BEACON LIGHTS FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

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Except The Lord Build

The last exams have been given and taken; books are replaced in cupboards; personal things are taken home; permanent records have been marked; the last report cards handed out, and graduation exercises completed—and another academic year comes to a close.

What a wonderful year! I am sure that our other schools have experienced, as we have at Adams St., that God has truly been good to us. For as the psalmist said (Psalm 127:1): “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.” This verse, spoken so many years ago, also applies to the last bygone days and weeks. In His strength, we have received. Subjects, which at times seemed unnecessary to study, were seen from another viewpoint when seen in the light of His Word. Geography and history were not merely chronological happenings without a purpose, but were seen as an unfolding plan and revelation of God. English and arithmetic taught us that God is a God of logic and order. Science showed the wonders of His creation, and the insignificance of man. And Bible brought us the closest of all to the throne of our majestic Lord. True, we received much intellectual knowledge regarding this wonderful Book; but I know, too, that we also drew closer to our Saviour, in an experiential way. And through these, we have grown; have been built; brought closer to maturity and responsibilities we must assume.

“Except the Lord build...” Yes, except He build, all this year has been vain; all those lessons learned, all those hours of study, all those tests; what a wasted time! But thanks to God, it has not been wasted. Truly Protestant Reformed education; daily lessons applied in the light of His Word; presented to covenant children by dedicated teachers; has been preserved. With this early fundamental background, our children have a firm foundation for secondary education. And growth will continue; for God has promised to our covenant youth a precious heritage. May we have grace to see that early training of our children in the three-fold atmosphere of home, church and school, is our calling!

To some, our direct calling is that of mother and father in the home. There, the Lord lays the foundation and begins the early building of covenant youth. In
daily intimacy the child quickly learns right from wrong: what is pleasing to God, and what is not. The years fly by, and soon it is time for others to manifest their calling. The minister in the church, with weekly catechetical instruction, acquaints his students with—not only Biblical stories and facts; but sound Protestant Reformed doctrine as well. As he grows older, his interest expands to Young People’s Society, and various other types of church meetings, where again, qualified leaders, called by God, lead the young church in the pastures of God’s Word.

But at the same time that the young child enters catechetical work, he also begins his academic training. Blotches of colors are no longer nameless, but can be distinguished; symbols take on meaning and form words; and even the art of printing his own name is mastered in a very short time. Years pass by, and the fundamentals of reading are applied to branches of higher learning of geography, history, and so on. Arithmetic becomes more involved—and mystifying—but also very challenging. Science, civics, and nature study, are constantly demanding earlier learned material to be applied to new situations. These various learning procedures are the calling of our Protestant Reformed teachers. And these teachers see, that, just as the early training in school work is important, is basic, for a child’s future studies and work, so is his training and upbringing in the spiritual realm necessary for a full, Christian life. For truly, as Proverbs 22:6 says: “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Teaching—what a glorious calling! True, it is not the easiest nor the most popular profession. Years of training are necessary, and a lot of hard work is involved—but I do believe it is the most satisfying. For a job well done, results cannot always be found in black and white or rewards given a tangible form. To further explain: At the end of each school term, I try to remember how the boys and girls were at the beginning of the term—and am amazed at the transition which has occurred. In one short, ten month period, students have gained so much in the way of knowledge, attitudes, and habits. They have become older in their thinking—decisions come more easily. Indeed, one stands in wonder at the creatures God has made and His wonderful work within them.

Not in just one, but in each grade level, there is a challenge. To see youngsters work, study, play, developing into Christian young men and women, is one of the most gratifying and humbling experiences to encounter. Four years have slipped by since I began teaching at Adams; and my first class, sixth graders, this year graduates. How they have changed! From mere children, they have grown to young people on the threshold of a new, exciting life at Christian High. Of course, they have grown physically—all children do; and they have grown mentally—all children do. But I think you will agree with me when I say that our young people, from our own schools, have also grown spiritually. Their powers of spiritual discernment, shown in sermon reports, is amazing; discussions in Bible, and their general attitudes toward our churches, certainly shows that God loves and preserves His own covenant youth as the future church. God grant that we may keep it so—distinctively Protestant Reformed, always!

And, we remember, the LORD builds. God does not merely lay the foundation and then hand over the cement, stones, etc. to us to complete the building of His church. For then all would be lost and vain. But no, through the years, HE con-
Continually builds, forming and shaping that perfect church. How beautiful! God as the Great Architect, plans a beautiful structure; forming and building as a potter makes a vessel from the clay. And, as in an earthly building there are always just enough stones—not too many or too less; so it is with the heavenly building. An earthly builder does not leave one or two stones out of that wall; that would not be complete. Nor does he, when the building is complete, add to that building, stones which serve no purpose, and which do not belong there; that would be superfluous. No, there is just enough—always.

And so it is with God’s building. He has all the “stones” necessary. His spiritual home will be complete. None will be missing, for then God would be lacking; would be insufficient; there is not one extra, for then God is not perfection. But again, there are just enough; only those “stones” for whom Christ died, will be members of that Wonderful Structure. And then the Church will stand; pure, holy, redeemed—a fit Bride for the Majestic, ever-Glorious Bridegroom, unto all eternity.

Hulda J. Kuiper

American Comics were scored as “totally devoid of wholesome humor” and “morbidly preoccupied with death and sex” in a report made to the Church of Scotland General Assembly by its committee on the church and the nation. Parents, teachers, youth leaders and ministers were warned to guide youth toward “healthier types of juvenile and adolescent literature.”

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The Necessity of Protestant Reformed Education

The subject heading this article is the one that has been assigned me by the “Beacon Lights” Staff for their “School Issue.” From one point of view the subject is outdated. There was a time, not too many years ago, when this was the burning issue in our churches; especially in the Grand Rapids area. But in recent years, with the establishment of our own schools, and especially with the split in our churches, the argument has faded into the background. For it was rather a striking thing that those who opposed Protestant Reformed education were also the ones that opposed the truth, that we as churches have always maintained. Be that as it may, the fact is that our subject is no longer an issue in the churches.

Yet it is worth our while to recall the arguments that we advanced against those who opposed our schools, and thus, to come to a renewed understanding of their importance in our lives.

Schools belong to the parents. For the task of instructing the covenant youth belongs to the parents. It is their responsibility; it is their duty; it is their obligation. And it is their duty and responsibility and obligation before God. We must not forget that really the parents instruct their children in our schools because the whole control of the school rests with the parents. For many reasons they give the duty to the school; but that does not mean that they lose their responsibility in the instruction of their children. It is their calling to bring the child up in the fear of the Lord. Thus the parents instruct their children through the means of the teachers in an organized school.

Fundamental to the necessity of Protestant Reformed schools is the truth of Scripture that God gathers His church in the line of continued generations. Although this is the teaching of the whole of Holy Writ, we call your attention to one text in particular: Gen. 18:19. The context to this verse speaks of the visit which the Lord pays to Abraham in the plains of Mamre. After the Lord has revealed to Abraham that he shall have a son, and that that son shall be the child of the promise, the Lord goes in the direction of Sodom to “see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me;”. Abraham goes with the visitors to take them on their way. Then we read, “And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” vss. 17-19. Several things we must notice in this passage.

1) God speaks of revealing something to Abraham.

2) That something is the secret of His own counsel, with respect to Lot, in his relation to Sodom, which has become ripe for judgment; and, more generally, the relation between the church and the world, especially with respect to the judgment of
the world, which becomes ripe for destruction.

3) The basis for that revelation of God is the covenant of grace. Abraham is God's friend-servant; and as covenant friend of God, he is in a position to receive the revelation of God's counsel in fellowship with Him. But that is not all. Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation. That great and mighty nation is the church which is gathered from all nations of the earth and which is the spiritual seed of Abraham. Nevertheless, that spiritual seed is gathered from the natural seed in the line of continued generation, even though that natural seed encompasses all the nations of the earth in the new dispensation.

4) But at the basis of the gathering of the seed from father to son, lies covenant instruction. The church is preserved in the midst of the world from father to son by means of covenant instruction. “For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, . . .” vs. 19. It is striking to notice however, that even at the basis of this, is the fact that God knows His people eternally. And that eternal knowledge that God has of His people is the cause of the preservation of the seed. Thus the first part of verse 19 could better be translated, “For I have known him, so that he will . . .” But those whom God knows, He preserves in the line of generations by means of covenant instruction.

Therefore the text teaches that God reveals His will to Abraham His friend because God has known Abraham, so that he will pass on that revelation of the will of God, to his children, so that the covenant seed may come, which is, essentially, Christ. Thus, the church is preserved through the means of covenant instruction.

That is important to our subject. For all instruction, whether that be geography or arithmetic or the sciences or philosophy is centrally and basically covenant instruction.

But now, we must be more specific. Attend to the Baptism Form, where we read these questions which the parents answer, in the affirmative, at the baptism of their child: “Whether you acknowledge, that although our children are conceived and born in sin, and therefore are subject to all miseries, yea, to condemnation itself; yet that they are sanctified in Christ, and therefore, as members of his Church ought to be baptized?

“Whether you acknowledge the doctrine which is contained in the Old and New Testament, and in the articles of the Christian faith, and which is taught here in this Christian Church, to be the true and perfect doctrine of salvation?

“Whether you promise and intend to see these children, when come to the years of discretion instructed and brought up in the aforesaid doctrine, or help or cause them to be instructed therein, to the utmost of your power?”

You notice that the same elements are present as in the text we quoted. 1) The revelation of God. 2) The covenant continued in the line of generations. 3) Covenant instruction as the basis of the continuation of that line of believers. But the parents are very specific. They vow before God and the church that they believe that the revelation of God is taught in the Church of which he is a member. That means that he believes that the church to which he belongs maintains the pure Word of God as contained in the Scriptures and the Christian Creeds. That, therefore, when they instruct their children, they instruct them in what their church maintains to be the truth. And that is the vow which they take before God from which they may not deviate in any respect.

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Doctrine In Our Christian Schools?

Space will not permit a detailed explanation of all the implications of the important question assigned to this department for this special school issue. That question is: "Should Doctrine Be Taught In Our Christian Schools?"

This question revolves about three matters which we will attempt to briefly discuss in this essay. They are:

1. What is The Idea Of The Christian School?
2. What Is Meant By Doctrine?
3. Does The Latter Have a Place In The Former?

1. The Idea of The Christian School:

In general, it may be said that the school is a necessary extension of the home. Its purpose is to assist in the training and instruction of the children of the home. This duty, according to all of Scripture, rests upon the home, and this must always be remembered, so that the obligation to train their children, is never severed from the parents. It is their responsibility to which they, also, in former times attended almost exclusively. There was no need of outside assistance. However, life has become very complex and the training that is now required to fit a child for its place in society is a very complicated one, so that the individual parent is no longer able to attend to it alone. This reality of life made it necessary for parents to band together and employ those, who are capable, to give instruction to their children in those branches of knowledge which they, as parents, are not able to do. From this, it follows that the school is not only an extension of the home, but that it also belongs properly to the control of the parents, and not to other agencies, such as the church or state.

Furthermore, it should then be evident that ideally the school must also be in harmony with the home. The school of christian parents must be distinct from that of ungodly and unbelieving parents. Between these two there is no concord. As different as the parents are, so different must the institutions for the training of the children be. These are as much opposite as light is from darkness. If we would speak of any similarity, it would be a purely formal one, while ethically these two can never be harmonized. Even so, it is impossible to find harmony between a christian home and the school of the world. And, how can two opposing camps cooperate in the training of the same soldier? Likewise, in a relative measure, the christian home cannot be harmonized with schools that are controlled by parents of other faiths. Thus, for example, parents of Reformed persuasion cannot permit their children to be instructed in Roman Catholic, Lutheran, or Seventh-Day Adventist's schools. Neither is it consistent for Protestant Reformed parents to send their children to schools controlled by Christian Reformed parents. This inconsistency puts a damper on my own enthusiasm for christian instruction in my own community, and I would that every Protestant Reformed parent felt this most keenly, so that there would be a more concerted effort put forth to eradicate it and bring harmony between home and school. How
else shall justice be done to our baptismal vow?

The importance of this becomes still more evident when we consider that the Christian school is not a replica of the public school with a few prayers, the singing of some hymns, and a bit of Biblical instruction added to create a religious or Christian atmosphere. The Christian School, as to its idea, is not a Public School with an added department for religion. Its idea is quite different. Although the Christian School deals with temporal and natural things even as does the public School, its aim is different. Both seek to prepare the children for their place in this present world, but the Christian School does this always in the consciousness that the natural things with which it deals can never be separated from spiritual things and temporal things cannot be separated from eternal things. This perspective gives a color to the Christian school that distinguishes it in the world as a light and center of true culture. Only then does the fear of the Lord, the beginning of all wisdom, permeate the school. Only then can the child be trained in the way he ought to go!

II. What is Meant by Doctrine?

If by doctrine is meant the systematic teaching of the carefully formulated faith of the church, we may immediately exclude it from the Christian school. This task belongs properly to the church and the school may not intrude. The church is not only qualified through its offices to perform this task, but it is called of God to do so. The school is not! Dogmatics has no place in the Christian day school. The Christian school teacher has no calling to teach it, and this must not be expected either.

However, in connection with our present subject, we may speak of doctrine in a broader sense. Thus defined, we would say that doctrine is a way of life. The doctrine of the various churches express divergent world and life views. Faith is not a cold, intellectual, logically construed formulation of certain beliefs, but faith is the living bond of union with Christ. And, objective faith concerns much more than individual preferences of interpreting the Bible. It concerns one's living attitude toward, and conception of God, and Christ, and man, and all things. To use but one illustration: it makes a great deal of difference in one's entire life, whether he conceives of God as a Being Who is gracious to all men, elect and reprobate alike, offers to them all salvation, and enables them by a gracious operation of His Holy Spirit to do good in this world, as 1924 maintains; or if one conceives of God as a Being Whose curse is in the house of the wicked, Who is gracious only to His people in Christ; before Whom none are able to do any good except those who are regenerated by the Holy Spirit; and Who works all things together for good unto salvation for His own, as we, Protestant Reformed people, maintain. Whether one conceives of God as a Covenant God or as a universal Father (in the modernistic sense) will inevitably effect one's life and position in this present world. And, so pages could be added to this theme, but this will suffice. Only let our Christian schools take cognizance of doctrine in this sense — the practical application of doctrine to life — for then we are ready to look at our final question.

III. Its Place:

As a subject on the curriculum of the school? No! Emphatically No, for that is the domain of the Church!

As the basis for the entire curriculum? Indeed so! Emphatically so, for that is Christian Instruction.

Let it be added that the sole basis for all positive Christian instruction must be the Protestant Reformed Doctrine! Noth-

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In this spring time of the year, the phenomenon of autumn colors is perhaps very far from our thoughts. As life begins anew, we are not too anxious to contemplate that wonder of plant life that awes us in the fall. The Daffodils and Crocuses (Crocus?) have already burst forth into yellow and purple; the grass has more than overcome the gray countryside with a rich carpet of green.

For the sake of this study, let’s turn our thoughts back to last fall. At one time or another every one of us has taken a color tour and marvelled at the variety and beauty all around.

It is the sugar maple that sets the standard for summer green tree color. It is not dark blue-green like the elms, nor yellow-green like the poplars, nor gray-green like the willow. Yet, about the tenth of October this dependable green will vanish. In its place, the same oval, composed of the same leaves, will appear flaming orange and yellow. In moister ground, where we can find the red maples, the change will be to bright crimson. All neatly in a row, a line of birches will become as yellow as butter, while an ash at some distance will turn as purple as prunes. The change comes as swift as a new window display and much more soundlessly and smoothly than the change of stage settings.

The key to this miracle is a tiny band of cells at the base of the stem of each leaf, where that stem is attached to the twig. As summer draws to a close, these special cells—and no others in the leaf stem—begin to loosen and dry out. In just a short time they become so brittle that the leaf will break off and fall to the ground. Before this actually happens, the tree prepares to heal the scar where this break will occur by converting other cells just below these brittle cells into a tough corky tissue. The toughness of these cells interferes with the plumbing system in the leaf stem by stopping the pipelines that bring the sap into the leaf.

Thus the supply of life-giving sap is shut off from the leaf a couple of weeks before the leaf is ready to fall; these are the two weeks of the fall foliage.

The procession of color begins with the little things like the strawberries and blackberries and various herbs. Little plants have autumn colors like the big ones. As the vanguard of the trees, comes the red maple; after them the sugar maples, elms, and ashes; and last of all, the hickories and birches.

As soon as a leaf has its supply of fresh sap cut off by this plugging of its pipelines, photosynthesis stops. This means that the leaves are no longer capable of manufacturing food and are no longer useful to the organism of the tree. Chlorophyll, which is so indispensable to this process, is an unstable chemical that must be constantly renewed to exist. Therefore, the green chlorophyll, isolated in the leaf, is destroyed by the sun’s rays and disappears. In this way green color which is dominant in the leaf, is removed. What is left becomes a vivid demonstration of color chemistry.

One pigment which comes into its own when the chlorophyll disappears, is carotin. Carotin (the color of carrots) was in the leaf all the time, floating around in the cell sap in little specks. But, despite the fact that these carotene plastids are
bright yellow or orange, they are masked by the powerful green of chlorophyll all summer long. This same pigment makes butter yellow after the chlorophyll in the grass has disappeared in the cow’s milk factory. Carotin is also the pigment of egg yolk. The fact that it survives all through the process of food making is proof of its stability. Sugar maple leaves are rich in the orange and chrome hues of carotin. Birches have pure yellow carotin.

What about the autumn crimson of red maples and Virginia creeper, the scarlet of oaks, the dark red of sassafras leaves, the plum coloring of the ashes? These red and bluish tones are caused by a sugar chemical in the cell sap. It is not a pigment at all, but rather a sugar in solution. It colors sap just as a drop of iodine colors water. If the sap of the tree in question is relatively alkaline, it turns blue or purple. Whether sap is acid or alkaline depends on the chemical make-up of the tree and not too much on the soil. The red maples are acid, so they turn red; ash trees are relatively alkaline, so they turn plum color.

Carotin and sugar still does not account for the brown colors which are so prevalent among oaks. When yellow or orange is toned down, it appears to our eyes as brown. After the yellow or orange of the leaves is exposed for some days, it loses its intensity and is keyed down to brown. Another cause of the brown color is a substance found in the food cells, a powerful astringent, called tannin. This acid stiffens protein in animal hides so that they become insoluble and incidently turn to a rich tan color. This is the process of tanning hides. The same thing may happen in leaves. One of the most beautiful and distinctive effects in the fall is contributed by the American beech leaves. They turn to a duotone, tan streaked with yellow along the veins.

Because of the wonderful variety in the chemical makeup of trees and plants, each species turns into its own distinctive color and we can often identify them by their hues in the fall.

It is interesting to note the reason that some trees do not contribute any new vivid colors to the landscape of fall foliage. For example, black walnut and butternut trees drop their leaves so swiftly when the brittle cells are formed that their branches are bare when other trees are flashing with colors. The locusts retain chlorophyll green until the leaves drop off. This implies that the corky cells which heal the scar may not cut off the supply of sap to the leaves. To verify this, examine the leaf scar of a locust in the winter, or any time after the leaves have fallen. You will find, instead of a clean scar, an irregular and broken callos, with a little hole into the bark, where the buds are buried.

Autumn colors and dropping leaves are part of the same phenomenon. To strip a tree completely of its leaves is a device of nature to preserve the life of that tree. Those handsome broad leaves are pouring out water in the form of invisible vapor into the air. This water is lifted out of the ground. But the supply of available water in the earth is curtailed when the ground freezes in the winter. Therefore, the leaves must be “shut off” before winter or they will dissipate vital sap when it cannot be replaced from the roots. The most efficient way to shut off the leaves is to knock them off. Nature does this by forming those brittle cells with which their adjacent corky cells plug up the sap system and cause the spectacle of the fall foliage.

The brilliance of the fall foliage may be enhanced by the weather conditions. The intensity of light has much to do with the intensity of the red and purple of the sugar chemical. For this reason,
"DISTINCTION FROM THE WORLD"

Once again, in the month of June, we experience the closing of our schools temporarily for summer vacation. For some, this vacation from scholastic studies will be temporary, to be continued in the fall by more advanced study; for others it means the end of their schooling and a beginning of different varied interests. When one looks back upon his schooling, he finds that during all the years that he has been in school, his education has been different from that of others; that is, from those who attend schools supported by the state and national government. Oh yes, on the surface this "distinctiveness" appears to be rather indistinct; rather small and unnoticed; but let us examine the difference, and notice this certain distinctiveness of which we are part.

Throughout our land, we find that there is a very large education system, built up and maintained for the purpose of instructing the youth and adults, the necessary knowledge one should possess in order to live as a decent citizen of our country. To the world, education means culture, refinement, and a better understanding of life with an aim to earthly wisdom, power, and wealth. This aim in life is not that of seeking to glorify God in all things; but rather, to seek the pleasures and treasures of this world, to which this education is generally directed.

However, as believers in the institution of Christian education, we remain distinctive in two ways; the bond of unity which exists between the home and the school; and the aim to which our education is directed.

The answer to the question, "What is a Christian school?", is given simply in the following words: "A Christian school is a school in which the instruction is given by members of Reformed persuasion, and in which the instruction is in harmony with the Word of God." The instruction in the Christian school is based on the Word of God. This is as it should be, for only under such circumstances can the teaching be done with inspiration and enthusiasm, and in such a way that there is unity in the education of the child and agreement between home and school.

And secondly, let us notice the difference in the aim to which our education is directed. Considering the Christian school in its nature, we find that it pretends to be nothing further than a school; that is, to say, an institution, auxiliary to the family in the education of the youth for their position in life. It is content with this function. It has no aspiration to supplant the church or the state. The program of the Christian school is to educate the youth for their calling; that is, to educate them for society, state, and church. This program is characteristic; for the public school confines itself particularly to educating for society and state, ecclesiastical and religious life being purposely eliminated. We notice here that the people of the world, in their aim of education, purposely eliminate religious education and the acknowledgement of God as the Creator, Ruler, and Sustainer of all things.

So then, we find that their aim and purpose in education is centered in the pleasures and treasures of this world, rather than in the calling which is set
before us; namely, Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

John H. Haan

WHAT A PROTESTANT REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL EDUCATION MEANS TO ME

To be honest, I have attended a school such as ours, for the last eight years for the simple reason, that was where my parents sent me. But in looking over these years, I realize the necessity of a Protestant Reformed Christian School education.

Our school is the third of a unity, it is a continuation of my home and church, because what I hear at home from my parents and what I hear preached by our ministers on Sunday and taught in Catechism, the same is taught by my teachers.

It is a fact that a teacher consciously and sub-consciously imparts her beliefs to her pupils. So, the Sovereignty of God is brought out in all my subjects because I have truly Protestant Reformed teachers. I am not taught the Sovereignty of God by my ministers and parents and then go to school and hear about the "free will" of man or God's so called "common grace" nor atheism. No,—my instruction is in harmony with the Word of God as instructed in my home and in my church.

My friends in school are my friends in catechism and will be later my friends in society life. I am thankful my friends are Protestant Reformed since they are such great influences.

When I was baptized my parents promised to bring me up in this doctrine and now I can see they are fulfilling their vows and promise for God in his grace has privileged me with a Protestant Reformed Christian School education to supplement all my other means of education.

Next year I will be in the 9th grade. As yet we have no Protestant Reformed High School. I will have to attend a High School where the education is not distinctively Reformed but is primarily Christian Reformed. I know I will be thankful that I have been prepared, and that by God's grace, through the means of a Protestant Reformed Christian School Education.

Mary Beth Engelsma
8th Grade Hope Prot. Ref. School

TRUTH vs. ERROR
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ing else will suffice. This is not a boast but rather a conviction. It may be simplified by saying that the basis of all positive christian instruction must be the Truth; but then that is saying the same thing with different words, for the Protestant Reformed Doctrine is The Truth. Let anyone who may, deny this, and prove his contention with the only standard of Truth, the Word of God!

It makes no difference then what branch of study is taught—reading, writing, arithmetic, music, history, social science, etc.! All the same. Space prevents us from explaining in detail the application of doctrine to these subjects, but that can easily be done and must be done, for that is the specific calling of the Christian School. And note, too:

1. When all things are taught from the viewpoint of false doctrine in any school, children are imbibed with Error which is the Lie!

2. When the Truth is the foundation of all instruction, the (child) man of God is thoroughly furnished unto every good work!

The necessity of maintaining and establishing our own Protestant Reformed Schools is exceeding great. No price is too much. No sacrifice too great! Love—the Love of God, of His Truth, of His children—demands it!

G. Vanden Berg.
THE PROBLEMS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

As chairman of the Hope Protestant Reformed School Board I was invited to write an article on this topic. I hesitate to take pen in hand because of lack of experience. Having been a board member for more than four years, I feel my experiences allow me to relate some of the duties and problems of a school board. If by doing this I can somewhat attain the purpose of a better understanding between all parties involved, I will feel amply repaid.

Protestant Reformed parents, by the grace of God, realize their calling, desire to fulfill the promises uttered before the Lord and the church, "to instruct and bring up in the aforesaid doctrine or help or cause them to be instructed therein to the utmost of your power." These parents organize into a Protestant Reformed School Society for Christian instruction, elect from its membership men, known as the School Board, to accomplish their purpose.

In order to understand our problems, the outline below, although not full and complete, will serve our purpose to determine some of the duties of the School Board as mandated by the Society.

I. Enrollment
   II. Buildings
      III. Teachers
      IV. Finances
      V. Supervision

I. Enrollment — The majority of the pupils enrolled come from the members of the School Society. There are also usually a few Christian parents in the vicinity, although not members of our own churches, who for the sake of "principle" or "convenience" will cooperate with the School Board and enroll their children. The total enrollment divided by 20 to 25 will determine the number of school rooms.

II. Buildings — The selecting of a building site is indeed very important, especially in the cities where building restrictions are enforced. The site should be centrally located. There should be plenty of space for the school buildings and playgrounds as well as room for future expansion. At least 5 acres are needed for a 4 to 8 room school. State approved building plans must be secured before a building permit can be obtained. Contracts to erect the school building, install heating, plumbing and electrical equipment and etc. must be made. The playgrounds must also be prepared and equipped with playground equipment. Seats, desks and many other needs must be purchased and installed. These buildings and equipment must be properly maintained. While all these needs are being supplied another very important problem must be solved, that is, hiring of qualified teachers.

III. Teachers — A. Requirements. The school Board, having the spiritual welfare of our children in mind, should seek the services of the best qualified teachers available. I believe the necessary requirements are as follows: (1) The state requirements regarding education and health should be met. (2) They must be confessing members of one of our Protestant Reformed Churches, in good standing, subscribe to our Three Forms of Unity and indicate very clearly their love of that truth as it is preached in our churches. (3) References regarding their experiences and ability are also desirable and should be given proper consideration.

B. Salaries. This subject is a delicate one but let us face the facts. At present there is a shortage of qualified teachers not only in our circles but also in the entire teaching profession. Could the low salaries paid be the cause, especially among the male teachers? In my opinion
any young man or woman contemplating entering the Christian School teaching profession with sole purpose of financial remuneration, should forget all about it. That alone disqualifies them to teach, but the School Board should not take advantage of teachers, who for the sake of principle are willing to teach in our own schools. If the information I have is correct, the salary our teachers receive is lower than the salary paid in our Christian Schools and considerably less than the salary paid the teachers in the public schools. Our School Board will do well to study this matter and, if necessary, make adjustments in the near future.

IV. Finance — The problem seems to be “ever present.” The School Board faithful in its duties will try to keep the “cost of education” at a minimum. Although the cost of operating the school should be met mainly by tuition, still large sums of money are necessary to finance this project, and we must seek ways and means to accumulate this money. Financial Drives are conducted to raise money to finance the cost of the school buildings and equipment, and if more money is needed a loan is negotiated. The cost of education is determined by dividing the total expenditure by the number of children enrolled. For example if the operating expenses of the school for one year equaled $15,000, and the school enrollment equaled 100 pupils the tuition per child would be $150 per year. Parents sending one child would pay this amount. Since it would become a hardship, if not impossible, for parents sending two or more children, the “sliding scale” is used. This creates a deficit which must then be met by church collections and gifts. I believe this problem could be solved, in part, if all those interested in Christian education, both young and old would contribute a definite sum each week. Whether this sum be large or small it would become a sizable gift by the end of a year. This could be done by stamped envelopes provided by the board.

V. Supervision — This is indeed another major problem. The School Board should labor in close cooperation with the principal and teachers in order to obtain the best results.

A. Text book — In the best school books obtainable, there are things that we cannot approve. The School Board is aware of this fact and realizes that the ideal shall be obtained only, when we are financially able to engage qualified men and women to write and assemble proper material for our own text books. Song books are also a problem. The Psalter is excellent, yet does not seem to fill all the needs for every occasion. We are looking with anticipation, for the new revised Psalter for which our Synod is laboring.

B. Instruction — The School Board must observe closely the instruction given in the school by delegating its members to each school room periodically. This does not mean we do not have confidence in our teachers, but the Board is responsible for all instruction given.

C. Discipline — Many discipline problems arise and I believe the board is using wisdom when it gives the Principal and/or teachers a free hand in solving all minor problems. Laws and rules are necessary and proper, but it is impossible to provide rules that cover every phase of misconduct in the school and on the playground.

When major discipline problems are brought to the School Board by the Principal or parent, the Board must give just judgment. This can be accomplished when the Board seeks divine guidance, is endowed with wisdom, and uses tact and discretion. Then no discipline problem is too great to solve.
D. Transportation of Pupils — This is also a burden that has been placed on the shoulders of the School Board in part. Some children walk to school; for others the parents must provide their own transportation and for others transportation is provided. This is not ideal. Where children come from widely scattered areas representing a number of congregations, this problem becomes a major one indeed. Past experience has taught us when the School Board provides transportation, this problem becomes too far removed from the home. I believe parents from each congregation should get together and assume this responsibility in order to have closer cooperation, better service and more economy.

VI. Conclusion — The problems of the School Board are very many of which I have mentioned only a few. A capable writer with experience in these matters could write a sizeable book on this topic.

Our Heavenly Father has led us into the Protestant Reformed Churches where the truth has been maintained and developed. We insist that His covenant children, which the Lord has placed in our care, shall be taught that truth in our own Protestant Reformed Christian Schools. The School Boards, realizing their own weaknesses and shortcoming, covet your prayers and desire your full and complete cooperation in order to attain that one ideal.

Martin Veenstra
Pres. of Hope Prot. Ref. Chr. School Board.

NATURE STUDY
(Continued from page 9)

The brightest colors are observed when the fall season is bright and clear. If there is an excess of overcast weather, the yellow and orange of carotin are not affected. They glow on moist and misty days with exquisite rich pastel hues. On the other hand, the reds and purples of the brighter varieties are dulled by cloudy weather.

Autumn colors do not depend on the frost. Some imaginative scientists are of the opinion that in some prehistoric age when the habits of the broadleafed trees were being formed, the frost had a hand in the process. But we know better; God has given the seasons to man; spring time and harvest. Nor should we imagine that today this process is automatic; our heavenly Father, who numbers the hairs of our head, also exercises his paternal and creative power over the ever-changing trees. The perfect timing throughout this fascinating process is not a haphazard thing; but all wise and purposeful.

D. J. Monsma

CHRISTIAN LIVING
(Continued from page 5)

The conclusion is therefore very evident. We must have schools which teach the reformed truth as we confess it to be the Word of God. We must have schools that are in agreement with what is taught in the church. We must have schools that will teach our children the truth of God’s Word as we maintain it — distinctively Reformed. Negatively, that means, that schools which are committed to a position which is not in harmony with God’s Word, as taught in our church, such as the public schools, and most of the Christian schools in our land, cannot be entrusted with the instruction of our children. It is only where the revelation of God, in its purity, is taught, that the instruction of our covenant seed is the basis for the preserving of the church. And do not say that the present christian schools are good enough, for where a split in the church is warranted to preserve the truth, it follows with indubitable logic that our own Christian schools become a vital necessity.

H. Hanko