had presented it somewhat differently, they thought, without lessening the principle matter.

Art. 10. Another period of discussion follows, and it now appears that some of the five Congregations represented were not fully prepared to complete matters on this day and to bring the union into being. This causes a motion to be made to meet again as a Committee.

Art. 11. After the Reformed Church brothers had returned to the Consistory room, two proposals were made:

a/ Must this matter be postponed until the Synodical Session of the next year?

b/ Shall we proceed in the manner stipulated?

The second proposal is accepted and the Brothers are asked to return.

Art. 12. After the Brothers had seated themselves, the president states that the Committee wishes to continue to deal with them, and with this, keeping in mind the Synodical decision of the Session of April 26 of this year. The President now asks the delegates if they submit to the six questions, formulated in the Synodical Session of this year?

The delegates answer that they have no objections to any of the questions. Then the President asks each question separately,

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and these are answered satisfactorily by the Committee. The Revs. Hulst and Duiker answer audibly and the others nod assent.

Art. 13. It is also brought up that the decision of acceptance must proceed according to Article 82 of the Synodical Regulations, in regard to Ministers from other denominations who wish to join with us, and especially in regard to those who formerly served in our Church. These Articles are now read, and it is now decided.

a/ That the Brothers, delegates, return to their Congregations and explain to their Congregations the points on which there is agreement, and make an effort to bring them to the acceptance of these points, and that the Consistories can again deal with their Committee and that the delegates receive formal mandates from their Consistories, and then meet once again with the Classical Committee at Grand Rapids, on the second Tuesday in December. This should settle matters once and for all.

Art. 14. The delegate from Montague, Elder Meidema, requests that the Church there send in the decision, due to the distance from Grand Rapids. The Committee sanctions this.

The meeting is adjourned with devotions by the Rev. R.T. Kuiper.

J.H. Vos, Pres.

R.T. Kuiper, Clerk

Following the regulations in the Meeting of the Committees of Classes Holland and Grand Rapids with the delegates from the Reformed Church, wishing to unite with our Church, see the Minutes of Art.... 14 of November last, meeting in Grand Rapids, as formerly, on Dec. 2, 1882.

Art. 1. The Committees consisted of the same members from the Classes Holland and Grand Rapids as those who assembled formerly. The delegates from the five Congregations were:
The Rev. R. Duiker and Elder M. Visser from Grand Haven
The Rev. L.J. Hulst and Elder J. Kasten from Coldbrook
Elders Lahuis and Veneklassen from Zeeland
Elder a Lanning from Drenthe, (without Mandate)
A letter from Montague.

Art. 2. This session is considered a continuation of the previous session; therefore the same officers shall preside.

Art. 3. Since Brother Lanning was not present at the previous session, and since he had no mandate, this created some difficulty, and the question arose whether he could be seated or not. After his explanation of what had occurred in his Congregation, which was affirmed by others, namely that his Church had recently been organized under State law, and under the same name, on the 4th of December, and that a formal mandate had been impossible, due to funeral services on the previous day; the Brother is recognized as a lawful delegate, from the Congregation of Drenthe, being taken at his word.

Art. 4. The letter from the Consistory at Montague, containing a statement of complete agreement, with all that had transpired at the previous Session, and containing a request of acceptance by the Holland Chr. Ref. Church, was received as information.

Art. 5. The Minutes of the previous Session were read and accepted.

Art. 6. The question is now put to the Brothers if they have dealt with their Congregations according to the decisions of the previous Session of the Committees. From the answers it now appeared;

a/ that either the Clerk or the delegates had erred: the Clerk had sent copies of the six questions from the Synodical Regulations, according to Article 13, to each of the five Congregations, so that the opinions of the Congregations might be ascertained. Most of the delegates had not understood this; but since it had occurred thus, they had dealt with it accordingly, and the Congregations, on the whole were tractable in accepting them.

b/ Two places were called to mind concerning the expression of question 3.
Taking into consideration the Synodical Regulations of the Holland Christian Reformed Church in America. Some considered that this might be misinterpreted, for example the celebration of the second Holiday, or something to that effect, which could not be proved by the Word of God. This was explained satisfactorily, however, by stating that the celebration of the second Holiday was a matter of one's own volition; and should there be any other matter not in accordance with God's Word in the Reformed Confession, rest assured that all that had to be done was to point this out, and it would be rectified at the next Session of the Synod.

The Brothers accept this explanation, and state that there is nothing else to prevent them from petitioning for admission. They now state that they wish to be accepted by the Holland Christian Reformed Church and become a part of it.

Art. 7. By mutual agreement on the precepts of the previous Session, it is decided with unanimous vote, and then announced that the union of the five Churches at Grand Haven, Zeeland, Coldbrook, Drenthe, and Montague, is at this moment brought into being. The President now announces the decision to the Brothers, Delegates, and welcomes them into the ecclesiastical union with the Lord's blessing and an added wish that they might be also a blessing to each other.

Art. 8. The delegates from Zeeland inform the Committee that for some time past they have been making an attempt to call a Minister, and they are in need of a Counsellor at once and request that one be made available. The Committee felt that it could not supply them with a permanent Counsellor, since that was really a matter for Classis Holland to decide. However since the request was for an immediate need, the Committee agreed that the Rev. Hulst should act in that capacity.

Art. 9. The Committee now adjourns until 2:00 P.M. at which time it will reconvene and question the Ministers, the Revs. Hulst and Duiker.

Art. 10. Interim Devotions.

Art. 11. Accordint to Article 82 of the Synodical Regulations concerning Ministers petitioning for admission to the Church from other denominations, the following procedure is in effect.

a/ First questions are put to them to explain their stand on certain points of Christian Doctrine; naturally more out of form than out of necessity, since both men have aged and grown gray in the service of the Church.

Additional questions are addressed to the Rev. Duiker, why he, the minister of the W.H. Reformed Church in America, had left the Church in 1872 for the Reformed Church, and now was leaving that Church to join the Holland Christian Reformed Church.

The Reverend sought to explain and justify his actions, stating that circumstances made it impossible to remain in Grand Rapids at that time. The Committee judged that he should have stayed in either case. It was pleased, however with the explanation of the Brother.

" I confess, that in my earlier feelings in regard to the Dutch Reformed Church, I was very much disappointed; yet I returned to that Church which I thought I once had to leave and which, upon reflecting certainly had the right of existing."

The Committee was satisfied with the statements of both men, and the explanations of the Rev. Duiker, and they are now recognized as co-laborers in the work of spreading the Gospel in the Holland Christian Reformed Church. They are welcomed into the Church by the President, with a wish for the Lord's indispensable blessing.

Art. 12. Now that all the necessary work had been completed, the Rev. L.J.Hulst ends this session with prayer.

J.H.Vos, Pres.

R.T.Kuiper, Clerk.

A copy of the letter following the conclusion of Art. 13.

To the honorable Brothers, the Consistories of the Reformed Congregations.....

My dear Brothers, Greetings:

Following a promise to Brother Lanning at our meeting in Grand Rapids, on November 14, last I send you now, on the reverse side, pertinent questions, in our Synodical decision, for your information.

Questions "a,b,d,e," seem to pass without any further explanation, and can readily be answered by each Consistory member.

Question "c" might require some thought, if each one of you could immediately accept the General Regulations. These are obtainable at "Hulswits in Grand Rapids. In general, they are very similar to those of the Christian Reformed Church of the Netherlands, so that no one who has the goodwill of these at heart, should find no objection to them.

What is found in part "f" signing the Articles of Confession, always was and still is required.

Having complied with your request, I now remain, with affectionate regard, your brother and servant in the Lord.

R.T.Kuiper

P.S. The Articles of union from the report of 1882, are also included.

The Report of the Delegates to the Christian Reformed Synod in the Netherlands in 1883.

To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in America, of May 23, 1883 held at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Our dear Brothers in the Lord, May Blessing and Peace be added unto you.

In answer to an invitation from the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, in the Netherlands, our Synod chose two persons, as delegates from our Synodical Assembly. All of us were spared during the interim, and in 1882 the delegates were sent with the necessary mandates, credentials, and things to be accomplished, and now at this writing, all has been completed.

The honor of being chosen to carry out this task, gave us truly thankful hearts. But the tasks assigned to us, and the work which had to be accomplished, weighty matters and extensive, and being cognizant of our limitations and capabilities, as well as the farewells of our loved ones and our Congregations; all these matters in connection with our mission, nearly caused us to exclaim, "Send not us, but others...."

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those who can better answer to the demands which have been made on us!" Therefore, not without diffidence did we accept the tasks assigned to us, with our eyes cast on the Lord, drawing on his strength and relying on his promises, and urged on by backing of our Synod, as well as by the prayers of the Church; we began our Atlantic crossing, after the necessary preparations had been completed, and the farewells had been taken from our Congregations, accompanied by some of our dear friends, who accompanied us to the docks, we set sail on the twenty second of June, 1882, boarding the "Edam" of the Holland American Line; a line which we can wholeheartedly recommend to any friends wishing to make a trip to the Netherlands.

It was a memorable occasion for us to be accompanied to the dock by our friends and dear ones, a last farewell, but with a silent hope that we would safely return to them one day, and in cherishing this hope, we were not disappointed.

May the Lord be praised! He had heard our prayers and those uttered in our behalf. After an uneventful and peaceful voyage of thirteen days, we arrived at our destination, Amsterdam, on a Friday morning.

While at sea, we could return thanks to the Lord: the great expanse of water, the smoothness in sailing with ideal weather, the fellowship with other passengers; all these in addition to the prayers for our preservation and our guidance, touched our very hearts.

One thing was disappointing to us, no worship services were permitted on the boats of this line. That was deplorable. Would that this could be changed so that the Lord could be served on sea as well as on land. This, the land of our birth, the land where we were cradled, and first saw the light of day, where our first precepts in matters pertaining to the Lord were learned, the land in which the Lord had guarded us with his watch care and also demonstrated to us in times without number, his wonders and his might; the land which we had left for shorter or longer periods of time, which we now anticipated visiting, and on which we hoped to tread again, and finally having done so; all this led us to exclaim, "O Lord, thou hath made thy beneficence to us most great...."

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so great, in fact, that we cannot recount it...

Our first meeting was at the home of the honorable brother P. Kaptien, at Amstleben, and was most heart warming, Christlike, and fraternal. And this was not only true at our first visit, but also the case when we departed, and calling him and his family together we stated that we could never repay them for their hospitality, but prayed to the Lord that he reward them, for the love which they had shown us in his name.

Greeting the brothers and sisters and all the friends in the Fatherland, causes us to state only that we were received with affection and sheltered with care. May the Lord bless them all for their thoughtfulness and their kindnesses to us.

But no more of this: Your honorable Assembly is anxious to know, and rightly so, how well we carried out the tasks assigned to us, while we were there. We are anxious to serve you and shall be brief, orderly, and concise, in giving you this report.

One mandate of the Synod was: To call a man suitable for Home Mission work, for the Church (See Art. 65, Min. 1882) At the earliest possible moment, we contacted the honorable Faculty of the University of Kampen, informing them of our desires, and asking for their advice. We arrived in Kampen on July 12th, while the Curators were conducting their Examinations. We were warmly received by both Curators and Professors. We met with the Professors and made our wishes known, stating the reason for our visit. We told them of our Mandate, as per Art. 65, and added that it would be very desirable for us to obtain a Missionary from the Netherlands, for the continuation of our Home Mission work. After a general discussion, and all the questions had been answered, they stated that the Faculty would consider the matter, and report to us at their earliest convenience

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and present us with a list of desirable prospects of both ministers and students. we thanked them and departed, and awaited a speedy reply, appreciating all they promised to do for us. In addition, we decided to explore the possibilities of finding prospects on our own. By the end of July we had had no letter from the Professors. At the end of the month we received a copy of the "Letter of Call" from our Synod. In the meantime some interested parties had made recommendations to us. We also decided to send a letter to the Faculty, asking them for the list they had promised, and we asked them at the same time if they could recommend the person whose name we had submitted in the letter. The reply was that since the vacation period had begun, the Faculty had scattered, and thus there was not ample time for answering our request. And, therefore, all this had come to naught.

Nor could they recommend the party we mentioned, since he was unknown to them. Thus the time had come for the Synod to convene. A month had elapsed and nothing had been accomplished. During the Sessions we again made our requests known but to no avail.

It grieved us that all our attempts had been fruitless, since we considered the need of a Home Missionary of primary importance, and thus we decided to inform the Synodical Committee immediately upon our return, and requested them to meet with the Missionary Committee and if at all possible, to call someone for this work, either here or the brother whom we mentioned in the Netherlands. To this we received no reply.

To strengthen the fellowship with our brothers, to acquaint our selves more completely with their Church life, to bind and strengthen our ecclesiastical fellowship...

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with the Church of the Netherlands and with our own; this was also a part of our mandate, while we were here. That our ecclesiastical existence in America is not considered by all on the same level, is a well known fact to us. Nevertheless we can freely state, that in general, we were received and treated with Christian goodwill and affection. The close bonds of ecclesiastical intercourse and a heartfelt union with us on a religious basis is becoming more clear, and is being more clearly comprehended by many persons, and in many spheres. Some persons became more sympathetic, others were enlightened, conditions which were not lucid previously, are now very plain, and these have made for a clearer conception of our religious existence. It is not necessary to name names, or to relate circumstances as they would be of benefit to no one. The moment we arrived, we made it our chief concern to become acquainted with Ministers and members of the Christian Reformed Church, and in this, we trust, we were successful. After our meeting with the Professors, which has been mentioned previously, we judged it possible, since the Synod would not convene until the 15th of August, to accomplish the task assigned to us more easily by visiting our friends and others whom we knew, and thru them contact Ministers and Elders and the members of various Congregations. Conversations were not difficult to carry on in this respect, since everyone was eager to hear about America, which resulted in a better knowledge of our country, and made for a better understanding, and a closer union. We had planned to hear many sermons, but, in this, we were disappointed, since wherever we came, the question was, "What does the Spirit of America say to the Congregations?" To use our talents for God's Kingdom, and to apply them is our calling, and therefore wherever opportunity presented itself ---many were disappointed--- we delivered sermons thruout the Netherlands, and we trust our work was blessed, since we often noticed nods of assent and approval.

And altho thousands of miles of land and water separated us, nevertheless we did not feel like strangers in our intercourse with the brothers in the Netherlands, and we felt at the same time that the feeling was mutual.

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One confession, one Doctrine, one hope and love; these were noticed repeatedly, and the result was that in one or two services in one or two Churches, we preached from the day of our arrival until the time of our departure. Without a doubt, bonds were strengthened. Many are prepared upon their arrival in America to unite with our Church. Whenever possible we pointed to the feasibility and need of locating in areas where there were churches, or where whole new sections were opening up, and to include in their groups, capable and God-fearing men; or to prepare men and ministers or candidates, so that they could come with organized groups, and settle in the chosen areas with them, asking the blessing of the Lord on their project, as this would be very beneficial in the preservation of the Faith, remaining in it, and propagating it thruout the generations. It is not an obscure fact that the Lord's blessing has been visible and rested on the preaching of the Word, since the founding of the Church in the Netherlands in 1834. She stands as a witness to the Truth in our Fatherland. She spreads out her branches as a tree, for untold distances, planted by the Lord, and even beyond the vast expanse of the ocean. Her influence is felt in the sphere of Church life, Social life is benefitted by it. She upholds the Truth in political spheres, so that unbelief finds a strong opponent in its existence. May the Lord cause her to be victorious over all unbelief, and in erring ecclesiastical politics, which is such a hinderance to the advancement of God's Kingdom. As it touches the heart of the Church, and the work of the Lord, and the work of those who love the Church, it will show in how much they have for the Church.

Theological Schools, parochial schools, Christian Schools, church buildings and parsonages, and funds for the support of these, and pastoral support in addition; all these are well-known signs that one loves the Lord and the Truth, and that one shares in its glorious growth. Their zeal is never lessened, their unity is shown in larger and smaller Assemblies. The Netherlands Chr. Ref. Church has an inner worth; she has an expanding influence; she carries the blessing of the Lord upon her work. She has an established and well-organized Theological school with 80-100 students, a faculty of 8, two of whom have grown old in the work of the Lord and his Church, others of middle age, while still others still enjoy the blessing and strength of youth. As to her existence and present status, this is expressed in Supplements three and four of the Acts, the Synod of Zwolle, 1882..

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and we can do no more than point your Assembly to these, since they are both plain and acceptable and have been accepted by the Synod. A satisfactory order of affairs is maintained as well as a thorough training in the work of the Gospel. Everyone present at the Examination has become thoroughly convinced of this matter. Clinging to the only true Doctrine, which leads to godliness; that is the one aim of the Theological School at Kampen. Her effectiveness is increased thru the work of three Professors, men with unlimited knowledge, in great earnest and God-fearing. The Church in the Netherlands rejoices because of this fact. We have reasons to be thankful for the blessings of the Lord that are bestowed upon them. She can function as a patron saint, as it were, since she has already contributed so much to our religious life; the fruit of her continued existence, building on the same foundations; she will ever be a greater blessing to us, we hope. There is a strong bond of union between Church and School, as, indeed, there should be, so that each is a blessing to the other. And this united cooperation is a blessing, which can be clearly seen.

The Church of Christ on earth is a Church militant, and in a state of imperfection, but she nevertheless strives towards perfection, as can be seen by the Synodical Sessions of the Church. The Sessions of their Synod began on the 15th of August and came to an end on the 30th, 1882. To represent the Holland Chr. Ref. Church of America, was a part of the task placed upon us, and really the most important part. After visiting many Congregations, as has already been stated, your delegates travelled to Zwolle, Province of Overijssel, on August 14, to be present at the prayer service, and the preaching of a sermon by the Vice-President of the previous Synod. In this beautiful, spacious Church, a great number of the inhabitants of the city had assembled, also delegates from home Churches and from foreign lands, Professors and students. In connection with a text from the Acts, we listened to a discourse on the "Law" 1/ its Holy character, 2/ its purpose, and 3/ the purpose of the Synod.

With a powerful closing prayer and the singing of a Psalm the Services came to an end.

and each one turned his steps homeward, meditating on the message and what he had hears, and pondering on the work of the following day, when the sessions should begin. It was a most enjoyable occasion for us to have been present, witnesses of the good work which the Lord had done in Zwolle. The Church is located in an ideal section of the city, with very pleasant surroundings. The speaker made mention of the fact, that the progress of this Congregation, is an example of what the Lord has done for it, and what he has been for it since the Sessions of the Synod twenty eight years previous to this which for either a delegate or a spectator could mean no less than a humble gratitude to the Lord. Our lodging was well provided for, and we were treated with every courtesy, remaining in Zwolle the entire length of time of the Sessions.

The Sessions opened on the 15 th of August, with the retiring President in Charge. He delivered a timely discourse, and after the singing of a Psalm, uttered a powerful prayer. There were four delegates, two Ministers and two elders from each Province of the Netherlands. The Seminary and the Missionary faculties were present, as well as delegates from Scotland, Germany, Belgium. Oostfriesland, Prussia, and we from America. We were seated, (Arts. 9,10 of the Minutes) and a short greeting and appropriate remarks were addressed to us, "Welcome into our midst, Brothers."

To mention the fact that we were moved by the responsibility which had been placed upon us, and that we turned to the Lord to supply all of our needs, need not be mentioned here, but you can very well surmise that in this we felt our weakness in our task as delegates of the Sessions, where gifted men with great capabilities and many talents were present, at whose feet we would gladly have reclined for instruction.

To mention minor details is not the purpose of this report, as that would make for much less interest and become boring; nor can we report on all the work of the Synod. Therefore we refer you to the printed copy of the Acts of the Synod.

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You will probably ask, "What was the attitude and the spirit of the Synod while it was at work?" The Answer is this: It was an Assembly where love held sway, because in the most delicate matters, a spirit of love pervaded the sessions, and a constant striving of the delegates to continue to work in a fraternal spirit. Love for the Truth and for the Confessions of Faith can be noted from the decisions which were made by the delegates. There was a spirit of unity, a striving for the Truth in the discussion of the Baptismal question; and in any other points of Doctrine, they clung to the immovable Confession which had been formulated and since maintained.

Matters of a more personal interest to the Church, the school and the Professors, the unity in the choice of three professors and matters connected with this, which had to be carried on with great care, with an earnest attitude and in trust; these matters were so carried out from beginning to end that a spirit of complete unity was prevalent, and this was the case in the treating of minor matters as well, and especially those pertaining to the ecclesiastical life of the Church. Reasons for a discussion of matters that once seemed of vital importance, and of party differences, these had no place in the Sessions at all. There was one characteristic among the delegates and that was the ardent love for the truth, on one foundation, and for a most wonderful purpose, the exaltation of the name of the Lord, advancing and spreading the Kingdom of Christ, the true doctrine and the unity among his believers, and a hope for those who acquire this most precious belief. The general opinion was, "Unity has never been present in a more powerful way than at the Sessions of the Synod of 1882." May her unity and power continue to increase here below, since the weaknesses in the best efforts in God's Church are always noticeable, yet the Church is capable of much more, and a continual progress in Christian unity should be her goal, until she experiences it in perfection and in glory.

Everything was done in order. Ample opportunity was given the delegates for periods of relaxation, after strenuous hours of exhausting work, when one becomes too tired to apply one's self to matters on hand. A period of rest gives one an opportunity to recapture his strength, which, in passing, is an excellent suggestion for our Sessions. With anticipation, you, no doubt, are awaiting the report on what we both did and said there. We can quickly satisfy you on this point, and first wish to state that we have carried on in such a way

that both the Synod and the entire Church may say, " Our delegates to the Netherlands have done what they could" taking into account our failings. An opportunity is given to the delegates from foreign countries, namely those with the same fundamentals as the Netherlands Churches,--from others she accepts no delegates-- to state the needs and the condition of the Churches, the ecclesiastical status, the struggles, the blessings it enjoys and so forth. We were given this opportunity on August 17. A number of interested listeners were present, to hear what the delegates from a foreign country had to say to the Synod, and also to learn all they could about the Holland Christian Reformed Church in America, and we were prepared to inform them of these things. No doubt, the interest was great, as we told of the growth and the present status of the Church, its struggles, its hopes, and the future of it in America. The older delegate was given the opportunity to take the floor first. To mention other Churches in America or even the Reformed Church, we considered unwise. It was not expedient to degrade another Church in order to exalt our own. This was not our task.

We told of our ecclesiastical existence, of the beginnings of the Church, its reasons for existing, the present condition of the Church, of its growth, and as far as we could ascertain of its future. We also stated that our existence was the expression of our unity and our heartfelt devotion of our Church for the Church of the Netherlands, feeling bound to her and considering her as a Mother Church. Being one in Doctrine, discipline and Church rule, and worship, we stated that we were willing to impart any information on such points as required more light by the Synod and to give this according to our best knowledge and ability, if something were demanded that our Church had not had in mind by our coming. The words which we spoke are recorded in the Minutes of the Sessions of 1882. Netherlands Church papers also printed our speeches in them, which the "Wachter" reprinted in its Sept. 28 copy, a very lucid account of what was said by us. (See also pp. 45-50 in the Minutes of the Acts of 1882)

53 Professor Brummelkamp addressed us with appropriate words. The gist of his remarks is as follows:(See Art. 63 of the Minutes) He stated that the brothers that are so closely joined to us, are to receive a double welcome. No one present considered them of minor importance. Because of their great distance from America, it was difficult to form an opinion of their existence, and they can very well understand this. In their presence here as delegates, we have accepted their Church; and has this been done previously, nevertheless we do it again. Referring to our remarks, to the necessary union, to the disputed freedom, he ends his heartwarming remarks in a spirit of affection.

We issued an invitation to them to send a delegate to our Synod, which they felt could not be accepted because of the expense connected with it. But should a Minister from their denomination be visiting friends in America, they would gladly supply him with the credentials needed by a representative. As we promised, we explained points on which more information was desired. We did this to the best of our knowledge and ability. (See Minutes, Art. 85)

Listening to the reports of the other delegates was most interesting, since we obtained a much better understanding of their problems, and we were convinced that our God guarded those Churches with his faithful watch care as well as he did ours. There was no delegate present from the Reformed Church in America, but a letter was read from Dr. Van Cleef. As a result of this, the question of Free-Masonry was brot up, and in this connection the ecclesiastical condition of the Church. The letter passed over this very lightly, and convinced the Synod more and more that a further discussion and more writing on this was necessary. A lengthy discussion followed on this, and the matter was most carefully considered.

The Synod was convinced that from a Christological point of view, Free Masonry could not exist, but that it rather rests on a cosmopolitical point of view. The Synod decided to send a letter to the Synod of the Reformed Church, warning them in a fraternal way to eradicate this evil from their midst. To express her opposition to Free Masonry in the Church, and to declare in her high calling no opposition to it, in these circumstances she thereby declares that the world has been taken into the Church. She shall take steps to remove this evil from her midst now at once and forever.

(See Art. 123,2; Art. 124; also Art. 131, for a copy of this material)

The Synod considered this a delicate problem, and their divine calling for God and the Church, to call attention to this matter, and at a glance demonstrated their care, their wisdom and their faithfulness, in thus discharging their duty. Our secession from the Reformed Church in America thus became more understandable, and the mistake made in the first union with the Reformed Church, is now realized to a great extent, as was shown by what was said about the conditions in America; but it is also shown from the answers that certain other brothers, ministers stated, who had left that Church and were independent for a time, and have now joined with us and sent by the Synod.

In the most delicate matters of discipline, and personal problems especially; the Synod dealt with these in Committees. No one had access to these Committee meetings who was not a bonafide delegate to the Synod. Nominating Professors was done in this way. But when the Synod met in general sessions anyone had access to the meetings, and men and women in large numbers attended the sessions and were interested in the affairs of the Church.

The preservation of good order was of an especial care to them, and for this see Art. 71 of the Minutes. Good order and speed in the work were noticeable thruout the sessions. we might well copy this.

Weighty matters are in reports and thus handled by the Sunod. This report does not mention their domestic matters, and those of no interest to us are not mentioned by us. The form of the Agenda can very well be a pattern for ours, nor need it be so elaborate, nor so costly, yet there is a need for a better format. The Foreign Mission Committee held its sessionx on the evening of August 21. Your younger delegate was present at this meeting, and was seated by the Committee. Mission reports were read, the condition of the two missionaries, Brothers Haan and Belfos, were discussed. Brother Huizing was also present. His return to the section of Asia where he is stationed was discussed also. It was our privilege to spend an enjoyable and profitable evening with them. I can wholeheartedly recommend the work of the Mission of the Netherlands Church for its love, its contributions and the financial assistance from our Church. The funds for Missions are meted out with care and used for the purpose for which they were meant.

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Bringing the Gospel to those who have never heard it, and to work for their blessing and x salvation, under the ever watchful eye of the Lord, and in conjunction with the Church of the Netherlands; can be wholeheartedly recommended to our Church for its love and attention and its funds, up to the time when we shall establish our own Mission areas. Yet I should add, " Let us first figure the costs of the tower, before we begin the labor on it. The Mission demands much money.

Until Friday night, August 25th, the younger delegate lodged with the Synodical Clerk, and since the delegate had been asked to lead the divine services, at Harlingen, and since the Synod would not reconvene until Tuesday, and then to discuss less weighty matters, he accompanied by the Rev. Beuker, took leave of the Synod after expressing a word of appreciation for the fraternal and heart warming intercourse, and the good derived from the sessions. The President answers with fraternal well-wishes, expressing his joy over the benefits they had received from our association. He asked us to convey the greetings of his church to ours As well as a fraternal greeting to our Synod, which we do at this time,

What followed on the last days of the sessions, and the words directed to Brother Kuiper, on these he will report, since he was also absent on the 25th, returning on the 29th, and he took his farewell on the evening of that day. It was good for us to have been there, extending the right hand of fellowship in the hope, that if we never meet again on this earth we shall, nevertheless meet in that Heavenly Kingdom, in a state of perfection, for no more parting, but to greet each other there and to worship the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit eternally.

Our schedule for our return was set for the 2nd of September, but due to a misunderstanding, we were detained until the 9th. During this time we called on more friends and acquaintances and also brother preachers, and the last Sabbath was spent in hearing God's word and proclaiming it, and thus a most enjoyable week was passed. The time for our departure was now near, after we had visited here and there.

The brother at whose home we lodged upon our arrival on July 5th, and whose care for us can never be repaid, accompanied us to the ship with his family. After our farewells, a touching hour, we set sail with the same group with whom we had travelled from America. We cast a final glance upon the Fatherland as our ship put out to sea, and, Thanks to God, after 16 days, we arrived at the Jersey City docks, and returned to the loved ones who had all been spared while we were away.

Our Congregations received us with gladness, and we all had reasons for gratitude to the Lord for our safe keeping, and we could cry out, "The Lord has done well with us, for which we are glad."

We wish to thank the Brothers who served so faithfully while we were gone, and for their fine co-operation, and this applies especially to the Rev. T. Vanden Bosch, who has faithfully served our Church as a Missionary and has crowned his final efforts with this work.

This is and concludes our report, my dear Brothers, which we were obliged to give to you as the delegates to the Synod of the Netherlands. How much this will be of benefit to you, we leave this to your judgment. If you decide that additional information is necessary, we hope to be able to satisfy you. We hope your judgment of our work as delegates will receive a favorable reaction among you, and that your final report may be, "Our delegates have done as much as they were able to do." With a backward glance at the condition of the Christian Ref. Church in the Netherlands, and what God has done for her, and that which we hope, will still be done for her, we may join in and sing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow. How sad that our Fatherland cannot contain all of its own children, since much more living room is needed, and therefore western lands must be sought by many for providing for their physical needs; but the Lord be praised, they have a new and blessed refuge here in America.

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And should many more come with the blessed hope in their hearts, we shall welcome them most graciously within our circles. How unfortunate that unbelief is also rampant in that country. May the God of our pious Dutch fathers, be gracious to the children of these fathers. May the Lord rise up and let his light shine forth. May our land experience the true Gospel, and may it find a much greater entrance into the hearts of the people of our country. May the Holland Christian Reformed Church be an example of his constant and abiding love. May he bind his children, now scattered, with the bonds of Truth, as it is in Christ Jesus. May we ever remain watchful, praying for the coming of his Kingdom, as he has promised to his Church. And now in a prayerful attitude, may we sing:

Thy Kingdom come o Lord;
Cast down the throne of Satan
Rule thru thy Spirit and thy word
And may thy praise for ere be heard
And fill the earth with fear of thee
Till thou shalt end thy Kingdom.

With this we end our report, and we in closing, thank both the Synod and the Church for the confidence placed in us, and for the many prayers sent up to God in our behalf. May the guidance of the Holy Spirit be conspicuous in your Assembly, so that there may be new fruit upon its labors, as Christ stated to his disciples, and thus to the Church, "I shall be with you always even to the end of the world."

This is the wish, dear brothers, from your co-laborers in the work of the Lord.

L. Rietdijk,
R.T. Kuipers.

510443

To the Synod of the Holland Christian Reformed Church, Meeting in Grand Rapids, Mich,
on May 23, 1883.

Dear friends and brothers:

As the result of a decision of Classis Hackensack, we are sending you a communication with Christian greetings from the brothers of our Classis.

That the already existing relations of the Holland Christian Reformed Church is continuing indefinitely, and in view of the existing rule that delegates be sent in return, we regret to inform you that we are unable to comply with this request, during this Session, because of the necessary obligations of its Ministerial staff. In lieu of this, it was decided that the Stated Clerk, in the name of the Classis, send you a Congregational letter as well as a copy of the pastoral work of the Classis, with our Christian greetings, to your Synod.

May the good Shepherd, who has purchased the Church with his blood, bestow upon the whole Church thruout the world, his Covenant blessing, as well as a true rebirth.

May peace and unity rule in your discussions to the advancement of the welfare of Zion. This is the hope and prayer of all the Brothers and of your co-laborer in the advancement of the Truth.

J.C. Voorhis, St. Clerk

Englewood, N.J. May 23, 1883.

N.B. This communication was received too late for the Synodical sessions.

G. Hemkes, Clerk.