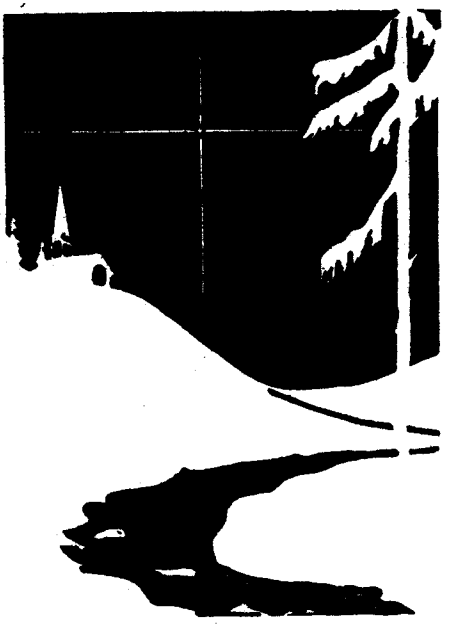
ANOTHER YEAR HAS DAWNED
DEAR FATHER, LET IT BE,
IN WORKING AND IN WAITING,
ANOTHER YEAR WITH THEE;

ANOTHER YEAR OF LEANING
UPON THY LOVING BREAST,
ANOTHER YEAR OF TRUSTING,
OF QUIET HAPPY REST



THE JANUARY ISSUE FOR 1953

God can do nothing else. Shall we look

by nature, we could not endure all our troubles. Therefore as the sons of God,

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BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

VOL. XIII JANUARY—1953 No.4

Hitherto Hath the Lord Helped Us

M. KOERNER

Grand Rapids, Michigan

HITHERTO HATH the Lord helped us. That was the proclamation of Samuel, in the seventh chapter and the twelfth verse of his first book, after the Philistines had been subdued by Israel. And this also was the shout of the whole congregation and assembly of Israel, because the Lord had delivered them from their enemies. Samuel had built an altar and sacrificed unto the Lord. There, upon that stone the people worshipped their God, and praised Him for His deliverance of them. Samuel named that stone Ebenezer; the stone of help. Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. That meant that not only had the Lord fought for them against the Philistines now. The people were not only praising the Lord their God for their present victory, but also because the Lord had been with them in the past. Hitherto, from the days of our fathers until now, hath the Lord helped us. And that also meant that they were confident that the Lord would also be with them in the future. Just what then, does all this mean for us, as the people of God, as we approach another new year. Can we also take this same praise of the God of our salvation upon **our** lips? Can we, and do we? By the grace of God, a child of God can do nothing else. Shall we look back for a few moments, across the year that has just gone by. Can we really say that the Lord has helped us? We should be able to say it, with the deepest conviction, from the bottom of our hearts. Oh, it may not have looked that way many times. Things didn't go the way we expected them to. Probably we had sickness in the family. Maybe even death. We had troubles, all kinds of them. Our young men are torn away from us, and sent to the battlefield to be cannon fodder, in order that the lusts and greed of the nations might be satisfied. Shall we still say, the Lord has helped us? Hitherto? How can we say it in the background of all our troubles and all our woes? By the grace of our blessed Lord we can say it. Yes, we can say it. For we remember, we realize, that all these things were sent upon us by the **Lord.** Praise be to His name. For in and through it all, He has been and is preparing us for our eternal home.

But why must we say, even of all this, hitherto hath the Lord helped us. Oh, we say it because we realize, by the grace of God, that had the Lord not been with us, had He not helped us, then we would surely have given up in despair. For we realize that, as we are by nature, we could not endure all our troubles. Therefore as the sons of God,

we turn to the **Lord** and we say: **Hitherto** hath the **Lord** helped us.

But can we say this only of all that comes to pass on this earth, or do we also look upon a higher plane? We do indeed, by the grace of God. Who really is our Ebenezer? Who is our Rock of Help? Truly that rock is Christ Jesus. Therefore, we do not despair, because our help is in Christ. In him is all our hope, and joy and bliss. In Him is our very life. In Him we live and move and have our being.

Yes, it was this very Christ Who was also Israel's only help in their victory over the Philistines in I Samuel 7:12. There Samuel was really holding this very Christ before the people as being their only help. That Christ also went before the people of Israel in the wilderness, and He was the rock from which they drank. Even as the Apostle Paul writes in I Cor. 10:4, "For they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ."

Thus we take this confession upon our lips. Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. Thus we also acknowledge that God is good, and that He has fulfilled all His promises. And we realize that "There is therefore now no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus." Rom. 8:1. There is no condemnation now, not only, but there never was any condemnation and there never will be any condemnation for us who are in Christ Jesus our Lord. Yes. Hitherto! hath the Lord helped us. That is our confession, and that is our praise unto God.

Yes, but what shall we say of the year that lies ahead? Until now we have spoken of the year that has gone by. What does God have in store for us in the future? That of course we do not know. Only God knows exactly what He will bring to pass. But this we do know, that we shall continue to suffer as long as we are in this present life. But we suffer for Christ's sake. We shall suffer for the sake of the truth. The world and also those who call themselves church shall continue to revile us, and persecute us and laugh us to scorn. But the **Lord** will help us even as He has helped us in the past. And we know that our salvation is sure, because Christ has accomplished it over 1900 years ago. Therefore, we praise Him and give Him all the glory. For He was not only our help in ages past, but He will continue to be our help in all the ages to come. Christ Who is our Rock of Help, our Stone of Help. Ebenezer. Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

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EDITORIALS

THE WOMAN'S SPHERE

Our recent national elections have brought to the fore the perennial question of woman's suffrage, or more particularly whether the christian woman's calling is to vote.

There seems to be quite some disagreement on this point. It might, therefore, be interesting and instructive to listen in on a discussion Mary and Martha are having on this very question: Martha: "I heard recently, Mary, that you don't vote because you believe it is not a christian woman's calling to vote and I, being a much younger wo- n than you are, thought I'd ask you out it."

Mary: "Yes, Martha, that's true, I don't vote because I believe it's contrary to Scripture. I'm glad you asked me about it because it is alarming how many women in our own churches neglect or fail to see the scriptural place of the woman."

Martha: "I'll admit I don't see the principle and I have heard or read very little on these matters. Don't you think matters such as these, affecting our practical godliness, receive very little emphasis in the preaching and writing of most of our ministers?"

Mary: "Yes, the fact that this matter of the woman's proper sphere is so widely misunderstood is proof in itself. Our younger women especially, I presume, receive very little help in regard to some of these questions?"

Martha: "Well I voted because I think is our duty to use the privilege we ve received in this country."

Mary: "I don't believe you have used the proper Christian starting-point to arrive at your view. A Christian should always subject all his views and actions to the word of God before coming to a conclusion or a positive course of action. Our desire should be to know the will of the Lord in order that whatever we do may be pleasing in His sight. The government may impose duties and grant "privileges" to its citizens with which we cannot comply, or of which we cannot take "advantage".

Martha: "Oh, I know that the government isn't always a reliable guide for our Christian conduct, but in this case I don't see that a women's voting is contrary to God's will. I voted favoring clean government and an end to corruption and communism in high places. It may even be that very important questions affecting us as Christians may some day come up. Then we will certainly be happy that we may vote."

Mary: "Your reasoning reminds me of the Roman Catholic theory, that the end justifies the means, or as Scripture has it, to do evil that good may result. It is established by Scripture that it is not a woman's place to vote, it surely wouldn't do to recommend that she vote nevertheless, because the occasion demands it, or the seriousness of the question to be voted upon warrant it. God expects our obedience and He assured us that the results are safely left to Him."

Martha: "I somewhat see your point, Mary, and I assure you I don't want to do anything of which God disapproves."

Mary: "I'm sure you don't and that's why I want to make plain to you that

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Roger Faber .....Associate Editor
Dwight Monsma .....Business Manager
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All material for publication should be addressed to Mr. SIDNEY DE YOUNG, 1001 Franklin St., S. E., GRAND RAPIDS 7, MICHIGAN.

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God has decreed a definite sphere for the man and a definite one for the women, and that the one is not to trespass on the sphere of the other. By this I don't mean that the man is superior to the women but that each has his God-given sphere, the man having been created the head and the woman his help-meet."

Martha: "Do you, then, think that by voting a woman steps outside of her own sphere and trespasses on that which God assigned to the man?"

Mary: "Yes, when God created man to be the head and women to be his help-meet, it implies that he is to rule and he is to speak with the authoritative voice, representing the woman and his own family. Gen. 2:24, speaking of man and woman's relationship says that they shall be one flesh and I Cor. 11:3 says that the head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the m and the head of Christ is God. Eph. 5:22-24 says: "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the Church; and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Now Scripture presents and pictures it thus —Christ is the head of His church and the church is his body. They are one. Christ only rules and speaks authoritatively. The church does not speak authoritatively (as Rome falsely teaches) but only echoes and re-echoes what Christ her head says. Now in marriage the man and the woman are the beautiful type of Christ and His body—the church. They are one flesh just as Christ and His body are one. Just as Christ only speaks with authority, so the man speaks with authority and the woman is

Continued on page 7

CHRISTIAN LIVING

REV. P. VIS
Manhattan, Montana

NEAR TO GOD

ANOTHER YEAR has come and gone, and again we stand on the threshold of a new year. Another year with all its joy and sorrow belongs to the irrevocable past, and again a new year with its unknown way stretches out before us. For just what awaits us on the way that lies ahead we do not know. That is known to God alone and will be revealed to us only as God unfolds His eternal counsel.

True, in general we know that the coming year will be no different than the year that has gone by, for also in the year to come, some will be born, others will die; some will profit, others will lose; some will be glad, while others are sad. So it has been always and so it will remain unto the end of time. Therefore, in a sense, there is nothing new under the sun and it is true as Solomon said: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

But even though life in general is much the same from year to year, yet in detail we do not know what awaits us, for the particulars of our way have not been revealed to us. Therefore it is but natural, as we enter a new year, that countless questions arise, questions in regard to ourselves and our loved ones, our parents and friends, our church and nation and the world in general. To all of which we can give only the answer: We do not know.

And therefore, as we might expect, it is specially at this time of the year that the hearts of men are filled with eager anticipation and that people in general do a lot of "hoping" and "wishing". They realize that the year that has passed was a failure and disappointment. Their resolutions were not kept, their goal was not attained and their hopes were not realized. With joy therefore they bid farewell to the old year and with gladness they welcome the new. And with fresh courage and renewed zeal, they begin the new year, in the hope and expectation, that the new year will bring them a joy and happiness which the old could not afford. And in that hope, they wish for themselves and one another, health and prosperity, joy and peace, and they greet one another with "A Happy New Year", with which they mean a year filled with the "best" and crowned with all the pleasant and sweet things of life. According to them, the year can be a happy one, only then, when man's way is one of roses and the skies are always blue.

And yet, friends, I am sure that if those things must make us happy then we shall always be unhappy. If health, peace and prosperity must be the source of our joy, then true joy and happiness will never be a blessed reality.

That such is indeed the case, is only the teaching of God's Word but also a matter of experience. It is not so many years ago, that we had, what we called a depression. At that time many hearts were heavy and all looked forward to a return of prosperity when again there would be plenty for all. Unto that end, prayer meetings were held and we clamoured for improved condi-

tions and an easier way, for then we would be happy, so we thought.

Today, however, God has given us that much-desired prosperity, even to such an extent that, with the exception of a few, all live in luxury. But still we are not satisfied. For though we receive the prosperity for which we clamoured, God also gave us war and the atomic bomb. Underneath the pretty rose hid an ugly thorn. Besides, sickness and disease still run rampant, there is trouble and unrest at every hand and death still lurks at every corner. And therefore, today as in the past, people are restless, hearts are burdened and man still looks forward to better days. In fact, in spite of our so-called prosperity, today as never before, men's hearts fail them for fear and the world is filled with anxiety and unrest instead of happiness and peace.

Thus we experience, on the one hand, that happiness and contentment are not to be found in things, that as long as we seek our joy in things seen, our dreams will never be realized and our hopes will always be crushed. And, on the other hand, we also experience, that it is true as we sing: "In all earth's habitations, On all the boundless sea, Man finds no sure reliance, no peace, apart from Thee."

So, friends, it was also with the Psalmist of old. In Psalm seventy-three Asaph tells us that he had seen the prosperity of the wicked and that for a time he envied them, for in spite of their sin they seemed to prosper. They were not in trouble as other men, their eyes stood out with fatness and they had more than heart could wish. While he on the other hand, apparently cleansed his heart in vain, for his punishment was there every morning and he was plagued all the day long.

But in the sanctuary of God it was revealed to him that with all their prosperity God sets the wicked on slippery places, that He is far from them and that He casts them down into destruction. But on the other hand, it was also revealed to him that his cross and suffering were sent him in love and must serve to prepare him for eternal glory And therefore he concludes at the end of the Psalm: "It is good for me to draw near to God." "Let the wicked", he means to say, "have his prosperity, but give me my God."

In these words the Psalmist therefore gives expression to the blessed truth that it is never first of all a question of "things" or outward circumstances, but of God, whether He be with and for us, and whether we are near to Him. And so it is, for on the storm-swept ocean of time, there is but one beacon of light, but one fountain of happiness and peace, and that is God. And as the rivers and streams cannot rest until they rest in the deep, blue ocean, so man c not rest until he rests in God.

But therefore the people of God have a rich consolation, for that God, who is the fountain of all good and apart from whom we cannot rest, is present everywhere and is with His people where'er they rest and where'er they go. He is nigh unto them not only in His providence to uphold and direct them, as He does all His creatures in general. But He is near them in His love, in His fellowship and grace, to bless them, to cause all things to work together for their good, and to prepare them for their home in heaven above. Thus, in reality, the Christian is never alone. In Him we have a Friend, who is always near. And what a Friend He is! For since He is almighty, He is always able to help; since He is all-wise, He always knows what is best; and since He is faithful, He never leaves not forsakes us, He never slumbers and never sle

And yet, there come times in the

of the Christian when he too feels lonely and forsaken, when life seems vain, when God seems far and His way with us appears to be foolish. However, the trouble is never with our way, nor can we attribute our anxiety and care to the fact that God is not near, for He is always near, and His way with us is always good. But the trouble is, though He is always near to us, so often we are not near to Him. Only too often with our minds and hearts and with our trials and problems we are so far from Him. And the result is, we become filled with anxiety and fears, we fret about our way and we are inclined to complain with Jacob of old that all things are against us. So it was also with Asaph. He allowed the prosperity of the wicked to draw him away from his God, and thus for the time being, he lost the experiences of God's favor and nearness, and later he had complain that he had been as a beast before God.

Therefore even though God is always near us, we must also be near Him. Not of course, that God's being near to us depends on our being near to Him. For that He is near us, is all of grace, and therefore nothing in all the world can destroy it, not even our sin. He is always near His people, and that forever. But that nearness is experienced and enjoyed by us, only in that measure that by His grace we live close to Him.

And that means that we do not ignore or disregard Him, but that we are always conscious of Him in the home and by the way, and that in our work and play, and in all circumstances of life, we seek to walk the way of His commandments, commit our way to Him in faith and follow where He leads us.

Therefore, with a view to the way that lies before us, it is not a question first of all of what the way will be, whether it will bring prosperity or adversity, joy or sorrow, life or death. But rather it is a question of faithfulness in that way, of living near to God.

As we start our journey in 1953, may this, then, be our prayer:

"Another year is dawning
Dear Father, let it be,
In working or in waiting,
Another year with Thee;

For then and then only, can we truly sing:

"In sweet communion, Lord, with Thee
I constantly abide;
My hand Thou holdest in Thy own
To keep me near Thy side."

And then we may boast in all circumstances of life:

"Thy counsel through my earthly way
Shall guide me and control,
And then to glory afterward
Thou wilt receive my soul."

EDITORIALS

(Continued from page 4)

in submission to him in all things. How can there be two voices in one body?"

Martha: "Why is it then that in recent years especially, this matter of women's emancipation, including women's suffrage, has gained such support?"

Mary: "It is undoubtedly, the result of the general trend of worldliness: an anti-christian tendency: a desire to be like the world and a failure to submit all our ideas and practices to God's word!

Martha: "Well, Mary, you certainly have given me something to think about."

Mary: "Don't think that this little discussion of ours exhausts the subject but if it may, as you say, give you something to think about and humbly search His Word if these things are so, I will be deeply thankful for having had the privilege of talking to you about it."

Will you also follow Martha's example and think about it?

TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ANDREW PETTER
Grand Rapids, Michigan

LABOR—JOYFUL OR JOYLESS

IF WHAT WE have said in the foregoing articles about labor is true then we can indeed speak of the joy of labor. Think of what we have found as the truth!

From the first pages of the Bible reporting the creation of man we learn that we are made to have dominion over the created things, and that by the work of our hands and of our mind we are to cultivate it for the development of its riches and beauties.

We also learn that the Lord set man, that is gave him the position, that he might dress, cultivate the garden, and keep, have custody over, preserve it. Some commentators suggest that this keeping was already an attitude of defense and protection against alien power, others see in keeping an activity of preserving it from running wild through natural degeneracy, or from exuberant disorder. Thus his activity over the creature in relation to God is pictured to us.

And then we also learn that God instructs man unto the cultivation of the created earthly things by placing the appropriate laws in and about them so that the manner of their successful cultivation and the stewardship over them is as it were pointed out and suggested to man.

From this we would certainly conclude that labor would be an unmixed pleasure and joy. Everything is conducive to success and joy. Unmixed this joy should be because the dominion, the adaption and the success and goal would be fully assured and realized.

But the revelation on this point as we have it in Genesis 3 immediately warns us that this is not realized. And it warns us that we shall have to re-evaluate labor on that score.

This revelation (Gen 3:17-19) gives us a very startling warning.

We read as follows:

"The ground shall be cursed. In misery shall man eat his bread all the days of his life. Thorns and thistles shall the earth bring forth. In the sweat of his face shall he eat his bread. F shall return unto this ground fro whence he was taken."

Taking these different phrases together to make up the one picture of the bitter turn in man's lot we can make a few remarks to clarify them.

In the first place we may remark that they apply to our life as it is in the present dispensation of sin and grace. In position in the record they come after the curse over the serpent has been pronounced, and also after the victory of the cause of Christ has been promised. This surely means that it is not an expression of the final curse, nor of an unrelieved curse, but of a curse as it presses upon Adam and Eve, the heirs of the redemption already promised, that is, as Children of God and saved by His mercy they shall still have to bear this curse.

Secondly we may note that it is so expressed that the simple elementar representative features stand for the e

tire circle and range of earthly activity and culture. The simple key-word in the picture pertains to the **eating.** His disobedient **eating** brings his further **eating** under the curse. Because he did not rule over his eating, did not excercise his delegated lordship in the name of God over his eating of the fruits of the garden, therefore he shall with great difficulty and much more sorrow feel in his eating the loss of his lordship, and shall experience that in his simplest activities and needs there is a recalcitrance, a stubbornness, a balkiness overagainst him from the part of the creature. God has freed them from his control to a great extent.

Thirdly there is in the listing of elements, a progression that is instructive for us.

As a general abstract heading it is said, "Cursed is the ground on account f you, because of you." Because he has own his disobedience and mismanagement with respect to the soil and its product over which he was placed, therefore the Lord causes him to feel the divine displeasure through the same relation in which Adam stands to the soil. The soil which he mismanaged now brings him his punishment. And this curse becomes clear from the instances of its use further in the Bible. Instead of being fertile and productive, lush and pleasant, it becomes barren, stubborn unyielding, dreadful When the earth is blessed it yields in abundance (Potiphar's house under Joseph, the southland under Isaac —Gen. 26:12—; Israel in the land of milk and honey, and Ps. 107 in the various sections) and when it is cursed it is blasted, barren, famineridden (Israel under the covenant-curse in the desert, also Ps. 107).

This curse of God is further, the cause of the misery expressed.

Then this misery reveals itself conetely in the persistence of thorns and thistles, and in hard sweating labor over the rebellious nature.

And after so toiling with the rebellious unsubjected nature he finally succumbs to it completely, returns to the dust from whence he came. Actually man loses his struggle to hold dominion over the creature and is finally overcome by it because God has set it against him.

And now fourthly we can say that what is presented here at Paradise in its elementary primitive simplicity under the form of food-production, is essentially maintained and is true of all things in relation to man.

Nature is cursed and brings misery upon man.

It may even be true that the primeval somewhat symbolical, form is not always starkly maintained. It may be true that the first simule, primitive struggle with bare hands against a sterile, barren soil with torturing thorns and thistles has somewhat receded out of sight. For the Bible indeed speaks of fruitful fields, the pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys are covered with corn, they shout for joy they also sing (Ps. 65:14) and not only in the Israel of God's favor but also in heathendom there were fruitful seasons filling men's hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14: 17). Yet the word there spoken in Genesis remains in general application. Man's work-material is cursed because of his disobedience, it is unamenable to his dominion, and his struggles with it issues in vanity until he returns to the dust completely vanquished.

But how does this compare with the actual situation as we see and know it today? Can we say that the threat of Genesis has been mitigated and lightened? Are there not many pleasant productive, seasons and regions and do not many people enjoy their work so

that they say, the longer I do this work the more I enjoy it?

What must be our answer to these questions?

First we may point out that we cannot operate with a grace that has somehow entered in to relieve the burden.

It is sometimes said that a certain grace entered in so that the threat of the probationary command was not executed. But that cannot apply here either, for we are here already beyond the probation and this threat imposed. That would have to mean a second change and lifting of a threat by an intervening grace.

It seems therefore that also this curse of Gen. 3:17-19 remains in force. Notwithstanding the apparent prosperity and pleasure this word remains in operation. We know of no Biblical notification or suggestion that it is lifted.

How then must we harmonize this curse with the apparent prosperity and pleasure?

In order to have a right understanding of the reality of this curse we shall first of all need spiritual sense to read the word of God. We shall have to realize what the blessed, normal, happy relation of a sinless world with a sinless man was. We must surely not forget that comparison when we look at the present world.

We shall also have to look at the present world with that same spirit-taught mind. And then the Bible teaches us that this misery and woe and defeat is actually our lot. Jacob was a successful shepherd-prince but he confesses at the end, "Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life" (Gen. 47:9). "The best of our years is labor and sorrow" (Ps. 90:5-10). "Every man at his best estate is vanity, walketh in a vain show, heaps up riches in vain" (Ps. 39:5-6).

And certainly history substantiates the fulfilment of this dark curse.

Think of the struggle of our first fathers in their primitive, barehanded struggle with the stubborn earth, to eke out food and clothing and shelter.

Think of the famine, pestilence, war slavery, subjugation, that has harrassed the human race.

Think of the groans and moans that arise from the human race under the development of civilization, under serfdom and exploitation.

And think even of the inevitable misery which the mechanization of our life brings with it in the form of regimentation, and deadening specialization.

After all the struggle of man to gain ascendency over the forces of nature the word of Genesis remains in power, for he loses the battle and falls back under the dominion of the dust from whence he issued and is completely vanquished

How then can we speak of the plea ure and joy of labor?

DAWN OF THE NEW YEAR

The new year dawns, a veil beclouds the way,
We long for just a flicker or a ray
Of beaming light to show what may befall,
Then speaks the heart, be still, He rules o'er all.

He rules, He leads, He plans the road before
Will there be happiness or trials sore,
Will there be ease or pain, sickness or health,
Poverty staring or abundant wealth?

As on the threshold of the year we stand,
Blessed submission to all the things He's planned,
Whatever happens, whate'er does befall,
Contentment reigns, He lives, loves and rules o'er all.

—Jeanette Pastc

CURRENT COMMENTS

REV. L. DOEZEMA
Bellflower, California

THE NEW YEAR AND THE POLITICAL SCENE

THIS YEAR 1953 brings in the new administration. What it brings with it in the political field is hard to say. Without any question there will be some changes of policy, and with respect to the international scene it may cause a better relation and understanding with our allies and a worse relation with Russia and her satelites. Notice how we write "may". There is no prediction possible, for such things are in God's hand and unpredictable. The question whether the administration will deal righteously with the many problems which face the world. Rather surprising it is that Mr. Eisenhower chose a union leader for the labor position in his cabinet. It is another indication to me that we cannot predict the course of events. Our expectations for the future are often shown up to ourselves by the Lord as very foolish and selfish. He calls us to face crises and issue and to witness for the truth in every sphere of life.

And the Church?

Our question about the future of the church is naive from a certain viewpoint. We know that there is nothing new under the sun. We shall experience the same struggle in the church world as we have in the past. Through all the opposition of the gates of hell, Christ shall build His church. Nevertheless there shall arise new situations in the struggle of the Church. We may and ought to discern the signs of the times. We must watch for the signs of the false church. It shall arise in new forms and it requires vigilance on the part of the watchmen of Zion. While we are called to seek the unity of the faith, the false church may pretend and boast of its better way of unity, and deceive many. In its calling to proclaim the everlasting Gospel the Church is always in danger of becoming worldly-minded. It is necessary for the church to be filled with the consciousness of the last hour and the coming of Christ to proclaim the message with that proper urgency. Then too, we are warned that we must watch for internal strife, which weakens the church. (Galatians 5:15).

Though the world boasts of new things that it shall bring to pass, the Church believes with joy and confidence that the Lord Jesus Christ, the worker of miracles, shall come and is now coming, to bring the new thing to pass, which He has promised since He ascended into the heavens,—the new creation wherein righteousness shall dwell.

And Science?

When the world faces the future it invariably looks to men of science. Science plays its role in the Apocalypise Both the State and the False Church, the two beasts that arise in time, look to science and call men to worship it.

Though it is fantastic, even beyond the imagination, men of science now are speaking of their conquest of space. Time magazine featured its cover and leading article with the subject of Space

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LIFTING THE LID. . . . .

SEYMOUR BEIBOER
Grand Rapids, Michigan

COMMUNISM

PART II

ITS SECRET CONTROLLING POWERS

IN MY LAST installment we have seen that Communism is only another attempt of mankind to dethrone the Living God and to exalt man as god instead. Just why do men do this? What is the hidden power behind all this? It is that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, who was cast out of heaven into the earth. It is the devil, working in the hearts of mankind. that always tries to dethrone the Living God. And it was through the deception of Satan that our first parents and the whole human race with them, fell and became haters of God. I do not have to repeat that sordid history of how the devil tried to crush the Seed of the Woman in the Old Dispensation. It is known to all of us, I am sure. And when that Seed was finally brought forth, the Devil and all his hosts worked with all their might to destroy the same, but was very unsuccessful because that Seed, Jesus Christ, was caught up unto God and to His throne; therefore the devil is wroth with the woman, and continually makes war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Rev. 12:3-5, 17. This is continually repeated throughout the New Dispensation until the end of time. No wonder that Martin Luther sang these famous words:

For still our Ancient Foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

And present-day Communism is only another manifestation of the devil's power, by means of wicked men, to destroy the Church of Christ.

Just how and when did Communism in its present form originate? Before we can satisfactorily answer this question, we must first study the origin and purpose of the devil's present-day "sacred cow" on this earth, the Masonic Lodge. And beware lest anybody molest or attack this "sacred cow" or even place a straw in its path. It means persecution for those that attempt to do so. This is the reason why we hear so little about the lodge, with the exception of its so-called Christianity and its boasted works of benevolence. From a human standpoint of view it is ev dangerous for me to write about th oneness of Freemasonry and Communism and only by the Grace of God can I persevere to write these lines to you, even if I should have to suffer for it. By the Grace of God I MUST, I CANNOT do otherwise; for I also know that the devil and all his hosts cannot even come near me unless the Lord wills it; For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6:12. I make these remarks in view of the fact that the market today is flooded with books, pamphlets, and magazines condemning Communism, but fail to recognize the secret powers behind the same. I can guarantee you that you will not find any of the following information (in this and in my future installments on this subject) in any public library, classroom, bookstore, or newsstand in the U. S however there are a few authentic sou

ces where one can obtain this information. I will gladly give the whereabouts of these sources should anyone desire to have more light on this subject.

In the early part of the eighteenth century the devil inspired certain wicked men to form a secret organization (known as the Masonic Lodge) which would in the process of time crush out all religion including Christianity. This organization began in London and soon spread over all of the European countries and in less than forty years, it had spread all over the world. (It is also interesting to note that the Christ-hating Jews were instrumental in organizing Freemasonry and are the secret international rulers of the lodge today.) The devil had no difficulty in recruiting wicked men to join his organization. Satan has all the riches, wealth, and honors of this world to offer unto mankind only they will fall down and worship m. Matt. 4:8-10. Today, all over the world, the more responsible and higher salaried positions are reserved for devil worshippers or Freemasons only, with very few exceptions. From the lodge itself I can prove that Freemasonry is actually DEVIL WORSHIP. In the first place Freemasonry will have nothing to do with Jesus Christ. He is cast out in an outspoken and deliberate manner. Therefore we read in I John 2:22-23, "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is that antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." To further prove this let us listen to the instruction of Albert Pike, Sovereign Pontiff of Universal Freemasonry. "That which we must say to the crowd is 'We worship a God,' (A good example of Masonic hypocrisy. S. B.) To you Sovereign Grand Inspector General, we say this— that you may repeat it to the thren of the 30th, 31st, and 32nd degrees—, 'The Masonic Religion should be by all us initiates of the high degree, maintained in the purity of the LUCIFERIAN DOCTRINE." (See The Freemason, Jan. 19, 1935). If we look up and read Isaiah 14:12-15 we will readily conclude that Lucifer is nothing more than the devil himself. Because Freemasonry's god, the devil, hates God and His people, its worshippers do the same. "Freemasonry is Satan's army on earth; it is in a certain sense Satan himself, the Adversary of God and of the children of God. It is revolt personified, the irreverant, impious revolt that blasphemes against God. That is its secret, which is the foundation of all its symbolism in the high grades as well as in the low." (Benoit op. cit. vol. 1 p. 256).

From the above facts we can readily see that the religions of Freemasonry and Communism are ONE. It was Freemasonry that gave Communism its birth. Space does not permit me to quote actual proofs that the above statement is true, however it is very evident that nearly all of Communism's founders such as Marx, Engels, Lasalle, Garibaldi, Mazzini, etc. were high degree Freemasons. It was these men that gave birth to what is known as Bolshivism, Socialism, or Communism at its first meeting in London in 1864, which advocated the overthrow of all existing religions and governments in the world. The overthrow of the Czarist government of Russia and of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1917 was also planned and engineered by Freemasons. Ever since that time Communism has always been and still is controlled by its secret power, Freemasonry, to which ALL the men, in high places in the world, have sworn by the most satanic of oaths, upon penalty of the most horrible deaths (Yes, they even swear themselves into everlasting Hell in some of the higher degrees), to obey their Masonic superiors unques-

tioningly. This is the reason why there are legions of known Communists running around all over the world. Freemasons actually protect Communists. In a German Masonic Journal, dated July, 1849, we read the following: "We cannot help but greet Socialism (Communism) as an excellent comrade of Freemasonry" ("Latomia" vol. p. 237) Here is another fact to consider: Hitler and Mussolini both officially condemned and denounced Freemasonry and placed a ban on the same in their countries. To this date Stalin nor Communism have never condemned Freemasonry. That is the reason why we fought World War II—in order to preserve Freemasonry and Communism.

I can furnish abundant material to prove that the above statements are true. The reason why I stress and repeat the above remark is because Freemasonry thrives on the proper tools of its god, the Devil, that is, lying, secrecy, hypocrisy, calumny, and oaths. Without these she cannot exist. It cannot stand the light of day; therefore she always works under the cover of darkness. It must be borne in mind that rank and file Freemasons are purposely kept in ignorance of the inner workings and ideals of the secret inner-rulers (men that have control over the wealth of this world) of the order to which all the kings and rulers of the various governments of the world are but mere puppets. Therefore we cannot accuse all Freemasons of being Communists. In fact Freemasonry even has a form of outward godliness (but of course she always denies the power thereof) in order to conceal its real religion. Satan also presents himself as an angel of light in order to win mankind over to his religion. The same is true with respect to Communism. In public Freemasonry strongly opposes, and even disowns and denounces Communism, while in secret it sustains that very party of action. This is a point worthy of deep consideration and shows above everything else, the ability and astuteness with which the whole organization has been planned—for the development of the coming Antichrist and IT IS COMING VERY SWIFTLY! Maybe perhaps in our day! The dark portions of Scripture are being fulfilled before our very eyes. In II Thess. 2:7 we read, "For the measure of iniquity doth already work.' God is using Communism's secret controlling powers to bring about that "falling away" in order that the "man of sin" may be revealed.

CURRENT COMMENTS

Continued from page 11

Pioneer, and asks the question, Will man outgrow the earth? Its leader boldly states, "Within the next 10 or 15 yea the earth can have a new companion the skies, a man-made satellite which will be man's first foothold in space.

A sobering statement appeared in an article on medicine. It concerned itself about the "flu". It reads, "The influenza pandemic which raged around the world in 1918-19 was the third great plague in recorded history (the others: the Black Death (bubonic plague), which ravaged Europe and Asia in the 14th century, and the scourge which swept Europe in the 17th century.) Nobody ever isolated the microbe that caused it, and recent attempts to find the supposed virus in long-frozen corpses of Eskiom victims got nowhere." Then there is a statement about the influenza vaccines. "Influenza vaccines today are often made worthless because the virus changes its nature and defeats them. The trick is to beat the virus to the draw and have a suitable vaccine ready before a virulent strain can st an epidemic."

The Military Mail Bag

KENNETH EZINGA
Grand Rapids, Michigan

HEY FELLAS,

You finally did it!

Our column can at last stand on its own feet and speak for itself.

Korea, Nov. 2, 52

Dear All,

I'm sorry I haven't written to the **Beacon Lights** before but it's so hard to keep up on all my mail and so easy to say "I'll write **Beacon Lights** next week" and then forget all about it.

I've been in the Army now since August, 1951 and have been in Korea since February of this year.

I took Medical training at Ft. Mead, Maryland and came to Korea as an aid man but ended up in the Artillery as a cannoneer. I am now a gunner on a 155 Howitzer, a 12,000 pound weapon. The shells are six inches in diameter and weigh around 100 pounds. The effective range is about 12,500 yards.

I worked my way up from rammer staff to chief of section. I held this for a month but had to give it up as it was too hard on me.

We are now near the town of Yonchon, which is 35 miles north of Seoul. The 1st Capt. R.O.K. Division is on the line in front of us. The French are fighting to our right on T Bone Hill. Kelley Hill is in front of us and the 2nd Division is there on the line.

We just moved here of late having been in the Mungdung Nie Valley backing up Heartbreak Ridge and Sandbag Castle. We pulled out of there just in time to miss the last push that was made and the place where we were set up was hit hard by Artillery.

That valley was raked from end to end when we were there and I have grey hair from it now.

The country here is more rolling with many rice paddies and makes good tank country. We're set up in a rice paddy and our fox holes are shallow and full of water. But it is protection.

I've been to Japan on R and R and am on my homeward stretch. Today we were told

we have to have 38 points to get out of here, so I'll be here 20 days longer than expected. I have about three months to do yet and I'll be on my way. That isn't too long and I can stick it out.

I received the **Beacon Lights** today when I got back from church. Half hour service. I was glad to get it as we have tomorrow off and I'll get a chance to read it. It's very seldom that we have a real chance to read and enjoy what we're reading but tomorrow I'll have a chance to really take it easy and enjoy the **Beacon Lights.**

We have had no lights here until today when we got some Korean lamps made of milk cans.

I read the Convention news and was happy to hear so many had a good time. The picture of Herm Hanko on the bus made me laugh and brought back many memories. I looked the pictures over good for familiar faces but I didn't know too many of them.

Well, I must close for now as I have more letters to write. I'm enclosing a Couple of pictures of myself and the Howitzer I am on.

Your Christian Friend,
Bob.

Here's Bob's address and I think he deserves some replies from us civilians who are having it soooo easy.

Cpl. Robert Wigger US 55186090
Batt. B., 90th FA Bn. APO 25
c/o PM, San Fransisco, California

The picture of Bob shows him after an inspection. The gunners Quadrant is in his hands. The Howitzer is shov out of its camouflaged pit for repair Note the empty powder cans in the foreground.

Nov. 9, 1952

Dear Friends,

I received the **Beacon Lights** of October and I read that the Military Mailbag is a little empty. I've been in the Army now for 11 months and havenot written to the **Beacon** Lights readers yet so I guess it's about time I got on the "Ball."

Well; to tell you a little about what I have been doing since I've been in Korea. I arrived here July the 1st and went to the front on the 8th.

For two weeks I was a Rifleman, then a B.A.R. man for two weeks and then became a machine gunner. After 10 days of this I was out on patrol and "Joe Chink" shot me in the thigh.

I was sent to a hospital in Japan and remained there for six weeks. Now I am back in Korea once again. In all I have been overseas slightly more than four months.

At present I am driving a truck for the Army and it's a lot more fun than being in the front lines. Right now our outfit is in the rear for a little rest. I don't know how long we'll be here but it's OK with me if we stay here for good.

I want to thank the **Beacon Lights,** Sunday School, **Standard Bearer** and all the others who send papers from home. We don't hear much of God and His word over here and I sure do enjoy reading our church papers.

I don't know if this will get in in time but I wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year. I'll sign off for now. God bless and keep you—that's my every day prayer.

Pvt. Kenneth Miedema US 55225878
Ser. Co. 5 R. C. T.
APO 301, c/o PM
San Francisco, California

Needless to say our prayers are with you, Ken, you, Bob, and each and every one of our Servicemen.

Nov. 23, 1952
Wackeinheim, Germany

Dear Friends,

Yes, here is one of those guys who used to write and then forgot how. I finally found my educated pen once more, so I guess I'd better put it to use.

I am another of those Z.I. bound guys. I have spent most of my Army career in Germany, 16 months in fact. Now I will try to make a career of civilian life. I imagine I will find it hard to take. Ha!

I have been to Holland twice and it is really a grand place. The last time I was there during Tulip Time which is from the 15th of April to the 15th of May. It is very beautiful then and I have many wonderful colored slides. I wish I had more.

I would like to tell the Holland (US) boys who go over here to see this beautiful sight if they have a chance. But be sure to go as soon as possible after the 15th of April as you can. The tulips stop blooming after the 1st of May. It will be worth every minute you spend there.

I have found the people very friendly and the biggest share of them can speak English so you don't have to worry about a little detail like that.

There are many interesting places to visit. There is a large diamond factory in Amsterdam that one should see if at all possible. You can see how diamonds are cut and polished.

—Continued on page 23

NATURE STUDY

ROGER FABER
Grand Rapids, Michigan

STARRY NIGHT

THOSE OF US who dwell in cities often miss a most rewarding experience: the sense of humility given by a starry night. The smoke of factory chimneys and automobile exhaust, the angular profiles of tall buildings and the glare of neon lights all contribute to dim our vision of the night-time sky. None of us, however, but especially those of us who live in rural surroundings, can escape at least some contact with the awful grandeur of the heavens. We proud creatures are continually wrapped up in the thought of our own importance. We make our abode on the face of the earth and alter that face to suit our needs. WE are bigger and more powerful than many other creatures and, although some others are bigger than we, our intelligence enables us to control them, too. Sometimes, however, we become aware of the star-studded dome above our heads, an inconceivably immense gulf in which the huge globe we call our home is nothing but a minnow swimming on its insignificant way, then our everyday surroundings take on an entirely different perspective and our sense of self importance falls away. The universe of stars is so staggeringly large that our imagination wears itself out in wonder.

Is it possible to conceive of the vast distances which comprise our universe? No, man is capable of measuring these distances and expressing them in numbers, but to visualize them is far beyond the capacity of our puny minds. Nevertheless, it is a richly rewarding experience to attempt this, if only to realize our own limitations and the glory of God's creation.

We are accustomed to speak in terms of miles, but the mile is a far too clumsy tool for expressing the distances between us and the stars. A more imaginative means is the speed of light. We say that Chicago is so many miles away, but we may also say that it is so many hours away, meaning it takes that many hours to travel there. Similarly, we may say the sun is 93 million miles away, but that huge number means very little.

Think of how fast light travels. Whe you turn the switch on your readin lamp, you don't have to wait for the light to strike your book. It is there seemingly instantly. In fact, the speed of light is so great that in one second it can travel around the earth seven times. Now this same light, which laughs at the size of the earth, requires eight minutes for the journey from the sun to us. But even eight minutes is a mere pleasure jaunt. The sun is a close neighbor on the scale of the universe. When we look at the stars, we see bodies which are infinitely farther removed from us than is the sun. The sun, after all, is just a middle-sized star, no brighter than thousands of other stars which are visible in the sky. Try to imagine, if you can, how far away these stars must be to appear as dim as they do. The next nearest star, which is somewhat smaller than the star about which the earth rotates, the apparently tremendous sun, is at suc a distance that its light requires fou

years to reach us. Even this star is exceptionally close. Most of the stars which we can see are exceedingly more distant. The light from most of them takes hundreds of years to bridge the gap between them and us. You may look at a particular star and say to yourself, "The light which is now entering my eyes began its journey when Columbus was sailing in the Santa Maria, and has been traveling in its tremendous velocity ever since then." And this is not at all unusual. There is one faintly visible patch of light in the summer sky whose light cannot reach the earth until nine hundred thousand years have elapsed. Remember, too, this same light can encircle the earth seven times in one second. Can you picture to yourself the immensity of these distances? The imagination is staggered.

Again, consider the number of the stars. Abraham could not number them, and yet the total number of those which are visible without the aid of a telescope form an infinitesimal fraction of the whole. Everyone is familiar with the Milky Way, that irregular glowing stream which stretches from north to south across the dome of the heavens like a faintly luminous cloud. Even a very small telescope will reveal that this band of light is composed of a multitude of stars, faint and close together, whose total number is many times greater than that of the visible stars. Yet this whole agglomeration of distant suns is just one of billions like it through out the universe. Our sun is inside the Milky Way, hence it appears so large to us. Other systems of stars as large as the Milky Way but at tremendously greater distances look like tiny patches of light, even in the most powerful telescopes.

Compared with the distances between them, the sizes of the stars themselves is a mere nothing. However, even the stars are overwhelmingly huge by earthly standards. The sun, a middle-sized one, can easily contain one million bodies the size of the earth. Moreover, a star in the constellation of Orion is so large that the sun could be placed at its center and there would still be enough room within the stars bulk for the earth to circle around the sun at the same distance it does now, 93 million miles.

There is no use in multiplying examples. No amount of description and measurement can convey even a remotely appropriate picture of the size of the universe. Man can measure and count but he cannot grasp the significance of his measurements. The only way to approach an appreciation of the magnitude of the universe is to feel it, to experience it. Stand by yourself some clear evening under the vast vault of the heavens and let its immensity weigh upon your soul. Only thus will the self-centered perspective born of our all-consuming interest in the earth be crushed before the awfulness and splendor of the starry heavens. It is a sobering thought, indeed, that we creatures of the dust occupy such a tiny corner of the universe.

Here is another thought, equally sobering. It is only through the soul of man, tiny though he be, that at the whole vast creation can return intelligent and loving praise to its Maker.

Attention Socitey Secretaries!

Please send your name and address to the Board Secretary:

Miss Eleanor Veldman
1435 Kalamazoo Ave.,
Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

SCHULER

A READER ASKS: Should a christian take part in dramatics; and is it proper for our Christian High Schools to sponsor Class Plays.

To my mind this is a very important and timely question. Dramatics are playing an ever increasing part in many of our christian programs, not only of the young people, but also of the adults. Now the question is, should our christian young people take part in such programs? My answer is an emphatic and unequivocal no. To me all dramatics and acting is principally wrong, for the simple reason that you cannot play with life and be accepted in the sight of the Lord who desires truth in the inward parts. Essentially all acting is hypocrisy, i e., one creature imitating or playing the part of another. Let me explain this a bit in detail. God has given to each and every individual his or her own unique and distinct character and personality, and has destined for each one a distinct pathway of life. There are no two individuals alike. Now to my mind it is positively wrong for any creature to impersonate or act out the life of another, either in his virtues, or in his vices, in his joys or sorrows, in his life or death. Life is far to serious in either its good or in its evil, than that it should be played with in comedy dramas.

We can never dramatize life without making a mockery of such sacred institutions of God as marriage, the family, the home, the relationship of husband and wife, of parents and children, the divine virtues of love, faith and hope, the expressions of prayer and of penitence. Neither may we play with life by acting out sin, and by impersonation seek to reproduce hatred, lust, greed, slander, adultery, murder, etc., etc.

The Committee on Worldly Amusements of the Christian Reformed Synod of 1928 was very inconsistent to say the least, when it expressed that **not a few things of life are too sacred** to be imitated, and that **certain** sinful deeds may not be reproduced, nor **certain** sinful words repeated. Permit me to quote literally from this report: "The question may be asked whether the theatre as **such** is a sinful institution. The answer depends on whether acting, particularly professional acting, is necessarily sinful. Is acting as such sin? Is it always sin to give or witness a dramatic performance? Your Committe feels quite safe in declaring that no ground for an affirmative answer can be found in the Bible. If the dramatic gift, the art of impersonation, is not from the evil one it must be from God. Impersonation is imitation of human actions, as expressing human character...." Report of the Committee on Worldly Amusements, Agenda of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, 1928, Part One, p. 32.

To me it is a sacrilege to ascribe the art of impersonation to God. To impersonate means the lie, and to ascribe this gift as a gift from God in whose eyes all hypocrisy is an abomination, is blasphemy. The committee itself felt the precariousness of their position and therefore added the following restrictions which our christian principles impose. If, for example, the christian in his impersonating seeks to reproduce life **as it is**, it is evident that certain sinful deeds

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QUESTION BOX

REV. G. M. OPHOFF
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Question: Who was Stephen praying for in Acts 7:60 when he said, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge."

He was praying for the same people for whom Christ prayed, when in the hour of his crucifixion he said: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And this people are all those who repent of the great sin of having crucified Him, the Son of God.

To understand these prayers we must concentrate on the words of Jesus: "For they know not what they do."

Christ's passion was not understood by any of His contemporaries. They did not know that it was the blood of the atonement that was being shed. his is true of the followers of Jesus as well as of His enemies. Not one of them considered that "he was cut off from the land of the living because of the transgression of His people." Isa. 53:8,9. One will ask, how is it to be explained that not even the followers of Jesus, to say nothing of His enemies, had understanding of this? The prophets had foretold His cross. And Christ had spoken plainly of His suffering and death. Yet they did not understand.

It can be explained.

First, they had an earthly conception of Christ and His kingdom. They had expected that Christ would do for their people what David of old had done for Israel, namely, deliver God's people from the dominion of the heathen nations and found upon the ruins of these nations aother mighty empire. All along they had thought of Christ as such a king—a king of earthy, typical power and glory. But Christ's kingdom was heavenly. nd in order to enter the glory of this ngdom—His kingdom—He had to go the way of the terrible cross. For sin had to be atoned, expiated, obliterated. For it was sin that lay at the bottom of all their troubles of the past present and future.

And that cross—Christ's cross—troubled them. It was not a wonder. For in Israel the cross was a thing too terrible to contemplate. The land of Canaan, let us consider, was God's country. It was the heaven of the Old Testament church, and therefore referred to in the Old Testament Scriptures as the land of the living, the spiritual living. in contradistinction to all the rest of the earth, which was the land of the dead. For in Canaan God was tabernacling with His people. Jerusalem was the city of God. Jerusalem's temple was His house. Here He dwelt. The court of the temple was the only place on the face of the earth, where God's people stood before His face and were blessed. For there in that court stood God's altar. Hence, the true Jew loved Jerusalem better than life. Canaan, being what it was, the land of the living, the wicked had to be cut off from it by death. "The soul that doeth ought with uplifted hand," so the Lord had commanded." shall be cut off from among his people, because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken the commandment; that soul shall utterly be cut off, he shall bear his iniquity." This had to be done by putting the offender to death. And thereupon his body was hung on a tree till even in token of his being cursed of God and cast into everlasting desolation. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," thus spake the law. This precisely is the stroke that fell on Christ. Pronounced a blasphemer by Israel's judges, He was cut off from God's country,

the land of the living, by death on the accursed tree,—cut off, banished from God's presence. Did He not from out of the darkness that enveloped His cross cry to God, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me!" Verily, He was made a curse for us.

And who of men considered that this stroke lighted upon Him for the transgressions of His people? Not one of them. The only solution of His suffering that men, including his people, could find within themselves that he was afflicted of God for His own fault. Isa. 53:3-6. Were he a prophet sent to deliver Israel, would his career be ending on a cross? So men reasoned. No one perceived that it was the blood of the atonement that the wicked were shedding. For, as John states, "The Holy Ghost was not yet sent; because Jesus was not yet glorified." He had not yet been sent to teach God's people all things, and to bring all things into their remembrance whatever He had said of them.

Now there is reason why God witheld this insight until Christ was glorified. Had men, had we, known that it was the blood of the atonement that we were shedding, we all would have perished in hell in that very moment. For in that case our crucifying the Christ would have involved us, Jews and Gentiles alike, in a sin that God does not forgive, namely, a sin identical to that of crucifying the Son of God afresh and putting Him to open shame. According to Hebrews 6:6 "It is impossible for those," so reads the text, "who were once enlightened, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance, seeing that they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh." As it is, we did not commit that unpardonable sin, when we crucified the Christ there on Golgotha For we did it in ignorance. We knew not that it was the blood of the atonement that we were shedding. Thus God's people, that is, all such who in tears of true contrition of heart, beseech God for mercy and forgiveness, are surely forgiven. And these contrite ones are the elect. And it was for such and for such alone that Christ and Stephenus prayed.

And certainly those prayers are heard. We are forgiven of God for that sin and for all our sins. The apostle Paul makes mention of this with respect to his own case. He wrote: "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me in the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy, because I did it (he crucified Christ by persecuting His church) ignorantly, in my unbelief.

And in his pentacostal sermon the apostle Peter, touching on the same matter, adresses his Jewish audience in this language: "And ye killed the prince of life, whom God raised up from the dead; ... and now brethren I know that through ignorance ye did it, and so also your rulers. But these things which God before had shewed by the mouth of His prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath now fulfilled. Repent therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out." Also the point here is that, whereas we had crucified Christ in our ignorance, we will obtain mercy, we who by the grace of God repent.

How unsearchable then the wisdom and mercy of God. He kept us in ignorance respecting the meaning of the cross in order that we might be saved by the Christ that we had to crucify.

MILITARY MAIL BAG

(Continued from page 17)

It's a very interesting procedure. There are many more places I could tell you about but space won't allow it.

I haven't seen a country I liked so well. It is really beautiful. One can tell as soon as you leave Holland and enter Germany. Germany isn't nearly as neat. I hope many of you can visit this wonderful country.

I have spent much of my stay over here on field problems. Since the first of July we have spent two months in camp. That gives us nearly 60% of our time out in the field.

Passes and furloughs were easy for us to get in our outfit. It's different in most outfits. I have had some enjoyable times over here in Europe.

By the time most of you read this I will be back home as we are to leave on the 2nd of December. I'll sign off for now and tell you to keep up the good work you have done in the past. We all appreciate it.

Yours in the Lord,
Harold Moss

We appreciate the good work Harold has done also. He has been one of our most faithful contributors and we want you to know that every letter was welcome, Harold.

Harold Moss is from our Manhattan Montana Church.

REPORT ON MASS MEETING

The Illinois Mass Meeting was held on the evening of November 21. The Young People's Societies of Oak Lawn and South Holland met in the auditorium of the Oak Lawn Protestant Reformed Church. The general theme chosen was "Thanksgiving".

Rev. Vanden Berg was chairman for the evening. After singing a few Psalter numbers Rev. Vanden Berg opened by reading a Psalm and offering prayer. The first number on the program was a recitation "Our Pilgrim Fathers" which was given by Clara Buiter. After this, Rev. and Jim Schipper favored us with two musical selections entitled "We Praise Thee, Oh God" and "Now Thank We All Our God". We were happy to have Pvt. John Buiter with us, who was home on furlough. He delivered an essay on "Thanksgiving". A piano and organ duet was rendered by Bertha Buiter and Grace Ipema.

Rev. Schipper was the speaker of the evening. He gave a brief history of Thanksgiving Day, as we know it. He said that the day has become highly festive and hilarious and that we should give thanks for all things, always Thanksgiving Day for the natural man is nothing more than praise of men. Only one who is in the Lord can give thanks and he does this everyday.

Also on the program was a Thanksgiving day reading given by Gert Van Baren. After singing Psalter number 268, Rev. Schipper closed the meeting with prayer. We recessed for a few minutes after which a delicious lunch was served by the members of the Oak Lawn Young People's Society.

—Gert Van Buren

BIBLE OUTLINE

REV. M. GRITTERS
Pella, Iowa

LESSON 45

Not Confusion But Order

I Cor. 14:20-40

The remainder of this chapter deals with the dignity and decorum of the Divine Service. Speaking with tongues (vss. 20-28) prophets (vss. 29-33) women (vss. 34-35) these all have their place. Let them take their place so that the Service may be what it ought to be.

Tongues need an interpretor
vss. 20-28

Are you so excited about speaking in tongues? (vss. 21, 22). Then read Isa. 28:11. In the Captivity, Judah became subject to the Assyrians and they heard foreign language a plenty. The curse of Jeremiah 5:15 had come. God spake to the rebels in Captivity, through the foreign tongues, but for all that they did not listen to the Lord. Here tongues are a sign of the curse upon the unbelieving (vs. 22). Prophecy is for them that believe. How arrogant then to boast about your ability to speak a foreign language.

If then the Church comes together for Divine Service. and suppose that you all stood there muttering and mumbling in foreign languages, and suppose a stranger (an uninstructed or an unbeliever) came to your service. Would they not say of you that you were drunk or insane (vs. 23)? Is that the effect which the Divine Service ought to have? If, instead of muttering foreign languages, you prophecy and speak plainly about the Truth, and if then there comes to your meeting some unbeliever or uninstructed (24-25) he will be seized by the power of the Word of God which you preach. Instead of calling you fanatics he will be convicted by the Word of God. The Word of God will convict him of sin and unbelief, it will try to stir up his conscience with the result that he will fall down before you. conquered. He will bend his knees before God and testify that this is holy ground. I take it that this man is brought to repentance and the conquering power of the Word of God shines forth brilliantly. When you congregate let there be order (vss. 2 28). Take turns speaking and let the man speaking in tongues be careful to have an interpreter standing beside him. If not, let him be still.

Prophets are to speak by turns
Vss. 29-33

Paul defends the dignity of the Divine Service against all disorder. Let two or three speak, says Paul. That will be enough for one service. Let them patiently await their turns so that there are not two of them speaking at once. God is a God of order and His Service must be dignified. Let your Service testify that God is among you; that all may learn and all may be comforted (or exhorted) (vs. 31).

Women to be silent
Vss. 34, 35

Good order requires that men carry the Revelation. Women are to submit to the Law from Gen. 3:16 and forwa

Even asking questions (perhaps to criticise and examine what the prophets had said) would constitute an infringement upon the task which God gave to the man cf. vs. 29. If she has anything to ask, let her ask her husband at home. The reason why the woman shall not prophesy in the Church is that it is a shame, it is ugly and disorderly.

Paul concludes by rebuking the arrogance of some (vs. 36) he asks them: do you originate the Word? Are you not but carriers of the Word? If you are a prophet you will recognize that what I have said to you comes from the Lord (vs. 37). Be energetic therefore to handle the gifts and let the Service testify that God is sovereign and that He dictates the Service. Principles do not change. When today the Church comes together in Divine Service the prophecy of Joel (Acts 2:17,18) has come to its fulfillment, all prophesy, but in order. For God has set up one to preach in the Name of God, and the rest to say "amen" in the Name of God. That congregation may be edified and all who gather in the Service may testify that God is among us with His Word.

Questions for Discussion

1 Vs 25 says something about the secrets of that man's heart being made manifest. To whom? To himself or to others? Cf. Heb. 4:12, 13.

2 Our Divine Service today is quite different from e.g. vs. 26 of that time. Several men took part in the Service, each contributed what he had "received". Men, women and all believers have the Spirit (Acts 2:17,18) how explain that just the Minister preaches?

3 Miriam was a prophetess (Ex. 15:20) Deborah was (Judges 4:4) Huldah (II Kings 22:14) and Anna was (Luke 2: 36). How explain?

LESSON 46

Beyond All Doubt, Christ Arose

I Cor. 15:1-11

Besides all the other errors in the Corinthian Church there was above all this fatal heresy that there were some among them who denied the resurrection of the dead. How wide-spread this heresy was, or how many followed, I do not know. It was present. That certain ones could have confessed the Apostolic Doctrine, been baptized, received into the Church, and then deny the very foundation upon which the church stands! How subtle is Satan. How inclined are we to all evil. How dreadful is the judgment of God upon those who, with Eve, give ear to the deceiver.

Influenced by, perhaps, the Sadducees, or perhaps the Greeks, there had arisen an element in the Corinthian Church which repudiated the resurrection of the body. I suppose, if you had asked them: do you believe that Christ arose, they would have said: indeed, we believe that. But wait, says Paul, Doctrine is ONE. You cannot deny it at one place and accept it at the other. If you deny the resurrection of the dead, you deny the resurrection of Christ. You are denying the resurrection of Christ and as a result of your error you have come to deny the resurrection of the dead. The two are intertwined. They stand and fall together.

Since then this is the issue at stake Paul rises to the defence of the Gospel and if it please God to the conversion of those who are departing from it. In the first eleven verses of this marvelous chapter Paul establishes beyond all doubt that Christ has arisen from the dead, in the sequence he will show that the Church arises WITH Christ and IN Christ. You deny one, you deny both.

Paul had labored in Corinth for more than eighteen months and the theme of his preaching was the theme of the Whole Scripture: CHRIST IS RISEN, HALLELUJAH. Now, must he prove to them once more that Christ is risen? How arduous is the task of the minister. What patience he must possess. God had told Paul in a night vision "I have much people in this city." God has His people here in the Corinthian Church, and for their sakes he is ready to do any amount of work, even if he has to repeat what he had so fervently preached and what should have been understood by this time.

I preached it to you, says Paul (vs.1) you also received it, in it you stand. I had no other Gospel than this one. If you heard anything from me you heard that Christ was raised. If you let slip that Word, your faith is vain. Any faith which springs not from the resurrection of Christ, nor roots in it is imitation. Beware then. (vs. 2).

Neither did Paul contrive this doctrine. Christ sent him with it (vs. 3). All the Scriptures. Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms (Lu. 24:44) all converge on this most blessed mystery that Christ is risen. Christ died for our sins (Isa. 53) He was buried, but saw no corruption (Ps. 16) and He arose on the third day, (Matt. 12:40) as also the event of Jonah teaches us. The Scriptures that went before spake of these things. Those Scriptures I preached unto you (vs 3,4).

Besides that, we have seen the Risen Lord with our own eyes. Many of us have seen Him (vss. 5-8). Peter saw Him, the Peter who one time denied Him, the Peter who is the rock upon which Christ builds His Church. He saw Him and he preached this risen Christ with great zeal. Then the "twelve" saw Him. Judas not being with it, the number being indicative of the group. This Group saw Him toward the close of the very first day (Mark 16:14). Then Jesus was seen of some five hundred at one time, many of whom are alive and among us today (vs 6). James saw Him. This is that James you have all heard about, how he was a martyr for the Christian Faith. He died for believing in the resurrected Christ. Then all the apostles saw Jesus (vs. 7). I take it this refers to the wider circle of preachers. These all saw Him and their testimony has been believed by the Church.

Then, last of all, I saw Him too. Enroute to Damascus. I am as one "born out of due time (vs. 8) or as an abortion. Paul uses this horrible word in referring to himself as one that is dead, not worthy to be looked upon. He stoops in deep humility. That Christ should have looked upon him. He persecuted the Church of God (vs. 9) and was worthy to be cast aside. But God's grace appeared and it made him an Apostle He saw the Lord and the Lord gave Hi grace to believe. Then Paul went out into the world, farther than any of the Apostles had gone and he preached this wonderful, life-and-grace-giving Christ. So he had also come to Corinth.

So, Corinthians, there is the eye-witness testimony preached by everyone of us. We never preached but what we preached this risen Christ, and you never believed our preaching but what you believed the Risen Christ.

Questions for Discussion

1 Why does Modernism etc. want to deny the Resurrection of Christ? What is there about it that makes the human nature so avid to denounce it?

2 That Christ arose on the third day, according to the Scriptures (vs. 4)—Can you show that from the Old Testament?

3 To believe that Christ arose is mu

more than mere assent to some historical fact. It is a persuasion and a conviction concerning the great Work of Salvation wrought by God, in Christ first and then in all who are in Christ.

4 What does it mean in vs. 2 "unless ye have believed in vain?"

LESSON 47

Christ Arose, We Follow

I Cor. 15: 12-22

From vss. 12-19 Paul says, as it were: some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead. On your assumption now that there is no resurrection, let us see what happens, what conclusions must follow. Five of them:

1 Then Christ is not raised (vss.13,16). Christ was among the dead. If the dead are not raised, the conclusion is simple, and as inescapable as simple: Christ was not raised. Then Modernism wins out and history marches us down a blind alley from which there is no retreat.

2 If Christ is not raised we have preached empty words, your faith has caught hold of empty words (vs. 14) and if Christ is not raised your faith is without blessed result, it doesn't lead you anywhere (vs. 17). We preached forgiveness of sins, justification, evidenced by Christ's resurrection. But, if He is not raised, you face your sin and the damnation of death that must follow.

3 If Christ is not raised then we stand forth like culprits, deceivers, who testified of things that do not even exist. We have borne false witness, we have lied against God (vs. 15). False witnesses are we, all of us...Apostles, prophets, all the way back to Enoch. From the days that men began to call upon the name of the Lord, in the day of Seth, until now, we all testified falsely. That is if Christ did not rise.

4 If Christ has not been raised, then Abraham (and how he longed to see the day of Christ) and Isaac, Jacob . . . the thousands who died in the faith of the coming Christ, the thousands of Hebrews 11, they are all perished (vs. 18). In stead of arriving in the City that has foundations, they discovered too late that they had been deceived. And they now gnash their teeth in hell. In your congregation there have some fallen martyr. They died in hope. But, if Christ is not raised they died in delusion.

5 If Christ is not raised (vs 19) we are more miserable than all men. For then our hope in Christ is confined to what we have in this life. We suffer for believing in Him, that is what we have in this life. Hope for anything beyond this life is dashed to pieces against the rocks of hard reality.

Paul skillfully leads their error to its only possible conclusion. Do you want us, do you want people in your congregation to follow your awful philosophy and arrive at these terrible conclusions? Repent of it. Wonderful is it not, how God "reasons" with us to lead us away from the false reasoning of sin into the knowledge of faith?

But now, says Paul in vs. 19-22. But now I testify truth. CHRIST IS RISEN. Not only that Christ is risen from the dead, He brings His people along with Him (vs. 20). Christ is the first one that is raised (cf. Acts 26:23 and II Tim. 1:10). Christ first broke the shackles of death. He led the way. He brings us after Him. Vs. 21 proves that Christ was the first fruits By man is death, by man is also the resurrection. this man being the Lord Jesus Christ. In Adam we all die (vs. 22), speaking of

what the believers received through Adam. In Christ we shall all be made alive, speaking again of the believers, and what they receive through Christ. As all God's people died in Adam, so shall they all be made alive through Christ. Adam stood not alone, neither did he fall alone. Christ arose not alone. He is the first-fruits, evidence of the subsequent harvest, author of eternal salvation, captain of our salvation, first-born from the dead (Cor. 1:19), leading the elect to the destined glory. This is the hope of the christian. Persecutions and sufferings of this life exercise us in that hope. Walk in sin and the hope fades, walk in sanctification and the hope of faith shines on until the perfect day.

Questions for Discussion:

1 Vs. 18 why is the word "fallen asleep" used instead of the term "dead"? In I Thess. 4:14 the word "sleep" is used, while in I Thess. 4:16 the word "dead in Christ" is used. Why?
2 Vs. 22 gives Arminianism a nice text, someone said one time. Consider, however, that you can prove most anything from the Bible if you tear it out of its context. Establish the context (e.g. vs. 23).
3 If Christ is not risen, our faith is vain. He IS risen, and our faith is fruitful, or result-ful (vs. 17). What then is faith? An activity, a non-activity or what?

LESSON 48

BECOME SOBER

I Cor. 15:23-34

In choosing this caption I attempt to express that we should keep seeing the trees but also the forest. I mean, we must not lose ourselves in details in this pasage and miss Paul's argument against the anti-resurrectionists. What are the conclusions if Christ is not risen? We came upon five of them in the previous Outline. But, says Paul, after he gave those five, Christ IS risen. Then Paul broadens out on the power of the Conquering Christ (23-28). But in vs 29-33 Paul is back again destroying the philosophy of the heretics. And ends this pericope with the summons: wake up, sober up, shame on you. Let this be enough.

Vs. 23-28. The All-conquering Christ

When will this resurrection be? Some heretics were saying that it had been already (II Tim. 2:18). No. the resurrection lies ahead of us. But there is order in the affairs of Christ's Kingdom (vs. 23). First Christ arose, then, when Christ comes back, we shall arise. It marks the end of this dispensation (vs. 24). Vs. 24-28 are best explained in the light of the Commentary we have in the Catechism, Lord's Days 19 and especially 48. As sitting at God's Right Hand, the exalted Christ is King. As God's covenant Servant (Isa. 53:12) He delivers up the Kingdom to God by reducing the powers-that-be, to prisoners. He strips the enemy (the devil, antichristian world and all who devise wicked counsels against Christ's Word) he strips them of their power and puts His heel on their necks This is a process. Ps. 8 and Ps. 110 have prophesied of these things, and Rev. 19:11-16 see it fulfilled. We are today living in the process indicated by the Catechism when the Kingdom is reaching its "full perfection". Vs. 25, 28 place the enemies under Christ's footstool. Then Christ has brought the Church to the Day of Vistory. God, in Christ is become King of kings and Lord of lords. The battlefields is cleared the divinely ordained conflict of Gen. 3:15 is consumated.

Vs. 26. Behind all the enemies, forever pushing them on against us, is the power called death. He is with us until the end, for the saints are dying one by one. Death has been conquered at Jesus

resurrection, but not formally dispatched. That will come at Jesus' return. Then, after all this history is accomplished, God, in Christ, will bring about the resurrection of our bodies. There will be one resurrection. That explains the "order" of vs. 23.

In vs. 29 Paul returns to annihilate the error of the antiresurrectionists. If there is no resurrection, what shall they do who are (being) baptized for the dead? (vs. 29). I do not know what this means. I offer the opinion that vs. 29 ought to be explained in the light of vs. 30. In Corinth particularly baptism marked them off as Christians, and thereby marked them off as targets of persecution. Their baptism pointed the martyrs to the hope of life after death. But, if Christ is not raised, what a predicament. They faced martyrdom for baptism gave nothing "for the dead". Why expose ourselves to dangers (of Christ's enemies) every hour, if Christ Himself capitulated to the enemy i.e. is not raised, is still dead? I die daily, says Paul (vs. 31) as in Romans 8:36. I do it rejoicing in the doctrine which I taught you.

And, ye Corinthians, I fought with beasts at Ephesus (vs. 32). I tend to explain this literally. But I realize Nero is called a lion in II Tim. 4:17 and the wicked men in Ephesus could by that same token be called "beasts". In either case, Paul was threatened with death. If there is no resurrection men might say: let us live voluptuously, the present we have, the future is insecure. Awake, says Paul sober up in a righteous way. Shame on you that I have to go to such lengths to prove a fundamental of our faith. Let it be enough. And they that have the Spirit of Christ will say: it is enough, we have erred, we shall obey the Word of the Lord.

Questions for Discussion

Our present Outline is drawn against the back ground of persecution. That easily becomes an abstraction to us in our modern day. Discuss the reality of persecution today.

2 Discuss the danger, especially to youth today (in the Service and at home) of living out of the philosophy of "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die". That is a way of life and it is diametrically opposed to the Faith-life.

3 How do you avoid Dualism in vs. 25? If you avoid that, how do you avoid abstraction?

4 "God may be all in all" vs. 28. What does that mean?

A JAPANESE CUSTOM

Most Japanese do not get married through their own choice or selection, but they are contented with marriage arranged by their parents or friends. To a Japanese wife her husband is the "lord". She speaks of him as "shujin" meaning master or boss. While in America the wife walks side by side with her husband, a Japanese wife lags behind, walking a step or two after him. Nor is she helped with her coat by her husband who on the contrary is helped by her in putting on his coat.

BOOK REVIEWS

JOHN VIS
Edgerton, Minnesota

INDIAN DRUMS AND BROKEN ARROWS, by Craig Massey. Publishers Zondervan Publ. House. Price $2.00.

The setting of our story is in the days of the Revolutionary War. The English are influencing the Indians to plunder, murder, and terrify the settlers. To make matters worse, there are a few traitors to the American cause who are helping the English and Indians in their evil deeds. Such is the situation in our story.

Jeff Lockwood, a wonderful, reliable young man, plays an important role, although he is only sixteen years of age. The years before the opening of our story Jeff's father, Sam Lockwood, had gone to Fort Stanwix, some distance through dangerous territory, to the west. He had promised to return in the fall, but as yet they had received no word from him. As spring comes Jeff decides to go west in an attempt to locate his father. Since there are few who dare to venture out for fear of Indian attacks, Jeff leaps at the first opportunity he receives to travel with someone. Thus we find him traveling the Mohawk valley with one, Gustave Kittle, whom Jeff likens to an old lazy snapping turtle. He is supposedly taking two wagon loads of grain to the settlers in the west.

After ten days of traveling they reach Oatfield where Stiles Warehouse and Store is located. Mr. Stiles knows Jeff's father, but can tell Jeff nothing of his present whereabouts. He shows a distrust for Kittle and tries to convince Jeff to travel no farther with him. Jeff, however, is determined to go farther west as soon as possible. As a result we soon find him held prisoner at gunpoint by Kittle and a friend. From this point the story progresses rapidly in a series of thrilling adventures.

Yes, the adventures are thrilling and wonderful, but the spiritual life presented in the book is also wonderful. We meet with two men who manifest a deep faith in God. The first is Carl Ives, a pioneer scout, from whom Jeff receives a vast amount of knowledge. not only of the art of scouting, but al a better knowledge of God. The other is Mr. Watson, a missionary who has gone west to serve the settlers and Indians.

The book is almost entirely free from such religious teaching as is found in most Christian ficton of today. What little objectionable material there is, is by no means dangerous. The book may be highly recommended. Our younger readers will be especially delighted with it.

SCHUILER

(Continued from page 20)

may not be reproduced nor certain sinful words repeated. But if it be his purpose to reproduce the best side life, or life **as it ought to be,** he fin

that not a few things are too sacred to be imitated (for instance The Lord's Supper)" Idem. p. 32

If it is true as the committee suggests that **certain** sinful deeds may not be reproduced, nor **certain** sinful words repeated, upon which basis then may **any** sinful deeds be reproduced, or **any** sinful words repeated? And on the other hand if there are not a few things too sacred to be imitated, why then are not all sacred things too sacred to be imitated? Are not such institutions of God such as marriage, the family, the relationship of husband and wife, of parents and children, and such actions as prayer, penitence and worship all too sacred to be imitated, just as well as the Lord's supper? Hence it must be evident that it is impossible for a Christian to reproduce life by impersonation, neither **as it is** because it is **sinful,** nor **as it ought to be** because it is too sacred. One can never play with life, either in its virtues, or its vices, and be acceptable in the sight of God. And the Christian who can look upon these things, and never feel the abomination of it, has already corrupted his own soul.

Hence I consider it wrong for any of our young people to take part in these dramatic plays, and woe unto the Consistories and Christian School Boards who are negligent in their divine calling as to endorse them.

P.S. I have not been receiving any questions of late. Let me hear of some of your problems young People.

ATTENTION ALL SERVICEMEN!

How would you like to have a hand in writing an issue of *Beacon Lights?* You would? Swell!

The April issue of B.L. is planned to be an all servicemen's issue with features, letters, and articles by and about service men. Here's what you can do: send us a letter (include a snapshot if at all possible) telling us about yourself, your activities, and observations.

Those of you who have written lately, write again; this is something special. For you who have yet to write your first letter to B.L., it's a good time to start.

Send all letters and pictures to:

Military Mailbag
c/o Kenneth Ezinga
1743 Alto Ave., S.E.
Grand Rapids 7, Michigan