

James Schaap

AGENDA

Synod
Christian Reformed Church

*To convene June 8, 1932
at Grand Rapids, Mich.*

**[REPORTS
PART I]**

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

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PREFACE

THE 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 1. The second part is to appear on or before May 1, 1932. Classical stated clerks, please send us the names of all the delegates AND THE ADDRESSES of the elders, as soon as possible. We hope the last items will not be forgotten and call special attention to it.

VOORWOORD

DIT boek is het eerste stuk der Agenda, voor de e. k. Synode. Het bevat de rapporten die volgens opdracht der vorige synodale vergadering werden samengesteld. Het tweede stuk, met voorstellen voor de Synode, verschijnt D. V. op of vóór 1 Mei, 1932, zie "Acta" der Synode van 1926, bl. 174. De classicale stated clerks worden bij dezen vriendelijk uitgenoodigd om ons die voorstellen, met de namen der gekozen deputaten (MET DE ADDRESSEN der ouderlingen), zoo spoedig mogelijk te doen toekomen. Dat laatste niet te vergeten.

Henry Beets, S. C.

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

AGENDA

PART I

REPORTS

REPORT I.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF THE MISSION ORDER

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church,
convening in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 8, 1932.*

DEAR BRETHREN:

YOUR COMMITTEE, appointed by the Synod of 1930 for the revision of the Mission Order (p. 205 of the Acts), hereby submits its report in which it has reckoned with the decisions of the Synod as contained in its Acts, and as much as possible, under Church Order limitations, with the suggestions of the Committee whose report is embodied in Part I of the Agenda placed before the 1930 Synod (pp. 21-26). Various decisions of our Christian Reformed Board of Missions have also been incorporated to make the new Manual as up-to-date as possible. We have not carried out Art. 111, Sec. 9, sub (2), on page 144 of the Acta: "De herziening van Art. 1 van de Regeling der Inwendige Zending," since foreign to the sub-joined report, and also because we presume this can readily be taken care of when the 1932 Synod passes finally on the new Rules and Regulations pertaining to Home Missions.

Respectfully submitted,

Your Committee:

J. DOLFIN,
H. BEETS,
J. L. HEERES,
Z. SHERDA.

DRAFT OF MANUAL OF MISSIONS

Rules and Regulations Covering the Work of Missions Under the Auspices of the Christian Reformed Board of Missions

PREAMBLE

The object of this work shall be to make known and to glorify the name of the LORD by means of the proclamation of the Gospel, and so to cooperate in the gathering of the Church of God and the extension of His Kingdom in the world. This is to be done according to the doctrines of the Christian Reformed Church, and under the direction of its Synod, in obedience to the command: "Preach the Gospel to every creature."

A. ARTICLES CONCERNING THE BOARD AND ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Article 1. The synodically appointed delegates entrusted with the work described in the preamble, shall be known as the Christian Reformed Board of Missions. This Board is not alone to serve as instrument of the Church to supervise and regulate this work, but also to acquire, possess, hold, and convey property for the above purpose, and to take charge of the offerings and expenditures for such purpose, and of moneys raised for or donated or bequeathed to said Board.

Article 2. The office of this Board is located in Grand Rapids, Mich., and the Board incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan.

Article 3. This Board is composed of one representative of each Classis of the Chr. Ref. Church, nominated by these Classes and appointed by Synod, and three delegates at large to be elected by Synod out of a nomination of six presented by the Mission Board, unless Synod desires to add nominees. The delegates at large shall also serve as members of the Executive Committee. Elders may be nominated as delegates as well as ministers.

Article 4. The *term of office* of each member of this Board shall be two years, from synodical meeting to synodical meeting, unless such term shall be terminated sooner by removal from the boundaries of a Classis, or such other cause or causes as shall, in the opinion of the Classis concerned, disqualify its representative from representing it any longer.

Vacancies in the Board are to be filled by the different Classes; in case of its officers, by the Board.

Article 5. The Board is charged with the duty of obtaining calling churches, or groups of churches, which declare themselves responsible for the salary of ordained and unordained workers (Acta 1920, p. 51).

Article 6. The Synod *decides* as to the extension or retrenchment of the missionary operations, and decides in last instance about the number of ordained missionaries. The Board is authorized to appoint mission-helpers of various kinds as the work may require.

Article 7. The Synod alone possesses the authority to recall ordained missionaries if said body judges that the interests of the work require such action, the Synod in such a case to be served by the advice of the Board. The Board is authorized to take provisional action in the interim.

Article 8. The Board shall duly report its actions to each Synod and submit its budgets for approval.

Article 9. The congregations are expected to contribute their respective quotas to the synodically approved budgets. All churches or groups of churches assuming responsibility for salaried workers are to promise, in addition to the sum pledged for such salaries, to contribute their respective quotas to the General Mission Fund. (Acta 1922, p. 196, 38.)

Article 10. The officers of this Board shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. These officers, with the exception of the Secretary, are to be elected by the Board from among its own membership, for a term of office of two years. The Treasurer and the Secretary shall annually be paid a salary as the Synod may

from time to time decide. The Director of Missions functions as Secretary. For an outline of his duties see Acta 1920, p. 51 ff.

Article 11. The Board shall be governed in its transactions by the rules and regulations of which this Article forms a part, and by such other rules and decisions as Synod may from time to time establish.

Article 12. In special cases for which Synod has made no provisions and which cannot be deferred without injury to the cause of missions, the Board is empowered to act.

Article 13. The Board meets in regular session once each year, called by the Secretary after consulting with the President.

Article 14. The WORK of the BOARD shall be:

1. Arranging for the calling and sending of the ordained missionaries, according to the directions of the Synod;
2. Deciding where the missionaries are to labor;
3. Reviewing the annual reports of the missionaries;
4. Acting on all questions, propositions, and requests of the missionary force;
5. Auditing or having audited the accounts of the Treasurer;
6. Approving the reports and overtures to be laid before each Synod. (See Art. 17, below.)
7. The Board shall, at each annual meeting, appoint a committee consisting of two members of the Executive Committee, and one Board member living nearest to the Indian field, to inspect the entire field and confer with the missionaries individually and as General Conference, see Art. 22, below, which General Conference shall at that time submit plans for future buildings, building locations, needed repairs and improvements, with an estimate of costs, and also all budgets needed for the Indian field. Such Committee shall notify General Conference at least four weeks in advance of its coming. This Committee shall submit to the Board, before its annual meeting, a complete and detailed report of its findings and recommendations.

Article 15. Since distance renders frequent meetings of the Board difficult, ad interim matters are entrusted to an *Executive Committee*, consisting of the representatives of the Classes in Michigan and Illinois, together with the three delegates at large (Article 4). This Committee shall meet as a rule every two months, called by the Secretary after consulting with the President.

Article 16. This Committee is accountable to the Board for all its transactions, and shall notify the Board members of all its doings by means of mimeographed copies of its minutes and if need be, by elucidating letters.

Article 17. The WORK of this EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE is:

1. Reviewing of the monthly reports of the missionaries;
2. Drafting the synodical report;
3. Formulating all overtures to be laid before the Synod;
4. Acting on all ad interim and less important matters;
5. Calling all special Board meetings, or ascertaining the opinion of the members of the Board in case of very important matters coming up.

Article 18. The members of this Board are expected to familiarize themselves as much as possible with the subject of missions, and are to arouse or strengthen an active interest in missions in their respective Classes.

B. ARTICLES CONCERNING THE MISSION FORCE

Article 19. The Mission force laboring under the direction of this Board is to consist of either ordained missionaries or helpers, or both. Ordained missionaries have the same status as our ministers, being officially pastors of the churches which called and sent them. But when they, with consent of the sending church, missionary, and Board, are loaned to any church on the mission field as pastors, they may by that church be delegated to the Classis to which it belongs, and by that Classis to Synod. As long as they are serving in such a pastorate on the mission field, the sending church waives its right to delegate them to its own Classis.

Ordained missionaries officially connected with their

sending churches should not function as elders or deacons of any church on the mission field.

The ordained missionary serving in China shall retain both his membership and his office as minister in the church sending him to China; he is permitted to accept associate membership in the Chinese Church as long as that is necessary for the development of that church, and such membership is desired by the Chinese Church. (Acta 1926, p. 41.) In matters dealing directly with church organization, doctrine, discipline, and with the administration of the sacraments, unordained missionaries (in China) have an advisory but no decisive voice.

In matters of general missionary administration, the disbursement of funds, the preparation of reports, and all matters not specifically ecclesiastical, unordained missionaries have a decisive as well as advisory voice in the Mission.

Unless the Board of Missions specifies differently, each unordained missionary will have his or her own status in the Mission, coordinate with the ordained missionaries. The helpers may be women as well as men.

Article 20. No one shall be called to serve as ordained missionary or helper, unless such an one be member of the Christian Reformed Church, and willing to subscribe to its confessional standards, promising to advance nothing contrary to them.

The number and kind of helpers to be sent, is left to the discretion of the Board, which is to reckon in the proper way not alone with the necessary educational requirements of the candidates, but also with the physical condition of the workers (and their family), their lingualistic ability, and other qualifications necessary, as taught by the experience of other churches.

Article 21. The missionaries are to devote themselves entirely to the work of missions and refrain from all other labors, unless the Board deems it wise for them to do otherwise.

Article 22. On the mission field such General or Local Conferences are to be organized as the Board deems ex-

pedient. They are to report faithfully and regularly all the transactions of these respective bodies;

To watch that all decisions of the Board and Synod concerning the missions are carried out;

To discuss the interests of the missions;

To observe closely the doctrine and practice of the entire mission force; and

To control the literature distributed.

The General Conference on the Indian field is to obtain at each spring meeting a statement as to when each worker is expected to take the annual vacation (Article 29, below), and where its major part is to be spent, so that the vacationing may be arranged that the field be not denuded of too many workers at one time, as well as for the purpose of having the Secretary of Missions, with the consent of the respective workers, fill requests for speakers in a systematic way. General Conference shall also meet the inspectors named in Article 14, sub 7, to enable them to discharge their duties as outlined in that Article.

Article 23. The LABORS of the ORDAINED MISSIONARIES are:

1. Preaching the Word, as often as circumstances and strength allow;
2. Catechizing;
3. Sabbath School work;
4. Superintending the helpers, to assist and instruct them in their labors and doctrine;
5. Studying the language, morals, customs and religion of those among whom they labor;
6. Pastoral visiting in their district as often as possible;
7. Reporting monthly to the Board, either directly or through their respective conferences, as the Board may from time to time determine;

and furnishing annually, before the Board meets in regular session, a general report of the past year's labors and the condition of their respective stations.

Article 24. The WORK of the MISSION HELPERS employed for evangelistic labors is:

1. Calling on people at their homes in behalf of their highest interests;
2. Catechizing;
3. Delivering gospel addresses;
4. Teaching Sabbath School classes;
5. Distributing Bibles, Testaments, religious tracts, and doing other colportage work;
6. Studying the subjects connected with their work;
7. Reporting monthly to the missionary under whose supervision they are laboring.

Article 25. Neither the ordained missionaries nor their helpers are permitted to occupy any new, or forsake any old mission station, or to engage or discharge assistants, to buy, sell, convey, or exchange mission property, or to build or rebuild, without permission of the Board.

Article 26. Cases of discipline shall be dealt with according to the Constitution and usages of the Christian Reformed Church.

Article 27. The missionaries shall endeavor to have regular churches organized in the mission fields as soon as such is possible, and after obtaining the advice of the Board or its Executive Committee. Such church or churches are to belong to that Classis of the Christian Reformed Church whose territory is nearest to the respective mission fields. Such a Classis, however, shall not have any more authority over the mission work as such than any other Classes of the Christian Reformed Church.

Article 28. The salary of the ordained missionaries shall be fixed from time to time by the Board, in consultation with the sending churches. That of the permanent helpers is left entirely to the discretion of the Board. Both classes of workers shall be provided with the necessary facilities to prosecute their labors, as well as with dwellings. The Board or its Executive Committee is authorized to make equitable pension arrangements as directed by Synod. The

ordained workers are to fall under the usual emeritus arrangements of the Christian Reformed Church.

Article 29. The missionaries and permanent helpers in the United States are entitled to an annual vacation of one calendar month, to be taken at such times as shall be least detrimental to the mission work. The workers abroad are entitled to a furlough to be taken each time, unless the Board deems it wise to make exceptions, after seven years of service. During each respective furlough the workers are entitled to one calendar month vacation, and for the balance of it are expected to be subject to such calls for deputation work as may be deemed needful to cultivate the home base. Arrangements for the spending of furloughs in study must be submitted to the approval of the Board (or its Executive Committee) and proposed beforehand within sufficient time.

Article 30. These Articles may be altered, amended, or repealed by any Synod of the Christian Reformed Church.

REPORT II.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE IN RE MISSIONARY TRAINING AND BIBLE SCHOOL TO THE SYNOD OF 1932

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR committee was appointed by the Synod of 1930 "to make a thorough study of the advisability and feasibility of establishing a Missionary Training and Bible School for our churches, either apart from or in connection with our Theological School and Calvin College," because "we are here face to face with a pressing and intricate problem which merits thorough study." (Acta Synodi 1930, Art. 31.)

In pursuance of this mandate, we beg to submit the following report:

I. A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE EVENTS THAT LED UP TO THE RESOLUTION OF 1930.

At the Synod of 1922 Classis Illinois reported that for the past year the five churches of Chicago had successfully conducted a Missionary Training School, and it requested Synod to acknowledge the existing school in Chicago and to appoint supervisory deputies. It was proposed that the work of these deputies should be to have a vote in the appointment of teachers, to supervise the operation of the school, to be present at the final examinations, and to sign the diplomas.

Classis Muskegon overtured the same Synod to introduce a mission course at Calvin College for the benefit of those who might wish to be trained for missionary activity. In the grounds adduced for this proposal attention was called to the fact that many of our young people were seeking such training at other than Reformed schools.

To the latter overture Synod replied that a mission course was as a matter of fact being introduced at our school, and the recognition requested by the former over-

ture was refused because recognition was sought not only of the existence of the Chicago institution, but of its scientific character as well, and because Synod did not wish to assume responsibility for this school. (Acta Synodi 1922, Art. 34.)

The Consistory of the First Church of Fremont requested the 1926 Synod to give its moral support to the Missionary Training School at Chicago in order that this institution might in course of time become a complete Bible School. The ground for this overture was that many of our young people were receiving training for missionary work at unreformed schools and were there being subjected to unwholesome influences, and it was thought that Chicago, with its many opportunities for evangelistic work, would be the proper place for a Bible School.

Synod felt that some need of a missionary training course existed, but decided, rather than to take further action, to await overtures from Classis Illinois, which had already taken steps toward the establishment of such a school. (Acta Synodi 1926, Art. 21.)

In 1928 Classis Illinois again presented to Synod an overture on this subject. This time it came with a three-fold request:

1. That Synod approve the Missionary Training School at Chicago and its expansion into a day-school;
2. That Synod assume financial responsibility for this school;
3. That Synod advise the Chicago churches to allow Classis Illinois to conduct the school for the Christian Reformed Church as a whole.

The grounds for this overture were similar to those which had previously been adduced.

Synod decided to appoint a committee "to study this whole matter and to report to the Synod of 1930 regarding the advisability of the Church as a whole assuming responsibility for this school, and if the committee considers this advisable, then to present a plan stipulating the relation of the school to the Church and to Classis Illinois, and its relation to our Theological School and Calvin College." (Acta Synodi 1928, Art. 117.)

When the committee appointed by the Synod of 1928 met, the attendance at the Chicago Missionary Training School had become so small that those in charge had decided to discontinue the institution. The committee reported this fact to Synod and expressed the opinion that, since its mandate referred specifically to the Chicago School, no further study of this matter could be required of it. At the same time it suggested that the Synod of 1930 might deem it worth while to appoint a committee to make a thorough study of the advisability and feasibility of establishing a Missionary Training School for our churches. (Agenda Synodi 1930, Part I, pp. 27-29.)

The Synod of 1930 was overtured by Classis Illinois to make provision for the training of missionary helpers at our Theological School and Calvin College. Also Classis Grand Rapids East asked Synod to take the necessary steps to organize in Grand Rapids a day-school for the training of missionary workers.

In response to these overtures Synod appointed the present committee with the mandate "to make a thorough study of the advisability and feasibility of establishing a Missionary Training and Bible School for our churches, either apart from or in connection with our Theological School and Calvin College." (Acta Synodi 1930, Art. 31.)

Perhaps the most salient fact in this historical review is that for a decade already there have been those among us who desired a denominational Missionary Training and Bible School, but that our Synods for various reasons never saw fit to accede to their request.

II. A SERIOUS SITUATION AND WHAT IT DEMANDS.

Owing to the wide-spread, intense and aggressive liberalism of our day and country, Christian America will, it seems, increasingly be reduced to the status of a missionary field. The churches that remain true to God and His Word will be the exception and a recrudescent paganism will be the rule. Owing to the combative character of the neo-paganism that is rampant in the land, the churches will be under necessity to do missionary work at their very doors, not only with a view to

winning apostate men for Christ, if possible, but also with the conscious and deliberate purpose of preserving their own identity and maintaining themselves. Of course, missionary work will not be the only means of self-preservation to be employed by the church. But, doubtless, vigorous missionary work will prove effective along with other means of self-maintenance, in raising up barriers against the huge tidal wave of unbelief that is hurling itself against the city of God and threatens to overwhelm the church of Christ. Missionary work, if prosecuted faithfully, vigorously and consistently, will be at once a powerful defense and a potent factor of aggressive warfare against the Kingdom of Darkness that is being built upon the ruins of historic Christianity in our land.

In view of this situation, the Church of God, our own included, should address itself to the task of *Evangelism*, i. e., missions among apostates, in a manner corresponding to the gravity of prevailing religious conditions. The time has come that the business of Evangelism should be built upon broad foundations and be administered in the statesmanlike manner that has marked missions among heathen since the opening of the nineteenth century. Sporadic and desultory efforts will not prove adequate; half-hearted endeavors will not meet the needs of the hour; purely practical measures, hastily devised and crudely executed, will not suffice; restriction to attempts looking to winning the down-and-outs will be tantamount to neglect of the most difficult part of the evangelistic work of the church; and confining ourselves to lay evangelistic activities will prove to be a source of weakness.

Neo-paganism is a tremendously formidable foe; it is fast becoming self-conscious and self-confident; it is beginning to get historic background and to draw strength from tradition; it is rapidly becoming solidly organized ecclesiastically no less than in literary and scholastic respect; emerging from a relative infancy, it is fast attaining to a degree of maturity and constancy; in numerical respect it already would appear to outnumber true-blue Christianity, and on this score as well as in other

respects it is putting the orthodox section of historic Christianity on the defensive.

Nothing less than an Evangelism built on deep and strong foundations of sound theology and learning in general and a healthy and vigorous spirituality, and prosecuted systematically along the whole front of the loyal church of Christ, will avail in worth-while fashion. Half-way measures simply spell defeat. Perhaps the church, our church, too, is still unaware of the real situation that already obtains and is assuming larger proportions daily. One gets this impression from the relatively trifling way in which the evangelistic task has been taken in hand. Now, surely, we should not despise the day of small things. But neither should the grateful acknowledgment of small things that are inherently good prevent us from seeing that in God's own providence the times call us to great things. What is needed supremely is a realization of the religious situation of our land and people, as summarily sketched above; an appreciation of the duty devolving upon the Christian Church to recall apostates to the religion of their fathers; and a strengthening, by evangelistic work and through the use of other serviceable means, of the consciousness, on the part of God's people, that the church militant is in the enemy's country and may at any time be called upon to suffer annoyance, if not persecution, at the hands of a hostile and intolerant world. Without in the least relaxing in our heathen missionary effort, we should engage in Evangelism on a scale commensurate with, if not larger than, our heathen missionary work. We should not rest satisfied until every church, either alone or in collaboration with neighboring churches, has not only a Pastoral Minister, but an Evangelistic Minister for its surrounding missionary field as well.

III. SKETCH OF A PLAN WHICH AIMS TO MEET THIS DEMAND.

A. As 'was observed above, every church should have an Evangelistic Minister as well as a Pastoral Minister. He should be called by the congregation and supported by it. No doubt, in some instances a group of neighbor-

ing churches will wish to coöperate in engaging this minister. In the case of a small, isolated church, one minister may well have to do both the pastoral and the evangelistic work. The Evangelistic Minister is to labor under the auspices of the local consistory or consistories according to general regulations drawn up by the Synod. If this plan is to be realized, opportunity must be given to men whom God endows with talents for evangelistic work and whose spirits He sets on fire for this work, to be trained specifically for Evangelism. We need evangelists who have been properly trained theologically and who, upon graduation and election to the evangelistic ministry, are duly ordained. If ever there was need of sound scientific training for the heralds of the Gospel, it is today, and particularly in the field of Evangelism; and this is true not only with reference to work in the higher strata of society, but also as regards work among the lower classes. The church has all along felt the need of an educated ministry, even though the ecclesiastical constituency contained but few educated people. Similarly, missionary work requires a thorough collegiate and theological education regardless of the level of the missionary objects. In this connection it may be remarked that most of our present-day Bible Schools were established by churches or groups of Christians which do not stress the need of an educated ministry in the same degree as the Reformed Churches have ever done.

B. It is not implied that there will be no need of and room for so-called lay-workers in the evangelistic field. Such there will be, indeed.

Lay-workers should be taught and trained both previously to their entrance upon their task and concurrently with their labors. Their training need not be scholastic in the ordinary sense of the term. Their instruction need not rise above the level of that of the advanced Bible classes of the congregation and can very well be taken care of locally by the Evangelistic Minister in charge of the work. What we need, then, is not a denominational school, day or otherwise, for the training of mission workers, the latter being understood to be lay and part-time workers in the evangelistic field. Every church or group

of churches engaging an Evangelistic Minister should have its missionary training class, conducted by the Evangelistic Minister and operated according to a general plan that has been worked out in experience and commends itself to those competent to judge of the work and its requirements. Thus mission workers' training will be decentralized and for that very reason will be capable of becoming a general fact. It is obvious that under this plan many more so-called laymen can receive training for evangelistic work than would be the case if one or, possibly, two missionary training schools should be established among our people. It is equally obvious that in our large centers as Chicago, Grand Rapids, etc., where several Evangelistic Ministers can cooperate in the training of lay-workers, this training may well assume considerable proportions.

It is self-evident that some years may elapse before many churches shall have engaged Evangelistic Ministers and the training of lay-workers, so-called, can be carried on as indicated above. Thus the pertinent question arises what is to be done in the meantime for those members of our churches who desire preparation for lay evangelistic efforts. As a matter of fact, our people have already begun to answer this question for themselves. During the past year a Missionary Training and Bible School was operating in Chicago. Missionary Training classes were conducted in Grand Rapids for some years already. It goes without saying that our churches are at liberty to start similar projects wherever and whenever they see fit. It seems to your committee, however, that it may be well for Synod to take some action as regards this matter in order that this important work may not through any fault of Synod's be slighted. It is proposed, then, that Synod request those groups which are now engaged in this work to continue to make provision ad interim for the training of lay evangelistic workers.

In this connection something must be said about Bible Schools in distinction from Missionary Training Schools. Without doubt there are those among our Christian Reformed people who do not feel called in any special sense to evangelistic work and yet desire advanced Bible study

courses. The surprisingly large demand for the correspondence course offered by the Reverend Wm. Stuart of the Grand Rapids Christian High School is conclusive evidence of this fact. The question might arise, then, whether there should not be established among us a so-called Bible School. In answer to that query your committee submits as its opinion that because of the great distances which separate our churches, it is far better to extend the work now being done by correspondence than to establish in any one place a denominational Bible School. And especially would we remark that the work of Bible study and missionary training may well be combined. This is actually being done in all the Bible Schools throughout the land. Advanced study of the Word of God may very efficiently be carried on in close connection with the training of lay evangelistic workers by our future Evangelistic Ministers.

In no case should advanced Bible Study for our people generally and courses below the college level aiming at the preparation of so-called laymen for evangelistic activity be allowed to become part of the curriculum of Calvin College and Seminary. Of that your committee is very certain. Such a step would unavoidably lower the academic standard of these institutions, something which may never be permitted. It will interest Synod to know that in May, 1931, the Board of the new Westminster Seminary of Philadelphia decided for a similar reason against the addition of courses in English Bible to the curriculum of that very excellent institution of theological learning. On the other hand, it goes without saying that it is highly desirable that high-school graduates who wish to prepare for lay-evangelistic work pursue courses in the Bible Department of Calvin College and that additions be made to the courses offered by this department with a view to meeting the scholastic requirements of such students. In the same way it is desirable that young women who are high school graduates and wish to prepare for nursing in a mission field pursue courses, for instance in Bible and Biology, at Calvin College.

Altogether in line with the proposal that lay evangelistic workers be trained by ordained Evangelistic Ministers is

the suggestion which, we are told, was offered some time ago by our missionaries among the Indians to the Board of Missions. It was requested that the Board should decide that those who might wish to serve as laymen on that field were to receive their training from the missionaries right on the field. That, your committee believes, would be proper and wise procedure. Likewise, our Bible-women and other lay-workers in China should be trained by our missionaries in that land. And in much the same way those who wish to prepare for evangelistic work among the Jews should receive their preparation, at least in large part, from experienced men laboring in that field.

C. Obviously, we need arrangements for the proper and specific training of our Evangelistic Ministers. We say: arrangements, and not: a school, advisedly. We have a school for ministerial training, both collegiate and theological. We do not need a separate Missionary Training School. Pastoral and Evangelistic Ministers have many propaedeutic needs in common. Their pre-seminary course need differ but slightly, if at all; their theological training a bit more. In order to preclude possible misunderstanding it may be remarked here that as a matter of course even those theological students who aim at the pastoral ministry should pursue several missionary courses in the seminary. It is not necessary at this stage of the discussion to go into the details of the difference between pastoral and evangelistic training. What needs definite mention at this juncture, perhaps, is that the enlargement of the curriculum, with a view to adequate training for the evangelistic ministry, would eventually require a chair for Missions. The need of a special department of Missions with a special incumbent is so obviously the postulate of pedagogical and practical considerations that it need not be argued at this time.

D. The final item of thought in this rough draft of a plan for the execution of the evangelistic duty of the church concerns the feasibility of the proposal concerning ordained Evangelistic Ministers. Now we may well start out with the general proposition that it is never or,

at most, seldom impossible for the people of God to discharge their kingdom duties. The Jachin and Boaz of the evangelistic fidelity of the church, as of all faithfulness to a God-assigned task, are the plain will of the King of the church that the work be done, and the clear realization of the people of God that this work is, indeed, their duty to God. Why is the *church* supported loyally, even when the people are impecunious? God wills it and His people clearly see it. Why are some of our Christian *schools* ailing to death financially? Because so many people somehow do not recognize that Christian schools are just as imperative a duty to God as Christian churches. There can be no doubt that God wants His church to engage in evangelistic efforts. As soon as our people see this clearly and are gripped in their consciences by what they plainly perceive, an addition to the staff of Calvin Seminary, and the addition in many cases of an Evangelistic Minister to the Pastoral Minister, becomes feasible; and not only a possibility but a fact.

In this connection it may not be out of place to remark that the adoption of this plan would likely aid greatly toward the solution of what is threatening to become a most serious problem among us. It seems that in the near future we shall actually be confronted with an oversupply of ministers. It is obvious that as soon as several of our churches proceed to call Evangelistic Ministers this difficulty will vanish. From the viewpoint, then, of the availability of men for this type of work, the plan outlined above should prove eminently feasible. May we be so bold as to suggest that it may well be considered the bounden duty of the church to employ for the proclamation of the Gospel all the young men who feel called of God to this work and in His providence have been prepared for it? Not to use them would seem to be sinful neglect. And to what better use can they be put than the work of Evangelism, the proclamation of Christ crucified to a nation which is rapidly forsaking the cross and reverting to paganism!

It is obvious that the adoption of this plan would not immediately require the outlay of large sums of money. It goes without saying that much time will elapse before

the ideal that every church should have an Evangelistic Minister can be realized. Steps in the direction of this ideal can be taken as God blesses our people with the means.

IV. SPECIFIC PROPOSALS.

In conclusion your committee comes to Synod with certain definite recommendations. We propose:

A. That Synod resolve that the rampant neo-paganism of our day and land requires that every one of our churches, whether alone or in collaboration with a neighboring church or churches, engage, in addition to the Congregational Minister, also an ordained Evangelistic Minister.

B. That Synod instruct the Faculty of Calvin Seminary to draw up, in consultation with experienced evangelistic workers, a course of study for prospective Evangelistic Ministers, and that, as soon as it has received the approval of Curatorium, this course be offered, temporarily by the present Faculty.

C. That Synod instruct Curatorium to proceed to the addition to the college curriculum of certain courses on the college level which may be profitably pursued by high school graduates who wish to prepare for lay evangelistic activity.

D. That Synod decide to leave it to the local churches to provide through their Evangelistic Ministers for training below the college level of lay evangelistic workers in the surroundings of our churches.

E. That as an ad interim measure Synod request those groups which are now providing training for lay evangelistic workers to continue to do so, it being understood that in the nature of the case any of our churches are at liberty to initiate training of this kind.

F. That Synod express as its judgment that laymen who desire to labor as missionary helpers among the Indians, in China, or elsewhere, should be trained, in large measure at least, by the ordained missionaries active in these respective fields.

G. That Synod appoint a committee to make a careful study of the ecclesiastical status of ordained Evangelistic Ministers; e. g., their standing in the Consistory, their relation to Classis, their possible deputation to Synod, etc.

We submit this report with the prayer that the Spirit of God may guide Synod in deliberating on this important subject, as well as in the consideration of all other matters that shall come to its attention.

Respectfully,

S. VOLBEDA, *Chairman*
J. BRUINOOGHE
J. DOLFIN
J. VANDE WATER
WILLIAM YONKER
R. B. KUIPER, *Secretary*

REPORT III

RAPPORT DER COMMISSIE IN RE "VRIJE STUDIE"

Aan de Synode der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk, te vergaderen in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in Juni, 1932, D. V.

GELIEFDE BROEDEREN IN DEN HEERE, HEIL EN VREDE!

TER verklaring onzer opdracht het volgende: De Synode van 1924 besloot "dat deze zaak (n.l. het beginsel van vrije studie) gesteld zal worden in handen van een commissie van praeadvies om op de e. v. Synode te rapporteeren, daar deze zaak van ver-reikende en ingrijpende beteekenis is en dusver niet voor de aandacht der Kerken gebracht is." (Acta Synodi 1924, Art. 41, onder D, 1, pp. 35, 36.) Doch men vergat hiervoor een commissie te benoemen. Ter Synode van 1928 was een instructie van Lagrave Avenue's kerkeraad, Grand Rapids, Mich., inzake mogelijke excepties ten opzichte van het besluit der Synode van 1922, dat candidaten tenminste het laatste jaar de lessen aan ons Seminarie moeten hebben bijgewoond. Naar aanleiding dezer instructie, ofschoon het advies der commissie werd aangenomen "that the rule should be enforced without exception," besloot de Synode tevens: "In verband met deze zaak wordt besloten uitvoering te geven aan het besluit van de Synode van 1924 (Acta, pag. 35 onderaan). Wijl genoemde Synode naliet een commissie te benoemen, zal deze thans benoemd worden, met de opdracht, om een grondige studie te maken van het beginsel der vrije studie," (Acta Synodi 1928, pag. 75). De bedoeling zal wel geweest zijn dat deze commissie op de e. v. Synode zal rapporteeren, ofschoon het besluit van 1928 hiervan geen melding maakt. De bedoelde commissie kon echter, door allerlei omstandigheden verhinderd, de Synode van 1930 geen rapport aanbieden, en werd door deze Synode gecontinueerd. Dies is zij wederom, gehoorzaam aan haar opdracht, aan den arbeid getogen.

De grootste moeilijkheid was echter om uit de bestaande

bronnen materiaal voor haar rapport te vergaderen. Blijkbaar is er in de Engelsche literatuur over deze kwestie niets te vinden, althans het is de commissie niet gelukt daarin iets te vinden, zelfs de vrij ruime bibliotheek van Princeton, N. J., leverde hiervoor niets op. De zaak schijnt een speciaal Nederlandsch aanzien te hebben, en zelfs in de Nederlandsche literatuur is dienaangaande niet zulk een rijk schat voorhanden als sommigen vermoeden. In pamphletten en brochures wordt er hier en daar wel iets van gezegd, doch uitgewerkt en ontwikkeld bijna nergens behalve een werkje van wijlen Dr. Prof. F. L. Rutgers door hem in het licht gegeven in 1878 onder den titel: "Vrije Theologische Studie, voorgestaan en verdedigd, vanwege de Nederlandsche Hervormde Predikanten-vereeniging door F. L. Rutgers, Theol. Doct. en pred. bij de Ned. Hervormde Gemeente te Hertogenbosch." Dit werkje is voor ons doel van groot belang, want daarin wordt het beginsel van vrije studie breedvoerig besproken en toegelicht en ingebrachte bezwaren ondervangen. Wij zullen dan ook in ons rapport er ruimschoots gebruik van maken.

Ter vergemakkelijking zullen wij ons rapport indeelen in een historisch, een stellend, en een adviseerend deel, doch wenschen beknopt te zijn, overmits wij oordeelen dat lange Synodale rapporten niet wenschelijk zijn en het nemen van besluiten eer vermoeielijken dan vergemakkelijken.

HISTORISCH DEEL

Ofschoon *voor* dien tijd bij dezen en genen ouden schrijver, zelfs ook bij den grooten Voetius, de uitdrukking "vrije studie," of ook "de studie moet vrij blijven," in hunne geschriften voorkomt, waaruit blijkt dat zij dit beginsel vorstonden, toch schijnt eigenlijk eerst in 1878 de kwestie van vrije studie op den voorgrond getreden te zijn en een onderwerp van drukke behandeling geweest te zijn. Toen vooral kreeg de zaak historische beteekenis. De aanleiding hiertoe was de wet op het hooger onderwijs die vier universiteiten aanwees voor de studie der theologie en het verbindend stelde dat zij die in de Nederlandsch Hervormde Kerk predikant wenschten te worden aan een dier

vier door de wet aangewezen universiteiten den theologischen cursus hadden te volgen om als candidaat te worden toegelaten. Zulks betitelt de schrijver van bovengenoemd werkje met den naam van dwang-studie, en stelt deze tegenover het beginsel der vrije studie. Tevens wijst dezelfde schrijver aan dat de kerken der zestiende, zeventiende, en achttiende eeuw steeds onbeperkt het beginsel der vrije studie gehuldigd hebben. Men dacht niet aan dwang-studie. Zelfs was het gansch niet buitengewoon dat men aan buitenlandsche universiteiten ging studeeren, hetzij voor korteren of langeren tijd.

Dr. H. Bavinck, in zijn "Theologische School en Vrije Universiteit," uitgegeven bij J. H. Bos te Kampen in 1899, verklaart op bladz. 43 dat de toenmalige Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk, n.l. voor de vereeniging, naast haar beginsel van kerkelijke school tevens het "beginsel van vrije studie" erkend heeft.

In zijn: "Het Doctorenambt," op bladz. 49, zegt Dr. H. Bavinck: "Het getuigt van den ruimen blik van Voetius, als hij zegt, dat ook na de stichting van Universiteiten in ons land het niet ontbroken heeft aan zulke mannen die een beperkte opleiding genoten, en toch een uitnemende theologische kennis verwierven, zoodat zij zelfs andere predikanten in kennis, in prediking, in kerkregeering, in het schrijven van wetenschappelijke werken overtroffen hebben (Pol. Eccl., III, 481). Nooit hebben de Gereformeerde Kerken hier te lande opleiding aan een Universiteit voor de theologen verplichtend gesteld; zij lieten de studie vrij en maakten geen tegenstelling tusschen deze en andere wijze van opleiding."

Dr. A. Kuyper, Sr., in zijn: "Welke Zijn de Vooruitzichten voor de Studenten der Vrije Universiteit?", uitgegeven bij J. H. Kruyt te Amsterdam in 1882, wijst er op bladz. 21 op dat het "stelsel van volstreckte vrijheid ten opzichte der studie echt Amerikaansch" is. Dit verklaart wellicht historisch waarom in onze Amerikaansche literatuur deze kwestie niet per se is besproken. Men ging er blijkbaar van uit als een vanzelfheid. Ook verklaart de schrijver in ditzelfde werkje dat het stelsel van absolute vrijheid ten opzichte der studie hem het meest toelacht.

Nog heden ten dage handhaaft de "Presbyterian Church" hier te lande het beginsel van vrije studie, hetgeen blijkt uit het feit dat studenten gepromoveerd aan het Westminster Seminarie te Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, en aan andere scholen, toegelaten worden tot de kansels der "Presbyterian Church," ofschoon er geenerlei verband bestaat tusschen deze scholen en de "Presbyterian Church in U. S. A."

Wat de "Reformed Church in America" betreft, zoo deelt Prof. Nettinga van Western Seminarie ons mede, dat candidaten die staan naar de bediening des Woords in de "R. C. A." aan eenige inrichting van onderwijs mogen hebben gestudeerd. Zij zijn niet gebonden noch aan New Brunswick Seminarie noch aan Western Seminarie, doch hebben zich natuurlijk aan een classicaal examen te onderwerpen. Slotsom: In de "R. C. A." is onbeperkte toepassing van het beginsel van "vrije studie."

In Nederland kwam de zaak nogmaals aan de orde toen studenten der Vrije Universiteit zich bij de Geelkerkenbeweging aansloten en er toen waren die wilden dat men deze studenten aan zekere confessioneele eischen zou binden zoo zij begeerden aan de Vrije Universiteit hun studiën voort te zetten. Toen heeft Dr. H. H. Kuyper het voor het beginsel van vrije studie opgenomen en derzelve bondigheid in billijkheid in drie artikelen in de *Heraut* bepleit (*Heraut*, Jaargang 1928, Nos. 2622-2624, onder den titel, "De Studie Vrij"). Zoo mag dan blijken dat onder de Gereformeerden in Nederland men nog steeds aan dit beginsel vasthoudt.

STELLEND DEEL

Onder dit hoofddeel hebben wij een drietal vragen onder de oogen te zien: (1) of wij in betrekking tot vrije studie kunnen spreken van een beginsel; (2) zoo ja, wat daar dan onder te verstaan zij; en (3) welke is de verhouding tusschen dit beginsel en een kerkelijke school?

(1) Inzake vrije studie spreken sommigen van een "leuze," anderen van een "stelsel," en derden van een "beginsel." Dr. H. H. Kuyper spreekt zelfs van "een zeer principieele vraag" (*Heraut*, 22 April, 1928, "De Studie Vrij").

“Een beginsel is in wetenschappelijken zin de grondstelling, waarvan alle onderzoek naar waarheid uitgaat en waarmede alle resultaten in verband staan. Een wetenschappelijk beginsel bepaalt den aanvang en den ontwikkelingsgang van wetenschap” (Algemeene Nederladnsche Encyclopedie, Deel XII, pagina 54).

Uit deze definitie mag dus blijken dat wij bij vrije studie wel degelijk aan een beginsel hebben te denken, want deze zaak (n.l. vrije studie) is de *grond*, de *grondslag*, de *grondstelling*, waarvan moet worden uitgegaan, overmits zij stoelt op den bodem der Christelijke vrijheid, waarvan Paulus bijzonder in zijn Brief aan de Galaten breedvoerig handelt. De Christen-jongeman die staat naar den Dienst des Woords sta in die vrijheid.

Voorts geldt het hier een wetenschappelijk beginsel, dat rust op de Universiteits-idee en uitgaat van de grondstelling dat de Kerk als organisme recht en bevoegdheid heeft om theologie in wetenschappelijken zin te beoefenen. Stel nu dat er onder ons een Universiteit op Gereformeerden grondslag verrees, dan zouden onze kerken noodzakelijk geroepen zijn om hare zonen vrij te laten in hun keuze tusschen Universiteit en Kerkelijke School. Het is allerminst de bedoeling uwer commissie een twistappel op te werpen over de kwestie, “Universiteit of Kerkelijke School,” doch dit onderwerp, ons tot bestudeering door de Synode opgedragen, dwingt ons er toe dat wij op deze zaak de aandacht hebben te vestigen.

(2) De vraag is verder, wat hebben wij te verstaan onder het beginsel der vrije studie? De woordenkeus laat hier meer dan één verklaring toe. Daarom hebben wij ons af te vragen wat historisch de beteekenis dezer clausule geworden is. De woorden toch krijgen hun beteekenis door het gebruik. Vrije studie zou kunnen beteekenen: Alle studie moet vrij zijn; men kan en mag haar niet aan banden leggen. Doch in dien algemeenen zin hebben wij deze uitdrukking hier niet op te vatten.

Men houde voor de aandacht dat deze zaak bijzonder raakt de theologische studie, en vooral aan de orde kwam naardien de Staat in Nederland de studeerende jongeling-

schap bij wetsbepaling dwingen wou om de door hem aangewezen universiteiten te bezoeken, zoo zij predikant wenschten te worden in de Vaderlandsche Kerk. Zij waren dus in hun keuze niet vrij, maar door staatsdwang gebonden. Alleen voor hen die aan een der door den Staat aangewezen universiteiten hun theologische opleiding hadden genoten stonden de kansels der Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk open. Men dwong dus de jongemannen zich naar staatswet te schikken zoo zij begeerden predikant te worden. Daarbij houde men voor oogen, dat zoowel praeparatoir als peremptoir examen natuurlijk kerkelijk was, doch zonder universiteitsbul mocht niemand tot dit examen worden toegelaten.

Zoo besluiten wij dan dat onder beginsel van vrije studie te verstaan zij: “dat aan allen die zich voor de Evangeliebediening voorbereiden volle vrijheid van theologische studie wordt verleend.” Met andere woorden, men zij geheel vrij in de keuze der school, waar men zijn theologische opleiding wenscht te genieten, hetzij in een Seminarie, hetzij in een Universiteit, hetzij door privaats onderwijs, of zelfs door zelfstudie. De vraag is dan niet *waar* en *hoe* men de vereischte kennis bekomt, maar uitsluitend *of* men de vereischte kennis bezit om tot de Evangeliebediening te worden toegelaten. Dit laatste hebben de Kerken te weten om op goeden waarborg iemand toe te laten tot de Evangeliebediening. De verantwoordelijkheid berust alleen en uitsluitend bij de Kerken. Zelfs al acht de een of andere inrichting van onderwijs voor de theologie iemand geschikt voor den dienst, dan berust toch nog uitsluitend de verantwoordelijkheid bij de Kerken. Zij zijn het per slot van rekening die tot den dienst toelaten.

Uw commissie is dan ook van oordeel dat het zeer belangrijk is om het beginsel van vrije studie te handhaven: (1) omdat het het recht tot oprichting eener vrije universiteit handhaaft; (2) omdat, in geval de Kerken afwijken in de leer, het jongemannen het recht geeft om hun opleiding te zoeken aan inrichtingen die in haar onderwijs positief Gereformeerd zijn; en (3) omdat het het recht erkent

dat men ook elders zijn opleiding kan genieten, zoo er waarborg is voor het beslist Gereformeerde gehalte van het onderwijs. Gelijk dan ook Dr. H. Bavinck in zijn "Theologische School en Vrije Universiteit" beweert, "dat de toenmalige Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk, n.l. vóór de vereniging, naast haar beginsel van kerkelijke school tevens het beginsel van vrije studie erkend heeft." (Zie hiervoor ons Historisch Deel.)

(3) Het ligt in den aard der zaak dat dit beginsel, gelijk alle beginselen, behoort toegepast te worden. Doch nu volgt de vraag in hoeverre onze tegenwoordige omstandigheden de toepassing van het beginsel van vrije studie onder ons toelaten. Wij toch hebben (a) geenerlei regeeringsdwang inzake de theologische opleiding; de regeering laat ons in dezen absoluut vrij; (b) wij hebben geen vrije universiteit, doch een kerkelijke school, en wij houden als Kerken steeds vast, "de opleiding der toekomstige predikanten door en voor de Kerk"; (c) de Kerken hebben de candidaatstelling aan hare curatoren opgedragen in verband met de Theologische School; en (d) onze kerkelijke school is heden ten dage, zooals algemeen erkend wordt, zuiver in de leer, zoodat er aan de oprichting eener vrije school geen behoefte is.

In Nederland stond men op dit beginsel der vrije studie, omdat men terecht vreesde voor den invloed der moderne universiteiten. Doch zou niet juist omgekeerd ditzelfde beginsel op onze toestanden toegepast, het gevaar met zich brengen dat men door dit stelsel van vrije studie onzen jongemannen de gelegenheid bood om aan allerlei niet beslist Gereformeerde inrichtingen van onderwijs hun theologische opleiding te ontvangen, waarbij wij dan als Kerken op den duur gevaar loopen ons confessioneel standpunt geheel of gedeeltelijk in te boeten, want een examen, hoe zwaar en grondig ook, zou in vele gevallen wellicht niet te voren brengen het gevaar waaraan men de Kerken zou bloot stellen. Eigen behoud zou derhalve strijden met de onbepérkte toepassing en doorvoering van het beginsel der vrije studie.

ADVISEEREND DEEL

Op grond van bovenstaande adviseert uwe commissie:

I. Dat de Synode uitspreke, dat, ofschoon vrije studie als beginsel dient gehandhaafd te worden, desniettemin de onbepaalde toepassing er van thans onder ons ongewenscht is, ja zelfs gevaarlijk zou kunnen zijn, omdat de hedendaagsche richtingen en stroomingen ons nopen met de toepassing van dit beginsel uiterst voorzichtig te zijn; en

II. Dat de Synode besluite:

A. Dat als algemeene regel streng worde gehandhaafd dat jonge mannen, die staan naar het leeraarsambt in onze Kerken, minstens hun laatste studiejaar aan onze eigen inrichting hebben door te brengen, wijl:

- 1) wij een kerkelijke school hebben tot opleiding voor den dienst des Woords;
- 2) de Kerken waarborg moeten hebben voor het gehalte van het theologisch onderwijs; en
- 3) het alleszins wenschelijk en natuurlijk is dat de zonen der Kerk in eigen kerkelijke inrichting hun kweeking ontvangen; en

B. Dat het Curatorium volmacht hebbe om in buitengewone gevallen uitzonderingen te maken op bovengenoemden regel, wijl:

- 1) dit eisch is van het beginsel van vrije studie;
- 2) het geval zich laat denken dat iemand wel *gewillig* doch *onmachtig* was om eigen inrichting te bezoeken, en desniettemin wel toegerust om onze Kerken in de Evangelie-bediening te dienen; en
- 3) geen ruimte te laten voor uitzonderingen een ontkenning zou zijn van het beginsel van vrije studie.

Met eerbied onderworpen,

De Commissie voornoemd,

R. B. KUIPER, *Praeses*

K. W. FORTUIN, *Secretaris*

M. VAN DYKE

L. VAN LAAR

C. VAN TIL

REPORT IV

EMERITUS FUND COMMITTEE

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches,
Convened in Grand Rapids, Mich., June, 1932.*

DEAR BRETHREN:

YOUR "Committee in re Study Emeritus Fund," see Acta Synodi 1930, Art. 128, 18, page 205, has the honor to report as follows:

The mandate that was given your Committee and the instruction which occasioned its formation, are to be found in Acta 1930, Art. 83, VII (3), which reads:

"*Overture of Classis Zeeland*, which could not be placed on the Agenda since this action was taken by the Classis on May 14, 1930. The overture reads as follows:

"De Synode benoeme eene Commissie om te onderzoeken of er niet een meer bevredigende methode gevonden kan worden voor de ondersteuning van emeriti predikanten en predikants weduwen en weezen. *Gronden:*

"a) Veel ontevredenheid over de tegenwoordige methode;

"b) De achterstallige schuld van 12 Classes bij de Emeritus Kas, bedragende de som van ruim \$16,000.00 volgens het rapport van den Emeritus Board op de laatstgehouden Synode."

"In regard to said overture your Committee submits two reports, one of the majority and one of the minority.

"Synod decides to *adopt* the minority report, which reads as follows:

"We would advise Synod to act according to the proposal of Classis Zeeland, and we would further advise that at least a majority of the Committee to be appointed be Elders or former Elders with business ability. *Grounds:*

"There is considerable difference of opinion concerning the principle on which support is granted from this Fund. This difference of opinion exists not only among the laity

but among the ministers and leaders as well. Some consider the principle to be practically the same as a pension, while others consider it to be a providing in the needs of the incapacitated ministers, their widows and orphans to the extent that they are not able to provide for themselves. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at, where the conception of the underlying principle is so divergent, that the practical application of such principle shall also vary greatly. It is therefore very urgent that the advice of Classis Zeeland be carried out so that this whole matter be studied and a complete report with recommendations be presented to our next Synod, so that all of our people will have a clear conception concerning this matter and that in consequence of the same we may come to a more happy and satisfactory execution of the principle which we shall adopt." (See Committee appointed, Art. 128, 18.)

INTERPRETATION OF OUR MANDATE

It should be noted that the instruction of Classis Zeeland, which virtually occasioned the formation of our Committee, requests the appointment of a Committee "om te onderzoeken of er niet een *meer bevredigende methode* gevonden kan worden voor de ondersteuning, enz. (we italicize). But the minority report which Synod, nota bene, *adopted* contains much more. Among other matters the following thoughts are prominent: "considerable difference of opinion concerning the *principle* *** urgent that the advice of Classis Zeeland be carried out so that this *whole matter be studied* and a *complete report with recommendations be presented* **** so that all of our people will have a *clear conception* ***** more happy and satisfactory execution of the *principle which we shall adopt.*" (We italicize.)

Entirely aside from the question of the propriety of the *adoption* of this minority report by Synod, entailing an espousal of its views with no proof whatever being adduced, such *adoption* has not assisted your Committee in arriving at a workable understanding of just what Synod demands of it. We do not desire to shield ourselves behind any technical considerations of our mandate. We cheerfully desire to do the work required of us. But we could

wish for a more concise and clear mandate that would dispel all doubt.

The following considerations led us to the course of action which we pursue.

In the first place, the instruction of Classis Zeeland presents the occasion for the formation of our Committee, and as such takes priority. In the second place we consider the entire minority report in the light of reasons or grounds why Zeeland's instruction should be acted upon. We choose to think that Synod did not *adopt* the minority report with anything like determined espousal of each thought expressed in it. Rather do we lean towards the conviction that Synod deemed a thorough study of the support of Emeriti, their widows and orphans advisable, and for that reason it acted as it did.

But a further consideration presents itself. Does our mandate call for a study of the whole matter on a basis of our Church Order and Synodical decisions only? This is at least a presentable question in view of the fact that our fathers did differentiate between the support of Emeriti, their widows and orphans, and the support of other members of the Church. See Church Order, Articles 13 in comparison with Articles 25 and 26. In the light of the distinction made by our fathers it may be presumed that a decided principle was the determining factor. The minority report, however, which Synod *adopted*, does not seem to take cognizance of a differentiation in principle as already incorporated in our Church Order, and necessarily espoused by us. It speaks of the principle "*to be adopted.*" (We italicize.)

These considerations led us to suppose that the desires of Synod demand a study of the principles involved in this matter: in the light of God's Word as the primary source; and in the light of our Church Order and previous decisions of our Synod. To the latter, may be added the pertinent decisions of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. Synod also desires a study of the practical application of these principles.

In short, then, our work entails two things:

- I. A study of the principles upon which the support of Emeriti, with their widows and orphans is based;
- II. And a study of the method of application of the principles involved.

We also deem this course to be advisable. As far as we have been able to ascertain, such a study has never been definitely undertaken for the enlightenment of our people. We, nevertheless, feel that they are abundantly worthy of it. They love the principles of the Word of God, and have never demurred at carrying them out in practical application to life, even though it may have entailed some sacrifice. Our highest glory is in living these principles to the honor of God.

I. The Principle Upon Which The Support of Emeriti, With Their Widows and Orphans, is Based

We purposely stress the idea of **principles** in speaking of the case at hand. We do so because the Word of God does not state in any text, in so many words, that such and such a Church should treat its Emeriti thus and thus. This, of course, is not to be expected. As in other practices that we have, so also here, if the underlying principles of the Word are clear, we will have accomplished our purpose by pointing to them. We also stress the idea of principles because it surely is not expected of us that we shall cite and explain every text of Scripture on the question involved.

The principles in question are to be sought in texts which deal with the actual service of the servants of God, such as Priests and Levites in the Old Testament dispensation, and the Apostles, Bishops, and Evangelists in the New Testament times. Of the regulation of the service and revenue of the Priests and Levites we read in *Numbers 18*. Jehovah God appointed priests and Levites to the holiness and responsibility of their office, to look after the spiritual welfare of His people. Their duties and rights are spoken of in verses 1-7. The remaining part of the chapter deals with the revenues or, we may loosely say, the salaries, of the priests and Levites. The priests were allotted the heave-

offerings as the portion belonging to them out of the gifts which the children of Israel offered to Jehovah, Numbers 18:8. In verse 19 we read: "All of the heave-offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto Jehovah, have I given thee and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, as a portion forever; it is a covenant of salt forever before Jehovah unto thee and to thy seed with thee." A "covenant of salt" is an indissoluble covenant; an inviolable contract. Aaron and the Levites were to receive no allotment in the land of Canaan as an inheritance. Jehovah was their portion and inheritance. Numbers 18:21 reads: "And unto the children of Levi, behold, I have given all the tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service which they serve, even the service of the tent of meeting."

From these duties, rights, and regulations we may learn the will of God in providing for His servants and their families (daughters are included in verse 19; see also 18:31, "... ye and your households"). They were to be rewarded *for their service*. The regulation of God provided very strictly for them. They were to be relieved entirely from earthly wants and cares so that they might devote themselves entirely to the Lord and His prescribed service. We may also observe that the revenues or salaries which the Lord assigned to the priests and Levites amounted to considerable. J. D. Michaelis (*Mos. Recht*, I, p. 52), quoted by Keil and Delitzsch with reference to tithes, states: "A tribe which had only 22,00 males in it (23,000 afterwards), and therefore could hardly have numbered more than 12,000 grown-up men, received the tithes of 600,000 Israelites; consequently one single Levite, without the slightest necessity for sowing, and without any of the expenses of agriculture, reaped or received from the produce of the flocks and herds as much as five of the other Israelites." To this is later added by Keil and Delitzsch: "The revenue of the tribe, which the Lord had chosen as His own peculiar possession, was not intended to be a miserable and beggarly one . . ." The indication of the Word of God is enlightening in this connection. The manner in which God wished His spiritual servants rewarded for their service in

the Old Testament dispensation and the relative amount that they received is at least worthy of passing notice. In Numbers 18:31 we read: "And ye shall eat it in every place, ye *and your households*; for it is your reward for your service in the tabernacle of the congregation." Quite naturally the households of the Levites were to share in the reward of service.

It also appears that the priests and Levites were *set apart for life* to engage in the special work of the Lord. Numbers 35:25: ". . . . he shall abide in it *unto the death of the highpriest*." The conclusion is that they received their reward from the altar for life. For it is unthinkable that they should be rewarded for their special service of God during years of active service and then be neglected. It was pleasing to God that their support should continue. And there is not even mention made of a diminishing of that which God demanded that they should receive.

It should also be noticed that their so-called "reward" was actually a wage for spiritual work. This is not always borne in mind. Wages for spiritual work, we fear, are too often looked upon as a gift. (Remuneration for spiritual work can never be measured in dollars and cents, we fully realize. In so far, to speak of "wages" is out of the question. But the point we are making here, although taking this distinction into consideration, does not aim at a development or violation of it. The distinction as such need not be spoken of at length in this connection.) As far as we have been able to ascertain, the reward or wages of the priests and Levites were not in any way determined, conditioned, or affected by what they might otherwise possess. The reward was based entirely upon the command of God for the work done. They did not receive an inheritance in Canaan. God was to be their portion. In Him they were to live from the altar.

With the forgoing in mind as a background, we enter the New Testament dispensation of the Kingdom of God. Also here we shall seek to know the will of God in connection with His servants. In *Matthew 10* we read that Jesus called unto Him his twelve disciples and sent them out to preach. In verses 9 and 10 He instructed them to "provide

neither gold nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; *for the workman is worthy of his meat,*” or, as Luke 10:7 has it, “: . . . the laborer is worthy of his hire.” Of this latter word “hire” the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, page 1395, says, “In the English N. T. the word occurs once as a verb and three times as a noun as a translation of *misthos* and its verbal form. In Matt. 20:1, 8, and James 5:4, it refers to the hiring of ordinary field laborers for a daily wage. In Luke 10:7 it signifies the stipend which is due the laborer in the spiritual work of the Kingdom of God. It is a wage, earned by toil, as that of other laborers. The word is very significant here and absolutely negatives the idea, all too prevalent, that money received by the spiritual toiler is a gift. It is rather a wage, the reward of real toil.” This presents the same idea with which we met before, that the salary of the spiritual workers in God’s Kingdom is the reward which God demands that they shall receive for the work they do. They are to engage in the work, trusting in the providence of God to care for them. And the flock of God in which they are placed is the means through which this providential care is to be dispensed. For that the people of God are responsible.

Of the many citations in Scripture which we might be expected to touch upon, Paul affords us a noteworthy one in *I Cor. 9:7-14*, which contains or refers to other passages. The passage reads: “What soldier ever serveth at his own charge? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8. Do I speak these things after the manner of men? or saith not the law also the same? 9. For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. Is it for the oxen that God careth, 10, or saith he it assuredly for our sake? Yea, for our sake it was written; because he that ploweth ought to plow in hope, and he that thresheth, to thresh in hope of partaking. 11. If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things? 12. If others partake of this right over you, do not we yet more?

Nevertheless we did not use this right; but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the Gospel of Christ. 13, Know ye not that they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? 14, Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel.”

This language of the Apostle is so plain that little need be said by way of explanation. It will be noticed that the Holy Spirit guides the Apostle in citing the references that he uses from the Old Testament in such a manner that he may rightfully say that it is assuredly or altogether said for our sake. It is the determination or will of God that those who minister in the Word and Sacraments shall be honorably maintained; that they shall live of the gospel. This ordinance of God is compared to natural justice, verse 7; to the law of Moses, vss. 8-10; to spiritual justice, vss. 11-12; and to the care of the Old Testament priests, vs. 13. Upon these as a basis the conclusion of the Apostle in verse 14 is unescapable, “Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel.” And we have incorporated the idea of such support in our Church Order, Article 11, which we have in common with the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, in the following language: “On the other hand, the Consistory, as representing the congregation, shall also be bound to provide for the proper support of its Ministers . . .”

We feel assured that the foregoing is accorded certainty among us. We as a people feel the righteousness of the due support of the ministry and we cheerfully assume the duty. In so far the foregoing need not to have been made a part of this report. And still we hope that it will serve some useful purpose. It should accentuate the idea of the perfect right that ministers have to their salary as a wage or reward for their work and the duty or obligation of the Churches in thus viewing the matter. And, at the same time, what has been thus far incorporated in this report will serve as a worthy basis for a Scriptural view of the duty of the churches toward their Emeriti preachers, toward those who have served the Church in the Word and Sacra-

ments in the strength of their years, but are now no longer in active service as heretofore.

That the churches have a special duty toward their Emeriti, their widows and orphans, appears in part from what has already been considered. The Old Testament priests, we have seen, were bound to the service of the altar for life, Num. 35:25. This, of course, entails that they with their families (Num. 18:19, 31) were to be supported from the altar for life. But there are also New Testament references which indicate this same life service for the servants of God. We do not believe in the principle of the Minister being bound to the Church as do the Roman Catholics who teach that the office of the Minister itself is of an unlosable or indelible character (character indelebilis). Nor do we believe the Anabaptistic error that because one is in a spiritual office he must necessarily shun all contact with civil life. But there are New Testament passages that indicate that it is right that Ministers be bound to the service of the Church for their entire lives. In John 21:15-17 and II Cor. 5:14 their undivided devotion is demanded. In John 9:4 Jesus says: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work." With reasonable expectation this also holds for those whom it has pleased the Lord to call to His work. All of their life should be devoted to the work of the Ministry. The ministry demands all of their willingness, I Cor. 9:16-17. It demands all of their perseverance, II Tim. 4:1-6. It demands entire setting apart and complete consecration to the work of the Word and the Sacraments, Rom. 1:1: "... separated unto the gospel of God," and Acts 15:26, men "that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It may be observed that none of the above-mentioned passages state, in so many words, that a minister is bound to the service of the Church for his entire life. This, of course, is true. There are indications, however, of what is pleasing to the Lord. And together with these indications the following observation should be given due prominence. An *office*, as we use the term in "office-bearers" in the church, is received through mandate, commission, or dedi-

cation. The office is a service and the office-bearer a servant. It is Christ who commissions one. But as far as external and objective relationships of inducting one into office are concerned, Christ does this through His Church, which must base its action upon the ordinances and indications of Scripture. In so many words, the Lord has not designated the length of service of the ministers of the Word. But principles and indications are present in Scripture. The Church is held to interpret them in accordance with its own well-being and that of the Kingdom of God at large. This, our Church has done. It has expressed itself in Article 12 of the Church Order as follows: "Inasmuch as a Minister of the Word, once lawfully called as described above (Article 4) *is bound to the service of the Church for life*, he is not allowed to enter upon a secular vocation except for such weighty reasons as shall receive the approval of the Classis." (We italicize.) This is a sound principle which the Church has a perfect right (if not a duty) to express as its understanding of the Word of God for its own well-being. And the Church has a perfect right when inducting servants into office to cause this life service to be a part of its contract with its servants.

Now the question may be squarely faced: Since the Church has thus expressed itself upon a basis of the ordinances, principles and indications of the Word of God and its own avowed well-being, has it or has it not a *special duty* toward those whom it thus inducts into office? The Church has required long and specialized training of them; has called them and inducted them into *service for life*; has forbade them to do any other than spiritual work whereby they might add to the comforts of life. Is the Church responsible for them; for their maintenance, support and well-being as a *special duty for life* or not? May the Church, may any Church of the living God lightly esteem that relationship which it demands shall be honored by its servants?

We may thank God that all of the Churches of Christendom have seen in the past and are seeing more clearly at the present time that their duty towards the Ministers of the Word and the Sacraments is a special duty. And we

may also thank God that the Churches are not only calling each other's attention to the principles of Scripture in this connection but are also warning each other against wilful neglect of duty and disobedience to the will of God in accordance with Galatians 6:6-8, "But let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. 7. Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." Well may Churches warn each other against wilful neglect of duty in this regard in view of this terse statement of the Word of God. *Calvin* observes in a sermon on this text: "This word (vs. 7) even though it is short, should cause us to tremble, not less than when we hear a hard crash of thunder or see the lightning flash beside us. Indeed, it concisely calls the negligence of members of the congregation towards the ministers a mocking of God since they act as if they can mislead God through the subterfuges (or excuses) that they give to others and to themselves. It assures us that God does not allow Himself to be effected, but also in this case He upholds His ordinances according to which the harvest answers to the sowing. And it warns the congregation not to allow itself to be misled by 'the subtlety of Satan,' who, while he well supplies 'his own servants,' continually endeavors to rob the Church of God of good shepherds and teachers . . ." (Quoted by Rutgers, *Kerkelijke Adviezen*, Vol. I, pages 67, 68, and translated by your committee).

We should also be thankful that there are an ever-increasing number of Churches who realize that it is for the well-being of the Church itself to look after, care for, and honorably provide for its ministry in active service as well as for those who are disabled or superannuated. In a pamphlet dealing with the support of superannuated ministers of one of our American Churches, we read the following: "Without a consecrated, faithful, and efficient ministry there could be no Church. Without the Christian Church the world would be wrapped in darkness. From the day of Pentecost the Church has depended for its great

mission to proclaim the gospel to all the world and to establish and expand itself in all lands on men who have vitally experienced the new life in Christ and who have been moved by the love of God and the Holy Spirit in determining to devote their lives to its service. This has implied that they must give up and keep aloof from all secular and remunerative occupations and to trust in God and the Church alone to furnish them with all needed temporal things, not only for the period of vigor, but also for times of disability and old age.”

“The Church wants in its ministry men of high character, learning, talent, and initiatives, who might adorn any profession or occupation and succeed in it. They must have a burning zeal in their hearts for the kingdom of God and for the salvation of souls. They must be equipped with a brave heart to withstand opposition and to stand pat against the spirits of darkness. They must be able to endure misrepresentations and to practice self-denial.” * * *

“It is simple justice that the Church provide in some manner for a decent support of all these servants for the periods of their lives, when they are disabled or superannuated, their salary being a thing of the past, and for their dependents. The Church has been since time immemorial the teacher of the world in love, sympathy, and justice. Is it too much expected that she practices her own teaching? Is it too much expected that she shows to the veteran servants a real appreciation of their faithful work in their days of strength, of their devotion to the Church in offering on her altar their lifetime, their talents, their scholarship, and their opportunities in other vocations? They proclaimed from the pulpit and the altar the way of salvation. They baptized the children, instructed and confirmed the young. They performed marriage ceremonies. They stood at deathbeds and at the graves and spoke words of consolation. They were ever ready to give advice, warning and comfort to all in trouble, doubt and sorrow. They were leaders of their flock in all good work, and by their initiatives church properties were procured and institutions founded and sustained, and the boundaries of the

Church extended through missionary work at home and abroad.”

We now repeat the question that has been asked before, *Has the Church a special duty towards the ministers of the Word whom it calls for life?* As a committee we are glad to answer the question in the affirmative. And we are equally thankful that our Church has officially recognized this special duty by incorporating *Art. 13* into its Church Order in the following words: “Ministers, who by reason of age, sickness, or otherwise, are rendered incapable of performing the duties of their office, shall nevertheless retain the honor and title of a Minister, and the Church which they have served shall provide honorably for them in their need (likewise for the orphans and widows of ministers) out of the common fund of the Churches, according to the general ecclesiastical ordinances in this matter.” That our churches have always recognized their care of the Emeriti, their widows and orphans, as a special duty may be seen from the contents of *Art. 13, C. O.*, as compared with *Arts. 25 and 26, C. O.* The latter named articles deal with the peculiar office of the Deacons in connection with the *poor*. That our churches recognize their duty towards their indigent members is a matter of common knowledge and it is a duty whose fulfilment we thankfully engage in. We do so in the spirit of Scripture, “Bear ye one another’s burdens and thus fulfil the law of Christ.” Surely “it is more blessed to give than to receive.”

But because our churches, from the very beginning, have recognized their special duty towards the Emeriti, their widows and orphans, they have expressed themselves in *Art. 13, C. O.*, in accordance with it. The churches in dealing with their Emeriti are dealing with servants whom they have hired for life; with those who stand in a special relationship of contract to them. And entirely in accordance with this special relationship the churches have recognized a special duty of providing honorably for their Emeriti, widows and orphans. This special relationship is expressed in short in *Art. 13, C. O.*, with the words that the Emeriti “shall nevertheless retain the honor and title of a Minister.” That the Emeriti retain the title of a Minister

could hardly be otherwise because the Church has inducted its ministers into office for life. And unless they forfeit their office in one way or another they retain it to the end of their lives. The same may be said of the "honor" that attaches to the office of the Minister.

But from the nature of the distinction further explanation is necessary. The Word of God in I Tim. 5:17, 18, was undoubtedly in the minds of our fathers at the time of the formation of Art. 13 of the Church Order. There we read; verse 17, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the Word and in teaching. Verse 18, For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his hire." It appears that this designation "double honor" sustained a relationship, in the mind of the Apostle, to the reward which those were to receive who labor in the Word and in teaching. The connection between the two verses, it will be noticed, is very close, "double honor"... "*for the Scripture saith...*" The conclusion seems perfectly warranted that what the Apostle had in mind with double honor was, in short, the office and the support or reward that it carries with it. Now our fathers have recognized this very principle or teaching of the Word of God by stating this twofold relationship; by expressing this double honor also for the Emeriti. We read in Art. 13 not only that the Emeriti shall "retain the honor and title of a Minister" but also that "the Church which they have served shall provide honorably for them in their need . . ." They have been engaged by the Church for life and the Church is in duty bound to provide honorably for them during their lives. And this is the *special duty* that our Churches have always recognized in the distinction that has been made between Art. 13 and Arts. 25 and 26 of the Church Order.

Now the question arises whether the churches are financially responsible to their Emeriti regardless of what they may possess. Art. 13 speaks of providing "honorably for them *in their need...*" This may be construed to mean that the churches are only financially obligated to their Emeriti when the latter are in dire need and have no other

means of support. And it may also mean that the churches shall provide for their maintenance, livelihood, living expenses; in short, for their *financial support* for life. If the former be true then there were no necessity for this to be expressly stated in Art. 13 of the Church Order. Articles 25 and 26 give enough security that the Churches shall provide for their needy. As a committee we feel that Art. 13 does not restrict "*need*" to this sense alone. This observation or interpretation is supported by the following. In tracing the history of Article 13 in connection with the Churches in the Netherlands, we find renderings of it that suggest this interpretation. *Dordrecht* 1578 states: "... dat sy den ouerighen tyt hares leuens eerlick toebrenghen moghen." *Middelburg* 1581, "dat hem soo veel toegheleijt werde, daerop hij de reste zijns leuens eerlick ende bequamelick door comen moghe." 's *Gravenhage* 1586, "... eerlijcken in haren nootdrufft versorgheet worden." These decisions define financial support for the lifetime of the Emeriti whereby they may be in a position to live honorably. The latter decision, that of 's Gravenhage, 1586, gives substantially what we have today in our Church Order, Art. 13, "... to provide honorably for them in their need." In the light of history your committee understands this expression "their need" to mean *proper support for living expenses*.

Dr. F. L. Rutgers, in his *Kerkelijke Adviezen*, Vol. 1, p. 100, has the following to say in connection with the expression "provide honorably for them in their need": "Immers, daardoor worden die emeriti niet beschouwd als hulpbehoevenden, aan wie barmhartigheid zou te bewijzen zijn; 't geen alsdan ook de taak zou zijn van de Diakonie. Het woord 'nooddrufftig' wordt zeker ook wel gebruikt in den zin van 'armoedig,' maar daarom beteekent 'nooddrufft' nog niet 'armoede.' Het beteekent eenvoudig 'levensonderhoud'; precies hetzelfde als wat in Art. 11, met betrekking tot tractementen, wordt uitgedrukt door de woorden 'van behoorlijk onderhoud verzorgen'; waaruit toch wel niemand zal afleiden, dat eene kerk het door haar toegezegde tractement wel mag verminderen met hetgeen zij meent dat de predikant wel uit eigen middelen kan betalen. Al

die uitdrukkingen bedoelen eenvoudig, een maatstaf aan te geven voor het bedrag van tractament en pensioen." On the preceding page of the same volume Dr. Rutgers had stated the following: "Al is of wordt die Dienaar bemiddeld en zelfs zeer rijk, zijne kerk mag dan toch niet zeggen: 'Wij zijn volgens Art. 11, K. O., gehouden, u van behoorlijk onderhoud te verzorgen; en dus, nu ge zulk een onderhoud reeds in ruime mate uit eigen middelen hebt, geven we u geen tractement meer.' Dat zou met het voor ieder geldende *recht* in strijd zijn; terwijl het bovendien zou bedoelen, de schuld voor het tractement, welke op de geheele gemeente rust, feitelijk te doen betalen door den éénen predikant; om nu nog niet eens te spreken van nog andere ongerechtigheden, die daaruit zouden voortvloeien."

"Maar datzelfde geldt dan ook van het emeritaats-pensioen, 't welk niet anders is dan eene gedeeltelijke voortzetting van het tractement, aan een predikant, die zijn dienst niet meer kan waarnemen."

Now it seems to us in view of what has been said and the citations that have been given (which could be multiplied by many others from authorities on Reformed Church Polity) that the expression appearing in Art. 13, "provide honorably for them in their need," means that the churches have recognized the Scriptural principles involved in the support of their ministry in such a way that the expression is equivalent to stating that the churches shall provide honorably for the support of their ministry for life. They have employed them for life. Thus their contract with them reads in Art. 12, C. O. And employment for life entails a financial obligation to them for life on a basis of Scriptural demands and plain justice. Under these conditions and circumstances the churches may never view their Emeriti, with their widows and orphans, as the objects of charity. To do so would be a denial of the principles of Scripture and it would be a blight upon the churches. The constituency of any church should be filled with righteous indignation if at any time their superannuated ministry should be referred to as the objects of charity. They should rise to the higher level of the Word of God, be thankful that God has given them an under

standing heart of its principles, and rejoice in the privilege of honorably maintaining the servants of an Almighty God who watch for their souls.

The "reward" which a minister in active service receives for his work we speak of as a salary. We thus refer to the "proper support" of which Art. 11, C. O., speaks. On a basis of principle there is no reason for not retaining the same word, "salary," for a designation of the obligation which the Church owes its ministers who are no longer in active service. The Church has, through contract, engaged its ministry for life and this life contract carries a salary for life. One virtue of the retention of the term "salary" for the support of Emeriti would be that it would continually remind of this life contract and obligation. This is not superfluous. And to call the support of Emeriti by the same name that is in vogue for the support of ministers in active service lends support to the idea of the continuity of the office. The Emeriti retain the honor, title, and support of a Minister, Art. 13, C. O. The Fund that we now have, might then be spoken of as "The Emeriti Salary Fund."

The word *pension*, however, has long been in use also as a designation of the support which the churches owe to their Emeriti. Our Synod of 1930 through its adoption of the minority report says: "Some consider the principle to be practically the same as a pension. . . ." By these "some" the Synod refers to members of our churches. Your committee feels honored in being included in these "some." In the light of our findings we fail to understand how anyone can conscientiously object to the statement that the support of our Emeriti is practically the same as a pension. But then the word *pension*, in this connection, is not used, as is frequently the case in labor circles, to designate an amount of salary that has been withheld or that has previously been earned but has not been paid. It is rather a term of convenience which is used to specify, by way of distinction from the salary of ministers in active service, that continued support to which the Emeriti are entitled by virtue of the life contract to which the Church has made them a party when inducting them into office. In this

sense, usage has somewhat sanctioned the term. It has been in use in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands for years even though some authorities there prefer the term "verzorging," which probably better expresses the underlying idea of justice, duty, and obligation. The term *pension* for the support of Emeriti ministers has also been in use for many years in this country. In a pamphlet called "Ministerial Pension," by S. A. Lindholm, under the auspices of "The Augustana Pension and Aid Fund," we find "Tabulated excerpts from annual reports of the Pension Funds within the Protestant Denominations * * * at end of fiscal year 1929." The following Churches are named as having Pension Funds for their Emeriti, widows and orphans: United Presbyterian, United Church of Canada, United Lutheran Church of America, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Reformed Church of America, Presbyterian (U. S. A.), Congregational, Protestant Episcopal, Norwegian Lutheran of America, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian Church in U. S. (Southern), Northern Baptist Convention, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist Church South, United Brethren, Augustana Lutheran, Church of Nazarene, Methodist Episcopal, and Reformed Church in United States.

In view of the meaning which the term *pension* may have in designating the support of Emeriti; its widespread use for such support and the convenience of the term, we believe that it may very well be employed by us to specify what we have in mind in the support of our superannuated ministers.

Under this division of our report we also subsume a few remarks anent the question of whether the local church or churches in general should shoulder the support of the Emeriti. We do so because the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands state that this is a matter of "principle." Since the year 1905 these churches have adopted the so-called principle that the local church, which the Emeritus minister has last served as a regular charge, is responsible for his support. Before the year 1905 the support of the Emeriti, their widows and orphans, was from a general fund maintained by all of the churches. The change was

brought about at the Synod of Utrecht in 1905. The grounds for the change are the following:

1. That it is the demand of Art. 13, C. O., that "the church (not churches) which they have served shall provide" for them. This is construed to mean the local church which the Emeritus preacher served as his last charge.
2. That the retention of the name and honor of a Minister demands it because this retention includes that the Emeritus shall be officially connected with his last congregation since thereby alone can he remain in office. Thus the duty of support belongs to the local church and not to the churches in general.
3. That the one local church may not be made responsible for the financial duties of another.

It was felt, however, that this change might burden small and probably poor congregations above their financial ability. For this reason a general Emeritus Fund was also resorted to and each local congregation is expected to contribute a certain specified amount to the general fund. The system, then, amounts to a combination of what is called the correct principle and what is condemned in ground 3 cited above. And from a practical standpoint the combined system has not met with general approval. Neighboring churches have begun to band together, enlisting each other's aid in the support of Emeriti or in becoming financially able for such support in case it is needed. This is called a different method of the application of Art. 13 than that to which the churches had been accustomed. In the "Rapporten Behoorende bij de Acta der Generale Synode van de Geref. Kerken in Nederland, Utrecht 1923, pp. 73 ff., we find a report of a committee which had been appointed at the General Synod of Leeuwarden, 1920, "te onderzoeken, of, met handhaving van het beginsel van Art. 13, K. O., mogelijk en gewenscht is, de regeling van Utrecht (1905) te wijzigen of te vervangen door eene nieuwe regeling, waarvan mag worden verwacht, dat ze meer algemeene instemming zal vinden. . . ." In this report we also read of this banding together of local churches as follows: "Im-

mers, om aan de bovengenoemde bezwaren zooveel mogelijk tegemoet te komen en toch aan het beginsel van Art. 13 vast te houden, zijn inderdaad 'onderscheidene kerken begonnen eene andere wijze van uitvoering van Art. 13 te volgen,' gelijk door de Synode van Leeuwarden geconstateerd werd."

"En welke is deze andere wijze van uitvoering?

"Uit het onderzoek, door Deputaten in dezen ingesteld, is hun gebleken, dat deze feitelijk neerkomt op "eene vrijwillige, onderlinge verbintenis van de kerken tegenover elkander om de financiële lasten, aan de uitvoering van Art. 13 verbonden, door het storten van jaarlijksche bijdragen naar een zekeren maatstaf, gezamenlijk te dragen.' Kortheidshalve gewoonlijk met den naam 'onderlinge verzekering' aangeduid." We are informed in this report that this practice has become quite general in the churches. The committee does not condemn the practice, although it states that there are matters in connection with it which call for stipulations by Synod and others against which the Synod should warn. The advice of the committee was adopted by Synod.

It should be noticed that Art. 13 of the Church Order of the Netherlands Reformed Churches differs from ours in just that which they call a "principle" question. Their part of Art. 13 in question reads: ". . . en van de Kerk, die zij gediend hebben, eerlijk in hunne nooddruft (gelijk ook de weduwen en weezen der Dienaren in 't gemeen) verzorgd worden." They understand the word "Kerk" to mean that the local church is held responsible for the support of those Emeriti who have served it as their last charge. Our Art. 13, in the part involved, reads: ". . . and the church which they have served shall provide honorably for them in their need (likewise for the orphans and widows of Ministers) out of the common fund of the Churches, according to the general ecclesiastical ordinances in this matter." Our churches have seen fit to add the idea of a "common fund." This matter has been settled here. And for that reason the problem of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands in this matter is not ours. When they

speak about maintaining the "principle" of Art. 13 they have the support by the local church in mind.

It is true that Art. 13, as formulated in the revision of Dordrecht, apparently had the local church in mind with the statement, "de Kerk die zij gediend hebben." But it appears that the singular number, "Church," was used because of the financial relationship of the State to the Church at that time and not because of any principle that was at stake. The Emeriti were paid by the State from the "Bona Publica," through the local church. All the latter had to do was to make a request from the State for the necessary amount. It is very natural, then, that the Church Order of Dordrecht should only make mention of the local church as a matter of convenience but not necessarily of avowed principle. Later editions of the Church Order have retained the word "Church," simply following the precedent that was established without taking the trouble to change it when the financial relationship of the State to the Church became altered. (Cf. Heyns, *Geref. Kerkrecht en Geref. Kybernetiek*, Grand Rapids, 1922.)

Your committee does not feel that the Word of God or the genius of Reformed Church Polity, as far as we understand it, demand, as a basic principle, that each local church become financially responsible for the proper and entire support of those ministers who, in God's providence, have served it as their last charge. We do, however, take note of practical difficulties against it with which the churches of the Netherlands are struggling at the present time. These difficulties seem too self-evident to mention in this report. We do not desire to burden our report with matters that would needlessly lengthen it.

That our churches have added the clause in question to Art. 13, C. O., is not without good reason. If our local congregations, through the Consistories, Classes, and Synod desire to morally bind themselves together for the financial support of their Emeriti ministers and thus individually and collectively assist each other in a common task, we fail to sense any Scriptural principle that may be thereby violated. Nor does the observation of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, given in the second ground

above (p. 51) for the position they have taken, militate against our practice. They state that the retention of the name and honor of a Minister by the Emeriti includes that the Emeriti shall be officially connected with their last charge and this *demand*s that that local church shall support them. But this statement of fact that the Emeritus Minister is officially bound to his last congregation does not prove the *demand*. The professors of theology at the Free University of the Netherlands retain the name and honor of a Minister without being officially connected with a local church as an office-bearer. Our home missionaries, although officially connected with a local church, are not supported by that church alone. This is the *practice* in the Netherlands and here. If the principles of the Word of God *demand* what is stated and Reformed Church Polity honors this demand, proof should be adduced to substantiate it. And then, naturally, it should be followed tenaciously and consistently. Even now the churches of the Netherlands are not honoring, what they call a principle demand, above the practice that is being followed by us. Churches are banding together for the support of the Emeriti. And although it is true that a local church hands the Emeritus his salary, it is equally true that other churches give for his support.

In conclusion allow us to state that we have endeavored to make a study, in this part of our report, of the general principles of the Word of God governing the support of Emeriti, their widows and orphans. We have had in mind the general cases of ministers serving the Church until incapacitated by reason of age. There will, in the providence of God, be exceptional cases to which these general principles apply with equal force. For practical reasons they may better be spoken of in the second part of our report. Much more could readily have been brought to your attention. We have, however, endeavored to make this report as brief as we feel is consistent with our mandate. After having these foregoing principles brought to its attention, our Synod should express itself in harmony with them in some concise form. As far as we know, this has not been done in the past. The Reformed Churches of the Nether-

lands have done so years ago. In their Synod of 1893, Acta, Art. 179, p. 187, the following expression was adopted in connection with Art. 13 of the Church Order: "De verzorging van Emeriti—predikanten en van predikants-weduwen en weezen, gegrond in den eisch van Gods Woord en voorgeschreven in Art. 13, K. O., is NIET zaak van BARMHARTIGHEID, maar van RECHT der genoemde personen en PLICHT der betrokken Kerken." Our study has led us to the same conclusions. We feel that the Word of God demands that the support of Emeriti is a special duty of the churches. It is not a case of charity but one of justice and obligation.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

In the light of the foregoing we recommend that Synod adopt the following resolution:

The support of Emeriti Ministers, their widows and orphans, founded upon the Word of God and prescribed in Art. 13, C. O., is NOT a matter of CHARITY but it is the RIGHT of the parties named and the DUTY of the churches concerned.

PART II. A STUDY OF THE METHOD OF APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE INVOLVED.

Assuming the adoption by the Synod of the recommendation at the conclusion of Part I of this report, Part II will necessarily have to define the practical application of the principle evolved from the Holy Scriptures. From the very beginning it was felt by your committee that this would be the most difficult part of its task. Several questions immediately arose, viz., 1. What have other churches or denominations of our country done with respect to this matter? 2. Which would prove the most practical and acceptable plan for our churches considering their number and financial strength? 3. To what extent or in what amount should our Emeriti Ministers, their widows and orphans, be supported? 4. How should the necessary funds to offer this support be raised? 5. How shall these funds be administered and dispensed to the recipients? In this second

part of its report your committee will seek an answer to these questions:—

1. What have other churches or denominations done with respect to this matter? Well has it been said, "The various pension systems now in operation or waiting to be put into operation, differ in details as much as the denominations differ in dogmatics, church polity, and traditions, though the purpose and general principles are the same." A heap of interesting and instructive literature on these various plans has been printed, but it would take us too far afield to describe them all in this report. May it suffice that we mention a few of the plans adopted by the larger denominations, just to show that all churches have been or still are struggling with this same problem.

The M. E. Church has adopted a Minister's Reserve Pension Fund which is to be put in operation in the year 1931. To this fund both ministers and Conferences must contribute, and the pension drawn by the minister at the age of 65 depends on the years of service rendered and on the total amount on the minister's credit account. There is no fixed pension for the widows. This depends entirely upon their deceased husband's credit account. Minor children are given \$75 per year until they are 16 years of age, but this may be increased to \$150 until they are 21 if enrolled in a reputable college.

The Congregational Church has its Annuity Fund, established 1920, and in addition to this there is a Pilgrim Memorial Fund, 1917, with endowment funds of \$8,000,000, and finally there is a Board of Relief. The resources for providing the annuity, which in some cases amounts to \$1,200 per annum, are swelled by contributions from the local churches.

The Northern Baptist Convention has what is known as The Ministers' and Missionaries' Benefit Fund. This was put in operation in 1920. The members pay six per cent of their salary and of a reasonable rental for parsonage. This is placed to their own credit account. There is an endowment fund of \$12,000,000. The interest on this fund and from other funds with a place in the church budget are calculated to produce 70 per cent needed for pension-

ing the members at the age of 65. Minimum pension is \$500 and maximum according to the member's individual credits. Disability benefit is \$500, but at the age of 65 regular pension is drawn. Widows and orphans draw according to the deceased minister's credits.

The Disciples of Christ are engaged at the present time (July, 1931) in a very elaborately set up campaign to raise \$8,000,000 for a Pension Fund.

The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. began its work of ministerial relief as far back as 1717. It had until 1927 two departments, the Relief and Sustentation funds. The first had for its purpose to relieve real want, the second was a pension fund. The ministers affiliated with it paid one-fifth and the church four-fifths to produce a pension of \$500 for its members at the age of 70. This worked splendidly until the demands of the new time proved the support of disabled and retired ministers wholly inadequate. In 1927 a reserve pension plan was put into operation, along the lines of the Church Pension Fund of the Episcopal Church, paying a minimum of \$600 and a maximum of \$1,200 to members at the age of 65. It provides for disability pension of \$600. Widows receive \$300 and minor children \$100 per year.

The Reformed Church in America, the Church nearest to us doctrinally, and as to church polity and as to tradition, also realized recently that the relief and support offered its disabled and retired ministers was not at all what it should be. It therefore also undertook to remedy matters and put on a campaign to raise \$1,000,000 for a Ministers' Pension Fund.

The Reformed Churches of the Netherlands have also had a long and tedious struggle to come to what would seem to them an adequate provision for retired ministers, widows and orphans. It is not necessary to repeat here what has been pointed to in the first part of this report, viz., the constant aim and struggle to link up this support of retired ministers with the last church served. We only refer to it here in passing, in order to show that everywhere, not only in our country but also abroad, this question has been considered from every angle.

2. Which would prove the most practical and acceptable plan for our churches, considering their number and financial strength?

In order to answer this question it was necessary for your committee to make a detailed study of the various plans now in operation or proposed, to tabulate the merits and demerits and thus come to a conclusion. The reason for not linking it up more definitely with the local church, but laying the responsibility for the support of these ministers upon the Church as a whole, has been referred to before. It makes the application of the principle so very impracticable. We see how it works out where it is tried.

(1) The congregations that become responsible for the support of an emeritated minister feel themselves unable to call another minister without becoming a subsidized Church. (2) The congregation that becomes responsible for this support may have enjoyed the services of the minister in question only for a very brief period, and that during the declining years of his life, while other churches have enjoyed his services for much longer periods and during the time when he was at the zenith of his strength and ability. (3) If a general fund is established from which these responsible churches may draw support for their emeritated ministers, then the whole matter of the local church's responsibility becomes a form rather than a fact. (4) If the churches of a certain district come to an agreement to create a fund from which emeritated ministers in that district may be supported, then also it becomes a form rather than a fact that the local church supports him.

Therefore, since our churches are so constituted that they all together, and only all together, open the way to the ministry in these churches, it would seem that they all together should also assume the support of disabled and retired ministers and their dependents.

Considering the number of our churches and their financial strength, we believe therefore that the most practicable and most acceptable plan for the relief and sustentation of emeritated ministers and their dependents would be by means of a general fund to which all churches shall contribute their proper assessment. This assessment to be as-

signed annually by the Committee in charge in accordance with the strength of the several churches.

3. To what extent, or in what amount should our emeriti ministers, their widows and orphans, be supported?

The application of the principle evolved from the Holy Scriptures requires that all ministers and their dependents should be fully taken care of by the churches who have accepted them into their ministry for life, irrespective of the means which these ministers may or not possess in themselves. However, realizing that this full application of the principle may awaken an unwarranted antipathy against the principle itself, and that it might lead to the assuming of a burden by the churches which might prove too heavy to bear, your committee believes that a plan should be adopted by which all disabled and retired ministers and their dependents should be taken care of in a way that shall answer the above-mentioned question, as much as possible, to the mutual satisfaction of the churches and their emeritated ministers. The former plan of the Presbyterian Church would seem the most practicable and satisfactory. By this we mean that each and every minister, after 35 years of active service, or upon reaching the age of 65, should be allowed to retire and receive a pension of no less than \$600 per annum. If this pension or allowance should not prove adequate for their needs, they should have the privilege of applying for further aid from the second or relief department of the fund. The maximum amount of relief granted should be \$600. Disabled ministers not answering to the above specified years of service, should be emeritated with an allowance up to \$1,200 from the second or relief department of this fund. Widows should be allowed up to two-thirds of what their husbands might have received or did receive. Orphans should be allowed up to \$150 until they are 18 years of age.

4. How shall the necessary funds to offer this support be raised?

It has been customary, as we all know, to raise funds for the support of our disabled and retired ministers, with their

dependents, by levying an assessment, reckoned per family, on the several congregations. It became necessary to raise this assessment from time to time until at present it is two dollars per family. In this arrangement no account was taken of the fact that a larger number of families in one church have less expenses than a smaller number of families in another church. Your committee would take these things into consideration and seek a more equitable proportioning of the amounts to be paid by the different churches. Our reasons for this may be stated as follows:

- (1) It is only logical that we should have the most fair and equitable proportioning to the churches of the amounts they should contribute for the care of our Emeriti ministers and their dependents.
- (2) A large congregation naturally desires the service of a minister when he is at his best, as to age, experience, and ability. No one will care to militate against this, since our larger churches are generally also the ones that have need of the best possible service. For this, it would seem, they should gladly and willingly contribute a larger proportion than the smaller churches for the support of the disabled or retired ministers and their dependents.
- (3) The larger churches have proportionately less expense than the smaller ones. We refer, in this connection, only to the following two items: Pastor's salary and upkeep of church and parsonage. Therefore we believe the larger churches are also better able to make a larger contribution to the sustentation and relief fund.

Your committee would therefore propose the following sliding scale as to the congregational assessments for the Emeriti Fund:

- All congregations of 75 or less families shall pay \$1.50.
- All congregations of 76 to 150 families shall pay \$2.00.
- All congregations of 150 to 250 families shall pay \$2.50.
- All congregations with more than 250 families shall pay \$3.00.

5. How shall these funds be administered and dispensed to the recipients?

Your committee would offer the following rules and regulations to supersede those now in force:

RULES FOR THE CARE OF EMERITATED MINISTERS AND OF WIDOWS AND ORPHANS OF MINISTERS

If any minister of the Word by reason of age, sickness, or otherwise, is unable to perform his duties, his request for emeritation is presented by him to his Consistory, and by them to the Classis, which decides on it, subject to the approval of Synod. Acts of 1914, Articles 17 and 72.

For the execution of Article 13 of the Church Order, the Christian Reformed Church maintains a Sustentation and Relief Fund from which sustentation and adequate aid is dispensed, subject to the following rules and regulations:

1. A minister who has served the Church for 35 years, or who has reached the age of 65, shall receive for his sustentance upon emeritation \$600 from this fund, payable in monthly installments.
2. A minister for whom this sustentance is inadequate for his necessary support, may apply to the Committee in charge for relief. After investigation by the Committee, the applicant may be given relief from this fund in not to exceed \$600 above that already received. This also to be paid in monthly installments.
3. A minister, who by sickness or otherwise, is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office, may apply, upon emeritation, to the Committee in charge for relief from this fund. After investigation the Committee shall determine the amount to be allowed, but in no case is this to exceed \$1,200 annually, payable in monthly installments.
4. A minister's widow shall receive two-thirds in amount of the sustentancé her husband was entitled to at the time of his demise, as also two-thirds of amount of the relief he was receiving. She may also be granted not to exceed \$150 annually for each child under eighteen years of age, payable in monthly installments. All this to cease immediately upon her re-marriage.

5. In case both the minister and his wife are deceased and leave orphans surviving them, these may receive not to exceed \$250 annually, payable in monthly installments, until their eighteenth birthday.
6. A minister, who by reason of sickness or otherwise, upon emeritation, has received relief from this fund, and who is declared eligible for a call by the Classis because of having regained his health, may continue to receive his allowance up to the next meeting of Synod, when his case shall be considered.
7. All cases falling under 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 shall be investigated by the Committee, and all decisions of the Committee must be submitted to the Synod for approval.
8. Clerks of Consistories and Stated Clerks of Classes shall be requested to supply all information they can to the Secretary of the Committee in re all cases falling under their jurisdiction.
9. The Committee shall present each Synod with the necessary information pertaining to the assessment per family for the two calendar years following upon that Synod, as also an estimated budget to be raised during that period for this fund. Private gifts and legacies may be solicited and received, and shall be acknowledged by the Committee.
10. The Committee in charge of this fund, to be appointed by the Synod, shall consist of six men, one each from the Classes G. R. East, G. R. West, Illinois, Holland, Muskegon, and Zeeland, these to be men to whom the administration and dispensing of said funds may be properly committed. This Committee shall be composed of two ministers and four other members.

They shall be legally incorporated under name and style of—Board of the Emeriti Fund of the Christian Reformed Church of America. Vacancies occurring in this Committee between Synods shall be filled temporarily by the Committee in consultation with the Synodical Committee.
11. The Synod which adopts these rules and regulations shall appoint this Committee, three to serve two years and three to serve four years, thereafter at each meeting of Synod members shall be appointed for the ex-

- pired terms, these to serve four years. Committee members may be re-appointed.
12. The Committee shall elect from its own membership a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Treasurer shall furnish a bond of \$10,000 the premium to be paid from the Fund.
 13. Every Classis shall attend to the regular and proper collection of the congregational contributions, according to the assessments, and these shall be forwarded by the Classical Treasurer at the close of each month to the Treasurer of this Committee.

Humbly submitted,

J. DE HAAN, JR.
GEO. OTTENHOF
JOHN HEKMAN
H. R. GEZON
P. D. ROSE
J. DOLFIN

Two members of our Committee have not signed this report. They have served notice that they reserve the right to present a *minority* report. (See Report V.)

Report V

MINORITY REPORT OF EMERITUS COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1932 of the Christian Reformed Church.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

AS members of your "Committee in re Study of the Emeritus Fund" (see Acta Synodi 1930, Article 128, 18, p. 205), we, the undersigned, not being in full agreement with the other members of the Committee, feel it our duty and privilege to submit a Minority Report.

In agreement with the other members of the Committee, we consider your mandate to entail the following work:

1. A study of the principles upon which the support of our Emeriti ministers and their widows and orphans is based;
2. A study of the method of application of the principles involved.

With much of the matter submitted in the Majority Report, both as to "Principle" and "Application," we are in hearty accord, and therefore, for sake of brevity, we shall refrain as much as possible from restating that material. We shall endeavor rather to submit points of difference between the results of our studies and those of the other members of the Committee as submitted in their Majority Report.

PART I. The Principles Upon Which the Support of our Emeriti Ministers, their Widows and Orphans is Based.

We submit that Scripture passages quoted in the Majority Report as proof that it is the duty of the Church to adequately support Ministers of the Gospel in active service, and grant that some of the passages may also be interpreted to mean that it is the duty of the Church to support Emeriti ministers, their widows and orphans. We submit,

however, that we have been unable to find any grounds in God's Word substantiating that it is the duty of the Church to support, in part or wholly, Emeriti ministers, their widows and orphans, where the ministers have been able to save sufficient from the salaries the Church paid them while in active service to take care of this support themselves, or where the Emeriti ministers or their widows have children who are financially able to supply this support. As to the service and compensation of the Old Testament priesthood, etc., and of the New Testament apostles, evangelists, etc., it is scarcely comparable to the service and fixed salaries of our present-day ministry. Although the Word of God does not specifically so state, we believe that it is God's will that the Church at large adequately support these Emeriti ministers, their widows and orphans, who have no other means of support.

How other denominations have interpreted this "Principle," and what Dr. Rutgers and others have stated in regard to it is embodied in the Majority Report, and we do not restate. This we regard as of secondary importance. We do not find where God in His Word imposes as a duty of the Church the support of Emeriti ministers, their widows and orphans, who possess means to support themselves; and we interpret Article 13 of our Church Order to mean just what it states: "Shall provide honorably for them *in their need.*"

So much for the "Principle" part of our report. Much stress has been laid on this part and much material submitted in the Majority Report, we believe more than asked for or intended by Classis Zeeland's overture and by Synod. If the "Principle" was the primary part to be studied at such length and established in detail, we take it that Synod would have appointed a committee of "Five ministers or Seminary Professors and two business men members" rather than "Two ministers and five business men members." We submit as our finding that the dissatisfaction among our lay members with the "Emeritus Fund" is not with the "Principle" of supporting needy Emeriti ministers, their widows and orphans, as practically all of our people are heartily in favor of supporting those having no

other means of support. We are of the honest opinion that the present dissatisfaction with this Fund lies in the application of this "Principle," and therefore submit the following as the result of our study of Synod's second mandate to this Committee.

PART II. The Method of the Application of the Principles Involved.

We shall endeavor to answer three questions which are also asked and answered in the Majority Report:

1. To what extent, or in what amount, should our Emeriti ministers, their widows and orphans, be supported?

We recommend that all Emeriti ministers, their widows and orphans, *who have no other means of support*, be paid the following maximum allowances per year, in monthly installments: Ministers, \$1,000.00; widows up to two-thirds of what their husbands might have or did receive; orphans, \$250.00.

2. How shall the necessary funds to offer this support be raised?

It has been customary, as we all know, to raise funds for the support of our disabled and retired ministers, with their dependents, by levying an assessment, reckoned per family, on the several congregations. It became necessary to raise this assessment from time to time, until at present it is two dollars per family. In this arrangement no account was taken of the fact that a larger number of families in one church have less expense than a smaller number of families in another church. Your Committee would take these things into consideration, and seek a more equitable proportioning of the amounts to be paid by the different churches. Our reasons for this may be stated as follows:

- (1) It is only logical that we should have the most fair and equitable proportioning to the churches of the amounts they should contribute for the care of our Emeriti ministers and their dependents, who are in need of support.

- (2) A large congregation naturally desires the service of a minister when he is at his best, as to age, experience, and ability. No one will care to militate against this, since our larger churches are generally also the ones that have need of the best possible service. For this, it would seem, they should gladly and willingly contribute a larger proportion than the smaller churches for the support of the disabled or retired ministers and their dependents.
- (3) The larger churches have proportionately less expense than the smaller ones. We refer, in this connection, only to the following two items—Pastor's salary, and upkeep of church and parsonage. Therefore we believe the larger churches are also better able to make a larger contribution to the Emeritus Fund.

Your Committee would therefore propose the following sliding scale as to the congregational assessments for the Emeritus Fund:

- All congregations of 75 or less families to pay \$1.50 per family.
- All congregations of 76 to 150 families to pay \$2.00 per family.
- All congregations of 150 to 250 families to pay \$2.50 per family.
- All congregations with more than 250 families to pay \$3.00 per family.

3. How shall these funds be administered and dispensed to the recipients?

Your Committee would offer the following rules and regulations to supersede those now in force:

RULES FOR THE CARE OF EMERITATED MINISTERS AND OF WIDOWS AND ORPHANS OF MINISTERS

If any minister of the Word, by reason of age, sickness, or otherwise, is unable to perform his duties, his request for emeritation is presented by him to his Consistory, and by them to the Classis, which decides on it, subject to the approval of Synod (Acts 1914, Articles 17 and 72).

For the execution of Article 13 of the Church Order, the

Christian Reformed Church maintains a Sustentation Fund, from which adequate aid is dispensed, subject to the following Rules and Regulations:

1. Synod shall appoint a Committee to administer this fund, consisting of six men, one each from the Classes G. R. East, G. R. West, Illinois, Holland, Muskegon, and Zeeland; these to be men to whom the administration and dispensing of said fund may be properly committed. This Committee shall be composed of two ministers and four other members. They shall be legally incorporated under name and style of Board of the Sustentation Fund of the Christian Reformed Church of America. Vacancies occurring in this Committee between Synods shall be filled temporarily by the Committee in consultation with the Synodical Committee.
2. The Synod which adopts these rules and regulations shall appoint this Committee, three to serve two years, and three to serve four years, thereafter at each meeting of Synod members shall be appointed for the expired terms, these to serve four years. Committee members may be re-appointed.
3. The Committee shall elect from its own membership a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Treasurer shall furnish a bond of \$10,000.00, the premium to be paid from the fund.
4. A minister, who by sickness or otherwise, is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office, may apply, upon emeritation, to the Committee in charge of the Sustentation Fund. After investigation, *if the need is established and it is ascertained that the applicant cannot supply it himself, and has no children financially able to do so*, the Committee shall determine the amount to be allowed, but in no case is this to exceed \$1,000.00 annually, payable in monthly installments.
5. A minister's widow shall receive two-thirds in amount of the sustenance her husband was entitled to at the time of his demise. She may also be granted not to exceed \$150.00 annually for each child under eighteen years of age, payable in monthly installments. All this to cease immediately upon her re-marriage.

6. In case both the minister and his wife are deceased, the orphans surviving them shall receive not to exceed \$250.00 annually, payable in monthly installments, until their eighteenth birthday.
7. A minister, who by reason of sickness or otherwise, upon emeritation, has received relief from this fund, and who is declared eligible for a call by the Classis because of having regained his health, may continue to receive his allowance up to the next meeting of Synod, when his case shall be considered.
8. All cases falling under 4, 5, 6, and 7 shall be investigated by the Committee, and all decisions of the Committee must be submitted to the Synod for approval.
9. Clerks of Consistories, and Stated Clerks of Classes must be, and any member may be, requested to supply all information they can to the Secretary of the Committee in re all cases falling under their jurisdiction.
10. The Committee shall present each Synod with the necessary information pertaining to the assessment per family for the two calendar years following upon that Synod, as also an estimated budget to be raised during that period for this Fund. Private gifts and legacies may be solicited and received, and shall be acknowledged by the Committee.
11. Every Classis shall attend to the regular and proper collection of the congregational contributions, according to the assessments, and these shall be forwarded by the Classical Treasurer at the close of each month to the Treasurer of this Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

CLARENCE DE VRIES,
A. H. RINGELBERG.

Report VI

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON IMPROVEMENT OF OUR PUBLIC WORSHIP

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church,
June, 1932,*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR Committee for the Improvement of our Public Worship, originally appointed by the Synod of 1916, can now look back upon a history of sixteen years, without having been able to accomplish anything worth while.

At one time it appeared that our labors were beginning to bear fruit. That was in 1928, when Synod adopted the new Order of Morning Worship, and instructed us to continue our labors with a view to the preparation of a complete Directory of Worship. We felt very much encouraged.

But alas! the reactionary procedure of the Synod of 1930 nullified almost completely what had been accomplished. Synod turned its back on the Committee, and rescinded the decision of 1928.

A few weeks after this catastrophe, your Committee met in great heaviness of heart, to view the wreck that remained of the Order of Worship previously adopted, and to consider the new instructions given us by Synod.

In spite of the salve Synod applied to the Committee's wounds, it soon became evident at our meeting that under the present circumstances we could not conscientiously continue our labors. A motion to discontinue, at least for the present, was unanimously adopted. No other meetings were held, and hence your Committee has nothing further to report.

Permit us, however, to state briefly a few reasons for this action.

The work done by your Committee did not receive adequate recognition on the floor of the Synod of 1930. The arguments advanced in its report were scarcely judged

worthy of any consideration. Not even a fair opportunity was given the Committee to defend its report. This report was in the hands of a Committee of Preadvice until near the closing session of Synod. Anxious to return home, after nearly three weeks of strenuous labor, the members of Synod were in no mood to listen. Other matters of far less importance were discussed at great length, but time for debate on this important matter was limited, something unheard of, without precedent as far as we are aware. It was only too evident that any argumentation on the floor of Synod was in vain. Your Committee's work had been pre-judged. Its case was hopeless.

Synod surely will not blame us for feeling ourselves aggrieved by this procedure, which reminded us only too painfully of the steam-roller in general use at political gatherings.

This view which the Committee takes of Synod's procedure in this matter is confirmed by the fact that Synod took a far more drastic action than was requested in the various overtures submitted by our Classes.

Consider the overtures on the Synodical table. Of all the Classes that considered the matter, there was only one that asked Synod to rescind the Order of Worship adopted in 1928. In some Classes the matter was never discussed. They were evidently satisfied with the decision of 1928, or at any rate willing to give it a fair trial. Of the Classes that did consider the matter, an overwhelming majority asked for a repeal of *only that part of the decision of 1928 which made the Order of Worship to a certain extent obligatory*. Your Committee, too, advised the repeal of that particular decision. Yet, in spite of all these overtures, Synod went greatly beyond this, and in hurried fashion, following the advice of an unsympathetic Committee of Preadvice, destroyed the work done in 1928.

In view of this, your Committee feels that the Order of Worship, so suddenly destroyed, has not had a fair trial. Synod rescinded the decisions of 1928, without showing that said Order was contrary to the Word of God, our Confession, or the Church Order.

Your Committee cannot but come to the conclusion that

it was the appeal to prejudice which undid the good work of the Synod of 1928. It was not sound argumentation, but the specter of Romanism that won the day in 1930. We had expected Synod to take a firm stand against prejudice and false conservatism, but instead of this, it gave way to these ancient foes of all true progress. Your Committee had to contend with these from the beginning, and with the backing of Synod, such as we received in 1926 and again in 1928, would gladly have continued the struggle, but since the Synod of 1930 made peace with these foes, we have lost all courage. We ask: What's the use? One Synod takes a firm stand, but the following Synod gives in. No real progress is possible in this fashion. We can never hope to accomplish anything worth while.

In the face of this experience, your Committee surely cannot be required by Synod to continue its labors, foredoomed to failure.

There is, however, another matter that weighs very heavily upon our minds, and compels us to ask for release from further service.

What has been mentioned thus far has been the sad experience of many Committees that have served Synod in the past. A Committee appointed by one Synod spends a great deal of time and study upon matters entrusted to it, only too often to see all its efforts come to a fruitless end in the hands of an unsympathetic Committee of Preadvice at the following Synod. There is certainly something wrong with that system, and this should be remedied.

But your Committee has another ground for far more serious complaint. It has been placed under a cloud, and that by action of Synod.

For two years, from 1928 to 1930, your Committee suffered a great deal of abuse at the hands of those who were antagonistic to the new Order of Worship. All sorts of unwarranted accusations were hurled against us. We did not complain about this, because we felt sure of our ground, especially because we had received the endorsement of the Synods of 1926 and 1928.

Now, however, the matter has taken a different aspect. In the report of the Committee of Preadvice, adopted by the

Synod of 1930, statements are made, partly based upon a misunderstanding of our arguments, which give color to the accusations referred to. This we keenly resent. By the adoption of this report, Synod has at least tacitly declared that our work savored of Romanism and formalism. Worse than that, our work has been condemned as being in conflict with our Reformed principles of liturgy.

This we desire to deny, emphatically and indignantly. We still maintain that the Order of Worship adopted in 1928 is in perfect harmony with our Reformed principles and practice. It is built upon the foundations laid by our fathers in the Golden Age of the Reformation.

But we shall not take space now to prove our contention. This has been done repeatedly in our reports to former Synods. We do not wish to stir up this matter anew.

All we now ask is to be released from further service. With this stigma attached by the Synod of 1930 to our previous efforts, your present Committee is in no mood to continue the struggle for the improvement of our Public Worship.

Respectfully submitted,

W. HEYNS, *President,*

D. ZWIER, *Secretary,*

H. J. KUIPER,

J. MANNI,

W. STUART,

L. TRAP.

Report VII

RAPPORT DER COMMISSIE IN RE "LEAVE OF ABSENCE"

EERWAARDE BROEDERS :

UW Commissie, door de vorige Synode benoemd om te rapporteeren over de zaak van "Leave of Absence," heeft de eer U het volgende aan te bieden:

I. EEN KORTE HISTORISCHE INLEIDING

De Synode van 1928 had onder meer ter tafel een instructie van den Kerkeraad van Leota, doorgezonden door Classis Orange City, betreffende "Leave of Absence" (Acta 1928, pp. 141, 142). Deze instructie bevatte zes punten. Over punten 1, 2, 3, 5^b, werd door diezelfde Synode een beslissing genomen (Acta 1928, p. 143). Punten 4, 5^a, en 6 werden gelegd in handen van een Commissie (pp. 143-144), dezelfde Commissie die te rapporteeren had over de vraag of er een weg op te vinden was waarlangs personen die onderwijs gaven aan niet-kerkelijke inrichtingen hun kerkelijke positie konden behouden (Acta 1928, p. 141). Deze Commissie bracht een rapport uit dat te vinden is in de Agenda, Part I, 1930, pp. 30-49. In het tweede deel van haar rapport behandelden ze de drie punten uit de instructie Leota haar opgedragen. Over punten 5^a en 6 werd nu besloten (Acta 1930, p. 56). Zoo bleef dus alleen punt 4 nog over. Dienaangaande had de Commissie ook wel advies. Toch meende zij ten slotte "er bij de Synode op te moeten aandringen dat zij een commissie benoeme om van deze zaak een grondige studie te maken, en de volgende Synode te dienen met rapport en advies" (Agenda 1930, Part I, p. 46). Ditzelfde werd door de Commissie van Prae-advies de Synode geraden, en aldus werd besloten (Acta 1930, p. 56). Aan de ondergeteekenden werd dit werk opgedragen.

II. EEN NADERE TOELICHTING VAN DE ZAAK WAAROVER HET GAAT

Het gaat over punt 4 van de instructie Leofa, in 1928 eerst ter tafel. Dat punt is in zijn geheel afgedrukt in de Agenda 1930, Part I, pp. 42-43. Het luidt als volgt:

“Ook spreke de Synode uit, dat, wanneer een Leeraar om groote en gewichtige oorzaken, die tijdelijke onderlating van den dienst wel wenschelijk maar niet noodzakelijk maken, begeert verlof te ontvangen, zal hij naar den regel van Art. XII, K. O., verzoeken om eerbaar ontslag en het recht om over te gaan tot een anderen staat des levens.

Gronden:

- “(a) Verlaten van den dienst met behoud van de eer en den naam eens Dienaars staat de K. O. alleen toe aan hen, die onbekwaam geworden zijn (Art. 13), of den dienst onderlaten *moeten* (Art. 14). Dit geldt dus niet van hen, die terwille van studie, of om eenige andere reden, den dienst onderlaten willén;
- “(b) Zulk een gaat feitelijk over tot een anderen staat des levens, en heeft evenmin als de theologische studenten, recht op de ambtelijke positie, zoolang hij in dezen ‘anderen staat des levens’ verkeert.”

Een weinig nader ontleed, komt dit dus hierop neer:

1. Het gaat over gevallen “wanneer een leeraar . . . begeert tijdelijk verlof te ontvangen” . . . tot “tijdelijke onderlating van den dienst”;
2. Voor dit begeeren zijn “groote en gewichtige oorzaken”;
3. Die oorzaken, echter, zijn van dien aard dat ze tijdelijke onderlating van den dienst wel wenschelijk maar niet noodzakelijk maken;
4. In zulke gevallen kan geen emeritaat verleend, volgens Art. 13, K. O., want dat handelt over degenen die onbekwaam geworden zijn;
5. Evenmin kan gehandeld worden naar Art. 14, K. O., want dat handelt over Dienaars die hun dienst voor een tijd onderlaten *moesten*;
6. Dus, zoo oordeelt de Kerkeraad van Leota, blijft er kerkrechtelijk geen andere weg open dan eerbaar ontslag en overgaan tot een anderen staat des levens. Zulk een, die, terwille van studie of om eenige andere reden, den dienst onderlaten wil, gaat feitelijk over tot een anderen staat des levens.
7. Daarom wil Leota dat de Synode zal bepalen dat zulk een Leeraar zal “verzoeken om eerbaar ontslag, en het recht om over te gaan tot een anderen staat des levens.”

De vraag is nu, wat verstaan moet worden door die "groote en gewichtige oorzaken," waarom zulks zou moeten geschieden. De uitdrukking is in zichzelf onbelijnd en, indien ze niet nader bepaald ware, zou de Synode hierop onmogelijk in kunnen gaan. Doch er is een nadere omschrijving: in de eerste grond wordt gesproken "van hen, die terwille van studie, of om eenige andere reden, den dienst onderlaten willen." Dit laatste is weer onbepaald, doch het eerste—"terwille van studie"—is definitief. Dit "terwille van studie" is dan ook volgens ons oordeel het punt waar het om gaat. Dit gebruik, van onderlaten van den dienst, tot verdere studie, met behoud van het ambt, is ongetwijfeld geweest de aanleiding tot dit punt in de instructie; dit bracht de Commissie benoemd in 1928 er toe de Synode te raden een Commissie van verdere studie te benoemen; en daarop werd nadruk gelegd door de Commissie van Praeadvies op de Synode van 1930, toen zij eveneens der Synode adviseerde zulks te doen.

De vraag is dus deze: Kan een Dienaar des Woords die, terwille van verdere studie, om zich verder te bekwamen voor het ambt, tijdelijk geen gemeente kan bedienen, zijn ambtelijke positie als Dienaar des Woords voor dien tijd behouden of niet?

III. HET OORDEEL DER COMMISSIE

A. De Commissie gaat er van uit, dat de bedoeling werkelijk is zich door verdere studie beter te bekwamen tot het ambt, niet om uit zekere plaats weg te komen of zich in te werken in een andere positie en onderwijl de ambtelijke positie nog vast te houden als een achterdeurtje waardoor men tenslotte nog weer een uitvlucht zou hebben indien zaken niet naar wensch gingen. Dat zou bedrog zijn, een spelen met heilige dingen, dat niet te sterk kan afgekeurd. Zou er op dit punt eenige twijfel bestaan, dan zou dit terdege moeten onderzocht worden. Wij veronderstellen in ons oordeel een normaal geval, anders kan men niet oordeelen.

B. En dan is het oordeel van uwe Commissie dat zoo iemand niet overgaat tot een anderen staat des levens, zooals Leota blijkbaar denkt.

De uitdrukking, “zich tot een anderen staat des levens te begeben,” wordt gebezigd in Art. 12, K. O. Licht hierover wordt verspreid door Ds. Joh. Jansen in zijn “Korte Verklaring van de Kerkenordering,” Kampen, 1923, pp. 55, 56. Hij zegt ons dat de “beteekenis is, dat een dienaar zijn predikambt niet mag neerleggen, om in plaats daarvan een of ander maatschappelijk of wereldlijk beroep uit te oefenen.” Hij maakt verder duidelijk dat de uitdrukking, “een anderen staat des levens,” kan verstaan in engeren of ruimeren zin. In ruimeren zin genomen valt er onder iedere werkring, “die buiten het eigenlijk predikambt ligt, als het professoraat in de theologie, en in de kerkgeschiedenis, de geestelijke verzorging in stichtingen van barmhartigheid,” enz. In engeren zin moet er onder verstaan “een of ander maatschappelijk of wereldlijk ambt of beroep, bijvoorbeeld, dat van rechter, burgemeester, advocaat, schoolopziener, doctor in de medicijnen, fabrikant, handelaar, boer, enz.” Hier, zegt Jansen, is die uitdrukking te nemen in engeren zin. Het gaat dus over gevallen wanneer iemand overgaat tot een maatschappelijk of wereldlijk ambt. Dat ligt ook in de Engelsche vertaling van Art. 12, K. O., waar staat: “To enter upon a secular vocation.”

En het komt ons vóór dat een dienaar die verder wil studeeren als boven bepaald, hieronder niet valt. Hij heeft geen voornemen het ambt te verlaten, wil nog voor zijn leven daarin blijven, wil alleen tijdelijk den geregelden arbeid onderlaten om zich verder te bekwamen. Hij kan tijdelijk dan niet de werkzaamheden verrichten die behooren tot het bedienen van een gemeente, doch de werkzaamheden die hij doet liggen geheel in die lijn: Hij studeert, predikt, bedient bij de gelegenheid de sacramenten en zoo meer. Hoe zou men nu kunnen zeggen dat zoo iemand tot een anderen staat des levens is overgegaan? Welke andere staat zou dat zijn? Hij treedt juist niet op in een andere betrekking maar is verder werkzaam om zich beter te bekwamen tot het ambt dat hij voor zijn leven koos.

Het doet ons genoeg te kunnen melden dat de Comm. die hierover aan de Synode van 1930 rapporteerde, met Prof. Heyns als rapporteur, van hetzelfde gevoelen is. Zij zegt in Agenda 1930, Part I, pp. 44-45: “Een onderlaten

van den dienst, waarbij aan een voor goed verlaten van den dienst om een aardsch bedrijf ter hand te nemen van verre niet gedacht wordt, maar waarvan juist integendeel het doel is zich voor verder dienstwerk verder te bekwamen, is zonder twijfel heel iets anders dan wat Art. 12 bedoelt met overgang tot een anderen staat des levens. Indien onderlating van den dienst als zoodanig overgang zou zijn tot een anderen staat des levens, konden Artt. 11 en 15 niet luiden zooals zij doen, en zou dat van geëmeriteerd worden evenzeer moeten gelden. Er is bij onderlating van den dienst voor verdere studie niet een loslaten maar een vasthouden aan het ambt.”

C. Daarom meent dan ook uwe Commissie dat zulk een dienaar zijn kerkelijke positie als leeraar kan behouden.

1. Wat de Kerkeraad van Leota daartegen inbrengt is, dunkt ons, niet ad rem. De onhoudbaarheid daarvan is in Agenda 1930, Part. I, pp. 44-45, duidelijk aangezewezen. In eigen woorden weergegeven, komt dat hierop neer:

- a) De eerste grond is dat verlaten van den dienst met behoud van den naam en de eer eens dienaars door de K. O. toegeslaan wordt alleen aan hen die onbekwaam geworden zijn (Art. 13) of den dienst onderlaten *moesten* (Art. 14). Anders zou er dus geen weg zijn dan alleen langs den weg van deze twee Artikelen. En waar gevallen van verdere studie hieronder niet vallen, wil Leota dat dus iemand die verder wil studeeren, niet den naam en de eer eens dienaars kan behouden. Doch dit is niet juist. Uit het feit dat alleen deze twee gevallen genoemd worden moet niet afgeleid dat er geen andere kunnen zijn. Dat volgt heel niet. Bovendien wordt dat door twee Artikelen der K. O. rechtstreeks weersproken: naar de Dordtsche redactie, Art. 11, konden losgemaakte predikanten verplaatst worden, waren die dus nog in het ambt of konden het althans zijn; en Art. 15, zooals we het nu nog hebben, spreekt er van dat men zijn dienst kan onderlaten of in geen vasten dienst zijn, en toch hier en daar kan gaan prediken, maar niet zonder consent van Synode of Classis. Het is dus mogelijk dat ie-

mand niet een gemeente bedient, niet emeritus is, niet den dienst moest onderlaten, en toch den naam en de eer eens dienaars behoudt.

- b) De tweede grond is dat zulk een feitelijk tot een anderen staat des levens overgaat, en evenmin als de theologische studenten recht heeft op de ambtelijke positie. De eerste clause is boven door ons beantwoord, namelijk, dat zoo iemand feitelijk tot een anderen staat des levens is overgegaan. Dat ontkennen wij beslist. En wat betreft de aanhaling over theologische studenten, dat doet hier niets ter zake. "Het gaat er niet over, of de positie waarin men zich bevindt recht op in het ambt stelling geeft, maar of de positie waarin men zich bevindt ontneeming van het ambt noodzakelijk maakt. Voor dat tweeërlei gelden niet dezelfde eischen." Wie niet in het ambt is kan volgens Art. 7, K. O. niet in het ambt gesteld worden tenzij hij zich aan een bepaalde plaats verbonden heeft; wie reeds in het ambt is kan volgens Art. 15 wel in het ambt blijven zonder aan zekere plaats verbonden te zijn. Dusver de gedachten van die Commissie.
- c) Waar dan nog in de derde plaats bijkomt dat de rede-neering van Leota in zichzelf tegenstrijdig is. Zij spreekt van gevallen waarin onderlating wel wenschelijk maar niet noodzakelijk is. Niet noodzakelijk: er is dus geen noodzaak doordat de leeraar de gemeente niet meer zou kunnen stichten of iets van dien aard. Wel wenschelijk, dat is dan natuurlijk met het oog op de uitoefening van zijn ambt. Het zou het ambt ten goede komen, zoo wordt geoordeeld, dat hij verder zich ging bekwamen. Gods Koninkrijk zou er, voorzover men daarover vooruit kan oordeelen, door gebaat worden. Maar dan zou men voor den tijd dat hij zich verder voorbereidt hem het ambt willen ontzeggen, terwijl hij juist bezig is zich te bekwamen om te beter te kunnen dienen. Dat komt toch niet met elkaar overeen.

2. Integendeel is er alles voor te zeggen, zoals boven door ons getoogd, dat zoo iemand zijn kerkelijke positie behoudt. We kunnen niet de minste reden zien, zoolang

het niet blijkt dat er eenige andere reden is dan lust om zich verder te bekwamen tot het ambt, dat zoo iemand zijn kerkelijke positie zou moeten verliezen. Als gezegd in Agenda 1930, Part I, p. 45: "De Kerkenorde verklaart dat wie eenmaal kerkelijk in 't ambt gesteld is, voor zijn leven lang aan den kerkedienst is verbonden, en dit kerkrechtelijk beginsel mag zoo min genegeerd worden als eenig ander. Het bedoelt niet op Roomsche manier aan het ambt onverliesbaarheid toe te kennen, want de Kerkenorde maakt wel degelijk provisie voor ontzetting uit het ambt. De eischen der goede orde en de bedoelingen der tucht kunnen het noodzakelijk maken. Maar het bedoelt wel, dat er geen verlating van het ambt, noch ontzetting uit het ambt mag zijn, tenzij op gronden die het gebiedend eischen. Maar tijdelijke onderlating van den dienst wier doel in het ambt ligt, is geen grond die het gebiedend eischt. Zoo werd ook in het boven aangehaalde uit No. 1943 door *De Heraut* het beroepbaar blijven van een naar Art. 14 losgemaakt predikant met genoemd kerkrechtelijk beginsel in verband gebracht."

D. Wat echter de praktische regeling van deze dingen betreft, zou uwe Commissie een eenigszins anderen weg willen inslaan dan tot hiertoe gevolgd werd.

1. Het komt ons vóór dat de tot hiertoe gevolgde weg niet de juiste was. Men ging gewoonlijk deze zaak verbinden aan Art. 14 K. O. Dat Art. zegt: "Zoo eenige Dienaars om de voorschreven of eenige andere oorzaken hunnen dienst voor een tijd onderlaten moesten, 't welk zonder advies des Kerkerads niet geschieden zal, zoo zullen zij nochtans ten allen tijde de beroeping der Gemeente onderworpen zijn en blijven." Hieronder bracht men ook gevallen als wij nu bespreken. Zoo zeggen Dss. Van Dellen en Keegstra in hun "Kerkelijk Handboek," 1915, p. 29: "Ingeval een Dienaar zijn dienst tijdelijk niet kan vervullen wegens vervolging, zooals vroeger, of ziekte, of omdat hij tijdelijk iets anders deed, bijv. verder studeeren, blijft hij niet slechts aan zijne Gemeente verbonden, wat Art. 12 in 't algemeen reeds uitsprak, en Art. 13 veronderstelt, doch blijft hij ook ten allen tijde de beroeping der Gemeente onderworpen, dat wil zeggen, kan de Kerk met welke hij verbonden is, hem terugroepen, als ze meent zijnen dienst

noodig te hebben. De positie van Dienaren, die verder studeeren, is in dit Art. geregeld . . .” In die voege werd dan ook gewoonlijk gehandeld. Een overeenkomst werd getroffen waarbij de leeraar officieel aan de gemeente verbonden bleef, zonder dat hij de ambtelijke werkzaamheden in de gemeente verrichtte, en zonder dat hij traktement had te eischen, en zoo meer. Nominaal was hij nog aan de gemeente verbonden, en zoo werd zijn kerkelijke positie gewaarborgd.

Wij meenen dat we dezen weg niet verder moeten bewandelen.

- a) Omdat we ten zeerste betwijfelen of bedoeld gebruik wel is volgens de rechte opvatting van Art. 14 K. O. Dit Artikel handelt in zijn geheel van die den dienst onderlaten *moesten* voor wie het dus tijdelijk onmogelijk was hun werk te doen. Van Dellen en Keestra maken in hun genoemd “Kerkelijk Handboek” onder meer melding van “vervolging, zooals vroeger, of ziekte,” p. 29. En Joh. Jansen zegt er in zijn “Korte Verklaring van de Kerkenordening,” pp. 63, 64, het volgende van: “Deze bepaling is oorspronkelijk gemaakt met het oog op predikanten, die een kruisgemeente dienden. Als het gevaar te groot, of de gemeente door de vervolging uiteen gedreven werd, zoodat zij ‘geen gemeente hadden om te dienen,’ moesten zij van zelf hun dienst onderlaten (zie K. O. van Dordrecht, 1578, Art. 7). Ook konden ouderdom, ziekte, gebrek, of ongeluk oorzaak zijn, dat zij hun dienst voor een tijd moesten nalaten. Maar in al die gevallen bleven zij ten allen tijde aan de beroeping der gemeente onderworpen. Zie Acta van Middelburg, 1581, part. vr. 6; van ’s Gravenhage, 1586, Art. 12; en van Dordrecht 1618-19, Art. 14.” De zaak was dus, dat men vanwege omstandigheden tijdelijk met zijn arbeid niet door kon gaan. Dat geldt niet van een leeraar die verder gaat studeeren. Daar is geen moeten, zoodat voortgaan met den arbeid voor een tijd een afgesneden zaak is.
- b) Bovendien ligt aan deze methode ten grondslag een vermeend beginsel dat niet juist is. Men meende

blijkbaar dat iemand niet leeraar kon blijven tenzij hij op zekere wijze verbonden bleef aan een plaatselijke gemeente. Was dit zoo, dan ware natuurlijk de beste weg dat hij verbonden bleef aan de gemeente die hij was dienende. En om hiervoor een kerkrechtelijke basis te krijgen, haakte men dit vast aan Art. 14 K. O. Die idee, echter, is niet juist. Onze K. O. zegt dat niet. Om nog eens dankbaar gebruik te maken van het werk van de Commissie die in 1930 over deze zaak rapporteerde, halen we aan uit Agenda 1930, Part I, p. 44: "Nergens geeft de Kerkenorde te kennen, dat behoud van het ambt een ambtelijk verbonden zijn en blijven aan de plaatselijke kerk die men diende vereischt, laat staan dat een ambtelijk verbonden zijn dat slechts een pretensie er van is, daartoe voldoende zou zijn." Dit is ook onze overtuiging. Indien een gemeente kan beroepen, kan dat toch zeker ook wel door een groep van gemeenten of kerkeraden, in Classis vergaderd. In de praktijk hebben we dat ook reeds lang erkend: Classis Muskegon beriep reeds verscheidene jaren geleden als Classis een zendeling, zeker zijn er wel andere Classes die hetzelfde gedaan hebben of nog doen; en onze laatste Synode beriep als Synode Dr. Bruxvoort om te leenen aan de gemeenten in Zuid-Amerika. Daarmede is, dunkt ons, dit vermeend beginsel feitelijk van de baan.

- c) Letten we op de praktische uitkomst van de methode dusver gevolgd, dan kunnen we niet zeggen dat ze bevrediging gegeven heeft. Feit is dat men dezen weg ging bewandelen als een noodmiddel om toch het ambt te behouden. We maken de broeders die daarvan gebruik maakten geen verwijt: de lust tot verdere studie was er, men wilde gaarne zijn kerkelijke positie behouden om allerlei mogelijke onaangename ontwikkelingen te vermijden, men had daar ook recht op, en dit was de weg die algemeen gevolgd werd als de rechte,—dus maakte men daarvan gebruik. Maar met dat al voelde ieder die een weinig nadacht, dat er iets haperde, dat dit in werkelijkheid weinig

meer dan een pretensie van werkelijk kerkelijk verband was. De leeraar was zoogenaamd aan de gemeente verbonden, maar toch werd een gemeente die anders nooit meer dan één leeraar had, nu vacant terwijl ze haar leeraar officieel nog had, en nu ging ze een ander er bij beroepen, en nu had deze gemeente twee leeraars: één die werkelijke diende, en één die geen arbeid in de gemeente verrichtte, geen salaris ontving, en gewoonlijk nimmermeer in de gemeente terugkeerde of het moest zijn om een zoogenaamd afscheid te houden. Algemeen werd gevoeld, dat dit een onware toestand was. Het bracht ontevredenheid. En terecht. We moeten ophouden met zulk een onwaarheid en dezen weg niet verder bewandelen.

2. We zouden dan ook in overweging willen geven of de Classis niet het aangewezen lichaam is om in zulke gevallen handelend op te treden. Tot hiertoe was deze zaak geheel of nagenoeg geheel in handen van den betrokken Kerkeraad. Dit komt ons niet juist vóór. Wanneer een predikant van de eene gemeente naar de andere vertrekt, moet ook de Classis daarin erkend, volgens Art. 10 K. O. Dat geschiedt dan doordat de Classicale Commissie inzage heeft van het leeraars-attest en dat approveert. Maar dan behoort toch zeker ook hetzelfde te geschieden wanneer iemand de gemeente verlaat tot verdere studie. We zouden nog verder willen gaan en de kerkelijke positie van zoo iemand geheel verbinden aan de Classis, zoodat hij geheel los wordt van de gemeente, en wat zijn kerkelijke positie betreft verbonden blijft alleen aan de Classis waaronder hij ressorteert wanneer hij gaat studeren. Hij vraagt van zijn Kerkeraad loslating. De Kerkeraad oordeelt er over en verleent die loslating of niet. Ingeval van weigering kan de predikant zich natuurlijk beroepen op de Classis, maar onderwijl mag hij de gemeente niet verlaten. Ingeval de loslating wordt verleend, neemt de leeraar op gewone wijze afscheid en wordt de gemeente vacant. Ze heeft nu zelfs geen nominale leeraar meer, in elk geval deze niet. Het leeraarsattest wordt als gewoon geteekend en opgezonden aan de Classicale Commissie, waar het verblijft tot de leeraar weer een gemeente gaat bedienen. Zijn persoonlijk

lidmaatsattest kan hij natuurlijk indienen bij de gemeente in wier midden hij tijdens zijn studietijd verblijft. Maar als predikant is hij kerkelijk verbonden aan de Classis, en staat hij onder haar toezicht.

3. Kerkrechtelijk is dit, meenen we, ook goed te verdedigen.

Dat wil niet zeggen, dat we een bepaald Artikel in de K. O. kunnen aanwijzen dat geheel deze zaak dekt. Maar wel zijn er in tenminste twee Artikelen beginselen waarvan we gebruik kunnen maken.

De meerderheid der Commissie die in 1930 over deze zaak een oordeel uitbracht was van gedachte dat deze zaak moest behandeld worden naar Artikel 11. Het luidt gedeeltelijk: "Aan de andere zijde zal de Kerkeraad als representeerende de gemeente . . . hare Dienaars . . . niet uit hun dienst ontslaan zonder kennis en approbatie van de Classe en van de Deputaten der (particuliere) Synode." Dit Artikel is blijkbaar bedoeld allereerst als een middel ter bescherming van leeraars, opdat de Kerkeraad hen niet licht ontsla, gelijk Artikel 10 de gemeente beschermt tegen willekeur van den leeraar opdat hij haar niet moedwillig verlate. Een Kerkeraad mag dus niet zoo maar, om geringe redenen, een dienaar ontslaan. Maar er is toch een weg waarlangs ontslag kan plaats hebben, zonder dat een beroeping is uitgebracht en zonder dat er afzetting plaats heeft, zoodat dus de leeraar in het ambt kan blijven. Alleen mag dit niet zonder kennis en approbatie van Classis en Deputaten der Particuliere Synode. Met die kennis en approbatie kan het dus. Wanneer daarvoor voldoende redenen zijn. En die zouden er, dunkt ons, wel zijn wanneer een leeraar werkelijk lust gevoelt om zich door studie verder te bekwamen.

Alleen zouden we het laatste gedeelte van dit Artikel een weinig wenschen te beperken. Het vereischt, dat hij zulke gevallen de deputaten der Particuliere Synode approbatie geven. Particuliere Synodes hebben we niet. En we gelooven niet dat de zaak zóó ingrijpend is dat daarbij de hulp van de Deputaten ad Examina behoort ingeroepen te worden. Dat zou de zaak ook onnoodig ingewikkeld maken.

Wel is het wenschelijk dat de Classis approbatie geve,

omdat de leeraar nu verder ook vooral onder Classicaal toezicht komt te staan. Doch dan zou het ook wenschelijk zijn dat de Classicale Commissie, die toch immers heeft te doen wat der Classis is wanneer de Classis niet vergaderd is, volmacht hebbe in zulke zaken handelend op te treden, tenzij de Classis zelf vergaderd is. Te eischen dat de Classis zelf deze zaak zou moeten behandelen, zou weer praktische moeilijkheden opleveren daar vele van onze Classes slechts tweemaal in het jaar vergaderen, en aldus het plan van verdere studie kon verijdeld worden doordat men te lang zou hebben te wachten op een classicale vergadering.

Verder wenschen we in dit verband de aandacht te vestigen op Artikel 15 K. O. Het eerste gedeelte daarvan luidt: "Het zal niemand geoorloofd zijn, den Dienst zijner kerk onderlatende, of in geenen vasten Dienst zijnde, hier en daar te gaan prediken buiten consent en autoriteit der Synode of Classe." Ook dit biedt elementen die we kunnen gebruiken. Het spreekt over iemand "in geenen vasten dienst zijnde." Dat sluit zich aan bij wat we in Artikel 11 vonden. Iemand die door den Kerkeraad, met approbatie der Classis, ontslagen werd, is in geen vasten dienst. Zoo iemand is het volgens Artikel 15 niet geoorloofd hier en daar te gaan prediken buiten consent en autoriteit der Synode of Classis. Dus: als behoorlijk consent van Synode of Classis verkregen is, mag het wel. En dat moet zijn van Synode of Classis. Het consent van één van beide is voldoende. Zoo kan zoo iemand ambtelijk werk verrichten. En dan spreekt het ook vanzelf dat hij als ambtsdrager staat onder kerkelijk toezicht van de Classis die hem consent verleende.

Langs dezen weg zou dus alles kerkrechtelijk zuiver loopen.

En het is onze overtuiging dat het in de praktijk beter aan het doel zou beantwoorden. Staat een verder studeerend predikant onder toezicht van zijn laatste Kerkeraad, dan komt van dat toezicht uiteraard zeer weinig: dikwijls is men van den predikant ver verwijderd, en wanneer men weer een eigen leeraar heeft, wordt de verantwoordelijkheid voor den predikant die verlof heeft weinig

gevoeld. En gesteld, dat de studeerende predikant zich in iets te buiten zou gaan, dan zou, meenen we, zulk een Kerkeraad er niet licht toe overgaan een kerkelijke procedure te beginnen. Nu zullen sommige van deze moeilijkheden ook gelden wanneer de predikant komt onder toezicht van de Classis. De moeilijkheid van afstanden en zoo meer blijft.

Toch is het onze gedachte dat een Classicale Commissie in zulk geval lichter zou ingrijpen en kunnen ingrijpen dan een Kerkeraad.

E. Mocht dit een en ander genade vinden in de oogen der Synode, dan zouden we in overweging willen geven de zaak zelve dan ook meer definitief aan te geven met een specifiek titel, zoodat men uit dit betoogde, wat dan een besluit der Synode zou worden, niet zou kunnen generaliseeren om daarvan gebruik te maken voor allerlei mogelijke gevallen. We hebben gehandeld over gevallen van leeraars die verder wenschen te studeeren om zich verder te bekwamen, niet over iets anders. En mocht de Synode besluiten in den geest als door ons betoogd, dan kan dit gelden alleen voor zulke gevallen. En dan zal het wenschelijk zijn dat ook in het opschrift te laten uitkomen. Dus zouden we in overweging geven dat het opschrift luidt: "Regeling voor Predikanten die Verder Wenschen te Studeeren."

IV. ADVIES

Op grond van het boven betoogde, adviseert uwe Commissie de Synode het volgende te besluiten:

REGELING VOOR PREDIKANTEN DIE VERDER WENSCHEN TE STUDEEREN

1. Deze regeling betreft predikanten die, in actieven dienst zijnde, begeeren voor zekeren tijd van den geregelden gemeentelijken arbeid ontslagen te worden, om zich voor verdere studie te beter te bekwamen tot uitoefening van het ambt.
2. Zulke predikanten gaan daardoor niet over tot een anderen staat des levens, en kunnen hun kerkelijke positie als predikant behouden.

3. Den weg daarbij te bewandelen is die aangewezen door de beginselen uitgedrukt in Artt. 11. en 15 K. O., namelijk, dat een predikant door zijn Kerkeraad, met approbatie der Classis, kan ontslagen worden; dat hij echter dan zijn kerkelijke positie kan behouden; dat hij ambtelijk arbeid mag verrichten mits de Classis of Synode hem daartoe consent verleent; dat het consent van een van beide voldoende is; dat hij diensvolgens uiteraard staat onder kerkelijk toezicht van de Classis of Synode die hem consent verleende.
4. De volgende stipulatiën zullen daarbij in acht genomen worden:
 - a) De predikant moet van zijn Kerkeraad ontslag vragen en dit ontslag moet door de Classicale Commissie goedgekeurd. Ingeval van weigering kan hij zich natuurlijk beroepen op de Classis;
 - b) Na verkrijging van ontslag neemt de predikant op gewone wijze afscheid van de gemeente en wordt de gemeente vacant;
 - c) Het leeraarsattest wordt op gewone wijze ingevuld en gegeven in handen der Classicale Commissie, bij welke het verblijft tot de predikant weer een gemeente gaat bedienen, wanneer het op gewone wijze wordt doorgezonden;
 - d) Tijdens zijn tijd van studie moet de predikant van de Classis bij welke zijn leeraarsattest verblijft, consent hebben tot het verrichten van ambtelijken arbeid, en staat hij onder haar kerkelijk toezicht;
 - e) Ingeval de predikant zich te buiten gaat, zoodat behandeling noodig wordt, zal de Classicale Commissie doen hetgeen in den gewonen weg des Kerkerads is, tot de Classis de zaak kan behandelen.
5. Met deze regeling zijn alle vroegere regelen betreffende dez zaak vervallen.

Met eerbied onderworpen,

Uwe Commissie,
G. W. HYLKEMA,
J. GRITTER,
J. M. DYKSTRA.

(RESUME IN ENGLISH OF REPORT VII)

Report of Committee in Re "Leave of Absence,"
Abbreviated

This Report is briefly as follows:

I. A brief historical part showing that the Committee is to report on an instruction from the Consistory of Leota, as found in Agenda 1930, Part I, pp. 42-43.

II. A further elucidation of the matter showing that the point for study is summed up in the question: Can a Minister who by further study wishes to equip himself more fully for his office, and therefore for a while cannot serve a congregation, retain his official position as a Minister of the Gospel? The Consistory of Leota contends that such a Minister really does "enter upon a secular vocation," as Article 12 of the Church Order makes mention of, and therefore cannot retain his official position.

III. Judgment of the Committee.

The Committee is of the opinion that such a minister does not enter upon "a secular vocation," as study of the historical meaning of that phrase in the Church Order shows. To the contrary, he clings to the office, does nothing that is not in line with it, and even wishes further to equip himself for it. Hence the Committee holds that such a minister can retain his official position. He naturally does because there is no reason why it should be taken from him. The fact that he serves no local congregation for the time being does not overthrow this, since according to Articles 11 and 15 of the Church Order a minister can be such without being connected with a local church. In this connection an answer is made to the objections of the Consistory of Leota.

As to the practical arrangements to be made in such a case, the Committee would blaze a somewhat new trail. Heretofore such a matter was brought in connection with Article 14 of the Church Order, but this is not in harmony with Article 14, which was drawn up for a minister who for certain reasons "is compelled to discontinue his service for a time," which cannot be said of one who wishes to pursue

further study. Moreover, this proceeds on the idea, which does not hold, that one must be connected with a local church in order to retain his official standing. And experience has shown that this method was not satisfactory. It gave us a class of ministers who were only nominally connected with a church, and this has caused a good deal of dissatisfaction because of the untruthfulness of such a relation.

Hence the Committee would rather connect this with Articles 11 and 15 of the Church Order. If studied together, these provide that a minister may be dismissed from service provided the Classis approves of this action; that such a minister can remain a minister though without a fixed charge; that he may perform ministerial duties with the consent and authority of the Classis; and that naturally in such a case he is under the supervision of that Classis.

If adopted, this would mean that the minister in question would be dismissed from that congregation so that he would have no more official connection with it, and the congregation would become vacant. The minister would, until he assumes charge of another congregation, be under the supervision of the Classis, and the Classical Committee would have to do what ordinarily the Consistory would do in case the minister should become delinquent in doctrine or life. The Committee is of the opinion that this is thoroughly in harmony with Reformed church polity, and in practice would be more satisfactory and effective.

IV. The Committee advises Synod to regulate this matter by deciding the following:

REGULATIONS FOR MINISTERS WHO WISH TO PURSUE FURTHER STUDY

1. These regulations are made for ministers who, being in active service, wish for a time to be excused from the regular duties in a congregation, in order that by further study they may the better equip themselves for the office.
2. Such ministers do not thereby enter upon a secular vocation and can retain their official position as ministers of the Gospel.

3. The method to be followed in such cases is that indicated by the principles in Articles 11 and 15 of the Church Order, namely, that a minister may be dismissed by his Consistory with the approval of the Classis; that he can retain his official position; that he may perform ministerial labors provided the Classis or Synod give consent thereto; that the consent of either Classis or Synod is sufficient; that he naturally stands under the ecclesiastical supervision of such Classis or Synod.
4. The following stipulations are to be observed:
 - a) The minister must, from his Consistory, ask dismissal, and this dismissal must be approved by the Classical Committee. In case of refusal he may, of course, appeal to the Classis;
 - b) The dismissal having been granted, the minister takes leave of the congregation in the usual way and the congregation becomes vacant;
 - c) The Letter of Dismission is signed as usual and placed in the hands of the Classical Committee, where it remains until the minister assumes charge of another congregation, when the letter is forwarded in the usual manner;
 - d) During the time of his study the minister must, from the Classis that possesses his Letter of Dismissal, obtain permission to perform ministerial duties, and be under the ecclesiastical supervision of that Classis;
 - e) In case the minister becomes delinquent in doctrine or life, the Classical Committee shall do what ordinarily would be part of the duties of the Consistory until the Classis can take up the matter.
5. By the adoption of these regulations all former rules concerning this matter have been abrogated.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee,
G. W. HYLKEMA,
J. GRITTER,
J. M. DYKSTRA.

REPORT VIII

REPORT OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE TO THE SYNOD OF 1932

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

TWO YEARS AGO the Committee on Religious Education had the honor of presenting to Synod a unified plan for the religious instruction given by and under the auspices of our churches.

Synod was kind enough to recommend this plan to the attention of the consistories of our churches, and we trust that the consistories have since that time made a careful study of the proposed plan.

At the same time Synod gave to the Committee a definite task with a view to at least a partial realization of the proposed plan.

This task was a twofold one:

1. Conferences with the representatives of the institutions of Christian instruction among us, so that we may come to a better understanding of our mutual problems, and to a closer coöperation in the great work of Christian education, to which the Churches and Christian Schools stand committed.

2. The preparation of an outline of a course of Bible Stories and Bible History intended more specifically for use by the churches in its work with the younger people.

I.

First of all we desire to give an account of the Conference which your Committee had with the representatives of the Christian Schools. We mention this first, because we feel that it is possibly of greater importance than anything else that the Committee has been privileged to accomplish since the last meeting of Synod.

The Synodical Committee approached the Principals' Clubs of Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, and New Jersey, and the

National Union of Christian Schools, asking them to send representatives to this Conference.

The following were present at a meeting held November 18 and 19, 1931, at Calvin Seminary:

Mr. G. Bos, for the Eastern Christian Schools.

Mr. J. R. Bos, for the Eastern Christian High Schools.

Mr. R. Postma, for the Michigan Christian Schools.

Mr. E. Post, for the Michigan Christian High Schools.

Mr. G. E. Roelofs, for the Christian Primary and Secondary Schools of the Midwest.

Dr. P. Hoekstra, for the National Union of Christian Schools.

Drs. H. H. Meeter and Garrett Heyns, for the Synodical Committee on Education.

The representatives from Chicago were unable to be present on the 18th. On the 19th Mr. A. Blystra came as representative of the Chicago Principals' Club.

Dr. G. Heyns presided; Prof. G. E. Roelofs acted as secretary.

The Chairman explained that the purpose of this meeting was to serve the Synodical Committee with information on what is being done in Religious Education in our Christian School (Grammar, High School, and College), so that the Committee may proceed with a church program of education more intelligently, and further, to formulate a general program which may serve the Christian School world toward securing a more uniform plan of Education in the Christian Religion.

The Conference proceeded to this task, using as a starting point an outline which a sub-committee of the Committee of Synod had drawn up—on the basis of a questionnaire sent to many of our Christian Schools.

The plan finally unanimously approved by this Conference is as follows:

A. KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE SIX

1. Kindergarten

- a) Plan: The work is to consist of introductory lessons grouped around a central topic, e. g., "God, our Father—We, His Children."
- b) Objective: To make the little child understand his relationship to God.

2. Grades 1-6

- a) Plan: The work is to consist of Graded Bible Stories of both Old and New Testament. It is divided into four cycles, each cycle representing one year's work.
- b) Objectives:
 - 1) Cycles 1 and 2 (Grades 1 and 2) to familiarize the child with the simple Bible Stories. "The teacher tells the simple stories of the Holy Book in a simple manner."
 - 2) Cycle 3 (Grades 3 and 4), to enable the child to understand the chronological sequence of the events related in God's Word.
 - 3) Cycle 4 (Grades 5 and 6). Since the Bible Stories have been told three times, the teacher now should find more time to apply the Bible teachings to life. In this way the Bible will be used as "the guide of life with reference to obedience, love, prayer, and praise, together with the horror of sin and trust in Jesus as our Savior."

Notes:

- 1) The above plan is followed in the main rather generally in our schools. It harmonizes also with that outlined in Landkamp's "Leerplan" in use in the Netherlands.
- 2) The Committee recommends going through the Bible four times, i. e., 4 cycles, in the four years of grades one to six, though it sees no insurmountable obstacles to a three cycle plan; however, the latter arrangement is likely to lead to illogical division of the subject-matter. It does see serious objections to a six cycle plan. The Committee is of the opinion that more thorough work can be done by going through the Bible four times during these grades. To cover the Bible yearly makes intensive study impossible. What with Sunday School and Catechetical classes, the six cycle plan makes for too much repetition.
- 3) The Conference considers grades one to six as a unit. It does not appear logical in arranging the work to subdivide this unit into two others, e. g., one of grades 1-4, and another of grades 5 and 6.

- 4) From the discussion it is evident that there are some differences in detail in the courses at present in use for grades one to six. In the main, however, these courses agree with the principles suggested in our Report. The delegates agree that where the above plan is adopted, there will be but little difficulty in adapting present courses to it.

B. GRADES 7-12.

1. **Grades 7B-7A** Sacred History—Old Testament.
Grade 8B Sacred History—New Testament.
Grade 8A Acts and Early Church History.
Objective: To enable the child to use the Bible as the Book in which God has given His revelation. The Covenant of Grace and the development of revelation is to be stressed during these years.
A brief introduction to Church History is given in Grade 8A in order to acquaint the pupil with the outstanding men and leading events.
2. **Grade 9.** Bible Study—Old Testament
Objective: To have the Student become familiar with the contents of the books of the Old Testament.
3. **Grade 10.** Bible Study—New Testament.
Objective: To have the Student become familiar with the contents of the books of the New Testament.
4. **Grade 11.** Church History.
Objective: To acquaint the student with the history of the Christian Church as a divine institution.
5. **Grade 12** Reformed Doctrine.
Objective: To acquaint the pupils with the Reformed system of Christian Doctrine.

Notes:

- 1) The Conference thought best to consider the Junior and Senior High Schools as one unit. The courses proposed are adaptable to the 6-2-4 plan as well as to the 6-3-3 plan. Realizing that our schools are organized on different bases, the Committee has sought a plan to meet the needs of all. Some schools have the 6-3-3 plan, with no prospect of change to the 6-2-4 plan. Others are organized on an 8-4 or a 6-2-4 basis with no indication of change to the 6-3-3.

It is evident that there is a break in sequence of studies either at the 8th or the 9th grades; hence the 6-6 organization adopted in this report to avoid as nearly as possible these breaks.

- 2) It will be noted that the Conference has thought it best to include Reformed Doctrine in the curriculum. Some of our schools have taught this branch for years, others have recently introduced it; still others are thinking of so doing.

The Church has various types and levels of training in its classes. The pastor-teacher, therefore, has an entirely different approach and method from that of the school teacher. The latter teaches Doctrine with special reference to other intellectual pursuits.

Furthermore, one naturally expects a boy or girl of high school training to know more of doctrine and matters of religion than does the average catechumen. The inclusion of Reformed Doctrine in the high school curriculum makes such additional training possible.

C. COLLEGE

1. Courses and objectives:

- a) Introduction to Bible
- b) Reformed Doctrine
- c) Church History
- d) Archeology
- e) Calvinism
- f) Christian Ethics

2. **Notes:** The Conference is of the opinion that it would be desirable that more of the courses now offered in Religious Education at Calvin be required and not elective. In particular does it recommend the introduction of a course in Christian Ethics—to be required for graduation of all students—in addition to courses now required.

This entire report, given above, unanimously endorsed by all the delegates and by the sub-committee of the Religious Education Committee was then presented to the Committee on Religious Education. After due deliberation, in which the delegates of the various school groups took part, your Committee unanimously adopted the recommended

plan in toto, after adding a statement of the objectives for grades eleven and twelve, and for the work in the College, which read as follows:

- a) **Introduction to the Books of the Bible.** The course aims to give a general introduction to the Bible as a whole, discussing its origin, nature, canonicity, authority, organic unity, inspiration, and related subjects. Also a special introduction, inquiring into the contents, historical setting, literary form, and especially the permanent religious and ethical values of each book.
- b) **Reformed Doctrine.** The purpose is to give an advanced course of study in the doctrines of the Christian Religion as contained in the Bible and as reflected in the confessional standards of the Reformed Churches.
- c) **Calvinism.** A study of the origin and nature of Calvinism, its influence upon the development of religion, ethics, political life, social life, science and art, as well as the proper application of its principles to these spheres.
- d) **Biblical Archaeology.** The aim is to acquaint the student with the geographical, social, civic, and religious customs of the Hebrews, and of the peoples among whom they lived when God's revelation arose.
- e) **Church History.** The aim is to trace the historic development of Christianity and events related to it. Special consideration is given the development amongst the Reformed Churches, more particularly of the Netherlands and America.

The most heartening feature of the entire conference was the manifest spirit of enthusiasm that prevailed. All were evidently delighted with the new era of coöperation that has been inaugurated. This augurs well for the future. All went home with the feeling that something definite and worth-while had been accomplished.

Your Committee as well as the representatives thoroughly realize that Synod has no jurisdiction over the Christian Schools, and therefore cannot adopt this plan and make it mandatory. Nevertheless your Committee as well as the representatives feel that the approval and moral support of

this plan by Synod will be of great value, and so recommends.

One of the ideals that animates us is the desire of co-ordination of our educational system. But this is quite impossible unless the plan pursued by each group carries the approval and endorsement of both.

With respect to a course in Biblical Instruction it was felt to be logical that a plan for the Christian Schools be worked out first, so that the biblical instruction of the churches might be organized with the work done in the Christian Schools as a background.

Your Committee and the representatives of the School groups also realize that even this is but a first step toward the ideal that we are mutually seeking to realize, viz., a course of Christian Education in which all branches of study all along the line are developed from the point of view of our Reformed world and life-view. Possibly the work of the Conference represents but a very small step in that direction, but we feel that it is nevertheless a very definite and worth-while step.

II.

In the second place your Committee has the pleasure to report on the progress being made in the preparation of a course in Bible Stories and Sacred History to be offered to the churches.

A. A COURSE OF BIBLE STORIES

In preparing this course, the Committee has for the present not considered the Beginners' Grades (Grades 0, 1, 2; ages 5-7). A series of Bible stories for the following three grades (3, 4, 5) is in course of preparation. The course consists of three books, containing 120 lessons, each lesson dealing as much as possible with a single Bible story. The stories follow each other in the regular historical order. In the New Testament stories particular attention is paid to the works and teachings of Jesus.

Each lesson will consist of questions and answers to be memorized, the lesson-story (appropriately illustrated), a "golden text," and a stanza from the Psalter.

The 120 lessons of this three-year course have been completely outlined, and the questions and answers for memory work are all prepared. The lesson stories are now being prepared by capable persons with teaching experience, engaged for this work by the Committee, and many of them are now ready for final editing.

It would take too much space in this report to give a complete list of these 120 lessons, but some idea of the course may be given here.

The First Book deals with O. T. stories.

- 1) From Creation to Israel in Egypt—23 lessons.
- 2) From the Exodus to the Divided Kingdom—17 lessons.

The Second Book deals partly with the Old and partly with the New Testament.

- 1) From the Divided Kingdom to the End of the Old Testament—20 lessons.
- 2) From the Birth and Childhood of Jesus, the work of John the Baptist, the Beginning of Jesus' Ministry, the teachings contained in the Sermon on the Mount and the Parables of Jesus—20 lessons.

The Third Book completes the N. T. stories.

- 1) The Miracles of Jesus, the Last Week, the suffering, death, resurrection, and the ascension of Christ—24 lessons.
- 2) The Early Church, the work of Peter and Paul, the growth of the Church under persecution, and the Book of Revelation—16 lessons.

The Committee will be ready to place the work thus far accomplished into the hands of Synod, with samples of lessons set up as they will appear in the lesson books.

Hoping that Synod will approve of the outline proposed by the Committee, and of the general make-up of the books as indicated by the prospectus to be submitted, the Committee asks Synod to authorize it to complete the books and to make the needed arrangements for their publication.

B. A COURSE IN SACRED HISTORY

Little has been done as yet in preparation for a course of Sacred History for the use of the churches. It seems to be clear that no single course in Sacred History can be designed that is suitable for all of our churches. We have to face the fact that, while many of our churches enjoy the privilege of having a Christian School in their vicinity, many are not so fortunately situated. If all the children of our churches could and did attend the Christian School, our problem would be comparatively easy to solve. This will be especially true if the Christian Schools succeed in adopting a unified plan, such as proposed in the first section of this report. The fact remains, however, that the majority of our church communities are without Christian Schools, and many of these are so situated that there seems little hope of having them in the near future.

Where Christian Schools do exist, it seems logical that the Church follow a course in Sacred History that keeps pace with the instruction given in the school. If, for example, the school, according to calendar, has during the past week dealt with the life of Jacob, the lesson given under the auspices of the Church could be so arranged, that it summarized the outstanding events of the career of this Patriarch, and sought to bring home the great spiritual values contained in the narrative. We foresee that something of this nature will have to be done in the future, if the instruction given by the schools and by the churches is not to continue to run along entirely unrelated lines.

It seems, however, that we will do better to wait with this part of the work until the Christian Schools have agreed on a unified program and have, in as far as this is feasible, calendared their courses in Sacred History. We sincerely hope that soon substantial steps will be made in this direction.

But the greatest need at present is a course in Sacred History for those churches where children cannot attend Christian Schools. Synod has already expressed that special effort should be made to make provision for an adequate course in Sacred History and Bible Contents for such churches (Acta 1930, page 327).

We are endeavoring, before Synod convenes, to have ready an outline and prospectus of such a course. In event these can be prepared in time, we hope to submit them to the Synod for approval, along with the other prospectuses for Catechism work.

III.

The Committee, complying with the instruction of Synod (cf. Acta 1930, Art. 68, p. 72), has considered the feasibility and possibility of introducing a new system of Sunday School lessons. The Committee feels for the graded system as a sound pedagogical basis for proper instruction. It therefore cannot see its way clear to recommend a system of Sunday School lessons and topics of our own, built on the principle of the International Lesson System; i. e., the same topic for all ages. The following objections were voiced in the Committee when the matter was discussed:

- 1) Any choice of topics can never wholly satisfy, even in our small Christian Reformed ChCurch;
- 2) Simply a distinct series would not tend to elevate the type of instruction;
- 3) Lack of sufficient variety would reduce the instruction to a dead level;
- 4) Distinction only in topics and not in method will simply isolate our group still more, because it is doubtful whether others will see sufficient cause for a change from the International Sunday School lessons to another series of the same type;
- 5) A new series will limit the reference material for teachers considerably;
- 6) A large percentage of our Sunday Schools would very likely continue to use the International lessons, and would be obliged to use other helps than those published in our own circles.

However, despite the objections entertained by the Committee, whereas Synod has requested that it prepare an outline of such lessons, we hereby submit the following cycle of lessons:

CYCLE OF STUDIES

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Studies in Genesis..... | Jan., 1934-June, 1934 |
| 2. Studies in the Synoptic Gospels..... | July, 1934-March, 1935 |
| 3. Israel from the Exodus to the Time of Samuel | April, 1935-Sept., 1935 |
| 4. The Spread of the Gospel..... | Oct., 1935-Sept., 1936 |
| (Studies in the Acts and in the Epistles) | |
| 5. Israel United and Divided..... | Oct., 1936-March, 1937 |
| 6. Studies in John's Gospel..... | April, 1937-Dec., 1937 |
| 7. The Kingdom of Judah..... | Jan., 1938-March, 1938 |
| 8. The Life of John the Baptist..... | April, 1938-June, 1938 |
| 9. Men and Women of the New Testament | July, 1938-Dec., 1938 |
| 10. The Captivity and the Restoration..... | Jan., 1939-June, 1939 |
| 11. Studies in Luke's Gospel..... | July, 1939-March, 1940 |
| 12. The Lives and Writings of Peter and John | Apr., 1940-Sept., 1940 |
| 13. Wrestlers with God..... | Oct., 1940-Dec., 1940 |

I. Studies in Genesis

FIRST QUARTER

- | | | |
|----------|---------|--|
| Lesson 1 | Jan. 7 | The Creation. |
| " 2 | Jan. 14 | The Fall and its Consequences. |
| " 3 | Jan. 21 | Godly and Wicked Men of the First World. |
| " 4 | Jan. 28 | The Flood. |
| " 5 | Feb. 4 | Light and Shadows in Noah's Life. |
| " 6 | Feb. 11 | Abram's Separation from His Kindred. |
| " 7 | Feb. 18 | Abram's Separation from Lot. |
| " 8 | Feb. 25 | Abram and the Kings. |
| " 9 | Mar. 4 | The Covenant with Abraham. |
| " 10 | Mar. 11 | Abraham Entertaining Angels. |
| " 11 | Mar. 18 | The Trial of Abraham's Faith. |
| " 12 | Mar. 25 | Review. |

SECOND QUARTER

- | | | |
|----------|---------|--|
| Lesson 1 | Apr. 1 | The Risen Christ and Mary Magdalene (Easter Lesson). |
| " 2 | Apr. 8 | The Marriage of Isaac. |
| " 3 | Apr. 15 | Jacob, the Supplanter. |
| " 4 | Apr. 22 | Jacob at Bethel. |
| " 5 | Apr. 29 | Jacob and Laban. |
| " 6 | May 6 | Jacob at Peniel. |
| " 7 | May 13 | Joseph, the Favored Son. |
| " 8 | May 20 | Joseph in Tribulation. |
| " 9 | May 27 | Joseph, the Interpreter of Dreams. |
| " 10 | June 3 | Joseph Trying His Brethren |
| " 11 | June 10 | Jacob's Family Reunited. |
| " 12 | June 17 | Jacob Blessing His Posterity. |
| " 13 | June 24 | Review. |

II. Studies in the Synoptic Gospels

THIRD QUARTER

Lesson 1	July 1	The Births of John and Jesus Announced.
" 2	July 8	The Nativity of John.
" 3	July 15	The Circumcision and Presentation of Mary's First-born.
" 4	July 22	The First Passover of Jesus.
" 5	July 29	The Baptism of Jesus.
" 6	Aug. 5	The Temptation.
" 7	Aug. 12	The First Rejection at Nazareth.
" 8	Aug. 19	The Recall of Four Disciples.
" 9	Aug. 26	A Memorable Sabbath in Capernaum.
" 10	Sept. 2	The First Preaching Tour in Galilee.
" 11	Sept. 9	The Lord's Dealings with a Paralytic and a Publican.
" 12	Sept. 16	The Son of Man and the Sabbath.
" 13	Sept. 23	The Choice of the Twelve and the Sermon on the Mount.
" 14	Sept. 30	Review.

FOURTH QUARTER

Lesson 1	Oct. 7	Capernaum's Centurion and Nain's Widow.
" 2	Oct. 14	Christ's Message to John the Baptist.
" 3	Oct. 21	The Warning Against the Unpardonable Sin.
" 4	Oct. 28	Jesus' Authority over Storms and Demons.
" 5	Nov. 4	Jairus' Daughter and the Sick Woman.
" 6	Nov. 11	The Mission of the Twelve.
" 7	Nov. 18	The Feeding of the Five Thousand.
" 8	Nov. 25	The Journey to Tyre and Sidon.
" 9	Dec. 2	The Lord's First Announcement of His Death.
" 10	Dec. 9	The Transfiguration.
" 11	Dec. 16	Lessons on Humility and Forgiveness.
" 12	Dec. 23	The Birth of the Savior (Christmas Lesson).
" 13	Dec. 30	Review.

The studies have been arranged in such a way that the sacred history of the Old Testament will be practically covered, and yet so, that at one time the Old Testament studies will be taken up in one part and another time in another part of the year. This has been done, because some Sunday Schools meet exclusively in the summer and others in the winter months of the year. The lessons have been further arranged so that all of the New Testament history will be covered and so that the teacher may discuss the vicarious

death of Christ more than once during the seven-year cycle. For Easter and the Sunday before Christmas suitable lessons have been selected.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Religious Education,

L. J. LAMBERTS, *President*

G. W. HYLKEMA, *Secretary*

H. H. MEETER.

P. A. HOEKSTRA

G. J. VAN WESEF

W. STUART

A. J. ROOKS

A. PETERS

REPORT IX

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON "DIVORCE"

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church,
Grand Rapids, Mich., June, 1932.*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Committee on Divorce herewith submits its report to your honorable body.

A. BRIEF HISTORICAL REVIEW

At the Synod of 1914 two divorce matters asked the attention of that body. First, an overture from Classis Muskegon, reading as follows:

"De Classis vraagt het oordeel der Synode aangaande eene vrouw die gescheiden werd van haren man, wegens 'Extreme Cruelty,' en later, nadat haar eerste man gehuwd was, weer trouwde, of zij toegelaten kan worden als lid der kerk." ¹⁾

The Synod decided:

"Dat wij ons nu over dit concreet geval niet uitspreken, doch eene Commissie benoemen die de volgende Synode inzake deze materie met rapport diene."

At the same Synod the consistory of Alpine Ave., after Classis G. R. West had refused to lend classical support to its viewpoint, requested Synod to revise or modify the stand of the Church

"Op zulk eene wijze dat zulké echtbrekers (parties illegitimately divorced and then remarried) na verkregen genade, ook zelfs 'met behoud van een tweede huwelijk door den Staat, toch wederom in de kerk eervol hersteld kunnen worden.'" ²⁾

The Synod decided:

"Aangezien reeds eene Commissie benoemd is om deze materie verder te onderzoeken, om op de volgende Synode te rapporteeren, gaat de Synode thans niet verder op deze zaak in. Intusschen stelt de Commissie van Praeadvies haar voorstel in de handen der pasgenoemde Commissie."

At the Synod of 1916 two reports were rendered by the committee appointed by the Synod of 1914. All the mem-

¹⁾ Acta 1914, p. 38, Art. 51.

²⁾ Acta 1914, p. 73, Art. 68, I.

bers of the committee were agreed that their task was not to critically examine the standpoint of the Church that there is only one Biblical ground for divorce, but to answer the question:

“Of het kerkelijk standpunt, dat alleen de grond in Matth. 5:32 genoemd een wettige grond voor echtscheiding is, alle mogelijkheid van toelating tot de kerkelijke gemeenschap uitsluit voor hen die op andere gronden echtscheiding verkregen en daarna een nieuw huwelijk aangegaan hebben; dan wel of zij toch op zekere voorwaarden, en dan welke voorwaarden, in het kerkelijk lidmaatschap kunnen deelen?”

Three members of the committee answered this question without hesitation in the affirmative. If such parties sincerely repent of their sins of un-Biblical divorce and illegitimate second marriage, they can again be received into the Church. The other three members of the committee took the position that the marital relations of the second marriage must be held to be a constant living in adultery, and that parties to such a marriage can be given the rights of membership only on condition that they abstain from all marital relations, until the tie of the first marriage is severed by death.

The Synod accepted neither report, but:

“Na breede discussie over deze zaak der Echtscheiding, en nadat de conclusies der in het Agendum gedrukte rapporten beide zijn afgestemd, wordt het volgende door de Synode aanvaard:

“De Synode, lettende op de zoo uiteenlopende conclusies der rapporten over de echtscheiding en het blijkbaar niet rijp zijn der vergadering om thans tot beslissing te komen, besluit om voor het tegenwoordige de zaak in *status quo* te laten, maar om middelerwijl door de Synodale Commissie het advies in te winnen der Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland en Zuid Afrika.”¹⁾

The Synod of the Netherlands appointed a large committee of very able men to consider this question. At the Synod of Utrecht, 1923, this committee reported. And at our Synod of 1924, it was decided not to decide on the question at once, but to appoint a committee that should thoroughly study the reports from the Netherlands and South Africa, as also the material already given by our own men, and to report at the next Synod. This Committee was also charged with the duty to give advice with reference to the question

¹⁾ Acta 1916, p. 51, Art. 44, V.

put by the South African brethren.¹⁾ The committee appointed consisted of the brethren Prof. F. M. Ten Hoor, Prof. S. Volbeda, and Rev. H. J. Kuiper.

At the Synod of 1926 this Committee reported that, in its opinion, our Church would do well to postpone final and complete consideration of this matter, until the Netherlands Synod had taken a definite stand also on the question of one or more Biblical grounds for divorce. The Committee also asked that two more members be added to the Committee, especially in view of criticism that the Committee as then constituted, was not unbiased.²⁾

The Synod decided that it was not necessary to wait as the Committee proposed, since we had received a very complete answer to the particular question we had put to the Netherlands Synod. Two more members, Dr. H. Meeter and Rev. G. Hoeksema, were added to the Committee. And it was decided officially to thank the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands for the thorough and scholarly advice given us.³⁾

At the Synod of 1928, the Committee reported that it had not yet completed its task, largely for the reason that considerable time was devoted to the question whether divorce in the absolute sense could be justified on any ground.⁴⁾

The Synod expressed its regret that the Committee was not yet ready to report; urged the Committee to limit itself to the "practische kwestie naar aanleiding waarvan zij benoemd werd," and to do everything in its power that the Synod of 1930 might be able to decide definitely in this matter.⁵⁾

This Synod also excused three members of the Committee, Dr. S. Volbeda, Dr. H. Meeter, and Rev. H. J. Kuiper, and added three new members, Prof. D. H. Kromminga, Rev. H. Keegstra, and Rev. W. P. Van Wyk.

This Committee submitted a definite report to the Synod of 1930. However, the Synod once more referred the ques-

1) Acta 1924, p. 90, (a) and (b).

2) Agendum, 1926, p. 183.

3) Acta 1926, p. 54, a, b, c.

4) Agendum, Part I, p. 127.

5) Acta 1928, p. 134, (b).

tion to the Committee for further study, chiefly with a view to a fuller exegetical consideration of the Scriptural passages that touch upon this problem. Prof. L. Berkhof and Prof. H. Schultze were added to the Committee. And it is this enlarged Committee that herewith presents its unanimous report.

B. THE COMMITTEE'S CONCEPTION OF ITS TASK

Before stating in positive terms what our task is, as we conceive it, it may be well to state what we do not conceive our task to be. First, we do not consider it our charge to give advice merely with respect to two concrete cases (see above) that led to the appointment of the original Committee by the Synod of 1914. The language used by the Synod in the appointment of the Committee plainly implies that it desired advice, not so much regarding to the two concrete cases as such, but with respect to the *general question* involved in both cases. This general question is the ecclesiastical status of parties divorced on non-Biblical grounds and then remarried, also in case they repent of their sins and desire the rights and fellowship of church-membership.

The original Committee, in its report to the Synod of 1916, also conceived of its task in these general terms, as we have shown in our historical review. The Committee appointed by the Neherlands Churches also clearly understood the question put by us as being a *general question*, as is evident from the following quotation:

“Op de Generale Synode van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland die in 1917 te Rotterdam gehouden is, was een verzoek ingekomen van de Synode der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in Noord-Amerika om advies inzake de uitoefening van de tucht na *ongeoorloofde echtscheiding* en daarop gevolgd nieuw huwelijk.”
(Rapporten, Synode van Utrecht, p. 1.)

Secondly, we do not consider it to be part of our task to reëxamine the correctness of the official standpoint of our Church that adultery is the only Biblical ground for divorce. To begin with, no “gravamen” or official objection has been entered against this position. Even the consistory of Alpine Avenue, in its request to Synod of 1914, enters its objections not so much against the stand of the Church as such, but rather against the *application* of that standpoint in such a

way that illegitimately divorced and remarried parties cannot be given the privileges of membership.

Moreover, the last Synod urged our Committee to limit itself to the practical question,¹⁾ and the Synod of 1926 asked of the Committee to come with definite advice, and as soon as possible, regarding the question of the ecclesiastical status of illegitimately divorced and remarried parties, rather than to postpone its report till the Netherlands Synod has acted on the question of one or more grounds.²⁾

Finally, though the question of one or more grounds for divorce and the aforesaid practical question are from the very nature of the case interrelated, they can nevertheless very well be considered separately. For, whether a particular Church takes the position, as does our Church, that there is only one Biblical ground for divorce, or adds other grounds, or holds that there is no Biblical ground at all for divorce, the question always remains for each Church on its own standpoint: can those who are divorced on grounds which the Church does not recognize as Biblical, and who are then remarried (to other parties namely) be given the rights and fellowship of membership in the Church, and if so, on what conditions?

The Committee therefore conceives its task to be, to give advice to Synod on the following question: Can parties who were divorced on grounds our Church does not recognize as Biblical (or, in other words, on grounds other than adultery) and who marry again (with other parties namely) be given the rights and fellowship of membership in our Church, and if so, on what conditions?

C. THE ANSWER OF THE NETHERLANDS CHURCHES

The answer of the Netherlands Churches is contained in the report of their Committee submitted to the Synod of Utrecht in 1923. It should be remarked here that this report deals not only with the question our Synod submitted, but also, yea especially, with the question of one or more

1) Acta 1928, p. 134, (b).

2) Acta 1926, p. 54, (b).

Biblical grounds for divorce. And in the answer received from the Netherlands is included the official information to our Church that the Synod of the Netherlands Churches leaves the question of one or more grounds "onbeslist" for the present. But on the question our Church submitted, the question of the ecclesiastical status of illegitimately divorced and remarried parties in case they repent, there seems to be no difference whatsoever. The Committee was unanimous in its opinion that such parties could be given the rights and fellowship of church-membership if they repent of the sins of un-Biblical divorce and illegitimate second marriage. And the Synod seems to have adopted this part of the advice of its Committee without question.

We quote from the official Acts of the Synod of Utrecht, 1923, Art. 91, p. 88, where we are told that the Synod adopted the following two points of advice of the Committee of "prae-advies":

"1. Uit te spreken, dat ze zich vereenigt met de conclusies van het rapport omtrent de vragen: welke roeping de Overheid ten opzichte van de echtscheiding heeft, hoe de Kerk ten opzichte van het scheidingsrecht der Overheid zich heeft te verhouden; en welke tucht de Kerk heeft te oefenen, wanneer haar leden op eene naar het oordeel der Kerk ongeoorloofde wijze echtscheiding aanvragen en tot een nieuw huwelijk overgaan.

"2. De genoemde conclusies van het rapport als advies der Synode te zenden naar de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in Noord-Amerika, met bijvoeging van het rapport, opdat deze Kerk ook de gronden zou leeren kennen waarop dit Advies rust; en tevens aan genoemde Kerk mede te deelen, dat de Synode onbeslist laat of ook op grond van kwaadwillige verlatting echtscheiding geoorloofd is"

We herewith present a few quotations from the report of the Netherlands Committee that touch directly on the question before us. The Committee itself gives the following resumé of its position:

"1. Dat de Kerk zeer zeker geroepen is om, wanneer leden der gemeente op ongeoorloofde wijze of onder leugenachtige voorwendselen echtscheiding verkrijgen, en evenzoo wanneer zij daarna tot een nieuw huwelijk overgaan, tucht tegen hen te oefenen.

"2. Maar dat, wanneer na het begaan van deze zonde berouw wordt betoond en de schuldigen tot de gemeenschap der Kerk willen terugkeeren, de Kerk—gelijk dit bij elke zonde het geval is—alleen als eisch kan stellen dat de zonde beleden en berouw over deze zondige daad getoond worde;

"3. Dat er dan alleen reden zou wezen voor de Kerk om aan de oprechtheid van zulk een berouw te twijfelen, wanneer dezelfde zonde van lichtvaardige echtscheiding en hertrouw daarna herhaald werd." ¹⁾

We also quote from the more general resumé of its position, as given by the Committee on p. 32:

"4. Dat, wanneer na zulk een volgens de Kerk ongeoorloofde echtscheiding, de Overheid een nieuw huwelijk toestaat, de Kerk zulk een huwelijk als een zondige daad heeft te veroordeelen, en daartoe op geenerlei wijze hare medewerking heeft te verleenen.

"5. Maar dat de eisch dat de aldus gehuwden zich dan van elke huwelijksgemeenschap hebben te onthouden, in de Schrift geen genoegzame grond vindt, aan de consciëntiën een te zwaren last zou opleggen, en de deur zou openzetten voor andere en nog veel ergere zonden."

We feel constrained to add one more quotation, found on p. 31—a passage which in our opinion is fully as fundamental to the problem we are considering as anything said by the Committee in its own resumé's quoted above.

"Hieromtrent nu merken deputaten in de derde plaats op, dat Christus wel het aangaan van zulk een huwelijk als een daad van overspel veroordeelt, maar dat deze daad van overspel zelf, naar Christus' eigen woord, den band van het vroegere huwelijk verbreekt. . . . De daad van overspel door het aangaan van dit tweede huwelijk begaan, valideert dus achteraf de door de Overheid uitgesproken echtscheiding."

D. THE ANSWER OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCHES

Your Committee has no information to the effect that the South African Churches have submitted to our Synod an official answer to our question. However, we do have some unofficial material regarding the answer of the South African committee to the question we submitted, an answer included in a report of said committee to their Synod. We herewith submit a copy of a portion of this report, translated and incorporated in an editorial by Dr. H. Beets in *The Banner* of September 24, 1922.

"South African Report on the Divorce Problem

"The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America requested our Church to furnish advice regarding the exercise of Christian discipline after illegal divorce, followed by a new marriage. First of all it should be defined what kind of divorce is permissible

¹⁾ Rapporten, Synode van Utrecht, p. 34.

and which is not permissible. Regarding this your committee wishes to express itself as agreeing entirely with the standpoint taken by the Christian Reformed Church in North America and by Prof. Ridderbos in the Netherlands, viz., that only the ground named in Matt. 5:32 is a legal ground for divorce for a Christian. Your committee therefore differs from those of the brethren in Holland who desire to recognize malicious desertion as an additional ground for divorce. The committee judges that the words of Christ as to be taken in a limited sense such as not alone is shown by the expression 'fornication,' but also by the clause: 'Whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery.' This expression can refer only to a woman which has been forsaken on no other grounds than adultery. In the eye of Christ such putting away is no dissolution of the marriage tie before God, consequently He says that a man who marries such a woman commits fornication. Now, it is true that in Matt. 5:32, taken strictly literal, mention is made only of a woman who has been put away and not one who has been maliciously deserted by her husband, but at bottom this means the same thing, for the essence of malicious desertion must be sought herein that there is an obdurate refusal to live together. Concerning the other text which is used in this connection, viz., I Cor. 7:15, your committee is of the opinion, following most of the newer exegetes, that we must depart from the traditional exegesis, viz., that in this case malicious desertion on account of difference in religion is named as a ground for divorce, and that according to analogy malicious desertion on account of other reasons may be tolerated. The above named exegesis seems to be natural because Paul shortly before, in verse 10, appeals to the command of Jesus, a command which certainly is the equal of what is written in the gospels. Compare especially Mark 10:4-12 and Luke 16:18. Also in the case of mixed marriages Paul accordingly forbids a Christian party to separate on account of differences in religious views, verses 12 and 13.

"That more recent exegetes in general have come to a more correct conception of Paul's words, your committee explains with Prof. Ridderbos from the fact that at the present the tie between Church and State is no longer so obnoxiously close (knellend) as formerly, so that exegetes are not forced to find in I Cor. 7:15 and similar texts rules for marriage legislation.

"Concerning the traditional conception of I Cor. 7:14, also favored by Calvin in so far as he considers the special case of desertion on account of religious hatred a legal ground for divorce for a Christian, your committee desires to remark that such a case can occur only in a missionary congregation (zendings-gemeente): possibly also when one of the married parties who formerly lived away from God and His command came to conversion, as the brethren in the Netherlands remarked in their report. But in no case did your committee feel at liberty to deduce from that text that malicious desertion for any other cause than religious difference should be a legal ground for divorce, and that is the point especially at issue in practical life.

"In order to do justice to Calvin we should also point out that he expresses himself with great carefulness, even if he accepts in part the traditional exegesis. In the first place the ground for divorce in his view is not considered to be that of desertion as such. He gives as his reason that the one who forsakes his partner of life separates himself from God more than from man. In the second place, Calvin says

very carefully about the application of Paul's words: 'Although some think at the present that we have nearly the same cause to separate from Papists, but we should nevertheless carefully note the difference in this case so that we do nothing light-heartedly.'

"In view of this all it is the safest to reach the conclusion on the ground of verse 11, that the divorced one, also in the case of radical religious difference, must remain unmarried.

"In regard to the question how the Church is to exercise discipline with reference to those who marry a second time after illegal divorce, the committee is of the opinion, first, that in such cases discipline must be exercised. The consistory must herein judge about each case separately. In cases concerning which in the Christian Church there is so much difference of opinion, such, as for example, divorce on the ground of malicious desertion, the consistory will do well to reckon with this difference of opinion.

"Secondly, when after illegal divorce as well as in the case of a new marriage following, the guilty persons confess their sins, then the Church must again receive them into its communion when the sins have been confessed and repentance has been shown.

"Thirdly, that the uprightness of such repentance must not consist in this, that the new marriage be annulled, which would be fornication anew, but herein that sorrow is felt on account of the sinful step which had been taken. Doubt concerning repentance may be entertained only when there is persistence in the sin of light-hearted divorce and repeated marriage.

"Herewith your committee considers its task to be discharged, and it closes with the remark that it is the calling of the Church to above all exhort its members to reconciliation so that even in the case of fornication a separation need not take place, but reconciliation, for, says Calvin aright: 'The desire for divorce is foreign to our confession'."

E. THE ANSWER OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY SYNOD OF 1930

There are four passages in the Gospels that touch directly on the question we are considering. In Matt. 5:32 we read:

"But I say unto you that every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress; and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery." Again in Matthew 19:9: "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery, and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." Again in Mark 10:11 and 12: "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her: and if she herself shall put away her husband and marry another, she committeth adultery." And finally we read in Luke 16:18, "Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery, and he that marrieth one that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

In these passages three principles are implied or clearly stated that touch on the problem we are considering. First,

divorce on any other ground but that of fornication or adultery is condemned by Christ, and can therefore not be recognized as legitimate by and in the sphere of the Christian Church. Secondly, adultery gives to the innocent party legitimate ground for divorce. That principle is, we believe, clearly implied in the phrase, "except for fornication." And since this is the official position of our Church, we feel no need of giving a more detailed exegetical defense of this view.

Thirdly, divorce on non-Biblical ground does not sever the marriage tie before God. For the man who thus divorces his wife and marries another is said to commit adultery. This implies that he is still bound by the tie of the first marriage.

There are those who profess to find another principle in these passages. In their opinion the words just quoted mean: "And he that marrieth her that is put away, *even after her former husband has married again*, committeth adultery." If this were the correct interpretation, then the principle would be implied that the second marriage of the husband, even though it was adultery, as Jesus plainly states, did not free the woman of the tie of the first marriage. Even after the husband had married another, she was still before God his wife. In other words, the tie of the first marriage *remains* a binding tie in the lives of both parties once divorced on non-Biblical grounds. From which it would follow, of course, that any second marriage after non-Biblical divorce, even that of the second party to remarry, would be an adulterous marriage, a constant living in adultery.

Now it is undoubtedly possible to interpret the passage as meaning just that, but on reflection and comparison with other passages, it appears that this is not the only possible, nor even the most natural interpretation. Jesus is taking position over against the Mosaic regulation found in Deut. 24:1, 2, which reads as follows: "When a man taketh a wife and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when

she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife." According to this regulation a man may put away his wife for some other cause than adultery, and both he and his wife may remarry. Jesus takes exception to this position on the basis of the original institution of marriage. He maintains that, if a man puts away his wife for some other cause than fornication, the marriage tie remains intact; and it follows that, if the husband marries another woman, he commits adultery, and if someone marries the woman who was put away, he, too, commits adultery. The condition presupposed in both cases is simply that the man has put away his wife for some other cause than fornication. His remarriage does not form a part of the supposed condition in connection with the statement: "and he that marrieth her when she is put away, committeth adultery." The following considerations clearly favor this position: (1) In Matt. 19:9 the Lord brings in a time element in the last clause, when He says, "And he that marrieth her *when she is put away*, committeth adultery. He does not say: when she is put away *and her husband has married another woman*. (2) In Matt. 5:32 the Lord makes no mention whatever of the husband's remarriage, while he does say: and whosoever shall marry her *when she is put away*, committeth adultery. Evidently He does not presuppose a remarriage of the husband. (3) In Luke 16:18 the two statements are simply coördinated: "Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another committeth adultery"; "and he that marrieth one that is put away from a husband committeth adultery." Again, all mention of remarriage is left out. And in Mark 10:11 there are also two coördinate statements, though the second is of a somewhat different kind. Evidently the statements of Jesus are simply conditioned by the putting away, and not by any remarriages. Consequently He does not mean to say that when a man puts away his wife for some other cause than adultery and then marries another, the woman must still be regarded as his legal wife, in spite of the fact that he has married another.

The question must now be considered what conclusions follow from these Scriptural passages and their implied or

clearly-stated principles, as to the question we are considering. This question is, as already stated, whether parties divorced on non-Biblical grounds and remarried, can enjoy membership in the Church of Christ, and if so, on what conditions.

To answer this question your Committee considers it advisable first to consider a case of *legitimate* divorce, that is, divorce on the ground of fornication or adultery. It may seem as if this will lead us away from our real problem. We are convinced, however, that the very opposite is true. For if the situation that arises in the case of adultery (in the usual sense) and consequent divorce be clearly understood and clearly stated, we will already have arrived at certain fundamental positions that must and will guide our reasoning and control our conclusions in the specific problem of *illegitimate* divorce and consequent remarriage.

In the following paragraphs we shall speak of the two parties to a legitimate divorce as Mr. and Mrs. A. Mr. A. makes himself guilty of adultery, thru his illicit relations with another woman. The situation that arises (from the point of view of Church government) as a result of this sinful act may be summarized as follows:

1. Mr. A. can never again enjoy the full rights and privileges of membership in the Church, except he sincerely repent of his adultery and confess his sin before God and man. (We are supposing, of course, that his sin is known to the public.)

2. Mrs. A. has the right to leave her husband, according to Jesus' own words, "except it be for fornication." If she so decides, she must recognize the State and procure a legal divorce.

3. Mrs. A. may, if she so chooses, overlook the moral lapse of her husband and forgive him, especially if he is sincerely penitent. If so, the marriage remains binding for both parties. For

4. The adultery of Mr. A. did not *ipso facto* break the tie of marriage, as some would contend. Adultery does *violate* the sacred relation of marriage, which God wills to be the faithful union of one man and one woman. But a divine

tie legalized by the State as a divine institution cannot *ipso facto* be broken by the infidelity of one of the parties to the marriage. Such a position exposes itself to too many evident objections, such as that a husband or wife might cease to be married without being aware of it, through the secret sin of the other party. Again, either of the parties could dissolve the marriage at will by a single act of unfaithfulness. And other kindred objections might be mentioned.

5. If Mrs. A. obtains a divorce on the ground of adultery, she is free of her husband not merely before the State, but also in the sight of God. This means that she has the right to marry again if she so chooses. And being thus divorced and remarried, she must, without any hindrance, be accorded the full rights of membership in the Church of Christ; assuming of course that she was a member or desires membership and satisfies all the other conditions and rules of the Church.

6. If Mrs. A. exercises her Biblical right to dissolve the marriage, Mr. A. though grievously guilty before God, can no longer, not even by the Church, be held bound by the marriage tie that has been dissolved. He also cannot be denied the right to remarry.

Some, also in our circles, have held a very different view. They would extend the right to remarry only to the innocent party. They ask questions such as this: If the innocent party has the right to divorce and remarry only because the other party was unfaithful to the marriage vows, on what basis does the guilty party receive the right to remarry? He (she) cannot base it on any unfaithfulness of the other party. Or again: Is it just that the guilty shall be accorded the same rights as the innocent?

It is, however, not difficult to point out the fallacy in this reasoning. First, it is not correct to say that the innocent party has the right to remarry *because the other was unfaithful*. For if the former does not choose to procure a divorce and thus sever the tie, she has no more right to remarry than the guilty party. It is *this severance of the tie* that gives the right to remarry. Being no more bound, before God or man, to her former husband, she is free to

marry again. And if she is no longer bound to her former husband, he is of course no longer bound to her.

He is grievously guilty before God. He can never again enjoy the full rights of a member of Christ's Church except he sincerely repent and confess his sin. In this respect the Church is very far from according the same rights to the guilty as to the innocent.

But the question of remarriage rights is determined solely by the question whether the first marriage is still in force. If it is, neither party has the right to remarry. If not, both parties are free. A tie that does not bind the one can impossibly bind the other. After the first marriage has been legally dissolved, in the sight both of God and man, both parties are in the unmarried or single state, and have the natural right to seek a mate.

The foregoing analysis of a case of legitimate divorce posits certain principles that will necessarily have to be applied also in the case of divorce on non-Biblical grounds. Now, aside from the many different grounds that may be presented, there are various possibilities as to the manner in which such a divorce may be procured. Let us speak of the two parties to a divorce on non-Biblical grounds as Mr. and Mrs. B. First of all then, Mr. B. might divorce Mrs. B. or vice versa. The divorce might be contested or the party divorced might not even appear in court. Again, the latter might be guilty of the charges filed, or altogether innocent. And the facts and circumstances of each particular case would determine the measure and manner of discipline applied by the consistory.

However, the question we are asked to answer will receive adequate consideration if we assume a hypothetical case similar to that of which Jesus speaks in the Scriptural passages already quoted and analyzed. We will assume then that Mr. B. leaves or divorces Mrs. B. on some other ground than adultery, and marries another, and that later Mrs. B. marries again. And we will follow them, from the point of view of church government and discipline, through the various stages of their sad history.

1. *Mr. B. divorces Mrs. B. on non-Biblical grounds.*
The resulting situation is as follows:

a. The Church cannot recognize that divorce as legitimate in its sphere, since it was not procured on grounds approved by Scripture. It must, therefore, do all in its power to induce Mr. and Mrs. B. to be reconciled and remarry. In that way the tie still existing before God will again become a legal fact and a legal privilege and responsibility.

b. Mr. B. must be admonished and, if he does not repent, censured because of his sinful act of procuring a divorce on non-Biblical grounds. And it is only in the way of sincere penitence and confession that he can again be accorded the full rights of membership in the Church of Christ.

c. If Mrs. B. did not do all in her power to prevent or contest the divorce, or if she made herself guilty of any unchristian conduct that led to the rupture of marital relations, she also must be admonished. On the other hand, if the divorce was procured without her fault or consent, she should not in any way be disturbed in her enjoyment of the rights of Church-membership, provided of course she is willing to reconcile.

2. *Mr. B. marries another woman.* Now, first of all, this act of contracting a second marriage is, according to the plain words of Jesus, adultery. The fact that he was divorced by the State from his first wife does not mitigate his sin before God or His Church. For he was still bound to his first wife in the sight of God. And therefore his act of establishing marriage relations with another woman is adultery. He should therefore be urged to repent and to confess his sin. And only after sincere penitence and confession can he be received again into the fellowship of the Church of Christ.

Secondly, the question arises, what effect this second marriage of Mr. B. has on the relations of Mr. and Mrs. B.? Are they *now also* still bound before God by the tie of the first marriage?

We here arrive at the crucial point in the problem we are considering. It is here that we come to the parting of the ways. Some would, in the hypothetical case we are con-

sidering, unhesitatingly aver that Mr. and Mrs. B. are still before God bound by the tie of the first marriage, even after his second marriage. The logical consequence of such a position is necessarily this, that Mrs. B. also, if she marries again, commits adultery. And this second marriage of either party would be a permanently adulterous relation. It could never be recognized as legitimate in the sphere of the Christian Church. And the only condition upon which either party could again be received into the Church would be not merely sorrow over the un-Biblical divorce, but also the promise to abstain from the supposedly adulterous relations of the second marriage.

This was the position taken by one of the Committees on Divorce that reported in 1916. We feel confident that some, if not many of our people, still lean in that direction. And we therefore consider it advisable to show briefly how untenable this view really is.

a. It is not in agreement with Scripture. In the passages already considered, Jesus plainly states that one party may leave the other for the cause of adultery. But according to the view we are criticizing, Mrs. B. may not leave her husband, though he has committed adultery by marrying another woman.

b. This view, if applied in the government and discipline of the Church, involves a serious injustice. This will be clearly seen if we suppose for a moment that Mrs. B. was altogether innocent of the illegitimate divorce. Mr. B. then adds to his first sin of divorcing his wife, the second sin of marrying another woman. But Mrs. B., innocent throughout the whole transaction, remains bound to her adulterous husband. Indeed, Mr. B. could divorce his second wife, could marry again, and again be divorced, and so on *ad infinitum*, and all the while Mrs. B. would still, before God, be bound to Mr. B. as her lawful husband.

c. It involves an inconsistency. The advocates of this view must admit, of course, that a married woman, if she chooses to exercise her right, is freed of her husband, if he make himself guilty of but *one* act of adultery. But according to the view we are analyzing, a woman could be sinned against again and again and again through the wilful di-

voiced and constantly repeated adultery of her husband, and yet she remains bound.

In view of these objections, your Committee holds that the position is untenable that both parties to a marriage are still bound to each other before God, even after the second marriage of one of the parties. Our view is that the second marriage of Mr. B. creates, from the viewpoint of government and discipline in the Church of Christ, an *altogether new situation*, a situation that may be briefly summarized as follows:

(1) Mrs. B. is no longer bound to her adulterous husband, not even in the sight of God, nor before His Church.

(2) The Church, though it can never approve the divorce on non-Biblical ground, can now recognize the *separated state* of Mrs. B. as legitimate, and the separated state of Mr. B. as tolerable also in the sphere of the Christian Church.

(3) Mr. B., though grievously guilty before God, is no longer bound by the tie of marriage with Mrs. B.

Perhaps we can best explain and defend this position by considering briefly an objection that has been entered at this point, an objection leveled especially against point (3) of the above summary. How, it will be asked, does the guilty Mr. B. gain his freedom? By adding to his first sin of divorce, a second sin of marrying another woman? Does sin make men free?

Now it need hardly be said that the added sin of marrying another woman does not *per se*, apart from its consequences, relieve Mr. B. of his duty and responsibility, (namely to seek a reconciliation and a remarriage with Mrs. B.). Such a position would be tantamount to saying that sin makes men free; an indefensible proposition surely, both from a Scriptural and an ethical viewpoint.

We do unhesitatingly aver, however, that the sin of Mr. B. in marrying again changes the relations of him and his former wife. And these changed relations effect a change in the attitude of the Church.

Before the second marriage of Mr. B., the Christian Church must hold that it is the duty of both divorced parties to seek a reconciliation and a remarriage, since neither has left the other on grounds approved by Scripture. After Mr. B. commits adultery by marrying again:

1. *The church can no longer demand a remarriage, since:*

First, Mrs. B. can now legitimately refuse marriage relations with Mr. B. For he has committed adultery. And upon this ground she may leave him, according to the plain words of Jesus.

This Committee takes the position that adultery in the form of a second marriage gives the same freedom to the other party as would adultery committed before divorce has been granted. Jesus, in the passage in question, speaks of adultery in the most general sense. He does not limit the meaning of the word to any particular form of adultery. Nor have we any right to limit its meaning in any way. Adultery, any adultery, all adultery, gives the right to the innocent party to leave the other.

Therefore, Mrs. B. has just as much right before God to refuse any further marriage relations with Mr. B., either in name or in fact, as she would have, had he lived with another woman before the divorce. The fact that divorce has intervened does not change one whit the fact that Mr. B.'s adultery (his second marriage) violates the sanctity of marriage. Indeed, in the case of a second marriage the violation is even more pronounced than in the case of adultery in the ordinary sense. For the latter is often limited to one act, while the former results in permanent sexual relations, and relations that cannot be lightly broken, since they are legalized by the State.

Secondly, Mr. B., through his adultery, has lost the right to ask that Mrs. B. re-establish marriage relations.

2. *After the second marriage, the Church can acquiesce in the separated state of Mr. and Mrs. B.* Let there be no misunderstanding here. We do not mean that the act of the State in divorcing the parties on non-Biblical grounds has now become legitimate, so that the Church can approve

it. That act of divorce can never be approved by the Church.

But we must distinguish between the original act of divorce on the part of the State, and the *separated state* of the two parties that resulted from it. That separated state was also illegitimate in the sphere of the Church before the second marriage took place. But after Mr. B. marries again, Mrs. B. has Biblical right to *leave him* in the full sense of the word. Her separated state has become legitimate through his act of adultery. And a marriage tie that no longer binds her can, from the very nature of the case, no longer bind him. In other words, the Church can and must acquiesce also in the separated state of Mr. B.

3. *Mrs. B. has the right to marry again*, since she is now, both legally and ecclesiastically, free from the tie of marriage with Mr. B. If she was co-guilty of the divorce, she cannot be admitted or re-admitted except she sincerely repent and confess her sin. But her remarriage may not be held to interfere in any way with her enjoyment of the rights and privileges of membership in the Church of Christ.

4. It necessarily follows from (3) *that Mr. B. also, though he is grievously guilty before God, cannot consistently be denied the right to remarry.* Here again, as in the case of adultery in the ordinary sense, the question of remarriage rights is not determined by the guilt or innocence of one or the other party. Upon this would depend the manner and measure of discipline exercised by the Church.

But the question of the remarriage rights of both parties is determined solely by the question whether the original marriage is still binding. If it is, it binds both parties, the innocent as well as the guilty. If, on the other hand, the Church must recognize Mrs. B.'s right to leave Mr. B. and remarry, then her first marriage can no longer be held to be for her a binding tie. And if not for her, then also not for him. Then Mr. B. also must be held to be in the unmarried or single state, and consequently the right to remarry cannot be denied him.

5. *Even if Mrs. B. should not prize her new freedom, and should continue to claim Mr. B. as her husband, the*

Church could not support her in her claims. Undoubtedly such an attitude would be assumed only very rarely. Nevertheless, the possibility exists, especially if Mrs. B. had opposed the divorce. The Church should, however, inform her that she is mistaken in her claims, and on the following grounds:

a. The divorce granted by the State has actually, though from the Biblical point of view illegitimately, robbed her of her marriage rights.

b. After the second marriage of Mr. B. the Church can no longer support her in her efforts to re-establish her rights by means of a new marriage with Mr. B., since neither she nor the Church has any legal or moral right to demand of Mr. B. that he leave or divorce the party to whom he is now married, and resume or re-establish the marriage relations of the first marriage.

c. The sacredness of the marriage relation, as the faithful union of one man with one woman, should render it repugnant to a Christian to claim any one as mate who is presumably living in constant sexual relations with some one else, and with whom the party making such a claim is not and cannot be legally married.

We conclude our report with three remarks of a general nature, and with our final advice.

First, the problems and situations discussed in this report are not very pleasant to contemplate. They make us see in frightful form the havoc and ravages of sin. Illegitimate divorce and remarriage after such divorce create conditions that are deplorable. They call into being wrong relations that can never be completely righted.

However, these sad facts should not betray us as a Church into assuming an attitude that cannot be harmonized with the gospel of full and free salvation for all penitent sinners. It may seem to some a very easy solution of our problem to say to all parties illegitimately divorced and remarried: "We do not mean to deny the possibility of your salvation, but you may not enter through *our* ecclesiastical gates." But it will be more in harmony, we believe,

with the spirit of the Gospel to say to them: "For you also there is a place in our midst if you sincerely repent and confess your sins."

Secondly, it is possible that this report will, as did the previous report, meet with the objection that we are opening the door to the evil of divorce. In the sense in which this may be meant by some it is surely not true. The rule of the Church, that is, no divorce except on the ground of adultery, is not weakened in any way. That rule remains absolutely intact. By the acceptance of our advice our Church would not depart from its fundamental position in the slightest degree.

On the other hand, in an infinitely more beautiful and nobler sense, we would be opening the door. We would be opening the door to penitent sinners. We would take the position that there is mercy and forgiveness for this class of penitent sinners, just as there is for the converted drunkard and murderer. Any other position, any exclusion of one class of penitent sinners while others are admitted, would mean that we would lose something of the riches of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, your Committee wishes to impress upon the Synod the urgent need of definite action on this problem at the Synod of 1932. As a Church we have hesitated long, perhaps too long, before taking a positive stand in this matter. It is now 18 years ago that this question began to be agitated in our midst. It is eight years ago that the churches of the Netherlands served us with their advice. So also the advice of the South African committee on this question has been in our possession for some time.

Moreover, several of our local churches are waiting and have been waiting long for a Synodical stand on this question. *The time has come to act.* The Church of Christ must function also in these matters. If the Synod hesitates any longer, the local consistories will be forced to make their own decision. And then all unity in discipline on this important question will become an utter impossibility.

In agreement with the spirit and content of the foregoing report, we advise Synod to adopt the following as the official stand of our Church on the question submitted to this Committee:

“Persons divorced on non-Biblical grounds and remarried, can enjoy the full rights and privileges of membership in the Church of Christ, if they sincerely repent of and confess their sins. The sin of un-Biblical divorce must be confessed by the guilty party or parties. The first party that remarries must confess his (her) adulterous act of contracting a second marriage.”

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Divorce,

PROF. F. M. TEN HOOR,
PROF. D. H. KROMMINGA,
REV. W. P. VAN WIJK,
REV. H. KEEGSTRAS,
PROF. L. BERKHOF,
PROF. H. SCHULTZE,
REV. G. HOEKSEMA, *Sec.*

P. S. A supplementary report on the question put to us by the South African Churches will be submitted later.

REPORT X

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE IN RE REVISION OF OUR LITURGICAL FORMULARIES

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Your Committee on the revision of our Liturgical Formularies, appointed in 1930 (cf. Acts of Synod, p. 205), respectfully submits the following report:

I. ITS INSTRUCTIONS

These are to be found on pages 137-141 of the Acts of Synod, 1930, and contain the following items:

A. To prepare in idiomatic English a translation of the "Prayers and Confession" following the text of Dr. Rutgers (Cf. p. 137).

B. To subject the Dutch and English formularies for the public profession of faith to a thorough examination and to provide more fluent and satisfactory formulations than those adopted, considering also the suggested rendering of 1930 and the forms used in the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches of our country (Cf. p. 139).

C. To revise the form for the public solemnization of marriage, taking into consideration the advisability of including in the form a warning against the sins of Neo-Malthusianism (Cf. p. 140).

D. To prepare a revision of the form for the ordination of elders and deacons (p. 141).

The committee has not succeeded in carrying out these instructions in full. Instruction D above remains to be done. Your committee suggests that a committee to report at our next Synod be appointed and entrusted with this task.

II. PROPOSED FORMULARY FOR THE PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH

A. *English Rendering*

BELoved IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:

We thank our God concerning you [all] for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus that you were made desirous of professing your faith publicly here in the presence of God and His Holy Church and of obtaining the privileges of full communion with the people of God.

You acknowledge the truth of the doctrine of salvation revealed in the Holy Scriptures and summarized in the doctrinal standards of the Christian Reformed Church, and you purpose stedfastly to continue therein to the end of your life.

You believe the promise of God as signified and sealed unto you in your baptism and you now personally and publicly ratify the covenant of discipleship.

You are firmly resolved always to live a Christian life, not being fashioned according to this world, but being transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

You promise to obey them that have the rule over you, and to submit to them, since they watch in behalf of your soul[s] as they that shall give an account: that they may do this with joy and not with grief, for this were unprofitable for you.

N. N. What is your response before God and His people?

(Ans.) With all my heart. (To be given individually)

I charge you then, Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, to continue with the assistance of divine grace in the maintenance of this holy faith, in the performance of the whole will of God, in the diligent use of the means of grace, and in the peace and love and mutual edification of the brethren.

In the name of Christ, our Lord and King, I declare that the privileges of full communion are now granted unto you. And we, the people of God, welcome you most cordially to our Christian fellowship. (Or the minister shaking hands with those making confession may say, "I am happy to extend unto you in the name of the people of God the right hand of fellowship.")

Prayer (preferably those making confession of faith kneeling).

The committee suggests as a model the following found in the Presbyterian Manual of Forms: "Heavenly Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast from the beginning embraced in Thy Covenant the children together with their parents. We thank Thee that Thou didst cast the lot of these Thy children in the Christian Church from the first and didst grant unto them all the manifold blessings of Christian culture. We bless Thee that Thou didst in their case add the special grace of the Holy Spirit, so that of their own wills they come here today to confess Thy truth and to consecrate their lives to Thy service. We earnestly beseech Thee that Thou wilt continue to carry on the good work Thou hast commenced in them unto the day of complete redemption. Increase in them daily the manifold gifts of Thy grace, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. Grant them the happiness of promoting the glory of their Lord and the edification of His people. Deliver them in the temptations of this life and in the extreme trial of death. And in that day when Thou makest up Thy jewels set these Thy children also in Thy crown, that they may shine as stars, to Thy praise forever and ever. Amen."

Now may the God of all grace, who has called you unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Appropriate song by the congregation.

B. *Dutch Rendering*

CONCEPT FORMULIER VOOR OPENBARE
BELIJDENIS DES GELOOFS

GELIEFDEN IN DEN HEERE JEZUS CHRISTUS:

Wij danken onzen God ten uwen opzichte vanwege de genade Gods u geschonken in Christus Jezus dat de begeerte in uw hart verwekt werd om uw geloof in het openbaar te belijden in de tegenwoordigheid Gods en Zijner heilige Kerk en om in het bezit te geraken van het voorrecht der volle gemeenschap van 's Heeren volk.

Gij hebt aanvaard de leer des heils geopenbaard in de Heilige Schrift en kortelijk samengevat in de Drie Formulieren van Eenigheid der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk. Ook hebt gij het voornemen opgevat om standvastiglijk bij die leer te blijven uw leven lang.

Gij gelooft de belofte van God die door den Heiligen Doop, aan u bediend, beteekend en verzegeld werd. Thans neemt gij uwen doop openlijk voor uwe rekening en zet het zegel uwerzijds op het verbond dat God met u opgericht heeft.

Gij hebt vastelijk besloten steeds een christelijk leven te leiden, verre te blijven van wereldgelijkvormigheid en veranderd te worden door de vernieuwing uws gemoeds en alzoo te beproeven wat de goede en welbehagelijke en volmaakte wille Gods zij.

Gij belooft uwen voorgangeren gehoorzaam te zijn en hun onderdanig te wezen als die waken voor uwe ziel(en) en rekenschap hebben te geven, opdat zij dit doen mogen met vreugde en niet al zuchtende, want dit ware u niet nuttig.

N. N. Bevestigt gij dit alles hier voor God en in de tegenwoordigheid Zijns volks?

(Antwoord) Ja ik, van ganscher harte (ieder der belijdenis doenden persoonlijk).

Ik vermaan u, dan, geliefden in den Heere Jezus Christus, dat gij met de hulpe van Gods genade voortgaat in de belijdenis van dit heilig geloof; dat gij niet nalaat te wandelen naar al den wil van God; dat gij naarstig zijt in het gebruik van de middelen der genade; en dat

gij zonder ophouden de liefde betracht en den vrede bevordert tot de onderlinge stichting der broederen en zusteren in den Heere.

Ik verklaar, verder, in den Naam van Christus Jezus, onzen Heere, dat gij thans in het bezit gesteld wordt van al de rechten en voorrechten verbonden aan het lidmaatschap der kerke Gods alhier. In naam der gemeente heet ik u recht hartelijk welkom en ontvang ik u onder degenen die 's Heeren Naam beleden hebben. (Ook staat het den Dienaar des Woords vrij, van den kansel afdalende den nieuwen belijders de hand te reiken en hen aldus aan te spreken: Het is mij eene oorzaak van blijdschap u in naam van 's Heeren volk alhier de rechterhand der gemeenschap te geven.)

Terwijl degenen die zooveen hun geloof beleden hebben nederknielen, verkieslikerwijze, ga de Dienaar des Woords aldus voor in gebed en dankzegging tot God:

Hemelsche Vader, wij danken U dat gij van den beginne de kinderen Uws volks met hunne ouders opgenomen hebt in Uw verbond, en dat gij deze uwe bondgenooten niet alleen in Uwe Kerk deed opnemen maar hun ook deed toekomen eene christelijke opvoeding. Wij loven U voor de genade des Heiligen Geestes hun geschonken dat zij geheel vrijwillig toetraden om Uwe waarheid en hun geloof daarin te belijden en hun leven aan Uw dienst te wijden.

Wij bidden U met aandrang des harten dat Gij wilt voortzetten het goede werk genadiglijk in hen begonnen en het te voleindigen tot op den dag van Jezus Christus. Vermeerder in hen dagelijksch de menigvuldige gaven Uwer genade, schenk hun den Geest der wijsheid en des verstands, den Geest des raads en der sterkte, den Geest der kennis en der vreeze des Heeren. Verleen hun de blijdschap dat zij de heerlijkheid des Heeren mogen bevorderen en de stichting Zijns volks mogen verhoogen. Bewaar hen te midden van de verzoekingingen dezes levens en verlos hen in de ure huns doods. En worde het hun gegeven wanneer de dag Uwer doorluchtige toekomst zal zijn aangebroken als juweelen te schitteren in de kroon Uwer heerlijkheid ter Uwer eere eeuwiglijk en altoos. Amen!

De God aller genade die u geroepen heeft tot Zijne eeuwige heerlijkheid in Christus Jezus, nadat gij een weinig tijds zult geleden hebben, Dezelve volmake, bevestigte, versterke en fundeere u. Hem zij de heerlijkheid en de kracht in alle eeuwigheid!

Gelieve de gemeente thans aan te heffen uit Psalm, ver(zen),

III. FORMULARY FOR THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGE

A. *English Rendering*

The following announcement is to be made on a previous Sunday: N. N. and N. N. have signified their intention of being married and have requested the ecclesiastical solemnization of their contemplated marriage. In the absence of lawful objections, they will, the Lord willing, be united in marriage in this church on (date).

Since you, N. N. and N. N., requested that your marriage be solemnized publicly before the Lord and in the presence of His Church, and no lawful objections have been raised against your marriage, we shall now proceed to the proper ceremony, reminding you of the institution and the purposes of marriage and of the duties involved.

We call to remembrance that our heavenly Father Himself instituted marriage at the dawn of history. Having made heaven and earth and all that in them is, He formed man out of the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. He made him in His own image and blessed him with fruitfulness, possession of the earth, and dominion over all things. He also said: "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him." Thereupon the Lord created the woman of man's own substance, brought her unto the man, and ordained that the two should be one flesh. When Adam beheld the woman he immediately recognized her as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and said, "She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man." The Scripture significantly adds: "There-

fore shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." The holy apostle Paul declared: "This is a great mystery, but I speak in regard of Christ and the Church," thus representing marriage as a beautiful symbol of the mystic union of the Savior and His redeemed Bride.

We may rest assured in our hearts that marriage is well-pleasing to the Lord and that it is an honorable estate, as the Scripture itself testifies. At Cana, in Galilee, the Lord Jesus attended a marriage and honored it with His first miracle. Knowing that marriage is a divine ordinance and that it was intended to be a fountain of good, we may look to the Lord for guidance in our married life, for comfort in our trials, and for grace to perform the duties and achieve the purposes of marriage.

The primary purpose of marriage is the propagation of the human race and the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God. Children are a heritage of the Lord, and inasmuch as they are included in the covenant of grace it behooves parents to bring them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

Marriage has also been ordained that the husband and the wife, each endowed by the Creator with distinctive gifts, may complement each other and contribute to the highest mutual development. In loving devotion to each other and their common offspring they ennoble and enrich their lives. Thus marriage, even after the primary purpose falls into abeyance, continues to be a sacred and fruitful union, especially to those who are joint-heirs of the grace of life.

Since marriage is a divine institution of the highest significance for the human race and the Kingdom of God and is a symbol of the marriage of Christ and His Church, the Lord has ordained that it should be a union for life, even as Christ said: "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

As to the duties involved in the married state, the Lord has ordained that the husband shall be the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, so that as Christ guides, protects, and provides for the Church in the great love which He cherishes for it, so the husband may take

the care of his wife upon himself. If the husband conducts himself in the spirit and after the example of Christ, the wife will never have reason to complain of any tyranny on his part. God has also ordained that the wife shall be subject to her husband in all things that are according to the Word of God, and show him deference, even as the Church is subject to Christ. Such obedience, after the example of the true Church of Christ, will be glorified by a liberty that is ennobled through its loyalty to law.

Inasmuch as the home is the foundation of a Christian society, it is of supreme importance that husbands and wives maintain a home of their own, a home in which Christian virtues are inculcated, spiritual character is developed, and which is a shelter and a retreat in the struggle of life. In the measure in which we maintain such a home it will be a foretaste of the eternal home with its heavenly rest.

(The officiating minister requests the bridegroom and bride to rise and to answer the following questions.)

N. N. and N. N., having heard from the Word of God the teaching concerning marriage, do you assent thereto and do you desire to enter this holy estate as God hath ordained in His Word? They answer: I do.

(The following question is optional: Who giveth this woman to this man? To which the father or guardian answers: I do.)

The minister continues: Give each other the right hand. May the Lord our God confirm the desire and purpose of your hearts and give you grace to answer the following questions in all sincerity and joyous earnestness.

To the bridegroom: N. N., do you solemnly declare that you take unto yourself and acknowledge as your wife, N. N., here present, and do you promise that with the gracious help of God you will live together in the holy bonds of marriage after God's ordinance, keeping her only unto yourself, so long as you both shall live? Answer: I do.

To the bride: N. N., do you solemnly declare that you

take unto yourself and acknowledge as your husband, N. N., here present, and do you promise that with the gracious help of God you will live together after God's ordinance in the holy bonds of marriage, keeping him only unto yourself, so long as you both shall live? Answer: I do.

(Ring ceremony, if desired. The ring is not a pledge but a symbol of marital union. The minister shall say: Give this ring unto her and receive it from him as a symbol of your constant faith and abiding love.)

Thereupon the minister says: According to the laws of the state of and the ordinances of the Church of Christ, I now pronounce you husband and wife, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

While the bridegroom and bride kneel in prayer let us invoke the blessing of our God upon their marriage.

“Most merciful and gracious God, of Whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named, we beseech Thee, set the seal of Thine approval upon the marriage into which our brother and sister have entered this day. Give them Thy Fatherly benediction; granting them grace and Thy Holy Spirit to fulfill with pure and constant affection the vow and covenant between them made. Guide them in the way of righteousness and peace that, loving and serving Thee with one mind and heart all the days of their life, they may be abundantly enriched with the tokens of Thine everlasting favor in Christ Jesus our Lord. In all life's experiences lift up Thy countenance upon them that they may meet prosperity with humble gratitude and may be patient and trustful under the shadow of adversity. May their marriage be fruitful for this life and for eternity. Grant them wisdom and strength to build a home life which shall be to the glory of Thy name and the coming of Thy Kingdom. May they live together many years, and at the end of their days may they die in the blessed hope of celebrating forever with all the saints of God the marriage of Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom,

and the Church which He loved so well. Hear our prayer in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who taught us to pray, saying: Our Father Who art in heaven . . . Amen.”

It is suggested that the ceremony be concluded with appropriate song.

B. *Dutch Rendering*

FORMULIER OM HET HUWELIJK TE BEVESTIGEN
IN HET MIDDEN DER GEMEENTE

Voorafgaande aankondiging. N. N. en N. N. gaven hun voornemen te kennen om in het huwelijk te treden en spraken daarbij de begeerte uit dat hun huwelijke staat in het midden der gemeente bevestigd worde. Zoo geen wettige bezwaren daartegen worden ingebracht zal de huwelijksplechtigheid plaats hebben

Daar gij N. N. en N. N. de begeerte te kennen gegeven hebt dat de bevestiging van uw voorgenomen huwelijk plaats hebbe in het midden van 's Heeren gemeente en hiertegen geen wettige bezwaren zijn ingebracht, zullen wij thans overgaan tot de bewuste plechtigheid, en alvorens u in den echt te verbinden u voorhouden uit het Woord van God de instelling en het doel des huwelijks.

Allereerst dan brengen wij in herinnering dat onze hemelsche Vader zelf het huwelijk ingesteld heeft in den ochtendstond der schepping. Nadat Hij den hemel en de aarde gemaakt had formeerde Hij den mensch uit het stof der aarde en blies in zijne neusgaten den adem des levens. God schiep den mensch naar Zijn beeld en zegende hem met vruchtbaarheid, bezit der aarde en heerschappij over alles wat op de aarde is. Ook sprak Hij: Het is niet goed dat de mensch alleen zij; Ik zal hem eene hulpe maken die als tegen hem over zij. Diensvolgens schiep God eene vrouwe uit het eigen vleesch en bloed van Adam en bracht haar tot haren echtgenoot opdat zij naar Zijn ordinantiën tot één vleesch zouden zijn. Toen Adam de vrouw hem door God toegebracht aanschouwde onderkende hij haar aanstonds als been van zijne beenen en vleesch van zijn vleesch, waarom hij ook

zeide: Zij zal Manninne heeten omdat zij uit den man genomen is. De Schrift voegt hieraan beteekenisvol toe: Daarom zal een man zijnen vader en zijne moeder verlaten en zijne vrouw aanhangen en die twee zullen tot één vleesch zijn. De heilige apostel Paulus zegt ten opzichte van het huwelijk: Dit is eene groote verborgenheid, doch ik zeg dit ziende op Christus en de gemeente. Op deze wijze stelt deze heilige schrijver het huwelijk voor als kostelijke symboliek van de mystieke unie die Christus en Zijne verlore Bruid vereenigt.

Wij mogen ons verzekerd houden dat de echtelijke staat Gode behaagt en mitsdien ten volle eerbaar is naar luid der Schrift. Te Kana in Galilea was onze Heere Jezus Christus zelf een Bruiloftsgast en gaf Hij aan de bruiloftsvreugde heilige wijding door Zijn eerste wonder. Nu wij weten dat het huwelijk eene goddelijke instelling is en dat het door God gewild is als een bron van waarachtig levensgeluk, mogen wij zonder aarzelen den Heere bidden om Zijne leiding in ons huwelijksleven, om Zijne ondersteunende genade te midden van het leed en kruis dat vanwege de zonde den gehuwden gewoonlijk toekomt, en om bekwaammakende genade tot de getrouwe volbrenging van de huwelijksplichten die wij in Zijn weg op ons nemen.

Wat aangaat het doel dat God met de instelling des huwelijks beoogde, het groote doel des huwelijks is de voortplanting van het menschelijke geslacht en den opbouw van het Koninkrijk Gods. Kinderen zijn een erfdeel des Heeren en zijn met hunne godvreezende ouders begrepen in het verbond der genade. Het betaamt daarom den ouders de kinderen waarmede de God des levens hen zegent op te voeden in de leering en vermaning des Heeren.

Het huwelijk is bovendien ingesteld opdat de beide geslachten elkander zouden dienen met de gaven waarmede de Heere iedere kunne versierd heeft en alzoo elkander behulpzaam zouden zijn in de volle verwezenlijking van hun levensideaal. Wanneer beide man en vrouw zich aan elkander wijden in teedere liefde en samen het kroost hun geschonken godzaliglijk opvoeden, veredelen en verrijken zij elkanders leven.

Aangezien het huwelijk een goddelijke instelling van de hoogste beteekenis is voor het menschdom en niet minder voor het Koninkrijk Gods, en geheel in overeenstemming hiermede een symbool is van de heilige vereeniging van Christus en Zijne gemeente, heeft de Heere verordend dat het huwelijk eene levenslange verbintenis zoude zijn. Met het oog hierop heeft Christus dan ook gezegd: Hetgeen God samengevoegd heeft scheidt de mensch niet!

Met betrekking tot de plichten der gehuwden heeft de Heere besteld dat de man het hoofd zijner vrouw zal zijn gelijk Christus het hoofd Zijner gemeente, en dat de man, naar het voorbeeld van Christus' zorg voor Zijne gemeente, de zorg zijner vrouw op zich behoort te nemen. Indien de man zich tegenover zijn vrouw gedraagt in den geest en naar het voorbeeld van Christus zal de vrouw nimmer reden hebben om over dwinglandij te klagen. De Heere heeft gewild dat de vrouw aan den man onderworpen zal zijn in alle dingen die recht en eerbaar zijn overeenkomstig het Woord des Heeren, en hem eeren zal als haar heer naar het voorbeeld der gemeente die Christus eert en dient. Deze gehoorzaamheid wel verre van slavèrnij te zijn, zal veeleer gelijk staan met de vrijheid die heerlijk is door trouw aan de wet.

En wijl het gezin de hoeksteen der maatschappij is moet het van het grootste belang gerekend worden dat man en vrouw hun eigen huishouding oprichten, en in hun huiselijk leven de heilige deugden beoefenen, een geestelijk stempel zetten op hunne kinderen en hun haard maken tot een plaats der ruste temidden van de felle branding van het leven. Op deze wijze zal ons aardse tehuis ons eene voorsmaak geven van het Vaderhuis hierboven en van de eeuwige rust die daar genoten wordt.

De Dienaar des Woords verzoekt alsnu den bruidegom en de bruid op te staan van hunne plaatsen en te antwoorden op de volgende vragen:

N. N. en N. N. Stemt gij van harte in met de leer des huwelijks gelijk u die uit het Woord van God is voorge-

houden en begeert gij overeenkomstig Gods Woord in den Heere te huwen?

Hierop antwoorden bruidegom en bruid achtereenvolgens: Ja ik!

(Desverlangd vraagt nu de dienstdoende Dienaar des Woords: Wie geeft thans deze vrouw aan dezen man? Hierop antwoordt de vader of de voogd der bruid: Ik (met eenigen nadruk).

Daarna gaat de Dienaar des Woords voort en zegt: Geeft elkander nu de rechterhand; en spreekt nadat bruidegom en bruid hieraan voldaan hebben als volgt:

De Heere onze God bevestigte uw voornemen en verleene u den wensch uws harten en geve u genade om op de volgende vragen met blijden ernst en in waarachtigheid des harten te antwoorden.

Tot den bruidegom zegt de Dienaar des Woords nu: N. N. Verklaart gij hier plechtiglijk dat gij tot u genomen hebt en als uwen wettige echtgenoot erkent N. N. hier tegenwoordig? En belooft gij met haar te zullen leven in den heiligen band des huwelijks overeenkomstig het heilig Evangelie met de genadige hulpe des Heeren? Belooft gij tevens met haar in den echt te zullen leven zoolang de Heere haar en u het leven laat?

Hierop antwoordt de bruidegom: Ja ik!

Daarna richt de Dienaar des Woords de volgende vraag aan de bruid:

N. N. Verklaart gij hier plechtiglijk dat gij tot u genomen hebt en als uwen wettigen echtgenoot erkent N. N. hier tegenwoordig? En belooft gij met hem te zullen leven in den heiligen band des huwelijks overeenkomstig het heilig Evangelie met de genadige hulp des Heeren? Belooft gij tevens met hem in den echt te zullen leven zoolang de Heere u en hem het leven laat?

Hierop antwoordt de bruid: Ja ik!

(Desverkiezend kan nu de uitwisseling van ringen plaats hebben. Men zij er aan herinnerd dat de ring slechts een symbool is van huwelijksvereiniging en echte-lijke trouw. De Dienaar des Woords spreekt nu aldus: Geef haar dezen ring en ontvang hem uit zijne hand als

een teeken van onvergankelijke trouw en bestendige liefde.)

Daarna zegt de Dienaar des Woords:

Overeenkomstig de wetten van den Staat waarin wij wonen en de ordinantien der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk hier te lande, verklaar ik u man en vrouw te zijn, in den Naam des Vaders en des Zoons en des Heiligen Geestes.

De bruidegom en bruid worden nu verzocht neder te knielen waarna de Dienaar des Woords aldus spreekt: Laten wij bidden.

Genadige en zeer barmhartige God, uit Welken al het geslacht in de hemelen en op de aarde genoemd wordt, wij bidden U dat Gij het zegel Uwer hooge goedkeuring moogt hechten aan het huwelijk dat heden gesloten werd tusschen deze broeder en zuster. Schenk hun Uwen vaderlijken zegen en geef hun Uwe genade en Uwen heiligen Geest, opdat zij beiderzijds trouw mogen zijn in heilige liefde aan hunne beloften en het verbonds des huwelijks dat zij met elkander aangingen. Leid hen in den weg der gerechtigheid en des vredes ten einde zij al de dagen huns levens samen U liefhebben en dienen en verrijkt mogen worden met de bewijzen Uwer eeuwige gunst in Christus Jezus onzen Heere. Wat hun ook ontmoete op hun levensweg, doe, o Heere, Uw gunstrijk aanzicht over hen lichten. Alleen dan toch zullen zij in voorspoed dankbaar en in tegenspoed geduldig kunnen zijn. Moge hun huwelijk vrucht dragen beide voor dit en voor het toekomende leven. Verleen hun wijsheid en kracht om in hun gezinsleven Uw Naam te verheerlijken en Uw Koninkrijk te bevorderen. Moge het hun gegeven worden samen lang te leven en ten slotte te sterven in de zalige hoop eeuwig de bruiloft des Lams hierboven te vieren met alle de heiligen. Verhoor onze bede in den Naam onzes Heeren Jezus Christus die ons heeft leeren bidden: Onze Vader, enz. Amen.

Ten besluite van deze plechtigheid heffe de gemeente aan uit Psalm, vers

IV. TRANSLATION OF "PRAYER AND
CONFESSION"

Prayer at the Beginning of Public Worship

Our help is in the Name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.

*A General Confession of Sins and Prayer on Sunday
before the Sermon and on Days of
Fasting and Prayer*

O eternal God and most merciful Father, we humbly prostrate ourselves before Thy great majesty, against which we have so frequently and so grievously sinned, and we acknowledge that if Thou shouldst enter into judgment with us we would deserve nothing less than eternal death. Indeed, we are, because of original sin, unclean before Thee and children of Thy wrath. We are conceived and born in sin, wherefore all manner of evil lusts striving against Thee and our neighbor dwell within us. Furthermore, we often and without ceasing transgressed Thy commandments, neglecting to do what Thou hast commanded and doing that which Thou hast expressly forbidden. We all as sheep have gone astray and have grievously sinned against Thee. We acknowledge these sins before Thee and are heartily sorry for them. Indeed, we confess unto our humiliation and unto the praise of Thy mercy towards us that the number of our sins is greater than the number of the hairs of our head and that we owe Thee ten thousand talents which we can not begin to pay. Wherefore we are not worthy to be called Thy children, nor to lift up our eyes heavenward to pour out our petitions before Thee. Nevertheless, O Lord God and merciful Father, knowing that Thou dost not desire the death of the sinner but that Thou desirest that he turn and live and that Thy mercy which Thou showest unto all those who turn unto Thee is infinite, we call upon Thee from the depths of our heart trusting in our Mediator Jesus Christ who is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. We pray that Thou, forgiving all our sins for the sake of Christ, will

have compassion upon us in our infirmities. Cleanse us in the pure fountain of His blood, so that we may become clean and as white as snow. Cover our nakedness with His innocence and righteousness for the glory of Thy name. Cleanse our understanding of all blindness and our hearts of all wilfulness and obduracy. Open now the mouth of Thy servant and fill it with Thy wisdom and knowledge in order that he may confidently proclaim Thy word in all its purity. Prepare our hearts to receive, understand, and preserve it. Inscribe Thy law as Thou hast promised upon the tables of our hearts and give us the desire and the strength to walk therein, unto the praise and honor of Thy name and unto the edification of Thy Church.

All this, O gracious Father, we crave and pray in the name of Jesus Christ who taught us to pray, saying: Our Father, *etc.* Amen.

*A Prayer for All the Needs of Christendom, to be Used
Upon the Sabbath after the First Sermon*

Almighty and merciful God, we realize and confess before Thee that if Thou shouldst regard our merits and deserts we would indeed be unworthy to lift up our eyes towards heaven and to present our prayers before Thee. For our consciences accuse us and our sins testify against us. We also know that Thou art a righteous Judge punishing the sins of those who transgress Thy commandments. But, O Lord, Thou has commanded us to call upon Thee in all our needs and hast of Thy inexpressible mercy promised to hearken unto our petitions, not because of our merits for we have none, but because of the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ whom Thou hast appointed to be our Mediator and Advocate. Therefore we spurn all other help and take our refuge only in Thy mercy.

We acknowledge, O Lord, that Thou hast showered upon us so many blessings that we are not able to comprehend them, much less to enumerate them. Especially would we acknowledge that Thou hast led us to the light of Thy Truth and to the knowledge of Thy Holy Gospel.

On the contrary we, being ungrateful, have forgotten Thy benefits. We have departed from Thee and have followed our own lusts not honoring Thee as we should. Thus we have grievously sinned. And if Thou shouldst bring us into judgment, we could expect nothing but eternal death and condemnation. But, O Lord, look down upon the face of Thine Anointed and not upon our sins in order that Thy wrath through His intercession may be removed. Strengthen within us the grace of Thy Spirit in order that He may each day increasingly mortify our flesh with all its evil lusts and renew us unto a better life.

And since it pleases Thee that we pray for all mankind, we beseech Thee that Thou wilt cause Thy benediction to rest upon the doctrine of Thy Holy Gospel, that it may everywhere be proclaimed and received, that all the world may be filled with the saving knowledge of Thee, that the ignorant may be converted, that the weak may be strengthened, and that everyone both in word and deed may magnify and sanctify Thy holy name. To this end, send forth faithful servants into Thy harvest and equip them in such a way that they may faithfully perform their duties. But destroy, we pray Thee, all false teachers, ravenous wolves and hirelings, who seek their own honor and profit, but not the honor of Thy holy name nor the welfare and salvation of poor souls.

Wilt Thou also graciously preserve and govern Thy Church (which Thou hast called into being everywhere) in the unity of true faith and in godliness of life, in order that Thy Kingdom may increase daily and that of Satan be destroyed, until Thy Kingdom be perfected and Thou shalt be all in all.

We also pray Thee for all civil magistrates. And particularly would we remember in our prayers those whom Thou hast set in authority over us. Grant that they may function in such a way that the King of kings may reign over them and us, and that the kingdom of Satan, which is a kingdom of shame and iniquity, may through them as Thy servants be harassed more and more and destroyed, and that we may under them live a peaceful life in all godliness and honor.

Furthermore, we pray for all our brethren who are suffering afflictions because of civil or ecclesiastical persecution. Wilt Thou comfort them with Thy Holy Spirit and grant them deliverance. Permit not the memory of Thy name to be removed from the face of the earth, in order that the enemies of Thy truth may not have occasion to boast unto Thy dishonor and blasphemy. But if it be Thy will that persecuted Christians must by their death witness to the truth and praise of Thy name, grant them comfort in their sufferings so that they may receive it as from Thy hand and following Thy will may remain firm in life and death unto Thy honor, unto the edification of the Church and unto their salvation.

We remember before Thee also all those whom Thou art chastening through poverty, imprisonment, physical illness, or spiritual distress. Comfort them all, O Lord, according to their several needs. Grant that their chastening may bring them to the acknowledgement of their sins and to the amendment of their lives. Give them steadfast patience, alleviate their sufferings, and finally deliver them, in order that they may rejoice because of Thy goodness and may eternally praise Thy name. Comfort also all widows and orphans, even as Thou art their Father. Wilt Thou grant a deliverance to all pregnant women and to those in confinement. Strengthen the mothers in childbed who are ill and weak. Wilt Thou strengthen in all those who are mentally unbalanced the good gift of understanding so that they may use it unto the magnification of Thy name and the edification of their neighbors.

Finally, O Lord, wilt Thou take us and our dear ones and all that concern us in Thy care and keeping, particularly those who are journeying afar over land and sea along dangerous trails for the promotion of Thy Kingdom, for the benefit of our country, or for the promotion of honorable personal interests. Bless also the products of the land. Grant favorable weather and fruitful increase. Give that we in our several callings may live according to Thy will. May we so use our talents which we have received from Thee that they may not hinder but rather further our eternal life. Strengthen us in all tempta-

tion so that we striving through faith may be victorious and may then hereafter with Christ possess eternal life.

We pray Thee for all these things, even as our faithful Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, saying: Our Father, *etc.*

Strengthen us in the true Christian faith so that we may increase daily therein. Of this faith we make confession with mouth and heart, saying: I believe in God, *etc.* Amen.

(Afterwards the congregation is dismissed with the usual blessing.)

Lift up your hearts unto God and receive the blessing of the Lord:

The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face to shine upon thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.

Prayer before the Explanation of the Catechism

O Heavenly Father, Thy Word is perfect, restoring the soul, a sure testimony, making wise the simple, and enlightening the eyes of the blind, and a power of God unto salvation for everyone that believes. We, however, are by nature blind and incapable of doing anything good, and Thou wilt succor only those who have a broken and contrite heart and who revere Thy Word; therefore, we beseech Thee that Thou wilt illumine our darkened minds with Thy Holy Spirit and give us a humble heart, free from all haughtiness and carnal wisdom, in order that we, hearing Thy Word, may rightly understand it and may regulate our lives accordingly. Wilt Thou also graciously convert those who are straying from the truth, so that we all in unity may serve Thee in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives. These things we crave of Thee only for the sake of Christ who promised to hear us and also taught us to pray in His Name, saying: Our Father, *etc.*

Prayer after the Explanation of the Catechism

O gracious and merciful God and Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast established Thy covenant with believers and their seed. This Thou hast not only sealed

by Holy Baptism, but daily showest when Thou dost perfect Thy praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, thus putting to shame the wise and prudent of this world. We beseech Thee that Thou wilt increase Thy grace in them, in order that they may unceasingly grow in Christ, Thy Son, until they have reached complete maturity in all wisdom and righteousness. Give us grace to instruct them in Thy knowledge and fear, according to Thy commandment, that by their godliness the Kingdom of Satan may be destroyed and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in this and other congregations may be strengthened unto the glory of Thy holy Name and unto their eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, Thy Son and our Lord, who taught us to pray saying: Our Father, *etc.* Amen.

A Public Confession of Sins and Prayer before the Sermon

Heavenly Father, eternal and merciful God, we acknowledge and confess before Thy divine majesty that we are poor miserable sinners. We were conceived and born in utter wickedness and corruption and are prone to all manner of evil and incapable by nature of doing any good. By our sinful life we transgress Thy holy commandments without ceasing and thereby incur Thy wrath and bring down upon ourselves eternal damnation according to Thy righteous judgment.

However, Lord, we are penitent and do grieve because of our sins whereby we provoked Thy wrath. We bring accusation against ourselves and lay transgression to our own charge. Yet we make bold to desire that Thou mayest in mercy regard our miseries. Have compassion on us, most merciful God and Father, and be pleased to forgive all our sins for the sake of the passion of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ.

Grant us also the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, in order that He may teach us to confess our sins in sincerity of heart, to abhor ourselves indeed, and may lead us to the mortification of sin in our lives. For we earnestly desire to return to a life that is truly holy and righteous and that is acceptable to Thee through Jesus Christ.

May it also please Thee to lead us into the comprehension of Thy holy Word according to Thy divine will, in order that we may be taught to put our trust wholly in Thee and not to repose confidence in any creature. May our old nature with all its lusts be increasingly mortified day by day, and may we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice to Thee, to the honor of Thy holy name and the edification of our neighbor.

We also beseech Thee, gracious God, to turn unto Thyself in true penitence all that depart from Thy truth, for we eagerly desire that we may all of one accord serve Thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.

This we ask of Thee through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught and commanded us to pray, saying:

Our Father, *etc.* Amen.

A Brief Formulary for Prayer after the Sermon

O Lord, Almighty God, we pray that Thy holy Name may not be blasphemed on account of our sins. For we have sinned against Thee in many ways. We do not obey Thy holy Word as it behooves us. Through ignorance, unthankfulness, and discontent, we daily provoke Thee to wrath. We confess, Lord, that Thou art just in inflicting punishment upon us.

But we beseech Thee, O Lord, remember Thy great mercy and have compassion upon us. Teach us that we may truly know our sins and sincerely mourn them and may amend our life. Strengthen the ministers of Thy Church, in order that they may faithfully and steadfastly preach Thy holy Word. Likewise, Lord, give strength to our magistracy that they may wield the sword of civil authority in justice and equity.

We pray Thee particularly for N. N.

Keep us, we beseech Thee, from all hypocrisy and unfaithfulness, and frustrate all evil and subtle designs against Thy Word and Thy Church. O Lord, do not withhold from us Thy Word and Thy Spirit. But, grant us increase in faith, and patience and steadfastness, in all suffering and adversity. Succor Thy Church, and deliver Thy people from the molestation, derision, and tyranny

which it suffers at the hands of wicked men. Impart Thy strength to all hearts that are sorely burdened with grief. And visit upon us Thy peace through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who gave us this sure promise: Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He will give it you, and would have us pray, saying:

Our Father, who art in Heaven, *etc.* Amen.

Prayer Before Meals

Ps. 145:15, 16—The eyes of all wait for thee; And thou givest them their food in due season. Thou openest thy hand, And satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

Lord God, Almighty, Thou who hast made the worlds and dost uphold all things by the Word of Thy power, Thou who didst sustain the children of Israel in the wilderness, bless us, Thy humble servants, and sanctify unto us these gifts which we have received from Thy bountiful goodness, in order that we may use them temperately and holily according to Thy will and thereby acknowledge that Thou art our Father and the source of all good things. Grant also that we may at all times and above all things yearn for the spiritual bread of Thy Word whereby our souls are nourished unto eternal life which Thou hast prepared for us through the precious blood of Thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Our Father, *etc.*

Even so we are admonished by our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke 21:34, 35—“But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it day upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth.”

Thanksgiving After Meals

Thus speaketh the Lord in the fifth book of Moses: Deut. 8:10, 11—“And thou shalt eat and be full, and thou shalt bless Jehovah thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware lest thou forget Jehovah, thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command thee this day.”

Lord God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for all Thy benefits which we have so unceasingly received from Thy bountiful hand. We thank Thee that it pleases Thee to sustain us in this temporal life and to supply all our needs. We are especially grateful that Thou hast regenerated us unto the hope of a better life which Thou hast revealed unto us in Thy holy gospel. We pray Thee, merciful God and Father, that our hearts may not become rooted in these earthly and perishable things, but that we may always look heavenward, expecting our Savior Jesus Christ until He shall appear upon the clouds unto our deliverance. Our Father, *etc.* Amen.

Prayer for the Sick and the Spiritually Distressed

O almighty, eternal and righteous God and merciful Father, Thou who art Lord of life and death, without whose will nothing transpires in heaven or upon earth, though we are not worthy to call upon Thy name nor to hope that Thou wilt hearken unto us when we consider how we have hitherto spent our time, yet we pray Thee that Thou wilt according to Thy mercy look down upon us in Jesus Christ who has taken upon Himself all our infirmities. We acknowledge that we have within ourselves nothing but proneness toward evil and inability to do any good, wherefore we have merited this affliction, yea, have deserved far more. But, Lord, Thou knowest that we are Thy people and that Thou art our God. Thy mercy, which Thou hast never withheld from those who turn unto Thee, is our only refuge. Therefore reckon not unto us our sins, we pray Thee, but impute unto us the wisdom, righteousness, and holiness of Jesus Christ in order that we may stand before Thee in Him. For His sake deliver us from this suffering, so that the Wicked One may not think that Thou hast forsaken us. And if it please Thee to try us in this way for a longer time, then give us patience and strength to bear it all according to Thy will in order that it rebound according to Thy wisdom unto our edification. Rather chastize us here than make us hereafter to perish with the world. Grant that we may die unto this world and all earthly things, so that we may be daily renewed after the image of Jesus Christ.

Suffer us not to be separated by any means from thy love and draw us daily closer and closer unto Thee in order that we may enter upon the end of our calling with joy, which is to die with Christ, to rise again, and to live eternally. We also believe that Thou wilt hear us through Jesus Christ who hath taught us to pray, Our Father, *etc.* Strengthen us also in the true faith which we confess with heart and mouth, saying, I believe in God, *etc.* Amen.

Or as Follows:

Eternal and merciful God and Father, the eternal Salvation of the living and the eternal Life of the dying, since Thou only hast life and death in Thine hands and Thou dost continually care for us in such a way that neither health nor sickness, neither good nor evil can befall us, yea, that not a hair shall fall from our heads, without Thy will, and since Thou dost turn all things for the good of believers, we beseech Thee that Thou wilt grant us the grace of Thy Holy Spirit in order that He may teach us to know truly our miseries and to bear patiently Thy chastisements which we have merited ten thousand times more severe. We know that they are not tokens of Thy wrath, but of Thy fatherly love toward us, so that we may not be condemned with the world. Increase, O Lord, our faith, by Thy Holy Spirit so that we may become more and more united as members with Christ our spiritual Head, to whom Thou wilt conform us in suffering and in glory. Lighten our cross so that we may in our weakness be able to bear it. We submit ourselves without reserve to Thy holy will, regardless of whether thou wouldst continue our souls for a longer time in these tabernacles or wouldst take them unto Thyself unto eternal life, because we belong to Christ and therefore shall not perish. We are desirous of leaving this weak body in the hope of the blessed resurrection when it shall be restored unto us in much more glorious form. Grant that we may experience the blessed comfort of the remission of sins and of justification of Christ so that we may with that shield overcome all the annoyances of Satan. May His innocent blood cleanse us of all the stain and uncleanness of sin and may His righteousness cover our unright-

eousness in Thy final judgment. Arm us with faith and hope, in order that we may not be put to shame by any fear of death. And when our physical eyes become dim, may the eyes of our spirit be fastened on Thee. And when thou shalt have deprived us of the use of our tongue, may our hearts never cease to call upon Thee. O Lord, we commend our souls into Thy hands; do not forsake us in the hour of death. This we pray only for the sake of Christ, who taught us to pray, saying: Our Father, *etc.* I believe in God, *etc.* Amen.

Morning Prayer

O Merciful Father, we thank Thee that Thou didst keep watch over us this past night in Thy great faithfulness. And we pray that Thou mayest strengthen and henceforth guide us through Thy Holy Spirit, in order that we may put this day as well as all the days of our life to the service of holiness and righteousness. Grant, we pray Thee, that whatever we undertake, we may always have an eye single to Thy glory, and may ever labor in the consciousness of our dependence upon Thy generosity for the success of our work. To this end we beseech Thee to forgive all our sins according to Thy promise, for the sake of the passion and the shedding of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we are truly sorry for our transgressions. Illumine our hearts, we pray Thee, in order that we may lay aside all works of darkness and may as children of light lead new lives in all godliness. May it please Thee to bless us also as we engage in the publication of Thy divine Word. Frustrate all the works of the Devil. Endue all the ministers of the Church who are faithful to Thee with strength, and make the magistrates of Thy people strong. Instil comfort in the hearts of all that are distressed, through Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, for He has assured us that Thou wilt surely grant us all that we ask of Thee in His Name, and has enjoined upon us to pray after this fashion:

Our Father, who art in Heaven. Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our

debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

May grace also be given us, we pray thee, to order our lives according to Thy will which Thou didst reveal in Thy Law as contained in the Ten Commandments: I am the Lord thy God, *etc.* (As may be copied from Ex. 20:2-17 or Heid. Cat., Lord's Day 34.)

Evening Prayer

O merciful God, light eternal shining in the darkness! Thou dispellest the night of our sins and the blindness of our hearts. Since Thou didst ordain that man should rest in the night and labor during the day, we pray Thee that our bodies may rest in peace and quiet in order that they may be enabled to sustain the labors to which we will again be called. Control our sleep and rule our hearts while we slumber, in order that we may not be defiled in either body or soul and may glorify Thee even in our nightly rest. Enlighten once more, we beseech Thee, the eyes of our mind, lest we enter upon the sleep of death. Grant that we may ever cherish the expectation of our redemption from the misery of the life that now is. Defend us against all assaults of the Devil and take us in Thy holy protection. We confess that we have not spent this day without grievously sinning against Thee. We pray Thee to cover our sins in Thy mercy, even as Thou dost shroud all the things of earth in the darkness of the night, lest we be cast away from Thy face. Be pleased to bestow comfort and rest upon all that are sick, bowed down with grief, or afflicted with distress of soul, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who would have us pray, saying: Our Father, Who art in Heaven, *etc.* (May be copied from accompanying translation of Morning Prayer.) Amen.

Opening Prayer for Ecclesiastical Assemblies

(Cf. Church Order, Art. 32)

Heavenly Father, eternal and merciful God, it has pleased Thee according to Thy infinite wisdom and lovingkindness to gather a Church unto Thyself out of the

peoples of all the earth, and to govern Thy Church through the service of men. Thou hast graciously called us to this office of government and has enjoined us to watch over ourselves and to bestow due care upon the flock which Christ purchased with His precious blood.

We are now assembled in this place in Thy holy Name, in order to deal after the fashion of the apostolic churches with such matters as shall come before us and concern the welfare and edification of Thy churches, agreeably to our office. We confess that we are unworthy and unable of ourselves as we are by nature to accomplish any good thing. We beseech Thee, therefore, faithful God and Father, that in accordance with Thy promise, Thou wilt abide in the midst of the present assembly through Thy Holy Spirit, and that He may lead us into all the truth.

Remove all misunderstanding and guard us against the influence of our sinful hearts. Grant that Thy Word may be our only rule and standard, in order that our deliberations may redound to the glory of Thy Name, the edification of Thy churches, and the peace of our own consciences.

This we ask in the Name of Christ Jesus, Thy Son, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit, the only and true God, is deserving of eternal praise and glory. Amen.

Prayer at the Close of Ecclesiastical Assemblies
(Cf. Art. 32, Church Order)

Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank Thee from our hearts, that it pleases Thee to gather a Church in our land and to employ our services to that end. Thou dost graciously so order all things that we can preach the Gospel without let or hindrance and may engage in godly exercises. Thou hast also been present with Thy Holy Spirit in our assembly, guiding our deliberations according to Thy will, and binding our hearts together in mutual peace and unity.

Wilt Thou, O faithful God and Father, graciously bless the efforts that we purpose to put forth and wilt Thou finish in power the work which Thou hast begun. Continue to gather unto Thyself a true Church, and cause it

to preserve the purity of doctrine; guide it in the proper use of the holy sacraments; and inspire it with disciplinary zeal.

But bring to nought all wicked and subtle counsels that are devised against Thy Word and Church. Give strength to all whom Thou hast placed in authority over Thy Church, to the end that they may preach Thy Word in faithfulness and steadfastness. Strengthen the civil magistrates of Thy people, in order that they may wield the sword of worldly power both justly and modestly. In particular do we pray for the civil rulers, both higher and lower officers of government, whom Thou has been pleased to appoint over us. We commend unto Thee especially the esteemed council of this city. Grant that their rule may be entirely directed toward the supremacy of the King of kings over rulers and ruled alike. May through their labors the shameful and wicked dominion of Satan be increasingly disturbed and broken down. May it be given unto us to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Hear us, O God and Father, through Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit, the only and true God, is worthy of eternal praise and glory. Amen.

Opening Prayer for the Meetings of the Deacons

(Cf. Church Order, Art. 40)

Merciful God and Father, Thou hast not only declared that we shall always have the poor with us, but hast also commended us to succor them in their need. Thou hast ordained the service of the deacons for Thy Church in order that its needy members may receive the aid they need. Since we whom Thou hast called to the deaconal office in this church are now met in Thy name to discuss matters pertaining to our office, we humbly beseech Thee that Thou mayest, for the sake of Jesus Christ, dwell among us with the Spirit of discrimination. May Thy Spirit help us to distinguish between those really poor and those who feign destitution, and to distribute the alms that have been collected as each one's need may render necessary in the spirit of joy and fidelity. May we

neither fail to comfort the needy members of Thy dear Son, nor dispense gifts to those who are not in want.

Kindle fervent love unto the poor in men's hearts, in order that they may contribute generously of their temporal possessions over which Thou didst appoint them stewards, and we may have command of sufficient means to bring relief to those that are indigent and may faithfully perform our task with true liberality of heart and without difficulty.

Bestow upon us also the grace we need not only to relieve want by means of external gifts, but also to instill the comfort of Thy Holy Word in hearts afflicted with misery. Truly, man liveth not by bread alone but by every Word that proceedeth out of Thy mouth. We pray, therefore, that Thou wilt bless our ministrations and wilt multiply the bread of the poor, to the end that both they and we may have reasons to praise and thank Thee; meanwhile awaiting the blessed appearance of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor that He might enrich us with eternal treasures. Amen.

P. S. This prayer was originally not included in the official Liturgy of the Dutch Churches (Geref. Kerken van Ned.) though it was composed soon after the other Prayers were formulated and added to these by publishers. Dr. Rutgers included it in his edition of the Liturgy of his church, 1898, but put it in brackets to indicate its non-official character. The committee ad hoc reporting to the Dutch Synod of 1930 recommended its official adoption, and Synod accordingly adopted it. Our church is still in the position of the Dutch churches that obtained before 1930. It is suggested that the Synod of 1932 include this prayer in the above repertoire of prayers and approve the translation of this prayer as well as that of the others.

Respectfully submitted by
YOUR COMMITTEE,

S. VOLBEDA,
H. SCHULTZE.
J. G. VANDEN BOSCH,
E. J. TANIS,

REPORT XI.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE IN RE INEXPENSIVE PSALTER AND HYMN-BOOKS

ESTEEMED FATHERS AND BRETHREN :

YOUR Committee, which was appointed by the Synod of 1930, to whom was referred the overture of Classis Pella, which reads as follows: “De Synode drage er zorg voor dat er goedkoope uitgaven van onze “Psalter” gepubliceerd worden, alsook van eenig ander zangboek dat de Synode mocht approuberen, dat gebruikt zou kunnen worden buiten den openbaren eeredienst,” reports as follows:

A. The *Psalter*, as to its present form and contents, can not be published and sold cheaper.

Reasons:

1. Our denomination, being a comparatively small one, does not warrant the publication of a large edition of such a book.
 - a. In 1926 an edition of 25,000 copies of the new *Psalter* was published. Of this edition there still is an unsold balance of 5,000 copies;
 - b. The Committee having access to, and having looked into the actual cost of the publication of the *Psalter*, and to the method of sale and distribution, is of the opinion that no publisher could offer such a publication at a lower price than what the book is sold for at the present time.

B. In regard to a *Hymnal*, your Committee reports as follows:

Inasmuch as the Synod has not officially approved any particular *Hymnal*, your Committee is unable to advise in this matter.

However, should Synod decide to publish a book of the scope as *The Christian Hymnal*, your Committee is of the opinion that such a Hymnal could not be sold for less than 85 cents per copy, after having looked into the cost of that particular Hymnal.

Respectfully submitted,

Your Committee,

JELLE HEKMAN

WILLIAM B. EERDMANS

MARTIN HOFFIUS

REPORT XII

SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE IN RE HYMNS AND PSALTER REVISION

*To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church
to be held at Grand Rapids, Mich., June, 1932.*

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

AS a Committee reappointed by the previous Synod to perform the important task of compiling a collection of suitable Hymns to be used in our public worship and to draw up a plan for the revision of our Psalter, we, the undersigned, consider it an honor and a privilege to present to your Honorable Body the second part of our report. In the first part, which had to appear three months earlier, we gave account of our labors in regard to a collection of Hymns; in this part we intend to do the same in regard to the work of Psalter revision.

In respect to this latter part of our commission we were instructed by the Synod of 1930:

“to make a thorough study of our English Psalter with a view to advising the following Synod (1932) as to which of the 413 selections can best be 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” (Acta 1930, Art. 61, B, p. 59 f.).

In addition to this, Part A of the overture of Classis Orange City was referred by Synod to your Committee. It reads:

“Synod provide ways and means to effect a revision of our English Psalter, especially with a view to:

“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 tune, 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” (Acta 1930, pp. 60 and 58).

In order to carry out these instructions, the first thing to be done was to work our way through the Psalter. Each one of its 413 numbers had to be considered, and judgment had to be passed whether the stanzas did or did not deserve to be retained, and whether the tune came up to the required standard of beauty and suitability. The result of this investigation was that in the estimation of your Committee, 117 selections might be eliminated, in 17 cases two or even three numbers could properly be combined, and of 89 numbers the music could be improved by interchanging tunes or by substituting others. For substitutions the Committee availed itself of tunes that had been released by elimination of selections, and of tunes taken from other Hymnals,—twenty-four from the New Christian Hymnal and seven from other collections.

The Psalter selections which the Committee would advise to eliminate are those of the following numbers:

5	39	68	109	153	196	234	284	354	388
6	40	70	115	160	197	238	301	355	390
9	41	72	116	162	208	242	312	358	395
11	44	74	118	166	209	257	313	362	398
12	46	78	119	167	219	258	314	364	401
17	54	79	127	169	221	263	315	368	406
19	59	90	130	172	225	264	319	369	410
25	60	100	132	177	226	267	320	370	411
26	61	101	133	178	229	269	344	372	412
29	62	105	139	189	231	270	346	374	
32	63	106	141	193	232	277	350	377	
33	66	108	143	195	233	279	352	380	

The cases in which we considered combination practicable are:

Nos. 83 and 84	Nos. 190 and 191
Nos. 85 and 86	Nos. 235 and 236
Nos. 95 and 96	Nos. 273, 273, and 274
Nos. 98 and 99	Nos. 285 and 286:1-2
Nos. 102 and 103	Nos. 286:3-6 and 287
Nos. 121 and 122	Nos. 294 and 295
Nos. 154 and 155	Nos. 323 and 324
Nos. 173 and 174	Nos. 394 and 396
Nos. 180 and 181	

In this way the numbers of the Psalter now in use would be reduced by 134, so that of the total of 413 only 279 would remain.

For the changes which your Committee proposes in regard to *the tunes* it will be sufficient to refer to the list of all the elements which the Committee would have included in the revised Psalter. In this list, which is to follow presently, these changes are indicated by a reference to the place where the substituted tune is to be found.

Meanwhile another matter was to be taken care of. One of the duties assigned to us was to have some of the eliminated numbers replaced by "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."

For procuring these metrical versions we needed the help of brethren endowed with poetical gifts. These brethren had to be chosen and engaged; between twenty-five and fifty of the best tunes of our Dutch Psalter had to be selected, and then a portion of the task of versification assigned to each one of them. All of this had to be done without delay, for it was a foregone conclusion that the work would prove to be very difficult and to require much time.

The melodies selected from the Dutch Psalter were the following:

Ps. 3	Ps. 47	Ps. 79	Ps. 97	Ps. 105	Ps. 122
Ps. 19	Ps. 65	Ps. 81	Ps. 98	Ps. 116	Ps. 130
Ps. 25	Ps. 68	Ps. 84	Ps. 99	Ps. 118	Ps. 133
Ps. 42	Ps. 73	Ps. 87	Ps. 101	Ps. 119	Ps. 138
Ps. 43	Ps. 77	Ps. 89	Ps. 103	Ps. 121	Ps. 150

The brethren chosen and requested to prepare the desired metrical versions were: Rev. S. G. Brondsema, Rev. B. Essenburg, Rev. Wm. Kuipers, and Mr. D. Westra, principal of the Detroit Christian School. To our gratification they assented to try their hand at this kind of poetizing and to do the best they could. A requisite was that the versifications should do justice to the text of Scripture and at the same time interpret so far as possible the well-known and beloved Dutch verses—a requirement to be sure with which it was difficult to comply.

In the opinion of the Committee these brethren have very acceptably acquitted themselves of this onerous task. Considering, however, that the responsibility for what was to be presented to Synod rested with the Committee to which the work was given in charge, we felt ourselves under obligation carefully to review the proofs that were received. Where it seemed advisable, changes were made, in some cases with the help of the authors and in others without them, but always with their knowledge and usually with their acquiescence.

Besides the thirty melodies named above, the Committee has borrowed from the Dutch Psalter also those of Ps. 100 and 134. For these two melodies, however, no new versions were needed, since for the tune of Ps. 100 the version of No. 268 of our English Psalter, and for the tune of Ps. 134 the version of No. 448 of the New Christian Hymnal can be used. And as still other additions to the chorales were chosen the words and tunes of Nos. 25, 39, 229, and 435 of the New Christian Hymnal and of No. 4 of the Bible Songs (old edition). Together the total number of selections of the revised Psalter as proposed by your Committee amounts to 315.

Concerning the publication of the revised Psalter together with the adopted Hymns, the Committee would direct the attention of Synod to the advisability, if not the necessity, of having this done in such a manner that the right of the Church to have full command over the contents is maintained.

Facts to be considered are:

That the preparation of a new Psalter has been accomplished by the Church itself through the Synod and as far

as necessary through a Synodical Committee. In so far the result of that work is therefore the property of the Church, and Synod must decide how that property is to be used.

That the new Psalter is to be a publication for the Church's own use in public worship. Obviously this is the Church's own business, and the Church not only has the right to manage its own affairs, but is even in duty bound to maintain that right, in order not to be brought under the power of others.

That in regard to the addition of Doctrinal Standards and Liturgical Forms no one but the Church is entitled to decide what shall and what shall not be included, and that in view of corruptions that have in the past crept into the text of these Forms, it will even be necessary for the Church to take special precautions in order to safeguard the purity of the text.

These things make it imperative in our opinion that Synod, after having completed the editing activities it has undertaken, proceed to make provision for the publication of the new Psalter and its concomitants under its own direction and supervision through a well-instructed Synodical Committee, instead of leaving the publication entirely to the initiative of other parties. Since hitherto the latter course was followed, an explicit resolution of Synod to that effect will be all the more necessary.

Your present Committee has made some investigation in regard to the matter of publication and if it seems advisable, will present the information received.

The following list presents the revised Psalter as planned by the Committee. Of the versifications retained from the Psalter the present Psalter number is given, not the text in full, which, if the number is known, can easily be found in the Psalter now in use. New versions, however, and those taken from other sources are given in full in the form of notes at the end, and are indicated in the list by figures referring to these notes.

This list also shows the method of numbering proposed by the Committee. It attempts to meet the suggestion of Classis Orange City by naming the Psalm first and then the number. To make this a custom in announcing what

shall be sung seems to be the only way to attain what this Classis had in view. With that custom it would make no difference whether all the selections are numbered consecutively or the parts of each Psalm separately, whether, for instance, the fourth selection of Psalm 25 is announced as Psalm 25, part 4, or as Psalm 25, number 40. In view of this the Committee considered consecutive numbering of the selections preferable, because it lessens the danger of the announcements being misunderstood, and because it is in general use in our land for Psalters similarly arranged.

A few remarks in explanation of the list may not be out of place.

It has three columns.

The first column presents the arrangement of the revised Psalter as proposed by the Committee, viz., the Psalms and the selections belonging to each Psalm, in consecutive order.

The second column shows where *the words* of the selections can be found. It contains numbers and references. The numbers are the old numbers of the present Psalter. The references refer to the Notes following the list and containing the text in full of new selections.

In the third column *the tunes* are indicated in so far as changes were made by substituting other tunes or by inserting new ones. Where no change was made, the number of the second column shows the tune as well as the words, and the space in the third column is left blank. Where a change was made, however, the third column gives the source from which the tune was taken.

The list now follows.

New Selection	Where Found	Tune	New Selection	Where Found	Tune
PSALM I			PSALM IV		
1	1		6	Note 2	Bible Songs 4
2	2		7	7	
PSALM II			8	8	a)
3	4		PSALM V		
4	3		9	Note 3	New Chr. Hymnal 229
PSALM III			10	12	
5	Note 1	Ps. 3, Dutch Psalter	PSALM VI		
			11	Note 4	New Chr. Hymnal 435

New Selection	Where Found	Tune	New Selection	Where Found	Tune
PSALM VII	12 13		PSALM XXIII	42 53	
PSALM VIII	13 14		43 55		
	14 15	U. P. Psalter Hymnal No. 10	44 56		Psalter No. 362—c)
PSALM IX	15 18:1, 4, 5, 6	New Chr. Hymnal 142	PSALM XXIV	45 57	
PSALM X	16 18	Psalter No. 337	46 58		
PSALM XI	17 20		PSALM XXV	47 Note 7	Ps. 25, Dutch Psalter
PSALM XII	18 21	Psalter No. 370—b)	48 64		
PSALM XIII	19 22		49 65		
PSALM XIV	20 23	New Chr. Hymnal 419	50 67		
PSALM XV	21 24		PSALM XXVI	51 69	
PSALM XVI	22 27		PSALM XXVII	52 71	
	23 28		53 73		d)
	24 30		PSALM XXVIII	54 75	New Chr. Hymnal 335
PSALM XVII	25 31		PSALM XXIX	55 76	
PSALM XVIII	26 34		PSALM XXX	56 77	
	27 35	Psalter No. 230	PSALM XXXI	57 80	Psalter No. 74
	28 36		58 81		
PSALM XIX	29 Note 5	Ps. 19, Dutch Psalter	59 82		
	30 37 & 38:1		PSALM XXXII	60 83 & 84	Psalter No. 83
	31 38		PSALM XXXIII	61 85 & 86	Psalter No. 86
	32 Note 6	New Chr. Hymnal 39	62 87		
	33 42		PSALM XXXIV	63 88	
PSALM XX	34 43	New Chr. Hymnal 55	64 89		Psalter No. 59—c)
PSALM XXI	35 45		65 91		Psalter No. 304
PSALM XXII	36 47		PSALM XXXV	66 92	New Chr. Hymnal 301
	37 48		PSALM XXXVI	67 93	Psalter No. 313
	38 49		68 94		
	39 50		PSALM XXXVII	69 95 & 96	Psalter No. 95
	40 51		70 97		Psalter No. 98
	41 52		71 98 & 99		Psalter No. 372

New Selection	Where Found	Tune	New Selection	Where Found	Tune
PSALM XXXVIII			PSALM LII		
72	102 & 103	Psalter No. 102	102	145	New Chr. Hymnal 257
73	104		PSALM LIII		
PSALM XXXIX			103	148	
74	107	Psalter No. 106	PSALM LIV		
PSALM XL			104	147	Psalter No. 139
75	111		PSALM LV		
76	112		105	148	Psalter No. 143
77	110		106	149	
PSALM XLI			107	150	
78	113	New Chr. Hymnal 154	PSALM LVI		
PSALM XLII			108	151:1-4	Psalter No. 369
79	Note 8	Ps. 42, Dutch Psalter	109	152	
80	114		PSALM LVII		
81	117		110	154 & 155	New Chr. Hymnal 301
PSALM XLIII			PSALM LVIII		
82	Note 9	Ps. 43, Dutch Psalter	111	156	Second Tune of Ps. No. 247
83	120		PSALM LIX		
84	Note 10	New Chr. Hymnal 25	112	157	Psalter No. 116
PSALM XLIV			PSALM LX		
85	121 & 122	Psalter No. 121	113	158	Psalter No. 14
86	123		PSALM LXI		
PSALM XLV			114	159	
87	124 f)	Psalter No. 29	PSALM LXII		
88	125	Magnus in lower key	115	161 h)	Psalter No. 162
PSALM XLVI			PSALM LXIII		
89	126		116	163	
90	128		117	164	
PSALM XLVII			PSALM LXIV		
91	Note 11	Ps. 47, Dutch Psalter	118	165	
92	129		PSALM LXV		
PSALM XLVIII			119	Note 12	Ps. 65, Dutch Psalter
93	131	Psalter No. 132	120	168	
94	134		121	170	
PSALM XLIX			122	171	
95	135		PSALM LXVI		
96	136		123	173 & 174	Psalter No. 174
PSALM L			124	175	
97	137		PSALM LXVII		
98	138		125	176	
PSALM LI					
99	140				
100	142 g)				
101	144				

New Selection	Where Found	Tune
PSALM LXXVIII		
126	Note 13	Ps. 68, Dutch Psalter
127	179	
128	180 & 181	New Chr. Hymnal 41
129	182	New Chr. Hymnal 419
130	183	
PSALM LXXIX		
131	184	Psalter No. 161
132	185	
133	186	
PSALM LXX		
134	187	
135	188	
PSALM LXXI		
136	190 & 191:1-6	New Chr. Hym. 154
137	192 i)	
PSALM LXXII		
138	198:1-5	
139	194	
140	199	
141	200 j)	
PSALM LXXIII		
142	Note 14	Ps. 73, Dutch Psalter
143	201 k)	
144	202	
145	203	
146	204	
PSALM LXXIV		
147	205	Psalter No. 190
PSALM LXXV		
148	206	Psalter No. 344
PSALM LXXVI		
149	207	New Chr. Hymnal 296
PSALM LXXVII		
150	Note 15	Ps. 77, Dutch Psalter
151	210	
152	211	New Chr. Hymnal 437
153	212	
PSALM LXXVIII		
154	213	
155	214	Oxford Amer. Hym. 123
156	215	
PSALM LXXIX		
157	Note 16	Ps. 79, Dutch Psalter
158	216	New Chr. Hymnal 4
159	217	
PSALM LXXX		
160	218	
161	220	Psalter No. 221

New Selection	Where Found	Tune
PSALM LXXXI		
162	Note 17	Ps. 81, Dutch Psalter
163	222	
PSALM LXXXII		
164	223	New Chr. Hymnal 221
PSALM LXXXIII		
165	224	New Chr. Hymnal 42
PSALM LXXXIV		
166	Note 18	Ps. 84, Dutch Psalter
167	227	
168	228	
PSALM LXXXV		
169	230	
PSALM LXXXVI		
170	235 & 236	Psalter No. 235
PSALM LXXXVII		
171	Note 19	Ps. 87, Dutch Psalter
172	237	
173	239	
PSALM LXXXVIII		
174	240	
PSALM LXXXIX		
175	Note 20	Ps. 89, Dutch Psalter
176	241 l)	
177	243 m)	New Chr. Hymnal 12
PSALM XC		
178	244	
179	245	
180	246	
181	247	
PSALM XCI		
182	248	
183	249	Psalter No. 4
PSALM XCII		
184	250	
185	251	
PSALM XCIII		
186	252	
PSALM XCIV		
187	253	
PSALM XCV		
188	254	Psalter No. 137
189	255	
190	256	
PSALM XCVI		
191	259	
PSALM XCVII		
192	Note 21	Ps. 97, Dutch Psalter
193	260	Psalter No. 264

New Selection	Where Found	Tune	New Selection	Where Found	Tune
PSALM XCVIII			PSALM CXII		
194	Note 22	Ps. 98, Dutch Psalter	230	305	Psalter No. 387
195	261		PSALM CXIII		
196	262		231	306	
PSALM XCIX			PSALM CXIV		
197	Note 23	Ps. 99, Dutch Psalter	232	307	Immanuel Hymnal 142
198	265		PSALM CXV		
199	266		233	308	
PSALM C			234	309	
200	268	Ps. 100, Dutch Psalter	PSALM CXVI		
PSALM CI			235	Note 27	Ps. 116, Dutch Psalter
201	Note 24	Ps. 101, Dutch Psalter	236	310	
202	271	New Chr. Hymnal 83	237	311	
PSALM CII			PSALM CXVII		
203	272, 273 & 274 n)	Psalter No. 92	238	316	
204	275		PSALM CXVIII		
205	276		239	Note 28	Ps. 118, Dutch Psalter
PSALM CIII			240	317	
206	Note 25	Ps. 103, Dutch Psalter	241	318	
207	280		PSALM CXIX		
208	281		242	Note 29	Ps. 119, Dutch Psalter
209	282		243	321	Psalter No. 320
210	278		244	322	
211	283		245	323 & 324	Psalter No. 312
PSALM CIV			246	325	
212	285 & 286:1, 2	Psalter No. 285	247	326	
213	286:3-6 & 287	Psalter No. 287	248	327	
214	288		249	328	
PSALM CV			250	329	
215	Note 26	Ps. 105, Dutch Psalter	251	330	Psalter No. 321
216	289	Psalter No. 312	252	331	o)
PSALM CVI			253	332	Psalter No. 397
217	290		254	333	Psalter No. 67
218	291	Psalter No. 185	255	334	Psalter No. 274
PSALM CVII			256	335	Interchurch Hymn. 315
219	292		257	336	
220	293		258	337	
221	294 & 295	Interchurch Hymn. 414	259	338	Psalter No. 313
222	296		260	339	Psalter No. 60
223	297		261	340	Psalter No. 379
PSALM CVIII			262	341	Psalter No. 144
224	298		263	342	
225	299	Psalter No. 267	PSALM CXX		
PSALM CXIX			264	343	
226	300	Oxford Am. Hymnal, App. 10	PSALM CXXI		
PSALM CX			265	Note 30	Ps. 121, Dutch Psalter
227	302		266	345	p)
228	303		267	347	
PSALM CXI			PSALM CXXII		
229	304		268	Note 31	Ps. 122, Dutch Psalter
			269	348	
			270	349	

New Selection	Where Found	Tune	New Selection	Where Found	Tune
PSALM CXXXIII			PSALM CXXXIX		
271	351		293	382	
PSALM CXXXIV			294	383	Psalter No. 368
272	353		295	384	
PSALM CXXXV			PSALM CXL		
273	356		296	385	New Chr. Hymnal 420
PSALM CXXXVI			PSALM CXLI		
274	357		297	386	a)
PSALM CXXXVII			PSALM CXLII		
275	359	Psalter No. 350	298	387	
PSALM CXXXVIII			PSALM CXLIII		
276	360		299	389	Psalter No. 390
PSALM CXXXIX			300	391	
277	361	Psalter No. 321	PSALM CXLIV		
PSALM CXXX			301	392	
278	Note 34	Ps. 130, Dutch Psalter	302	393	
279	363		PSALM CXLV		
280	365		303	397	
PSALM CXXXI			304	394 & 396	Psalter No. 394
281	366	Psalter No. 106	305	399	
PSALM CXXXII			PSALM CXLVI		
282	367		306	400	
PSALM CXXXIII			PSALM CXLVII		
283	Note 33	Ps. 133, Dutch Psalter	307	402	
284	371		308	403	
PSALM CXXXIV			PSALM CXLVIII		
285	Note 34	Ps. 134, Dutch Psalter	309	404	
PSALM CXXXV			310	405	
286	373	Psalter No. 374	PSALM CXLIX		
287	375		311	407	
PSALM CXXXVI			312	408	
288	376		PSALM CL		
289	378		313	Note 36	Ps. 150, Dutch Psalter
PSALM CXXXVII			314	409	
290	379		315	413	
PSALM CXXXVIII					
291	Note 35	Ps. 138, Dutch Psalter			
292	381				

- a) Tune to be transposed in lower key.
 b) Second Tune, Psalter No. 21.
 c) Second Tune, Psalter No. 56.
 d) With No. 72:3 placed between vss. 4 and 5.
 e) Second Tune, Bible Songs, No. 79.
 f) In 5 double stanzas with No. 125:1 added to No. 124:9.
 g) With No. 141:3, 4 added to the selection.
 h) In double stanzas of vss. 1 & 4, 2 & 3, 4 & 5, 6 & 7, 8 & 9.
 i) No. 191:7 to be added as the first stanza, first line to read: From days of early youth.
 j) Tune to be transposed in lower key as in No. 327, New Christian Hymnal.
 k) Second Tune, Psalter No. 220.
 l) With No. 242:1 as tenth stanza.
 m) In seven double stanzas; Vs. 13 to be omitted.
 n) Double stanzas; No. 273:7 to be omitted.
 o) Tune to be transposed in lower key.
 p) Second Tune Pilot, Ps. No. 346.
 q) Tune to be transposed in lower key as in Interchurch Hymnal, 114.

[NOTE 1]

PSALM 3

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.

O Lord, how swiftly grows
The number of my foes,
Who wantonly oppress me;
Yea, multiplied are they
That rise to my dismay,
And day by day distress me.
Though heavy my despair,
They scornfully declare,
To my humiliation,
That Thou, O God, no more
Canst help me as before
Or come to my salvation.

2.

But Thou, Jehovah, art
A shield about my heart,
My hope and sure reliance;
Thou in the hour of dread
Dost lift my weary head,
And biddest them defiance.
Whene'er to God I cried,
He hastened to my side
In all my tribulations;
From Zion's mountain fair
He looked on my despair,
And heard my supplications.

3.

I laid me down and slept;
I waked for I was kept
In His divine protection;
The Lord was at my side,
My succor He supplied,
Whatever my affliction.
Defended by His hand,
I shall undaunted stand,
While thousands surge about me;
Though furious foemen wage
Their war with mighty rage,
I know they shall not rout me.

4.

Arise and save me, Lord,
For Thou hast smitten hard
The jaws of them that hate me;
Yea, Thou didst fiercely break
For me, Thy servant's sake,
The teeth of the ungodly.
I shall not suffer long,
For my salvation strong
Belongeth to Jehovah.
Thou, Lord, wilt freely pour
A blessing from Thy store
Upon us; Hallelujah!

[NOTE 2]

PSALM 4

BIBLE SONGS, No. 6

1.

God of my righteousness, reply
In mercy to my earnest cry;
In past distress Thou didst relieve;
Be gracious now, my pray'r receive.

Chorus.

"O who will show us any good?"
Exclaims the restless multitude;
But lift on us, O God of grace,
The cheering brightness of Thy face.

2.

How long, ye sons of men, defame,
And turn my glory into shame?
In vanities which ye devise,
How long delight, and follow lies?

Chorus.

3.

Yet know that ever for His own
The Lord doth choose the godly one;
And when to Him my prayers ascend,
The Lord will graciously attend.

Chorus.

4.
Then stand in awe, from sin depart,
And hold communion with your heart,
When on your bed reclined at rest;
And still the risings of your breast.

Chorus.

5.
In sacrifice of righteousness
Your homage to the Lord express;
And ever let your heart rely
With confidence on God most High.

Chorus.

6.
More joy from Thee has filled my heart
Than all their corn and wine impart.
I lay me down to peaceful sleep,
For Thou wilt me in safety keep.

Chorus.

[NOTE 3]

PSALM 5

NEW CHRISTIAN HYMNAL, No. 229

1.
O Jehovah, hear my words,
To my thoughts attentive be;
Hear my cry, my King, my God;
I will make my prayer to Thee.
With the morning light, O Lord,
Thou shalt hear my voice arise;
And expectant I will bring
Prayer as morning sacrifice.

2.
Thou, Jehovah, art a God
Who delightest not in sin;
Evil shall not dwell with Thee,
Nor the proud Thy favor win.
Evil-doers Thou dost hate;
Lying tongues Thou wilt defeat;
God abhors the man who loves
Violence and base deceit.

3.
In the fulness of Thy grace
To Thy house I will repair;
Bowing toward Thy holy place,
In Thy fear will worship there.
Lead me in Thy righteousness,
Let my foes assail in vain;
Lest my feet be turned aside,
Make Thy way before me plain.

4.
False and faithless are my foes,
In their mouth no truth is found;
Deadly are the words they speak,
All their thoughts with sin abound.
Bring, O God, their plans to naught,
Hold them guilty in Thy sight,
For against Thee and Thy law
They have set themselves to fight.

5.
O let all that trust Thy care
Ever glad and joyful be;
Let them joy who love Thy Name,
Safely guarded, Lord, by Thee.
For a blessing from Thy store
To the righteous Thou wilt yield;
Thou wilt compass him about
With Thy favor as a shield.

[NOTE 4]

PSALM 6

NEW CHRISTIAN HYMNAL, No. 435

1.
No longer, Lord, despise me,
Nor in Thy wrath chastise me;
Thy mercy I implore.
How long Thine anger cherish?
Consumed thereby, I perish;
My soul is troubled sore.

2.
To me, O Lord, returning,
Save Thou, with pity yearning.
Shall death Thy mem'ry keep?
Or shall the grave confess Thee?
Or I give thanks and bless Thee,
While day and night I weep?

3.
The Lord will ever hear me,
And when I pray be near me,
To put my foes to shame;
Turned back, no more to grieve me,
They suddenly shall leave me;
All glory to His Name!

[NOTE 5]

PSALM 19

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.
The spacious heavens laud
The glory of our God
With full, majestic praise;
The open firmament,
Unmeasured in extent,
His handiwork displays.
Day doth to day proclaim
His sovereignty and fame
With joyful exultation;
Night doth reveal to night
Jehovah's boundless might
And thoughtful ministrations.

2.
God's law, a perfect whole,
Is saving to the soul,
And ev'ry secret tries.
His testimony sure,
Which ever shall endure,
Doth make the simple wise.
His statutes, right and true,
Rejoice the heart anew
And show the Lord's salvation.
His pure command hath lent
Mine eyes enlightenment
In all my meditation.

3.
The fear of God is clean,
A fountain of serene
And everlasting bliss.
The judgments of the Lord,
That purest light afford,
Are truth and righteousness.
More to be sought are they
Than gold and silver, yea,
More precious far than money;
In sweetness they excel
The sweetnesses that well
From honeycomb and honey.

4.
Moreover, they forewarn
Thy servant that he scorn
All evil ways, O Lord.
He that in faith on Thee
Doth keep them piously
Shall reap a great reward.
But, Lord, where is the man
Who with precision can
Discern his every error?
Thou Fount of joy divine,
O clear this heart of mine
From secret faults forever!

5.

Thy servant, Lord, restrain
From wilful ways and vain;
Let sin not rule o'er me.
Then shall I be upright
And guileless in Thy sight,
From great transgression free.
Teach me Thy perfect way
That all I think and say
May meet Thine approbation.
Then need I fear no ill,
For Thou, O Lord, art still
My Rock and my Salvation.

[NOTE 6]

PSALM 19

NEW CHRISTIAN HYMNAL, No. 39

1.

The heav'ns declare Thy glory,
The firmament Thy pow'r;
Day unto day the story
Repeats from hour to hour;
Night unto night replying,
Proclaims in every land,
O Lord, with voice undying,
The wonders of Thy hand.

2.

The sun with royal splendor
Goes forth to chant Thy praise,
And moonbeams soft and tender
Their gentler anthem raise;
O'er ev'ry tribe and nation
The music strange is poured,
The song of all creation
To Thee, creation's Lord.

3.

All heav'n on high rejoices
To do its Maker's will;
The stars with solemn voices
Resound Thy praises still.
So let my whole behavior,
Thoughts, words, and actions be,
O Lord, my Strength, my Savior,
One ceaseless song to Thee.

[NOTE 7]

PSALM 25

By REV. S. G. BRONDSEMA

1.

Unto Thee, O Lord Jehovah,
Do I lift my waiting soul.
O my God, in Thee I trusted;
Let no shame now o'er me roll.
On my enemy be shame,
Oft without a cause transgressing;
But all those who trust Thy name
Honor with abundant blessing.

2.

Unto me, O Lord Jehovah,
Show Thy ways and teach Thou me;
So that, by Thy Spirit guided,
Clearly I Thy paths may see.
In Thy truth do Thou me guide;
Teach me, God of my salvation.
All the day for Thee I bide,
Lord, with eager expectation.

3.
Call to mind, O Lord Jehovah,
Tender mercies manifold,
And Thy store of lovingkindness
Which has ever been of old.
Sins of youth remember not,
Nor recall my hid transgression;
For Thy goodness' sake, O God,
Think of me in Thy compassion.

4.
Good and upright is Jehovah
In His dealings evermore.
Sinners are by Him instructed
In the way untrod before.
He will ever guide the meek
In His judgments true and holy;
Teach His ways to those who seek
With a contrite heart and lowly.

5.
All the pathways of Jehovah
Speak of truth and mercies pure
Unto such as keep His cov'nant
And His testimony sure.
For the glory of Thy Name
Pardon, Lord, my evil-doing;
Grievous though my sin and shame,
Hear my cry, Thy love renewing.

6.
Who is he that fears Jehovah,
Walking with Him day by day?
God will lead him safely onward,
Guiding in the chosen way.
Then at ease his soul shall rest,
In Jehovah still confiding;
E'en His children shall be blest,
Safely in the land abiding.

7.
Yea, the secret of Jehovah
Is with those who fear His Name;
With His friends in tender mercy
He His cov'nant will maintain.
With a confidence complete
Toward the Lord my eyes are turning;
From the net He'll pluck my feet;
He will not despise my yearning.

8.
Turn Thou unto me in mercy,
Have compassion on my soul.
I am sore distressed and lonely;
Waves of trouble o'er me roll.
Myriad woes beset my heart,
Myriad doubts and bitternesses;
Thou, who my Deliv'rer art,
Bring me out of my distresses.

9.
O consider my affliction,
All my travail, Lord, behold;
Grant me full and free remission
Of my trespasses untold.
See mine enemies, for great
Is the number that upbraid me;
Who, in their consuming hate,
With their cruel scorn have flayed me.

10.
Keep my soul, O gracious Savior;
Come, I pray, deliver me,
Lest my head with shame be covered;
I have set my hope on Thee.
Trusting in Thy pow'r supreme,
Lord, I wait for Thy salvation;
For Thou wilt Thy Church redeem
Out of all her tribulation.

[NOTE 8]

PSALM 42

By MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.
As the hart, about to falter,
In its trembling agony,
Panteth for the brooks of water,
So my soul doth pant for Thee.
Yea, athirst for Thee I cry;
God of life, O when shall I
Come again to stand before Thee
In Thy temple, and adore Thee?

2.
Bitter tears of lamentation
Are my food by night and day.
In my deep humiliation
"Where is now thy God?" they say.
With these things in memory
How my soul will melt in me,
When again I shall assemble
With the joyful in Thy temple!

3.

O my soul, why art thou grieving,
Why disquieted in me?
Hope in God, thy faith retrieving;
Let Him still thy refuge be.
I shall yet extol His grace
For the comfort of His face.
He hath ever turned my sorrow
Into gladness on the morrow.

4.

From the hills and plain of Jordan,
O my God, I think of Thee;
From the summits of Mount Hermon
I bewail my misery.
Deep doth bellow unto deep,
As Thy tempests o'er them sweep;
All Thy waves and billows roaring,
O'er my wounded soul are pouring.

5.

But the Lord will send salvation,
And by day His love provide;
He shall be my exultation,
And my song at eventide.
On His praise e'en in the night
I will ponder with delight,
And in prayer, transcending distance,
Seek the God of my existence.

6.

I will say to God, my Fortress:
"Why hast Thou forsaken me?
Why go I about in sadness
For my foes' dread tyranny?"
Their rebukes and scoffing words
Sting my bones as pointed swords,
As they say with proud defiance:
"Where the God of thy reliance?"

7.

O my soul, why art thou grieving;
Why disquieted in me?
Hope in God, thy faith retrieving;
He shall still thy refuge be.
I will yet through all my days
Give to Him my thankful praise;
God, who doth from shame deliver,
Is my God, my Rock, forever.

[NOTE 9]

PSALM 43

BY REV. WILLIAM KUIPERS

1.

Send forth, O Lord of my salvation,
Thy light and truth to be my guide;
O let their rays, in my privation,
Lead me unto Thy habitation,
Where 'neath Thy wing I'll be supplied
With grace Thou wilt provide.

2.

Then, at Thy sacred altar bending,
My heart to God in prayer I'll raise.
With harp and voice, in worship blending,
Thy courts resound; while psalms, ascending
To God, my highest Joy, bring praise
For all His wondrous ways.

3.

My soul, why art thou sad and grieving;
Why so oppressed with anxious care?
Hope thou in God! His word believing,
Thou shalt behold His face, receiving
The blessings of His count'nance fair;—
What bliss beyond compare!

[NOTE 12]

PSALM 65

BY REV. WILLIAM KUIPERS

1.

Forth from Thy courts, Thy sacred dwelling,
In jubilant accord,
We hear sweet strains of praises swelling,
O Isr'el's mighty Lord!
To God, who hears our imploration,
We come to pay our vow;
Soon men from ev'ry tribe and nation
Before our God shall bow.

2.

A mighty stream of foul transgression
Prevails from day to day;
But Thou, O God, in great compassion,
Wilt purge my guilt away.
Blest is the man whom Thou hast chosen,
And bringest nigh to Thee,
That in Thy courts, in Thee reposing,
His dwelling-place may be.

3.

There, in Thy holy habitation,
Thou wilt Thy saints provide
With ev'ry blessing of salvation,
Till all are satisfied.
By awful deeds, so just and mighty,
God saves us from our foe;
To all who walk with Him uprightly
He will salvation show.

4.

From stores on high Thy streams flow over
The hard and arid land;
The fields are sown with corn and clover,
Provided by Thy hand.
The furrows, softened by Thy showers,
Are blest with springing grain.
How great, O God, Thy love and power,
Throughout Thy vast domain!

5.

The year is crowned, O Fount of blessing,
With gifts to cheer the land;
Thy goodness fills the earth, expressing
The wonders of Thy hand.
The hills rejoice; the pastures, teeming
With flocks that skip and spring,
The golden grain, in valleys gleaming,—
All sing to God the King.

[NOTE 13]

PSALM 68

By REV. B. ESSENBURG

1.

Let God arise, and by His might
Let all His foes be put to flight
In utter consternation.
God's haters, haughty though they be,
Shall, scattered at His presence, flee
In doleful desolation.
When God appears in majesty,
His smitten foes will driven be,
With all who evil cherish,
As smoke before His dreadful ire;
As wax is molten by the fire,
So shall the wicked perish.

2.

But let the righteous, blest of yore,
Joy in their God as ne'er before,
Faith's victory achieving.
Their joy shall then unbounded be
Who see God's face eternally,
Their heart's desire receiving:
Exalt, exalt the Name of God,
Sing ye His glorious praise abroad,
And say with exultation:
"Cast up a highway smooth and wide;
Let through the desert places ride
Jehovah, our salvation."

3.

Rejoice in God, sing praise to Him
Who dwells among the cherubim
In heav'n, His habitation.
As Father of the fatherless,
As Judge of widows in distress,
Men fear His indignation.
The sighing pris'ner God doth free;
He makes the lonely family
Increase amidst the nation;
But those who 'gainst His Word rebel
The righteous Lord will cause to dwell
In lands of desolation.

4.

Sing praise, thou chosen Israel,
Who with the folds of sheep dost dwell;
Thou art God's joy and treasure.
Like doves on golden-feathered wing,
In holy beauty thou shalt bring
Thy praise to God with pleasure.
Jehovah scattered kings and foes,
Redeeming thee from grievous woes;
Praise is thy holy duty.
For God did choose a mount so fair
That Bashan's height cannot compare
With Zion's fame and beauty.

5.

The Lord is great, His might untold,
His chariots thousand thousand fold,
His armies ne'er confounded;
Among them God with joy displays
The glory that in Moses' days
Mount Sinai surrounded.
When Thou, O Lord, in glory bright,
Ascendedst in the heavenly height
Our captive-bonds to sever,
Rich gifts from those who did rebel
Thou didst receive, that men might dwell
With Thee, O Lord, forever.

6.

Let God be praised with reverence deep;
He daily comes our lives to steep
In bounties freely given.
God cares for us, our God is He;
Who would not fear His majesty
On earth as well as in heaven?
Our God upholds us in the strife;
To us He grants eternal life,
And saves from desolation.
He hears the needy when they cry;
He saves their souls when death draws
nigh;
This God is our salvation.

7.

O praise for mercy, truth, and grace,
Jehovah, King of Isr'el's race,
Praise Him, ye congregation.
To Zion's hill the tribes repair;
Let all the people, gathered there,
Bless God with exultation.
There princes come in grand array;
Among them Benjamin holds sway,
With Judah, vanquished never.
Here rulers stand, with glories won,
Of Naphtali and Zebulon:
Let God be praised forever.

8.

Ye kings and kingdoms of the earth,
Praise ye Jehovah's matchless worth
With psalms of adoration.
Our God dwells in the heavenly height;
He sendeth forth His voice with might;
Great God of our salvation!
O Lord, on high Thou ridest forth,
From east to west, from south to north,
The skies before Thee rending.
From heav'n, Thy holy dwelling-place,
Thou strengthenest Thy chosen race:
Thy glory is unending.

[NOTE 14]

PSALM 73

BY REV. WILLIAM KUIPERS

1.

O Isr'el's God, how good Thou art
To all the true and pure of heart!
Though paths of saints are fraught with evil,
Thou showest favor to Thy people.
While faith sank low, I hardly knew
That Thou art Isr'el's Keeper true;
When in my grief I nurtured doubt,
I well-nigh slipped from ways devout.

2.

Yet in my care, my grief and pain,
I ever, Lord, with Thee remain;
My hand is clasped by Thine forever,
And held by love that faileth never.
On all my ways Thy wise decree,
Through gloomy vale and wind-swept lea,
Will ever guide my faltering feet,
Till we at last in glory meet,

3.

Whom have I, Lord, but Thee on high?
None else on earth can satisfy
But Thou, O God, my soul's deep yearning;
For Thee my longing heart is burning.
Though flesh should faint and heart should break,
Thou art my Rock that naught can shake;
In life, in death, Thou art my stay,
My strength, my portion, Lord, for aye.

4.

Who seek their pleasures far from Thee
Will perish in their misery.
Thou hast destroyed the carnal-hearted,
Who from Thy cov'nant-ways departed.
But unto Thee, my God on high,
'Tis good for me that I draw nigh.
I'll trust Thee, Lord, through all my days,
To praise Thy works and wondrous ways.

[NOTE 15]

PSALM 77

BY REV. WILLIAM KUIPERS

1.

In my grievous tribulation,
Hear my cry and supplication;
O my God, who hearest prayer,
Look on me in all my care!
Day and night in my complaining,
Ne'er my mournful voice restraining,
I in vain with tearful eye
Sought relief with Thee Most High.

2.

Will the Lord cast off forever,
Ties of cov'nant-friendship sever?
Will He show His face no more,
As He did in days of yore?
Will the word, to Israel spoken
By o ur fathers' God, be broken?
Must we in our grief complain
That God's promises are vain?

3.

Shall His wrath, my way attending,
—So I asked, in sorrow bending—
Ever stem His wondrous grace,
And conceal His kindly face?
Then my faith, by sorrow chastened,
Cast out fear and doubt, and hastened
To reply in happy strain:
“God will send me joy for pain.”

4.

I'll remember, O my Savior,
How the years of joy and favor,
Like the dew on arid land,
Came to me from Thy right hand.
I'll recall, Thy works confessing,
All the wonders of Thy blessing;
With my mouth will I proclaim:
“Great and glorious is Thy Name.”

5.

Holy in Thy habitation
Are Thy ways, Lord of creation.
There's no god, O God, like Thee,
Clothed with strength and majesty.
Thou eternally art glorious;
All Thy wondrous works victorious.
Let the nations, spread abroad,
Know that Thou alone art God.

[NOTE 16]

PSALM 79

BY REV. WILLIAM KUIPERS

1.

Thy land, O Lord, the heathen have invaded;
Thy holy heritage they have degraded.
Jerusalem, the temple and its altars
Are ruthlessly defiled by the assaulters.
Thy land in ruin lies,
And cries for vengeance rise
To heav'n for all this evil.
Our foes have giv'n to beast
And vulture, for a feast,
The bodies of Thy people.

2.

Recall no more the sins we have committed,
But may they all in pity be remitted.
O Lord, make haste; O may Thy mercy tender
Now strength and help unto Thy people render!
To us salvation show
In all our grief and woe;
O God, forsake us never!
Free from the tyrant's chain;
Purge from all sin and stain;
For Thy Name's sake deliver.

3.
Incline Thine ear to all in bondage sighing;
Those doomed to death, on Thee alone relying,
Preserve, O God! Lift by Thy mighty power
The awful scourge of this relentless hour.
O Lord, our foes restrain;
Avenge Thy servants slain,
Thou Lord of all creation.
By those within Thy fold
Thy Name will be extolled,
Through ev'ry generation.

[NOTE 17]

PSALM 81

BY REV. B. ESSENBERG

1.
Unto God our King,
Joy and Strength of Isr'el,
Lofty anthems sing.
Glorious are His ways;
To His Name give praise
With the harp and timbrel.

2.
This our festal day,
Jacob's God hath given;
Solemn joy display
Throughout all the land:
This is the command
Of the God in heaven.

3.
"Hear, My children, hear,"
Saith the Lord who bore thee;
"Never serve nor fear
Gods of wood or stone;
I am God alone:
Worship and adore Me."

4.
"Open," saith the Lord,
"Wide thy mouth, believing
This My cov'nant-word:
'I will, if thou plead,
Fill thine every need,
All thy wants relieving.'"

5.
"O that to My voice
Israel would hearken!
If they would rejoice,
Walking in My ways,
Bright and joyous days
Ne'er a foe would darken."

6.
"Most abundant good,
—If thou wouldst but prove Me—
E'en the choicest food,
Honey from the comb,
Wheat, the finest known,
I would pour upon thee."

[NOTE 18]

PSALM 84

BY REV. WILLIAM KUIPERS

1.
O God of hosts, O God of grace,
How lovely is Thy holy place,
How good and pleasant is Thy dwelling!
My thirsty soul longs earnestly,
Yea, fainst Thy holy courts to see;
'Mid festal throngs and music swelling,
My heart and flesh cry out to God;
To Him I spread my hands abroad.

2.
The sparrow finds a house to rest,
The swallow deftly builds her nest,
And broods her young hard by Thine
altar.
O Lord of hosts, my God, my King,
With all my soul to Thee I cling!
Hold Thou my hand, lest I should falter.
How blest are they that dwell with Thee!
They praise Thy Name continually.

3.

Blest is the man, whose strength Thou
art;
Thy ways are hidden in his heart;
He treads the highway to Thy dwelling.
Though passing through a vale of tears,
Thy grace, O God, to him appears
With winged hope and pow'r impelling.
The wilderness, by showers blest,
Is now a pilgrim's vale of rest.

5.

O God our shield, with face benign
Look on Thy servant, wholly Thine,
And keep him, Lord, Thou great De-
fender!
One day, passed in Thy house of praise,
Is better than a thousand days
Spent in the realm of earthly splendor.
Though only at Thy door I wait,
No tents of sin give joy so great.

4.

From strength to strength Thy children
dear
Go forward, till they all appear
In Zion's courts, God's holy mountain.
O how delightful, God of grace,
The paths of those that seek Thy face,
And yearn for waters from Thy fountain!
Jehovah, God of hosts, give ear;
O Jacob's God, in mercy hear!

6.

O God Jehovah, good and kind,
On Zion's mount in clouds enshrined,
Thou art our Sun and Shield forever!
To upright souls that seek Thy face
Thou givest glory, truth, and grace;
E'en in death's vale Thou failest never.
O Lord of hosts, most blest is he
Who puts his stedfast trust in Thee!

[NOTE 19]

PSALM 87

BY REV. WILLIAM KUIPERS

1.

Our gracious God has laid His firm
foundation
On Zion's mount, the courts of His
delight;
Her gates of splendor, bathed in
heav'nly light;
He loves far more than any habitation.

3.

The Moor with the Philistine and the
Tyrian
Shall soon, O Zion, throng thy holy gate;
In gladsome strains we'll hear her sons
relate:
"These all were born within the walls of
Zion."

2.

What glorious things, O city of
Jehovah,
Are spoken in melodious tones of thee!
Lo, Rahab, even Babel, I will see
'Mid hallowed chorus singing Halle-
lujah.

4.

God will Himself confirm them with His
blessing,
And on the roll of nations He will count
All these as born on Zion's holy mount,
In many tongues one God, one faith
confessing.

5.

Then shall God's Name with holy adora-
tion
And joyful tones be praised by Isr'el's
throng;
Both harp and voice will blend in swell-
ing song:
"In Zion are the founts of my salvation."

[NOTE 20]

PSALM 89

By REV. WILLIAM KUIPERS

1.

My mouth shall sing fore'er Thy tender mercies, Lord;
To ev'ry age will I Thy faithfulness record.
I know how firm and sure Thy wondrous grace is founded,
Established in the skies by love that is unbounded.
As Thy celestial throne shall never sway, no never,
So shall Thy truth endure forever and forever.

2.

"With my own chosen one, e'en David," God affirmed,
'I've made a covenant, with sacred oath confirmed;
I've sworn in truth to him, my servant: 'I will surely
Build up thy lustrous throne through ev'ry age securely;
Forever will thy seed, in spite of degradation,
Still sit upon thy throne through ev'ry generation'."

3.

The heavens praise, O Lord, Thy wonders day and night;
Thy saints on earth extol Thy faithfulness and might.
Exultingly they ask: "Who, Lord, within Thy dwelling,
Who 'mong the kings of earth, in carnal strength excelling,
Can be compared with Thee, Jehovah great and glorious,
In all Thy wise designs triumphant and victorious?"

4.

The hosts of heav'n, O God, acclaim Thee Lord alone,
And greatly fear Thy Name 'bove all around Thy throne.
Who is there like to Thee, throughout this vast creation,
Jehovah, Lord of hosts, the God of our salvation,
Arrayed like Thee with pow'r and faithfulness astounding,
Constraining saints to praise Thy wondrous grace abounding?

5.

How blessed, Lord, are they who know the joyful sound,
Who, when they hear Thy voice, in happiness abound!
With stedfast step they walk, their countenances beaming
With brightness of the light that from Thy face is streaming.
Exalted by Thy might from depths of desolation,
They praise fore'er Thy Name, Thy justice and salvation.

6.

Thou art, O God, our boast, the glory of our pow'r;
Thy sov'reign grace is e'er our fortress and our tower.
We lift our heads aloft, for God, our Shield, is o'er us;
Through Him, through Him alone, whose Presence goes before us,
We'll wear the victor's crown, no more by foes assaulted,
We'll triumph through our King, by Isr'el's God exalted.

7.

As long as heaven stands on pillars firm and sure,
So long shall David's seed through endless years endure.
But if his children e'er forsake My law appointed,
And walk not in the ways decreed by Mine Anointed,
Then truly I will come in holy indignation,
And chastise them with rods for all their provocation.

8.

Remember, Lord, how frail I am, how few my years;
My life is like a cloud that comes and disappears.
Has man then lived in vain? Who can, when death's shades lower,
Escape the dismal grave with all its ruinous power?
O Lord, recall Thy love, Thy words to David spoken;
Sustain us as of yore by cov'nant-oaths unbroken!

[NOTE 21]

PSALM 97

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.

Jehovah reigns as King;
To Him all homage bring.
Ye islands, earth and ocean,
Break forth in glad devotion.
Dark clouds of secrecy
Enshroud His majesty.
The pillars of His throne
Are fixed on truth alone
And perfect equity.

2.

Consuming flames deploy
Before Him, to destroy
His foemen round about Him,
Who vainly seek to flout Him.
His lightning-bolts when hurled,
Enlightened all the world;
Earth saw and quaked with fear,
To see His wrath appear,
And thund'rous clouds unfurled.

3.

The hills, as wax by fire,
Are molten at His ire,
When God on His creation
Pours flaming indignation.
The heav'ns in awe express
His perfect righteousness.
Let all the nations see
His glorious majesty,
His royal pow'r confess.

4.

Confounded be all they
Who in their folly pray
To gods of man's creation
And boast of vain salvation.
Jehovah, Him we laud,
For He alone is God.
Come, all ye gods, draw near,
And worship Him with fear,
By His dominion awed!

5.

All Zion then rejoiced,
When in her gates were voiced
The judgments, O Jehovah,
Which Thou hast wrought for Judah.
Her daughters sang with mirth,
For high above all earth,
Thou, who art God alone,
Hast made Thyself a throne
And magnified Thy worth.

6.

Ye lovers of the Lord,
To Him all praise accord;
His holy Name confessing,
Despise all base transgressing.
Jehovah keepeth well
The saints in Israel;
He frees them from the snare
That wicked men prepare;
His praises they will tell.

7.

Jehovah's kindly face
Gives happiness and grace
To all that are purehearted;
To them is life imparted.
Rejoice in God, ye just;
He raised you from the dust.
Give thanks, ye people all;
His holy Name recall;
Repose in Him your trust.

[NOTE 22]

PSALM 98

By MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1. Sing, sing a new song to Jehovah For all the wonders He hath wrought; His right hand and His arm most holy The victory to Him have brought. The Lord hath published His salvation, His righteousness hath He made known; He showed to every heathen nation That judgment issues from His throne.	3. Join to the harp your glad rejoicing, A psalm of adoration bring, With trumpet and the cornet voicing A joyful noise to God, the King. The sea let roar with all its fulness, The world and they that dwell therein; Proclaim Jehovah's pow'r with boldness, Exalt Him ever and again.
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2. He hath remembered all His mercy, His truth declared to Israel. The ends of earth have seen His glory; His ways in majesty excel. Then make a joyful noise before Him, O, all ye earth, His praises sing; With loud acclaim let all adore Him And let the joyful anthems ring.	4. Let all the streams in joyous union Now clap their hands and praise accord, The hills rejoice in glad communion, And skip for joy before the Lord. He comes, He comes to judge the people, Arrayed in truth and equity; The world shall He redeem from evil, And righteous shall His judgment be.
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[NOTE 23]

PSALM 99

By REV. S. G. BRONDSEMA

1. God Jehovah reigns; Praise to Him pertains. Tremble at His Word, Peoples who have heard Of the power of Him, Who 'mid cherubim His great throne has taken; Let the earth be shaken.	3. For God's royal might Serves His truth and right. Justice He maintains; Righteously He reigns. Manifesting grace To His chosen race, Jacob's seed He'll never From His cov'nant sever.
2. For the Lord is great In blest Zion's state; All the people's might Naught is in His sight. His most august Name Let all men acclaim, And to Him give glory; He alone is holy.	4. Honor then accord To our God and Lord; At His footstool bow; Seek His favor now. Worship and acclaim His most holy Name; For our God and Savior Holy is forever.

[NOTE 24]

PSALM 101

By MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.
Lord, I will sing with rapturous rejoicing,
Thy justice and Thy lovingkindness voicing;
A joyful psalm, Jehovah, I will raise
Unto Thy praise.

2.

I'll wisely tread the pathway of perfection;
When wilt Thou come, O Lord, for my direction?
I'll walk within my house with perfect heart,
From sin apart.

3.

No wicked thing or sland'rous accusation
Shall stand before mine eyes with approbation.
No hateful doings of apostasy
Shall cleave to me.

4.

The froward heart will I not suffer near me;
All evil things will I abhor sincerely;
All who in secret at their neighbors scoff
Will I cut off.

[NOTE 25]

PSALM 103

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.

O bless the Lord, my soul, with all thy power;
Exalt the God who is thy strength and tower;
Let all within me bless His holy Name.
Bless Him who heareth all thy supplication;
Forget not thou His kindly ministration,
But all His gracious benefits proclaim.

2.

O bless the Lord who all thy need supplieth,
Thy soul with good He fully satisfieth,
And, like the eagle's, He renews thy youth.
Jehovah doeth right for He is holy;
His judgments for the sore oppressed and lowly
Are done in perfect righteousness and truth.

3.

He spake to Moses from the midst of thunder;
He brake the bonds of Israel asunder,
And showed to them His mighty works and ways.
The Lord is gracious and of kind compassion;
He saved His own in truly wondrous fashion;
To anger slow, He loved them all their days.

4.

Jehovah will not chide with us forever
Nor always keep His anger, but deliver
His people from their sorrows and distress.
He has not crushed the flock of His possession,
Nor dealt with us according to transgression;
He chastens but with love and tenderness.

5.

Like as a father looketh with compassion
Upon his children, lo, in such a fashion
The Lord doth look on them that fear and trust;
He knoweth that our frame is weak and humble;
How void of strength, how prone we are to stumble!
And He is mindful that we are but dust.

6.

Lo, as for man, his days are like the grasses,
Yea, like the flow'r that blooms and quickly passes,
Whose morning-beauty fadeth with the day;
For when the wind but lightly passes o'er it
'Tis gone anon and nothing can restore it;
'Tis found no more, its place is lost for aye.

7.

Jehovah's mercy floweth, like a river,
From everlasting, and abideth ever
On those that love and worship Him with awe.
His righteousness shall bless the habitations
Of children's children through the generations
That keep His cov'nant and obey His law.

8.

High in the heavens hath Jehovah founded
His lofty throne, by cherubim surrounded;
And lo, His kingdom ruleth over all!
O bless Jehovah, angels full of glory,
Ye mighty heroes, famed in sacred story,
That do His word, obedient to His call!

9.

Bless Him, ye hosts, in praises without measure,
Ye ministers of His that do His pleasure;
Exalt His Name, His majesty extol.
Bless ye Jehovah, all His works in union,
In all the places of His wide dominion;
Yea, bless the Lord with joy, O thou, my soul!

[NOTE 26]

PSALM 105

BY REV. S. G. BRONDSEMA

1.

Unto the Lord lift thankful voices;
Come, worship while your soul rejoices.
Make known His doings far and near
That peoples all His Name may fear,
And tell in many a joyful lay
Of all His wonders day by day.

2.

In joyful song your hearts uniting,
His works most marvelous reciting,
Now glory in His holy Name;
Let those that seek Him spread His
fame,
Incline their hearts to sing His praise,
And unto Him their anthems raise.

3.

Seek ye Jehovah and His power,
Seek ye His Presence ev'ry hour.
His works, so marvelous and great,
Remember still, and meditate
Upon the wonders of His hands,
The judgments which His mouth com-
mands.

5.

Jehovah's truth will stand forever;
His cov'nant-bonds He will not sever;
The word of grace which He commands
To thousand generations stands.
The cov'nant made in days of old
With Abraham He doth uphold.

4.

Ye seed from Abraham descended,
To whom His favors were extended,
And Jacob's children, whom the Lord
Has chosen, hearken to His Word.
He is the Lord, our Judge divine;
In all the earth His glories shine.

6.

The Lord unto His people granted
These favors, and His fear implanted,
That they His statutes might observe,
Nor from His laws might ever swerve.
Let songs of praise to Him ascend,
And hallelujahs without end.

[NOTE 27]

PSALM 116

BY REV. WILLIAM KUIPERS

1.

I love the Lord, the Fount of life and grace.
He hears my voice, my cry and supplication,
Inclines His ears, gives strength and consolation;
In life, in death, my heart will seek His face.

2.

The cords of death bound me in deep despair.
The pangs of hell, like waves by tempest driven,
Rolled o'er my soul; with grief and sorrow riven,
I turned in my distress to God in prayer.

3.

I cried, "Deliver Thou my soul, O Lord!"
Jehovah heard. I pledge Him my devotion.
The Lord is just, His grace wide as the ocean,
In boundless mercy He fulfils His word.

4.

The Lord preserves the meek most tenderly.
Brought nigh to death, in Him I found salvation.
Come, thou my soul, relieved from agitation,
Turn to thy rest: the Lord dealt well with thee.

5.

Thou hast, Jehovah, in Thy sov'reign grace,
Redeemed my soul from death and woe appalling,
Dried all my tears, secured my feet from falling.
With blessed saints I'll walk before Thy face.

6.

In sore affliction men put me to shame.
In haste I said, "All men are false, deceiving."
God is my Rock—in Him my soul believing
Must needs His truth and faithfulness proclaim.

7.

What shall I render to the Lord, enshrined
In heavenly light, for blessings freely given?
Salvation's cup I'll take and lift to heaven,
Then call upon His Name with heart and mind.

8.

Before His saints I'll pay my vows to God.
E'en in death's vale He keepeth me from evil;
Precious to God the dying of His people.
Praise Him, ye saints, and sound His Name abroad.

9.

I am, O Lord, Thy servant, bound yet free,
Thy handmaid's son, whose shackles Thou hast broken.
Redeemed by grace, I'll render as a token
My sacrifice of thanks and praise to Thee.

10.

Jerusalem! Within thy courts I'll praise
Jehovah's Name; and with a spirit lowly
Will pay my vows. O Zion, fair and holy,
Come join with me and bless Him all thy days!

[NOTE 28]

PSALM 118

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.

Let all exalt Jehovah's goodness,
For most compassionate is He.
His mercy, excellent in fulness,
Endureth to eternity.
Let Isr'el praise Jehovah's goodness,
And say: "Exalt His majesty;
His mercy, excellent in fulness,
Endureth to eternity."

2.

Jehovah is my strength and tower;
He is my happiness and song.
He saved me in the trying hour,
Hence shall my mouth His praise prolong.
The voice of gladness and salvation
Is in the tents of righteousness;
There do they sing with adoration:
"The Lord's right hand is strong to
bless."

3.

The Lord's right hand is high exalted,
Jehovah's strong and mighty hand.
The vaunting enemy He halted,
And made His chosen ones to stand.
I shall not die but live before Him,
And all His mighty works declare,
That all may joyfully adore Him,
Who in His lovingkindness share.

4.

In truth, the Lord has sorely chastened,
But not to death delivered me;
In His paternal love He hastened
To mitigate my misery.
Now open at my salutation
The gates of truth and righteousness;
And I will enter with elation,
There to proclaim my thankfulness.

5.

The stone the builders had rejected,
And in contempt refused to own,
To their dismay has been selected
To be the foremost cornerstone.
This thing is from the Lord Almighty,
It is a marvel in our eyes;
Man cannot understand it rightly
Nor fathom it in any wise.

6.

This is the day of full salvation
That God has made and sanctified.
Come, let us voice our jubilation,
And triumph in the grace supplied.
Save, O Jehovah, we implore Thee;
Save now Thy people, e'en today.
Prosperity send Thou in mercy,
And favor us upon our way.

7.

Now blessed be the King of Glory,
That cometh in Jehovah's Name;
Out of His temple we adore Thee,
And all Thy blessedness proclaim.
The Lord is mighty: He provideth
A light for us when sore afraid;
Then be our thankful sacrifices
Upon the sacred altar laid.

8.

Thou art my God; I will extol Thee,
And magnify Thy majesty.
My God, in glory none excels Thee;
Thy praise be to eternity.
Let all exalt Jehovah's goodness,
For most compassionate is He.
His mercy, excellent in fulness,
Endureth to eternity.

[NOTE 29]

PSALM 119

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.

How blessed are the perfect in the way
Who, walking in Jehovah's law with
pleasure,
Preserve their piety from day to day!
How blest are they who make His
Word their treasure,
Who keep His testimonies and display
Their love for Him whose goodness
none can measure!

2.

O let Thy Spirit be my constant aid,
That all my ways may ever be
directed
To keep Thy statutes, so to be obeyed,
That from all error I may be pro-
tected!
I shall not be ashamed then or afraid,
When Thy commandments I have e'er
respected.

3.

O Lord, how shall a youth preserve his
way
At every turn by vanity surrounded?
In truth, if he Thy statutes will obey,
If on Thy Word his attitudes are
founded.
Thou whom I've sought, O let me never
stray
From Thy commandments, lest I be
confounded!

4.

Thy precepts have I hid within my
heart,
Lest I should stray and fall into trans-
gression;
O teach Thou me and unto me impart
Thy statutes for a permanent posses-
sion.
In all Thy judgments Thou most
righteous art;
Thy truth I praise in rapturous con-
fession.

5.

O teach me, Lord, the way that I
should go;
Then shall Thy servant walk therein
forever.
Give understanding all Thy paths to
know;
Then shall I keep Thy law with zeal-
ous fervor.
Instruct me in Thy perfect will and, lo,
I shall observe it with my whole en-
deavor.

6.

O Lord, Thou art my portion and my lot;
I said that I would keep Thy Word
forever,
Though to my sorrow I have oft forgot;
With all my heart I now entreat Thy
favor:
Be merciful to me and chasten not;
According to Thy Word be Thou my
Savior.

7.
O how I love Thy law! Yea, Thou
canst see,
Through all the day it is my medi-
tation.
By Thy commandments, Lord, Thou
madest me
More wise than all who seek my ruin-
ation.
Thy testimonies evermore shall be
The perfect source of all my inspiration.

8.
Thy Word is as a lamp unto my feet,
A light upon my pathway unto heaven;
I've sworn an oath, which gladly I
repeat,
That I shall keep, as always I have
striven,
Thy righteous judgments, holy and
complete,
When unto me Thy helping grace is
given.

9.
Great peace have they who love Thy
perfect law:
They shall not swerve from paths of
consecration;
Their happiness shall be without a flaw.
Lord, I have ever hoped for Thy sal-
vation;
All Thy commandments I have kept with
awe;
Thy precepts are my daily meditation.

10.
Grant life unto my soul, O Lord, I pray;
Shed still the brightness of Thy Pres-
ence c'er me;
Then shall I praise Thee in a perfect
way,
Because Thy judgments quicken and
restore me;
Thy servant like a sheep has gone
astray,
Yet Thy commandments I will keep
before me.

[NOTE 30]

PSALM 121

By MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.
Unto the hills I lift mine eyes,
Whence cometh all my aid
When troubled or afraid.
Jehovah to my help shall rise:
He made the earth and heaven;
His aid is freely given.

2.
Thy Keeper slumb'reth not nor shall
He cause thy foot to fail,
When danger doth assail.
Lo, He that keepeth Israel
Doth neither sleep nor slumber;
Naught shall thy soul encumber.

3.
Jehovah is thy Keeper aye,
A shade on thy right hand
Thy safety to command.
The moon by night, the sun by day,
Shall not afflict or smite thee,
But with their radiance light thee.

4.
Jehovah will preserve thee when
The waves of trouble roll:
He will preserve thy soul.
When going out or coming in,
The Lord will thee deliver
From henceforth and forever.

[NOTE 31]

PSALM 122

By MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.
My soul was glad when unto me
They said, "Come, we will now repair
Unto Jehovah's house of prayer,
There to adore His majesty."
Jerusalem, where blessing waits,
Our feet are standing in thy gates;
Here shall we bring our supplications.
Jerusalem is builded well;
It is the pride of Israel;
Securely knit are its foundations.

2.
Lo, to the holy oracles
The tribes assemble from abroad
With thanks unto the Name of God,
For there His holy Presence dwells.
The seats of judgment are therein,
The thrones of David's royal kin;
There sit the rulers of the nation.
Prosperity shall be to them
That love thee, O Jerusalem,
Who make thy peace their supplication.

3.

Let peace be found within thy walls
And in thy palaces repose;
Jehovah bless and prosper those
Who dwell within thy favored halls.
For friends and brethren I will say,
"Let peace abide in thee for aye,
May nought disturb thee now or ever."
By reason of His temple fair
And for the mercy proffered there,
Will I invoke thy good forever.

[NOTE 32]

PSALM 130

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.

Out of the depths of sadness,
O Lord, I cried to Thee!
Thou, who canst fill with gladness
Lend now Thine ear to me.
O Fount of consolation,
Attend unto my cry,
Hear Thou my supplication
And to my help draw nigh!

3.

I wait for God to hide me;
My soul, with longing stirred,
Shall hope, whate'er betide me,
In His unfailing word.
My soul waits for Jehovah
With more intense desire
Than watchers for the morning
To dawn of day aspire.

2.

If Thou should'st mark transgression,
O Lord, who then should stand?
For evil and oppression
Are found on ev'ry hand.
But Thou dost pardon fully
All our iniquity,
That we may serve Thee truly.
And fear Thy majesty.

4.

Hope in the Lord, O nation,
For with Him there is grace
And plenteous salvation
For all who seek His face.
He shall redeem His people,
His chosen Israel,
From all their sin and evil,
And all thy gloom dispel.

[NOTE 33]

PSALM 133

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.

Behold, how good, how pleasant is the union,
When brethren in the Lord have sweet communion!
'Tis like the oil on Aaron's head
That, running down, into his beard doth spread;
The oil that flows upon his priestly dress,
Anointing him to holiness.

2.

'Tis as the dew on Hermon's brow descending,
The dew that falls where Zion's slopes are bending,
And makes their vintage overflow.
So they who dwell in peace no want shall know,
For there Jehovah doth His blessing pour,
Yea, even life for evermore.

[NOTE 34]

PSALM 134

NEW CHRISTIAN HYMNAL, No. 448
(BY REV. L. J. LAMBERTS)

1.

O bless our God with one accord,
Ye faithful servants of the Lord,
Who in His house do stand by night;
And praise Him there with all your might.

2.

Lift up your hands, in prayer draw nigh
Unto His sanctuary high;
Bless ye the Lord; kneel at His feet,
And worship Him with rev'rence meet.

3.

Jehovah bless thee from above,
From Zion in His boundless love;
Our God who heav'n and earth did frame,
Blest be His great and holy Name.

4.

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

[NOTE 35]

PSALM 138

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.

With all my heart will I record
Thy praise, O Lord,
And exaltation;
Before the gods with joyful song
Will I prolong
My adoration,
I'll worship toward Thy holy place
And for Thy grace
And truth extol Thee;
Above Thy Name, Thou, Lord Most High,
Didst magnify
Thy Word so holy.

2.

O God, whene'er I cried to Thee
Thou heardest me
And didst deliver;
For by Thy strength, when sore afraid,
My soul was stayed,
O Gracious Giver.
The Kings of earth in one accord
Shall thank Thee, Lord,
With praise unbroken;
When over all the earth is heard
The wondrous word
Which Thou hast spoken.

3.

They all shall sing in joyful lays
And laud His ways
With jubilation;
For great is God in majesty,
The Lord is He
Of all creation.
Jehovah looketh from on high
With kindly eye
Upon the lowly;
But He doth know whoe'er would hide,
In sinful pride,
His ways unholy.

4.

Lord, though I walk 'mid troubles sore,
Thou wilt restore
My falt'ring spirit;
Though angry foes my soul alarm,
Thy mighty arm
Will save and cheer it.
Yea, Thou wilt finish perfectly
What Thou for me
Hast undertaken;
May not Thy works, in mercy wrought,
E'er come to naught,
Or be forsaken.

* In the new Psalter-Hymnal this doxology, which does not belong to Psalm 134, should appear among the hymns for liturgical use.

[NOTE 36]

PSALM 150

BY MR. DEWEY WESTRA

1.

Hallelujah! Praise ye God!
In His temple shout His laud!
Praise Him in the wide extent
Of His spacious firmament!
Sing Jehovah's praise uprightly!
Praise Him for the plenitude
Of His boundless magnitude!
Praise Him for His deeds so mighty!

2.

Praise Him with the trumpet sound!
Let Jehovah's praise abound!
Praise Him with the psaltery!
Harp unto His majesty!
Praise Him with the pipe and timbrel!
Praise Him with stringed instruments!
Organ forth His excellence!
Praise Him with the sounding cymbal!

3.

Let the clashing cymbals ring
To the praise of God, the King!
Praise Him with a mighty sound!
Let your voices shake the ground
With the praises of Jehovah!
All that breathe, exalt the Lord!
All ye men, His fame record!
Great is God! Sing: HALLELUJAH!

The Committee was not instructed by Synod to furnish versifications of those hymns mentioned in Article 69 of which there is as yet no versification in our Psalter. We would propose, however, that in case Synod desires to have these numbers in the new book of praise, that Synod instruct the Committee which is to be charged with the publication of this book, to provide such versifications and to insert them in their proper place.

Respectfully submitted,

THE COMMITTEE,

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