

AGENDA

Synod Christian Reformed Church

*To convene June 12, 1946
at Grand Rapids, Mich.*

REPORTS AND OVERTURES

CHRISTIAN REFORMED PUBLISHING HOUSE
Grand Rapids 2, Mich., U. S. A.

PREFACE

This Agenda for the Synod of 1946 contains Reports, Overtures, etc.

On Tuesday evening, June 11, 1946, at 8:00 o'clock, D.V., Prayer Meeting for Synod will be held in the Alpine Avenue Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, led by Rev. Martin Monsma, president of the Synod of 1945.

Wednesday, June 12, at 10:00 a.m., in the Calvin College Library building, the president of the previous Synod formally opens the synodical meeting with an appropriate address, prayer, and roll call.

On the preceding Sunday, June 9, according to established custom, our congregations are requested to remember prayerfully the forthcoming meeting of Synod.

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Grand Rapids, Michigan, U. S. A.

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Reports

REPORT NO. 1

REPORT OF INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE RE INDIAN AND FOREIGN MISSIONS' EDUCATIONAL POLICY

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

INTRODUCTORY

THE appointment of this committee was occasioned by a protest of the Rev. A. A. Koning, a member of the Christian Reformed Board of Missions, submitted to the Synod of 1945. (cf. Supplement 5-b, p. 205, Acts, 1945). This protest was directed against the educational policy pursued on the Indian Mission Field. As expressed in the "Elucidation" given by the advisory committee re this matter, "Although this protest is specifically a protest against the additional appropriation of \$30,000.00 for the proposed Rehoboth school building, its heading and contents reveal that it is in reality a protest 'against the educational policy on our Indian field, as this is being recommended by the Board, and even as it has up until now been approved by Synod'."

In his protest the Rev. Koning first reviews the arguments for our present educational program as drawn from the "Great Commission." It is his conviction that our present educational program "inverts the order of Scripture, seeking to bring the 'teaching to observe' before the 'making disciples,' seeking to bring the education first and then the 'preaching' unto conversion." He goes on to call attention to the distinction between the "narrow view" and the "broader view" of missions. He argues that in the "broader view," so-called, "there is serious confusion in thinking, as it seeks to establish the Kingdom of God in all its manifestations among the heathen. There is no differentiation between the work of the church within its own fold and outside its fold. . . . The program of the church on a mission field cannot be the same as in an established church." He lays great stress upon the three-point program laid down for us in the Great Commission, and especially upon the order of these three points: First, the preaching of the Gospel; second, the baptizing; and third, as following and not preceding the first and second, the "teaching to observe."

Viewing the financial aspect of our present mission program, the Rev. Koning also finds room for criticism. He says: "In so far as the educational program is germane to our missionary task the present plan, especially as envisioned by the Board, is far out of proportion to the primary task of missions, and threatens to engulf our whole mission endeavor."

And from the more pragmatic viewpoint he goes on to argue that "our educational program has proved both futile and detrimental. . . . After so many years on the field, it may be well to look into the results and consider carefully the methods employed." He allows, "we have had young 'converts' in goodly number." But he adds, "their conversion was like the 'morning dew' that vanished." And he has his serious doubts about the greater success expected in this respect by holding these children for four more years in a high school.

Further, the Rev. Koning maintains that "our educational program paralyzes our efforts to establish indigenous churches," which we have been aiming at throughout the years. He calls our attention to the fact that "establishment of indigenous churches has become the number One item on our list." He allows that a Native Training School is necessary to reach this objective. But this is something quite different from a complete high school for all Indian young people, as proposed by the Board.

He appeals to Synod, therefore:

"1. not to approve any additional appropriations for this educational project;

"2. to disapprove the comprehensive plan as pictured by the Board and the Coordinating Committee of Rehoboth;

"3. to appoint a committee whose task shall be to revamp our missionary practices along proper lines and in proper subordination;

"4. To hold all past decisions and their execution, pertaining to the building of the central heating plant and the establishment of the high school in abeyance until the report of this committee shall have been acted upon."

In view of the far reaching implication of this protest as over against the continuation of our present educational policy upon the Indian Mission Field, it was decided that,

"Whereas Synod finds it impossible to reach certainty regarding the matters under discussion in the protest of the Rev. A. A. Koning, and

"Whereas many members of this Synod, together with certain leaders in our churches have grave doubts as to the correctness of our present Indian Mission policy with its concentration of effort on our educational enterprises,

"Therefore Synod of 1945 decides to appoint an investigation committee of seven, charging said committee to make a comprehensive study of our Indian Mission Methods in the light of Scripture and history, and to advise our churches regarding the policy to be followed.

"This committee, if possible, will report to the Synod of 1946. However, if the forthcoming report cannot be discussed at every one of our Classes before the Synod of 1946, then Synodical consideration of the report is to be postponed until the Synod of 1947.

"Pending the outcome of this investigation no further expansive of our physical plant at Rehoboth shall be made" (Art. 56, p. 42, Acts, 1945).

This Committee was further instructed to study the problem of a future educational program for the China Field, in connection with the proposal of the Board and the recommendation of the Advisory Committee re this matter: "That as soon as our China work can be re-established, we move definitely in the direction of setting up an educational program. We will have to begin with Mission primary schools, but our ideal is to move toward the organization of free Christian schools with only a small proportion of children from non-Christian homes. The question of possible organization of middle schools (high schools) can be taken up later."

Synod decides to place this matter in the hands of the same committee which is to study the future educational policy for the Indian field in order that some policy may be established for the future of the China field too. (Art. 43, V. A. 3, p. 44, Acts, 1945).

Your Committee has attempted to meet the demands of this mandate to the best of its ability within the short space of time allotted to it. Those members of our committee that had never visited the Indian Field arranged to do so upon the recommendation of the other members of this committee. They interviewed all of the workers on the field with regard to the policy under discussion. They acquainted themselves also with the mission policy of other Protestant denominations, as well as with the educational work of the Government among the Indians. Further, they consulted recognized authorities in the field of missions, notably Dr. J. H. Bavinck and Ds. D. Pol, of the Netherlands, and the Rev. Chalmers Martin, one-time professor at Princeton Theological Seminary.

We found the scope of our work too extensive to render a complete report at this time. We have confined ourselves in this report, therefore, to those phases of our mandate which are the most urgent; those, namely, which pertain to the educational and medical policy which we shall pursue on the Indian Field. We beg Synod's indulgence to allow us some more time for a more intensive study of other matters pertaining to our work among the Indians, besides the problem of the future educational program of the China Field.

In so far as we have been able to carry out our mandate, we humbly submit our finding under the following headings:

- I. Scriptural Teaching re Mission Objective and Methods;
- II. Mission Methods of Other Churches;
- III. Examination of our Present Mission Policy;
- IV. The Proposed Rehoboth High School;
- V. The Hospital;
- VI. Recommendations.

I. SCRIPTURAL TEACHING RE MISSION OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

1. As regards the *objectives* in the carrying on of mission work as held up before us in Scripture, our attention is directed especially to the

"Great Commission" given by Jesus to His disciples shortly before His Ascension, and further to the mission activities of the Apostles as recorded for us in the Book of Acts. The "Great Commission," as expressed in the words of Matt. 28:19, 20, states: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." In Mark's Gospel 16:15, 16, it reads thus: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." Luke quotes Jesus as teaching His disciples "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem" 24:27). And at an earlier point in Jesus' ministry it is likewise recorded: "He sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:2; cf. also Matt. 10:7).

These several passages teach us essentially the three-point program presented also by the Rev. Koning in his protest as missionary objective; namely, (1) preaching or teaching the Gospel unto remission of sins, (2) baptizing those who repent of their sins, and (3) teaching to observe all things commanded. And these disciples are bidden to go out as personal witnesses with this message, as Christ's ambassadors, as Christ's representatives.

From the Book of Acts, chapters 1-12, we may learn how the eleven understood this command and what was their aim as missionaries. As they preached, the words of Jesus which we have quoted were apparently constantly ringing in their ears. They repeatedly refer to themselves as witnesses of the things they are preaching, and call their hearers to repentance of sins and to faith in the crucified and risen Lord unto remission of sins. Witnessing, teaching, preaching, and baptizing mainly characterized their activity.

Let us take note of the fact that this missionary objective as laid down by Jesus and as understood by the Apostles did not consist merely in the winning of some souls to Christ, as we hear it so often expressed by evangelists of our day. It was the fundamental error of the Pietistic movement of an earlier century to lay all emphasis upon the conversion of individual souls. It was Zinzendorf's common slogan to his Moravian followers: "Sehet zu, ob ihr dem Lamm einige Seelen gewinnet!" Paul, as is evident from the account of his labors in the Book of Acts and from his Letters, regarded his task far more comprehensive than this. He sought as soon as possible to establish self-supporting churches wherever he labored, with elders either appointed by himself or chosen by the congregation to have oversight over the flock. The congregation met together regularly for instruction and fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayers. They had regular places of worship. The Sacraments were celebrated. Discipline was exercised. The poor were cared for. They min-

istered to the needs of fellow-Christians in Judæa. The establishment of local churches, therefore, as a visible representation of the body of Christ upon earth, may be mentioned together with the evangelizing of the nations as a definite objective of missions as set before us in Scripture.

It may not be amiss to call attention to the fact also that the Apostles were never merely negative in their preaching, as though their strength was to be found in their attacks upon the heathen idols and customs. To quote Dr. J. H. Bavinck ("Zending in een Wereld in Nood," p. 29): "Paulus was nooit negatief, afbrekend, in zijn prediking, hij schold niet op de heidensche goden en de heidensche zeden. Toen hij drie jaar in Efeze gearbeid had, moest de schrijver van die stad nog getuigen, dat Paulus in al die jaren de godin Diana niet gelasterd had (Hand. 19:37).

"Daaruit blijkt wel zonneklaar; dat Paulus zijn kracht niet zocht in het negatieve, in het prediken *tegen* de afgoden, maar in het positieve, in de onomwonden prediking van het evangelie van Jezus Christus."

This avoidance of negative preaching on the part of Paul does not at all imply, of course, that he compromised between paganism and Christianity. He never tries to build a Christian superstructure upon a pagan foundation. At the most he finds a point of contact in preaching to the people of Athens, by setting forth to them the "unknown God" whom they worshipped in ignorance (Acts 17:23).

2. The next question calling for an answer, if possible,—and this is the point on which the Rev. A. A. Koning especially takes issue with our Church as to its present policy in the exercise of its mission task,—is that pertaining to the *Method* of missions as taught us in Scripture. The "Great Commission" speaks of "preaching," "baptizing," "teaching," and "witnessing." In so far as we have knowledge of the mission activities of the Apostles we find no sharp distinction between the meaning of the terms "preach" and "teach." In fact, these two concepts, especially as we in our Reformed circles have been taught, are inseparable in connection with the presentation of the Gospel. Just as the missionary's task is not simply one of winning a few souls for Christ, so also his message consists of more than the mere Gospel call: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved!" We read of Paul that he "reasoned" with his hearers in the synagogues from the Scriptures (Acts 17:2; 18:4; 19; etc. Gr. *DIALEGOMAI*, sometimes rendered "disputed" in A. V.). This "reasoning" evidently did not at all resemble what we understand with preaching today. It was teaching rather than preaching. And this teaching did not only *follow* upon conversion on the part of those whom he taught. It likewise preceded conversion, and in many cases, no doubt, did not even culminate in conversion on the part of Paul's hearers. Teaching is an integral part of preaching in all three of the well-known steps in salvation, as is properly emphasized in the First Lord's Day of our Heidelberg Catechism: We need a *knowledge* of sin, a *knowledge* of the way of salvation, and a *knowledge* of the life of gratitude required

of us. And this knowledge is to be one not merely of the heart but also of the intellect. To that end we in our Christian Reformed Church place great emphasis on the importance of catechetical instruction for our children and youth as well as the importance of continued indoctrination on the part of the confessing members. To argue from the Great Commission that there is a place for teaching in the missionary program only with respect to those that have been converted is to lose sight of the distinction between instruction in *obedience* and instruction in *the way of salvation*,—which latter, it is reasonable to believe, constituted a large part of the “reasoning” which Paul carried on from sabbath to sabbath in the synagogues which he visited.

The Rev. Koning seeks to support his thesis with respect to the sharp distinction between preaching and teaching by citing the methods of Modernistic missions, which, he says, have “substituted education for salvation, or (have) identified civilization with salvation.” We do not deny, of course, what he here says about modernistic missions. His argument is not to the point on the question at issue, however. He confuses method and content. Our objections against modernism are not to be found chiefly in its educational efforts but rather in that which they teach their mission subject. As far as educational method is concerned, we aim to out-educate them by means of our catechism classes, Sunday School classes, and Christian day schools. It is this educational program that distinguishes us from the pietistic “Fundamentalists” of our day, whose whole missionary objective is contained in the mere “saving of souls.”

As regards the specific question, then, whether the Great Commission does or does not leave room for the religious teaching of pagan children, it is our conviction that it certainly does. It makes no direct reference to such religious instruction, of course. In fact, nowhere in the New Testament do we find explicit instruction with regard to educational policy in connection with mission work. Yet, where the Apostles “reasoned” with their hearers, we may safely infer that they set no age limit whenever opportunity presented itself for them to acquaint anyone with the Gospel of salvation which they proclaimed. We may believe they were faithful imitators of their Master in this respect, Who welcomed also the children as they crowded about Him. And we may be sure, as He did so, He did not merely entertain them with some meaningless bed-time story, but in His inimitable way taught even those children the words of life.

As Paul pursued his missionary journeys from place to place, in most cases remaining at a certain place only a few weeks, we must allow it is reasonable to infer that he did not busy himself much, if any at all, with the teaching of children as a means of preparation for their later conversion and baptism. It may be remarked, however, that there was not the need for him to do so that there is in the case of our missionaries among the Indians, in that he did not have to contend with the language

barrier that they do. Wherever Paul traveled, he could get an audience as he spoke to them in Greek. Our own missionaries, on the contrary, can for the greater part make contact with the adult Indians only with the aid of a native interpreter, which makes their work with the adults much less effective than in the case of the children and youth who have learned the English language.

Further, while we must allow that there is no direct evidence in Scripture that the Apostles at any time engaged themselves with the Teaching of pagan children, so that the Rev. Koning may reply that all of our argumentation on this point is merely by way of inference, the further question is *ad rem* whether the Apostles took advantage of any form of activity as an *auxiliary* means to the great objective of making disciples and establishing churches. And to that we can answer with a very positive "yes." They were endowed with the gift of healing, so that, as they went about preaching, they could by calling upon the Name of the Lord heal many of their diseases. This healing was one of the special tasks laid upon them by the Lord Himself, as we read in Matt. 10:1: "And He called unto Him His twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease and all manner of sickness" (cf. also vs. 8; Luke 9:2; 10:9). And the Book of Acts gives abundant evidence of the fact that the Apostles frequently exercised this power and authority entrusted to them. In the earlier days of their ministry we even read that people "carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some of them. And there came also together the multitude from the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folk, and them that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed everyone" (Acts 5:15, 16).

The purpose of these healings was, of course, not the mere physical one of relieving as much as of the suffering and distress of their fellow-men as they had it in their power to do. This motive of Christian compassion was not absent, of course. Yet these miracles had a higher spiritual purpose, to convince the peoples that they spoke with authority as they proclaimed the Gospel of salvation through the atoning blood of Christ, in whose Name these miracles were performed. They aimed at the breaking down of the kingdom of Satan by this means and the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ (1 John 3:8).

We likewise read of the gift of tongues with which the Apostles were endowed at least at times. Paul witnesses to this effect in 1 Cor. 14:18, where he says: "I thank God, I speak with tongues more than you all." And he supplements this with a restatement of the purpose of this gift: "Howbeit in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue."

In this same chapter again Paul gives a clear statement to the effect that the purpose of these gifts is not only the edification of the believers

but also the extension of the church. We read (vss. 23-25): "If therefore the whole church be assembled together and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reprov'd by all, he is judged by all; the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring that God is among you indeed."

Of Paul especially we read that he had a number of co-workers with him on his missionary journeys. We are not told much of the character of their labors. We know that some of them would serve as his secretaries, writing his letters to the churches as he in all probability dictated them. They probably kept some sort of diary also of their daily labors. Further, it is very likely that they assisted in personal work, expounding the Scriptures to those that came to hear the preaching of Paul. It is worthy of note in this connection that we find people from all walks of life mentioned as co-workers with Paul, women as well as men. What these women did we are not told, other than that they "labored much in the Lord." And this labor again must have been of an auxiliary nature, since Paul is very specific in teaching: "Let the women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak . . . for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church" (1 Cor. 14:34, 35).

From these findings we judge that, though we have no direct evidence of the Apostles, or their helpers, ever having engaged themselves with the teaching of children or young people in connection with their missionary labors, yet there is nothing in Scripture forbidding such teaching. Nay, rather, there is good reason to believe that the Apostles did engage themselves with such teaching where the opportunity presented itself. Hence, we believe here is good ground for the employment of this method on our part, as well as any others that may be at our disposal, if it can be proved to contribute in a real way to the objective of mission work as laid down for us in Scripture.

II. MISSION METHODS OF OTHER CHURCHES

Whereas then Scripture recognizes the use of auxiliary means to the great objective of missions; namely, the making of disciples and the establishing of churches; and whereas the establishing of schools for the purpose of teaching children, along with their other subjects, the knowledge of God, must be acknowledged as a possible means to this end, let us examine next the mission methods of other churches in this connection.

1. *De Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland*

As concerns the principles and methods of missions recognized by these churches, we read in "*De Zendingsorde van Arnhem*," 1902 (revised at Utrecht, 1905), as follows:

"Art. 9: Nevens den Dienst des Woords worden op het Zendingsterrein hulpdiensten ingericht. Deze zijn tweeërlei: schooldienst en medische dienst.

"Art. 10: Zooveel mogelijk zullen op elke plaats op het Zendingsterrein scholen voor lager onderwijs worden opgericht.

"Art. 11: De gezamenlijke kerken onderhouden op het Zendingsterrein van Midden-Java eene kweekschool ter opleiding van Inlandsche onderwijzers, alsmede een opleidingsschool tot vorming van helpers bij den dienst des Woords."

Further, we read in the "Reglement der Keuchenius-School," Art. 9: "Als leerling worden toegelaten:

"a. allen, die ter opleiding voor den dienst der zending vanwege de Kerken worden aangeboden, mits zij voldoen aan de vereischen voor de toelating gesteld;

"b. voorts, zoover de gelegenheid dit toelaat, allen die zich aanbieden, wanneer zij aan de gestelde eischen voldoen en bereid zijn zich aan alle regelen der school te onderwerpen."

We would quote also from Ds. D. Pol, President of the General Board of Missions in the Netherlands, in his book, "Midden-Java ten Zuiden," p. 214, as follows:

"Ook de Zending krijgt vergunning (Explan: i. e., from the Government) haar scholen in de desas op te bouwen; alleen met voorschrift van 'facultatiefstelling' op plaatsen, waar geen neutrale school is; d.w.z. dat er vrijheid gelaten moet worden, om het gebed en het godsdienstonderwijs niet bij te wonen.

"Dat zij dat haar gegeven verlot benut en voortgaat te benutten, spreekt immers van zelf!

"Het karakter der zendingsscholen is daardoor zeker wel eenigermate gewijzigd. Tevoren stond het zendingsdoel geheel op den voorgrond; doch voortaan gaat de schooldienst *indirect* werken voor de komst van Gods Koninkrijk.

"... het valt niet te ontkennen, dat ons zendingsonderwijs, onder den drang der omstandigheden, een eenigszins ander karakter heeft aangenomen.

"Maar ook zóó is, bij de algemeene ontwaking van het Javaansche volk, dit te werk stellen van den schoolhulpdienst van groote waardij te achten voor de verbreiding van het Evangelie onder de jeugd, naar de bekende uitspraak, dat wie de jeugd heeft, de toekomst heeft."

This same author in his article of "Zending" in the "Christelijke Encyclopaedie" (V, 784), speaking of the means that may be employed in mission activity, writes as follows: "Drieërlei dienst wordt hierbij onderscheiden: de hoofddienst (waartoe ook te rekenen de colportage), de schooldienst en de medische dienst, en tevens wat als Zending in *engeren* en in *ruimeren* zin is aan te merken."

2. Other Churches

As we examine the mission methods of other churches in the United States, we find that they all, without exception, make use of education as an evangelistic agency. The Sudan United Mission, for example, establishes schools, and does not consider that these schools are a departure from its evangelistic emphasis.

Even the Korean, or Nevius Mission plan, though strongly evangelistic and very successful in promoting self-support, nevertheless favors the establishment of primary schools, high schools, and even colleges.

Indeed, we find modern missions engaging in a rather wide variety of activities, all of which nevertheless are intended to contribute to the one great missionary objective of evangelization. And if it be argued that there is no adequate Scriptural basis for these diversified activities, we would reply with the Rev. Chalmers Martin, one-time instructor in the O. T. Department at Princeton Theological Seminary, that "the apostles themselves were inclined to be tolerant in the matter of methods. Ready to condemn unsparingly any who adulterated the gospel, they were ready, also, to admit a large variety in the methods of applying the gospel to the needs of men. To this attitude they were led by the very profusion of the *charismata*. They could not but recognize wide diversities of operation as thoroughly consistent with the indwelling of one Spirit, and as all tending to the one end of extending and building up the church, the body of Christ. The apostles believed, too, as we have seen, in the adaptation of their methods to meet the special circumstances in which they might find themselves; and while we abate nothing of what was said in a former chapter as to the essential similarity of the mission problem in modern times to that which presented itself to the apostles, we may at the same time admit that here are differences in the details of the two situations which may well justify some differences of method" ("Apostolic and Modern Missions," p. 171).

The Rev. Martin in his book also comments on the great variety of instruments at the disposal of the modern missionary, all of which have their legitimate place in the work of evangelization. We quote: "And how many forms that story takes! Sometimes the formal sermon; far more often the informal address, where questions are freely allowed and skillful objections must, perhaps, be answered; and quite as often the quiet talk with a single inquirer, as Jesus talked with the woman at the well, or Philip with the eunuch in the chariot. And as the missionary despises no place, no audience, no form of address, so he thinks no device too trivial that will serve to get him a hearing. The power of music, whether of baby-organ, or flute, or guitar, or violin, or even hand-organ; the open medicine chest; the book-stall; the vivid picture on the lantern-screen; the telescope focused on a distant hill; his watch; his pocket-compass; the buttons on his coat; the rubber rattle of his infant child, if need be—any of these will serve these modern fishers of men as lure

for their hook" (pp. 175, 176). And as regards the use of education as such a means, he tells us: "Education, too, is pressed into the service of evangelism, nay is often chiefly a means to it. In Mohammedan lands, the school platform is the only pulpit from which the glad tidings can be made to fall on Moslem ears. One chief motive of Dr. Duff's great work as an educator in India was that, by means of the school, he might bring the gospel to bear upon Brahman youths not easy to be reached in any other way" (p. 178). And in answer to the objection that, after all, we read nowhere of the apostles' having established schools, he replies: "Let us admit that the apostles did not establish schools nor teach them—though the late Dr. A. P. Happer maintained that in the school of Tyrannus, in which Paul reasoned daily with the disciples of Ephesus (Acts XIX:9), we have explicit New Testament sanction for the mission-school—but let us remember that the apostles labored, not among barbarous peoples, but among the most highly civilized peoples of their day. Let us remember that much of what the modern missionary strives to give by means of the mission-school—the ability to read the Scriptures, the quickening of dulled minds, the development of useful gifts—had in great measure been given to the people of the Roman empire through the diffusion of Greek culture and the Greek tongue, on the one hand, and the influence of the synagogue and the existence of the Septuagint, on the other. . . . The apostles were not school-teachers, but had they lived in the nineteenth century instead of the first, had they begun at Calcutta instead of at Jerusalem, had their field been the Indian or the Chinese empires instead of the Roman, is it not more than possible that they would have seized on the school, as they did in fact upon the synagogue, as a great agency for the diffusion of the gospel, and is it not likely that foremost among them in this as in all else would have stood that matchless missionary, at once the Carey and the Duff of the infant church, who counted himself debtor both to the Greek and barbarian, to wise and unwise, and who was ready to use any means if only he might save some?" (pp. 189, 190).

Dr. J. H. Bavinck in his "Zending in een Wereld in Nood" devotes some five pages to the subject of Bible translation and the translation and production of Christian literature as part of the missionary's task. He cites the splendid work done in this connection by the British and Foreign Bible Society. And speaking of Christian literature he says: "Wij denken allereerst aan goede Christelijke *week- en dagbladen* . . . Naast deze dag- of weekbladen hebben wij noodig *theologische lectuur* voor de predikanten, ouderlingen en ontwikkelde gemeenteleden. . . . In de derde plaats wordt overal een verlangen kenbaar naar *stichtelijke, opbouwende lectuur*, tot versterking van het geloofsleven. Dan bestaat er behoefte aan *verhalende lectuur*, goede Christelijke romans en vertellingen. En eindelijk is er een groot gemis aan lectuur, die geschikt is voor *buitenstaanders*, die begrijpelijk en pakkend geschreven is, zoo dat niet-Christenen daaruit

een klaar beeld verkrijgen van de boodschap van Jezus Christus" (pp. 44, 45).

He stresses also the valuable contribution to the main mission objective rendered by the agencies of medical service and education. He points out that the object of medical missions is not merely to win the hearts of the people so that they will be willing to listen to a Gospel message afterward. This field of mission activity has a much farther-reaching objective than this. It aims to deliver the heathen from their blind superstition under which they go stooped. He says: "Ziekte wordt beschouwd als de werkzaamheid van een of anderen boozen geest, die met allerlei spreuken en toovermiddelen moet worden uitgebannen. Krankzinnigheid wordt gezien als een soort bezetenheid. Blindheid en gebrekkigheid worden maar al te gemakkelijk aanvaard als gevolgen van den almachtigen wil der goden, waar toch niets tegen te doen is. Menigmaal wordt tegenover al zulke beklagenswaardigen slechts uiterst weinig erbarmen aan den dag gelegd."

"Eén van de eerste daden, waarin de zendeling kan betoonen dat hij door Christus gezonden is, is, dat hij medelijden aan den dag legt voor de lijdenden en hen op alle mogelijke wijze tracht te helpen en te genezen. Hij moet de bijgeloovige gedachten, die men koestert, verbreken en laten zien, dat alle menselijke ellende uit de zonde is voortgekomen, en dat God in Christus den gevallen en diep gezonken mensch redden en verlossen wil. God heeft ook, naar den rijkdom Zijner barmhartigheid, de medicijnen doen groeien, opdat wij daarin Zijn liefde zouden opmerken en Hem erin verheerlijken zouden. . . ."

And to quote still one more paragraph in this connection from this Dutch authority:

"Naast deze medische hulp zijn er nog *vele andere wegen*, waarlangs de Zending in daden kan betoonen, dat zij gekomen is om te bevrijden. Zij kan door armenkolonies het lot der ellendigen verzachten. Zij kan door voorlichting en onderwijs de bevolking helpen, om zich uit den staat van gezonkenheid op te richten en een nieuw leven te beginnen. Zij kan door haar scholen grondslagen leggen voor een nieuwe maatschappij, met nieuwe volksgewoonten, waarin een andere geest openbaar wordt dan in de oude zich verwerkelijkte."

"Kortom, de Zending kan tal van mogelijkheden aangrijpen, om het iederen keer opnieuw te zeggen en ook door daden te bezegelen, dat Christus alle dingen nieuw maakt, en dat het geheele volksleven veranderd wordt, wanneer Hij met Zijn Woord en Geest de harten regeeren gaat" (pp. 49, 50).

Dr. Bavinck attaches such importance to these so-called auxiliary services on the mission field that he does not like to speak of them as mere "hulpdiensten," as alongside the so-called "hoofddienst." He suggests as a better terminology "Kerndienst en Nevendiensten" (p. 53).

And he stresses once more with regard to these several "nevendiensten": "Grondslag daarvan is de ontferming over de groote lichamelijke en maatschappelijke ellende, die daar in die verre wereld heerscht. Gedreven door de liefde van Christus, willen wij leniging brengen in al dien nood, tegelijk vurig hopende, dat zij, die die leniging ontvangen, straks ook Hem zullen ontvangen, die van den veel grooteren nood onzer zonde verlossen kan. *En eindelijk voegt zich ook de schooldienst in dit geheel, als een poging om alle dingen van het evāgelie uit nieuw te belichten*" (p.54; italics ours).

From all these findings we may conclude, then, that education indeed has a legitimate place in the program of missions as a means of evangelization. We may say that:

a. Education by means of mission schools is a preaching of the gospel in its wider sense. It is a valuable sustaining aid to the central task of Gospel preaching. It must never be allowed to crowd out the Gospel preaching, of course, as the thing of chief importance, as, sad to say, we find but too commonly in Modernistic circles. With these latter the erection of schools and hospitals becomes an end in itself, effecting the social uplift of humanity. And the Gospel of the cross of Christ is not heard. Against this, once more, we must ever be on our guard.

b. Such education serves as a valuable means of leading pupils to a knowledge of sin and profession of their faith.

c. It places the child under the influence of the gospel before it is firmly entrenched in the superstitions and prejudices of its race.

d. It teaches the child not only the contents of the gospel as to its doctrinal aspects, but also what it means to live a Christian life under all circumstances in a Christian community.

e. It provides a valuable opening into the homes of these pupils.

f. It opens the way for the training of Christian native workers from among the more promising students.

III. EXAMINATION OF OUR PRESENT MISSION POLICY

While we have established the fact that there is a legitimate and in most cases a valuable place for education in the program of the missionary, let us now proceed to an examination of our own mission fields and our present mission policy, which is under criticism by the Rev. Koning. Must we possibly confess that we have allowed ourselves to lose the proper balance spoken of above, so that we are to a certain extent guilty of the error that characterizes Modernism? Have we allowed our mission boarding school at Rehoboth to become too prominent a factor in our missionary program at the cost of evangelization? And a second practical question that has been raised by various members of our Church is whether our Rehoboth school has sufficiently proved its worth as a means toward the end of evangelizing the Indian to justify its continued main-

tenance,—yes, to justify even its expansion into a high school for the Indian youth?

It must be admitted that, for the years that the Rehoboth school has been in existence, we would like to have seen more favorable results in the way of conversions from among those that have graduated from it. Only a relatively small number are known to show a real interest in the gospel of salvation. Statistics are not available in this connection. Because of the mode of living of the Navaho Indian it is impossible to retain contact with the graduates of our school, at least with our present limited staff of missionaries and workers. The Navaho Indian lives a very isolated life in his hogan, seeking as isolated a spot as he can find in order to have room for his sheep to graze. Statistics indicate that even with the rapid increase in population among the Navahos, the average population upon the Navaho Indian reservation today is still but one and one-half Indians per square mile. A second factor that makes it difficult to keep contact with our graduates is the fact that a large number of the Navaho Indians have two homes—a summer home and a winter home. In the winter they migrate to the valleys, where it is somewhat warmer and the snowfall is not so heavy, in order that their sheep may continue to find pasturage; and in the spring they move back to the higher plateaus. And the average Indian leaves no forwarding address, of course, in order that his whereabouts may be traced. Several of the Indians in recent years also have taken up different forms of occupation, in government projects and in the various forms of ordinary labor, and as hired help upon truck farms in certain seasons of the year. These are some of the factors that make the missionary's task such a difficult one in trying to keep contact with our Rehoboth graduates.

Our Rehoboth school is admittedly also a very expensive item on our mission budget. The 1946 budget calls for \$81,331.79 for the Rehoboth Mission, besides another \$13,580.00 for the Rehoboth Hospital. These two items call for nearly one-half of the total amount set aside for Indian Missions. The figure of \$81,331.79 is broken down for us by the Finance Committee to show that actually only \$32,000.00 is chargeable directly to meeting the running expenses of the educational work at Rehoboth. It must be admitted, however, that, if we had no school or hospital at Rehoboth, we would no longer need all of our buildings nor our several workers, with the exception of Mr. Bosscher, our Business Superintendent. We could then attempt to dispose of the whole property with the exception of the church and missionaries' and Business Superintendent's homes. And the item for Rehoboth Mission would be only a few thousands of dollars.

The question is therefore pertinent: "Shall we continue our present educational policy in connection with our mission work among the Indians,—yes, and even add to the already large financial burden of maintaining this school by expanding it into a high school? Or shall we

say, the results are too discouraging; and therefore we shall make a radical departure from the commonly accepted method of mission activity in this respect and close up our buildings at Rehoboth?"

Also another question forces itself into the foreground in this connection: "If we do not feel ready to take so radical a step as is involved in the second alternative just mentioned, recognizing that the teaching of the children in the Word of God, where we have the opportunity to do so, is too important a work to be discontinued, do we necessarily have to have our own mission boarding school for which such a large sum of money must be annually set aside? Can we not accomplish practically just as much by seeking permission to teach the Indian children the Word of God at the various government schools—as is being done by our own missionaries at Crown Point, Fort Wingate, Tohatchi, and elsewhere?"

And a third alternative calls for an answer: "Will we not accomplish more toward the evangelization of the Navaho Indian by converting our facilities at Rehoboth exclusively into a training school for native workers, inviting promising young men and young women from among the Indians to enroll for this training?"

The further question is raised in connection with this last one just mentioned: "Is not this admittedly the main objective in our educational program among the Indians: to discover and train those of the Indian youth who give evidence of being promising subjects for training as native evangelists? Why must we busy ourselves with the teaching of the 'three R's' to the smaller Indian children, and now even consider going on to offer them a complete high school training to fit them for a remunerative position in secular life?" And if one would reply that we are firm believers in the necessity of Christian grammar schools and high schools for our own children and therefore cannot deny the necessity of these for the Indian children likewise, the answer is forthcoming that our school at Rehoboth is not a school for Covenant children but rather a *mission* school. (Approximately one-half of the children at present enrolled at Rehoboth are children of former graduates of the school—which does not necessarily mean, of course, that one-half of them may be called Covenant children.) Our Rehoboth school, and our Zuni day school likewise, are not to be placed in one class with our own local Christian schools for our Covenant children.

In reply to these several questions and objections we are convinced that our mission boarding school at Rehoboth is not only of great value to our mission work among the Indians but well-nigh indispensable.

The Navaho Indian, living in his isolated hogan, has up to the present lived an extremely primitive life, so that it is difficult to approach him with any kind of religious message. And though he has his pagan religion, it does not constitute a very vital part of his life. His daily life is rather one of practical atheism. Hence he has little ear for any kind of religious message. Moreover, his mode of life is typical of his nature.

He keeps himself aloof from the white-missionary. Past history has led him to regard every white man with suspicion. There is still further the obstacle of isolation with regard to an attempt to establish suitable meeting-places for religious services or Sunday School work. With the exception of certain areas near the cities and towns, where some Indians have taken up various forms of occupation connected with industry and business, the Indians live so scattered that it is well-nigh impossible to get a sizable audience for a religious meeting anywhere. Government statistics indicate that the Indian population on the Navaho Reservation averages but one and one-half persons per square mile. And where the average Indian has no calendar and all seven days of the week are alike to him, the missionary cannot accomplish much in the way of Sunday meetings with those who are still in a state of paganism. And in his camp work he is also confronted with a difficulty. Not to mention the difficulty of reaching the widely scattered hogans along trails which in many cases are hardly distinguishable and far from ideal for auto travel, he has the Indian code of morals to contend with. He dare not enter a hogan where a mother is home alone without her husband or another male adult member of the family, lest he be suspected of evil intentions. He should therefore always have a companion with him. And even then the Indian woman will not readily engage in a conversation with the missionary. And the husband will as likely as not be out of sight, roaming the prairies with his flock of sheep. And on top of all this there is still the language barrier. The government has been very lax in the past in trying to provide schools for the Indian children. With the facilities at present available only one-third of the Indian children can receive any kind of education. And of this third, a large one-third again are being trained in the various mission schools that the churches have built. The great majority of adult Indians speak little or no English, therefore. And over against this, their own language is so difficult for the white man to learn that it takes years of intensive study, with the help of an Indian interpreter as private tutor, for a missionary to master the language to any extent. Hence, the school is by far the most practical means for the imparting of the knowledge of the Gospel to the Indian.

But, if the teaching of the child must be admitted to be essential as a means of approach to the Indian mind, why will not the government school suffice for us? Does not the work of our missionaries at the Fort Wingate school, and the Crown Point school, and the Tohatchi school, etc., all of which are government schools, prove just as effective as our work at Rehoboth? To this we must reply, with due acknowledgment and appreciation of the good work done at these other schools by our missionaries in the past, "No, it does not." In certain cases, notably that of the Rev. Jacob Bolt, who has labored for many years at Crown Point, this work has been fairly successful, due in part to the fact that the school authorities were very favorably disposed to his work there. How-

ever, the same objection to this type of religious training must be raised that is raised against similar attempts in our own communities. We cannot expect to accomplish much with the child when it is being trained as a pagan five days a week while we have that child under our care for a Bible lesson one or two hours a week. Our missionaries must also depend upon the good-will of the school authorities for permission to conduct such religious classes. And where the missionary is in some cases simply dependent upon the willingness of the youngsters to attend his classes in their free time, his work cannot be expected to show much result. At Fort Wingate, for example, where Sunday School classes are conducted on Sunday morning, the girls are restricted to the area enclosed by the buildings, while the boys are free to roam the fields round about. The result with regard to the Sunday School work is as might be expected: There are a goodly number of girls in attendance, for want of something to do, while there are only a small handful of boys. Because of these difficulties all of our missionaries at present laboring among the Navahos are unanimous in their judgment that the government school is a poor substitute for our own mission school at Rehoboth, to say the least. At Rehoboth the Indian children are placed in a Christian atmosphere twenty-four hours a day, in a manner even superior to that enjoyed by many of our own Covenant children. Here the children are taught not merely a certain number of Bible stories and some Reformed doctrine, but also the Christian way of living from the time they arise till they retire. The greatly superior value of such a training surely doesn't need defending for any of us.

A further argument against our changing our mission policy at this juncture of our work among the Indians by closing up our Rehoboth school is that we now have a fairly large percentage of children of former Rehoboth graduates enrolled at the school. And we may expect that this percentage will increase in future years. This will remove the argument raised at times in past years that our efforts at Rehoboth have been futile to such a large extent, since the children upon graduation would return to their pagan homes and soon forget all that they had learned of the gospel at school. The present enrollment, which shows children from homes as much as one hundred miles away, proves that these labors have not all been in vain.

As for the question whether a school maintained exclusively for the training of native mission workers is not preferable to our present complete grammar school, we must reply that while we might be able to find a certain number of candidates willing to avail themselves of such a course, these candidates would almost certainly be found from among the former graduates of our Rehoboth school. It would seem poor logic, therefore, to argue that now we don't need the grammar school anymore, since we have found a few candidates for a training school.

Furthermore, it would be mainly with the graduates of our school that future native workers could expect to accomplish something toward the establishment of native churches. The school must serve as a feeder, therefore, for a two-fold purpose: to prepare the Indian youth for membership in a native church, and to arouse in the hearts of some the desire to devote their life to the bringing of the gospel to their own people. The training of native workers, therefore, is not something that should replace our present school, but something that should supplement it.

IV. THE PROPOSED REHOBOTH HIGH SCHOOL

Having established the fact that our mission boarding school at Rehoboth is essential as a means toward the evangelization of the Indian, the further question confronts us: Should we expand our educational program so as to include also the high school department? Or should we supplement our present curriculum only with such courses as may be necessary for the training of native workers? And if we should decide in favor of a high school, how complete should we make this high school?

In reply to the first couplet of these questions we would reply that, while the mere addition of some Bible training courses would seem to be most in harmony with our recognized mission objectives, the findings of our missionaries indicate that this would prove quite inadequate. With a rare exception the graduates of our present Rehoboth school are still too young to be enrolled as students in a mission training school, to be sent out on the field within two or three years. They are not mature enough as yet for such work. Students for such a course should be beyond the high school age. We could not expect an Indian youngster in his teens to go out as a missionary among his people any more than we expect our own young people as yet to be ready for such work.

But why can we not get them back some five or six years later for this purpose, it may be asked? To this it must be replied that the most promising candidates for such training will in the meantime have been lost to us in favor of some other denominations. For those Indian young people that have a desire to continue their studies leave our school to enroll in another mission school offering high school training. And being in those crucial years of life in which they may be expected to come to a personal conviction of sin and faith in Christ, they naturally affiliate themselves with the church whose school they are then attending. We have in this way lost several promising students to the Methodist Church, which has an excellent school at Farmington. The names of at least forty such former Rehoboth pupils are on record. Your Committee also found some Rehoboth graduates in attendance at the Presbyterian school at Ganado. These students run great danger, therefore, of having the religious foundation laid for them at Rehoboth swept from under their feet. Thus it is quite evident that to send the Indian boys and girls away when they have completed the eighth or ninth grade, as we have been

doing thus far, is to leave an important job half done and thus to allow a large part of our efforts to be wasted.

Permit us at this point also to call attention to the urgent need of more native workers as well as lay white workers. The ideal which we must ever keep in mind in our mission endeavors upon foreign fields is the establishment of indigenous churches: churches constituted entirely of natives, with native office-bearers and a native preacher. To that end we must seek to place capable native workers in the field as much as possible, who may be expected to be far more successful than the white missionary in proving that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not merely the white man's religion which he is trying to force upon the native. We need more of the kind of witnessing that the Rev. J. B. Swierenga's native interpreter at Two Wells was heard to give recently, when he did not stop after having interpreted the words just spoken by Rev. Swierenga, but kept on talking with a genuine fervor and zeal, telling his Indian kinsmen that he was telling them what he did, not merely because the missionary had so instructed him, but because he had knowledge of it in his own soul; and as a personal ambassador of Christ he entreated them that they also might be reconciled to God.

This particular young Indian feels greatly his need of more training to be properly equipped for the responsible task of going out individually as a native worker among his people. He happens to be a graduate of the public high school at Albuquerque, where he received no religious training, of course.

Possibly some would ask: "Why not send such promising young people to our Reformed Bible Institute in Grand Rapids for the necessary training?" In answer to this we would remind you what has already been previously stated in this report, namely, that we cannot expect Indian youngsters upon graduation from the eighth grade,—allowing for a rare exception—to have a firm resolve to become a missionary among their own people, any more than we expect our own children in the great majority of cases to have their minds definitely made up regarding their future career at that early age.

Moreover, even in the case of such young men as the one referred to above, our R. B. I. in Grand Rapids is hardly the proper place for them, where they would be taken out of their native habitat and placed as lone foreigners in a foreign land. We should provide the necessary training for them in the midst of their own people, if at all possible.

We said above that sending the Indian boys and girls away to continue their schooling elsewhere when they have completed the eighth or ninth grade, as we have been doing so far, is to leave an important job half done and thus to allow a large part of our efforts to be wasted. The same thing must be said with regard to those youngsters that do not have the incentive to go to another high school. Unless they are from Christian homes, there is great danger of their soon again losing all that they

have received at school, while, if they could be kept under the Christian influence of their teachers and pastor at Rehoboth for another four years, they would be about ready to establish their own home and be far more likely to continue in the doctrines that they had been taught.

An important factor supporting the desirability of providing also some high school training at our school is the fact of a general awakening, so to speak, on the part of the Indians, and a desire for education. The Indians of their own accord are pleading for admission to the schools that are available for them. This is occasioned in part by even the limited education afforded the Indian in past years, which is now beginning to bear fruits among them. It is occasioned in part also by economic pressure. The Navaho population has doubled itself in each of the last two generations. In 1870 the population was approximately 11,000. In 1900 it was 21,000. In 1935 it had jumped to 43,500. By today it is estimated to be above 55,000. In spite of the fact that the government has set aside ever larger areas of New Mexico and Arizona for the Indian, the poor soil of this area does not provide him an adequate livelihood. He is therefore compelled to look for other sources of income. Many have found opportunity for this during the recent war years. The Indians in general do not welcome the policy of Mr. Collier, who in recent years was in charge of the government schools, and who opposed the idea of "compelling the Indian to live the white man's way," as he called it. Many ridicule his policies. The younger generation especially is very pronounced in its assertion that it does not want to stay in the hogan, with all that it symbolizes. Your Committee personally interviewed certain Indian young people that we met on the reservation,—one, a young woman now teaching at the Ganado Mission School, another, a young man just returned from military service and a former graduate of our Rehoboth School. We also discussed this matter with Mr. Milling, the principal in charge of the Government school at Fort Wingate. These all condemned the Collier policy in no uncertain terms. A recent article in *The Reader's Digest* (August, 1945), entitled "Set the American Indians Free!" also confirms these testimonies. We quote: "Speaking with grim accents, this Winnebago Indian told me: 'We're tired of being treated like museum pieces. I'm a mechanic. I want a real job. They're not going to send me back to live in a shack and loaf around in a blanket!'" Also the older children at Rehoboth are clamoring for the opportunity to get more education. As they became aware of the purpose of your Committee's visit to the Indian field last fall, several of them addressed us individually to express their hope that they might get also a high school at Rehoboth.

A further important factor that lends support to this cause is the fact that, contrary to general belief, the Indian's I. Q. proves to be equal to that of the average white man. This is backed up by the carefully conducted findings of Dr. George Boyce, present Director of Navaho Educa-

tion. And, again, contrary to general belief, a study of the Indian's history has shown him just as adaptable to new modes of life and means of making a livelihood as the white man, if only given the opportunity. We think of the Indian today as being mainly a raiser of sheep. Yet the shepherd's life was not natural to the Indian 400 years ago. It was the Spaniards who first brought horses and sheep to the New World in the 1500's. And the Navaho quickly took advantage of the new opportunities hereby afforded him of making a livelihood. Another great source of income for the Indian today is the making of jewelry. Yet this again was quite foreign to him before the white man's arrival. In fact, Dr. Boyce, who has made an intensive study of the history of the Navahos, maintains that the Navaho people "have been a very progressive people, learning new things in each generation. Silversmithing, for example, dates back only to 1868 with them. And the art of making earthenware dishes has since been lost among them." Dr. Boyce concludes by saying: "The Navajo people will undoubtedly continue to learn many new things from the rest of the world. Their greatest handicaps in this respect are the lack of written language known by all the people; and lack of knowledge of English. When the Navajo people have acquired these tools they will acquire ideas from nations all over the world" ("A Primer of Navajo Economic Problems," p. 35).

There is every indication, therefore, that there is a new era ahead for the Indian, and likewise that there is a new era ahead for the mission among the Indians, especially by way of the door of education.

How large a high school is contemplated? This is a further question of real importance in this connection. After all, the Navaho Indian field is large. And if we should aim to provide Christian instruction for as many children and young people as would avail themselves of this opportunity from the area in which our missionaries are now laboring, we would have to build a school of enormous proportions. We all realize, this is beyond the range of possibility for us. Our teaching staff at Rehoboth, together with our missionaries on the field, are sufficiently modest in their ambitions in this connection, however. They visualize a high school which would truly remain a mere handmaid to the great prime task of our missionaries, namely, to preach the gospel. It is to be a high school aiming primarily at the discovering and training of promising native workers among the Indians. And with regard to the rest of the graduates it is hoped that a goodly number of them will go back to their homes to form nuclei of Christian influence, through whose coöperation native Christian Churches may in due time be established.

The Rehoboth teachers and missionaries would increase the enrollment of our Rehoboth school from its present total of 120 to a maximum of 200; in other words, allowing for a slight further increase in attendance in the grammar grades, the high school enrollment would be limited to some 50 or 60. This number, it is judged, will be quite adequate to supply our

missionaries with future native Christian workers and interpreters from among their number. And the remainder would go forth, as just stated, under the gracious blessing of God, as a salting salt in their several communities where they may make their home and as ready co-workers of our missionaries.

As concerns the course of studies to be pursued, the main emphasis is to be laid on the academic courses, together with the proper courses in Bible study and related subjects. A word of explanation must be given with regard to the curriculum as approved by the Synod of 1943, which has aroused a certain amount of criticism on the part of some and has given occasion, no doubt, to a considerable extent to the protest of the Rev. A. A. Koning. This curriculum is to embody also, so we read, "2) Vocational studies, such as manual training (carpentry, masonry, mechanics), and agriculture for the boys, and home nursing, home economics (sewing and baking), for the girls. 3) Standard academic studies, required by the State Department of Education, such as: English, mathematics, social science, natural science. 4) Physical education, for this is required by the State Board of Education, and the Indian is very fond of physical exercise" (Acts 1943, Art. 88, pp. 46, 47).

This array of subjects naturally leads the reader to visualize a high school of considerable proportions, with expensive laboratories, a large gymnasium, a mechanical training shop with thousands of dollars worth of machinery, a kitchen with the latest home appliances, etc. The workers on the field have given your committee assurance, however, that, if there should be anyone in the Board possibly having such a school in mind, it must be stamped as a mere "pipe dream." (Remember, they are contemplating a high school with an enrollment of only some 50 pupils.) These various vocational and science courses are to a large extent regularly being given to the upper grades right now in our present school in a thoroughly practical way by having the girls help prepare the meals for the dining hall under the supervision of the cooks, assist the laundress in her labors, mending the clothes of the pupils, etc., while the boys help in the work of carpentry, masonry, painting, etc., to keep the building and grounds in repair. We were assured also by the teaching staff that this sort of training meets fully the State requirements in this connection.

As concerns the physical training, thus far this has been given in the great outdoors in the form of basketball, baseball, etc. Our teaching staff complains of a certain handicap in this respect, however, and hopes that a suitable gymnasium for indoor activities will be included in the contemplated building program.

A word of enlightenment is also necessary with regard to the expense involved in this proposed expansion of our school. The Church has, unfortunately practiced an extremely poor economy in past years, with the result that a number of the present buildings are in poor con-

dition. The present school building, we are informed, calls for extensive repairs, or better, for replacement by a more substantial one. The facilities at the mission house are lamentably inadequate. All of our lady teachers and workers must get along with one bathroom and an additional lavatory. The kitchen, serving the dining room on the first floor, while roomy enough, was very poorly planned at the outset, necessitating miles of extra walking on the part of the kitchen help. Even if Synod should reverse its previous decision, therefore, regarding the building of a high school, a substantial sum must be spent nevertheless for buildings. The increased expense involved in providing high school facilities would accordingly be relatively small.

In order to know as accurately as possible what the actual *additional* cost of the high school would amount to, your Committee asked for a statement of the estimated cost of new buildings needed, and the portions of this expense chargeable to the grade school and to the high school respectively. We received the following estimate. (This estimate has the approval of Mr. J. H. Bosscher, Business Superintendent at Rehoboth, Mr. Henry J. Bloem, Principal of the Junior High School at Rehoboth, and the Finance Committee of the Christian Reformed Board of Missions.)

1. Initial Cost of Buildings

Name of Building	Total Cost	Portion Chargeable to Grade School	Portion Chargeable to High School
School Building	\$ 65,000	\$ 35,750	\$ 29,250
Girls' Dormitory.....	25,000	-----	25,000
Remodeling Mission Home			
for Boys' Dormitory.....	5,000	-----	5,000
Dining Hall	35,000	6,500	28,500
Assembly Hall	35,000	35,000	-----
Nurses' and Teachers' Lodge....	30,000	20,000	10,000
High School Principal's Home..	6,500	-----	6,500
Totals.....	\$201,500	\$ 97,250	\$104,250

Elucidation: "... approximately 55% of the school building is needed for the grammar school, considering that we need a new school building anyway. . . . If no high school is allowed we should spend at least \$6,500.00 to make the present kitchen suitable for future needs. The assembly hall should be had regardless of high school. If present dining hall is continued as such we would not need a new dining hall. However, we would need the \$6,500.00 as mentioned above to bring the present dining hall up to requirements. Whether we get the high school or not, the lodge is essential to house the present and future personnel of the hospital and teachers. We would need at least \$20,000.00 of the \$30,000.00 mentioned above to build a lodge, regardless of high school" (Bosscher and Bloem).

2. *Estimated Distribution of Total Rehoboth Running Expenses Between Educational and Other Rehoboth Departments.*

The total Rehoboth budget for 1946, exclusive of non-recurring items such as new buildings, as \$64,591.79. Of this, it is estimated that \$32,000.00 is chargeable to educational work.

3. *Estimated Distribution of Total Educational Expenses Between Grade School and High School Departments.*

Year	Total Education	Grade School	High School
1946	\$32,000	\$30,400	\$1,600
1947	34,000	30,000	4,000
1948	36,000	30,000	6,000

A question raised in connection with these figures is: Why don't we demand of the Indian that he pay at least the major portion of this cost for the education of his children? Why can we not make the same demands of the Indians that our missionaries do up the African field? Here, we are told, the native pays out of his meager income for all of the expense connected with the education of his children in the mission school.

The answer to this question is mainly: the competition of the free government school. The Indian has been greatly spoiled by our government in this respect. He has been granted free land on which to live, and a certain number of sheep with which to build up his herd. And likewise the government has taken his children out of the hogan and placed them in the government boarding schools, where they are given not only free schooling, but also free board and clothing. Hence the mission schools could not expect any enrollment if they would charge a sizable fee for attendance. Even the Indian that has been converted to Christianity continues to harbor the idea that the white man has taken his country away from him, and that therefore it is still but a small return he is receiving by having his children receive free board at the mission school. Only as he sees the greater advantages of the mission school, and as he becomes more deeply conscious of the meaning of Christian stewardship, can we expect of the Indian that he will assume personal responsibility for this task of educating his children.

Our present tuition charge is only a nominal \$15.00 for the lower grades and \$25.00 for those in the junior high school. A number of Indian girls are eager to learn to play the piano, for which an additional \$15.00 is charged. The parents are at present also furnishing practically all of the clothing for their children. This charge is practically the same as that at the Farmington School. The school at Ganado has a somewhat higher tuition. Here \$40.00 is charged for the lower grades and \$50.00 for the upper grades. Our Board is aiming to step up the fee at Rehoboth gradually, so as to educate the Indian in this connection, teaching him his personal responsibility toward his children.

Another obstacle with regard to this matter of finances is the extreme poverty of several Indians. And since hardly any of them display their wealth, it is difficult to determine the ability of the Indian to pay a certain percentage of the cost of educating his children. And our aim at Rehoboth is, of course, not merely to admit whatever children come with the enrollment fee in their hand, but to give preference to children of former graduates.

We must admit, therefore, that the day is not yet in sight when we may hope to make our school at Rehoboth, nor our day school at Zuni, self-sustaining.

V. THE HOSPITAL

Whereas for the last few years there has been no resident doctor at Rehoboth, your committee is not convinced of the desirability of again attempting to fill this vacancy. On the basis of our findings in the earlier part of our report we readily acknowledge that there is a proper place for medical care in connection with the work of missions as another auxiliary means to the great objective of evangelization. However, Rehoboth is situated only five miles from Gallup, a fair sized city, where the Indian can obtain whatever medical care he needs. There are also a number of government hospitals to serve him free of charge. We may also point to the Farmington Mission, which is far better equipped than ours, but which also does not have a hospital. Moreover, to reopen our hospital would mean a considerable outlay of money for additional and more modern equipment. It would mean the engaging of at least some four or five additional nurses as well as a medical doctor, aggregating an outlay of several thousand dollars. It would mean still further the building of another home—an item not included in the estimated cost of buildings just quoted in connection with the proposed expansion of the educational work, or the possible renting of a home in Gallup. The Rev. J. R. Kamps, Field Pastor, laboring among the Indians living scattered in various directions from Rehoboth, is living in the "parsonage" on the Rehoboth property. The Rev. A. Poel, his successor as Missionary Pastor at Rehoboth, had the "doctor's home" assigned to him, since this was left vacant upon the resignation of Dr. Pouma. Hence, there is no home available at present for a resident doctor. On the other hand, if we would limit our medical work to the retaining of a resident nurse to look after the minor physical ailments of the children and workers, as is being done at present, the total cost of our proposed building program could be appreciably reduced. With some remodeling, the hospital building could be converted into a home for our teachers and other workers.

While, as we stated above, we readily acknowledge that there is a proper place for medical care in connection with the work of missions as another auxiliary means to the great objective of evangelization, apart from the financial consideration just mentioned it must be admitted that the value of the hospital is by no means equal to that of the boarding

school at our Rehoboth Mission. The hospital patient or attendant at the clinic is brought in contact with the missionary only a few days or even only a few hours in most cases, while the child at school is brought under the influence of the Gospel every day—in fact, practically all of his waking hours—throughout his stay at the school.

Hence we believe it wiser to concentrate our efforts at Rehoboth on education only, as was advised by the Christian Reformed Board of Missions at the Synod of 1942, which advice was unfortunately rejected by the Synod of that year upon the recommendation of the advisory committee re this matter.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

To conclude this report then, our findings lead us to lay the following recommendations before your honorable body for approval:

1. On the basis of Scripture and in conformity with the history of missions Synod shall express its missionary task essentially to be:

- a. Preaching or teaching the Gospel unto remission of sins,
- b. Baptizing those who repent of their sins, and believe in Christ as their Savior and Lord,
- c. Teaching such to observe all things commanded them, and
- d. Organizing them as soon as possible into self-propagating, self-governing, and self-supporting churches.

2. On the basis of Scripture again and in conformity with the history of missions Synod declare that there is a legitimate place in its mission program for several auxiliary activities and enterprises—especially those of education and medical service. These may be called *mission work in its broader sense*.

3. While admitting that the Church's mission activity by means of education in the Indian field has thus far not yielded the fruits that it would have desired, Synod nevertheless declare it justifiable and necessary to continue its present educational program.

Grounds:

- a. This educational program has had many blessed results;
- b. It serves as a valuable means for leading pupils to a knowledge of sin and profession of their faith;
- c. It places the child under the influence of the Gospel before he is firmly entrenched in the superstitions and prejudices of his race;
- d. It teaches the child not only the contents of the Gospel as to its doctrinal aspects, but also what it means to live a Christian life under all circumstances in a Christian community;
- e. It provides a valuable opening into the homes of these pupils;
- f. It opens the way for the training of Christian native workers from among the more promising students.

4. Synod authorize the Board of Missions to proceed with its expansion program in the matter of education on the Indian field, so as to

include a complete high school course with a limited complete enrollment of 200 for the combined grammar and high schools.

Grounds:

- a. To give the Indian child only a grammar school training is to leave an important task half finished; the high school years are the crucial years for making personal decisions.
- b. Our past educational policy has caused us to lose many promising young people to other denominations, as they completed their schooling at other mission schools.
- c. There is at present evident a general awakening among the Indians and an urgent demand for more education.
- d. Economic pressure and other influences are leading the younger generation of Indians to look for other means of livelihood, which again call for more schooling.
- e. A high school is essential as a "feeder" for the discovery and training of native workers who shall be adequately equipped for the responsible task lying before them.

5. Our missionaries and teaching staff shall be instructed to try earnestly to instil in the Indian a sense of responsibility with regard to his stewardship, to the end that the churches and schools on the field may become increasingly self-sustaining; the tuition at the Rehoboth school shall immediately be substantially increased.

6. With regard to the hospital at Rehoboth, Synod shall decide to retain only the clinic for the resident workers and children with the services of a resident nurse.

Grounds:

- a. The missionary value of the hospital service among the Indians is rather secondary as compared with the other forms of mission activity among them.
- b. The need for medical care is less urgent in the Indian field than it is in our other mission fields because of the adequate medical service rendered by practicing physicians at the adjoining city of Gallup and at the various government hospitals.
- c. The re-opening of the hospital would involve a considerable expenditure of money, of which only a small part could be offset with patients' fees, namely, a doctor's salary, several nurses' salaries, the building of another residence, nurses' lodges, and a certain amount of new hospital equipment.

In connection with this recommendation, your Committee would have Synod take cognizance of the fact that, in accordance with the decision of the Synod of 1942, the Executive Committee of the Christian Reformed Board of Missions just recently appointed a medical doctor for Rehoboth. The doctor has accepted the appointment, and plans to begin his practice at Rehoboth on September 1 of this year.

(NOTE: Dr. J. C. De Korne and the Rev. H. Verduin, members of this committee, wished to have it recorded that they take exception to the Committee's recommendation with regard to the hospital. Their personal stand on this matter is given below.)

Respectfully submitted,

M. MONSMA, Pres.
M. VAN DYKE, Sec'y
J. BREUKER
J. C. DE KORNE
J. H. MONSMA
R. L. VEENSTRA
H. VERDUIN

The undersigned, while admitting that the need for maintaining a mission hospital at Rehoboth is less urgent now than it was before the government had expanded its medical facilities for the Indians, nevertheless feel constrained to advise Synod to continue the hospital at Rehoboth.

Grounds:

- a. It does perform an important function in the evangelization of the Indians.
- b. Our people are able and willing to support both the school and the hospital.
- c. The appointment of a doctor for Rehoboth was entirely in line with the instructions given the Board by Synod, and since the doctor has accepted the appointment, we feel that Synod is ethically bound to stand by the agreement.

HENRY VERDUIN
JOHN C. DE KORNE

REPORT NO. 2

DELEGATE TO THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Lord has prospered the work of distributing the Bible in every part of the world. This was the gist of the reports received at the two-day conference of the advisory counsel of the American Bible Society, which we attended as your delegate. A large part of the time was devoted to the emergency work due to the war and post-war conditions. It is estimated that at least three million dollars is needed for 1945-1947; about half of this has been obtained and expended. This money is needed to provide Scriptures for our armed forces, for prisoners of war, and for rehabilitation work in devastated countries. Many churches in Europe are without Bibles.

There is a great demand for German and Japanese Bibles and New Testaments. A request for 100,000 New Testaments came in from Japan while we were in session, and the religious forces coöperating with our army of occupation speak of an unlimited demand on the part of the Japanese people.

Our Synod of 1945 expressed itself as being particularly interested in the speedy replacement of Bibles in the war devastated areas and especially in the Netherlands. We obtained the following information: That the Netherlands Bible Society is functioning again and has printed 60,000 copies of the Bible, but only in sheets. They have no machinery nor material for binding them. So the American Bible Society has continued to supply Dutch Bibles and is also binding these Dutch printed sheets, and is trying to obtain binding machinery to ship to Holland as soon as possible. But the needs of the Dutch East Indies, formerly supplied from Holland, have been during the war and are still supplied today from our emergency fund. All that is sent to the Netherlands is paid from the emergency fund; and although the Dutch people have offered to pay for it later, no money can be sent at present and the American Bible Society expects no return.

The United States, which was the arsenal of weapons of war, is now trying to be the arsenal of the Word of God. Let me quote some figures. 277,000 Bibles and parts of it printed in 42 languages have been distributed to prisoners of war. From our Geneva office 100,000 Bibles, 480,000 New Testaments, and 1,800,000 gospels were supplied to European countries. Besides, 200,000 German Bibles were sent on request of the religious leaders, and another 200,000 are on the press and will be shipped in a few months.

The British Bible Society is doing all it can to resume its pre-war work. It assists our Society in printing New Testaments in some foreign

languages, and we assist them in other work. Moreover, we try to aid Bible societies in different countries to resume the work in their own fields. This has been partly accomplished in France, Norway, Holland, Greece, and Italy.

Besides all these special needs the regular work of the Bible Society is not only carried on but even extended, as requests for more supplies come in from home and foreign fields. The task of the society is three-fold: to print Bibles, distribute them, and to have them read. The number of languages in which the Bible is printed is now 1,068.

I am glad to report that our Church has responded well to this cause by contributing \$5,645.00 for the regular and emergency funds. We recommend this cause to our churches for added support in view of the emergency needs, and to our Synod of 1946 to place it again on the list of accredited causes.

Respectfully submitted,
HESSEL BOUMA

Delegate to the American Bible Society

REPORT NO. 3

CHICAGO JEWISH MISSIONS

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

AS reported in *The Banner* of August 10, 1945, the Board of the Nathanael Institute has undergone a considerable change in personnel. Men who had served on the Board for a longer or shorter period of time accepted calls elsewhere, and the alternates which had been appointed by Classis Chicago North took their places. With the help of the men serving in the Board these new members are endeavoring to orientate themselves and to be faithful in the work entrusted to them.

Dr. William Masselink is now serving as president of the Board, Rev. E. Kooistra as vice-president, Rev. Marvin Vanderwerp as secretary, and Mr. George Ottenhoff as treasurer. Other members of the Board are the Rev. T. C. Van Kooten and Mr. Lambert Bere. The Board meets the second Tuesday of every month at 9:30 a. m., the meetings usually lasting until noon. For the first hour the workers meet with the Board, giving a report of their various activities, and discussing with the Board problems arising in connection with their work. The workers then return to the manifold tasks, and the Board transacts the business necessary to a proper functioning of the Institute.

As far as our staff of workers is concerned, we can report the following: In July of last year the Board took cognizance of the fact that Dr. William Yonker had been associated with the Nathanael Institute for twenty years. Three mornings each week he is at the Institute, minister-

ing to the physical and spiritual needs of the patients. He was assisted in the medical work by Miss Marie DeBruin, and in the spiritual work by Miss DeBruin and the other workers. Miss DeBruin felt constrained to give up her work at the close of the year, and a temporary part-time worker was secured in her place. The Board decided to put forth efforts to secure a full-time missionary nurse.

The other workers, Mr. Huisjen, Rev. Zandstra, Miss VanderMeulen, and Miss Tuit, are carrying on as usual. In addition to the contacts made at the clinic, contacts are made through the various meetings and classes which are held, and through calls at the homes in the Jewish community surrounding the Institute. Every Friday afternoon the staff meets for prayer and consultation, and the Board has decided that once a month a member of the Board shall meet with them. This member shall then, if possible, remain at the Institute for the afternoon so as to become better informed as to the many activities and problems. Another familiar figure at the Institute is Miss Minnie Goosens, who keeps the building neat and clean, and radiates Christian cheer and peace.

Rev. Zandstra and Mr. Huisjen attended the annual conference of the Hebrew Christian Alliance the first part of last September. This conference was attended by eminent Hebrew Christian missionaries from various parts of the United States and Canada. It was the consensus of opinion that, because of the changing attitude on the part of the Jews, new avenues of approach must be used in addition to the old. The Board and the Staff are studying the problem with a view to adapting the work as conditions require. Mr. Huisjen is again teaching a Jewish Mission course at the Reformed Bible Institute, an evidence that the R. B. I. has included Jewish Mission work definitely in their curriculum. It is felt that Jewish Mission work should become increasingly a part of our general evangelistic work as a denomination.

The work of Jewish Mission remains difficult, and the fruit, as far as we can see, is not abundant. But the fact that a task is hard does not excuse us from performing it, nor warrant us to diminish our efforts and lose our zeal. And the primary consideration for us is not the amount of fruit, but whether we are obedient and faithful with respect to the command of God. The fact that the task is hard and the fruit rather meager should be all the more reason for redoubling our efforts and our prayers. We believe that the gospel of Christ is still the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew as well as to the Gentile. Only eternity will reveal the full fruit of our labors as a denomination in the interests of that people who have retained their distinctiveness in spite of being scattered and persecuted. We plead for a renewed and increased interest in the cause of Jewish missions, and covet your further prayers and gifts for this great cause.

Respectfully submitted,

MARVIN VANDERWERP, Sec'y

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF THE CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

December 31, 1945

RECEIPTS

Balance on hand, January 1, 1945.....		\$ 943.79
Synodical Treasurer	\$ 9,600.00	
Donations and Collections	335.14	
Medical Department	1,293.00	
Rebates	22.80	
Interest on Investments	1,090.46	
Total Operating Receipts	\$12,341.40	
Other Receipts:		
Principal payments on Mortgages	\$ 2,366.48	
Escrow Funds:		
Tax Deposits on Properties on which Mortgages and Contracts are held	207.00	
Withholding Tax on Employees	714.00	15,628.88
Total		\$16,572.67

DISBURSEMENTS

Operating:		
Salaries	\$10,109.60	
Huisjen, Rent	480.00	
Rev. Zandstra, Rent	600.00	
Rev. Zandstra, Auto Expense	300.00	
Mission, Petty Cash	330.50	
Phone	75.04	
Gas and Electric	119.45	
Medical Supplies	459.48	
Building Supplies	28.62	
Cleaning and Repairs	369.95	
Fuel	364.99	
Service and Traveling Expense	175.00	
Insurance	48.93	
License	27.50	
Printing and Advertising	149.31	
Equipment	494.00	
Miscellaneous	99.18	
Total Operating Disbursements	\$14,231.55	
Other Disbursements, Investments:		
From Escrow Funds	\$ 258.67	
Withholding Taxes	702.08	15,192.30
Cash Balance on Hand, Dec. 31, 1945		\$ 1,380.37
Note: Used from Reserve for operating		\$ 1,453.57

STATEMENT OF THE CHICAGO JEWISH MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

January 1, 1946

ASSETS

Cash on Hand	\$ 1,380.37
Property and Equipment (Nathanael Institute)	17,640.00
U. S. Government Bonds	18,000.00
Federal Savings and Loan Assn. Stock	7,000.00
Mortgages and Real Estate Contracts	6,763.55
Total	\$50,783.92

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1946

Pastor's Salary	\$ 2,300.00
Pastor's Rent	600.00
Pastor's Auto Expense	300.00
Religious Worker's Salary	2,300.00
Religious Worker's Rent	600.00
Doctor's Salary (part time)	1,644.48
Lady Worker's Salary	1,644.48
Lady Worker's Salary	1,644.48
Nurse's Salary (part time)	828.00
Janitor's Salary	1,173.12
Gas, Electric and Fuel	500.00
Insurance and License	250.00
Repairing and Decorating	500.00
Medical Supplies, etc.	500.00
Traveling and Services	175.00
Supplies and Equipment	350.00
Printing and Advertising	150.00
Phone	100.00
General Office Expense	350.00
Total	\$15,859.56

January 15, 1946

Board of Jewish Missions,
Christian Reformed Church,
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Brethren:

In accordance with your request I have examined the books of your Treasurer, Mr. George Ottenhoff, and found the records in excellent condition and well kept.

The scope of my work consisted of the following:

All receipts were accepted as recorded, since it is impractical to verify all receipts, the principal item is from the Synodical Treasurer, in the sum of \$9,600.00

All disbursements were examined and appear to be proper charges.

The cash balance was reconciled with the bank statement as of December 31, 1945.

Respectfully submitted,

LAMBERT BERE

THE PATERSON HEBREW MISSION BOARD

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

WE herewith submit a report on the work conducted under the jurisdiction of the Classes Hudson and Hackensack.

The work of Hebrew missions is not easy, as many barriers are placed in the way by leaders of the Jews. Yet the personnel faithfully bring the Gospel to the Jews. According to the reports that are brought to the attention of the Board, the attendance at the meetings is holding its own. The accompanying reports show the Jewish attendance at the various meetings.

Dr. Dunning conducts the work at the Dispensary, with the assistance of Miss Rosendale, the nurse. All patients are required to attend the gospel meetings. Both doctor and nurse are esteemed highly, and have the full confidence of the Jews. They have served for many years.

The Board members, appointed by the Classes, are the following: Rev. P. Van Dyk, President; Rev. H. Bouma, Vice-president; Mr. H. Van Ostenbridge, Secretary; Mr. M. Bolier, Treasurer; Rev. H. Radius, Rev. C. Spoelhof, Mr. A. Atema and Mr. J. DeLeeuw. They are faithful in their attendance at the Board meetings. All matters that are brought to the attention of the Board are carefully considered. Attention is given both to the spiritual and the material needs.

Hoping that this will meet with your approval, and that, as in the past, financially as well as spiritually, we may receive your cooperation and prayerful support, we remain

Yours in the service of the Master,

H. VAN OSTENBRIDGE, Sec'y

Report of the Superintendent

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

During the year 1945 we might bring the gospel to the Jewish people of Paterson, N. J., in various ways, with varied results. Sometimes we meet Jews who are eager to listen to the gospel, while others show indifference and even hatred. The personnel consists of Rev. J. Rozendal, superintendent; Dr. W. L. Dunning, clinic physician; Miss M. Rosendale, nurse and Bible woman; Miss Agnes Vellenga, teacher and Bible woman. Our main mission is at 48 North Main St., and our branch mission is at 253 Hamilton Ave., Paterson, N. J.

We shall attempt to give you a survey of the work, as well as the attendance at our meetings. At North Main St., we have held gospel meetings during the year on Saturday evenings. Forty-seven meetings

were held, and a total of 525 Jews attended. Messages are brought from the Old and New Testaments.

Once a month we have a special service, conducted by one of the local pastors, and their congregations furnish music. Seven meetings were held, at which 123 Jews and 119 visitors from the church were present. The ministers and congregations of both Classes show their interest by conducting these meetings, and they serve to acquaint the Jewish people with our church people, and our churches become more familiar with the Jewish mission work.

Once a week we have a clinic meeting at North Main St. In 1945 we held 53 clinics, and 340 patients received treatment. Before the clinic we have a regular gospel meeting, at which all patients must be present.

Miss Rosendale teaches a class of ladies on Tuesday evenings. They study the Bible and also spend some time sewing. Thirty-three meetings were held, and a total of 165 ladies attended.

On Wednesday afternoons, Miss Rosendale teaches another class of ladies, instructing them in the Word of God. At 35 meetings a total of 135 Jewish ladies were present.

At our Branch mission on Hamilton Ave., we hold Gospel meetings on Sunday evenings. In 1945 twenty-four meetings were held, with a total attendance of 63 Jews.

Miss Vellenga teaches a class in Bible and Americanization on Monday and Wednesday evenings each week. In 1945 sixty-eight meetings were held, with a total of 544 Jewish ladies attending.

A ladies' sewing class meets on Wednesday afternoons. Nineteen meetings were held, with a total attendance of 30 Jewish ladies.

Thirteen boys' classes were held, with an attendance of 20; and 33 girls' classes, with an attendance of 76.

We also opened a clinic here in March, 1945. At 35 clinics 114 Jewish people received medical care. Before each clinic a gospel service is held, and all the patients attend.

A very important phase of the work is visiting homes, stores, shops, hospitals. Miss Rosendale regularly visits the sick in their homes and hospitals. All the members of the staff visit homes and shops, and during 1945 a total of 1,413 visits were made. We leave Bibles, testaments and tracts where the people are willing to read them. A total of five Bibles, 64 New Testaments, 143 Gospels, and 1,168 tracts were distributed throughout the year.

During the year we were asked to attend several Jewish funerals, and at one funeral we were asked to speak a message. This is a very rare privilege, and we welcomed the opportunity.

We have reason to believe that there are a few true believers among our Jewish friends; yet they are not ready to accept baptism. May the Lord bless the efforts put forth with the work of His Holy Spirit, so that the Jew may also learn to know himself as a sinner and seek salvation in Jesus Christ.

From time to time the personnel are asked to speak before societies in the churches, as well as in the local R. B. I. May you all continue to remember the work in prayer, and may you all try to reach the Jew with whom God brings you into contact. We only have two Jewish mission stations in this great land, where there are so many Jews. May each local church also reach out into its community to bring the Gospel to the Jews.

Yours in the Lord's work,
REV. J. ROZENDAL, Supt.

Report of the Treasurer to the Synod of 1946

Balance, January 1, 1945\$ 1,353.75

RECEIPTS

From General Fund	\$ 7,322.66	
From Rents	534.00	
Free-will Offerings	166.32	
Donations	72.15	
Telephone toll	28.18	8,123.31
Total Receipts		\$ 9,477.06

DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries	\$ 4,609.88
Bonus	610.96
Rents	840.00
Supplies	386.96
Miscellaneous	118.10
Water, Light, Telephone	233.35
Withholding Tax	193.28
Coal	207.35
Repairs	267.15
Equipment	191.98
Insurance	48.05
Property Tax	260.18
Total Disbursements	7,967.24

Balance, December 31, 1945\$ 1,509.82

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

January 1, 1946

Three-story Mission Building	\$10,000.00
Furniture and Equipment	800.00
Balance in Bank	1,509.82
Total Assets	\$12,309.82

Liabilities—None.

The books and records were examined and found correct from January 1, 1945, to December 31, 1945, by Mr. John Last and Mr. John J. Dahm.

C. SPOELHOF, S. C.

Respectfully submitted,
M. BOLIER, Treas.

Respectfully submitted,
THE PATERSON HEBREW
MISSION BOARD

THE HOLLAND SEAMEN'S HOME AT HOBOKEN, N. J.

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

ANOTHER year has been added to the annals of our Seaman's Home in Hoboken, N. J. The year 1945 was an anniversary year. On March 12, 1915, the Home was opened in the presence of distinguished guests. The Board decided to observe the thirtieth anniversary by a program for the Seamen on Monday, March 12, 1945, with Mr. John J. Dahm and Rev. D. Grasman in charge, and by a luncheon on April 18, 1945 for the Board members, their wives, the personnel of the Home and various officials. Rev. J. J. Hiemenga spoke on this occasion on "Thirty Years in Hoboken"; Mr. Y. C. Spyksma on "First Beginnings"; Rev. D. De Beer on "The Treasurer Looks Back"; and Mr. John J. Dahm on "The Manager Looks Ahead." Greetings were brought by Dr. Winfield Burgraaff, the Commissioner of Revenue of the City of Hoboken, Consul E. V. E. Teixeira de Mattos of the Netherlands, and by representatives of various steamship companies. Ambassador Alexander Loudon sent regrets that he could not be present. Pictures of the group were taken and appeared in our church papers.

The Board is composed of four members representing Classis Hackensack, and four members representing Classis Hudson. Rev. John J. Hiemenga is President; Rev. Jacob P. Smith, Vice-president; Rev. D. De Beer, Treasurer, and Rev. E. Van Halsema, Secretary. The other members are Mr. B. J. Stap, Mr. A. Kuipers, Mr. Sipp Lafleur and Mr. C. P. Van Genderen. Monthly meetings are held, monthly inspections are made of the Home, and monthly reports are given by the personnel.

Rev. D. Grasman, spiritual advisor of the Home, serves the seamen with advice, receives them in his home, and labors among them with the gospel. Mrs. Grasman, a diligent helpmeet, served 328 meals to seamen and servicemen in her own home, and entertained 328 guests at the coffee table in 1945. In addition to this, 25 U. S. A. servicemen received overnight lodging in the Grasman home. In view of the many guests at the Grasman home, the Board decided in October to grant the Grasmans an allowance for their hospitality.

The spiritual labors are not without fruit. Rev. Grasman believes that in 1945 a definite change of heart has come to at least seven persons known to him.

Mr. John J. Dahm, our Manager of the Home, is constantly on the lookout to make the Home as attractive as possible for the men of the

sea. Some of the seamen have returned to the homeland, others are here for the first time since the war began. "These new comers," says Mr. Dahm, "most of whom have spent the five years of occupation in Holland, have tragic as well as interesting stories to tell. Numerically our Home has not suffered, spiritually it gives us an even greater opportunity to bring the gospel to an ever shifting attendance." In 1945 eighty-one regular gospel meetings were held in the Seamen's Home, with an attendance of 1,254. Some clothing was collected; twenty boxes of one-hundred pounds each were shipped to the Netherlands.

Two tracts, written by Rev. Grasman in the Holland language, and especially adapted to our seafaring men, were published in the course of the year; of the one 2,500 were printed, and 500 of the other.

Two hundred forty hospital calls were made, and 62 ships were visited. A number of Bibles, New Testaments and tracts were distributed.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Fisher keep the Home clean and in presentable condition.

May the Lord bless the Synod's work.

Respectfully submitted,

E. VAN HALSEMA, Sec'y, E. H. M. B.

C. SPOELHOF, S. C.

REPORT NO. 6

THE MINISTERS' PENSION AND RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Board of Trustees of the Ministers' Pension and Relief Administration herewith submits its report to your honorable body.

The membership of the Board consists of: Rev. R. J. Bos, Pres.; Mr. N. Hendrikse, Vice-Pres.; Rev. J. O. Bouwsma, Sec'y; Mr. W. K. Bareman, Treas., and Mr. F. L. Winter, Vice-Sec'y-Treas.

The Alternates are Mr. G. Doornbos, Mr. G. B. Tinholt, the Rev. B. Van Someren, Mr. B. De Jager, and the Rev. T. Yff.

We call attention of Synod to this: the term of appointment of the following expire at this time: the Rev. R. J. Bos and alternate, the Rev. T. Yff; the Rev. J. O. Bouwsma; Mr. W. K. Bareman and alternate, Mr. B. De Jager; and the alternate, Mr. G. B. Tinholt.

Since June 1, 1945, two of our pensionaries passed to their reward: the Rev. R. Diephuis and the Rev. J. De Haan.

Since our last report the Rev. W. Steenland and Dr. L. S. Huizenga departed this life. As they had contributed the 3% to the Ministers' Pension Fund, their widows are automatically entitled to the pension.

Information was received of the emeritation of: Rev. J. Bolt by Classis California on the ground of years of service and age; his emeritation went into effect Oct. 1, 1945. Rev. G. J. Vande Riet by Classis Zeeland on the ground of ill health; his emeritation was effective as of Oct. 1, 1945. Dr. Y. P. De Jong by Classis Grand Rapids South on the ground of years of service and age; his emeritation began Nov. 18, 1945.

Those Brethren are automatically entitled to a pension as they had united with the Ministers' Pension Plan.

THE MINISTERS' PENSION FUND

The Rules adopted by Synod for the administration of this Fund stipulate that the average salary of our ministers shall be determined on or before March 1. It was necessary to compute the average salary before that date to get this report into the hands of the Stated Clerk of Synod before this Agendum would go to press.

The 1946 salaries of 251 ministers were obtained. The average salary of those 251 ministers is \$2,261.25. A statement containing the names of our ministers who are in active service and their salaries is available.

The 1946 pension of a minister—40 per cent of the average salary and computed at the nearest multiple of 10—is \$900.00, an increase of \$40 above the pension of 1945. The 1946 pension of a widow—30 per cent of the average salary and computed at the nearest multiple of 10—is \$680.00, an increase of \$30.00. We add as a matter of information that since 1940 the pensions have increased approximately 30 per cent, or \$210 for a minister and \$160 for a widow. That increase is in line with the increase in the average salary of our clergymen.

Some of the pensionaries are not receiving the full pension in accordance with Synodical decisions. We recommend to Synod to add \$20 to each of those pensions because of the higher cost of living and because the pensions of the other pensionaries have increased. All of those for whom we ask that increase are not receiving the full pension.

The list of 1945 pensionaries and of the pensions follows:

Rev. H. Ahuis	\$860.00	Mrs. Cora Bloem	\$650.00
Rev. J. S. Balt	860.00	Mrs. Emma Bode	650.00
Rev. K. Bergsma	860.00	Mrs. Hattie Brink	420.00
Rev. H. Beute	860.00	Mrs. L. P. Brink	650.00
Rev. H. C. Bode	860.00	Mrs. S. Bouma	650.00
Rev. M. Borduin	860.00	Mrs. T. De Boer	650.00
Rev. R. Bolt	860.00	Mrs. Bertha De Jonge	650.00
Rev. J. W. Brink	860.00	Mrs. H. J. De Vries	650.00
Rev. W. Borgman	860.00	Mrs. Jennie Dekker	530.00
Rev. J. Bruinooze	860.00	Mrs. Anna Dolfin	650.00
Rev. J. M. Byleveld	860.00	Mrs. S. Eldersveld	650.00
Rev. B. J. Danhof	860.00	Mrs. Alida Fokkens	650.00
Rev. J. C. De Bruyn	860.00	Mrs. Ottelena Gelderloos	650.00
Rev. J. De Haan and Mrs. De Haan	538.32	Mrs. Sena Gerritsen	650.00
Rev. J. De Jonge	860.00	Mrs. Susan Gruessing	650.00
Rev. R. Diephuis and Mrs. Diephuis	789.96	Mrs. Hattie Haarsma	650.00
Rev. H. Dekker	860.00	Mrs. Cornelia Haveman	650.00
Rev. F. Doezeema	691.20	Mrs. Cora Heynen	650.00
Rev. J. J. Dyk and Mrs. Dyk	344.00	Mrs. Wilhelmina Hoefker	530.00
Rev. B. H. Einink	516.00	Mrs. Nellie Hoekenga	650.00
Rev. H. Fryling	860.00	Mrs. Elizabeth Hofmeyer	630.84
Rev. A. Guikema	860.00	Mrs. D. Hollebeek	216.66
Rev. H. Guikema	860.00	Mrs. Johanna Hylkema	650.00
Rev. G. J. Haan	788.34	Mrs. Sara Jonkman	530.00
Rev. R. L. Haan	860.00	Mrs. Tena Kamps	530.00
Rev. J. B. Hoekstra	860.00	Mrs. R. Karsen	650.00
Rev. J. Holwerda	860.00	Mrs. Magdalena Keizer	530.00
Rev. J. Homan	860.00	Mrs. A. H. Kort	650.00
Rev. H. Keegstra	860.00	Mrs. Emma Kuipers	650.00
Rev. J. Keizer	860.00	Mrs. H. J. Mulder	530.00
Rev. J. Kolkman	860.00	Mrs. Christine Oostendorp	440.00
Rev. R. Posthumus	480.00	Mrs. Minnetta Plesscher	300.00
Rev. F. Schuurmann	860.00	Mrs. Jacoba Robbert	650.00
Rev. J. Timmerman	860.00	Mrs. J. A. Rottier	650.00
Rev. I. Van Dellen	860.00	Mrs. Tracy Schultz	650.00
Rev. L. Van Haitsma	860.00	Mrs. Anna Schultz	380.00
Rev. H. Vander Woude	860.00	Mrs. Mary Stuart	650.00
Rev. W. Vanderwep	860.00	Mrs. Gertrude Stuart	650.00
Rev. J. M. Voortman	860.00	Mrs. Jennie Temple	650.00
Rev. L. Veltkamp	860.00	Mrs. Helen Tuls	650.00
Rev. J. Walkotten	860.00	Mrs. Grace Tuuk	650.00
Rev. J. A. Westervelt	860.00	Mrs. J. B. Vanden Hoek	650.00
Rev. P. D. Van Vliet	860.00	Mrs. Mina Vander Heide	530.00
Rev. J. Bolt	215.00	Mrs. Grace Vander Heide	530.00
Rev. G. J. Vande Riet	215.00	Mrs. T. Vander Ark	250.00
Rev. G. Westenberg and Mrs. Westenberg	702.50	Mrs. Catherine Vander Ploeg	650.00
Rev. T. Van Loo and Mrs. Van Loo	702.50	Mrs. Everdina Vissia	530.00
		Mrs. Sara Voss	650.00
		Mrs. Jennie Van Wyk	650.00
		Mrs. Effie Weidenaar	530.00
		Mrs. I. Westra	650.00
		Mrs. Ella Zwaagman	650.00

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

January 15, 1945 to December 31, 1945

Current Pension Fund

RECEIPTS

Classical Treasurers	\$48,672.10
Ministers, 3%	21,680.00
Individuals	676.50
Interest Earned on Savings Accounts	51.01

Total\$71,079.61

DISBURSEMENTS

Payments to Pensioners:

Ministers	\$36,431.20
Widows	32,058.62

Administrative Expenses:

Treasurer	300.00
Secretary	150.00
Travel, Board Members	116.20
Auditor	75.00
Bond Premium, Treasurer	25.00
Safety Deposit Rental	2.40
Bank Service and Exchange Cost	6.33
Postage, Printing, Supplies	161.67

Total\$69,326.42

Balance	\$ 1,753.19
Balance, January 15, 1945	21,083.77

Total	\$22,836.96
Transfer to Reserve Pension Fund	5,000.00
Balance, December 31, 1945	\$17,836.96

Reserve Pension Fund

RECEIPTS

Transfer from Current Pension Fund	\$ 5,000.00
United States of America—Series G Savings Bonds (Contra)	5,000.00
Increase in Redemption Value—United States Bond	944.50
Interest Earned on United States Bonds	658.75

Total\$11,603.25

DISBURSEMENTS

Purchase of United States—Series G Saving Bonds (Contra)	\$ 5,000.00
Balance, January 15, 1945	56,787.82

Total Balance in Pension Reserve Fund\$63,391.07

All is in United States Government Bonds except \$965.94 in cash.

A detailed statement of receipts, disbursements and present assets submitted by the firm, Maihofer, Moore, De Long & Kragt, Certified Public Accountants, is available for Synod.

The following is an estimate of our 1946 receipts and disbursements:

ESTIMATED RECEIPTS

From the Quota, at \$1.75 per family	\$51,301.25
From the Ministers, 3% of salary	22,000.00
Interest	1,000.00

Total\$74,301.25

ESTIMATED DISBURSEMENTS

To Pensioners	\$75,610.00
To Pensioners, a \$20 increase	320.00
Additional Pensions	2,500.00
For Expenses	800.00
Total	<u>\$79,230.00</u>
Deficit	<u>\$ 4,928.75</u>

We call the attention to the estimated deficit. In view of that deficit we recommend that the 1947 quota for the Ministers' Pension Fund should be increased \$.25 per family, making it \$2.00. *Ground:* The pensions are computed according to the average salary. As the average salary has been increasing, the pensions also have increased. That increase in the pensions cannot be met or covered by the increase in the 3% salary contributions. The quota should be raised in accordance with the increase in pensions.

In accordance with the decision of Synod, Acts 1944, we are continuing to advance aid to Mrs. J. Van Lonkhuizen. We suggest to Synod to decide by whom and when steps should be taken to bring that to a just end.

We request Synod to advise us what should be done anent the pension of a minister, who has written that "his activities are those of a full-time minister."

THE MINISTERS' RELIEF FUND

The Rules for the administration of this Fund authorize us to inform the Church as to the needs of this Fund. We are happy to report that the contributions of this Fund have been increasing. Whereas the receipts in the first three years were inadequate so that the large balance with which this Fund started in January, 1940, was wiped out, during the last three years a good balance has been built up. Because of that balance and because we are asking for an increase of \$.25 for the Ministers' Pension Fund, we do not request a free-will offering for this Fund in 1947.

A statement of receipts, disbursements and present assets of this Fund certified by the Auditors, Maihofer, Moore, De Long & Kragt, Certified Public Accountants, is available for Synod.

Current Relief Fund

RECEIPTS

Classical Treasurers	\$ 6,722.84
Balance, January 15, 1945	10,136.63
Total	<u>\$16,859.47</u>

DISBURSEMENTS

To Beneficiaries	\$ 1,760.00
Transfer to Reserve Relief Fund	7,500.00
Total	<u>\$ 9,260.00</u>
Balance	<u>\$ 7,599.47</u>

Reserve Relief Fund

RECEIPTS

Transfer from Current Relief Fund	\$ 7,500.00
United States—Series G Savings Bonds (Contra)	7,500.00
Increase in Redemption Value—United States Bonds.....	287.90
Interest Earned on United States Savings Bonds	93.75
Total	\$15,381.65

DISBURSEMENTS

Purchase of United States—Series G Savings Bonds (Contra).....	\$ 7,500.00
Balance	\$ 7,881.65
Add, Balance of Jan. 15, 1945.....	20,893.93
Total.....	\$28,775.58

All of this is in United States Bonds.

A detailed report of our receipts and disbursements, which according to the Rules shall be submitted to the Advisory Committee, and, if Synod so desires, to Synod itself in Executive Session, is available.

We have endeavored to administer the Ministers' Pension and Relief Funds in accordance with the Rules adopted by Synod. Our aim has been and is on the one hand to safeguard the interests of the Church, and on the other hand to uphold the rights of the Emeriti, Widows and Orphans, who according to our Church Order are beneficiaries. The administrative cost has been kept to less than one per cent of the moneys entrusted to our care.

Respectfully submitted,

J. O. BOUWSMA, Sec'y

MISSION SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON PLANNING COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE attention of Synod is called to the fact that approximately half of the lessons outlined below have already been taught to the mission classes for which they were drawn up: another fourth of them have been printed and are ready for distribution. Our report, therefore, is in large measure impossible of either approval or disapproval on Synod's part. It would be well that Synod remedy this situation by some such arrangement as mandating its committee to work farther ahead than for just the immediately ensuing year. Another reason for such a remedy is the fact that the committee is appointed in June, and expected to have its work done in August, to permit the publication personnel to start their work in September.

2. The committee suggests that Synod consider the advisability of having the committee be composed of three mission workers and two ministers, rather than the reverse proportion, as now.

3. As to the contents of the report, below, the committee continues its previous policy—having proved satisfactory—of using the first half of the year for New Testament material, into which schedule all the Christian holidays (from Christmas through Pentecost) fit logically and chronologically—while the last half of the year treats Old Testament subjects (this year, from Creation to Moses).

Lesson Plan for the Year 1946

- Jan. 6—The Boy Jesus (Luke 2:40-52)
- Jan. 13—Jesus' Baptism (John 1:19-34; Matt. 3:13-17)
- Jan. 20—Jesus' Temptation (Matt. 4:1-11)
- Jan. 27—Jesus Calls His First Disciples (John 1:37-51)
- Feb. 3—Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-42)
- Feb. 10—Jesus Heals a Nobleman's Son (John 4:43-54)
- Feb. 17—Jesus Heals a Leper (Luke 5:12-16; Mark 1:40-45)
- Feb. 24—Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-47)
- Mar. 3—Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant (Luke 7:1-17)
- Mar. 10—(*Prayer Week*) Jesus and the Syro-Phoenician Woman (Matt. 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30)
- Mar. 17—Jesus' Story of the Sower (Matt. 13:3-8, 36-43)
- Mar. 24—Jesus' Story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24)
- Mar. 31—Jesus' Story of the Marriage of the King's Son (Matt. 22:1-15)
- April 7—Jesus' Triumphal Entry (Luke 19:29-44; Mark 11:1-11)
- April 14—(*Good Friday Week*) Jesus' Crucifixion and Death (Luke 23:33-56)
- April 21—(*Easter*) Jesus Rises from the Dead (Matt. 28:1-15)
- April 28—Jesus Appears to Two Travelers (Luke 24:13-35)
- May 5—Jesus Appears to His Disciples at the Lake (John 21:1-14)
- May 12—Jesus' Story of the Laborers in the Vineyard (Matt. 20:1-17)
- May 19—Jesus, the World's Savior (Matt. 19:13-15; 28:16-20)

- May 26—(*Ascension Week*) Jesus Ascends into Heaven (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11)
- June 2—The Father's House (John 14:1-4; Rev. 21:1-22:5)
- June 9—(*Pentecost*) Jesus Sends the Comforter (Acts 1:6-9; 2:1-40)
- June 16—God Creates All Things (Gen. 1:1-25, 31)
- June 23—God Creates Man (Gen. 1:26-30; 2:5b-7, 18, 21-25)
- June 30—Man's First Home (Gen. 2:8-17, 19, 20)
- July 7—How Sin Began (Gen. 2:1-24)
- July 14—The First Murder (Gen. 4:1-26)
- July 21—The Spread of Sin (Gen. 6)
- July 28—The First Great Punishment of Sin (Gen. 7; 8:1-12)
- Aug. 4—God's Bow in the Clouds (Gen. 8:13-9:17)
- Aug. 11—The Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9)
- Aug. 18—The Call of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-9)
- Aug. 25—Abraham and the Heavenly Visitors (Gen. 18)
- Sept. 1—The Destruction of Sodom (Gen. 19:1-29)
- Sept. 8—God Tests Abraham (Gen. 22:1-19)
- Sept. 15—Jacob at Bethel (Gen. 27:46-28:42)
- Sept. 22—Jacob Wrestles with God (Gen. 32)
- Sept. 29—Joseph Sold by His Brothers (Gen. 37)
- Oct. 6—Joseph Overcomes Temptation (Gen. 39)
- Oct. 13—Joseph Interprets Dreams (Gen. 40; 41:1-45)
- Oct. 20—Joseph's Kindness to His Brothers (Gen. 41:53-45:15)
- Oct. 27—Joseph Care for His Father (Gen. 45:16-47:12)
- Nov. 3—The Baby Moses (Exod. 1:8-2:10)
- Nov. 10—Moses Prepared to Lead God's People (Exod. 2:11-4:31)
- Nov. 17—God Plagues Egypt (Exod. 5:1-11:10)
- Nov. 24—(*Thanksgiving Week*) Israel's Day of Thanksgiving (Exod. 12:1-36)
- Dec. 1—The Promise of Jesus' Coming (Gen. 3:15; 49:10; Isa. 7:14; 9:2, 6, 7; Micah 5:2; Mal. 3:1-3)
- Dec. 8—John Prepares for Jesus' Coming (John 1:6; Matt. 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-18)
- Dec. 15—Angel Announcements of Jesus' Birth (Luke 1:26-38; Matt. 1:18-25; 2:8-14)
- Dec. 22—(*Christmas Week*) The Shepherds' Christmas (Luke 2:1-20)
- Dec. 29—The Wise Men Come to Jesus (Matt. 2)

Respectfully submitted,

REV. HENRY VERDUIN
 REV. PETER JONKER
 REV. ROLF VEENSTRA
 A. VANDER VEER
 THOMAS AFMAN

MAJORITY REPORT "MIXED MARRIAGES"

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

IN presenting our draft for a synodical testimonial on mixed marriages as per mandate of the Synod of 1945 the undersigned deem it advisable to preface their work with a statement why they cannot agree with the position of the Rev. W. Groen in his report to your honorable body.

The Rev. Mr. Groen declares that no testimonial of a general nature, either on mixed marriages or on other matters involving moral principles and issues should be issued by your Synods because in so doing Synod would act contrary to (and in the past frequently has acted contrary to) our Church Order, articles 30, 31, 71-78.

To us it appears that in this the Rev. W. Groen proceeds from a debatable premise. His assertion implies that to issue such a testimonial constitutes ecclesiastical censure or discipline. If this were so, we agree that the procedure of ecclesiastical censure is stipulated in Arts. 71-78 C. O., and applies to individual and concrete cases.

This premise, however, is not as clear as the Rev. W. Groen posits. The fact that the report submitted to the Synod of 1945 by the synodical committee ad hoc asserts that all marriages between members of the Christian Reformed Church and Christians belonging to other denominations are to be condemned and warned against as being more or less mixed marriages, together with the fact that the undersigned take a somewhat different view on this point, reveals that there is not among us sufficient unanimity as to what constitutes a mixed marriage and just what calls for disciplinary action. Consequently, there is a problem in the minds of some of our people concerning the questions: "Just what is a mixed marriage? Just where does ecclesiastical censure begin?"

The undersigned therefore take the view that the Synod of 1945, in giving its mandate, has not charged them with issuing generalities intended to take the place of individual discipline, but rather with the task of aiding the churches in becoming clear on the fundamental questions, "When and where does the application of Articles 71-78 begin? And, where there is no clear indication that Articles 71-78 should be applied, what general rule should be followed?"

We are now ready to comply with the work assigned to us by the Synod of 1945, to wit, to draft a synodical testimonial on the problem of mixed marriages. Here much good work has been done by previous committees. For instance, we hold that practically all the material con-

tained in the report of the 1945 committee under the headings "Principles Involved," "Need of Education," "Love Itself Not Enough," "Bible Proof" (Agenda 1945, pp. 12-15) is of an excellent nature. Lest our report become needlessly long, we prefer not to reprint all of this here, but to suffice with a general admonition by way of a reminder concerning matters which, in the words of the Rev. W. Groen, are "plain teachings of the Bible, on a well-known truth."

We propose therefore the following

TESTIMONIAL ON MIXED MARRIAGES

The Synod of 1946 reminds the churches that there can be no doubt as to the teachings of Scripture concerning the marriage of one who is in the covenant with one who is not in the covenant. Scripture plainly brands such a union sinful, forbids it as an unequal yoke between a believer and an unbeliever, and in the histories of Esau, Samson, Solomon and others shows that such a union leads only to disaster.

Synod warns against being led by mere passion, which blinds its subjects to the faults of others, and which leads to deceiving oneself concerning the motives that promote one to become engaged to an unbeliever.

Synod urges all parents, ministers, and elders to see that the children of the covenant receive due instruction in the home before it is too late, and to send children, wherever possible, to Christian grammar schools and Christian high schools in order to prevent the formation of ties of intimate friendship between the sexes in the formative years of life.

In the matter of marriage between people belonging to different denominations, Synod makes a distinction, and warns against

MARRIAGE BETWEEN PROTESTANTS AND ROMAN CATHOLICS

It is true that the Church of Rome adheres to some cardinal Christian doctrines that are denied by large sections of many Protestant churches, such as the doctrines of the Trinity, the two natures of Christ, the substitutionary death of our Lord, etc.

There are, nevertheless, grievous objections to a daily fellowship between Protestants and Romanists such as married life entails. Among these we mention:

1. The sacerdotal conception of salvation held by the Church of Rome, which makes its members more dependent upon the sacraments and upon the ministry of the clergy than upon a personal and vital relationship to Christ.
2. The Romish doctrine and practice of the mass, which our Church officially condemns as a "cursed idolatry."
3. The Romish doctrine that salvation depends in part upon the good works of faith done by man.

4. The fact that the Roman Catholic clergy acknowledges no marriage between a Protestant and a Catholic except it be solemnized by a Romish priest under the promise that all children resulting from such a union shall belong to the Church of Rome and be baptized and trained in its faith; and also the solemn promise on the part of the Catholic party that he or she shall endeavor to gain the other party for the Church of Rome.

For these reasons Synod not only warns against such unions, but also warns all ministers in the Christian Reformed Church not to take part in the solemnization of marriage between any kind of Protestant and a member of the Roman Catholic Church.

MARRIAGE BETWEEN PROTESTANTS OF VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS

Although it would indeed be ideal if members of the Christian Reformed Church would marry only with a member of their own denomination, because the greatest happiness and unity can be expected where there is the greatest similarity of background, religious conviction, etc., yet to condemn all marriage between Christian Reformed people and those of other denominations would be both impractical and wrong.

It would be wrong because by so doing Synod would say in effect that American citizens of Netherland descent should only marry American citizens of the same national ancestry. And this is plainly contrary to the divine providence which has decreed that upon our western continent a new nation should be formed which has in it the best traits and characteristics of many nations in Europe and even of other continents. *E pluribus unum* is the divinely ordained slogan that will, if time continues, ultimately turn a unified American nation out of the melting pot of the peoples. It is therefore contrary to the divine plan to forbid Americans to form an American family with Americans of other than Holland descent.

Moreover, to sound a blanket condemnation of all marriages except with members of the Christian Reformed Church would be equivalent to stating that in the United States of America the Calvinistic faith is to be found only in the Christian Reformed Church. What would Calvin, the Frenchman who labored in Switzerland and exerted his influence in Scotland, Holland and Poland have thought of that? We are convinced that the Reformed conception of the truth in international because it is the most pure and adequate expression of the evangelical or biblical faith.

If, then, we consider that God has many of His people outside the Christian Reformed Church, and that the predominant weakness of the American churches consists of lack of doctrinal training and of doctrinal knowledge, it should be possible where truly God-fearing people become interested in Christian Reformed church members of the opposite sex, to convince them of the truly biblical character of our doctrine and

practice (i.e. Christian institutions). Experience has indeed shown that oftentimes those who have entered the Christian Reformed Church from without have taken their place among its most interested adherents.

In fact, the difficulty created by marriage with members of other denominations lies not in this that true Christians marry true Christians who cannot be made to feel at home in our Church, but it lies in this that too often lax baptized members of the Christian Reformed Church drift into marriage with lax members of other denominations. It then becomes a marriage between two unbelievers, or between people with a mere historical faith, which is covered up with the cloak of formal denominational membership. It should be evident that from this lamentable fact it does not follow that a rule may be made which also includes those who, though originally belonging to different denominations, are truly God-fearing Christians and therefore members of the same covenant of grace.

A blanket condemnation of all marriages between Christian Reformed people and those of other denominations, however, is not only fundamentally wrong; it is also impracticable. The Christian Reformed Church in North America comprises today less than one-tenth of one per cent of the population of the United States; or, as another one of our ministers has stated it, "You can take our entire denomination, and with a little crowding, put it all into Soldier's Field, Chicago."

There are localities in which the number of Christian Reformed people is so small that there, unless our young people go far and wide upon scouting expeditions, marriage is virtually prohibited if it is to be limited to members of the Christian Reformed Church. Must we urge these boys and girls to stifle those biological impulses which God has so undeniably laid in human nature and sanctioned? Synod prefers not to do so. Synod would rather advise these young people to refrain from becoming intimate with those who do not evince unmistakable signs of interest in the true Christian religion, and urge them to see their pastors, asking them to lend their aid in getting their friends acquainted with and interested in the doctrine and the ways of our Church.

SUMMARY

Whereas the wide distribution of our Young People by reason of the late war has scattered our sons and daughters throughout the globe, and taken many of them to great distances from our Christian Reformed churches; and

Whereas in some respects an increase in conformity to worldly American habits of living is to be observed among us;

Therefore, the Synod of 1946 addresses to all those under its jurisdiction the following thoughts:

1. The sacred Scriptures teach clearly that Christians should not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. Marriage between believers

and unbelievers leads only to disaster. Those who contemplate marriage must "marry in the Lord."

2. Synod also warns all members, including ministers of the gospel, not to contract a marriage or to officiate at a wedding between a Protestant and a Roman Catholic because the divergence of religious views between Protestants and Romanists is too wide to allow of a successful marriage.

3. Synod reminds the churches that, as a general rule, best results may be expected when marriage is contracted between those who have been reared in the same doctrinal and ecclesiastical atmosphere.

4. Synod states that members of the Christian Reformed Church should contemplate no marriage with any one who does not fear God from the heart or who dislikes the Reformed conception of the truth. Where a friendship is formed with a Christian of another denomination who is prejudiced against or ignorant of the teachings of our Church, Synod states that the Christian Reformed party should insist that the ignorant party receive catechetical instruction, if need be of a private nature, prior to entering upon engagement.

5. Synod advises all our Young People that, in cases where they are unwilling to be guided by these principles and rules, under no condition should a husband and wife belong to separate denominations, and that the issue as to which church both shall join should be discussed and decided before the marriage state is entered upon.

Respectfully submitted,

H. J. TRIEZENBERG

J. K. VAN BAALEN

MINORITY REPORT "MIXED MARRIAGES"

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Synod of 1945 appointed me to be a member of a committee to formulate a testimonial on mixed marriages. I hereby express my appreciation of the honor conferred on me and the confidence imposed in me by the appointment.

After giving the mandate of our committee considerable thought and after meeting with the brethren H. J. Triezenberg and J. K. Van Baalen, I have decided not to sign the report of the committee. I have profound respect for the work of my brethren and offer no criticism either of the content or of the form of the report. Yet I do not sign it. To explain my conduct I bring to the attention of Synod three matters which I regard to be of some importance.

I. For reasons which I enumerate below I hold that Synod was in error in giving us this mandate. Unless these reasons are removed I cannot coöperate in the fulfillment of the mandate. The reasons are as follows:

A. Synod lacks authority to issue general testimonials as a part of censure and ecclesiastical admonition. The constitutional process of censure and ecclesiastical admonition is prescribed in Articles 71-78 of the Church Order. Every step of the process is clearly marked; but at no point is Synod authorized to issue general testimonials, warnings, declarations, or directives. On the contrary every step of the process is strictly personal and specific. Hence a general testimonial on mixed marriages is foreign to and in conflict with Articles 71-78 of the Church Order.

B. Synod lacks jurisdiction in the matter of mixed marriages because there is no specific instance of mixed marriage which the minor assemblies were unable to settle and which now lies on the synodical table for adjudication. This is required by Articles 30 and 31 of the Church Order in relation to Articles 71-78.

C. In the light of what happened in 1945 the mandate is very ill considered. In 1945 a testimonial was submitted to Synod but rejected. The proposed testimonial was declared to have three faults because of which it was not acceptable. Synod did not try to find the underlying cause of these faults, namely, the violation by Synod itself of Articles 30, 31, 71-78 of the Church Order. Synod simply enumerated the faults of the proposed testimonial, discharged the committee which had prepared the testimonial, and appointed a new committee. In the light of these happenings our mandate is to formulate a testimonial which

shall at one and the same time be concise and also general enough to cover all eventualities of marriages of believers with unbelievers, and of believers with Christians of other persuasions. In my humble opinion this is a stupid mandate. How can a testimonial be concise when there is no specific case of mixed marriage? How can it be concise if it must cover all eventualities? Indeed, I cannot cooperate in a cause in which I can have no confidence. Nor have I stomach for any humiliation such as the committee on mixed marriages suffered in 1945.

D. Any testimonial on mixed marriages will be a redundancy in view of the plain teachings of the Bible on that subject. Beginning with Genesis 6:1-4 and continuing through the history of the patriarchs and of the people of Israel to the Gospels and Epistles, the subject of mixed marriages is so clearly and so thoroughly treated that any synodical testimonial would be at best only a repetition of and an anticlimax to that which the Bible teaches. In fact, this teaching is so well known among us that we would ask: Why is Synod seeking a well-known truth?

II. I earnestly petition Synod to cease all effort to formulate a general testimonial on mixed marriages and to declare that the matter is not legally before Synod. *Reasons:*

A. Such a general testimonial is foreign to and in conflict with the strictly personal and specific nature of censure and ecclesiastical admonition as stipulated in Articles 71-78 of the Church Order.

B. There is no specific case of mixed marriage which the minor assemblies failed to settle and which now lies on the synodical table for adjudication. This is required by Articles 30 and 31 of the Church Order in relation to Articles 71-78.

III. Full well do I realize that I lay myself open to the argument that our synods have made several general testimonials and declarations on various subjects and that therefore a strong precedent exists in favor of a testimonial on mixed marriages. I do feel keenly that I am trying to hold back a strong trend and that little sentiment in my favor has expressed itself publicly.

I contend earnestly that this trend represents a serious departure from our Reformed Church Polity. If Synod should see fit to sustain me in I and II above, and if God grants me life and health, I promise Synod that I shall in 1947 initiate proceedings to examine the ecclesiastico-political basis of all the testimonials, proclamations, etc., that have been promulgated by our synods and to declare null and void all those that have been made contrary to our Church Order.

Moreover, it is urgently necessary for our church to regard the demand for a testimonial on mixed marriages as only one symptom of a very unhealthy condition in our church. This demand is an expression of that misdirected zeal which has for many years exerted persistent pressure on our synods to declare themselves on various religious, social, and moral subjects. Our synods have neither checked this zeal nor

guided it into orderly channels. Instead, our synods have yielded to the pressure, sometimes reluctantly and sometimes readily. I regard it my duty to call the attention of the churches to this misguided zeal as an unhealthy condition of our denomination.

We lack courage to deal energetically with specific cases. To save our denominational face we must devise an escape technique. We draft the best minds in our denomination to formulate testimonials, proclamations, warnings, and directives. This work done we lapse into complacency and even forget what our synods have done. This is a symptom of moral and spiritual debility. I cannot resist the suggestion of Revelation 3:1 "I know thy works, that thou hast the name that thou livest, and thou art dead."

Therefore I call our churches to grapple with actual conditions and cases rather than with generalities. Thereby we shall show that we are alive. If we are sincere in our efforts to oppose mixed marriages, let our consistories discipline the members who have contracted such marriages and the ministers who have solemnized these marriages. General testimonials are simply the expression of a zeal that lacks courage to meet actual cases. The teachings of the Bible are sufficiently plain and familiar that any consistory can do its duty if it has the courage.

Respectfully submitted,

W. GROEN

REPORT NO. 9

DELEGATE TO LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF THE UNITED STATES

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE past year has been one of the most important years for the Lord's Day Alliance. It has been a year of the most interesting and unusual opportunities and activities. Here in our own country it has used its influence in many of our state capitals in behalf of the day of rest. The General Secretary has also been active in the capitol of the United States and succeeded to have a bill introduced in Congress which, if passed, will again bring to the mind of our people that this country is still a Christian country in its respect for the Lord's Day. Through the efforts of the Alliance the work in the post-office in Cleveland, Ohio, was reduced to a minimum and the same can be done in any post-office in any city.

But the outstanding and unusual opportunity referred to above, is a world opportunity. This Alliance has established contact with similar

Alliances in Canada, Great Britain and Australia in order to submit to the council of the United Nation a request to embody in its consideration the *need* and the *right* of all nations and peoples of the world to have a day of rest and to make that day, for the Christian nations, the Day of the Lord. So, at the council table of the nations of the world, there will be a memorial of the Christian faith and the Christian Sabbath.

The work of the Lord's Day Alliance is carried on by its General Secretary, H. L. Bowlby, D.D. He is, at present, the only man that draws a salary from the Alliance. The other officers of the Board receive no remuneration. They hold regular meetings at the Alliance headquarters at 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. I am sure that a closer contact with the Alliance would be beneficial to many of our ministers, especially with respect to Sabbath legislation and observance. The office has some very valuable tracts for distribution.

The churches have contributed more liberally this past year than before. Our Christian Reformed Church still is in the lead. But at the end of this year, we expect to have our deficit eliminated, and to be ready to call an assistant to Dr. Bowlby to the field in order to increase and expand our work.

I am asked to convey to our Synod the gratitude and hearty greetings of the Board of Managers. Is it necessary to say that we trust and pray that our church will continue to take a leading part in this important work of God's Kingdom? May the Lord bless you in your deliberations. We continue to look for and depend upon your prayers and your cooperation.

As per Synodical decision, a complete financial statement will be sent to you in time from the office.

Fraternally yours,

Your representative,

JOHN J. HIEMENGA

REPORT NO. 10

PROGRAMS FOR MUTUAL SUPERVISION

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE undersigned committee on *Programs for Mutual Supervision*, appointed by the Synod of 1944, herewith submits to your honorable body the following report:

I. HISTORY WHICH LED TO THE APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

About six years ago the practice was introduced in a few classes, of answering the questions of Article 41 by written questionnaire, instead of orally. The Consistory of the Grant Christian Reformed Church appealed to Classis Grand Rapids West against the custom, and when this did not avail, it appealed to the Synod of 1941. Synod agreed with the Consistory that the practice was contrary to the letter and spirit of Article 41. However, because the questionnaire method was finding favor, Synod appointed a committee to consider the advisability of revising Article 41, in permitting the questionnaire method, and to submit a revision and questionnaire if the committee deemed such a change desirable (Agenda II, 1941, pp. 132-136; Acts 1941, p. 27).

In its report to the Synod of 1942 the committee expressed among many other things, also these thoughts: the questions of Article 41 were first formulated more than 350 years ago, they were intended then to determine the program of Classis, the questioning constituting almost the entire business of Classis, and our overtures and agenda and also church visiting had the effect of making this questioning obsolete. At the recommendation of the committee Synod adopted a revision of Article 41, increasing the questions from 5 to 11, and it approved the written questionnaire method (Acts 1942, pp. 26-35).

In 1943 Synod refused to accede to an overture of a Classis that sought a revision of the revision of Article 41 adopted the previous year. It also would not sustain another overture from another Classis which asked that Article 44 be revised to allow for biennial church visiting (Acts 1943, pp. 130, 131).

II. THE COMMITTEE'S MANDATE

In 1944 Classis Hudson in an overture to Synod complained as to the revised edition of Article 41 that 9 of its 11 questions, which are asked at every meeting of Classis, are also asked in church visiting. It said that the purpose of asking these questions was to increase diligence and spirituality but that the asking of them so frequently had just the opposite effect. And it reminded of the fact that mutual discipline among the Consistory members by way of *censura morum* was moreover taking place four times annually (Acts 1944, p. 29).

In compliance with the overture of Classis Hudson, Synod appointed the undersigned committee with the following mandate:

1. To make a comparative study of our present programs for mutual supervision as they are contained in Article 41 (Acts 1942, p. 111), and in the Rules for Church Visiting (Acts 1922, pp. 249-253).

2. To integrate these programs in such a way that unnecessary duplication be avoided and that each cover its own field (Acts 1944, p. 29).

The undersigned committee came with a preliminary report to the Synod of 1945, and asked that Synod reconsider its mandate, in view of the following:

1. The committee has difficulty carrying out the provision of its mandate as to the phrase "each cover its own field" for some of the questions of Article 41 and those of Church Visiting were duplicates from the beginning.

2. The way of the committee is blocked by recent decisions of Synod if it comes with a proposal as to the content and use to be made of these questions (Acts 1945, pp. 330-334).

In answer to the expressed difficulties of the committee Synod instructed it to continue its work and to come with recommendations "even though such recommendations may suggest altering recent decisions of Synod" (Acts 1945, p. 22).

III. HISTORY AS TO THE QUESTIONS OF ARTICLE 41 AND THE RULES FOR CHURCH VISITING

Historically the questions of Article 41 are four in number and they concern the following matters: the holding of Consistory meetings, the exercise of discipline, the care of the poor and the school, and the need of the help or the advice of Classis. These date from 1581 on, and they were adopted in that year in the Netherlands by the Synod of Middelburg. They were in use in fact for ten years previous to that date but were accompanied during that decade by two additional questions as to heretics and doubts as to main doctrines. The above historic four questions were adopted also by the National Synod of Dort, 1618-1619, and remained in use for hundreds of years. Upon the secession of 1834, the Reformed churches continued to use them, and they are the four questions of Article 41 used by the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands to this date. In America they were similarly used in our Christian Reformed Church from the year of its organization in 1857 to 1930. In the latter year a slight change was introduced which increased the number to five questions by splitting the question as to the care of the poor and the schools. Against this background we should view the great change that was introduced by our Synod in 1942 when the number of questions was more than doubled by increasing them from five to eleven. And by this increase the duplication between the questions of Article 41 and those of church visiting was also doubled.

If one have regard to history, one may therefore with much reason ask whether we were moving in the right direction when we decided as we did in 1942

Our Rules for Church Visiting have the dignity of almost as great an age as the original four questions of Article 41. The earliest edition of our present Rules was made as far back as 1621 in the Netherlands by the provincial Synod of South Holland but was never adopted by a national Synod. It was revised in 1724. Five of our present questions under Article 41 were already in that set of 1621 and one of them dates from 1724. Upon the secession of 1834 in the Netherlands, the secession churches used that set of 1724 which by them was subjected to a revision in 1882. Since 1893 the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands leave to the discretion of the Classes what set of Rules they wish to follow. Our Christian Reformed Church in America, upon its organization in 1857, used the set of 1724 and after 1884 the Netherlands set of 1882. Our Church slightly augmented it in 1912 and 1922, and also translated it into the English language in the latter year.

IV. ANALYSIS AS TO DUPLICATION AND AS TO RESPECTIVE FIELDS

The extent of the duplication between most of the questions of the revised Article 41 (Acts 1942, p. 111), and some of the questions of Church Visiting (Acts 1922, pp. 249-253), and also the problem as to the respective fields of these questions, appears from the following:

A. Questions Which Were Duplicates from the Beginning

Question 1 (Art. 41), about Consistory meetings, similar to q. 7 to the whole Consistory (Church Visiting).

This question has belonged to Article 41 since 1571 and to Church Visiting since 1724. Though there always has been duplication in the case of this question, the committee believes this, however, should not be continued. In the case of Church Visiting the answer to this question should be ascertained by investigating the minute book of the Consistory.

Question 3 (Art. 41), about discipline, similar to q. 10 to whole Consistory, and to 3 and 4 to Minister(s) (Church Visiting).

This question has belonged to Article 41 since 1571 and to Church Visiting since 1621. Though there has always been duplication in the case of this question, the committee believes that duplication, as to form, should be avoided by obtaining in church visiting a more accurate answer to this question from definite data supplied by the Consistory.

Question 5 (Art. 41, about the deacons' office, similar to q. 1 to Minister(s) and Elders (Church Visiting).

This question, in the form as to whether the poor are cared for, has belonged to Article 41 since 1571 and to Church Visiting since 1621. The committee believes that also in this case, duplication as to form can with profit be avoided by ascertaining a more exact answer to this

question by examining certain data to be supplied by the Consistory at the time of church visiting.

The change of this question from the care of the poor to the deacons' office was approved by the Synod of 1942 merely upon the recommendation of the advisory committee—not the special committee that studied the matter at the time.

Question 6 (Art. 41), about schools, similar to q. 18 to the whole Consistory (Church Visiting).

This question belonged to Article 41 since 1571 and to Church Visiting since 1621. The committee believes that also this duplication should no longer be continued as to form and that a more accurate answer should be obtained at the time of church visiting by studying definite data as to what the church is doing in this matter.

B. Questions Which Became Duplicates in 1942

Question 2 (Art. 41), about Minister's office, similar to q. 1 to Elders (Church Visiting).

This question belonged to Church Visiting since 1921 and to the revised Article 41 only since 1942. The special committee for study did not in 1942 recommend that this be added to Article 41 and it was added by Synod merely upon the recommendation of the advisory committee. The undersigned committee believes this question should be asked only under church visiting where it belongs historically and also according to Article 44 of the Church Order.

Question 4 (Art. 41), about elders' office, similar to q. 12 to whole Consistory, and to q. 1 to 4 to Minister(s) (Church Visiting).

Of this question, precisely the same can be said as was said about the minister's office in the preceding paragraph.

Question 7 (Art. 41), about supporting kingdom causes, similar to q. 16 to whole Consistory (Church Visiting).

This question has not belonged to Church Visiting for very many years and to Article 41 it has belonged only since 1942. The committee believes this question should not appear under Article 41—also in view of the printed financial reports of the classical treasurers. At the time of church visiting an accurate answer to this question should be obtained by examining those same reports.

Question 8 (Art. 41), about separation from the world, similar to q. 16 to whole Consistory (Church Visiting).

This question is a phase of q. 3 (Art. 41), about discipline, and in that sense it goes back, both in Article 41 and in Church Visiting to their beginning. As a distinct question it does not even now belong to Church Visiting, and to Article 41 it has belonged only since 1942. The committee believes it should not appear under Article 41, and that under Church Visiting it should only receive special mention in connection with the matter of discipline.

Question 10 (Art. 41), about evangelization, similar to q. 15 to whole Consistory (Church Visiting).

This question has not belonged to Church Visiting for very many years, and to Article 41 it has belonged only since 1942. The special committee of study did not in 1942 recommend that it be added to Article 41. This was done by Synod merely upon the recommendation of the advisory committee. The undersigned committee believes that this question should be asked only in church visiting.

C. Questions Which Are Not Duplicates

Question 9 (Art. 41), about non-resident members.

This question belonged to Article 41 only since 1942. It is a question of vital significance for our denomination as conditions are in America. However, it has not been used effectively till now. The committee believes it should be retained in Article 41, in an improved form, and that it should be made effective.

Question 11 (Art. 41), about needing the help or the advice of Classis.

This question was in Article 41 since 1571. The committee believes it should be deleted from that Article for it serves no worthwhile purpose ever since it has become customary to enter the instructions upon the credentials. Already as early as 1912 Synod was overtured to delete it. The manner in which it has been customary for some member(s) of Classis, and not Classis as a body, to give answer to an occasional question also argues in favor of deletion.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

A. Recommendations as to the Questions of Article 41

The committee recommends as to the questions of Article 41:

1. That the questions of Article 41 be again revised, and be made to read as follows:

"Furthermore, at the beginning of the meeting, the president shall, among other things, put the following questions orally to the delegates of each church: (1) Are the Consistory meetings held in your church? (2) Is church discipline exercised? (3) Are the poor cared for? (4) Does the Consistory support the cause of the Christian schools? (5) Have you submitted to the clerk of the Classis the names and the addresses of all baptized and communicant members who have, since the last meeting of Classis, moved outside the bounds of your congregation?"

Grounds:

The argument of history, the dissatisfaction with Article 41 as revised in 1942, and other considerations set forth in previous pages of this report. As to q. (5) see recommendation 3 of this part of the recommendations.

The oral method has stood the test of centuries, while the written method, after but a few years, is already meeting with disfavor. Moreover, if Synod reduces the number of questions under Article 41, as the

committee suggests, there will be little value in the written method. The custom of examining the written questionnaires by a mere committee of Classis is in telling conflict with what Synod in 1942 correctly declared, when it said, "that an inquiry on the part of Classis into the spiritual state of its several congregations constitutes the central and principal task of Classis and should take precedence. Hence Article 41 should not be taken up at the end of classical meetings but at the outset. These questions should never be answered in a perfunctory manner but should serve as a basis for further examination" (Acts 1942, p. 110). If these questions should not be answered in a perfunctory manner, neither should they be examined in such a manner.

2 That Synod declare:

Before asking orally the questions of Article 41, the president shall make the following statement: "Because it is a central and principal task of Classis to inquire as to the spiritual state of its several congregations, it is incumbent upon the president of Classis to ask the following questions which should be answered with due gravity."

3. That Synod declare:

The clerks of Classes, after each classical meeting, shall at once send the names and addresses of non-resident members and the names of all churches which submitted them, to the secretary of the Executive Committee for Home Missions.

The Executive Committee for Home Missions shall:

(1) Keep an up-to-date record of these names, grouping them, according to their addresses, into small geographical units so that at any time the Committee knows how many non-resident members there are in any given locality.

(2) Labor with such members to the end that the nearest Christian Reformed church takes them under their care, or (and)

(3) Seek to unite them into groups in the regular way of home mission work.

(4) Give to Synod annually an accurate tabulation of the number of names which it has received from each Classis, and the disposition made thereof, so that Synod may know whether the churches, Classes, and Executive Committee are faithful in this matter.

Note: What was done in World War II for our service-men, (who were made acquainted with others serving in their respective camps and who were united in meetings arranged by the service pastors), suggests what can and should be done toward keeping and uniting that considerable portion of our membership which otherwise is constantly being lost to our Church by way of the back door of non-resident membership.

B. Recommendations as to the Rules for Church Visiting

The committee recommends the following changes in the Rules for Church Visiting (Acts 1922, pp. 249-253):

1. That to the preliminary paragraphs which precede the questions to the whole Consistory, to paragraph (2) which reads "at least one week prior to their coming the visitors shall notify the Consistory of the day and the hour of their visit," there be added the following:

"The visitors shall not arrange their schedule in such a way that their visiting is done under compulsion of the time element. If, for example, an hour and a fraction thereof is allowed for a visit, which then must necessarily be terminated in order to meet the next Consistory, that method defeats the very purpose of church visiting."

2. That of those same preliminary paragraphs the one designated (5) be deleted and that the following be substituted for it:

"(5) In writing to the Consistory beforehand the visitors shall remind it to have on hand, in harmony with the questions which follow:

"(a) The minute book, the membership book, and the books of the treasurers.

"(b) Data as to discipline (cf. q. 10 to whole Consistory).

"(c) Data as to kingdom causes—possibly (cf. q. 16 to whole Consistory).

"(d) Data as to schools (cf. q. 18 to whole Consistory).

"(e) Data as, to poor (cf. q. 2 to Ministers and Elders).

"This data should be on hand before the scheduled time of meeting to give the visitors opportunity to examine it. The value of this examination will be proportionate to the knowledge of the visitors as to what is a reasonable standard in these matters."

3. That to those same preliminary matters there be added between (6) and (7) the following:

"The visitors, at the beginning of their meeting, shall remind the members of the Consistory that they may express only such grievance against one another as was previously discussed within the Consistory and which could not be gotten out of the way."

4. That the caption "Questions to the Full Consistory" be revised to read "Questions to the Whole Consistory." The caption, as it now reads, may well occasion one to wonder with just what the Consistory is "full."

5. That to q. 7 to the whole Consistory, which reads "Does the Consistory meet at stated times according to the needs of the Church?" there be added in parentheses:

"(The answer to this question shall be ascertained by examining the minute book of the Consistory)."

6. That to q. 10 to the whole Consistory, which reads "Is church discipline administered faithfully in accordance with the Word of God and the Church Order?" there be added in parentheses:

"(The answer to this question shall be obtained by examining data prepared beforehand by the Consistory which must show the number of

and the nature of the cases dealt with since the previous church visiting, the duration of the cases, the number of times the Consistory met with the person or sent a committee to him, and the disposition thereof. Special attention shall be directed to the matter of Christian separation from the world).

7. That to q. 16 to the whole Consistory, which reads "Is the church to the extent of its ability diligent towards the extension of God's kingdom?" there be added in parentheses:

"(The answer to this question shall be ascertained by examining the financial report of the Classical treasurer or data furnished by the Consistory. Regard shall be had not only to causes listed as quotas but also to the synodically approved causes for which no quota is set)."

8. That to q. 18 to the whole Consistory, which reads "Do the parents as far as possible send their children to Christian schools?" there be added in parentheses:

"(The answer to this question shall be ascertained by examining data obtainable through the National Union of Christian Schools, or (and) data furnished by the Consistory, or (and) self-evident facts)."

9. That to q. 2 to Minister and Elders, which reads "Are they (deacons) diligent in collecting alms, and do they faithfully discharge their duties in caring for the poor and the distressed, and in comforting them?" there be added in parenthesis:

"(The answer to this question as to 'the care of the poor' shall be obtained by examining data, prepared beforehand by the Consistory, as to how many persons or families they aided, how much they gave for poor within the congregation, and how much for poor outside it)."

Synod, moreover, declares that:

The clerk of each Classis shall inform the church visitors of his Classis of these decisions until they appear in some future edition of a published Church Order.

C. *Recommendations as to Censura Morum*

The overture which gave rise to the appointment of the undersigned committee directs attention to the mutual censure among the members of the Consistory. The committee believes this mutual supervision within the Consistory should be improved, the more so, since there will be fewer questionings as to the faithfulness of office bearers if the previous recommendations are adopted. Therefore the committee makes the following recommendations as to *censura morum*:

1. That from Article 81, about *censura morum*, be deleted the phrase "before the celebration of the Lord's Supper."

Grounds:

The effectiveness of *censura morum* will likely be considerably enhanced if it is conducted at a time apart from the Lord's Supper. The rather minor influence of *censura morum* is due not a little to this that

rather generally there is an erroneous and somewhat naive conception as to what it stands for: and this in turn is not a little due to the rule that it must take place before the Lord's Supper. That *censura morum* must take place before the Lord's Supper is not stated in the original Article of the Synod of Dort, 1618-1619, nor in the present Church Order of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands.

2. That Synod declare:

Censura morum shall take place three times annually, apart from the Lord's Supper, at equi-distant intervals, and as much as possible mid-way between meetings of Classis. It is incumbent upon the president of the Consistory to explain the meaning of it previously.

3. That from q. 9 to the whole Consistory (Rules of Church Visiting) there be deleted the phrase "before each celebration of the Lord's Supper," and that the phrase "three times annually" be substituted in its stead.

The committee believes that the adoption of the above recommendations will give the Church a much improved program of mutual supervision. However, neither the suggested method, nor any method for that matter, will in itself guarantee that supervision will be carried out effectively, for no method is better than its administrators. It is the committee's labored conviction that *the greater need* of our Church today is not better methods but better administrators.

May the King of the Church guide the brethren assembled in Synod in the deliberations upon the material of this report, and no less in all the other matters that come before them.

Respectfully submitted,

I. D. COUWENHOVEN

J. L. SCHAYER

J. O. SCHURING

REPORT NO. 11

ECUMENICITY AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER CHURCHES

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Synod of 1945 has given us the mandate to continue our labors in two investigations: I. Ecumenical Synod; and II. Improvement of Interchurch Correspondence.

I. ECUMENICAL SYNOD

HISTORY UNTIL 1945

An Ecumenical Synod in August of 1946 seems to be within the pale of realization. If this Synod meets a great ideal will then have become a reality. In 1922 Dr. H. Beets presented this ideal to the Dutch churches. In 1924 Dr. H. H. Kuyper spoke in the same vein to the S. African churches. These churches then responded in 1927 by sending a delegate to the Netherlands to demonstrate its agreement with the ideal and to plan in the direction of realizing it. In 1930 the S. African Churches officially invited the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands and our Church to participate in an ecumenical synod. At that time our church while upholding the ideal could not see its way clear to accept. Unfortunately this invitation came at the beginning of the depression. The Synod of 1934 instructed its committee to keep in touch with the sister churches regarding this matter. In 1938 a communication from Dr. Prof. G. Ch. Aalders addressed to our committee reopened the entire question. In 1939 Dr. Beets and the Rev. I. Van Dellen represented our committee at the Synod of Sneek to draw up final plans for the long prayed for Synod. This was approved by our own Synod.

The World War made communications and planning impossible. Your committee with the approval of Synod assumed a watchful waiting attitude. In 1944, however, upon recommendation of our committee, Synod decided to "continue the present Synodical Committee and to instruct it to proceed in the several studies proposed in its own report."⁽¹⁾ The committee had asked Synod two things: 1. Initiate the studies of the problems involved, and 2, receive authorization to make preliminary preparations for an Ecumenical synod in consultation with the Reformed Churches of South Africa.⁽²⁾

Our report in the Synod of 1945 indicated the progress made since the Synod of Sneek, Netherlands, of 1939. Preliminary correspondence with the S. African Churches was begun. We had recommended in our report and also to the S. African Churches that the proposed foundational (or as Dr. Aalders and the Synod of the S. African Churches call it, "preparatory") Synod be held in America, and limited to the three

Churches thus far involved. This proposed Synod is to take up the matter of inviting other churches in the future.

The Synod of 1945 decided: "Synod approves of the work thus far accomplished by the Synodical Committee on Ecumenicity and Correspondence with the other Churches and authorizes it to continue its labors in accordance with the decisions of the Synod of 1944."⁽³⁾

Inspired by this approval and also authorization of Synod to continue in the direction we were moving, your committee addressed a communication to Dr. Prof. G. Ch. Aalders immediately after the adjournment of Synod. We sent a communication also to Prof. S. Du Toit of the S. African Churches. Our report is substantially a review of this correspondence and recommendations.

CORRESPONDENCE SINCE SYNOD OF 1945

Dr. G. Ch. Aalders, secretary of the committee on Ecumenicity of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, in reply to our communication informed us that our recommendations appeared on the Agenda of the Synod at Utrecht of August 8, 1945. Utrecht concurred in our recommendation that the first ecumenical synod be held in the United States of America, and that this synod be limited to the three churches thus far involved. In doing so Utrecht reversed the decision of Sneek of 1939. New situations demanded the change.

The Synod of Utrecht has appointed the following delegates: Dr. G. C. Berkhouwer, Dr. J. Hoek; the two elders, W. Hessels and J. Hartsinker; and a theological professor, Dr. G. Ch. Aalders.

The Dutch churches agree with us to convene this proposed synod sometime in August of 1946. The South African churches faced this difficulty. Their synods meet triennially. It seemed as if their committee could not obtain the necessary synodical authorization to meet until 1948. Dr. Aalders wrote that he thought 1948 would be too late. The S. African church, however, had to call a special Synod for another matter and the S. African committee in the meantime was successful in having this question placed on the agenda of this special Synod. We were gladdened with a cablegram stating: "Synod decides to send three delegates, letter following; S. Du Toit."

Since then we received a letter verifying the cablegram, dated February 12, 1946. This communication informs us that (1) the Synod of the Reformed Churches of South Africa thanks us most cordially for our invitation and that it has the pleasure to accept the same. It will delegate three: a theological professor, a minister of the gospel, and an elder. The primi delegates are: Prof. Dr. J. D. Du Toit, Dr. P. J. S. de Klerk, and elder Prof. Dr. H. G. Stoker. (2) The time of meeting to be August of 1946, or as soon afterwards as possible. (3) The appointment of the study commission (studiekommissie).⁽⁴⁾ The purpose of this commission is to study the problems that will come before this

ecumenical synod. (4) The status of this assembly shall be that of a synod, but decisions must be approved by national synods. (5) The name of this synod shall be a Preparatory Ecumenical Synod.

Both the Dutch and the South African Churches think it advisable and profitable that the calling church have the largest representation. Consequently our committee can recommend to Synod as favoring a delegation of ten—two theological professors, four ministers of the gospel, and four elders.

As far as agenda is concerned, Dr. Aalders writes to us in a letter dated October 8, 1945: "Regarding your second recommendation that the first item for the agenda of our meeting should be, preparation for the ecumenical Synod and inquiry to the questions referring to such a synod." The South African brethren recommend that our church draw up an agenda and submit it to the two churches. Each church could supplement the agenda proposed. Consequently your secretary was instructed to review past synodical approvals and decisions to ascertain the mind of the three interested churches.

We have hastily subdivided our finding unto two main headings: I. Doctrine and Creed; II. Reformed Testimony and Action. In this connection it must also be remembered that for a time another question paralleled the problem of the ecumenical synod, *nl.*, "Expansion and/or Revision of the Confessions." From now on these questions seem to flow into each other. With this background we obtain the following summary:

I. *Doctrine and Creed:*

A. *Inspiration:* Some of the questions mentioned are: organic character, the relation of the human to the divine, complete authority of scripture in all its parts. The apologetic angle: inspiration vs. modern criticism. Perhaps some may feel the need of taking cognizance of the Barthian and Neo-Protestant movements also.

B. *Evolution:* The request to express ourselves on this subject originates with the South African churches. No doubt this church has in mind: God or Evolution, Plan or Chance? Perhaps also we should state plainly how the doctrine of creation or the philosophy of evolution basically controls all our thinking. No doubt we shall have to reduce this comprehensive field to some definite propositions.

C. *Eschatology:* This includes an inquiry into Dispensationalism, Church and Kingdom, and especially the implication of the Reformed faith and eschatology. Here again there may be some who might wish to express themselves regarding the Barthian conception of eschatology.

D. *Church:* Especially the question of the uniformity and the diversity of the church. This would necessitate a review of Art. 29 of the Belg. Conf. The South African church suggested this study.

E. Art. 36, Belg. Conf. The S. African church called our attention to this article especially in its relationship to our democratic world. Our Church is also studying this article at present.

II. *Reformed Testimony and Action:*

A. *Organizational Questions:* Status of Ecumenical Synods; Synods vs. Conferences (Convents); Questions of interchurch correspondence, its necessity or improvement.

B. *Questions of Promulgation or Propagation:* Expansion and/or Revision of Creeds? Or, special statement, testimony, or doctrinal deliverances by ecumenical synod?

C. *Our Place in the Modern World:* This question was discussed at our committee meeting and is implied in such inquiries as: How can we make our Reformed Confessions more effective in the world of today?

The Committee of the Reformed Churches of South Africa has regrouped its agenda as follows: I. Doctrinal; II. Our Mission in the Modern World; and III. Church action according to the Reformed point of view. This committee has added a few subjects to each group, not found in our resumé. It will be up to the South African churches to present its own agenda.

One can readily anticipate the objection that this agenda is too broad for effective treatment. All that our committee can do at this time is to call the attention of our Synod to the proposals the three churches have made and that the foregoing is only a summary of these proposals. No doubt a foundational synod must decide upon its own method of work. At the same time this proposed synod must take cognizance of the mind of the three churches to perform acceptable work.

In addition to the above we had to face two more questions raised by the S. African churches. The S. African brethren have questioned the advisability of limiting this first synod to the three churches. It seems as if they have the following picture in their mind. First, we should convene what they call a "Convent." Reformed Churches subscribing to the same confessions should be invited to come together to discuss the broader issues confronting all the Reformed churches. Secondly, after the adjournment of this "Convent," Reformed churches having the same Church Order should meet as a Synod. This we infer from their latest communication to us.

Perhaps the foregoing picture may be prompted by at least two considerations: (1) The desire to be as ecumenical as is consistently possible; (2) A full program to warrant such a great expense traveling will demand.

To this we have replied that we hope that the S. African churches can waive the first point, that of convening a convent before a synod, until the proposed ecumenical synod convenes. A question of this character should be discussed by an ecumenical synod itself. We expressed

the hope that the S. African churches would concur with the churches of the Netherlands and America on this point. This they have done.

The second question is one of finances. The S. African brethren desired to know the cost of lodging while engaged in synodical work. To this we replied that the church undoubtedly would want to serve as host and that no entertaining expenses would be incurred during synod.

We made no commitments to our Dutch brethren, still we feel we must recommend to Synod to set aside, if necessary, enough money for their trips from the Netherlands to Grand Rapids and return so we do not place a burden upon the sorely tried Dutch churches.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We recommend Synod to call an ecumenical Synod in August of 1946, and cable the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands and the Gereformeerde Kerken in Suid Afrika our decision to do so at once.

2. Synod elect or appoint ten delegates: two theological professors, four ministers of the gospel, and four elders.

3. We further recommend that care be taken in the choice of nominees because of the specialized character of this type of work, and especially of the possibility of the need of knowing more than one language.

4. We recommend that Synod appoint a calling church. Your committee feels that Grand Rapids is the logical place for said Synod. This being the case we recommend that the Fuller Ave. Christian Reformed Church be designated as the calling church.

5. We recommend that this Ecumenical Synod be preceded by an hour of prayer, and that the order of worship for such a special occasion be left to the consistory of the calling church and the committee on ecumenicity.

6. We recommend that the president of the Committee on Ecumenicity call the first session of the proposed Synod to order, open it in an appropriate manner, ask all delegates present to express their agreement with the confessions, and to conduct the election of officers.

7. We recommend that Synod request the ecumenical Synod to decide upon its mode of operation, and originate its own inquiry into the questions pertaining to the scope and authority of ecumenical synods. (This is especially important if the first ecumenical synod is to be a foundational synod).

8. We recommend that Synod request said Ecumenical Synod to receive the agenda found in this report, a summary of the questions proposed by the three churches, as information, and to consider this agenda as basis for discussion and action according to the time and manner best suited to a foundational synod.

9. We recommend Synod to entertain all delegates without expense while engaged in synodical work, and that the regular lodging facilities for synodical delegates be used for this purpose.

10. We recommend to Synod because of the present emergency in the Netherlands that our Synod aid the Dutch delegates in meeting their traveling expenses to the extent they deem necessary.

11. We also recommend that Synod concur with the Dutch churches that the second ecumenical Synod be convened in Amsterdam, Netherlands, the time to be determined by this first foundational Synod.

12. We recommend that Synod authorize its committee on Ecumenicity to consider itself the responsible committee to make the necessary arrangements.

Note: We have informed our consistories and classes of our recommendation to Synod to call the proposed Ecumenical Synod so that the various classes if they so desire can propose names of ministers and elders as a possible nomination for Synod to choose from. Such procedure is in harmony with the representative character of our assemblies. We realize that it is entirely within the province of Synod to appoint delegates as it deems best.

II. CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER CHURCHES

Your committee begs leave to inform Synod that it is not ready as yet to come to Synod with definite recommendations for the improvement of interchurch correspondence. Your committee has made a serious attempt to do so but it could not finish its work satisfactorily at this time. We recommend that Synod receive this as information, and that Synod instruct this committee to continue its studies according to the decisions of 1944 and 1945.

May the Holy Spirit direct Synod in all its decisions especially when called upon to give final authorization to call a "preparatory" or a "foundational" ecumenical synod—an historical moment expressive of deep unity, filled with far reaching possibilities.

L. BERKHOF
R. J. DANHOF
J. T. HOOGSTRA
D. H. KROMMINGA
I. VAN DELLEN
S. VOLBEDA

Since God took unto Himself our Stated Clerk, the late Rev. John De Haan, our new Stated Clerk, the Rev. Dr. R. J. Danhof, has taken his place on our committee.

(1) *Acts of Synod, 1944*, Art. 124:4, p. 85

(2) *Ibidem*, "Supplement 21," p. 367

(3) *Acts of Synod, 1945*, Art. 31, p. 21

(4) The primi and the secundi delegates constitute this study commission.

REPORT NO. 12

THE PUBLICATION OF REFORMED TRACTS

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Committee for the Publication of Reformed Tracts originated with the decision of Synod of 1945; "to create a special committee on publication and distribution of tracts for missionary and for home church purposes" (Acts 1945, p. 59, C. 1). Your committee met five times throughout the past year, and has the following to report for your consideration and approval.

I. THE MANDATE

A. Your committee in seeking to ascertain accurately its mandate has been somewhat at a loss to find a clearly defined statement of its task in the Acts of 1945. Upon study of the recommendation presented on page 59 of Acts of 1945, your committee conceives its mandate to be "the procurement, publication, and distribution of tracts." Your committee further considers itself the responsible body appointed by Synod to investigate questions of:

1. Organization for display and sale of tracts.
2. Craftsmanship or the attractive printing of tracts.
3. Tract psychology.
4. Acceptance of tracts other than those definitely assigned.
5. Purchase for circulation of any tracts produced by other organizations peculiarly suited to our needs.
6. Guarding against overlapping with the work done by other organizations.
7. The possibility of our own printing establishment producing these tracts.

B. In seeking to carry out the above mandate your committee immediately felt the need of clarifying the broad and elastic term "tract." We have divided tract literature into two groups:

1. Promotional literature as that which is published by our denominational organizations to acquaint our own people with the needs and opportunities of our various activities.
2. Tracts and pamphlets as literature produced for the two-fold purpose of:
 - a. Instructing our own people more thoroughly in our doctrines and practices and,
 - b. Interesting the unchurched and careless people in the Gospel.

This committee interprets its mandate as pertaining to tracts as defined in 2 a, b, above and not to promotional literature.

C. With a view to a clear understanding of your committee's particular task in the publication of Reformed tracts, attention of the Home Missions Committee was called to an overlapping in Synod's decisions

(Cf. Art. 36, B, 3, p. 30 and Art. 65, VIII C, 2, 4, p. 59, Acts 1945) with respect to the production and procurement of tracts. Your committee requested the Home Missions Committee to entrust the execution of Art. 36, VI, B, 3, p. 30 to the Committee for the publication of Reformed Tracts, inasmuch as Synod evidently intended that all tract procurement and distribution should be entrusted to the newly created tract committee. Under date of Nov. 16, 1945, the Secretary of the Committee for Home Missions informed our committee that they were in agreement with our request, and entrusted this work previously assigned to their committee to our body.

D. We also wish to call Synod's attention to the fact that we deem it our task to take over the work of publishing tracts as previously assigned to the original committee (consisting of Prof. L. Berkhof and Revs. H. J. Kuiper and H. Baker) appointed by the Executive Committee for Home Missions upon instruction of Synod (see Acts 1944, Art. III, A, and B, pp. 69, 70; Acts 1945, Art. 36 VI A, a. p. 29).

II. PROGRESS IN THE WORK

In taking upon itself this pioneer project your committee wishes to present the following review of the progress made in the work thus far:

A. Your committee has set certain standards for the tracts which it is to publish, and will insist on their observance. These standards shall concern (1) contents (which should be definitely Reformed); (2) literary form (which should include faultless English), and (3) an attractive tract style (direct, concrete, simple, forcible).

B. Your committee plans through an announcement in our church papers eventually to make contacts with talented persons who may be desirous and willing to present samples of their work to be used for artistic tract-covers.

C. Our tracts are to be produced in color and with an appealing front cover design.

D. Our tracts are to be produced for three distinct groups:

1. For the home church.
2. For the more intellectual type of mission subject.
3. For the "down-and-out" type of mission subject.

E. Titles thus far approved by your committee are as follows:

FOR THE HOME CHURCH

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>What About the Family Altar?</i> | 8. <i>The Teen-Ager</i> |
| 2. <i>Sunday in the Home</i> | 9. <i>"Until Death Us Do Part"</i> |
| 3. <i>Watch That Radio Dial</i> | 10. <i>Understand Your Baptism!</i> |
| 4. <i>Are You Neglecting Your Children?</i> | 11. <i>Before We Go to Communion</i> |
| 5. <i>"Marrying In the Lord"</i> | 12. <i>What's Wrong with the Lodge?</i> |
| 6. <i>"Whom Shall I Marry?"</i> | 13. <i>What Is the Social Gospel?</i> |
| 7. <i>In Love?</i> | 14. <i>Does Scripture Teach Infant Baptism?</i> |
| 7. <i>I Have a Date</i> | 15. <i>The Victorious Life Movement</i> |

FOR THE MORE INTELLECTUAL TYPE OF MISSION SUBJECT

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>Who Is This Jesus?</i> | 8. <i>The Case Against Darwinism</i> |
| 2. <i>The Dynamic of the Christian Religion</i> | 9. <i>Guilty!</i> |
| 3. <i>The Bankruptcy of Man-made Religion</i> | 10. <i>Repent—This Means You!</i> |
| 4. <i>Preserve That Home!</i> | 11. <i>The Joy of the Redeemed</i> |
| 5. <i>The Bible—God's Treasure Chest</i> | 12. <i>Complete Redemption</i> |
| 6. <i>Dead Timber?</i> | 13. <i>The Hammer Breaks—The Anvil Stands</i> |
| 7. <i>Science and the Bible</i> | 14. <i>Real Comfort</i> |
| | 15. <i>America's Greatest Need—Back to the Bible!</i> |

FOR THE "DOWN-AND-OUT" TYPE OF MISSION SUBJECT

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. <i>"This Is My Father's World"</i> | 10. <i>Who Is a Christian?</i> |
| 2. <i>"Man or Monkey?"</i> | 11. <i>Why I Go to Church</i> |
| 3. <i>The Last Court of Appeal</i> | 12. <i>Solid Comfort</i> |
| 4. <i>"The Forgotten Word"</i> | 13. <i>Come and Drink</i> |
| 5. <i>"The Pay Off"</i> | 14. <i>Believe and Live!</i> |
| 6. <i>"Hypocrites in the Church"</i> | 15. <i>"Chained!"</i> |
| 7. <i>Not Good Enough for Heaven</i> | 16. <i>"Sorry"</i> |
| 8. <i>Can You Tell Time?</i> | 17. <i>Worship in the Home</i> |
| 9. <i>One Church! "Why Many Denominations?"</i> | 18. <i>"How to Pray"</i> |
| | 19. <i>Redeemed!</i> |

F. The work of assigning the writing of tracts to authors has begun. The ideal of your committee is to place the writing of tracts into the hands of a few authors, thereby giving opportunity for increased proficiency in the art of tract writing.

G. The writers of tracts are to be remunerated for the work.

H. Investigation of tracts published by other organizations has begun. Eventually acceptable tracts from these sources will be recommended to the churches, thereby eliminating overlapping and needless work.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Your committee recommends that Synod continue to have a Committee for the Publication of Reformed Tracts.

B. Your committee requests Synod to appoint the personnel of the Committee for the Publication of Reformed Tracts.

C. Your committee requests Synod to permanently transfer the appropriation of \$5,000.00 set aside in the budget for Church Extension for the printing and distribution of tracts and approved by the Synod of 1945, to our committee (Acts 1945, p. 153). By decision of the Home Missions Committee, the Committee for the Publication of Reformed Tracts has already been granted the privilege to draw upon this appropriation if necessary.

D. Your committee requests Synod to recommend our cause to the churches for one offering next year.

Note: The Committee for the Publication of Reformed Tracts is continuing its work up to the meeting of Synod and will present a supplementary report giving further details of work accomplished.

Respectfully submitted,

J. T. HOOGSTRA, Pres.
N. L. VELTMAN, Sec'y
H. BAKER
T. AFMAN

P. B. PETERSEN
H. J. KUIPER
J. C. DE KORNE
L. BERKHOF

REPORT NO. 13

CHURCH HELP COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

WE herewith submit to you our report for the year 1945.

Again we can report a financially prosperous year for the fund. The total income amounted to \$45,682.66. This is much less than last year, but it must be borne in mind that many churches paid up their loans in order to take advantage of the discount.

Only three churches failed to make repayment, and only seven did not collect for the fund. We have written to these churches in accordance with the Synodical ruling. The amount of loans promised was \$38,800.00.

We desire to call attention to the fact that Classes have lately begun to recommend very high amounts. Nearly all requests are for \$10,000.00 loans. We realize that costs of building are very high, but at the rate requests are coming in, the reserve in the fund will soon be depleted, and we will not be able to help some really needy churches. Some of the requests for high amounts are from churches which we can scarcely classify as "weak congregations" (cf. Schaver 73 b). We feel that with the present quota, the Classes will have to be more conservative in their recommendations. Your Committee recommends a quota of \$1.25 for the year 1947.

When Rev. J. R. Van Dyke left for Washington, the alternate Rev. O. Breen took his place in the committee, and when Rev. A. Wassink also left for Washington, we asked the Synodical Committee to appoint another member to serve until Synod. The term of all three members has expired and we call the attention of Synod to the fact that the majority of the committee, according to the Articles of Incorporation, must reside in the State of Iowa.

The books of the treasurer have been audited by the Public Accountant, Miss Cora Hilger of LeMars, Iowa. We herewith attach a report of the treasurer.

Respectfully submitted,

O. BREEN, Sec'y

CHURCH HELP FUND—1945

SCHEDULE "A"

BANK RECONCILIATION

NORTHWESTERN STATE BANK, ORANGE CITY, IOWA

Bank Balance as per statement January 1, 1945.....	\$40,831.61
1944 Deposits (late).....	11,921.36
Total	\$52,752.97
Balance in Canadian Treasury.....	2,907.42
Our Ledger Balance	\$55,660.39
1945 Receipts	44,005.22
Total	\$99,665.61
Less 1945 Disbursements	26,223.15
On hand	\$73,442.46
Cash in the United States	\$36,366.05
Cash in Canada	76.41
U. S. Government Bonds	37,000.00
Total	\$73,442.46
Bank Deposits as per Statement	\$21,004.79
Deposits (late)	15,369.46
Total	\$36,374.25
Less Checks Outstanding, Dec. 31, 1945	8.20
Total	\$36,366.05
Cash in Canadian Treasury	76.41
Invested in U. S. Government Bonds	37,000.00
Total	\$73,442.46

SCHEDULE "B"

ANALYSIS—LOANS OUTSTANDING

	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1945	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 31, 1945
Allison, Iowa	\$ 750.00	\$.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 700.00
Arcadia, Calif. ....	.00	5,000.00	.00	5,000.00
Ackley, Iowa .....	.00	2,500.00	.00	2,500.00
Bejou, Minn.	450.00	.00	25.00	425.00
Bemis, S. Dak.	100.53	.00	100.53	.00
Second Bellflower, Calif.	6,000.00	.00	.00	6,000.00
Birnamwood, Wis.	1,000.00	.00	1,000.00	.00
Brooten, Minn.	772.02	.00	772.02	.00
Berwyn, Ill.	10,000.00	.00	500.00	9,500.00
Cedar, Iowa .....	.00	3,000.00	.00	3,000.00
Chatham, Ont., Canada	2,850.00	.00	25.00	2,825.00
Compton, Calif.	1,800.00	.00	.00	1,800.00
Crookton, Minn.	957.90	.00	50.00	907.90
Duvall, Wash.	1,750.00	.00	750.00	1,000.00

	Outstanding Jan. 1, 1945	New Loans	Payments	Outstanding Dec. 31, 1945
Des Plaines, Ill.	2,044.19	.00	105.00	1,939.19
Decatur, Mich.	3,237.46	.00	111.65	3,125.81
Second Denver, Colo.	6,000.00	.00	400.00	5,600.00
Dorr, Mich.	1,037.50	.00	75.00	962.50
East Martin, Mich.	510.00	.00	435.00	75.00
Edmonton, Alta., Canada	2,000.00	1,000.00	150.00	2,850.00
Estelline, S. Dak.	1,588.41	.00	588.42	1,000.00
Everson, Wash.	4,750.00	.00	250.00	4,500.00
Flint, Mich.	4,750.00	.00	275.00	4,475.00
Grandville, Mich.	5,240.63	.00	310.00	4,930.63
Goshen, Ind.	1,200.00	.00	75.00	1,125.00
East Leonard, Grand Rapids..	3,950.00	.00	300.00	3,650.00
Godwn Heights, Grand Rapids	1,800.00	.00	1,800.00	.00
Hollandale, Minn.	617.50	2,500.00	60.00	3,057.50
Hamilton, Ont., Canada	2,206.00	.00	150.00	2,056.00
Hancock, Minn.	216.13	.00	216.13	.00
Hills, Minn.	1,302.70	.00	200.00	1,102.70
Holland, Minn.	2,593.57	.00	105.00	2,488.57
Holland Marsh, Ont., Canada	219.00	.00	208.50	10.50
Houston, B. C., Canada	255.00	.00	180.00	75.00
Lacombe, Alta., Canada ....	.00	4,000.00	200.00	3,800.00
Lansing, Mich.	6,750.00	.00	375.00	6,375.00
Luverne, Minn.	4,000.00	.00	200.00	3,800.00
Lark, N. Dak.	475.00	.00	475.00	.00
Modesto, Calif.	5,100.00	.00	300.00	4,800.00
Momence, Ill.	1,189.15	.00	1,189.15	.00
Morrison, Ill.	2,175.00	.00	150.00	2,025.00
Milwood, Mich.	2,400.00	.00	2,400.00	.00
Montello Park, Mich.	6,250.00	.00	1,250.00	5,000.00
Milwaukee, Wis.	4,750.00	.00	250.00	4,500.00
Neerlandia, Alta., Canada	1,251.09	.00	750.00	501.09
Newton, Iowa	4,685.00	.00	300.00	4,385.00
Second Orange City, Iowa.....	1,162.50	.00	112.50	1,050.00
Ogilvie, Minn.	237.78	.00	.00	237.78
Preakness, N. J.	600.00	.00	50.00	550.00
Parchment, Mich.	2,000.00	.00	150.00	1,850.00
Pipestone, Minn.	3,425.00	.00	190.00	3,235.00
Pine Creek, Mich.	1,885.00	.00	120.00	1,765.00
Plainfield, Mich.	1,500.00	.00	250.00	1,250.00
Second Randolph, Wis.	4,080.22	.00	561.90	3,518.32
Raymond, Minn.	1,995.00	.00	125.00	1,870.00
Rock Rapids, Iowa	1,374.50	.00	1,374.50	.00
Sumas, Wash.	609.50	.00	60.00	549.50
Sully, Iowa	1,950.00	.00	500.00	1,450.00
Sheperd, Mont.	794.26	.00	794.26	.00
Seattle, Wash.	5,900.00	.00	925.00	4,975.00
Sibley, Iowa	964.60	.00	200.00	764.60
Sioux City, Iowa	3,205.00	.00	260.00	2,945.00
Sioux Falls, S. Dak.	762.83	.00	342.83	420.00
Sarnia, Ont., Canada	2,850.00	.00	75.00	2,775.00
Tracy, Iowa ....	.00	3,500.00	.00	3,500.00
Vancouver, B. C., Canada	50.00	.00	50.00	.00
Vona, Colo.	347.25	.00	100.00	247.25
Washington, D. C. ....	.00	3,850.00	.00	3,850.00
Western Springs, Ill.	1,100.00	.00	225.00	875.00
West Branch, Mich.	114.29	.00	114.29	.00
Winnipeg, Man., Canada	1,083.79	.00	.00	1,083.79
Totals	\$148,965.31	\$25,350.00	\$23,686.68	\$150,628.63

SCHEDULE "C"
DENOMINATIONAL QUOTAS BY CLASSES AND PERSONAL DONATIONS

Classis	1944	1945
California	\$ 979.13	\$ 609.41
Chicago North	1,358.89	1,312.87
Chicago South	1,360.60	1,275.11
Grand Rapids East	1,804.30	1,831.31
Grand Rapids South	1,947.01	1,977.38
Grand Rapids West	1,100.25	1,131.00
Hackensack	707.75	715.25
Holland	1,728.94	1,805.30
Hudson	1,163.25	1,217.31
Kalamazoo	770.98	838.52
Minnesota	854.81	897.89
Muskegon	1,722.62	1,756.85
Orange City	798.64	742.64
Ostfriesland	537.62	547.50
Pacific	783.97	682.64
Pella	1,081.33	1,111.59
Sioux Center	1,188.43	1,231.35
Wisconsin	446.07	603.75
Zeeland	1,350.33	1,367.82
Miscellaneous, Personal	15.00	5.00
Canadian Churches	291.72	335.49
Total	\$21,991.64	\$21,995.98

SUMMARY

Balance on hand, January 1, 1945\$55,660.39

TOTAL RECEIPTS

Repayment by Churches (Schedule "B")\$23,686.68

Quotas by Classes and Donations (Schedule "C") 21,995.98

Total\$45,682.66

Less Discounts to:

Momence, Ill.\$ 300.00

Rock Rapids, Iowa 200.00

Milwood, Mich. 450.00

Second Denver, Colo. 6.14

Shepherd, Mont., balance cancelled by

Synod (see Acts 1945, page 110,

XXVI, B-2) 794.26 1,750.40 43,932.26

Total\$99,592.65

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS

New Loans\$25,350.00

Administrative Expenses 800.19 26,150.19

Balance on hand, December 31, 1945\$73,442.46

Cash in the United States\$36,366.05

Cash in Canada 76.41

U. S. Government Bonds 37,000.00

Total\$73,442.46

We are also holding \$18,500.00 in Government Bonds, bought in 1944.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES R. MULDER, Treas.

GENERAL FUND JEWISH MISSIONS

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

WE THANK our God that we can report again this year to the Synod that the General Fund Christian Reformed Jewish Missions is in very good condition. From the chart of figures in this report it may be observed that our balance at the close of the previous year, January 16, 1945, was \$8,162.42. At the close of this year, January 15, 1946, we have a balance of \$6,629.60. This might look like a loss of \$1,532.82, but we invested \$6,660.00 in United States Government bonds since our last report—nine of the Series F bonds. Subtracting the apparent loss of \$1,532.82 from the apparent gain of \$6,660.00 we have what appears to be a net gain of \$5,127.18. In reality, however, it is \$1,000.00 less than that, or \$4,127.18, because the Michael Vanden Berg bonds on the First Christian Reformed Church of Cicero, Illinois, were called in and cashed. We received \$1,000.00 cash for these bonds. This cash was turned into government bonds included in the \$6,660.00 mentioned above. Thus our actual net advance during the past year has been \$4,127.18. Looking at the same figures for the previous year, we note that this advance is \$1,108.05 less than the 1944 net gain was.

The usual records of receipts and disbursements have been kept. Acknowledgments with messages of appreciation and requests for continued prayerful interest were sent the classical treasurers, mission unions, societies, an individual donors. Monthly disbursements were made to our Chicago Jewish Mission and our Paterson Hebrew Mission.

Of the nineteen classes three failed this year to meet the full quota. They failed by \$0.12 per family, \$0.04 per family, and \$0.01 per family on a quota that was \$0.57 per family. It may be that some of their funds arrived too late to be recorded in the books for the year 1945. Our books are to be closed ordinarily on January 15. On the overall average the classes gave \$3,300.65 above the stipulated quota of \$0.57 per family during 1945 without including the receipts from the Canadian churches. This indicates a love for this work of the Church. May the Lord graciously sustain us and increase us in this love that this worthy work among the Jews may continue and go forward.

You will no doubt have a report on the receipts for this fund from the Canadian churches from the Rev. P. De Koekkoek of Edmonton, who now is the treasurer for our Canadian churches. We have received none of the quotas from the Canadian churches for this fund and hence we could not book them. We have been informed that the treasurer for our Canadian churches holds assets of \$1,186.39 for this fund.

Gifts received from mission unions, societies, and individuals amounted to \$1,254.74. We heartily thank these special donors. From interest on reserve funds we received \$250.00. Much of our reserve fund

is in Series F bonds, which rather than draw interest increase in value.

We thank the churches most cordially for their gifts and prayers and we ask the churches to remember that the quota for the year 1946 is \$0.70 per family—an advance of \$0.13 per family above last year's quota.

Respectfully submitted,

OREN HOLTROP, Treas.

REPORT OF TREASURER—GENERAL FUND JEWISH MISSIONS

Classis	No. of Families	Full Quota	Amount Received	More or less than quota	Rec'd per Family
California	1,080	\$ 615.60	\$ 830.61	\$215.01 more	\$0.769
Chicago North	1,738	990.66	1,070.02	79.36 more	0.615
Chicago South	1,905	1,085.85	1,564.03	478.18 more	0.821
Grand Rapids East	2,557	1,457.49	1,559.59	102.10 more	0.609
Grand Rapids South	2,651	1,511.07	1,411.58	99.49 less	0.532
Grand Rapids West	1,618	922.26	723.75	198.51 less	0.447
Hackensack	887	505.59	624.25	148.66 more	0.704
Holland	2,214	1,261.98	1,487.46	225.48 more	0.673
Hudson	1,560	889.20	1,004.52	115.32 more	0.664
Kalamazoo	1,125	641.25	937.48	296.23 more	0.833
Minnesota	1,234	703.38	877.45	174.07 more	0.71
Muskegon	2,246	1,280.22	1,684.90	404.68 more	0.75
Orange City	947	539.79	623.25	83.46 more	0.658
Ostfriesland	695	396.15	549.08	152.93 more	0.79
Pacific	1,408	802.56	788.01	14.55 less	0.56
Pella	1,446	824.22	1,034.65	210.43 more	0.715
Sioux Center	1,393	794.01	1,173.09	379.08 more	0.842
Wisconsin	803	457.71	514.86	57.15 more	0.64
Zeeland	1,808	1,030.56	1,521.62	491.06 more	0.847
Totals	29,315	\$16,709.55	\$20,010.20	\$3,300.65 more	

Receipts:

From Classes	\$20,010.20
From Mission Unions, Societies, Individuals	1,254.74
From Interest	250.00
From First Christian Reformed Church, Cicero, Ill. (Michael Vanden Berg Bonds)	1,000.00
Balance on hand Jan. 16, 1945	8,162.42

Total of all receipts plus balance.....\$30,677.36

Disbursements:

To Chicago Jewish Mission	\$ 9,600.00
To Paterson Hebrew Mission	7,672.66
U. S. Bonds	6,660.00
Bond-box, Stamps, etc.	15.10
Gratuity	100.00
Balance in bank, Jan. 15, 1946	6,629.60

Total disbursements plus balance.....\$30,677.36

In Reserve:

Johanna Woltman Legacy	\$ 500.00
Twenty U. S. Government Bonds	16,903.00

Total Reserve

\$17,403.00

THE QUOTA FOR 1946 IS \$0.70 PER FAMILY

February 19, 1946

Audited and found correct as of close of business Jan. 15, 1946, showing a balance of \$6,629.60. Period from Jan. 17, 1945, to Jan. 15, 1946.

Was signed: LOUIS M. BOLT

REPORT NO. 15

EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE committee to study the examinations of the candidates for the ministry, appointed by the Synod of 1942 (Acts 1942, p. 31), begs to submit the following report to your honorable body.

I. MANDATE

The mandate of this committee is found on page 31 of the Acts of the Synod of 1942. We quote literally:

"1. to make a 'study of the entire subject of rules and requirements for entering the ministry, including such investigations made for entrance into the Seminary and for licensing to exhort.'

"2. 'to advise as to the feasibility of blending the praeparatoir and the peremptoir examinations, and to suggest ways and means for such blending if deemed feasible.'

"3. 'to recommend the body or agency to conduct such an examination or examinations.'

"4. to recommend 'the subjects in which this or these are to be conducted'."

It will be noticed that these four points cover the entire range of the process by which an aspirant to the sacred office of the ministry is admitted to office. The various examinations are not only mentioned, but the subjects in which an aspirant is to be examined must also be made an object of our consideration and recommendation.

In writing this report we assume acquaintance by the members of Synod with the report rendered by the present committee to the Synod of 1942, which is found in the Agenda of that Synod, Part II, pp. 63-81. In fact, this report will be intelligible only after the report to the Synod of 1942 has been read.

II. CONTROLLING INTERESTS

For the historical development of the examinations required of aspirants to the sacred office we refer to our report to the Synod of 1942. As to the principles which are to guide Synod in arranging these examinations and in determining their number we can, of course, not be expected to engage in an elaborate discussion. Nevertheless, the committee feels prompted to mention and to describe briefly two or three of them. These principles, we feel, are to be kept in mind constantly as Synod deliberates upon and decides this matter.

1. The first and basic principle to be borne in mind in that Christ only, as the Chief Prophet and King of the Church, calls to office. The work which ministers perform in their official capacity is the work of Christ. Christ employs them for that purpose. Christ also calls them for that purpose, both internally and externally. To that end Christ

also equips them with the necessary qualifications, gifts, CHARISMATA, both innate and acquired, so that they shall be able to perform the duties of the sacred office, be it in a smaller or larger degree of perfection.

2. The second principle which Synod should keep in mind is that the examinations to be required of those aspiring to office must serve the purpose of discovering whether such aspirants have actually been equipped by Christ with the qualifications necessary for the performance of the duties of the sacred office. This principle describes not only the purpose, but also the limits of these examinations. These examinations are to be ecclesiastical in character rather than academic, and should always be conducted with a view to the duties of the ministry.

3. Finally we mention the principle that the Church and no other body, is to assume the full responsibility for these examinations. The Church itself is held responsible for the purity of doctrine and of life. As the Church controls the ministry by its exercise of discipline, so the Church must likewise control the entrance into this office. A directive to this effect is even found in 1 Timothy 3:10, "And let these [i. e. deacons] *also* [hence, deacons as well as other office-bearers] first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless." The matter in which the apostolic church "proved" the office-bearers is not known, but it is clear from this directive that the Church must assume the responsibility of this "proving." Dr. H. Bavinck states (Geref. Dogm., IV, p. 417), "... het recht tot het instellen van zulk een onderzoek komt naar de H. Schrift, de Geref. belijdenis en ook naar den aard der zaak aan de kerken toe. De school neme hare examens af, maar de kerken houden het recht, om te beroepen, om te beproeven, om te zenden, om macht te geven tot bediening van woord en sacrament." This principle should not be taken for granted, since history proves that other than ecclesiastical bodies or agencies (such as the theological faculties of universities, cf. our report to the Synod of 1942) have tried to claim this authority.

III. EXAMINATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

In the course of events and of circumstances there have developed among us four examinations which an aspirant to the ministry may pass successfully if he is to be inducted into office. At least two of these may be considered *minor* examinations and the other two *major*, still all four are examinations, and failure to pass any one successfully may prevent one from entering the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church. Concerning all four, recommendations must be made to Synod by this committee. These four examinations are:

1. Examination by the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary for admission as a "*regular*" student to the Seminary.

2. Examination by the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary for licensure to exhort in Christian Reformed Churches.

3. Examination (Praeparatoir) by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church for eligibility to a call from a Christian Reformed Church.

4. Examination (Peremptoir) by a Classis of the Christian Reformed Church for ordination into the office of the ministry of the Word and Sacraments.

The place and function of these four examinations must now be considered.

IV. EXAMINATION FOR ADMISSION TO THE SEMINARY

The Annual Catalogue of Calvin Seminary is the only publication known to this committee which describes the examination for admission to the Seminary. We have consulted the 1944-1945 issue of this catalogue. A distinction is made in this catalogue between "regular students" and "special students." The difference between these two categories appear to be that the "special students" do *not* look forward to the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church, while the "regular students" do. Both pursue the same prescribed course of study and pay the same amount of tuition, though, as might be expected, the "special students" are not eligible for licensure. It is stated in the catalogue (p. 8) that "By the term regular students those are designated who look forward to the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church; have successfully passed the examination of the Board of Trustees for such prospective ministerial service; and are pursuing the full, regularly prescribed undergraduate course of the Seminary." One of the credentials required for admission is described as follows, "A testimonial from the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary to the effect that he has successfully passed the examination of the Board as to his *spiritual fitness* for prospective ministerial service in the Christian Reformed Church." We have underscored the words "spiritual fitness," since this describes the character of this examination and since this is the only published description of the nature of this examination known to us. In comparison with the above quoted testimonial it may be noted that in regard to "special students" it is stated in the catalogue (p. 9), that for admission they shall present, "A certificate of *good moral character* issued by some consistory, faculty, or other responsible body. If applicant comes directly from some other school he is also to present a statement of honorable dismissal." We have underscored the words "good moral character" in this description, since these words describe the only requirement made in the catalogue pertaining to the non-academic conditions for matriculation.

As we view these requirements for matriculation the question cannot be suppressed, What purpose does the examination by the Board of Trustees as to an applicant's "spiritual fitness" serve? The student may at this time look forward to induction into office, but his matriculation in the Seminary does not in any way place him in office. Moreover, the work of a student in the junior year of the Seminary cannot in any way be described as being "official" in the sense that it pertains to the official work of the ministry. The origin of this examination may be the desire to guard the purity in doctrine and in conduct of the student body.

However that be, one cannot escape the opinion that this examination "as to his spiritual fitness for prospective ministerial service in the Christian Reformed Church" is *premature*. The student may look forward to such ministerial service, but so do many students in College. It appears to the committee that an examination as to fitness for office should not be conducted before a student is actually ready to engage in the work of this office. This he does, after a fashion at least, upon his licensure, but not upon his enrollment in the Seminary. Moreover, if it is the purpose of this examination to guard the purity in doctrine and conduct of the student body it would seem that all students, and not only the "regular students," should submit to such an examination.

Considering these matters the committee recommends that Synod decide as to the examination for admission to the Seminary:

1. That the applicant for admission to the Seminary be *not* specifically examined "as to his spiritual fitness for prospective ministerial service in the Christian Reformed Church."

Ground: Enrollment in the Seminary does not entitle anyone to perform work of an official nature.

2. That all applicants for admission to the Seminary, both "regular" and "special" students, shall be examined as to their Christian conduct.

Ground: Such an examination would serve to retain a high spiritual level among the students of the Seminary.

3. That the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary be charged to conduct this examination and be given the right to make the proper regulations for the same.

Ground: Since this examination does not admit to office, nor entitles a student to perform official work, it may properly be conducted by the Board of Trustees.

V. EXAMINATION FOR LICENSURE

Possibly no work in our churches is performed in such an un-official way as that of "student preaching." This "preaching" has always been a matter hard to locate in the set-up of our church polity and difficult to reconcile with the principles governing the administration of the Word. It is generally admitted, of course, that the "student preacher" holds no office in the Church. However, it must also be admitted that his work of "preaching" or of exhorting bears at least a quasi-official character. Time was that a student in our Seminary having finished the work of the junior year could take it for granted that he could "go out preaching." The fact that a student must now pass an examination for licensure before he is permitted to exhort in our churches and be engaged by our consistories for such work should be considered a step in the right direction. But even this examination does not erase the fact that the position and status of the "student preacher" are dangling and that this fact calls for improvement.

In this report we cannot afford to enter upon a discussion of the history through which the practice of allowing students "to preach" has passed in our churches. (If interested in this phase of the subject, we would advise to consult such works as John Jansen, "Korte Verklaring van de Kerkenordening," and Van Dellen and Monsma, "The Church Order Commentary," both under Art. 20, C. O.). Suffice it to say here that this practice has received a certain standing in our Church Order when it was revised in 1914. Article 20 was then made to read, "Students who have received permission according to the rule in this matter . . . shall, for their own training, and for the sake of becoming known to the congregations, be allowed to speak a word of edification in the meetings for public worship." The Synod of 1936 (Acts, Art. 89) has prescribed certain rules for licensure which stipulates, (a) that the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary has the authority to grant such licenses, (b) that students in our Seminary who have successfully passed the final examinations of the junior year in the Seminary are eligible for such licensure, and (c) that the Board shall grant licensure only upon examination, either by consulting the faculty or by examining the applicants directly. The Annual Catalogue of Calvin Seminary (1944-1945), p. 17, adds the following information: "All student preaching is subject to the supervision of the Faculty, which has entrusted the assignment of engagements to the Professor of Practical Theology. Such assignments are made only for dates falling within the school year and not coming within the vacations. For preaching dates falling within the officially designated vacations, and for these only, the licensed student shall have the right to make his own engagements."

"In case a student should violate any rule regarding preaching, the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees is authorized to revoke his right to preach for the time of three months."

From the preceding it may be gathered:

1. That Middlers and Seniors only are eligible to licensure.
2. That the Board is authorized to grant licensure after proper examination.
3. That the Board upon infraction of its rules disciplines.
4. That the Faculty supervises the work of "student preaching."
5. That the Faculty (during the school year) and the licensed student (during vacations) make the "preaching" engagements.

Mention should also be made of the fact at this time that while provision is made for the supervision of licensed students as long as they are enrolled in our Seminary, no such provision is made for students taking post-graduate work at other seminaries. The Synod of 1936 has adopted rules for the extension of the licensure of such post-graduate students, but failed to provide for their proper supervision. It may be taken for granted that they are under the supervision of the Board, since this body grants the license and is authorized to revoke it, but such supervision is very remote, to say the least.

Now the committee has considered the question whether these arrangements approach the ideal as closely as possible. The work of exhorting by our licensed students is of a quasi-official character: the Board licenses them and the consistories of our churches invite them to "preach." It will also be admitted that the work of instructing and edifying the people of God is exceedingly important, the gravity of this work cannot be overestimated. In addition it must be observed that while the work of an ordained minister in an established church is regularly supervised by the consistory of that church, the work of a licensed student, who is by no means a tried veteran in the work, is remotely supervised by bodies (the Faculty and the Board) which are not ecclesiastical in the sense that they have authority to apply censure according to Articles 79 and 80 of our Church Order. Surely it would be desirable if ways and means could be devised by which the status of our licentiates could be placed upon a more solid footing and their responsibility to an ecclesiastical body more definitely defined.

In the early Reformed Churches of the Netherlands there were "proponenten" who had passed a preliminary examination and were given the opportunity to develop their talents by so-called "propositiën," under the direction of a minister and consistory. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, as it appears from its "Standards of Government, Discipline and Worship," seems to have something similar to this "proponenten" system of the early Reformed Churches. In "The Standards" it is stated, "... presbyteries shall license probationers to preach the gospel, that, after a competent trial of their talents and receiving from the churches a good report, they may in due time ordain them to the sacred office." In addition it is also stated, "... the presbytery shall continue to show its concern, after such examination, for the progress of all the candidates under its care, and shall advise with them with regard to their preparation for the work of the ministry."

The question arises whether the Christian Reformed Church could not develop a system by which at least two objectives would be attained: (1) By which the licentiates would be acknowledged officially by the Church as seeking ordination in the sacred office of the ministry. It is true that a student or any member of the Church may seek ordination, but this is not acknowledged by the Church until he is declared eligible to a call, i.e., until after the *praeparatoir* examination. This acknowledgment on the part of the Church would then be advanced and take place upon a student's successfully passing the examination for licensure. Such a licensed student might be called a *probationer*. (2) By which a licentiate would be placed under the supervision and special care of a consistory of a Christian Reformed Church, so that such a consistory would, in a general way, control his work and show interest in his development.

To attain the objective described above, the committee recommends that Synod decide:

1. Only students who are members in full communion of a Christian Reformed Church and have successfully completed a year's work (be it the Junior, Middler, or Senior year) in Calvin Seminary shall be eligible for licensure in the Christian Reformed Church and be permitted to seek the status of probationer in the Christian Reformed Church.

2. All students desiring licensure shall submit for examination to a classis in the Christian Reformed Church (If a student receives support from the Student Fund of a Classis he shall not apply for licensure to another Classis unless it be with consent of the Classis supporting him), which Classis shall conduct this examination in the presence of two synodical examiners. This examination shall be of a practical character and shall inquire into the following matters:

a. Whether the applicant has the spiritual qualifications necessary for the ministry and whether he considers himself called of God to prepare himself for the sacred office, and whether his conduct is honorable and godly.

b. Whether he has sufficient knowledge of the Bible and especially of our Reformed principles to act as a guide to others.

c. Whether he intends upon the completion of his studies to seek to enter the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church.

d. Whether he can speak acceptably and to the edification of the churches. (Classis may ask the applicant to submit a specimen sermon in writing or Classis may ask him to speak this sermon before the meeting—the text shall be of the applicant's own choosing.)

3. Application for licensure shall be made by the student in writing at the meeting of Classis next preceding the meeting he desires to submit to the examination. The applicant shall also cause to be delivered in sealed envelopes to Classis a testimonial of the consistory of the church of which he is a member concerning his conduct as well as a statement from the Faculty as to his conduct, ability, and his successfully passing the work of at least one year in the Seminary.

4. When the applicant passes the examination successfully, the Classis, after having received the consent of the Synodical examiners, shall give him license to exhort in our churches and declare him a probationer in the Christian Reformed Church. The Classis shall further assign the probationer to a consistory belonging to the Classis (the probationer may express his choice to the Classis, which choice shall, however, not bind Classis), which consistory shall interview the probationer from time to time (at least twice a year), receive reports concerning his work from the Faculty as well as from the congregations in which the probationer may labor, and further take a general interest in him.

5. The Consistory to which a probationer is assigned shall have the right to suspend the licensure of the probationer for cause, but shall immediately notify Classis to this effect, which Classis has the right to revoke the license. In any disciplinary action the Consistory and Classis shall notify the Seminary Faculty.

6. The probationer shall affiliate as a member with the church to whose consistory he has been assigned.

7. The connection between the probationer and the consistory shall continue until the time of the probationer's ordination, even though he should pursue post-graduate work after graduation by our Seminary.

8. The "preaching" engagements of the probationer shall continue to be arranged by the Faculty during the academic year. Engagements during the probationer's vacations shall be arranged by himself in consultation with the Consistory.

(P. S. The committee should like to call Synod's attention to the desirability of asking the Seminary Faculty whether the Curriculum for the junior year in the Seminary cannot be arranged in such a way that certain indispensable courses for the preaching of the gospel, such as Exegesis and Dogmatics, be included.)

VI. EXAMINATION FOR CANDIDATURE

The question which calls for consideration first of all in this place is, whether the so-called *praeparatoir* examination and the *peremptoir* examination can be brought together and as it were, fused into one examination in some way or another. This would mean that a probationer and graduate from the Seminary would have to pass only one examination instead of two.

Much could doubtless be said in favor of such an arrangement. First of all mention could be made of the fact that in a general way both examinations, as they now exist, serve the same purpose: they are used as means of determining whether or not the applicant is qualified for the sacred office of the ministry. Secondly, it may be stated that neither Scripture nor the Church Order demand a dual examination. As we explained in our report to the Synod of 1942 (cf. Agenda, p. 63 ff.), only one examination was required originally. The "Arminiaansche Twisten" were the occasion of placing the *praeparatoir* examination alongside of the examination, which thereupon became known as the *peremptoir* examination. As far as the purpose which these examinations serve and the principle which is involved are concerned one might, therefore, be inclined to work towards a fusion of these two examinations or the abrogation of the one or the other.

However, there are certain practical considerations which should not be neglected. Though the principle involved does not demand dual examinations, neither does this principle forbid such dual examinations. If certain considerations of a practical nature are then so preponderant that they indicate the need of retaining the system of dual examinations, the committee feels that Synod should not decide to abrogate one or the other.

We are convinced that there are such considerations. If a choice would have to be made between the repeal of either the *praeparatoir* or the *peremptoir* examination, it would be very inadvisable to discard the

praeparatoir and to retain the peremptoir. A person cannot declare himself eligible to a call. That is the task of the churches. However, before the churches can declare anyone eligible to a call and thereby recommend such a one to the churches, they must examine him. The church thus controls entrance into the ministerial office by restricting the liberty of calling to persons examined and recommended by it. In the abstract it may be true that the church can exercise this control also after a person has received and accepted a call and thereupon submits to an examination. A Classis and the Synodical examiners could even then, at such a late hour, reject anyone who is disqualified for office. However, such a course of procedure would involve so many practical difficulties that upon consideration it is to be rejected. There would, for instance, be reason for fear that the sad experience of "dropping" a candidate, which occurs very infrequently now, would occur frequently then, and that at the expense of the peace and contentment of the church which has set its heart upon the candidate called. If the two examinations are to be fused, it is apparent that the peremptoir should be fused with the praeparatoir and not the praeparatoir with the peremptoir. The time of the one examination would be that which is now occupied by the praeparatoir examination. However, this one examination would have to be thorough and comprehensive and final. It would have to be conducted by either the Synod or by a Classis. But there are objections to either of these bodies conducting this examination.

The committee feels that Synod cannot afford to take the time necessary for this examination. For this one examination would not only have to be thorough, but also comprehensive, including many theological disciplines (be it in a practical way and not distinctly academic) and other qualifications necessary for the sacred office. Synod can ill afford to take the time for such an examination. Moreover, when a group of aspirants (consisting of as many as ten) submits itself for such an examination, the work becomes well-nigh impossible. Again, if Synod should undertake to conduct this one examination, the committee fears that the work would become too far removed from the churches directly concerned in the examination. It would be altogether possible that not one member of the consistory of a church considering to extend a call to a certain aspirant would witness the examination. Candidates would then be more or less superimposed upon the churches—a procedure not at all desirable and to be avoided.

However, if the work of conducting this one examination would be assigned to Clâsses, there would be difficulties of another nature. It would be most logical to assign aspirants either to the Classis to which the church of their membership belongs, or to the Classis to which the church from which they originally hail belongs. If the former, the three Grand Rapids Classes, and of these three Classes, Grand Rapids East would receive practically all these assignments. Obviously such an ar-

rangement would not be fair to these Classes nor to the Church as a whole. The great responsibility of conducting the examination should be spread as much as possible. If, however, aspirants would be assigned to the Classis to which the church from which they hail belongs, it might be difficult for such a Classis to meet at a time convenient to the aspirant. Besides, traveling expenses would in some cases be high for the aspirant not only, but also for the members of Classis.

The Board of Trustees of Calvin Seminary, we feel, is not the proper body to conduct this work. Moreover, if it should be assigned to the Board, some of the same objections mentioned above in connection with Synod would be of force. The Board would also have to examine an entire group at one time. Considering that this would be the one examination required and that it would, therefore, be final, the committee feels that such a group examination would be highly undesirable, to say the least.

Having taken all the foregoing considerations into account, the committee proposes that Synod decide:

1. To retain the system of dual examinations.
2. To assign the first examination, called the examination for candidature, to Synod.
3. To assign the second and final examination, called the examination for ordination, to the Classes.

The first of these two examinations, generally called "praeparatoir" examination, but which the committee proposes to call "*The Examination for Candidature*," should be assigned to Synod. This is, of course, an ecclesiastical examination and should, therefore, be conducted by an ecclesiastical body. The Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary, which might be considered for this assignment, is not an ecclesiastical body. It is, moreover, an executive committee appointed by Synod, the eldership of the Church is not represented on the Board, and Synod should not delegate the decretory work of declaring persons candidates to a committee. Our Classes, though ecclesiastical bodies and, therefore, qualified to conduct this examination, will find it too difficult and too expensive to conduct this work. Hence we propose that Synod retain the work of conducting this examination for Candidature.

Synod is to conduct this examination for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not the applicant possesses such qualifications as supply a reasonable hope that he shall become a good minister of the gospel in the Christian Reformed Church. Upon such an ascertainment the Synod shall declare the applicant a candidate for the sacred office, recommend him to the Christian Reformed Churches for a call and announce this officially to the Churches. This examination is, however, to bear a preliminary character and shall in no wise make the second examination, or "The Examination for Ordination" redundant.

With these things in mind, we propose the following schedule for this Examination for Candidature to Synod:

1. *Requirements:*

a. A statement of the Consistory with which the applicant is connected as a probationer in regard to the measure of success with which he has exhorted in the churches, in regard to his walk of life and moral conduct as well as in regard to his zeal for the work of the ministry. No consistory shall issue this statement unless it is able to declare that it has given specific attention to these matters through investigation, personal observation and interview.

b. A statement of the Faculty of Calvin Seminary indicating that the aspirant has successfully completed the regularly prescribed course in Theology, and testifying to his Christian conduct and walk of life while a student in the Seminary.

c. Neither the statement of the Consistory nor of the Faculty shall be acceptable unless received by the Stated Clerk of Synod in sealed envelopes. The officers of Synod shall examine these statements and report their recommendations to Synod.

2. *Subjects:*

a. *Homiletic Ability:* The aspirant shall be required to deliver a specimen "sermon" especially prepared for this examination on a text assigned not less than one month before the day of the examination. This "sermon" is to be complete, but its delivery should not require more than 20 minutes.

b. *Experimental knowledge of religion and of the motives* which influence the aspirant in seeking the sacred office. Naturally such matters as the aspirant's conception of the holy ministry and his devotion to the tasks implied are to be discussed under this heading.

c. *Controversial Subjects:* Old as well as new heresies and "isms" are to be discussed under this heading. The aspirant should be able to defend the Reformed position over against scientific systems not only, but also over against heresies popularly known in our day, in order that as a shepherd of Christ's flock he may be able to protect this flock and thus, "holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9).

d. *Acquaintance with and Adherence to Peculiarly Reformed Doctrines and Institutions:* We have in mind such doctrines as those of Creation, Image of God, the Fall of Man, Total Depravity, Covenant of Works and of Grace (Common and Special), the Sacraments, the Church, the Parousia, etc. We have in mind such institutions as Catechism preaching, Catechism classes, Family Visiting, the Christian School and others. Moreover certain matters pertaining to Church Polity should be discussed. The aspirant should be able to express himself as to the organization and the authority of a Consistory, Classis and Synod; as

to the place and work of the offices of Minister, Elder and Deacon. He should have sound conceptions of Christian discipline, its character and its procedure, etc. Moreover, the aspirant should be willing to declare his adherence to the three standards of unity.

3. *Method of Procedure*: Every aspirant is to be examined separately by Synod. When a group numbering more than five (5) presents itself to Synod for examination, Synod should divide itself into two sections (one minister and one elder of each Classis to belong to each section) and devote not less than two hours in examining each aspirant individually, including, of course, his trial in homiletic ability. By thus examining each aspirant individually the assurances gained are bound to be fuller than is the case with group-examinations.

VII. EXAMINATION FOR ORDINATION

After a consistory having extended a call to a candidate, has received his letter of acceptance, it shall notify the Stated Clerk of the Classis to which the church belongs, and request that arrangements for the examination of the candidate be made.

The purpose of this examination, now generally called the "peremptoir" examination, but which the Committee proposes to call "*The Examination for Ordination*," shall be to ascertain whether or not the candidate has the necessary qualifications for the sacred office and can be expected to be able to pursue the work of the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church in an acceptable manner, to the edification of the people of God and the progress of the Church of God, so that the Classis can conscientiously consent to his ordination.

1. *Length and Method*: Though it is impossible to gain an absolute assurance in regard to a candidate's future soundness in doctrine and conduct, yet the Classis should reserve ample time to investigate fully whether or not the candidate's present doctrinal position and walk of life are beyond reproach, and whether or not these yield a reasonable expectation of his continual progress along soundly Reformed lines both in doctrine and practice. The committee is of the opinion that Classes are often handicapped by restrictions of time limits, and that examiners at times err in failing to emphasize cardinal points of doctrine. The examination in Dogmatics is, for instance, often conducted according to a textbook, and questions are asked in such a way that a candidate has no opportunity to show his grasp of the truths confessed in their relationship to the system. The examination is not supposed to be academic but ecclesiastical in character. The church must know whether the candidate is sufficiently equipped to be an instructor in the church, to be a watchman upon the walls of Zion, to be able to give answer to the gainsayers. The committee feels that if the Classes put the questions to be asked in the various disciplines with discretion, the time allotted to the examination will in most cases be sufficient and will not be occupied with matters a well-informed catechumen should be able to discuss, but with subjects

which are cardinal for the administration of the Word and the Sacraments in the times in which we live.

2. *Requirements:*

a. A statement of Synod as to the candidate's successful passing of the examination for candidature.

b. A statement of the consistory with which the candidate is connected as a probationer in regard to the measure of success with which he has exhorted in the churches, in regard to his walk of life and moral conduct as well as in regard to his zeal for the work of the ministry. No consistory shall issue this statement unless it is able to declare that it has given specific attention to these matters through investigation and personal observation and interview. A copy of the statement to Synod may be presented to Classis if the date of the examination for ordination is less than one-half year after the examination for candidature. Otherwise the consistory is to issue a new statement. This statement shall be mailed in a sealed envelope to the Stated Clerk of the Classis.

c. The candidate shall make available to the Classis for inspection the letter of call, and the consistory shall present the letter of acceptance for inspection by Classis.

d. This examination shall take place in the presence of two synodical examiners.

3. *Subjects:*

The Synod of 1920 adopted a schedule for this examination after an elaborate report had been made by a committee to that Synod. This schedule may be found on pp. 60 and 61 of the Acts of that Synod. It should be observed that this report and schedule presuppose not only the academic examinations conducted by the Seminary Faculty, but also tries to avoid duplicating these academic examinations. In that way the Classes are apparently asked to assume knowledge of and soundness in many theological disciplines with the candidates. One wonders whether an ecclesiastical assembly may thus delegate its responsibility to another body; viz., the Seminary Faculty. The committee acknowledges that we meet with a difficulty here. We trust that our Classes will readily concede a greater ability to conduct academic examinations to the Seminary Faculty. Yet the responsibility of safe-guarding the ministry has been assigned to the Classes. In addition it should be noted there is some duplication in the schedule as adopted by the Synod of 1920. In fairness it should be stated that this duplication is not due to the work of the committee reporting to that Synod, but to the Synod itself. The Synod added the subject of Dogmatics to the schedule, which subject was not included in the proposed schedule of the committee, and which was perhaps subsumed by the committee under the subject: "Kennis onzer Belijdenisschriften," which also embraces "Kennis van den inhoud onzer Belijdenisschriften." But however these things be, the present committee

proposes that the Examination for Ordination be conducted by the Classes in the following subjects:

a. *Homiletic Ability*: The candidate shall be required to deliver a specimen "sermon" especially prepared for this examination on a text assigned. If at all possible the candidate shall be required to deliver this "sermon" in a regular meeting of public worship, which shall be attended by the members of Classis. Classis shall, however, appoint a committee which shall receive from the candidate a copy of the "sermon," not less than one week before the examination. This committee shall not only judge the structure and delivery of the "sermon," but it shall also interview the candidate in the presence of Classis as to the context of his text, the hermeneutical principles applied in the exegesis of the text, the exegetical and homiletical technique employed, by which they shall give the candidate an opportunity to show his acquaintance with exegetical and homiletical methodology in general as well as with the original language of the text. In this connection the liturgical place of the sermon and other elements of public worship shall also be discussed.

b. *Knowledge of the Bible*: The candidate should be able to show an acquaintance with Scripture, so that he can handle the Word of God aright. He should be able to indicate the unity of Scripture as well as the difference between the Old and New Testaments. He should be able to discuss the books of the Bible isagogically, as well as certain doctrines in their development in the history of revelation. His conceptions of Sacred History should, of course, be soundly Biblical.

c. *Dogmatics*: The emphases are to be placed by the Classes not so much upon the mastery of a certain text (a matter which may be assumed to have been included in the academic examinations), but upon specifically Reformed and cardinal doctrines of each locus. The Classes should select the material under this heading especially with a view to present day doctrinal deflections. If sufficient time is allotted to this subject, the subject of "Controversial Subjects" may be eliminated from the examination as a separate item and subsumed under this heading.

d. *Ethics*: Both theoretical and practical ethics should be discussed under this heading. The candidate's principles and attitudes towards modern life with its many anti-Christian practices should be brought out in the discussion of this subject.

e. *Confessional Standards*: The candidate should be able to describe the validity, the purpose, the authority as well as the necessity of confessional standards in general. He should be conversant with the contents of our three confessional standards in general and be able to indicate which purpose each serves.

f. *Church History*: The principles of Church History should be brought out. It will be impossible to cover the wide range of the entire field of this subject. Emphasis should be placed upon the history of the

Protestant Reformation, upon American Church History and the History of the Christian Reformed Church.

g. *Church Polity*: The Reformed principles of Church Polity should be discussed. The organization of the Church as well as the place and authority of the various ecclesiastical assemblies and offices (minister, elder, deacon) should be made the subjects of the interview under this heading.

h. *Reformed Institutions*: Such subjects as Catechism preaching, Catechism classes, family visiting and pastoral calling, the Christian School and other subjects of like nature should be discussed with the candidate under this heading.

i. *Experimental Knowledge of Religion*: The candidate's personal religious life should be discussed. He should be able to testify of his fear and love of the Lord and his faith in and submission to Him. His motives in seeking the sacred office of the ministry as well as his conception of this office and other like matters are to be discussed under this heading.

ADDENDUM

The Synod of 1945 committed an overture of Classis Pella (Agenda, 1945, Overture 4, p. 76) to this committee for consideration and recommendation.

Classis Pella overtured Synod to revise Article 4 of the Church Order by eliminating the requirement that Synodical examiners be present at the examination of candidates for the ministry, if such candidates had already been examined by Synod. The Classis argues that the presence of these examiners is superfluous and unnecessary and that their work is perfunctory in character, requiring much time and an outlay of money.

Recommendation: The committee recommends that Synod reject the overture of Classis Pella and do not revise Article 4 of the Church Order.

Grounds:

1. The presence of Synodical examiners at the examination of candidates is necessary, since such candidates seek to be ordained in an office which is acknowledged by the entire denomination.

2. If Synod adopts the schedule of The Examination for Ordination as proposed above by this committee, the work of the examiners cannot be called perfunctory and their time will be well spent. The examination for ordination is more important than any and it is final. If Synod is to conduct or be represented at the preliminary examinations, it surely is necessary that Synod be represented at the final and most comprehensive examination for ordination.

Humbly submitted, the committee

E. F. J. VAN HALSEMA, Pres.

N. J. MONSMA, Sec'y

J. BEEBE

TRANSLATION OF HOLLAND THEOLOGICAL WORKS

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE Committee appointed in 1945 "to arrange for the translation and editing of Dr. A. Kuiper's *E Voto*" (see Acts of 1945, p. 38) is pleased to serve you with the following report.

1. *Labors Performed by the Committee.* Our notices printed in *The Banner* and in *The Church Herald* brought response from upward of half a dozen persons in the Reformed and Christian Reformed Churches. Most of these expressed their willingness to help in the work of translating *E Voto*. These we subsequently asked to submit a sample of their work. Three or four have done so and others may be working on the translation at this writing.

We have also gone into the matter of translation rights, etc., in order to learn whether any obstacles will be encountered at this point.

Finally we have attempted to arrive at some conclusions as to how much it will cost to translate and edit this four volume work.

2. *Conclusions Reached by the Committee.* We feel confident, having examined somewhat the nature of the work submitted thus far, that an acceptable translation could be accomplished in the not too distant future, especially if the work were assigned to more than one person. Then there would be some editing to do: but this should not consume too much time.

We have estimated that if the persons doing the laborious work of translating Dr. Kuiper's highly idiomatic Dutch were given an honorable gratification, not to say a respectable payment for services rendered, it would cost in the neighborhood of fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) to prepare the manuscript for the printer.

We also feel that although there are a few difficulties in connection with translation rights that need to be settled, Synod would not find its pathway obstructed should it decide to proceed.

3. *Recommendations Made by the Committee.* We recommend that in the event Synod sees its way clear to proceed with this undertaking it set aside the necessary funds and instruct a committee to engage persons to do the work. (Although the mandate given in 1945 could be read and exegeted in such a way that power to act has already been assigned, your present committee has proceeded upon the exegesis that Synod did not in 1945 give such power to us; therefore we have stopped short of the act of engaging persons to do the work.)

We pray that Synod may receive the insight and the wisdom to decide in this matter to the greatest benefit of His cause; and we are happy to have had the opportunity of serving Synod in some small way.

D. H. KROMMINGA, Pres.
LEONARD VERDUIN, Sec'y
B. K. KUIPER

REPORT NO. 17
COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION CONCERNING A
DENOMINATIONAL BUILDING

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

THE initiative for the matter with which your committee is charged comes from the Christian Reformed Board of Missions, in its recommendation to Synod that "Consideration be given to the possibility of erecting a denominational building which can provide for office and committee rooms for all our denominational agencies" (Board Report, 1945, Section IV, F). The Committee of Pre-advice thereupon, "recommends that Synod appoint a committee to investigate this matter, this committee to present definite recommendation to the Synod of 1946. Such a building would centralize and facilitate the work of our denominational agencies" (Acts 1945, Art. 115 V, p. 42). This was adopted by Synod.

Your committee in discussing her mandate was confronted at the outset with the clause, "office and committee rooms for *all* our denominational agencies." We realized that at least two of them, Calvin College and Seminary and the Board of Publication, have ample facilities on their respective premises, not only for office and meeting rooms, but also fire-proof vaults to keep their records.

There are, however, two very important agencies, the Christian Reformed Board of Missions and the General Home Mission Committee, which rent office space upstairs of private store buildings, which are far from being fire-proof. Here all their business is carried on and their records are stored. The Board and their committees meet in various places.

While considering these matters, your committee was informed that the newly appointed Tract Committee will be in need of a central office for the display, distribution, and storage of tracts to be made available to our churches and various mission agencies.

Other denominational agencies such as Board of Trustees of the Ministers' Pension and Relief Administration, Church Help Committee, South American Committee, Back to God Radio Committee, Holland Seamen's Home, and Jewish Missions, apparently carry on their particular activities from various centers and their records no doubt are kept at these places by secretaries and treasurers.

Thus it appears that for some of these agencies permanent office room should be provided to carry on their work and store their records, while for some of the others it will be necessary only to provide meeting rooms when they meet in Grand Rapids from time to time.

Regarding the archives and records of all these agencies, we believe there should be a central place where vault room is provided to file these safe from the danger of destruction by fire or of being lost. Many of

these valuable records are now being kept at the homes of committee members, where they may be destroyed in case of fire or be lost when membership of these agencies changes from time to time.

The question of location, should Synod decide to build, was also considered. Your committee believes that the logical place is the present denominational property at Jefferson Ave. and Weston St. in Grand Rapids. A two-story building could be erected on the recently acquired lot 50x100 feet, which would provide room for these various agencies and possible expansion of the publication building. Provision should be made for two or three private offices with combined office and reception room for personnel. A few rooms of various size for smaller and larger committee meetings. Ample vault room for storing of records and archives. The necessary room for storing supplies, etc. The location of this building with the present publication building would make possible combined janitor service and heating plant. The necessary office personnel could be used by the various agencies as each one had need. This will make for economy.

Your committee therefore recommends:

1. That Synod provide for a building where the various committees and agencies of our denomination will be centralized.
2. This building is to be erected on the denominational property at Jefferson Ave. and Weston St. in combination with the present publication building.

Grounds:

A. To have all these agencies of the Church located in one central location will make for efficiency in carrying on their work, in their interrelation and in dealing with the membership and the public.

B. Economy is apparent when we consider:

1. Elimination of rent payments
2. Combined use of office personnel
3. Single janitor service
4. One heating plant

C. The matter of safety of the records of these various agencies should weigh heavily. These records if lost or destroyed cannot be replaced.

3. Because of the prohibitive cost of building and the scarcity of material at the present time, Synod postpone erection for at least a year and charge a committee with obtaining further data as to the extent of the rooms to be provided.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN HEKMAN, Pres.

JOHN P. SEVEN

JAMES J. RYSKAMP

GEORGE WIELAND

PETER D. BOUMA, Sec'y

SOUTH AMERICA AND CEYLON

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

GOOD progress and the outlook for still more expansion characterizes the work entrusted to your Committee by Synod. We are grateful that the Rev. Jerry Pott after eight very successful years in Argentina is now on furlough and in our midst and that he has been privileged to address many of our audiences telling of the progress and the outlook.

The progress is evident in that the work is blessed in all the South American fields of work among Hollanders of Reformed persuasion. Under the ministry of the Rev. Wm. V. Muller in Brazil, several persons made confession of faith, especially young men that also entered the service of the Dutch armed forces. Rev. Muller's work was also blessed among the aged, and an elderly woman was among those that made confession of faith. The Rev. and Mrs. W. Muller enjoy the work. Perhaps increased emigration from the Netherlands will also cause the Dutch colony of Carembehy, Brazil, to grow. Although the Christian School principal of Carembehy entered the armed forces of the Netherlands, the work of Christian education has continued. For a while the call of the Netherlands Government for volunteers from among its youthful Dutch citizens in Brazil brought about unsettled conditions in the congregation of Carembehy, but these have practically disappeared, due in large measure to the wise leadership of the Rev. W. V. Muller, and due most of all to the indispensable blessing of God, who maintained the unity and progress of the congregation in war and peace. The Rev. and Mrs. Muller may look back upon the sum-total of their labors in Carembehy, Brazil, thus far with gratitude, and behold the evident tokens of the Lord's great and abundant blessings upon their work and upon their many prayers.

Your Committee authorized the Rev. W. V. Muller to visit certain definite home mission fields again, namely, those among the Reformed Hollanders of Rio de Janeiro and of Sao Paulo, Brazil. We hope for church extension in Brazil eventually, seeing that there are scattered Reformed people that respond to pastoral care. As in Argentina so now in Brazil the needs and opportunities connected with the service of our workers justified the purchase of an automobile. The automobile remains the property of the Committee of Synod for South America, on behalf of the work in Carembehy, Brazil, but the Rev. Wm. V. Muller was given permission to have the automobile registered with the Brazilian government in his name.

Neither in Brazil nor in Argentina have our men experienced any serious opposition from the Roman Catholic Church in their work. We

believe that this favorable situation is due to several factors, such as Scriptural preaching and tact of our ordained men in South America, the Christian education sponsored by them, the Reformed character of the Dutch colonists among whom they labor, the cumulative influence of various Evangelical denominations, and especially the Lord's blessing upon all the work done in His name.

The outlook for expansion is evident not only in Brazil but also in Argentina. In Buenos Aires the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt not only continues to serve in the new church building, but he keeps in mind the needs of the Dutch sailors that arrive at that great harbor, as well as the needs for more church extension in the vicinity. The progress of the work is greater than the brother can cope with and he renews with urgency the need for more workers in Argentina.

The Committee for South America of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands provided an annual subsidy for the salary of Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt before the war and according to their correspondence with us plan to do so again. Whether they will be able to raise the usual amount may be a question, but your Committee does not intend to leave Rev. Sonneveldt in the lurch. During the war, with the consent of our Synod, your Committee sent subsidies to the Rev. Sonneveldt, and we will keep a watchful eye with regard to his needs also in the future.

With respect to expansion in the field of church extension we are approaching a solution. A home missionary was requested by Classis Buenos Aires some years ago. A plan for the work of the proposed home missionary was prepared at the request of our Committee by the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt, the Rev. Jerry Pott and the Rev. Wm. V. Muller. This plan was approved in principle by our Committee, leaving details to be adjusted later according to the development of the work. The Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt is now some sixty-five years of age and if he would become the first minister in the general service of the Classis for this work of church extension (or home missions), the work would enjoy the benefit of his excellent talents, his great prestige, and his broad knowledge of practical conditions acquired through several decades of work in Argentina.

A successor to the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt could possibly be found for the Church at Buenos Aires. Several possibilities may be considered here, for there is now an increasing number of workers on the horizon. Correspondence will have to go forward on this subject. The pastor of Carembehy did not deem it feasible to leave Brazil for work in Argentina until a successor could be found for the work in Brazil. We must depend upon the Lord who opens and closes doors in the work of His Kingdom. We are inclined to believe that Buenos Aires would benefit from the services of a man with considerable experience in the ministry, considering all the difficult problems that lie on the horizon here, and considering the opportunities that have been stressed by the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt.

The Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt still labors among the Reformed congregation of Chubut in Southern Argentina, visiting them twice a year for some eight or ten weeks of work there. It was the privilege of the Rev. Jerry Pott to accompany the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt on one of these trips some years ago, and we believe that it would be for the good of the work if the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt would also be accompanied to Chubut by others, possibly by Cand. D. U. Bergsma of Tres Arroyos, Argentina, so that when eventually the Rev. Sonneveldt has become so aged that he has to give up the work in Chubut, other workers in the Classis may be thoroughly familiar with this important field of labor, which has many problems all its own, that have been solved by the Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt with great success, but that would become familiar to a successor only gradually.

At present Cand. D. U. Bergsma is stated supply for one year in Tres Arroyos, Argentina, the congregation served so acceptably for eight years by the Rev. Jerry Pott. Cand. Bergsma graduated from the regular theological course at the Free University of Amsterdam. With Mrs. Bergsma and with an extensive theological library, Cand. Bergsma went to Argentina at his own expense. He preached occasionally, the content of his sermons was good but his delivery was not greatly appreciated. Meanwhile he served as elder and as clerk of the consistory at Tres Arroyos very acceptably for some time. And now that he serves as stated supply during the furlough of Rev. Jerry Pott, his work is reported to be very satisfactory. This fact increases the hope that it may be possible for Cand. D. U. Bergsma to serve elsewhere as stated supply. And who knows whether ordination might not follow? We cannot tell what Providence has in store for this brother, but his record has certainly become more encouraging during the past year. It shows good progress and therefore the outlook for the expansion of the work in South America has again improved.

The wife of Cand. Bergsma is a registered nurse, and she is now in charge of the boarding school that was organized by the Rev. and Mrs. Jerry Pott, and over which Mrs. Pott, also a registered nurse, was matron, until their departure from Tres Arroyos for the present furlough. The fact that the Rev. and Mrs. Jerry Pott lived in this boarding school for a while really put the Christian School of Tres Arroyos on its feet, for it could then hold sessions regularly and the time of the teacher did not need to be divided any more between a town school and a country school, for the children of the country now also attend the town school and are cared for at the boarding school. We are grateful that this excellent solution worked out by the Rev. and Mrs. Jerry Pott, for the Christian School arrangement at Tres Arroyos seems to be a permanent solution, even now after their furlough has begun.

From Tres Arroyos a young man went some years ago to the Kampen Theological School in the Netherlands to study for the ministry. He will

spend two more years at Kampen Theological School before he becomes a Candidate. Then he evidently intends to serve in South America, if the way is opened, and we believe that in consultation with the Committee for South America of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, ways and means can be found for his service in Classis Buenos Aires, where we look for increased expansion in the work, especially if immigration from the Netherlands is again resumed to Argentina.

Recently the Rev. Jerry Pott expressed the opinion to the Committee that the ministers of the Reformed Churches in South America should not limit their activities to Reformed people of Dutch ancestry but that an increased attempt should be made to reach others in South America. The Committee believes that the Rev. Jerry Pott should receive an opportunity to elaborate his views on the floor of Synod. The Committee has for years had the opinion that the local Reformed congregations in South America do have a missionary duty to try to reach the native population, even though our church is not yet sending out full time missionaries to reach others.

Our mandate of 1912 limits us to the promotion of the spiritual interests of Reformed people of Dutch ancestry in South America. We await with interest and enthusiasm the Synodical reaction to the position of the Rev. Jerry Pott that the efforts of our denomination in South America should not be thus limited. We are in favor of Rev. Pott's position that the scope of our denomination's work should be broadened in South America beyond people of Reformed persuasion and beyond people of Dutch ancestry. As a traditional step ordained workers could be placed in several South American localities where there is a nucleus of Reformed people of Dutch background. Such ordained workers could probably become associate pastors of the incorporated Reformed congregations in South America, even though they worked in a home mission station of Reformed and Dutch people some distance away, and initiated a program of evangelization among the Argentines or Brazilians as well.

The Rev. Jerry Pott reports that a high school student of 19 years of age of his congregation at Tres Arroyos wishes to study for the ministry. His name is Juan Samuel Boonstra. Your Committee has received many favorable details of information concerning this young man and his academic record which made it clear that he apparently deserves financial encouragement. He has taken about as much schooling as is given in Tres Arroyos. The Rev. Jerry Pott concludes his report concerning him as follows: "Should his desire to come to the States for study find realization, then he would need financial assistance to make the trip and he would have to be supported throughout most of his student career. The United States government demands that some responsible party guarantee that he become no 'charge to the States.' Does the Committee feel that it can take any of this upon itself? Or does the Committee feel

that it would like to appeal to Classes or churches or individuals in case the matter is worth acting upon? Some groups might be found that would be willing to coöperate in supporting the Argentine student."

We consider the above statement from the Rev. Jerry Pott very indicative of the good progress that the Lord is giving to our work in South America. Your Committee hereby encourages Classes, Churches and individuals to extend aid to this young man, through the South America Fund of our denomination. He may still have to do some work in a high school and would then enter Calvin College. We believe that our mandate of 1912 enables us to carry forward this project financially; nevertheless we will present a proposal on his matter for Synodical approval or disapproval, because of its unusual character.

We received the following recommendation from the young brother's consistory:

Tres Arroyos, 26 Februari, 1946

Comité der N. Am. Chr. Geref. Kerk voor Z. Amerika
Prof. Dr. M. J. Wijngaarden, Secr.
1144 Chippewa Dr., SE.
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Geliefde Broeders,

Op indicatie van Ds. J. Pott, verzocht de lidmaat der Kerk te Tres Arroyos "Juan Samuel Boonstra" van den Raad zijner Kerk een getuigenschrift ten behoeve van een aanvrag om hulp tot studie ter voorbereiding op den Dienst des Woords.

In vergadering van 25 Januari 1946 heeft de Kerkeraad dit verzoek behandeld en met eenstemmigheid besloten br. Boonstra bij uw Comité hartelijk aan te bevelen.

Br. Boonstra is belijdend lidmaat en, voor zoover den Kerkeraad bekend, gezond in de Leer en onbesproken in den Wandel.

Zijn ouders zijn godvreezende, zeer getrouwe en meewerkende leden der Gemeente en zij staan aan het hoofd van een groot (9 kinderen) en veelbelovend gezin, maar de stoffelijke middelen ontbreken om de kinderen te laten studeeren.

Verscheidene kinderen vertoonen kenmerken van een materiaal waar wat van te maken is.

De oudste zoon, Juan Samuel, is steeds een ijverig en begaafd medewerker in den Evangelisatie-, Zondagsschool- en Jeugdarbeid geweest.

Het werk in het kleine bedrijf zijner ouders trekt hem niet aan, maar gedurende de zomermaanden der vacantie slaagde hij er in een goed loonende arbeid te vinden in Buenos Aires, wat mede wijst op zijn goede capaciteit.

Aangaande Juans motieven voor zijn keus, meenen wij te mogen vertrouwen dat, bij alle menschelijke onvolkomenheid, toch het geloof en de vreeze Gods, ja 's Heeren hand zelve, in de lijn van het verbond, hier werken.

Overigens heeft Ds. J. Pott den betrokkene meer persoonlijk en van nabij leeren kennen.

Aan Boonstra zelf verstrekt de Kerkeraad een korter getuigenis, ter verzending aan uw Comité.

U den zegen Gods toebiddend over al uwen arbeid in Zijn Koninkrijk, verblijven met groeten in den Heere,

Namens den Raad der Geref. Kerk te Tres Arroyos,

(was geteekend) D. BERGSMA, Pr.

(was geteekend) D. ZIJLSTRA, Scr.

We are thankful to have received the above splendid and unanimous recommendation from the brother's consistory, for financial support, with

a view to his studying for the ministry. One or more of our Classes may desire to volunteer to come to his aid.

The ordained workers of our denomination laboring under the auspices of our Committee have to cope with increased costs of living. Hence your Committee has decided to pay a bonus of thirty per cent on children's allowances for 1946, in addition to the amounts approved by Synod of 1945, as indicated in the Synodical Acts.

CEYLON

With respect to the "Ceylon Request" (Acts of Synod of 1945, page 119, Art. 115, III, 35), your Committee received the following mandate:

"a. To endeavor to make contacts with ministers who might be interested in this work.

"b. To advise the next Synod as to the status of the minister who would be called by the Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Churches in Ceylon." (Acts 1945, p. 32, Art. 36, VII, B, 3.)

On these matters your Committee wishes to present a preliminary report at this time; while a more definite report is to be presented to Synod later, because more data will hopefully be available from Ceylon at that time.

Your Committee has endeavored to make contacts with ministers who might be interested in this work. A notice was published in our church papers inviting ministers interested to contact any member of your Committee. In other ways also your Committee has carried forward this work. We know that one of our ministers is definitely interested. Some seminary students have also shown interest in the matter. Your Committee at this time again invited and urged all ministers interested to contact any member of the Committee. We would like to see more interest shown in this great opportunity to exert leadership of a distinctive Reformed character, in a strategic center like Ceylon, and in Asia, which means so much for the future, both religiously and politically. Your Committee intends to go forward with the work of endeavoring to contact ministers that might be interested in this work and invites correspondence, especially since no one has yet definitely volunteered to go.

Your Committee has decided to correspond with Ceylon concerning "the status of the minister who would be called by the Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Churches in Ceylon," in order that we may be able to advise Synod on this matter of status. In the light of this correspondence, we hope to be prepared to present the requested advice by the time Synod meets. We understand that Ceylon has had ministers from South Africa that did not lose their status in their own South African denomination. A similar situation obtains with respect to the Rev. Jerry Pott and the Rev. William V. Muller in South America, for they retain their status as ministers in our denomination; while a form was prepared by

the late Prof. W. Heyns for the signatures of the consistories that they serve. Our Committee is seeking to learn from Ceylon whether an arrangement much like that of our ministers in South America would be satisfactory to the consistory of Ceylon, and what modifications might be possible or desirable.

We have contacted one of our missionaries from China, the Rev. A. H. Smit, and hope that when he returns to China next summer he may be able to visit Ceylon in September and advise our Committee on many matters of detail.

We hope that a letter of call may be written up which shall meet the situation in such a way that it can be signed by your Committee as representatives of Synod, by a calling consistory of our denomination, which shall then loan a minister to Ceylon, and by the consistory of Ceylon, whose Macedonian call—"Come over and help us"—thus comes to definite expression.

May Jehovah's indispensable blessing be granted upon the work in the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, both in South America and Ceylon, and unto the uttermost ends of the earth, to the praise and glory of His thrice Holy Name.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Synod continue to support the work in South America with an annual offering of 35 cents per family.

II. The following budget for 1947 is presented for our denominational work in South America, all in United States currency:

Basic salary, Rev. William V. Muller.....	\$1,500.00
Salary raise, Rev. Muller, after ten years.....	200.00
Child's allowance, Rev. Muller.....	150.00
Bonus, Rev. Muller, 30 per cent of \$1,700.....	510.00
Basic salary, Rev. Jerry Pott.....	1,500.00
Salary raise, Rev. Pott, after five years.....	100.00
Children's allowance, Rev. Pott.....	375.00
Bonus, Rev. Pott, 30 per cent of \$1,600.....	480.00
Subsidy Rev. A. C. Sonneveldt, serving Chubut and Buenos Aires	900.00
Basic salary, another ordained worker, approved by Synod.....	1,500.00
Bonus, this ordained worker, 30 per cent of \$1,500.....	450.00
Children's allowance according to schedule and transportation to South America	1,000.00
Administration expense	125.00
Furlough reserve and other expenses.....	500.00
Total.....	\$9,290.00
Expected from Tres Arroyos for Rev. Pott's salary.....	240.00
Total.....	\$9,050.00

III. Synod again appoint a Committee for South America, with mandate as heretofore.

IV. Synod authorize its Committee for South America to appeal to some Classis or Classes to extend financial aid to Juan Samuel Boonstra, and if need be, to supplement such aid from the South America Fund.

Ground:

The practice of our denomination is such that Classes support students for the ministry.

V. Synod authorize its Committee for South America to broaden the scope of its work so that this work is not limited to the advancement of the spiritual interests of Reformed people of Holland descent, but so that our ordained representatives in South America are also authorized to promote evangelistic work among people of other antecedents.

Grounds:

1. Every congregation has an evangelistic task and this holds also for the congregations served by our representatives in South America.

2. Each scattered group of Reformed Hollanders will gain in significance, if it is looked upon as affording an opportunity for evangelistic efforts in the community.

3. The field is the world, according to our Lord, and it cannot be limited indefinitely and permanently in any land to the people of a certain ancestry. Our Lord's Great Commission is to preach the gospel to all creatures, teaching them to observe all these things that Christ has commanded.

4. Though a broadening of the scope of our work is thus permitted, the main task of your Committee would continue to be the advancement of the spiritual interests of Reformed people of Holland descent in South America, according to our mandate of 1912.

5. In actual practice both the Rev. William V. Muller and the Rev. Jerry Pott have in the past found evangelistic work outside of our Holland circles to be a normal part of their task, even though it had not been authorized by Synod.

Respectfully submitted,
Committee for South America,

HENRY BEETS, Pres.

MARTIN J. WYNGAARDEN, Sec'y and Treas.

DAVID D. BONNEMA, Vice-Pres.

HARRY BLYSTRA

PETER JONKER

RE: PROF. KROMMINGA'S COMMUNICATIONS ON
ARTICLE 37

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

YOUR committee has received of Prof. D. H. Kromminga the material which sets forth his eschatological views. The professor himself believes that these views bring him into conflict with Art. 37 of the Belgic Confession and particularly with the opening clause which says that the number of elect will be complete at the return of our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. The professor does not hold all his peculiar views with the same degree of certainty (see his second communication to Synod of last year, Acts, p. 342), but desires to have his views tested in public discussion or through investigation by Synod. Professor Kromminga is of the opinion that Eschatology has received the least adequate development in the history of Reformed theology. Says he, "I wish to state that I find that this question is one in the study of which a lone individual can not very well arrive at final conclusions on every one of the detailed points which are involved. I feel the need of the help of the Church" (Acts 1945, pp. 342, 343).

The very desire to have his views tested as well as the tone of all the materials which have been presented indicate that the professor does not speak dogmatically. In distinction from others who have held opinions in conflict with our Confession, he has not propagated his views nor does he declare them to be final. He desires that discussion of the eschatological problems in the light of Scripture shall make plain either the tenability of his own views or the correctness of our credal statement in Art. 37. This attitude of the professor is to be highly commended.

When your committee faced its task assigned by last year's Synod, one of the first considerations before us was the meaning of our mandate. It became apparent that the majority of the committee did not consider it the proper function of the Synodical committee to attempt a solution of general eschatological problems. The opinion prevailed that discussions on eschatological questions should be carried on by the church as an organism. In accordance with this persuasion your committee drew up the following resolutions:

I. We feel that Prof. Kromminga does two distinct, although not unrelated things in his communications, namely:

A. He declares that he deviates from Art. 37 of the Belgic Confession in regard to the clause "when . . . the number of the elect shall be complete." This is essentially a gravamen in which the quoted clause is incriminated.

B. He asks for a committee of investigation to study the whole field of eschatology anew so that he and others may come to greater clarity in these matters.

II. It is our opinion that only the former should receive our attention seeing that the latter should be conducted by the church as an organism with the hope that in this way the truth may be precipitated,

III. Therefore we request Prof. Kromminga to state concisely to this committee his Scriptural grounds for his deviation from, and incrimination of, the afore quoted clause from Art. 37.

These resolutions were communicated to Prof. Kromminga who was prompt in replying as follows:

Esteemed Brethren in the Lord:

Yesterday I received from your secretary, Rev. J. Griffioen, copy of the resolutions you have taken at your first meeting.

I am herewith offering you my reply to this communication and, in it, I am trying to the best of my ability to comply with your request for the concise statement you desire. I trust you will have patience with me if my statement is not quite as concise as you may hope for and contains rather much of elucidatory material that is not directly scriptural. The necessity for this I can perhaps best make clear by starting from your analysis of my communications to Synod. You correctly say that in them I register my deviation from Art. 37 in regard to its statement that at the return of Christ the number of the elect shall be complete, and that I seek a study of the whole field of eschatology for further clarification.

Now, since you proceed to separate between these two matters and state that as a committee you can deal only with the former, but that the eschatological study for further clarification must be left to the church as an organism, the only matter left for discussion between you and me is what you call "essentially a gravamen in which the quoted clause is incriminated." I am glad that you have taken note of the fact that the character of my "gravamen" as such can be questioned, since you qualify it as being such only "essentially." I do not know how else you could name it in the traditional terminology in use among us, but I feel it necessary now, that my double aim has been split up, to call your attention to the need of qualifying the "gravamen" character of my communication.

When a gravamen against some clause of the creed is entered, it would seem to be perfectful legitimate and proper to ask of its author to present his scriptural grounds. And that is, as I see it, precisely what you are asking of me in your present request. But that may readily be taken to mean, that the author of the "gravamen" is expected to show that the "incriminated" clause is in conflict with scripture. May I point out to you, that my complaint does not go quite so far? I am not ready to say definitely, that the clause from which I deviate is in conflict with Holy Writ. All I asked from Synod in my first communication was substantiation for that clause from Holy Writ. Lacking that, I see no valid reason for allowing this clause to stand in the way of a fresh study of the whole eschatological field, such as you say only the church as an organism can undertake. But, being an integral part of our Formulas of Unity, the clause may very well limit and restrict the fullness and completeness of such a study and discussion. If the understanding plainly is that the clause is not to be used for such a purpose, I have no quarrel at all with its presence in our creed as a record of what the dominant or prevailing or general conviction both of the authors and of our church constituency at the present is on the point involved.

I am sure you, brethren, will immediately realize that this qualification of the sense in which the term, gravamen, is applicable to my communications to Synod has quite a bearing on the sense in which the term, scriptural grounds, which you request for it, must be understood. I am faced with the difficulty of proving a negative. If my contention were that the clause conflicts with the Word of God,

I would be under obligation to prove such a conflict. But what scriptural grounds am I to advance for my opinion that the Word of God does not substantiate the clause? I trust you will be satisfied with my attempt to state concisely the scriptural grounds on which I deviate from said clause, without insisting that I give scriptural grounds for *incriminating* the clause, since I do not incriminate it any further than to say that it should not stand in the way of a free and all-around discussion of the eschatological field and the problems which that field presents. Even so I fear that I shall not be able to add anything new to what I already have given the Synod and you in my various previous communications; but I shall try in the following points to summarize that material concisely, as far as it bears on this clause.

1. *Ipsissimus verbis*, the statement that the number of the elect shall be complete when Christ returns is not found in Holy Writ. It is an inference from other declarations of the Word of God. The inference may be correct, but, until this is actually established, the occurrence of the clause in our Confession ought not to be allowed to cut off or to restrict investigation, discussion, and debate on the question of its correctness.

2. Speaking of Christ's conquest of Satan after the fall of Babylon and the overthrow of the two beasts, Dr. Herman Bavinck makes the following statement: "Nu is het zeer bevreemdend, dat deze laatste overwinning over Satan in twee tempo's geschiedt. Eerst wordt hij voor duizend jaren gebonden en in den afgrond geworpen, en daarna verleidt hij opnieuw de volken, voert krijg tegen de gemeente en wordt dan voorgoed overwonnen en geworpen in den poel van vuur en sulfer, 20:1-10. De voorstanders van het Chiliasme vinden, behalve in het Oude Testament, in deze pericoop hun sterksten steun en de tegenstanders zijn er niet in geringe mate verlegen mede en hebben er al hun exegetische kunst aan beproefd . . ." *Geref. Dogma*, IV, p. 751 (fourth edition). The church ought to be slow in condemning a man for taking his stand with what Bavinck recognizes as the obvious sense of the millennium-passage instead of with the results of the exegetical efforts to get rid of that sense. But if a man takes such a stand, he faces the question, what interpretation must be given of the passage on the assumption of a future millennium. And it is then that the question of the statement in our creed definitely comes into the picture.

3. If one accepts a millennium still to come and at the same time does not allow of conversions unto salvation in that millennium, he appears to be quite well shut up to the identification of the saints who are after the close of the millennium attacked by Gog and Magog with the saints who during the millennium rule with Christ. Compare Rev. 20:4 and 9a. Such an identity is, however, not indicated in the text, and against it is the plain disparity of the two groups involved in the last war, which would have to be assumed if Gog and Magog are held to plan their assault on the saints that ruled with Christ during the millennium and that consist of martyrs and the like. Therefore I hold that the saints of vs. 9 were converted in the course of the millennium.

4. There still would be no conflict with the statement that the number of the elect will be complete when Christ returns if one could place the millennium before the second advent of our Lord. However, this is impossible in view of Paul's declaration, in II Thess. 2, that the return of Christ will bring the destruction of the man of sin, who by the power which he exercises and the worship which he demands is evidently identical with the beast whose overthrow precedes the millennium in the order of John's visions, Rev. 19 and 20.

These four points, I think, briefly summarize my views and the bearing of the "incriminated" clause in Art. 37 of the Belgic Confession on them. You will realize, how far I am from actually incriminating that clause. I merely have serious questions concerning its correctness and must concede even in my own thoughts the possibility that the clause may turn out to be correct after all. You will no doubt also realize that I am little interested in such a general discussion by the church as an organism from which my personal slant on the eschatological question is *a priori* excluded. I am fully aware of the fact that I stand pretty well alone with my peculiar views in this field and can look for support from the side of the Premillenarians as little as I can from the side of the Postmillenarians or from that of Amillenarians. But I am pleading for a chance for these views to be

heard and considered in the discussion I, and I think we all, hope for. If the clause in our Creed which seems to stand in the way will not actually do so, I am satisfied and have no desire to see it removed from our Creed.

Hoping that this reply is neither too lengthy for you nor unhelpful in your labors, I am,

Yours in the service of our Lord,

(signed) D. H. KROMMINGA

After receiving this reply from Prof. Kromminga your committee met to deliberate, evaluate and crystallize its opinion on what it considers the proper solution of the problem concerned. The result of our discussions were drawn up in the form of a resolution which expresses the position of your committee and which we advise Synod to approve. This resolution follows:

"It is the opinion of this committee, that loyalty to our Confession does not preclude the freedom of discussion, providing that the views concerned be stated as a hypothesis, and that they do not constitute a direct attack upon the Confession. To our mind the Confession should be constantly tested in this way, through common discussion, in the light of Scripture. This also is the proper way to lead to revision of our Confession, if such should prove necessary.

"The Professor himself speaks with hesitancy and a measure of uncertainty. This is evident from his communication to our committee: 'You will realize how far I am from actually incriminating that clause. I merely have serious questions concerning its correctness and must concede even in my own thoughts the possibility that the clause may turn out to be correct after all.' As long as discussion retains the specific character of hypothesis, we see no reason why the professor's allegiance to our Confession should hamper him in bringing his views on eschatological matters into public discussion."

Your committee then met with Prof. Kromminga to inform him of our view on the matter and to obtain his reaction. The professor appeared satisfied if his views could be brought into public discussion in this form and be tested on this basis.

We believe the position taken by your committee is in accord with the best Reformed traditions and opinion. We believe this to be sufficiently well known as not to require lengthy substantiation. We append just a few considerations which motivate us in taking the position above indicated.

1. The wide discussions in our own circles on the propriety of certain clauses in Art. 36 of the Belgic Confession is a parallel instance close at hand. It was in respect to this article that the late Dr. A. Kuyper, after enumerating three varying interpretations of, and attitudes toward, this article, proceeds to give his own position as one of a fourth group, as follows:

"En ten vierde zij, die, met schrijver dezes, met kracht en klem de historische uitlegging van Art. 36 maintineeren; nochtans rondborstig er-

kennen, dat zij geweldpleging van de Overheid in geloofszaken voor in strijd met de Schrift houden; en die voorts pogen aan te toonen, dat de vrijheid van consciëntie en van eeredienst niet in den zin der Fransche Revolutie, maar in overeenstemming met de dieper liggende beginselen der Gereformeerde belijdenis moeten worden geëerd.

De laatsten hebben daarom nooit gearzeld hun *gravamen* tegen Art. 36 in te brengen, en dit wel op grond van de Gereformeerde overtuiging, dat geen confessie onveranderbaar is; dat *elke confessie steeds appellabel aan den Woorde Gods blijft; en dat het de eere der Gereformeerde kerken niet te na komt, maar veeleer hoog houdt, indien ze, beter geleerd, ook zuiverder in haar Belijdenis spreken.*" (De Gemeente Gratie, Deel III, p. 99).*

2. The door to Confessional revision has always been left open. Prof. Dr. H. Bouwman accurately states the prevailing attitude of Reformed Churches as follows:

De Kerk "stelde de belijdenis niet naast of boven maar onder de Schrift, en beleed dat de belijdenis examinable was aan de Schrift, die eenige regel is van geloof en leven. De belijdenis is geen norma normans maar norma normata, geen regel, die de norma in zichzelf heeft, maar een afgeleide regel des geloofs. Zij is menschenwerk, geheel ondergeschikt aan Gods Woord. Niet de kerk, maar de Schrift is 'autopistos.' Zij heeft als het Woord Gods gezag in zich zelve. Geen menschenwoord mag met haar op één lijn gesteld worden. . . .

"De Gereformeerden zijn dus tegenstanders van een valsch confessionalisme, dat de belijdenis wil kristalliseeren en de leerontwikkeling stuiten. Zij willen naar het woord van Lasco 'de ontwikkeling van volgende eeuwen niet afsnijden bij het meerdere licht, dat het God believen zou te ontsteken.' Wat Ursinus schreef, 'dat wat verbetering van noode had verbeterd moest worden,' is steeds de leus der Gereformeerde kerk geweest. . . .

"Revisie der belijdenis is steeds mogelijk. Maar deze revisie is alleen dan profijtelijk, als de kerk zelve op hoog geestelijk standpunt staande, na degelijke studie en zorgvuldige voorbereiding, met vasthouding aan de beginselen, in staat is meer juist en scherp uit de Schrift de uitdrukking van har geloof vast te stellen." (Christelijke Encyclopaedie, Deel 1, pp. 276, 277.)

Dr. P. Biesterveld speaks in similar vein: "De waarde en de beteekenis van de belijdenis is juist dat zij uit de Schrift is opgekomen. In haar mag niets staan, wat niet uit de Schrift zelve is afgeleid. Aan de Schrift is zij ten allen tijde appellabel, de Schrift is haar bron en norma. . . . Gods Woord is de eenige regelmaat, waaraan alle leeringen moeten beproefd

*We underscore. We are perfectly aware that this quotation deals with *gravamen* rather than with exploratory discussion. We insert it because of the testimony it gives to the proper attitude toward our confession. It is well known that much free discussion has been allowed on Art. 36, short of actual *gravamen*.

worden. . . . En wat alles afdoet de Confessies zelve spreken het luide uit, dat de Schrift alleen is de regel en dat geen menschelijke geschriften, welke dan ook, met haar op één lijn zijn te stellen, laat staan boven haar." (Schets van de Symboliek, p. 4.)

The practice of the Reformed Churches at the early date of 1565, when they were still "De Kerken onder 't Kruis," is instructive on this point. A transcript of Article One of the minutes of "The Synod held in the Vineyard (a fictitious name for Antwerp) on Pentecost Day, 1565" speaks for itself. "Qu' au commencement de chaque Synode, on ait à faire lecture de la Confession de foy des Eglises de ce païs; tant pour protester de notre union que pour adviser s'il ni à changer ou amender." (That at the beginning of each Synod, The Confession of Faith of the Churches of this land shall be read; as much for to declare our unity as to see whether there is something to change or to amend.) (Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis, Deel IX, 1849, p. 152).

3. The alternative to your committee's position would place us in an intolerable situation. Short of presenting actual gravamen against a certain expression in our Confession there would be no room for exploratory discussion on what may possibly prove itself to be new light from the Scriptures. All our confessions are themselves the outgrowth of controversy, discussion and study. The door to new exegesis should never be closed, as long as new thoughts on Scriptural truth be proposed in the form of an hypothesis.

Grace and peace be with you all.

Respectfully,

WM. KOK
J. G. VAN DYKE
L. VERDUIN
D. ZWIER
J. GRIFFIOEN, Sec'y

REPORT NO. 20

UNITED YOUTH COMMITTEE

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

ACCORDING to the decision of Synod in 1945 (See Acts of 1945, page 94) a standing committee, known as the United Youth Committee, was to be established for the purpose of effecting a coördinated program for the youth of the Christian Reformed Church. The committee met in the fall and the spring quarters and is making this brief report on the progress it has made.

The work of the two federations is continued under their respective boards. Both federations expect to resume their annual conventions this year after a four year interruption. The Young Men's organization is still suffering from serious depletion because of the demand of selective service for the 18 year olds. This federation hopes to do more work with the societies this year through the increased time and effort of a travelling field secretary.

The "Young Calvinist" is still being sent to the young people in the armed services under first class mail to insure prompt delivery. This cost is being met by the Home Missions Committee and the "Young Calvinist." The publication is greatly appreciated by the service men, according to the fine testimonies that have been received. The peak subscription figure of 30,000 copies will soon taper off unless we can keep every family in the Christian Reformed Church interested in the paper.

The United Youth Committee has discussed the responsibility for leadership and guidance in all organized youth activity for Junior High School age and older. It is giving some study to the types of youth work promoted in other denominations. The problem that has had most attention is how the joint activities among young men and young women can be promoted without harm to the existing federations. It was felt that where youth organizations do exist they should be asked to coöperate with the ecclesiastical authorities in planning and promoting such activity.

It is also the opinion of your committee that more should be done to stimulate missionary zeal and missionary interest among our young people. The problem of combining the spiritual program with some type of summer recreational program is now under consideration.

All of these discussions will eventually lead to a program of activity which we hope will be able to preserve the best interests of our societies and yet be flexible enough to borrow some of the good features that are

making such a strong appeal to our young people in the process of Americanization.

Respectfully submitted,

The United Youth Committee,

REV. C. WITT, Chairman

MRS. E. J. HOLTROP

MISS JOHANNA TIMMER

MISS DENA KUIPER

MR. RICHARD POSTMA

MR. CLARENCE DE GRAAF, Sec'y

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OVERTURES

WAIVE SLIDING SCALE FOR SUBSIDIZED CHURCHES

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

1 Classis overtures Synod to waive the application of the sliding scale for subsidized churches adopted by Synod in 1937 for the present because of the high cost of living.

Grounds:

The sliding scale was adopted when the cost of living was far lower than at present and further since 1937 the average salary of our clergy has increased.

By order of Classis Kalamazoo,

EDWARD BOER, Pres.

JOHN H. STEENWYK, S. C.

Done in Classis, February 20, 1946

LITURGICAL FORM FOR ERASURE OF BAPTIZED MEMBERS

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

2 Classis Grand Rapids West overtures Synod to provide the churches with a liturgical form which is to be used when delinquent baptized members are placed outside of the visible church (erased) by action of the Consistory.

Grounds:

1. Such a form would be proper, since such individuals are by virtue of their covenant membership and baptism also members of the visible church. Placing them outside of her fellowship should require more than a mere statement to that effect with one or two general grounds.

2. Such a form would also impress upon the congregation the seriousness of erasure from the membership of the visible church.

3. Since matters of church polity and liturgy affect the whole denomination, it is within the province of Synod to provide the churches with such a form.

Humbly submitted,

Classis Grand Rapids West,

A. PERSENAIRE, S. C.

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INVESTMENT OF MONEYS BY THE VARIOUS BOARDS

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

3 Classis Grand Rapids West overtures Synod that it instruct the various boards under its supervision, to give careful consideration to the firms and organizations in which its moneys are invested, and that, if it appears that moneys are invested in firms and organizations whose activities give offense to the Christian conscience by public Sabbath desecration, etc., to instruct the boards to take the necessary measures to invest these moneys elsewhere.

Grounds:

1. It is the duty of the churches in their joint activities as well as the duty of the individual Christian to refrain from giving offense to the Christian conscience as much as possible.

2. It violates the Christian conscience to use moneys for kingdom purposes when it is apparent that the manner by which these moneys have been obtained is unscriptural.

Humbly submitted,

Classis Grand Rapids West,

A. PERSENAIRE, S. C.

DIVORCE

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

I. INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4 The undersigned is a member in full communion of the First Christian Reformed Church of Ripon, California.

As such I have exercised my right of appealing to Synod concerning certain ecclesiastical matters.

I overtured the Synod of 1936 to repudiate and rescind the decision of the 1890 Synod, maintained and defined by the Synod of 1908 in regard to membership or non-membership in the Christian Reformed Church of persons divorced and afterward married to a third party—on the ground that those synodical decisions were unscriptural.

I have never received any answer, direct or indirect, of said Synod, stating whether or not any action was taken in regard to my plea.

From the Acts of 1936 it appears that my overture never even had been up for discussion. But of this lack of orderly procedure I have not been notified either. However, since the same Synod of 1936 in the latter part of its sessions decided in two concrete cases in full accord of what I had advocated in my overture, I abstained from making any

further comment, believing that the precedent set by the 1936 Synod would be effective to disprove adverse decisions taken by former Synods and be a standard by which similar cases would be judged.

This proved to be an illusion.

For the Synod of 1944 upheld the protest of a few members of the First Cicero, Ill., Church against the Consistory of the Church and against the Classis Chicago North.

The First Cicero Church had admitted as members a family of which both the husband and the wife had been divorced from a former mate. They had, however, realized the greatness of their sin and had confessed it before the Church. This decision of the Cicero Church was upheld by Classis Chicago North.

It was against this procedure that two Cicero families protested to the Synod of 1944, which Synod upheld that protest and confirmed it.

The 1944 Synod therefore ignored the 1936 decisions made in two similar concrete cases and sustained the 1890 and 1908 decisions.

In view of the contradictory action of the 1944 Synod, I considered it my duty to remonstrate again and therefore protested to the Synod of 1945 against the action taken by the 1944 Synod and at the same time overtured the Synod of 1945 to rescind the stand taken in 1890 and 1908 on the same grounds as were named in my 1936 overture.

My protest and overture has been duly laid before the 1945 Synod. I have received no direct answer, but it is stated in the Acts of 1945 that "the adoption of appointing a new Committee to re-examine the decisions of 1890 and 1908" should be a sufficient answer to my overture, which answer was not at all a decision concerning the matter, but a mere putting off of a decision.

At the same time the Synod of 1945 revoked the action of the 1944 Synod in the case of Cicero I. It was against that 1944 decision that I had protested so that by the 1945 reversal my protest automatically is dropped.

But seeing that the principle of this whole matter is to be put again before the Synod to be held in 1946 I beg to place before that same body virtually the same overture which I placed before both the Synods of 1936 and 1945. Though I am aware of the fact that a Committee has been appointed to study this matter and to report to Synod, it has become plain to me from former reports (1934 and 1936) that though I am largely in agreement with the majority report of 1934 and the Hoeksema-Sjaarda report of 1936, yet I do not agree with them on the essential point of what constitutes the breaking of the marriage tie before God and man.

In view of the foregoing I am herewith presenting to the Synod of 1946 a new overture, which does not differ essentially from the 1945 overture, but which plea I deem necessary to re-state, since the personnel

of 1946 is very likely to be made up of other members than was the Synod of 1945.

II. OVERTURE

I. (or we) overture the Synod of 1946:

I. To repudiate and rescind the stand taken by the Synod of 1890, maintained and defined by the Synod of 1908, affirmed by the Synod of 1934, and in spite of adverse action in concrete cases by the Synod of 1936, again affirmed by the Synod of 1944 in regard to:

a. The guilty party in a divorce on biblical grounds, if re-married during lifetime of first mate;

b. Persons divorced on non-biblical grounds and subsequently re-married during lifetime of former mate.

The stand taken by the Synods of 1890, 1908, 1934 and 1944 does not admit any of the above described persons into the membership of the Church, though they profess to repent sincerely from their sins.

The above named stand is unscriptural and inconsistent.

II. Further overture the Synod of 1946 to repudiate and rescind the *false ground* on which the above named stand is based, as stated by the Synod of 1908.

III. To repudiate and rescind the equally *false conclusions* based partly on the unscriptural ground and partly on a misconception and a malconstruction of the working of sin and grace in the human heart.

Grounds:

The question which came to the Synod of 1890 (Acts of 1890, Art. 36, p. 24) is as follows:

"Can a man be a member of the Church, if he has been divorced by his wife, because of having committed adultery, and if he has re-married during the lifetime of his first wife?" (Translation mine.)

This question is too vague and undefined for an intelligent answer.

Does this question mean that the man who had committed these sins had not repented of them and therefore would not confess any sin? Then the Synod of 1890 justly answered: "No." But if that was the manner of his case, then why was the question brought to the Synod at all? Can any person who lives in gross sins become or remain a member of the Church as long as no repentance is professed and shown?

The Church has no place for him.

But if the question means (though not stated) that the person referred to had repented of his sins and was willing to confess them before the Church, then the case becomes an altogether different one. I believe it has been taken for granted by the Synods of 1890, 1908, 1934 and 1944 that such was the case.

Assuming this to be true, the Synod of 1890 has decided that this man who was a sinner in the sight of God, who has repented of his sins,

who was willing to confess his sins, but who by reason of new legal ties could not undo the result of his sin, *cannot be a member of the Christian Reformed Church.*

This unscriptural stand has been maintained and circumscribed by the Synod of 1908, affirmed by the Synod of 1934 by rejecting the Committee Report which advised an opposite stand, and reaffirmed by the Synod of 1944 and left unchanged by the 1945 Synod, which stand therefore has been the official position of the Christian Reformed Church for the last 55 years.

Can anything be more unscriptural, more contradictory to the gospel of salvation by grace? If *one* repentant sinner is refused, then why not all? Then where would the Church be?

Does not Jesus give us an example of what He would do and did in the case of a woman who had had five husbands and was now living with a man who was *not* her husband? He said: "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee: Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." And: "*Whosoever* drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

That was Jesus' word and promise to a woman who *was at the time living in adultery*; but the Christian Reformed Church maintains that such as *have lived* in sins and sincerely repent *cannot be* members of the Church. We shut to them the doors of the Church and consequently the doors of heaven, for: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven."

The Synod of 1908 has stated its own grounds for maintaining this stand in the following words:

"In the case where a woman has obtained a legal divorce from her husband, because of his committing adultery, said woman is thereby freed from the bond of marriage before God and man, but not so the husband. Before God he remains bound to this woman. If this man should have contracted another marriage during lifetime of his first wife, he cannot be a member of the Church" (Translation mine).

This reasoning is altogether inconsistent.

The legal divorce, justified by the sin of the husband has *effectually* cut the tie for one party, therefore also for the other. The bond of marriage can never remain with only one of the parties to said marriage. Either both are bound by it or neither one. The legal divorce has therefore *effectually* freed both parties, though not beyond repair, as long as both remain unmarried. If one of them marries again, the tie is *irrevocably* cut. However, the sinning husband is thereby not freed from his guilt. *Legally* both have the right to remarry, but *not morally* so. According to Scripture only the innocent party has that right.

As a basis for its inconsistent reasoning, said Synod of 1908 quotes the following: "This man remained bound to his first wife before God and his second marriage is therefore a continuous living in adultery" (Translation mine).

This statement is in direct conflict with the teaching of Scripture.

Whereas the former marriage tie has been effectually dissolved for both parties by the legal divorce, the sinning husband, though guilty before God is not any more bound before God by any marital tie to his first wife whom he has wronged.

Whenever second marriage has been legally obtained, it must be considered an established and lawful marriage before God, though begun in adultery. Jesus Himself calls it a marriage in contrast to the case of the Samaritan woman who was *living* with a man who was *not* her husband.

On this unscriptural basis the Synod of 1908 draws the following false conclusions: "Were this not so (that is, if a second marriage were not a continuous living in adultery) then the way would be open for any one to free himself of his lawful wife by committing adultery and to marry another—and yet remain in peace with the Church. For he could reconcile himself to the Church by public confession after these sinful premeditated acts of adultery and second marriage" (Translation mine).

This conclusion is entirely perverted and unscriptural on the following grounds:

a. His committing adultery in order to free himself from his wife does *not* automatically *sever* the marriage tie. This can only be done by the innocent party in obtaining a legal divorce, but is nowhere commanded. If a divorce was not sued for and obtained his avowed sinful purpose of marrying another would be frustrated.

b. This synodical conclusion teaches that the sins of one person, though repented of and forgiven, opens the way for others to commit the same sins. It teaches that the "more abounding grace of God" opens the way and is an inducement for others to commit the same sins and live in them. It teaches in effect that the Lord God erred greatly in forgiving the adultery and murder of David. For that forgiving was an inducement for others to commit the same sins.

c. It further teaches that anyone who had thus been induced to commit the same sins "could yet remain in peace with the Church. For he could reconcile himself to the Church by public confession after these sinful premeditated acts of adultery and second marriage."

This statement is such a glaring error, that it is inconceivable how professing Christians could ever come to such conclusions, and how it has been upheld by a Christian Church for 37 years.

This whole reasoning is based on the assumption of insincere repentance and sinful calculation. How can any person contemplate to commit a grievous sin and *at the same time* plan to *repent heartily* of

such sin at some future convenient season? That is an utter impossibility. *True repentance never looms in the background of contemplated sin.*

d. We may never base our reasoning on the assumption of insincere repentance. Seeing that the entire Church consists of repentant sinners, true humility demands that when a sinner comes to repentance (no matter what was his sin) and confesses his sin and his faith in Christ as his Savior, his repentance and confession must be taken as *sincere*, unless it proves afterward not to have been so.

e. The acceptance into the Church of any repentant sinner never disannuls any of God's ordinances or institutions. On the contrary, it establishes them. In demanding public confession of the sin of adultery (or unbiblical divorce) and of second marriage and in admonishing to live hence forth holily in the sacred bond of marriage, the Church establishes and strengthens God's ordinances and causes them to be respected.

f. The exclusion of any repentant sinner from the Church sets arbitrary bounds to the mercy and grace of God. The consequences of that standpoint is his exclusion from the kingdom of heaven. To say (as has been stated) that he can be accepted after death of first mate makes his eternal state dependent on circumstance and not on the all-atoning blood of Christ.

(Although the case of the guilty party in a biblical divorce, if remarried, and that of a party remarried after unbiblical divorce are not identical, the attitude of the Church is alike in both cases. Both are refused admission to membership.)

In view of the above stated erroneous and untenable position and attitude of the Church, I (or we) overture the Synod of 1946 to adopt the following:

Persons, legally divorced from their marriage partner, irrespective of the cause, can enjoy the full rights and privileges of membership in the Church of God, if they sincerely repent of and confess their sins. If not remarried, they must be admonished to be reconciled to each other and be legally reinstated in the holy bond of matrimony, henceforth to live holily therein. In case second marriage has been contracted, the last legally contracted marriage must be considered binding to the exclusion of former marriage ties, inasmuch as the legal divorce has effectually "put asunder that which God had joined together."

Grounds:

The institution of marriage is a divine ordinance given for the civil and social life of man on earth.

It belongs in the sphere of the natural life and of common grace and is being governed by the laws of the State as God's ordained minister and authority in that sphere of life.

The State being responsible and accountable to God must perform its duties of consummating and dissolving marriages according to God's revealed will, which in many cases is not done.

Because the power of the State to act in the matter of matrimony has been ordained by God, He causes the decisions of the State to stand, even though they were in conflict with His revealed will. God does so in other matters. Example: God confirmed the judgment of Pilate in condemning Jesus to death, though the judgment was altogether unjust.

The Church has no right to disregard what has been legally performed by the State in its own province. It has no right to demand that a second marriage should be again legally dissolved. It may and must deal with the sin committed as God has given it a charge. The Church must proclaim repentance from sin and salvation in Jesus Christ to all sinners and receive them that give heed to that Word, but it cannot change the legal position of any couple as hereinbefore mentioned, no more than that the State can forgive the sins which have been committed.

I have endeavored to prove that persons who have been guilty of the sins mentioned herein, if sincerely repentant, may in no wise be rejected, but can with joy be admitted in the Church, accepting their present married state as valid and binding.

Respectfully submitted,

PETER L. VAN DYKEN

Ripon, California

*The Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Ripon, California, supports the overture of brother P. L. Van Dyken regarding Synod's official stand on divorce.

J. J. STEIGENGA, Pres.
WM. GREYDANUS, Clerk

**Classis California did not sustain the above overture.

MINISTERS AS TREASURERS

To the Synod of 1946.

ESTEEMED BRETHERN:

5 Classis Pella respectfully petitions Synod that ministers of the Gospel be discouraged from serving as treasurers of our denominational funds.

Grounds:

1. There are capable laymen in our Church who can execute these functions as well as the ministers.

2. Ministers of the Word should devote themselves exclusively to the spiritual aspect of Kingdom work as much as possible.

For Classis Pella,

ELCO H. OOSTENDORP, S. C.

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