

Beacon Lights

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*"They shall ask the way to Zion
with their faces thitherward,
saying, Come, and let us join
ourselves to the LORD in a
perpetual covenant that shall not
be forgotten."*

Jeremiah 50:5

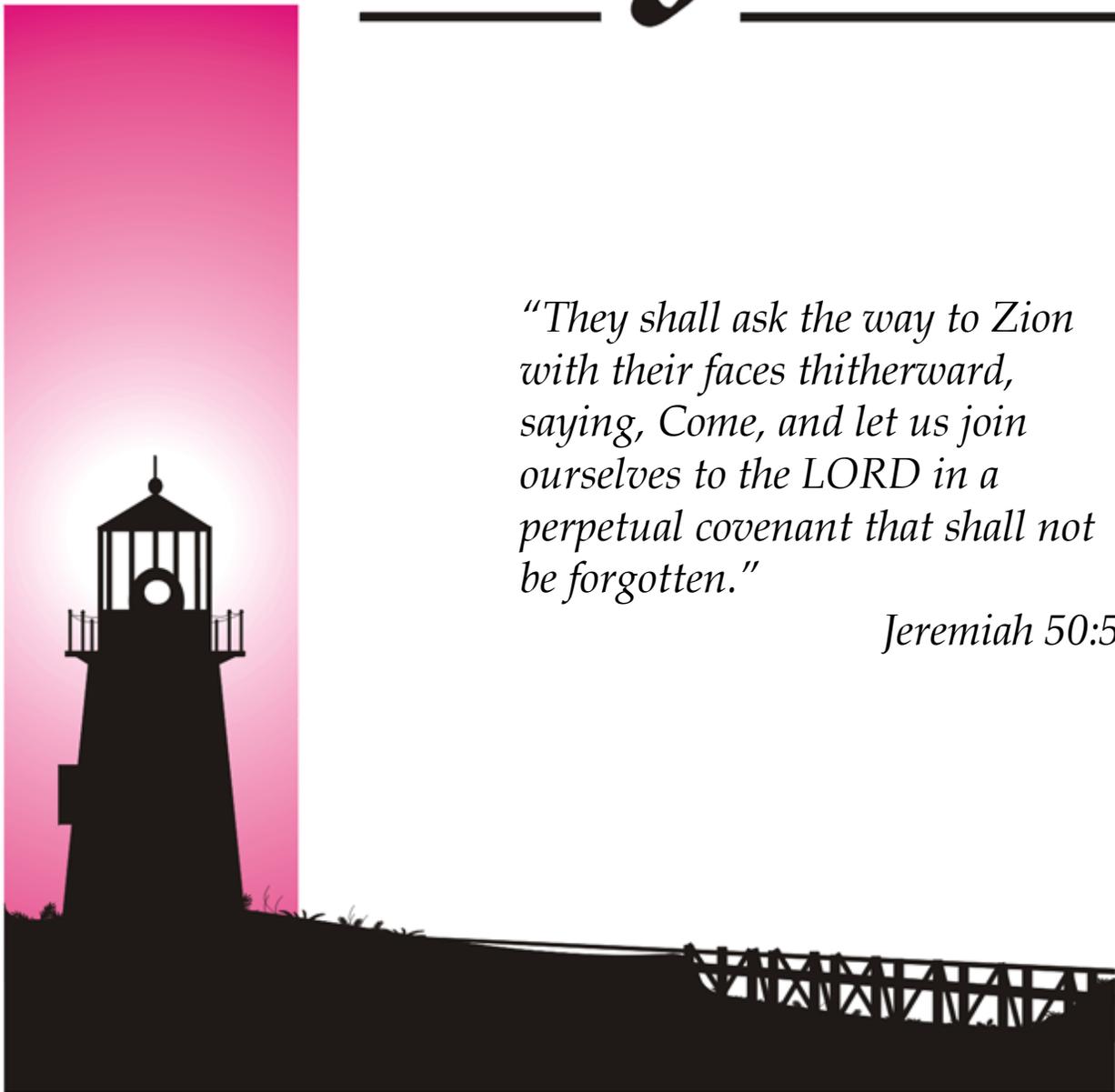


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Convention Preparation

Advertisements of the upcoming convention have been published regularly in *Beacon Lights* and the deadline for registration is coming up. It is our goal to use *Beacon Lights* in the issues leading up to the convention to help you prepare for this event with material related to the theme of the church gathered from all nations. Before looking outward at the church as it is gathered from nations distant from ours, this issue takes a look at our own churches. What does church life mean to you? Do you feel that you are a living and vibrant member of the body of Christ? Our reprint of an article by Marvin Kamps asks each one of us some important questions to that effect. In this issue we also look back to some of the deeper roots of our churches as we continue with Professor Engelsma's remembrances of Rev. Hoeksema, and also look back even further with a book review of a new book that has recently been published. When we look at our own history, we see how God has gathered even our churches and families from diverse backgrounds that are now foreign to our current day to day life. We also hope you continue to use and enjoy the devotional material that Mr. Hunter, along with others, has faithfully provided over the years. ❖

Letters

Dear Prof. Engelsma,

I read with great interest your article in the January *Beacon Lights*, and am looking forward to reading the February article as well. I have a couple of questions about the January article.

First of all, regarding Richard Newhouse's question to Prof. Volbeda on his inconsistency in defending sovereign, particular grace, but not Hoeksema, Danhof and Ophoff, do you know what response Volbeda gave, if any?

Secondly, I have seen some old pictures of the consistory of Hope CRC of Riverbend, which was deposed by Classis Grand Rapids West. In these pictures is a certain R. Niewenhuis. Is this Richard Newhouse as well, with the Dutch spelling?

Thank you for writing this series. I find it both interesting and edifying.

Response

If Prof. Volbeda replied to Richard Newhouse, the answer has not come down in the tradition.

It is just as well.

Newhouse's question was rhetorical.

The "little Dutchman," having only a third-grade education, but possessing the wisdom of the Spirit,

pointed out a truth that holds today, as much as it held then. If a man will not speak out on behalf of the cause of Christ in the arena where it is being attacked and at the time that the issue is being decided (the church papers and the meeting of the church assemblies), all his pious talk to the people elsewhere and at times convenient and safe for himself is so much self-serving "praatje" (as Newhouse would have said). "Praatje" is Dutch for idle chatter.

Richard Newhouse is indeed the R. Niewenhuis of the Protestant Reformed histories. You will find him (at Rev. Ophoff's right hand) in the picture of the consistory of the Hope Christian Reformed Church, Riverbend, Michigan, that was deposed by Classis Grand Rapids West of the Christian Reformed Church in January 1925, on page 21 of Herman Hoeksema's *The Protestant Reformed Churches* (2nd ed., 1947).

You will find him also, now as R. Newhouse, in the picture of the consistory of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in the twenty-fifth anniversary book of the Protestant Reformed Churches, *Twenty-five Year Jubilee of the Protestant Reformed Churches of America 1925-1950* (p.18, back row, far left).

—Prof. David J. Engelsma

The Fourth Man

A Story from the Time of the Afscheiding

Editor's note: *The following story was previously published in November, 2000 and the following chapters can be found online under the Beacon Lights link at the PRCA website <http://www.prc.org/>. This story gives the background to the story of the book reviewed in this issue.*

PREFACE

The articles which will appear in subsequent issues of *Beacon Lights* are translations of a book with the title, *The Fourth Man*. The book was written in the Dutch by P. S. Kuiper and published by *The Banner* in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

The author informs the readers that the title of the book is taken from Daniel 3:25: "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

As the sub-title indicates, the story is about the Secession of 1834, and what effect that Secession had on the inhabitants of the small village of Hilversum in the year 1835, one year after the Secession began. The author explains the book in these words. "In this story free use is made of the scarce data and traditions that have been saved from this anxious time." That implies that most of what is described in the book did not actually happen. The main persons are the product of the imagination.

"The tragic attack on the farm of Gijsbert Haan on June 12, 1836 is, sadly enough, a historical fact. However, similar acts of violence did occur in the Netherlands in those years.

"It may be added for the interest of the reader that Gijsbert Haan was among the 800 immigrants who came to America under the leadership of Rev. Scholte. He first settled in Pella, Iowa, later came to Grand Rapids, and was one of the organizers of the Christian Reformed Church in 1857."

The original translation of the book was done by Rev. Cornelius Hanko, my father, and the editing and prepara-

tion for publication was done by the undersigned. My father thought the book worth publishing in *The Beacon Lights* for various reasons.

The story itself is a simple story, in fact, almost too simple for the young people who read *The Beacon Lights*. But that may have its own advantage. Its very simplicity makes it a story that can be read by children and young people from 7 or 8 years old and up. It will introduce them to *The Beacon Lights* at an early age and get them accustomed to reading what will be, in a few years, their paper.

But the value of the story makes its simplicity something to overlook in the interests of other advantages. My father saw in the book an accurate and interesting description of life in our Fatherland 180 years ago. (The interested reader might want to know that the same thing has been done in picture form by the Dutch artist Poortvliet, whose books are available in this country.) More importantly, the book gives an accurate description of the effect of the Secession of 1834 on the people in the Netherlands, who suffered persecution for their commitment to the cause of the Lord Christ and the truth of Holy Scripture. This Secession, which took place in 1834, was a true reformation of the church of Christ. Many of these Seceders came to this country, and our own Protestant Reformed Churches have many sons and daughters from immigrants who were a part of this Secession. My own paternal grandmother was herself a daughter of the Secession. It is a book about our roots.

For those of our readers who do not know a great deal about the Secession of 1834, the following brief summary will help them place this momentous event in its proper light. The Secession really began in the Reformed Church of Ulrum, a village in the northern part of the Netherlands when Rev. De Cock and his consistory and deacons signed a Declaration of Secession, which announced their separation from the State Church which had become thoroughly apostate. Joining De Cock in the Secession were other ministers, among whom was Scholte, who later led a group of immigrants to Pella, Iowa, and Van

Raalte, who led another group of immigrants to what is now Holland, Michigan on the shores of Lake Macatawa. In this latter group the Christian Reformed Church had its origin. If anyone desires more information on this, such information is available in my book "Portraits of Faithful Saints," and in a syllabus prepared originally for The Beacon Lights entitled "From Dordt to Today."

The editor and publication committee of The Beacon Lights have graciously consented to publish this translation. For this my father is grateful.

One or two remarks by way of explaining some of the translation and formatting. My father (I concur)

thought it best to leave the names of people, towns, and streets in their Dutch form. Many can be translated into English, but not all. The names, therefore, may strike our readers as strange.

The author has included a few endnotes will be included in endnotes at the end of the pertinent chapter. I have also included a few additional endnotes when I thought the text needed some explanation. What endnotes belong to the author will be indicated in the endnote itself.

Prof. Herman Hanko
Grand Rapids, Michigan
September 20, 2000

CHAPTER 1

The School by the Creek

According to an old saying, "April sometimes wears a white hat." But that certainly did not apply to the first of April in the year 1836. Spring came all at once, and the sun, which freely poured out its golden rays over the weaver's village of Hilversum,¹ was far from lacking in strength.

The farmers plodding behind their plows knew it, and so did the weavers and spinners in their stuffy work areas.

But the greatest sigh came from the old town school at the Kerkbrink, where instructor Dirk De Liefde and the assistant, J. J. Van Oostveen, gave lessons to about 190 children.

"Children, we have now finished our arithmetic lesson!"

The solemn voice of instructor De Liefde rang through the schoolroom. His words did not fall on deaf ears!

Immediately all the pencils were laid aside.

"One: Take up your slates!"

A hundred hands took up the slates.

"Two: Slates in your desks!"

A hundred slates disappeared in the desks.

"Three: Arms crossed!"

Two hundred arms were crossed.

Like frozen snowmen the children sat in their black-painted seats each of which held six persons. It was most advisable to sit still because the rod and the ruler did not hang on the straight-backed chair of the instructor in vain.

All eyes were focused on the blackboard where the instructor De Liefde had written a poem in very neat letters.

His piercing eyes wandered for a moment over the class until they settled on a blond, sturdy lad. "Martin Boelhouwer, come and stand here by the blackboard!"

The boy's face went white. Had he unawares done something wrong for which he would now be punished?

Instructor De Liefde noticed his fear and smiled slightly.

"Do not be afraid, boy," he said encouragingly. Martin shuffled to the front, still not quite at ease. "Children, this morning I have written a very fine poem on the blackboard. Martin Boelhouwer, you try to read this for us in a proper and clear tone of voice!"

The lad blushed from both shyness and pride. He put his feet together and his hands behind his back.

At that moment the side door creaked softly open and Mr. Van Oostveen entered the room.

When he saw Martin standing at the blackboard he immediately saw what was happening. He nodded as if to say: "I will wait a moment."

Martin looked at the blackboard, cleared his throat and read with a clear voice:

He who strives after virtue,
And values her worth,
Finds peace and contentment,
A paradise here on earth.

“Every one of us enjoyed that,” Instructor De Liefde said in praise, “don’t you think so, Mr. Van Oostveen?” The assistant nodded, after which he hastily took something out of the cabinet and disappeared.

A rising tumult in his room proved that his hasty departure was necessary.

The teacher signaled Martin to be seated. Martin walked to his seat with his head in the clouds.

It was a great honor to be chosen to read a poem.

Usually his friend Cornelis Van Ravenswaay was asked to do this.

Slyly Martin looked at him. Would his friend be jealous?

But Cornelis only looking longingly outside while Instructor De Liefde admonished the children: “Let us all live according to the spirit of the wisdom in this poem.” The children all nodded in full agreement, although they understood very little of it.

They understood still less that this “very nice” poem was exactly the opposite of what the Bible taught. They never heard anything else but “virtue.”²

Twelve strokes, announcing deliverance to the children, rang from the church tower high above the school. A hundred sighs arose.

When Bollebakker, who had been rubbing his always-hungry stomach for some time, arose part way from his seat, one look from the eyes of the instructor brought him back to the required position.

“In order to enjoy our noonday meal we turn homeward decently and orderly.”

Row after row the children now left the room. First the children of the dime-seats. Those were the children whose parents paid a dime tuition and who therefore might sit in front. Toon Bollebakker was also among them, for his father was in a double sense a big farmer: his stomach was as fat as his wallet.

After that the children of the “nickel seats” might go out, among which were Martin and Cornelis.

The children of the back seats, the “flea” and “louse” seats, were the last to stand up. Their parents paid 2½ cents or less. But the fleas and the lice, which infected the back seats, were, for that matter, less considerate of these differences, for they regularly paid a visit also to the middle and front seats.

In the hall the children hastily slid into their wooden shoes, while the boys also put on their caps. Because of the nice weather, most of them left their jackets hang until later. The class of Mr. Van Oostveen was also excused. All at once the entire village rang with the pleasant voices of the children. The geese, chickens and cats, which

wandered about in the village, hastily sought refuge.

While Martin pulled on his wooden shoes and reached for his cap among his jostling and cheerful classmates, his eyes attentively watched the door. He was preoccupied with his daily problem: How do I escape Toon? Part of the way Toon Bollebakker and he had to walk the same way. However, Martin hated it when Toon walked with him, for he always boasted of his father’s fortune and impressed upon Martin that Martin’s father was only a small farmer.

However, since Toon sat in the front seat he was always the first one out, so that it was difficult to escape him.

This time things were in Martin’s favor. He heard the husky voice of Toon asking where his wooden shoe could be.

Martin realized that now he had the opportunity to get ahead of his unpleasant companion.

He hurried out of the door and turned to his right into Moleneind St. His wooden shoes clattered loudly on the road. Past Doodweg Ave. he took off his wooden shoes and ran the rest of the way on his socks.

This was certainly not good for his socks, but his mother was far away, and his danger was near!

Martin raced like a greyhound through Moleneind St. with the pleasant thought that that fat boaster could never catch up with him. This occupied his attention so completely that he hardly noticed that he had arrived at a corner. That was his mistake. At that very moment out of the Dieperweg Ave., a peddler was trudging along. His name was Aalt Boor and he was pushing a handcart. He was one of the fish peddlers from Huizen who traveled through the surrounding villages to sell his wares.

Botje—that is what he was commonly called—was in an especially bad humor that day. Yet, up to that moment he had done a good business, for Friday was always his best day, because on that day the Roman Catholics might eat no meat. Besides, today was Good Friday, when his business was at its best. But it was also April 1 and many villagers could not resist the temptation of playing tricks on the not-so-sharp Botje.

He crossed Moleneind St. with an angry jerk of his cart and a face that looked like ten rainy days.

When Martin saw him suddenly appear at the corner of Dieperweg Avenue, he could not slow down quickly enough to avoid colliding with the peddler. With a crash both tumbled to the ground.

Martin fell on unpaved Dieperweg Avenue—it was fortunate for him that it was still unpaved – and his wooden shoes and cap flew through the air.

Aalt Boor was less fortunate. He tried to keep his balance by holding on to his rickety handcart. When that failed he tipped the cart over with him as he fell, and the whole slippery load spilled on top of him. The fish peddler was so shocked that he sat for a while staring with open eyes and a gaping mouth. He had a striking and noticeable likeness to his wares.

Martin was the first to come to his senses. He stood up pale and shaking. A few drops of blood flowed from his nose as a result of the collision. Hastily he went to Botje, who was wrapped in a dangerous silence.

“Excuse me, Botje...er...Boor,” he stuttered. “I’ll help you clean up a moment.” And while his classmates came shouting to the spot, he tried to set the handcart upright.

At that point it seemed as if something snapped in the peddler. Snorting with rage, he got up and gave the boy a ringing slap around his ears so that the poor boy saw the stars and the constellations.

“Look out of your eyes, you clumsy clown!” he shouted, hoarse with rage, “and keep your claws off from my cart!”

Martin decided that he’d better take his departure as soon as he could; his enemy had given in to his anger. Crying in his misery and hurt, he picked up his wooden shoes and cap and trudged away, giving no further thought to the fish peddler.

In the meantime the peddler was surrounded by a troop of noisy schoolboys. First they laughed heartily about the man, but before long many of them felt sorry for him. Finally together they set up the handcart and with a grin of pleasure they took to their legs.

Aalt Boor stood watching all this with suspicion, but let the boys go their way. Zadok Pakkendrager, a Jewish boy, whose nickname was Dokkie, saw the fish peddler secretly brush the fish scales from the seat of his pants.

“Shall I do that for you?” he asked with a straight face. The peddler gave the boy a look of an angry spider, but was wise enough to say nothing.

“You all are thanked,” he grumbled briefly and set his cart in motion. “No thanks,” answered Dokkie hypocritically, and took off his cap. “Give the greetings to the people in Huizen and be careful at the corners.” With a red face the fish peddler crossed over the creek of Rijk Das and disappeared like a beaten dog down Zonen Maanstraat Avenue.

Endnotes

¹ In the present town of Hilversum one can find only a little of the old weaver’s village. Most houses and farms of that time have disappeared and many of the streets have been renamed. On the edge of the square where is the church one can still find: a. The old church tower. The church itself has been replaced by a larger building in 1891. b. The courthouse which has become a municipal information center. c. The large inn, which is now The Court of Holland. Also the old toll house still exists, which stood at the place where the road divided into two roads, one to Baarn and the other to Utrecht. It is now a café. “The Young Count of Buuren (evidently also a hotel, HH) is still in use. The wooden bridge has been replaced by a stone bridge, which still has the old name, “Dogs’ Bridge.” The cemetery, named, “Ponder Your Death,” in which many people from this story lie buried, was closed in 1943 and will soon disappear. (author’s endnote.)

² The author introduces here a main reason why the Secession took place, and, along with that, one of the themes of the book. The apostate State Church had virtually denied the importance of and need for the knowledge of the truth as revealed in the Scriptures. Religion had been reduced to doing good, to “virtue.” Nothing else counted but a virtuous life. Note too that the doctrine of heaven in fact is denied in the verse when it speaks of the reward of a virtuous man as being Paradise on earth. This was being consistently taught in the schools. ❖

Prof. Hanko is professor emeritus of Church History and New Testament in the Protestant Reformed Theological Seminary.

Is the Center of My Life the Church?

by Rev. Marvin Kamps

Have you ever met Harry? He is one of those fellows who is not so very interested in the worship service or various activities of the church. The first thing Harry does after he is ushered to his seat in church, is settle down as comfortably as possible. Then he struggles through a tradition prayer. During congregational singing, Harry mumbles along as best he can. The songs of God's praise don't stir his heart. When the minister leads the congregation in prayer, Harry sleeps. When Christ speaks to his people through the minister, Harry is restlessly watching his watch or he is far off in some distant land to which only sound sleep call bring him. Harry is the first to complain about the long-windedness of the servant of God. Harry wasn't spiritually fed and strengthened because he never listened for the voice of Christ as he spoke through the minister. Harry says to his friends that he doesn't get much out of the sermons either. In societies Harry is a quiet fellow—bored to death really. He hasn't prepared for the society meeting and he doesn't participate in its discussions. You can't discuss the things of the church with Harry because Harry doesn't know much about these things. Harry doesn't read much either you know. But Harry is a most interesting fellow during the week. He plays softball two or three nights a week. He is the real hot shot on the ball diamond. Harry is a real talkative fellow when it comes to sports, cars, girls, or most anything else, but he is man concerning the church and the things of God's kingdom. In the sphere of the church Harry is deaf and dumb.

I pity Harry.

The center of Harry's life is not the church of Christ. It certainly is a most blessed thing, however, when one can say that he finds his delight and joy among the people of God and in worship with them. There are families and individuals who express by their walk that they find their life's purpose solely in the church of Christ. You can tell by their walk among us. Many may say that they find their joy in the church, but does their walk confirm their speech or betray them? There are a few elements of

church life which we should consider in this connection to determine whether or not the center of our life is the church of Christ.

The spiritual names of the child of God are "thirsty one" and "hungering one." Such a one comes to church regularly. But he is not there just to fill his customary place in the pew, he is there with a desire to partake of the bread of life and of the water of life—Christ Jesus himself. He is not there to take a "cat nap," but to feed his soul. Such a one worships God! During the congregational prayer, he prays. He too brings the needs of the congregation in prayer before the throne of God. When he has the opportunity to praise God with his fellow saints in song, he sings making a joyful noise unto God. Maybe he doesn't have a good voice, but he sings anyway because he is conscious of the fact that congregational singing is part of the worship service. Something which some of us seem to forget. Do you sing in church or just mumble along which is dishonoring to God?

Also the people of God desire and seek the communion and fellowship of one another especially as they are one in public confession. They desire one another's fellowship because the truth of God's Word lives in their hearts. They come to young people's societies so that as individuals and society they may study the Scriptures and enjoy an hour of Christian fellowship. Young people's societies are not just another social club, but a society which has the study of God's Word and related matters as its uniting force.

To live along with the church also means that we read the *Beacon Lights* not only but also the *Standard Bearer*. If you do not read the *Standard Bearer*, I would urge you to do so. Of course, it is not the official church paper as some have mistakenly imagined, but it is a source of edification and an opportunity to keep up with developments in other churches. It certainly is sad when the people of God can not because of ignorance of the facts discuss intelligently developments in our own churches and in the church world in general.

When we find our pleasure elsewhere than in the church of Christ it is an occasion for humility and repentance. All too often, our major concern in life is sports, money, recreation, etc.; but those who live with the church, walk with her in all her manifestations, experi-

ence the joy of communion with God and his people.
Marvin Kamps ❖

Reprinted from the August September, 1970 issue of Beacon Lights.

Gem of the Month

Time Spent...

*When the Master calls in that last day
How was my time spent, what will I say?
Am I watching and waiting, looking ahead,
Instructing my children, the Bible daily read?*

*To raise up the children—I must daily prepare,
To answer their question, and for their needs care
Do I study God's word that I may diligently teach,
That when they grow older they may spirituality reach?*

*Where are my priorities, do I strive for my "gain"
Or do I remember I have these children to train?
Time goes by so quickly, the children soon will be grown
Have I instructed them faithfully, the seeds of truth sown?*

*Without constant prayer and grace from above
I could not raise children apart from His love.
The children are a blessing, but are not my own
What a great responsibility to me He has shown*

*As a mother of young children in this evil day
I may remember my calling, This do I pray.
Happiness never will come out of things
But faithfulness to my calling contentment will bring.*

—Cheri Rutgers

Watching Daily At My Gates

by Chester Hunter

April 15 Read John 5:1-9

Once again we have another miracle of our Lord. There is some discussion about the place of this incident in the canon of Scripture. I believe that the Holy Spirit led the church to accept its authenticity for the church of all ages. Notice Jesus's directness in verses 6-8. He asks a question, receives an answer, and performs the miracles. There is no pleading on either the man's part or on Jesus's. Jesus has compassion on the man and heals him. The man hears the voice of Christ and obeys and walks. This is how Jesus heals us from crippling of sin. He does not plead with us. He has compassion and heals us. May we hear his voice and thank him by a walk of sanctification. Sing Psalter 310.

April 16 Read John 5:10-15

This miracle stirs up a firestorm in Jerusalem. Jesus would answer many questions about it, but because his hour was not yet come he would not be taken. The important idea for the man is found in verse 14. There we find that the impotent man was healed not only bodily but spiritually as well. If he had not been made completely whole, it would have been better for him that he lay by the pool for another thirty-eight years. But now when Jesus pronounces him whole he can live a life of thankfulness. We must learn from this. By nature we are no better than that man of whom we know little. For we all have sinned and all have fallen short of the glory of God. Let us seek Jesus who alone is able to make us whole. Let us do this daily and pray daily for such healing. Sing Psalter 140.

April 17 Read John 5:16-23

Notice verse 23. Christ deserves the honor of all men. This is not the testimony of some in the world. Some will say that Jesus is not God. This was the word of a man named Arius. His declaration caused

trouble in the church many years ago. Out of that trouble was written the beautiful Nicene Creed. Read it some time. It can be found in the back of our *Psalter*. Not only is Jesus God, but his work of salvation is the work of God alone. Our salvation is laid out beautifully in the Scriptures. We must believe all of that work and not, as many do today, reject part of it. For, to reject part of it is to reject the Father, and then there is no salvation. Sing Psalter 222:1-3

April 18 Read John 5:24-32

Notice the many truths in this portion of Scripture which testify of that which is to come. Christ by his work on earth assured us of eternal life. That is the life spoken of in verse 25. He continues to tell of the resurrection of the dead. As we throughout our lives lay loved ones to rest in the grave, we do so in hope. We have the assured hope that Christ will raise his people from the dead. That is verse 29. Finally, we see that this is the will of the Father. From all eternity God has elected a church unto himself, ordained salvation through Christ, and will gather these elect to himself to live in heaven forever. What a wonderful promise that is to us! Sing Psalter 33.

April 19 Read John 5:33-40

Notice verse 39. It is one we should remember. Christ told the Jews to search the Scriptures and see that they spoke of him. We, too, should search the Scriptures. We should see how they testify of Christ our Savior. On each page of Holy Writ, we find evidence of the means of our salvation. After we search the Scriptures, then we must not be like the Jews. We must come to Christ daily, for only in him is life eternal. We need to be busy in that practice, knowing in that way we will receive the assurance of our salvation. Sing Psalter 337.

April 20 Read John 5:41-47

Jesus gives to those around him a stern warning. First of all, we see a warning against a behavior so evident today. This is the idea of honor. The world today loves to show honor to various kinds of people. But it is a shallow honor; one which fades as popularity fades. To honor God and his Son is a foreign thought. Witness what is done with the Lord's Day. Secondly, he warns them who say they believe the Bible to put their actions where their words are. Do they really believe the Bible? If they do, shouldn't they walk in those words? What about us? In what do we believe? Is it a shallow belief in some earthly person? Do we show we believe what God has written in his Word? These were hard sayings to the people who heard them. These are words of warning that we must heed today. Sing Psalter 314.

April 21 Read John 6:1-9

When Jesus did miracles, there was always some sign of God's grace toward his people. Miracles were not just a healing or a feeding, but there was always something spiritual about them. Those miracles done on those who were diseased were a picture of us being healed from the ravages of sin upon our spiritual souls. Miracles also show to us God's power. Even Andrew's question helps us to see this. God has power over all in creation today. We see healing where no healing was thought possible. Some would glibly say a miracle took place. But because our God is all-powerful, he brings all things to pass for his glory and the salvation of his people. Sing Psalter 403.

April 22 Read John 6:10-15

The first item of note in this miracle is that Jesus blessed the food. We may wonder why he did this. After all he was Lord of all. It was his by creation. These two facts we read in Psalm 50 and sing in Psalter 137. But yet in his human nature, he looks to his Father and asks a blessing on daily bread. Does this teach us anything? Do we on occasion skip prayer because its too "inconvenient" or "embarrassing"? This should teach us to ask God's blessing on our food each time we sit down to eat. Secondly, we see the reaction of the people to this miracle. They did not see the grace involved. They did not understand that this bread was a picture of Jesus himself—the bread

of life. They were happy their bellies were full, they saw a chance to put work behind them, and so they wanted to make Jesus their King. Jesus's hour was not yet come; therefore, he departed into a mountain to pray to his Father about that hour which awaited him. Sing Psalter 286.

April 23 Read John 6:16-21

"It is I, be not afraid." In other places in Scripture we have these words, "Fear not." What a wonderful group of words! When God speaks these words to us, is there any reason to be afraid? He takes all of our fears from us because he is our Father. Just as an earthly father will calm his son or daughter, so our heavenly Father will calm us. He can do this because he knows all things and brings all things to pass for "good to them that love God." He puts his arms around us with these words and brings us peace through the Comforter who is the Holy Spirit. You will find this phrase many times in the Bible. There is one of those times for any of us no matter in what circumstances we may find ourselves. People of God, "Fear not, be not afraid." Sing Psalter 152.

April 24 Read John 6:22-29

It does not matter to what we are called in this life; we must labor for the meat which does not perish. There is nothing on this earth for which we can labor since all on this earth will perish. If you are a student, you do not study for good grades, a good job, or for some other "good" thing, you must labor for the glory of God. This does not mean that we can be lazy in our callings. This would contradict other parts of Scripture, and Scripture never contradicts itself. People in the workforce do not labor for high pay, promotion, or any other aspect that might go with some occupation. They must labor for the kingdom of heaven. By laboring in this way God will be glorified and we will show thankfulness for the salvation wrought by his Son by his death on the cross. Sing Psalter 396.

April 25 Read John 6:30-40

One of Jesus's "I am's" is found in verse 35. "I am the bread of life." We in America do not think that bread is very important. Oh, some would miss it if it was not around, but many other types of food have taken its place. In the society and culture of those

times bread was important. To be without bread usually meant starvation. So when Jesus tells them that he is the bread of life this had an impact upon them. Do we crave Jesus as the bread of life? Do we see the importance of Bible reading, study, and meditation? Are we hungry for it? That's the comparison here. Let us seek after the bread of life. Let us not let our Bibles gather dust, but rather let us read and study them even as we seek after food. Sing Psalter 287.

April 26 Read John 6:41-51

Let us look at verse 44. What a comfort that is for us! If it were left up to us to go to Jesus, none of us would. We would all find somewhere else to go, or something else to do. Think about when we have opportunities to study God's Word or to have fellowship with those of like faith; we often have many excuses about not being in attendance. The Father draws those whom he has elected to his Son. He brings them to him so that they may enjoy the bread of life. That life is everlasting life in heaven. Thanks be to God for such an unspeakable gift! Sing Psalter 332.

April 27 Read John 6:51-59

In his gospel John used events and teaching of Jesus to show that the crucifixion must come to pass, and that it was the way unto salvation. This passage is no different. As we read verses 51-53 we see this truth. Jesus came into this world for the purpose of dying on the cross in order that his people might be saved. Those who would be his people must believe in that sacrifice. There is no other way to salvation. John also used figures from Jesus's sermons that showed Old Testament pictures of Christ. as we see portrayed by the manna. The Jews of that day should have understood the pictures. Are we any better when we read the Word and see the signs of the end in creation? Thanks be to God for the gift of the crucified Savior, and may he every draw our minds to Christ's return through the signs all around us. Sing Psalter 47

April 28 Read John 6:60-71

Whenever we think of listening to some other gospel, we should remember Peter's words, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Peter, the impetuous one, was known for blurting things out without thinking. This time the words that he spoke were the whole truth. There is no one else to whom we can turn. In

any difficult situation we must learn to "cast our burdens upon the Lord" for "he careth for us." We may be tempted to do otherwise. We may try to rely on our own strength. We may try to rely on the strength of others. The child of God will soon be brought back to Christ. This does not mean we may not use means. We may and we should, but we must remember that those are in his sovereign hands as well. There is no where else to go; let us go to our Father who will not let us go lost. Sing Psalter 150

April 29 Read John 7:1-10

Jesus's own brothers did not believe before he was crucified. We know that at least one believed after his resurrection, as James became a pillar in the church. They were watching his "career," however. They thought he might "go places" and they did not want to be left out. But they, like so many then and so many today, were looking for the wrong kind of a kingdom. They were looking for glory on this earth and that they wanted a part of. What about us today? Are we looking for things above where moth and rust do not corrupt? We have been placed into this world to prepare us for the life to come. Let us walk with our eyes fixed on the goal that awaits us which is not earthy but spiritual and heavenly. Let us eagerly await the kingdom where all glory is given to God our Creator and Father. Sing Psalter 131.

April 30 Read John 7:11-18

Notice verse 12 again. "He is a good man..." This is what many want Jesus to be. Even in the world today this is what man wants of Jesus. They only want a good man. They do not want salvation by faith in a risen Savior. If Jesus is only a good man, then man must do some works for salvation. If Jesus is only a good man, than any of his doctrines which are not popular can be ignored. As I have written before, John's aim in his gospel is to show who Jesus the Savior is, and what the way of salvation is. That way is not found in the doctrine of those who say that Jesus was only a good man. What do we say of Jesus? Sing Psalter 110.

May 1 Read John 7:19-27

Notice verse 24. We fall short here very often. We often enter into judgment against a person, but our standard is faulty. We judge on the basis of looks,

wealth, style, or some other earthly standard. Christ tells us to judge righteously, that is judge according to a righteous standard. That standard is Christ himself who fulfilled the law by his life and death on this earth. In Matthew Christ taught “Judge not that ye be not judged.” Let us be careful in our judging knowing that we will be judged in the last day. Sing Psalter 223.

May 2 Read John 7:28-39

Jesus’s hour had not yet come. He had work to do. As we see in verse 31 many believed. Satan was working furiously to stop him as we see in verse 32. Then Jesus speaks the seemingly cryptic words in verse 33 and 34. We see one of the effects of preaching in verse 35. We see unbelief. True preaching exposes those who wish nothing to do with the Christ. Some will scorn it as we see in that verse. Some will plead ignorance as we see in verse 36. What about us? Are we among those who believe and worship in spirit and in truth? Let us pray for the grace to believe each day and to walk in a manner pleasing to our Lord. Sing Psalter 325

May 3 Read John 7:37-43

Every man thirsts, but yet not everyone knows that he is thirsty. Some are not given that grace, but to us who are given the grace to realize that we thirst there is a fountain prepared for us. What a fountain that is! Just as Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the beginning of his ministry, he will provide for his people the water of life. When we know we thirst, let us not ignore that well. Let us not ignore the means of grace by which we can drink from that well. This is the glorious gospel of grace which is proclaimed each Sunday. In the last few verses of this section we see again the two-fold response to that gospel. What is our response? Sing Psalter 337.

May 4 Read John 7:44-53

The condemnation of the chief priests and Pharisees will be great in the final day. Here we have the testimony of men that heard Christ and the Pharisees called them deceived and not knowing the Scripture. We must be careful not to fall into their error. When we hear the word preached we must not dismiss it as the word of a man. We must go and hear Christ. Secondly we must not fall into Nicodemus’s error. He

was timid. He went by night; he does not persist in his defense of Jesus. We must be willing at anyplace, at anytime, to anyone to defend our Lord. Let us pray daily for the grace to do this knowing that we will receive a blessing from our Savior. Sing Psalter 388.

May 5 Read John 8:1-11

Which of the two parties are we in this incident? Are we the ever condemning Pharisees, or are we the sinning woman in need of forgiveness? The self-righteous Pharisees attempted to trap Jesus in the guise of being offended at a breaking of the law. Jesus listened to their complaint and then reminded them of their ever-present sin. After they left, probably in anger, Jesus spoke wonderful words to the woman, and to all of his people. “Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.” Again I ask us the question, “Which of these two parties are we?” By nature we would be Pharisees; by grace we are not condemned. Let us go throughout our lives and sin no more. Sing Psalter 24.

May 6 Read John 8:12-20

Jesus is the light of the world! This is a light which has no equal. Even the best halogen lights of the day put out a very dim beam when compared with the Christ. But yet that light blinded many who heard him preach. Because they did not have the eyes of faith, they could not see the truths that were so plainly held out before them. What about us? Does the light shine brightly upon our path, or do we block it out through unbelief? Jesus was that true light. Many ignored it in his day; many more ignore it now. Let us pray for the grace to walk in the light as it shines brightly around us. Sing Psalter 73.

May 7 Read John 8:21-29

Notice Jesus’s continued insistence that his work was from the Father. John is continuing to point out Jesus’s divine nature. It was a nature that was necessary to bare the awful wrath of God on account of our sins. This nature was prophesied of Jesus in the Old Testament prophets. The Jews of Jesus day, especially those who were leaders in the church, did not want to believe on that nature. What about us? Who do we want Jesus to be? Do we want him to be our Savior? We had better because there is no other way to salvation. Sing Psalter 14.

May 8 Read John 8:30-41

Once again in these verses we see the two effects of the Word. To some it is the savor of life unto life, and to others it is the savor of death unto death. (2 Cor. 2:16) For those who believe, the truth makes them free. What a glorious thing this is! We become free from sin's slavery. We become free to walk in God's good words that he has ordained for us. The truth does this! Not the lie, not some watered down version of the truth. But the truth that is found in Scripture, revealed unto us by the Spirit through grace. May we ever enjoy that truth now and in the world to come. Sing Psalter 338.

May 9 Read John 8:42-59

Notice the importance of verse 51. There are many in this world who do not believe in a life after death. Or if they do, it is dependent on how they have lived on this world. Keeping Jesus's sayings is a necessity. We need to read the truth, know the truth, learn the truth, love the truth, and above all live the truth. By doing those things we will have everlasting life. Let us seek that life in a life of obedience to our God. Sing Psalter 227.

May 10 Read John 9:1-7

Notice the end of verse 3. "...That the works of God should be made manifest in him." There are times in which we wonder why. It does not have to be sickness or death. It may be some other circumstances in our lives. We sometimes want to know why something is happening. We look for some reason in our lives. Even though sometimes it may be because of something we have done, the most comforting and instructive answer is so "...That the works of God should be made manifest in him." Is this our knowledge? Is this our belief? Is this our comfort? If this is our confession, we will be comforted by the words of Paul that "all things work together for good to them that love God." May God be glorified in us and in all that happens to us. Sing Psalter 405.

May 11 Read John 9:8-17

In healing this blind man, Jesus opened a hornet's nest among the rulers of the Jews. An obvious miracle is being discredited in any way possible. The man is forced to repeat his story over and over to these rulers. They attempt to find holes in it. They say that because

the miracle was done on the Sabbath that Jesus must be a sinner. The blind man is not easily cowed as we shall see as we continue in the passage. What about us? Do we believe in Jesus as the one who has healed us from spiritual blindness by dying on the cross? Are we content with this way of salvation or do we try to invent some other way more pleasing to our natures? The watchword of the reformation must still live in us. Salvation by faith alone! Sing Psalter 251.

May 12 Read John 9:18-23

The Jews in their obstinate unbelief now try to dissuade the man's parents that it was Jesus who had healed their son. We do not know of the parents' faith. But we see that if there was any, it was weak. They first try to just say that their son who was blind now sees. The reason that they say this is found in verse 22. They were afraid of an evil edict that if you confessed that Jesus was God you would be removed from the church. They then try to deflect the questions back to their son. What about us? How strong is our faith? Will we take a stand for the name of Jesus? Will we do it even if it means "loss" of our place in a church? What about loss of our lives, our families? Are we ready and willing to take up our crosses and follow Jesus even unto death? Let us pray for the grace to do just that. Sing Psalter 228.

May 13 Read John 9:24-34

We see here another attempt by the Jews to discredit Jesus as the Son of God. They begin to badger the man who was healed. They want him to disavow that Jesus did the miracle. The man did not bow to their attempt. Then in verse 33 he makes a wonderful statement about Jesus. By faith he says that Jesus had to be from God. This makes them furious. Would we stand in the face of such opposition? Would we confess our Lord even if it was the unpopular thing to do. By God's grace we would. Let us pray daily for such grace. Sing Psalter 123.

May 14 Read John 9:35-41

The incident concerning the man born blind ends with a confession of faith. As Jesus stated in the beginning, this man was born blind so that God could receive the glory. And that was so. The only way that this man could confess Christ was through the glorious gospel of grace. He and we cannot believe by our

works or by any keeping of the law. We believe by faith that comes through grace. This grace is the gift of God to those for whom Christ came into the world. May we daily give thanks for this gift and may God be glorified in our healing. Sing Psalter 30.

May 15 Read John 10:1-6

Jesus begins a series of comparisons that were familiar to the Jews. The Jews were known for sheep herding. So when they heard this discourse, they knew of what Christ was speaking. He is doing two things here. First of all, he is establishing himself as the true shepherd. Secondly, he is identifying the present rulers as false shepherds. This is evident in these first few verses. In verse 6 we see their stubbornness. They did not want to see themselves as false shepherds. They knew what the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel had said about such shepherds. Christ's sheep would follow him because he made himself known unto them. He did this by a powerful word. Do we know the voice of Jesus? Do we want to hear it? Sing Psalter 219.

May 16 Read John 10:7-15

Throughout the book of John, John shows to the church who Jesus is and what is his work. Here in these verses we have two examples. John captures Jesus's words as he speaks "I am..." First of all we see that Jesus is the door. He is the door that is the way to salvation. One of the major themes of the gospel of John is the work of Christ in salvation. It is only through him that his people enter heaven. As a door there are two functions. The first is to let those into salvation who are appointed for it. The second is to bar those who are not his sheep. Both of those functions make it evident that salvation is by grace and not by any work of man. Sing Psalter 398.

May 17 Read John 10:10-15

Jesus continues his discourse on his work comparing it to that of a shepherd. He is the good shepherd. He does not do his work haphazardly or lackadaisically. He does his work, and he carries it out faithfully even to the point of dying for us. He knows us, and in that knowledge he loves us. What a comfort for us to know that Jesus is our shepherd! Like the Psalmist of old, our children and we can confidently confess,

"Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want..." Sing Psalter 53.

May 18 Read John 10:16-21

The words of verse 16 bring to us great comfort. We are among those other sheep of which Christ speaks. We, by grace, hear his voice, are brought into the fold, and follow the true Shepherd. This happens because Christ went to the cross and paid for our sins with his life. He did that because of the love of the Father towards us. How do we treat our Savior? Do we call him a devil, or do we walk in the right path following the good guidance of our Shepherd? As we walk day by day let us give thanks for that guidance. Let us eagerly await the day when we will "dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Sing Psalter 221.

May 19 Read John 10:22-30

Perseverance or preservation of the saints is the fifth petal of TULIP, the Reformed acronym that we love. Of that preservation is what Jesus assures us in verse 28. As his sheep we have the blessed assurance that he will never let us go. Nothing on this earth or out of this earth can take us away from our blessed Savior. This is of utmost comfort to the child of God. The aged saint need not fear death. The new parents need not fear death because Christ has conquered death and made us his own forever. Let us follow the true shepherd all the days of our lives. Sing Psalter 55.

May 20 Read John 10:31-40

John again emphasizes the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. The Jews of Jesus's day wish to discredit him on that fact. Is it any different today? Do people of the world want Jesus to be the true Son of God? Or do they just want him to be a good man whose example is worthy of their following? What about us? Who do we say that Jesus is? Is he the Son of God? Is he God? If we cannot confess that Jesus is the Son of God and God himself, he will not confess us to the Father. If he does not confess us to the Father, we have no eternal life or any hope of reaching eternal life. Then, we are of all men most miserable. Let us walk in his light that we might see light. Sing Psalter 72.

I Remember Herman Hoeksema: Personal Remembrances of a Great Man (7)

by Prof. David J. Engelsma

Magnanimity

During the three years of my close contact with the Rev. Prof. Herman Hoeksema in the Protestant Reformed Seminary, I found him to be unfailingly magnanimous.

This will surprise those whose judgment of the man has been formed by the slanders of his theological and ecclesiastical foes.

It may also surprise those who conclude from Hoeksema's uncompromising defense of the gospel of grace, and sharp condemnation of theologians who deviated from it, that personally Herman Hoeksema was narrow, determined to have his own way, sensitive to any slight of, or disagreement with, himself, and ready to strike out at those who criticized him.

Magnanimity is a lovely Christian perfection.

Literally, the English word, derived from the Latin, means 'largeness of soul.' It is the grace, not only of openness to disagreement with oneself (which is not the same as tolerance of disagreement with the word of God), but also of bearing insult and abuse patiently, so that one neither reacts in anger to contradiction, nor retaliates for injury, nor becomes embittered by wrong done to himself.

The magnanimous man graciously puts up with those who hurt him.

The opposite is pettiness; sensitivity to every slight; a brooking no disagreement; and vindictiveness—smallness of soul.

The Greek word in the New Testament that refers to magnanimity is usually translated by the Authorized Version as "longsuffering." Literally, the Greek word means 'long of spirit.' This is the word translated "suffereth long" in I Corinthians 13:4: "Charity suffereth long." Love in one who has the Spirit of Christ expresses itself by graciously and patiently putting up with the neighbor who injures him, especially the neighbor in the church.

The virtue of magnanimity is especially necessary in a minister. The minister is exposed, more than any other, to personal criticism, slight, and abuse—real injury.

Weakened, like every other human, by a sinful nature, the minister is tempted to assert himself, to strike back, and to become bitter. But the result of this pettiness, this smallness of soul and shortness of spirit, would be senseless and profitless strife in the church, a weakening of his teaching ministry, and spiritual harm to himself (bitterness corrodes the Spirit's work of grace), to say nothing of interference with the building of the kingdom of Christ.

With good reason, therefore, Paul bound upon young Pastor Timothy (and the Holy Spirit binds upon every minister, old as well as young), with solemn charge ("before God and the Lord Jesus Christ"), that he "exhort with all longsuffering" (II Tim. 4:2).

I saw something of the large soul of Herman Hoeksema in his response, on one occasion, to the reaction of Richard Newhouse (yes, the little Dutchman of Hope figures in our story once again) to his (Hoeksema's) "peccavi."

I explain.

In the February 15, 1960 issue of the *Standard Bearer*, Hoeksema introduced his editorial with the information that the editorial would consist largely of his publishing a protest by the "Orthodox Protestant Reformed Church" (the consistory of the schismatic "First Orthodox Protestant Reformed Church" of Grand Rapids, Michigan, the president of which was the Rev. Hubert De Wolf) to their synod. (The content of the protest was sad. It indicated that the consistory was unhappy with the doctrinal compromise that their synod was making in order to be received back into the Christian Reformed Church. But this is another story.)

At the end of his brief introduction to the publishing of the protest, Editor Hoeksema wrote, "Here, then, follows the protest."

What actually followed, however, on the pages of the February 15, 1960 *Standard Bearer* was not the protest at all.

Rather, there appeared a catechism of sorts, treating the reorganization of Second Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids in the turbulent days of the schism in the Protestant Reformed Churches of the 1950s and various and sundry aspects of Reformed church polity.

Obviously, the kind of printing error had been made that keeps editors awake at night in fear of its happening and that embarrasses them when it occurs.

Aggravating the mistake, and compounding the confusion, were that Hoeksema appended remarks at the end of what ought to have been, and was advertised as being, a protest (but was not) that applied to the non-existent protest, but not at all to the very real catechism. His editorial concluded, “The reader will agree with me that the above [protest] is a thoroughly Protestant Reformed document.”

An explanation of the glaring mistake would be necessary.

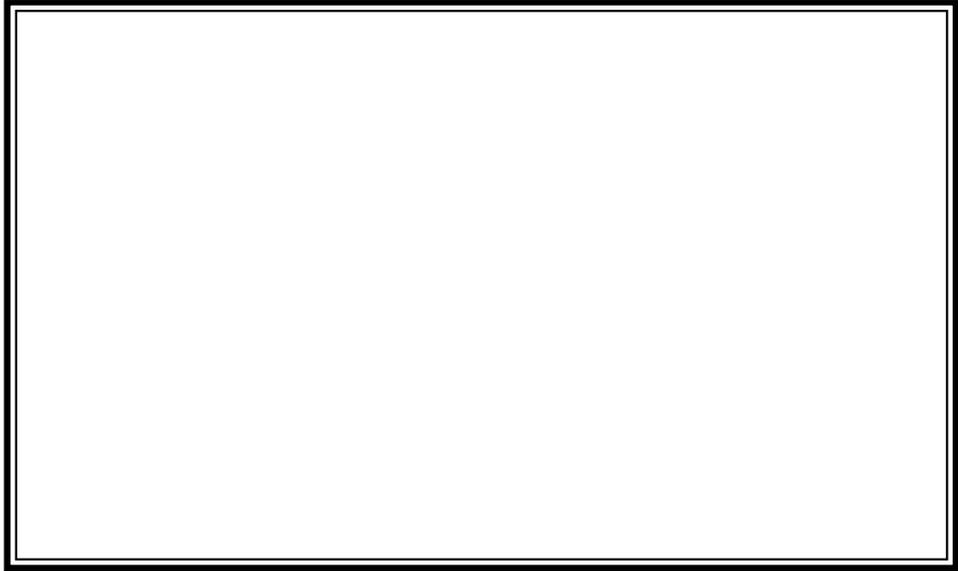
The explanation was forthcoming in the next issue of the *Standard Bearer* (March 1, 1960). It read as follows:

All our readers, no doubt, will by this time have wondered about my editorial in the Feb. 15 issue of our paper. The explanation is that, instead of the protest I meant to publish, something else appeared and the protest was left out. Hence I now publish the entire editorial as I meant to write it. You ask who is to blame for this ridiculous error. Let us say: the undersigned, although he still cannot understand how it could possibly have taken place. Just remember, dear reader, that nihil humanum alienum est mihi. And I say peccavi. Perhaps you cannot figure this out either. Then you better ask someone that knows Latin.

Finally, the elusive protest did, in fact, appear. “Peccavi”—Latin for ‘I have erred.’
Hoeksema’s “peccavi.”

There would be one “dear reader” who would not so easily be placated by Hoeksema’s “peccavi.”

At that time, still in college, I worked for a farmer in the Riverbend area, who also employed Richard Newhouse, the venerable elder of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in what is now Walker, Michigan. Newhouse, a



Richard Newhouse abroad (in Loveland, Colorado) with friends in 1966.
FROM THE ARCHIVES OF DAVID J. ENGELSMAN

widower, lived in a trailer on the farm, in the shade of a large apple tree. Often, of an early evening, after milking, I would walk over to the trailer, to visit with Mr. Newhouse, whose company and conversation I greatly enjoyed.

One evening, soon after March 1, 1960, I discovered an agitated Dutchman. Newhouse sat on a raised platform (otherwise the short man could not see out of the windows of his trailer), seated in his big, overstuffed chair (very much like a little lord on his large throne), waving the latest issue of the *Standard Bearer* (next to the Bible his favorite and most authoritative reading).

There was no polite greeting, no question about the cows, no inquiry after my studies.

Rather, an abrupt, “Wat is dit? Wat is dit?”

“Peccaaavi!” “Peccaaavi!” “Peccaaavi!” (Thus he grossly mispronounced the Latin.)

With some academic pride, I fear, I could explain to him that “peccavi” (I took pains to correct his pronunciation by my own careful enunciation—a completely wasted effort) was Latin for “I have erred,” or, “I have made a mistake.”

If I expected some praise for, or even recognition of, my knowledge of a foreign language, I would quickly be disabused of the notion.

Newhouse paused for a moment to digest the information, and exclaimed, “Peccaaavi! Peccaaavi! It took him forty years to admit he made a mistake, and then he did it in a language nobody can understand.”

Young and naïve, I filed this bon mot for specific, future use. The near future.

In the fall of the same year, I began my seminary studies with Prof. Herman Hoeksema. Not long after the start of the school-year, during coffee break in the kitchen of the old First Church at the corner of Fuller and Franklin, as Hoeksema was lighting his massive pipe, pleurably filling his lungs (and the room) with clouds of smoke, I asked him, casually, "Do you know Richard Newhouse?"

"Do I know Richard Newhouse?" he responded. "I know Richard Newhouse."

Whereupon I related, with gusto, the tale of Newhouse's reaction to my professor's "peccavi," concluding with an enthusiastic, full quotation of Newhouse's "it took him forty years to admit that he made a mistake," etc.

As I reflect today on my temerity, there comes to mind the proverb, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

Of course, Hoeksema did know Newhouse—a wholehearted, lifelong supporter and friend. But even then...

And Hoeksema did not know me, except as a fledgling seminarian, and apparently cheeky.

A man with a small soul would have put me in my place, and perhaps Richard Newhouse too, with a withering look or a cutting remark, and likely both.

Hoeksema did no such thing.

He threw his head back and roared with laughter, hard and long.

"You say hello to Newhouse for me. And you tell him that he ought to learn some Latin" (which I did).

There was no defensiveness, no sensitivity to what could easily have been taken as an insult, no involuntary anger, no striking back against a perceived slight (or against the "slighters"), no putting of lesser folk in their place, not even a struggle to gain his composure.

Magnanimity!

In the remark by Newhouse, to which Hoeksema responded with magnanimity, there was more than meets the eye.

That "more" brings to light another aspect of Hoeksema's greatness. ❖

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Book Review

Landverhuizers or The Immigrants

reviewed by John Huizenga

Landverhuizers or The Immigrants by Pieter J. Risseeuw. \$25, \$4 shipping and handling. Published 2008. 384 pages. Soft color cover. A historical novel, originally published as a trilogy, of Dutch immigration of the mid-nineteenth century. This English translation is made available for the first time by permission of the original publisher and supported by Netherland-America Foundation of New York. Originally published in Dutch in 1947, the novel discusses the trials and tribulations of immigration and the establishment of the Dutch churches and colonies in Iowa and Michigan. <http://schrc.org/store.htm>

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If a picture is worth a thousand words, this book paints a very realistic picture of our cherished history that is worth ten good history lectures. An excellent book that is as enjoyable to read as it is informative. You will not finish this book without gaining a deeper appreciation for our heritage and a greater desire to hang on to what we have. *Landverhuizers or The Immigrants* by Pieter J. Risseeuw is the product of extensive collection and research into original letters and documents of those who left the Netherlands to escape the religious persecution of the Dutch Reformed Church as well as the growing problems of poverty. The author does an excellent job of tying a great deal of original letters, sermons, etc. together into a gripping story of the young people in their struggles with their faith, relationships, life and death.

I will not spoil the plot of the story which largely

follows the hearts of two lovers, but wish to included some rather lengthy excerpts from the book to give some idea of the historical content of the book which begins in Arnhem Netherlands.

**Excerpts from
Landverhuizers: The first
night on the shore of lake
Michigan, pp 92-92**

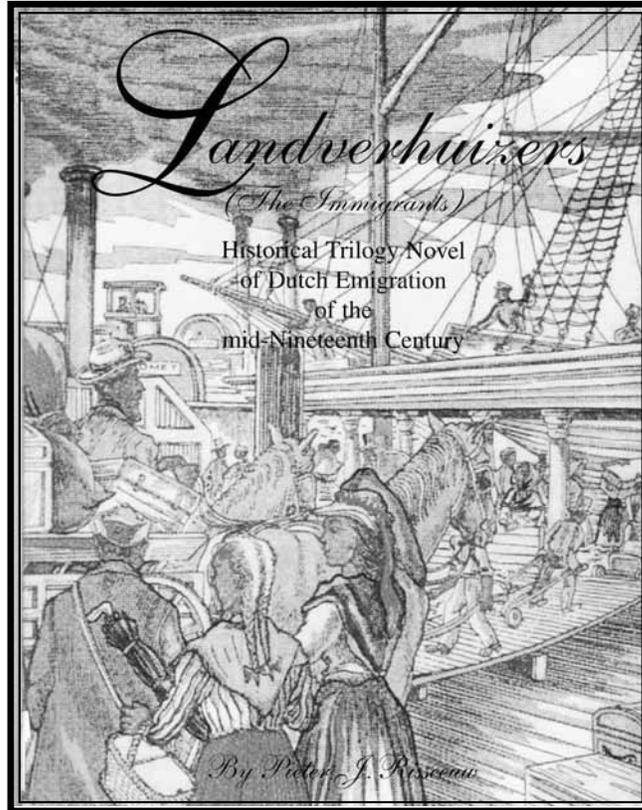
“I will always be afraid here.” Maria said, shivering. “Let’s go to sleep and then we will awaken in Amsterdam,” Anna said as she heaved a deep sigh. Before she realized it she had fallen asleep.

The youngsters tensely awaited the first streaks of dawn, unable to sleep. “What a lot of strange noises I hear,” Jacob Keppel whispered. “That’s the rustling of the pines and the screeching of the night owls—the woods are full of life, even at night,” Arjaan said as he heaped some more fuel on the fire.

In spite of herself, Janna fell asleep and dawn was already breaking when she opened her eyes and looked around in wonderment. At the still smoldering fire sat the men and women and children, wrapped in blankets, leaning against each other. Everywhere, as far as the eye could see were trees, trees and more trees with here and there a white cloth hanging from a branch.

One by one they got up and stretched their stiffened limbs. Between the trees they could now see the temporary shelters which had been constructed of branches, some of them with sheets in front of the openings. As it became lighter they saw more of them, some of them built against the trunks of trees. They also saw a few half-completed log houses. Felled trees were lying all over. In the distance they saw a couple of barracks. Now some of the inhabitants stuck their heads through the openings of their shelters, their sleeping caps still on their heads.

Shortly they began emerging from their makeshift shelters, walking slowly towards the travelers, talking in every conceivable Dutch dialect. The Van der Veens couldn’t even understand them since no one talked the language of the Amsterdammers. Anna thought, “What



strange clothes these people are wearing—not at all what one would expect to see in a city!” She concluded that this was merely some sort of a landing place. Her husband was talking to one of the men who had crawled out of his leafy tent.

“Jacob! Jacob!” called Anna. Slowly he turned his head but, when he made no move to do her bidding, she arose stiffly and walked toward him. “Jacob,” she said, again, in a tone which admitted no argument, “I want you to go to the city immediately and rent a good house, preferably one near a running brook.”

The man with whom Jacob had been talking looked at her in amazement and, without saying a word, crawled

into his shelter to tell his wife what he had just heard.

Van der Meulen and his wife made their way to Van Raalte’s home. When they met they shook hands and the women embraced, weeping. Although the day had hardly begun there was already a row of men seated on the felled trees in front of Van Raalte’s home, waiting to see him.

Van der Meulen had not told his wife that the Zee-landers, who had already been here a month, were still badly disorganized and did little more than grumble and complain. Since there was not enough room in the original settlement, they were still debating where they should go to settle. Arjaan and Willem Keppel had walked to one of the large barracks, but when they looked inside, saw nothing but utter confusion among the groups of men, women and children.

The morning air was cool. The giants of the forest spread their branches to the sky and the sun could not penetrate through the heavy foliage. The damp, cool air tickled Arjaan’s nostrils.

He had finally realized his ambition and here he was in the colony! He wasn’t disappointed—it was plainly evident that everything was still in the initial stages of development. A new life was about to begin for him—this was a new country and he was going to be a part of it—he could start at the beginning with the others! Nevertheless,

there was one keen disappointment. No one had heard or seen anything of Uncle Lips and his family or Sara Weyer. Apparently they had gone with Scholte to Iowa.

About eleven o'clock Jacob Van der Veen, walking slowly, went back to his wife. He walked slowly because no one hurried here—the struggles with the forest had already decreased the tempo. “What did you find out?” she asked, tensely, “What did Van Raalte say? Have you been to the city and did you find a house?”

Jacob looked at her. He hardly had time to digest all that Van Raalte, without mincing words, had quickly told him. Looking Anna squarely in the eye, he said very slowly and emphatically: “Anna, this IS the city!”

Early church services in Holland Michigan & the idea of a conditional covenant, p. 106

The services, lacking a church building, were held in the clearing in front of Van Raalte's home, under the blue sky. When they arrived there was already a large crowd and the Keppels were amazed that there were so many people in the colony. It was hard to understand where they all came from—it seemed as if they had popped out of the ground.

Dominie Van Raalte and the elders came out of the Van Raalte home. He used a large, low stump as his pulpit—his wife sat near him with little Christine in her cradle. As Van Raalte pronounced the blessing the wind rustled in the tree tops. In these same woods where they had pitted their puny strength against the giants of the forest during the past week, they were now assembled to worship God. For most of the people in the colony Sundays were the high points in their lives.

Van Raalte prayed. The men stood up and all hearts and minds were joined in a spirit of humility, in confession of their sins and gratitude for the blessing they had been privileged to enjoy. Van Raalte prayed earnestly as he laid all his and his people's troubles before God, prayed for the newcomers, the many who were ill and for those who had stayed in the fatherland.

The subject of his sermon lifted men's minds from thoughts of earthly cares to concern for their spiritual condition. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh within you, both

to will and to do, according to His good pleasure,” was the text he had chosen.

Arjaan listened carefully because so much was vague to him. He had always been taught to believe that conversion was entirely an act of God. But now Van Raalte was telling him and the others, just as he had done in Arnhem, that it also was up to the individual. The covenant of grace contained both a promise and a demand—a demand that man become converted and a promise that God would care for his beloved people.

The covenant of grace contained both a promise and a demand—a demand that man become converted and a promise that God would care for his beloved people.

A summer of fever and death, p. 122

Janna and Anna Van der Veen bought some meat and hurried home but Maria Bertro didn't get to eat the soup they hurriedly prepared. Death had claimed her and the women looked on in shocked amazement when Bertro said, “Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast delivered her.” He hurried away to the home of Slag, the carpenter, to get a coffin.

The women stood beside Maria. Not much of her former beauty remained and Anna's lips began to quiver. “Oh, you poor girl...you poor girl...” she kept mumbling, “to think that were we too late to bring you a little soup. What a terrible life you had with such a scoundrel as a husband...” She raised her angry eyes and added, “But he'll get his just deserts, Maria, as sure as there's a God in heaven!”

Bertro came back empty handed. The lumber for coffins was all gone and the men were too weak to go to Allegan for more. “Let the dead bury their dead,” he grumbled. Just what was meant he didn't know, but he was at his wit's end. He had the appearance of a living skeleton with



Van Raalte

his hollowed cheeks and unshaven face. With an ashen pallor of weariness on his features he stood viewing the corpse of his wife. In spite of her present appearance, he remembered the young body which had belonged to him—he remembered her beauty and embraces and then began to weep like a child.

Jacob Van der Veen entered. “Come Bertro, this can’t go on...” he said, “Do you have a sheet?” With no coffins available, this method of burial was becoming common. Together they sewed Maria’s body in a sheet and then went into the woods to find a suitable place for burial. They began digging and Van der Veen chopped through the roots, returning to the cabin after they had dug the shallow grave.

Willem didn’t offer to help. He was completely apathetic and had acquired a deep aversion to the hardships and the illnesses which they had to endure. He heard Bertro and Jacob stumbling around in the loft but it barely penetrated his consciousness. Maria’s body was carried down the steep steps with difficulty and it was worse than Jacob had thought it would be. He felt like a criminal removing the evidence of his crime and the terrible stench nauseated him.

Bertro was of very little help. In the careful and reverent way Jacob carried the body he tried to atone, in a measure, for the uncivilized burial of this woman who had loved life intensely and who had, in this wilderness, lain with open eyes dreaming of her earlier years in Amsterdam.

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Before placing her in the grave, Jacob went down and carefully smoothed the uneven place. Bertro couldn’t help feeling a certain amount of awe for the manners of this worldling.

More on the trials and hardships of Holland, p. 126

There was less and less life in the colony. A period of terrific heat was followed by rains and Janna, who dragged herself about between spells of fever, hardly knew which was worse—the humid, oppressive heat with a constant yearning for a drink of cool clear water, or the steady rains which left everything damp and chilly and cast a melancholy gloom over everything.

At the last church services she had noticed how thin and emaciated the people were, their clothing hanging on their bodies like loose sacks and every heart filled with a dull lethargy. News of anyone dying hardly created any comment any more. It seemed as if everyone had reconciled himself to the fact that this was the end for all.

They had begun the colonization project with abundant faith but now it appeared that their reckless undertaking was to come to a tragic end.

They had begun the colonization project with abundant faith but now it appeared that their reckless undertaking was to come to a tragic end. However, they were more concerned about whether they were prepared to meet their God than about anything else. Fear filled every heart concerning the sins which stood between them and God and one heard it expressed in every cabin and shack.

Louise Arnaud said, “Israel also had trials and hardships when they were led out of Egypt and we are richer than Israel. We have the Lord Jesus Christ.” This tall woman, dressed in her black jacket and white bonnet, hadn’t lost her indomitable courage. She was fiery and spoke grimly and plainly as she went through the colony nursing the ill.

Silently she watched the deserters. Not a day passed that some colonists did not leave for the other side of Lake Michigan—to Wisconsin or Chicago—away from the terrible forest and swamps where fevers raged and death threatened, spurred on by the irresistible instinct of self-preservation. Get away! Over the big lake to Wisconsin where the sun shone on the prairies.

Van Raalte, p. 128

Stubbornly he fought the forces which were trying to pull him down; the doubts which plagued him about the ultimate success of the colony—the picture of Scholte’s face with an expression of irony and self-satisfaction saying ‘I told you so’ as he sat high and dry on the Iowa Prairie.

When he went outside at ten o’clock, only a handful of people had showed up for services and only two elders were present.

“Let us begin the services.” Van Raalte said.

They sang a psalm but the usual volume and enthusiasm were lacking. Christien listened at the open window. She knew how much Albert was suffering but had been afraid to say anything—he was so touchy and quick-tempered. She listened to his clear voice as he read the Scriptures and then to his prayer. His prayer was earnest and pleading. All of the misery he had seen during the past weeks, the pressing needs of the sick, the spiritual needs of the colony, were laid before God’s throne.

Communion of the saints, p. 150

“Probably it’s a good thing we have had adversities,” Van der Meulen said, “Have you noticed how interested people are in their spiritual welfare?”

Of all the news which was received in the colony, the most shocking had been the report of the sinking of the Phoenix on Lake Michigan on Sunday, November 21st, with one hundred seventy-five Hollanders on board of whom one hundred twenty-seven were drowned. The few survivors had lost all their possessions and the city of Sheboygan had taken care of them.

“The repercussions of this tragedy will be felt most in the Netherlands,” Van Raalte said worriedly. All these adversities were enough to test one’s faith and again the inevitable question of ‘why’ popped up in his mind.

Thanks to Van Raalte’s urging, most of the colonists had completed their log cabins before the winter set in. But the first winter was rather mild and, even when the snows came, it still didn’t get very cold.

The church at Holland was almost completed. Van der Veen had provided a couple of large stoves. Benches were rough hewn affairs—there was hardly enough roof to keep dry and everyone was so taken up with his own problems that Van Raalte had difficulty in keeping the men working on its completion. He had noticed, a little jealously, that the church of the Zeelanders was better than theirs.

Many Americans had predicted that the colonists would never be able to stick it out but those who had stayed alive now felt bound together with closer ties, even if they lacked practically everything.

In his sermons he constantly stressed the necessity for communion of saints. No one rich and no one poor—that was his philosophy and he believed all should work for the common good. He had the love and respect of the believers who were his followers. Many Americans had predicted that the colonists would never be able to stick it out but those who had stayed alive now felt bound together with closer ties, even if they lacked practically everything. They had a sense of responsibility toward each other and shared their meager supplies. One had some salt pork, another some peas and still another might have some flour or coffee. Corn was the only item that was plentiful.

Doctrinal controversy, p. 156

Kneitijzer enjoyed spending his evenings at the Arnaud’s, usually managing to steer the conversation into religious channels. He was inclined to be critical of both Van Raalte and Scholte, saying that Scholte was an ecclesiastical freebooter and that Van Raalte wasn’t critical enough of the religious heresies of the day nor was the catechetical instruction given the youngsters satisfactory.

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Progress in Holland, p. 172

Daylight lingered on this evening in June and the men decided to take a walk through the colony. Despite all the sickness and adversity of the past year, amazing progress

had been made. They looked at Willem's clearing and the crops which had been planted between the stumps.

"Just look at the lush growth of those potatoes," said Willem "and how fine the corn, wheat and beans look. From the looks of the crops there won't be a shortage of food in the colony this winter. I even have a couple of pigs and hope to own a cow next year."

There were more than twenty houses built along Eighth Street and the straight lines of the street were plainly visible. Last year it had all been dense forest.

Joining with the Dutch Reformed Church of America, p. 193

On the morning of the 4th of June, 1849 the delegates met at the home of Van Raalte—the Holland Classis had come to meet the representative of the Dutch Reformed Church of America.

Van der Meulen and his elders, Van Hees and Van de Luyster; Ypma and his Friesians; Bolks from Overijssel; Kolvoort from Groningen; the men from Graafschap—all were present, dressed in their best black suits and silken caps.

One by one they shook Wyckoff's hand and he remembered many of them as having stopped in Albany to meet him. "I want to see all your villages and your homes and farms," he said, making a broad sweep with his arms. They had hoped he would.

He was soon busily engaged in conversation with Bolks. He had heard that Bolks and his people had stayed in Syracuse for a while.

"That's right," Bolks replied, "We left the Netherlands in August '47 but we heard bad reports about the Michigan colony and decided to spend the winter in Syracuse where our people found work. I was called as pastor to Graafschap so we decided to go there. It is just a year ago that we landed at the mouth of Black Lake. We couldn't get together with the people of Graafschap so we decided to settle by ourselves and bought land nine miles southeast of Holland in Allegan County. There was good soil and we paid an average of two dollars per acre. Each one got forty acres and an acre of land in the village."

Van Raalte now called the meeting to order. He offered a short but earnest prayer and then addressed his remarks to Wyckoff who, in spite of his advanced age, had braved the rigors of the trip to visit them, expressing his appreciation of the trouble Wyckoff had gone to in helping them as travelers in a strange land.

They all sat down and Wyckoff looked over his papers with a dignity befitting a representative of the Dutch Reformed Church which had been in existence

in America for more than two centuries.

He spoke Dutch slowly and carefully. As a descendant of pioneers of the 17th century he felt a strong attachment to these people, but he now began to discuss the purpose for which this meeting had been called. They had come together to make a decision which would be of far-reaching importance to themselves and succeeding generations.

Wyckoff asked, "Which confession and which form of church government is followed by the churches which have left the Netherlands to come to Michigan and how far have they developed?"

Van Raalte answered, "We follow the confession of faith as drawn up by Guido de Bres, the five articles against the Armenians, the church government and order as stipulated in 1618-19—by the Synod of Dordt, and the Heidelberg Catechism. As far as development is concerned, there are representatives of six organized congregations present here.

There are also some small groups in Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo and neighboring villages, These are served by the four preachers who are present here but, because of the great distances, the work is strenuous. The consistories meet as a Classis twice a year and the ministers get together four times a year for discussion of mutual problems."

Wyckoff took notes as Van Raalte spoke and then, without any beating about the bush, asked the all-important second question.

"Do your churches wish to unite with the Dutch Reformed Church of America?" Van Raalte looked at his colleagues. They nodded that he should answer as they felt that that was his prerogative. General discussion would follow anyway. Van Raalte fully realized the gravity of the moment but spoke from the deepest convictions of his heart.

We also consider it abominable to say, 'I am holier than thou.' For that reason we seek a union with God's people, wherever they may be found, if they know and confess the way to salvation.

“We feel,” he said, “a very great need for the communion of saints and we all hate sectarianism. The eye cannot say to the hand nor the hand to the eye, ‘I have no need of you. We also consider it abominable to say, ‘I am holier than thou.’ For that reason we seek a union with God’s people, wherever they may be found, if they know and confess the way to salvation. But we prefer to unite with those churches who have the same confession of the same liturgy and the same form of government as our own and which stand ready at all times to defend God’s truths against heresy. We have never considered ourselves as anything but a part of the Dutch Reformed Church of America and wish to send our representatives to its meetings...”

On a trip from Pella to Waupun, Wisconsin, p. 209

A week later they boarded a steamer at Keokuk. Uncle Lips was wearing his best black suit and Sara was dressed in a green checked dress with a dark jacket and also wearing her bonnet. She attracted a lot of attention and was sorry she had worn her bonnet — all the American women went bareheaded.

What crowds of people! This was America where people were always on the move, never satisfied to remain firmly anchored in one spot, always ready to try their luck elsewhere. Sara enjoyed the sight of the colorful costumes of the various nationalities which were to be seen at any river port. Thousands from all nations were flocking to America.

At every opportunity, Uncle Lips would contact Hollanders. There was hardly a boat on any of the larger rivers of America which didn’t have one or more aboard. He talked to some who had been in Illinois and Wisconsin. Unfavorable reports about Van Raalte’s colony were still making the rounds and most agreed that Wisconsin, partly prairie and partly wooded, offered better opportunities than Michigan.

**It seemed to Sara that they
had traveled for months
before they finally arrived
at Waupun...**

The next day after their arrival in Keokuk, Uncle Lips met a man who knew Sleyster and who was also on his way to Wisconsin. He agreed to help them. It seemed to Sara that they had traveled for months before they finally

arrived at Waupun and saw Sleyster’s home. “How quiet it is here” she thought. The only audible sound was the murmuring of a small brook. Then she heard a woman’s voice. It was Johanna, singing one of the familiar Dutch psalms.

Slowly they climbed the hill to the house, already surrounded by trees. On all sides were bare acres—the grain already harvested.

Roelof Sleyster looked out of the window and saw the guests coming. “Looks like we have visitors,” he said. Johanna, who had been tending the baby, looked over his shoulder to see who it might be. “I believe I recognize them,” said Roelof, getting excited. “So do I,” said Johanna, as she quickly put down the baby and followed Roelof outside. “What an unexpected surprise!” Roelof said as they all shook hands. Talking excitedly, they went inside.

Doctrinal controversy in Holland, p. 237

The articles had engendered so much friction that the atmosphere in the ‘City’ of Holland was unbearable and for that reason Van Raalte felt that a couple of weeks in other surroundings would do him good.

With Van Raalte gone, the consistory found itself facing quite a problem but they decided to force the issue while Van Raalte was gone. The controversy had been going on since February and now it was May. No one knew who was responsible for the anonymous articles and Doesburg refused to tell. The elders, as overseers of the whole community, sided with Van Raalte because they felt that their authority was being badly undermined by the scurrilous articles. So they summoned the preachers Bolks and Ypma from the neighboring villages of Overijssel and Vriesland.

These men immediately called on Doesburg, hoping to achieve results by using a little diplomacy. They realized that Van Raalte was sometimes too autocratic even though he was strictly honorable. In his desire to guard his people against worldly influences he had driven them with a tight rein, resulting in many clashes.

Doesburg smiled when he heard some of the arguments which were presented and attempted to defend his own position.

“We must maintain the freedom of the press,” he averred, “Many of our readers are of the opinion that the consistory and Van Raalte wield too much power. According to the Church Regulations of Dordt, elders are not supposed to hold their office permanently but must retire after serving two years. They refuse to do so. This is not only contrary to church regulations but is also un-

American. The people want more representation—they want a more democratic form of church government.” Doesburg spoke with conviction but knew what would follow. These men thought they held the keys of heaven and that their power was unbreakable.

“You have not kept your promise to sell your interest in the paper.” Dominie Bolks said. “We deem it necessary that Van Raalte have control of it. It must not take a critical, negative attitude but a positive one if it is to be of any benefit to the people. Without positive leadership people become the victims of mutual discord and misuse of the paper leads to destruction of all the good of preaching and of church government. Our purpose of establishing a Christian colony here is being placed in jeopardy. As a member in good standing in our denomination it is your duty not to do or say anything which may destroy the Church of God. Through your actions and words you are making yourself guilty of creating dissension and are barring yourself from the privilege of partaking of Holy Communion...”

Bolks looked squarely into Doesburg’s eyes, making Doesburg hesitate before answering.

“I am being sore pressed and must admit my guilt, brothers,” he finally said, “but I do not consider it my duty to mention any names.”

When Van Raalte returned to take up his pastoral duties, some smoldering embers remained but the unrest gradually died down. He was not vindictive by nature...

More on the controversy, p. 252

“Do you wish to have me continue to sell Baxter’s book?” he now asked.

“Yes, we would like to have you do so,” said Van Raalte. “Do you know that there are complaints about the book, dominie?” “Yes, I know about that. Some say that Baxter is Arminian in his philosophy,” Arjaan continued. “I suppose Krabshuis said that,” answered Van Raalte, sharply. He frowned and his face assumed that grim expression which people feared. “Not only he,” said Arjaan, “but others have made the same complaint.”

“Listen to me, Keppel! Baxter has always been considered an orthodox theologian and he still is, even if he is not in the good graces of the group which leans towards mysticism —those people who seem to enjoy living in false passivity. Baxter says—“Be careful—God wants you to actively seek and accept his offer of salvation. You can become converted if you make up your mind to do so. If our minds have become so depraved that only overpowering grace can change them; that is all the more reason why we should actively seek that grace!”

“If our minds have become so depraved that only overpowering grace can change them; that is all the more reason why we should actively seek that grace!”

“May I ask you something, dominie? I have read the book and enjoyed it. You know that I don’t hold with mysticism but can a man believe or not believe of his own free will?”

Van Raalte picked up the book before him.

“Listen Keppel,” he answered, “Baxter himself answers your question. If an enemy attack you or your children, do you sit back and say—‘I have no free will and so cannot defend myself if God doesn’t give me the grace to do so?’ Of course you don’t! The doctrine of free will is not a simple one. We must never forget that God, to a great degree, has entrusted us with the working out of our own salvation. Baxter says rightly—‘What a remorseful thought it will be for those who, through their own passivity, have deliberately kept themselves from God. Fear not, only believe, is a definite command.’ False pride causes man to hide behind his own inability. Man has no free will to do good. We believe that sin has depraved man’s will but do not forget, Keppel, that not for a single moment, are we excused from doing those things which God wants us to do. In the first place we must believe and also seek conversion.”

Arjaan didn’t answer. Silently he took his leave.

The need for Christian schools, p. 256

“I am going to give this call my prayerful consideration,” he said to Christien but she knew he was not only speaking to her. He was speaking to the congregation in Holland and to the whole Michigan colony. Having always been a strong proponent of parochial schools, the lack of interest on the part of his parishioners had always irritated him. Most people felt that as long as the Christian group could maintain their influence on the public district schools, they need not burden themselves with the costs of establishing and maintaining parochial schools. But Van Raalte was looking ahead. Very often his parishioners were too lackadaisical to attend school meetings and so see to it that church members were

as long as the Christian group could maintain their influence on the public district schools, they need not burden themselves with the costs of establishing and maintaining parochial schools.

elected to the school boards. Van Raalte saw the day coming when the influence of the church people on the public schools would diminish and then their children would be exposed to unorthodoxy.

His second peeve was the lack of interest shown in the Pioneer School for higher education, or, as it was called, the Holland Academy. The school had been established for the good of the entire Michigan colony but too often people regarded it as a school established primarily for the city of Holland and did not give it their support.



John is a member of Randolph Protestant Reformed Church in Randolph, Wisconsin and is editor of Beacon Lights.

Church News

Church News

BAPTISMS

“He is the LORD our God: ...He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.” Psalm 105:7, 8

The sacrament of Holy Baptism was administered to:

Elsie Frances, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Tim VanTil—Byron Center, MI

Justin Luke, son of Mr. & Mrs. Jason Elzinga—Bryon Center, MI

Malachi James Alan, son of Mr. & Mrs. Josh Meurer—Bethel, IL

Landon Kenneth, son of Mr. & Mrs. Justin Koole—Faith, MI

Megan Elisabeth, daughter of Rev. & Mrs. Andy Lanning—Faith, MI

Leah Grace, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Brad Pastoor—First, MI

Callie Joelle, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jordan Dykstra—Hudsonville, MI

Hudson Benjamin, son of Mr. & Mrs. Greg Bruinsma—Peace, IL

Vanessa Louise, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Tyler Pipe—Southeast, MI

Madeline Sue, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Joel Noorman—South Holland, IL

Jenna Sue, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Schaaf—South Holland, IL

John Edward, son of Mr. & Mrs. David Vermeer—South Holland, IL

Kelsey Renae, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Steve Kamps—Southwest, MI

CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

“Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.” Psalm 119:33

Public confession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ was made by:

Eric Mulder—Edmonton, AB, Canada

MARRIAGES

“For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death.” Psalm 48:14

United in the bond of Holy Matrimony were:

Mr. Matthew Kamps and Miss Chelsea Hassevoort—Byron Center, MI

Mr. Joshua Meulenbergh and Miss Carrie Lubbers—Grace, MI

"LITTLE LIGHTS"

... let it shine!

by Connie Meyer

500 Years Ago...

"Let Us Find the Truth!"

(2)

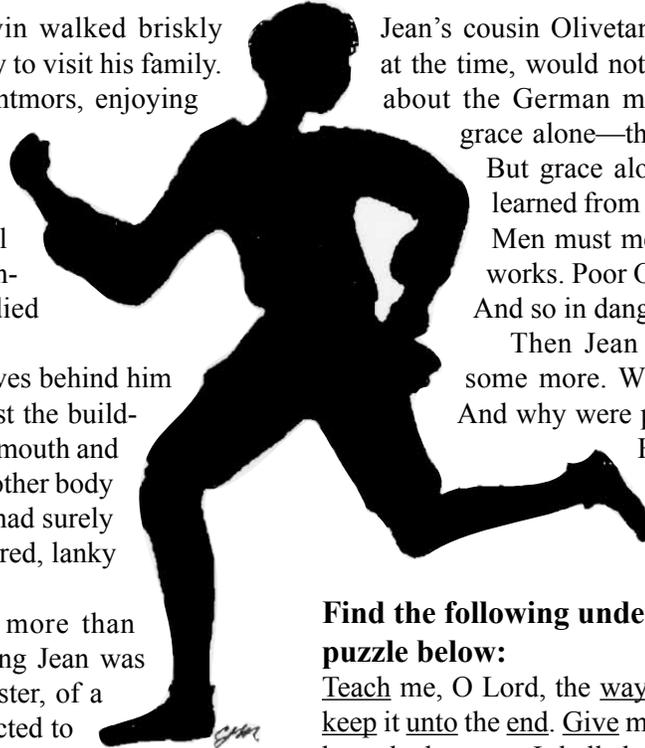
Fourteen-year-old Jean Chauvin walked briskly through the narrow street on his way to visit his family. He had been staying with the Montmors, enjoying an education under tutors in their wealthy household. Jean's father had arranged it so. But now Jean must more permanently bid farewell to his father, stepmother, two brothers, and sisters. His mother had died years ago.

He heard the clop of horse hooves behind him and looked back. He pressed against the building where he stood and covered his mouth and nose as the horse cart passed by. Another body was being borne away. The plague had surely come to northern France. The tonsured, lanky lad hurried home.

His father had secured even more than an education for him, though. Young Jean was already a chaplain, or type of minister, of a small church. Not that he was expected to perform the duties of a chaplain; he merely possessed the title—and the corn and grain that went with it. The title explained his tonsure (monk's haircut). That's the way things could be arranged in the Catholic Church five hundred years ago in France. The Chauvins took full advantage of it.

But Jean was indeed a devout boy for all of that. He was leaving for Paris to escape the plague, and to go to the colleges there. He would study hard to be a good priest. He was a student for three years in one school, and then attended an extremely strict college for men of the Church. That he could live with his uncle helped preserve his health. But Jean did study hard. While other students were severely whipped for not learning their lessons, young Chauvin excelled remarkably in Latin and debate. And in these days, there was much to debate.

The invention of the printing press allowed many books—dangerous books—to be delivered into France. The work of a heretic German monk, Martin Luther by name, was most offensive. Jean Chauvin would have none of it. Men were being burned at the stake for possessing such ideas against the Church of Rome. But



Jean's cousin Olivetanus, who was also in Paris at the time, would not give up arguing with Jean about the German monk's ideas. Salvation by grace alone—that was the contested point.

But grace alone was not what Jean had learned from his parents and his teachers. Men must merit salvation by their good works. Poor Olivetanus was so mistaken! And so in danger of his life.

Then Jean Chauvin thought about it some more. What, indeed was the truth? And why were people willing to die for it?

Hmm...was his cousin so mistaken?

Find the following underlined words in the puzzle below:

Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

Psalm 119:33-35

C	M	S	L	W	A	Y	E	A	N	U	M	D
N	L	T	Y	K	W	T	V	K	H	N	P	O
I	M	S	G	T	H	G	I	L	E	D	S	H
E	L	T	E	L	O	M	G	S	L	E	M	B
R	P	A	H	C	L	V	M	H	M	R	P	V
E	C	T	P	E	E	K	B	E	X	S	S	W
H	Y	U	V	W	A	D	V	A	K	T	A	E
T	W	T	M	K	E	R	A	S	H	A	L	L
D	N	E	L	L	E	T	T	G	I	N	M	L
H	D	S	W	S	H	A	L	L	H	D	R	A
T	K	R	B	O	T	N	U	L	T	I	S	H
I	C	O	M	M	A	N	D	M	E	N	T	S
W	A	L	Z	T	P	U	T	D	B	G	K	M

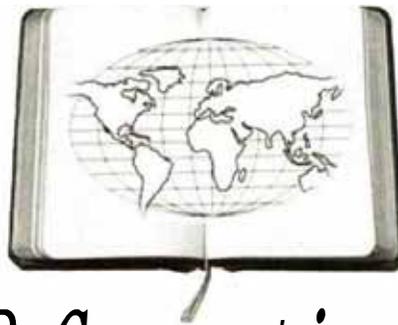
Connie is a member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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