Greetings for the
NEW YEAR

In This Issue . . .

FEATURE—page 1
"Beacon Lights Looks Back"

EDITORIAL—page 4
"Loyalty . . . to the truth"

CHRISTIAN LIVING—page 6
"The Future of our Youth"

OPEN FORUM—page 9
"Active Interest"

BIBLE OUTLINES—page 13
"Mordecai and Esther"

CURRENT COMMENTS—page 19
"This Dark Hour"

TRUTH VS. ERROR—page 21
"Temperance Salesman"

QUESTION BOX—page 24
"The Kingdom of Heaven"

LIFTING THE LID—page 27
"The College of Satan"

BOOK REVIEWS—page 31
"Read a good book"
"Beacon Lights" Looks Back

"The Publication Committee of the P.R.Y.P.F. takes great pleasure in introducing the first issue of our new periodical into your midst." (With these words written ten years ago, the Beacon Lights began its work among the Protestant Reformed young people. And Beacon Lights was organized to serve a definite purpose, which was aptly expressed in the first editorial: "Beacon Lights purposes to guide you on your course toward your goal. As an airplane pilot wings his way unhesitatingly on his course by the sweeping rays of his beacon lights, so this paper designs to guide you on your way through this world of sin and darkness, that you may hold your course and unswervingly strive for your goal. Or, to use a more common, time tried figure, as a ship at sea is in imminent danger of suffering shipwreck on some hidden shoal or treacherous rock unless the beacon lights guide it through the raging storm and murky blackness of the night, so Protestant Reformed youth must be warned of lurking heresies and threatening temptations which so easily beset them."

The Federation at first attempted to find an outlet for itself in the Church News, an independent paper published at that time; but soon realized that a separate magazine belonging to the young people was needed. Consequently, the South Holland Young People's Society was assigned to make all the necessary arrangements so that by January of 1941, the first editor, Rev. C. Hanko, could say, "Not 18 months ago the Federation was organized in South Holland, Ill. Not 5 months ago the second annual Convention was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Today you have your own paper. And what this means toward filling the long felt need in our young people's societies can only be surmised."

The first five numbers were regarded as trial issues, "... It is true, these first appearances were not without disappointments. ... But the hearty reception soon banished every thought. ... There were expressions of approval, of surprise, and no less of criticism. Yes, even the criticisms could warm anyone's heart. They show that our young people are not adopting this magazine as a
foster child which is forced upon them, but are receiving it as their very own, a product of their own efforts, and are not afraid to handle it, to eye it critically and to say exactly what they think of it."

In form, these issues resembled the Standard Bearer with sixteen $1\frac{1}{2}$ by $8\frac{1}{2}$ pages. The editorials took the place that feature articles now occupy, and Bible Outlines and Book Reviews formed the main contents. All of the contents at this time were supplied by various ministers.

Volume two began with the sixth issue in October, 1941 and several changes were introduced. The most striking innovation was in the form of the magazine. The measurements were reduced to $8\frac{1}{2}$ by $6\frac{1}{2}$, and the number of pages increased to 32. At this time Current Comments and Nature Study first appeared, and a column of soldier’s correspondence reflected the beginning of the Second World War. Also introduced was the Open Forum, about which the editor said, "This department will give every reader an opportunity to express himself on any subject or question of the day." The voice of the young people became more evident with several articles written by various society members.

Meanwhile, Beacon Lights continued to grow. By the first anniversary "Beacon Lights has crossed the boundary of ten states in the Union... It now has 502 subscribers." The Publication Committee had set a goal of 1000 subscribers. At present, although the goal has remained the same, the '42 figure has been doubled.

The practice of beginning each issue with a feature article on some timely topic was first introduced in April of 1943 and has continued to the present day. Also the regular Christian Living department first appeared in 1943 with Rev. De Wolf writing it.

As the Beacon Lights developed, there was a marked tendency toward increased participation by laymen and young people in the work of publishing. As Rev. Hanko said at the end of his four consecutive years as Editor, "... The next issue, opening a new season, will also bring certain new changes in our paper, particularly in the editorial staff. From the very outset the Board intended to introduce less ministers and more laymen as writers of the various departments."

This policy has been continued. Under the succeeding editors, Mr. George Ten Elshof, Rev. Walter Hofman, and Mr. Homer Kuiper, the work of writing and publishing Beacon Lights was increasingly assumed by the Young People until today the entire publication staff is composed of Laymen and Young People.

As we look back upon the past issues of Beacon Lights, we see that much has changed. The appearance has been altered, new columns and departments have been added, new topics have been discussed. But we also see that Beacon Lights has never turned from its basic goal set forth in the first editorial, namely, to be a guide and a beacon for the Protestant Reformed young people as well as a ready means for expressing their thoughts—in short their paper. Ar
as we stand at this tenth anniversary and look to the future, we trust and pray that Beacon Lights, with the whole-hearted support of the Young People, may continue to realize that goal.

We Gratefully Acknowledge . . .

— G I F T S —

FOR

BEACON LIGHTS

Miss Gertrude Timmer .............. $ 3.50
Doon Y. P. Society .................. 5.00
Singspiration—4th Church .......... 49.85
Mr. and Mrs. Soc. (Fuller Ave.) ... 10.00
Junior Bible Club (Randolph) ...... 15.00
T. P. Society—2nd Church .......... 125.00
Singspiration—Hope Church ....... 26.53
Mrs. Siebert Kooima ............... 1.00
So. Holland Ladies Soc. .......... 10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Helmholdt .... 2.50
Singspiration—2nd Church ......... 24.04
Ladies' Aid (Fuller Ave.) .......... 25.00
Miscellaneous ...................... 1.00

Thelma Jonker
Business Manager
1210 Wealthy St, S. E.
Grand Rapids 6, Mich.

The great standard of literature as to purity and exactness of style is the Bible.

— Hugh Blair.
Loyalty . . .

In our last editorial we expressed the considered opinion that we personally viewed with alarm the apparent disinclination of many of our people to seriously concern themselves with the issues now under discussion by our leaders. We made an appeal for sound and sane thinking, for a serious approach, and a forthright treatment of each important aspect of the various questions involved. We humbly urged this approach upon everyone, including our ministers, and expressed the desire for contributions from our readers in this connection. We refer you to the Open Forum for the two replies we have received up to this time.

There is just one other matter which we ought to mention here, although we cannot help but feel the majority of our readers are charitable enough to sense it for themselves, but for the sake of avoiding misunderstanding we bring it up now. Without any qualification I wish to state that I in no way feel qualified to set at rest any of the big questions of the day. Neither do I feel that it lies within our province to tell our leaders what they should do officially in dealing with such important matters as we brought up in our last editorial. We do, however, keenly feel a responsibility to call the attention of all Protestant Reformed people to the seriousness of the issues at hand and to voice our own concern for the welfare of our Protestant Reformed denomination when and wherever we feel its future to be in jeopardy.

In passing let us also bear in mind that in the church there will always be people who will evidence morbid disinterest in the welfare of the church. There are even some shallow ones who delight in "picking" at our ministers and other writers who have the courage to speak up for their convictions. They are usually the ones who continually criticize everything and anyone. Among these persons seem to regard the present controversies in abject horror. And the pity of it is they communicate this inhibition to others who, without such a retarding influence, would very likely develop a real concern for the well-being of the church. However displeased we may be with them, we must bear with such people.

On the other hand we do know, too, that there exists, in the hearts and minds of some of those who are genuinely concerned for the spiritual welfare of the church and its defense of the truth, a severe distaste for "disturbances and conflicts" in our denominational life. They are quick to point out the need for peace and the command to "love one another". They make an honest effort, a well-meant effort, to patch things up.
ill this is well. We undoubtedly need more of it in our circles today than ever before.

But, friends, let us not in all this disregard the essential element of the spiritual life of the sincere church member which demands a readiness to speak out for the purity of the truth which our church confessionally must uphold. To keep still for the sake of harmony when the very ground we stand on is questioned would be travesty. To fail to remain loyal to our Confessions, and keep still when the intent and authority of them is challenged, would be outright sin. This is what we must realize today.

Did Christ, in all His ministry, ever turn aside from dealing vigorously with questions concerning the truth? We, too, must certainly deal firmly and directly with any departure from the Confessions, which are based upon the Scripture. The Confessions are our doctrine, and doctrine is truth.

Our Confessions plainly state that God’s promise is unconditionally for the elect only. Our Confessions state, too, that the gift of faith is received from God, and the fact of it proceeds from His Eternal Decree. Our Confessions state that “the errors are rejected of those who teach that faith, holiness, godliness and perseverance are not fruits of the unchangeable election unto glory, but are conditions. . . .” Our Baptism Form further tells us “. . . . the Holy Ghost assures us to be members of Christ, applying unto us that which we have in Christ. . . .”

How clear it is from the foregoing that the assurance which we have that we possess everlasting life in Christ comes to us through the work of the Holy Spirit, and that this further gift of God—THE ASSURANCE OF THE FACT of redemption, sanctification, etc.,—comes to every believer through the instrumentalitY of faith! And so it is that we have not only a rich promise but the beauty of it all is that through faith God manifests to us that we always were saved in His Eternal Counsel. Cannot we also then comprehend that faith is therefore not a condition that is required unto salvation, a requisite upon which is predicated the realization of the promise of God?

Faith is rather the efficacious means which enables the children of God, the saved and elect ones, to walk uprightly before Him working out their own salvation in fear and trembling. “Faith”, says the Netherlands Confession, Article 22, “is an instrument that keeps us in communion with Him in all His benefits.”

—A. H.

QUESTIONAIRES

We are sending them out to see what you think of your magazine. They will be handed out in all the societies or they may be obtained by contacting a staff member. We want all our readers to get them and no matter how you get one be sure to fill it out and send it in. We want to know what you think of Beacon Lights so that we can publish your magazine as you would like it.

BEACON LIGHTS STAFF.
No doubt we are all deeply concerned with our future. In view of the present world situation and the economic instability of our country we sometimes wonder what the situation will be a few years hence. Yet, because the future remains unrevealed we continue without fear or apprehension trusting that the hand of our God rules all things and so also works all together for our salvation.

No doubt we, too, as Covenant Youth, are deeply concerned with the future of our churches. Certainly we should be for our spiritual life is to a great extent patterned after the course which is laid out by the church and that simply because our life is intricately interwoven into the life of the church. When the church becomes "coldly dogmatical", we become "practically indifferent". When the church grows "mystical" we become "sickly". And when the church is rooted in and flourishes in the "living Word of Truth" we become "spiritually sound and healthy". Hence, beginning a new year we say, "What of our future?".

It is, of course, no secret that our churches are in grave jeopardy. One of our ministers wrote me recently, "The news of late is not too good". Another said, "I'm afraid our churches are being broken down. No room anymore for missionaries either if our present policy continues". And then see again the editorial in the last issue of Beacon Lights. The underlying cause of this situation lies in the controversy of "conditions".

Youth, the situation is grave and calls for your united action. You constitute the church of tomorrow and so as you act now the church of tomorrow will be. What must our attitude toward this matter be?

This is no place for me to give expression to my personal opinions of the controversial issue. Nor is it my intention to enter here into the debate. In our department we want to face only one question: "What effect has and will all this have upon our Christian Living?" With that thought before our mind we make a few observations and remarks, hoping that we may stimulate you to thinking, diligent study and positive action in the defense of our "dear truth".

It is said that the controversy has already aroused much thinking which stimulates Christian living. No doubt that is true, but the question remains as to whether that stimulus was healthy for us and the churches or whether it gave occasion for the expression of that which...
not truly christian? Have we through all this been aroused to a greater appreciation of our Truth or not? Do we now have more fire in our bones to live and die for it than we had before the controversy began?

It may also be said that the controversy has created much confusion. This I personally believe is due to the fact that those who have strongly advocated "conditions" have failed to clarify their conception. Repeatedly they have stressed that they repudiate "conditions in the Arminian or Pelagian sense" and, yet, in the minds of many that which they understand by "Reformed conditions" is not clear. The result in practical life has been confusion. Division has sprung up among the members of the same church with some holding to the "conditional ew" and others vigorously opposing it. This, we feel, has been detrimental to Christian living.

It may also be said that in my opinion that which has been advanced thus far in the discussion favoring "conditions" has failed to contribute to a better understanding of our Truth, a richer appreciation of Scripture, or a definite advancement in practical, holy living. It has been affirmed that "these conditions are very desirable and necessary. They are theologically necessary. The Lord has ordained that man should so come to the enjoyment of salvation and in no other way." Now, I can agree that what is referred to as "conditions" here is surely necessary. Faith, repentance, holiness, good works, man's responsiveness to God's grace, etc., are all necessary in the enjoyment and experience of salvation. However, I fail to see why the term "condition" is so tenaciously held to express these things when our Canons of Dordt plainly state: "Faith, holiness, godliness and perseverance are not conditions but are the fruits of the unchangeable election unto glory." (Canons I, B, Art. 5). Now, I do not believe that quibbling over a "term" is conducive to Christian living either but I feel that it is a serious thing when our leaders throw the churches into confusion by persistency in the use of this term. Must we say with them, "faith, godliness, etc. are conditions" and turn around to our confessions and say "they are NOT conditions". Oh, I know, in the two instances a different meaning has to be given to the same term "condition". In the one case it must mean "condition in a Reformed sense" while in the other it means the old Arminian condition". Those fine distinctions are alright for the "philologist" but to the laymen "condition" continues to mean as Webster simply defines it and as it lives in everyday usage: "something established or agreed upon as a requisite to the doing or taking effect of something else". And of course, such a "condition" cannot be applied to salvation.

Hence, why this ambiguity? Why this insistence at any cost upon that term? Is it, perhaps an appeasement to the Liberated? If that is the case it will not serve our Christian living to follow such appeasement. Compromise never results in progress. The truth is never developed that way. But is it perhaps
imperative? Then I would say those who embrace it are duty bound for the peace of Jerusalem and the good of the church to clarify their conception and free the atmosphere of the misgivings of Arminianism. Then we can unitedly promote our christian living. Let them point us clearly and unmistakably to something richer embodied in that "term or conception" which we have not had in possession before. Then we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Else I, too, fear that under our present policy we will see division and disaster.

Yet, one more thing about this term. I wonder whether those who cherish it so dearly have reckoned with the possibility that they may be calling a Scriptural concept by the wrong name. Scripture surely emphasizes the responsiveness of man in the Covenant of God and yet to do that it never uses the term "condition". The term simply is not found in Scripture. Further, in our three forms of unity the term also is not found except as it is put in the mouth of Arminians and as it means "a requisite unto the doing of something else". Surely also the Confessors stress the idea of responsibility and responsiveness without the term. So I question whether the term is as essential as some would make it to be. I believe that we do full justice to the Word of God and our Reformed Faith without the use of it. Again, however, it may be stated that a proper and agreeable expression could perhaps be found if the issue itself would be made clear.

But what then of our future? Also our future christian living? In confusion and quibbling we cannot possibly live under one church roof and unitedly serve our God. Nor do we promote the cause of Truth that way. The Covenant Youth of today must therefore, through personal study of the Word of God and society discussion strive to clearly understand the issues and call them by proper names. Then, "buy the truth and sell her not". Take your stand upon it and by the conviction of faith fight for her for then Zion will be blessed abundantly.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES . . . .

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it.—Isaiah 55:6-11.
THE OPEN FORUM

OUR READERS “WRITE” . . . OR “WRONG”

The OPEN FORUM offers to all our readers the opportunity to express their opinions and thoughts concerning articles and contributions published in Beacon Lights. It also extends to our readers the privilege of space for comment on any other issue or development within our sphere of interest.

If you wish to place a contribution in OPEN FORUM, please feel free to do so. All we ask is that copy be typed (double-space) or at least legibly written.

P. S. — And not too long, please.

Speaking Plainly . . . Let’s Be Sane!

Your editorial in the December issue of Beacon Lights contains several rash sweeping statements which may not go unchallenged. Such statements for example as “the awful fact is that the very foundations upon which our existence as a distinct group of churches are grounded are in great danger of being uprooted and torn apart”. . . “should have served to awaken all of us to this alarming situation”. . . “there are ominous signs in our ecclesiastical sky”. . . “we are in great danger of losing our precious Protestant Reformed heritage by default”. In my opinion, such sweeping statements coming from you, and that without one iota of proof, are sheer nonsense. They can best be characterized as a mere playing to the gallery, and are wholly unworthy of an editor of our young people’s magazine. Let’s be sane in our leadership. Such tactics of making sweeping statements as indicated above, may create mass hysteria, but do not reveal good, sound, Reformed leadership.

You claim that the above described situation exists in our churches because of the present discussion of the term and concept “condition” in our Standard Bearer, and Concordia. What, can’t there be a lively discussion on some theological issue in our midst without some alarmists crying out fire, fire, FIRE. Such tactics remind me of the tactics of the Christian Reformed Churches prior to 1924, and of the churches in the Netherlands prior to the “Liberation”.

For your information the term and concept “condition” has had an important and indispensable place in Reformed theology for the past 400 years, notwithstanding the fact that throughout all these years there has been an almost continuous controversy about this term. And also in our Protestant Reformed Churches the term and concept “condition” has had a place from their very beginning, and has a place even now. Even the Rev. H. Hoeksema in his splendid address at our 25th Anniversary Field Day, at Jamestown Grove, emphatically stated that if we as Protestant Reformed Churches were to continue as the true
Church of Christ Jesus in this world, then the **conditio sine qua non**, the indispensable condition is, that we be spiritual.”

Since it is a fact that the term and concept “condition” has always had, and **always will have** a place in Reformed theology, the sole question is, what do we, and what did the Reformed fathers mean by it? Did they mean by it that God’s grace is dependent upon conditions, or that God is bound by conditions, or that they are something that man must fulfill before God can bestow salvation? God forbid! So conceived, the term and concept “condition” is but the destructive poison of Pelagianism and Arminianism, and is abhorred by all who love the Reformed truth. And if that were the only possible interpretation of the term and concept “condition” we would have to brand all the Reformed Church fathers as Pelagian and Arminian, from Calvin and the fathers of Dordt to Rev. H. Hoeksema. But thanks be to God, these fathers were no Pelagians and Arminians, but loved, defended, and preserved our Reformed heritage, and spoke of “conditions” in the Scriptural and Reformed sense of the word.

What then is the Reformed interpretation of the term and concept “condition”? I can perhaps best express this in the words of Prof. Dr. Schilder as “something which God has inseparably linked up with something else, in order to make clear to us that the one cannot come without the other, and that we can never be assured of the one, except at the same time we have become assured of the other.” (Reformatie, Vol. 26; p. 51). In other words, when we speak of “conditions” we mean that God has inseparably linked up faith with salvation, the cross with the crown, the battle with the victory, and that we can never receive the one without the other, and can never be assured of the one except at the same time we have become assured of the other.

It is in this sense of the word that we and the Reformed fathers speak of a “conditional promise”. Here lies, according to Prof. Dr. Schilder, the fine point of distinction. “God, says he, does give us promises but no prediction. He does not say to N.N.: you shall inherit eternal life, and to another N.N.: you shall eternally remain without.”

“Therefore He gives a promise, with a command, even as the Canons of Dordt express it: the promise comes to us with the command to repent and believe. Thus also in baptism He says: he that believeth in Me shall not be ashamed; for them that honour Me, I will honour; unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness; they that seek me early shall find Me.” (Reformatie, Vol. 26, p. 51).

Hence, in order to inherit the promise of eternal life we must believe; we must love the Lord our God; we must do good works; we must fight the good fight of faith; we must walk in sanctification; in one word the **conditio sine qua non**, the indispensable condition is, that we be spiritual. CAN we do all these things? By no means except God work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure’
That’s Scripture! That’s Reformed! That’s the Confession!

Bernard Kok.

Reply:
In his contribution our friend, Reverend Kok, asks for proof that there exists any threat to the future of our churches. We believe he knows very well the recent debate on “conditions” has been carried to the point where the participants have each publicly denounced each other’s position in no uncertain terms. Is it not generally admitted that there can be no room in our circles for two such opposing doctrinal positions? And does not our Protestant Reformed heritage hinge on which one is ultimately held to be in harmony with our Confessions? And is it not a fact, too, that while this issue’s being disputed in the States the fruits of our initial missionary efforts in Canada have ripened into thorns? Please see the contribution following these remarks and the report of our own Protestant Reformed minister in Hamilton which appears in the latest Standard Bearer.

As to Reverend Kok’s avowal that a conditional theology has “a place even now in our churches” we refer him to the Christian Living department and to our own editorial in this issue. Our readers should note, too, that Reverend Kok quotes at length a liberated minister to prove his contention.

—A. H.

Dear Young People:
A pertinent article appeared in the Beacon Lights of December, written by Mr. A. Heemstra. This editorial gave me the desire to write a few words from “this side of the border”.

We have gone through a year of varied experiences and reactions. I am of the opinion that you are interested in learning about them.

Many of you were undoubtedly enthused about our church in Hamilton. May I assure you, young people, that we, too, were enthused. When we were convinced that the Lord’s hand was leading us to labor here, everything, except the church, seemed to lose significance. The change was tremendous in many ways but we were desirous to acquaint these immigrants with the truth which we have learned to love as a Protestant Reformed denomination.

I accompanied my husband on many visits. Though we often heard remarks that made “our ears ring” as far as the Reformed truth is concerned, our enthusiasm continued unabated for four and one half months. We opened our home for catechism, society, and visiting. Many enjoyable hours were spent. We brought people to and from church (often I had eight or nine passengers in our car). During the winter we would huddle around little coal stoves to discuss the truth. At times we ate with the people. And we were glad we had come!

Gradually, however, fear clutched at our hearts. We began to realize that many things could be enjoyed if only the line between the Liberated (as they revealed themselves around Hamilton) and the Protestant Reformed Churches did not have to be crossed in our direction.
BEACON LIGHTS FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

Some agreed with many of our views but others often made very strange remarks. You will be interested, I am sure, in some which I heard personally. And I assure you that these remarks were uttered by members of our congregation here. For example: If we had known, when we were organized as a church or joined this church, that we could neither interpret the Confessions and Scriptures as we see fit, nor convince others of our convictions, we certainly would never have become members; Do not stress anything of your doctrine or of ours, and we will have peace; There is no use doing more immigration work if we have not the liberty to say to our children: that is what the minister says but this is the way it is; You (to my husband) bother yourself too much with the Confessions; Why do you say (also to my husband), “Protestant Reformed”, and not simply, “Reformed”, when you speak of your church.

You may say, “How easy it would have been to give in to this trend and have a large congregation.” But you think amiss! If you had been there, I am sure your reaction would have been: For the sake of the truth, as proclaimed by our churches, we crossed the border; we surely cannot give that up, too!

Our hearts are “large enough” to welcome hundreds from across the ocean but not at the expense of our churches and truth and history. I recall a day when I attended Christian High School in Grand Rapids at the time we were “put out” of the church. A student who went home for lunch came bounding up the steps upon his return saying, “Hey Kids, we’re out!” The same penetrating love for our churches has been brought to the fore due to our recent experiences.

Little does anyone know the anxious moments we have had nor how high our spirits soared at the least sign of encouraging remarks.

We trust that as our churches are again being weighed in the balance for purity of doctrine, we will pray for strength to let the truth be our guide. Also as young people!

With Christian greetings,
Mrs. H. Veldman.

WISE WORDS . . .

Read the best books first, or you may not have the chance to read them at all.
—Thoreau.

A handful of patience is worth more than a bushel of brains.
—Dutch Proverb.

He who knows himself best esteems himself least.
—H. G. Bohn.
LESSON XV.

"Esther Learns Of The Plot"

(Esther 4:4-9)

Mordecai's plan succeeded, and Queen Esther was informed of his deep sorrow. Because of the bond of natural love between her and Mordecai she is exceedingly grieved to learn that something so terrible has happened to him that he had put on sackcloth and ashes. It is very evident from verses 7 and 8 that Esther knew nothing of the decree of the king which Haman had induced him to make. This is to be understood. There was, of course, no reason in either the king's mind or in Haman's to inform her of this edict. Neither one considered her to be a Jewess. And the queen led a more or less secluded life in the palace and did not mingle in the streets with the common people to learn this thing from them.

Hearing of Mordecai's deep grief and not knowing its cause she sent him other apparel showing thereby her disapproval of his actions. Some suggest that she sent him other clothes so that he could enter into the gate and come and speak to her. A more plausible reason is that she wished to show her sympathy and at the same time to show her disapproval that he sit there outside the gate in these manifestations of mourning. She saw no reason for such deep sorrow.

When Mordecai refused the clothing she realized that there was indeed something very seriously wrong in his life. Therefore she now sent one of her servants to find out from Mordecai what the reason is. She wishes to know all about it. Therefore she asks "what it was and why it was". Mordecai feels the need now of revealing Esther's people and kindred. Remember, as we wrote above, neither the king nor Haman, as is evident from chapter 5:12 and chapter 6:5, are aware of Esther's kindred and people. Mordecai tells Hatach the whole plot even to the sum of money which Haman had promised to the king's treasury but also through him charges her to go to the king and make supplication before him for her people. It may be argued that this Hatach was a trusted servant and knew for some time of this national tie between Esther and this Mordecai who had kept contact with each other all these five years of her marriage to the king. But the point is that now for a material reason Mordecai is willing to have her kindred and people known even to the king.

Points For Discussion:

1. Mordecai's charge. The charge which
Mordecai gave to Esther was a command. The question arises, what right did Mordecai have five years after she left his house and was married to this king to give commands to her? The word "charge", by no stretch of the imagination means that he requested her to do this. The word used definitely means a command. You find this word in Genesis 2:16 in the mouth of God. Look it up. When, then, does authority, the right to command, cease. Does it cease as soon as a young man or woman marries and leaves the house? Suppose she marries and remains home with her parents due to a housing shortage or the like. Do the parents have any authority over her? The Fourth Commandment holds the parents responsible for the behaviour of their children on the Sabbath. Does that refer to married children under their roof since it also refers to servants?

2. Esther's grief. Esther has been queen of the world-wide empire of Persia for five years. Yet she has not forgotten Mordecai and all he did for her as her foster-father. Do you feel attracted to her for such loyalty? Does it give you a good opinion of her? Could he not have asked her to ask for the lives of the Jews without revealing that she was a Jewess? Do you think that he did this purposely because he feared that she might refuse to do this one thing at his command?

* * * * *

LESSON XVI.

Esther Agrees To Mordecai's Plan

(Esther 4:10-17)

When Hatach informed Esther of the reason for Mordecai's mourning and of his charge to her she was filled with apprehension. Not only was the thing he demanded forbidden and therefore dangerous for her, but the events of the past month were such that the danger was greater than Mordecai realized. Strangely enough, the king had not spoken to her for thirty days. That must be the significance of the statement that he had not called her to come in unto him for thirty days. Whatever else the expression may mean it shows that the king and queen did not eat together. They did not live together. In order to talk to him she would have to go to the place where his royal throne was. She would have to approach him as one of the many citizens of his kingdom rather than as his beloved wife.

Because of this she informs Mordecai of the danger to her. Mordecai is not so easily set aside in his plans and wishes. The thing to remember here is that her kindred has been made known. Mordecai reminds her of this and tells her that she must not expect to escape the sword when all the Jews are killed. He makes plain to her that she has no alternative. Appearing before the king without his request might mean her death, but over against this there are two other ways in which she might meet her death if she refuses to go to see the king. The on-
BEACON LIGHTS FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

that she will die in the slaughter of the Jews since her nationality is known. The other is a very malicious threat to her. Mordecai says that there will be enlargement and deliverance from another quarter and because she has been a traitor to her people, they the Jews who receive the deliverance will slay her and all her father's house. Evidently there were other brothers and sisters of Esther whom Mordecai or some other relative had brought up.

That Mordecai speaks of a certainty of deliverance from some other quarter does not mean that he had faith in God's Covenant promises. He deliberately refrains from using God's name. Do not forget that the unbelieving Jew still today looks for the Messiah and for God to give the Jews the victory over all other peoples. And does not the unbeliever today say that somehow this world will attain to a lasting peace but apart from Christ the Prince of Peace?

Mordecai also in an appeal to get her to do his wishes suggests that she might have come to the kingdom for this reason. Again there is no mention of God's providence in bringing her there. He sees no hand of God. And he does not urge her to go in faith trusting upon the Almighty Covenant God of Israel.

Esther sees the futility of refusing to do his bidding and asks that the Jews fast for her three days. It would seem as though she yet believed in God. And we would like to believe this too, but the terrible words of unbelief she utters in his connection forbid us to believe it.

She says, "If I perish, I perish". That is not the language of faith. Compare it with the speech of Daniel's three friends who tell the king that they are not careful to answer him, and their danger was far more imminent than Esther's.

Points For Discussion:

1. Mordecai's Faith In Deliverance. Would you say that Mordecai had historical faith? Does the unbelieving Jew who denies the Virgin Birth and the resurrection of Christ but believes the Old Testament history have historical faith? Have you any idea what other deliverance Mordecai expected? Did he expect God to intervene? Would that not be more than historical faith?

2. Esther's Speech Of Unbelief. Does God's child ever speak of himself as liable to perish? What expression would you as a believer have given had you been in Esther's position? Or what text in Scripture would you suggest as the proper answer of a believer? Is there something selfish in these words of Esther? Do they show any concern for God's covenant and His covenant people? Would it be less sinful had she said, "If we perish, we perish"?

* * * * *
LE S S O N X V I I.

Esther Obtains Favor.

(Esther 5:1-8)

The hour had come that Esther dreaded so greatly. It was time for her to go in to see the king on behalf of her people. She approaches him very delicately, we may be sure. She simply went to stand in the court where she could be seen by the king. To insure a proper reception she also puts on the royal apparel. Whether this was a clever piece of work suggested by the former request of the king that Vashti appear clad in the full royal apparel or whether it was to identify herself with the king so that he would immediately see that this person who was so bold as to stand there in his court was his own possession is not stated. The latter seems to be the more plausible explanation.

The king held out the sceptre to her. God saw to it that he did this. Whatever it was in the king's heart that caused him to find delight in her presence, God saw to it that the king would hold out his sceptre and Esther would not be put to death. The king may have been pleased and flattered to think that whereas he had not asked for the Queen to come to visit him she loved him so that after thirty days she could no longer stand it. It may have been her rare beauty. But it surely was the hand of God that led these events the way they transpired.

The king asks her to make her request known unto him. And he adds those words which were plainly still in force when the daughter of Herodias danced before wicked King Herod, "It shall be given thee even to the half of the kingdom". Esther replied with a very strange request. She asks that the king and Hamon come to the banquet that she has prepared that day for the king. It is plain even to the king that this is not her real request. For at the banquet, according to verse 6, the king asks again what her request is. Now whether this whole plot to approach the matter by decrees and along the lines which it was executed was the clever scheme of Mordecai and belonged to the "charge" which he gave her or whether this is all the work of Esther's mind is not told us. It does however, seem to be Mordecai's plan. He appears, to our mind, to be the kind of man who was capable of such a plan.

The king had Haman notified and the banquet is held. At the banquet the king presses the matter further only to receive the same answer from Esther, and a second banquet is scheduled to be held with Haman as the special guest of the king and queen. Esther promises the king that at this next banquet she will definitely make her request known to him.

Points For Discussion:

1. Haman's presence at the banquets. Why did Esther insist on having Haman at these banquets? Was it planned so that to kill her and her people would be exposed in Haman's presence so that he could defend himself? Was it to make his fall all the more
intense by first treacherously and cruelly leading him to believe that he was doing very well in the king's and queen's eyes? Thus was it all planned with a view to doing the just and right thing or was it a cunningly devised way of seeking revenge? May we conclude from verse 12 that Esther dealt very hypocritically with Haman? Or was this simply Haman's opinion for which Esther could in no way be held responsible?

2. Esther's second banquet. Why did Esther ask for a second banquet before making known her request? There certainly was a great danger here yet that the king would be furious at her for hiding from him all this time the fact that she was a Jewess. Do you suppose that she hesitated and asked for this second banquet because she lacked courage? Or would you consider this a mere formality, an oriental custom of not making a thing known immediately and finally doing so in a deliberate way? Or would you take the stand that she wanted to find out fully first how the king felt towards her before asking such an important question. The king had told her that she could have anything to the half of his kingdom. Did she not believe this? Or was that simply a formality which had no significance?

* * * * *

LESSON XVIII.

Haman Is Filled With Joy

(Esther 5:9-14)

Haman returned home from the first banquet to which he had been invited with a very glad heart. That is, his heart was glad until he came to the gate and saw Mordecai in the king's gate. For Mordecai neither stood up or moved an inch out of the way when Haman came through the gate. Haman might just as well have been a beggar instead of the man next to the king as far as Mordecai's behaviour was concerned. He was now full of indignation and he could not contain it anymore. As we have said before, he had a tremendous capacity for hatred, but the measure is now full, and it will now make itself manifest by his deeds. Little does he realize that the queen who had so honored him was so closely related to the man who caused him so much indignation.

He did, however, still have the power to control himself in public and the fierceness of his wrath was hidden from the eyes of men. When he was once in his own house he called for all his closest friends and for his wife. In their hearing he explained how he had been favoured with a seat at the banquet of the king and the queen. Of all the millions in this wide empire, and of all the princes in Shushan, he had been the only one to be here with the king and the queen. What is more, he was to be the only guest tomorrow also! These were things of which he had never dreamed.
And it all came so swiftly, so unexpectedly. L'UT he must also tell them of another thing which takes all his joy away. Now he reveals his bitter hatred for this particular jew. It spoils the whole thing for him, and as long as Mordecai is there to ignore him he can never enjoy this great honor which has fallen upon him.

It seems strange that Haman has no solution to his problem and that his wife—who was certainly a desperately wicked woman also—and his friends have to suggest a remedy for him. But so it is. The plan sounded good to Haman immediately and he went out to have the gallows built. His plan was to go to Ahasuerus the next morning to ask permission of the king to do this thing. It was not so to be. God planned all these things and Haman's guilt is exposed before he can make this request. This our next lesson reveals to us.

Points For Discussion:

1. Haman's indignation. What does his indignation show us concerning Haman? What does it show us about the depraved heart of man? You would think that since he had all this glory the deeds of one man would not infuriate him so much. Does his indignation show us that he had a very haughty nature and that he loved the esteem of men above anything else? Would it have been different with Haman if he had been born with a different nature, for example with an "explosive" nature? People sometimes say that if you just say everything that is in your heart it will make you feel better and you can stand the abuse of others much more easily. Is that a Scriptural teaching? Did Haman do right by never speaking to Mordecai about his stubborn refusal to recognize him?

2. The plot to kill Mordecai. Why is murder always an evidence of lack of love? What is at the bottom of every act of murder, that is, what does the murderer always try to do by his deed? How does murder become a violation of the first table of the Law? Against which one of the first four commandments is it especially a sin as well as against the sixth? But Mordecai is sinning against the king's laws too. Was the plot to kill Mordecai then really murder? Does the state commit murder when it punishes by death? Haman will go to ask the king, in what way then can this be called murder that he has Mordecai put to death?

NOTE: — At the request of the Board we went slowly in these outlines and took short passages for each lesson. The Board having received several complaints that this does not give some societies sufficient material, we will change our policy and provide more material by taking longer passages. It was at first the plan of the Board to have this book last us the entire season. Another book will now, of course, have to be added after this one.—J. A. H.
This Dark Hour.

When these lines reach you it will have become more certain what the outcome will be about Korea. It seems rather sure to me that we are facing a third world war, with Russia and China and very likely more of the Asiatic peoples as our enemies instead of our allies which they were presumably in the last war.

The latest news that I have received is that they are preparing to evacuate a part of our army and that they are also preparing to defend Seoul and the 38th parallel. Truman and Atlee have conferred and their word is that there will be no appeasement but opportunity has been given for Red China to negotiate.

From the looks of things it seems to me that our power is not sufficient at this time to force the Chinese to negotiate terms which will retain even a semblance of our original purpose to fight in Korea. When nations and peoples have gathered so much strength and courage to attack, there lies behind that a planned purpose and it is humanly impossible to stem that tide of war.

The future is dark. Especially is it dark if we notice the comments of commentators and leaders. One narrator remarks that it is the darkest hour in our history. That we have suffered the worst military defeat in our history. General Marshall warns that we must prepare for a life of tension, and that the situation now is much more serious than in the early days of World War II.

It may be that the future is darker than these leaders dare to tell us.

The Asiatic situation has always been a dark problem to my mind. Some leaders have and still believe that our gravest danger lies in Europe. Such is the concern also of the European nations who seek assurance that our strength will not be spent in the Pacific so that they will be subject to the immediate danger of Russia.

Russian Domination.

However, it seems to me, even when and if we are to make the European nations strong allies, we still face the peoples of Asia. This may be postponed for a time through appeasement or some kind of diplomacy, but never again will it be possible to sail into the harbors of China and Asia and dictate terms to them.

The details of the future are not known to us. The general pattern is from the Bible. We know there shall be rumor of war. We know there shall be a final
war in which shall be engaged the east and west powers which seem to be shaping themselves now into battle alignment. We know too that there shall be more of a one world power than now. Only time will reveal to us whether we must experience this world power with its artificial peace and power without much war between nations, except for a few skirmishes, or whether we are still to witness another total war before that world peace.

Somewhere in this fast moving scene in which we shall soon witness the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ on the clouds of heaven, we must experience a peculiar twist in history. There shall be a turning upon the servants of God in most bitter hatred, as the cause of all the evil.

In view of these things I am very hesitant to speak about the future with certainty.

It is sure that the dark hour for the Christian is not the same dark hour of the world. In all these hours there is the purpose of the Author and Finisher of our faith to cause our faith to shine forth to His praise.

In this hour therefore this much is clearly evident: we must pray for the church, for the peace of Jerusalem. The church must have the peace in Christ, the knowledge of its righteousness to stand firm while the judgments of God are being poured out upon the earth, to stand firm in the knowledge that these are not judgments upon the church, but are signs of its deliverance. In this peace of heart and mind we have a hiding place until these calamities be past.

---

**MERCY . . . .**

God's mercy, too, is His infinite goodness. But mercy considers this goodness of God from the viewpoint that He is the infinitely blessed One. With God there is life and light, fulness of joy and gladness; there are pleasures forevermore at His right hand. And even as He is blessed in Himself, and that, too, as the infinitely perfect One, so He is the sole Fount of all blessing, of all life and joy and delight, for all His creatures. For the will to glorify Himself implies that He purposes to reveal Himself as the eternally blessed God. That God is merciful, therefore, signifies the will and desire in God to make the creature share in His own divine blessedness. If, therefore, that creature is in depths of misery, the mercy of God becomes revealed in the divine act of deliverance. In relation to the creature, therefore, the mercy of God is that divine virtue according to which He delivers the creature from all misery and fills him with life and joy.

—Rev. Herman Hoeksema “In The Midst Of Death”.
Concerning:
Temperance-Preaching.

Two ministers are sitting together on a fine winter afternoon in the parsonage of a church in a mid-western town. They are ministers of two different church-denominations. The one pastor is making a call at the home of the other. At several occasions these two men had met during the past year. Not only had they met on the street at the Post Office of the little town, but they had met at other occasions, such as the meeting of the parents interested in giving their children a Christian training. They would often discuss the problems of Christian living, the life of faith, and not seldomly this would lead them into the fundamental questions of Reformed Theology.

What we wished to state is that these two ministers are no strangers.

But what has brought them together; what caused the one of them to pay a call at the home of the other?

Briefly stated, the reason for this call is still: just the week before a "field-man", or "contact-man" presenting himself as representing the "Church of Christ" had paid a call to each of the ministers of the five churches in that town. He sought to induce all the ministers of these various churches to sponsor a meeting where a popular speaker, "preacher" if you will, would inform the gathering of the terrible evil and growing menace of the sale and use of intoxicating liquors, and of all of its attending evils for the individual, the family and the community.

And this "field-man", although he had not met with complete success, had nevertheless met with quite a good deal of success. He had been promised such an evening, and this meeting was being announced in the local papers as sponsored by the various churches.

There was, however, one minister, who definitely was opposed to such a gathering and had raised his voice against this gathering. It is this minister that we find on the aforementioned winter afternoon in the home of the very preacher in whose church this public gathering would be held.

As might be expected, the conversation between these two ministers is relative to the correctness of sponsoring, yes, even of attending such a meeting; the rightness of asking such a speaker to come and inform the meeting was very seriously challenged by the dissenting pastor. For it stands to reason that the dissenting pastor questioned whether it was right in the light of the Word of God and the nature of the office of the Shepherd of Christ's sheep to have a stranger thus come to inform the people.
of God of the awful sin of the use of strong liquor; to inform the people that their God-given duty would be to be “teetotalers”, that is, those who would make it a point never to drink a drop of any kind of intoxicating liquors, yea, even to institute the use of grape juice at the Lord’s table instead of wine.

Such was the nature of the conversation at this winter afternoon meeting at the parsonage of this mid-western town between these two ministers.

The minister, who advocated “temperance-preaching” we shall call Rev. Fundamentalist. He indeed subscribes to the cardinal points of doctrine such as: creation, the fall, the Virgin-conception, vicarious atonement, the return of Christ. However, in his life-and-world-view he is not Reformed-Calvinistic. And the lack of this latter is very detrimental. On the other hand, the minister, who advocates that we must not have “temperance-preaching”, we shall call Rev. Reformed-Calvinist. For the sake of brevity we shall call them Rev. F., and Rev. Ref. C., respectively.

The Rev. F. thinks that it simply is wonderful to have such a “temperance-preacher” to speak. Such an evening is merely beneficial to the people of the various churches “represented”, but, added to this, it is doing the “interested public” a good turn by enlightening them as to the evils of intoxicating drinks. It is really killing two birds with one stone.

Besides this, the Rev. F. thinks it may be a way to gain “others” for Christ. If the matter is only one of “social reforming” at least that is more christian than drunkenness. Surely “the church” is interested in that sort of thing too. Must not the church set its stamp upon the life of the community? And, who knows but what the cessation of the use of intoxicating liquors, may be the “stepping stone” to gain men and women for Christ.

According to Rev. F. this last point is not the least important. For is not, thus Rev. F., salvation in Christ also salvation from being a slave to intoxicating liquor and all manner of drunkenness?

In fact, Rev. F. strongly condemns the stand of Rev. Reformed-Calvinist, in that he is opposed to having this temperance-preacher in his church. He finds it utterly strange and really unaccountable before God.

But the Rev. Reformed-Calvinist simply shakes his head in deep earnestness and in rock-bottom conviction. He simply cannot see eye to eye with Rev. Fundamentalist in whose home he is now seated. And he has rather clearly defined reasons—reasons taken from the Holy Scriptures themselves.

In the first place, he insists that he as yet knows next to nothing of this “great, success-universally acclaimed preacher”. And that is surely necessary. No business firm would simply thus hire a man without a personal interview and without references of commendation from trustworthy organizations. But what does Rev. Fundamentalist and Rev. Reformed-Calvinist know of this man? They know next to nothing concerning the fundamental position of this man as
to the Christ of the Scriptures. The only man that has been contacted is the “field-man” and he knew next to nothing about the issues involved when interrogated. Now one may not be too concerned about the well-being of the “general-public”, but Rev. Ref. C., feels that the truth remains that no shepherd of Christ’s sheep will let a man of such unknown quantity, who might be a wolf in sheep’s clothing, at the sheep.

Then too the Rev. Ref. C. insists that there are but two possibilities. And that on either count he will not have this particular “preacher” address the sheep entrusted to his care. The first is that the “temperance” taught by this globe-trotting “preacher” is not at all that of the Scriptures. In this case he may not address the flock of Christ. And this flock must not be sacrificed on the altar of the “public-benefit”. The other is that this speaker indeed preaches the temperance of Scripture, but then it is not necessary for him to speak. His flock receives this preaching from him as their God-sent preacher. He will tell them the truth as it is in Jesus.

Rev. Reformed Calvinist is against this man’s speaking in either case.

The Rev. Reformed-Calvinist has also basic reasons against the so-called “temperance-preaching”. Also these objections he brings to the attention of Rev. Fundamentalist.

These reasons we shall report to you in next month’s instalment.

--- 1951 ---

At Thy feet, our God and Father,
Who has blest us all our days,
We with grateful hearts would gather,
To begin the year with praise:
Praise for light so brightly shining
On our steps from hea’nm above;
Praise for mercies daily twining
Round us golden cords of love.

Jesus, for Thy love most tender,
On the cross for sinners shown,
We would praise Thee and surrender
All our hearts to be Thine own:
With so blest a Friend provided,
We upon our way would go,
Sure of being safely guided,
Guarded well from ev’ry foe.

Ev’ry day will be the brighter
When Thy gracious face we see;
Ev’ry burden will be lighter
When we know it comes from Thee.
Spread Thy love’s broad banner o’er us,
Give us strength to serve and wait,
Till the glory breaks before us
Through the city’s open gate.

—J. D. Burns.

Once in Persia reigned a king
Who upon his signet ring
Graved a maxim true and wise,
Which if held before the eyes
Gave him counsel at a glance
Fit for every change and chance.
Solemn words, and these are they:
“Even this shall pass away.”

—Tilton, “The King’s Ring”.

— 23 —
Dear Editor of the Question Box Department:

I would like to ask you a few things about that beautiful and rich passage of Scripture, namely, John 10, where our Lord appears under the figure of The Good Shepherd. To what do you understand the "sheepfold" of verse 1 to refer? If that is understood to be "the Kingdom of Heaven", how must we explain that "thieves and robbers climb in some other way than the door" (vs. 1)? And also the statement that Christ "leadeth His own sheep out" (vs. 3). And then, vs. 4: where does Christ lead these sheep? Will you give an explanation that answers these questions?

REPLY:

Rightly does my correspondent characterize John 10 as a Scripture passage beautiful and rich in meaning. For it is that. Gladly therefore do I address myself to the task of answering his questions on this passage by explaining it, that is, the part on which the questions have bearing. This part (vss 1-6) reads:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the sheep herd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And the stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."

A right understanding of this parable can be had only if it be viewed in connection with the reaction of the Pharisees to the preceding miracle. Jesus had restored to sight a man that was born blind. It was one of those many works that bore witness of Jesus, constituted the indisputable evidence that, despite his lack of form and comeliness—He was born in a stable, Joseph his supposed father, was a poor carpenter. His hometown was the despised Nazareth—he was nevertheless the Christ, the Son of God in the flesh, the Lamb of God who by His suffering and death on the cross taketh away the sin of the world, and by reason thereof is the sanctification, justification, and redemption of His people. Still the unbelieving Jews insisted to the end that He was holding them in suspense by not telling them whether He was the Christ (vs. 24 of chap. 10). Jesus’ reply was that He told them by the works that He did in the Father’s name—works bearing witness of Him—but that they believed not because they were not of His sheep (10:25). These unbelievers included also many and per-
naps most of the leaders in Israel—the Scribes and the Pharisees and the priests. They were offended by the miracle that had just been performed; and in their fierce antagonism to the person of Christ they excommunicated out of the church the man whom Christ had restored to sight. Thereby they exposed themselves for what they were—false shepherds in the sheepfold of Christ.

It was in reply to the wicked reaction of Scribes and Pharisees that Christ spake the parable with which we are now occupied.

The sheepfold was an uncovered space surrounded by a low wall and affording protection to the flock at night. Symbolized is the church as an organized institution—the theocracy in the Old and every local congregation in the New Dispensation—as including both the carnal and the spiritual seed; the false sheep (the goats rather, Matthew 25:32) and Christ's own sheep. The door is: 1) the true Gospel of Christ; 2) faith in the Gospel; 3) the Christ set forth by the Gospel.

Characteristic of the false pastors and teachers through the ages is that they do not believe in Christ—the door—and by Him come to the Father. Accordingly, they do not enter the fold by the door; that is, enter upon their office by faith in Christ and His Gospel and as vowing to proclaim it in all its purity. Being heretics at heart and aiming to fleece the flock of God, they climb up some other way in order to get over the wall and over the hedge. Their climbing denotes the method by which they gain the office and entrench themselves in places of power and influence in the church. They ingratiate themselves with the carnal seed by their corruptions of the Gospel. They tickle the itching ears of this seed by their fables. It is, of course, in the apostate communion of churches, where the true sheep form but an insignificant minority, that the attempts of the false pastor's to climb over the wall into the fold meets with easiest success. Christ calls them thieves and robbers, who come to steal, kill, and destroy.

Characteristic of the shepherd of the flock is that he enters in by the door. He cometh to the Father by Christ. Accordingly, he enters upon the office of pastor and teacher by faith in Christ's Gospel and as vowing with his mouth and all his heart to proclaim it. This shepherd is Christ and secondarily the true prophets by whose agency He proclaims His Gospel through the ages. He only has a shepherd's heart and will prove Himself a shepherd. "To him the porter openeth". The porter watches in the night-time within the fold, and in the morning thrust aside the bolt for the shepherd when he announces himself. Some interpret it as referring to God, or to the Holy Spirit. But it is better to take it simply as completing the picture of the lawful entering in.

"The sheep hear the voice of the flock," mark you, "the sheep" in contradistinction to the carnal seed. Reference is to God's elect and regenerated people. They hear the voice of the Shepherd with the ear of redeeming faith. What they hear
is the true Gospel as proclaimed through the ages by the faithful shepherds and as preached by Christ in the hearts of His people, the Shepherd of the flock. “He calleth His own sheep by name.” They have a name collectively such as “believer, pure of heart, broken of heart, weary and heavy laden, peacemaker.” Besides, each individual sheep receives a “white stone, and in the stone a new name written,” expressive of its own gift and function as a member of the flock of God—“and which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it”. And to these names the sheep collectively and individually joyfully respond. For they are Christ’s own sheep given him of the Father before the foundation of the world. “And he leadeth them out,” that is, His own sheep in contradistinction to the others, who know not His voice because they are not of His sheep. “And when he putteth forth his own sheep. . .” “Putteth forth”—Greek ekballein to lead one forth or away somewhere with a force which he cannot resist. Christ puts forth His sheep. He calls them by His Spirit and His Word irresistibly.

(The other meaning of “ekballein”—to cast out; to drive out by force—is not in harmony with the rest of the features of the parable).

Christ puts forth His sheep 1) out of the Old Testament theocracy—the reproved Jerusalem that killeth the prophets and crucified the Christ; 2) in general, out of the false church of all ages. And He goeth before His sheep, drawing them to Himself by the power of His cross. And the result is that they follow Him into the green pastures of His Word onward and upward to their everlasting destiny—the house of the Father. For they know His voice, being as they are, His sheep.

“But a stranger”—the false pastors—“they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of the strangers,” meaning that they hate their voice, their corruptions of the Gospel, their fictions and fables. The sheep—Christ’s own sheep—raise their own voice in protest against the heresies of the false pastors; and if that gets them no results, they forsake them—the strangers and their ministry and choose them consecrated pastors. So behave Christ’s own sheep.

Herewith, I believe, I have answered all my correspondent’s questions on this passage.

The slave who flies from his master is a runaway; the law is master and he who break the law is a runaway. Vexation, anger and fear, mean refusal of something, past, present, or to come, ordained by Him who rules all things, who allots to every man what is fit. He then who fears or is grieved or is angry is a runaway.

—Marcus Aurelius.
because she takes evolution for granted in all of her movies. Furthermore she makes fun of all of God's ministers, people, and church activities. Herbert J. Miles in his book "Movies and Morals", tells us that out of 100 pictures he reviewed, only 21 pictures made reference to Christianity. Out of this number 19 pictures made light of right, virtue, and integrity; and 7 pictures ridiculed Christianity. One picture represented the unpatriotic people of a community as faithful in church attendance and another represented the forces of righteousness in a community as being stupid, ignorant people, who foolishly fell for the shrewd schemes of the forces of wickedness. Ministers, missionaries, elders, and fools. Another picture contained the following conversation: "Where do you look for a guy who doesn't drink, gamble, or chase around with women?" Answer: "In the funny papers."

Hollywood further mocks God by dramatizing Bible narratives in her own wicked way. The same sordid love affairs have to be there and the actors who impersonate the Bible characters live lives of gross sin while filming the picture. While playing the saint they live and act like the devil. This can be seen by looking at some of the titles of pictures such as: Angels with Dirty Faces; The Devil is a Sissy; Charming Sin; Cain and Mabel; Half a Sinner; Heaven Can Wait; etc. Furthermore Christian martyrdom is made a mockery, belief in a Supreme
Being is made into a burlesque and Jesus Christ, our adorable Saviour, is used as a peg on which to hang a dirty joke. (Questionable Amusements by F. P. Wood, p. 29). The religious teachings of one picture are noteworthy. "The picture opened with a scene in which an old man had just died; he had entered the outer office of hell and was applying for admittance. The devil decided to review his life before admitting him. The picture then told the story of his life from birth to old age. After his long life of dissipation and extreme wickedness, the picture ended with the devil saying, "Hell cannot use men like you." The devil then took the old reprobate to the elevator and sent him up to heaven." (Movies and Morals, p. 54). In other words the picture teaches that there is no such thing as hell and that all men, no matter how wicked they may be, go to heaven.

Hollywood further transgresses the first table of the Law by deliberately desecrating the Sabbath. Her devilish greed for money requires that her theaters shall do business as usual on Sunday as well as on the other six days of the week.

Hollywood changes the admonition of Paul in Ephesians 6:1-4 to read like this, "Parents obey your children . . . and ye children provoke your fathers to wrath." In many pictures children are presented as tough, acting like adults, and disrespectful to parents and older people. Disciplining of children, according to Hollywood, is old fashioned and is therefore never portrayed in the movies.

The same is true with respect to government officials. The police are presented as fools, and in many cases were represented as inexperienced, ignorant, and incapable. In many pictures the hero, heroine, or both, solved the case for the police. A survey also shows that movies depict traffic rules broken, contempt of court, the breaking of national and international immigration laws, gambling in violation of city laws, breaking of marriage laws, disrespect for government officials, and many other crimes. The offender, however is seldom brought to justice and usually "gets away with it."

Hollywood not only shows crime, but teaches that crime pays. A scientific investigation of the movies showed that "movie criminals are so attractive that they tend to make crime alluring and criminality distinguished." The above quotation is made by Henry James Foreman in his well written book, "Our Movie Made Children." This book presents the results of a nation-wide four year research by a group of scientists, educators, and psychologists especially selected for the task of investigating into every phase of the movies. Out of 115 pictures, Mr. Foreman reports that there were 54 murders portrayed, 21 kidnappings, and numerous other crimes; some 43 crimes are attempted. This makes a grand total of 449 crimes committed in 115 pictures! This does not include the numerous war pictures and the bitter words of hatred, strife, and envy that are uttered. The above investigation shows that only one out of every five criminals are depicted as being punished by law.
The movies also teach the public how to make big money, not by doing an honest day's work, nor by thrift, but by gambling, stealing, cheating, etc. Gambling in some form or another is displayed in most of the movies as a normal part of human life. The gambler in the movies mostly always wins. Hollywood instructs its patrons in all the techniques of robbery and crime. How to open a safe by the "feel" of the dial; how to enter a store by means of a crowbar; how to cut burglar alarm wires in advance of a crime; how to break glass noiselessly by means of flypaper; the use of a glasscutter; sudden approach and quick get-away; use of a master key; how to cross wires in an automobile to do away with the necessity of a key, train robbery; pick pockets; the use of gloves not to leave fingerprints; how to establish alibies, and how to use weapons such as pistols, shotguns, machine guns, blackjacks, brass knuckles, bombs, etc., are only a few of the many things that are taught by Hollywood.

Concerning marriage and courtship Hollywood advises "love at first sight" and a courtship of not longer than one week. She also teaches concerning marriage that happiness can be had only when there is freedom for both husband and wife to have unrestricted social relationship with others and that separation and divorce are not to be feared. The thing that Adam and Eve were ashamed of (Gen. 3:7-10) is glorified and is presented as beautiful. Dancing, particularly the kind that excites the sexual passions, is shown in most of the pictures as an desirable art(?). Sexual relations outside of holy wedlock are presented as being entirely proper. All Hollywood films contain smutty jokes, suggestive talk, hugging and kissing scenes, cursing and swearing. Therefore there is no such thing as a "good" movie.

Lying and dishonesty are portrayed by Hollywood as a noble virtue. Most of the pictures portray lies by the bucketful. In one picture a character said, "Tell the truth," and in an undertone said, "which I don't do." In another picture someone mentioned the word "truth". A leading female character said, "Truth—oh that old thing." (Movies and Morals, p. 25).

That Hollywood teaches covetousness can be easily summarized by the following confession of a sixteen year old boy. "When I see movies that show snappy clothes and wealth, I do get dissatisfied. I want these things also. I want to have beautiful clothes, automobiles, and plenty of other luxuries that they have." (Hell Over Hollywood, p. 31).

Drinking and drunkenness is shown in nearly all the movies. Hollywood considers it bad manners not to drink. The liquor, displayed by Hollywood, is generally the kind that contains the higher percentages of alcohol. The admonition of Solomon in Prov. 23:29-35 is considered by Hollywood as out of date and as the height of folly. Hollywood to my mind is a perfect example of the "strange woman" of Proverbs 7.

Although Hollywood and the false modernistic church may act as if Romans 1, Ps. 73:18-20; Ps. 7:11, and other like
passages of Holy Writ were never recorded in the Bible; nevertheless they are still in the Bible. God's word shall surely stand. In my next and last installment on this subject I will hope to prove that God IS angry with the wicked every day, and that He DOES visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children of the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him.

---

God give us men. A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands!
Men whom the lust of office does not kill,
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy,
Men who possess opinions and a will.
Men who love honor, men who cannot lie.

—J. G. Holland.

THE ALCOVE

LOVE — NOT FELLOWSHIP . . .

The Lord admonishes His people that they shall love their enemies. Now, love is not a sentimental feeling or emotion or affection. It is according to Scripture, the bond of perfectness. It is therefore, the bond between two parties or persons that are ethically perfect, that seek each other and find delight in each other because of their ethical perfection, and that, in the sphere of ethical perfection seek each other's good. It is in this true sense that God is love. However, it stands to reason that in the case of loving our enemies, that despitefully use us, curse us and persecute us, love must needs be onesided. There cannot be a bond of fellowship between the wicked and the perfect in Christ. To love our enemy, therefore, is not to flatter him, to have fellowship with him, to play games with him and to speak sweetly to him; but rather to rebuke him, to demand that he leave his wicked way and thus to bless him and to pray for him. It is to bestow good things upon him with the demand of true love that he leave his wicked way, walk in the light and thus have fellowship with us. If he heed our love, which will be the case if he be of God's elect and receive grace, he will turn from darkness into light and our love assumes the nature of a bond of perfectness. If he despises our love our very act of love will be to his greater damnation. But the cursing and persecution of the wicked may never tempt the child of God to live and act from the principle of hatred, to reward even for evil, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Title: DAY AFTER TOMORROW
Author: G. FRANKLIN ALLEE
Publisher: ZONDERVAN PUBLISHING CO.

Stanley Ross Scott was restless and never satisfied. From his mother he inherited a vein of materialism that caused him to grasp for the reality of power and influence and from his father he received the qualities of a dreamer to whom the future goals beckoned with such promise that goals already attained gave no satisfaction. He graduated from high school to find a university education urging him on. Each new promotion in his life as a newspaper-man made him eager for another.

For Stanley, his conscience was his guide, and he rigidly adhered to its law even in the face of personal danger and loss. He used his career as a fight against injustice, lawlessness, dirty politics and crime. The dangers, narrow escapes, losses and griefs that came to him as a result only spurred him on in the fight.

In the face of rising influence, greater power, and continuing success, Stanley remained a lonely, heartsick, unsatisfied man until, through the influence of Christian friends and the love of a Christian girl, he was led to accept Christ as his Saviour. This is the keynote of the author's philosophy and our Beacon Lighters will realize immediately that this book does not follow our Reformed conception of the truth. Because the Arminian viewpoint is not subtly hidden, but is evident in all its error, I feel that this book is not dangerous in the hands of our young people. However, the author's seemingly commendable picture of Faye Ann's death as a sacrifice of love for Stanley must be sharply criticized. What is in reality sinful and cowardly must not be presented as something noble and sweet even for the sake of the romantic.

The book is interesting and well-written but its value from a Christian point of view is questionable.

* * * * *

Title: THE LIGHT IN MY WINDOW
Author: FRANCENA H. ARNOLD
Publisher: ZONDERVAN PUBLISHING CO.

It was a frustrated and unhappy Hope Thompson, whose introverted personality was warped with a strange complex, that found her way to the Henderson Institute to apply for a job, which required that
she was a Christian and was "anyone who can boil an egg." There she met the Kings, and Billy, and Dr. Ben, consecrated Christians whose lives were dedicated to reclaiming souls from the slum district of Sherman Street. From them she learned what it meant to be not just a Christian, but a consecrated one.

Stan Dykstra entered the circle of workers at the Institute, too, and also learned what being a real Christian meant. Through her association with these people Hope came to face her complex squarely and realized how wrong her ideas had been. She learned to know true happiness in fulfilled desires as well as in peace of heart.

This idealistic story lacks realism, but it is interesting and instructive, nevertheless. Its emphasis on consecration to the Lord and His service even in every day life is commendable and inspirational. However, the error so prevalent in the Christian world of today—that of too much emphasis on Man's acceptance of Jesus the Saviour, thus minimizing, if not denying the work of God Himself—is woven into the story, thus detracting from its desirability as a book for our young people.

Beacon Lights is a publication of Protestant Reformed young people, an expression of their thoughts. Therefore in order that other people may become aware of what we are thinking, we thought it advisable to send Beacon Lights to the libraries of Christian High Schools and Colleges throughout the country.

We place this notice so that we may let you know what is happening to your magazine, and because we thought you might like to become actively engaged in the support of this project. If you would like to assume the responsibility for one or more subscriptions, send the subscription price to the Beacon Lights Public Relations Committee, c/o John Hofman, 747 Fuller Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. You may designate the school to which you would like to have Beacon Lights sent or you may leave it to the discretion of the Committee.