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GETHSEMANE'S AGONY

REV. H. VELDMAN

The undersigned was requested to write the feature article for this issue of Beacon Lights. The subject assigned to me deals with the struggle of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, and particularly with the words of our Lord: "Not My will but Thine be done." The topic which I selected for this article reads: Gethsemane's Agony. The reason for this selection should be obvious. The prayer of Christ: "Not My will but Thine be done," surely reflects the tremendous agony which our Saviour endured in the garden of Gethsemane. The Scriptural passages which speak of this suffering of our Lord are Matt. 26:36-46, Mark 14:33-41, and Luke 22:41-45. And the words, "Not My will but Thine be done," are recorded in Luke 22:42.

I believe that the Board of Beacon Lights, assigning me this subject and quoting these words from Luke 22:42, has certainly laid the finger upon the heart of Christ's struggle in Gethsemane. Our Saviour struggles in the garden, as a worm and no man, exactly in order that not His will but that of His Father may be done. And the emphasis falls upon the thought that this will of His Father may be done in His soul, as we shall presently see.

We understand, of course, that the cup wherein Jesus speaks in His prayer in Gethsemane refers to the cross of Calvary. I need not reflect in this brief article upon the many and various explanations that are offered us of this expression. Suffice it to say that the cup is meant here. That cup is nothing less than the suffering of the wrath of God upon sin which would burn down in all its incomprehensible fury upon the head and soul of the Son of Man. It is the cup of being forsaken of God, the moment, eternity's moment, when the terrible righteousness of the living God, which knows of no pardon, no wavering, is eternal and terribly unchangeable, would burn down upon Christ's head, when all fellowship of Christ with God would be wholly swallowed up, buried underneath the fearful and for us incomprehensible experience for Christ of that wrath of the Lord His God. No, this does not mean that Christ Himself would become, upon the cross, the object of the hatred of His God. God loved His Son also upon the cross, yea especially upon the cross of Golgotha. But it does mean that Christ, the Beloved of the Father, would experience in His soul, and in full and perfect consciousness, the infinite and eternal wrath of God upon sin.

"Not My will but Thine be done." What does this mean? Why did Jesus now become so sorrowful, even unto death? Did not the Saviour know that this moment awaited Him? Is this something new for Him? Does He now stand suddenly, and for the first time, before the cross? But, this cannot be. We cannot explain this petition of the Saviour from ignorance. Had He not instructed His disciples that He must fall into the hands of sinners, be killed, and rise again the third day? Or, all we need do is recall the last few hours in the upper room. There He had commanded the betrayer: what thou dost do quickly. Indeed, Christ knew what awaited Him. And yet, His soul now becomes sorrowful, even unto death. This, my friends, means that, although the Saviour knew what awaited Him, even into minutest details, now the first time, experimentally, the cross of Calvary looms before Him and strikes into His soul in all its fearful reality. That cross now takes hold of Him as never before.

"Not My will but Thine be done." Is, then, the will of the Saviour contrary to the will of His God? Does Jesus rebel against the Father Who sent Him? Is He disobe-
dient here in the garden of Gethsemane? How must we view and interpret this petition of our Lord? Well may we bear in mind that, entering this garden, we take the shoes off our feet, because we tread upon holy ground. Instead of boldly asking or declaring that this is disobedience, we do well to look on in all amazement and to stammer: How could the perfect Servant of Jehovah come to this prayer, say: “Not My will but Thine be done.”

Indeed, Jesus is the perfect Servant of Jehovah. There is no conflict here between our Lord and the Father Who sent Him. That would be impossible. He does not oppose His God in the garden of Gethsemane. He does not try to change the will of His Father. To be sure, He desires that this cup may pass from Him, but this is altogether different than to set Himself against the will of His God. One thing we must emphatically place upon the foreground here: Jesus has but one will, but one desire in His soul, as far as the will of God is concerned: Thy will be done. He would not maintain Himself even for one moment. He came to empty Himself, to do the will of His God.

To form some kind of a conception of Jesus’ struggle in Gethsemane, we do well to bear in mind the tremendous sorrow which now grips the soul of our Lord. Jesus here is sorrowful, even unto death. The terror of Calvary now strikes into His human soul as a lightning bolt. He stands aghast at that which lies before Him. He will presently be forsaken of His God. And for Jesus to be forsaken of His God was something far more terrible, agonizing, fearful than for you or for me to be forsaken of Him. Christ was the holy Child Jesus, the perfect Child of God, Who lived in perfect fellowship with His God, Who thirsted after God as a hart panteth after the waterbrooks in the most perfect sense of the word. For Him to be forsaken of His God was an agony which we will never be able to comprehend, which bottomless depths we will never be able to fathom.

Indeed, our Saviour desired another way than the way of this cup. To be sure, He longed for its passing, expressed the desire that, “if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.” O, if God would only save His people another way than the way of the cross! That was His will, expressed in the words: “Not My will be done.” Only, and this we must bear in mind, this was His will, not in opposition to the will of His God, but purely as the expression and longing of His human nature. That was His purely human desire. His purely human reaction to the cross of Calvary. As that fearful cross loomed before Him, struck into His tender soul as a lightning bolt, He shuddered and shook, recoiled from that fearful abyss, uttered the purely human desire: “Let this cup pass from Me.” Our Lord was no stoic, did not assume an attitude of carefree indifference toward the cross of Calvary. Instead, He became sorrowful even unto death; the pangs of death and of hell took hold of His soul; the agony of Golgotha swept over Him, engulfed Him, pressed from Him His blood as sweat.

“Not My will but Thine be done.” What, then, is the significance of Gethsemane? This, that Jesus would evade the cross? This, that He would escape the Hour for which He came into this world? This, that He would be spared the agony of suffering and dying for His own? No, a thousand times No! For unto this Hour He came into this world. Unto this Hour He took upon Himself our flesh and blood. For the Son of Man came to seek and so save that which was lost. What then? Gethsemane is the struggle of the Saviour, of the perfect Servant of Jehovah, not to evade the cross, not to oppose His God, not to change the will of His Father Who sent Him, but to submit His agony-filled and terror-stricken soul to the will of His God, to lay Himself as a perfect sacrifice upon the altar of His God, to subject His horror-filled soul to the will and righteousness of the living God, to be able to rise from the dust of the garden, with peace in His soul, to confront the cross and say: Thy will be done. This is the significance of Gethsemane. For it we give thanks unto our God. And we look upon Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Gethsemane is the anticipation of Calvary. And Calvary is our redemption and salvation, now and forever.
APOLOGY FOR THE 24-HOUR DAY

Science is no more to be blamed when it puffs up than a sword when it falls into the hands of a madman. — John Calvin.

Beating a dead dog is always safe, generally satisfying, and seldom profitable. If the belief which contends for creation days of millions and billions of years were, indeed, a dead dog, continual assaults upon it would, in turn, be so many (futile) thrashings. But the opposite is true. No dead dog is belabored, but a sacred cow. And if beating carries unsavory connotations, we are content with "challenging."

Those who advocate that the days of Genesis 1 were periods ought not delude themselves by supposing that their opponents are ignorant of the scientific evidence involved. The pivotal issue is not mere awareness of carbon 14, fossils, and the half-life of certain forms of uranium. Rather, the admission or rejection of the theory hinges upon one's estimation of Scripture. After all the old bones are rattled, there remains the stubborn and demanding question: "And now what of Genesis 1?" Simple Christians and learned Christians ask that question: the answer must be the same for both. Either "day the first" is a day for both or "day the first" is a period for both. If period, then what of the reliability of the Bible? It is plain that the controversy is a limited one: godless men reject the Creator, most of the church world rejects the infallible Bible. Only those who take seriously both that "in the beginning God created" and "all Scripture is given by inspiration" confront the issue. And our arena is the Reformed community.

When young people rush home from the science class in high school or college to bombard (and irritate) their parents with the scientific proofs for the long day, the youths, when refuted with references to God and the Bible, generally fall back upon a rhetorical question which evades, and all too often successfully, the crucial point: "Isn't God sovereign enough to have taken as long as He wanted to create the heavens and earth?" If such a question is answerable, the reply must be "Yes." But the point is, how long does He say that "it took Him?" And then, is what He says reliable?

Every scientist who is also a Christian feels the necessity of correlating the "truth" of the billion-year-old earth with the truth of Genesis 1. Invariably, the truth of Genesis 1 comes out the worse for wear. Dr. Jan Lever, professor of zoology at the (Reformed) Free University of Amsterdam, in his book, Creation and Evolution, passes, among others, this judgment upon the writer of Genesis: "we should consider the following possibility: (which the author later states is his "present preference" — d.e.) the writer of Scripture did not know anything about the age of the earth and of living creatures being millions of years old" so that when he "saw the fragments of happenings of the hoary past... through lack of knowledge and imagination he, as it were contracted these to a level dating of only a few thousand years ago." Immediately, Lever makes the curious judgment upon Scripture that "nothing is detracted from the historicity of the biblical statements... but it is no scientific-historical historicity..."
hence, we may never demand from Scripture ... exact historical knowledge.” So much, we are accustomed to hearing in Reformed circles. But a half-way house does not satisfy Lever. He proceeds to weigh the Scriptural account of the distinct creation of man and finds it wanting: “we should not exclude the idea that the first human being looked more anthropoid-like than we do,” “we may not reject in advance the possibility that there has existed a genetic relation between man and animal.” Two considerations to which Lever clings retain for him, he thinks, the status of “creationist,” the one being his belief that the first particle of matter was created by God, the other being his belief that the development from particle of matter to man happened under God’s providential control.

To state bluntly what Lever couches in wary language: 1) Genesis is a hodgepodge of inaccuracies because of the great limitations of the author. 2) The sheer evolutionistic account of the development of all things from one particle of matter becomes Christian if one says “God” at the beginning and “God’s providence” all along the developmental line. 3) Indicating the immensity of the effect which Lever’s view has, it is permissible, in fact, preferable, to hold that Jesus Christ was historically in the loins of an animal (“one as Christian ... principally does not have to have any objection against the general hypothesis of a genetic continuity of all living organisms, man not excluded”).

Not all theories of the long day go as far as the one expressed by Lever. Not yet. Some retain the sharp Scriptural division between the various creations. But in the all important realm of creation, the first wrong step is the crucial one. Wander from days into periods and, although you personally may be content to go no further, the next generation advances into the genetic relationship of all things. From there it is a short slide into the pit where “God” has become the empty symbol of human aspiration.

Whether acceptance of periods instead of days carries within itself the inevitable progress into admitting a genetic relationship between all things may be contested. Several considerations are relevant here. History’s lesson indicates that such a development of thought has occurred, and that plainly in Reformed Churches. If even the barest theory of periods is allowed, the havoc wreaked upon Genesis 1 precludes any later fundamental objections to the theory of genetic continuity and for that matter, any objection to regarding Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden as so much myth. Scripture cannot be broken, not in the so-called little matters and, a fortiori, not in the absolutely essential matter of the beginning of all things. And if theologians and the entire Christian congregation render themselves so pliable in evaluating the Word of God half-desperate to appear “respectable” and “modern” in the eyes of the world, they will discover that they have picked an insatiable master. Nineteenth century theology ran amok exactly here. As soon as a scientist or a philosopher or a poet raised his noble brow to attack some teaching of Scripture, theologians scurried for their studies like leaves in the path of a hurricane. All their zeal for “re-evaluation” of Scripture amounted to nothing less than King Jehoiakin’s more obvious destruction of the Lord’s Word. Cut out the pages or fill them with man’s word, what does it differ?

Monstrously strange it is that one who confesses a day of twenty four hours should be regarded as if he had just told of seeing a little green man with forty four arms and a neon nose behind his fifth ear. A rose is a rose is a rose but a day is a period is an aeon?

To science, our gratitude for knowledge that the earth is round, our system sun-centered, and the universe unfathomably vast. But there will be another explanation of fossils and carbon 14 than the theory of periods or there will be none at all. Perhaps, the other, the correct explanation has already been made, perhaps, it will come later, perhaps, it will never appear at all. Whatever be the case, let the Word stand, lest you, in yourself or in your generations, reveal yet one more explanation for the bones and the molars and decomposition, that they have “hid these things from the wise and prudent.”

Four
"Father, the hour is come." — John 17:1
What a terrible hour that was,—the hour of suffering and death, of Gethsemane and Golgotha!

Jesus and His disciples are on their way to Gethsemane. The last Passover had been celebrated, —and the first Lord’s Supper too. The last discourse of Jesus to His disciples, a message of comfort and exhortation and promise, had been uttered—John 14—while they were still in the upper room—John 15 and 16—while on the way to the garden of sorrows. Now they are nearing the gate; the tension mounts in the soul of the Lord Jesus; and He prays,—prays that most touching high priestly prayer, which may well be called the holy of holies in the temple of the Word of God.

"These words spake Jesus (John 14-16) and he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."

Any mother knows what it means when at last it can and must be said: the hour is come. She knew all the time that this hour was inevitable. She knew approximately when to expect it too. From the beginning of her pregnancy she had dreaded that hour, and the tension had increased in the measure it drew nearer. But finally it must be said: the hour is come! The labors have begun, the delivery is at hand!

In some such way, only in an infinitely deeper and more terrible sense, these words of the Savior must be taken. He knew all the time that this hour was coming. In the measure it drew nearer He became more and more conscious of it too. How plain that is from all the gospels. The nearer the hour the more He talks about it. But now it must be said, "Father, the hour is come!" The hour of my deepest suffering,—and death! The hour of labor and delivery! I am standing on its threshold. Another moment and the flames will beat about my body, all the waves and billows of affliction will begin to roll over my soul, all the fury of a wicked world, all the wrath of an eternal God!

That hour was the more terrible, of course, because of Him Who suffered, and through suffering was glorified. He was the Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the only begotten Son, God Himself. He was the Son of God as Son of Man, the anointed of the Father, the Christ. Therefore this hour was of such inestimable value for lost and damnable sinners. Therefore, too, it was so unutterably terrible. God in the flesh is speaking here to God Triune; God as man to God as God!

And we hear Him say, "The hour is come!"

That does not mean that His suffering
began with this hour, - it didn't! The meaning is not, that He did not suffer all His life, - He did! His humiliation began in the manger.

Now, however, THE hour is come. THE hour of all history. The hour such as the world had never known, and never again will know. The hour wherein all the forces of darkness would be released against the champion of the covenant of God, the visible representative of the invisible God in the world. The hour of the Savior's deepest agony of body and soul, wherein all the wrath of an eternal God would burn down upon Him, an infinite Godhead would avenge Himself on sin, and an eternal hell would concentrate itself in a single hour. All the agonies of the damned on one individual! A whole eternity in one brief hour! Therefore earth has never known such an hour, -- and hell itself will never know an hour like this!

That hour was necessary, too - as necessary as it was terrible.

For that prospective mother the hour, that of labor and delivery, is absolutely necessary. The child is there, it must be born, it cannot remain where it is, - that would kill the mother. Of that babe she can be delivered, then to rejoice in the fruit of her sorrows, only in this way. From the moment of conception the way points directly and inexorably to this hour. There is no escape, no detour.

Thus is was with Jesus. The church was there, it had to be born. While still in the manger, come to take our place, to pay our debt, to establish His kingdom, to do the will of the Father, to atone and reconcile and redeem, the way pointed straight and relentlessly to this hour. Once in Bethlehem, Calvary is inevitable. God's covenant with men had to be realized, the church had to be born of Him, as it were.

That hour was necessary, first of all, from the viewpoint of God's everlasting counsel. No, it was not that the enemy had become too strong. Jesus could have escaped, as He had done so often before. It was night, and they were alone. Had Jesus and His disciples gone anywhere but to Gethsemane, Judas and his mob would never have found them that night. However, God's counsel had decreed it so, and when the time came, Jesus and His disciples, Annas and Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin, Pilate and Herod and the soldiers, all hastened to realize the good pleasure of our sovereign God; that good pleasure, according to which God had chosen a people to be glorified in the way of sin and grace, designed a church to be redeemed and gathered by the blood and Spirit of the only begotten Son.

Consequently, that hour was necessary from the viewpoint of Christ Himself. He had been ordained from all eternity to be the head of this church in which He would be glorified and which with Him would glorify the Father. As their head He had been eternally burdened with the responsibility of redeeming this church and given the mandate: lose none of them but raise them up at the last day. This was possible only in the way of taking their place, bearing their punishment, dying their death. There was no other way than that which led directly to and through this hour.

Thus this hour was necessary, finally, for you and me. Lost we were in sin and misery, guilt and eternal death. There was nothing we could do to deliver ourselves. The only way was the way of the hour, Jesus' hour, that of eternal suffering and death.

Therefore this hour was so glorious, too.

For that prospective mother the hour of labor and delivery is a glorious hour because its end is life and birth. Her pains are not the agonies of death, but the pangs of birth. Her momentary anguish is not a matter of departure, but of arrival: of sorrow, but joy; of frustration, but anticipation. It's the hour of birth, and that birth is itself part of the hour - its end and purpose.

The same is true of Jesus' hour. It is so glorious because it is the hour of birth, redemption, deliverance, victory, resurrection and life. All these are part of the hour, - its purpose and climax and glory. In connection with the miracle of Easter there is nothing but glory in the shame of Good Friday, nothing but light in the darkness of the cross.

How glorious was this hour for the Father. His righteous wrath was appeased. His justice was satisfied, His covenant realized, His kingdom established. That was the primary purpose of this hour. "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee." He is and must be all in all.
How glorious was this hour for Christ Himself. Under God all things are for His sake. True, in this hour He would suffer and die and be buried, He despised and rejected of men. However, in this hour He would also redeem His church and merit eternal life for all His own; He would rise again as Victor o'er the dark domain; He would ascend to heaven to be clothed with all power and majesty and to rule over all God's wide dominion as King of kings and Lord of lords. The Father did glorify the Son, that the Son might glorify the Father. It was the hour of triumph and everlasting joy.

Therefore, too, what a glorious hour it was for all His own, for all who believe in that mighty Savior. In that hour is your salvation; nothing need be added. That salvation is yours in all its riches by faith in that Jesus; nothing more is necessary. One aged, dying Christian put it this way: "The Bible says, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." So simple, and yet so beautiful! Therein lay her hope and comfort. Yours too? By faith in that crucified Christ we may look back to this hour and say: there my debts were paid, my guilt was blotted out, my battle was fought, my victory was achieved. The night is past, it is now day. My sins are gone, I am justified with Christ and have peace with God.

Lay hold on that redemption! Put your trust in nothing else!

The way of the cross leads home!

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**PENCILS and CHALK**

**DARYL VANDER KOOI**

**MAKING GEOGRAPHY LIVE**

Generally, one could say that geography is a burdensome task for the average student. It appears to be a boring, tiresome subject to most students, but why? I would like to give some possible reasons for this problem.

First of all, I think that geography tends to be stagnant. To explain further — to the general pupil, geography has no change, it seems to be the same pile of maps with the same cities, the same boundaries, the same elevation, the same imports and exports, the same rivers every time he studies. Geography does not deal with people, animals, or any other creature that has interest and dynamics.

Then, also, geography is primarily a large book jammed with facts. He sits down to study 3 or 4 pages of facts concerning names of cities, products, imports, exports, etc. After he has read the assignment several times, and feels rather secure in the fact that he will be able to "parrot" them back in exact pronunciation, order, and detail, he closes the monstrosity of compiled data in relief, and reaches for a library book which gives a fast-moving, interesting story of Perky, the sheep dog.

Another possible culprit for geography's
scare is probably the time at which it is taught. Often geography is "squeezed in" in the afternoon by a teacher who himself likes to hide it until last. When a subject tends to be a boggy problem, it should be changed to a time when interests are at their peak. For example, if it is scheduled for the last study of the day, it will "chug and crawl" for both teacher and pupil; but, if it were placed after a morning recess, the response would increase very much.

In the fourth place, geography covers much more than can be covered adequately. Speed to the pupil means more than, I believe, is realized by many. If they can only cover 2 or 3 of those cumbersome pages a day, they wonder if they will ever finish that book. It appears that even the pupil thinks that he must keep moving to make it interesting.

The greatest problem in geography is that it is much too abstract. It does not deal with people they can visualize, factories they have seen, houses they have been in. Mark Twain was not just having a joke or laugh in his story of the flying machine, when Huck Finn denied that the green territory below them was Illinois because it was pink on his school map. The pupil has too much of a problem putting geography into the tangible or the experienced.

After studying the failures or hindrances of geography, I think it would be advisable to look at a few remedies for the problem. I intend to give some of the remedial steps and not discuss them "pro" or "con."

First of all, geography can become a moving subject both in study and in material; that is, more can be covered in subject matter itself by making it more general with less fact, and one can remove the stagnant effect by introducing discussion concerning change in both conditions of life and the world. For example, one can study changes that took place in industry, politics, political territories and in the people in Europe before and during the Second World War.

This type of study will bring about more study of concepts than of fact. In the teaching of concept, I believe a pupil has a stronger place to co-ordinate his facts which will not become burdensome and detailed.

It will also help to place geography at a different time in the daily schedule to make use of the pupil's best interests and to link geography with other subjects, such as history, reading, and science. To illustrate—a teacher can teach geography and history jointly in a study of the Civil War through its campaigns and battle fronts.

My last suggestion is that of introducing more of the many possible projects that exist. The only difficulty in projects is that they are restricted only by the teacher's imagination and research. I will give a number of the many aids that can be used.

1. Maps and charts can be used with success if used correctly. Desk maps can be used to teach concepts and generalizations of different regions through study of population, elevation, location, size, rainfall, etc. The pupil can make his own maps, map puzzles, graphs, and charts from his own research and study.

2. Bulletin boards can be used for maps, pictures, and diagrams of the regions studied in order to increase curiosity and to act as good illustrations. Allow or request pupils to bring their own pictures or newspaper clippings which they can explain to the class possibly on a credit system.

3. The children can build houses, ranches, factories, and machines (preferably to scale) like those studied in geography class in order to add motivation and concreteness.

4. The teacher can make worksheets and outlines emphasizing those things he believes important.

5. The teacher can give frequent objective and/or subjective tests to find the weak areas of study.

6. Other effective methods are the argumentative and problem solving methods. In the argumentative method, panel discussions and debates are given by the pupils on a problem. For example, they could hold a debate on the problem—Resolved that the most important factor in the fall of Hitler's rule was his invasion of Russia. Problem solving also initiates new interest. Primarily one or two pupils are set to the task of a particular, comprehensive question such as, "Why did the Egyptian religion center around the Nile River?"
7. Requesting a pupil to write or tell a story about people or industrial businesses in a particular country will demand study from him. A Mr. Thomas could request Tommy to prepare and tell a story about the life of an imaginary Mexican boy named "Escedro," who grew up in Mexico City.

8. Stories either read to, or by, the pupil about children or animals in other parts of the country or world will push his curiosity to learn more about this particular country or region. For instance, after reading or hearing a story about a little Eskimo and dog, Jimmy can study Alaska on the basis of his experience through the book (which can also be interpreted as a call for better reading books).

9. Lastly, a good means of motivation lies in trips both of the class and of the individual. A well planned trip to a textile mill, furniture factory, or museum can bring new interest if the pupil is required to listen and learn in order to give a report or take a quiz. The individual pupil can also make his own trips for research by going to the local business men to gain information. To illustrate: Jim has been requested by his teacher to find all the steps and processes which are involved in the transportation of the corn in his cereal from the farm to his home. He can visit the local feed mills and the local grocery store to obtain nearly all of the necessary information.

These are only a few of the many projects that can be incorporated to enliven the dead study of geography. May geography live for the student and the teacher!

Redemption Accomplished and Applied
John Murray - Eerdmans - 192 pp. - $1.50 (paperback)

John Murray ranks among the foremost Reformed theologians of our time. Since 1937 he has served as professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. His concern for and grasp of the truth of Scripture make this book a valuable contribution to the knowledge of redemption.

The worth of Redemption lies in its being a thorough investigation of the many aspects of the redemptive work of Christ. All of these are the object of Dr. Murray's exposition. On every theme, Scripture is brought to bear, both as regards the positive expression of the doctrine and as regards the criticism of present-day deviations. This prominence given to Scripture coupled with Murray's generally keen and incisive explanations enable the reader to obtain a clear and all-encompassing view of the work of Christ.

Obviously, in dealing with a theme of such importance and centrality, a theologian will make plain his basic convictions. In answer to the question, "What is the extent of the atonement," Murray goes to battle against advocates of universal atonement, i.e., Christ died for all men. "We shall have none of it. The doctrine of 'limited atonement' which we maintain is the doctrine which limits the atonement to those who are heirs of eternal life, to the elect." Again, the clear tenor of the Re-
formed faith sounds an "alarum" against "A cheap and tawdry evangelism" which "has tended to rob the gospel . . . of that invincible power which is the glory of the gospel of sovereign grace."

The book divides into two sections, redemption accomplished and redemption applied. The first treats the several facets of Christ's work and the second the ordo salutis or the work of Christ within His people. In the second section, Murray beclouds the nature of the work of God in His people when he maintains that although calling, regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification are God's own works, "faith is not the act of God" but of "the sinner." Certainly, it is we who believe, not God. But as a link in the chain of salvation, faith is also worked in us by God. Denial of this results in one's meandering into the universal offer of the gospel, as does Murray.

Helpful to the serious Bible student is the lengthy index of texts as well as the index of subjects. By no means least, doctrine to Murray is as warm and as vital as life itself. Of which truth the entire book is evidence.

David Brainerd, Beloved Yankee

DAVID WYNBECK - Eerdmans - 256 pp. - $3.75.

David Brainerd, the young new Englander who brought stirring revival to the Indians in Colonial America during the 1700's, was a contemporary of Jonathan Edwards, the well-known Puritan "fire and damnation" preacher. Jonathan Edwards, highly esteeming Brainerd, edited Brainerd's doleful diary in the year 1748. Wynbeck, a graduate of Calvin College and presently Advertising Manager for Wm. B. Eerdmans, revised Edward's edition of Brainerd's diary in Beloved Yankee.

Although Wynbeck does an adequate job of portraying Brainerd as a faithful, sin-conscious child of God in a quasi-religious era, Wynbeck's work is disappointing in that it contains for too many exact excerpts from Brainerd's diary which the author attempts to elucidate by appending his own commentaries.

It is not difficult to glean from the book that David Brainerd was an avid preacher, a laborious missionary, and a despondent, oft-times querulous Yankee, but a little more of the fictional mingled with the factual would have produced a more interesting account of the beloved Brainerd.

Sharing His Suffering


From "the old, old story" to "just an old story" is a short step, easily and often made in our day. Even the cross of Christ is whittled away until it no longer casts its shadow over the life of the professed Christian. To the modern, relaxed disciple of the Crucified One, Sharing His Suffering carries the irritating message, "There was no easy way for Him to save us, and there is no easy way for us to serve Him."

The same quality which detracts from Eldersveld's radio sermons enhances his book, viz., his frequent quotations and illustrations. The tough-minded investigation of the soft and easy lot of most Christians bristles not only with the Word but also with the secondary barbs of sayings and examples. An excellent book for young people, Sharing confronts them with a frankness which is all too scarce. That there is no Christian except he be a suffering Christian sounds "like a very dark and dismal view of life . . . to young people who are looking forward to a bright future." They must know that the issue is not between suffering and not-suffering but between suffering "unto eternal life with Christ" and suffering "unto eternal death without Him." There is no other alternative.

Eldersveld is an interesting as well as instructive author. Never does he weaken his observations of failure and calling with a stuffy huffing-and-puffing. His style is smooth, personal, and provocative. At the close of the book, Rev. Eldersveld engages in what would be, were the subject not so stark, a neat imitation of Mark Anthony's treatment of "an honorable man," only the word here is "odd." The modern mind scorns those who look for the second coming as "odd." Naive and odd and unenlightened as such ones may be, when Christ comes, it shall be discovered "who are really the odd ones."
CRITIQUE

AGATHA LUBBERS

THE FAR RIGHT

While conversing recently with a literate and well-informed business man, he made the surprising and unusual statement that he had never met or talked with a Communist. In all the fervor which is presently being expended this is a surprising statement. Few would make such a statement and yet the truth of this statement can undoubtedly not be debated or denied. I also have never met a Communist.

There are those, however, who have retained sufficient fervor from the McCarthy enterprise to see a Communist in every pulpit, in most school rooms, and certainly in many of the government positions. Periodicals have devoted much space to these fervent Communist hunters. These haters of any form of Communism are represented today by a group generally denominated as the Far Right or Ultra Rightists. Much paper and ink is expended in the defense of these Rightists and even more is used by the Rightists themselves as they fight all forms of subversion.

Life in one of its more academic articles gives some rather interesting facts concerning the tempest stirred by the Far Right. This weekly classified these subversion hunters as: “the responsible practicing advocates of conservative policies; idealists, mostly the young, who cleave to a conservative philosophy: the faculty, making a profession out of the mass study of Communism; the pushers, who advocate and tolerate ideas outside normal political action; and militant extremists, loosely organized or not organized at all.”

Rightist groups are represented by such a man as Senator Barry Goldwater, who is being touted along with George Romney as a possible candidate for the presidency in the next election. This Senator from Arizona is one that many depend on for responsible legislation to prevent centralization of power, federal control, and Communist infiltration. Dr. Frederick Schwartz is pointed out as the leader of those who advocate academic study of the tenets of Communism. The idealists are those who hold to a conservative philosophy and speak out for it. The pushers are represented most pointedly by Robert Welsh, leader of the now well-known John Birch Society. These “patriots” practice methods outside regular political action. They have said that President Eisenhower was a “dedicated conspicuous agent of the Communist conspiracy.” Life reports that the Birchers “described former President Roosevelt as an unconscious tool of Communism, and Truman as a conscious one.” The militant extremists are exemplified by groups such as the minute men who spend their time in active preparation for possible open hand to hand pitched conflicts with the Communists.

What do these extreme rightists oppose and what causes them to be so alarmed today? Where do they discover signs of Communist infiltration and Communist subversive policies becoming apparent? Life lists at least nine trouble spots singled out by the Rightists. These are too many for us to mention but
we shall mention a few of the obvious and possibly less obvious.

Rightists claim that the Liberals are well down the road toward socialism. Their program of socialized medicine (Medicare) is an example of this movement toward socialization. “Rightists say this is as far toward Communism as even Russia has gone.”

“Federal income tax (which must be repealed) goes in part to support Communism and even worse, to regiment Americans by confiscating their wealth.

“Flouridation of drinking water is a plot to weaken American minds leaving them easy victims for Red brain-washing. The same goes for any mental health program.”

“The National Council of Churches is suspect. Among the 109,000 ministers of its member churches, at least 7,000 are knowing or deluded tools of Communism.

It is quite evident, it seems to me, that the position of the rightists, if it is correctly described by Life, is hyper-reactionary. These ultra conservatives are convinced that almost every liberal program under consideration is the result of Communist infiltration and subversion in government. The argument of the conservatist is that there must be a decided return to the conservatism and free enterprise of the past. This they claim is an inherent and fundamental part of a democratic state or republic.

It ought to be pointed out that the ultra right is not completely new in national history. Senator Joseph McCarthy, who has been previously mentioned, is the nearest progenitor of the contemporary rightist movement. The Communist “witch-hunting” and trials which he initiated are still somewhat fresh in the minds of some of the older readers of this periodical. American Firsters, the Ku Klux Klan, and the “Know Nothing” movement of the 1850’s are part of the ultra conservative tradition. The Firsters were strongly against U. S. participation in the Second World War. The Ku Klux Klan became a real political power in the 1920’s and the “Know Nothing” movement was strongly against the immigration of Catholics from Europe.*

All these reactionary movements in one way or other attempted to revolt against the main stream of American thought and action.

The question concerning the primary cause for concern by the rightists at this time still remains. Where have the rightists gained their new impetus in their struggle for conservative government? Life reports that “political frustration” is one of the major causes for the present rash of concern. The cleavage between the two major political parties is not as evident as it should be. In the recent past people were somewhat disillusioned but now the lid is off. Congressmen have discovered, however, that this concern is not simple “political frustration” but is also concern with the area of foreign affairs. John Dowdy, Democrat of Texas, is reported to have said: “The biggest question asked me is why the government of the U. S. is helping Communism all over the world.” Americans, whether Democrats or Republicans, are concerned. They are Communism, nuclear bomb, and fallout conscious.

We are assured by the author of the article in Life that no clear-cut victory is in sight in the struggle of the cold-war. What about the Rightist? He is impatient. He cannot accept the complex, long-range struggle and the lack of ready made answers in this battle of the ideologies.

The first question that we immediately ask ourselves is one which deals with our attitude toward this complex political problem. Should we become much alarmed? What should be the attitude of the Biblically orientated and confessionally sound child of God? Is it his calling to fervently and energetically join these Rightist movements or organize similar movements whicharray themselves against the “terrible” menace of Communism?

Without engaging in a point by point rebuttal or affirmation of some of the so-called subversive policies pointed out by the rightists, it should be very apparent that these are extreme examples of such tactics. Some of them are even ludicrous; i.e., fluoridation of drinking water.” It is equally true that gradually the federal government has assumed more and more of the activities previously controlled by the state and local governments. I hesitate, however, to at-

tribute all of these trends to the subversive tactics of the Communists.

I have personally never been much alarmed or concerned by this ideologicaI struggle. I do not mean by this that I am not interested in observing and studying this struggle as it develops historically but active participation in this struggle between the rightist and leftist movements hardly fits into such objective study. It also appears to me and I humbly submit that such participation is not the responsibility of the Christian. One does have a responsibility to be an informed Christian but this does not imply participation.

I am convinced that the doctrine of the leftist (Communist) is anti Christian. I am equally convinced, however, that the position of the rightist is just as anti Christian. Of course, if one takes the position that democracy, free enterprise, and state right-

ism is the Christian ideal, then to be a rightist is the only possible position.

In spite of a seeming claim to Christian ideals and Christian motives, our federal documents are humanistic and man-centered. Let’s not be afraid to denominate them for what they are. Patriotism does not imply acquiescence and assent to all the imaginations and vain philosophies of men. The Christian concern is one which transcends the concerns of the rightist and leftist movement. Paul, the great apostle of Christianity, stood on a “moral Sinai” and proclaimed to citizens of a heavenly commonwealth while they lived in a Roman republic some eternal logic.

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

OUR CALLING TO ATTEND THE PREACHED WORD

"Hearken unto Me now, therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth" (Prov. 7:24). It is the calling of everyone, whether children of God or profane atheists, to hear the preached Word. All are accountable to God to place themselves under the sound of the Gospel, even the wicked who do not and will not hear it. But I am now thinking of what is particularly required of those who do hear the Word preached. They have a peculiar responsibility in the hearing of the Word of God. It is their duty, our duty, to regularly attend on the Word of God preached. These are days when iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold, so that church attendance does suffer all over the world, even “on the mission field.” The house of God is by some visited only spasmodically. If half the regular services are attended, this is often regarded as doing well. No church knows what it means to keep the Sabbath
Day holy which has only one service on Sunday. God's Word requires attendance at two services on the Lord's Day. Scripture frequently speaks of the morning and evening sacrifice. The people assembled to hear the preaching "at the evening sacrifice" (Ezra 9:4, 5). The early New Testament church also had an evening service: "The same day at evening being the first day of the week... the disciples were assembled..." (John 20:19). There has always been a morning worship, but also a public "evening oblation" (Dan. 9:21). Newly established churches, in the zeal of their first love, had an evening service. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together... Paul preached unto them... and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7). It is God's command to His church, "In the morning sow thy seed; and in the evening withhold not thy hand" (Eccl. 11:6). According to Ezekiel 46, the children of Israel worshipped the Lord every morning, but also on Sabbath evenings, for only then was the door of the temple closed at the end of the Sabbath day. One spiritual meal a week is not enough to make a strong Christian.

Naturally, we are to attend on the preached Word regularly. But is our duty fulfilled when we do so? By no means: that is only the first step. Suppose we attend only one service a Sabbath: that is not meeting our obligation to the Lord, nor is it doing Him a favor. It is only half-beginning what is required of us. But there are other matters to consider in the zealous attendance of God's house. There are certain malpractices to avoid, such as, coming to the services late; unnecessary whispering and chatting before, or, what is worse, during the hour of worship; reading of books or papers which have nothing to do with the act of worship progressing at the moment; playing with the children; or dozing. There are other actions which ought to be eliminated entirely, such as clipping the finger-nails, foot-tapping, nervous snapping of a penknife or cigarette lighter. There are other idiosyncrasies which may be distracting to the minister as well as to other worshippers, such as constant craning of the neck to watch the clock, yawning, and that without covering the mouth, excavation of the nasal potato patch, augering out the auditory canal, or the sitting with eye-lids in repose, brain out of gear and jaws in action.

Attendance on the preached Word requires preparation. There must be "preparatory" with a view to the Lord's Day. Care must be given to as much ordinary business as possible on Saturday so that the Sabbath may be free for worship, meditation and spiritual conversation with God's people. The mind and heart must be prepared to turn from worldly affairs, the business of the week, and the earthly pleasures which crowd in so much upon us. Preaching of the Word will not be effective with us if we come to church with the mind filled with TV, basketball, business and late hours spent in pleasure-seeking. Make this preparation also with prayer. Pray that the Holy Spirit may enable the minister to expound the Word of God effectually. Pray for yourself and others that there may be grace to receive the Word, and that the gracious operation of the Spirit may precede, accompany and follow the ministry of the Word.

Attend the preached Word with assimilation. Some foods may easily be swallowed down whole; but then the body cannot assimilate it, and so nourishment does not follow. Do notgulp down spiritual food; masticate it; let it become part of you. Do not allow your minister (or your husband) to do all your thinking for you. Search the Scriptures yourself. Accept the truth not merely because the minister says it, but also because you think it through and understand it for yourself. Hear the Word willingly, gladly and with such attention that you follow it up in your Bible, and learn to see where and how Scripture teaches the thing heard. There is every reason to do this. Our Reformed ministry is not characterized by an emotional or sensational evangelism. Our preaching does not call on men to repent, without explaining the source, nature and evidence of repentance. We do not call on men to believe without teaching the doctrine of faith. We do not exhort men to receive Christ as Saviour without preaching His two natures, Person and redemptive work. We do not plead with men without informing them what they are to decide. Nor do we urge men to come
to Jesus without warning them that by nature they cannot come, will not come, and may not come, unless they be regenerated and come by faith. We have an instructive ministry. The Word is very thoroughly and comprehensively preached, and most beautifully presented as we open up the contents of the Heidelberg document from year to year. Do you take advantage of that preaching? Is it your delight? If not, how can it ever be your intelligent understanding? It will, at that, remain a mystery to you. Is it not given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven?

Attend the preached Word because it is an instructive ministry. The preaching which is popular in the world today is really second-rate, superficial, and depends for its existence upon a certain frame of mind instilled in the hearers: a high emotional excitation; and if this attitude is not fed by sensational oratory, the ear-appeal of bombastic delivery, the eye-appeal of religious films and female trios, and by a cluttering of crowd-gathering gimmicks, a delusion of spirit ensues. The preaching which does not keep one in this pleasant mood is regarded as dead, formal and unprofitable. A sound instructive ministry does not please such hearers. They are only irked by it, and feel a chill upon their frivolous zeal. Doctrinal preaching dispels the religious day-dreaming in which they prefer to revel.

Receive the preached Word with readiness of mind. Of the Berean Christians it was said, "Those were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). This they did because the Lord opened their hearts (Acts 16:14). No one will do this unless his heart is opened. Heart-opening removes stubborn resistance to the truth, and secures humble reception of it. By nature, a man is prejudiced against the truth of Scripture, is inclined to argue against it, or drop it in dull silence. Among many who profess to be the soundest believers, the champions of orthodoxy (my Fundamentalist brethren: be not offended, but take heed) there is an aversion to certain fundamental doctrines, as Original Sin, Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresist-

ible Grace, the Sovereignty of God, Absolute Predestination, Particular Grace and even Eternal Punishment. When a true believer is shown plainly from Scripture that these are not the doctrines of men, but the very Word of God, he will believe it. The prejudiced mind will not, but will stick to his Arminianism, or his Modernism, and will go so far as to transfer his revulsion to these doctrines of grace to the preacher or the holder of them. It is never a question of what we would like to hear preached. It is not even a question of whether we can understand what is preached. The Real question is, "Is it the teaching of Scripture?" "Is it according to the Word of God?" Real readiness of mind will then have it, whether the flesh likes it or not, whether or not the finite or undeveloped understanding is able to grasp it.

In the preached Word Christ speaks. That is what really matters, that Christ speaks to us in the preaching. If that is your conviction, then you will take the preached Word to heart. Hide it in your heart. Retain it in the mind; memorize it. Repudiate the "in-one-ear-and-out-the-other" method of attending the Word. Store it in the heart, so that you will benefit by it in the day of adversity, as well as in the prosperous present. Christ preaches, "Hearken to Me," not to soul seducers, nor to adulterers of the Gospel. Your sensual appetite may tempt you to the alluring dainties of the shallow multitude. Therein lies the broad way to spiritual starvation. But "attend to the words of My mouth" and "verily thou shalt be fed."

PUBLIC LECTURE

Date: April 26
Time: 8:00 P. M.
Place: First Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids
Subject: The Calling of the Christian in Regard to Culture
Speaker: Rev. H. Hoekema
(Sponsored by the staff of Beacon Lights)
Remember CHRISTMAS?

EDWARD LANGERAK

Of course we do. Who could forget Christmas. There is a very definite place in everyone's life for this season. So much centers about it—vacations, gifts, cards, and parties. There even exists a universal feeling which we define as the happy "Christmas Spirit." It also becomes very important to the economy; many businesses frankly declare their inevitable bankruptcy should the Christmas season be eliminated. Yes all over the world, Christmas is impatiently anticipated and boisterously celebrated. We too, as Christians, place much emphasis on Christmas. It, of course, commemorates Christ's incarnation. And this is important, this event of Christ coming in human flesh, and we do well to distinguish it.

What about Good Friday?

This seems to be somewhat different. In the first place, the world in general seems to take almost no notice of it. Secondly, we as Christians seem to do little more than give the occasion a polite nod.

Now, as far as the world is concerned, this attitude is understandable. Why should they celebrate a man's death? It is so much more fitting to celebrate his birth. A birth is always joyous, while a death is always sad, even a death for high ideals. Yes, it is only reasonable that the world, while raising such a big hubbub about a man's birth, should try to forget his death.

But what about us? What should be the relative importance of these occasions to Christians? Christmas, as we have noticed, is important in that it marks Christ's incarnation. But for what reason did this occur? Was not Christ born to make the cross possible? Could Christ's birth help his people in any way as far as their sins are concerned, except to pave the way for his death? In the Old Testament, why could the angels rebuke Satan and claim the body of Moses? Was it not because God promised that Christ would die for the sins of Moses and the rest of his children? For every Old Testament prophecy foretelling Christ's birth, there are seven picturing his death. This includes the beautiful and oft-quoted Isaiah 53. And the sacrifices and many of the feasts that Israel had to keep pointed directly to the supreme sacrifice of the cross.

Also today, is it not true that what happened on Good Friday is the only hope we have for everlasting life. So our very life centers about the fact that Christ died for our sins.

Yet our remembrance of this occasion is almost engulfed by our celebration of something that led up to it. Now, my point is not so much that we should do less at Christmas time but that we should begin to place more importance upon Good Friday and, along with it, Easter. And our remembrance of this should not be marked, as some might suppose, with grief for a man who died for his lofty convictions. We should rather glorify God with our expressing joy and thankfulness in that the only possibility of our salvation has been realized. We have an excellent opportunity to do this during our Lenten season with its special sermons and all. If we have not done so in the past, let us begin to use this occasion properly; we might find ourselves all the more spiritually blessed.
NEWS from, for, and about our churches

LOIS E. KREGEL

Several of our servicemen have sent in changes of address:

Pvt. Harold Triceenberg (Kalamazoo)
U.S. 53707402
46th Engr. Det. (U)
Fort Campbell, Ky.

Pvt. Duane Mensch (Hope)
R.A. 16729317
Co. C 9th Bn. 3rd Tng. Regt. (BCT)
3rd Platoon U S A T C A
Fort Knox, Ky.

A. B. Max H. Moore, AF 17620698
(Loveland)
Flight 266, Box 1508
Lackland A.F.B., Texas

Pvt. Wm. D. Huber, RA 17606781
(Loveland)
33rd E.N. Det. Field Main
A P O 58, New York, N. Y.

Often in our school papers there appear little gems worth sharing with those who would otherwise not have the opportunity to read them. Miss W. Koole wrote recently in the Adams Announcer, "At one time or another in your life you may have heard the rasping, creaking sound of an unoiled piece of machinery... just so it is with an unoiled life. A Christian needs the precious lubricants of Godly virtues to keep the machinery of life from being dragged down by unnecessary and often injurious friction...

Is your supply low? God will replenish your luck - go to the Throne of Grace from which flows a never ending supply."

The Athletic Ass'n of Adams St. School served its usual delicious Pancake Supper on March 24 to approximately five hundred people.

Wedding bells rang on February 16 for Robert Velting and Bonnie Vollink (First).

Two of our denomination were suddenly called home:
Mrs. Paul Buys, of Edgerton, at the age of 33 years.
Mr. George Stuursma, a member of our Southeast Church.

The sound of music is heard in our churches.

Hudsonville Church recently organized its own singing group, the name of which had not yet been chosen at this writing. The first meeting was held on March 4. We shall be looking forward to hearing them in the future.

The Hope Heralds presented a program in Southeast on March 18.

Loveland Young People's Society sponsored a singspiration on February 18.

Hope Choral Society plans to give an Easter Program April 22 in Hope Church.
**Future Conventioneers:**

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Perlin Schut (Hudsonville)
A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Linhardt (Loveland)
A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. T. Looyenga (First)
A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Jabay (Edgerton)
A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Win. Den Besten (Doon)
A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. John H. Blankespoor (Doon)
A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Lubbers (Hudsonville)
A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. C. Doezema (First)

Several of our older members celebrated birthdays recently:
Mrs. Fred Faber, the oldest member of First Church, was 90 on March 19.
Mr. G. Bergsma (First) became 88 on March 11.
Mrs. H. Bleyenber (Edgerton) celebrated her 87th birthday on March 9.

**Church Extension and Missions:**

"Mission Night" was held in Hull on March 9, sponsored by the Ladies Society of Hull Church. Rev. Lubbers spoke on the theme "The Word of God is not Bound" and told of his labors, problems, and encouragements. Two of the members of the Radio Committee, Mr. Clarence Prince and Mr. Charles Kregel, came from Grand Rapids to tell about the radio work in connection with mission activity. The meeting-place was full and a most enjoyable evening was spent by those present. The ladies of Hull Church served refreshments at a social hour afterwards.

South Holland-Oaklawn Church Extension Committee has prepared the first of a series of pamphlets for broad distribution; this one was written by Rev. J. Heys.

The Reformed Action Committee of Doon, Hull, and Edgerton is constantly busy publishing and mailing pamphlets. Hull's bulletin recently contained an appeal for volunteers to help in folding and mailing, and the next week a "thank you" was on it for those who responded.

**Miscellanea:**

A Benefit Coffee for the Christian Foundation for Handicapped Children was held in First Church on March 14, under the sponsorship of the Priscilla Society. More than $400.00 was collected.

Mrs. Jay Holstege was received as a member by our Hudsonville Church; she formerly belonged to the First Chr. Ref. Church of Byron Center.

Rev. B. Woudenber is to be the speaker at the Western Ladies League Meeting on April 13 in Doon. His topic is "Scriptural Communism in Acts."

A public lecture is scheduled for April 26 in Oaklawn. Rev. C. Hanko plans to speak on the subject "The New Heavens and Earth."

During February and March blizzards caused cancellation of many activities in our Western churches of Hull, Doon, and Edgerton; even church services had to be cancelled sometimes. On Sunday, March 11, four young people planned to make confession of faith in Edgerton, but they had to postpone it until the following Sunday, even though one of them managed to make it through the drifts on horseback.

Rev. and Mrs. G. M. Ophoff are staying at present in the Beacon Lights Rest Home in Manne.