BEACON LIGHTS

For Protestant Reformed Youth

VOLUME VI DECEMBER — 1945 NUMBER 3

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THE GIFT OF SONG

By WINNIE DYKEMA — Grand Rapids, Mich.

Music and Song—enchanting words! And little wonder, for truly the gift of song is one of the most wonderful creations of God. When we read in Genesis that the Lord saw that His works were good and that He rejoiced in them, we can imagine He also listened to the wonderful harmony arising from all creation. Scripture is full of the song of creation. In Job we read that the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. And truly, if we have ears to hear and are not too rushed by the hustle and bustle of our busy world, who has not on a beautiful summer's days listened with awe to the melody of sweet singing song-birds and humming insects, and that, even now after the curse of sin has caused a note of groaning to be heard from all creation?

The Psalms call to creation to sing. "Sing oh heavens and be joyful oh earth! Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all the earth." And Psalm 148 is one call to praise, to angels and stars, to fire and hail, snow and vapours, fruitful trees and cedars, beasts and creeping things and birds and then to kings and people, young men and maidens, old men and children. For very well can we realize how Adam in his state of righteousness joined his voice in the grand swelling chorus of praise to his Maker.

What a change sin wrought also in this gift of song. Yes, man living in sin still sings; sings in wicked revelry or to try to forget the miserable results of the curse of God upon sin. We hear it round about us every day, this vain, sinful singing. Our hearts ache when we see men, women and children go into eternity singing these empty, sinful songs. How grateful we should be who, by the grace of God, have been turned from death to life.

Surely it is most fitting that Christians should sing. Scripture calls us to shout aloud and sing for the great redemption wrought in us. "Oh sing unto the Lord a new song for He hath done marvelous things. The Lord hath made known

His salvation, He hath remembered His mercy and truth toward the house of Israel. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous." And this is as it should be. Our lives should resound with praise and thanksgiving. The question may arise, what shall we sing? The answer is given in Ephesians 5:19 "Speaking to yourselves in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord". How must we sing? Colossians 3:16 "Sing with grace in your hearts to the Lord". Yes, we very well know what and how we as Christians should sing because it is plainly shown us in God's Word. In regard to this wonderful gift of song given us by our God, it is our calling to let our light shine that men may see our good works and hereby our Father in heaven may be glorified, because it is true that by our songs we make an impression which is often times stronger than our mere speech.

Is it then not pathetic that also among us as Christian young people we often hear these vain, sinful worldly songs at our banquets and outings and at our work? Surely it must have grieved many of us when also at our own picnics and outings we find that many a one is ashamed to sing good old songs and psalms but not one bit ashamed to sing such ridiculous things as "Pistol Packin' Mama" many seem to be much better acquainted with all this popular stuff than with our own Psalter. Surely these are not songs of salvation and spiritual songs. Anyone full of the Spirit and with grace in their hearts certainly cannot sing, "Mairsy Doats"! It is indeed, in what we sometimes consider to be Christian homes, very shocking to find the hymnals and psalters covered by about two layers of popular music. I challenge anyone to prove to me that we may expect much active spiritual life there. It is the spirit of the age and we certainly here also may see the signs of the times. I know when we look shocked and disgusted about these very things, we are ridiculed and called "old fashioned" but if we turn to God's Word we can easily see our calling to turn back.

Of course this is only one of the forms of misuse of the gift of song. Singing with grace in the heart and full of the Spirit, making melody in the heart unto the Lord, is also very often lacking even when singing sacred songs. How often are we not singing just for the form and because we enjoy a catchy tune. This, of course, has always been the case in the history of God's people especially in times when the spiritual life is not on a very high level. We are easily led astray by beautiful tunes and be-

(Continued on page 24)

His Humble Birth

MR. GEO. TEN ELSHOF — Grand Rapids, Michigan

Perhaps the first thing a child is taught concerning the birth of Jesus, is the place of that birth. And even before it has learned to speak correctly, it will answer when asked, "Where was Jesus born?" "In Bethlehem." A little later, details are added which more definitely state the location and children are taught that it was "in a manger because there was no room for Him in the inn." And it would not be superfluous for us to pause for just a few moments and consider this humble birth of our King although, the facts, as such, are known to all of us.

What a far cry is such a birthplace from that of the children of today! Do we not associate the event of birth with spotless, sanitary hospitals and maternity wards? Basket after basket each with its precious little bundle safely sheltered behind glass walls; "No Admittance" signs on the door; a nurse with a gauze mask over mouth and nose carefully weighing out formulas and checking charts!? And Jesus? In a manger! In the room where the cattle were kept! Possibly it was not a separate building since in that region it was customary to set apart a portion of the dwelling place for a stable for the cattle. But even at best it certainly, to all external appearances and even literally, was a very ignominious place in which to be born.

And as we pause to reflect, how true it becomes that Jesus was born, as it were, on the very edge of the world. For even the lowliest peasant mother must have had her bed-chamber, but Mary the mother of our Lord was forced to spend her hour of travail in a stable!

Oh yes, you may say that it was circumstance that determined this lowly birthplace. Tell Mary that she had no business at a time like this to be so far from home and the accomodations which it afforded. She didn't *have* to go with Joseph did she? Could he as family head and representative not have transacted this tax business alone and left her in the care of friends? Surely they could have foreseen

that housing facilities would be limited at a time such as this. Foolish parents? Newly-weds who couldn't bear to be separated? Ignorant folk who did not appreciate or understand the mysteries and seriousness of child-birth?

These and many more questions and accusations could be hurled and yet, in that direction we shall never find the answer. For it is the Hand of God who is leading them. And He it was who required that His Own Son should be born in a manger.

In the world, we find two classes of people. First of all there are those who have risen to heights of wealth and prominence and who, if they have been born "on the wrong side of the tracks", will avoid discussing their birthplace or parentage for they are ashamed. Secondly, there are, in direct contrast to the former, those who will openly boast of their lowly birth and brag about how they "started on a shoe-string". It is done, of course, solely for the purpose of boasting. How often haven't we been reminded of the fact that Lincoln was born in a log cabin and arose to become a president?

But Jesus? A child of royal lineage even according to the flesh, must He be born in a stable? Yes, He must! It is a fitting place for Him! I repeat, *He must and it is a fitting place for Him!* Why? Because He stood in our stead and even as some thirty lears later, He is to be nailed to the accursed tree and drink to the last the dregs of the bitter cup: and even as during His sojourn among men He could testify that the foxes have holes and the birds have nests but the Son of Man hath not place where to lay His head; even so it is fitting that His birth be in conformity with His life and purpose.

And shall we strive to remove the shamefulness of that humble birth? Shall we embellish that lowly scene and remove its objection? Should we, perhaps, have little plays and pageants and highly imaginative artists' conceptions of that birthplace? Shall we place a shining halo above the head of that kingly Child? Shall we? Shall we forget that He was born in a stable and that stables smell? Shall we tell the world that, after all, our King wasn't born in such a bad place and besides, He couldn't help it and neither could Mary and Joseph. Remember, there were those "unavoidable circumstances". shall we take the Christ Child out of a malodorous stable?

No! Leave Him there when meditating upon His birthplace. Leave Him there for He is come in our stead. Leave Him there for it is a silent yet dramatic testimony, both to us and to the world, that there is no room for Him. Leave Him there for it speaks louder

than words can shout that He has come in our place of death and shame and the stench of our decomposition. Leave Him there and as you gaze on the Son of God lying in a mephitic stable, remember that that suffering and shame, which was climaxed in the Cross, was already begun at His humble birth.

And now, who among us dares lift his head? Who among us dares to boast in his own self-righteousness? Who dares boast of his wealth, position in society, talent, skill or ingenuity? Who dares then to hold high his head and begrudge a hearty Christian greeting to his fellow miscreant? If we do, we have not seen that manger nor the precious gift which it contained. We have not seen that He, our King and Redeemer, has come in our stead and has borne our shame and guilt also in His humble birth.

But if we have seen Him and known Him both in His birth and life and death and have been made partakers of the work which He has so perfectly accomplished, then must we indeed stand in awe and with humble gratitude rejoice in this great gift of God's love.

Christian Living

By REV. R. VELDMAN — Grand Rapids, Mich.

Of all the months of the year, none has greater significance for the church of God, has more to say to us, carries with it more sentiment, than this month of December, which is with us once again. How soon! How time does fly!

First of all, first also in the minds of young and old, it is the month wherein we commemorate that most blessed of all events, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the coming of the Son of God in the flesh to redeem us from our sins and to exalt us to heavenly glory, the fulfilment of that ancient yet wonderfully vivid prophecy, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." How wonderful beyond all human comprehension! How worthy of all the joy and happiness God's church can

possibly express! December means: Christmas.

However, December also comes to us with a message of an altogether different nature—the message of the end. It is the last month of the year, and thus brings with it its last week, its last day, its last hour. Christmas is the first day of that week of which the last day marks the close of the entire year. It is of the latter that we are thinking now. The end of the year speaks of the end of all things. It reminds us of the end of our entire lives, which may be here who knows how soon. Perhaps it is December, also in this respect, for you or me. It speaks, too, of the end of this entire dispensation, of the whole world and all it contains. Presently the day will be here when the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ will make an end forever of all present things. All the signs of the times seem to indicate that in this respect, as far as the calendar of all history is concerned, we are certainly in the month of December. Better and better do we understand the words of the apostle, "Little children, it is the last hour." The carnal world does not want to think about these things. All it craves is a new lease on life; a new year wherein to sin and seek the satisfaction of the flesh. Therefore, it spends the year's last evening as it does—in revelry and riot, in drunkeness and hilarity such as marks no other evening of the entire year. The church of Christ, however, would face reality and spends this same evening, the last of the year, in solemn contemplation and worship.

* * * *

The day of the Lord *will* come, says Peter, as a thief in the night.

Then—then great and terrible things will take place in and with all God's present creation. Of course they will, for that day of the Lord Jesus Christ, the "December 31" of all history, as it were, will be the day of GOD; the day wherein our covenant God will manifest Himself in all His power and glory; the day wherein the counsel of God will be realized with respect to all things, God's tabernacle with men will be made perfect and all that is of the world and sin will be destroyed forever.

You've read what Scripture has to say about those things that will soon come to pass. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." II Peter 3:10. The incomparable Isaiah saw it more than 2500 years ago in prophetic vision and he writes, "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as a leaf fall-

eth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree." Is. 34:4. And the seer on Patmos testifies, "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." Rev. 6:12-14.

Indeed, great and terrible things will take place in that day, when the Maker of the atom will Himself do the splitting and all present things will be no more. The very heavens, the firmament and all it contains, the sun and the moon and the stars, all will be set ablaze and consumed with fire. Also the earth and all it contains, in fact the very elements whereof all present things are composed, shall be set on fire and burned up. Everything that is of the earth earthy shall disappear forever. Absolutely nothing of man and of this world shall survive that final catastrophe to enter into the New Jerusalem. "All these things shall be dissolved." II Pet. 3:11. All the fruits of human labor and ingenuity. All the accomplishments of art and science, the poet and the sculptor. All that eye can see and ear can hear and the hand can touch.

But is this all? Is there no more? Then, surely, the thought of the end is a terrible one—unutterably so. Will nothing take the place of all these present things? Oh, indeed, something will; something inconceivably great; a *new* heaven and earth. We look, not only for the final dissolution of all present things, but for an entirely new creation. In fact, it is only with a view to the latter that the former must take place. In that new heaven and earth only righteousness will dwell. How wonderful! There sin and corruption will have no place and will be in perfect harmony with the will of God. In that new creation all will be heavenly. It will not be a glorified version of this present creation. All will be different, new, heavenly, spiritual, glorious. There the tabernacle of God will be with men forever. There all tears will be wiped from our eyes, death and sorrow will be no more; there we shall see face to face, know as we are known, and walk and talk with our covenant God, in Christ Jesus, in endless perfection. No, we cannot comprehend these things now, but we somewhat sense the glory of it all, do we not?

* * * *

Of all these things we are reminded anew as we approach the

end of another year. With a view to it all "what manner of persons ought we to be?"

This question is pertinent. It is the application of all the preceding to Christian living,—the "toepassing". What shall be our attitude toward it all, and how should this attitude reflect itself in our daily conduct?

Looking, first of all, at these present things and their ultimate dissolution in the day of Christ, what should be our attitude? Shall we cling to these things that are speeding toward their end with all possible haste, to set our hearts on them, put our trust in them, live only for them, sacrifice all we are and have for them? That the world does, the natural man—the fool. Ought we to be such manner of persons? God forbid! No, we shall not desire this present life. We have a life to live here, a duty to perform, and to the execution of that task we shall set ourselves with all the consecration to duty of the conscientious Christian. But we shall not set our hearts on "these things". We shall labor and plan, we shall plow and sow as in a world that will soon be no more. Our attitude toward all that is, shall be determined by the reality concerning them and that with relation to the things which soon shall be.

"What manner of persons ought we to be?" We ought to be a people that is looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, that is anticipating that day as the day of our complete deliverance, that is looking for its Saviour God much as children look for their father to come home from work at night. And looking for that day we should sanctify ourselves, eschew all that is of sin and this present wicked world and walk in a new and holy life.

Then all will be well and we shall have nothing to fear. Then we shall be confirmed in the assurance that that new heaven and earth will also be our dwelling place forever. Then we can think of the end of all things, not with regret, but with anticipation and hope, knowing that the impending dissolution of all present things will be for us the beginning of that which is eternal and heavenly. In that hope we may join the church of all ages in that song of blessed anticipation:

When I in righteousness at last
Thy glorious face shall see,
When all the weary night is past,
And I awake with Thee
To view the glories that abide,
Then, then I shall be satisfied.

words: "Son of God in heaven, on earth, and in all the worlds?" A direct contradiction to Peter's glorious confession in Matt. 16:16—"Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God."

Often I found myself wondering just where Mr. Asch himself stands and if he himself believes that Christ is the fulfillment of the Mosaic law.

The story ends with the martyrdom of Peter and Paul. The Christian Jews had become the scapegoat for the burning of Rome—Rome which burned upon Nero's orders and for his pleasure. Nero prepares for the Roman masses, steeped as they were in immoralities, a spectacle such as they had never beheld — a gigantic blood bath. We see God's people hiding and living in the catacombs, witness the horrible tortures for "the crime of Christianity". All in all it was thoroughly in the spirit of the time—"and Rome was not astonished for Rome was worthy of Nero, and Nero of Rome".

Peter and Paul are both victims of the Neronian persecution. The two apostles meet once again as they are both led out to die, the one on the cross, the other by the sword, all differences forgotten in the service to a common Lord.

This book of 800 closely written pages, is to be recommended only if read critically, as I believe it has serious discrepancies. Any author who sets out to add to the Bible narratives may expect much criticism, as the simple but beautiful records laid out for us in the gospels, remain completely satisfying. Any one who endeavors to solve all the mysteries which the Bible does not reveal and sets out to expound all its teachings may expect violent reaction.

The reader must constantly be mindful that much of the narrative springs from the author's imagination, and one should really keep the New Testament close at hand to verify where Scripture leaves off and Mr. Asch begins.

The book's value should be measured by its historical background. Without a doubt the author is a master on this subject. One obtains a vivid picture of the spirit of the world in which the Saviour and His apostles lived, and that is indeed interesting and very educational.

And—just as a suggestion—this novel might be just the thing for the book lover on your Christmas list.

To Our Boys In Service

Dear Fellows:

The other day, after having read an article on the atomic bomb and on atomic power in general, and some items in the newspaper about the rather general unrest, fear and rumors of war in the world of today, my thoughts wandered to the common grace theorists, and I began to wonder whether and when they would attempt to offer an explanation of events and conditions in the present day world in the light of their strange philosophy.

To me this appears impossible, but one might expect that the common grace philosophers would attempt it.

It it the theory, as you know, according to which all science, art, and all culture and civilization in general are the fruits of common grace, by which God through His Holy Spirit so operates upon the minds and hearts of the unregenerate, that sin in them is restrained, they may, do much good in this world, and develop the powers in creation for the benefit of mankind. There is, according to this philosophy, even supposed to be a covenant or alliance between God and the fallen world for this purpose.

But when one looks at the world and its development today, one cannot help asking the question: where is this restraining power of the Holy Spirit? It seems that, in spite of it, sin develops fast, and the world is speeding to destruction. Where was this restraining grace in the last few decades? Even while the world talked constantly of peace, wars increased in scope and intensity of destruction, so that in one lifetime we have been witnesses of two world-wars, the second of which was ten times more horrible than the first. Science served to invent instruments of destruction such as the world has never seen before, and other instruments to counteract and neutralize the effect of similar instruments invented by the enemy. And its latest invention is the atomic bomb, by which whole cities can be laid in ruins and hundreds of thousands of people killed in a flash!

Not long ago, I heard over the radio that Dr. Einstein is of the opinion that even the atomic bomb cannot destroy our civilization. Calmly he announced that, if it were used in the next war, two thirds of the earth's population might be killed, but civilization might well survive!

In the meantime, fellows, let us not be deceived by vain philosophy, whether about a surviving civilization, humanistic brotherhood, or an equally humanistic common grace.

Rather let our only hope be in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then we shall never be put to shame.

May that grace ever be with you!

Valete! And may you soon return to us!

As ever your friend,

H. Hoeksema

Letters From Our Boys

Tinian
October, 1945.

Dear . . . .

I have just received the October issue of Beacon Lights and I have the pleasure of saying that it is the last issue I shall receive overseas.

In two or three days I expect to go aboard a ship to return to the States and therefore I am giving you notice so that you will not send any more issues to me at this address.

Looking forward to a pleasant journey homeward to my family and friends and thanking you for sending Beacon Lights, I remain

Sincerely,
T-Sgt. Homer G. Kuiper.

* * * * *

Pfc. Joe De Koekkoek writes from Melk, Austria:

"I wish to inform you of my change of address and also that I appreciate your sending the Beacon Lights to me."

Joe is originally from Edgerton, Minn., and wrote the above from Austria on October 26, 1945.

* * * * *

George Lanting, E.M. 1-c from South Holland, Illinois also informs us of his change of address and adds:

"My sincere thanks for your splendid work. May the Lord further bless your work."

George is at present stationed at Camp Parks, California.

* * * * *

Hudsonville, Michigan

Beacon Lights:
Dear Friends,

Please discontinue sending me Beacon Lights whereas I have been discharged from the army.

Many thanks for having sent me Beacon Lights for the four and one half years while I was in service. Beacon Lights has been a source of much comfort to me.

May God continue to bless you in your efforts.

Enclosed find a small gift toward for Beacon Lights.

Sincerely,
Mr. Bert Maring,
Hudsonville, Michigan.

AMUSEMENT CENTER REACTIONS

Have you heard? Yes, I heard about this drive for a "Youth Center", but haven't paid much attention to it. But listen again. This "Youth Center", is desired by *our* youth. They are not merely talking about it, but it is their aim! No, this can't be true. Yes, it is. That is what they are working for.

Thus I reasoned with myself, and decided that I would study this problem and see whether it is a problem or if it isn't.

I've come to the conclusion that it is. In fact, it is very alarming. What, I ask, does it show to us? It shows to us that the church of *Christ Jesus* is seeking to have amusement as a secondary necessity. Mind you, *secondary*. Yes, Christ comes first, but He isn't our complete life. We, the body of Christ, need some secondary amusement to help us pull through this miserable life of woe. (Ho, hum, what a dull life!") Have you ever heard that expression? Why is it said? They know not the true purpose of life, I'd say.

Christ is not the first *and last* in our lives. He is only part of it. Christ needs to furnish some amusement to keep his bride, the church, satisfied. He cannot give *her* the amusement she craves. Therefore the church seeks a way to find it.

We go about it in a very cunning way, well under cover. We appear to be so innocent.. This is the way we say it. "Amusement is secondary". It isn't first, only secondary". So we say to Christ, "Let these amusements be a part of me. Than I needn't go out into the world for it. In other words, let a little of this earthy be a part of me, oh my King. After all, I'm not in heaven, where thou art, and it is hard for me to be *completely* devoted to thee, while I am still on this earth. I know I belong to the world, but I *must* be amused, so let me take just a small speck of the world and make it a part of me."

I wonder what Christ Jesus our Lord, will do with such a church.

Is that the church, who gives Him the glory, and who He will bless and call His own? We know better. When we read His Word and study it, we find an entirely different way of life. We find no secondary way, in which to amuse ourselves. There is no place or time for it. All we find in His Word is His *will*. By His will, means the way in which *He wills* us to walk. If we love that will and desire to do it, than we have no problem, such as secondary amusements. We find that amusements have no place in our church.

We read in the article written some time ago. "Is it not worth while to give our youth (by this, is meant the church) a weapon with which to fight against the world?" How ridiculous such a weapon is! How can we possibly use man and amusements to fight the world? Further back in the article we read "Inevitably the temptations to worldly amusements become more and more attractive". Let us not fool ourselves! The church, neither Christ, can help it that worldly amusements tempt us. Let us go to the Scriptures and read, James 1 verses 13 to 17. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then when the lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethern".

So we could go on and on, in His Word and find the way of true life. In contrast we see how dark the way of sin is. I would definitely call a "Youth Center" sin. It is the beginning of the forsaking of Christ. It shows, that we are not satisfied with the way He has shown us in His Word. We want to live like the world does. The way of the world is to be amused. They do this in bowling and billiards, besides the many more ways they have of living a careless "God forgetting" life.

If we have our own "Youth Center" the result will be that, in time Christ will forsake *us* and we'll find ourselves having all of the world but none of Christ.

Youthful Oaklawn Contributor

* * * *

AMUSEMENT CENTERS

At a recent meeting of the Young Men's Society of the First Church in Grand Rapids a round table discussion of the subject of Christian Amusement Centers was introduced by Harry Bloem. He gave a brief summary of the two articles dealing with this subject previously printed in Beacon Lights. The first written by Lois Hoeksema and the second a reply to the first written by the Editor. The result of this discussion was the formulation and adoption of the following principles.

1. The duty of the church is to preach the gospel.

2. It follows therefore that it is not the duty of the church to furnish recreational activities of any kind.

3. Standing on the principle that bodily exercise profiteth little we stand opposed to the present day amusement craze.

4. In view of the fact that godli-

ness is profitable unto all things it is the calling of the child of God to put forth every effort to promote spiritual recreation.

5. In conformity with the principle that bodily exercise profiteth little we are opposed to commercialized recreation and insist that that bodily recreation should proceed from the home.

Vice Sec.
Tony Vanden Berg

* * * * *

Chofu, Japan
November 1945

Dear Friends:

I found the article "Your Reporter Reports" in the August edition of the Beacon Lights, to say the least, provoking. Comparitive to Voltaire even, in a sense. Perhaps you're thinking this is going from bad to worse; dragging from me the confession that I've read Voltaire. But this is exactly the point I wish to present. The old story of the horse wearing eye-blinds; seeing only what's directly ahead, like so many people, child and adult alike. I don't wish to exclude myself, and yet, I doubt whether those who knew me even before my entry into the Armed Forces saw me as a person of great false modesty. On my return home (which of course I hope will be soon) I'm afraid modesty will find even less room in my life. I've seen so much more—and all this not at my own choosing. Conclusion: Eye-blinds should go out: they were designed for days when horseless carriages were a new and terrifying thing to horses. For people, they should be equally out of date. Paul says, in one of his epistles, we would have to move out of the world not to see the world. Whether this eduation is good or bad depends naturally, on the person being educated. If there are those on "shallow ground", will the storm hold off for them to take root? I'm sure we all agree it will not. Whether such a thing as A Recreation Center for our young people would or would not be an invitation for heresy and evil into our church, I firmly believe would certainly depend on the young people themselves. I sincerely hope we can have more confidence than that in them. They one day, no doubt, will be replacing those now being held responsible for the standards of our church. How would they if it were not possible for them to withstand the trials of a Recreation Center, one day hold the offices of our church without dealing in magnanimous hypocricy?

I hope I make my vote clearly seen as in favor of giving our young people the opportunity of a place where they can freely (not unreasonably so) exercise themselves physically and that one day a great spiritual profit may be seen because they've learned practically how to conduct themselves in a world from which they cannot escape.

Your friend & brother,
Pfc Fred Pype, Jr.

He Leadeth Us

By GERTRUDE ROOSE — Pella Girl's Society

He leadeth us who knoweth best,
Along life's busy way;
Watching, gently leading on,
That His sheep go not astray.

There is not always sunshine
As along life's paths we go;
Yet doth He ever lead us,
Where quiet waters flow.

Where doubts and grief o'ertake us,
And burdens we can't bear;
There's ever One beside us.
Who will all our burdens share.

Often we'd faint and falter,
Yet when the clouds are gone;
After all our trial's past
We know He led us on.

Often we would ask,—"Why, Lord
Lead me so by Thy hand?"
After the tasks are finished,
We'll fully understand.

When our eyes are dimmed by sin,
There's sorrow, grief, despair;
Then through the darkness light we see
For lo, our Lord is there.

He leads us gently on,
Although our steps be slow;
With eyes upon our Leader
Our way we safely go.

Though it be through day or night
In a world of sin and woe;
May we say,—"Thy will be done;
Thou leadest—we will go."

Our pathway through this life is safe
To God our prayers we raise;
With faith and trust within our hearts
To Him eternal praise.

Though cross be heavy; cross be light
On journey here below;
Some day the Answer we shall see,
Why He led us so.

From The Editor's Desk

Dear Staff:

How about a New Year's resolution that you get your material at the proper address on or before the 15th of each month? It may be only a beautiful ideal but it certainly isn't an impossible one to attain. It should not at all be necessary in a monthly publication to have a last minute rush with its subsequent chances for errors and omissions. Let's consider it a privelege rather than a chore for us to write for this publication. So, will you or won't you?

We try to keep brevity and variety as two of the jewels of Beacon Lights and we are happy to hear from various readers who attest to its readability and who find it interesting enough to read from cover to cover.

(P. S. This is written to compliment our staff and to spur them on to comply with the reasonable request of the former paragraph.)

Well, I hope you readers have been enjoying the contributions in regard to "Our Own Youth Center". Your editor has thoughts on the matter but will wait until it appears that all the contributions are in. However, let's not become so excited about the matter that we forget to excercise Christian charity also to those who may differ with us. Remember now, no punching below the belt, in the clinches or after the bell rings!

You can write poetry if you watch that ryhme, meter, have a theme and a climax. There is such a thing as poetic license but that does not give you permission to take a hammer and pound the meter out of shape.

You will find it easier, too, if you can see things which others have not noticed. For instance, a bridge is not a group of girders across a stream, but rather, it is the hearty handclasp of the two friendly shores on opposite sides of that stream. Or, rivets in that bridge are not little rounded pieces of steel, but rather they are the bent over backs of countless mighty men clutching with a Herculean grasp the various parts assigned to them. And leaves turn red in the fall because the wind has whispered that their task is ended and they are blushing with indignation!

To save you the trouble of looking it up, the word "mephitic", found elsewhere in this issue, means "having a foul odor". I came across the word and liked it. Hope you don't mind. Why not use it a few times and thus make it your own?

We Need You, Grandpa!

This publication has as its sub-title, "For Protestant Reformed Youth". But we need you Grandpa! And Grandma, too, for that matter. Certainly, we may speak of essentials and come to the absolute minimum of necessity and reason that all we need, let us say, for

this publication (although it may very well apply to other things) is a quantity of paper, a few writers and a printer and presto! Beacon Lights is born! Let's see now, could we trim it down just a little more? Oh yes, I have it! Find a printer afflicted with cacoethes scribendi and give him a pile of paper and "mumbo jumbo" a publication sees the light of day!

But, my imaginary printer-writer-publisher-distributor-reader friend complains! The ungrateful wretch wants a building, a linotype, a home and even bread to eat! And all these things require help from others—contractors, mechanics and bakers. And I shall quietly slip away and hope that you soon forget my perfectly logical soap-bubble!

And so, grandpa, we need you. We hope that also as we come to your home from month to month we may find a welcome. We need you even as the home, school and church need the wisdom and experience of your years. Your comments, friendship and support are welcome!

* * *

Have you read anything unusual or striking in other periodicals or books lately? Something which would perhaps be of interest to all of us or our denomination? If you have, won't you please let us share it with you? You may add your own comments if you wish.

Elsewhere on this page, you will find a request for titles of books or good reading material. We shall be happy to receive suggestions from other societies or individuals and print them in Beacon Lights. Such suggestions should be very helpful to our societies.

* * * * *

ATTENTION — SOCIETIES

Fellow Societies:

We have a small beginning of a Library and find it rather difficult to find good reading material. We would like to suggest a plan or method which we think would be beneficial to all our Young Peoples Societies.

We would like to have any Society, having a library, to send in names and the authors of good books which they have in their libraries. In this way any society or even individual who is interested can be benefited by selecting the books which they do not have and thus build up their libraries.

This we think, will save many Library Committees a good deal of work and time.

A good Library is essential but much of the literature is so Modernistic.

Hoping this proves successful.

Thank you,
The Manhattan Prot.
Reformed Y. P. S.

* * * * *

If you have something to do that is worthwhile doing, don't talk about it, but do it; your friends and enemies will talk about it.

Who Am I

(1.) Your first impression of me must be that I am a tall, broad, shouldered individual. As you learn to know me better you soon realize that I am sedate and modest of disposition, studious and conscientious in my work.

(2.) My birthplace was in the Netherlands. The date, January 22, 1904. It was four years later, in 1908, that I first set foot on American soil. Our family settled in Atwood, Michigan where I spent my early years and received my training in the fundamentals of learning. I always had my lessons without much effort, which may have been one of the reasons why my teachers considered me a problem child.

(3.) At eighteen I began feeling about for my field of labor, little realizing then that my future lay in the ministry of the Word. I went to Grand Rapids where I worked both in the factory and on the farm. Then I went West for a while and later returned to Chicago where I met the turning point in my life. I was in an automobile accident, so that I was laid up with an injured knee for some time. It was during this time that I felt my calling to enter the ministry. So I returned to Grand Rapids, attended the local Christian High School and Calvin College, and soon was able to make another stride toward my goal by entering the Seminary of our own Protestant Reformed Churches.

(4.) Before entering the ministry I married a young lady of Grand Rapids, Miss Nettie Woudenberg. My first charge was in Bellflower, California, where I served as their first minister. My next charge was in Oskaloosa, Iowa and now I am located in Grand Haven, Michigan.

THE GIFT OF SONG

(continued from page 4)

fore we know it we may be singing heartily something we cannot accept as our confession of the truth.

In regard to the gift of song which God has given us with which to glorify Him, I am sure everyone of us when appearing before our God and giving account of also this wonderful gift of His, must confess:

"My sins are more than I can count
My sinful deeds arise;
Yea, they have overtaken me,
I dare not raise my eyes".

We may have one consolation as Christians, even though now singing very imperfectly, one day we shall sing the song of complete victory when we shall sing the new songs and the songs of Moses and of the Lamb.

Too Busy

By MRS. C. DE BOER — Kalamazoo, Mich.

To busy to hear the song of the bird
As he carols at the break of the day —
Or list to the bee as his drone can be heard,
When nectar he sips on the way?

Too busy to observe the expanse of the blue
As the clouds nonchalantly float by —
Or gaze at the flowers of beautiful hue,
Carressed by the breezes wafting nigh?

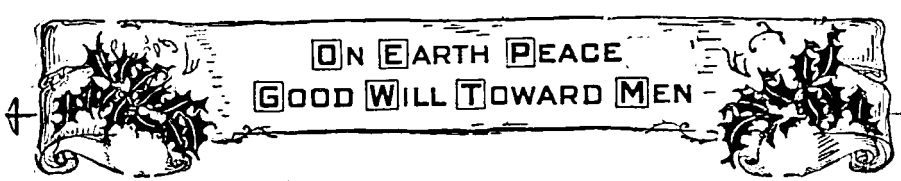
Too busy to visit those in deep pain,
And comfort the weary of heart —
Or write to a friend his faith to sustain,
'Ere the days of his life do depart?

Too busy to read in God's Holy Word,
And meditate on the Truth He imparts —
Have we prayed in the days already accurred:
Is gratefulness ingrained in our hearts?

Too busy with the cares of this life here below,
That we forget the great mansions beyond —
Are we pilgrims—and in our very life show
That we to the friendship of God do respond?

Too busy to realize that the things of this world,
As fantasy soon pass away —
And the plan of God will then be unfurled,
To all—on that great Judgement Day?

Will the words "*Too Busy*" be atuned on that Day,
To the richness of that divine state —
Or will the rebuke to our utter dismay.
Be—"It's too late, yes, it's too late!"?



Bible Study Outlines

By Rev. L. DOEZEMA — Bellflower, California

IX

Job Raises the Problem of His own Suffering (Chap. 3: 20-26)

In the previous portion of this chapter we read of the great sin more desirable than life. This last part of his opening speech, verses 20-26, in the presence of his three friends, is a complaint. He first asks the question why such an one as himself is given life at all. Then he closes with a final complaint because he does not understand why he was suffering.

I. Job doubts God's justice in causing a man to live for suffering.

1. In verses 20-22 Job raises the question, why is light given to one who is in misery and explains what that misery is. a) The one of whom he is thinking is one who is bitter in soul. One who is bitter in soul is a person who has suffered so much that he not only has no hope but he despises the thought of hearing of any hope. He denies absolutely the slightest suggestion that life has any purpose in it. The bitter in soul regard life as nothing else than vanity. The question Job asks is, why is light or life given to such an one who is in misery who does not care to live? b) Furthermore, the one in misery is in deep misery for Job expresses it thus, that they long for death. This is his own desire. It is stronger than the desire that he would that he had never been born. Now that he is in life he longs for death. That reveals the depth of misery. How impossible to us is the next expression: "and dig for it more than for hid treasure". Our nature always seeks to keep this life. c) Verse 22 explains also the one in misery. He is one who rejoices exceedingly when he has found the grave. This seems impossible for how can one rejoice who has found the grave? It is an extreme way to express that one has no change of mind when death and the grave finally stare upon him without giving any escape. 2. Verse 23 brings out the real thought in back of the question and it expresses that a man's misery is caused by Jehovah's hedging him in keeping him in the dark about his way. It seems that Job here comes to the point that a man's misery is determined by the Lord and that no other cause can be seen for it. Job does not see any reason for living merely to suffer misery and really this question implies an attack upon

God's justice, if it is not accompanied by the prayer to be made subservient to the revelation of His inscrutable will.

II. Job applies his philosophy to his own experience. Vss. 24-26 1. He describes his own suffering. Vss. 24, 25. His suffering comes to him as food, regularly, and that is all he has, suffering. His expressions of pain know no bound. They are poured out like a stream of water. The thing that he feared came to him. He could not say that it was better than he had feared. His fears were realities. 2. This suffering has no let up, no rest, or quiet, or a time to refresh. Yet there is the cycle of new trouble and raging. The fire was continually fed. 3. We have read a description of Job's suffering in the previous chapter. Here we have Job's own words describing his own pain and terror, and his doubt as to the justice of it.

III. Remarks: 1. This passage is indeed a most important one of the book of Job. This first speech of Job reveals to us the extent of his suffering and his sin. It, therefore, also is the occasion for the following discourses of his friends and the final word of God in this book. As we interpret this chapter correctly we see the line of thought in the remaining discourses. The discussion seeks to satisfy Job, as he expresses himself. 2. Often commentators add their criticism of Job at this stage and remark that he looked at himself and at suffering and forgot all about the factor of sin. Undoubtedly, we can make some remarks to answer the questions of Joab, but at this time they are out of place. 3. Let us keep the question, why must a man suffer, and wait for the answer of God.

* * * *

X

Eliphaz's first speech (Chap. 4, 5)

Upon the speech of Job, Eliphaz, the leader or eldest of the three friends, speaks. One commentator concludes that this speech considered by itself is one of the masterpieces of this book. With great tact he seeks to apply the morality of himself and his three friends to Job. The above commentator makes the qualification about this speech: "considered by itself", for although in itself it contains many beautiful thoughts, in its application to the condition of Job there is something wrong with it. Let us try to discover the import of this speech and thereby trace the error or failure of Eliphaz.

We can divide the speech into three parts: Chapter 4:1-11; 11-21; Chap 5.

In this frist part of Eliphaz' speech, we have the setting forth of the main proposition of the three friends. Let us first see how he introduces his idea, however.

I. His introduction: 1. First of all Eliphaz politely asks permission to speak. Because of the misery of Job this is indeed a difficult task. But especially is it so when the three friends have in their mind to show Job that the trouble is with himself. He realizes it may cause Job more grief. So he tries to soften it

by adroitly asking a question in his opening speech, verse 1. 2. Without troubling Job by having him consider whether to allow them to speak in his condition, Eliphaz forces himself upon Job by saying he cannot help speaking. Verse 1b. 3. He calls attention to Job's past in comparison with his present circumstances. Verses 3-6. a) He does not refer to the riches of Job but to his great influence and leadership that he gave to all those who needed it. He gave instruction and comfort to many and they all were helped and comforted by Job. b) In verse 5 the speaker reminds Job that now the situation is reversed. He is in trouble, and he cannot bear it. c) In verse 6 we hear an important question. From this question Eliphaz approaches his proposition which follows. To interpret the King James translation we must determine what is meant with the word "this". Evidently the translators mean: is not this, that is, thy trouble, in thy fear, etc. Eliphaz is directing Job to the reason, as he sees it, for the fact that Job faints. It is because of lack of fear or faith in God, which is the hope and confidence and the uprightness of thy ways. If such is our interpretation it is almost the same as the idea of the Revised version although t he revised version approaches it from the positive idea and is probably more correct. The Revised version reads, "Is not thy fear of God thy confidence, and the integrity of thy ways thy hope? This, in effect, gives us Eliphaz pointing Job to the way out of trouble, which is faith in God.

II. The contention of the friends is here first presented by Eliphaz: 1. In verse 7 the proposition is given that the innocent and the righteous do not perish and are not cut off. This is very true; Psalm 37:25 expresses the same truth. 2. From his observation Eliphaz points out that one reaps what he sows. If it is iniquity, that shall be reaped. Also this is a truth which cannot be denied. Galatians 5:7, 8 " . . . . For what a man soweth, that shall he also reap . . . ." 3. In verse 9 the destruction of the wicked is strongly pictured in the very way Scripture also portrays it. Cf. II Thess. 2:8. 4. Very choice is his example of the lion. The strong is destroyed.

III. Our criticism: 1. Eliphaz speaks many truths but does not speak the truth, he does not apply the truth correctly. A beautiful moral philosophy, a choice of texts, but not a perfect understanding of them. 2. When the speaker points Job to the necessity for faith he did not take into consideration at all that Job was perfect and that he had not sinned when this calamity had overcome him; he even had worshipped the Lord. Job needed strengthening of his faith, to be sure. But the mere expression of a platitude in such a crisis did not at all touch the matter of Job's suffering. (Cf. 6:1) 3. The truths of Scripture and of reality as God created it are not thoroughly understood by Eliphaz. These texts are only to be understood from the eternal point of view. What a man sows is not always reaped in this life. The harvest is at the end of time, eternal. So, too, the righteous

are never eternally cut off and do not perish out of everlasting life. But often they are cut off from this life ever since the cutting off of Abel.

* * * *

XI

Eliphaz' Speech (Continued)

It is worth our while to analyze the speech of Eliphaz further, and study the second part of his speech. There is much to be learned from Eliphaz' failure and the attempts of the three friends to solve the problem of Job. We are often far behind these three friends in our consideration of reality. The Word of God does not give us this speech and the entire discourses between these saints merely to criticize them, but to see our error and to be led to the light.

The second part of his speech includes the verses 12-21. Very real is the conception of reality given here by Eliphaz. We could say he pictures to us: Man's Fate.

I. This conception which Eliphaz gives is not the result of superficial observation, but is the result of deep meditation. 1. This is evident from the fact of his vision. Verses 12-21. a) I do not think that we should criticize this vision as a pretense for prophetical power on the part of Eliphaz. Some do explain this as a revelation of God. b) I think we must consider this as his poetical and figurative way of emphasizing the way this thought came to him in his life of refection out of his subconscious. We can have dreams in which thoughts come to us, which impress us and stay with us. c) Eliphaz is in earnest and powerfully describes to us his actual experience in verses 14-16. d) The speaker is giving his philosophy of life, the result of profound study and reflection and not revelation or a pretense that he has received something from God. Cf. 5:27. 2. Evident also from the content of his vision a) It is not a direct revelation of God for then it would be indicated. b) This speech is what he himself conceived of reality, and it is undoubtedly based on his knowledge of revelation also, for it is rtuth. c) Striking and beautiful.

II. Content: Vss. 17-21: 1. Very beautifully he expresses how man cannot question and contend with the Almighty and that there cannot be any question about the Perfection of God, who is our Creator and above the creature. Verse 17. 2. In verse 18 there is a striking expression to show how that the servants and angels of God are nothing in themselves. Eliphaz is not only thinking of sinful men and angels; he is thinking of the creatures of God in comparison to God. God, the Almighty Creator, never entrusted anything of His work to His creatures in themselves, for they are mere creatures. He did not risk His kingdom with the first Adam. He willed from the beginning to realize all things in and through Himself. He must be all in all. Eliphaz is deep. 3. In verses 19-21 he gives us the fate of man. Man is nothing really, if we observe his beginning and end, in himself. a) Made a house of clay, from the dust; b) vanish-

ing like the moth. c) Men are beat to pieces from morning to evening. Death finally has the victory and they perish and are no more. Tragically he also adds, without any regarding it, which refers to men themselves. (Cf. 21 "without wisdom") d) The Revised version has the literal translation of verse 21, "Is not their tent cord plucked up within them?" This refers to the soul which Eliphaz pictures as the cords which connect our frame to life. When the tent cords are pulled the tent collapses.

* * * *

XII

Eliphaz' Speech (Continued)
His Conclusion (Chapter 5)

From the profound and correct conception of Man's fate Eliphaz now directs himself to Job in his final advice in this first speech. We may see the negative and the positive. From verses 1-7 we have his advice to turn away from the creative; and in verses 8-27 to turn to God.

I. **No help in the creature:** 1. This is his contention as is expressed in verse 1. a) "Call now . . . ." and in the second part of verse one he speaks of saints or, as it may be interpreted, angels. b) His question implies that there is no creature no matter how perfect who can help Job! c) If God, the Creator, in His justice and holiness rules that man should turn to the dust, can a creature help him? 2. Over against this fate of man it does no good to rebel. Verse 2. "Wrath. (that is vexation, anger because of frustration) kills a man, envy, (jealousy, rebellion) slayeth the silly one." Eliphaz must have in mind Job's cursing of his day. 3. Eliphaz reminds Job of the many examples of men who thought and of whom Eliphaz himself thought that they would succeed in establishing themselves. But they were foolish and Eliphaz even cursed their living. They were themselves lost in the clutches of fate and their children were also crushed because they had no counsel. They were destroyed of other foolish ones, the hungry who became robbers. 3-5. 4. Once more the speaker refers to man's lot of affliction, fate. a) Although it cometh not of the dust, i.e. created that way; b) yet "man (now) is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward", so inevitably. c) This, however, is to strengthen his negation, do not seek help below, verse 1.

II. **Help is in God:** 1. Overagainst the helplessness of all things and all creatures the speaker advises, seek unto God and commit thy way unto Him. Vs.8. 2. The praises of God are sung by Eliphaz. Verses 9-15. a)Many and great are His works b) infinitely beyond our comprehension. c) He cares for His creation, verse 10, d) He deals righteously with His creatures, verses 11-15 (1) the crafty and the wise and the froward are dealt with after their own iniquity. (2) The low and the mourners and the poor he saveth and exalteth. 3. The saved ones experience this. Verse 16 "The poor hath hope . . . ." 4. The way of salvation is in the way of chastisement. a) Nevertheless, happy is that one

who is corrected. b) Correction takes the form of sore trouble, wounds, famine, war, mockery, destruction. c) But always complete recovery for this correction. Verses 17-21. 5. The man who considers this way of salvation shall be happy, even in the face of trouble. Verses 22-23. Affliction shall be as nothing to that man. "thou shalt laugh". 6. In this life thou shalt have confidence and trust in the future. "thou shalt know . . . ." Verses 24-26. 7. Death shall be an end of the life of full prosperity. Verse 26. It shall be the harvest. 8. This is finally emphasized as a message from the friends who have contemplated life and come to these definite conclusions. Verse 27.

III. Remarks: 1. Once more we can remark that we have some beautiful thought and Scriptural quotations here which are intended for our study to arrive at the full and complete Word of God in the book of Job. 2. Nevertheless, there is some failure, some misconception which will be made plainer to us in the following discussions between the friends, and which God will finally Himself show to us. We have previously indicated something of that. The purpose of the book is to have us proceed along with Job and his friends.

* * * *

WHO AM I

The "Who Am I", written by Rev. C. Hanko, is a biographical sketch of the life of Rev. Andrew Petter.

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The Beacon Light's Servicemen's Fund wishes to thank the following donators for their recent contributions:

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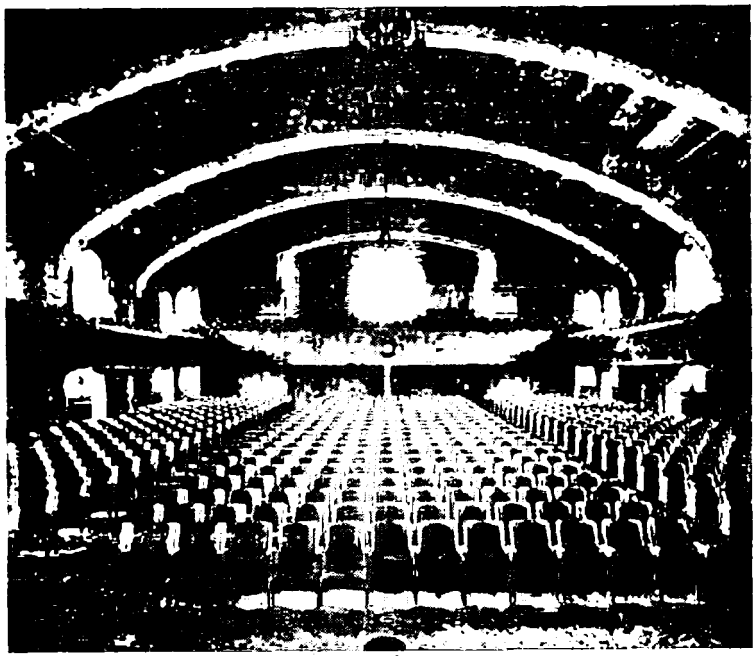

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