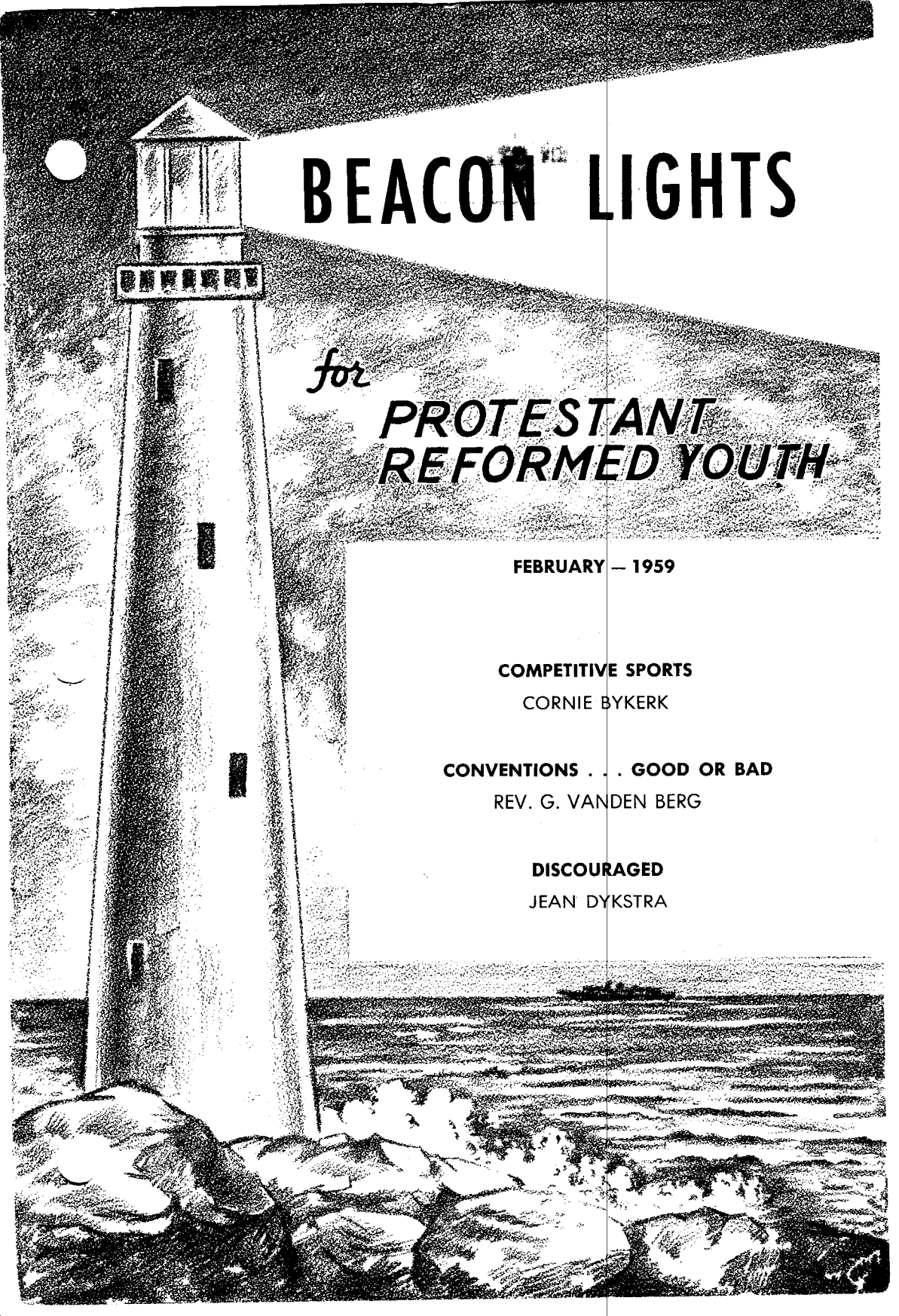

BEACON LIGHTS

for

PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

FEBRUARY — 1959

COMPETITIVE SPORTS
CORNIE BYKERK

CONVENTIONS . . . GOOD OR BAD
REV. G. VANDEN BERG

DISCOURAGED
JEAN DYKSTRA

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FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

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Competitive Sports

Their Place in the Christian's Life

CORNIE BYKERK

Our feature writer for this month is Cornie Bykerk, a member of First Protestant Reformed Church. He attends the newly organized Kalamazoo Young People's Society. Cornie is a graduate of our Adams Street Christian School and is now attending the Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He is working toward an A.B. in education with a major in Physical Education. Cornie has always shown interest in competitive sports and is well qualified to write on this timely subject.

We are living in a competitive age. Almost every thing we engage in is associated with competition in some manner. Competition breeds forth organization. To be competitive an organization or individual must produce organized efforts. Sports are competitive in nature. The question whether or not sports should be organized is very significant. Many people confuse the terms physical education, recreation, and sports. Although they have a similar nature they are each specific fields. Physical education is a field of endeavor which has as its aim the development of physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially fit individuals through the medium of physical activities. Recreation is a worthwhile socially accepted leisure experience that provides immediate and inherent satisfaction to any individual who voluntarily participates in the activity. The field of sports is an organized competitive branch of both physical education and recreation. Everyone should participate in some form of physical education and recreation in as much as neither require any specific skill. When an individual has a desire to develop a skill he participates in sports.

All three of these areas of physical activities have been growing by leaps and bounds in the past half century. The sports world of today is fascinating to say the least. Millions of people are participating in sports yearly. It can not be determined how many more millions are spectators of these same events. Organized sports have been with us a comparatively short time when we consider that competition came into existence soon after the beginning of time. We compete in almost every thing we do. Our entire educational system is based on competition. Competition provides us with a unique stimulus to perform to our very best.

Most people will grant the fact that competition in itself can be good. The question then is raised whether or not competition has to be associated with sports. The primary objective of all sports and games is to win. Take for example a simple game of checkers or chess. If one of the two players does not care whether he wins or loses, there is no sense in playing the game. The object is to win. If both players do not compete for the victory there is no contest. The same is true of any sport. Therefore we see that sports are necessarily competitive in nature.

Sports provide the individual who possesses physical talent the opportunity to develop his various skills. At the same time it provides the participant with a wholesome form of recreation. There is a strong correlation between the development of our physical and mental facilities. A strong body does not necessarily produce a strong mind, but seldom does a weak body produce a strong mind.

One of the major objections to participation in organized competitive sports is that they are performed during leisure time. Some people feel it is a waste of leisure time to participate in sports. To such people sports are sin in disguise. They feel that sports are a temptation to the Christian, and if the individual is to participate in any organized sport he should only compete with those within his church. They feel that leisure time could better be used for spiritual study and similar activities. It is true that sports can be over emphasized and in many cases are. It is imperative that we do not forsake our spiritual life for our physical well being. No matter how strong the physical body may be, the mind is weak if it is not spiritually strong. We must balance the use of our leisure time. There

is an increasing need for spiritual enlightening. We will never fulfill this need on earth. Just as Bible study strengthens the spiritual body, participation in sports strengthens the physical, mental, emotional, and social atmosphere of our bodies.

Sports are beneficial to the spectator as well as the participant. In many ways the spectator is challenged just as much as the participant. On many occasions our character is given the real test. Every athletic contest provides a winner and a loser. Both have equal opportunity to exhibit Christian sportsmanship.

Frequently the objection is raised that we as Christians must not entertain ourselves by competing with people outside the church. There is a grave misunderstanding of what an athletic contest really is when this objection is raised. We must understand that when we play outsiders in athletic contests we are playing against them, not with them. Our lives are filled with circumstances in which we must meet the world. We live with the world, but we are not one of them. Our physical bodies are the same whether we are in the church or of the world. Many of our competitive sports can be indulged in within the circles of various churches. It is difficult to conceive of a reasonable objection of competing in athletics against other church groups. Certainly the fact that our opponent may not be Protestant Reformed is not a logical basis for an argument against competitive sports. Success in competitive sports is determined by the physical skill of the individual not his religion.

Competitive sports are beneficial to both sexes, young and old. Women are in need of physical activities just as well as men. The physical activities for women are geared to fit their physical aptitudes. In many ways participation in organized competitive sports is like eating. If an individual eats the right amount of food and the right kind of food, it will have beneficial results. However, if he eats too much food and does not eat the right kind of food, it may have harmful results. Competitive sports are very similar. If a sport is over emphasized, it may be harmful; whereas, if it is adapted to one's personal needs, it will be helpful. Almost everything that is done in excess is sin. Therefore it is imperative that the Christian maintain a well balanced physical life. Sports can play an important role in every person's life. Pleasure comes from engaging in the activity. Competitive sports are only a small part of the Christian's life. It matters not if one is young or old, rich or poor, strong or weak, active or bedridden, man or woman, or boy or girl, competitive sports can contribute to the welfare of the individual.

EDITORIAL

Creeping Corruption

C. H. WESTRA

As most every high school student of modern American Literature knows by heart:

"The fog creeps in
On little cat feet."

Whether poet Sandburg was writing only of the fog that occasionally envelopes his beloved Chicago, or of the fog that clouds one's thinking, or perhaps to both, we can only speculate; for philosophers, theologians, and even politicians have known for ages past that the beclouding of the intellect is most effective when it "comes in on little cat feet."

In contrast, — a daring, blatant lie may be received for a short while, but generally it is soon identified as such and loses its impact on the intellect. However, a tradition, a superstition, or just an attitude can greatly influence our thinking in spite of our disagreement with the principle involved.

Allow me to illustrate: The popular Christmas carol "Joy to the World" with its

objectionable first verse ("Let every heart prepare Him room") has been sung in our Sunday School programs and in our schools or many years. It has been taught by dedicated teachers whose devotion to their students and to the proper teaching of our religious concepts is beyond reproach, by teachers whose sacrifices for the sake of their pupils continue unrewarded and often unappreciated. To suppose that these dedicated teachers were attempting to propagate a false doctrine is unthinkable; yet because this song has been accepted for so long, we had begun to pass it along to the children of the church, although it contains a doctrinal statement contrary to our belief. This song, like certain phrases, e.g. "prayer changes things" and concepts, e.g., that any experience in the Christian's life could be other than blessing, have infiltrated into our thinking so unobtrusively, and have become so firmly entrenched, that we easily and often fail to question their authenticity.

As youths in the more formative ages, we should be even more alert for these creeping fogs of the intellect. First, because we are now collecting the concepts which will be ours throughout our adult life and should by all means, attempt to gather only those worth having. Secondly, the deeper such a mental paralysis has entrenched itself, the more difficult it becomes to rid one's self of it.

Christ once said, "be ye as wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves." The latter is generally accepted, but the former is often glossed over. To be wise as serpents is to be discerning of that which is not obvious, both offensively and defensively. In a word, being wise as a serpent is never being "fogged in."

CHRISTIAN LIVING

A Protestant Reformed World and Life View

REV. H. HANKO

Common Grace!

What memories that term brings to the minds of those who are members of our Protestant Reformed Churches. For it was in opposition to this theory developed by the Christian Reformed Church culminating in the Synod of 1924 that is the main historical reason for the establishment of our denomination.

In our discussion of a world and life view which is based upon Scripture, it is impossible to ignore the theory of Common Grace. For this dogma, established by the Church, has much to say about this subject. By its very nature, Common Grace speaks of the world and life view of the Christian in the world; of his attitude towards unbelievers and the fruits of their labors as they apply themselves to the creation about them and produce the fruits of their scientific and intellectual efforts.

In this article I am particularly concerned with the view itself. If the Lord wills, we may treat the world and life view that is logically implied in it in a future article.

And I am not now so much concerned with the first point, for that does not have the immediate relevance to our subject which warrants a detailed discussion. The first point has to do with God's attitude of favor toward all men in the whole creation. There is a sense, according to this point, in which God loves all men, bestows upon them many temporal blessings to reveal His favor, and makes them conscious of His earnest desire to save them. This favor is revealed in the rain and sunshine He sends upon them, the blessings of prosperity and health, riches and honor; but especially is this favor shown in that He sends to them all the offer of the gospel by means of which they have a chance to be saved if they will accept the gospel and receive it as their own. There is no need now to show

that this first point is obviously Arminian, subtracting greatly from the sovereign work of God in the preaching of the gospel powerfully to save His elect.

Beyond a doubt there is an organic connection between the three points so that the second and third points are logically related to and follow from the first. But in a discussion of this sort, it is perhaps not necessary to go into this intimate relation between the points, but merely to concentrate on the second and third points which have more direct bearing on our subject.

The second point has to do with the particular subject of the restraint of sin by an inward operation of the Holy Spirit upon all men. If God had not intervened after the fall, according to this view, man would have fallen into the state of bare animal existence, losing even his rationality and morality. He would have been incapable at worst of doing anything above the level of the beast of the field. At best, he would have become so totally vicious in all his acts that human existence upon earth would have been impossible. He would immediately have killed every body in sight if he could, lost all regard for even an external moral conduct, and sunk into the morass and slough of the lowest degenerate whose life is morally and spiritually below the level of an animal.

But God intervened with His Holy Spirit in such a way that the complete breaking forth of the sin of man is somewhat restrained. The Holy Spirit operates upon the heart of all men in such way that they cannot sin and do not sin as much as they otherwise would.

The result of this restraint of sin is that the natural man who is unregenerate and unsaved is capable of performing many good deeds which are good in the sight of God, yea, which will even abide into eternity. He is capable of moral and civic good and righteousness, of making astounding progress in all branches of learning and human endeavor; and with these things in his hands, he stands before God expecting and receiving the evident approval of God upon what he does. These good things which meet with God's approval are many and various. He, with the powerful influence of the Spirit within him, lives a good life in which he contributes much toward the benefit of his fellow man in financial gifts, in good deeds, in the good things of life. He develops beautiful music and art in which true Scriptural though and ideals are conveyed and communicated to those who will listen and look. He establishes wonderful systems of philosophy in which he comes even to the knowledge of God imperfect though it may be. He aids and abets man's desire for the better life with the products of scientific achievement which mitigate the power of the curse upon the creation and man and go a long way towards making man's life fruitful and happy, relieved of cares and fears. And all that he does meets with God's approval and satisfaction, so that what he produces is of sufficient value to be preserved for eternity.

That this is the view of Common Grace can be shown from the three points themselves and the texts and Confessional references which were used to support this view. But it can also be shown that this is the case from writings which men addicted to this view have produced in years gone by.

In a book entitled "Christianity And Classical Civilization" written by Ralph Stob, we read for example, "Reformed theology also says that there is common and special grace. In common grace and its blessings all men as men can share. Special grace is that which is received by the elect alone. Now, it is the common grace of God which has been given bounteously to the people of ancient Greece and Rome. Because of that grace their civilizations attained the heights. Through that common grace Socrates, Plato, Sophocles, Pheidas, Homer, etc., received the insight into truth and put it in the forms which have come down to us . . . It is by means of this doctrine that the explanation is found for all the good present in the teaching and the life of people who have never heard the Gospel." p. 28.

A little later he writes, "The Reformed view pictures the world of antiquity as neither totally corrupt nor altogether good. It does not view the course of the history of the pagan peoples as only downward on the steep road to the abyss. Nor again does it see humanity in antiquity climbing higher and higher until it finally scales the heigh of thought characteristic of Christian teaching. Rather it views the situation as a com-

bination of both. There are trends and movements pointing upward. Again there is much that points downwards toward ruin and destruction. The Providence of God does not lead only to a long list of zeros so that the total effect is negative. But through the negation at times and again along side it in another direction there is positive working." p. 32.

Again, "To return now to a further elucidation of this doctrine of common grace as applied to pagan civilization. In surveying that civilization one can maintain that this grace operated not only negatively but also positively. Its sole function was not to restrain the various evil tendencies, to hold sin in check. There was not only a working of the Spirit by which the minds of men saw the inconsistencies and the folly of their views, so that by their reasoning they felt themselves led astray and into deeper struggles . . . But often through their thinking they came upon bits of truth which gave them a measure of satisfaction and a measure of contentment and joy." p. 35.

Then there appears some comment on the various products of this Spirit in the old pagans with the conclusion that "Such a development was positively in the direction of Christianity which called for faith on the part of the individual in Jesus Christ and God." p. 37.

There are a few other quotations which I would like to call to your attention, but this must evidently wait.

TRUTH VS. ERROR

Conventions . . . Good or Bad

REV. G. VANDEN BERG

There are things in life concerning which it may be axiomatically said that they are either true or false, good or bad. For example, this may always be said with respect to the truth of God as revealed in Christ Jesus in contrast to the heresies of men and the doctrines of devils. The former is good because it is right. There are no *ifs* or *ands* about it. When we are told or admonished to be holy in all things, there is no room for argumentation. God says, *"Be ye holy."* He speaks the truth. His word is good. All of this is indisputable.

Likewise the lie and vain babble of men, always contradicting the truth, is bad. It is *per se* bad. Thus, for example, no amount of reasoning with all the *"yes buts"* and/or *"there's another side"* can make good the abominable lie that *"man is not by nature totally corrupt"* and that *"salvation is graciously offered by God to all men without distinction."* Such lies are inherently evil as the truth is good.

There are, however, other things in life concerning which it cannot be axiomatically stated that they are either true or false, good or bad. One of these things which is of concern and interest to us at present is the matter of conventions, particularly our annual Young People's Conventions.

Are they good? Or are they bad?

Perhaps one will say that it is too early to talk about conventions. We are still in the heart of winter (20 degrees below zero here in the suburbs of Chicago a couple days ago) and conventions are things we think and talk about when we begin to swelter in the summer heat. That this is not true will be readily admitted by those who have sweat and toiled even in the cold of winter in making preparations for those mid-summer events. That it is true will probably be claimed by those who belong to a society that from August to July forgets about conventions and then suddenly find themselves faced with the assessment-bill, conveniently ignored but now realistically overdue. But, then, they would also admit how wrong this omission of convention-thinking has been.

Yet, it is not our purpose now merely to arouse in you a convention-consciousness but we are rather trying to stimulate in you some serious thinking about a deeper matter, — *the good and/or bad of conventions!* Merely to be convention-conscious may be

good but it also may be very bad! That depends! Now the matter for us to determine is: *"Which is it for me?"* Let us not be too hasty in answering this but remembering that a proper answer can be found only in the way of truthfully ascertaining what our individual attitude toward and conception of a convention is, we had better do a little convention-thinking first.

Right now, I am going to do a little thinking on paper. I'm going to think of the bad as well as the good even though the former hurts while the latter leaves me with a wonderful feeling of gratitude as I look in retrospect to some of our conventions. To be able to write only of the good in conventions would afford great pleasure but then justice would not be done to our *Beacon Light's* department. We must see *TRUTH vs. Error.*

Error there is and I think that one of the first errors in convention that ought to be corrected before August 1959 is one in which both the parents and the young people must share the guilt. Young people sometimes like to use the generally accepted *good-convention* as a pretense for their own wrong doing. They really don't care about the *Convention* but what they have in mind is to get away for a few days from parental control and supervision. They have in mind a good time in their own way. The convention only serves as a wonderful excuse for this purpose. Why, they may even prevail upon dad to let them have the family car since they are pursuing such worthy aims as attending the convention of the young people of the church. When then these *adroits* make their appearance, they spoil the whole thing. They are restless, fidgety and sometimes even disturbing during the speeches. Business meetings they seldom attend but you see them literally flying helter-skelter in their cars. When the day's activity is finished, do they retire at a reasonable hour for their assigned places of lodging? No, for the curbs of parental restraint (if any) are now lifted and they apparently have no regard for those who have kindly opened to them their homes. And nothing is said yet of some of the conduct that by its being mentioned would only disgrace these pages. We are confident that those who practice such convention errors comprise a small minority but *"a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"* and, consequently, it must be uprooted.

In 1959 the convention is to be in Oak Lawn and it may be said that if any (we hope that there are none) have such evil convention-intentions, you are *NOT* extended a cordial welcome. We rather you did not come if you are going to bring these evils with you. You do not help us to achieve a successful convention, a goal toward which we are striving for months. You only mutilate our plans and mar our work and make our convention a disgrace to those round about us. We don't want this and so we politely ask you, "Please stay away if you want to act like that. If you may do those things at home, then stay there, and if not, then don't do them while you are at convention."

And as to the parents!

Probably in many instances they are not aware of the behaviour and mis-behaviour of their children at convention. They may assume that it is good for young people to attend the convention. They erroneously take this as an axiomatic truth and it may even gratify them no little bit that these children show such enthusiasm and interest. This is a serious error. They forget that if the child is not prepared for the convention, (and not only in years) the convention obviously is not prepared for the child. We must remember that to really attend a convention involves preparation, training and maturity. We cannot simply ship our young peole to the convention site as cattle-men ship their live-stock to the market. If we do, the task of leading them falls upon the leaders of the convention but in directing so many at once, it is inevitable that some of impetuous ones will break the pen and run wild. Training begins at home. There our young people must be thoroughly instructed in the *"whys, hows, wherefores, etc."* of conventions. Do you, parents, know why John or Mary want to go to the convention? Do you discuss with them the purposes of convention so that it may become evident before they go whether they really have an interest? When they return, do you inquire into the fruits and benefits they have derived during these days away from home? Do you impress upon them the truth tha

(Continued on page 15)

First Senior Reports

CLARICE NEWHOF

Left to right. Front row — Bud Bult, Jim Jonker, Don Faber, John Bult, Kent Vink. Second row — Alice Hanko, Marcia Newhof, Eileen Van Baren, Louisa Looyenga, Elaine Bult, Mary Pastoor. Third row — Beverly Hoekstra, Carlene Oomkes, Thelma Pastoor, Clarice Newhof, Gordon Ondersma, Dave Ondersma, Rev. C. Hanko. Absent are Bob Decker, Don Doezema, Christine Faber, Oscar Faber, Dan Meulenberg, Bill Oomkes, Carol Pastoor, John Velthouse.

The Senior Young People's Society of First Church in Grand Rapids consists of twenty-three members and we meet every Tuesday evening. Our president is Rev. C. Hanko, with the other offices held by Bob Decker, Vice Pres.; Clarice Newhof, Secretary; Jim Jonker, Treasurer; and Dan Meulenberg, Vice Secretary-Treasurer.

We have been studying Acts 16 and 17 for our Bible discussions. These lessons are very interesting and instructive. We also have very interesting after-recess programs. One evening Dan Meulenberg and Christine Faber presented their pro and con views on "A Prayer Day for Peace." For another program Beverly Hoekstra read a paper on "The Christian's Thanksgiving." When we visited our Holland Young People's Society in November, Bob Decker gave his views on "A Christian's Financial Obligations, both Church and Civic."

On December 16, Creston's society joined our society to sing Christmas carols at the Holland Home and at the home of Rev. and Mrs. Ophoff. After caroling we met together in our church basement for a Christmas party.

We have had two weeks' vacation now but we hope to meet again the first Tuesday in January.

We are thankful that we as young people may meet together to study God's Word and hat we may edify one another in word and in song in our social hour. May God bless us and lead us that we may glorify His Name and ever remain faithful to the truth of His Word.

The Book of Acts

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

REV. H. C. HOEKSEMA

IV. At Jerusalem, 21:17 to 23:30 (continued)

B. Paul's Defense before the Mob, 22:1-23

1. How does Paul establish himself as a genuine and loyal Jew? 1-6
   a. How does he address his audience? vs. 1
   b. In what language does he speak? What effect does this have?
   c. How does he introduce himself? vs. 3
      1) Why does he mention that he was brought up in Jerusalem and at the feet of Gamaliel?
      2) What does he mean when he says that he was "zealous toward God"?
      3) What does he mean by the words "as ye all are this day"?
      4) What is the significance of the fact that when speaking of himself as being zealous he uses "was" and when speaking of his audience he uses "are"?
      5) Why does he mention his former persecution of the church in this connection?
2. Paul's conversion-narrative and his calling as an apostle. 6-16
   a. Are there any differences between the narrative here and as told by Paul himself and that in Acts 9 as told by Luke? If so, how do you explain them?
   b. How is it to be explained that the Jews did not interrupt Paul as soon as he mentioned Jesus of Nazareth?
   c. What does Paul emphasize in regard to the reputation of Ananias?
   d. What is the main point of this narrative as a part of Paul's defence before the Jews? What does Paul want to emphasize?
   e. Make plain that in this defence Paul at the same time proclaims the gospel of Christ.
3. The narrative of Paul's return to Jerusalem and of the vision he received there. 17-21
   a. At what visit of Paul to Jerusalem did this incident take place?
   b. Is this vision recorded in Acts 9? How is Paul's leaving Jerusalem explained there? Is there conflict between the two records?
   c. Why, with a view to his defence, does Paul here mention this vision?
   d. What took place in this vision?
      1) What did the Lord tell Paul, vs. 18?
      2) What did Paul reply? What is the meaning of this reply? Does it imply that Paul did not want to leave Jerusalem? Does it imply that Paul felt himself unqualified for his task? Had he at this time perhaps lost courage to preach?
      3) Where does the Lord say he will be sent?
   e. Is there any significance in the fact that Paul mentions the place and the occasion of this vision?
4. The reaction of his audience, 22-23.
   a. Had Paul at all succeeded really to quiet his audience?
   b. What was the reason for this violent reaction? What was the word that stirred up all their fury? Why?
      1) Did not the Jews themselves make proselytes among the Gentiles?
      2) Why then did they so strenuously object to what Paul said?

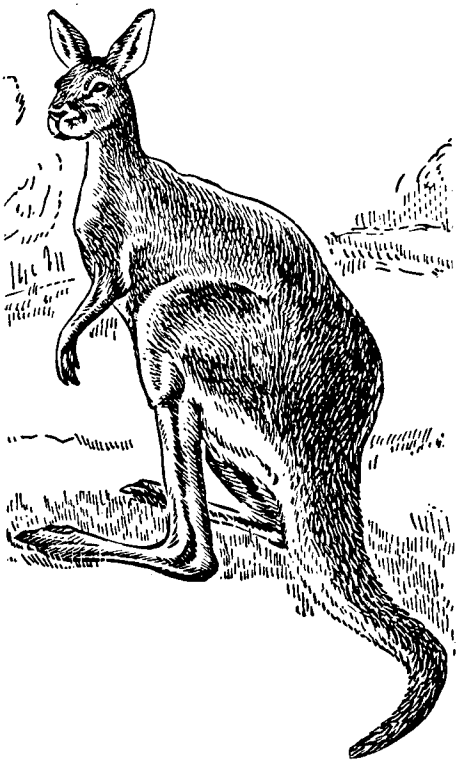
C. Paul's Narrow Escape from Scourging, 22:23-29.
1. What did the chief captain do with Paul when the mob again became violent? Where was this "castle"?
2. What did he give commandment for the soldiers to do with Paul?
   a. What was this scourging?
   b. What was to be accomplished by this scourging?
   c. Did the chief captain have no idea as to Paul's supposed crime?
   d. Had he understood what Paul had said in his defence?
3. How did Paul avoid this scourging?
   a. How far had the soldiers proceeded to carry out their orders?
   b. What was Roman law on this matter of scourging a citizen?
   c. How did they know that Paul was a citizen?
   d. What is the meaning of the chief captain's mention of having obtained his citizenship at a great price?
   e. Why was the chief captain afraid?
   f. Was it proper for Paul to avoid scourging by this means?

D. Paul's Appearance before the Jewish Council, 22:30 to 23:10
1. What was the purpose of the chief captain in bringing Paul before the council?
   a. Had he been formally accused by the council?
   b. What was the authority of this council?
2. How does Paul begin his defence?
   a. What does he mean by "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day"?
   b. How was this line of defence interrupted?
      1) Who was high priest at this time? What is known of him?
      2) What did he command? Was this proper according to the law? Why not?
      3) What was Paul's retort?
         a) Was this retort proper?
         b) Should Paul have kept silence and allowed himself to be smitten?
         c) What is the meaning of "thou whited wall"?
      4) Of what was Paul now accused?
      5) What is the meaning of his reply in vs. 5?
         a) Is it a genuine statement of ignorance?
         b) Is it irony? sarcasm?
3. What line of defence does Paul follow after this?
   a. Who were the Pharisees? the Sadducees? What were the fundamental differences between these two parties?
   b. What claim did Paul make for himself? What does he say as to reason why he is on trial?
      1) Was Paul a Pharisee at this time? Could he properly say this?
      2) Does he strike the fundamental question when he claims that he is called in question of the hope and resurrection of the dead?
      3) Was it possible for him to appeal to the Pharisee-party on this score? What was the difference between Paul and the Pharisees? Was it necessary for Paul to point out this difference? Why does he not do so?
      4) Did Paul intentionally arouse dissension in the council between the two parties?
         a) Was this effect calculated by him?
         b) Was it proper for him to avoid the issue in this way?
         c) Or did he not avoid any issue? What does this whole incident reveal as to the moral right of the council to judge Paul in any way?
         d) What was the judgment of the Pharisees, vs. 9? Did they probably say more than they wished?
4. What did the chief captain now do? Why?
5. What was the Lord's purpose with this whole turn of events?

The Giant Hopper from the "Island Continent"

AGATHA LUBBERS

Synonymous with the island continent of Australia is that interesting animal which you see depicted in this issue of *Beacon Lights*. The kangaroo is so much a part of Australia that the "giant hopper" is an integral part of the great seal and coat of arms of the continent and dominion of Australia.



The kangaroo is further significant because it represents a notable and interesting group of mammals; i.e. the marsupials or the animals with pouches. Even the small child knows the kangaroo as the animal that carries her babies about with her in a pouch on the underside of her body much like the Indian mother carried her papoose on her back.

Still, we find many other fascinating creatures who also claim our attention in this group. Not only do the colorful little koala, the curious Tasmanian devil, the opossums, the wombats, and the bandicoots belong to it, but it also includes such little-known creatures as pouched mice and moles, and even an animal that can launch itself in the air, the flying phalanger. Among this group is also an American representative. The common or Virginia Opossum and its relatives also belong to the marsupial group of mammals.

At birth, the hands and feet of these tiny bits of life are well formed and somehow they manage to scramble through th mother's fur to the pouch on her abdomen. They find it a warm, comfortable incubator, equipped with milk taps, and they become inseparably attached to these teats for the rest of their early life. The animals of this group are too young and too weak to suck, so their mother feeds them forcibly by contracting the muscles in her mammary glands. Literally, she injects nourishment down their little throats.

These animals are called "marsupials" (order Marsupialia), after a Latin word meaning "pouch." Not all female marsupials have a pouch in which to carry their young, but most of them have some sort of receptacle for this purpose.

The question immediately arises as to the origin of the name "Kangaroo." The great English explorer of the 18th century, Captain James Cook is said to have seen the kangaroo and asked what it was called. In the dialect of the aborigines of the Endeavor River the word "kangaroo" means "I do not know" and when they replied in this manner it became the word to desi nate this remarkable animal ever since.

There are many different kinds of kan-

garoos but in general they live on the ground. One lives in trees and there are the Rat Kangaroos which are also not so familiar but are about the size of a rabbit and are rat-like in appearance. Some of the Rat Kangaroos are hoppers while others move about on all fours.

At one time kangaroos were hunted extensively by the natives for meat. They are still hunted but are harder to find. The hide makes excellent leather for gloves and running shoes. The best type of track shoes are made from kangaroo leather and are excellent because they are soft and lightweight.

The Great Kangaroo or Forester, scientifically called *Macropus,* is the most familiar of all. The Great Kangaroo is the largest of the marsupials. A male, or "boomer," may stand five to seven feet high and may weigh up to two hundred pounds when full grown while the female or "flyer" is somewhat smaller.

The Great Kangaroo lives in the inland plains of New South Wales and the open forests and brush country of Queensland, southwestern Australia, and Tasmania.

As you look at the illustration you will notice that the outstanding feature of the great kangaroo is its extremely lengthy, powerful hind limbs, on which the animal hops about. The long, mighty tail serves it as a prop and also gives added impetus to its leaps.

Traveling at a normal rate, the kangaroo jumps from five to ten feet at a time; and when pressed for speed, it can cover fifteen to twenty feet in a single bound. According to one nature writer, the record jump was made when a Queensland kangaroo chased by dogs cleared a mass of dead timber ten and one-half feet high while the length of the jump was a record twenty-seven feet.

Kangaroos are often encountered in herds or mobs. During the developmental era of Australia it was not unusual to see a thousand head but today it is doubtful whether a mob of a hundred could be found. These groups travel great distances and have no fixed home. They lie down and sleep on the ground like cattle and their diet as a rule consists of vegetable matter. Their average life span is said to be fifteen years.

The young kangaroo or "joey" is carried in the mother's pouch for the first six months. Rarely is more than one raised at a time. As the joey develops, it takes more and more interest in the outside world, peering about from its safe retreat while its mother hops along, sometimes at a speed of twenty-five miles per hour. If she is hard pressed in flight she may sometimes toss her young into a thicket and lead the pursuers away. Relieved of the extra weight she will escape and then return later to retrieve her joey.

The kangaroo is outwardly timid, and does not like to attack other animals. It depends on its keen sight, hearing, and smell, and on its great speed to escape from its enemies. But if cornered, it will defend itself vigorously. It can strike hard blows with its strong hind legs, while it supports itself by the powerful tail. The long hind feet make good weapons. Each has four toes, and is armed with one claw that is especially long and dangerous. A large male with its back to a tree or wall can protect himself from a whole pack of dogs, and any individual that approaches too close is ripped to shreds by his powerful clawed hind feet.

Kangaroos are gentle in captivity. They can be tamed and have been trained on some occasions.

It is rather remarkable that all the mammals that are native to Australia are the marsupials. Darwin uses this as one of the facts in his book the *Origin of Species by Natural Selection* to prove his theory that all animals were modified by a process of natural and sexual selection from one or a few parents. Geological surveys prove, he says, that the marsupials are a primary species and that they were wiped out and became extinct in sections where they could not survive. In Australia, however, the marsupials were protected by the "wall" of water, and life remained easy for them till the coming of man.

This is specious reasoning because how would he explain the marsupials in the Americas and also why have not the marsupials changed since they were first observed in the 18 century?

Rather we must take the position that these are all creations from the hand of God and that all these creatures show forth God's handiwork and his infinite greatness.

Discouraged

JEAN DYKSTRA

So much is written now days about children. Questions are asked such as: is the child emotionally happy? is he secure? does he feel wanted? do his parents accept him? These questions are asked by those who have made a study of children's behavior. These people write much on child psychology. We do not need child psychology. We just need the Word of God.

In the first place it is necessary in this discussion to consider the place God has given the family unit. God made the family unit the basis of all society. The family is extended into the school. The state organizations are an outgrowth of the family unit. Because of the importance of the family unit the family is a tremendous educative force. Attitudes and ideas learned at home are ingrained in the children before they enter school and remain influential in adult relationships.

Since God has made the family unit of such importance in the society, He has also devised His commandments to be a guide for the family. There are three types of relationships in the family. They are the relationships of husband and wife, children to parents, and parents to children. Now God has in His abundant mercy given us a commandments to guide us in each of these relationships. The guide for the husband-wife relationship is found in the seventh commandment. The guide for the children-to-parents relationship is in the fifth commandment. So too, the sixth commandment is a guide for the relationship of parents to children. Thus we have three family commandments. Three means the Trinity, God's family. So now the first four commandments are our relationship to God and the next three are our relationships to family members making a total of seven. Seven means that God's people together have covenant fellowship of friendship with God through Christ Jesus.

In this article we will consider the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." Positively stated the sixth commandment says that we, parents and teachers, must love our children. We do love our children. We teach them to pray at a very early age. We take them to church and Sunday school. We tell them Bible stories and sing songs about Jesus. We sacrifice for a school of our own. However, these things show only one phase of the love spoken of in the sixth commandment. There is another phase, the love of the neighbor's person. The neighbor is the one who crosses our path and limits our purposes, alms, reputation and any activities which we wish to carry on. The neighbor is the one who sits next to us in church. It is the child that sits next to us. Is it possible that we should hate the person of our child? We can only answer that we do sin against all God's commands continually, so we must be sinning against the sixth command, "Thou shalt not kill" meaning thou shalt not kill the person of the child. That we do kill our children we will never confess. But we never confess any sins we commit, we love sin and wish to remain in sin by nature.

This Word of God nevertheless is spoken in our hearts and we have answered that testimony with many excuses and seemingly soothing conscience balms. These are the things parents and teachers have said. The child is spoiled, he is aggressive, he is a born tease, he is like his uncle (and by the way, it is usually the brother of the parent that the parent himself never got along with), he is selfish, he wants to be the big cheese around here, he thinks he knows it all, he is not nice like the other children, and most soothing against the testimony of God's spirit in us is the remark, he is totally depraved.

There are many more things we say. But we will consider just the last one mentioned, totally depraved. To say that the child is totally depraved is not correct. It is dangerous. It is a half truth because everyone is totally depraved and parent and teachers may not forget this. To say that children are totally depraved implies a

bias and it is not good to be biased against our children. However, there are differences between children and adults. Children do ot have a veneer like adults. But neither do they have capabilities to sin developed to the extent that adults have.

That the child may be these things that the parent says about him is beside the point at this time. We must see first the nature of hating the person of the neighbor. This hating is rooted in rebellion against God. Furthermore the person of the neighbor is not the cause of the hate. In the parable of the Good Samaritan we see the priest and Levite ignore the robbed man. They left that man to die and are therefore killing him by withholding any aid they might have given him. Next the Samaritan comes and he has compassion. All three persons saw the same dying man. The difference is that the priest and Levite in themselves had hate but the Samaritan had compassion. So it is with parents. If they have the hatred of the person in their hearts they too will leave the child to die or as will be shown later, will by their hate of the child's person actually kill. A compassionate parent, on the other hand, will ove the person of the child for God's sake. The condition of the child is not a determinant for compassion or hate on the part of the parent or teacher.

Now to return to the things that parents say about their children. It must be conceded that these things might very well be the description of the way the child acts. We will show how that the parent has by his hate of the person brought this behavior which is wicked to be manifest in the child. Paul says: "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." Col. 3:21. Provoking means to stir up, to stimulate. So parents stir up wickednesses that are in children. As was mentioned before, children are not as developed in the capabilities to sin like adults are. Now to stir up the sin in a child is to develop the capabilities to sin. It must not be thought that the child does not develop his own capabilities. He does, but not as efficiently as an adult who hates the person of the child.

When do parents begin this tunneling into the child's sinful nature so that the motions of sin have clear sailing? We say clear sailing because the young child has no veneer by which he can hide the motions of sin. The parent starts this hate of the child's person sometimes before the child is born. One must bear in mind that this hate is rooted in rebellion against God. Maybe a child is coming at the wrong time according to the plans of the parents. This is the occasion, not the cause or reason. The child has crossed the path of the parents before he is born. In fact no matter what the occasion of the crossing may be, the parent often begins the provoking early in the child's life. Moreover, intense hating may not always fall on the first child. Following through with the occasion mentioned, the parent will show his hate when the child makes his first self-will manifest. That is the signal for the hating parent to begin. The provoking starts. The parent may use diverse methods. Usually the first one he uses is to ignore the child. The child in response to this killing, because it hurts, reacts with sin. The parent is now stirring up the wickednesses within the child. A tunnel is being chiseled and the motions of sin are given a freeway. The parent capitalizes on the resulting sin of the child. He uses

(Continued on next page)

A Word of Thanks

We wish to thank those individuals and organizations who in the past months, by their letters of encouragement and generous donations, have shown the **Beacon Lights** Staff that the **Beacon Lights** is being read and appreciated.

Rev. G. M. Ophoff	$10.00
Russell E. Stadt	2.00
First Prot. Ref. Ladies' Aid	50.00
Singspiration —	
First Prot. Ref. Church	58.06
Edgerton Prot. Ref. Church	16.99
Hull Reformation Day Program	16.25
Mr. Henry VanderWal	2.00
Holland Prot. Ref. Church	25.15
Hope Prot. Ref. Church	49.96
South West Prot. Ref. Church	42.95
Oaklawn Prot. Ref. Church	26.30

the sin as a reason to hate the PERSON of the child with intensity but the parent piously calls it hating the SIN of the child. The more sins a parent can find in the child the better he feels he can answer the testimony of God's spirit in his own sinful heart. The parent who hates has countless other methods of attack. We will not discuss them here.

". . . lest they be discouraged." Since the cause for the hate of the parent is in the parent himself there is no pleasing him. The parent will never be satisfied with the behavior of the child. Now is there power in the behavior of the child to remove sin from the heart of the parent. The provoking continues so that the child is discouraged. Lest we forget, we are discussing our transgression of the sixth commandment within the family circle. These things just written are not about people of the world; but rather about the priest and Levite. Us.

There are awful consequences because of the parent's sin. God always punishes sin with sin. Just look at the time when Jacob should have gone straight to Bethel. He went to Shechem and a trail of sin and misery comes to Jacob's whole family because of Jacob's carnality. Had not God saved them, they would have been destroyed.

The immediate consequence in the child is that he is discouraged. This discouragement can be defined by describing the four phases of sin the child develops. The first is the attention-getting devices, next is the battle for power (the child will fight for a toy and then drop it), the third is revenge and the last is inadequacy response. (There are adults who have a humility but it is only the scar tissue of the final phase, inadequacy response.) A discouraged child is one who has been taught and has tragically learned to hate the person of himself. But this hatred of the person of himself is rooted in rebellion against God. When this discouraged child, hating his own person, becomes a parent and sees himself in his child, (again, this is the occasion, not the cause or reason) he must hate the person of his child. The corruption of sin goes on from generation to generation. It is easier for a camel . . .

There are other dreadful consequences. The child being hated by the parents becomes miserable and hateable. The other children will hate him and he will hate back. Teachers must watch out for this hating and may not join. There will be jealousies, and strife of all kinds. Prov. 10:12, "Hatred stirreth up strifes." Later in life the in-laws are enticed to join.

Sometimes there is love that a hated child can find. He may find it in the other parent. That parent, feeling that demand on himself for compassion, complains that the child needs more affection and he never gets enough. On the other hand, the hating parent will never talk about the child needing compassion. The parent who gives some measure of satisfaction to the child will be able to make a slave and shadow of him. For that child, the sun rises and sets on this parent so that the child dare not advance any activities on his own without the parent being involved. Suffice it to say, all the relationships in the family are distorted, lopsided and extreme.

What can be done? Nothing can be done for the world. They will love their children for self preservation and become child centered. The church, thru the preaching of the Word and by God's grace will be God centered in keeping the sixth commandment, for it is with Him with whom we have to do. Besides the ministry of the Word Paul says: "The aged women . . . . that they may teach the young women . . . to love their children," Titus 2:3-4. The aged women must first confess their sins against the sixth commandment and then teach the young women to love their children. The young women do not know they need instruction in loving their children. They say that they know their family. But really they are finding it easier to pick at the child's sins and leave their own unconfessed. It is always easier to see the sins of others. Consider David's first response when Nathan spoke to him in the case of Uriah.

The fathers may think they are not so involved as the mothers. They are not with the children as much as the mother is so they cannot be the cause of all the strife. It must be called to the fathers' attention, however, that though they spend less time with the children yet those copious moments are a tremendous influence either way. Neither may we think that Paul, being a bachelor, and never having lived with chil-

dren is therefore not qualified to speak on these things. This may not be said because Paul was informed by God that parents do not love, that they do provoke and that children are angered and discouraged.

Give our children new parents, that is, parents who walk out of the principle of the new obedience, a sanctified walk according to the sixth commandment and the child will revive. However, the child will not behave better but worse for a time. This can be explained. Those tunnels are still there but the child is happy once more, so he will speed through those tunnels since that is the only behavior he knows. But the parents must not be dismayed. Therapy, healing these tunnels, is a slow process and is a subject in itself and because of the nature of this article it cannot be discussed here.

Blessings. Peace in the family, natural affection is preserved. The rod again becomes the rod of correction rather than of hate. It becomes effective so that the same offense will not reappear three weeks later.

By the way, Paul does not lay emphasis on the rod. It seems the rod passes out of focus with the rest of the Old Testament tangible fighting against sin. The fighting against sin in the New Testament is ethical and begins first within the parent himself. The emphasis in the New Testament is on obeying for God's sake. Children will not find it hard to obey parents who serve God according to the sixth commandment. "When a man's ways please Jehovah — he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him," Prov. 16:7. Our children will obey not because they must but because they want to. So the emphasis must be on "for God's sake."

This article hits only the high spots so that if any idea herein expressed is not clear it must not be construed to indicate that the idea is incorrect but rather that explanation is insufficient due to space limitations. One warning. The world mocks about God punishing the sins of parents by more sins in the children. We may not mock. Moreover, the undersigned feels that our Godfearing parents and teachers, once they understand the nature of their sins as parents and teachers, will welcome the guide God gives us in this sixth commandment with a holy eagerness.

CHASTENING (Heb. 12:11

I know not why His hand is laid
In chastening on my life,
Nor why it is my little world
Is filled so full of strife.
I know not why, when faith looks up
And seeks for rest from pain
That o'er my sky fresh clouds arise
And drench my path with rain.
I know not why my prayer so long
By Him has been denied;
Nor why, while others' ships sail on,
Mine should in port abide.
But I do know that God is love,
That He my burden shares,
And though I may not understand,
I know, for me, He cares.
I know the sheaves must needs be threshed
To yield the golden grain.
I know that, though He may remove
The friends on whom I lean,
'Tis that I thus may learn to love
And trust the One unseen.
And, when at last I see His face
And know as I am known,
I will not care how rough the road
That led me to my home.

CONVENTIONS . . . GOOD OR BAD

(Continued from page 6)

the same authority of God which is evidenced in your parental authority over them remains upon them while they are away and that under that authority their conduct must be ordered? If not, there are errors preceding convention, the effect of which inevitably becomes manifest in convention days!

But there is much more!

We want to write yet about the good in conventions and we will attempt later to offer some suggestions as to how the evil-errors may be dispelled and the true-good cultivated but this will have to wait for our space is already taken for this issue.

We hope we have succeeded in stimulating your convention-thinking and we'd like to hear, especially from you young people, as to what your thinking is about convention. Write us! Our address is: 9402 South 53rd Court, Oak Lawn, Illinois.

News From, For, and About Our Churches

by ALICE REITSMA

Experience and understanding comes with years. Therefore, we love and honor and respect the older generation.

Mr. Peter Kooistra of 1st Church, celebrated his 94th birthday on Christmas. Think of it! Almost a century of living!

Mr. W. Kooienga, member of our churches since 1924 and now a member of S. E., passed away Jan. 17 at the age of 82 years.

Mrs. J. A. Schut, mother ond grandmother of many members in our churches, passed away Jan. 16 while at Bradenton, Florida. She is a member of Hudsonville Church.

"**An aged Christian** with the snow of time on his head may remind us that those points of earth are whitest that are nearest heaven." **E. H. Chapin**

NEWS FLASHES WERE RECEIVED FROM:

Oaklawn — The parsonage in Oak Lawn seems to be a good place to get together. The Convention Planning Group meets there, the deacons hold their monthly meetings there, the consistory meets there, and who knows what else!

Rev. H. Hoeksema will lecture March 17 on the subject: "The Virgin Birth and the Human Nature of Christ." This is sponsored by the Men's Society.

Several changes have been made in the worship service. **Praise God from whom all blessings flow** is now being sung at the beginning of the service, and individual communion cups will be used in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Holland — Something new has been added — a large pulpit Bible has been made available through the generosity of Mr. Henry Vander Kolk.

The Ladies' Aid is working on a project to repair the Psalters of the church.

A monthly offering is taken for their Transportation Association. To keep their school bus running all the way from Holland through Byron Center to Hope School each day demands much care and time and money. But Holland considers it a very "worth-while cause."

Lynden, Wash. — The Adult Bible Class is studying the Book of Genesis and is at present considering the Prot. Ref. view of the Covenant in ch. 9. The notes on their studies are sent to parties in Pennsylvania New Jersey, and N. Carolina, to eight individuals in all. The notes are well received.

S. E. Church — Ruth Moelker is down with a serious thyroid condition. According to Jan. 11 bulletin she expected to enter the hospital the coming week. We hope that the next issue of **B. L.'s** will be able to bear a favorable report on her condition.

Rev. R. Veldman and family have moved into their new home at 1543 Cambridge, S. E.

Doon — "Is an evil thought as bad as an evil deed?" That's the question to be discussed by the Doon Men's Society after recess.

Edgerton — Lots have been purchased on which they plan to build a church. A the sister congregations are helping them financially.

THIS IS WHAT GOES ON AT YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES:

Holland, Creston, Hudsonville, Hope, Oaklawn all are following the outlines on Acts in their society Bible discussions. Doon is studying Genesis. Kalamazoo is studying Romans.

Kalamazoo holds its meetings at the parsonage. They recently enjoyed a toboggan party at Echo Valley.

Creston Y. P. were host to the 1st Jr's and will return a visit to 1st Sr. during this month. Creston Society has eight members. They were pleased to have Rev. Lubbers at their service Sunday evening, Jan. 4.

Oaklawn Y. P. sponsored a supper, Jan. . Where? I don't know. The bulletin didn't say. (Not at the parsonage, was it?)

Oaklawn and S. Holland hold combined meetings once in two months.

For an after recess discussion, 1st Sr. Y. P. tackled the topic: "Lucky numbers, Right or Wrong?" They met with Hope on Sunday, Jan. 18.

YOUR FEDERATION BOARD

will have a meeting Jan. 31. They are working on a constitution for Beacon Lights. By means of this constitution they hope to define more clearly the duties and titles of those connected with the publication of Beacon Lights. They promise to publish the results of their meeting.

WE HAVE THIS TO TELL ABOUT OUR SERVICEMEN

Pvt. John M. Huizinga, from Hope Church is in Germany with his wife. He hopes to be discharged in October.

Pvt. Ira Veenstra, also from Hope, is in the army and serving in Germany. His time will also be in by June of this year.

Pvt. Jason Redder, from Hudsonville, is stationed in Kentucky. He lives with his wife away from the camp.

Pvt. Sid Stellinga, from Doon has almost completed his service in the army. He is also stationed in Germany.

John H. Blankespoor, Doon is stationed in Texas at the present time.

P.F.C. Robert Haak is a member of Oaklawn. Bob will have served his two years about the first of March. He is stationed in Germany at present but expects to come back to the States soon.

Summing it up — Hope has 4 servicemen at present, Hudsonville has 2, First has 2, Doon has 2, Oaklawn has 1, Redlands has 1. Are there any more? Do all our Servicemen receive Beacon Lights? If not, please notify the Editor.

ONE MORE THING

The Host Committee at Oaklawn reports that to date — **19 patrons have contributed $51.00** — towards the support of the 1959 Y. P's Convention. Watch the figures grow as we report them each month! But don't **only** watch! Do something about it!! Didn't you get one of those little green slips in church Sunday? Oh, you got one but you don't know where it is! Doesn't matter — here's the address:

Convention Fund
9402 S. 53rd Court
Oak Lawn, Illinois

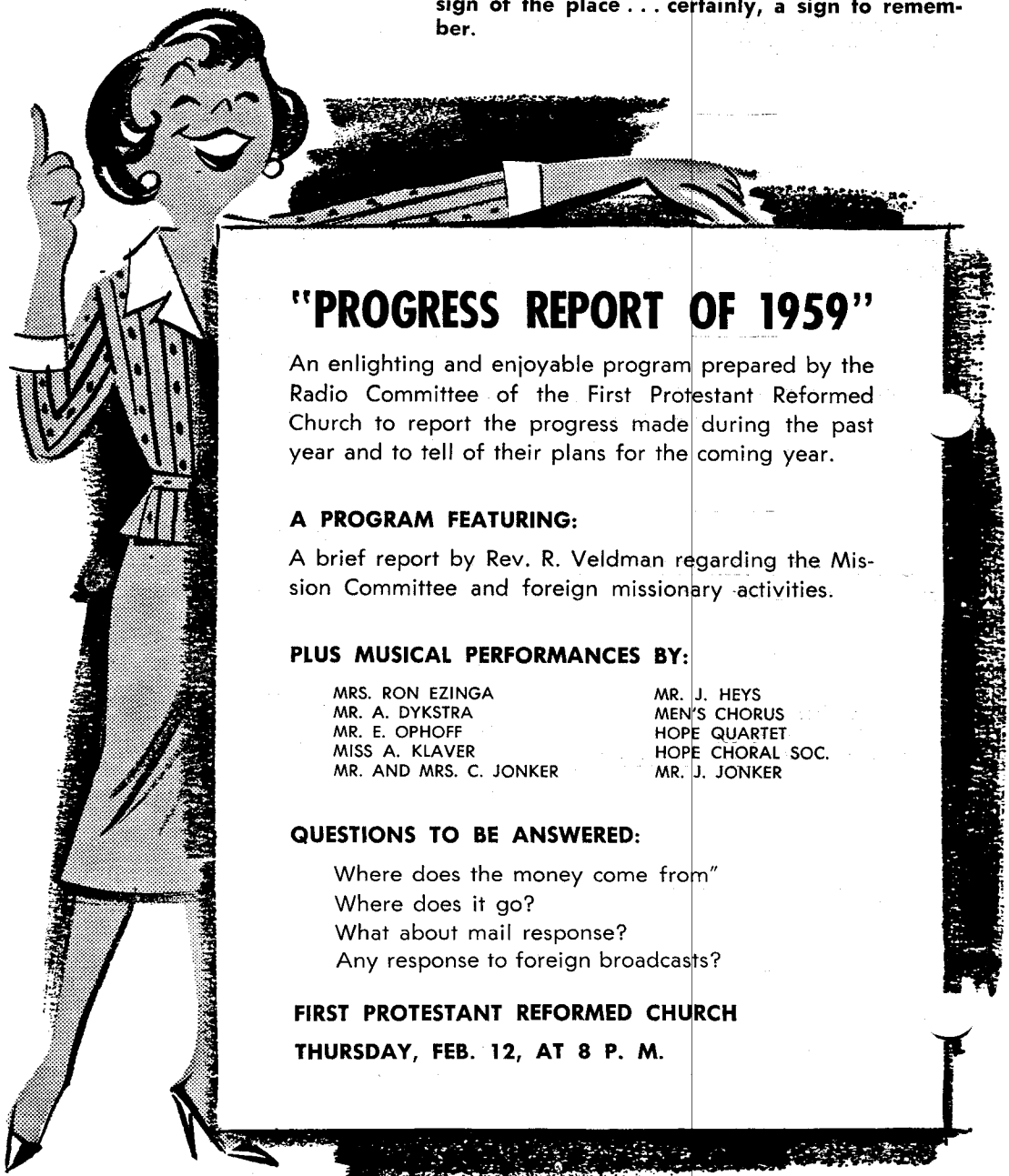
Just send what you like and then watch next month's report go skyrocketing.

P. S. It cost 54¢ in postage to get this news from there to here. Rev. Heys came all the way from Hull to bring his bulletins personally. He claims he had to come this way anyway.

STUART J. BYLSMA FEB.
1123 WORDEN ST., SE
CITY 7

Sign of the Time!

A sign of the time . . . a sign of the date . . . a sign of the place . . . certainly, a sign to remember.



"PROGRESS REPORT OF 1959"

An enlighting and enjoyable program prepared by the Radio Committee of the First Protestant Reformed Church to report the progress made during the past year and to tell of their plans for the coming year.

A PROGRAM FEATURING:

A brief report by Rev. R. Veldman regarding the Mission Committee and foreign missionary activities.

PLUS MUSICAL PERFORMANCES BY:

MRS. RON EZINGA
MR. A. DYKSTRA
MR. E. OPHOFF
MISS A. KLAVER
MR. AND MRS. C. JONKER
MR. J. HEYS
MEN'S CHORUS
HOPE QUARTET
HOPE CHORAL SOC.
MR. J. JONKER

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED:

Where does the money come from"
Where does it go?
What about mail response?
Any response to foreign broadcasts?

FIRST PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH

THURSDAY, FEB. 12, AT 8 P. M.