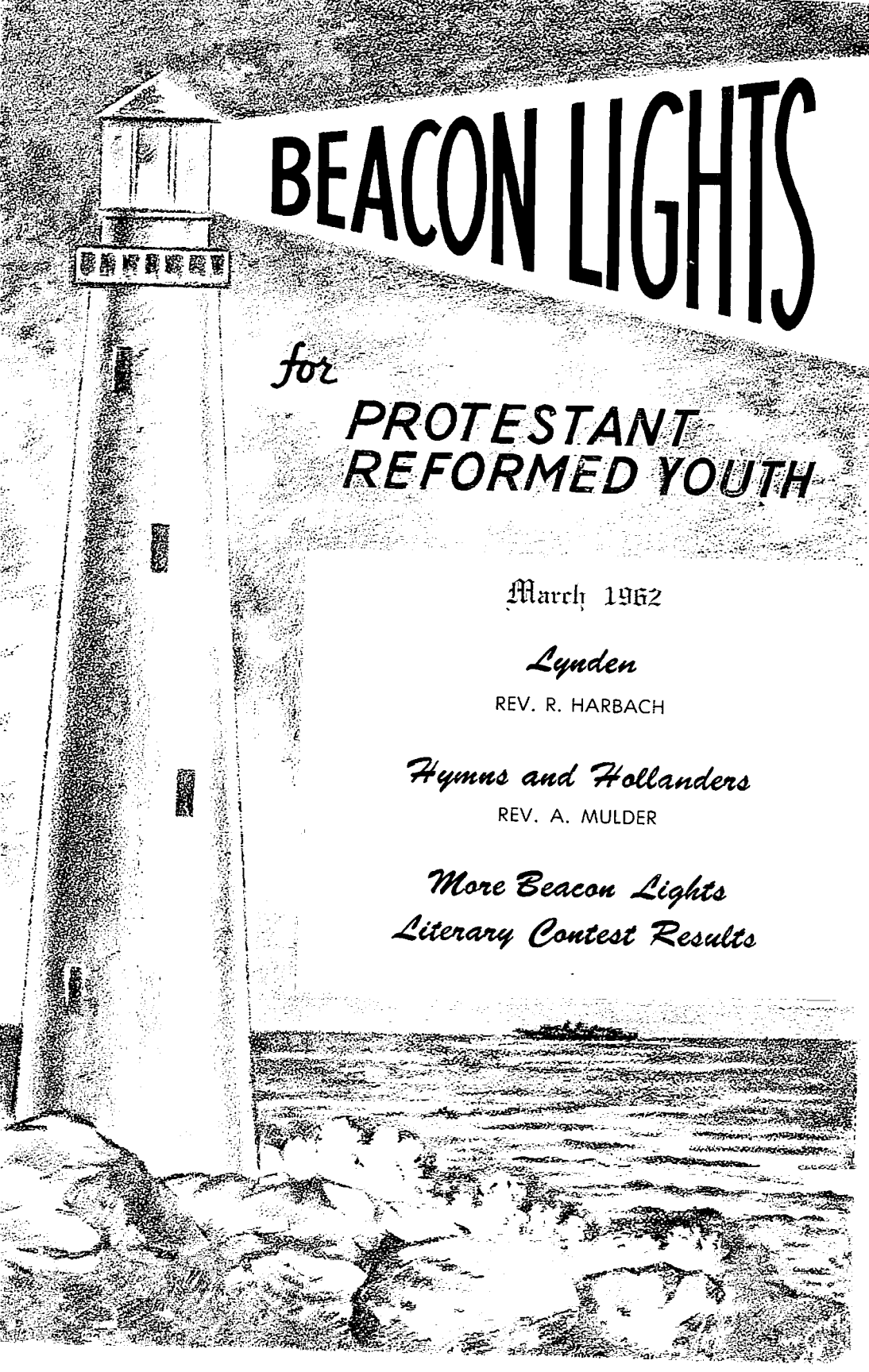


BEACON LIGHTS

for

PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

March 1962

Lynden

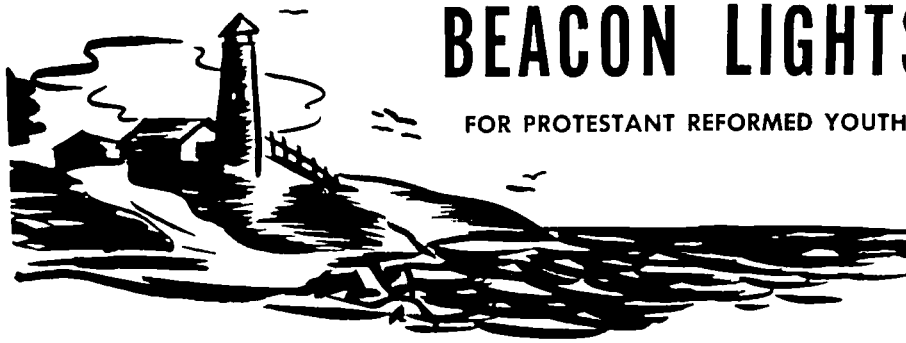
REV. R. HARBACH

Hymns and Hollanders

REV. A. MULDER

More Beacon Lights

Literary Contest Results



BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

VOLUME XXII MARCH, 1962 NUMBER 2

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LYNDEN

REV. R. C. HARBACH

The Protestant Reformed Church in the City of Lynden, Washington, is located in the Nooksack Valley of Whatcom County, at about 15 miles east of the extreme northwest corner of the U.S.A., and four miles south of the Canadian border. The area is a broad, flat valley extending from the bay thirty miles or so to the foot-hills, up against which two of our families live. One family lives practically parallel to the British Columbia border. Staggeringly beautiful mountains are all around us on all sides, even to the west, where the mountains of Vancouver Island and the mountains of islands in the Georgia Straits may be seen, so that we are almost entirely enclosed by a wall of mountains, except for a far northeastern door up in Canada. This means that usually, when the arctic winds sweep down toward us, they strike the mountains above us and are shunted out over Idaho and into Montana. So that with the warm air brought in by the North Pacific Current from Japan we usually have mild winters. But when an arctic northeast wind blows, it pours in through that door in the mountain and we have winter as bad as anywhere! The normal winter weather for us is rain, rain, so much rain that the ground almost feels like quicksand under tire and foot. If we had the space we could become poetic about our rain!

The City of Lynden is, roundly, of 2,500 population. It has two public schools and four Christian schools, two of which are grammar schools, with one junior high and a high school. There are four Christian Reformed Churches, two Reformed Churches (of America), two Baptist churches, a Methodist, an Assembly of God, a Roman Catholic, a Gospel Hall, a Kingdom Hall and a Christian Science reading room. There used to be an unincorporated group calling itself "Protestant Reformed," but which no longer exists. However, the Protestant Reformed Church is still here.

Perhaps a word about the city is in order. There are numerous noteworthy buildings throughout town, such as, the VFW, Camel's Club, American Legion, Masonic Hall, Eagles' Hall, City Hall, with police and fire departments, local medical center, newspaper weekly, Post Office, Christian Rest Home, City Park, Community Swimming Pool, and air port (not for jets).

The major industries in the area are dairying, berry farming and chicken farming. But in town we have twelve gas stations, five hardware stores, three barber shops, three drug stores, and two each of the following: stationery and book shop, super markets, bakeries, banks, dry cleaners and lumber yards. There is a department store, a trucking concern, a five-&-ten, cafes, TV stores, furniture stores, auto dealers, a J. C. Penny, a dairy, cannery and a florist.

Our congregation meets in the F.O.E. Hall, which originally was the site of a normal school, which later moved to Bellingham at the present location of the Western Washington College. Five of our families have Lynden addresses, and three have Sumas addresses. Our membership has forty-one souls and twenty communicant members. Of the latter, seven are dairymen (two of whom are still in high school). One member is an auto mechanic and berry farmer. Another is a gas station operator; another a retired farmer and working handyman; and still another is employed at an abattoir. One of our members graduated from high school last Spring and found employment at the C.P.H. in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Her membership has been transferred to our Hudsonville Church. We have two catechism classes, a Y. P. class and an adult class. Fourteen of our children are in Christian schools. We have six pre-school age children.

The manse, where pastor, wife and two children dwell in happy, often noisy, confusion, is a four bed-room house, with a partially equipped class-room in the basement. The manse is a beautiful white house with turquois roof and sparkles like a star among the best. Adjoining our property are spacious lots where we hope some day to erect our own church building.

Ours is a church where not the salvation of man, but the sovereignty of God is first; where not conditional theology, but covenant theology is taught; where not only the scarlet thread of atonement, but Scripture's golden thread of absolute predestination is preached; where never common grace, but glorious particular grace is proclaimed; where the Heidelberg Catechism is preached, taught, heard and loved; where the preaching is in harmony with the Scripture and the Reformed Confessions, and where, we trust, some of God's elect in this part of His vineyard are fed with the Bread of Life, and grow to spiritual manhood in His grace.

Editorials . . .

HYMNS AND HOLLANDERS

Although I know the hymn question is a weighty matter with our young people, I am somewhat surprized at the silence in their ranks. Possibly you are just sitting by awaiting the appearance of another's position or perhaps Synod's final decision? If so, let me encourage you not to stand idly by but pen your opinion and publish it in *Beacon Lights.*

In the meantime . . . .!

Surely the introduction of hymns into our church services would be something altogether novel. Everyone knows that! Past debates at Classis and Synod and present discussions in homes and on the street clearly establish this fact. This does not imply however that we are necessarily so unfamiliar with hymns. We have contacted the hymnal in the Christian schools and in the homes of relatives and friends. Religious records and radio programs have, to some extent, swept hymns into our hearts. Besides, special programs of some sort or another have seen us homeward bound with another hymn ringing in our ear. And occasionally many of us have gathered together about the family piano and "lifted the lid": we sang hymn after hymn to our hearts content. Yet I think it can safely be said that hymns have not enjoyed an open place in our circles as such. They have been somewhat distasteful to us and we have viewed them rather suspiciously.

Even more so, the final adoption of hymns will be something altogether mountainous. It will necessitate among many other things: the altering of an article in our Church Order, recasting our praise-book, and last but not least, convincing a goodly number of our people the value of a hymn.

One of our greatest concerns should be the "change" toward hymns.

It must not be forgotten that we have also made history when it comes to this subject. There are definite reasons why some of our members oppose hymns so forcefully. Without raising eye-brows please (!) I would like to suggest that we in the past have more or less frowned on hymns. And why? Have we judged them to be great departures from the "real" song? Have we considered them the product of Arminians and Arminian thought? When other churches adopted, or continued to adopt hymns, did we then immediately claim this to be proof of a departure in the wrong direction? And this question yet: have we perhaps taught ourselves, by implication or suggestion and then without distinction, that hymns were valueless and precarious?

I for one am not surprized at forceful objections voiced against the introduction of hymns into our church services; "echoes" always have a way of returning. We simply have not been a hymn-singing denomination. Whether this is praise-worthy or not is another matter.

Another of our greatest concerns should be the "hymn" introduced.

May we make a few comments on our Psalter? This precious book has been the object of much praise. It is a song book which contains only a select number of songs; chosen from many, many songs which at one time were afloat in the American church-world, chosen by a special committee whose task it was to gather singing material for use in the worship services. It is worth remembering that these songs afloat in the churches were based on the Psalms of the Holy Scriptures. And there were others of course! Consequently we are justified in saying that the so-called "Psalm" enjoyed wide spread use by the people of God in many sections of this country and other lands.

Our opinion of the Psalter also has been traditionally high, even though of late we are exposing some of her frailties: chief among which is her liberal versification. I take this to mean that the song-writer took great liberty, such as complete departure from the text of scripture at times, in order to versify. Hence versification quite naturally brings about more-or-less of a poetic commentary of the scriptures as well. And this means that the "Psalms" we sing are always only a metrical version of the inspired Psalms of Holy Writ. Obviously therefore our Psalter's songs are already a departure from the literal text of God's Word.

Why then insist on the Psalter? Of course, the Psalter's songs are still songs based on the Word of God which was specifically used and designed for singing. I have always seen much value in maintaining this, and this should give such songs the "edge" over all others. Many churches, beyond doubt, have recognized this basic and beautiful virtue of the "psalms," in spite of minor frailties, for no less than nine American and Canadian denominations sometime ago jointly participated in composing the Psalter from which we presently sing in our worship services. And after its publication, several other church groups adopted it for use in their churches.

What has happened in the meanwhile?

And then there are hymns, thousands of them. They vary considerably in quality and kind. The vast majority are simply the product of sweet thoughts in a Christian heart. Some of these convey cardinal doctrines taught in the Christian church such as: redemption, creation, providence, sanctification and glorification. Think of several! "What a friend we have in Jesus." "How great Thou art" and "Take my life and let it be." And there are many special occasion songs, here are two: "Dwell in me O blessed Spirit" and "He arose." Naturally these songs do not attempt to versify the very text of God's Word, but they surely convey beautiful truths which stir the righteous soul. We do not sing these in our worship services (nor am I asking that these be put on a list for that use) but some of them emphatically speak of doctrines energetically taught in our churches. Think for one moment of the covenant reality expressed in that song, "What a *friend* we have in Jesus," or the same truth in, "*Dwell* in me O blessed Spirit, gracious teacher, *friend* Divine."

Other hymns are probably more scriptural in that they express exact phrases from the Word of God. Reflect just a moment on those beauties: "We have an anchor that keeps the soul" or "There were ninety and nine." And there are many more!

Even if a goodly number of present-day hymns express untruths, this does not and should not ruin the lot.

Comparing "faithful hymns" and "psalter songs," it seems as if they essentially differ very little, except as earlier stated: the latter are resting upon a portion of scripture designed for singing. Both attempt to relay the text of God's Word, but both depart from that exact text when they versify. Consequently there is an element of poetic commentary to both hymns and psalms. Is that serious? Naturally not, for a song cannot abide *only* with the very words of the Bible and yet be a song.

Should we also find room in our singing for those beautiful hymns which express those rich and glorious truths taught in our churches, even though these hymns do not express literal portions of God's Word? Of course, and let's also call these faithful hymns.

Now what hymns would we be singing in our services if our Synod approves of this

change? Well that is a good question. As things stand now there appears to be a movement in a bad direction. For in the first place, it seems we will definitely shy away from the already-existing hymns – hymns commonly sung in the church-world. And in the second place, it seems we will lay much stress on giving birth to hymns of our own. I may be mistaken in this judgment but this seems to be the direction in which the hymn matter is moving. Of course this is a far cry from the desire of the consistory which originally overtured our Synod (via Classis East) and expressed, "in recognition of the *common use* of hymns by our people and the often expressed desire for *their* use in our church services, we appeal to your body to consider the matter and adopt measures enabling their use in our churches" (italics mine: a.m.). Our own hymns?

Hymns and Hollanders!

I do not deny the possibility of a talent along these lines in our churches, but this shouldn't move us to compose our own 'private" songs of praise. And they would be private indeed! This certainly would be a very dangerous venture. The Hollanders, with exceptions, were never known to be hymn-writers. I believe a study of hymnology will show the peace-loving Anglo-Saxons were gifted along these lines. This unique talent was theirs; we don't have everything.

What will happen? I suppose each of us has his hopes . . . . his fears . . . . and his desire: to sing the praises of ZION.

rev. a. mulder

BOOKS

The Upward Calling

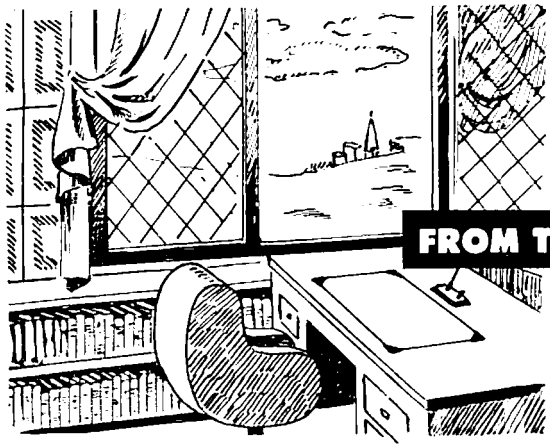
R. E. O. White – Eerdmans – 202 pp. – $3.50

The Upward Calling completes Rev. White's trilogy, the other two books being *The Stranger of Galilee* (*Beacon Lights*, June-July 1961) and *Beneath the Cross of Jesus*. One who has appreciated the Baptist minister's stylish simplicity in previous writings will not be disappointed in this book. The grand topic of the Christian life is set forth with the clarity and poetic vigor which are the genius of Reginald Ernest Oscar White.

Scripture's presentation of the Christian life includes many elements and aspects. It views the believer as an athlete, a pilgrim, and even as a slave. The new man in Christ loves, hates, fights and enjoys. In all of this, the individual child of God is called, with a high calling, to be holy and perfect as the Caller is holy and perfect. With uncompromising rigor but with invigorating appeal, author White points out how that calling must be answered by a human's life. In a marvellous section on love, he writes, "Love's thinking, in fact, amounts to a rare intellectual charity, that will say to no man contemptuously 'Thou fool!' . . . that delights in discovering more favourable interpretation and suspends its verdict until proof forces conviction, that searches out explanations that quicken sympathy—without excusing wrong—and when the worst is known, is gentle with human failings, remembering its own." Here as elsewhere, the Christian must wince as that which ought to be reveals the pitiful nature of that which so often is. But the ultimate verdict upon the high calling can only be that it is, irresistibly, an upward one. With love as with the other virtues, there is endurance for "by the unbreakable patience of Christ it never fails."

More clearly than before, White gives evidence of basic weaknesses, however. He speaks of the conditions of salvation which "are within every man's reach" and suggests, as the principle upon which we base our love to all men, that "such love . . . is the practical expression of our belief in the Creator of all men . . . who . . . become fellow-members of the body of Christ, brethren, for whom Christ died." Discerning readers will note that such infrequent statements directly contradict White's own avowed beliefs that the sinner is saved "never by his own effort" and that there are those who are part of a "dying world," which could never be the case if Christ died for all.

d. j. e.



FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

REV. R. VELDMAN

THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE (II)

"*Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?*"

Believest thou this?

"I am the resurrection and the life." To know Me is to know the Father. To see Me is to see the Father. All that belongs to life is in Me alone. If you have Me you have life everlasting. I have power over death in every and any form, spiritual and physical. I speak, and a throng no man can number from all nations and tribes and tongues hear my voice unto faith and salvation. I speak again and all that are in the graves hear My voice and come forth, the good to the resurrection of life, the evil to the resurrection of damnation.

Believest thou this?

And believest thou *this*: "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die"?

We say of them who departed in Christ: He or she, my father or mother is dead. That's true, of course. They are no longer with us. We saw their bodies descend into the grave, a prey to worms and all the power of dissolution. No longer can we eat and drink with them, walk and talk with them. They are gone, completely and forever gone, from home and work and church. They are dead. That's according to the Bible too. True, Scripture does not prefer to speak of the "dead" when referring to those who departed in Christ. Nevertheless, the Bible does say: "though we were dead," and Jesus Himself says: "Lazarus is dead."

However, it is true in only a very relative sense, that the departed saints are dead. Actually, only the body is dead, and the body is only part of man. We are composed of body and soul. Moreover, even of that body two things must be said. It is dead for only a short time. It will not remain in that gruesome, forbidding grave. "Though he were dead, yet shall he live." Hence, it lies in that grave as a seed that is sown in the soil, and it is waiting for the day of Christ to reappear in a new, heavenly, spiritual form. That is the joyful and rest-giving hope of all the saints. Therefore the Bible prefers to speak about the death of the righteous as a "sleep" and the righteous dead as those "who sleep in Christ."

In still another and very real sense, however, this is not true at all. Those who departed in Jesus are not dead; they live as they never lived before; they are far more alive than you and I. Jesus says, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

Believest thou this?

° ° ° °

"He that believeth in Me, ..."

If we somewhat understand what faith really is and does, we shall also understand

that it is the only way to come to eternal life in Jesus Christ. Faith is not only a beautiful way, as though there might have been another. It is the only possible way.

What is faith?

Is it mere assent of the natural mind to the truths of Scripture? – mere intellectual agreement with the teachings of Holy Writ? You believe that there is a God. You are no Atheist. Does that make you a believer? You believe that Christ lived; that He is the Son of God in the flesh; that He suffered and died, rose again and is now seated on the right hand of God. Now are you a believer? By no stretch of the imagination! So you believe that there is a God, and a Christ. What have you that the devil does not have? I believe that this may well be stressed. Too many seem to base too much on mere head-knowledge rather than inner life and the true experience of love. Hell will be full of people who believed in that sense. You may know the Bible by heart and have a head full of Reformed doctrine and still be forever lost. Your hopes will have to rest on firmer ground than that.

Is faith this: that I receive Christ with all my heart, cling to Him, trust in Him, lean on Him for time and eternity? Yes, of course, that is faith, that is believing in Jesus.

Even so, more must be said, lest we see faith only as an activity of man and attribute to man what belongs to God alone.

In essence, faith is the spiritual bond, the life of Christ Himself as it makes us one with the Lord Jesus, like the branch is one with the vine. In its operation, faith is the spiritual activity of that bond, the new life in action, whereby we cling to Christ and put all our confidence in Him alone. Thus we may speak of faith and believing much as we speak of sight and seeing, smell and smelling, seed and growing plant.

And all of God from beginning to end. He must give the life itself, the faculty, the power to believe, the spiritual union with Christ in regeneration, our spiritual resurrection from the dead. And He must bring that seed to growth and fruition; that new life to conscious activity. Then, and only then, do we believe. In this way God receives all the glory. In this way faith is not our act whereby we make Christ ours, but His act whereby He makes us His. And thus faith is not in any way the cause of eternal life, but its fruit and manifestation.

Therefore Jesus speaks as He does: "Whosoever liveth and believeth." Don't turn this around. Believing is not first; living is first. You don't live because you believe; you believe because you live.

° ° ° °

What about those who live and believe in Jesus?

Christ Himself says: they "shall never die." The Lord uses a double negative here to express Himself in the strongest possible way. Shall never not die! In our language only the stupid or careless use double negatives. Our teachers never weary of telling their pupils that a double negative makes a positive and that they must, therefore, never commit this grammatical sin. It could as well be reasoned, it seems to me, that a double negative is just twice as strong as a single negative. Be that as it may, Jesus here uses a double negative. They shall never never die!

How wonderful and how true! What a comfort as here we walk through the valley of darkness toward our divinely set rendezvous with death and grave! We shall never die! How can we? We have "everlasting life," and everlasting means unending, unbroken, does it not? Conscious life with God is our portion without end. That can never be lost. On the contrary, we go from strength to strength, from life to life, from glory to glory, until we appear without spot or blemish before our God in Zion. Now we live by faith in Christ. When we die we enter at once into the preliminary fulfilment of our hope. Instantly! without one moment of death, wherein we shall stand unclothed. And presently we shall be glorified perfectly, according to body and soul, in the blessed day of our Savior's appearing.

Therefore, too: "Though he were dead, yet shall he live." In a sense we must die, of course. This body must be changed. The natural must become spiritual; the earthy heavenly. Corruption must put on incorruption; mortality immortality. However, that death is but a moment. The body is only the seed that is sown. While it reposes in the grave, YOU will be in heaven, with God

and with Christ and all the angels and departed saints. Presently your body, too, will be raised to a glory it never knew or could have known apart from the blessed Word become flesh. Then all will be life and blessedness forever and ever.

° ° ° °

'Believest thou this?"

Not, believest thou? That is important too, of course. However, that's not what Jesus says. There comes a time when that should be established.

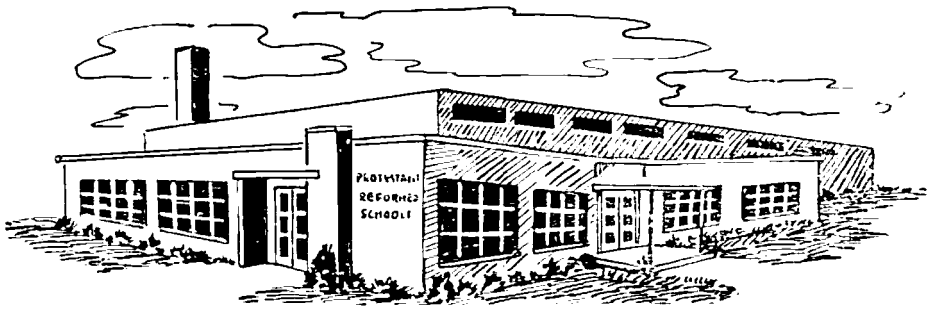
But, believest thou *this?* That Jesus is the resurrection and the life. And that those who believe in Him shall live, though they be dead; in fact, shall never die.

Then we have comfort, do we not?

Comfort with respect to our loved ones, who have died in their Lord. It's a terrible thing, when the dead must bury the dead. However, when the living bury the living the basic note should be our resurrection hope and joy.

Then, too, we have comfort for ourselves, even in the face of death and grave. Then we can look over and beyond these to the glory laid away for us and rejoice with the church of every age in those mighty words of Job:

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh *shall I see God.*"



PENCILS and CHALK

THE EDGERTON SCHOOL SYSTEM

The time is 8:30 on a cold wintery morning. The school buses have been out for over two hours picking up the children from the area surrounding Edgerton, Minnesota. They now deposit their precious cargo at the various schools in the town. The last deposit is at the Free Christian School. It is small, twenty-eight pupils all told, but it is very precious and many sacrifices must be made that its doors may remain open. The children are rural; each carries his own lunch box.

The name, Free Christian School, deserves an explanation. The word "free" means this school is free from church control. The school is governed by a society of Reformed people. Presently, all society members are Protestant Reformed; hence, all subject matter is taught from a Protestant Reformed point of view. The prerequisite for being a member of this society is subscription to the Three Forms of Unity.

The purpose of my article is to explain the history, the life, the advantages, and future of the Free Christian School at Edgerton, Minnesota.

The history of the Edgerton school system must be divided into two periods, namely, the pre-schism and post-schism periods.

The pre-schism history started back in 1940 during the pastorate of the late Rev. Wm. Verhil when a school society was formed by the members of the Edgerton Protestant Reformed Church. During the

pastorate of Rev. Gerrit Vos efforts were put forth to erect a school building, but the society could not see its way clear. In 1948 under the pastorate of Rev. Peter De Boer the society decided to build a school. It is a brick building consisting of six rooms, i.e., two classrooms, an office, a furnace room, and two bathrooms. The eight large lots surrounding the building afford more than adequate playground. Instruction is given in grades one through eight. The first enrollment was between fifty and sixty students. A bus was bought to solve transportation problems.

The instructors from 1950 to 1954 were John W. Vis, principal, Beth De Boer and Josephine Mesman, the other teachers in respective years. John W. Vis and Josephine Mesman taught the 1953-54 school term as members of the schismatic church. But as Divine Will afforded, the members of the true Protestant Reformed Church had the majority of the votes in both the society and administrative board. At this time the name and what it stands for had special significance. Since our school, as was pointed out above, is entirely *free* from church control; it could not be taken into the courts along with the various church properties.

The post-schism history showed many changes. First, the positions of principal and teacher had to be filled. Mrs. Herman Veldman became principal, and Mrs. Egbert Gritters became the other teacher. Next, the 50% reduction in enrollment had several effects: (1) the bus was sold because it could no longer be run economically; (2) the maintenance of the school was placed on the shoulders of eight families instead of sixteen; (3) the children grouped together and became as one big happy family.

The next principal was Herman Woudenberg with Mrs. H. Veldman as the other teacher. Following these two were Dale H. Kuiper as principal and Sylvia Brummel and Evelyn Huizenga as the other teachers in respective years. The present principal is the undersigned with Evelyn Huizenga as the other teacher.

The life in our school is very similiar to the life in the country schoolhouse of years gone by. As in the little country school, we have four grades in each room. Also all the children come from rural homes which makes life at times very interesting. Examples of this is such conversation: "Joey, how many pigs did your dad's sows have last night?" or "Say, Miss Huizenga, my pet cow Gloria had a calf last night," or "Mr. Huisken, Bobby won't be in school today because he sprained his ankle when one of our horses threw him last night." A farm is a place of endless activity and children being endlessly active. I agree wholeheartedly with the English Romantic who said: "Every child should be born and reared on a farm."

This system of education has several advantages. The first and far most important being that these children have more individual help than in a departmentalized system. For example, in a departmentalized system the teachers have an average of 30 pupils, 360 minutes of school time, giving each student 12 minutes, per day. On the other hand, in a combined grade system the teacher has an average of 15 pupils, 360 minutes of school time, giving each pupil 22 minutes per day, practically double the time in the departmentalized system. The next is that the parents and the teachers have more rapport because of the smallness of the group represented in the school. The effectiveness of our recent P.T.A. conference has well proven this fact.

Looking to the future most of our graduates have received or will receive their high school diplomas. Several in the near future will graduate from college. Soon we hope, D.V., to add the ninth grade thereby taking the first step toward adding the latter three. This year marks the twelfth year of our existence — nine years since the schism. But we do not forget, "All things work together for good for those that love God."

DARREL LEE HUISKEN

DONATIONS

Hope Choral Society Program	$47.04
In Memory of Jim Jonker	10.00
A Friend	10.00
Hope Mr. and Mrs. Society	25.00
Creston Prot. Ref. Church	19.70
Henry Heemstra	2.00

Beacon Lights Literary Contest

FICTION

3rd place LOIS KREGEL

THE VASE

Margaret put down the magazine she had been reading and sighed. She had been looking at the recipes; somehow, nothing appealed to her today. The tempting dishes seemed too complicated: the easy ones too dull.

It was just one of those days, she said to herself. In spite of all the work she had had to do that day, she had accomplished almost nothing. The ironing lay dampened in a plastic bag. The mending was piled on the sewing machine, untouched. The dishes were done, and the beds made, to be sure, but she would have had to be positively ill to neglect that daily routine. The morning had been punctuated by a few phone calls, none of them very important. She had sat down twice for a cup of coffee, and each time had paged rather aimlessly through a fashion magazine, stretching her coffee break a little. After lunch she had tried to nap, thinking she might wake up in a better mood, but she had not even been able to doze.

She had been troubled all day by a vague uneasiness. It had started at breakfast time. Jeff had been unusually quiet for a nine-year-old boy; a couple of times, in fact, he had not answered her when she had spoken to him. His mind seemed to be on something else, and she wondered what it was. Perhaps he was having trouble with his school work, or maybe he wasn't getting along with some of his friends. She almost asked him; then she decided to wait. If it was important enough, he would come to her eventually and talk it over.

She had watched him pedal off on his bicycle and had gone to bathe the baby, dismissing Jeff from her mind for the time being. But occasionally throughout the day that feeling of uneasiness had come back to haunt her, and now it was there again. Probably this dark chilly weather had helped put her in a mood like this, Margaret thought to herself. The weather man had predicted that the present rain would change to snow; it would be the first snow of the year, and surely to be expected, for it was already mid-November.

She glanced at the clock. Jeff would be home any minute, and the baby was due to wake up. She stood up resolutely and went to the kitchen to get a dust cloth. She would at least dust the living room, so that it would look a bit neater if someone should come to the door. She whisked the cloth skillfully over the tables and turned towards the mantel. She paused a moment before dusting to admire her favorite vases on it. It was only two weeks before that she had bought them in Chicago, and she still enjoyed standing back to see how pretty they looked. She hoped this pair of vases would remain whole. So many of her pretty ceramics had become chipped or broken. The baby was just learning to walk, of course, and had little idea what he should not touch. Even Jeff was not too careful, and often brushed against a table, nearly upsetting her lamps. She had chided him for it, but he had shown little improvement; when she had bought the new vases she had spoken to him very sharply about them.

"You are to keep your hands off from these, Jeff,' she had said. "I value them very highly, and would feel just terrible if they were broken. Besides," she had added, a little crossly, "I'd like to keep something in one piece around here."

Now she walked up to the fireplace. And then she saw the white envelope, with "Mom" scrawled on the outside in Jeff's writing. The uneasiness in her suddenly began to take form. She tore open the envelope, her hands trembling a little, and found the note inside. "Dear Mom," it said. "In case you find the piece out of your vase before I come home, don't worry. I went to find you another one. Love, Jeff."

Margaret hurried to the telephone and dialed the number of Jeff's school. She recognized his teacher's voice. "Miss Arman? This is Jeff's mother."

"O yes, Mrs. Marsden, is Jeff ill? We missed him today."

"No – no, he isn't ill. I mean – I'll send a note with him tomorrow." Without waiting for the teacher's reply Margaret put down the receiver. Hurriedly she woke the baby and dressed him, and slipped into her own coat. She scribbled a brief note of explanation to Jim, her husband, in case he should come home before she returned, then picked up the baby and ran out to the car.

Surely she would find him, she thought, as she started down the drive-way. The few times he had gone shopping with her she had taken him downtown, so that must be where he went. She would go to the gift shops and ask whether a small boy had been there that day; after all, someone would remember.

But her heart was pounding with fear as she drove. He had been gone all day. What could he have been doing all that time? What if something had happened to him? She thought of a dozen possibilities. She called to mind how sharply she had spoken to him, warning him about the pair of vases, and she reproached herself bitterly. No wonder she had given him the impression that the vases were very important to her. And so they were, she admitted to herself, ruefully, far too important. She had treasured them far too highly. Jeff had sensed that she would be angry and unhappy because he had broken one.

In her fear her thoughts came tumbling one upon the other. Had she been putting too much emphasis on *things* for a long time? Materialism, she had read in one of those church papers, was the spirit of the age in which they were living, and Christians should not allow themselves to be engulfed by it. She had brushed the words aside at the time she had read them, but now they returned to plague her conscience. Is that why she had been so often moody, discontented? Did she have her heart set on too many pretty things? Remorsefully she admitted to herself that she had, and that this had led up to Jeff's present predicament. Desperately she prayed, "Forgive me, Lord, and help me to find him."

At the first two gift shops she received the same reply to her question. "Yes, there was a small boy in here this morning, looking for a certain vase, but I didn't have what he wanted, and he left." She inquired further in the department stores; she tried the florists. Some of them had seen Jeff that morning; others simply shook their heads sympathetically.

Finally, on the far side of the shopping district she found a shop where Jeff had been seen around noon. Yes, he had found what he wanted, "that vase over there, but he didn't have enough money to pay for it. He said he'd be back for it."

Margaret asked if she could use the telephone and dialed her own number, hoping that Jeff would have returned. There was no answer. She turned to go, when the owner of the shop called after her, "You'd better get some help in finding that youngster, lady. This is no weather for you and the baby to be out in." Margaret glanced out of the shop window. The rain had turned to a driving sleet that was freezing on the cars and pavement.

She looked at her watch: it was nearly six o'clock. Disconsolately she went back to the car. Her arms ached from carrying Johnny and there was a growing fear within her that something terrible had happened to Jeff. She turned toward home, and in spite of the sleet her driving was almost automatic.

Then she saw him, his head bent slightly

against the storm, pedaling slowly, as if he was very tired. She pulled up behind him, stopped the car and ran out. "Jeff—oh, Jeff," was all she could say at first, as she hugged him joyfully. Then, "Come in the car, son, and let's go home."

"But my bike —"

"Never mind the bike; we'll leave it at this gas station and pick it up tomorrow. Just get in. You're all soaked and freezing cold."

On the way home Jeff said, "Mom, did you find my note? I mean — I thought when you dusted you might notice the vase had a chip out and so I thought I'd better explain. Johnny climbed up when I was supposed to be watching him, and when I grabbed it out of his hand I knocked it against the corner of the mantel."

"Oh, Jeff, never mind about the vase," Margaret replied, "It doesn't matter."

"But, Mom, I know how much you liked it and everything, and I found one just like it, and I'll save up my allowance and get it for you. It tried to find some odd job to do after I finally found the right vase, but everyone said I was too small, and should be in school. Then I sorta got lost, and had to ask someone the way home. But I'll still get it for you."

Margaret looked at the baby; he was sound asleep in his car seat. She stopped the car at the curb, and turned to her small son.

"Jeff," she said, "I must have led you to think that the vase meant more to me than you did. That was wrong of me, and I'm sorry. 'Set your affections on things above' God tells us. Well, I guess I've been forgetting that for a long time, and needed a lesson. Now let's go home."

POETRY JUDY LUBBERS

The Storm

The skies above are dark and gray;
It had been a dreary day;
Coming would be a dark night,
No moon or stars to give their light.

Slowly the rain begins to fall;
It seems a shower will be all,
But then the winds begin to rise,
Blowing clouds across the skies.

A flash of lightning cuts the sky;
A clap of thunder rumbles by.
But for long it does not last;
Very soon the storm is past.

Up above the skies are clear;
The moon and stars begin to appear.
The winds are calmed; only a breeze
Whispers quietly through the trees.

The Tree

Gnarled, twisted, writhing snake,
Snow-shod 'neath a winter sky,
Putting on the feathery flake,
Only then to lay it bye.

Standing bleak and bare, alone —
Leaves have drifted to the ground;
Cheerful, chirping birds have flown;
The howling wind's the only sound.

Stalwart, staunch, and strong it stands
'Neath the vaulted roof of sky.
Fearless of cruel winter's hands;
It will live again, although it die.

May we too stand straight and sure,
Even 'neath death's troubled sky,
Knowing that by faith secure
We shall live, although we die.

Today's Tragedy

In the past, considerable interest and discussion have centered upon meaningful phrases. "I love you," probably ranks as most popular, for obvious reasons. The poet Whittier says that the saddest words of tongue and pen are these: "It might have been."

Today another phrase must concern us. Although we all use it, it is not a pleasant one, in fact, it is most miserable and disgusting. It is not so repulsive in itself, but rather, it is the attitude that is repulsive. The phrase is "I don't care." The attitude portrayed is one of indifference. Because the attitude underlies the phrase, we will concern ourselves with the attitude.

Let us first consider some of the gifts that our Creator gave us, which distinguish us, as human beings, from the rest of the animate creation. Do they not include the qualities of rationality and morality, the abilities to think about our thoughts and to choose between right and wrong? Included in these, would be the splendid gift of sensitivity, the ability to love and to feel compassion. And as gifts from God, should we not use them as much as possible, in the best ways possible? Carrying this thought

to its logical conclusion, we come to the stark realization that failure to properly employ these God-given powers is not only a symptom of a lazy person harming himself, but also a real depreciation of the difference between man and beast. Of such a nature is indifference.

The poem, "The Man with the Hoe," by Edwin Markham, depicts very vividly the sad state of a soul in slavery. Markham writes about the terrible tragedy of dictators blowing out the light of intelligence of their subjects and making them brothers to the stunned ox.

In this country, today, there are no more dictators, but the tragedy is still with us. However, its cause is not forced slavery, but rather, the willing self-surrender of our sensitivity. How much worse, this is!

The tragedy is evident in many ways. What is the prime purpose in the lives of most Americans? Is it not to make more money, to "increase our forty acres to eighty?" Carl Sandburg sums up our attitude in these words; "I earn my living, I make enough to get by, and it takes all my time. If I had more time, I could do more for myself and maybe for others. I could read and study and talk things over and find out about things. If I only had the time." But we do not care enough to give our time.

Today America is faced with the formidable communist challenge. By 1972, the communists expect to be in full control of America. We do not like this. Their gains even bother us somewhat. But it would be very troublesome to try to correct some of the blunders of our foreign policy as depicted in the *Ugly American*. It is much easier to take the line of least resistance and try to eliminate the problem by being indifferent to it. And we so often do that. When we come up against something which is difficult and frustrating, something that would require some real application, we get rid of the trouble by telling ourselves that we just don't care. It is a lazy way out and can only result in our becoming social parasites.

In the classroom, the acute seriousness of this problem may be readily realized. Which student is it that the teacher finds most exasperating? Is it the one who disagrees with what is taught, or the one who does not care about that which is taught? True, it is not so pleasant to be met with resistance, but it is downright nauseating to be met with an apathetic listlessness.

Our churches also must guard against this dead life. It is historical fact that in times of persecution and opposition, the church is strongest spiritually. It is in a time like today, when no resistance must be overcome, that is most dangerous. We soon lose interest in what we believe, and often do not even know what that is, and we care less. We shy away from so-called "doctrine" sermons. We become, in effect, a group of non-believing believers.

This indifference to communism, this apathy in the schools, and this passivity in the churches, are all examples of today's tragedy. And this tragedy of today must be eliminated. Our minds and souls must break out of this prison of indifference and with renewed purpose, strive for those truths that rest on universal bones. The emptiness can no longer linger, which threatens to throw us into spiritual limbo. We have had enough "dumb driven cattle." We need "heroes in the strife." We need people who do care, people who care enough to give themselves, give to be teachers, give to be ambassadors, ministers, missionaries, and all fields of endeavor. The all-important thing is that we again learn to care enough to give ourselves. The great civilizations of the Greeks and the Romans died just because they had too many takers and not enough givers.

America is on the same road to ruin. Her every group is interested only in helping itself. The unions protect only the unions, the industries profit only the industries, and the War Veterans help only the War Veterans. Our selection of a political candidate is based largely on how much he will give us. We, as yet, cannot understand how it could be more "blessed to give than to receive." But soon, one way or another, we will understand this. We are at the crossroad, and the way we choose will make all the difference. If we become people who care enough, our culture will reach new heights. But if today's tragedy is tolerated, our whole civilization will become tomorrow's bitter memory.

POETRY honorable mention Mrs. D. ENGELSMA

RECLUSE

He built a wall around his life,
Hate mortared every stone,
Enclosed from taunt, from scorn, from strife,
His boast:
    I'll dwell alone.
The tines of hate which he employed
Impaled the love of friend and kin,
The darts of foe did not destroy . . .
    He rotted from within!

POETRY WINIFRED KOOLE

ANOINTING OIL

The flame is low
Upon the wick,
So pale its glow.
Dark shadows flick
And slowly lick
Up light, the foe.

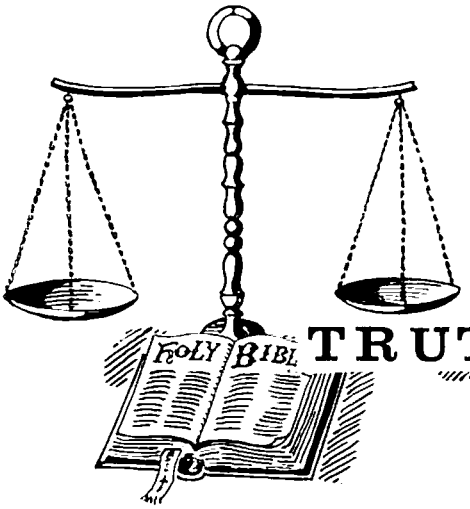
Sharp tongues of men
Expose the quick,
Lay bare each sin.
No oil to slick,
And faults are thick
When love is thin.

POETRY honorable mention C. H. WESTRA

THE PRAYER OF MID-LIFE

Dear Lord,
I see old people;
Wrinkled,
Gray,
Forgotten People.

When I am old
May I be
Wrinkled,
And gray,
But not forgotten.



TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. R. C. HARBACH

TAKE HEED WHAT YOU HEAR!

Our last article charged, "Take heed how ye hear." A more basic demand is that appearing in the title, as certainly more fundamental it is *what* ye hear than *how* ye hear; just as what you eat is more important than how you eat. What matters it so much how you eat if you eat only cream-puffs and meringue? What matters it at all how you eat if you feed sumptuously on poison? Or what matter that you know how to eat as socially acceptably as Emily Post if there is nothing to eat? So, what you hear is basic to how you hear. We must, indeed, be trained how to hear, but more important, we must have something to hear. We must learn to hear discriminately, but one cannot do that unless there are *good* as well as bad sounds to distinguish. Not much choice prevails if, for example, the ear is incessantly bombarded with little else than the nerve-jarring reverberations of "rock-'n-'roll," the idle gossip of shallow associates, or, as in a room with television on, attempts at conversation amount to hardly more than the cultured grunt of pleistocenic man. Hence, more to the point what ye hear than how ye hear. True, to be strictly logical, we should have considered the former before the latter. Nevertheless, "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you; and unto you that hear shall more be given" (Mk. 4:24).

Just, so, a homiletical course in seminary on "what to preach" is foundational to "how to preach." The theological student and the minister, then, must "take heed what ye *preach*." If they are deficient here, it matters little or nothing how efficient they are in how they preach. For the pulpit is not to be corrupted to a clothes-line where opinions may be aired, or to an empty manger where the sheep may be fed on wind. But next in importance is the matter of *listening* to the preaching: "Take heed what ye *hear*."

These words of Jesus are still a timely admonition. An admonition is not only a command, but an injunction which gives us fair warning, putting us on our guard against dangers. For there are definite, lurking threats to our spiritual well-being in what may be heard. "Take heed what ye hear" is then not a suggested motto, not an open question for philosophical discussion, nor an optional or elective course in the school of life. It is a divinely imposed directive which we neglect at our peril. Anyone who confidently affirms there is no danger in this respect is either a liar, a deceiver or both.

Since we are bidden to care what we hear, what *should* we hear? As members of the catholic Christian church we are concerned with hearing that which emanates from the true church, namely, the preaching of the pure doctrine of the gospel. I wish that my Fundamentalist brethren were more

consistent in this. They often confess their part and lot in the true church, but make not enough of that essential *mark* of the true church – the pure preaching of the Word of God. For although they are "fundamental" to a degree, there are certain fundamentals of the faith which they almost invariably omit. The one great fundamental principle of Christian faith and life is that of the absolute sovereignty of God in every realm, nature and grace! Fundamentalists have all too little to say of this most fundamental of all Christian principles. They must realize that the scarlet thread of redemption which runs all through Scripture is intertwined with the co-extensive golden chord of God's sovereignty. If God is truly sovereign in the dominion of grace, then another great, but neglected, fundamental of the faith is the much misunderstood, much mis-represented doctrine of absolute predestination, with its two parts, election and reprobation. So fundamental, for example, is the doctrine of unconditional election, that without it there is no atonement. So fundamental are the Five Fundamentals of Calvinism that without limited atonement there simply is no atonement at all!

"Take heed what ye hear." Judge what you hear in the light of our glorious and stimulating confessions. Is what you hear in harmony with the Christian life so beautifully described in the Heidelberg Catechism? How does what you hear measure up to the pure theology of the Belgic Confession? How will what you hear stand up under the searchlight of the Canons of Dort (the Five Fundamentals mentioned above), together with the Rejection of Errors? These are only different ways of asking, How does the Word of God, as in these standards so perfectly set forth, evaluate what you hear? Hear the truth. Shun all false doctrine. "My sheep hear my voice . . . a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers" (John 10).

There is little enough truth in the world to be heard. Make sure you hear your share of it. For the believer's ear today is dinned with the clashing clamor of the heretical sects, strange cults, and now in this country, Hinduism, Yogism and Mohammedanism. To these religions, as well as to the imposing Romanism, the Bible is a sealed book. To them all, the revelation of God is practically unknown and unwanted. So take heed what ye hear. Mummery, trumpery and superstition are not for the people of God. But these dangers are perhaps not the worst, being rather apparent. There is more treacherous danger to Protestants in that siren, Arminianism. Here, too, Fundamentalists, who strive so hard to be biblically sound, must take heed what they preach and what they hear, that they preach not, heed not Arminianism. Then why is Fundamentalism's vocabulary cluttered with such Arminian and unbiblical expressions as "invitation" and "accepting" Christ? Never – as a concordance will show – does the Bible use these words as Arminians do. It is legitimate to use "invite" or "invitation" expressing relations between man and man (as the Bible does), but not to indicate an act of God toward man. For God does not "invite" the sinner; He bids, commands and calls him. Why use language which implies man of himself *can* come to Christ, when Scripture teaches he cannot (John 6:44)? Why misuse the term "accept," which in Scripture refers to the Lord accepting man, not man's accepting the Lord? In fact, man's accepting the Lord Scripture regards as an unheard of thing (Job 13:8)! My meaning is that even when you hear your own voice, you must take heed what you hear. That is, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth. Let every word be receptive, and reconstructive, of God's Word.

Take heed what ye hear! What hear ye? a God-centered ministry? Not the more popular man-centered preaching! The Bible is God-centered; so is the gospel. All of Christianity is theocentric; all its subject matter is of God, through God and unto God. Modern religion is non-doctrinal, tells its hearers nothing more than what they already know, reminds them of what they cannot possibly forget, and has no higher objective that man. It is somewhat pious-sounding to say, We preach Christ; and the Christian faith is Christ-centered There is a secondary sense in which this is true, for we know no God save the one revealed in and through Christ. Christ is the be-

ginner and completer of our faith. All authority has been given unto Him: all history revolves about Him, and He in Himself gathers together in one all things in heaven and on earth. But Christ is central because Christ is God. "The head of every man is Christ . . . and the head of Christ is God" (I Cor. 11:3). The center for man is Christ, and the center of Christ is God.

Hear that which is God-honoring. There is a kind of discourse which flatters the flesh, inflates the ego, and candies the strict principles of Christ to make them palatable to the natural mind. Jack-a-candy "evangelists" appeal to the knowledge of the masses (a 14-year old level), attenuate the sharp accents of God's commandments, blunt the sharp edges of the piercing, dividing Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and in effect close the mouth of that perfect doctrine of salvation, the Reformed Faith, so that what we are made to hear as ostensibly coming from the Gospel is something else. We hear that man is very far (not wholly) gone from original righteousness; that election is complete and decisive because of not only foreseen faith, but foreseen perseverance unto the end, both of which are left up to man. Where is the scriptural doctrine that election is eternal, sovereign, unconditional, not based on foresight of faith, but on the decree of God; and is infallibly unto salvation? Why do we hear that the death of Christ was for all men absolutely and without exception, and the atonement not an actual saving power, but provision of salvation for all? Where is the scriptural doctrine that Christ died for His people alone? Why do we hear that man can resist God's grace so as to prevent entirely his regeneration, since it remains in his power to be regenerated or not? Where is the truth that whom God predestinates He also calls, and regenerates, *and* gives faith, *and* justifies, sanctifies and glorifies? Why must we hear that man has the power to persevere to the end if he will only do his duty, yet that he can fall from grace and be lost forever? Where is the old, old truth that it is not by his merits or strength, but of God's free mercy that elect man does not totally fall from faith and grace? Where is the preaching which gives its hearers a comprehensive presentation of "all the counsel of God": one that withholds nothing profitable to men?

Listening without thinking, many fill themselves with the husks which the swine eat! They spiritually impoverish themselves. They go down to Egypt every Sabbath to feed on intellectual leeks and lettuce! How can they expect anything but spiritual anemia? Sow chaff and stones and the harvest cannot be wheat and bread. Sow sparingly and you reap also sparingly. Sow much and you reap much. What you hear and heed is sown in the heart and passes into life and character. Hear and heed the double-minded, and double-mindedness will be measured to you. Give heed to hear what is profitable, and you will be profited, become profitable in God's church, and always be profitably rewarded. Hear the best and you will have the best. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." "Unto you that (so) hear shall more be given": more desire for God's Word, more capacity to hear good doctrine, more understanding of what you do hear, more conviction of the truth heard, more grace to conform to Christ, more opportunity to profit spiritually. Has the Lord given you something worth hearing? Is what you hear worth heeding? Then what He has given is a banner of truth. Heed it by displaying it (Ps. 60:4)!

Rev. H. Hoeksema will give a lecture in First Church during the last week in April. He will lecture on the topic "The Calling of the Christian in Regard to Culture."

This lecture is promoted by the young people; however, everyone is urged to attend.

that open letter to Rev. A. Mulder

I sincerely hope the Rev. H. C. Hoeksema is not offended when I refuse to place in *Beacon Lights* a letter addressed directly to him. (Our readers will recall he addressed such a letter to the undersigned in the Feb. issue of this paper). There are reasons for this action on my part: (a) he has never spoken to me (there were occasions) nor written a personal note to me regarding this entire matter. This to be sure is a lack of common courtesy amongst contacting colleagues to say the least. And (b) his cry, "retract . . . . retract" closes the door to this. This cry is intolerable especially in the light of his earlier exaggerations of my mission presentation, and of my evalutions of our Protestant Reformed mission endeavors.

But as I promised earlier, I will reply.

As I page through this letter of the brother I begin to wonder if he allows another free expression of opinion! I notice he expresses amazement and bewilderment at my reply. This is strange to say the least! Did he not expect a defence from me? Any conscientious reader would have granted me the right of stern and serious reply, especially when so mercilessly attacked. But let me go on with matters in this letter.

(1) About that title "missions defended." It was neither a slip of the pen nor a skip of thought. It was deliberately chosen and doubtlessly will not undergo any correction or alteration. Unless! Anyone who has the courage to criticize me for citing the mission mandate, deserves to be reminded of the cause of missions as such. And *I* was *criticized* when the brother wrote, "It is all very well to use an eye-catching phrase, and to cite the so-called 'great mission,' for which, by the way, the term 'mission mandate' is really a misnomer. But if our people are to be 'mission minded' in the healthy, Reformed sense of the word, they must be instructed. Everyone in our day cites this great commission." All in all I would say my title found its place to roost. Now if my colleague withdraws the above paragraph (and several other questions) from his "reflections" then naturally my title will fall by the way side.

(2) About that term schismatic. Here I would like to monopolize a little space in *Beacon Lights*. For two things I am very sorry: (a) that the Rev. Hoeksema did not demonstrate to us the good that could come out of its use; and (b) that he did not substantiate his "right of use" of that term with ought from the Word of God. Yes, I know, many of my remarks he noticeably bypasses, but far more serious is the fact that the Bible is left out of his letters. Serious omissions! From out of the minutes of our major assemblies (classis and synod) he quotes. Worse yet, into my personal vocabulary he prys. And I must use that term also he claims! That is, unless I can show us (all of us: churches, consistories, classis and synod) that its use is wrong. But about this I have much to say.

I am not having a quarrel with our synod, classis or consistories. I presented a public protest against my colleague and friend. This I have the perfect right to do without having registered "ecclesiastical protest" in any church assemblies. The public protest is simple notification of disapproval to public correspondence or conversation. And then: when anyone has a public bit of correspondence directed directly to me or revolving about me, I have all the right in the world to resist and react.

Neither do I have a quarrel with brother Hoeksema about the FACT of schism. I react against his use of the term "schismatic" as a NAME, and then in writing which many, many come to read. I can easily un-

derstand that the minutes of some major assembly have in them the term schismatic since these ecclesiastical bodies naturally lay the sin of schism at someone's door. Once again, with this I have no quarrel – and please don't try to put me in conflict with our major assemblies! But I have aversion to splashing this NAME on the pages of our *Beacon Lights,* especially when the correspondence concerns me. And certainly, simply because a Classis or Synod used the term, this surely is no license for our free use thereof, nor mandatory use thereof. I am sure Synod never meant that this term must be continually on our lips and come constantly from our pens!

In the meantime let me explain more clearly the real distinction between FACT and NAME with respect to sin. I would like myself understood. Suppose a brother in the church commits murder and being confined to jail remains an unrepentant man-slayer. Of course, by *fact* he is a murderer but when I refer to him I don't call him "the murderer." Surely not when I visit him in his cell (to bring about repentance) or when I write a letter which he has access to and will come to read. Oh! all of us see this! But did Rev. Hoeksema use this term *only* as a fact? I should say not! Purely as a name, and then not as a name that distinguishes the De Wolf group (now disbanded) from us, but as a name indeed. This brings unnecessary antagonism.

Now how about it all? Well naturally much evil comes out of it. A responsible, professional person, in all he does, makes policy for many, many followers. The outcome: one hears more of the term Schismatic than of the Savior.

No brother! it's not only a matter of "truth and fact" but of wisdom and charity. The littlest child of God can see this. I think in the past the *Beacon Lights* has been rather free from that name, and I, as associate editor would like to keep it such.

Besides it's not even being consistent. Paul designates the enemies of Christ as "dogs" in his Epistle to the Philippians (I am not implying at all that the De Wolf people were dogs, in fact, I consider them Christians too) but neither we, nor he, just commonly and consistently use this term when we refer to such wicked about, much less when we speak in their hearing. Oh no! let's not be nasty.

And me! Retract? Before God, brother Hoeksema, bury your demand in your own bosom! I write this in love! And my love or charity does more than call sin to one's attention (as you seem to imply is its real character) but also seeks, struggles with and often finds. It is sweetness, softness and kindness. Without which, Paul tells the Corinthians in his 13th chapter of the first epistle, we are NOTHING.

What do I wish to call the De Wolf group? I think the answer is now known.

(3) About all those other matters. To be sure I will try to be brief, but because of the nature of things stated I will have to write a few more words about matters hitherto concluded in my estimation. All along I think I proved my points. Indeed I clarified how that Rev. Hoeksema inflated and exaggerated my statements. I demonstrated evidences of that which is nothing but insinuation throughout his article. But let me just cite one example, a prize one! Rev. Hoeksema writes in his "reflections," "Or does the editor have in mind an overbalanced and over-emphasized mission program, such as, for example, the . . . . launched on Guam . . . .?" Now it makes no difference whether one writes in question form or in declarative language – the above is an insinuation of the bad sort. Here is my concrete proof once again, and my charge remains: insinuations! Contrary is this to Christian ethics.

I suppose it only wise once again, to prove concretely, the evidence of gross exaggeration. The reader would clearly know I proved this in my former article but let me cite again two apparently innocent questions. From "reflections" I quote again, "Is it fair and just to our churches to classify vacancies and dearth of ministers as 'only excuse'? . . . . Would it be according to the will of God, do you think, to take two or three or four more of our ministers and put them in the mission field?" I submit: are these really only questions? I know better, for the entire context clearly shows that Hoeksema would impress us: so with Mulder.

I never thought it would be necessary to point out a mis-quote to the brother. But

again observe please, I never used *only* the phrase, "only excuses." My editoral's full expression was, "by and large, only excuses." To delete such vital words just preceeding is "lifting entirely" out of context. Please stop this for it frightens the very concept integrity.

I am sorry to have to point out these things.

In the light of all the above I am told in the letter, "unless you can prove conclusively that your charges are true, without either tearing them out of context or adding your own imaginary insinuation and evil suggestions to them, you should retract."

Retract again? What for?

I am convinced the cause of missions can never "live" in the atmosphere of such intolerance. Herewith I conclude all correspondence with Rev. Hoeksema of this score.

But for now I would like to deal with the concluding part of the letter. Point 1 is amazing. I am amazed that there was something with which my critic agreed. One surely wouldn't know it from reading "reflections." But toward the end of the letter I notice the one thing with which my colleague agreed was the matter of our church papers not saying enough about missions. Well, this is a big concession! If this is missing it's somewhat like having the engine but not the auto. Then who goes places? I could ask many questions now but I will not do so. Just one: if there is scarcely nothing in our church papers about our missions as such, how will our homes know thereof and keep interested?

No our mission program is not without criticism, says he; but don't you dare to mention one of these, says me!

Point 2 is wearisome. I will only make a few statements. Yes, Rev. Hoeksema is *only* asking questions – there were many, many of these. I indicated the suggestiveness of a few earlier and now again would only remind him: there is an ethical aspect to all questions as well. The explanation of all these questions, as he gives it, is not satisfactory or justifying to the reader who understands that words have meaning. How innocent they are made to appear! I concede there were purely innocent questions, and these questions were answered.

About all those questions! I would have the brother know that I intended and could joyfully have penned some fine thoughts without being tutored by him. I often wondered why he so pre-maturely stepped into my editorial plan to write some on missions. (Something unheard of for years.) Now I know. It was to help me along a little – give a guiding hand – for he now writes, "My third reason for asking questions was that I hoped to stimulate further, well-grounded discussion of our mission calling and mission mindedness." He could very well have written an independent article if this be the case.

Finally, although I agree there is a real difference in spheres when it comes to education and missions, nevertheless practically speaking all of us know that whether it be the mission field or the school room, both (and many other causes) are financed from the same purse. I am still not swayed from my former claim: dimes to dollars! I am still rather convinced that the item of missions on the kingdom budget is somewhat like unto the telephone bill on any family's general budget. Sorry, not swayed! More serious however is this: the comparison pictured in the letter doesn't say much for missions, now when my Bible so explicitly calls us, *"Go* ye into *all* the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

In conclusion, normally I would take it that a confession should be forthcoming from my colleague, but certainly I am not asking for this. Nor do I intend to tell him what I want in the area of missions. He knows very well, and we all do, that I pleaded for more enthusiasm and interest – not for a new program. I have never intended nor planned to set things in order nor pattern a whole new plan for our missions. He knows that, and then why press me so? Please, I am not popish!

Now let us all hope that the very thought of missions will be restored in our midst and has suffered no harm by what I dolefully consider a violent storm.

Rev. A. Mulder

In keeping with the editorial policy of Beacon Lights, *this concludes the public correspondence on the matter.*

– ed.

NEWS from, for, and about our churches

LOIS C. KREGEL

Our Schools

"To you, God's covenant children, He has given the precious gift of learning. He has not given to all equally, however, but in love He gives to each the measure due to him. Our Heavenly Father in wisdom gives to His children that which is best for them. In giving you this ability He expects and requires that you use it in the best way possible, and in honor of His Holy Name." So wrote Miss Ruth Dykstra of our Adams St. School in the *Announcer*. She was commenting on the report cards received by the students upon completion of half of the school year.

Our South Holland-Oaklawn school scheduled a conference night for January 25.

Seminarian David Engelsma spoke on "Closer Co-operation Between Parents and School" at the most recent meeting of Hope's P.T.A.

The Ladies' Auxiliary of South Holland-Oaklawn School was to put on a smorgasbord dinner on February 16.

Hope School's Mothers Circle prepared a soup and spaghetti supper at Hudsonville Church on February 2.

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Radio News

The Program Committee of our Reformed Witness Hour has furnished us with a few facts and figures which we believe will prove quite interesting to the readers of this page.

Item one: About two miles of recording tape is utilized each week to broadcast our program over the various radio stations.

Item two: The tape that is mailed to Monte Carlo, Monaco, and beamed to the British Isles over Trans World Radio travels more than 8,000 miles before the tape is again in the recording room of the Reformed Witness Hour.

Item three: Did you know that to put our thirty-minute program on the air each Sunday, a total of approximately eighty hours of work is expended by the minister, choir members, and members of the Radio Committee?

Item four: Each tape, enclosed in its mailing carton (total weight, 15 ounces), requires only a four cent stamp when mailed to our stations in the United States.

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Our Servicemen

Duane Mensch entered the service in January and is at Fort Knox, Kentucky. We hope to have his address later.

Homer Teitsma (Southeast) and Tom De Vries (First) have returned home from the service.

Bill Huber (Loveland) has been in the hospital with tonsilitis and pneumonia. There is a change in his address:

Pvt. Wm. D. Huber
RA 17606781
Co. H 2nd BN, U.S.A.E.C.R.
Fort Belvoir, Virginia

JOHN ZANDSTRA JAN
1, BOX 206-B
CHICAGO HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS

Wedding bells

rang on January 22 for Virginia Heemstra and John H. Doughty (Southeast).

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Membership changes

Mr. and Mrs. H. Kamphuis and eight children transferred to Hope from Grand Haven.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Kamps and four children joined Hope, coming from Hudsonville.

Mrs. Gary Lubbers came to our Hudsonville Church from Sherman St. Chr. Ref. Church.

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Called Home

Mr. H. Mulder of First Church at the age of 78 years.

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Future Conventioneers

A boy, born to Mr. and Mrs. James Dykstra (First).

A girl, born to Mr. and Mrs. John Kuiper (Hope).

A girl, born to Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Miedema (Hudsonville)

A boy, born to Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Booth (First).

A girl, born to Mr. and Mrs. S. Looyenga (First).

A boy, born to Mr. and Mrs. John Hoksbergen (Hull).

A boy, born to Mr. and Mrs. Lam Lubbers (Creston).

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News Nuggets

Mr. and Mrs. John Snyder (First) celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on her birthday, January 28.

The congregation of Southwest commemorated with Rev. M. Schipper, their pastor, the twenty-fifth anniversary of his entering the ministry. They met together on February 8 for a Hostess Supper and program and presented Rev. Schipper with a generous gift.

The Reformed Action Society of the West sponsored a singspiration on February 9 in Doon Church. The latest pamphlet published by this society is "The Shape of the World" by Rev. G. Van Baren.

Hull's Ladies' Society plans a Mission Night for Friday, March 9. Rev. Lubbers will speak on the theme "The Word of God is not Bound."

First Church received an urgent request for summer clothing from churches in Jamaica who have been corresponding with Rev. Hanko, and are interested in our doctrine; these items were collected the latter part of January.