

# AGENDA

Synod  
Christian Reformed Church

*To convene June 11, 1930  
at Grand Rapids, Mich.*

**PART II.**  
RELATED  
**REPORTS**  
and OVERTURES

Grand Rapids, Mich., U. S. A.  
Office of the Stated Clerk  
737 Madison Avenue, S. E.

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# AGENDA

## Part II :: Belated Reports

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### REPORT XIV

#### REPORT IN RE CHOIR SINGING

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*To the Synod of 1930.*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :—

Pursuant to the mandate given us (Acts of Synod 1928, Art. 71) the following is respectfully submitted:

The instruction for this Committee is found in Acts of Synod 1928, Art. 71: "De Synode benoeme een commissie om de a.s. Synode voor te lichten aangaande het koorgezang in onze godsdienst-oefeningen. Gronden:

- (a) De Synode van 1926 ontried het koorgezang, doch sprak er zich niet over uit of er voor dergelijk gezang krachtens ons Gereformeerd beginsel plaats is in onze eredienst;
- (b) Het is zeer gewenscht dat onze gemeenten in dezen met bewustheid handelen, en zich niet uitsluitend door practische overwegingen laten leiden."

The question of choir singing in our churches was brought before our Synod in the year 1904. In the Acts of Synod of that year we read: "De Synode keure het zangkoor bij den openbaren godsdienst af" (Instruction of Classis Illinois). Synod approved of this instruction and decided to do so (Acts 1904, p. 41). But on page 42 the considerations are stated, and it appears that Synod was not opposed to a choir, but disapproved of the choir SINGING ALONE, WITHOUT THE CONGREGATION.

For a period of 22 years nothing was said about choirs in the Acts of the Synods, until in 1926 an instruction came

to Synod from Cl. Grand Rapids West. This overture asked Synod to revise the Acts of 1904. It reads as follows: "Synod revise the decision of the Synod of 1904 in re choir singing in our public worship, and take a definite stand on this question, either by prohibiting it altogether (except as an aid to congregational singing) or leaving the matter entirely to the local congregation" (Acts 1926, p. 69). Synod decides (see p. 70) "that although it would discourage the introduction of choir singing in public worship (except as an aid to congregational singing) **IT LEAVES THE FINAL DECISION** with regard to this question, **TO THE LOCAL CONSISTORIES.**" Grounds given for the above are:

- (a) It has been the custom in some churches for many years;
- (b) It belongs to the province of the local consistories.

Again in 1928 the same question in re choir singing came before Synod. Two Classes sent overtures to Synod, namely, Classis Pella and Classis Grand Rapids West. And again Synod decided to abide by its decision of 1926, adopting reasons 1 and 5 as grounds. These read as follows:

- (1) Your Committee believes that one Synod should not revoke the decision of a previous Synod unless a specific instance occurs which proves that the decision was harmful to the churches, or proof is offered that the decision is contrary to the Scripture or the Doctrinal Standards of the Church or to the Church Order. Neither the Standing Committee nor Classis Pella have offered these conditions necessary to revoke the decision of 1926.
- (5) Your Committee furthermore reminds the Synod that the decision of 1926 compels no church to introduce a choir. On the contrary, the introduction of choirs was discouraged (Acts of Synod 1928, p. 58, Art. 67).

Against this decision of Synod a protest is submitted (see p. 59). The protest is not against choirs as such, but against "leaving the introduction of choirs to the local consistories." The grounds indicate that the protestants maintain that Synod is inconsistent, inasmuch as Synod adopted a uniform Order of Worship for all churches, and at the

same time refers the question of choir singing to the local consistories.

Your Committee concludes therefore that:

- (1) Synod never opposed choir singing as such.
- (2) Synod has left the introduction of choirs to the local consistories.
- (3) Synod has not recommended the introduction, but rather discouraged it.
- (4) The question before the Committee is: whether there is a place in our public worship for a choir (singing alone) according to our Reformed principles.

#### SCRIPTURE RELATIVE TO CHOIR SINGING

It would be misusing Scripture to directly quote FOR or AGAINST choir singing, especially from the New Testament. The Old Testament ritual was ceremonial, and has served its time. True, in the New Testament, in Revelation, choirs are heard singing from heaven, but it has not been enjoined upon us to pattern after them, as Moses had to pattern the Old Testament sanctuary after the heavenly model shown to him.

The great guiding principle of Scripture as to Public Worship is this, that God Himself, in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator, through the Holy Spirit, the Declarer, is the Great Dispenser of Salvation, to His body the Church, with the office-bearers as His functionaries, to feed the Church of the Lord, which He purchased with His blood. Hence, all that the office-bearers do must be strictly according to the Word and will of God. And all that the Church does in the entire worship, must be to obey, and please and magnify the Lord, while at the same time edifying one another. These principles are most assuredly believed among us.

Now these principles of Scripture as to our Public Worship neither demand nor forbid choir singing. Choir singing, then, as to its pro and con, must belong to the *adiaphora*, which must be left to the wisdom of the local church. But, if choirs be considered desirable or necessary

for various reasons, then in the light of the aforesaid principles their singing must be:

- (1) Under careful control of the office-bearers or consistory;
- (2) To the glory of God;
- (3) To edify the Church;
- (4) Never in Divine Worship to curtail congregational singing, nor for mere entertainment.

Your Committee is further of the opinion that there is another element in Divine Worship. Besides God meeting with His people and speaking to them; and His people meeting with and speaking to God; our assembling together must also be for "our upbuilding or edification." According to Eph. 2:20-22 we must be built up; we must build ourselves (Jude 20); we must build others (1 Cor. 3:12-15); we must build one another (Rom. 14:9; 1 Thess. 5:11); and we must edify the hearers (Eph. 4:29; 1 Cor. 14:26-33).

May not a choir, properly controlled by the consistory as stated above, sing scriptural words of God for the edification of the people? And again, may not the choir, with the consent and at the request of people, sing from the hearts of the people, praise and prayer to God in words of Scriptures, as we find them in the Psalms and other places? Especially for such edification choirs may be helpful, though they cannot be regarded as indispensable.

Cordially yours,

(Signed) Rev. J. J. Hiemenga,  
Rev. Wm. Kuipers,  
Dr. R. L. Haan,  
Rev. D. De Beer,  
Rev. J. Timmerman.

## REPORT XV

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*Aan de Synode der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk te vergaderen in Juni te Grand Rapids, Mich.*

GELIEFDE BROEDEREN, *Heil!*

**U**WE COMMISSIE, benoemd door de Synode van 1928 inzake "Het Gereformeerde Beginsel van Vrije Studie," moet U tot haar leedwezen mededeelen dat zij haar opdracht niet heeft kunnen uitvoeren: eerstens omdat de bronnen tot opdieping dezer kwestie niet te verkrijgen waren noch in de bibliotheek onzer School, noch in die van Western Seminarie, noch in die van Princeton, en de bestellingen naar Nederland gedaan tot op heden nog niet zijn ontvangen; en ten tweede, omdat twee leden der Commissie in September j.l. naar Philadelphia, Pa., vertrokken.

Daarom stelt Uwe Commissie der Synode van 1930 voor de huidige Commissie te ontslaan en voor deze niet-onbelangrijke zaak een nieuwe Commissie of een gereorganiseerde Commissie te willen benoemen.

Met eerbied onderworpen, de Commissie voornoemd,

R. B. Kuiper, President,  
M. Van Dyke,  
L. Van Laar,  
C. Van Til,  
K. W. Fortuin, Rapporteur.

## REPORT XVI

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE WHETHER THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR IS A NEUTRAL ORGANIZATION

*To the Synod of 1930.*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—

**Y**OUR COMMITTEE was appointed to investigate whether the American Federation of Labor is a neutral organization. In the execution of our task we have adhered to the interpretation of a neutral organization accepted by Synod of 1928 (see the Acts of Synod of 1928, p. 91).

“Op de vraag of het in strijd is met ons Christelijk beginsel, dat leden der kerk tevens leden zijn van organisaties op maatschappelijk terrein, waar deze organisaties niet op een Christelijk standpunt staan, en niet vanuit Christelijke beginselen werken, dient als antwoord:

“Dat ieder Christen vrij moet worden geacht samen te werken met zijne naasten op elk wettig terrein der samenleving, en dat hij als lid der maatschappij volkomen recht heeft meê te doen aan een gemeenschappelijke onderneming, of zich met anderen te vereenigen in een organisatie, wanneer het welbegrepen doel van zulk een onderneming niet in strijd is met de algemeene rechtsbeginselen in Gods Woord neergelegd.”

“Aangenomen.”

Your Committee has carefully examined the constitutions, the speeches of many labor leaders, and much of the literature on the principles and policies of the American Federation of Labor. While it is true that some of the earlier statements and positions were much more radical than those of recent years, we have come to the conclusion that the objects of the American Federation of Labor, as set forth in the constitution, and defined and interpreted in the literature and in speeches, are not contrary to the Word of God. We submit the following data to substantiate our position.

## THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

### ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSE

“The A. F. of L., as its name implies, is a federation, and not, as it is often mistakenly called, an organization. It is a federation of organizations, each of which has its own government, determined by its own needs and requirements, the result of the experiences of the members of the organization. This right to self-government was recognized in the beginning and has been reaffirmed and adhered to as consistently as possible. The Federation has no powers except those which are authorized and conceded by the organizations which compose it. The powers are enumerated in its written constitution, and the definite direction of conventions.”<sup>1)</sup>

According to its Constitution:

1. “The object of this Federation shall be the encouragement and formation of the local Trade and Labor Unions, and the closer federation of such societies through the organization of Central Trade and Labor Unions in every city, and the further combinations of such bodies into State, Territorial, or Provincial organizations to secure legislation in the interest of the working masses.

2. “The establishment of National and International Trade Unions, based upon a strict recognition of the autonomy of each trade, and the promotion and advancement of such bodies.

3. “The establishment of Departments composed of National or International Unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, of the same industry, and which Departments shall be governed in conformity with the laws of the American Federation of Labor.

4. “An American Federation of all National and International Trade Unions, to aid and assist each other; to aid and encourage the sale of label goods, and to secure legislation in the interest of the working people, and influence public opinion, by peaceful and legal methods in favor of organized labor.

5. “To aid and encourage the labor press of America.”<sup>2)</sup>

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<sup>1)</sup> GOMPERS, S., *The American Labor Movement*, p. 7. A. F. of L. Pamphlet; no date.

<sup>2)</sup> Constitution of the A. F. of L., Article 2; 1923.

The Federation aims to allow the utmost liberty to each organization in the conduct of its own affairs, consistent with the generally understood principles of labor. "From its inception it has taken the stand that while unions of miners, sailors, shoemakers, cigarmakers and printers, must each and all be left entirely to govern themselves within their own borders, yet, that between the members of all these unions there should be a bond as great as that between the members of the same union. The great aim and object of the Federation is to strengthen that bond, and its method is, by organization, education and inculcation, to place the labor movement upon a higher and more effective plane. The strength of a chain is in its weakest link, and the Federation, therefore, endeavors to organize all labor, recognizing that while many non-unionists may be sympathetic with unionism, yet that the unorganized are far more exposed to the pressure of unjust conditions than are the organized, and being thus necessarily weaker in maintaining wages, keeping down hours, and resisting other encroachments, are the source of constant danger to the organized as well as to the themselves."<sup>3)</sup>

Samuel Gompers believed that "the trade union" (that is, the individual union of which the National Unions and the Federation are combinations) "is a practical democracy affording within itself daily object lessons in ideal justice, providing a field for comradeship, deeds of loyalty, and self-sacrifice."<sup>4)</sup> He insisted also that the trade unions are broad enough and liberal enough to admit of any and all shades of thought upon the economic and social question, although he was of the conviction, "that in the trade union movement the first condition requisite is good-standing membership in a trade union regardless of to which party a man might belong."<sup>5)</sup>

The 1893 Convention of the Federation adopted the following resolution:

"Resolved, We deplore the introduction of any sectarian or captious side issues among the working people. Such movements are destined to divide labor's forces and produce bitter antagonism as they produce religious bigotry, provoke rancorous intolerance, and divert the working

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<sup>3)</sup> *The American Federation of Labor*, a propaganda sheet; no date.

<sup>4)</sup> *The American Federationist*, July, 1911.

<sup>5)</sup> Annual report to A. F. of L. convention 1890. (*In Labor and the Common Welfare*, GOMPERS); 1919.

people from working out their own emancipation from the galling slavery of the present social and political conditions.

“Resolved, That we here and now reaffirm as one of the cardinal principles of the labor movement that the working people must unite and organize, irrespective of creed, color, sex, nationality or politics.”<sup>6)</sup>

It makes no difference, therefore, to the A. F. of L. what the religious convictions of the members of its affiliated unions are. It attempts to cover the entire field of industry, its only requirement for membership being that its members be laborers. These wage-earners may believe what they please so long as they do not oppose the interests of labor. The Federation literature refers to the religious convictions of the Federation members only with a view to doing away with religious prejudices and with a view to pointing out the duty of the laborer to join the union irrespective of his religious belief.

#### PHILOSOPHY

Gompers declared frankly, “Our movement is of the wage-earning class, recognizing that class interests, that class advancement, that class progress is the best made by working class trade union action.”<sup>7)</sup> He believed that wage-earners should and would become “larger sharers per dollar of the wealth produced.” He believed that there has always been a struggle between the “wealth possessors and those who produce wealth” and that that struggle “will continue so long as there are diverse interests between the two.” He gave his life, however, to accomplish the union purpose that “the struggle shall not be so bitter and costly.”

Occasionally this phrase, “class struggle,” creeps into the Federation literature and reports. It means little more than this that the laborer has always had to struggle for what is justly coming to him, and, further, that so long as we have such diverse interests as we have under the present economic order, such struggle will necessarily continue.<sup>8)</sup>

“The A. F. of L. is neither governed in its activities by a so-called ‘Social Philosophy,’ nor does it work blindly from day to day. Its work is well planned to be continually of

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<sup>6)</sup> Letter of Frank Morrison Sept. 12, 1929.

<sup>7)</sup> Annual report to A. F. of L. convention 1898. (In *Labor and the Common Welfare*, GOMPERS), 1919.

<sup>8)</sup> See also Hoxie's opinion below.

the greatest benefit to the working people to protect and promote their rights and interest in every field of human activity.”

“The A. F. of L. is guided by the history of the past. It draws lessons from history in order to interpret conditions which confront working people so that it may work along the lines of least resistance to accomplish the best results in improving the conditions of the working men, women, and children, today, tomorrow, and tomorrow’s morrow, making each day a better day than the one which went before. That is the guiding principle, philosophy, and aim of the labor movement.”<sup>9)</sup>

In his annual report to the A. F. of L. convention at Detroit, in 1890, Gompers said, “I maintain that the working people are in too great a need of immediate improvements in their condition to allow them to forego them in the endeavor to devote their entire energies to an idealistic end however beautiful to contemplate. I maintain further, that the achievement of present practical improvements for the toilers places them on so much vantage ground gained and renders them more capable to deal with the various problems it is their mission to solve. In the language of that foremost of economic and social thinkers, Ira Stewart, ‘The way out of the wage system is through higher wages, resultant only from shorter hours’.”<sup>10)</sup>

As he said at the Firemen’s Conventions at Washington, D. C., in 1904, “The labor movement is founded on the bed-rock of opposition to wrong. It is based on the aspiration for right. I want you and all of us, to coöperate with the best that is within us to make the labor movement strong and powerful and influential, and that it may grow day by day. And the day that comes shall see for it a better and brighter path than the day that has gone, and open up a new vista of light and life and happiness for the home and fireside and the wife and the children, and that the burdens of labor shall be lighter and man shall be a brother to his fellow-man.”<sup>11)</sup>

From the above statements of purpose and point of view it is evident that the A. F. of L. relies principally upon economic activity for the attainment of its ends. The Federa-

<sup>9)</sup> GOMPERS, *The American Labor Movement*, page 20.

<sup>10)</sup> Annual report to A. F. of L. convention 1890. (In *Labor and the Common Welfare*.)

<sup>11)</sup> Talk to firemen, 1904. (In *Labor and the Common Welfare*.)

tion frankly emphasizes this position, and those who have commented on the organization argue that this is the case. As M. R. Carroll says in "Labor and Politics," the A. F. of L. progress is one "combining non-partisan activity with the economic method of collective bargaining."<sup>12)</sup>

The same writer goes on to say, "Dependence upon economic activity is due partly to the Federation's belief that the adult male worker does not want charity, does not want to be the object of humanitarianism and pity. He is a free man and wants to retain and develop his freedom. It is due partly to the wish to engage in economic activities without the interference of the law."<sup>13)</sup>

In its dependence on economic activity the Federation accepts the present economic order and refuses to approve the dream of radical reformers. Carroll agrees with the other critics that "Socialism is anathema to the leaders of the Federation."<sup>14)</sup> As Budish and Soule assert, "the old unionism" (meaning the A. F. of L.) "having no quarrel with the present social order, has no compelling reason to undertake independent political action. In politics as in industry it seeks merely to trade for immediate concessions, which may be wrested by promises and threats from either of the two old parties."<sup>15)</sup> The same writer says of the A. F. of L. unions, "The old unionism concentrates all its efforts on here and now, on the problems of today, on those proximate difficulties which vary from trade of trade and from industry to industry. 'It works along the line of least resistance', and this line is different according to circumstances. Not merely has it no vision, no announced program, no dream of its own, but it wishes none; more than that, it believes every vision or dream or comprehensive program a serious danger, which may divert the attention of the workers from the struggle for immediate betterment."<sup>16)</sup>

As R. F. Hoxie writes in his excellent work on "Trade Unionism in the United States", "The truth is that the outlook and ideals of this dominant type of unionism are those very largely of a business organization. Its successful leaders are, essentially, business men and its unions are organ-

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<sup>12)</sup> CARROLL, M. R., *Labor and Politics*, page 8; 1923.

<sup>13)</sup> CARROLL, M. R., *Labor and Politics*, page 64; 1923.

<sup>14)</sup> CARROLL, *op. cit.*, page 177.

<sup>15)</sup> BUDISH AND SOULE, *The New Unionism*, page 203; 1920.

<sup>16)</sup> BUDISH AND SOULE, *The New Unionism*, page 159; 1920.

ized primarily to do business with employers—to bargain for the sale of the product which it controls. It has found, however, by long and general experience, that if it is to do business with the average employer or with associations of employers, it must be prepared to fight. But throughout its history this fighting has been predominantly conducted with the purpose of forcing employers to recognize it as a business or bargaining entity. Its position and experience have been very much like that of a new and rising business concern attempting to force its way into a field already occupied by old established organizations in control of the market. Like the new business concern, it has had to fight to obtain a foothold. But to argue from this that it is organized for war is a complete *non sequitur*.”<sup>17)</sup>

Hoxie writes, “the causes of its success may be explained largely by its supremely adaptable and catholic character, made possible by its non-theoretical, opportunistic, trial methods and ideals, and its loose organization.”<sup>18)</sup> Hoxie attributes the failure of the A. F. of L. to do more for labor than it has, and to organize a larger number of laborers, to the fact that it has adopted the trial methods of the present economic order, and has consequently tended to develop the same kind of selfish monopolistic group feeling that is developed among the owners of industry. He contends that the A. F. of L. has failed to develop a “practical idealism,” but admits at the same time that it is a question whether that kind of idealism can be developed under present circumstances where the improvement of conditions of life do so greatly depend on the labor supply.<sup>19)</sup>

#### POLICIES, METHODS OF DEALING WITH MEMBERS AND OTHERS

In its “Manuel of Common Procedure for the Use of Local and Federal Unions,” the A. F. of L. presents the initiatory obligation required of members of the Federation. The initiatory obligation is as follows:

“You, of your own free will, do sincerely promise to abide by the laws of this union?

“You also promise to bear true allegiance to the American Federation of Labor, and never consent to subordinate its interests to those of any labor organization of which you may now or hereafter be a member?”

<sup>17)</sup> HOXIE, R. F., *Trade Unions in the United States*, page 336; 1920.

<sup>18)</sup> HOXIE, R. F., *Trade Unions in the United States*, page 132; 1920.

<sup>19)</sup> HOXIE, R. F., *Trade Unions in the United States*, page 133; 1920.

“You also promise to keep inviolate the traditional principles of the American laborer, namely: To be respectful in word and action to every woman; to be considerate to the widow and orphan, the weak and defenseless; and never to discriminate against fellow-worker on account of creed, color or nationality. To defend freedom of thought, whether expressed by tongue or pen, with all power at your command?”

“You further agree to educate yourself and fellow-workers in the history of the labor movement, and to defend, to the best of your ability, the trades-union principle which guards its autonomy and which regards Capital as the product of the past labor of all toilers of the human race; and that wages can never be regarded as the full equivalent for labor performed, and that it is the mission of the trade unions in the present and the future to protect the wage-earners against oppression, and to fully secure the toilers’ disenthralment from every species of injustice?”

“You further promise that you will never knowingly wrong a brother, or see him wronged, if in your power to prevent it, and that you will endeavor to subordinate every selfish impulse to the task of elevating the material, intellectual and moral condition of the entire laboring class?”

“You further solemnly promise on your word of honor that you will, whenever and wherever possible, purchase only strictly union made goods, and that you will use your best endeavors to influence others to do the same, and never become faithless to your obligation?”

“To all this you pledge your honor to observe, and keep as long as life remains, or until you may be absolved from the obligation by the A. F. of L.”<sup>20)</sup>

The reading of this obligation is preceded, however, by the following remarks of the President of the union which the member is joining. “An obligation of fidelity is required; but let me assure you that in this obligation there is nothing contrary to your civil or religious duties. With this understanding are you willing to take an obligation which binds you upon your honor as a man to keep the same as long as life remains?”<sup>21)</sup>

When asked for an interpretation of this promise that the member makes, Mr. Frank Morrison, Secretary of the A. F. of L. wrote the following: “In reply will say that this obli-

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<sup>20)</sup> *Manual of Common Procedure*, page 5; 1927.

<sup>21)</sup> *Manual of Common Procedure*, page 4; 1927.

gation contains no element of an oath. The entire proceeding is based on Man's promise to join in a common cause. The word 'promise' runs all through the initiation, and no reference is made to an oath. You will note on page four, the President announces to the candidate: 'An obligation of fidelity is required; but in this obligation there is nothing contrary to your civil or religious duties. With this understanding are you willing to take an obligation which binds you upon your honor as a man to keep the same as long as life remains?'

"It is true that the candidate is asked to bind himself for life. Trade Unionists constantly strive to inculcate the need for workers to remain true to the lofty ideals of their organization, as indicated on page 5 of the Manual. The trade union movement does not imply that ours is a passing effort or that men can abandon these ideals as suit their fancy or their material interests. If they elect otherwise, they are free men."<sup>22)</sup>

According to Mr. Morrison this initiatory promise does not, therefore, as has sometimes been contended,<sup>23)</sup> deprive a man of his Christian liberty to act according to his own convictions.

Although the leaders of the A. F. of L. are, for example, strongly opposed to socialism, many of the members of the trade union are socialists.

It is not the accepted practice of the Federation to use coercion in the control of members of the trade unions. Nor is coercion used in the control of the affiliated unions. Gompers, in testimony given to the United States Commission on Industrial Relations, said: "The affiliated organizations are held together by moral obligation, a spirit of group patriotism, a spirit of mutual assistance.

"There are no coercive methods used by the A. F. of L. to prevent the withdrawal or secession of any affiliated organization. The Western Federation of Miners, for instance, withdrew from the A. F. of L. about 1896. There were many efforts and many suggestions made to induce individual unions belonging to the Western Federation of Miners to join the A. F. of L. as local unions. Not only were these efforts discouraged, but the proposal was repudiated.

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<sup>22)</sup> Letter of Mr. Frank Morrison, Sept. 30, 1929.

<sup>23)</sup> *Unionism and Unions*, by a committee of Chr. Ref. Church; 1902.

“Similarly, no coercion is used in regard to national organizations which are not affiliated with the the A. F. of L. We feel that it is the duty of every wage-worker to belong to the union of his trade or calling; and that is equally the moral duty of every national or international organization of bona fide workmen to belong to the A. F. of L. But coercive methods are never employed.”<sup>24)</sup>

The method by means of which the A. F. of L. seeks to pursue its ends is that of collective bargaining. “Collective bargaining means,” according to Gompers, “that the organized employees of a trade or industry, through representatives of their own choosing, shall deal with the employer or employers in the making of wage scales and working conditions. Collective bargaining is the only practical proposal for adjusting relations between the management and the workers in a business way, assuring a fair deal to both sides.”<sup>25)</sup>

With collective bargaining as its outstanding method of gaining its ends, the A. F. of L. is willing to resort to voluntary arbitration. It believes that when a deadlock has been reached, “the good sense as well as the necessity of both employers and employees and the public conscience may be relied upon to find an honorable means of conciliation, mediation, and arbitration voluntarily entered into, and any opinion expressed or award made should be accepted voluntarily by the parties in interest.”<sup>26)</sup> It is, however, bitterly opposed to compulsory arbitration. “Compulsion, by any process, and particularly by the powers of government, is repugnant to the principle as well as to the policy of arbitration. If organized labor should fail to appreciate the danger involved in the proposed schemes of so-called compulsory arbitration, and consent to the enactment of a law providing for its enforcement, there would be introduced the denial of the right of the workers to strike in defense of their interests and the enforcement by the Government of specific and personal service and labor. In other words, under a law based upon compulsory arbitration, if an award were made against labor, no matter how unfair or unjust, and brought about by any means, no mat-

<sup>24)</sup> GOMPERS, S., *The American Labor Movement*, page 8.

<sup>25)</sup> GOMPERS, S., *Collective Bargaining*, page 3; 1920.

<sup>26)</sup> GOMPERS, S., *The American Labor Movement*, page 39.

ter how questionable, we would be compelled to work or to suffer the stated penalty, which might be either mulcting in damages or going to jail, not one scintilla of distinction, not one jot removed from salvery.”<sup>27)</sup>

After having given utterance to the above, Gompers said, “It is our aim to avoid strikes, but I trust that the day will never come when the workers of our country will have so far lost their manhood and independence as to surrender their right to strike or refuse to strike.” In its propaganda literature the Federation declares, “The Federation is opposed to strike, as are all peaceful institutions; but when struck, it will strike back as best it can. Strikes are barbaric in the act, but highly moral and absolutely necessary when forced by aggressive employers who would curtail the liberties of a portion of the community for the advancement of another, who refuse fair and open conference and adopt arrogance and forceful measures.”<sup>28)</sup>

President Wm. Green, in his address before the Harvard Union, gave the present attitude of the Federation toward strikes. “During the formative period organized labor relied almost solely upon its economic strength, while today it places immeasurable value upon the convincing power of logic, facts and the righteousness of its cause. More and more organized labor is coming to believe that its best interests are promoted through concord rather than by conflict. It prefers the conference table to the strike field.”<sup>29)</sup>

The Federation desires to be fair to capital just as it wishes to obtain justice for labor. Green says, “The outstanding and primary factors in all industrial enterprises are capital and labor. Both are essential in industry, and each is dependent upon the other.”<sup>30)</sup> And Samuel Gompers once said, “I would award to employers the same freedom of action, the same right to individuality that I desire for the workers.”<sup>31)</sup>

The A. F. of L. believes that the laborers have the right to be represented in conferences with their employers, particularly in the matter of wages and working conditions. It wishes, however, to go much farther than this. It is willing

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27) GOMPERS, S., *The American Federation of Labor*, pages 10-11; page 7; Pamphlet; 1900.

28) *The American Federation of Labor*. A propaganda sheet.

29) GREEN, W., Address before the Harvard Union; 1925; “Modern Trade Unionism,” page 10.

30) GREEN, W., Address before the Harvard Union; 1925; page 4.

31) GOMPERS, S., *The American Federation of Labor*, page 40.

by means of active coöperation to do all in its power to increase the production of the business of the employer. In the Railroad Union-Management Coöperation, the Unions affiliated with the A. F. of L. coöperate with the management of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad in joint conferences in obtaining: (1) Job analysis and standardization; (2) Better tools and equipment; (3) Proper storage, care, and delivery of material; (4) Economical use of supplies and material; (5) Proper balancing of forces and work in shops; (6) Conducting and scheduling of work through shops; (7) Improving quality of work; (8) Conditions of shops and shop grounds, especially in respect to heating, lighting, ventilation, safety, etc.; (9) Securing new business for the railroad; (10) Securing new work for the shops; (11) Stabilization of the employment. The venture has been a remarkable success as attested to by both the Railroad officials and those of the Union.<sup>32)</sup>

While willing to coöperate, as Unions with employers, the Trade Unions affiliated with the A. F. of L. are very open in their hostility toward the so-called Company union organized under the direction of the employers and limited to the employees of a single company. Such organization, the unions contend, is paternalistic, limited in scope, and therefore as weak as it is limited, and in the main autocratic rather than democratic as is that of the union.<sup>33)</sup>

The A. F. of L., it must be remembered, stands for and works for more than higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions. It advocates sick benefits, life insurance, and death benefits. It urges its members to learn more of the union movement not only, but to educate themselves as fully as they can. It contends that the unions first started the movement for free public schools; that they have always backed factory legislation in behalf of children, and safety legislation in behalf of all employees; that the unions have helped to reduce waste in industry; that they have stood for good citizenship and, as such, that they stand for coöperation between all wage earners, between unions and management, and between unions and other organizations in the town or city for community betterment. Its annual reports are evidence of the fact that it is

<sup>32)</sup> JEWELL, B. M., AND BEYER, O. S., *Union Management Coöperation*; 1925.

<sup>33)</sup> GREEN, WM., *The Superiority of Trade Unions over Company Unions*; 1925.

constantly watching what is going on in our State and National legislatures, and that it is giving its support to measures that should be adopted in the interest of the general welfare.

The trade-unionists have little sympathy with the non-unionist. They say, "You may believe what you like, but when the general interests of labor are at stake we deny your moral right to act with the opponents of labor."<sup>34)</sup> "This is the moral ground upon which trade unionism rests its case: If the aims and objects of organized labor are in accord with the best interests of society, if its efforts are commendable in trying to raise and maintain the standard of living, to obtain more wages and shorter hours, better sanitation and safeguards in factories, less overwork for women and children, more mutual helpfulness among workers,—then the non-unionist has no moral right to act as a counteracting agent to these efforts."<sup>35)</sup>

Gompers once wrote, "Non-unionists who reap the rewards of union effort, without contributing a dollar or risking the loss of a day, are parasites. They are reaping a benefit from the union spirit, while they themselves are debasing genuine manhood. Having rights, they are too cowardly to stand up for them."<sup>36)</sup>

From the evidence presented it does not appear that the objects of the A. F. of L. can be condemned as anti-christian. As a matter of fact most of its aims are highly commendable from an economic and from a moral point of view.

Whether or not the conduct of its members measures up to the professions of the Federation is a fair question. In an address before the 1928 convention Father J. W. Maguire, after praising the organization for what it is trying to accomplish, closed with the remarks: "On the other hand—and I say this with sorrow—sometimes you do have men who betray the high and holy cause of labor by dishonesty, by graft, by crime, by corruption, yes, even by murder. And from time to time the argument is thrown into my teeth by those who know that I have always tried to uphold and defend the great labor movement, that there are men who are criminals even in official positions in the ranks

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<sup>34)</sup> FOSTER, F. K., *Has the Non-Unionist the Moral Right to Work How, When, and Where He Pleases?*; 1923; page 6.

<sup>35)</sup> *Op. cit.*, page 7.

<sup>36)</sup> *American Federationist*, June, 1910.

of labor, and I have to hang my head in shame and acknowledge it.

"If it is not impertinent on the part of an outsider to come in here and use the privilege of this floor for this purpose, might I suggest that the finest thing that the American Federation of Labor can do, allowing, of course, for the various laws and regulations of your different organizations, is to rigidly and immediately exclude from the ranks of organized labor all those who have been guilty of any kind of dishonesty, of grafting, of corruption, of racketeering, or of crime. You would remove at once one of the strongest and most powerful arguments that is sometimes used against you."<sup>37)</sup>

Since these remarks were left unchallenged it may be inferred that in the A. F. of L. practice and principle do not keep as close company as they should, perhaps not any more so than they would in the case of any other organization of similar size and purpose. The address of the speaker was, however, well received by the convention, and President Green thanked him for his interest in and support of the A. F. of L. cause.

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On the basis of this material your Committee has come to the conclusion that from a purely theoretical point of view the American Federation of Labor can be regarded as a neutral organization in the sense in which that term is accepted by the Synod of 1928. (See the first paragraph of this Report.)

Your Committee also had in mind the investigation of the actual operations of some of the labor unions to which our people belong, but found the task so enormous that it had to be abandoned. In a city in which most of our Christian Reformed working people are members of a union, there are no less than thirty-five local carpenters' unions, and hundreds of other "locals". It is self-evident that it was impossible for your Committee to observe the actual practices of all these organizations in this one city, not to speak of investigating the local unions in the dozen or more other cities in which our people reside and affiliate with the

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<sup>37)</sup> Proceedings of the Forty-eighth Annual Convention of the A. F. of L., 1928, page 246.

unions. It should be added that the practices of the unions differ from place to place, and even in the same city.

The investigation of the local unions, even if it had been possible, was not part of our commission as received from the Synod of 1928.

Respectfully submitted,

Y. P. De Jong,

Henry J. Ryskamp,

William B. Erdmans,

E. J. Tanis.

## REPORT XVII

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, which will convene at Grand Rapids on June 11, 1930, and following days.*

ESTEEMED FATHERS AND BRETHREN :—

**T**HE Committee of Pre-advice of the Synod of 1928 in re labor organizations, incorporated in its report the following recommendations: "In verband met het slot van conclusie A, III, 2, dringt de Commissie er bij de Synode op aan, om eene Commissie te benoemen, die de vraag indenkt wat zou kunnen worden gedaan tot herleving van christelijke organisaties op maatschappelijk gebied. Zij meent dat hiermede ook genoegzame aandacht zou zijn gewijd aan het schrijven van den kerkeraad van Ripon." That part of the Committee's report to which this recommendation refers, reads as follows: "De Kerk, die altijd de roeping heeft om het licht van Gods Woord te laten vallen op elk levensgebied, hare leden te waarschuwen tegen het kwade, de rechte beginselen aan te wijzen, en tot handhaving daarvan aan te sporen, verzuime die taak niet voor het terrein van den arbeid, en dringe er bij hare leden op aan, dat zij hunne kracht vooral zoeken in Christelijke organisaties." The Synod of 1928 acted in harmony with the advice of its Committee, and appointed a Committee to consider what could be done for the resuscitation of distinctly Christian organizations in the sphere of industry and of social life in general. This Committee now begs to submit the following report to your honorable body.

In connection with Article 30 of our Church Order, and with the fact that the advice to appoint a Committee was occasioned by a statement in the report of the Committee of Pre-advice respecting the duty of the Church to give guidance to its members in every sphere of life, and conse-

giving offense; and which, therefore, a Christian can join without qualms of conscience or moral scruples. It is also possible, however, that Christian laborers join the existing unions without any compunction, even when these do violate the fundamental principles of justice, and if not in their constitutions, yet in their official propaganda, in their course of action, and in the language employed in their meetings, go contrary to Christian principles. They may seek to still the voice of conscience by pleading their inability to follow any other course, by saying that they do not attend the meetings and thereby avoid the necessity of listening to the offensive language employed, and by disclaiming any responsibility for the union's acts of injustice and violence. And it is especially in connection with such cases that the question arises, whether the Church can do anything to promote the organization of Christian labor organizations.

Now it is perfectly clear that the Church can accomplish whatever it may be able to do in this sphere, only with the means entrusted to her, that is, by the faithful preaching of the Word and the judicious exercise of church discipline. But by these means she may accomplish a great deal. She can best promote the organization of Christian labor organizations and of other Christian organizations in the social sphere of life:

- (1) By preaching unceasingly and uncompromisingly the biblical principle of the Christian's separation from the world. The Bible clearly teaches that believers constitute a peculiar people, and that as a holy people they are in duty bound to separate themselves from all that is unholy, and should not be unequally yoked with unbelievers, but should avoid all social entanglements that might in any way compromise their Christian character and profession;
- (2) By setting forth clearly and unequivocally the anti-Christian spirit of the Marxian Socialism with its glorification of class hatred, class struggle, and class ethics, and its principle that might makes right; and by placing over against this the great fundamental biblical principles of justice as they apply in the industrial world and ought to be maintained by all those who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ;

- (3) By calling particular attention to the principle of corporate responsibility, clearly taught in the Word of God (Acts 2:23, 36; 3:13-15; 2 Cor. 6:14-17; Eph. 5:11; 1 Tim. 5:22; 2 John 11; Rev. 18:4), affirmed by an enlightened Christian conscience, and recognized by sociologists; and by giving a discriminating answer to the question whether and in how far one can relieve himself of this responsibility by protesting;
- (4) By exercising disciples in the spirit of love, but nevertheless with a firm hand whenever her members become guilty of propagating un-Christian principles in the world of labor, assume an unbrotherly attitude towards their fellow-Christians, take part in acts of violence, trample upon the fundamental principles of justice, or refuse to break with organizations that are avowedly anti-Christian in character, or reveal throughout an anti-Christian spirit in their activities.

By working along such lines as these with fidelity, the Church will naturally train the conscience of the laboring-men in her midst, and will make them feel more keenly than they do at present the need of distinctly Christian organizations in the industrial world. If the need is keenly felt and the necessity clearly seen, the laborers themselves will find ways and means for the establishment of such organizations. And when they do show that they feel within them the urge to organize on a strictly Christian basis, that they are willing to take up the struggle in separate organizations for the sake of their King, and that they are ready for the sacrifices which it may entail,—then the Church will undoubtedly find many ways in which it can encourage them in their laudable efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

Your Committee,

L. Berkhof,  
Clarence Bouma,  
J. M. Vande Kieft,  
A. Rodenhuis,  
J. Van Vels.

## REPORT XVIII

### RAPPORT DER COMMISSIE INZAKE KERKHULP

*Aan de Eerwaarde Synode die staat gehouden te worden den 11den Juni, 1930, en volgende dagen, te Grand Rapids, Mich.*

EERWAARDE EN HOOGGEACHTE BROEDERS:—

Uwe Commissie komt tot Uwe Eerwaarde vergadering met het volgende rapport, uit hetwelk wij kunnen zien dat Kerkhulp nog steeds eene behoefte is in het midden onzer kerken, en vooral met het oog op zwakke gemeenten, die in de verschillende deelen van dit groote land tot openbaring komen.

De aanvraag om steun uit dit fonds gaat bestendig voort. Nog zijn wij als Commissie eenige duizenden noodig om aan de behoeften te kunnen voldoen.

Vroeg de Commissie de vorige Synode om eene speciale collecte te mogen vragen met het oog op de groote behoefte, door omstandigheden kon eerst aan het begin van het jaar 1930 daaraan worden voldaan. Want ongeveer den tijd der vorige Synode werd een speciale collecte gevraagd voor de gemeente Wyoming Park, aangezien haar kerkgebouw door brand verwoest werd; en eer dat nog de laatste gaven aan Wyoming Park waren opgezonden, kon uwe Commissie niet anders dan ook een collecte vragen voor de Eerste Gemeente van Sioux Center.

Hoewel de Commissie gaarne nog wat gewacht had met de bijzondere collecte te vragen, kon zij echter niet langer uitstellen met het oog op de groote behoefte van een paar gemeenten in Canada, die zoo spoedig mogelijk moesten geholpen worden, en andere gemeenten, die evenzeer verlangend naar de ondersteuning beloofd uitzien.

Voor Wyoming Park werd ontvangen door uwe Commissie \$9,060.27, en voor de Eerste Gemeente van Sioux Center \$4,830.22.

De vraag is meermalen bij uwe Commissie gerezen of het wel billijk is dat zulke gemeenten, die ongeveer een honderd huisgezinnen tellen, deze gaven geschonken worden

zonder terugbetaling, terwijl al de andere gemeenten, die pas tot openbaring komen, een twintigste deel jaarlijks terug moeten betalen. Uwe Commissie is van oordeel dat zulke gemeenten gelijk gesteld moesten worden met alle andere gemeenten. Wanneer het noodzakelijk wordt om de gaven te schenken, is daarvoor provisie gemaakt in het Reglement voor Kerkhulp.

Aan bijdragen voor Kerkhulp werd van de gemeenten ontvangen:

ONTVANGSTEN VOOR 1928		ONTVANGSTEN VOOR 1929	
Van de gemeenten.....	\$6,154.65	Van de gemeenten.....	\$4,942.16
Terugbetaald .....	3,558.62	Terugbetaald .....	3,573.74
Aan Kas Jan., 1928.....	190.43	Aan Kas Jan., 1929.....	280.65
<b>Te zamen.....</b>	<b>\$9,903.70</b>	<b>Te zamen.....</b>	<b>\$8,796.55</b>
UITGAVEN VOOR 1928		UITGAVEN VOOR 1929	
Aan de gemeenten.....	\$9,500.00	Aan de gemeenten.....	\$7,400.00
Andere Uitgaven .....	123.05	Andere Uitgaven .....	140.94
Aan Kas, Dec. 31, 1928..	280.05	Colton .....	24.89
		Aan Kas Dec. 31, 1929..	1,230.72

Bij eene vergelijking met eenige jaren terug vermeerderen de gaven voor dit Fonds niet. Wij geven, vooral voor de Kerkeraden, eene vergelijking van de laatste vier Synodale jaren opdat, kan het zijn, meer dan één Classis overtuigd moge worden dat er zeer zeker door sommige gemeenten niet aan de verplichting voldaan wordt.

CLASSIS	1922-23	1924-25	1926-27	1928-29
Classis California .....	\$.....	\$ 128.90	\$ 181.34	\$ 231.63
Classis G. R. East.....	1,922.23	1,536.55	1,174.45	985.10
Classis G. R. West.....	1,054.56	1,606.51	1,224.45	1,490.49
Classis Hackensack .....	115.43	321.29	162.78	187.79
Classis Holland .....	1,180.11	1,689.19	1,038.88	838.67
Classis Hudson .....	1,107.70	1,192.84	1,038.88	838.67
Classis Illinois .....	3,113.45	2,720.78	1,600.44	1,628.17
Classis Muskegon .....	1,168.85	1,058.23	1,330.26	1,085.49
Classis Oange City.....	564.79	1,132.77	551.26	975.61
Classis Ostfriesland .....	282.95	198.18	296.00	208.24
Classis Pacific .....	676.61	643.87	746.46	888.25
Classis Pella .....	1,264.27	1,239.49	495.87	451.32
Classis Sioux Center.....	686.68	368.26	505.22	544.34
Classis Wisconsin .....		276.95	455.97	440.57
Classis Zeeland .....	604.28	918.25	501.91	463.04

Wij zien hieruit dat sommige Classes veel minder collecteren. Wij bemerken dat zoodra een speciale collecte gevraagd wordt voor een gemeente als Wyoming Park en Sioux Cntr, de gewone bijdragen afvallen. Er wordt dan niet gecollecteerd voor het Fonds in het algemeen. Het is niet noodig sommige Classes bepaald aan te wijzen; het bovenstaande lijst nagaande, spreekt voor zichzelf.

De gemeenten die de beide laatste jaren ondersteuning ontvingen zijn:

1928		1929	
East Leonard St.....	\$ 500.00	Atwood .....	\$ 600.00
Neerlandia .....	2,000.00	Neerlandia .....	1,500.00
Belflower .....	1,000.00	Alameda .....	3,000.00
Decatur .....	2,000.00	Rock Rapids .....	800.00
Vancouver .....	2,000.00	Decatur .....	1,500.00
Godwin Heights .....	2,000.00		

De som die bij de gemeenten berust is \$88,948.57, verdeeld onder de volgende gemeenten:

Arlene .....	\$ 177.00	Ada .....	\$ 150.00
Sullivan .....	300.00	Conrad .....	1,984.70
Atwood .....	594.00	Plover .....	2,130.00
Rudyard .....	463.00	Muskegon Heights .....	470.00
Tracy .....	98.36	Sanborn .....	205.00
Alamosa .....	750.00	Winnipeg .....	365.00
Oskaloosa .....	275.31	Hancock .....	578.00
East Palmyra .....	162.64	Hanford .....	193.99
Noordeloos .....	125.00	Sibley .....	1,627.35
Shepherd .....	3,160.00	Worthington .....	1,665.00
Vona .....	155.00	Ocheyedan .....	1,040.79
Cramersburg .....	770.00	Lark .....	500.00
Neerlandia .....	3,995.00	West Branch .....	1,660.00
Los Angeles .....	2,320.00	Hope Church .....	1,175.00
Holland, Minn. ....	1,150.00	Ogilvie .....	722.00
North Blendon .....	200.00	Austinville .....	600.00
Detroit .....	575.00	Columbus .....	900.00
Fremont II .....	200.00	Hawarden .....	450.00
Dutton .....	450.00	Estelline .....	1,897.25
Chandler .....	1,187.32	Bigelow .....	2,000.00
Purewater .....	380.00	Hills .....	225.00
Wyoming Park .....	1,250.00	Roseland IV .....	300.00
Lansing .....	1,000.00	Holland Center .....	760.00
Brooten .....	1,235.00	McBain .....	1,372.00
Crookston .....	850.00	Holland, Iowa .....	1,700.00
Lynden II .....	700.00	Waupun .....	1,300.00
Portland .....	902.50	Mountain Lake .....	475.00

Coopersville .....	1,425.00	East Martin .....	1,423.00
Diamond Springs .....	500.00	Aetna .....	775.00
Bradley .....	850.00	Sulton .....	1,120.00
Rock Rapids .....	2,650.00	Burnips .....	500.00
Bauer .....	800.00	Goshen .....	750.00
Sioux Falls .....	1,660.00	East Muskegon .....	3,800.00
East Leonard St. ....	4,025.00	Ellsworth .....	1,700.00
Godwin Heights .....	2,900.00	Lee Street .....	1,800.00
Alameda .....	3,000.00	Vancouver .....	1,900.00
Bellflower .....	1,000.00	Decatur .....	3,500.00
Chatham .....	3,000.00		

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Met eerbied onderworpen,

Uwe Commissie,

Henry J. Heynen.

D. De Beer,

J. Manni.

## REPORT XIX

### REPORT OF THE DELEGATE TO THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, to be held at  
Grand Rapids, Michigan, June, 1930.*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—

**T**HE Synod of 1928 renewed its recommendation of the work of the American Bible Society. As a result, the Christian Reformed Churches have contributed to this worthy cause during the past two years. Statistics obtained from the Society show that \$2,051.13 was received in 1928, and \$2,066.95 in 1929. Some of the churches have done very well; others have done nothing for the work of Bible translation and distribution. A list which we have received from the Society shows that approximately two-thirds of our churches gave nothing for this Synodically-approved cause since the former meeting of Synod.

As the delegate of our Church to the Society we have attended both the annual meetings of the Advisory Council. We believe the work of the Society is most efficiently carried on, and that the moneys are carefully expended. It may be of interest to you to know what the Advisory Council Meeting of December 4th, 1929, decided. Here follow its impressions and commendations:

- (1) "We are impressed anew with the magnitude of the trust administered by the American Bible Society. Its task, with similar organizations in other lands, is to distribute the Word of God in the languages of the people to the ends of the earth. Over 11,000,000 volumes of the Scriptures, in 182 languages, were issued last year by the American Bible Society alone. This great work is done within a budget of a little more than \$1,200,000.00. It is a great work.

- (2) We are impressed anew with the needs of the work. Doors of opportunity are opened of which we cannot avail ourselves. The budget must be cut to the income of the Society.
- (3) We are impressed again with the tardiness of the churches to support this work as it deserves. One-fourth of the income of the Society must come from the churches in order to sustain the budget, yet many denominations recognize the Society in an inadequate way. We call on our several congregations to give this cause its rightful place.
- (4) We are impressed with the fitness of the several officers of the Society for their tasks. Their coöperation and efficiency not only made the task of the Advisory Council a pleasure, but we are convinced that the administration of the Society's work is in competent hands.
- (5) As the Word of God is the organ of the divine Spirit's operation, we call upon all Christian people to observe the nineteen hundredth anniversary of the advent of the Holy Spirit by a new and larger use of this Word in the home, the school, and the Church."

Your delegate recommends that the American Bible Society be again placed on the list of approved causes, and we as a denomination give this work our hearty support.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN BEEBE.

## REPORT XX

### PATERSON HEBREW MISSION

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church to be held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, June, 1930.*

ESTEEMED FATHERS AND BRETHREN:—

Since the Synod of 1928 met in regular session in Holland, Michigan, the work of the Paterson Hebrew Mission has been continued. The personnel has remained the same, and the members of the Board—brethren from the two Eastern Classes—faithfully perform the duties to which they are called.

The Board meets the first Monday of every month to transact such business as comes before it, and to devise ways and means to encourage the Jews to attend the several meetings of the Mission. At these monthly gatherings the Superintendent, Cand. H. H. Schultz, renders the regular reports of the work of visitation, gospel meetings, the dispensary work, and so on.

The work of home visitation among the Hebrew people in Passaic and Paterson is regularly done. Tracts are distributed, gospels and Bibles are left in the homes where they are desired, and the gospel brought to the people with whom our Missionary comes in contact. This is a very important phase of the work.

During the summer months the gospel meetings are held in the open air, near busy intersections of the ghettos. These meetings do not seem to be in vain. Of course, the work is extremely difficult, and often hostility is encountered.

The indoor gospel meetings are held regularly, except when the Jewish Holy Days interfere. Several Jews attend these meetings. Usually an Old Testament prophecy is explained, and the relation shown between it and the fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Often after these meetings the work-

ers are able to discuss the message with the Jews, who always seem ready to debate and argue. Then, too, a Bible hour has been introduced on Sunday evenings for the study of God's Word. Recently the Board engaged four young men from the churches to play musical instruments at the gospel meetings. They have volunteered to help without any remuneration. The instruments are the property of the Mission, and have been purchased for this purpose.

The Sewing Class has been discontinued, inasmuch as there were more Gentile children in attendance than Jewish children. In place of this an Esther Club has been started, open only to Jewish children. The meetings are held weekly, and several children attend. The Scriptures are studied with the children and then, to encourage attendance, sewing lessons are given by the ladies in charge of these meetings.

The Superintendent gives an evening every week to Jews who desire to learn the English language. A few Jews regularly make use of this Night School, and at the same time brother Schultz has an opportunity to bring the message of salvation to them.

The Dispensary usually has a large attendance. Dr. Walter L. Dunning kindly gives his services free of charge, and the Board greatly appreciates the gratuitous services he renders in behalf of the Mission. He is a Christian physician, and is respected by all with whom he comes in contact. Each dispensary patient is required to be present when the gospel message is presented, and this address is usually listened to with interest, and is well received.

Thus the work of the Mission has been continued during the past two years. The command, "to the Jew first," has been heeded, and in the hope that also the seed sown may bear rich fruit unto everlasting life. Our staff of workers have labored; the work has been difficult, and often discouraging. But God's promise stands: "So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the things whereto I send it."

We are also in need of the financial support of the Synod. We request that we be allowed the sum of \$6,000.00 annually. The last two years we received the sum of \$5,000.00, but

then we had a surplus on hand, which has since been used. The above mentioned sum is needed to cover the following:

Salaries .....	\$4,460.00
Coal .....	300.00
Light .....	100.00
Drugs .....	300.00
Sundries .....	300.00
Incidentals .....	540.00
<hr/>	
Total.....	\$6,000.00

Brethren, we ask you all to remember the Hebrew Mission, as well as all other Missions and benevolent causes, in your prayers. The work among the old Covenant people is difficult, and for us seemingly fruitless, but it is God's command: to the Jew as well as to the Gentile.

Humbly submitted,  
The Paterson Hebrew Mission Board,  
(Signed) Henry Van Ostenbridge, Clerk.

## REPORT XXI

### REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RADIO PREACHING

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:—

Your Committee received from the Synod the following mandate:

“De Synode besluite de zaak van de radio prediking in handen te stellen van een Commissie bestaande uit drie personen om op de volgende Synode te rapporteeren” (zie Acta Synodi 1928, Art. 27, pagina 17).

Your Committee consists of five members instead of three.

A. Your Committee recommends that Synod make radio preaching denominational. Grounds:

- (1) Today there is in America a great need for positive Christian preaching;
- (2) We have, by the grace of God, received from our fathers a great heritage. Ours is a positive message, and it is our duty to spread it;
- (3) Today we have:
  - a) An ever-growing modernistic-humanistic group;
  - b) A more or less emotional and superficial evangelistic group;
  - c) A large group of middle-of-the-road men.

The radio reaches millions, and to bring our message to the masses in the best and most efficient way we can think of, would be a worth-while missionary work.

- (4) We have men who can do this if given time;
- (5) We have a great responsibility. Much shall be asked of those to whom much is given. It is our duty to propagate, to spread, to preach and teach our Reformed conception of biblical truth as much as is in us.

B. Your Committee respectfully recommends to Synod the following plan of action:

- (1) That Synod appoint a permanent Radio Committee and invest it with power to act;
  - a) It would be impracticable to offer at this time definite plans as to time, place, personnel of speakers, etc., because all these things depend on conditions and circumstances;
  - b) A Committee with power to act could plan and operate according to needs, and as opportunities arise.
- (2) That Synod give this Committee the right to ask free-will offerings from the churches.

One initial collection in all the churches would establish a basic fund.

It would be the task of this Committee to organize groups of young people in our churches who would interest themselves in raising funds for radio preaching.

It is the opinion of your Committee that there will be no difficulty in procuring the necessary funds. Classes Grand Rapids East and West raised the sum of approximately \$2,200 in 1929 for radio preaching, and when a denominational Radio Committee has the entire denomination as a field to raise funds from, it is the opinion of your Committee that the estimated expenditure of some \$5,000 or \$6,000 per year can be met.

- (3) Your Committee recommends that all efforts be concentrated on preaching, and that the radio service be limited to thirty minutes.

For the elimination of music, both vocal and instrumental, from these radio services, your Committee offers the following grounds:

- a) Professional music is rather expensive, and often does not coincide with the motive and the spirit of these services;
- b) It is the experience that inferior and amateurish music often has detracted from the preaching service. But this matter, perhaps, could also be left to the discretion of the Committee.

- (4) Your Committee further recommends that a contract for broadcasting our message be made with one of the central radio stations in Chicago, Illinois. Broadcasting from that city would benefit the largest part of our own denomination as well as the general radio audience;
- (5) That our denominational radio preaching services be held once a week during the months of October, November, December, January, February, March, April, and May. That time, place, personnel of speakers, etc., be arranged by the Committee as suggested above.

Ground: The above mentioned months constitute the radio season.

- (6) Your Committee realizes that it would be an ideal arrangement if one man could be found who would equip himself for the delivery of these radio sermons. In order to carry on this work most effectively it would require considerable study and preparation on the part of the preacher, both as to the content and as to the form of the sermons. Such a man should be well-posted on current thought and literature. However, your Committee recommends that the matter of radio preachers be referred to the Committee. Looked at from the most ideal point of view, this is a work of magnitude and considerable cost. We would not attain to the highest ideal at once, but by development and progress, by application and devotion to the task, we could reach a goal which would constitute a worth-while effort to glorify our God.

H. Verduin,  
I. Westra,  
J. M. Ghysels,  
L. Trap,  
Wm. B. Eerdmans.

REPORT XXII.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF MISSIONS ON HIS  
DEPUTATION WORK TO OUR CHRISTIAN RE-  
FORMED MISSION FIELD IN CHINA

(Report Submitted to the Executive Committee of Our  
Board of Missions on April 16, 1930)

DEAR BRETHREN :—

**M**Y last report to you mentioned the sad duties I performed at Rehoboth, New Mexico, when on my way to the Orient, as ordered by our Board. I officiated at the funeral of our dear brother Mierop, and held a conference with the ZUNI force. October third I left San Francisco on the Dollar Line per "Pres. Johnson," after having spent a couple of days in addressing our churches at Ripon and Alameda, Calif. After an uneventful but pleasant voyage, via Honolulu and Japan, I reached Shanghai October 28, 1929, and was delighted to have Rev. J. C. De Korne meet me at the dock. He had been delegated by the JUKAO force to do this, and after a somewhat exciting trip (exciting for me as a tenderfoot in China), we reached Jukao October 30, being heartily welcomed by our entire force there.

The first thing I did was to take a thorough survey of Jukao, this being the center of our China work. You know it is situated in the province of Kiangsu, north of Shanghai. It took us 24 hours by boat and "Ford" to reach it. We found Jukao an interesting town, surrounded by a wall, dating, I was told, from about 1555, and still in a good state of preservation. It is made of bricks, enforced by mud, that is, the facing is of brick. The wall, several feet high, I suppose twenty or so, is broad enough on the top to allow, if paved, two autos to pass. These walls are provided with four gates, with diagonal approaches to them, and in front of these gates are compact groups of houses, constituting



by oars and poles (the smaller ones), or, as is the case of the larger ones and the rule, drawn by Chinese women as well as men, who toil along the towpaths found alongside the canals.

Some few boats use sails. We saw one steam launch. No horses are employed to pull the boats. We saw no horses at all on our field, which is a fertile level country, on which all kinds of vegetables are raised, besides some wheat, and some cotton, and a wealth of tuberous plants. Each of the farmers seems to own a hog or two, animals used as scavengers of the place. A kind of small buffaloes are employed to draw the plows and primitive wagons, but the bulk of the things transported from place to place, in so far as boats are not in use, is conveyed on wheelbarrows, or carried in baskets and buckets suspended to shoulder-yokes, so common in the Netherlands. There is some cotton carding and spinning going on in the district. This is mostly home industry, but a few factories have been started. Some weaving is done; much incense is manufactured in and around Jukao, and some silver-smithing and comb-making is carried on, as well as rope-making.

Perhaps we ought to add here that besides Jukao, with its 50,000 or more people, the Shien contains not less than 22 towns each, with a population of 5,000 or more, and scores of smaller villages and hamlets. A vast field indeed, not to mention the other Shien, in which work has been started, the one which has Chingchiang as center—see below.

But, to return to Jukao, the town has many narrow streets, one rather straight, running from the East gate to the West gate, and one with a large angle, running from the South to the North gate. Besides these there is a regular network of streets, or rather of alleys, some of them following the aforesaid canals running through the town. None of them is wide enough for an auto. Some rickshas are used. Otherwise mostly wheelbarrows for people as well as for goods.

There is some gardening carried on, but nearly the whole town is crowded with residences, usually but one story high, homes made of brick, or adobe, or wattled bamboo, all with tile-roofing, these homes forming a regular labyrinth of al-

leys and courts. The larger homes, we ought to say, are all surrounding one or more courts. The store fronts on the business streets are wide open. At night shutters are placed before them. The homes of the gentry and rich people are encircled by rather high walls, provided with gates.

We were told that at one time Jukao numbered 24 temples. Some of them have recently, after the Revolution at any rate, been turned into barracks and schools, while the nunneries (at one time numbering 13), have been abolished, or practically so. But even so, Jukao Shien is said to support nearly 2500 priests and 400 nuns, while some 600 temples are still open, and thousands of wayside shrines are used for incense burning, etc. The old Taoist City temple is being transformed into a home for the Jukao Yamen (government). But there must be at least a dozen temples left in Jukao, most of these Buddhist, some of these complexes of buildings. A few rooms in them are filled with coffins, purchased in advance, often as gifts to one's parents, and awaiting burial use, while considerable of the space in these temples is used for the manufacture of paper houses, to be burnt at funerals, while the hands of the monks who make these temples are also dextrous in folding silver paper into the shape of little boats, to be burned as "spirit money" to provide the departed with finances, as they think in the spirit world.

We visited the prison of Jukao and tried to arrange for our workers to carry on some gospel work within its somber walls and unsanitary rooms, suggesting harsh treatment of the poor inmates. But Jukao has more than temples and a forbidding looking prison and soldier barracks and police stations. Its people must of old have been of a philanthropic turn of mind, because since a long time Jukao harbors and Old People's Home, where room and bed are given gratis to poor people. But they must beg for their food. Jukao also has a Loan Bureau, a Storage Place for rice to be distributed to the poor, while during the winter-time kitchens are opened for that class of people. It also has a Workhouse for the poor, weaving cloth, making sheet iron, and manufacturing reed furniture. There is likewise a Children's Home, supported by taxes and contributions, and a school for Orphans.

In recent years the cause of education has been stressed considerably. There are twenty-eight primary schools, with about 160 teachers in the Shien, and three middle schools, two of these in Jukao. Yet evidently not all of the children of the Shien nor of the city are attending these schools. At least the people of Jukao which, as we said, is supposed to number at least 50,000, has, I was told, only about 2,000 children in school, besides 400 in the two middle schools. Formerly some of these teachers seemed to be receptive to Christianity. At present many appear to be skeptical as to the claims of religion or positively antagonistic.

The Roman Catholics have a church building and a school in the city, near the East gate. It does not seem that it is a very thriving plant. Besides this the Southern Baptists have a chapel at the South gate. They began work in 1909. Their communicant membership is said to be 40, of whom 18 are men and 22 women. Street chapel preaching takes place two times a week, and the attendance is from 30 to 60. There are some scattered members of this church in neighboring towns, as well as in the surrounding country.

At the present time our own Mission force uses only one little chapel near the North gate. It does not make a very fine impression, and it is entirely too small for the Sunday School, which is taught by Miss Liu and Miss Kalsbeek, and numbers at least 125 pupils. When I was there a good many wanted to come in but were unable to find a seat. I was told this was quite a common occurrence. That was the reason I advised, in view of the splendid results of this Sunday School work, reaching many families, that we should obtain a more commodious room for our women to work in, and of course for other meetings to be held.

Now in the heart of the city we have quite a piece of property, called the Er-ya-lane property, originally designed for hospital grounds. It has a school building on it, erected some years ago. For the time being, while I was there and for some time in the past, this has been occupied by soldiers. Since then, however, it has been vacated again, and a little home has been built on it for Miss Liu and Miss Kalsbeek. I am strongly in favor of having a community

house erected in the middle of JUKAO, and I think, preferably on this centrally located property, which is 270 feet long and 100 feet wide. The price paid for it is \$7,000 Mex. Entrance to it is through a narrow street, but by buying just a little piece of property we can get access to the main street and I advised the men to try and obtain that parcel of ground.

I felt sorry that two other chapels had been given up; the one opposite the old city temple, which temple, as I stated, is now being converted into the city hall.

Besides this Er-ya-lane property, in another part of the city, but on the main street, we have a hospital property. This looked to be in a delapidated condition. It was occupied by one of our evangelists. I presume by this time Dr. Huizenga has been setting it in order, to serve its former purpose. If my information on the subject is reliable, this hospital property has, or rather had, 25 beds and a number of rooms used for laboratories, office, reception room, and quarters for native helpers. Part of the building is two stories high. In front the property is 50x50 feet, and the back 75 feet wide. A courtway runs through the house. It seems to me this place will serve for a long time for hospital purposes. One reason for this view is that there is another hospital in operation in Jukao, opened in 1922, and having 30 beds. There are six doctors connected with it, all native Chinese, and five nurses. Its cost of operation is \$14,000 Mex., of which the city pays \$5,000. The rest is paid by patients. The building costs originally \$14,000. It evidently is not large enough for its purpose. Christian services are not specially objected to, but the doctor to whom I spoke on the subject, said that the intelligence of his patients was too low, so that it was best not to have any religious exercises. Of course, this may have been just a subterfuge, which the Chinese are very clever in making.

Besides the two properties in the city, which I already named, there is the house of Dr. Huizenga which, at the time of my visit, was occupied by Rev. and Mrs. Selles, and I presume now also by Dr. Huizenga. It is also used as a school-room, where Rev. and Mrs. Selles and Miss Bode are taught each day. Their teacher, speaking the Jukao dia-

lect, teaches five hours daily. During the morning one hour is devoted to the learning of new words, one hour to conversation, and one hour to writing. In the afternoon the characters already learned are reviewed, and some time is spent in asking questions and reading characters. The last half hour is devoted to the reading of a text-book used in Nanking. As I understand it, the regular teaching of this nature is to last two years, but in view of our missionaries having learned several things in the Nanking school, they expect to cover the two years' course in one year and a half. It is thought that after two years of study our workers can begin gospel work, although they are to continue the language study, since the entire course is supposed to cover five years.

All the homes of our workers, except Dr. Huizenga's and the little home now being erected for the women workers, already alluded to, are located outside the city wall, some distance from the East gate, near the aforesaid city wall. We have two plots of ground there. The first piece of property, about five minutes' walk from the East gate, is occupied by the homes of Revs. De Korne and H. A. Dykstra. There is ample room in that compound for a smaller home for Rev. and Mrs. Selles, and such has been planned. This plot of ground is about 6 Mows. There are 6 Mows to an acre. I paced it and to the best of my knowledge it is 450x180 feet. The second plot, facing the city moat, is occupied by the homes of Revs. Smit and S. A. Dykstra, and is 240x300 feet. Besides these, back of Rev. Smit's plot is another lot, about 50x100 feet, bought for cemetery purposes. The deed, however, is not yet recorded properly somehow. I wrote Rev. Smit to be sure to see to it that our other deeds meet all the requirements of the ever-changing Chinese property registration regulations.

Both of these plots, occupied by the homes of Revs. De Korne and Smit and the Dykstras, are surrounded by a compound wall. This is a necessity it seems to me, in order to obtain some privacy in a land where there is but little of it, as well as to exclude the smells and bells and yells, for which China is "famous." These two plots are joined by a little winding road between vegetable gardens, here and

there adorned by open manure pits, receptacles found almost everywhere throughout the district in which our missionaries are located. Back of the lot of Rev. Smit is a tennis-ground, which has been paid for by the missionaries out of their own pockets and which is a place where exercise is taken, weather permitting, from 4 to 5 p. m. by the female as well as by the male members of the force. There is room for a vegetable garden on these plots, something very necessary since it is simply impossible to use vegetables raised by Chinese because these, during the growing season, are sprinkled regularly with the contents of the aforesaid manure pits and by the contents of buckets containing solutions of human excrements, brought from the city each morning—for the city is too full of cesspools—said buckets borne on yokes, and endangering the clothes of passersby.

The homes of our missionaries at first sight, I thought to be rather roomy, but since I have seen other missionaries' homes, in China as well as in Java, I have come to the conclusion that they are not too pretentious. What is needed in China is good, airy rooms with a high ceiling. Of course, when it is chilly it is harder to heat them, and the heating process has not yet been solved in a satisfactory way in our missionary homes. But in summer the rooms surely should be as airy and as high as possible. Bear in mind, brethren, something which I did not realize at the time, that the latitude of our mission field, north of Shanghai, is practically the same as of northern Africa. So you can realize that the sun is very hot during the major part of the year. In fact, while I was there during November, planting of all kinds of vegetables was merrily going on. There is only a brief interval during February, it seems, when frost prevents the growing of vegetation. As we already related, the entire countryside of our mission field, up to the sea, as well as from the Yangtse and up north, is one great garden, and the people seem to be fairly prosperous and content. They certainly appear to be an industrious lot.

Considerable trade is going on by means of boats in the numerous canals intersecting and connecting the whole territory. At times, however, the water in these canals is so low that it is a difficult matter to use boats of any depth.

Moreover, as I learned, if we were to get a gasoline motor boat, it would require that a family should live on it right along, because it is impossible to leave a boat unprotected in the canals.

Our Mission now has a Ford sedan, but it is impossible to store that useful vehicle on our mission property. The automobile road from Tungchow to Jukao and northward is found near the South gate, whereas our property is close to the East gate. In order to reach it our folk have to travel along the narrow path through the field from their place to the auto road, which means circumventing the town nearly one quarter of its circumference. This, of course, is not a handy thing, but it is the best that can be done under the circumstances. Perhaps later on another road will be built to our mission property, or at least nearer to it.

My impression of the missionary force is a very favorable one. I found the relationship fraternal and cordial, and that not alone among the men, but also among the women. All of them are devoted to their work, and they are striving each day to obtain points of contact. Every morning the missionaries hold religious meetings with their servants. They have four or five of these, a necessity owing to the strict division of labor obtaining among Chinese servants, and this employment is releasing our men and women to do gospel work, and that at not too much of an expense, while it brings all of these servants under gospel influence. One evening per week they are instructed in our religion, as a class taught by one of our workers, while they regularly attend chapel services.

While I was on the field, six evangelists were on our staff. Recently three others were engaged and one colporteur. This indicates that at present each of our men engaged in gospel work has two or three helpers, with whom they do considerable itinerating, when tracts are distributed. Street preaching is carried on right along. Sunday afternoons or evenings, our workers hold a religious service in English, for the edification of themselves and their families.

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Considerable of my time was spent in visiting the two places which previously were selected for stations for white missionaries. A little later on I will tell more about these places, named in the Acts of Synod.

Among the things which I did while on our field was to visit our Consul-General at Nanking. We were informed by one of his force that it would not be wise at present to engage in buying property in new stations for missionary purposes, as it would be apt to arouse the attention of the powers that be and of the populace too much, so that anti-foreign mission sentiment might result. So we talked the matter over, after my return from Nanking, and we decided it was best to have the territory around Jukao developed first of all instead of branching out to the distant cities. A division of that work is as follows:

Rev. J. C. De Korne in charge of the work at Jukao city, and as sub-districts Ting-Yen and Suang-tien;

Rev. H. A. Dykstra the Pai-p'u sub-district; (south of Jukao);

Rev. S. A. Dykstra, Hai-an (north of Jukao) and environs;

Rev. A. H. Smit, Shi-chuang, Tungch'en, Ch'aho and Matang, towns along the canal leading toward the sea.

Miss Kalsbeek and Miss Liu labor not alone in Jukao City, but also in country sections around that town, as much as they can reach on bicycles, with which they, as well as the male workers are equipped.

I am very much in favor of developing the territory around Jukao first of all. Then it is not necessary to buy property in those places because our missionaries can work them from Jukao. Nor will it necessitate all at once to put up all kinds of new buildings. And, moreover, we can see during the interval when that neighboring territory is developed, how things turn out in war-ridden China.

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Now as to the survey of the field above alluded to. You will remember that our missionaries proposed that work should be opened by one of them in one town called **Chu'chkiang**, eastward, close to the Yellow Sea. We reached that town in a houseboat. We found there was a Roman

Catholic church (a cathedral) and school there, and this property looked quite prosperous. There are several temples in the town, one of them having been renovated and provided with a library. The other temples are filled with statues of Buddha, and with idols, covered with dust and dirt and cobwebs, the accumulation of ages. There are quite a number of monks and some nuns in the temples of Chu-chkiang. Chu-chkiang is an important town, and it looks to me when conditions warrant it, that it would be a good place to have a white missionary and a woman worker settled there. There is ample opportunity to do all kinds of gospel work in this place and vicinity. The town is some 50 miles away from Jukao. The territory between these two cities can be worked from these two stations, that is, from out of Jukao as well as from out of Chu'chkiang, traveling along the canal connecting these two places.

North of Chu-chkiang and the places along the canal I have just named, are several other towns, notably Feng-li, Panch-a, Lipao, and Haian. We were unable, however, to visit them, except the last named one, Haian, which is directly north of Jukao, and connected with an auto road, and where an encouraging beginning has been made by the Rev. S. A. Dykstra. There is a hired chapel at Haian and there are a number of believers there. An evangelist is working in this place. He occupies a room back of the little chapel. At the side of the chapel and facing the street, is a little room in which Reverend Dykstra spends the week-ends. He usually goes there from time to time, and always on Friday, staying till Sunday evening, seeing inquirers and helping in the work of the Sunday School, as well as in the preaching. This Sunday School now has two teachers and an average attendance of 15.

The second main station which had been selected by the brethren as another post of a white worker and a woman missionary, is southwest of Jukao. It is the town of Ching-kiang. It was to that town that we went from a river port on a wheelbarrow, an unforgettable midnight ride, or practically so, since it was 11 p. m. when we arrived at the city gate, and we had difficulty at that to be allowed to enter in. We traversed the town the next day, and found the South-

ern Baptists had a chapel near one of the gates. They began work there in 1914 and have an enrollment of 38 baptized Christians and about 20 inquirers. It is a native evangelist who takes care of this mission station. So far as I could discover there is little work carried on in the main part of the town. Ching-kiang numbers from 30,000 to 40,000 inhabitants. At least so we were told. The evangelist of the Southern Baptist Church explained that the number attending Christians was not as large at present as before the trouble of 1927 began. He holds Sunday morning services for the Christians of the church, and the evening meeting is open to all. Only about 20 people seem to attend. As I already stated, this work is near one of the city gates, so that there would be no difficulty in having a station of our workers opened in the main part of the city. The town is fairly religious. It numbers at least four temples, two of them Buddhistic, one Confucionist, and one Taoist temple, which harbors the city-god of Ching-kiang, who is supposed to lord it over the gods of the other districts. The town itself, it is claimed, is very old, dating from the Sung dynasty, about 800 A. D. It looks to me that when conditions warrant it, a white missionary and a woman worker should be placed there also.

Some time was spent in conversing with our Mission force on a **Questionnaire** to be filled in each month, covering the work in detail. The one we adopted is already in use. Several hours were devoted to discussing the so-called **Korean-plan**. It was my desire, for one thing, to have this discussed also with the Reformed Church mission force in the Amoy district, so that we could profit from their experience. The Korean plan, as you know, means essentially that the native Christians must foot the bills of missionary effort from the start, except the salaries of the foreign workers. No chapels are to be opened. As soon as an inquirer becomes a professing Christian he is supposed to open his home for other inquirers, and when there are enough of those they are to rent a room for public worship, etc. Ultimately they are to build a church building at their own expense, perhaps with some aid from the China Mission force. A plan was made to have a kind of a "Church Help Fund"

established for this purpose. And if these Christians want to have more time spent among them by the native evangelist, they are to pay for this pro rata.

Now, this may sound acceptable. In Korea, where there is in some places at least, a kind of mass movement toward Christianity, it may work well. In fact it has worked well. But in China, so far, the converts are but few in any given place, and many of them are poor. Moreover, their homes are often not large enough to furnish room for inquirers. Or—one or more of the inmates of the home, not being a Christian, may object to religious services. Besides this, the evangelist must have a home rented for him anyway. So my idea is, that at first at least, in renting such a home, one should be obtained which has room for a gathering for inquirers, be it called a chapel or not. This would facilitate and expedite matters far more from the very beginning of the opening of the work. This has also been our policy so far, and it has worked well. The brethren of the Amoy force also thought that the Korean plan would not work as well in China as in the land after which it has been named. It is too radical, and may retard the work too much at the start, or embarrass some of the converts.

Of course, this does not mean that we should not work in that direction, as soon as a foothold has been obtained. But to get a start, it seems to me, the old method is more efficient and practicable in China.

I should add here that the experience of the Amoy force has taught the wisdom of stressing evangelistic effort rather than school work. Just now educational work is greatly hampered. The government, if it recognizes, or, as it is called "registers" the schools, insists of late on three things: first, that no religious instruction be part of the curriculum; second, that no propaganda for Christianity be made on the schoolgrounds; third, fifteen minutes each Monday morning be devoted to a reverencing, some call it a worshiping, of Sun Yat Sen and the reading of his will. Of course, orthodox churches refuse to submit, as this would cut the very heart out of the educational missionary work. Sorry to say, not even all of those connected with orthodox churches are of one mind on the subject.

Medical work is less hindered although as we understand it, the National Government insists on having a Chinese doctor to be the head of a recognized hospital. These restricting regulations are not enforced equally at all places. Nor is the Nanking Government really able to enforce all of its proclamations. But we are convinced that in China the work of education and to some extent of healing, is apt to be hampered more or less, perhaps increasingly. What a difference in this respect in the Dutch East Indies, in which the government liberally aids these two branches of missionary effort.

The conditions in China show the wisdom of the policy of our Board to stress evangelistic rather than educational or medical work. And I am glad to be able to state that our Mission force heartily endorses this policy and is therefore engaging, as already stated, an ever-increasing number of native evangelists. Sorry to say, however, these are not all of equal ability or devotion, and there have been some unpleasant bickerings among some of them as to salary arrangements. The evangelists serving us now are trained by other bodies, the Presbyterians, North and South, and are said to be orthodox. There is mutual consultation and recognition with the heads of these two denominations in China. It would be desirable, however, if in course of events we can train our own men from the bottom up, if it pleases the Lord to give us gifted and reliable converts. For the time being our ordained men do considerable of the work of training evangelists and colporteurs, and guiding them in selecting sermon topics and working out the sermons, something which is also diligently attended to by the Reformed missionaries in Java, and we suppose, also in the Amoy field.

But a small training school of our men appears to me to be desirable and preferable in the long run. A moment ago I used the phrase: "train our own men." But I want to be specific to add: our own women workers too. I have been greatly impressed by the need of well-trained women workers—Bible women. The Amoy Mission, R. C. A., employs twenty-four of them and finds their work indispensable. That is the case still more on our field, since many

doors to Chinese homes can be unlocked only, it seems, by our women workers, through contacts reached through Sunday School scholars and others. It was through Miss Kalsbeek and Miss Liu that I was able to get a look into a high class and a middle class home in Jukao. The work in Ting-yen and Suang-tien, too, has really been ushered in, as I understand, by contacts made by our women workers. Very recently Miss Bode, assisted by the wife of one of our evangelists, has been able to start a Sunday School class at the West gate of Jukao. Absence of Bible women has been recognized as one of the weak spots, by the way, of the work of the Reformed Churches on Java, and steps are being taken to strengthen this branch of missionary activity.

In conclusion, brethren, I have been impressed more than ever with the unsatisfactory, soul-deluding, degrading "religions" of the Orient, and the need of the pure religion of our Lord. I have returned from the mission fields with more enthusiasm for the work than I ever had before, convinced as never previous, that only Christ's gospel, applied by God's Spirit, is a power of God unto salvation.

I also appreciate our missionaries in China more than ever, and feel their need of our intercessions and whole-hearted support. Again—I have seen what a vast field is ours in China, a field with some two millions of souls and but few workers. I have also felt that the Spirit of God changes the Chinese, just as well as Caucasians. You should see the lit-up, smiling faces of some of the converts I met at Jukao and vicinity, and at Amoy, where, at Kolungsu, Rev. De Korne and I preached to perhaps 1,000 Chinese converts—a wonderful inspiration!

At Chang-Chow, near Amoy, we addressed a Classis of a fine-looking group of Chinese pastors and elders, also an inspiration, even as such was the case on the island of Java where I addressed various groups of men won from Mohammedanism and one Chinese congregation. I should add here that I also gave a talk to the men and women in training in the Seminary of the Mission on the island of Kolungsu, opposite Amoy. Altogether, it was a wonderful trip I made, through the mercies of God, who kept me alive and well on all the voyage. But I also owe gratitude

to the Board which voted to have me take the trip. Again, I feel grateful to Mr. G. L. Daane, the Hekman family, and our Board-member, Mr. J. Kos, who helped me so handsomely to pay the expenses of the journey. Last, but not least, I thank President Mulder and his accomplished wife for taking care so efficiently of so much of the work.

Respectfully yours,

HENRY BEETS, Secretary.

## REPORT XXIII

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR REFORMED LITERATURE

*To the Synod of 1930.*

ESTEEMED FATHERS AND BRETHREN :—

Your Committee has the honor to report as follows:

After trying for a number of years to procure books dealing with the subjects previously reported to and approved by Synod, your Committee regrets very much to inform you that our attempts have not met with success. Several men have been approached and have agreed to write books on subjects assigned by the Committee, but as yet no manuscripts have been submitted, and the Committee has not been able to publish any books.

This experience has been very disappointing, and we have seriously considered the advisability of requesting Synod to discharge the Committee and assign the funds collected to some other cause. However, in view of the fact that literature of the type desired by Synod is really needed, we have found no liberty to make that request, and have decided to ask Synod's permission to continue. Probably the method employed in the past was not the right one, and another method may produce better results. In the past we have appointed men to write books, and our experience has convinced us of the truth of the statement that, as a rule, books are not made to order.

The Committee now requests Synod to be allowed:

- A. To publish an announcement in our official Church papers to the effect that correspondence is invited from those who have in their possession or who are willing to prepare manuscripts on subjects taken from the list previously approved by Synod. Such manuscripts—if accepted by the Committee—to be published;

- B. To offer a prize for writing a book on the subject: "What Our Church Stands for"—especially in the light of present-day problems;
- C. To procure for publication in pamphlet form, for the purpose of propaganda, expositions on burning questions of the day, such as Udenominalism, Law and Grace, Pre-millennialism, Church Union, Covenant of Grace, Infant Baptism, etc.

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**Statement of Fund for Reformed Literature**

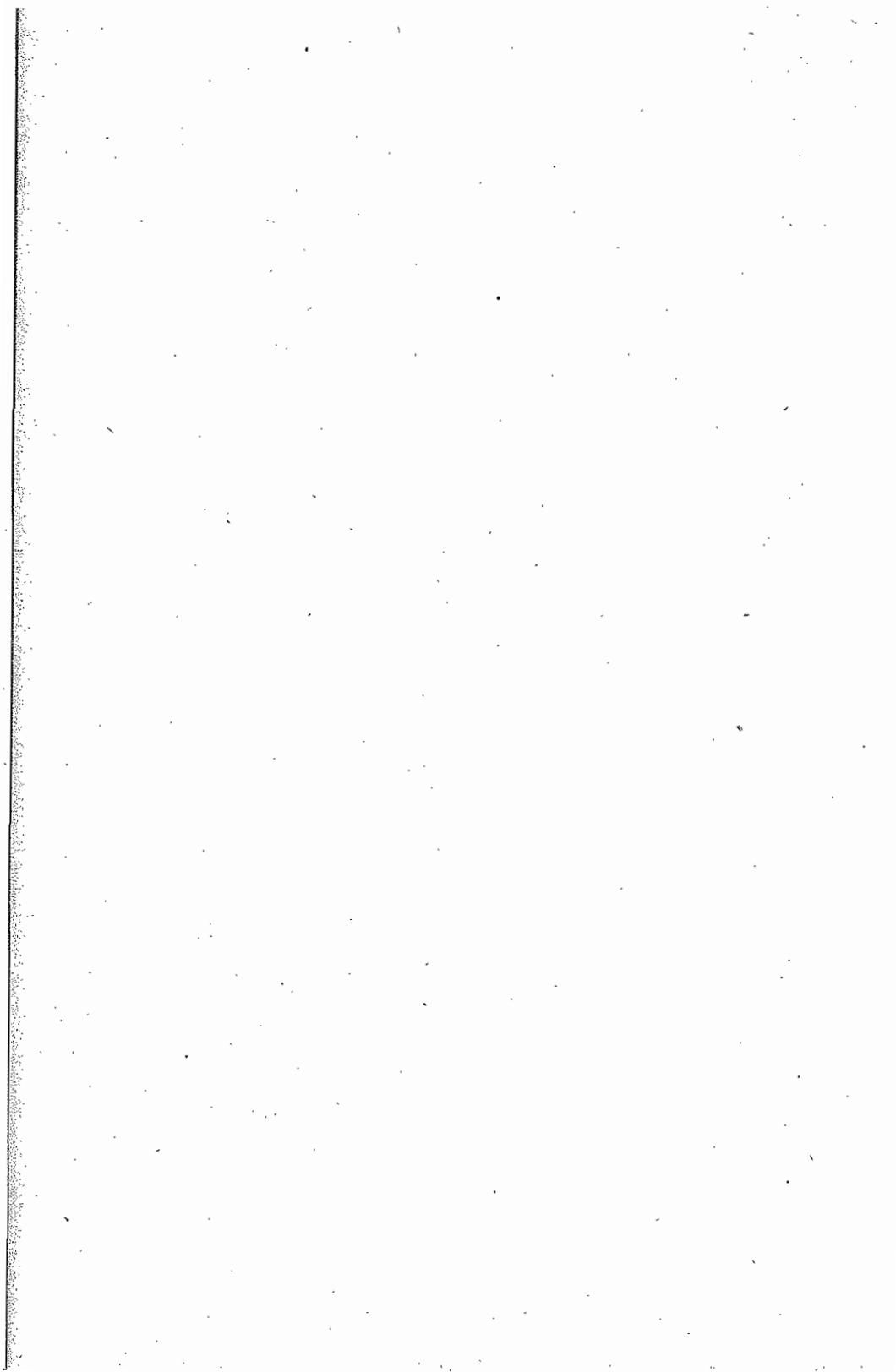
Receipts .....	\$2,639.51
Disbursements .....	30.00
	<hr/>
Balance, March 24, 1930.....	\$2,609.51

The books of the Treasurer have been audited and found correct by Messrs. J. B. Hulst and H. J. Voss.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee,

L. Berkhof,  
J. Hekman,  
J. B. Hulst,  
W. H. Jellema,  
R. Postma,  
B. H. Spalink,  
J. M. Vande Kieft.



## P R E F A C E

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**T**HE Synod of 1926, p. 174 of its "Acta," decided that hereafter its Agenda should be published in two parts, the first, to contain the Reports, to appear as soon as possible after January 1st of the synodical year; the second part, to contain the Overtures to be laid before Synod, to be published on or before May 1st of that same year. The present volume is PART II. It contains some belated reports, the names of the classical delegates, the Overtures to be laid before the Synod, and a list of the appeals or protests addressed to Synod.

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## V O O R W O O R D

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**D**IT boek is het tweede stuk der Agenda, voor de e. k. Synode. Het bevat nagekomen rapporten die volgens opdracht der vorige synodale vergadering werden samengesteld, de namen der synodale deputaten, en voorts de Instructies der verschillende Classes benevens opgave van protesten, enz.

*Henry Beets, S. C.*

737 Madison Ave., S. E.,  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

## DEPUTATI SYNODI

### Primi

### Secundi

#### Classis, California

J. De Jonge.....Leeraar	N. De Vries.....Leeraar
H. J. De Vries.....L	M. M. Schans.....L
W. Groen .....L	J. J. Werkman.....L
J. Bolt .....Ouderling	H. Fokens .....Ouderling
H. H. Bosch.....O	J. Schans .....O
H. Elders.....O	K. Winters .....O

#### Classis Grand Rapids Oost

W. P. Van Wyk.....Leeraar	M. Van Dyke.....Leeraar
H. J. Kuiper.....L	J. Bruinooge .....L
J. L. Heeres.....I	E. B. Pekelder.....L
B. J. Bennink.....Ouderling	M. Berghage .....Ouderling
Rev. W. P. De Jonge.....O	S. M. Vertregt.....O
M. Hoffius .....O	A. H. Swets.....O

#### Classis Grand Rapids West

Dr. Y. P. De Jong.....Leeraar	J. K. Van Baalen.....Leeraar
H. Baker .....L	G. J. Haan.....L
J. De Haan, Jr.....L	J. J. Steigenga.....L
J. Hekman.....Ouderling	Dr. G. Broodman.....Ouderling
Rev. J. Manni.....O	Prof. J. G. Vanden Bosch.....O
H. Denkema .....O	C. Luyendyk .....O

#### Classis Hackensack

J. Beebe .....Leeraar	D. De Beer, (Sec. Gen.)..Leeraar
G. Goris .....L	.....L
J. J. Hiemenga.....L	.....L
A. De Vries.....Ouderling	H. B. Ackerman.....Ouderling
J. Rienstra .....O	J. L. Westervelt.....O
M. Kalle .....O	M. Bolier .....O

#### Classis Holland

L. Veltkamp .....Leeraar	J. O. Bouwsma.....Leeraar
L. Van Laar.....L	H. Bouma .....L
D. Zwier .....L	P. D. Van Vliet.....L
J. Maas .....Ouderling	A. Tien .....Ouderling
A. Peters .....O	J. A. Brouwer.....O
Dr. G. Heyns.....O	K. Diepenhorst .....O

### Classis Hudson

C. Spoelhof .....	Leeraar	E. F. J. Van Halsema.....	Leeraar
Dr. R. L. Haan.....	L	J. L. Koert .....	L
J. Holwerda .....	L	J. L. Van Tielen.....	L
M. J. Broekhuizen.....	Ouderling	C. Maat .....	Ouderling
D. Heuseveldt .....	O	P. De Leeuw.....	O
D. Van Hoff.....	O	R. Spoelhof .....	O

### Classis Illinois

Dr. H. Kuiper.....	Leeraar	E. J. Tanis.....	Leeraar
G. Hoeksema .....	L	J. J. Weersing.....	L
C. De Leeuw .....	L	Leonard Trap .....	L
A. De Boer.....	Ouderling	C. Leenhouts .....	Ouderling
J. Hofstra, Sr.....	L	.....	O
J. G. De Vries.....	O	H. Bulthuis .....	O

### Classis Muskegon

L. J. Lamberts.....	Leeraar	R. Karsen .....	Leeraar
S. Eldersveld .....	L	C. Maring .....	L
B. H. Einink.....	L	J. Breuker .....	L
J. H. Bolt.....	Ouderling	H. Bolt .....	Ouderling
J. J. Bolt.....	O	S. P. Vander Ark.....	O
S. Ellens .....	O	C. J. Beukema.....	O

### Classis Orange City

G. W. Hylkema.....	Leeraar	P. Bloem .....	Leeraar
A. B. Voss.....	L	J. R. Van Dyke.....	L
G. A. Lyzenga.....	L	G. André.....	L
B. Den Ouden.....	Ouderling	J. De Kok.....	Ouderling
W. Geurink .....	O	A. Lantinga .....	O
K. De Vries.....	O	E. Mulder .....	O

### Classis Ostfriesland

A. Koning .....	Leeraar	G. Westenberg .....	Leeraar
D. H. Plesscher.....	L	E. Boeve .....	L
K. Tebben .....	L	A. D. Folkema.....	L
B. Eckhoff .....	Ouderling	H. Kruse .....	Ouderling
B. Abbas .....	O	F. Santjer .....	O
Prof. H. J. Kuiper.....	O	J. Davis .....	O

### Classis Pacific

A. Guikema .....	Leeraar	A. H. Brat.....	Leeraar
M. Borduin .....	L	J. Homan .....	L
P. Hoekstra .....	L	H. Vander Woude.....	L
A. J. Brink.....	Ouderling	Geo. Boersema .....	Ouderling
M. Dykshoorn .....	O	J. Slotemaker .....	O
J. H. Zylstra.....	O	A. Postma .....	O

### Classis Pella

H. Blystra .....	Leeraar	K. Bergsma .....	Leeraar
I. Couwenhoven .....	L	P. De Koekkoek .....	L
G. Zylstra .....	L	W. D. Vander Werp .....	L
George Vander Kooi .....	Ouderling	W. Pars .....	Ouderling
H. Nieuwland .....	O	C. Groenendyk .....	O
D. Sjaardema .....	O	A. Hof .....	O

### Classis Sioux Center

J. Gritter .....	Leeraar	J. M. Dykstra .....	Leeraar
J. C. De Bruyn .....	L	J. Cupido .....	L
A. Wassink .....	L	B. Van Someren .....	L
A. Ten Harmsel .....	Ouderling	A. J. Groen .....	Ouderling
G. Ledeboer .....	O	W. De Boer .....	O
P. Nieveen .....	O	D. Heinsma .....	O

### Classis Wisconsin

W. Borgman .....	Leeraar	N. Jansen .....	Leeraar
R. J. Frens .....	L	J. O. Vos .....	L
J. M. Voortman .....	L	H. Ahuis .....	L
C. Visser .....	Ouderling	G. Bultman .....	Ouderling
A. Buteyn .....	O	D. Westra .....	O
G. W. Te Grootenhuis .....	O	Wm. Katt .....	O

### Classis Zeeland

H. Keegstra .....	Leeraar	W. Kok .....	Leeraar
E. J. Krohne .....	L	A. De Vries .....	L
H. E. Oostendorp .....	L	J. Kolkman .....	L
W. Bareman .....	Ouderling	H. Jonker .....	Ouderling
J. Poest .....	O	A. Broekhuis .....	O
O. Vander Plaats .....	O	N. Rozema .....	O

## VOORARBEID

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**O**P DINSDAGAVOND, 10 Juni, 1930, te acht ure, zoo de Heere wil, *Ure des Gebeds* voor de Synode, in het gebouw der Neland Ave. Chr. Geref. kerk te Grand Rapids, Mich. Voorganger, de President der vorige Synodale Vergadering, Ds. H. Keegstra. Deze opent de Eerw. Synode op Woensdag, 11 Juni, des voormiddags te 10 ure, in de "chapel" van Calvin College, te Grand Rapids. Na gebed en toespraak, roept hij de deputaten op en leidt de verkiezing van den president, vice-president, en scribæ der Synode. De verkozen president aanvaardt zijn taak. Hij leest de **OPENLIJKE VERKLARING** voor, door de Synode met "ja" te beamen. Bepaling van wijze van arbeiden en uren van zitting. De president benoemt eene commissie tot verdeeling der voorstellen en rubrieken van de Agenda onder verschillende commissies, met voordracht van de leden daarvan, en tijdsbepaling van 't rapporteeren. Ook benoemt de praeses eene Comm. voor ontvangst van deputaten van corresponderende kerken, en een voor Rouwbeklag. Alsmede wijst hij aan de rapporteurs voor de bladen.

# AGENDA

## Part II

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## Overtures

### I. THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL AND COLLEGE MATTERS, ETC.

REPORT CURATORIUM; CHICAGO MISSION TRAINING  
SCHOOL (Report III); Geref. BEGINSEL VRIJE  
STUDIE (Report XV).

Classis calls attention of Synod to Art. 40, Acta Synodi 1920, p. 62 ff, in re agreement with Grundy Center, especially that part where Synod promises to maintain the two years' seminary preparatory department at Grundy Center, and which since 1922 has been discontinued.

This action of Synod has worked hardships with our school out West since this support was withheld, and it furthermore has worked detrimentally to our churches, making it difficult to collect the theological assessment in full in every church.

Because of this double ill-working of Synod's decision of 1922, we should like to have Synod reopen the case by appointing a committee to confer with Classis Ostfriesland to, if possible, adjust this matter in an amiable way.

(Classis Ostfriesland.)

De Synode besluite tot opleiding van "zendeling-helpers" aan de School onzer kerken te Grand Rapids. *Gronden:*

- 1) Reeds een groot en steeds toenemend getal "zendeling-helpers" zijn werkzaam op onze verschillende zendingsvelden, die of geen voldoende opleiding konden verkrijgen, of deze moesten verkrijgen aan niet-specifiek Geref. Scholen;
- 2) Onze "zendeling-helpers" hebben behoefte aan voldoende en specifieke opleiding, welke onze School gereed is te geven;

- 3) Onze Kerk geeft in hare School ook voorbereidende opleiding voor anderen dan toekomstige leeraars, terwijl toch de Zending speciaal het werk der Kerk is;
- 4) Met toevoeging van sommige speciale zendings-vakken, hebben wij in onze School reeds een bekwaam en voldoende aantal professoren en leervakken;
- 5) Het actieve zendingswerk van onze kerken in Grand Rapids biedt schoone gelegenheid aan tot practisch werk voor a.s. "zendeling-helpers."

(Classis Illinois.)

De Synode wekke de kerken op de jaarlijksche collecte voor "The National Union of Christian Schools" geregeld op te nemen. *Gronden:*

- a) De Synode van 1926 heeft deze collecte aanbevolen;
- b) De "Union," die de zaak van Christelijk Onderwijs behartigt en bevordert, heeft behoefte aan deze steun;
- c) Volgens het verslag in de "Christian School Magazine" van September, 1929, hebben gedurende dat jaar slechts 83 gemeenten uit de 263 aan dit besluit voldaan, terwijl 180 gemeenten in gebreke bleven.

(Classis Pella.)

Cf. Kroon Petition, p. xxviii.

— o —

## II. MISSION MATTERS

REPORTS CHR. REF. BOARD OF MISSIONS AND GENERAL HOME MISSION COMM. REPORT; KERKHULP (Report XVIII); JEWISH MISSION REPORTS (Report XX et al.); HOBOKEN SEAMEN'S HOME et al; RULES AND REGULATIONS HOME MISSIONS (Report I); STATUS OF MISSIONARIES (Report II); STAMGENOOTEN IN ZUID AMERIKA (Report IX).

De Synode aanvaarde het ontwerp voor een nieuwe orde voor de Inw. Zending, zooals voorgesteld door de Commissie daartoe benoemd op de Synode van 1928 (Acta Synodi, Art. 143, Punt 22). *Gronden:*

- 1) Volgens deze nieuwe orde vervallen de hezwaren, die op de laatste Synode tegen de voorgestelde "Rules and Regulations" werden ingebracht;

## VIII

- 2) Volgens dit plan komt het Inw. Zendingswerk op zui-  
verder basis te staan, terwijl:
  - a) de classicale commissies blijven fungeeren als tot  
hiertoe;
  - b) de district-commissies worden losgelaten; en
  - c) de generale commissie door de Synode wordt be-  
noemd.

(Classis Pacific.)

Classis Pella stelt aan de Synode voor dat de Synode her-  
zie Art. I van de **Regeling van de Inwendige Zending**, vast-  
gesteld in 1910 (Acta Synodi 1910, p. 17), en ge-amendeerd  
in 1912 (Acta 1912, p. 12); en een artikel worde geplaatst  
in de vast te stellen Nieuwe Orde voor de Inw. Zending,  
waarin het recht van roeping en uitzending en regeling der  
arbeid van Missionaire Leeraars wordt toegekend aan Ker-  
keraad, Classis of Synode, waarvan de betrokken zending  
uitgaat en waardoor zij gedreven wordt. *Gronden:*

- 1) In beginsel is dit reeds zoo aangenomen (Acta 1912,  
p. 12; Acta 1920, China Zendel., p. 83);
- 2) Een onzer Classis volgt reeds deze methode (Muske-  
gon);
- 3) Dit van ouds kerkrechterlijk erkend (Rutgers, K. A. I.,  
p. 324);
- 4) De oude methode is meer schijn of vorm dan werke-  
lijkheid;
- 5) Deze regeling is veiliger voor Classis, Gemeenten, en  
zendelingen.

(Classis Pella.)

Classis Pella stelt aan de Synode voor, dat indien het Rap-  
port der Comm. "In re Rules and Regulations for Home  
Missions" aangenomen wordt, de dienstdadigheid van de Classi-  
cale Commissie-leden verlengd wordt tot vier jaren, in  
plaats van drie jaren, met twee-jaarlijksche aftreding beur-  
telings van twee leden en van een lid; hetzelfde ook te gel-  
den voor hun secundi (cf. Agendum, 1930, Part I, Art. 2,  
p. 13). *Gronden:*

- 1) Zoo wordt de diensttijd van de Class. Comm. leden gelijk aan die van de Generale Comm. leden, hetwelk noodig is zal de Generale Comm. alleen bestaan uit leden der respectieve Class. Comm., zooals voorgesteld wordt in Art. 5, p. 14;
- 2) Dit heeft de adhaesie van Prof. Heyns, die bovengenoemd rapport mede onderteekende.

(Classis Pella.)

Synod decide that the "Concept-Regeling tot Pensionering van 'Unordained Workers' op ons Zendingeveld," as found in Acta Synodi 1920, pp. 22 and 23, Art. 25, par. 12, be made to apply also to the Jewish Mission field, with the one exception that "kas der Jodenzending" be substituted for "kas der Board der Heidenzending."

(Classis Illinois.)

Classis petitions Synod that it also consider the Status of Ordained Jewish Missionaries when considering the Status of Home Missionaries. *Reason:* An ordained missionary is to be called for the work at Nathanael Institute.

(Classis Illinois.)

Classis overtures Synod with reference to the Fund for **Church Aid** as follows:

A. That Synod shall express its disapproval of the practice of recommending churches that are in financial difficulties to our people for special offerings. *Reasons:*

- 1) This practice is unjust. In the past well-established churches, temporarily embarrassed, have received large sums which need not be repaid, while small and needy churches that have obtained aid from the Fund for Church Aid by the regular channels, have been required to repay all that they have received;
- 2) While offerings are being received throughout our denomination for individual churches, the Fund for Church Aid does not receive the necessary consideration, and as a result small and needy churches who expect aid from the Fund must wait a year or even longer.

B. That Synod shall rule that in case a church requires immediate aid and is recommended to our people for a special offering, this church shall repay the money received to the Fund for Church Aid in the same manner as is done by churches that have received aid in the regular way.

*Reason:*

In the past churches that were well-established but had suffered some unforeseen disaster, received rather large sums of money as gifts; while small churches, that needed aid to obtain their church properties, could obtain such aid only in the form of a loan. Such procedure is very evidently an unjust one, and recurrence of it ought to be made impossible.

C. That as the method for repayment of sums received from the Fund for Church Aid, Synod shall adopt the following:

- a) Churches that repay all money received from the Fund in five years after the date on which the loan was made, shall receive a discount of 20% of the principal;
- b) Churches that repay all money received from the Fund within 10 years after the date on which the loan was made, shall receive a discount of 10% of the principal;
- c) Churches that repay all the money received from the Fund within fifteen years after the date on which the loan was made, shall receive a discount of 5% of the principal;
- d) Churches that owe any of the money received from the Fund fifteen years after the date on which the loan was made, shall be required to repay the principal entirely. *Reasons:*
  - 1) This method gives equal consideration to all;
  - 2) It encourages the prompt repayment of money borrowed by various churches from the Fund. Such repayment will render the Fund in a position to aid promptly all that are recommended by the Classes. One of the weaknesses of the method now in operation is that loans are held for a very

long time, and the Fund, as a consequence, cannot aid promptly those churches that have been recommended;

- 3) Altho the method proposed by Classis will, because of the discounts, entail some loss for the Fund, this loss should be considered in the light of a gift (and therefore a gain) for the deserving church that has done its utmost to repay the money that was borrowed from the Fund.

D. That Synod shall apply the benefit of discount as outlined above in C also to churches that on January 1, 1931, owe unpaid balances to the Fund for Church Aid, the time being computed from January 1, 1931.

*Reasons:* The same as under C.

(Classis California.)

Aangezien de tegenwoordige wijze van handelen inzake **Kerkhulp**, noch de Comm. Kerkhulp, noch de Kerken bevredigt, verzoekt de Classis Pella de Synode:

- 1) Dat voortaan de collecten welke gevraagd worden van de Kerken voor de gemeenten welke brandschade of anderszins verliezen geleden hebben, dat zoodanige ontvangen gelden langs den weg van de Kas Kerkhulp gaan met de verplichting, dat deze gelden moeten terugbetaald worden, evenals zulks verlangd wordt van hen die gelden ontvangen uit de Kas;

- 2) Dat de Comm. geen hulp verleene of verzoek om speciale collecten aan de Kerken richte, voor de behoeftige gemeente constateere:

a) Hoeveel zij zelf kan doen;

b) Hoeveel zij noodig heeft. *Gronden:*

1. Gemeenten die daarvoor vergunning vragen en verkrijgen om collecten te vragen uit de gemeenten der Kerk, staan niet onder de verplichting deze terug te betalen, hetwelk niet billijk is tegenover gemeenten die direct uit de Kas steun ontvangen, maar onder verplichting staan om deze uit te keeren zoodra daartoe in staat zijnde;
2. Vaak wordt meer steun gegeven dan een gemeente noodig heeft;

3. Daardoor wordt gelegenheid gegeven om meer gemeenten te helpen in het verkrijgen van kerkelijke eigendommen;
4. De belangstelling en het vertrouwen in de Kas zou daardoor toenemen. (Classis Pella.)

De Kerkeraad der Christelijke Gereformeerde Gemeente te Colton, So. Dak., komt nogmaals met een dringend verzoek om door de Synode bij de gemeenten onzer Kerk aanbevolen te worden voor een collecte (de gemeenten van Classis Sioux Center uitgezonderd, daar zij reeds een collecte voor ons opnamen).

Onze *gronden* voor dit verzoek zijn drieërlei:

- 1) Onze gemeente is zelf niet bij machte hare schuld af te betalen;
- 2) De weg, door de Synode van 1928 aangewezen, namelijk, een collecte in Classe Sioux Center, bleek niet voldoende te zijn;
- 3) Den 2den Nov., 1929, is onze bank te Colton gesloten. Het geld in de kassen onzer gemeente, toen in de bank, is daarom thans buiten ons bereik. En een groot gedeelte er van ontvangen wij niet terug. 21 Dec. was onze mortgage due. In de kas voor Schulddelging was een gedeelte van het geld door gemeenten onzer Classis ons gegeven. Ons plan was om dat geld op die "interest-bearing date" af te betalen op onze mortgage. Dat is ons nu echter onmogelijk geworden.

Sommige leden der gemeente hadden ruim \$1,000 tijdelijk in bewaring in de bank, toen de bank gesloten werd; anderen minder. Dus ook het sluiten van deze bank juist op dezen tijd—toen er in onze Schulddelgingskas tamelijk veel tijdelijk in bewaring was—en toen leden der gemeente er tijdelijk geld in bewaring hadden (sommigen hadden juist hun tax betaald, maar hun checks kwamen terug, en zij werden derhalve genoodzaakt hun tax nog eens te betalen), is een niet licht te achten financieele terugslag voor onze gemeente.

U de leiding van des Heeren Geest toebiddende,

(Kerkeraad, Colton, S. D.)

Classis Sioux Center hecht hare adhaesie aan dit verzoek, en voegt er dezen grond aan toe: De Classis kan het recht er niet van inzien dat Wyoming Park wel een collecte werd toegezegd en Colton niet.

Namens Classis Sioux Center,  
John H. Geerlings, S. C.

De Classis verzoekt de Synode om haar de som van \$750.00 toe te staan uit de Algemeene Inwendige Zendingskas, opdat wij Birnamwood's gemeente kunnen bijstaan in het verkrijgen van een leeraar. Indien ons dit niet toegestaan kan worden, zullen wij als Classis het verzoek van Birnamwood tot handopening moeten weigeren.

(Classis Wisconsin.)

Classis expresses its gratitude to Synod for financial help received during 1928-1930.

(Classis California.)

Classis again requests Synod for aid in bearing the classical expenses to the extent of 50 cents per family per classical meeting.

*Reason:* The same reason as given in 1928, when Classis submitted a similar request, holds today. The churches of the Classis of California are widely scattered not only within the State of California, but also in the State of New Mexico. As a result the expenses of meeting, even though Classis meets only twice a year, are very high. Seldom does the assessment for the expenses of a classical meeting fall below \$1.10 per family.

(Classis California.)

Classis requests Synod to grant Classis California aid from the General Home Mission Fund to the extent of \$8,500.00 per year for 1930-1932.

**Explanation:**

The budget adopted by Classis for home mission work is as follows:

Salaries of three Home Missionaries.....	\$ 6,000.00
Auto allowance for three Home Missionaries....	900.00
Rent of two homes.....	1,200.00
Subsidy to Bellflower.....	500.00
Subsidy to Ontario .....	1,500.00
Incidental expenses (telephone, moving, etc.)....	100.00
Total.....	<u>\$10,200.00</u>

#### XIV

Towards the raising of this budget, Classis of California can contribute as follows:

Churches numbering a total of 461 families, assessed at \$3 per family, contribute.....	\$ 1,383.00
Mission Stations contribute.....	317.00
Total.....	\$ 1,700.00

Consequently Classis requests \$8,500.00 in order that the budget may be met.

Synod will observe that Classis requests \$1,000.00 less than in 1928. This is remarkable, since work is being done in two more mission stations than in 1928, and one church is being heavily subsidized to enable it to call a pastor. That a smaller amount of aid is being requested is due to the fact that Classis is growing in numbers and that the mission stations are contributing regularly to the Home Mission Fund of the Classis. Synod may expect that henceforth the amount of financial aid needed by Classis will steadily decrease. Classis hopes to be able soon to bear its own home missionary burden and to impart aid to others.

Due to the blessing of God Classis has succeeded in establishing churches and mission stations in localities most strategically located from the standpoint of the agricultural and industrial development of California. Thus far our people have known this state as a land for invalids and as a winter resort. However, California is at present advancing rapidly as a commercial and industrial state. Consequently California offers in addition to a salubrious climate increasingly better prospects for the business man and for the workingman. Accordingly, to whatever locality in California our people are most apt to go, our Church is prepared to keep in touch with them and to provide a church home for them.

Moreover, Synod should consider, that opposition to the Church of Christ and especially to the principles for which our Church stands is exceedingly bitter in California. Therefore, whatever our Church has begun there must be vigorously prosecuted. Half-measures do not avail. Consequently Classis has aimed to provide every church and every

mission station with the regular services of ordained ministers.

Classis trusts that Synod will grant the request of our Classis as willingly as in 1928. (Classis California.)

De Classis vraagt \$3,500.00 uit de Algemeene Kas der Inwendige Zending. (Classis Sioux Center.)

De Synode houde, bij het vaststellen van het Budget voor de Inwendige Zending, er rekening mede, dat er evenredigheid zij in den aanslag per huisgezin voor iedere Classis. *Gronden:*

- 1) Het is niet billijk, dat door sommige Classes bijna de helft meer per huisgezin moet worden opgebracht dan door andere:
- 2) Volgens het Budget voor 1929 en 1930 worden, behoudens enkele uitzonderingen, de kleinere Classes hooger aangeslagen dan de grootere.

(Classis Pacific.)

The proposed annual Budget for the Seamen's Home (1930-1932) which the Classis would like to see approved by Synod is as follows:

SALARIES:

Superintendent .....	\$2,000.00	
Assistant Superintendent .....	1,560.00	
Janitor and Matron.....	1,560.00	\$ 5,120.00

RUNNING EXPENSES:

Fuel .....	500.00	
Gas and Electricity.....	600.00	
Repairs, Maintenance and Incidentals .....	520.00	1,620.00

INTEREST AND DEBT REDUCTION:

Annual Interest on \$21,000 Mort- gage and Notes.....	1,260.00	
Reduction of Debt.....	2,000.00	3,260.00

To be received thru gifts from Churches, etc. ....		\$10,000.00
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Approximately 44 cents per family annually. (Also see Report XX on Paterson Hebrew Mission.)

(Classes Hudson and Hackensack.)

Classis overtures Synod to alter Art. IV of the By-laws attached to the Articles of Association of the Mission Board of the Christian Reformed Church, to read as follows:

"This Board is composed of one representative of each Classis of the Christian Reformed Church, elected by these Classes and approved by Synod, and three delegates at large, who are or have been Elders, to be elected by Synod out of a nomination of six presented by the Mission Board. The delegates at large shall also serve as members of the Executive Committee." *Grounds:*

- 1) Experience during the past two years has proved the value of having such men, who have training and judgment of business men, on the Board and Executive Committee;
- 2) It seems like a slight cast upon these men, and upon the office of the Elders as well, to give them only an advisory vote, as the Synod of 1928 did. They should have a deciding vote in all questions coming before the Board and the Executive Committee;
- 3) Since these delegates at large are elected by Synod, and therefore represent the whole Church, there can be no objection to the fact that they are chosen from Classes centrally located, so as to be able to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee without undue expense.

(Classis Holland.)

Classis Pacific verzoekt vriendelijk, dat de Synode haar nogmaals steune in het dragen der reiskosten voor de Classicale vergaderingen. Deze reiskosten beloopt voor iedere vergadering \$1.50 per gezin. Indien de Synode steunt met 50c per gezin, dan blijft het nog \$1.00 per gezin voor de Classis.

(Classis Pacific.)

Classis Pacific vraagt steun uit de Algemeene Kas ten bedrage van \$6,030.00 jaarlijks.

(Classis Pacific.)

### III. PUBLICATION MATTERS

#### REPORT PUBLICATION COMM.

Synod enjoin the Publication Committee to publish *The Banner* on Wednesday and *De Wachter* on Friday, in order that *The Banner* may reach the wider scope of readers by the Sunday following its publication. *Reasons:*

- 1) At present *The Banner* reaches its destination after Sunday in most of the homes outside of Michigan and Illinois;
- 2) Our young people should be supplied with good reading matter on Sunday;
- 3) *The Banner*, and not *De Wachter*, is read by our young people;
- 4) If *The Banner* arrives after Sunday many of our young people have no time to read it until its contents have become "old news."

(Classis Hackensack.)

Classis overtures Synod to instruct its Publication Committee to undertake the annual publication, either directly or indirectly through the present editors, of the *Yearbook* of the Christian Reformed Church. *Grounds:*

- 1) This is in line with the custom of many denominations in our country. The official statistics of the Church are as a rule published by denominational Publication Boards, and not by individuals;
- 2) This will give this annual publication official standing. At present our *Yearbook* has at most but semi-official standing, yet it is considered by many, especially outside of our circles, as authoritative.

(Classis Holland.)

De Synode drage er zorg voor dat er goedkoope uitgaven van onze *Psalter* gepubliceerd worden, alsook van eenig ander zangboek dat de Synode mocht approbeeren, dat gebruikt zou kunnen worden buiten den openbaren eeredienst.

(Classis Pella.)

De Synode wijze op de noodzakelijkheid om onze jeugd meer onderwijs te geven in de Geschiedenis, en wel in de vakken genoemd in: "A Course of Religious Instruction," p. 135 van de Agenda, Part I voor de Synode van 1928, en legge daarbij nadruk op de geschiedenis en voorgeschiedenis van eigen kerkengroep.

De Synode drage aan de Educational Committee, of aan eene nieuwe te benoemen Commissie op, om in dezen de kerken van voorlichting te dienen door aan te geven:

- a) Waar die vakken behooren onderwezen te worden, hetzij in de Catechisatie, Zondagsschool, of Christelijke School, opdat er in dezen meer samenwerking kome;
- b) Welke methode bij dit onderwijs dient gevolgd te worden, opdat de onderwijzer op dit breede terrein naar een vast plan kan werken;
- c) Hoe aan de onderwijzers voorlichting kan worden gegeven door verklaringen van een lessen-cursus zooals dit voor de Zondagsschool lessen geschiedt.

De Synode neme in dezen actie:

- a) Omdat in onze kringen in het algemeen het onderwijs in de geschiedenis van Kerk en Zending te zeer wordt verwaarloosd, met name in plaatsen die geen Christelijke School bezitten;
- b) Omdat het zoo noodig is dat het navolgende geslacht de band blijve gevoelen met het geestelijke voorgeslacht en leere vertellen de loflijkheden des Heeren, en Zijne sterkheid en Zijne wonderen, die Hij gedaan heeft (Psalm 78:4);
- c) Omdat zonder krachtige actie en voorlichting der Synode het gevaar dreigt, dat we in den ouden sleur blijven voortgaan door ons in de Kinder-catechisatie, de Christelijke School, en de Zondagsschool nagenoeg uitsluitend te bepalen tot het onderwijs in de Bijbelsche Geschiedenis. (Classis Pella.)

De Synode neme stappen tot het opstellen van een stel *Vraagboekjes*, hetwelk van het begin tot het einde, door één plan beheerscht wordt. *Gronden:*

- a) Er bestaat op dit gebied thans wel haast een eendlooze verscheidenheid. En in vele gevallen beslist de willekeur van den catecheet;

- b) Het is alleszins gewenscht dat de verschillende vraagboekjes zich bij elkaar aansluiten, en geheel door één plan beheerscht worden. Een stel vraagboekjes met eenheid in de stof beslist voor een groot gedeelte over het onderwijs dat gegeven zal worden;
- c) De behoefte aan eenheid in de stof heeft zich ter Synode dan ook gedurig weer geopenbaard (zie Acta 1912, p. 125, 126; Acta 1924, p. 96, 346; Agenda 1926, p. 45).

Met de wenk dat in deze boekjes de methode van Dr. Kuizenga en Dss. Tuuk en Hylkema gevolgd worde.  
(Classis Sioux Center.)

The Classis of Grand Rapids East supports the following overtures from two of its Consistories: Fuller and Neland Avenues:

A. At the Consistory meeting of the Fuller Ave. Church, held Jan. 7, 1930, the Consistory decided with a unanimous vote to ask Classis Grand Rapids East to overture Synod to abolish the International Sunday School Lessons. This decision was taken upon receiving the following letter from its Sunday School officers:

"We, the undersigned, Superintendent and Teachers of the Sunday School of our Fuller Avenue Church, hereby desire to give expression to our discontent with the use of the International Sunday School Lesson system in the Sunday Schools and lesson helps of our Christian Reformed Churches, and do hereby petition you as a Consistory to overture Classis and Synod so that action may be taken by which the use of this system in our Sunday Schools is abolished or, at least, discouraged and another system, more adapted to our needs, is introduced.

"Since this problem is not solved by abolishing the use of the International Sunday School Lessons in an individual Sunday School of our Church, but can be solved only when a better system is by united action substituted for the present one (not only in the Sunday Schools, but also, from the nature of the case, in the helps found in *The Banner*, *De Wachter*, and *The Instructor*), we earnestly petition your body to overture Classis Grand Rapids East that it overture Synod to take action in this matter.

"The *grounds* for our disapproval of the use of the International Sunday School Lessons in the Sunday Schools of our Christian Reformed Churches are the following:

- 1) Unmistakable modernistic leanings crop out in the selection of the lesson topics, of the biblical material, and of the Scripture passages used for a given lesson (see *Banner* editorial in issue of Dec. 20, 1929, entitled, 'A Dangerous Series of Lessons')!
- 2) Altho we consider this ground quite sufficient by itself, we would also urge the following considerations against the use of the International Sunday School Lessons:
  - a) The great redemptive facts of Sacred History, which should stand out prominently in the lessons at the time of Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost, and Christmas, are almost entirely ignored at those festive seasons of the year;
  - b) Especially during 1929 the system has been marked by a lack of historical material. This is a serious deficiency, especially for the primary and junior classes. Moreover, where the historical material has been used, its selection has been marked by a lack of continuity and chronological connection.

"Hoping that you may take action in this matter that may lead to the substitution of a more acceptable system than the present one, for the welfare of our Sunday Schools, we are," etc.

B. Synod decide to go on record as favoring the **abolition of the International Sunday School Lessons** in our Sunday Schools, and the introduction of a new Lesson System for our Sunday Schools to be prepared by some of our own men, and to be submitted for approval to the Syond of 1932 together with a careful estimate of the cost, inclusive of picture rolls and the like, and a report on possible coöperation with those in charge of *The Instructor*. *Grounds:*

- 1) The un-Reformed and in some cases Modernistic tendencies of the International Sunday School Lesson Topics, as revealed by the Topics of the last quarter of 1929 and by some of those for 1930.

We submit the following examples from the 1929 Lessons: November 10 Topic: "World Peace through Mutual Understanding." Text, Isaiah 2:2-4; Acts 17:22-28; John 4:20, 21, etc. There is no proof in any of these passages that world peace will ever come thru mutual understanding. This is merely one of the superficialities of "modern" thought. November 24 Topic: "The Higher Patriotism." Text: the Book of Jonah. This topic obscures the real message of the book of Jonah, namely, that God, even in the Old Testament cared not only for Israel, but also for the heathen nations.

The following examples are taken from the lessons for 1930:

- a) August 3 topic: "Naomi and Ruth (A Study in Racial Relationships)." Text, the Book of Ruth. This topic ignores the real meaning of the book of Ruth.
- b) September 14 topic: "Jeremiah (the Prophet of Individual Religion)." Text, Jer. 1:4—10:27-34. This topic implies the familiar distinction between individual and social religion. There is truth in this distinction. But to call one of the prophets **the** prophet of individual religion, implying that other prophets are prophets of social religion, is to deny that all religion is primarily individual and that all the prophets were men who stressed individual religion.
- c) September 21 topic: "Jonah (the Narrow Nationalist Rebuked)." Text, the Book of Jonah. Why did the International Committee choose the book of Jonah for two successive years? Notice that the topic is practically the same in both cases, as far as the tendency is concerned, and in both cases ignores the real meaning of this book. But the International Committee seems to be anxious to put across the modern ideas on internationalism. We don't object to Internationalism of the right kind, but we do object to the manner in which the International Lessons are making propaganda for it.

- d) October 19 topic: "Simeon and Anna (the Insight of the Pure in Heart)." We object strongly to this interpretation of Simeon's and Anna's prophecies. Special divine revelation is subjectified and the true significance of the statements in Luke 2:25, 26 obscured.
- e) December 7 topic: "Stephen (an Early Interpreter of Christianity)." Text, Acts 6:1—7:60. We do not believe it is proper to speak of Stephen as an interpreter of Christianity. This may imply—to say the least—that Stephen and others, who were vehicles of special revelation, gave their own interpretation of Christianity. At all events, this terminology does not fit in with the Reformed conception of the Bible and of Inspiration.
- 2) The lack of agreement in many instances between the topic and the text, evidently as a result of the determination of the International Committee to find Scriptural passages for certain popular ideas of the present time, and to emphasize the "Social gospel." For examples we refer to the editorial in *The Banner* entitled, "A Dangerous Series of Lessons" (issue of Dec. 20, 1929, pages 956, 957).
- 3) Since the International Lessons are designed primarily for American Churches in which catechism classes and Christian Schools are unknown and the Sunday School is the only agency for the religious training of the child, the Committee evidently feels that Scriptural doctrine, prophecy, and poetry, as well as history, should be presented in these lessons. But for this very reason these lessons do not fit in with the purpose of our Sunday Schools, and some of them are altogether too difficult to be taught with any degree of success to the younger classes.
- 4) The lack of continuity and chronological sequence in the lessons or groups of lessons show that the organic unity of the Scriptures is not sufficiently recognized by the International Committee.
- 5) The omission of lessons by the International Lesson Committee which coincide with our festive days is to be deplored. This year's plan does not even provide appropriate texts and topics for Easter Sunday, Ascension Day, or Pentecost Sunday.

(Classis Grand Rapids East.)

De Classis hecht hare adhaesie aan de Instructies van Grand Rapids Oost in betrekking tot invoeren van eigen Zondagsschool lessen. (Classis Sioux Center.)

Classis verzoekt de Synode om de "International Sabbath School Lessons" los te laten en zelf een Zondagsschool-Rooster te ontwerpen. *Gronden:*

- 1) Er bestaat meermalen gansch geen verband tusschen de eene les en de volgende, zoodat de kinderen moeilijk een overzicht kunnen krijgen van het geheel;
- 2) De onderwerpen zijn dikwijls te diep voor de kinderen en ongeschikt om naar hunne bevattings te worden behandeld;
- 3) Niet zelden worden er "topics" boven de lessen geschreven die niet in overeenstemming zijn met onze Gereformeerde Schriftbeschouwing.

(Classis Wisconsin.)

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#### IV. CHURCH ORDER, EMERITI MATTERS, ETC.

##### EMERITUS BOARD REPORT:

**REPORT IV, Status Dienaren aan Niet-kerkelijke Inrichtingen; REPORT VI, Uithouw Belijdenis; REPORT VII, Divorce; REPORT X, Doop van Aangenomen Kinderen; REPORT XI, Rules of Synodical Procedure; REPORTS XVI and XVII, Labor Organizations.**

Classis overtures Synod to amend the ruling regarding the **announcement** of names of those who have confessed before the Consistory transgression of the seventh commandment (Acta 1908, Art. 54, IX), so that the advisability of such announcement shall be determined by the Consistory in each case. *Reason:*

Classis has in mind two specific instances that took place in churches within the jurisdiction of Classis. Communicant members confessed to the consistories of these churches transgression of the seventh commandment. These members had come as total strangers to these churches, but the fact of their transgression had been noted on their letters of dismissal by the Consistories of the churches from which the members had departed. In their new church homes the fact of their transgression was known to no man.

In these cases Classis is convinced that to announce the names of the members who had transgressed would be of profit neither to the churches before whose Consistories the confession was made, nor to the members themselves. On the contrary, Classis foresees that should the names be announced the reputation of these members would be greatly harmed. (Classis California.)

Classis overtures Synod to erase the following sentence from the **Form for the Ordination of Deacons**: "Let him that has stolen steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the things which are good, that he may give to him that needeth." *Grounds*:

- 1) It needlessly offends the deserving poor who receive support;
- 2) The quotation (Eph. 4:28) does not speak of people who are supported by the Church;
- 3) The conditions condemned by Paul in this text are so exceptional that it seems unnecessary to incorporate this injunction in this form of ordination.

Classis urgently requests Synod to take up this matter at this time and act on it, since this expression needlessly offends the poor. (Classis Holland.)

De Synode wijzige Art. 41 onzer Kerkenorde in dier voege dat de uitdrukking: "of de armen en de Chr. Scholen bezorgd worden" in tweeën gesplitst worde, en de lezing voortaan zij: "of de armen bezorgd worden," en "of de kerkeraden hulpbehoevende Chr. Scholen genoegzaam steun verleen." *Gronden*:

- a) Deze twee zaken, zoo verschillend van aard, kunnen niet aaneengeschakeld verbonden worden, wijl de armen behooren tot de Kerk als instituut, maar niet aldus de Chr. Scholen;
- b) Het sticht verwarring in gemeenten in wier midden geen Chr. School is, beide zaken in één adem te vragen;
- c) Beide zaken zijn lang niet altijd met hetzelfde "ja" te beantwoorden;
- d) De roeping der Kerk is een andere tegenover de armen dan tegenover de Chr. School.

(Classis Illinois.)

De Classis adviseert de Synode om niet op de instructie van Classis Holland in te gaan, maar het Formulier te laten zooals het altoos in de Geref. Kerken is uitgevoerd. *Grond:*

De Synode van 1922 stelde deze zaak reeds in handen van de Commissie om de Formulieren te herzien, en deze zaak te behandelen in overleg met de Geref. Kerken in Amerika, Nederland, en Zuid-Afrika.

(Classis Sioux Center.)

The Consistory of Englewood Second calls the attention of Classis to the following clause in the decisions of Synod of 1928 concerning industrial organizations: "En indien de organisatie, ondanks dit protesteeren, volhardt in het plegen van het kwaad, dan wordt het des Christens plicht zijn lidmaatschap in zulk eene vereeniging op te zeggen" (II, 3, p. 92).

The Consistory proposes to the Classis that it request Synod to omit this clause for the following *reasons*:

- 1) It is not true that a member is obliged to leave an organization because his protest is not acted upon;
- 2) There may be very weighty reasons for remaining in the organization, such as, to work for the improvement of the union;
- 3) The report as amended by the Synod of 1928 seems to contradict itself (see II, 3, and III, 3);
- 4) There are cases in which it is impossible for consistories to carry out the above decision.

Kerkeraad, Tweede Gem. Englewood, Chicago.)

De Synode spreke zich duidelijk uit over de vraag of **kwaadwillige verlating** al of niet een Schriftuurlijke grond voor echtscheiding is. *Gronden:*

- 1) Er is in dezen veel onzekerheid in onze Kerken. En nu blijkt uit het Synodaal Agendum voor 1930, Part I, p. 76, dat de Comm. in re "Divorce" de zaak van kwaadwillige verlating heeft uitgeschakeld;
- 2) Vooraanstaande Gereformeerde Theologen (zie Rutgers, "Kerkelijke Adviezen," II; 233, e.a. plaatsen) en vele Gereformeerde Kerken erkennen kwaadwillige verlating als een Schriftuurlijke grond voor echtscheiding;

- 3) Onze Synoden zijn in dezen nog nimmer tot een klare, welgegronde uitspraak gekomen;
- 4) De praktijk eischt dat we in dezen een beslist standpunt innemen, dat rust op duidelijke Bijbelsche gronden;
- 5) Classis Pella heeft behoefte aan zulk een uitspraak, dewijl zij een concreet geval heeft betreffende kwaadwillige verlatting. (Classis Pella.)

Classis Orange City verlangt advies in betrekking tot twee moeilijke gevallen van echtscheiding. Zie desbetreffende stukken in handen van den Stated Clerk der Synode.

(Classis Orange City.)

### EEN VERZOEKSCHRIFT

GELIEFDE BROEDEREN DER SYNODE:—

Op bladzijde 135 der Acta Synodi 1928 staat te lezen inzake een zeker besluit dier Synode: "Ds. K. W. Fortuin geeft te kennen, dat hij met dit besluit niet kan instemmen, en verzoekt aanteekening hiervan in de Acta." Op dien grond meent ondergeteekende recht en bevoegdheid te hebben om zich rechtstreeks tot de Synode van 1930 te wenden om haar te verzoeken hem welwillend oor te verleenen voor het volgende verzoekschrift.

Ondergeteekende heeft ernstig bezwaar tegen het volgende besluit der Synode van 1928, te vinden op pagina 134 der Acta, luidende: "dat voortaan een nominatie door een kerkeraad, waarop de naam of namen voorkomen van een predikant of predikanten uit een andere Kerk dan de Chr. Geref., zulk een nominatie de goedkeuring moet hebben niet alleen van den Consulent, maar ook van de genabuurde Deputaten ad Examina." Aldus besloot de Synode van 1928. Zie bladz. 135.

Ondergeteekende is vast overtuigd dat dit besluit tegen de door de Synode van 1914 aangenomen Kerkenorde indruischt, en dies onkerkrechterlijk en niet bindend is. Dit besluit is in strijd met Artikel 30 onzer Kerkenorde in verband met Art. 5 dierzelfde Kerkenorde. Volgens Artikel 5 behoort deze zaak, waaronder ook valt de beroepbaarheid van een persoon, onder de zaken die behooren tot het ge-

bied der Classis. En daarvan nu zegt Art. 30: "in meerdere vergaderingen zal men niet handelen dan hetgeen dat in mindere niet heeft afgehandeld kunnen worden, of dat tot de kerken der meerdere vergadering in het gemeen behoort." Volgens Art. 5 behoort deze zaak niet "tot de kerken der meerdere vergadering in het gemeen." Tot nader bewijs zou ondergeteekende zich ook nog kunnen beroepen op Art. 9 der Kerkenorde, welk Art., handelende over beroepbaar stellen van "predikers zonder vasten dienst, en die anderszins eenige sekte verlaten, de Classis hiervan niet buitensluit. En dit nu juist doet het besluit van 1928 wel. Het besluit zelf, zooals door de Synode van 1928 genomen, bewijst met geen enkel woord, dat deze zaak niet in de mindere vergadering (de Classis) kan afgehandeld worden. Men mist dus alle recht om deze zaak der Classis uit de hand te nemen.

Ondergeteekende is eveneens overtuigd, dat het geenszins in overeenstemming is met het wezen, den aard, de bevoegdheid van het consulentchap dat zulk een nominatie zou afhangen van de goedkeuring van den consulent. Dit maakt den consulent feitelijk tot een "power behind the throne," bekleedt hem met een autocratische autoriteit die met zijn consulentchap geheel in strijd is. Zulk een macht kent onze Kerkenorde nergens in geen enkel geval den consulent toe. Zulk een onbeperkte volmacht als het goedkeuren van een nominatie, waarop een kerkeraad een leeraar uit een andere kerkengroep wenscht te plaatsen, zou in strijd zijn met de taak en bevoegdheid het consulentchap eigen.

Een consulent heeft recht noch bevoegdheid om te doen wat der Classis is. Zulke concrete gevallen kan een Classis niet van te voren aan een consulent opdragen, daartoe heeft zij eerst zelf over het geval te oordeelen. Het geval dient eerst beschouwd en overwogen, aler een Classis zou kunnen beslissen en eerst dan zou zij den consulent dienaangaande opdracht kunnen geven.

Ondergeteekende is eveneens overtuigd dat, waar de Classis de consulenten aanwijst en deze aan haar verantwoordelijk zijn, het niet aangaat dat een Synode aan deze door de Classis aangewezen consulenten de bevoegdheid zou toekennen om zulk een nominatie goed te keuren. Daaruit moet wel noodwendig frictie of conflict ontstaan.

Eindelijk is ondergeteekende eveneens van gevoelen dat één consulent eenerzijds en drie Synodale deputaten anderzijds een ongelijkheid is die nimmer te billijken is, en ook in strijd met het kerkrechtelijk beginsel in Art. 84 belichaamd.

Ten slotte wenscht ondergeteekende er nog op te wijzen dat, waar in andere gevallen de Deputaten ad Examina slechts adviseerende stem hebben, het besluit van 1928 hun in deze zaak een beslissende stem toekent, en dat zelfs geheel buiten de betrokken Classis om.

Op grond van al het voorgaande komt ondergeteekende tot U met het vriendelijk verzoek, dat de Synode van 1930 herroep de het besluit van 1928, omdat het strijdt met Art. 30 onzer Kerkenorde in verband met Artt. 5 en 9 van diezelfde Kerkenorde; dat de Synode tevens besluite te handhaven Art. 81 der Algemeene Bepalingen, luidende: *Leeraars uit andere kerkengroepen zijn eerst beroepbaar, nadat Kerkeraad en Classis, na nauwkeurig onderzoek, bevredigd zijn geworden aangaande hun opleiding, dienst, belijdenis en wandel.*"

Tevens zou ondergeteekende heel bescheiden de Synode in overweging willen geven of niet soms onze Kerken rijp zijn om, inplaats van bovengenoemde, te besluiten: *Leeraars die uit andere Kerkengroepen uit overtuiging tot ons over willen komen, hebben hun ambt neer te leggen in de kerk, die zij dienen, zich als een gewoon lid bij een Chr. Geref kerk aan te sluiten, om alsdan aan te kloppen bij de Classis waaronder zij ressorteeren, om hen voor de Chr. Geref. kerken beroepbaar te stellen.*

U in alle uwe beraadslagingen des Heeren onmisbare leiding toebiddende,

Met eerbied onderworpen,

Uw d.w. mede-ambtsbroeders,

KAREL WILHELM FORTUIN.

The undersigned petitions Synod to consider the advisability of urging the Consistories of vacant congregations to refrain from calling ministers of other than the Christian Reformed Churches. *Grounds:*

- 1) We have a precedent in part for such advice in Acts of Synod of 1898, p. 34, which reads: "Het beroepen

van Predikanten uit het buitenland wordt geacht minder noodig te zijn en daarom wordt vacante gemeenten in ernstige overweging gegeven of zij zich daarvan niet dienden te onthouden, met het oog op de Theol. School."

(Although the foregoing decision refers to "Predikanten uit het buitenland," nevertheless the same grounds on which Synod rests its instructions in the above decision should also hold in the cases of "ministers of other denominations.")

- 2) Our own Seminary graduates a sufficient number of students to supply our denominational needs.
- 3) We thereby conserve our own denominational principles and loyalty in that all our ministers have been trained in our Theological School.
- 4) We already demand that students who have not had training at our School, shall at least take the last year of training at our Seminary before being declared eligible for a call in our Church. (See Acts of Synod of 1922, Art. 11, par. 3, and Acts of Synod of 1924, Art. 41, E and F, p. 38). These acts read as follows:  
 (Acts of Synod of 1922): "Students that have pursued their studies at institutions not positively Reformed must at least have attended the classes of the last year at our Theological School, before they are permitted to take the preparatory examination."  
 (Acts of Synod of 1924): "Students who have pursued their theological studies at other institutions must at least have pursued the studies of the senior year at our Theological School, in order to be declared eligible for a call in our Church."
- 5) The calling of ministers and students graduated from other Theological Schools does not deal fair with our own ministers and theological students, in that it minimizes and ignores the value of their training given them by the Church.
- 6) The inconsistency of establishing and supporting our own schools and Seminary at a great expense paid for by the Church, and at the same time accepting "outsiders" regardless of where such individuals obtained their theological education.

Respectfully,  
 AUGUST KROON.

Classis overtures Synod to add to Art. 5 of the present Constitution for the Emeritus Fund: "Every synodical year the consistories shall state what is needed for the support of the emeriti, widows and orphans under their supervision."

(Classis Ostfriesland.)

Mrs. S. S. Vander Heide is recommended for support of \$600.00 annually out of the Emeritus Fund, beginning Oct. 1, 1929.

(Classis Hudson.)

Classis recommends that Rev. J. J. Dyk be granted emeritation on account of continued ill-health. For his support Classis recommends that he be granted \$1,200.00 annually; this emeritation to take effect August 15, 1929.

(Classis Muskegon.)

Classis Muskegon asks that Mrs. J. C. Kruithof be given \$500.00 per year out of the Emeritus Fund, this aid to begin December 1, 1929.

(Classis Muskegon.)

De Classis beveelt Mrs. B. Nagel aan bij het Emeritus Fonds voor \$300.00 per jaar, met een extra toelage voor het eerste jaar van \$200.00.

(Classis Orange City.)

De Classis verleende tijdelijk emeritaat aan Ds. J. G. Vande Lune en beval hem aan bij het Emeritus Fonds voor \$1,000.00 per jaar en een extra toelage van \$500.00 voor het eerste jaar. Ds. Vande Lune lijdt aan ernstige zenuw-krankheid. Hij is absoluut onbekwaam tot den dienst.

(Classis Orange City.)

De Classis verzoekt de goedkeuring der Synode van bovengenoemde Emeritaatszaken.

(Classis Orange City.)

## V. LITURGICAL MATTERS

IMPROVEMENT OF OUR PUBLIC WORSHIP (Report V); REVISION LITURGICAL FORMS (Report VIII); KWESTIE INVOERING GEZANGEN (Report XII); HYMN QUESTION (Report XIII); CHOIR SINGING (Report XIV)

[Additional Matter in hands of S. C. of Synod]

Synod decide to appoint a Committee to make a thoro study of our English Psalter with a view to advising the following Synod (1932) as to which of the 413 selections can be best eliminated, as being unsatisfactory, especially as regards the tunes, and to recommend as substitutes for some of these, new metrical versions of not fewer than twenty-five and not more than fifty Psalms which can be sung to the best tunes of our Dutch Psalter, these chorales also to be selected by the Committee. If necessary this Committee shall be authorized to make the expense required for the procuring of these new metrical versions.

*Grounds:*

- 1) Our present Psalter contains too many of the short, four line stanzas. Not a few of the tunes, especially for these selections, are too dry to be used with satisfaction;
- 2) Even if the corresponding Dutch chorale of such an unsatisfactory selection in our English Psalter would not be worth using, said number from our English Psalter could very well be omitted, since there are more than enough numbers (413) in this Psalter. Moreover, a new metrical version could be prepared to fit a satisfactory tune (chorale or otherwise) from another Psalter or Hymnal;
- 3) Many of the Dutch Psalm tunes are beautiful chorales which our people have learned to love and would be glad to sing in our American-speaking churches. In view of this and also of the revival of interest in this type of music, it would be very regrettable if we made no effort to preserve our musical heritage.

(Classis Grand Rapids East.)

De Classis hecht hare adhaesie aan het voorstel van Classis Grand Rapids Oost in betrekking tot het herzien onzer "English Psalter."

(Classis Sioux Center.)

Classis overtures Synod to undertake the revision of our American Psalter, the revision to retain only those numbers of our present Psalter which experience has proved fit for public worship, substituting for the others a number of the best chorales from our Dutch Psalter. *Grounds:*

- 1) Our present American Psalter contains too many numbers which are musically unattractive and unfit for public worship;
- 2) Our Dutch Psalter contains some wonderful tunes which we should preserve as a precious part of the heritage of our fathers. (Classis Holland.)

Synod provide ways and means to effect a revision of our English Psalter, especially with a view to the following two matters:

A. The numbering of the songs in such a way that the number of the Psalm (as found in Scripture) receives the emphasis instead of the number of the tunes, as is at present the case in our Psalter. By the present arrangement the number of the Psalm tends to become practically lost as far as the consciousness of the congregation is concerned, and numbers are substituted which do not at all coincide with the numbers of the Psalms themselves.

B. The incorporation into our English Psalter of those "Chorales" from our Dutch Psalter which are judged to be the most appealing and suitable.

(Classis Orange City.)

De Synode neme maatregelen om onze *Psalter* te verbeteren door het min geschikte in melodieën en berijmingen te verwijderen, en nieuwe melodieën op te nemen, met name de schoone koraal muziek onzer oude Psalmen en daarbij nieuwe berijmingen te zoeken.

Zulk een verbetering onzer Psalter is noodig om het zingen onzer Psalter aantrekkelijker en gemakkelijker te maken, en het oorspronkelijke in meer dichterlijken vorm te vertolken. Bovendien wordt dergelijke herziening bijzonder vereischt, waar de Hymns meer en meer ingang vinden, en het gevaar dreigt, dat bij de tegenwoordige stand van zaken ons Psalmgezang ten staarte zal worden.

(Classis Pella.)

Classis Pella dringt er bij de Synode op aan er voor te waken dat bij een eventueele invoering van het vrije lied, het Psalmgezang niet verwaarloosd en de Psalmschat niet begraven worde. (Classis Pella.)

Inzake het gebruiken van meer Hymns in onzen openbaren eeredienst verzoekt Classis Zeeland de Synode om thans niet tot eene beslissing in deze zaak te komen, maar deze zaak terug te verwijzen naar Classes en Kerkeraden, om dan op een volgende Synode tot een besluit te kunnen komen. *Grond:*

Deze zaak is juist twee jaar verleden op de Synode gebracht, en is dus betrekkelijk jong. Te groote spoed zou in deze belangrijke zaak veel kwaad in onze kerken kunnen doen. (Classis Zeeland.)

De Synode ga verder niet in op de gezangen-kwestie, doch besluite dat de kerken in haren publieken eeredienst zich houden aan den bestaanden regel. *Gronden:*

- a) Het hebben van gezangen in den eeredienst ontkent feitelijk in beginsel de eenheid tusschen Oud- en Nieuw-Testament, aangezien onze Zaligmaker ook van den Oud-Testamentischen Psalmbundel het heerlijk middenpunt is. Ook voor de Oud-Testamentische geloovigen was Christus de eenige Zaligmaker;
- b) Den Christus niet in de Psalmen te kunnen vinden is geen bewijs van hoogstaand geestelijk leven;
- c) De roep om gezangen houdt geen rekening met de leiding des Heiligen Geestes in het Oud-Testamentisch lied, wijl de zin des Heiligen Geestes menigmaal zich veel verder uitstreckte dan de dichters zelve vermoedden;
- d) De gezangen-kwestie houdt geen rekening met de historie, welke duidelijk doet zien dat de Gezangen ten slotte de Psalmen geheel verdrijven;
- e) De gezangen kunnen het in geen enkel opzicht halen bij den diep geestelijken zin en heerlijken inhoud der aloude Psalmen;
- f) Het invoeren van gezangen geeft feitelijk onze vaders, die meê om de gezangen-kwestie zich hebben afgescheiden, een slag in het aangezicht, en geeft heel hunne beweging een schijn van kerkisme;

- g) Het invoeren van gezangen zal noodwendig leiden tot een ongewenschte scheiding en verwijdering der Engelsche en Holland-sprekende gemeenten, wyl de meeste tegenzin zich openbaart in de "Psalter";
- h) Het is zeer gewenscht dat ons volk thuis worde in de "Psalter," doch dan dient daarnaast geen gezangenbundel te komen, hetgeen niet aan het zich eigen maken der "Psalter" dienstbaar zou zijn.

(Classis Illinois.)

1. Classis overtures Synod to call the attention of the churches to the fact that 70, H, 5, does not make the introduction of the New Order of Worship absolutely compulsory; it does no more than urge the adoption, "with the understanding, however, that the peace and welfare of those churches where there is considerable opposition, shall not be imperiled."

2. With a view to the peace of the churches and in order not to bind consciences, Classis further overtures Synod not to press the introduction of the New Order of Worship, but rather to leave it to the discretion of the various consistories.

3. However, for the furtherance of uniformity thruout our churches, Classis overtures Synod to recommend to the consistories the earliest possible adoption of the New Order of Worship.

(Classis Grand Rapids West.)

The Classis of Illinois overtures Synod:

A. To reconsider the decision of last Synod in re Order of Worship. *Grounds:* The lack of unity in this matter, and the danger of disturbing the peace of the churches if the decision is enforced.

B. To appoint a new committee to consider the matter of the Order of Worship, a Committee in which the various viewpoints now defended receive proper representation; this Committee to give special consideration to the following questions:

- 1) Do we need a special assurance of pardon outside of the regular service of the Word?
- 2) Is a "Service of Reconciliation" a proper element in our worship?

- 3) Is it not more advisable for Synod merely to recommend a new Order of Worship rather than to make it binding upon our churches?

(Classis Illinois.)

Classis Muskegon overtures Synod to reconsider the decisions regarding the new form of worship and to change them to the extent that:

I. In the place of the present declaration of pardon, certain passages of Scripture be literally quoted without commentary, for instance, 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." *Grounds:*

- 1) This would take away the impression that the minister declares sins to be forgiven on his own accord;
- 2) This will remove one of the greatest objections maintained by many against the form of worship as a whole.

II. That the language used in the decision of Synod leave no room for fear of pressure or force when a Consistory does not feel free to accept the new form in part or as a whole. *Grounds:*

- 1) It is now said by some that Synod will enforce it and use pressure, while some say the decision are not to be construed that way;
- 2) It is our conviction that all parts of the form are not absolutely necessary for the welfare of the soul or for the maintainance of an orderly form of worship. If you take, for example, the declaration of pardon, no one denies that this is primarily given in the preaching of the Word. And though a further definite declaration of pardon is nice and perhaps even unobjectionable, it cannot be said that it is a necessary addition to the preaching of the Word;
- 3) Since it is our conviction that such a part of the form is not absolutely necessary, we also believe it to be improper usage to press or force upon any one or any church such a thing which is not absolutely essential.

(Classis Muskegon.)

I. De Classis dringt er bij de Synode op aan het besluit inzake de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst alzo te wijzigen dat het geheel en al aan de wijsheid der kerken zal staan de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst al of niet in te voeren.

*Gronden:*

- a) Omdat invoering van de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst nog meer gebrek aan eenstemming (Agendum 1918, p. 19) in het leven roepen. Beide de Comm. en de Synode van 1918 waren van oordeel dat er in dezen meer overeenstemming tusschen de verschillende gemeenten diende te komen. De invoering van de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst zou in de nummers 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, en 15 ruimte voor verscheidenheid laten. Dus nog meer verschil dan thans bestaat;
- b) Omdat de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst in vele kringen beslist niet gewild is. Een meerdere of mindere mate van afkeer van de vorm van Eeredienst waaronder men nederzit moet noodzakelijk de stichting belemmeren. De gevoelens der gemeente moet in zulk een teedere zaak terdege meê gerekend worden. Het beginsel van het profijt der kerken eischt dit;
- c) Omdat invoering van de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst in vele gemeenten onrust verwekken zou. De zaak in kwestie is van te weinig gewicht dan dat de rust der gemeente daar op eenige wijze aan zou mogen opgeofferd worden;
- d) Omdat zulk een wijziging niet in strijd is met Art. 31 onzer Kerkenorde. De Schrift eischt dat alles "met stichting" zal geschieden. Ook dat de vrede in de gemeente gezocht moet worden. De aangenomen Orde van Eeredienst gaat in vele kringen daar tegen in.

B. Indien de Synode tot het voorgaande besluit, spreke de Synode uit dat de gemeenten in hunne Eeredienst geen andere elementen zullen invoeren, dan zulke als in de 1928 aangenomen Orde van Eeredienst worden gevonden.

*Gronden:*

- a) Het is niet gewenscht dit geheel aan de willekeur der gemeenten over te laten;
- b) Het gevaar is niet denkbeeldig dat vreemde en zelfs onzuivere elementen zouden overgenomen worden van buiten.

(Classis Sioux Center.)

**De Classis overwegende:**

- a) Dat de aangenomen orde voor de Eeredienst bij velen op bezwaren stuit, en dat de kerken in 't algemeen niet rijp blijken te zijn voor de invoering;
- b) dat er wel degelijk behoefte is aan eenheid in de orde van de Eeredienst;
- c) dat er eenstemmigheid is in bijna alle punten rakende de orde van de Eeredienst—stelt aan de Synode voor:

Een orde van Eeredienst te ontwerpen waarin die punten worden opgenomen, welke blijkens het tegenwoordig gebruik in de kerken, en de ingekomen instructies, op algemeene instemming mogen rekenen, en daardoor de zoo gewenschte eenheid en vrede te bevorderen.

(Classis Pella.)

Classis overtures Synod that in our new Order of Worship the question of whether or not the offering shall be received during the singing of a Psalm be left optional with the various Consistories. *Grounds:*

- a) Many are strongly convinced that when the service of offering is not allowed its own place in our worship, it is shorn of the emphasis which it deserves, which emphasis is edifying to the cause of Christian stewardship;
- b) Many of our churches have long used the offertory organ voluntary and find it worshipful. In such churches its prescribed absence will be a lack.

(Classis Muskegon.)

Classis Zeeland dringt bij de Synode, die D. V. 1930 zal gehouden worden, aan op **herroeping** van het besluit der Synode van 1928 inzake den **Nieuwen Vorm van Eeredienst**. *Gronden:*

- 1) De Nieuwe Vorm van Eeredienst zal niet de gewenschte eenheid ten gevolge hebben, maar de verdeeldheid bevorderen;
- 2) Het feit dat deze Nieuwe Vorm van Eeredienst uitdrukkelijk en met zooveel woorden bestemd is voor de "Main Service" (Acta 1928, p. 52) brengt ons op een verkeerd spoor;

- 3) Doordat het aantal elementen, die van Zondag tot Zondag herhaald moeten worden, vermeerderd wordt, zal het gevaar om in vormendienst te vervallen grooter worden, en vooral door het gezamenlijk opzeggen van het "Onze Vader," en de Twaalf Artikelen;
- 4) De Nieuwe Vorm van Eeredienst verstoort de rust der kerken;
- 5) Het element van de absolutie of verzekering van vergeving—
  - a) behoort thuis in de prediking en in het gebed, en ligt, wat den inhoud aangaat, reeds in den zegen-groet;
  - b) wordt als aparte formule gansch en al niet gevorderd door de Heilige Schrift;
  - c) staat historisch zeer zwak;
  - d) is door zijn ambtelijk karakter oorzaak dat de geheele vorm van eeredienst weer veranderd moet worden, zoodra de diensten door een niet-geordend persoon worden waargenomen.
- 6) Het besluit der Synode van 1928 met betrekking tot den eeredienst is in flagranten strijd met het besluit van diezelfde Synode om het aparte koorgezang in den eeredienst over te laten aan de discretie van den plaatselijken kerkeraad;
- 7) Alhoewel het natuurlijk juist is dat eene breedere vergadering, b.v. de Synode, heeft te zorgen voor de zuiverheid van den eeredienst, volgt hieruit niet dat de Synode nu ook het recht zou hebben, om tot in de kleinste bijzonderheden bindend te bepalen wat voor elke afzonderlijke gemeente de volgorde van de elementen van den eeredienst moet zijn, en daar dan nog bij te bepalen dat "the Classis shall urge the consistories, especially through the church-visitors, to make progress in the matter" (Acta 1928, p. 301).

(Classis Zeeland.)

Aangezien de aangenomen **Orde van Eeredienst** verdeeldheid in de Kerk teweeg brengt, inzonderheid vanwege het bindend gezag, dat er aan gehecht wordt, stelt de Classis Pacific der Synode voor, om het al of niet gebruiken van den nieuwen vorm geheel aan de vrijheid van de gemeenten over te laten. *Gronden:*

- 1) Hoewel deze vrijheid wel niet in eens de zoozeer begerlijke eenheid in den eeredienst zou teweeg brengen, zou ze toch den vrede der kerken bevorderen;
- 2) Deze vrijheid zou den onhoudbaren toestand weg nemen, waarin we nu verkeeren, doordien de meerderheid der kerken het Synodaal besluit niet uitvoert;
- 3) Deze vrijheid is in overeenstemming met de Gereformeerde gedachte, die vrijheid eischt in middelmatige zaken. (Classis Pacific.)

Classis Orange City heeft tegen het besluit der j.l. Synode inzake de nieuwe orde van eeredienst een **tweeledig bezwaar**.

A. Allereerst dat de Synode een nieuwe orde van eeredienst bindend zoekt te maken voor de kerken. Na alles wat tot verdediging van dit standpunt is gezegd en geschreven geworden, blijft de Classis toch overtuigd dat een bepaalde volgorde van de elementen der eeredienst niet behoort tot het wezen onzer kerken, noch noodzakelijk is om de eenheid onzer kerken tot openbaring te brengen, of voor het verrichten van de gemeenschappelijken arbeid onzer kerken.

De elementen der eeredienst liggen vast in de H. Schrift, en een Synode heeft zeker wel het recht te constateeren dat deze elementen in de eeredienst onzer kerken tot hun recht moeten komen.

De beginselen die aan alle zuivere eeredienst ten grondslag liggen, komen ook evenzeer op uit Gods Woord. Wij juichen het toe dat de Synode ons volk beter zoekt in te lichten met betrekking tot deze beginselen. En tevens zullen onze kerken modellen in welke deze beginselen op schoone wijze zijn uitgewerkt, met dankbaarheid aantevaarden.

Maar de Synode ging een geheelen stap verder door een bepaalde orde van eeredienst vast te stellen en bindend te maken voor de kerken. Zulk een bindend besluit mag o.i. eerst dan gemaakt worden, zoo eerst bewezen wordt, niet slechts dat een zekere orde van eeredienst aan de eischen der beginselen voldoet, dat zij tevens schoon en doelmatig is, maar dat die orde van eeredienst de eenige is die aan de beginselen beantwoordt, en dat Gods Woord dus die orde eischt.

De Synode heeft echter nooit zoeken te bewijzen dat geen andere orde van eeredienst even logisch en met even goed recht uit de schriftuurlijke beginselen kan worden opgebouwd. En tenzij juist dat bewezen wordt, mist o.i. de Synode het recht de kerken aan een door haar opgestelde orde te binden.

Het argument dat door de afgevaardigden der verschillende Classen al onze kerken op de Synode vertegenwoordigd waren, en dus ook de besluiten der Synode voor alle kerken bindend zijn, raakt o.i. de zaak niet. De zaak is deze: dat er zeker een terrein is op hetwelk een bredere vergadering het recht en de roeping heeft bindende besluiten te maken. Alle zaken betrekking hebbende op kerkelijke leer en het kerkelijk leven die door de mindere vergaderingen niet kunnen worden afgehandeld, worden in het licht van Gods Woord door de Synode beslist, en die besluiten zijn bindend.

Maar er is ook een terrein op hetwelk de Synode wel onderwijzend, vermanend en adviseerend kan optreden, en tot welzijn der kerken goeden raad en leiding geven, maar waar bindende besluiten buiten orde zouden zijn. Met andere woorden, er is en blijft een terrein van Christelijke vrijheid, ook voor de plaatselijke kerken, op hetwelk het welbegrepen belang der gemeente en het oordeel van het plaatselijk ambt tenslotte moet beslissen.

De vraag is echter of een specifieke orde van eeredienst ook tot dit terrein behoort. En dan stemmen wij in met hetgeen Prof. W. Heyns schreef in zijn "Liturgiek" (p. 78): "Als derde hoofdbeginsel voor de liturgie hebben wij te noemen vrijheid. Is onder het N. T. de Kerk van het juk der dienstbaarheid verlost, om de vrijheid der kinderen Gods te genieten, is daarmede ook aan haar eeredienst het karakter der vrijheid verleend, dan volgt daaruit rechtstreeks, dat die vrijheid ook moet heerschen in de liturgie." . . . "Niet een vrijheid, natuurlijk, die gelijk zou staan met bandeloosheid en willekeur, zoodat de liturgie geheel naar menscheijk goedvinden ingericht zou mogen worden; niet een vrijheid wat de beginselen betreft, maar een vrijheid ten aanzien van het vormelijke. Zulk een vrijheid had de Kerk des O. T. niet. Elke handeling was bepaald, en moest juist zóó verricht worden. De Kerk des N. T. daarentegen is bij het

regelen van haar eeredienst en bij het vaststellen van liturgische vormen door of aan geen positieve voorschriften, ook behoeft zij zich niet, gelijk Rome beweert, gebonden te achten aan de oude kerkelijke traditie, maar zij heeft ten volle recht om rekening te houden met de behoeften harer leden, in verband met de tijden en de omstandigheden.”

Dit, naar ons oordeel, is in volkomen overeenstemming met het standpunt van Calvijn. Uit Calvijns Franschen Catechismus geeft Doumergue het standpunt van Calvijn aldus weer: “Calvijn liet zich in de liturgie door het beginsel van accommodatie leiden. Hij wilde vrijheid ter wille van de stichting. In middelmatige dingen ten opzichte der ‘ceremoniën’ kunnen de kerken verschillen. Het kan wel nuttig zijn, dat men geen eenvormigheid in dezen heeft, want daaruit blijkt dat het geloof hierin niet bestaat. Hij wil geen slaafsche eenvormigheid die niet sticht.” (Doumergue, “Calvijn in het Strijdperk,” p. 406.)

Het strijdt dus geheel tegen den geest van Calvijn een en denzelfden vorm van eeredienst aan de kerken te willen opdringen. Voor den grooten Hervormer ligt dit “vormelijke” op het terrein der middelmatige dingen, waar de Christelijke vrijheid moet heerschen, en hij stelde slechts den regel “dat alles eerlijk en met orde geschieden zal.”

De beginselen voor de eeredienst liggen in Gods Woord vast. Ook moet de gemeente gevoelen hoe deze beginselen in de eeredienst in haar midden tot openbaring komen. Maar welke bijzondere volgorde de gemeente, naar gelang toestanden en omstandigheden en bepaalde gelegenheden, zal volgen, moet geheel aan het oordeel der kerken en het plaatselijke ambt overgelaten worden. Hierin ligt o.i. het onderscheid tusschen de liturgische kerken en de Gereformeerde kerken, dat de liturgische kerken mede in den bepaalden vorm het wezen der eeredienst zoekt, en dezen bijzonderen vorm dus bindend bepaalt, terwijl de Gereformeerde kerken, tot op de jongste Synode, de orde van eeredienst aan het goed oordeel van het plaatselijk ambt heeft overgelaten.

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B. Ook heeft de Classis principieel bezwaar tegen het element der absolutie als een afzonderlijke dienst in de eeredienst onzer kerken. Hoe goed ook bedoeld, leidt zulk een

afzonderlijke dienst der verzoening ons toch van den rechten lijn. Wij zijn het allen eens met de gedachte, dat de gemeente in Gods huis vergadert ook om hare zonden te belijden, en om van Godswege de verzekering te ontvangen, dat aan allen die hunne zonden van harte belijden en hun vertrouwen op Christus stellen, vergeving van zonden is geschonken.

Maar, om deze-troostrijke waarheid tot openbaring te brengen is er allermint behoefte aan een afzonderlijke dienst der verzoening. Deze dienst der verzoening bevat geen enkel element dat niet in het gebed, het gezang, het lezen der Schrift en de prediking tot zijn volle recht komt.

Allereerst maken wij de opmerking dat in de voorgestelde nieuwe orde van eeredienst de Tien Geboden des Heeren enkel voorkomen als kenbron der ellende, terwijl juist die Tien Geboden in hunnen vollen omvang in onzen Heidelbergschen Catechismus behandeld worden als regel der dankbaarheid. Door het wekelijks herhalen van de Wet des Heeren in dezen dienst der verzoening alleen als kenbron der ellende, kan het niet anders, of de gemeente moet een geheel eenzijdigen indruk krijgen van de beteekenis der Tien Geboden.

In verband hiermede wijzen wij dan ook juist op deze eenzijdigheid aan welke o.i. geheel deze nieuwe orde mank gaat. Met al het vele goede en schoone in deze orde van eeredienst te vinden, wordt juist door dezen afzonderlijken dienst der verzoening aan de volle beteekenis der verzoening tekort gedaan.

Er is behoefte, zoo wordt beweerd, aan een dieper besef van de vergeving der zonden. Wij stemmen dit volmondig toe. Maar, is er daarbij niet even groote behoefte aan een meerdere toewijding der gemeente tot een leven van nieuwe gehoorzaamheid? Van een afzonderlijke dienst der dankbaarheid, van een opnieuw zich wijden tot den dienst des Heeren, is in de nieuwe orde niets te vinden. Dit toch geeft een eenzijdige indruk wat aangaat de beteekenis van onzen godsdienst, alsof het zoowat enkel hierop aankomt dat de Christen de verzekering wegdraagt dat zijne zonden hem vergeven zijn, en niet evenzeer, dat hij opnieuw zich aan God verbindt om in den weg van alle zijne geboden te wandelen.

Doch in een Gereformeerde Kerk is er geen behoefte aan een afzonderlijken, in vasten vorm gegoten dienst der toewijding, en even zoo min aan zulk een afzonderlijken, door vaststaande formules uitgedrukten dienst der verzoening.

In het openbaar gebed belijdt de gemeente door den dienst van het ambt ook hare zonden voor God. Geen Christelijk gebed is denkbaar zonder deze belijdenis van zonden en zonder een smeeken om vergiffenis van die zonden. In de nieuwe orde van eeredienst wordt opzettelijk dit element van schuldbelijdenis en van gebed om vergiffenis uit het gemeentelijk gebed uitgelicht, en in een aparten en vast geformuleerden dienst belichaamd. Wij kunnen niet anders zien dan dat hierdoor het gemeentelijk gebed wordt verminkt en aan de beteekenis van dat gebed wordt tekort gedaan.

Evenzoo staat het met de absolutie, in een bepaalde en steeds herhaalde formule door den Dienaar des Woords uitgesproken. Ook voor de verkondiging van de vergiffenis der zonden is er geen de minste behoefte aan een aparte en vastgestelde formule. Dit toch is juist de beteekenis van de prediking des Woord. Zij is dienst der verzoening in den volsten zin van het woord. Paulus getuigt dit duidelijk in 2 Cor. 5:18-20. Wanneer Paulus hier spreekt van de "bediening der verzoening" die hem gegeven is, en van het "Woord der verzoening" dat in hem gelegd is, dan bedoelt hij daar niet mede dat naast andere bevoegdheden hem de macht gegeven is de absolutie uit te spreken, en dat een bijzondere formule voor de vergeving der zonden hem is toebetrouwd, maar dan doelt hij op de prediking des Evangelies in al haren vollen en rijken omvang.

In de verkondiging des Evangelies wordt de gemeente van Godswege verzekerd dat een iegelijk die zijne zonde van harte belijdt en op Christus vertrouwt, vergeving der zonden en het eeuwige leven uit genade geschonken is. Deze beteekenis van de prediking des Evangelies als bediening der verzoening moet steeds hoog gehouden worden in de Gereformeerde kerken. En dan de bediening der verzoening in al haren vollen en heerlijken omvang. Indien het waar is, dat de bediening der verzoening niet tot haar recht komt in de prediking, dan mag de predikant nog zulk een schoon en bezielend betoog leveren, maar zijn rede is geen

dienst des Woords. En dan ligt de remedie niet hierin, dat de dienst der verzoening in een aparte formule wordt belichaamd, maar hierin, dat de prediker zich bekeert, en de gemeente den vollen raad des heils verkondigt.

En is het waar dat er vele Christenen zijn die zwak zijn en mank gaan door gebrek aan een diep schuldbesef, of zijn er vele anderen die bijzondere behoefte hebben aan de verzekering van de vergeving hunner zonden, dan is het evenzeer waar, dat God alles in Zijn Evangelie heeft geopenbaard dat den mensch van zonde kan overtuigen en den berouwhebbende van volkomene vergeving kan verzekeren. Indien berouw over de zonde en de verzekering van Gods genadige vergeving niet in de ziel gewekt worden door de zuivere en volle verkondiging des Evangelies, dan zal dit gewisselijk niet tot stand gebracht worden door de wekelijksche herhaling van een vaste formule.

Het invoeren van een afzonderlijken dienst der verzoening en een vaste formule voor de absolutie, met het doel om aan berouwhebbenden meerdere verzekering van de vergeving der zonden te doen toekomen, mag logisch op zijn plaats zijn bij Rome en in al zulke kerken waar de prediking des Woords niet op den voorgrond staat. Maar het heeft o.i. geen rechtmatige plaats in een Kerk als de Gereformeerde, die alle nadruk op de prediking des Woords laat vallen.

Weshalve wij de Synode verzoeken:

- 1) Uit te spreken dat de nieuwe orde van eeredienst tot de kerken komt als voorbeeld, maar niet als een bindende vorm, daar tenslotte de bepaalde vorm en orde der eeredienst moet overgelaten worden aan het plaatselijke ambt met het oog op de behoeften en omstandigheden der plaatselijke gemeente;
- 2) Het element der absolutie als een vastgestelde formule uit de voorgestelde orde van eeredienst te verwijderen, daar een aparte dienst der verzoening niet tehuis behoort in een Kerk die de prediking des Woords in hare volle schriftuurlijke beteekenis hoog wil houden en aan deze prediking de centrale plaats in hare eeredienst toekent.

(Classis Orange City.)

De Synode herroepde het besluit der Synode van 1928 inzake "Improvement of our Order of Worship," Acta 1928, Artikel 62. *Gronden:*

- 1) Het besluit der Synode beoogde blijkbaar eenvormigheid en eenheid te bewerken in den eeredienst der kerken, doch tot hiertoe is verdeeldheid, oneenigheid en veelvormigheid het gevolg geweest. Zelfs daár, waar men de nieuwe vorm van Eeredienst invoerde, was geen eenvormigheid. Juist het omgekeerde dus, van wat in het besluit gezocht werd, is de vrucht geweest van het besluit zelve;
- 2) Het valt niet te bewijzen uit de Heilige Schrift, noch uit de Belijdenisschriften, dat **inzonderheid de Absolutie (het zoogenaamde hart van den nieuwen vorm van Eeredienst)** geëischt wordt, noch aan de Kerk werd voorgeschreven. Jezus noch de Apostelen melden er ons iets van.

Terecht wees Dr. Abraham Kuyper er op (zie "Eeredienst," p. 246) zeggende: "Al aanstonds toch is uit de Evangelieën duidelijk, dat Jezus wel eigener beweging, een enkele maal, meest alvorens een zieke te genezen, de zonden-vergeving uitsprak, maar er is geen sprake van dat de schare of de discipelen op geregelde tijden tot Jezus zouden komen om te biechten en absolutie te ontvangen. Zelfs bij hen die absolutie ontvingen, is voorafgaande schuldbelijdenis of biecht alerminst regel. En evenzoo is het uit de Handelingen der Apostelen en uit de brieven der Apostelen duidelijk, dat van een geregelde Biecht en Absolutie in den kring der Apostelen niets te bespeuren valt. Ook bij de aanstelling der Presbyters en in de pastorale brieven aan Timotheus en Titus, is van zulk een instelling als onmisbaar voor het gemeente-leven, zoo goed als geen spoor te ontdekken." Tot zoover Dr. Kuyper.

- 3) Het profijt der kerken wordt blijkbaar door het Synodaal besluit niet bevorderd, althans zoo ver er iets van openbaar wordt, komt de Kerk in verzet tegen het Synodaal besluit, en dat is zeker niet tot profijt der kerken;
- 4) Met het oog op den vrede der Kerk en de welvaart is het ongewenscht dit genomen besluit door te zetten.

Wij meenen de Kerk zou zich best kunnen vinden indien de komende Synode zich uitsprak in den geest van het besluit der Synode van Middelburg, 1581. Op de vraag: Of het noodig is des Sondags na de predicatie openlijk en in 't gemeen den boetvaardigen vergeving en den onboetvaardigen straffe der zonde te verkondigen, antwoordde de Synode: "Overmits de binding en ontbinding der zonden genoegzaam in de prediciën des Woords geschiedt, zoo is het onnoodig een eigene forma daarvan in te voeren."

Wij meenen eveneens, dat indien de prediking des Woords tot haar gewone recht komt, dat er dan voor een Speciale Absolutie geen plaats is, en indien de prediking **daarin in gebreke is**, dan is het zeker roeping der Kerk om **daarop** nadruk te leggen.

(Kerkeraad, Ellsworth, Mich.)

The undersigned hereby lodge a protest against the New Order of Worship as adopted by our last Synod. We have conscientious scruples against the introduction of this Order into our services. We request that our next Synod repeal, or revise this new Order, especially the part dealing with the Service of Reconciliation.

The *grounds* of our protest are as follows:

I. The present Order of Worship is objectionable to the majority of our churches. This is evident from:

- a) The fact that it was unfavorably reported on by eight of our Classes at the Synod of 1922 without as much even one endorsement (cf. Acts 1922, pp. 67, 68);
- b) The present general dissatisfaction with the new Order as is evident from our papers and the minutes of the various Classes.

II. The so-called Service of Reconciliation, as contained in the new Order is undesirable both from the point of view of principle and practice.

A. Objections from the point of view of principle:

- 1) It is an unnecessary repetition of elements already contained in the service. The congregational prayer and the sermon adequately bring out the confession of sin and absolution;

- 2) It is contrary to the thirty-first Lord's Day of our Catechism. The view here presented with respect to the doctrine of the keys is that absolution is applied thru the direct preaching of the Word, and not by a separate form as was the practice of Rome;
- 3) The absolution in the new Order of Worship will lead us in the direction of the Roman Catholic view of the priesthood. Explanation: God alone can grant absolution, and does so thru the medium of His holy Word. As a servant of the Word, it is the office and duty of the minister to apply it in the most direct manner possible. Separating the absolution from the preaching of the Word will tend to direct attention in this matter, rather to the person and office of the minister than to the Word of God;
- 4) The separate Service of Reconciliation will tend to develop a spirit of formalism and ritualism in our public worship:
  - a) by multiplying the elements of our worship;
  - b) by placing a wrong emphasis upon the relative importance of the different elements of our worship. **Explanation:**

Arguing on the basis of the fundamental principle of the service as being the meeting of God with His people, the Service of Reconciliation becomes pivotal to the whole worship. That is the most important element of the meeting of God with His people. The Service of Reconciliation thus usurps the place of the Service of the Word. This will inevitably lead to formalism.

- 5) The pivotal place of the Service of Reconciliation gives our worship too much of an anthropological-soteriological character. The genius of Calvinism is theological. This should also be brought out in our worship.

B. The Service of Reconciliation is undesirable from the point of view of practice:

- 1) Its use in one of the services on the Lord's Day, and not in the others, will lead to an undesirable discrimination between the services, and tend to foster habits of irregular attendance of divine worship;
- 2) It will tend to foster a false type of assurance of faith based more upon the formal declaration of the minister than upon the direct promises of the Word of God and a searching self-examination by the direct light of the Word.

(Consistory of the Aetna Church.)

De Kerkeraad van Hull, Iowa, heeft bezwaar tegen het invoeren van den Nieuwen Vorm van Eeredienst en verzoekt de Synode het besluit in re eeredienst te herroepen.  
*Gronden:*

- 1) De "Absolutie" na de Wetlezing geeft den schijn dat de Wetlezing alleen geschiedt met een doel, namelijk, de kennis der ellende, daar ze toch wel in de eerste plaats dient te geschieden als regel des levens;
- 2) De "Absolutie" dient in de prediking te geschieden, en moet niet een apart deel zijn (zie Zondag 31). Men kan niet wel aannemen dat de opstellers van onzen Catechismus niet met de "Absolutie" bekend waren;
- 3) Dat de "Absolutie" alleen kan bediend, wanneer een leeraar aanwezig is, is bedenkelijk. We gaan de gedachte voeden dat waar het bijzonder ambt is, dat daar de Kerk is;
- 4) De gewetens mogen niet aan band gelegd worden volgens onze Nederl. Geloofsbelijdenis (Art. 32). Dit heeft te meer klem nu we ons bevinden in een overgangsperiode;
- 5) De versterking des geloofs geschiede door het Woord en de Sacramenten (zie Nederl. Geloofsbelijdenis, Art. 33, en Kort Begrip, Vr. 50);
- 6) Om sleur te voorkomen hebben wij viermaal in het jaar Avondmaal. Schriftuurlijker was het elke week te hebben. Om sleur te voorkomen is het niet wenschelijk zulk een vasten, bindenden vorm te volgen. In Nederland heeft men de gewoonte om dezelfde verzen te zingen na Wetlezing en lezing der Twaalf Artikelen afgeschaft om deze reden;

- 7) De geschiedenis onzer kerken bewijst dat de Synode de vorm van eeredienst steeds aan de kerkeraden heeft overgelaten, getuige hiervan de geschiedenis van het koorgezang, insluitende de Synode van 1928;
- 8) De "Absolutie"-formule door de Synode voorgeschreven is geen essentieel deel van de eeredienst. Ook de Synode van 1928 beschouwt het niet als zoodanig. Ze schreef de Absolutie-formule's voor alleen voor de eerste dienst;
- 9) Verwekking van onnoodige onrust of erger.  
(Kerkeraad, Hull, Iowa.)

De Kerkeraad verzoekt de Synode om het besluit, in 1928 genomen, in re de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst te herroepen. *Gronden:*

- 1) Omdat ze de eenheid en den vrede der kerken bedreigt, wat thans reeds openbaar wordt;
- 2) Omdat de Synode geen recht heeft eene middelmatige zaak bindend te maken, en alzoo de conscientien der geloovigen te binden (1 Petri 5:3; Art. XXXII onzer Confessie);
- 3) Omdat door het stuk der Absolutie de sleutelen tot het openen en het sluiten van het Koninkrijk Gods worden verlegd, waar volgens de Heilige Schrift en onzen Catechismus dat geschiedt door de verkondiging des Evangelies en de Christelijke Ban (Matth. 16:19; Matth. 18:15-17; Catechismus, Zondag XXXI);
- 4) Omdat de Absolutie feitelijk verheven wordt tot een Sacrament
  - a) daar slechts een geordende leeraar de Absolutie mag verkondigen ("proclaim") Acta 1928, p. 300;
  - b) en beweerd wordt dat ons een vaste grond voor ons geloof gegeven wordt door de formule der Absolutie, Acta 1928, p. 285;
- 5) Omdat voor eene vormelijke belijdenis van zonde en absolutie, zooals die vastgelegd is in de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst geen enkele grond kan gevonden worden in de Heilige Schrift. De Heilige Schrift leert daarentegen, dat de zondaar tot oprecht belijdenis der zonde komt door de overtuiging des Heiligen Geestes, Die ook bij den aanvang en den verderen voortgang het geloof werkt en versterkt (zie Ef. 2:8; Heb. 10:39).  
(Kerkeraad, Shepherd, Mont.)

The Consistory of Ripon asked Cl. California to transmit to Synod the following overture. Classis granted the request, but expressed itself as being entirely out of accord with the substance of the overture.

The overture is: De Kerkeraad stelt voor dat de Synode het besluit aangaande de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst herzie.

*Grond:* De beroering in onze kerken is bewijs dat men nog niet rijp was voor zulk een besluit.

De Kerkeraad zou gaarne zien dat het besluit herzien werd in deze voege dat deze nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst niet verplichtend werd gemaakt, maar alleen als een advies worde beschouwd. Indien er gemeenten zijn die veranderingen willen aanbrengen, dat men dan alleen die aanbrengende in den geest van de nieuwe orde.

De Kerkeraad van Rock Rapids, Iowa, zich bezwaard gevoelende tegen het invoeren van den nieuwen Orde van Eeredienst, zendt de volgende instructie door naar de Synode:

De Synode herroepde haar besluit genomen inzake den Eeredienst, zooals die zich concentreert in de Absolutie (zie Acta 1928, Art. 62, enz.). *Gronden:*

- a) Uit een historisch oogpunt is de absolutie toch door geen Gereformeerde Synode als het hart van den eeredienst aangenomen en de kerken bindend opgelegd;
- b) De zaak van den eeredienst, zooals die zich in de absolutie concentreert, was de kerken reeds voorgelegd en door haar, althans in een materieelen zin, verworpen. Kon nu de Synode, waarin de kerken vertegenwoordigd zijn, de nieuwe Orde van Eeredienst maar invoeren, zonder deze zaak, met de daarvoor aangegeven gronden, de kerken eerst weer voor te leggen?
- c) Tegen den aangenomen eeredienst zijn gewichtige bezwaren in te brengen:
  - 1) Men maakt van de vergeving der zonden het centraal dogma van den eeredienst; terwijl het centraal dogma van den eeredienst is God geopenbaard in Christus Jezus door den Heiligen Geest, gelijk dat in den zegen aangegeven wordt. Hierin liggen al de weldaden gegrond;

- 2) In den aangenomen eeredienst komt de weldaad van de vergeving der zonden te veel op zichzelf te staan, los van de heiligmaking. De verzekering van de vergeving der zonden wordt toch ook verkregen door het geloof in Christus in den weg van heiligmaking;
- 3) In den aangenomen eeredienst wordt de absolutie uitgesproken hoofdzakelijk op de belijdenis der zonden. In den Catechismus en de Formulieren van Doop en Avondmaal wordt de vergeving der zonden en het eeuwige leven toegezegd in den weg van drie stukken. Bij de absolutie ontbreekt althans één der stukken. Op dit spoor verzeilt men in de wateren van hedendaagsche "revivalism";
- 4) Men maakt wezenlijk onderscheid tusschen de diensten. Dit is in strijd met het grondbeginsel van den eeredienst;
- 5) Men heeft de absolutie tot de waardigheid van een sacrament verheven. Wat toch is een sacrament? Een sacrament is een teeken waaraan een werking verbonden is. Het Evangelie centraliseert zich in het sacrament. Het wordt bediend in het uitspreken van een bepaald formule. Het kan alleen door een bedienaar des Woords bediend worden. Welnu, al deze kenmerken draagt de absolutie. (Kerkeraad, Rock Rapids, Iowa.)

Classis California transmits to Synod three protests by William Verver, Gerhard Vander Beek, and G. H. Schaapman, communicant members of the Church at Ripon. Classis declares itself entirely out of accord with the substance of the protests.

Classis also informs Synod that K. Winters, G. Meninga, H. Meninga, G. Vrieling, and T. Schuiling notified Classis of their intention to submit to Synod protests against the action of Synod of 1928 regarding the Order of Worship. All of these brethren are members in full communion of the Church at Ripon.

The above named protests and one sent by the Hon. A. Dykstra on the same subject, with Reply thereto of the Broadway Consistory, are in the hands of the Stated Clerk of Synod.

H. B.

## VI. VARIA

REPORTS REPRESENTATIVE BIBLE SOCIETY, CHICAGO  
TRACT SOCIETY; NATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

(Cf. Acta 1928, pp. 26 and 156.)

## Redistributie der Classes

Classis Orange City geeft de Synode ter overweging of het niet wenschelijk zou zijn dat een grondig onderzoek worde ingesteld naar de mogelijkheid en raadzaamheid van eene nieuwe indeeling onzer gemeenten onder tien of twaalf Classes waarin, binnen zekere grenzen, er meer gelijkheid zij in het aantal gezinnen, en zóó verdeeld dat, geographisch de onderscheidene terreinen van elkander gescheiden zijn, zoodat geen twee of meer Classes gemeenten hebben die over hetzelfde terrein verspreid liggen. *Gronden:*

- 1) Meerder eerlijkheid in de vertegenwoordiging der gemeenten in Boards en Synode;
- 2) Geestelijke en kerkelijke belangen komen beter tot hun recht zoo onze Classes noch te groot, noch te klein zijn;
- 3) Telkens kwam de zaak genoemd in punt 1 der gronden in onze Kerk ter sprake.

(Classis Orange City.)

## Classis-indeeling

Inzake een soortgelijk stuk dat ter Synodale tafel komt van Classis Orange City betreffende een mogelijke verandering aangaande de indeeling der Classes, wenscht de Kerkeraad te Prinsburg U Eerwaarde broeders het volgende mede te deelen:

- 1) De Kerkeraad deelt mede dat hij grootendeels met de inhoud van wat van Classiswege ter Synode komt instemt. Wij gelooven wel dat op dit gebied verbetering behoort plaats te nemen indien immer mogelijk;
- 2) Doch de wijze waarop dit materiaal van de zijde der Classis ter Synode komt keurt de genoemde Kerkeraad niet in orde te zijn.

Mogelijk zou de Synode om dit tweede punt de zaak alszoodanig niet gaan behandelen. Daarom zenden wij evenwel onze instructie door naar de Synode.

De zaak staat in het kort zóó. Op de herfstclassis van 1929 zond de Prinsburg Kerkeraad een brief naar de classicale vergadering uitsprekende de wenschelijkheid van een andere en betere indeeling der vier Iowa Classes. Die zaak werd in handen gelegd van een Commissie door de Classis benoemd. De Commissie legt de voorjaarsclassis (1930) voor de zaak voor de Synode te leggen, gelijk het Agendum dat zal te kennen geven. Dat was niet volgens de opdracht der Classis aan de Commissie gegeven. Desniettemin werd de **Instructie**, die wel voor de Synode was bedoeld (n.l. van Prinsburg) door de Classis niet doorgezonden. Doch het advies van de Commissie werd aangenomen.

De Prinsburg Kerkeraad oordeelde dat iedere instructie kerkerechtelijk ter Synode moet komen van een bepaalden Kerkeraad.

Zodoende deelden de afgevaardigden aan de Classis direct mede dat men het recht behield hunne instructie door te zenden.

Tenslotte is de hoofdinhoud van beide stukken dezelfde, doch de genoemde Kerkeraad is overtuigd kerkrechtelijk deze materie door deze methode langs zuivere banen ter Synode tot overweging wordt voorgelegd.

Onze instructie luidt als volgt:

De Synode benoeme een Commissie bestaande uit althans vijf leden die bekend zijn met onze kerkelijke kaart om pogingen aan te wenden zooveel mogelijk meerdere gelijkheid van grootte der Classes te bevorderen. De *gronden* hiervoor zijn:

- 1) De redenen voor de vroegere indeeling sommiger onzer Classes vallen thans weg, bijv. de herkomst (Cl. Hackensack), de taalquestie (Cl. Ostfriesland), en de geografische liggingen van onderscheidene gemeenten. (In den staat van Minnesota zijn er niet minder dan drie Classes vertegenwoordigd);

- 2) Het aantal der afgevaardigden ter Synode en Curatorium zou zoodoende meer billijk zijn volgens het getal huisgezinnen en der gemeenten. Iedere Classis moest, indien immer mogelijk, uit minstens duizend huisgezinnen bestaan. Doch vergelijk een Classis van 560 huisgezinnen met een bestaande uit 3,387 huisgezinnen;
- 3) Een te klein aantal huisgezinnen en gemeenten in EEN Classis is niet bevorderlijk voor het welzijn der Kerk. (Kerkeraad, Prinsburg, Minn.)

De Emden, Minnesota, Kerkeraad verzoekt overdracht van de Classis Osthriesland tot die van Orange City.

*Gronden:*

- 1) Ruim drie honderd (300) mijl zijn wij gelegen van het centrum van Classis Osthriesland en de gewone vergaderplaatsen dier Classis. Wij zijn geen honderd en vijftig (150) mijlen van het centrum van Classis Orange City. De gemeenten van Classis Orange City liggen ons allen nader dan de overgroote meerderheid van Classis Osthriesland. Zoo terwille van de onkosten (Classical zoowel als in geval van vacature voor Classisbeurten, enz.) verzoeken we tot deze overdracht;
- 2) In den regel gebruikt de Kerkeraad de Hollandsche taal, ook in zijn instructies naar de Classis. Dit ook veroorzaakt moeilijkheid en maakt voor ons de overdracht zeer gewenscht.

(Kerkeraad, Emden, Minn.)

Classis overtures Synod to take note of the fact that the business interests at home and abroad are demanding a **Calendar Reform**. Of all the plans that have been proposed, the Cotsworth International Fixed Calendar appears to have more supporters than any other.

This Calendar, in brief, consists of thirteen standard months, with each month as follows:

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Each month in the year will always be exactly the same as that shown above. A new month will be inserted between June and July. The 365th day will be December 29, but will have no week-day name. This day, to be known as "Year-day," will be inserted between Saturday, December 28, and Sunday, January 1. In like manner in Leap Year, the extra day, June 29, will be placed between Saturday, June 28, and Sunday, the first day of the new month. It is proposed to have a fixed date for the Easter Sunday.

In view of these facts Synod is asked:

- 1) To express itself as being opposed to the proposed Cotsworth International Calendar because of the insertion of the "Year-day" between Saturday and Sunday, making it very difficult for Christians to observe the Lord's Day at the proper time; and
- 2) To ask other Churches to take a similar stand with respect to the proposed Calendar Reform.

(Classis Muskegon.)

Classis requests Synod to register a protest with the organization sponsoring the adoption of a new calendar containing thirteen months of four weeks to a month, doing away with one or more days each year. *Ground:* This is in conflict with the ordinance of God, calling for one day out of seven to be kept holy unto the Lord.

(Classis Pella.)

Classis overtures Synod to register with the **American Bible Society** a vigorous protest against statements made by Rev. S. Parkes Cadman, D.D., L.L.D., in an article entitled, "How to Read the Bible," appearing in the *Bible Society Record* of January, 1930, p. 14. The objectionable statements are: "As a collection of tracts, treatises, and histories, it includes every type of literature. Folklore, myth, legend, drama, idyll, poetry, and biography are here associated with meditations, maxims, letters, sermons, parables, prayers, psalms, and canticles. Transmitted to successive generations by providential oversight, the Bible's teachings reflect the ever-advancing moral and religious intelligence of the nations."

(Classis California.)

**VII. PROTESTS AND APPEALS**

**(COMPARE PROTESTS in re PUBLIC WORSHIP)**

Ackley Consistory vs. Austinville (?)

Appeal to Synod of L. M. Breen and Reply thereto, Classis Hackensack.

Report on case of Rev. H. Kamps.

Protests, Rev. W. De Groot.

Protest, Rev. J. S. Dykstra.

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**REPORT XXIV\***


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**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**


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*To the Synod of 1930.*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :—

**O**UR REPORT will be concerned largely with the results of the survey ordered by the last Synod. Between 75% and 80% of our pastors and clerks have answered the questionnaire sent to them. We wish to express our thanks to the men who were willing to take the time and the trouble to furnish the requested information. We especially thank the brethren who were interested enough and kind enough to call our attention to special problems which they were meeting in their work, or to offer suggestions for the improvement of our catechetical instruction. In some cases these suggestions were as helpful as the information asked by the questionnaire itself.

The returns on the Sunday School work are not yet sufficient for a complete report, so that, as far as the survey is concerned, we will confine ourselves to the general condition of our catechetical instruction as reflected in the answers to the questionnaire.

I. TERM

It may be of interest to remind ourselves that in our churches we have about 33,000 catechumens. In the smaller rural churches we find an average of 2.2 catechumens per family, and in the large urban churches an average of 1.3 catechumens per family. The term average is 34 weeks. It appears that 11% of our churches conduct catechism classes 28 weeks or less, and 10% continue classes for more than 36 weeks. The average lies between 7 and 9 months, with a tendency to shorten the term as the church increases in size and operates under urban conditions. Of the churches

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\* This Report was handed in after the forms were practically closed, and therefore of necessity had to be placed in the rear of the book.

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of over 150 families only 3 report a 36-week term, while the great majority report a 28-week term. Again the Committee recommends that, wherever possible, the catechetical term be not less than 9 months.

II. SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

(I.E. DIVISION INTO CLASSES)

The next point of interest is the division of our Church-schools into classes. The various ways in which this is done may be brought under six heads, and symbolized as follows:

- |    | PR. | JR.              | SR.   |                           |
|----|-----|------------------|-------|---------------------------|
| 1) | 0   | Jr.—○            | ..... | (no junior doctrine)      |
| 2) | 1   | Jr.—○—○          | ..... | (one class Jr. doct.)     |
| 3) | 2   | Jr.—○—○—○        | ..... | (two classes Jr. doct.)   |
| 4) | 3   | Jr.—○—○—○—○      | ..... | (three classes Jr. doct.) |
| 5) | 4   | Jr.—○—○—○—○—○    | ..... | (four classes Jr. doct.)  |
|    |     |                  | I     | (four classes Jr. doct.)  |
| 6) | 4   | Jr. I—○—○—○—○—○— | ..... | with intermediate class)  |

1) The symbol 0 Jr.—○..... stands for the Church-school with no doctrine class between the Preparatory classes (Bible story and history) and the final doctrine class. In these schools the children, usually at the age of 15 or 16, pass out of the preparatory classes immediately into a mixed class of students all the way from 15 to 20 years.

In the reports we find 30 such schools, largely, as may easily be understood, among the smaller churches. Nevertheless, even among churches as high as 80 families, with more than 170 catechumens, we find cases in which pupils at the age of 14 or 15 pass out of the preparatory classes and immediately enter into a general young people's class in which they remain until confession of faith is made.

2) Next comes the school symbolized by 1 Jr.—○—○..... Here the graduates of the preparatory classes pass into a single junior doctrine class in which they remain for one to three or even six years before entering the senior or young people's class. About 80 of the schools that reported belong to this class, which is by far the largest single class of schools in our churches. Even among our very largest churches we find instances in which pupils pass out of the preparatory classes into a single junior class, and from

there join the mixed senior class in which they remain to the end. In this class we find the greatest lack of uniformity with respect to the age at which the pupil begins doctrinal work and the age at which he passes into the senior class. Some begin doctrinal work as early as 10; in other churches the pupil is 16 years of age before receiving any doctrinal instruction. On the other hand, in some schools the pupil is finished with his junior doctrine as early as 14 years of age (2 years earlier than pupils in some other schools begin to study doctrine), and at that early age join the mixed senior class, including all ages from 14 to 20.

3) The next class 2 Jr.—○—○—○—○.... is represented by 44 of our Church-schools. This is the predominating class among our larger churches, but several of them are found even in our smaller country charges. In this class of schools the situation is much better, although also here there seems to be a marked difference of opinion as to the time when doctrinal work ought to be begun. Some begin their doctrinal classes at 11 years of age; others not until 14 years. The majority, however, begin doctrinal work at the age of 12, passing the pupil into the second junior class at the age of 14 (that is, at the age when they enter high school), in which class they remain until 16 or 17 years, and in quite a number of cases until the age of 18 years. In this class of schools the senior classes are, as a matter of course, much more of similar age, and the work of the senior class is in most cases more definitely preparatory for making confession of faith.

4) The symbol 3 Jr.—○—○—○—○.... represents schools with the junior years divided into 3 classes. A hopeful number (35) of pastors have adopted this plan. The work here approaches close grading and makes for much better results. It may seem strange that the largest percentage of this class of schools is found, not in our largest churches, but in the medium-sized churches from 75 to 150 families. This is, no doubt, due to the fact that pastors in this class of churches have a sufficient number of catechumens to make close grading possible, and are not so overwhelmed with pastoral work and other duties that not sufficient time and

attention can be devoted to the educational work of the church.

5) Of truly closely graded schools with 4 junior years, or with 4 junior years followed by an intermediate class, we find only a very few instances, so that we will not speak of them at this time. The needs of a more closely graded system of education in our churches will be brought up later in our report. It may be mentioned, however, that also these instances are found in the group of medium-sized churches, and we evidently have pastors who see the need of organizing their catechetical work, that it may as much as possible be on a par with the organization of the day school which their pupils attend.

### III. TEXT-BOOKS USED

In the preparatory grades (Bible story and history work) Borstius' Primer, Sacred History for Juniors, and Sacred History for Seniors are used in 264 classes; Borstius, Dyksterhuis, and Donner are used in 102 classes, while Dr. Kuzenga's books are used in 106 classes. With respect to the work in the preparatory grades and the text-books used, we will have a suggestion later in this report.

In the doctrinal classes we meet with a greater variety of text-books in use. The books of Dr. Beets and Bosma (Primer of Reformed Doctrine, Compendium Enlarged, and Catechism of Reformed Doctrine) are used by 96 classes. The books of Hylkema and Tuuk (First, Second, and Third Book in Christian Doctrine, are used by 213 classes. The plain Compendium is used by 51, and Stuart and Van Wyk's Manual by 44 classes. (Note: This last figure is not so certain. We have met with several who had answered "Compendium" who were using the Manual or some other rendition of the Compendium.)

Among the more advanced classes the Students' Compendium is used in 35 classes, the plain Heidelberg Catechism by 19, Bosma's Exposition of Reformed Doctrine by 17, and Beets' Compendium Explained by 10 classes. Modifications of the Compendium by other authors are used by 8 classes.

In the few churches that conduct special classes for confessing members the recent text-books by Prof. Heyns on

Ref. Doctrine and by Dr. Beets on our Confession are in use. It may be interesting to note that Kort Begrip in the Holland language is used in 7 classes, Donner's Bijbel-sche Waarheden in 3, and Hellenbroek also in 3 classes.

When we survey the field of text-books used in teaching the doctrinal classes, the variety is not nearly as great as some have supposed. Compendium is still the basic text for almost all junior doctrine. The various text-books in use in the various classes may vary somewhat in scope and in method, but they are based upon the Compendium, follow the same order of treatment, and cover virtually the same ground.

In the more advanced classes some schools continue the study of the Compendium, using either a pithy summary like the Manual of Stuart and Van Wyk, or a more comprehensive work like Beets' Compendium Explained or Students' Compendium. Other pastors prefer the more theological method for their advanced classes, using Beets and Bosma's Catechism of Reformed Doctrine, Bosma's Exposition of Reformed Doctrine, or the Outlines for Seniors.

This leaves only the special classes of confessing members which, when not using the books already mentioned, are taking up advanced studies either in Prof. Heyns' Exposition of Reformed Doctrine or in Dr. Beets' Manual on the Confession.

There seems to be nothing in the text-book situation that can lead to confusion or that should cause concern. It may be deemed remarkable that, with all the efforts on the part of various men of our denomination for the past twenty-five years and more to provide text-books adapted to present-day needs, virtually all follow the same material that has been in vogue in our churches since their earliest days. The text-books are either enlarged versions of or commentaries upon the Compendium, or they are manuals on Reformed Doctrine used in advanced classes that have already been grounded in the Compendium.

The Committee is of the opinion that, while there is much room for improvement in our catechetical work in general, there does not seem to be any need for Synod at this time to advise a change with respect to the text-books

in use. It should be kept in mind that our churches vary greatly in size, and that they operate under conditions that are vastly dissimilar, so that there is need of a number of texts from which to select. We can only advise that pastors seek to grade their catechetical schools as closely as the number of pupils and the circumstances will allow, and that they exercise care in selecting the texts best suited for these grades.

#### IV. CHURCH HISTORY AND CHURCH GOVERNMENT

In answer to the question, whether any provision was made for the study of Church History and Government, about 30 pastors replied that this was taken care of more or less incidentally in the regular doctrinal classes or in the Young People's Societies. This question drew forth several inquiries as to a suitable text for this subject. Your Committee is sorry that it cannot point to a simple text suitable for such a class. We are of the opinion that the great facts of Church History in general, and the main features of the history of our Reformed Churches, should be taught in our Church-schools as well as the elements of Church government. Most of our young people grow up with virtually no knowledge of the history of the Christian Church, and a number make confession of faith with only a vague notion of the government of the Church of which they are members, and in the life and work of which they are called to take an active part. If intelligent citizenship requires that American history and civil government be taught in our schools, it is still more necessary that church history and government be taught to our young people, that they have a better appreciation of the Church and its heritage, a better understanding of the task to which it is called, and a better comprehension of the various currents of religious thought by which we are surrounded.

A grasp of the essentials of Church History will make for an intelligent type of loyalty, the kind of loyalty that is especially needed in our day. And a knowledge of the fundamentals of our church government will be a great aid in promoting intelligent coöperation of the church with its office-bearers and in the development of leadership in the Church.

In the judgment of the Committee the cause of the Church would be well served if provision were made for a short course in these two branches of study. Some Christian schools give a course in Church History. Wherever this is the case, the Church-school can devote itself more exclusively to history and work of our denomination. To be able to do this work efficiently, suitable text-books will have to be written. With respect to these text-books we would make the following general suggestions: The text-book on Church History should provide for a course of not more than one year, say 28 lessons, leaving time for reviews and tests. It should preferably have a biographical emphasis, bringing out also the great controversies that have arisen, so that this study may be of both historical and doctrinal value to the pupil. The manual on Church government should provide for a course of not more than half a year (about 14 or 16 lessons). It should be elementary, and set forth such features as every church-member should know in order to take an intelligent interest and share in the work of the Church. We sincerely hope that men who are versed in these branches of knowledge, and have a knack of writing for young people, will ere long provide our Church-schools with suitable manuals for this purpose.

It is not necessary, however, to be idle in the meantime. There is a little book used in several of our Christian schools, "Sketches from Church History," by Mr. B. J. Benink, which in many respects is an excellent manual on general Church History, and can be used with excellent results by our churches. It contains 52 short lessons, written for 8th graders. In our opinion the style is somewhat heavy for the average child of this age, and the book can be used to still better advantage by young people in the 10th grade. The book would be still more useful if review questions appeared after each lesson or group of lessons, but these can be supplied without any great effort by the individual teacher. The lessons are short. Two of them can be easily taken at one time, so that it can conveniently be finished in one year. We would recommend that wherever no other provision is made for the study of Church History, pastors

make a beginning by using this book. Further information may be had by writing to Principal A. S. De Jong, 10431 So. State St., Chicago, Ill.

#### V. TESTS AND REPORTS

To the question whether regular tests were conducted in catechetical classes, 91 answered "No," 32 stated that they conducted weekly or occasional oral tests, and 61 answered "Yes." Of these last only some 20 informed us that regular written tests were conducted. One of the advantages of a more general use of the same text would be this, that it would be more feasible to have sets of tests printed, so that pastors would find this part of the work made easier. This, no doubt, would be a step ahead in the standardization of our catechetical instruction.

It is the opinion of the Committee that, if at all possible, regular written tests should be conducted at least in the Junior classes in doctrine. If such tests are held and the test-papers properly graded and handed back to the pupil, they will do much to encourage faithful study on the part of the pupil. They will serve also as a valuable guide to the teacher, since they will enable him to check up constantly on the efficacy of his work. If frequent tests are deemed indispensable in our day-schools, they are equally indispensable in our Church-schools. Moreover, the pupil should never get the impression that study and effort devoted to the catechetical work is of less consequence than it is for the day-school. Properly conducted tests, say every two months, are too valuable a means to stimulate the interest of the class, to uphold the morale of the school, and to guide the teacher in his work, to be neglected.

The Committee feels the same way about sending report cards to parents after each test. With respect to this question 141 answered that they did not send report cards, 11 stated that they reported only occasionally, or when the pupil was not doing satisfactory work, while 35 stated that they kept parents regularly in touch with the work of the children by sending them a report.

The practice of sending report cards is to be encouraged. One of the most frequent complaints brought in by pastors

is this, that it seems so difficult to secure the coöperation of the home. Too many send their children to catechism in the same spirit in which they send a bundle of soiled linen to the laundry. They expect the work to be done by those who are paid for doing it with the least possible inconvenience to themselves. This attitude is becoming more widespread as the distractions of life multiply, and the old simplicity of home-life disappears. The Committee feels convinced that all the ways and means that may be devised to improve catechetical instruction given in the brief hour once a week in the class-room, will bear little fruit if we cannot win back the parents of homes to take a more sincere interest and to give a more whole-hearted coöperation in the work of instructing their children. This is a situation which is in itself worthy of the most serious thought and effort on the part of our pastors, and there seems to be the need of a special and concerted campaign to awaken our people on this subject. From earliest days our churches have stood strong on the point of the education of our youth. We may call it one of the distinguishing features of our church-life. Nevertheless there is increasing need to take to heart the warning, "Hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown." The official work of the Church can serve only to retard decadence and to defer the time of ultimate collapse, unless Christian parents take seriously the solemn promise given at the baptism of their children.

But it is also true that pastors do not always use the means at hand to stimulate the interest of parents and to keep them duly informed with respect to the work of their children. One of the means is the sending of report cards at regular intervals. It has been abundantly proven that both pupils and parents take a much greater interest in the catechetical work wherever this is done. Some men have informed us that sending report-cards is impracticable, because it is difficult to get the cards back after they have been sent out. It will be found, however, that this difficulty will vanish almost entirely after a while, if the practice is kept up. A word from the pulpit and a little help from the consistory will usually be sufficient to bring careless and

negligent parents in line. The Committee proposes to devise a report card which may serve the needs of most of our pastors and which can be procured at a nominal price.

#### VI. CLASS-ROOMS AND EQUIPMENT

No class of questions drew forth more comment and suggestions than did those pertaining to the class-room and equipment. It was reported by 151 of our pastors that the seats in use were none other than church-pews or chairs of some kind. Only 27 reported that their class-rooms were equipped with desks or tablet-arm chairs, so that written work can be done in class. Several pastors expressed themselves very feelingly on this subject. Most of our churches, especially in the past, have not been planned with any view towards the educational work of the church. The auditorium of the church, a general utility room attached to the auditorium, or else a room more or less gloomy and forbidding in some corner of the basement, are the places where the majority of our pastors spends several hours of the week teaching the young hope of the Church.

This is true in quite a number, even of our largest churches built in more recent years. The auditorium is planned with care. The basement is designed especially with the social needs of the church in view. Kitchens and large assembly rooms have been the prime consideration. But usually very little thought has been given to the educational work. More than one-third of our churches of over 150 families provide no other seats for their class-room than discarded pews, and only one-third provide the children with writing facilities.

When asked whether their class-rooms compared favorably with the school-rooms of the day school in neatness and general cheerful effect, 85 pastors answered emphatically "No," 20 answered "fair," while about 80 felt that their class-rooms measured up to the day school class-rooms in neatness and cheerfulness, if not in equipment. A few of our pastors are very fortunate in that they have splendid class-rooms and all the needed equipment for their school work.

The Committee would urge our churches to pay greater

attention to this matter. We would advise consistories and building committees to keep in mind that good class-rooms are just as important as a good auditorium, and to consult the needs of this important branch of the church work when planning a new church building. It is certainly true that the efficiency of catechetical work depends most of all upon the consecration, personality, and ability of the pastor or teacher. But, while Hopkins on one end of a log and a student on the other may constitute a university, it will nevertheless be a university laboring under unnecessary difficulties. Both pastors and pupils are greatly handicapped in their work when proper facilities and equipment are withheld from them. If we remember that the type of church membership that will prevail in the next generation will depend largely upon the instruction and the impressions received by our children now, during the twelve years of their school life, it will be felt that the church owes the very best it can give to the Church-school.

Many of our churches are so situated that matters can be very much improved without much additional expense. A well-lighted class-room above ground is the ideal. But in cases where this is less feasible, it is very well possible to build a generously-proportioned class-room in the basement, even if this should mean that the general assembly room has to be cut up for this purpose. The educational work, carried on every week, is of much greater importance than occasional socials or meetings of that kind.

We are aware, however, that many of our smaller churches see no immediate hope of making radical changes. Pastors in these charges will have to take encouragement from the fact that a good craftsman can do acceptable work even with a limited equipment of tools. But even their situation can be improved if they show themselves deeply interested in this work, and can succeed in arousing their consistories to see the importance of providing the best that is possible under the circumstances.

A portable blackboard of sufficient size can be owned even by the smallest church, and can be used to good advantage in every class. It seems strange that over fifty of our pastors, who have blackboards at their disposal, never

make use of them, and that only sixty report that they make use of a blackboard with any kind of regularity in the class-room work. We believe that the teacher who has acquired an aptitude for pointing his lessons and lectures with blackboard jottings, and so brings home to the class the salient points of the lesson; has gained much in making his teaching effective.

It is possible, even in the smallest churches, to provide writing facilities for the pupils. Wherever possible desks or chairs with tablet arms should be installed. Rubber-tipping the legs of these chairs will do away with the noise of which some pastors complain. Writing facilities for the pupils are indispensable, not only for written tests, but also for the regular class-work. Much of the effectiveness of the class-work is lost unless the pupils and young people have learned to take notes, and this they should learn to do during the years of Primary and Junior doctrine.

Wherever it is not possible to provide chairs or benches with tablet arms, it will be found possible to construct some fairly serviceable makeshifts. A few pastors arrange their pupils around a table. A better way is to construct simple writing-benches which can be placed in front of the chairs and which are the right height for comfortable writing. These benches can be constructed by any carpenter at small cost. They can be tiered up in a corner when not in use, and they are useful around the church for many purposes. If any of the pastors of small churches are interested, they may send to the Secretary for drawings and further suggestions.

#### VII. GREATER UNIFICATION NEEDED IN THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF OUR CHURCHES

In this last chapter of our report the Committee would urge that steps be taken to make possible a greater unification of the educational work carried on in our churches. As has been said, the reports concerning the work of the Sunday Schools have not come in in sufficient numbers to enable us to form a reliable opinion on this subject. This much is apparent, however, that outside of kindergarten and some primary work, our Sunday Schools almost uni-

versally follow the International Sunday School lesson system. We are fortunate indeed that we have able men who are devoting themselves to the task of preparing these lessons for our own Sunday Schools every week. We have nothing but praise for our **Instructor** and for the primary leaflets printed by these men.

The fact is, that however valuable the International System of lessons may be, it is not satisfactory especially in the Primary and Junior Departments. The sequence of the International lessons does not foster a conception of God's revelation to man as a progressive and unified whole. It does not help the pupil to acquire a knowledge of Sacred History. If the same method were followed in the day school, and pupils were given selections from the Colonial period in one quarter, from the Civil War period in another, followed by the period of early discoveries and then jumping to the time of the World War, etc., the result would be utterly confusing. The idea of a divine record of revelation running through the channel of continuous history, a history controlled by God throughout for the accomplishment of his great purpose upon earth, is one that is foreign to the International scheme. And yet, it is this thought that our children must learn to grasp, if they are to have a truly Reformed world-and life-view, and to have a solid backing of historical knowledge for their later studies in Christian doctrine. Even in the Bible Story classes the historical order should be observed.

Voices of dissatisfaction with the International system are heard from an increasing number of our churches, and the Committee believes that it is time to look seriously into this matter. In view of these things, and also in view of the instructions of the Synod of 1928 has given this Committee (see Acta 1928, p. 31), we venture to give suggestion as to this matter.

Before we go on, however, we wish to point to another great need, or rather, the same need in another quarter. The questionnaire also inquired into the primary work of our Church-schools, that is the work in Bible Stories and Sacred History. It was found that practically all churches continue to conduct these classes even where the majority

of the children attend Christian schools. (It may be said here that the 90 Christian schools are attended by children from 119 of our churches, and that of our 20,000 children in the primary schools about 13,000 receive Christian instruction.)

Many pastors, however, are dissatisfied with the text-books at present available. The usual "question-books," in attempting to cover the entire ground of Sacred History in a single term, compress too much material into one lesson. On the other hand, it is difficult to select from other books that are available, a course that is adapted to the needs of the various grades, and at the same time faithfully follows the line of sacred history. We have received several communications on this subject, and from experience and observation we believe that our children should be put in possession of a well worked out and properly illustrated series of "Readers" covering the entire field of Bible Story and Sacred History.

This is the need of our Sunday Schools and also of our primary catechetical classes. But now, since both deal with the same child at about the same age, it follows that for the sake of the best interests of our children, the two should be one. In other words, the Committee feels that it should be our ideal to arrive at a Church-school in which a consistent course of Bible Story, Sacred History, and Christian Doctrine is given, and in which the time and energies given to two departments which at present are entirely unrelated, can be employed in a unified course.

There may be churches who do not see it in this way, and who feel a strong attachment to the traditional Sunday School. These churches need not feel disturbed about this part of our report. We feel that no attempt should be made to coerce anyone, and that each church should be left free to decide for itself in this matter. But there are also churches that are highly dissatisfied with the present material available for both Sunday Schools and primary catechetical classes, and it should be made possible for these churches to procure material for a more systematic course of Bible study for their children. We also have a large class of churches without Christian school facilities, so that

the children of these schools are entirely dependent upon the instruction given in the home and by the Church. In these cases it is above all necessary to make the best possible use of the time and opportunities offered, to give the children a thorough and consistent course in Bible knowledge. We believe that if such a course is made available it will be gratefully adopted by an increasing number of our churches.

The Committee asks that Synod express its approval of a unified Church-school, embodying a progressive course of study in Sacred History and Christian Doctrine, making use of the time and teaching talent now employed in both catechetical classes and the Sunday School. It must be repeated that no single plan can be worked out that will suit the needs of all churches. The Committee wishes nevertheless to present a basic plan which it believes to be logical and practicable, and which is susceptible of considerable modification to meet the needs of a large number of our churches. The plan is virtually the same as that which appeared in our report to the last Synod. It then appeared merely as an illustration of a coordinated or unified course of instruction which was hinted at in the report. The Committee now comes before Synod with this same idea, asking Synod to approve of it, so that the Committee may begin to take definite steps in working out a course of this kind and offering it to the churches. The diagram on pages 72 and 73 may be helpful toward a better understanding of the remarks that follow.

The plan as illustrated includes:

- I. **A Course in Bible Story work and Sacred History.**  
(Usually from kindergarten to 8th grade inclusive.)
  - A. **Three years of Kindergarten and Primary work**  
(grades 0, 1, and 2);
  - B. **A three years' course in Bible Stories** (grades 3, 4, and 5).

During these three years the great stories of the Bible are studied in consecutive fashion. The pupils memorize questions and answers, stanzas of the Psalms, etc., in the usual way. Each lesson is

devoted to one Bible story. The "Readers" should be attractively illustrated.

C. A three years' course in elementary Sacred History (grades 6, 7, and 8).

It is still a question whether the lesson material should be prepared to appear in Sunday School papers or in the form of text-books. But it is clear, whatever way it is to be published, that it is to appear with good illustrations, and to be accompanied with maps. The course should be worked

5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
P R E P A R A T O R							
<i>Beginners</i>		<i>Bible Stories</i>			<i>Sacred His</i>		
							7 <i>Beg.</i>

out so as to give the pupil a good idea of the geography of Bible lands and of Bible customs.

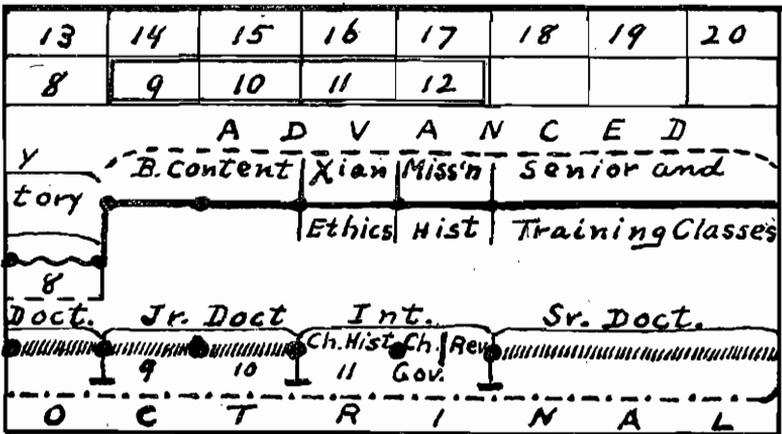
The Instructor Publishing Company has signified its willingness to supply the needed material. It will be understood, however, that some time, possibly a year or two, will have to pass before the lessons are prepared and ready to be introduced.

This plan would also enhance the value of Teachers' Training Classes, and make it easier to work out an effective teachers' training course. A set of teachers' manuals, composed with a view to the needs of each grade would, in our opinion, be a greater aid to the teacher in preparing the lesson than the average "Teachers' Meeting." And, as is the case in the day school, teaching the same grade for a few years will make for better work. We believe that this

method is one that makes for better preparation, greater pleasure in teaching, and more fruitful results as far as the pupils are concerned.

## II. Primary and Junior Doctrine

According to the plan illustrated by the diagram, the Bible Story and Sacred History work is taken care of entirely by the Sunday School. But somewhere around the 7th grade it is time to introduce the pupil into the study of Christian doctrine. We believe that the period of begin-



ners and junior doctrine should cover at least four years, and be graded as closely as possible. The work done in this period is of the utmost importance. It is the period for drill-work in the fundamentals of Christian doctrine, for the thorough memorizing of the questions and answers of essential definitions and of foundation texts.

Since there seems to be no special dearth of material to fill the present need, it is not necessary to say any more on that head. This does not mean that there is no room or need for improvement. Undoubtedly as time goes on the text-books available for Primary and Junior doctrine classes will be improved. As our Church-schools become better organized and a more definite plan of instruction is adopted and followed by our churches, it will be easier to provide texts adapted to the needs of the various grades.

### III. The Intermediate Course

We have already spoken of the desirability of an Intermediate class in Church History and Church Government. We foresee that it may take some time before we have the needed texts, but we hope that with the encouragement of Synod men will be found who will provide manuals for these classes. We have already mentioned a good little text-book that may be used for Church History, and it should not be difficult for any pastor to make a simple 14 or 16-lesson outline of the principles and essential elements of Reformed Church government.

Something might be said as to the best period at which to insert these subjects. Some will give preference to the senior years. Others will feel that these subjects can be handled more effectively in an intermediate class. The best way, no doubt, is to maintain an experimental attitude. At least for the time being. In the diagram these branches appear in an intermediate class of two years. One year of Church History, one semester of Church Government, and one semester of review of Christian doctrine are suggested there. We hope that a number of our pastors will try out this plan and will then let us have the benefit of their experience.

### IV. The Senior Class

Since also sufficient material is available for the Senior classes, it is not needful to say much on this subject. Under fairly normal circumstances the senior classes will consist almost entirely of professing members. Parents and consistories, as well as pastors everywhere, should help in creating a custom that young confessing members, as a matter of course, continue to avail themselves of the instruction offered by the Church. There are by far too many of our young confessing members who consider it a privilege to be exempt from further attendance at catechetical classes. The very ones who need further instruction the most, are often the most prone to take advantage of the fact that they can no longer be compelled to go. In fact, cases are not so rare in which it may be suspected that confession of faith

was prompted largely by a desire to be released from the irksome obligation of attending catechetical classes.

It may be true that with public profession of faith a change takes place with respect to the status of the young man or young woman in the church. But the instruction received during his years of ecclesiastical minority has in so far failed of its purpose, if this change of status serves only to reveal a lack of interest in further equipping himself for the Master's use.

We believe, however, that where this attitude has become more or less traditional, we as churches are not entirely without blame. Too often is the impression given as if the significance of catechetical instruction lies chiefly in this, that it is preparation for the making of public confession. The instruction furnished by the Church as equipment and training for active and fruitful membership is an idea that has possibly not been stressed as it might have been.

In the Senior course especially the student should be led to see Reformed truth in its direct bearing upon Christian life and activity. Its great aim should be to give the student a clear grasp of the fundamentals of Reformed doctrine:

- (1) as contrasted with past and especially with current divergent views;
- (2) as the basis of a Reformed life- and world-view. That is, it should show the direct and vital significance of these doctrines with respect to the life and the work of the Kingdom.

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#### V. The Advanced Sunday School Classes

In the plan outlined by the diagram, the Sunday School classes after the 7th grade run parallel to the catechetical classes. In other words, instruction is given not one hour, but two hours each week. During the first two years (grades 7 and 8, the time of "Beginners' Doctrine"), the course in Sacred History is finished in the Sunday School. From that time on, it is suggested, a course be worked out for the ad-

vanced Sunday School classes which shall be coördinated with the studies taken up in the catechetical classes, such as Bible Content, Practical Christian Ethics (after the manner of "What it Means to be a Christian," "The Problems of Youth in Social Life," "Special Problems in Christian Living," and "The World as a Field for Christian Service," published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication), the History of Christian Missions, and finally, Senior Classes and Teachers' Training Class.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Committee feels, however, that if anything is to be accomplished, we should not undertake too much at once. The great need for the present is a thorough preparatory course of Bible Story and Sacred History work, and we believe that we should confine ourselves to that for the present.

The advantages of such a graded preparatory course to take the place of the small "Question Book" classes conducted by pastors or elders, may be summed up as follows:

- (1) The work can be closely graded, which is impossible if the pastor is required to teach also the Bible Story and Sacred History classes. Since the teaching of Bible Stories and Sacred History does not form an essential part of catechetical instruction, there can be no objection, as far as any principle involved is concerned, to appoint teachers who are trained to teach these classes;
- (2) The plan makes possible a rather complete 3 years course in Sacred History. Any attempt to cover the ground in one year, as is made in the question books in common use, cannot give the best results;
- (3) In the graded plan the classes will be smaller, and a teacher with a small group of children, all belonging to the same grade, can do much better work than a pastor facing a large class of dissimilar ages. This is especially true when a teacher meets a class only for one hour a week;
- (4) This plan gives the pastor an opportunity to devote himself to the teaching of doctrinal classes, and it will enable him to effect a closer grading of these

classes. There is possibly no single situation that offers a greater handicap to effective teaching during the early years of doctrinal work than a considerable diversity in the ages of the pupils;

- (5) This plan will make it easier, not only to aid the teachers by providing "Teachers' Helps" designed for special grades, but also to devise means to secure better coöperation from the home. Once a considerable number of our churches have adopted this plan, it will be found easier to bring about a concerted effort to interest parents in the educational work of the Church.

\* \* \* \* \*

At the end of our report it is fitting that we record the loss of a beloved brother and valued member of our Committee, Mr. B. Sevensma. Since the last Synod God took him out of the midst of his labors here and took him home to his reward. The Committee expresses its sincere appreciation of the work done by Mr. Sevensma, and at the same time expresses its sincere sympathy with those who were bereaved by his death.

We announce that the Educational Conference, authorized by last Synod, has not yet been held. It was felt that we should have more complete data and a more definite program of action before a conference could be expected to be very helpful. With the consent of Synod we hope to arrange for a conference during the next term.

In studying the educational work of our churches the Committee asked itself the question whether it would not be possible and profitable that a course of pedagogy and practical catechetical methods be provided for our prospective ministers? The Committee would like to lay this question before Synod. We believe there is need for such a course somewhere in our institution, and that it will be helpful toward bringing our educational work up to a higher standard.

We would call the attention of Synod to the fact that the survey which was held has been of great help to the Committee, and it is suggested that a similar survey be held

every four years, so that the Committee may have definite data with which to work.

Finally, we bring to the notice of Synod that the terms of two of our members, Rev. L. J. Lamberts and Dr. H. H. Meeter have expired. Mr. Sevensma's term would also have expired at this time. Three men will therefore have to be appointed for a term of six years.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Education,

L. J. Lamberts, President,  
G. W. Hylkema, Secretary,  
H. H. Meeter,  
P. A. Hoekstra,  
G. J. Van Wesep,  
W. Stuart,  
A. J. Rooks,  
A. Peters.

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