

AGENDA

Synod Christian Reformed Church

*To convene June 14, 1939
at Grand Rapids, Mich.*

PART II: RELATED REPORTS & OVERTURES

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

AGENDA

Synod Christian Reformed Church

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737 Madison Avenue, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.

P R E F A C E

THIS Agenda, Part II, for the 1939 Synod, contains belated Reports, list of synodical delegates, overtures, list of protests, etc.

Tuesday evening, June 13, 1939, at 8:00 o'clock, D. V., PRAYER MEETING FOR SYNOD in the Fuller Avenue Church of Grand Rapids, led by the Rev. I. Van Dellen, president of the Synod of 1938.

Wednesday, June 14th, at 10:00 a. m., in the Calvin College library, the president formally opens the synodical meeting with an opening address, prayer and roll call.

According to established custom, our local churches are requested to prayerfully remember, on the preceding Sabbath, the forthcoming meeting of our Synod.

Henry Beets

737 Madison Ave., S. E.

Grand Rapids, Mich., U. S. A.

AGENDA

PART II BELATED REPORTS

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

REPORT IX.

REPORT, TREASURER CHR. REF. JEWISH MISSIONS (GENERAL FUND)

IT is a pleasure to report that the Lord has prospered the Jewish Mission Work in a financial way for another year. The coöperation of our people has been very fine. We have been enabled to pay in full the quotas set for the year for each mission. Had all the churches been able to bring up their full quotas we should have had a substantial balance. We need to be grateful however for the splendid showing which we are able to make this year.

Examination of the report reveals that three of the Classes have paid more than the quotas expected of them. This is most commendable. Five Classes have almost reached the goal. Three Classes have fallen short by one-third, while a fourth has fallen short by one-half. No doubt there were special reasons for this. Perhaps the coming year will see them approaching the mark set for them.

Two sources of revenue which have been a splendid aid during the past year were the legacies from the estate of the late Henry Schaafsma and the late Mr. Van Agthoven. The legacy from the Van Agthoven estate has always been designated for the Chicago Mission. The legacy of Mr. H. Schaafsma was designated for Jewish Missions. This amount was sent direct to the Chicago Mission instead of the General Treasurer because it is an incorporated body. No part of this amount was deducted from the quota of the Chicago Mission in view of their debt and the splendid financial reserve of the Paterson Mission. Chicago was asked to apply the amount to the payment of a part of its debt.

In view of the excellent financial reports of both branches of our Jewish Missions it would seem to be possible at this time to begin a program of expansion. There are perhaps more Jews in the Missions today than there have ever been. The workers are not many. The finances are once more in a sound condition. Paterson has a fine balance. The Chicago Mission has reduced its indebtedness to such an extent that a worker can almost be supported by the amount formerly required for interest. The request for a worker by the Chicago Jewish Mission is therefore worthy of serious consideration.

The treasurer has made no special appeal for funds except a note appended to the second quarterly report. This indicates that our people are alive to the work and ready to give for it. Perhaps if a little more emphasis could be placed on it in the Classes which have not met the quotas they too might more nearly approach the mark.

Respectfully submitted,

PETER HOLWERDA, *Treasurer.*

REPORT FOR THE GENERAL FUND OF JEWISH MISSIONS

From January 15, 1938, to January 15, 1939

Classis	No. of Families	Amount Expected	Amount Received	Less than Expected	Rec. per Family
California	631	\$ 473.25	\$ 642.61		\$ 1.018
East Friesland	503	377.25	366.90	\$ 10.35	.729
Grand Rapids East	2,075	1,556.25	1,386.31	169.94	.668
Grand Rapids South	2,352	1,764.00	1,115.63	648.27	.474
Grand Rapids West	1,440	1,080.00	726.51	353.49	.545
Hackensack	811	608.25	541.03	67.22	.667
Holland	1,944	1,458.00	1,450.50	7.50	.746
Hudson	1,416	1,062.00	741.96	320.04	.523
Illinois	3,003	2,252.25	1,895.45	356.80	.631
Kalamazoo	962	721.50	527.32	194.18	.548
Minnesota	1,093	819.75	462.68	357.07	.423
Muskegon	2,062	1,546.50	1,484.61	61.89	.719
Orange City	879	659.25	367.54	291.71	.418
Pacific	1,048	786.00	727.10	58.90	.693
Pella	1,199	899.25	684.20	215.05	.57
Sioux Center	1,275	956.25	401.77	554.48	.315
Wisconsin	725	543.75	590.12		.813
Zeeland	1,573	1,179.75	1,470.79		.935
Totals.....	24,991	\$18,743.25	\$15,583.03		

Societies, Churches, Individuals.....	\$ 590.44
Interest	65.63
Balance on hand January 15, 1939.....	.74

Total Balance and Receipts.....	\$16,239.84
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DISBURSEMENTS

To Chicago	\$10,800.00
To Paterson	4,050.00
Gratuity	100.00
Bond, Box, Printing.....	16.38

Total Disbursements.....	\$14,966.38
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Balance on hand January 15, 1939.....	\$ 1,273.46
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IN RESERVE

Michael Vanden Berge Memorial Bonds.....	\$ 1,000.00
Johanna Woltman Legacy.....	500.00

(Certificates — 5 Shares Paid-up Stock)	
Total Reserve.....	\$ 1,500.00

Respectfully Submitted,

PETER HOLWERDA, *Treasurer.*

P. S. Quota per Family: 75 cents.

We have examined and audited the books and accounts of the General Fund of Jewish Missions, and find the same to be correct and in balance, and in our opinion the foregoing report is a true record of the activities of this fund as shown by the books, for the period, January 15, 1938, to January 15, 1939. Reserve Fund investments have been examined and the bank balance has been verified.

Respectfully submitted,

IRA STRUCK,

B. J. STAP,

Auditing Committee.

Paterson, N. J., March 17, 1939.

REPORT X.

REPORT OF THE PATERSON HEBREW MISSION BOARD

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

AS Board of the Paterson Hebrew Mission, we again wish to give a brief report of the work done in the past year, 1938.

The Lord has blessed us materially in the past year, in that we were able to meet all our obligations, as you will notice from the financial report. This makes it a pleasure to carry on the work.

The Board meets regularly on the first Monday afternoon of each month, and does all it can to make the work effectual, prayerfully seeking wisdom from above. The Board members are very faithful in their attendance at these meetings.

Rev. J. R. Rozendal was appointed Superintendent for a period of one year, beginning February 1st, 1938, and took full charge of the work. He has shown true interest and consecration. On September 2, 1938, the Board decided to continue the present arrangement with Rev. J. R. Rozendal for one year, from September 1, 1938 to September 1, 1939, with an increase in salary to \$1,500.00 per year. Both Classes approved this action of the Board.

With the faithful help of Miss Rozendal new classes have been introduced, especially for the young folks; they have found favor, as was shown by the attendance.

In the past year the workers have made a total of 1,545 visits to Jews in their homes and stores.

Various meetings were held during the year. The attendance at these meetings was as follows:

47 Saturday evening meetings, with a total attendance of.....	1,419
34 meetings — Young Ladies' Class; total attendance.....	57
50 meetings — Children's Class; total attendance.....	372
48 meetings — Ladies' Class; total attendance.....	357

Eight special meetings were held during the past year; these meetings are under the auspices of the various church societies; programs of songs and music are rendered. A total of 309 Jews attended these meetings.

Dispensary meetings are held every Thursday afternoon, with Dr. Dunning and our nurse, Miss Rozendal, in attendance. We also have an evening Dispensary Meeting, inasmuch as some cannot attend in the afternoon. A total of 884 Jews have been given this medical attention. All those seeking medical aid must attend the Gospel Meetings. The superintendent gives them a gospel message while they are waiting for the physician. The superintendent also makes a personal contact with the Jews either before or after the meeting.

As for results, we believe the Mission is making progress spiritually.

Christmas exercises were held on Saturday evening, Dec. 24th, with 68 Jews present, both young and old, among which were 12 Jewish men. Dr. Dunning gave a short address, and Rev. Rozendal a short sermon, in which the Christmas spirit was expressed. The superintendent shows slides at the children's meetings, and lectures to them on the subject shown, at the same time weaving in the Gospel.

Repairs have been made where necessary, such as papering on the second floor. The third floor, which is occupied by the superintendent has been put in order. A new floor, which was sorely needed, was laid in the Mission. A motor stoker was installed on the boiler; this works very efficiently and needs very little attention. It burns the cheapest grade of buckwheat coal, so that it will eventually pay for itself. A new sink was also installed, with hot and cold water mixing faucet, very convenient for the doctor, for sterilizing purposes.

And now, brethren, while reporting our blessings, we also bring our needs to your attention, hoping that you may see your way clear to comply with our request, as set forth in the financial report and budget. Please remember this phase of the Lord's work in Paterson as well as in Chicago.

Humbly submitted,

The Paterson Hebrew Mission Board,

H. VAN OSTENBRIDGE, *Secretary*.

C. SPOELHOF, S. C.

TREASURER'S REPORT OF THE PATERSON HEBREW MISSION FOR 1938

RECEIPTS

Balance, January 1, 1938.....	\$2,048.00
From the Gen'l Fund, through Rev. P. Holwerda.....	4,773.00
Rent — second floor of Mission Bldg. (13 mos.).....	455.00
Donations and Gifts.....	111.68
Free-will Offerings.....	72.18
Refund, Telephone Toll.....	9.58
Interest, Certificate of Deposit.....	7.58

Total..... \$7,477.02

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries Paid.....	\$2,810.00
Building Repairs and Renewals.....	874.34
Fuel.....	148.40
Electricity, Gas, and Water.....	114.07
Insurance.....	115.20
Telephone.....	34.47
Bibles, Testaments, Literature, and Supplies.....	300.91
Medical Supplies and Medical Equipment.....	271.37

Total..... \$4,668.76

Balance on hand, December 31, 1938..... \$2,808.26

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) ABRAM VEENSTRA, *Treasurer.*

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE PATERSON HEBREW MISSION FOR THE YEAR 1939

Salaries of Missionary, Worker, and Doctor.....	\$ 3,000.00
Gas, Electricity, Fuel, Water, and Telephone.....	350.00
Medical Department.....	200.00
Insurance.....	100.00
Building Repairs and Replacements.....	300.00
Literature, Printing, Miscellaneous Supplies, etc.....	200.00

Total..... \$ 4,150.00

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

ASSETS:—

Three-story Mission Building (unencumbered).....	\$10,000.00
Furniture and Equipment.....	500.00

\$10,500.00

LIABILITIES:—We have no liabilities.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) ABRAM VEENSTRA, *Treasurer.*

C. SPOELHOF, S. C.

(Approved by Classis Hudson January 24, 1939.)

Classis Hackensack, in session March 21, 1939, in Paterson, N. J., approved of the secretary's report and of the proposed budget, and ordered it sent to Synod.

Classis Hackensack,
J. VAN BRUGGEN, S. C.

REPORT XI.

CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION REPORT

(Submitted to Classis Illinois January 17, 1939)

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Board delegated to direct the affairs of the "Chicago Jewish Mission of the Christian Reformed Church" requests via Classis and Synod that permission be granted to call an ordained man for that work. In 1930 a similar request was approved by Classis and granted by Synod. Two calls were sent. Both were declined. Then the depression came and because of financial stress the Board abandoned the plan of expanding our work. In fact, your Board went beyond that. The doctor and nurse were put on part-time basis. We tried to manage without a lady worker. Every possible effort was made to reduce our indebtedness which was near the \$50,000.00 mark at that time, with no equity. At present, thanks to the untiring efforts of our very capable treasurer, Mr. George Ottenhoff, who handled the financial interests of our Mission, as if they were his own, our indebtedness has been reduced to \$10,250.00. The Board is of the opinion that the time has come to take the necessary steps to procure the services of an ordained man in this field. *Reasons:*

1. Our 1938 financial report shows a large decrease in our indebtedness, reducing our interest almost sufficiently to pay the salary of an ordained missionary.

2. Experience shows that we can get the mission subjects if only we have the mission-workers. From time to time groups are turned away because we have no one to take charge.

3. Our missionaries are faithful in their efforts but there are unlimited opportunities which our present staff cannot begin to consider because of their numerous duties. Some of these opportunities are:

- A. Enlighten our Churches. An ordained missionary could present the cause of Jewish Missions to our people

from the pulpit. This is very necessary. Witness the fact that many of our Churches do not meet their quotas for this work.

B. Creation of literature. At all meetings of the Hebrew-Christian Alliance the need of good literature was stressed. A man with knowledge of the Jews and with firm convictions regarding the truth as expressed in our reformed symbols would be able to accomplish much in this field. By means of good literature we would not only influence the Jews in our immediate vicinity but also in many other places.

C. Care of the reading room. There is ample opportunity of making the reading room an important factor in our program. Here people come in quest of the truth. They need someone to direct their way and tell them about the savior.

D. Open-air preaching. We should not feel satisfied to reach only the Jews in the immediate neighborhood of our mission, but should make an attempt to bring the good tidings to as many of them as can be reached in this city.

E. Teaching of adult Bible classes. The teaching of the truths of the Bible by exegetical study of Scriptures is an important means of bringing souls to Christ and is something for which a minister of the gospel is excellently qualified. The time is come that several of the boys who have been coming to our Institute can be induced to attend such classes.

F. Personal work with dispensary patients. Although both the doctor and the nurse consider it their privilege to speak with patients regarding the health of their soul, they are altogether too busy to give sufficient time to this matter. While the patients are waiting for the doctor good work can be done by personal conversation. But one man cannot be thus engaged all forenoon, then teach his classes in the afternoon and evening.

Therefore the Board begs the approval of Classis in asking the Synod of 1939 for permission to call a missionary for the Jewish Mission of the Christian Reformed Church in Chicago.

Fraternally yours,

The Board of the Chicago Jewish Mission,

REV. P. A. HOEKSTRA, *President*

REV. B. ESSENBURG, *Vice-President*

MR. C. LEENHOUTS, *Secretary*

MR. GEO. OTTENHOFF, *Treasurer*

REV. WM. HAVERKAMP

Report of Secretary of the Board of Chicago Jewish Mission

It has been my duty and privilege for the past fifteen or sixteen years to render a report to you, of the activities of the Jewish mission of our denomination at Chicago, and once more I am called upon to serve you with such a report.

Although we cannot report great things as to the results of the work done, in numbers of converts; we may say that we have been signally blessed by the Lord during the past year. None of the workers nor board members have been removed from our circle by death. We might continue to labor with the exception of our faithful president, Rev. P. A. Hoekstra, who was forced to resort to other climes to take rest on account of a nervous condition, but of whom we are glad to hear that he is on the way to recovery.

The Board members at present are Rev. P. A. Hoekstra, Rev. B. Essenberg, Rev. Wm. Haverkamp, Mr. Geo. Ottenhoff and the writer of this report.

The members of the staff are Mr. A. Huisjen and Miss Edith Vander Meulen as full time workers, and Dr. Wm. J. Yonker and Miss Delis, R. N., as part-time workers in the clinic, three forenoons a week.

Good service has been rendered by Mr. J. Nauta, Mrs. N. Noorlag, Miss Hilda Iwema, and Miss Tessie Swieringa, as volunteer workers during the past year.

Just fifteen years ago at the January meeting of Classis Illinois Mr. Huisjen was appointed as worker at the mission.

From the workers report of November we quote the following:

"The Lord has blessed us with many opportunities for missionary work, and with receptiveness on the part of some of the Jewish people, which has been encouraging to say the least. The total attendance at the Gospel meetings was 155. That of the children's classes 124, and that of the Bible classes 711; making a total attendance of 990." The month of December was equally as good.

For the entire year the attendance was as follows:

Gospel Meetings, avg. weekly attendance, 22; 52 wks.....	1144
Woman's Bible Classes, avg. weekly attendance, 10; 52 wks.....	520
Boys' Bible Classes, avg. weekly attendance 24; 52 wks.....	1248
Girls' Bible Classes, avg. weekly attendance 46; 52 wks.....	2392
Children's Bible Classes, avg. weekly attendance 15; 52 wks.....	780
Clinic Patients for the year, total.....	1787
(To these a message is brought while in the waiting-room.)	
During five weeks of Daily Vacation Bible School, an average of	
40 children attended daily for 25 days, total.....	1000

Thus the total number of contacts amounted to.....8871

Aside from this some house visitation is done, but very little time is found for this, along with all the class work.

And so the seed is being sown, and effects of it can be seen in many, but the Jew does not very easily take the step to break with the traditions of his people, however we may trust that the Lord is working and in his time will cause the seed to bear fruit.

No doubt the present world conditions tend to set the Jews to thinking and we should take advantage of the opportunity to expand the work so as to point them, the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to the real deliverer, their and our messiah.

It is for this reason and several other reasons that the board at this time comes to Synod with a request to increase the staff of our workers by giving the board permission or instruction to call an ordained man. The need of which was already recognized by Synod several years ago, but at which time the board was urged to delay the calling of a minister, and on account of financial conditions advised to first try to reduce the debt to a level where we could feel safe in taking on additional responsibilities. We feel that our financial situation will permit this at present.

Financially we have been exceptionally blest this past year. Our budget proposed to and approved by Synod last year, and the quota set by Synod to bring up the necessary amount, was brought up by the churches to 96% of the total. With the proceeds of this and of the Van Agthoven Estate and two other legacies, the board has been able to carry on the work and meet all regular obligations and reduce the indebtedness by \$12,220.00, so that the total indebtedness is now brought down to \$10,250.00, and our net equity is now \$25,850.00.

With grateful hearts we may say "hitherto hath the Lord helped us" and we may take courage to go forward in the assurance that God wants us to extend the work and that He will bless it.

Yours in the cause of Jewish Mission work,

The Board of Nathanael Institute,
C. LEENHOUTS, *Secretary*.

**ANNUAL STATEMENT OF THE CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION
OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
January 1, 1938 — December 1, 1938**

RECEIPTS

Balance on hand.....	\$ 16.50
Synodical Treasurer	10,300.00
Donations and Collections.....	251.50
Rents	325.68
Interest	286.50
Medical Fund	900.00
Van Agthoven Estate.....	8,000.00
H Schaafsma Estate.....	945.33
Rev. J. O. Voss Estate.....	50.00
Insurance Rebate	7.50
Total Receipts.....	\$21,083.01

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries	\$ 5,621.72
Bonds, Notes, and Mortgages.....	12,220.00
Interest	901.63
Mission Petty Cash Disbursements.....	310.00
Medical Supplies	331.69
Phone	53.57
Gas and Electricity.....	169.93
Fuel	307.57
License	78.00
Repairing and Decorating.....	127.05
Postage and Bank Exchange.....	10.55
Insurance	236.78
Mission Equipment	65.85
Miscellaneous	5.50
Balance on hand.....	643.22
Total Disbursements.....	\$21,083.01

**STATEMENT OF THE CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION OF THE
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
as of January 1, 1939**

ASSETS

Property and equipment in building located at No. 1241-43 South Crawford Ave., Chicago.....	\$27,600.00
Property located at 3948 Grenshaw St., Chicago.....	3,000.00
Property located at 1524-26 W. 14th St., Chicago.....	2,500.00
Van Agthoven Estate (estimated).....	3,000.00
	\$36,100.00

LIABILITIES

Bonds Past Due and Payable.....	\$10,250.00
Net Equity	25,850.00
	\$36,100.00

**CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED
CHURCH**

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1939

Salaries: Religious Worker, Doctor, Nurse, Lady Worker, and Janitor.....	\$ 6,100.00
Gas, Electricity, Phone, and Fuel.....	600.00
Insurance, Tax, and License.....	300.00
Repairing and Redecorating.....	200.00
Medical Supplies	350.00
Traveling Expenses	100.00
Interest	450.00
Payment on Indebtedness.....	2,500.00
Pastor's Salary	2,000.00
Pastor's Allowance for Rent.....	400.00
Total.....	\$13,000.00

This is only \$2,200.00 higher than last year, but takes care of a pastor which was contemplated for several years but not appointed owing to our heavy indebtedness.

REPORT XII.

FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE TREASURER OF THE HOLLAND SEAMEN'S HOME FOR THE YEAR 1938

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The following reflects the receipts and disbursements of the Holland Seamen's Home at Hoboken, N. J., from January 1, 1938, to December 31, 1938:

RECEIPTS

Balance on hand January 1, 1938:		
Commercial	\$	951.41
Savings		806.28
		\$ 1,757.69
Received from the Various Classes		706.03
Proceeds from Seamen's Home		1,403.07
Contributions		94.00
Payment on Principal of Mortgage		4,705.19
Interest on Mortgages		666.08
Dividends on Stock		344.00
Interest on Savings Account		4.63
Van Agthoven Estate		8,000.00
		\$17,680.69
Total		

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries	\$	2,937.42
Maintenance and Repairs		834.43
Telephone, Water, Gas, Electricity, and Heat		630.39
Mortgages Purchased		6,935.09
Insurance		21.92
Charity		48.70
General Expense		54.00
Miscellaneous		93.15
Balance, December 31, 1938:		
Commercial	\$	245.46
Savings		5,880.13
		6,125.59
Total		\$17,680.69

STATEMENT OF TOTAL ASSETS

of the Holland Seamen's Home at Hoboken, N. J., as of Jan. 1, 1939	
Invested in First Mortgages	\$12,663.10
Little Miami R. R. Stock — 80 shares (@ 104)	8,320.00
Cash in Savings Account in Prospect Park Bank	5,880.13
Cash in Commercial Account in Prospect Park Bank	245.46

Three-story Building, 334 River St., Hoboken.....	25,000.00
Three-story Building, 310 Hudson St., Hoboken.....	15,000.00
Total Assets.....	\$67,108.69

Respectfully submitted,
D. DE BEER, *Treasurer.*

The books were audited and found correct by Mr. John Zuidema, Jr., and Mr. Anthony Vroon.

The Eastern Home Mission Board respectfully requests an allowance of expenditures for next year as in this year, with the help of voluntary unsolicited contributions of the various Classes.

Eastern Home Mission Board,
P. HOLWERDA, *Secretary.*

To the Board of Directors of the Eastern Home Mission Board.

GENTLEMEN:

We have examined the books of the E. H. M. Board, in charge of the Rev. D. De Beer, Treas., from Jan. 1, 1938, to Dec. 31, 1938, and are pleased to report that to the best of our knowledge they appear to be correct and in order.

(Then follows the receipts and disbursements of the Seamen's Home which is the same as above.)

We assure you that it has been a pleasure to be of assistance to you in this connection.

Respectfully yours,
(Signed) JOHN ZUIDEMA, JR.
ANTHONY VROON.

February 24, 1939.

At a meeting of Classis Hackensack this financial statement was approved and ordered sent to Synod.

J. VAN BRUGGEN, S. C.

REPORT XIII.

REPORT OF THE SYNODICAL COMMITTEE FOR SOUTH AMERICA

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR Committee for the advancement of the religious interests of those in South America that are of the same Reformed faith and Dutch ancestry with us can report that both the Rev. Wm. V. Muller and the Rev. Jerry Pott are now tri-lingual preachers.

In addition to being able to use the English and the Dutch languages, the Rev. Muller preaches once a month in Portuguese, at Carembehy in southeastern Brazil, and the Rev. Jerry Pott preaches Spanish every Sunday at Tres Arroyos in east-central Argentina. In these men the Lord has given us much for which to be thankful. Confession is made by young people from time to time in their congregations, even a Roman Catholic young man having responded earnestly and diligently to the study of the Word in order to make a good confession in the church of Rev. Muller. And, from the church of Rev. Pott, a young man went to Holland to study for the ministry.

On Sept. 18th, 1939, it will be five years since the Rev. Wm. V. Muller accepted the responsibilities involved in his letter of call. His church, which scarcely used any Portuguese when he arrived, now has its Sunday School entirely in Portuguese, except the primary department. Native Presbyterians, living at a distance from their own church, worship and coöperate with our people. A Portuguese Psalter-Hymnal is used in the monthly Portuguese services. And, every Lord's Day, the law or the creed is read in the regular services in Portuguese, the language of Brazil.

Mrs. Muller not only does her work as Mevrouw Muller in the congregation, and not only as registered nurse involving about 70 patients per month, but she is also studying Portuguese in a school in a neighboring town a part of each week.

The Rev. Wm. V. Muller was formerly secretary of the colonial organization of the Dutch people at Carambehy, including his church members and others, both Roman Catholics and Modernists; and now the Rev. W. Muller is President of this organization, representing its interests with the political rulers of the Brazilian state and nation. Several of these rulers have visited the colony of Carambehy, at an anniversary celebration, and to inspect the colony. All necessary freedom has been granted by the rulers both in the church and in the Christian school, where the state pays the salary of one teacher and the Christian School Society the salary of the other teacher.

The Rev. Jerry Pott has entertained a representative of the Queen of the Netherlands and various representatives of Dutch business men, whose help has been sought to buy a large tract of land around Tres Arroyos. Small parcels of land are not for sale here, and rents are high. The past year saw the poorest crop in Tres Arroyos since 1904, and our people have difficulty with the high rents. It is hoped that Dutch capital can be interested in this Argentinian colony, to provide our people the opportunity to buy their own farms.

Since the Rev. Wm. V. Muller will have completed five years by the end of 1939, as minister loaned to Classis Buenos Aires, he receives a raise of \$100, applying to 1940-'45. (Cf. Acts of Synod, 1938, Art. 76, II, page 59.) Furthermore, children's allowances are paid to the Rev. Jerry Pott, in harmony with his letter of call.

The Synod of 1938 adopted the following motion: "Synod expresses itself as favoring the policy suggested to our South America Committee as well as to the similar Committee of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, that the churches of Tres Arroyos and Carambehy be led in the direction of gradually assuming increased financial responsibility, so that in course of time they may entirely take over the support of the pastors our church is now loaning them." Acts of Synod, 1938, Article 76, page 60.

Accordingly this matter was promptly called to the attention of the Rev. Wm. V. Muller and the Rev. Jerry Pott by your Committee, and a formal statement was sent afterward to the consistories concerned.

The response is as follows: The Rev. Wm. V. Muller informs us that Carambehy, Brazil, has increased the quota that it raises toward the salary of the Rev. Mr.

Muller from \$144 to \$216 annually, beginning October, 1938.

And Tres Arroyos, Argentina, has informed us that it expects to pay one-tenth of the salary, in 1940, and if possible increasingly more in later years. For the rental of a parsonage and for auto allowance, this congregation raises annually about \$500, and both Carambehy and Tres Arroyos have their building funds to remember, and their Christian schools.

The latest available statistics for the various churches of Classis Buenos Aires are as follows: Concerning Carambehy, Brazil, the Rev. Wm. V. Muller reports, for 1939, 24 families, 46 confessing members, 91 members by baptism, total number of souls 137; Sunday school enrollment 80; Catechism 40; Christian School 45 pupils with two teachers.

Tres Arroyos, Argentina, together with three neighboring places, presents the following statistics for 1939: Tres Arroyos, 34 families, 76 communicants, 118 baptized members, 194 souls; Claromeco, 4 families, 9 communicants, 14 baptized members, 23 souls; San Francisco de Bellocq, 3 families, 9 communicants, 10 baptized members, 18 souls; Belcarce, 2 families, 4 communicants, 10 baptized members, 14 souls. Total served by the Rev. Jerry Pott, 43 families, 97 communicants, 152 baptized members, and 249 souls; Sunday school enrollment 30, catechism 76; gain of Tres Arroyos in 1938, 28 persons, including several families from the Netherlands.

The statistics for Buenos Aires and Chubut are derived from the year book of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands for 1936, and are as follows: Buenos Aires has 70 confessing members, and numbers 135 souls; while Chubut, in southern Argentina, includes 170 confessing members and numbers a total of 320 souls.

Now the tragic part of it is that this largest of all our S. A. fields has no resident pastor, except for a few months per year, when the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt leaves Buenos Aires to serve Chubut.

We may also report that a leading and capable student at Calvin College and Seminary has presented a communication to the Committee expressing a desire to be sent after a few years, as an ordained man, to the South American field. He writes as follows: "I feel constrained to express a prayerful interest nurtured over a period of

a year or more, in the work of our Denomination in South America. . . . My inclination to the South American field arises out of a love for that work engendered by reading and hearing accounts of labor being done and of need for more laborers. God's providence has so brought these factors to bear upon my life that I can do no other than apprise your committee of my interest."

Since, in the opinion of the Committee, Classis Buenos Aires does not meet frequently enough, the Committee has urgently advised the South American churches to meet in classical assembly once a year, at a stated time.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SYNOD

I. With full appreciation of the several months of work performed annually in the Boer congregation of Chubut, southern Argentina, by the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt of Buenos Aires, in northern Argentina, Synod instruct its Committee for South America to put forth efforts to the end that Chubut may also ere long receive Classical appointments by the Rev. Wm. V. Muller and the Rev. Jerry Pott, in the light of the following grounds and considerations:

1. The young people of this Boer Reformed Church, a church numbering 320 souls, are drifting away from the church and from the faith to an alarming extent;

2. It is therefore impossible to wait with additional pastoral work, in this Boer Church, until South Africa sends Chubut a full time minister, although this should really be done by the South African Reformed Church, for their own people;

3. Our ministers, the Rev. Wm. V. Muller and the Rev. Jerry Pott, are under a heavy and continuous strain, in their own bilingual congregations, and the health of these brethren would no doubt be benefitted through a few classical appointments annually, in Chubut with its dozen places of worship;

4. Chubut has requested a full time pastor from South Africa, promising to pay a part of the expense; and Chubut would undoubtedly take a portion of the expense of such classical appointments;

5. It is expected that some of the expense could be borne by Classis Buenos Aires.

II. The following budget for 1940 is presented for our denominational work in South America, all in U. S. currency:

Salary at Carembehy, Brazil*.....	\$1,800.00	
Salary at Tres Arroyos, Argentina.....	1,200.00	
Children's Allowances, Rev. J. Pott.....	150.00	
Administrative Expense	125.00	
Classical Appointments, chiefly for Chubut.....	250.00	
Furlough Reserve and Other Special Expenses.....	250.00	
		<hr/>
Expected from Carembehy at least.....	\$ 216.00	\$3,275.00
Expected from Tres Arroyos at least.....	120.00	
		<hr/>
		\$ 336.00
		<hr/>
		\$2,939.00

III. Your Committee advises that the work in South America be again recommended by Synod to our consistories for an annual offering or for 10 cents per family. With synodical approval, this fund has for years presented the alternative of its quota or an annual offering. We prefer to let the congregations keep this alternative.

Respectfully submitted,

Committee for South America,

HENRY BEETS, *President*

D. D. BONNEMA, *Vice-Pres.*

M. J. WYNGAARDEN, *Sec'y-Treas.*

HARRY BLYSTRA

PETER JONKER, JR.

* A raise of \$100, because Rev. Muller has then served five years.

REPORT XIV.

REPORT OF CHURCH HELP COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

WE herewith submit the annual report to your honorable body. Since the present Committee did not commence to function until some time after the Synod of 1938, we naturally do not have much to report for that year. However, in the present report we also include what we have done up to the time that this report is written.

The former Committee has transferred the material to us and the Treasurer's books were properly audited.

Twice the Committee met to consider the numerous requests that were submitted. It seems to us that a centralized committee, though it involves a little more expense, is a decided advantage over the former system, because the respective cases can be thoroughly reviewed.

The various requests submitted during the time that we functioned, up to April 1, 1939, amounted to more than \$35,000.00. This is at least three times as much as the income for the fund during the same period. Consequently we were compelled to trim some of them down considerably. And even then the fund is far in arrears. It seems to the Committee that the Classes in their recommendations to this fund are frequently too liberal. A more reserved attitude would frequently seem to be advisable.

With a view to the great need of this fund we have reminded our congregations that this fund has been recommended by Synod for 50 cents per family. We have also during the beginning of the year written to the 103 congregations from whom no contributions were received during the year 1938. We believe the fact that so many congregations have not sent any contribution deserves the special attention of Synod.

The Committee has also written the various congregations that were in arrears to this fund, stating the exact amount. In some cases this amounted to more than \$2,000.00. However, the Committee is of the opinion that

those congregations which are far in arrears for obvious reasons, but are paying up regularly now, ought not to be annoyed about this negligence in the past. Should Synod have a different opinion on this matter, we trust it will inform us.

We have found that 11 churches did not pay back anything during the year 1938. This is comparatively not a large number. We have written them emphasizing repayment of 5%. Some have written us that they regretted not being able to meet their obligation.

Finally, the question of mortgages was somewhat of a problem to the Committee. Since the Committee is not incorporated, the Committee cannot receive mortgages. The Committee thought best to take mortgages on the name of the Treasurer, as has been done formerly. Should Synod not approve of this method, kindly inform us of a better course. Your Committee is anxious to carry out the wishes of Synod, and is therefore ready and willing to be further guided by your instructions.

In this connection we wish to state that as a matter of good business policy the Committee has bonded the Treasurer for \$5,000.00.

A detailed report of the standing of the treasury is herewith attached.

Respectfully submitted,

The Church Help Committee,

DR. W. BODE, *President*

REV. A. WASSINK, *Secretary*

MR. CHAS. R. MULDER, *Treasurer*.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER OF THE CHURCH HELP COMM. CLASSICAL COLLECTIONS

CLASSIS	1937 For Comparison	1938
California	\$ 253.16	\$ 237.44
Grand Rapids East.....	660.20	364.93
Grand Rapids South.....		491.84
Grand Rapids West.....	1,163.76	349.41
Hackensack	143.78	264.00
Holland	820.66	584.88
Hudson	436.35	506.03
Illinois	934.29	718.31
Kalamazoo		271.25
Minnesota		64.03
Muskegon	1,001.71	610.53
Orange City	78.18	55.65
Ostfriesland	226.09	101.75

Pacific	375.83	124.01
Pella	343.55	212.04
Sioux Center	142.65	121.44
Wisconsin	505.52	112.06
Zeeland	355.49	394.00
Miscellaneous, Personal	113.00	135.00
Totals.....	\$7,554.22	\$5,718.60

Three new Classes: Grand Rapids South, Kalamazoo, and Minnesota.

LOAN STATEMENT

Church at	Amt. Owning 11/1/38	New Loans	Paid in 1938	Amt. Owning 12/31/38
Aetna, Mich.	\$ 1,651.86	-----	\$ 93.22	\$ 1,558.64
Alameda, Calif.	1,800.00	-----	150.00	1,650.00
Alamosa, Colo.	288.22	-----	50.00	188.22
Arlene, Mich.	96.96	-----	11.70	85.26
Atwood, Mich.	1,080.00	\$ 200.00	.00	1,280.00
Austinville, Iowa	350.00	-----	.00	350.00
Bauer, Mich.	425.00	-----	75.00	350.00
Bejou, Minn.	445.69	-----	114.50	331.19
Bemis, S. D.	192.33	-----	6.04	186.29
Bellflower, Calif.	2,050.00	-----	300.00	1,750.00
Bigelow, Minn.	1,305.54	-----	99.91	1,205.63
Birnamwood, Wis.	2,055.42	-----	25.54	2,029.88
Brooten, Minn.	1,212.64	-----	8.10	1,204.54
Colton, S. D.	950.00	1,100.00	10.17	2,039.83
Chandler, Minn.	1,437.62	-----	176.88	1,260.74
Chatham, Canada	2,975.00	-----	.00	2,975.00
Conrad, Mont.	1,570.00	-----	50.00	1,520.00
Coopersville, Mich.	1,417.93	-----	.00	1,417.93
Crookston, Minn.	1,137.90	-----	.00	1,137.90
Dearborn, Mich. ....	.00	1,000.00	.00	1,000.00
Des Plaines, Ill.	1,785.00	-----	.00	1,785.00
Delavan, Wis.	950.00	-----	50.00	900.00
De Motte, Ind.	795.00	-----	50.00	745.00
Doon, Iowa	1,500.00	-----	75.00	1,425.00
Decatur, Mich.	3,500.00	-----	.00	3,500.00
Second Denver, Colo. ....	.00	7,000.00	.00	7,000.00
Duvall, Wash.	1,000.00	-----	50.00	950.00
Dutton, Mich.	250.00	-----	25.00	225.00
Dorr, Mich. ....	.00	1,000.00	.00	1,000.00
East Martin, Mich.	1,035.00	-----	75.00	960.00
East Muskegon, Mich.	3,685.54	-----	50.00	3,635.54
Estelline, S. D.	2,292.14	-----	77.35	2,214.79
Everett, Wash.	950.00	-----	50.00	900.00
Grangeville, Idaho	1,925.00	-----	.00	1,925.00
Goshen, Ind.	350.00	-----	50.00	300.00
Grand Rapids, East Leonard	5,887.68	-----	62.53	5,825.15
Grand Rapids, Godwin Heights	2,625.00	-----	.00	2,625.00
Grand Rapids, Lee St.	1,500.00	-----	.00	1,500.00
Glendale, Calif. ....	.00	1,000.00	.00	1,000.00
Hollandale, Minn.	1,050.00	-----	.00	1,050.00
Hamilton, Canada	2,940.00	-----	80.00	2,860.00

Church at	Amt. Owning 11/1/38	New Loans	Paid in 1938	Amt. Owning 12/31/38
Hamshire, Texas	1,875.00		.00	1,875.00
Hancock, Minn.	1,013.08		31.25	981.83
Hawarden, Ia.	775.00		35.00	740.00
Hills, Minn.	900.00		57.00	843.00
Holland, Iowa	943.50		100.00	843.50
Holland, Minn.	3,373.57		75.00	3,298.57
Holland Marsh, Canada	.00	300.00	.00	300.00
Holland Center, S. D.	960.00		70.00	890.00
Ireton, Iowa	425.00		25.00	400.00
Lansing, Ill.	525.00		144.00	381.00
Lark, N. Dak.	500.00		.00	500.00
Los Angeles, Calif.	1,444.90		144.90	1,300.00
Second Lynden, Wash.	1,550.00		.00	1,550.00
McBain, Mich.	964.95		51.39	913.56
Morrison, Ill.	825.00		50.00	775.00
Momence, Ill.	850.00		50.00	800.00
Millwood, Mich.	2,175.00	500.00	200.00	2,475.00
Martin, S. D.	211.14		211.14	.00
Mountain Lake, Minn.	350.00		50.00	300.00
Muskegon Heights, Mich.	215.00		.00	215.00
Neerlandia, Canada	4,500.00		250.00	4,250.00
Noordeloos, Mich.	41.12		.00	41.12
North Blendon, Mich.	74.68		11.20	63.48
Second Orange City, Iowa	1,125.00		75.00	1,050.00
Ocheyedan, Iowa	883.35		50.00	833.35
Ogilvie, Minn.	475.00		25.00	450.00
Ontario, Calif.	1,992.31		2.95	1,989.36
Oskaloosa, Iowa	78.90		28.85	50.05
Second Pella, Iowa	916.00		50.00	866.00
Preakness, N. J.	950.00		.00	950.00
Portland, Mich.	640.00		25.00	615.00
Parchment, Mich.	2,000.00	1,000.00	125.00	2,875.00
Purewater, S. D.	625.00		30.00	595.00
Riverbend, Mich.	1,175.00		.00	1,175.00
Second Randolph, Wis.	.00	1,500.00	.00	1,500.00
Rock Rapids, Iowa	4,569.94		32.00	4,537.94
Fourth Roseland, Ill.	2,650.00		175.00	2,475.00
Rudyard, Mich.	203.46		15.00	188.46
Sully, Iowa	2,800.00	1,000.00	100.00	3,700.00
South Holland, Ill.	.00	1,000.00	.00	1,000.00
Sanborn, Iowa	140.57		37.82	102.75
Shepherd, Mont.	2,766.80		.00	2,766.80
Sibley, Iowa	1,385.50		20.00	1,365.50
First Sioux Center, Iowa	1,337.20		187.20	1,150.00
Sioux City, Ia.	900.00		55.00	845.00
Sioux Falls, S. D.	1,557.51		27.57	1,529.94
Sumas, Wash.	950.00		.00	950.00
Sultan, Wash.	980.00		57.50	922.50
Tracy, Iowa	929.10		67.50	861.60
Volga, S. D.	415.00		25.00	390.00
Vancouver, Canada	1,409.00		34.00	1,375.00
Vona, Colo.	432.25		.00	432.25
Second Wellsburg, Iowa	850.00		25.00	825.00

Church at	Amt. Owning 11/1/38	New Loans	Paid in 1938	Amt. Owning 12/31/38
Western Springs, Ill. -----	.00	1,000.00	.00	1,000.00
West Branch, Mich. -----	731.20	-----	48.95	682.25
Winnipeg, Canada -----	345.96	-----	2.74	343.22
Worthington, Minn. -----	1,386.75	-----	69.34	1,317.41
Wyoming Park, Mich. -----	854.51	-----	.00	854.51
(99) CHURCHES. TOTALS--	\$119,359.72	\$17,600.00	\$4,813.24	\$132,146.48

SUMMARY

RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR 1938

Balance on hand January 1, 1938.....\$ 4,157.79

RECEIPTS

Classical Collections and Personal Donations.....\$ 5,718.60
 Repayments by Churches.....4,813.24
 Directly sent to Second Denver, but charged to them.....4,500.00

Grand Total.....\$19,189.63

DISBURSEMENTS

New Loans
 Second Denver Loan, Direct.....\$ 4,500.00
 Other Loans13,100.00
 Administrative Expenses for 1938.....264.85
 Refund to Classis Kalamazoo — sent to this Fund in error 50.00
 Balance on hand December 31, 1938.....1,274.78
 \$19,189.63

REPORT XV.

REPORT OF THE DELEGATE TO THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN :

AS delegate to the American Bible Society, it is our pleasure to render another brief report to Synod.

During the year 1938 we sent a form letter to all the pastors of our churches encouraging them to remember the work of the Society in their prayers and gifts. On the whole this statement met with favorable response. This is evident from the numerous gifts received during the calendar year. They amounted to \$1,401.42. Many churches remembered this important cause—the arm of the church in the missionary enterprise—and we are very grateful to them for their sympathetic interest. However, there were several congregations which failed to do anything for this important phase of kingdom work. In the event that it was inability or oversight, we sincerely hope they may be able to help this great cause during the present year!

In the past year the Society commemorated the fact that the Scriptures have now been made available in one thousand languages and dialects. In this achievement, the American Bible Society has had a worthy share.

We are sorry to report that one of the secretaries, well known to most of you, the Reverend Dr. George W. Brown, has returned to the pastorate. He has accepted the call presented to him by the West Presbyterian Church of Binghamton, N. Y. For nearly ten years he was connected with the Society and often appeared at our Synodical gatherings. The Board of Managers regretfully accepted his resignation.

It was our privilege to attend the meeting of the Advisory Council on November 30, 1938. There were forty-five delegates present. The Reverend Graham Frank of the Disciples Church, Dallas, Texas, was chosen

chairman for the day. It was a day of inspiration and challenge—challenge to send out the Holy Scriptures to the utmost bounds of the world. There are yet so many millions of our fellowmen who are without God's precious Word and the knowledge of salvation.

Again we heartily commend this worthy enterprise to our people and request that Synod place the American Bible Society upon the list of accredited causes.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN BEEBE.

REPORT XVI.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR representative of the National Christian Association is happy to make his report to your honorable body concerning the anti-lodge work in which the Association is engaged and which the Christian Reformed Church has again so nobly supported this past year.

The Board of the N. C. A. has gladly complied with Synod's request to give "more definite information of the financial status of its organization by furnishing us with a complete statement of assets." See Acts of Synod, 1938, Article 83, Part IV. Hence, the Board has sent your stated clerk a complete financial statement for the fiscal years, May 1, 1937 to April 30, 1938, and May 1, 1938 to April 30, 1939; a complete statement of assets, a proposed budget for the year 1939-1940 and the Auditor's Statement.

The undersigned, your representative, has been a member of the Board of Directors for the past eight years and is, therefore, somewhat acquainted with the work of this organization in its anti-lodge work. He has attended almost every Board meeting during that time. The Association is greatly handicapped in its work because it lacks a Field Secretary, a position which the late Dr. Stoddard filled so admirably for over fifty years. Our work is greatly in need of a Field Secretary. If all the Christian denominations interested in our work would support it financially as well as the Christian Reformed Church does, we could have more than one Field Secretary. The need is very great. The doctrine of Christ is diametrically opposed to the doctrine of the Lodge. The two are absolutely exclusive. And yet many a church of Christ permits the Lodge to exist within the church side by side with the doctrine of Christ. It is a sad condition. No wonder the church is at a low spiritual ebb. And the N. C. A. is the only organization in the world that opposes this inconsistency.

Without a Field Secretary our work is being carried on by printing and distributing tracts and booklets, and by publishing *The Christian Cynosure*, a monthly magazine, edited at the present time by the Rev. G. M. VanPernis of the Reformed Church of America. This magazine has been published for over seventy years. Now and then a lecture is given by one of our Board members. Miss M. Essenburg, the daughter of our chairman, the Rev. B. Essenburg, takes care of our office, and her work is greatly appreciated.

Our Christian Reformed Church has supported the N. C. A. for years. The Board appreciates this support very much. But not all the congregations have given an offering for this work. Some take up an annual offering, others place the work on their annual budget for a fixed sum, but there are others that do neither.

Your representative recommends that you continue to give this worthy cause your moral and financial support for the next year, and that you urge all the congregations to remember this work with an annual offering.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES PUTT.

REPORT XVII.

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

UPON advice of the Budget Committee the Synod of 1938 decided to request the Board of the National Christian Association for more definite information concerning the financial status of this organization by furnishing Synod with a complete statement of assets. (cf. Acts of Synod, 1938, page 67, Article 83.)

In answer to this request, the Board of Directors of the National Christian Association is sending you under separate cover a complete Financial Statement for the year 1937-38, a list of the Assets and Liabilities of the Association, and a Proposed Budget for the year beginning May 1, 1939, and ending April 30th, 1940, also an Auditor's Certificate.

The Board is very grateful for the financial support given by the Christian Reformed Churches and begs Synod to again recommend the Association for financial aid.

Synod's reporter, the Rev. James Putt, will give more detailed information as to the scope of the work.

May the King of the Church guide you in all your deliberations for His name's sake.

very cordially yours,

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,

REV. B. ESSENBURG, *President*

MATHILDA ESSENBURG, *Secretary.*

REPORT XVIII-(a)

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE IN RE A REFORMED ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

ACCORDING to the synodical Acts of 1938, Art. 82, 6 (page 63), the task was entrusted to this committee to answer four questions submitted to our Synod by Dr. Aalders in behalf of the "Deputaten voor Correspondentie met Buitenlandsche Kerken" of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. The committee has discharged that task to the best of its ability, but deemed it advisable, in view of the importance of the matter and in view of the fact that our Synod meets in ample time to notify the Synod of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands in case Synod's judgment should materially differ from that of the committee, to act subject to the approval of Synod. We therefore submit to your judgment the following letters that have been sent, the one, to Dr. Aalders for the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, and the other, to Rev. D. Postma for the "Gereformeerde Kerk van Zuidafrika."

It will appear from the first letter, that in addition to answering the four questions submitted to our Synod we took the liberty to point out to the brethren in the Netherlands the advantages that would accrue if the preliminary and preparatory work with a view to an ecumenical council or synod could, at least in part, be done by a committee in which the three churches primarily concerned were represented. We took that liberty in view of the fact, that two members of the committee, Dr. Beets and Rev. Van Dellen, were delegated in 1938 to represent our Church at the General Synod, Reformed Churches, in the Netherlands in August, 1939, and suggested that they could at the same time act as our representatives on such a preparatory committee. The letter to South Africa was sent in order to secure, if possible, the representation on such a committee of the "Gereformeerde Kerk" there.

There are, therefore, two distinct matters which we herewith submit to you for approval:

1. The answers to the four questions which the brethren in the Netherlands presented to our Synod in 1938; and,
2. Our proposal to them of a preparatory committee representing the three Churches, to meet in connection with the presence of our delegates to their coming Synod.

We wish to draw the attention of Synod to the fact, that according to present indications creedal matters will be of prime importance at the hoped-for Reformed Ecumenical Synod, and to the further fact, that in 1938 a separate committee was appointed to urge upon our Reformed sister-churches joint action in the matter of creedal revision. We have tried to have contact with that committee and it has taken cognizance of our task and work. It will be well, if in the future the necessity of such contact in order to avoid confusion be borne in mind.

May the Lord guide you in all your labors and graciously grant to His Churches that are loyal to the Reformed faith the ecumenical gathering we seek and make it fruitful of much good to the honor of His name and the advancement of His truth and kingdom.

In behalf of the Committee,

D. H. KROMMINGA, *Secretary*.

REPORT XVIII-(b)

REPLY TO QUESTIONS TRANSMITTED TO OUR SYNOD BY DR. G. C. AALDERS

*Aan de Deputaten der Gereformeerde Kerken
van Nederland voor Correspondentie met
Buitenlandsche Kerken,*

*Dr. G. C. Aalders,
Hilversum, Nederland.*

HOOGGEACHTE HEER:

Het schrijven, dat U onder datum van 16 Juni, 1937, namens Uw mededeputaten en de Generale Synode Uwer Kerken richtte tot de Synode der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in dit land, is door haar in de handen gegeven aan de Commissie, in 1932 benoemd inzake eene oecumenische Synode of Conferentie van alle Gereformeerde Kerken der wereld, met volmacht, om op Uw vragen in haar naam te antwoorden (zie Art. 82, 6, der Acta van 1938, en Art. 40 der Acta van 1932). Het verblijdt ons zeer, Uw schrijven te mogen ontvangen, daar het blijk geeft van het feit, dat de belangstelling in het ideaal eener wereldwijde samenkomst van Gereformeerde Kerken ook in Uwe Kerken leeft en actief is, en het is onze wensch en bede, dat de resumptie der correspondentie dienaangaande ons samen eene wezenlijke schrede nader bij het ideaal zal brengen.

Gaarne geven wij dan ook naar de mate van ons inzicht en vermogen een antwoord op Uw vragen, doch we wenschen vooraf op te merken, dat het ons verkieslijk voorkomt, indien, zoo mogelijk, het voorbereidend werk voor eene Gereformeerde oecumenische Synode inplaats van langs den weg van tijdroovende en omslachtige correspondentie door eene voorbereidende Commissie of Deputaatschap, samengesteld uit leden van alle drie tot dusver over dit onderwerp corresponderende Kerken, verricht werd. Daar onze Synode in hare samenkomst in Juni l. l. de broeders Dr. H. Beets en Ds. I. Van Delen, beide onder U welbekend, gedeputeerd heeft om haar bij Uwe Generale Synode in 1939 te vertegenwoordigen, meenen wij, dat de samenstelling en bijeenkomst van zulk eene voorbereidende Commissie binnen het bereik van het mogelijke valt. Wij van onzen kant zullen het gaarne aan deze beide broeders overlaten, om tijdens hun verblijf in Nederland samen met U op zoodanige wijze te functioneeren en te handelen. Tevens hebben wij ons voorgenomen, om met het oog op de samenkomst van zulk eene Commissie te schrijven aan de Gereformeerde Kerk van Zuid Afrika en er bij Ds. D. Postma op aan te dringen, dat, indien immer mogelijk, ook die Kerk haar deputaat of deputaten zende naar Uw Generale Synode in 1939, of, zoo de benoeming alreeds geschied is, dat er aan toegevoegd worde opdracht om deel te nemen aan den arbeid van eene eventueele voorbereidende Commissie. Over deze idee zullen we gaarne Uw oordeel vernemen en wij hopen, dat het gunstig zal uitvallen.

Van de vier vragen door U gesteld zijn de eerste drie uitdrukkelijk door Uwe Synode aan ons gericht, terwijl de laatste er door U en Uwe mededeputaten aan toegevoegd is. In uitvoering van onze opdracht, en gebruik makende van onze volmacht, wenschen we op die

vragen zóó te antwoorden, dat onze Synode geen oorzaak zal hebben, om des gewetens wille iets in onze antwoorden te verwerpen. Mocht evenwel haar oordeel onverhoopt van het onze afwijken, dan zal het tijdsverloop tusschen de vergadering van onze en die van Uwe Synode gelegenheid geven, om door onze deputaten daarvan tegen Augustus, 1939, aan U mededeeling te doen. Tevens is het onze bedoeling, dat onze antwoorden het werk van eene eventueele voorbereidende Commissie, zooals door ons voorgesteld, niet zullen belemmeren maar zullen wijken voor haar beter oordeel. De vier vragen luiden, als volgt:

1. Wie eene eventueele oecumenische Synode zal moeten samenroepen en op welke wijze dit zal dienen te geschieden;
2. Welke Kerken tot die Synode moeten worden uitgenoodigd;
3. Hoe de afvaardiging tot die Synode behoort plaats te hebben;
4. Welke punten naar het oordeel onzer Kerk op eene eventueele oecumenische Synode zouden moeten behandeld worden.

1. Ten opzichte van het eerste gedeelte Uwer eerste vraag sluiten wij ons aan bij de suggestie, vervat in den slotzin van de besluiten in dezen in 1930 genomen door de Synode der Gereformeerde Kerk van Zuid Afrika, zooals afgedrukt in de Acta van onze Synode van 1932, pag. 201. Daar lezen we de volgende uitspraak der Zuid Afrikaansche Synode: "Dit zou ons van harte verbly, as die Nederlandse Gereformeerde Kerke daartoe kon besluit om so'n Interkerklike Synode in Nederland saam te roep." Onze instemming met dezen wensch rust op de volgende overwegingen: de oorsprongen van alle drie Kerken, die tot dusver over eene eventueele oecumenische Synode van Gereformeerde Kerken hebben gecorrespondeerd, liggen in Nederland; de historische prioriteit behoort aan de Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland; uiting aan de begeerte naar zulk eene oecumenische Synode werd eerst gegeven door den deputaat dier Kerken, Dr. H. H. Kuyper, op de Zuid Afrikaansche Synode van 1924; en met het oog op reisgelegenheden en reiskosten is Nederland het meest centraal gelegen en het makkelijkst te bereiken.

Wat het tweede lid Uwer eerste vraag betreft, zijn wij van oordeel, dat kwesties betreffende de wijze van samenroeping behooren tot die zaken, die zeer wel aan eene eventueele voorbereidende Commissie kunnen overgelaten worden. Hierover ons verder uit te spreken, achten we daarom niet noodig, tenzij het mocht blijken, dat zulk eene voorbereidende Commissie niet tot stand komt.

2. Wat betreft de vraag, welke Kerken tot zulk eene oecumenische Synode moeten worden uitgenoodigd, zijn wij het eens met wat Dr. H. H. Kuyper in 1924 voorstelde als het ideaal in dezen, toen hij zeide: "Het ideaal moet wezen een oecumenische Synode, waar alle Kerken, die nog aan de Gereformeerde Belijdenis vasthouden, samenkomen." Vasthouden aan de Gereformeerde Belijdenis houdt meer in, dan het bloote historische en officieele bezit, en met het oog op dit onderscheid, dat naar ons oordeel bij de samenroeping eener oecumenische Gereformeerde Synode bestendig in het oog te houden is, zal eene keuze gedaan moeten worden uit het geheele aantal van historisch Gereformeerde Kerken, welke keuze niet eenvoudig en gemakkelijk geacht kan worden. Naar ons oordeel zou voor de handhaving van het Gereformeerde standpunt genoegzaam gezorgd zijn, indien het maken dier keuze werd overgelaten aan de door ons voorgestelde voorbereidende Commissie onder approbatie door de Generale Synode der Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland.

3. In de derde plaats vraagt Uw Synode het oordeel onzer Kerk over de wijze van afvaardiging naar eene eventueele oecumenische Synode. Het spreekt zeker wel vanzelf, dat de enkele particepeerende Kerk elk voor zich zullen moeten afvaardigen, alsook, dat geen Kerk aan eene andere de wijze van afvaardiging zal kunnen of mogen voorschrijven. Zoodoende zou het ideaal van proportioneele vertegenwoordiging, dat zoo goed past in het denken van onzen tijd, in het gedrang kunnen komen. Doch het is te bezien, of proportioneele vertegenwoordiging in denzelfden zin evenzeer een Gereformeerd ideaal is. In de oude Kerk hebben de oecumenische Concilies blijkens de geschiedenis nimmer bijzonder gestaan op proportioneele afvaardiging van elk harer onderdeelen. En op de Synode van Dordrecht in 1618-1619 deed het feit, dat het meerendeel der leden de Nederlandsche Kerken vertegenwoordigen, aan het oecumenische karakter harer beslissingen en uitspraken inzake de leer geen afbreuk. Met het oog daarop is het onze gedachte, dat de wijze van afvaardiging aan de afzonderlijke Kerken behoort overgelaten te worden met de suggestie, dat zij eenigszins rekenen met hare relatieve numerieke sterkte. Mocht de oecumenische Synode, zoo de gedachte verwezenlijkt wordt, repetitie wenschelijk en mogelijk achten, dan zou het op haar weg liggen, de kwestie van afvaardiging tot precieser oplossing te brengen.

4. Aan de voorgaande vragen heeft Uwe Commissie nog toegevoegd die naar de punten, die naar het oordeel onzer Kerk op zulk eene oecumenische Synode zouden moeten behandeld worden. Het antwoord op deze vraag hangt samen met de vraag, welke Kerken aan de Synode deelnemen. Hoe wijder kring, des te meer kans, dat de overeenstemming niet boven eenheid in de fundamenteele Gereformeerde positie zal uitgaan, en verschil in kerkrecht en kerkregering en zelfs in officiële formulering der Gereformeerde leer zal samenwerking op die punten in elk geval niet bevorderen, maar belemmeren. Toch zijn er wel gemeenschappelijke belangen, die gemeenschappelijke behartiging en behandeling ten zeerste wenschelijk maken. We zouden als voorbeelden willen noemen de bepaling der Gereformeerde houding in het vraagstuk van den oorlog en ten opzichte van de jongste sociaal-economisch-politieke verschijnselen, bewegingen, en organisaties. Twee zaken staan in elk geval naar onze bescheiden meening vast, en op die beide vaste punten wenschen wij de aandacht te vestigen.

Ter eener zijde is het een historisch feit, dat geheel deze beweging, die als doel heeft de verwezenlijking van het ideaal eener Gereformeerde oecumenische Synode, ontstaan is in verband met de vraag, wat gedaan kan worden om onze gemeenschappelijke Gereformeerde Belijdenis van groter invloed te doen zijn in onzen tijd. Zonder de werkzaamheid eener eventueele oecumenische Synode daartoe te beperken, heeft de Zuid Afrikaansche Synode van Burghersdorp het uitdrukkelijk uitgesproken, dat zij op het programma van zulk eene Synode actie inzake de Gereformeerde Belijdenis wenschte te zien. In haar brief aan onze Synode van 1932 lezen we: "dat hy Synode van die Gereformeerde Kerke van verskillende lande, wat een is in Belidenis, as dringend noodsaaklik beskou in die toekoms, om die Gereformeerde leerstukken wat deur die Ewolusieleer bedreig word, te handhaaf en die dwaling te bestry" (Acta Chr. Geref. Syn. 1932, pag. 200). Onze jongste Synode, gehouden in Juni van het loopend jaar, heeft eenzelfde begeerte uitgesproken, toen zij, in aansluiting aan het rapport van haar Commissie inzake revisie of uitbouw der Belijdenis besloot, aan eene Commissie de opdracht toe te vertrouwen, om in contact te treden met andere Gereformeerde Kerken met dezelfde Belij-

denisschriften, om (1) in ervaring te brengen wat de tegenwoordige stand van zaken is in elk dier Kerken met betrekking tot voorgestelde uitbreiding of revisie der Belijdenis, en (2) om de breedste vergaderingen dier Kerken aan te sporen tot behandeling dezer zaak en, indien immer mogelijk, stappen te nemen die leiden kunnen tot gemeenschappelijke actie door alle Gereformeerde Kerken die dezelfde Belijdenis hebben . . (Acta, 1938, Art. 39, pag. 22, vertaald uit het Engelsch). We mogen en behooren er dus van uit te gaan, dat de belangstelling beide der Zuid Afrikaansche Kerk en onzer Kerk in eene eventueele oecumenische Gereformeerde Synode in de eerste plaats zich beweegt rondom kwesties in verband staande met de Gereformeerde leer en belijdenis.

En ter andere zijde is te bedenken, dat het niet zal aangaan, eene Kerk tot deelneming in zulk eene eventueele Gereformeerde oecumenische Synode uit te noodigen, zonder het recht dier kerk te erkennen om voor die eventueele oecumenisch Synode te brengen alle zaken waarover zij meent, licht noodig te hebben, en denkt, dat de oecumenische Synode licht kan verspreiden. Met het oog op dit vanzelfsprekende recht van elk der vergaderde Kerken, dat, onzes inziens, in eene eventueele uitnoodiging duidelijk erkend en uitgesproken behoort te worden, zou het ons niet verwonderen, zoo ten slotte het programma of menu van zulk een oecumenische Synode voldoende rijk en gevarieerd zou blijken te zijn. In laatster instantie zal het natuurlijk aan de oecumenische Synode zelf moeten staan, te beslissen, op welke van de haar voorgelegde zaken zij bevoegd en in staat is in te gaan.

Hiermede meenen wij, hooggeachte broeders, Uw vragen naar ons beste vermogen beantwoord te hebben. Moge de Heere U en allen, die met U deze zaak behartigen, leiden en voorlichten in de besprekingen en besluiten, ons pogen met Zijnen zegen bekroonen, en de Gereformeerde oecumenische Synode verwezenlijken om wille van Zijne zaak en waarheid.

Namens de Commissie,

D. H. KROMMINGA, *Secretaris*.

REPORT XVIII-(c)

LETTER TO SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCH

*Aan Ds. D. Postma,
Burghersdorp, Zuid Afrika.*

WELEERWAARDE EN HOOGGEACHTE BROEDER:

Het heugt U ongetwijfeld nog, dat U in 1930 een der beide onder-teekenaars waart van een brief, namens de Gereformeerde Kerk van Zuid Afrika in copie gezonden aan de Synode der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in de Vereenigde Staten van Amerika inzake een oecumenische Gereformeerde Synode, met name met het oog op mogelijke revisie of uitbreiding onzer gemeenschappelijke Belijdenis. Op hare jongste Synode, gehouden in Juni van het loopend jaar, heeft onze Kerk opnieuw hare belangstelling in die zaak betoond door bij andere Gereformeerde Kerken aan te dringen op gemeenschappelijke actie inzake de Belijdenis, en door de beantwoording van een aantal vragen, door de deputaten der Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland voor correspondentie met buitenlandsche Kerken tot haar gericht, op te dragen aan hare Commissie, in 1932 benoemd voor correspondentie in deze zaak.

Deze Commissie heeft pas haar antwoord aan de Nederlandsche deputaten gereed gemaakt, en daarin medegedeeld, dat zij de voorkeur geeft aan eene voorbereidende Commissie, samen te stellen uit leden van alle drie corresponderende Kerken, boven voorbereiding der gezochte oecumenische Synode langs den weg van omslachtige en tijdroovende correspondentie. Om U geheel op de hoogte te stellen, gaat deze brief gepaard met copie van het aan de Nederlandsche deputaten gericht antwoord. U zal daaruit kunnen vernemen, waarom en hoe wij zulk eene voorbereidende Commissie mogelijk achten.

Zal ze tot stand komen, dan is het ten zeerste wenschelijk, waar-schijnlijk beslist noodig, dat in haar zitting hebben ook een of meer vertegenwoordigers Uwer Kerk. Met het oog daarop is het onze hoop, dat Uwe laatste Synode deputaten heeft benoemd om haar te vertegenwoordigen bij de Generale Synode der Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland in hare vergadering in Augustus, 1939, of, indien niet, dat vooraf nog eene samenkomst Uwer breedste kerkelijke vergadering plaats moge hebben, waarop zoodanige deputaten benoemd worden. Een onze wensch en begeerte is het, dat aan die deputaten opdracht gegeven worde, om samen met deputaten onzer Kerk en deputaten der Nederlandsche Gereformeerde Kerken te dienen als eene Commissie om de gewenschte oecumenische Synode van Gereformeerde Kerken voor te bereiden. Het is natuurlijk ook goed, als U of iemand anders gezonden kan worden door de Commissie Uwer Kerk, die in dezen dient, om haar op de door ons voorgestelde voorbereidende Commissie te vertegenwoordigen.

Mogen we bij U er op aandringen, om al wat in Uw vermogen is te doen, opdat die voorbereidende Commissie tot stand mag komen en in werking treden in verband met de samenkomst der Nederlandsche Generale Synode in 1939? Persoonlijke mondelinge beraadslaging is zooveel grondiger en werkt zooveel sneller, dan correspondentie en

raadpleging tusschen drie zoo ver van elkander verwijderde Kerken als de drie zijn, die over eene eventueele oecumenische Gereformeerde Synode onderhandelen, en zelfs wanneer we allen spoed maken, zal het allicht toch nog heel wat tijd nemen, eer alles klaar is voor de samenkomst van zulk eene Synode.

Namens de Commissie der Christelijke Gereformeerde
Kerk inzake eene oecumenische Gereformeerde Synode,
D. H. KROMMINGA, *Secretaris*.

REPORT XIX.

EMERITUS BOARD REPORT

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Board appointed to administer the Emeritus Fund is constituted as follows: President, Mr. H. Hekman; Vice-President, Mr. G. D. Vanderwerp; Secretary, Rev. J. O. Bouwsma; Treasurer, Mr. W. K. Bareman; and Vice-Secretary-Treasurer, Rev. R. T. Bos.

It has been our earnest endeavor to administer and disburse the funds wisely and equitably.

Again we must report that the number of beneficiaries has increased. It has never been as large as at present. There are 79 on the list. Also this year we have been compelled to do what we disliked to do, make a cut in some of the allowances. And yet even with these cuts, the General Fund ran in the red. The receipts from the assessment are inadequate to meet the demands.

Requests for aid were received since the last Synod of:

Classis Sioux Center, for Rev. J. C. De Bruyn, who was granted emeritation in accordance with Synodical action, 1938 Acts of Synod, art. 84. His support began Oct. 1, 1938. Aid of \$1,000 per year was recommended.

Classis Hackensack, for Rev. M. B. Botbyl, who was granted emeritation in accordance with Synodical action, 1938 Acts of Synod, art. 84. His support began March 1, 1939. Aid of \$1,000 per year was recommended.

Classis Zeeland, for William Oostendorp, minor son of the late Rev. H. Oostendorp. His support began Aug. 1, 1938. Aid of \$150 per year was recommended.

Classis Zeeland, for Mrs. T. Vander Ark, widow of the late Rev. T. Vander Ark. Her support began Oct. 1, 1938. Aid of \$200 was recommended.

Classis Grand Rapids East, for Mrs. H. J. Mulder, widow of the late Rev. H. J. Mulder. Her support began Jan. 10, 1939. Aid of \$300 was recommended.

We are happy to inform Synod that Rev. L. Trap has been restored to health. Classis Illinois, which granted emeritation, has announced in our Church papers his eligibility for a call.

Mrs. J. L. Heeres has graciously notified us through her Consistory that she is not in need of an allowance for the present.

Mrs. K. Poppen, having re-married, no longer receives aid.

The beneficiaries as of March 28, 1939, and the allowances, which we recommend to the Synod, are:

Rev. H. Ahuis	\$600	Mrs. L. P. Brink	\$700
" P. Bloem	750	" A. Dekker	400
" H. Bode	700	" H. J. De Vries	500
" M. Borduin	650	" N. Fokkens	700
" M. Botbyl	750	" N. Gelderloos	700
" S. Bouma	700	" J. A. Gerritsen	450
" J. Brink	400	" J. H. Gruessing	500
" T. De Boer	700	" H. J. Haarsma	550
" J. De Bruyn	750	" J. Haveman	600
" J. De Haan, Sr.	600	" H. J. Heynen	450
" P. De Jonge	800	" G. L. Hoefker	400
" R. Diephuis	650	" P. J. Hoekenga	600
" J. Dyk	800	" J. B. Jonkman	400
" B. H. Einink	750	" H. Kamps	400
" H. Fryling	700	" A. Keizer	400
" A. Guikema	700	" W. Kuipers	700
" J. Gulker	450	" A. W. Meyer	150
" J. B. Hoekstra	600	" G. J. Plesscher	250
" J. Homan	650	" B. Post	350
" P. Jonker, Sr.	500	" J. Robbert	550
" J. Keizer	600	" H. Schultz	500
" W. Kole	700	" J. Schultz	200
" D. J. Meyer	500	" P. Steen	500
" J. Rottier	750	" W. Stuart	450
" F. Schuurmann	650	" H. Temple	550
" W. Steenland	850	" H. Tuls	550
" J. Timmermann	500	" E. J. Tuuk	400
" L. Trap	700	" R. Vande Kieft	400
" W. Vande Kieft	750	" J. B. Vanden Hoek	500
" W. D. Vanderwerp	650	" M. Vander Heide	400
" T. W. R. Van Loo	650	" S. Vander Heide	400
" G. Westenberg	600	" T. Vander Ark	200
" J. Westervelt	500	" H. Vander Ploeg	400
" L. Ypma	500	" E. Van Korlaar	550
Mr. Wm. Oostendorp	150	" P. Van Vliet	350
Mrs. C. Bode	\$400	" J. Vissia	400
" M. J. Bosma	300	" A. B. Voss	700
" A. Brink	200	" D. Weidenaar	400
		" P. Yff	500
		" B. Zwaagman	400

The following beneficiaries passed to their reward since the last Synod: Mrs. E. Breen, Mrs. D. J. Meyer, Rev. E. Van Korlaar, Rev. J. A. Gerritsen and Rev. H. Kamps.

APPENDIX TO THE FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE
EMERITUS BOARD

Arrearage Money, Dec. 31, 1937.....	\$31,514.76
Arrearage Money Received in 1938.....	1,518.78
Balance Due Dec. 31, 1938.....	\$29,995.98
Assessment Money, 1938.....	\$43,734.25
Assessment Money Received 1938.....	40,225.52
Deficit for 1938.....	\$ 3,508.73
Arrearage, December 31, 1938.....	\$33,504.71

The Arrearage money received during 1938, \$1,518.78, should have been put in the Capital Fund, per Synodical decision, but due to the deficit in the General Fund, it was used in the General Fund.

Yours fraternally,

J. O. BOUWSMA.

Besides this brief report a statement of all receipts, disbursements, and present assets, certified by Mr. W. P. Dreyer, a public accountant, is in the hands of the Stated Clerk and available to Synod.

We humbly request Synod to take cognizance of the following:

(a) According to the rules governing the Emeritus Board a dependent is a child under 18 years. According to the Rules and Regulations for the Pension Fund for Calvin College and Seminary a dependent is a child up to and including 18 years of age. Acts of Synod, 1938, page 149. We call attention to this and ask Synod to eliminate the inconsistency.

(b) It is gratifying to inform Synod that the number of gifts to this Fund from individuals has increased. However, there are still a large number of congregations which do not contribute the assessment. Some congregations did not give one penny in the past year. More than one-sixth of the congregations did not contribute anything during the first nine months of 1938. We ask Synod to urge the payment of the assessment and then monthly. It is a bad policy to wait with sending contributions till the last months of the year.

(c) The Synod of 1937 declared that the beneficiaries must re-apply for aid every other year. This must be done through the Consistories and Classes. However, the Consistories have not been instructed to investigate whether the emeritation should be continued. We ask Synod to

instruct the Consistories to make this investigation when the beneficiary re-applies for aid.

(d) One of the emeritated brethren wrote us: "A way might be found whereby the emeriti ministers might do some church work, if they are able to do some, as evidently some are. In that way they could earn a little and supplement their meager allowance. As it is now when they are emeritated they are excluded from all church activity, all at once, which is a dreadful experience."

Rev. H. J. Kuiper wrote in a *Banner* editorial: "... if he becomes emeritus, not because he has become incapacitated for all service but for the reason that he can no longer carry a full load of work in any congregation, he should be required and privileged to perform a limited amount of labor in the Kingdom—not as elder but as minister of the Gospel?"

May we ask Synod to consider the above suggestion and if deemed practical to devise ways and means to provide some Kingdom labor?

(e) As far as our records show the Church has fallen short in paying the assessment every year. The number of beneficiaries is increasing from year to year. We are laboring with a deficit in the General Fund and that yearly though the allowances have been too low. The Budget for 1939-1940 year is:

Present Allowances	\$41,600.00
Emergencies, such as Bonuses for Operations, Funerals, etc.	1,000.00
Three Additional Allowances.....	1,900.00
Administration Expense (approximately).....	450.00
Total Amount Necessary.....	\$44,950.00
If every family pays the assessment, the total would be.....	44,532.25
Approximate deficit for 1939-'40.....	\$ 417.75

It is evident that the assessment of \$1.75 per family is inadequate. The allowances are too low and yet should the assessment be increased? We leave this to the judgment of Synod.

Respectfully submitted,
J. O. BOUWSMA, *Secretary*.

REPORT XX.

EMERITUS FUND COMMITTEE

Rules for the Pension and Relief Funds of the Christian Reformed Church

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE "Emeritus Fund Committee" presented a plan for the setting up and the administration of a Pension and a Relief Fund for the support of the emeritated ministers, widows and orphans of ministers of the Christian Reformed Church, to the Synod of 1938. The proposed plan was adopted in general (although objections were raised against some of the particular proposals) "in view of the decision of the Synod of 1938: 'Synod while agreeing with the fundamental principle expressed in 1932, nevertheless deems it necessary to include the idea expressed in the decision of 1934, that the clergy shall be asked to contribute to the Emeritus Fund according to a fixed scale, and decides to appoint a Committee to present a plan to the next Synod which shall include both elements' (Acts 1938 p. 92)."

The Synod of 1938 decided:

1. "All ministers desiring for themselves and for their widows and orphans the benefits of this fund shall contribute annually 3% of their salary."
2. "The Consistory will deduct this amount from the salary of the minister and send it quarterly to the treasurer of the Board."
3. "Since it becomes apparent that Synod, anxious to finish its labors today, will not be able to reach satisfactory conclusions with regard to many particular points that are involved, to recommit this plan for further study to the Emeritus Fund Committee, enlarged by the addition of a brother well-versed in pension matters, with instructions to work out in detail the Ministerial Pension Fund on a straight 3% basis, and to give particular attention to such matters as to the legality of the Fund, the possible need of a small reserve fund at the inauguration of the Fund, the official guarantee of the Fund by Synod, and the possible temporary division of the synodical quota for the Emeritus Fund between the Pension Fund and the Relief Fund."

(Cf. Acts of 1938, pp. 93, 94.)

The committee submits the following for your consideration:

RULES FOR THE PENSION AND RELIEF FUNDS OF
THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

ARTICLE I.

For the execution of Article 13 of the Church Order, the Christian Reformed Church of America shall maintain a Pension Fund and a Relief Fund from which emeritated ministers, widows and orphans of ministers shall receive aid as hereinafter stipulated.

ARTICLE II.

The administration of these funds shall be in charge of a Board of Trustees of five persons appointed by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. This Board shall be composed of two ministers and three other office-bearers or former office-bearers. It shall be incorporated as the "Ministers Pension and Relief Administration of the Christian Reformed Church." Synod shall appoint in every even numbered year, alternately, three and two trustees. Trustees who are functioning may be reelected. An alternate shall be appointed for each trustee.

ARTICLE III.

A. The officers shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and a Treasurer.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS:

1. The *President* shall preside over all meetings of the Board of Trustees and shall perform such other duties usual to the office of the president.
2. The *Vice-President* shall act in the absence of the President or in event of his being incapacitated.
3. The *Secretary* shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and shall record them in a proper minute book, and shall have charge of all records of the Board of Trustees.
4. The *Treasurer* shall have charge of the funds of the Board of Trustees subject to its instruction, shall keep an accurate set of records, and accounts of all receipts and disbursements. He shall sign checks. The treasurer shall also be required to furnish a Surety Company Bond in the amount of \$10,000.00 in favor of the Board and the premium of such Bond shall be paid by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall designate and determine the bank or banks to be used as depositories for all funds of the Board.

The books of the Treasurer shall be audited annually at the close of the calendar year. The auditor shall be named by the Board of Trustees each year and it shall bear the cost of such audit.

B. THE DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES shall be as follows:

1. It shall elect its own officers.
2. It shall receive and administrate all moneys contributed for the Pension Fund and Relief Fund, and shall disburse them in accordance with these rules and further decisions of Synod.
3. It shall give a full report of its activities to Synod.
4. It shall submit to Synod a budget for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE IV.

The Board of Trustees is authorized:

A. To gather all the necessary data from the churches and from the ministers for the administration of these Funds.

B. To create and pay for reasonable administration expenses to properly conduct the business of both the Pension Fund and the Relief Fund. Such expenses shall be pro-rated between the two funds as the Board shall deem proper.

C. Whenever necessary in its judgment to have a minister, emeritated for other reasons than old age, examined by duly qualified physicians designated by the Board to determine whether such minister is entitled to continued emeritation. In event the physicians declare the minister physically able to resume his ministerial duties, the Board shall notify his consistory to that effect. Whereupon the consistory shall apply to the Classis for the termination of his emeritation and declare him eligible to a call.

ARTICLE V.

The Pension Fund shall be maintained by contributions from the churches and from the ministers as follows:

A. Synod shall determine what each church shall contribute annually per family.

B. These contributions from the churches shall be sent through the classical treasurers to the treasurer of the Board of Trustees in quarterly payments.

C. All ministers desiring for themselves and for their widows and orphans the benefit of this Fund shall contribute 3% of their salary. The consistory, or whatever other body pays his salary, shall deduct this amount from the salary of the minister and send it quarterly to the treasurer of the Board.

D. As all ministers do not receive a separate auto allowance, the ministers who do receive such, shall add it to their salary in order to compute the amount to be paid. Those who receive more than \$200.00 allowance due to the special needs of their work, such as missionaries and others, shall not be called upon to add more than \$200.00 of the allowance to the salary.

ARTICLE VI.

The Pension Fund shall be disbursed as follows:

A. All ministers who have served the Christian Reformed Church shall upon emeritation receive as an annual pension two-fifths of the average annual salary of the ministers of the Christian Reformed Church. This amount to be determined annually by the Board of Trustees on or before March 1.

B. When an emeritated minister is officially declared eligible to entertain a call from the churches, his pension shall cease not later than one year from that date.

C. All widows of ministers, who have served the Christian Reformed Church, and who themselves have served in the manse, shall receive as an annual pension for herself and her minor children one-third of the average salary of ministers of the Christian Reformed Church (to be determined as in A. above). Upon re-marriage their pension shall cease.

D. Orphans of ministers who have served the Christian Reformed Church shall receive an annual pension of \$75.00 per person until they shall have attained their eighteenth birthday, unless physically or mentally incapacitated and so certified by two competent physicians appointed by the Board of Trustees, in which case their pension shall be continued. However, orphans of one family shall never receive collectively more pension than that to which their mother would have been entitled.

E. Dependents or orphans of deceased ministers, not members of the Christian Reformed Church shall not be entitled to pension.

ARTICLE VII.

Payment of pension to a minister, a minister's dependents, a minister's widow and orphans of a minister shall cease for the following causes, viz.:

A. In event an emeritated minister for any reason ceases to be a member of the Christian Reformed Church, his pension shall cease and the final check shall have incorporated in it a release and receipt in full.

B. In event a minister's widow, a minister's dependent or dependents, or a minister's orphan or orphans who receive pension from this fund, shall voluntarily cease to be a member of the Christian Reformed Church, or shall have been legally erased or excommunicated as member by his own or her consistory, the pension of such person or persons shall cease.

ARTICLE VIII.

A. In event a minister discontinues his ministerial office, or is deposed by the church, or ceases to be a member of the Christian Reformed Church, neither he nor his widow nor his dependents shall be entitled to pension. Such a minister shall be refunded a sum equal to 25% of the total amount he has contributed to the Pension Fund and he shall be required to sign and execute a proper form of release and receipt in full for and in consideration of such refund.

B. In event a minister desires to withdraw from the Pension Fund, he shall upon emeritation be entitled to a Pension in the proportion that the total number of years he has contributed shall bear to the difference between his attained age at time of withdrawal and age 65.

C. In event a contributing minister fails to pay through his consistory, or whatever other body pays his salary, the contribution of 3% of his salary due, he shall be notified by mail of such failure and if same shall remain unpaid for six months then the benefits from this Fund to either him or his widow or dependents shall be reduced to the ration mentioned in section B above. However, if such minister shall within a period of five years pay in full his past unpaid annual contributions plus 6% interest the full benefits shall apply.

ARTICLE IX.

A Relief Fund for those emeritated ministers, widows, and orphans, who, because of special circumstances, need more than the allotted pensions, shall be maintained and administered as follows:

1. This fund shall be maintained by free-will offerings of the churches. The Board of Trustees shall keep the churches informed as to the needs of this fund.

2. Any recipient of the above pensions, if special circumstances warrant it, may apply for aid to this fund. This application to be made on a blank provided by the Board, shall state reason for and extent of need, and shall have the approval of the consistory of the applicant. Upon receipt of such application duly filled in and approved, the Board may grant such aid as it deems necessary. Application for aid from this fund must be renewed at the beginning of every fiscal year with the approval of the applicant's consistory.
3. The total Pension and Relief granted a minister in one year shall never exceed two-thirds of the average annual salary of the ministers of the Christian Reformed Church; nor shall the total Pension and Relief to a widow exceed one-half of such aforementioned salary; nor shall the total Pension and Relief to orphans exceed \$150.00 per year per person.
4. Lack of personal means shall be the basis upon which application for aid from this fund shall be granted.
5. The payments from this fund shall be reported to the advisory committee of Synod and, if Synod desires, to the Synod itself in executive session. These payments shall receive no further publicity.

ARTICLE X.

All income from legacies, unless otherwise specified, shall be divided as follows: one-third to be put in the Relief Fund and the remaining two-thirds in the Pension Fund; and shall be kept as Reserve Funds. Provided, however, that in event of special emergency the Board of Trustees may borrow from these Reserve Funds to meet such emergency; but shall repay the same as soon as funds are available.

ARTICLE XI.

The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church reserves the right to alter and amend these rules as may be required and justified by experience and the available resources for the general advantage of the Church.

If the above plan is adopted by Synod your committee presents the following proposals:

1. That Article 13 of our Church Order be revised to read:
“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 (likewise for the orphans and widows of ministers) out of the common funds of the churches according to the general ecclesiastical ordinance in the matter.”
2. That the present Capital Fund be divided, one third for the Relief Fund and two thirds for the Pension Fund, in order that there may be a reserve in both funds.

3. That this plan shall apply to all beneficiaries of the present Emeritus Fund; but that those emeritated ministers, their widows and orphans who do not draw from the present fund, shall receive pension from Pension Fund only upon request, since they did not contribute to this Fund and apparently are not in need.

REMARKS

Your committee was instructed to look into the legality of this plan. This has been done. The plan was submitted to a competent attorney, and he found no legal objections to the plan as presented by your committee.

As to the official guarantee of the Pension Fund by Synod, your committee wishes to state that, this plan is not based upon actuarial principles and it is not meant to be. This plan is as strong as the promise of the church.

Respectfully submitted,

Y. P. DE JONG

WM. KOK

RALPH J. BOS

GEO. J. BROODMAN

TONY NOORDEWIER

FRED L. WINTER

REPORT XXI.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON POSSIBLE FOURTH YEAR SEMINARY COURSE

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ISSUE

THE synodical mandate, with which your committee has been charged, concerns a matter that may be said to have originated as early as 1932. The Synod of that year, in connection with the report of the Committee in re Missionary Training and Bible School, instructed the Faculty of Calvin Seminary "to draw up, in consultation with experienced evangelistic workers, a course of study with a view to special evangelistic work, and that, as soon as it has received the approval of Curatorium, the course be offered temporarily by the present Faculty" (Cf. Acts, 1932, page 20.)

In response to this mandate of 1932, the Seminary Faculty sent a communication to the Synod of 1934, in which it informed the Synod that it had not carried out the mandate because of the difficulties involved. It also asked that a further clarification of the mandate be given by the Synod. (Cf. Acts, 1934, page 125). Upon the recommendation of the Committee of pre-advice the Synod appointed another committee, which, together with representatives of the Faculty was to study the question whether such a course was feasible, and to report to the next Synod. It is to be noted that in this decision Synod failed to furnish the requested clarification, which occasioned much delay in the matter as consequent history revealed.

The synodical committee appointed by the Synod of 1934 reported in 1936 that it was unable to perform the task assigned to it because of the ambiguity in the mandate given. The ambiguity was due to the Synod's failure to state whether it had in mind only a course for prospective evangelistic ministers or also for lay evangelistic workers. The committee of pre-advice in its report acknowledged the ambiguity in the previous declarations

of Synod on this matter. It recommended that the committee be discharged, that the Synod declare that the mandate concerns a course for prospective evangelistic ministers only, and to appoint the Calvin Seminary Faculty to serve as a committee to report to the next Synod concerning the feasibility of such a course, and if considered feasible to suggest a way in which this might be carried out. (Cf. Agenda, Part I, 1936 and Acts 1936, p. 40).

The Seminary Faculty submitted a well worked out report on this matter, which may be found in the Agenda of 1938, pp. 71ff, part 1. Besides outlining a year's work for prospective evangelistic ministers, it also called attention to the difficulty of introducing such a course in the present set-up. In view of this problem and in view of the evidences of the need of more work in the Seminary, the Faculty recommended that this problem be not decided independent of the larger problem of the development and expansion of the seminary course now offered. This was the immediate occasion for the appointment of the committee now reporting.

The Synod of 1938 decided to "appoint a committee which shall report to the next Synod on the advisability of adding to our Seminary course a fourth year of study with a view toward practical and evangelistic training as well as postgraduate studies. *Grounds:*

1. The times call for more practical training of prospective candidates to the ministry, and this has also been acknowledged by the Synod of 1932, as is evident from the quotation on page 73 in the report of the Faculty.
2. Many of our students, by taking up postgraduate studies, seem to indicate their own conviction that they need, or desire, a more complete theological and practical training. This being the case, it is the duty of our Church to make a complete education possible rather than forcing our students to seek part of their education elsewhere.
3. This would be in harmony with the desire of the Theological Faculty, which speaks of the larger problem of the future development and enlargement of our Seminary beyond the scope of the introduction merely of an optional course in evangelistic training without an increase in the Seminary teaching personnel, which the Faculty calls highly problematical.

Our mandate clearly places upon us the duty of reporting on the question whether it is advisable to add a fourth year to the present required seminary course with a view to the voices that have been raised in favor of a practical and evangelistic training as well as in favor of post-graduate studies.

The Committee regrets to inform the Synod that Rev. J. Weidenaar, who was appointed a member of this Committee, had notified the Stated Clerk that he would not be able to serve. We have missed the valuable services that he would undoubtedly have been able to give in the preparation of this report.

METHODS OF APPROACHING THE PROBLEM

Early in its discussions about the problem your committee felt that it would be wise to secure the sentiments of those who were known to be vitally interested in the training of evangelistic ministers within our circles and the reaction of those seminaries that have already introduced the fourth year seminary work.

In the responses of those who are known to be vitally interested in this particular problem, we found as might have been expected an enthusiastic plea for the introduction of a course specifically adapted for the training of evangelistic ministers. The courses that they recommended square pretty well with those outlined by the Faculty and recommended to the Synod of 1938. But it is striking that they agreed in frowning upon the suggestion of introducing a fourth year seminary in order to realize their ideals. It seemed to your committee that those who are strongest for the special course for the training of evangelistic training of ministers are not yet willing to pay the price of an additional year of study at the seminary for this particular work, and that the Church may as yet be not ripe for the step that seems so highly desirable to your committee.

We have also corresponded with the American Association of Theological Schools in order to find out what is being done and what the reactions are to a fourth required year for graduation from the seminary. From our correspondence it became apparent that there are theological seminaries (among them the Princeton Theological Seminary) that have given this problem serious consideration, but that as yet only three of them had introduced it or were introducing it.

The Concordia Seminary (Lutheran) of St. Louis, Missouri, had introduced it at the beginning of this academic year, that is, in the fall of 1938. However the problem in this seminary is not analogous to ours. Concordia demands only two years of college work for entrance requirements, and, we are informed, now adds another year of seminary work "in order to gain more time for college subjects." Their situation is so different from ours that it may be dismissed from any further consideration in our particular study, even though a fourth year in the seminary is added.

The Columbia Theological Seminary (Presbyterian), located at Decatur, Georgia, has this academic year introduced a fourth year seminary course because it does "not believe that it is possible to give all the training which is needed within the compass of three years." It has placed a year of clinical or practical training in the problems of the pastorate under the oversight of some carefully selected and successful pastors in co-operation with the Faculty. This year of practical training follows the second year of seminary work. Although the Faculty seems to cherish high hopes for this introduction, yet it is candidly admitted that it is only in the stage of experimentation since it had not yet been operating for a full year.

The Augustana Seminary (Lutheran), located at Rock Island, Ill., stands alone as a pioneer in this field. They are now in their fifth year and declare that for them it is beyond the stage of experimentation. Judging from the reports, the Faculty, the students and the churches are more than mildly enthusiastic about it. They call this extra year which was placed after the second year "The Parish Service Year." In the year 1933, the Synod of the Swedish Lutheran Church, convened at Chicago, adopted the resolution "that the seminary course be extended to four years, one year, preferably the third, to be spent in practical work, under the supervision of the pastor at or near the field and the theological Faculty, at a salary on the basis of \$30.00 per month plus board and room, and that the resolution go into effect during the school year 1934-1935." Many of the details have been ironed out and the innovation is now working smoothly. And in the estimation of all those concerned it constituted a highly desirable step ahead.

From the correspondence carried on, it appears that there is a growing feeling among the seminaries that three years of seminary work cannot prepare a student adequately for the ministry of the gospel in these times which are demanding a more adequate training for those who propose to be ministers of the Gospel of Christ. It is clear too that where the introduction of a fourth year has been tried out, it has met with instantaneous approval by all those concerned, and that sooner or later all the seminaries of recognized standing in this country will fall in line with those who have already blazed the trail.

THE PROPOSALS OF YOUR COMMITTEE

The above information has, of course, a bearing upon the specific mandate with which we are charged, namely, to report on the advisability of adding a fourth year to the Seminary with a view toward practical and evangelistic training as well as postgraduate studies.

It is well to note that the Synod has made our task a rather easy one. It has asked us to report on the advisability of requiring another year's work for graduation from our seminary and then proceeds to give three valid reasons, not for the necessity of a report of a committee on this matter, but for the very advisability on which we are to report.

Your committee recommends that the Synod declare that a fourth year be introduced as soon as the necessary regulations have been drawn up and approved of by a Synod. *Grounds:*

1. The introduction of a fourth year would make it possible to do justice to the persistent demand for a more adequate training for our prospective evangelistic ministers, without taking any more time from the work that is now given and which is already reduced to an irreducible minimum.
2. The times call for more practical training of prospective candidates to the ministry as acknowledged by the Synods of 1932 and 1938. And as time marches on, there will be an even greater demand made upon the ministers of the Gospel. Young men are being trained not merely for the present but to meet the spiritual problems and needs of a coming generation. Their training should anticipate the needs and problems of the future. Such preparation

cannot be met by merely a change in the courses offered, but call for an enlarged course that only the requirement of an additional year can meet.

3. The ministers and the students themselves have indicated that they felt that the present course is inadequate by taking up post-graduate work. And the percentage of students and ministers who could avail themselves of additional theological work and did, is suggestively high. A well constructed fourth year Seminary course could in a large measure meet this demand.
4. The Seminary Faculty has already expressed its conviction that justice cannot be done to the demands made by those who are interested in more practical and evangelistic training in the present required seminary course of three years.

Your committee recommends that the additional year be in the nature of an internship, or a combination of internship and academic work. *Reasons:*

1. The requirement of actual work in the field offers splendid opportunities for the practical aspects of the training for prospective evangelistic ministers. Such practical work is generally conceded by those interested in evangelistic training as an indispensable part of an adequate course.
2. It will aid the Faculty to meet the deficiency in practical training. The need of such practical training for prospective candidates for the ministry was conceded by the Synods of 1932 and 1938. The Seminaries that have introduced the fourth year have deemed it necessary to devote the extra year for clinical work on the field.
3. If this year of clinical and practical work be placed after the second year, it will help bring to light some of the deficiencies that the student may actually manifest in the ministry, and such manifestations will appear in time so that those concerned about his deficiency can work together in the direction of correcting it.

Your committee recommends that a committee be appointed to draw up for the next Synod a well worked out plan of a four year course together with various regulations covering among others the following points:

1. Regulations governing the relationship of the seminary interne to the minister, consistory, and church on the field where he is serving his internship.
2. Regulations governing the placement of the various students.
3. Regulations governing the Faculty's supervision together with that of the minister and consistory while the student is on the field.
4. Regulations stipulating the relationship of the Faculty to the minister under whose direction and supervision the work is being done.
5. Regulations by which the student may carry on additional academic work, if required.
6. Regulations concerning the student's sustenance while on the field.

Praying that God may guide and direct the Synod in the deliberations of a matter of as far reaching significance as the addition of a fourth year to the seminary course, we are sincerely yours.

The Committee,

GERGE GORIS
D. H. KROMMINGA
HENRY SCHULTZE

[NOTE—The Rev. S. G. Brondsema was not present when this report was adopted. His signature therefore is not attached. The sentiments herein expressed have met with his approval in the discussion meetings.]

REPORT XXII.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE FORM OF ATTESTATION

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Committee appointed by the Synod of 1936 on the "Form of Attestation" begs to submit its report according to the following outline:

- I. Mandate.
- II. Origin and History.
- III. Principles and Practices Involved:
 1. What is a "letter or testimony" of which Art. 82 (C.O.) speaks?
 2. The Value of a Certificate.
 3. The Occasion for Issuing Certificates.
 4. The Rights of Members in Issuing Certificates.
 5. The Coöperation of the Congregation in issuing Certificates.
 6. The "Safeguarding" of Membership.
 7. The Expiration of the Validity of Certificates.
 8. The Authentication of Certificates.
 9. The Mailing of Certificates.
 10. Proper Appellation.
- IV. Proposed Form.

I. MANDATE:

The mandate with which Synod charged this Committee may be found in the Acts of the Synod of 1936, Art. 97, V, p. 51. An overture from Classis Grand Rapids East occasioned the decision of Synod to appoint this committee: (1) to make a thorough study of the whole subject of attestations ;" and (2) ". . . . to present as a result of this study a formula to be recommended for use by the consistories when issuing letters of membership."

It should be noted that the first part of this mandate, ". . . . to make a *thorough study* of the *whole subject* of attestations," is as comprehensive as it can be. A charge such as this would be more suitable for an academical dissertation than for a report to Synod. For reasons that

are obvious, the present committee has limited its task, confining this study to the principles generally acknowledged and the practices honored by the Reformed churches in the Netherlands, and naturally also and even especially, by our own denomination in America. The committee is well aware of the fact that this will not exhaust the subject, but trusts also that this limiting of the mandate will satisfy Synod.

II. ORIGIN AND HISTORY:

The practice of giving testimonials or letters of reference to persons well known and trusted, in order that they may be received by others not acquainted with such persons, is common in our day as it was in the past. Even in the Scriptures such letters and testimonials are found. In Romans 16:1, 2 the Apostle Paul "commends" unto the church at Rome, "Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you . . ." Another example may be found in Acts 18:26-28. Here the brethren at Ephesus wrote a recommendation for Apollos to the disciples at Achaia, in order that these might receive him.

However, though we find mention made of such "incipient certificates" in the New Testament, still we could not expect to discover a perfect model for a formula at this early stage of the development of the church and of inter-congregational relationships.

Reflection on the proper formulation of such testimonies and their phrasing occurred in the churches of the Reformation in the Netherlands. It appears from literature consulted that this was occasioned especially by the fact that misuse was made of alleged church membership by persons desiring to benefit from donations of diaconates in various places. These strollers would travel from place to place, feign belief in the doctrines of the Reformation and apply for financial aid to sympathetic diaconates. To obviate this abuse the churches soon began to issue testimonials to persons traveling from one place to another, signed or sealed by the minister or the consistory of the church from which such travelers hailed; and the churches to which application for aid was made soon began to demand such testimonials. It was soon discovered that such testimonials could serve a larger purpose, not

only to safeguard the diaconates, but also the membership of persons moving from one place to another. It is not difficult to understand that very early in the history of the churches of the Netherlands Synods began to regulate the issuing and the receiving of these testimonials.

The following synods made decisions in regard to these testimonials:

1. The Synod of Embden, 1571, Art. XLV.
2. The Synod of Dordrecht, 1578, Art. XXV, ofte X.
3. The Synod of Middelburg, 1581, Art. LXVII.
4. The Synod of 's Gravenhage, 1586, Art. LXXV.
5. The Synod of Dordrecht, 1618-'19, Art. LXXXII.

Upon consulting the decisions of these Synods, it will be noticed that they all insisted that the testimony to be given in the certificate should concern one's walk of life, one's "wandel." The Reverend Joh. Jansen in his "Korte Verklaring van de Kerkenordering," p. 354, maintains, however, that this expression is not meant to exclude one's confession, but that both were implied in it, confession and conduct. For that reason, so the Reverend Jansen claims, the Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands held at Utrecht in 1905, revised Art. LXXXII, so that it was made to read, ". . . aangaande hun belijdenis en wandel."

Among us, as the Christian Reformed Church, a number of Synods have made decisions in regard to the issuing and the receiving of the testimonials now under discussion. It will suffice to indicate the synods that have taken action, since the quoting of the decisions would require too much time and space:

1. Algemeene Bepalingen, Art. 64.
2. Minutes of Classical Meeting, Oct. 2, 3, 1867.
3. Acta Synodi, 1880, Art. 31, p. 201.
4. Acta Synodi, 1892, Art. 30c, p. 15.
5. Acta Synodi, 1898, Art. 68, p. 53, 54.
6. Acta Synodi, 1898, Art. 89, p. 72.
7. Acta Synodi, 1916, Art. 41, IV, p. 44.
8. Acta Synodi, 1916, Art. 44, pp. 48, 49.

None of these decisions has in any way impaired the force of the two articles of the Church Order, controlling the issuing and the receiving of testimonials. A reference to these two articles may, therefore, suffice as a statement of the church's present position in regard to this matter.

Art. 61 (C.O.) governs the *receiving* of members from other congregations. It reads as follows: "1. None shall be admitted to the Lord's Supper except those who according to the usage of the Church with which they unite themselves have made confession of the Reformed Religion, besides being reputed to be of godly walk, without which those who come from other churches shall not be admitted." It will be noticed that this article makes mention of *confession*, which is to be Reformed in character, and of a *walk (of life)*, which must be godly. No church or consistory may, therefore, admit any one to the Lord's Supper unless he comes with a testimony from another church containing these two statements. It is very important to note that Art. 61 links the receiving of testimonials to admission to the Lord's Supper; i.e., to the use of the sacraments. That constitutes a principle which does not always receive due attention among us and to which the committee wishes to refer later on in this report.

Article 82 (C.O.) on the other hand, governs the *issuing* of testimonials to such as remove from the congregation. It reads: "To those who remove from the Congregation a letter or testimony concerning their profession and conduct shall be given by the Consistory, signed by two; or in the case of letters, which are given under the seal of the Church, signed by one." Again, the same expressions are here used; viz., "profession and conduct."

It may, therefore, be asserted that the Reformed churches of the Netherlands from the time of the Reformation to the present, as well as our own Christian Reformed Church, have consistently demanded that whenever testimonials are issued or received, these shall concern and make mention of two matters: (1) *profession*, which is to be Reformed; and (2) *walk (of life)*, which is to be godly. These two expressions are evidently intended to cover the entire field concerning which man can give testimony. The heart and its disposition must be left to the judgment of God and should, therefore, not be made an object concerning which a consistory may be required to testify.

III. PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES INVOLVED:

1. WHAT IS A "LETTER OR TESTIMONY" OF WHICH ART. 82 SPEAKS?:

After a brief history and survey of the present rules concerning letters or testimonies, of which Art. 82 (C. O.)

makes mention, has been given above, the question should now be answered, just what is such a letter or testimony, in order that a correct formula may be presented to Synod by the committee.

Various answers have been given to the question stated above. Dr. F. L. Rutgers states that it is “. . . een getuig-schrift, aan iemand gegeven op kerkelijk gebied.” He adds, however, “In den aard der zaak ligt, dat het getuig-schrift zegt, waartoe het is afgegeven, zoodat er geen misbruik van gemaakt kan worden.” (Collegevoordrachten, p. 144). Prof. W. Heyns asserts in his Kybernetiek, p. 108, “Daarentegen ligt het op de lijn van de erkenning van de organische eenheid der Gemeenten van hetzelfde kerkverband, en van een lidmaatschap der kerk als geheel, om aan een attestatie de beteekenis toe te kennen van *een overdracht van lidmaatschap* van de eene Gemeente aan de andere, met dien verstande, dat men lidmaat blijft van de eene Gemeente tot men opgenomen is door te andere.” (See also p. 302, as well as Heyns, Handbook for Elders and Deacons, pp. 271, 274.) Van Dellen and Keegstra (Kerkelijk Handboek) describe a certificate as follows: “Uit de attestatie blijkt of degenen, die uit andere kerken (hierbij wordt gedacht aan kerken uit de zelfde kerkengroep) komen, krachtens belijdenis en wandel tot het Avondmaal kunnen worden toegelaten.” Dr. H. Bouwman (De Kerkelijke Tucht, p. 281) gives the following lucid definition, “Een attestatie is een getuigenis, een verklaring omtrent geloof en wandel, afgegeven door een kerkeraad aan een lid der gemeente, die van de eene plaats naar de andere verhuist, opdat de kerkeraad van de plaats, waarheen het lid verhuist, wete wien hij ontvangt en of hij dat lid kan toelaten tot de sacramenten.”

Aside from the question as to the value or character of a certificate, whether it is a transfer of membership or not, or whether a consistory may issue and must receive it under all circumstances, (which matters are to be discussed after a little) the committee feels that the definition of Dr. Bouwman is so clear that it merits translation. Dr. Bouwman's definition reads, “An attestation is a testimony, a declaration concerning faith and conduct, issued by a consistory to a member of the congregation, who moves from one place to another, in order that the consistory of the place to which he moves may know whom

it receives and whether it may admit this member to the use of the sacraments."

This makes a certificate a testimony from one consistory to another concerning the profession and conduct of a member who moves from one place to another, in order that the member's standing or status in the church he leaves may be continued in the church with which he affiliates.

As was seen above Art. 82 prescribes that a certificate must contain "a letter or testimony concerning this profession and conduct." This appears to be the essential element in a certificate. Indeed other statements may be added; such as, the commending of a brother or sister to Christian fellowship and the request that they be taken under the supervision of the consistory, and so forth. Still, such matters are not essential to such a certificate. Art. 82 of the C. O. makes the statement concerning profession and conduct the cardinal element.

2. THE VALUE OF A CERTIFICATE:

In a discussion of the character and value of certificates, it is impossible to escape the moot question of the nature of the relation between individual churches within the denomination. The Scylla and Charybdis in this case are collegialism and independentism or congregationalism. The Reformed position lies in between. For collegialism emphasizes the organic unity of the denomination at the expense of the independence of the local church, while independentism emphasizes the independence of the local church, at the expense of the organic unity of the denomination.

It will, we trust, not be expected of the committee to answer the question, Just where the line is to be drawn. There was a time of well-nigh unanimity in the Netherlands before the synod of Assen, 1926, but at present these churches are involved in disputes concerning matters that touch this vital question. Among us, there has perhaps never been complete unanimity. A report such as this cannot be expected to contain a full discussion of this matter, and the committee proposes to continue without definitely settling this question first.

This will be possible if we accept the two fundamental and definitely stated principles of the Church Order here;

viz., (1) The parity of the churches (Art. 84 C.O.); (2) The obligation of every church to receive each other's certificates.

The principle of the parity of the churches implies that no church can lord it over another, so that no church can force any other to accept its certificate unconditionally. This article (84) and principle, therefore, militate against collegialism, which makes it possible for one church to lord it over another. This may never be done. Every individual consistory is responsible for the sanctity of the sacraments and no form of church government may attempt to erase that responsibility, in fact, the structure of church government must be so made that it acknowledges and honors this responsibility.

However, the ruthless insistence upon the principles of Art. 84 (C.O.) would lead to independentism; therefore, articles 61 and 82 act as its counterpart, restraining the inconsiderate application of the principle by prescribing that every church shall accept the certificates issued by another. This is made possible since the one church exercises supervision over the other as is prescribed by Art. 44 (C.O.), so that the one consistory has faith in the other's purity of doctrine and Christian conduct. If, therefore, a church or consistory feels constrained to refuse to accept certificates issued by another, it is a serious matter, since this implies that there is a lack of confidence in regard to profession and conduct.

We conclude, therefore, that under ordinary and regular circumstances, certificates must be received, unless the church refusing to receive them has reasonable doubts as to the soundness of the issuing church, in which case it must also prosecute the case according to the rules obtaining therefor.

3. THE OCCASION FOR ISSUING CERTIFICATES:

Art. 82 (C.O.) plainly states the occasion which warrants the issuing of a certificate by a consistory: "To those who remove from the congregation . . ." No other condition is mentioned. The idea underlying this condition is undoubtedly that Christians living in a certain geographical section should belong to the same church. Generally speaking, this principle is sound. However, it should not be forgotten that the enforcing of this principle may cause considerable grief, since we are now living in changing times, due to the invention of rapid means of trans-

portation as well as of communication. Still evil practices should be discouraged. It is a fact that some members of our churches ask for a certificate to avoid disagreeable situations between members mutually, or between members and consistory or pastor. It is difficult and perhaps not advisable to construct a rule in this respect, yet it seems to be plain that the constant exchanging of one church for another cannot be conducive to a normal church life, nor to one's spiritual growth.

4. THE RIGHTS OF MEMBERS IN ISSUING CERTIFICATES:

It stands to reason that a certificate can be issued only at the request of the member himself. Attempts to violate this rule are heard of occasionally, but such attempts give evidence of ignorance concerning the character of a certificate and the position of a member in the church. We have no hierarchial form of church government, no not even a collegialistic, we may not consider members as pawns upon the board, or as soldiers in an army. These pawns and soldiers can be shifted at will, but a member of the church stands directly responsible to Christ and must be considered having attained majority, so that he has a voice in the matter. It is true, however, that members make misuse of this right at times, but then the proper way of procedure is not violence, but instruction and persuasion. Since this right of a member cannot be challenged, it should be recognized in the certificate issued, and the phrase, "at his (her, their) request," should be incorporated in the formula to be adopted by Synod.

5. THE COOPERATION OF THE CONGREGATION IN ISSUING CERTIFICATES:

The statements made in a certificate must, of course, be true. A consistory issuing a certificate for a member and stating that such a member is "of the Reformed religion, besides being reputed to be of a godly walk," should be convinced of the truth of such statements. The matter is much too important to "risk" such a statement. It concerns the sanctity of the sacraments, and for that reason, it has been the custom in many, and especially in the larger churches, in which it is hardly possible for the eldership to be intimately acquainted with every member, to announce the application for a certificate to the congregation before it is actually issued, in order that the congregation may have an opportunity to acquiesce in its

issuance by its silence, or to inform the consistory of possible objections to the issuing of a certificate. This practice should be approved and encouraged since not only the consistory, but also the congregation is interested in the sanctity of the sacraments, the congregation should be afforded an opportunity to coöperate.

6. THE "SAFEGUARDING" OF MEMBERSHIP:

The overture of Classis Grand Rapids East, which occasioned the decision of the Synod of 1936 to appoint this committee, petitions Synod, "... to approve a form of transfer that shall safeguard the membership of a member, or of members, during the transfer." (See Acts, p. 51.) The advisory committee of this Synod (1936) recommended—and Synod adopted this recommendation—that Synod declare:

"1. That the overture of Classis Grand Rapids East proceeds on the wrong assumption that the membership of a member is in need of being safeguarded. *Ground:*

"A member having requested his consistory to give him a testimony as to his membership remains a member of his church until his letter of membership has been accepted by the consistory of the church with which he desires to affiliate himself, subject to previous regulations of Synod."

Though one might wish that Synod (1936) had substantiated this declaration, it remains that nearly all seem to be agreed that one's membership, during the period elapsing between the issuing of the certificate and its acceptance, remains with the church issuing the certificate.

Reference has been made in this connection to the decision of the Synod of 1914, which reads: "Dat volgens Art. 83 der K. O. attestatie aan den vertrekkende medegegeven moet worden, en dat hij niet als lid eener andere kerk kan worden toegelaten aler hij aldaar zijne attestatie heeft ingediend, terwijl zijn lidmaatschap op den duur zou vervallen als hij zijne attestatie niet indiende." (Acta Synodi, 1914, Art. 63, p. 69). This decision also seems to proceed from the idea that a person's membership remains with the church issuing the certificate. Dr. F. L. Rutgers (College-voordrachten, p. 145) seems to be of the same opinion. This authority criticizes an erroneous view when he says, "De voorstelling heerscht dan, dat

iemand, als hij zijne attestatie gekregen heeft, van de gemeente los is." Prof. W. Heyns agrees with Rutgers on this score as the quotation from his Kybernetiek, found above, clearly shows.

The Rev. Joh. Jansen appears to be of a different opinion, says he (*Korte Verklaring*, p. 353), "Door zijn vertrek houdt hij ipso facto op lid der plaatselijke kerk te zijn, ook al vraagt hij zijne attestatie niet op. Vraagt hij ze wel op, maar verzuimt hij ze in te leveren, dan blijft hij daardoor van zijn lidmaatschap verstoken." The question here discussed would not be so important, if it were not for the fact that it actually involves practical difficulties at times. It occurs not infrequently that a member receives a certificate upon his request, but discovers that the church to which it is addressed refuses to receive it. The church which has issued the certificate now assumes the right to refuse to acknowledge the person concerned as a member, very often because of unpleasant experiences in the past, and the person is thus forced to continue without any church affiliation. Aside from unpleasant experiences and possible obnoxious characteristics in the person, the situation thus created is very serious for the party involved. As a rule, there seems to be no cause to exercise discipline in such a case. The validity of the person's baptism and confession of faith is, therefore, acknowledged, yet he cannot partake of the sacraments which the Lord has also instituted for him. The institute, the church, which the Lord called into being to administer the sacraments, now refuses to do that in regard to a particular person, who has passed through a certain experience. Obviously such an attitude of a consistory cannot be correct, and the position occupied by the church at the synod of 1914 and again in 1936 should, therefore, be continued not only, but reiterated, since a violation of this position occurs not infrequently. The formula for certification should incorporate this idea in some way or another.

7. THE EXPIRATION OF THE VALIDITY OF CERTIFICATES:

In addition, it seems to the committee that mention should also be made in the certificate of the period of its validity. It happens that persons neglect to request a certificate for several weeks and months after they have moved from the congregation, or that they fail to deliver

the certificate to the consistory to whom it is addressed for a considerable length of time. This practice is not only deplorable, but actually makes the issuing of a certificate impossible, or invalidates a certificate issued. A certificate is "a letter or testimony concerning their profession and conduct" (Art. 82). Such testimonies must be true and should be given only from actual knowledge. But how can a consistory know if the person concerned has been absent for a considerable length of time, and of what value is such a testimony if it is written a considerable length of time previous to its submission? Consistories should, therefore, insist that persons moving to the territory of another church apply for a certificate immediately, in case they fail to do this they should be admonished and a statement to this effect attached to the certificate. Moreover, the formula for certification should not only indicate the date of its issuance, but also the date of the cessation of its validity, or its expiration. A period of one to three months, depending upon circumstances, should give ample time for this purpose.

8. THE AUTHENTICATION OF CERTIFICATES:

The proper authentication of a certificate is prescribed also in Art. 82 (C.O.) It is to be issued not by the pastor, but by the consistory. This stands to reason. The consistory must guard the sanctity of the sacraments and must, therefore, also control the issuing of certificates which will give admission to the use of the sacraments in another church. It is, moreover, to be, ". . . signed by two; or in the case of letters, which are given under the seal of the church, signed by one." It is well to adhere to this rule. All official documents written by our churches are usually signed by the president and secretary of the body, a certificate being an official document should be signed in that manner. The committee is, however, of the opinion that the final clause of Art. 82, ". . . or in the case of letters, which are given under the seal of the church, signed by one," has become obsolete. Hardly ever does a consistory employ this method. Moreover, it is observed that when a consistory does occasionally employ this method, it allows the same office-bearer, who signs the certificate, to attach the seal of the church to it. It is difficult to see how such a practice authenticates a certificate in a better way than when signed by just one

office-bearer, the seal is quite redundant. For these reasons the committee proposes to Synod that the final clause of Art. 82, which is quoted above, be deleted.

9. THE MAILING OF CERTIFICATES:

The expression in Art. 82 (C.O.) "shall be given" or as the Holland version puts it, "medegegeven worden," has been widely discussed. It has been maintained that a member moving from one place to another must carry his certificate with him, in order that he may personally hand it to the consistory of the new place. The practice of mailing certificates by one consistory to another has, upon the basis of this expression, been condemned. While the present committee feels that the emphasis placed upon the responsibility of the member moving in regard to his certificate is to be appreciated as the only sound view, still it fails to see any violation of doctrine or principle in the practice of mailing a certificate at the request and direction of the member concerned. As long as the personal responsibility of the member is not neglected nor violated, the manner of sending the certificate seems to be of secondary importance.

10. PROPER APPELLATION:

It is not superfluous to speak a word concerning the name or the designation of the "letter or testimony" mentioned in Art. 82 (C.O.) It is a fact that there is no unanimity among us in this respect, while such unanimity is nevertheless desirable. Many appellations are used, such as "Church Papers," "Letter of Dismissal," "Letter of Transfer," "Letter of Membership," "Attestation," "Certificate," and possibly others. Obviously some of these are not descriptive of the document and should, therefore, be discarded.

"Church Papers" is a wholly neutral term, without any significance, reminding one of naturalization papers, and fostering the erroneous idea that such papers are regularly on file with the clerk of the consistory.

"Letter of Dismissal" does not properly describe the character of the document, since the consistory does not dismiss a member by issuing a "letter or testimony" according to Art. 82 (C.O.).

"Letter of Transfer" cannot be accepted, since it presupposes a collegialistic form of church government and inter-congregational connections.

"Letter of membership" is not sufficiently descriptive of the purpose the document is to serve. The term "Letter" is quite neutral.

"Attestation" is defined as a verbal or written testimony or declaration in support of a fact. If this term were more widely used and sufficiently understood, it might be acceptable.

"Certificate of membership" is perhaps the most desirable, since a certificate is a testimony or a declaration signed by a party who wishes to verify a fact. This is exactly the thing the document described in Art. 82 (C.O.) should do. Moreover, the term "certificate" is familiar and generally used. Hence, the committee recommends this appellation.

IV. PROPOSED FORM:

According to the requirements of the mandate, the committee now presents a formula, attached hereto, which Synod may recommend for use by consistories when issuing certificates of membership.

We trust that this form will be self explanatory, especially after the foregoing has been consulted. Still it may be well to call attention to two or three elements incorporated in it.

1. The first paragraph of the proposed form contains the cardinal elements of the certificate. The committee, after considering several phrases used, deemed it best to employ the clause from Art. 61 (C.O.), ". . . of the Reformed Religion, besides being reputed to be of a godly walk." This clause is, of course, approved, since it is borrowed from the Church Order, and it describes exactly what the "receiving" consistory may demand of the "issuing" consistory.

2. The spaces for the names of baptized children have been placed over (not under) the signatures of the president and clerk of the consistory. This appears to be the logical place. The other arrangement creates the impression that baptized children belonging to parents whose certificates are issued, are a mere appendix and are not considered as actually belonging to the Church of God.

3. The remainder of the changes suggested and incorporated in this proposed form are sufficiently explained in this report, so that they do not call for special comment in this place.

Respectfully submitted:

N. J. MONSMA
L. VAN LAAR
A. PETERS

CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP

The Consistory of.....Christian Reformed Church of.....hereby certifies that..... (is, are) member(s) of the above-named Church, and that, as far as is known to this Consistory he (she, they) (is, are) "of the Reformed Religion, besides being reputed to be of a godly walk."

At his (her, their) request this certificate is issued to the Consistory of..... Christian Reformed Church of....., in order that he (she, they) may be admitted to the holy sacraments; to which Consistory he (she, they) (is, are) also commended for Christian supervision and fellowship.

The validity of this certificate shall expire.....month(s) after date; and upon the receipt of the attached form his (her, their) peculiar relation to this Church shall cease.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Baptized Children Date of Birth</i>	<i>Date of Baptism</i>
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

For the Consistory:

Done in Consistory:, President
....., 19....., Clerk

The certificate of.....from the.....
Christian Reformed Church of.....has been duly
received and accepted by the.....Christian Reformed Church.

For the Consistory:

Date, 19....., Clerk

REPORT XXIII.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON TESTIMONY CONCERNING OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD WAR

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

OUR synodical charge is found in Art. 68 of the Acts of 1938, which records the following decision: "The Committee appointed to advise Synod with respect to the Seminary Faculty's Report on 'Our Attitude Toward War,' recommends that the Synod adopt the suggestion of the Faculty that a Committee be appointed by Synod to draw up a statement in the nature of a Testimony on the question of our attitude toward war, for approval to Synod, for the reasons given in the Report (cf. Agenda I, pp. 34-35), said Committee to report to the next Synod."

In pursuance of this decision your Committee herewith submits the following proposed Testimony to your honorable body.

TESTIMONY REGARDING THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD WAR AND PEACE

In view of the fact that there is found among Christian people today, especially in our country, a widespread pacifistic and also militaristic propaganda; and seeing that many of our church members are honestly perplexed as to their duty in the matter of participating in future wars, some apparently holding that all such participation is unchristian, whereas others are inclined to refuse participation in certain kinds of war; the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, assembled at Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 1939, herewith addresses the following Testimony to the Churches.

I.

It is a fundamental Christian duty to promote mutual understanding and peace wherever possible between individuals as well as groups and nations. We are admonished in the Epistle to the Romans: "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men." (Rom. 12:18)

The Christian should be the sworn enemy of all malice, bitterness, animosity, and hatred, which is the root of murder.

This is likewise the duty of the government and of every citizen in the sphere of civil, national, and international life. Both individual citizens and those clothed with authority should do all in their power to promote peace and understanding between individuals, between racial, religious, economic, and social groups within the nation, and between nations as such. All inflammatory propaganda designed to stir up hatred and animosity between nations and races is to be condemned. Every effort to settle differences between nations in a peaceful way, by arbitration, by frank discussion around the conference table, is deserving of the support of Christian individuals and nations. We should strengthen the hands of all those who strive in an honorable way to settle international differences peaceably without recourse to war.

There is a militarism which the Christian cannot support but must oppose. This term is often used in a two-fold sense. Militarism in the sense of maintaining and developing an adequate army and navy for the defense of a country and the protection of the national interests, is not an evil but a good, a good without which no government could perform its God-given duty in a sinful world. But militarism as an attitude of mind which glorifies war as war, i.e., war for war's sake, or war for national aggrandizement—this is a great evil which no Christian should promote. All glorification of war for its own sake must be branded as unchristian and a direct violation of the apostolic injunction cited above. Against this militaristic spirit the Synod would strongly warn the members of our Churches to be on their guard.

II.

Recognizing the evils of such militarism on the one hand, Synod would issue a no less serious warning against the evils of present-day pacifism on the other.

The solemn duty which the Christian has to exert himself to the utmost in behalf of peace and the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes, should at no time be used to cancel his equally solemn duty to defend his country against the attack of the aggressor, to protect the weak in the international family from the wanton assault

of the strong, and in general to promote justice and fair dealings between the nations of the world. However much nations and individuals may and should stand committed to the prevention and suppression of war whenever and wherever possible, in a sinful world sooner or later situations will arise in which one nation resorts to aggression and attack upon another. And when in such a situation honest efforts to come to a just and peaceful adjustment of differences with the aggressor have failed, the moral right—if not duty—of the assaulted nation to defend itself against the aggressor is beyond dispute.

In condemning pacifism Synod desires to be clear and unambiguous. If by pacifism were meant the attitude of those who are prompted by a strong and persistent desire to promote international peace and understanding, every Christian should be a pacifist. But this is a loose and improper use of the term. Pacifism, properly used, stands for the conviction and attitude of those who condemn every war, and hence refuse to bear arms under any conditions. In its most radical form this pacifism not only involves the refusal to bear arms, but even the refusal to take part in any type of work incidental to warfare, such as medical, nursing, or welfare service when such service is occasioned by and required for the prosecution of a war.

This pacifism, which is incompatible with Christian duty, is becoming alarmingly prevalent in our country, both in its usual and in its radical form. Only a few years ago no less than ten thousand American Protestant clergymen declared themselves against participation in any and all wars. In recent years appeals have been made in the form of a challenge especially to American students "to refuse to support the government of the United States in any war it may undertake." These appeals to sign pacifist pledges are very common in our day, especially among such influential groups as students and clergymen. The recent Ministers' Peace Covenant, so-called, signed by such prominent liberal clergymen as Fosdick, Buttrick, Holmes, Sockman, and others, states unconditionally: "We believe that God leads his church into new life through obedience of the individual believer in refusing war for Christ's sake."

Against such insidious propaganda Synod feels constrained to issue a solemn warning, the more so since it

is a common procedure on the part of these pacifists to defend their refusal to participate in any and all wars with an appeal to Scripture and in the name of allegedly Christian principles.

The Scripture most commonly cited by pacifists in this connection is the so-called non-resistance passage in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:38, 39). But this passage gives no ground for a pacifistic position. It concerns the personal relationship of the members of the Kingdom to their fellows and, repudiating all personal revenge such as Jewish leaders would justify by an appeal to the Old Testament law of retaliation, Jesus urges upon His followers the readiness to suffer evil rather than resisting it. We are taught here that we must be willing at times to forego our rights and that situations may arise in which it is the noble thing to suffer rather than to insist upon our rights. But this can never justifiably be used to nullify our individual Christian duty to ward off an assault upon our life or our solemn duty to protect our loved ones from such an assault. And in the sphere of national and international relations it should be remembered that government is divinely instituted precisely for this protective purpose, viz., to maintain justice and to protect the weak from the strong. If this passage means what the pacifist would have it mean, it would require both of the individual and of the nation that they place themselves at the mercy of the violence of the boldest aggressor.

Many more specious arguments are used by the pacifists which should not lead Christians astray by their pious appearance. When it is urged that since all war is the result of sin, it is the duty of the Christian to refuse to have any part in it, the reasoning suffers from serious ethical confusion. All war is indeed the result of sin. But from this it in no wise follows that participation in every war is a sinful act for every party involved. Also in a sinful world there is a difference between a just and an unjust war, just as there is a difference between attacking in self defense a villain who breaks into one's home and assaulting a peaceful man without provocation.

Pacifists also often urge that all going to war is incompatible with the gospel of the Prince of Peace. In this connection they are wont to stress love and to ignore justice, both of which are essential in the Christian moral

life. In fact, they are inclined to forget that "in the face of unjust aggression the law of love may actually urge a demand for forcible resistance." In another form this same type of argument is urged when it is said that participation in war is always sin because it is utterly impossible to think of Jesus Christ in a soldier's uniform or handling a gun. We leave aside that this reasoning entirely overlooks the fact that our Savior came for a very unique and specific task into this world, which made participation in many human activities out of place for Him. But we may possibly ask the pacifist: Can we very well think of our Savior as a policeman? And if the reply must be in the negative, must we conclude from this that a Christian is not permitted to wear the uniform of a policeman or perform the functions of such an officer of the peace?

But this pacifism is fundamentally to be condemned because it is in irreconcilable conflict with the teaching of Scripture and of our Creed or the duty of the government in the matter of war and the corresponding duty of the Christian citizen.

One of the clearest and most explicit passages of Scripture on this subject is Rom. 13:1-5, and our Reformed fathers have formulated their convictions on this subject in Article XXXVI of our Belgic Confession. In this Scripture passage we are admonished as follows: "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake." And the appropriate sentences from the Confession read as follows: "We believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, has appointed kings, princes, and magistrates; willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and

policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained and all things carried on among them with good order and decency. For this purpose He has invested the magistracy with the sword for the punishment of evil-doers and for the protection of them that do well Moreover, it is the bounden duty of every one, of whatever state, quality, or condition he may be, to subject himself to the magistrate; to pay tribute, to show due honor and respect to them, and to obey them in all things not repugnant to the Word of God. . . .”

This scriptural injunction and the creedal deliverance based upon it clearly teach the following:

1) That because of the depravity of mankind civil government has been instituted by God for the purpose of maintaining good order and decency in human society and to curb the evil of the dissolute.

2) That according to the divine ordinance the government has the power of the sword over its citizens for the punishment of those who do evil and for the protection of them that do well.

3) That, though this power of the sword is first of all a power to punish the transgressors among its citizens for the protection of the good, it also by necessary implication extends to the power to defend the nation from the attack of an enemy nation. Since the government is responsible for the safety of its subjects, the power of the sword not only involves police but also military power.

4) That it is the duty of the citizen to obey his government, and that this duty also involves answering the government's call to arms for the protection of the nation.

5) That there is only one restriction upon this obedience of the Christian citizen to his government. This restriction is expressed by the Confession in these words: “all things which are not repugnant to the Word of God.” In scriptural language it is recognized and expressed in the words of the apostle Peter, who justified his disobedience to the magistrate when he and others were forbidden to preach the Word of God, by saying: “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

III.

From all this it must be clear that the Christian who consistently refuses to bear arms at the call of his government not only is disloyal to his country, but in so doing

fails to discharge his solemn God-given duty to obey his government and to defend his country. The Church should bear witness against this pacifism, point out its unscriptural character, and warn its members against its subtle, religiously garbed propaganda.

But can it be said that the Christian citizen's duty to obey his government in its call to arms is absolute and unconditional? Must he be denied the right to disobey this call of his government under any and all circumstances? It would, of course, be a very simple and easy solution of a difficult problem to answer these two questions in the affirmative. But would such a solution be a Christian solution?

As a general rule the orders of the government must be obeyed. A state in which the citizen only obeys the government when it pleases him is no state and that government is no government. This is true in days of peace, and the principle gains intensified force in days of war, when the national safety is at stake. The duty of the citizen to obey his government by responding to its summons to go to war is, in the light of Romans 13, a very solemn one. He must go the limit in discharging this duty. Seeing we live in a sinful and imperfect world, it may even be necessary for him to submit to an unjust law. But after this duty has been properly stressed, it must also be recognized that there is a limit to this obedience to the state. As Professor V. H. Rutgers of the Law Faculty of the Free University wrote recently in an address on "The Reformed Faith and Its Ethical Consequences for the State": "But there is a limit: the duty of obedience ceases when to obey men is to disobey God." (*Proceedings of the Fourth Calvinistic Congress*, 1938, p. 124. See also *Christelijke Encyclopaedie*, I, 593)

As was pointed out above, both Scripture and our Confession place a restriction upon our duty to obey the government. Peter at one time refused to obey the civil authorities and appealed to a higher loyalty to God in doing so. And our Creed restricts the duty of the citizen to the State to "all things which are not repugnant to the Word of God." From this it is clear that the Church must not only recognize the right of Christians but even their duty *under certain definite circumstances* to refuse obedience to the civil magistrate.

But under what kind of circumstances must such a right—or even duty—be recognized? That it applies to religious matters is plain. Peter and his apostolic associates were denied the right to preach the gospel and they refused obedience. Our spiritual ancestors in Holland in the days of the Secession similarly refused to obey the orders of the government to abstain from the preaching of the gospel. Korean and Japanese Christians who today are ordered by their government to perform acts of worship in the shrines of a false religion have, according to Christian standards, the right and the duty to disobey. Must this right of disobedience be restricted to matters of freedom of religion only? Surely this would be an untenable position. Quite apart from matters of freedom of worship, the government might conceivably deny a citizen important rights or order him to participate in certain activities, either of which might constitute an outrage to what he, in the light of the Word of God, conceives his Christian duty to be. In such cases, no less than when it concerns his religious rights and privileges, the only justifiable course to pursue is to obey God rather than men.

Is this a vindication of the conscientious objector? Yes, but of only one kind of conscientious objector.

There is a conscientious objector who claims that because his conscience objects to all participation in war, he has the right before God to refuse obedience to the government's call to arms. But this is a baseless claim. Not the conscience of the individual citizen is the last court of appeal, but God's revealed will. And, as shown above from Scripture, he who denies the right and the duty of the government to wage war on just occasions is not in harmony but in conflict with the Word of God. His conscience is seriously in error.

Synod would warn Christians against this claim often made of late by pacifists that their conscience must be the last court of appeal. This ethical fallacy is also made in the constitutional amendment on the subject adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. in 1938 and now sent down to the presbyteries of that body for ratification. This amendment reads: "When war breaks out, Christians are bound, in relation to it, to obey their consciences before God, who alone is Lord of the conscience, and the Church must recog-

nize and uphold their duty thus to obey conscience, whatever its commands may be." The groundlessness of this sweeping claim may possibly best be instanced from the fact that at one time in the history of our country polygamy was practiced in the state of Utah because the conscience of the Mormon population of that state sanctioned it. Must we understand the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. to mean that that body would wish to champion the nineteenth century Mormon conscience on this score? And would that same Assembly deny the government of the United States the right to override this Mormon conscience as it actually did by federal legislation?

If it be objected that in the matter of military service our government has nevertheless consistently recognized the right of the conscientious objector against all war by exempting such groups as the Society of Friends (Quakers) and certain others from military service, it must be noted that such exemption is a concession but not a right. Our government can afford to make such a concession, because, and so long as, the number of conscientious objectors is comparatively small, and it can do this the more readily because Quakers have never objected to perform some very valuable auxiliary services incidental to war. But if and when the number of such conscientious objectors should become unduly large, the government is under no obligation to continue the concession and it would in fact be compelled to withdraw it.

Not only must the Church reject the claim of the pacifistic conscientious objector, but there is also another kind of conscientious objector whose claims can not stand the test of Scripture and the Creed. There are those who would refuse to take part in any war when, and as long as, they are not persuaded of the justness of the given war. With the frequent complexity of the causes of modern wars and the difficulty of the average citizen to be adequately informed on this complexity of causes at the time the war breaks out, it is clear that this may be the predicament in which many a Christian will find himself. But in such a situation he is not justified in refusing to perform military service. He who would maintain this position overlooks the fact that in such a situation the prior duty of each citizen to obey

the government must have the right of way. This type of conscientious objector does not face the moral alternative: to fight or to do nothing; but: to fight or to disobey his government. His *uncertainty* as to the justice of the given war can be no justifiable ground for refusing obedience to his government.

The only conscientious objector to military service whose claim the Church cannot repudiate is he who, recognizing his duty to obey his government and to defend his country in response to its call to arms, has intelligent and adequate grounds to be convinced that the given war to which he is summoned is an unjust war. When he is absolutely certain in the light of the principles of the Word of God that his country is fighting for a wrong cause, he cannot morally justify his participation in the given war. War is killing people and for anyone to engage in such killing of fellowmen when he is convinced in his heart that the cause for which he is fighting is an unjust one, this procedure cannot be justified before the tribunal of God and His Word. The only course open to such a person is to resort to passive resistance and to refuse to bear arms in that given war.

In closing, Synod would urge upon all to pray for righteousness and peace in national and international affairs; to study the revealed Word for an understanding of the will of God for the guidance of the life of citizens and their government; to obey all lawfully constituted authorities for God's sake; and, if a serious conflict of duty should occur, to obey God rather than men.

Humbly submitted,

LOUIS BERKHOF
SAMUEL VOLBEDA
CLARENCE BOUMA
MARTIN J. WYNGAARDEN
HENRY SCHULTZE
DIEDRICH H. KROMMINGA

REPORT XXIV.

SUNDAY LABOR PROBLEM

To the Synod of 1939.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR committee to study the problem of Sunday labor has the following to report to your honorable body.

I. OUR MANDATE.

This is to be found in the Acts of Synod of 1938, Art. 60, pp. 34, 35, where we read:

"A. Your Committee advises Synod to accede to the request of Classis Grand Rapids West to appoint a committee *anent necessary Sunday labor*. (The overture is not merely of the Broadway Ave. Consistory.)

This Committee shall give interpretation of the phrase, "servile works . . . , which . . . present necessity require" (cf. Art. 6 of the six points of 1881) in the light of Scripture, and in connection with the complexity of the present social structure. While avoiding the cataloging of forbidden labors, the Committee shall set forth principles which may enable Consistories to decide in the concrete cases which repeatedly arise. *Grounds:*

1. The indefinite phrase, "works . . . which . . . present necessity require," lends itself to interpretations which encroach upon the sanctity of the Lord's Day.
2. Due especially to the complex character of the present social structure, many problems of Sunday labor are constantly pressing for a solution.

Adopted.

B. Synod refer the overture of Classis California to said Committee.

Adopted.

The overture of the Broadway Ave. Consistory referred to in Point A of the above, as found in the Agenda of Synod, 1938, Part II, Art. 54, p. 184, reads as follows:

"*Anent Necessary Sunday Labor*. Our Synod of 1881 adopted six points of the Synod of Dort, 1618-1619, and our Synod of 1926, Art. 136, p. 192, stressed the officially

binding character of the last of these six points which reads: '(6) This day must be so consecrated to religion that on that day we rest from all toilsome works, except those of charity and present necessity. Also from all such recreation as hinder religion.'

"The times in which we live are highly complex. Modern competition in business is extremely acute. The Lord's Day is being encroached upon repeatedly and increasingly in the name of meeting competition. Judgments on what is, and what is not a work of necessity are diverse. This is becoming more apparent as time goes on, in various denominations, including our own. Local Consistories and different Classes, in the same denomination, find it increasingly difficult to act in accordance with a uniform standard in similar cases.

"What is, and what is not a work of necessity on the Lord's Day, may not properly be left to the determination of local Consistories. This is a matter that belongs to the major assemblies. Cf. Art. 30, b, of the Church Order: '... or such as pertain to the churches of the major assembly in common.'

"We respectfully petition Synod to appoint a committee to study the problem of what constitutes legitimate industrial or commercial work on the Lord's Day, according to the Word of God. This Committee should advise our 1939 Synod what broad or general principles it would be wise to adopt, in an effort to give proper guidance to our churches to safeguard them against encroachments of the world.

(Broadway Ave. Consistory.)"

The overture of Classis California referred to in Point B of the above is found in Art. 53, pp. 182, 183 of this same Agenda. It reads as follows:

"Upon the occasion of a protest presented by a brother against his Consistory for nominating as consistory-member one who performed certain Sunday labor (sold milk) and dealt with at the meeting of Cl. California held in Bellflower February 23, 1938, the Classis among other things decided:

"That this rule (of 1881) of Synod that no man engaged in any kind of labor on Sunday shall be allowed to hold the office of elder or deacon in our churches, is in its opinion too sweeping. And since past history gives

abundant proof that many consistories have taken a different view than expressed in said rule of Synod, and acted accordingly, therefore Synod declare that the labors listed may in some cases be required by necessity or mercy, and that each case be determined upon its own merits.

(Classis California.)”

The rule of the Synod of 1881 referred to in this overture of Classis California reads as follows:

“With respect to some occupations or labors which are also performed on the Lord’s Day, as those of railroad employees, those of canal boat employees, those of custom house officers, the manufacturing of gas, and the making use of one thing or another on the Lord’s Day, and also the buying and selling of milk and similar products on this day, attention is directed to the 38th Lord’s Day of the Heidelberg Catechism and to the Post-Acta of the Synod of Dort, 1618, 1619; and all labors which religion, necessity, or mercy do not require are strongly disapproved of. And if somehow the performance of such labors is condoned in the case of members in general, this is however not to be tolerated in the case of elders and deacons. Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands (now Gereformeerde Kerken), Acts of Synod 1840, p. 38; officially adopted by our Church in 1881, General Rules, Art. 76.” (Chr. Ref. Church Order by J. L. Schaver, p. 89).

II. OUR ADVICE.

A. With regard to the first part of our Mandate, as expressed under Point I, A above, your committee humbly submits the following:

1) The mandate states: “This Committee shall give interpretation of the phrase, ‘servile works . . . which . . . present necessity require’.” It is the humble opinion of your committee that this phrase does not need any fuller clarification or interpretation. This committee at least confesses its inability to add to the clarity of these words. As for the term “present necessity,” we can only remind your honorable body of what the Church has always recognized as necessary labors; namely, (a) certain works of necessity laid down by God in nature, such as the milking of cows; (b) certain works of necessity which have been made such by reason of the entrance of sin into the

world; e.g., police protection; (c) certain works of necessity which have been made such by reason of our complex social structure; e.g., the furnishing of electric power. To attempt a more detailed definition of this term than is herewith given would result in a cataloging of specific works,—a thing which Synod rightly declared it wished to avoid.

2) Our mandate under Point I, A further reads: "While avoiding the cataloging of forbidden labors, the Committee shall set forth principles which may enable Consistories to decide in the concrete cases which repeatedly arise."

With regard to this part of our mandate we must humbly confess again our inability to do what is asked of us. In the opinion of this committee the Six Points dealing with the Sunday labor problem, so admirably drawn up by the Synod of Dort in 1618-1619, and adopted by our Synod in 1881, are quite complete in dealing with this problem.

In presenting this advice we realize that we may be charged with having failed to carry out the mandate given us. We cannot do otherwise, however, than sincerely confess our inability to formulate mere *principles* in connection with this subject. And may we make bold to add that we also doubt very seriously whether such additional *principles* can be found?

3) In view of the nature of our advice, we are aware of the fact that our report may appear rather unsatisfactory to some of the members of our Church and of your honorable body. We are also not insensitive to the need that some feel of having more light on the Sunday labor problem. It is our humble conviction, however, that the only manner in which more light can be obtained on this problem is that local consistories take a firm stand in dealing with concrete cases of what they regard transgression of the Fourth Commandment. And only if the persons involved should appeal their case to the major assemblies of the Church, would our Classes and Synod have occasion to make further pronouncements on this subject. In this way also a body of precedents would be established for the Church's further guidance.

B. With regard to the second part of our mandate, pertaining to the overture of Classis California, (cf. Point

I, B above,) your committee recommends that Synod repeal in its entirety the paragraph pertaining to Sunday labor in the decisions of the Synod of 1881 to which reference is made in the overture of the above named Classis.

Grounds:

- 1) This decision of 1881 embodies the very thing that the Synod of 1938 very correctly pronounces undesirable; namely, the cataloging of certain sins,—making mention of railroad employees, canal boat employees, etc.
- 2) This decision also sets up a double standard for church membership, one pertaining to so-called “ordinary” members, in whose case the performance of various Sunday labors would be condoned, and the other pertaining to such members who shall be eligible to the office of elder or deacon. Such a double standard is altogether foreign to our Reformed conception of Church polity.

Respectfully submitted,

I. WESTRA
M. VAN DYKE
G. HOEKSEMA
A. MEETER
G. EISENGA

DEPUTATI SYNODI

Primi

Secundi

Classis California

M. M. Schans.....	Minister	J. J. Weersing.....	Minister
E. Tanis	M	S. Struyk	M
B. De Boer.....	Elder	D. De Wit.....	Elder
J. H. Bosscher.....	E	P. Wielenga	E

Classis Grand Rapids East

W. Hendriksen	Minister	J. Weidenaar	Minister
L. Van Haitzma.....	M	W. Van Peursem.....	M
P. Van Hekken.....	Elder	J. Knoll	Elder
H. Hekman	E	J. Entingh	E

Classis Grand Rapids South

A. J. Rus.....	Minister	A. Dusseljee	Minister
J. Gritter	M	J. Bult	M
W. D. Vanderwerp.....	Elder	B. Gezon	Elder
A. Meyster	E	P. Dornbos	E

Classis Grand Rapids West

T. Yff	Minister	Dr. W. Masselink.....	Minister
A. Persenaire	M	R. Veldman	M
W. Hofstra	Elder	A. Hoekstra	Elder
J. Kramer	E	L. J. Ritzema.....	E

Classis Hackensack

J. J. Hiemenga.....	Minister	D. De Beer.....	Minister
J. Beebe	M	Dr. J. T. Hoogstra.....	M
A. De Vries.....	Elder	H. Cole	Elder
H. Brasser	E	F. Feenstra	E

Classis Holland

D. Zwier	Minister	H. Blystra	Minister
L. Van Laar.....	M	D. H. Walters.....	M
N. Stielstra	Elder	L. Van Appeldoorn.....	Elder
A. Peters	E	H. R. Brink.....	E

Classis Hudson

C. Spoelhof	Minister	E. Kooistra	Minister
A. H. Kort.....	M	J. Holwerda	M
J. Van Dyk.....	Elder	M. Vander Heide.....	Elder
B. De Vries.....	E	G. Link	E

Classis Illinois

I. Westra	Minister	Dr. H. Kuiper.....	Minister
C. Huissen	M	Dr. W. H. Rutgers.....	M
A. Minnema	Elder	J. Fisher	Elder
E. Vander Wal.....	E	N. Yff	E

Classis Kalamazoo

E. J. Holtrop.....	Minister	G. Van Laar.....	Minister
P. A. Spoelstra.....	M	Dr. J. Masselink.....	M
S. G. Schaafsma.....	Elder	J. P. Brussee.....	Elder
E. C. Goldsword.....	E	F. Kornoelje	E

Classis Minnesota

P. F. Dahm.....	Minister	J. Ehlers	Minister
A. Disselkoen	M	J. Guichelaar	M
H. Bloem	Elder	P. Honderd	Elder
G. Reitsma	E	S. Hoekstra	E

Classis Muskegon

C. Holtrop	Minister	R. J. Bos.....	Minister
J. T. Holwerda.....	M	L. J. Lamberts.....	M
F. C. Keegstra.....	Elder	A. Holtrop	Elder
H. Bolt	E	H. Mulder	E

Classis Orange City

W. Van Rees.....	Minister	F. Vander Stoep.....	Minister
W. Bajema	M	J. R. Van Dyke.....	M
A. Dokter	Elder	P. Sinkey	Elder
D. L. Muyskens.....	E	R. Cleveringa	E

Classis Ostfriesland

J. M. Voortman.....	Minister	R. Wezeman	Minister
L. F. Voskuil.....	M	R. S. De Haan.....	M
H. Eekhoff	Elder	J. Ploeger	Elder
W. Primus	E	H. Folkerts	E

Classis Pacific

W. Groen	Minister	A. H. Bratt.....	Minister
G. Stob	M	N. De Vries.....	M
J. De Boer.....	Elder	P. Bruinsma	Elder
L. Stremmer	E	P. Kooi	E

Classis Pella

D. J. Hoitenga.....	Minister	M. M. Monsma.....	Minister
G. Zylstra	M	J. Griffioen	M
B. Bandstra	Elder	J. T. Brandsma.....	Elder
J. Rus	E	D. Sjaardema	E

Classis Sioux Center

J. Rubingh	Minister	H. J. Triezenberg.....	Minister
G. Oldenburg	M	P. De Koekkoek.....	M
J. Vogel	Elder	A. Compaan	Elder
A. J. Groen.....	E	J. Krediet	E

Classis Wisconsin

C. R. Veenstra.....	Minister	E. B. Pekelder.....	Minister
J. J. Holwerda.....	M	H. Vander Klay.....	M
D. Kuik	Elder	George Eisenga	Elder
J. Verhage	E	F. Van Someren, Jr.....	E

Classis Zeeland

G. J. Vande Riet.....	Minister	J. Kolkman	Minister
G. Gritter	M	A. De Vries.....	M
H. Plaggemeyer	Elder	H. Holstege	Elder
L. De Witte.....	E	F. Veldink	E

AGENDA

Part II

Overtures

I. CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY MATTERS

REPORT OF CURATORIUM AND REPORTS ON KINDRED MATTERS — SEE AGENDA

II. MISSION MATTERS

REPORTS CHR. REF. BOARD OF MISSIONS AND EXEC. COMM.
FOR HOME MISSIONS; CHURCH HELP; JEWISH
MISSION REPORTS AND BUDGETS; HOBOKEN
SEAMEN'S HOME et. al.; SOUTH AMERICA;
PROPOSED NEW MISSION MANUAL;
See BUDGETS in Reports.

1. a. **Subsidy.** Classis recommends the following Churches for subsidy: Conrad, \$700.00; Grangeville, \$600.00; Lynden 3, \$400.00; Shepherd, \$700.00; Sultan, \$700.00; Sumas, \$700.00; Sunnyside, \$500.00; Zillah, \$600.00; Vancouver, \$900.00.

Monarch & Granum. Beginning Jan. 1, 1940, Rev. J. Mulder will be Pastor of Monarch only. From then on Monarch is recommended for \$400.00 and Granum when calling a minister for \$600.00.

b. Classis Pacific repeats its request for financial aid from the synodical fund as formerly.

(Classis Pacific.)

2. Overture from the Church at Manhattan and supported by Classis: "Dat de Synode zich duidelijk uitspreke over classicale onkosten van Classis Pacific, daar zij als grond aangeeft Acts 1938: a. 'There are Classes whose classical expenses amount to 60c per year and more.' De onkosten voor Classis Pacific zijn niet 60c per jaar, maar voor elke vergadering. Wordt hier bedoeld, dat Classis Pacific 60c per jaar betale of 60c per vergadering?"

3. Overture from the Church of Sultan and supported by Classis:

"The Consistory of the Sultan Christian Reformed Church overtures Synod to revise or amend The Home Mission Order, Art. 5 (h) as follows: The article reads

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thus, "To pass upon all applications for support from the Subsidy Fund and to submit its recommendations to Synod for approval." The Consistory overtures Synod to add the following clause:—and in each case when the recommendations of the Executive Committee differs from the recommendation of the Classis, the Executive Committee shall call the attention of the Synod to this difference and state the reasons why the Executive Committee differs from the Classis." *Grounds:*

1. This will give the delegates of the Classis involved full opportunity to present the case fully before Synod.
2. This will give the Synod full opportunity to vote intelligently in each case and not simply to put its stamp of approval on the recommendations of the Executive Committee and the Budget Committee as has been done in the past, without having the case fully presented to Synod.
3. This will give greater satisfaction in the Churches and Classes involved, for all parties will realize that their case has been fully considered, which is not true in the present method.
4. This is in accord with our Reformed Church Order and Practice, that all parties be given all opportunity to present their case before the deciding body.

4. Overture from the Church at Shepherd and supported by Classis, request "that its subsidy for 1939, reduced to \$600.00 by the last Synod, be raised again to the original amount of \$700.00." The original copy and grounds in hands of S. C. of Synod.

III. CHURCH ORDER MATTERS

(Cf. Agenda Material.) **LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE, et. al.**

5. Classis Illinois overtures the Synod to adopt the following: That the matter of delegating a home missionary to the Classis in which he has his official status be regarded as covered by article 42 of our Church Order rather than by the synodical decision of 1930 under article 41, C. O. (See Acts of Synod 1930, article 111, page 146.)

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The following report rendered by a committee and adopted by Classis serves to elucidate the above overture:

The committee wishes to call the attention of Classis to three things regarding the ecclesiastical position of Home Missionaries:

1. The decision of the Synod of 1930, Art. 111, page 146, which reads as follows: "Wherever possible, a home missionary should be connected, as minister, with one of the congregations which he serves, in order that it may delegate him to the classical assemblies. In case it is not possible for a home missionary to be delegated to classical assemblies as stated, it is within the jurisdiction of Classis, by way of exception to article 41, C. O., to grant a home missionary, when delegated to a church together with its minister and an elder, the privilege of membership in the classical assembly."

2. The decision of the New Mission Order, in the very last paragraph which reads as follows: "Installation or ordination of home missionaries takes place in the midst of the calling church, with which church also the missionary remains *officially* connected as a minister of the Gospel." This was adopted by the Synod of 1936.

3. Article 42 of our Church Order, which reads as follows: "Where in a church there are more ministers than one, also those not delegated according to the foregoing article (Art. 41) shall have the right to attend Classis with advisory vote."

The decision of 1930, quoted above under (1), concerns *Classical* home missionaries. Since the New Home Mission Order has been adopted in 1936, we no longer have *Classical* Home Missionaries. The interest and the field of labor of a home missionary are now no longer confined to any particular Classis.

In view of the above, and in view of the fact that the matter of delegating the home missionaries is not expressed in the New Home Mission Order, we recommend to Classis to overture the forthcoming Synod to adopt the following: that the . . . etc. (overture above).

(Classis Illinois.)

6. Classis overtures Synod to erase from the Synodical Rules of Procedure under motions to rescind (Acts 1934, p. 311) (A), which reads: "All motions to rescind shall require a two-thirds majority in order to carry."

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Ground:

This rule is contrary to Art. 31 of our Church Order, which states that whatsoever may be agreed upon by a majority vote shall be considered settled and binding.
(Classis Sioux Center.)

7. "Inasmuch as there is an apparent conflict and uncertainty in the matter of the authority of the Classis (Classical Committee and of the Home Missions Committee of Classis) and the Executive Committee for Home Missions, Classis Orange City petitions Synod to clearly define the functions of these bodies in granting a vacant, subsidized church permission to call. *Grounds:*

1. In practice and in the thought of our church there is a conflict between the Church Order (Artt. 4 and 5) and subdivision h. under Art. 5 of the Home Mission Order.
2. This became especially apparent in the experience of Bigelow, Minn., which, having received classical permission to call, had to wait nearly three months (Dec. 6, 1938 to March 2, 1939) before they could proceed to calling, due to the uncertainty and confusion in this matter.

(Classis Orange City.)

8. Classis overtures Synod as follows:

a. There exists in our Church a crying need for an official *definition* of the concepts "Complaints," "Protests" and "Appeals" and a body of rules covering them. Such definitions and rules are necessary for our Church judicatories as well as for our membership. That such a need exists is evident from the following:

1) Experts in the field of Church polity have complained of the need persistently. For example:

- a) Rev. I. Van Dellen in "Kerkelijk Handboek" states (in re Art. 31) "Het ware wenschelijk dat we eene nadere regeling bezaten met het oog op de wijze waarop men in hooger beroep kan gaan."
- b) Prof. W. Heyns in "Handbook for Elders and Deacons," p. 140, "The matter of appeals needs some regulation, which in our Church is lacking."
- c) Dr. Samuel Volbeda of our own Seminary has repeatedly expressed himself in similar vein.

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d) Rev. H. Keegstra complains emphatically that such a condition exists; so much so that he has written a long series of Editorials in *De Wachter* about it. (*De Wachter* beginning Aug. 16, 1938).

2) A candid examination of the Acts of any Major Assembly of our Church shows plainly that there is much uncertainty and hazy thinking about the matter. Concepts such as "Protests" and "Appeal" are used interchangeably to the detriment of good polity in our Churches.

3) An Advisory Committee serving the Synod of 1938 urges that

a) Our Church has no adequate rules for protests and appeals.

b) As a result of this there is much confusion in the matter and much time is lost in our synodical meetings.

b. In view of this situation Synod was

1) requested in 1936 to define the terms "Protests" and "Appeals," distinguishing between them and thus remedying the situation. Synod seemed reluctant to do anything about the matter and dismissed the overture, arguing that defining terms is not a proper function for an ecclesiastical body. Of this disposition of the matter the Editor of *De Wachter* has written, "Ja, zoo kan het als een Synode liefst zoo spoedig mogelijk van een lastige zaak af wil. Maar met wat goeden wil had het, onzes inziens, ook anders gekund. In't algemeen is het natuurlijk wel waar, dat eene Synode er niet is om termen te definieeren. Doch het kan wel voorkomen, dat in de behandeling van eene zaak eene Synode wel eens genoodzaakt is, eene definitie of verklaring van een woord of term te geven. Zoo is meer dan eens geschied, Zou dat onkerrechtelijk zijn?"

2) requested in 1938 to appoint a committee to define the terms "Protests," "Complaints" and "Appeals," and to draw up rules covering each of them. A pertinent document was submitted with the suggestion that it could possibly be of help to the Committee to be appointed. But again Synod chose the easy way. Although the Advisory Committee advised that the overture be accepted, Synod decided to reject their advice, and therewith the overture. No grounds for the rejection of Sioux Center's overture of 1938 are given in the Acts. This is hardly fair to the Classis sending the overture. One can understand the

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questions that have been raised about this: "Te druk? Beginselbezwaren? Onnoodig gekeurd?"

c. Classis *overtures* Synod to appoint such a *committee* now as asked for in the overture of 1938, or state the reason(s) why such a committee should not be appointed.
(Classis Sioux Center.)

9. Classis *overtures* Synod to urge the congregations whose number of families is approximately 200 and above to separate into two or more congregations:

Reasons for this overture:

1. Neither the minister of the gospel nor the elders can know the flock sufficiently and tend to their pastoral duties. The result is that many members are neglected which is detrimental to the spiritual life of old and young.
2. That the shepherds cannot watch the flock sufficiently, especially in regard to the proper use of the means of grace, as well the attendance of divine services as the use of the holy sacraments.
3. That the contact is lost between the members mutually, so that the communion of saints cannot properly be exercised.
4. That great numbers lose their interest in the affairs of the church which also becomes evident by the way they contribute or rather do not contribute to the needs of the church.

(Classis Pella.)

10. Classis wishes to call the attention of Synod to the irregular status of the Rev. C. Van Dyk as minister of Glendale and of our Classis and church in general. His active ministry at Glendale has been terminated, although he still is a minister of Glendale in good and regular standing. But he has no regular charge in any of the churches and it may be doubted whether his status as minister of the Christian Reformed Church should be continued indefinitely.

(Classis California.)

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IV. EMERITI MATTERS

REPORT EMERITUS BOARD; COMMITTEE ON SUBJECT, et. al.

V. PUBLICATION AND LITURGICAL MATTERS

REPORT BOARD OF PUBLICATION; COMMITTEE "BANNER"
EDITOR, et. al., Agenda

11. In view of the fact that there is a great dearth of acceptable material to be read in our so-called reading services, Classis overtures Synod to take steps to supply this need. We have in mind a project, if need be subsidized by Synod, furnishing all subscribers with a weekly sermon by our own ministers and written especially for vacant churches and furnished at a nominal price. It seems that such a project would yield big spiritual returns for the amount of money expended, especially if the work were done by the mimeograph process. With the over-supply of candidates fast disappearing there seems to be a real need for such reading materials. Especially is this need felt in outlying districts.

(Classis Sioux Center.)

12. De Kerkeraad te Leighton verzoekt Classis hare goedkeuring te hechten aan de volgende instructie:
"De Synode drage zorg voor de uitgave van een voldoende aantal predikatiën geschreven in de taal des lands en vervaardigd door onze eigene predikanten hiertoe aangewezen of verzocht, om in onze gemeenten gelezen te worden bij afwezigheid van een predikant."

Leighton Kerkeraad.

This overture was endorsed by Classis Pella at its September, 1938, session. — (Classis Pella.)

VI. ARREARAGES

13. Classis Orange City overtures Synod to cancel the arrearages of the **Hawarden** congregation to the Synodical Assessments, namely, Calvin College and Seminary and Emeritus Fund, up to January 1, 1939. *Grounds* (as given by consistory):

1. Due to the depression our congregation has suffered many reverses,

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- a. Since 1931 we had to contend with two entire and two part crop failures,
 - b. During these lean years farm rentals were not lowered and consequently many are burdened with past due rent, an accumulated debt which will take years to pay,
 - c. Because of a removal of several families to California our membership roll was reduced from 44 to 35.
2. In addition to meeting local expenses our congregation has a rather large indebtedness on which interest must be paid. All in all the financial obligations rest on fewer shoulders than heretofore,
- a. Since numerically our congregation was depleted,
 - b. Because those on relief have barely sufficient for living expenses.

(Classis Orange City.)

14. Classis Orange City overtures Synod to cancel the arrearages of the **Ireton** congregation to the Synodical Assessments, namely, Calvin College and Seminary and Emeritus Fund, up to January 1, 1939, *Grounds* (as given by Consistory):

1. Due to the depression our congregation has suffered many reverses,
 - a. Since 1931 we had to contend with two entire and two part crop failures,
 - b. During these lean years farm rentals were not lowered and consequently many are burdened with past due rent, an accumulated debt which will take years to pay,
 - c. Because of bank failures our congregation was pressed to the limit to make payment of an indebtedness in the amount of 1,400 dollars.
2. In addition our congregation supports a local Christian school with an enrollment of 47 pupils calling for an expenditure of \$1,200 annually,
 - a. Our church numbers only 69 families of which 25 dwell in town, a few of these are on the relief.
 - b. The group that meets the church budget is the same that is burdened with the finances of the school. However, we are grateful to our covenant God that

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we have been enabled to keep the school open all these years which meant a great sacrifice on the part of our people.

(Classis Orange City.)

15. Classis Holland recommends to Synod to cancel the arrearages of Noordeloos and Pine Creek as of Dec. 31, 1938. Reason: Inability to pay.

(The arrearages of Noordeloos cover the years 1934-1936 and amount to a total sum of \$218.73. This includes the following funds: Calvin College and Seminary, \$135.53; Emeritus Fund, \$78.24; Synodical Expense, \$4.96. The arrearages of Pine Creek cover the years 1934-1938 and amount to a total of \$479.25. This includes the following funds: Calvin College and Seminary \$294.09; Emeritus Fund, \$167.45; Synodical Expense, \$17.71.)

(Classis Holland.)

16. Newton requests Classis to advise Synod to cancel its arrearage of 1936. The amount is \$20.40, one-half of the assessment. Reason:

The assessment was placed upon the church soon after its organization and the money was not available.

So decided by Classis.

(Classis Pella.)

17. Classis overtures Synod to take the necessary steps toward the establishment of a Fund for the assistance of those of our families who have need of financial help for the support of a patient in one of our benevolent institutions, such as the Christian Psychopathic Hospital or Bethesda Sanatorium. Grounds:

- a. A large number of such families are unable to supply all the necessary funds.
- b. Very frequently the local deaconate is unable to remedy the deficiency.
- c. The usual method of appeals to other deaconates often leaves so much uncertainty that the patient finally fails to enter our Christian institutions, and is taken up in some State institution.

(Classis Minnesota.)

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VII. PROTESTS AND APPEALS

18. In re Rev. B. J. Danhof, including protest of E. Vanden Berg. Defense, Classis Zeeland. (Material in hands of S. C. of Synod.)
19. In re Rev. K. W. Fortuin, including report of Classical Delegates.
20. Communication of C. J. Scholten (?)

Correct copy.

Henry Beets, S. C.

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

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