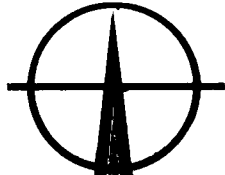


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*FOR PROTESTANT
REFORMED YOUTH*

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EASTER





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Editorial

A Jamaican Pistle to my grandchildren

by John M. Faber

Dear Grandchildren:

I almost said, dear kids; but since I have been here in Jamaica I have seen so many young goats who really are kids that I have decided against that word when addressing you. The country roads are common pathways for the multitude of goats found here. One's driving demands constant attention to the roadsides from which these animals emerge. They, and many men, women and children are a constant menace to the unwary driver. You know, of course, that the cars we use have right hand drives, and that we must drive on the left side of the streets. It is quite confusing at first; I keep telling myself, "Think left," but the natural instinct is to do the opposite. Left turns go quite well, but in making a right turn one must cross the traffic, and that all seems to come from the wrong way! But, one soon catches on, and we find the natives are most courteous. When we are trying to make a right hand turn on the city streets, the oncoming driver will stop and wave us in. Really! When we stop at the roadside to take a coffee break in the country, a motorcyclist or bicyclist will stop and ask if we had a breakdown. And whenever we must ask our way at an intersection, there is always someone near who is eager to give directions. One Sunday, on the way to a mountain church, we stopped three ladies walking towards us on the way to their church, and asked about the church we were seeking. One of the ladies gave us all the information: "The elder was away at Kingston, so there would be no service; the deacon was at home, and did we want her to show us where he lived?"

So she got in our car, and when we came to a very BAD stretch of the road with large broken rock in the roadway, she advised us all to get out while the driver took the car over the bad part, lest we puncture the gas tank. So we did, scrambling over that awful road. When the worst part was past we again got in the car to go to the deacon's house. She then scurried up a steep hillside to fetch the man. Now that lady did that out of pure kindness and Jamaican courtesy. She had to walk back a couple of rough miles! We did not dare come back the same way, but went down the back way. At the bottom we found another one of "our" churches which had no service because they had decided to go to another church for that morning. Rev. Brown had come all that way for nothing. Just another disappointment to us, but we went on to a third church at 12:30 and found that they had just finished Sunday School and were ready for the service. We joined them and heard a very good Reformed sermon by Rev. Beckford! Though it was an unexpected visit he did not lose his cool; his sermon was good, his delivery was good, and his ability to quote proof texts was amazing. That Sunday morning was not at all what we had planned, but it turned out for the best. It reminded us of the saying, "Man proposes, but God disposes."

When we talk about "our" churches, we mean that they are a matter of "our" concern. They are charges of the ministers graduated from "our" seminary here. They are the people who have benefited by "our" gifts of money and clothes. But they are not ours in the sense that we

have any control or supervision over them, although we do advise, and they appreciate that help.

The congregations are small: maybe four men, five women, and some ten children. The congregations vary, but only one or two are sizable--from thirty to forty in all. The singing is lustily done! Sometimes it seems that twenty natives produce as much volume as two hundred of our people. Really, one must hear it to believe it! We were in a church Monday night, (yes, these people meet Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays!) and the four men present each added to the accompaniment with drums, guitar, cymbals and some other clacking instrument. The others all clapped to the rhythm while singing at top volume! The Jamaicans are a singing people.

The countryside conceals many churches of various faiths. The R.C. and the Baptists have the most substantial buildings. Others, like "our" Belmont Church are but open air roofed-over shelters. But one experiences the communion of saints in such shelters just as in one of our own brick churches. We are happy that we "have" four young ministers and one older one to preach to the natives. Native ministers can most effectively reach the mental and psychological level of their listeners. They know the thinking, the besetting sins, and the devious way of expressing themselves better than our ministers can ever hope to know. The most prevalent sin of the Island is concubinage, and that sin must be eradicated from the people with whom we deal. Again, the native ministers can point that out. We have listened to sermons here that specifically condemn those sins, as well as "visiting" other churches, the insidious evils of Arminianism, and the more blatant sin of confessing holiness already attained. The instruction given by the Revs. Lubbers, Hanko, Heys and M. Hoeksema reveals itself in all the sermons that we have heard. The ministers are

basically sound in doctrine and preach the Reformed faith fearlessly.

We are on a "working vacation;" a vacation from ice and snow, but yet a working one because we have no time for beach lounging and sight-seeing. Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings are pretty well filled with work--the bad mountain driving adds to that work not a little! We paid a visit to the Baptist College and talked to the missionary who gave us quite a lot of news regarding the government's activities regarding missionary sufferance. He told us that the government would no longer issue work permits for foreign (that's us) missionaries, and that they expected to lose all their possessions in the near future. Maybe short term emissary visits will have to suffice to give added instruction and encouragement in the future. But the need is great; the people are starving from lack of biblical instruction. We find a ready response to the Truth of God's Word when it is brought to them. Truly the harvest is ready, but the reapers are few.

I see that your Gramps has rambled so much that this letter is getting too heavy to mail unless I put on so many stamps that the address will be covered. Maybe when I get to see you again I can tell you more about the Island: its people, its customs, its road system, its political unrests and violence, and its beautiful waterfalls and large caves. But this letter is "full up."

Until we meet again, Gramps

P.S. Gramma has lost her heart to the little babies and little children. She feels so sorry for them with their uncertain future, which, at best, is bleak. Mrs. Lubbers and Gram will soon have pleasure in distributing the clothing sent by Hudsonville's people.

Love, Gramps

Feature

THE BEAUTY OF EASTER

by Sharon Bylsma

Sharon is a member of our First Church.

Who could have furnished this season
With blossoms from colored gardens of beauty,
Along with the sun splendoring through the patchwork of blue
On the distant mountains stretching for it's warmth.

What mighty hand has swept abroad
The lightning crashing through the night,
As the commanding rain descends over all
It's thrashing pellets sprinkle His earth.

A Creator who painted the world
With a brush of His wisdom and love,
Who spattered His rainbow across the heavens,
Is that Master who on our shoulder lies.

In awe we whisper at the mystery
Of nature's flower just awakening
To the ray of golden wonders,
And into the new dawn of spring.

On this occasion of Easter,
Occurs the long awaited baskets of candy,
Or the new brightened clothing,
But there is no talk of it's true meaning.

The Christ who died for our sins
So God's grace could live,
Such rich abundance from above
Did He with His love in glory arise.

On the highest hill He stands,
And even through the widest desert lands.
In the sorrowed murks much pain
But through the grave He sends relief.

Why does the wicked not feel
What we sense within our souls?
The contentness to ever trust
Always our Father's grace will flow.

In this memory which holds Christ near,
Let us keep the meaning ever ringing,
Not only when this time is gone,
But let the hope never diminish.

Feature

'TIS RESURRECTION DAY!

by Mrs. Betty Ekema

Mrs. Ekema is a member of our Hope, Redlands, Church.

Let us rejoice, oh christian!
Let us be glad, and say,
"Our Savior has arisen.
'Tis Resurrection Day!"

He won the glorious victory
O'er death and o'er the grave.
He died, and rose triumphant,
Our guilty souls to save.

This precious Lamb who knew no sin
Was make sin for His own.
Obedient to His Father's will
He bore it all alone.

Oh, how our Lord did suffer.
Yes, all His days on earth
He bore humiliation.
Had such a lowly birth.

He was a man of sorrows,
And grief he so well knew.
He was despised, rejected.
And, true friends were but few.

The cross had cast its shadow
O'er His life here below.
He came to do His Father's will
Obedient He would go.

So, willingly he bore the wrath
Of God at Calvary.
He took our sin upon Himself
So that we might be free.

The temple veil was rent in twain.
The shadows now were o'er.
The Lamb of God had shed His blood.
God's wrath for sin He bore.

Our Savior's blessed body
Was buried in a tomb
By those who truly loved Him.
Their hearts were filled with gloom.

But, Christ, the perfect High Priest
Had power o'er the grave.
He tore the bars asunder,
And 'rose, our souls to save.

His work on earth is finished.
He gave His life, and then,
With power and great glory
He took His life again.

And so, in Christ we're righteous.
Before God justified.
Our Savior, our Redeemer,
God's justice satisfied.

Death swallowed up in victory
On Resurrection morn.
It was the first day of the week.
The grave was left forlorn.

In Christ God recreated
All things on that first day.

The "rest day" of the shadows
Were fulfilled, have passed away.

We know that our Redeemer lives.
That He's in heaven above
At the right hand of God He sits,
And reigns with Him in love.

He also lives within our hearts
For He's our Royal Head.
He's the first fruits of them that slept.
He's risen from the dead.

He prays, and intercedes for us,
And gives us blessed peace.
Some day in heaven we'll share with Him
True joys that never cease.

And so, rejoice, oh christian!
Lift up your hearts and say,
"Indeed, the Lord is risen.
'Tis Resurrection Day!"

George M. Ophoff (6)

by Prof. H. Hanko

In the last article we attempted to describe somewhat the kind of environment into which George Ophoff was born. He was born in the city of Grand Rapids on January 25, 1891. He was born as the oldest of eight children to Frederick H. Ophoff and Yeta Hemkes Ophoff. The house in which George was born was located on Cass Ave., south of Franklin Street in the vicinity of Franklin and Grandville Ave. During the years of George's childhood, the family made a number of moves in the southeastern part of Grand Rapids, finally settling at 1126 Eastern Avenue. George's mother



lived at this address until her death in the early 1950's, and Rev. and Mrs. Ophoff returned here to spend some of the last years of their lives.



The family was, in many respects, a typical Dutch immigrant family. They were members of the Christian Reformed Church, born in the tradition of the **Afsheiding**, people of a simple faith, godly and pious, but finding life not all that easy in the land of hope and promise. In the course of the years seven more children were born into the family, five boys and two girls, and it was not always easy to earn sufficient to feed all the hungry mouths of growing children.

Frederick Ophoff had a job downtown at the Rex Reed Furniture Factory--a factory which no longer exists today. The hours were long; workdays began at 6 in the morning and extended to 5 in the late afternoon. This was the time before 40 hour weeks, and 10 or 11 hour days were

not relieved by a Saturday off. Men worked 6 days and rested and attended church on the Sabbath.

Not only were the days long, the work hard, and the pay meager, but also in those days most men walked to work. While streetcar transportation was available, the few pennies which a ride cost were too sorely needed in the family to be spent on public transportation. The result was that working men had to be out of bed at 4:30 or 5:00 to eat their breakfast and still have time to make the nearly hour walk to their place of work. Then, at the end of a hard day's labor, there was still the long walk home.

It is not surprising, therefore, that work consumed most of the waking hours of these men, and there was little time to spend with the family. The instruction in the home fell mainly upon the mother, and the children really did not get to know their father very well, except for the few moments they could spend with him before an early retirement at night and on the Lord's Day.

It seems as if life in the Ophoff house was a fairly normal life, not unlike that of many other families in similar circumstances. On the one hand, it was a noisy and quarrelsome household--as so many households were with growing broods of children. In later years George was to complain that he could not find in his house the quietness he needed for study. But on the other hand, it was a godly home. The family grew up to be extremely close knit--a closeness which was to remain throughout the lives of the children. In fact, there was an unusual closeness because one of the more difficult aspects of the break in 1924 which Rev. Ophoff endured was the difficulty of breaking with a family which was precious to him but did not agree with him on the matter of common grace. Although the responsibilities for the education of the children fell mainly upon the mother, and although all the strength and energy of



the father was consumed in his work, nevertheless, there was a profound realization of the importance of covenant instruction. Not only were the children given such instruction in the home, but a few pennies had to be eked out of the family finances each week to pay for Christian instruction.

George was baptized in the Franklin Street Christian Reformed Church which was located on Franklin Street a short distance east of Grandville Avenue. This church no longer is used by a Christian Reformed congregation, but the building is still standing.

When the family moved to the southeast end of town, the membership papers of the family were transferred to the Oakdale Park Christian Reformed Church. There George received the main part of his catechetical instruction; there he made confession of faith at the age of 16; and there he remained a member until the day when he became a minister of the gospel.

The Christian instruction which the

children received from kindergarten through the ninth grade was in Oakdale Christian school. At that time the school was not located where it is now but was on the corner of Butler and Temple Street. The immigrants from Netherlands already at the very beginning of their history, showed a strong interest in Christian education, and they built schools almost as soon as they built their places of worship. This was due in large measure to the emphasis on the truth of God's covenant, which was characteristic of the Reformed faith in the Netherlands in general, and of the Churches of the Separation in particular. We do well to pause here a moment to consider this. Most of us have been educated in Christian schools and now have children attending Christian schools. In fact, we, as Protestant Reformed Churches, have erected our own school system. The danger is that we become so accustomed to our schools that we forget that they are wonderful blessings of God's grace to us and tokens of His care and concern for us.

And we forget too, that these schools were built out of the deep and abiding sense of covenant consciousness which characterized our forebears. They were often built out of great financial sacrifice. They were built because our forebears, seemingly sometimes better than we, understood the importance of the truth that God gathers His people in the line of covenant generations. It is this covenant consciousness which we must, at all costs, preserve among us, for this stands as the bedrock of a solid parental school system.

Already as a child, George showed some of the traits which were to appear later in life in different contexts and with different results. Many of our readers who knew Rev. Ophoff remember well the crooked index finger on his right hand with which he could gesture so vehemently. This crooked finger was a legacy of his childhood days. While he was not one of the playground bullies who were so common in those days and who can still sometimes be found on the schoolgrounds, and while he was not in his earlier years

one who would deliberately go around provoking fights, nevertheless, he was not afraid of a good healthy brawl. Especially if he was provoked--and he was often the butt of childhood pranks and pestering--he would easily turn in anger against his tormentors and engage in a no-holds-barred fight, from which he would usually emerge the winner. And if he believed that the reason for fighting was a just cause--just according to the standards of young boys in those days--he would back down for no one and fight regardless of the odds against him. Many were the times when he incurred the wrath of his mother for coming home with torn clothes, for clothes were not easy to come by and each little boy had only one change of clothing, worn all week, washed on Saturday, and returned to the wearer on Monday morning in time for school. The crooked index finger was a lasting result of one such fight, for the finger was broken in a brawl and was never properly set. It had to heal itself, and it healed crookedly.

This poem was sent to me by Mrs. Grace Vande Vegte from Loveland. The poem was sent to her by her mother, Mrs. H. Brands, of our Faith Church. Mrs. Brands now resides at the Hudsonville Rest Home.

THERE HATH NOT FAILED ONE WORD OF ALL HIS GOOD PROMISE

I do not know what next may come across my pilgrims way
I do not know tomorrow's road, nor see beyond today;
But this I know - My Savior knows, that path I cannot see,
And I can trust His wonderful hand to guide and care for me.

I do not know what befall of sunshine or of rain,
I do not know what may be mine of pleasure or of pain,
But this I know - My Savior knows and whatsoe're it be,
Still I can trust His Love to give what will be best for me.



Truth vs. Error

REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

THE HOLY WAR

made by

King Shaddai Upon Diabolus

for the

Regaining of the Metropolis of the World

or

The Losing and Taking Again

of

The Town of Mansoul

**The Dragon ... went to make war with the remnant of her seed.
Faithful ... in righteousness doth judge and make war.**

—The Apostle John

Despite the critics, **The Pilgrim's Progress** will remain one of the most popular and beloved stories in the English language, let alone in the English speaking church. It is in a class by itself. In intriguing allegory, it presents the Christian pilgrim, a stranger and sojourner in this world, leaving the City of Destruction and traveling to the Heavenly City. The story, in many ways, is the Heidelberg Catechism illustrated. Christian and many of the good characters in the book, at every stage of their journey, are conscious of their misery, their deliverance from misery, and true thankfulness for their deliverance.

Even with this story so high in the

scale of the classics, **The Holy War** stands on its own in that eminent rank. It is all about Truth versus Error from the beginning to the end and on every page. This antithesis is evident in such characters as Mr. God's-peace and Alderman False-peace, in Mansouliaus and Diabolonians, and, to name no more, Mr. Hate-lies and Mr. Stand-to-lies. The book came out in 1682. Like the wars of Scripture, the wars of the Lord, the wars of Moses and Joshua, the wars of the Judges and the wars of David, it deals with the Battle Between the Two Seeds, a thoroughly biblical concept. In another beautiful way, it presents man's misery, deliverance and thanksgiving for his

deliverance. Its sub-title might be, *The Creation, Siege, Capture, Enslavement and Retaking of the Town of Mansoul*. John Bunyan, the unlettered author, taught by his unlettered Master, puts it this way:

Then lend thine ear to what I do relate
Touching the town of Mansoul, and her state;
How she was lost, made a slave;
And how against Him set that should her save.
...I myself was in the town,
Both when 'twas set up and when pulling down:
...I was there when she owned Him for Lord,
And to Him did submit with one accord.

The Pilgrim's Progress had its great battles and mighty warriors. There is conflict with Apollyon and the Giants' Pope, Pagan, Despair, Grim, Maul and Slay-good. There are mighty men like Greatheart and Valiant-for-truth. But in *The Holy War* we have a royal battle between two kings, God and Satan, or as the story has it, between Immanuel and Diabolus. There is humor in the book, and of a loftier kind than that of the Dickens' works and characters. The latter are somewhat engaging as their very names reveal something of human nature. Think of Dickens' Count Smorltork, a foreigner doing research for his great work on England, an outsider who cannot get straight such a name as Pickwick, pronouncing it, "Peek--Christian name; Week--surname; good, ver' good. Peek Week! How do you do Week?" Then there are Lord Mutanhed and Lady Snuphanuph, very fittingly a town of Eatanswill, and a Mr. Pecksniff, who despite his cloak of morality has no more acquaintance with goodness than a peck or a sniff at it. So in this book under review, you have significant names of characters such as Mr. Backward-to-All-but-Naught, Lord Pragmatic, Lord Belial, Lord Python, Captain Past-hope, Mr. Let-good-slip, Mr. Gnaw, Mr. Gripe, Mr. Godly-fear, Lady Fear-nothing, who married Lord Self-conceit, Mr. Revelling, Mr. See-truth, and to mention but one more of many, Mr. No-truth. These characters freight the

story with a wealth of meaning.

Not everyone will understand *The Holy War*, many not immediately and many more not at all. This is not entirely surprising, since the book is deep and complex, and since it demands knowledge, experience and fulfillment in matters of the heart and soul of man. To approach a full understanding of it, one must see it realized in his own body and soul. It presents an absorbing drama and it is so profound that the whole picture cannot be sketched.

Tell you of all I neither will, nor can I;
But by what here I say, you well may see
That Mansoul's matchless wars no fables be.

Not everyone will like *The Holy War*. This is evident from a book (1967) entitled, *Fifty Works of English (& American) Literature We Could Do Without*. It would be too much to expect the book, at least in a sub-title, to specify fifty-one works and include its own title in the condemned list. For it rather deserves that notoriety. All fifty books listed, with the addition of the Bible (not on the list as such, but only because "we have excluded translations"), are regarded as weeds. *Pilgrim's Progress* is there listed, and what it said of it could just as well be said of *The Holy War*, since the author is deemed a maniac, a psychopath, an uneducated bigot and a seventeenth century Billy Graham. With Talmudic scurrility the authors say of Bunyan: "Driven almost to madness by the absurd and ferocious biblical texts he studied so assiduously, he was bullied first into conversion and then into the fanatical desire to convert others. Inexperienced, illogical and single-minded to the point of lunacy, he was equipped for nothing but preaching." So Bunyan's writings were "morally warped."

But then within the sphere of the church the book may be rejected and not recommended because its author was a Baptist. To do this is like throwing out the baby with the bath water. Granted that

Bunyan has his faults, and that we are not enamored with certain of his writings, still, the same goes for some Reformed and Presbyterian writers like A. Kuyper, B.B. Warfield, and A.A. Hodge. Yet we do not ban these authors and their works. What we do is respect them for their faithfulness to Scripture, and where it is otherwise, to warn against their errors.

But it is not to be expected that the majority will like this book. When the Maginot Line was cut by the Nazi pincers, it was not pleasant, but tragically shocking to France to find that all her gates were in the hands of a hard-hearted implacable enemy. When such things as are in this book are preached, the preacher will be advised by some, "Prophecy not unto us right things! prophecy smooth things! prophecy deceits!" Who loves the preacher who tells men to their faces that their eyes, ears and all passages to their hearts are already in the power of a mighty, cruel and ruthless enemy? But then, you have never read **The Holy War**? Maybe we should say, No wonder! For no wonder that the mass of men have not read a page of it! No wonder that strangers to the realities of this history have never once opened the book!

Mansoul saw the swords of fighting men made red,
And heard the cries of those with them wounded.
Must not her frights, then, be much more by far
Than they that to such doings strangers are?
Or theirs that hear the beating of a drum,
But need not fly for fear from house and home?

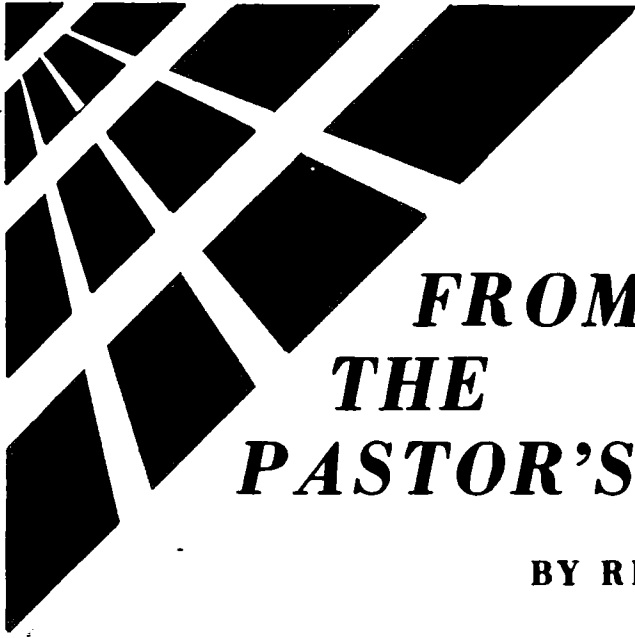
Perhaps it will not interest you to read of the Black Prince Diabolus, of Mr. Forget-good, of Mr. Ill-pause, of Mr. Anything (a good friend of Mr. Pragmatic), of Mr. Loathe-to-stoop or of the image of Shaddai which was lost and turned into the image of Diabolus. But

then, what would be the reason why not? Would it arouse your curiosity enough to want to learn more about Mr. Carnal-Security, the hordes of Diabolonians led by Lucifer, Beelzebub, Apollyon and Legion? Then there are Lord Lasciviousness, Lord Anger and what called themselves, the Captains Cain and Nimrod, Captains Ishmael and Esau and Captains Absalom and Judas. Also hordes of doubters flood into Mansoul, and among them such Diabolonians as Calling-doubters and Election-doubters.

The book will not be liked because reading it requires taking it all to heart. We must see ourselves throughout in its burning glass. We must see that its terrors and horrors are exactly true of ourselves. The book demands of us that we open every access to the soul. Ear-gate, Eye-gate, the intellect, will and all out senses, day and night, for the Lord Jesus Christ to enter in. Indeed, we must see that He must make His own room in our hearts, that we may open to Him. This is a book which teaches us the antithesis, to shut, bolt and bar every gate in the devil's face, to pull down the blinds and slam in the shutters of the soul on the southern Sodom exposure. All too few will submit to the strict rigors of such holy discipline. No man is sufficient of himself to do so. But our sufficiency in this impossibility is of God, who in the day of His power makes us willing to throw down the weapons of our warfare against Him, to quit the mad hurling of ourselves against the thick bosses of His buckler, to submit to His sovereign sceptre, and to find that it is He who works in us to will and to do for His good pleasure.

The **Beacon Lights** Staff would like to thank Kathy Koole for serving as subscription manager. In her place we welcome Grace Faber of our Southeast church. We are also changing the

subscription areas, with Grace Faber taking subscriptions within the state of Michigan, and Phyllis Bylsma taking subscriptions outside of Michigan.



FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

BY REV. G. LUBBERS

"....And they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king".

II Kings 11:12b

Today I would like to talk a little with you, young people, about the clapping of the hands. Real little children are taught to clap their little hands in their mother's hand, with the little song, "Patty cake, patty cake, baker's man, bakes the cake as fast as he can." And such clapping of their little hands is becoming to such little ones. However, when we cease to be such little children we no longer sing such a little ditty; we have then put away the things of a little child.

You have grown now to be young men and women. You meet in your high school assemblies, and you clap your hands at occasion giving applause, giving public approval of a score tallied at the basketball game, or when scholastic honors are given out, and when the new class president is presented. Then we clap our hands. Youth expresses its joys and approvals with hand-clapping. Sometimes at the Young People's Convention we also applaud. It is not the rule that this is

done when the "speakers" at the convention have finished their serious exposition of the Word of God. That is as it should be. When the Word of God is addressed to us by one of God's faithful servants, we have heard what the Spirit says to the churches. It is a time to listen and say, "speak LORD, thy servant heareth." The reverent silence that follows such preaching of the Word of God is precious rubies compared with any cheapening applause. A great minister used to tell his congregation that they applaud in the theatre and in the opera house, where men bow in the glory that is given them, and respond with an encore.

I am writing this on the island of Jamaica. Here too, we have clapping of the hands, with the beat of the drums and the cymbals, and lusty singing of the "choruses." These are sometimes denominated "pocomania" songs. In this singing there is a very rhythmic clapping of the hands, in which men and women,

young people and children join, so that the beat is stepped up and the crescendo rises! This singing is not ever very euphaneous for the ears of us missionaries and visitors from the States. When these same people are asked to sing "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty..." they do not clap their hands. Nor do they beat their drums. The music and the words are too sublimely divine and heavenly. Here we do join in with their beautiful singing--without clapping a rhythmic beat. It would be out of spiritual taste.

Now it is interesting to notice that the Bible speaks of different kinds of clapping of the hands. The sacred Scriptures record for us some exhortations to "clap the hands." We do well to make a little study of this for our instruction in proper "clapping of the hands."

We call attention to the incident of the crowning of young King Joash, the son of Ahaziah, by the aged High Priest, Jehoiada. This was the restoration of the house of David upon the throne in Jerusalem after the murderous attempt of Ahab's daughter, Athaliah. It was a great day in Israel, a day of the triumph of the church, "great with child!" (Rev. 12:1-3). The dragon, who had attempted to kill the "Man-child" before he was born, lies in the dust of shame, and the son of David sits on David's throne, which shall be forever, and on which Christ shall sit at God's right hand. And when Athaliah is dead, guilty with the blood of the royal sons, the people rejoice. It is not vain applause in honor of the hoary Jehoiada, but it was an acknowledgement of God's keeping His faithful word concerning David's house forever. And they clapped their hands for joy and thanksgiving. This was profound clapping of the hands before the Lord. It was clapping which meant to convey "joy in their king." And they said, "Long live the king." (II Kings 11:12).

This is the very opposite of the hand clapping of wicked Ammon. Babylon had destroyed Jerusalem, the city of the

great king, and had burned the temple, after plundering the sacred vessels. It was then that Ammon, the aged enemy of Israel, clapped his hands in wicked and fiendish glee. But the Lord in heaven heard and was wroth with Ammon; for he loves Israel, His chosen people. The Lord had taken notice of the "hand clapping" of Ammon, for we read, "For thus saith the Lord God: because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with thine feet, and rejoiced in heart with all thy despite against the land of Israel, ...behold, therefore I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen, and will cut thee off from thy people, and will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD." (Ezekiel 25:6-7). Here is a hand clapping with hellish design against God's people, when they hang their harps upon the willows. But the Lord hears the cry of his elect who cry unto Him day and night.

The Psalms of Israel speak of clapping of their hands, for God's people are victorious in the battle. Here is not the hand clapping of fools, but here is exultation with true spiritual understanding of the history of Israel, and of His sovereign dealings. The key to Israel's joyful hand clapping is that their King has gone up with a shout to sit on David's throne, at God's right hand. The King lives forever, indeed. He is caught up into heaven, and he triumphs over the beast. Wherefore we read in Psalm 47:1; "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph!" In the ascension of Christ to God's right hand, we have the Mystery of God which is great without any contradiction. "God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of the trumpet. Psalm 47:6." Here is the profound clapping of the hands when heaven touches earth. This is no cheap applause; it is profound worship of God.

One day heaven and earth will be

perfectly united, and all creation shall share in the glory of Christ in the church. (Rom. 8:18-20). In view of creation sharing in the glory of David's throne and king, and participating in the adoption of sons of all the saints, the Scriptures enjoin heaven and earth to join in glad accord and to "Clap their hands." This we read in Psalm 98:8 where we also read, "Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together." Yes, this is poetic prophecy of the Spirit of Christ which signifies the sufferings to come upon Jesus, and the glory to follow. Isaiah, in the prophetic vision, sees this grand panorama unfolding before his eyes, and sees the bringing in of the saints from distant lands into the Kingdom of the sure mercies of David, and speaks of the triumphs of the Gospel, and breaks forth into a joyful jubilee, "for ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth

before into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." This is poetic prophecy at its best.

In this clapping of the hands we hear the joyful song of the redeemed in our churches. This is not cheapened by the rhythmic music, nor should it be cheapened by the thunderous organ which drowns out the singing. (Organists must be spiritually sensitive!) But the Lord must be worshipped with understanding. God is King of all the earth in Christ Jesus. Wherefore "sing ye praises with understanding. Psalm 47:7."

On Sunday the princes of the earth are gathered together. They are the off-spring of Abraham by Sarah, born from the promise. Are you deeply conscious of this in your "hand clapping", young people? You are the people of the God of Abraham!

**For the shields of the earth belong to God!
He is greatly to be exalted!**

The Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies

FIRST SR. YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

First Church Senior Young People's Society has 24 members and is led by Ed Ophoff, Jr., our Bible leader and President. This year we have chosen Corinthians for our Bible study. We chose Corinthians because we feel that the letters of the Apostle Paul are very applicable to our present lives and consequently, our discussions are edifying and profitable.

The after recess programs are given by individuals of the society who prepare an outline and questions on a given topic. Some of these topics we have discussed are: "Different Versions of the Bible," "Drinking," and "Birth Control."

One of our best means of raising money for the Convention is the spon-

soring of casserole suppers, although we hope to have other projects such as car washes and baked goods sales too.

HOLLAND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

The Holland Young People's Society has 16 members. Under the leadership of Rev. Heys we are studying I Corinthians, a very appropriate book for young people to study. We began studying this at the beginning of last year and are now up to chapter 10.

After recess topics are very interesting and well discussed this year. A few of these topics are: "Donating Organs of our Body; Right or Wrong?" "Euthanasia," and "Doing Your Own Thing." Some of these topics are taken from one of our church magazines and others are papers

NEWS From, For, and About Our Churches

by Karla Kalsbeek

FROM OUR LOVELAND CHURCH:

Mr. & Mrs. Max Moore were blessed with the birth of a son, Mark Andrew, on February 17.

On March 15 the congregation was invited to a chili supper.

FROM OUR HUDSONVILLE CHURCH:

Mr. Daryl Kuiper and Miss Sharon VanderVennen were united in marriage on February 14.

Mr. Laverne Havemen and Miss Mary Lou Ophoff were united in marriage on February 27.

Public confession of faith of Laura Brunsting, Peter Bykerk, Mary Lou Hoekstra, Shelby Holstege, Henry Kamps, Linda Kamps, Debra Miedema, Barbara Ondersma and Ronald Schut took place on February 29.

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Ensink were blessed with the birth of a son, Scott Charles, on February 24.

FROM OUR HOPE CHURCH:

Public confession of faith of David Harbach took place on February 15.

FROM OUR HULL CHURCH:

Mr. & Mrs. Alvin Bleyenberg rejoice in the birth of a son, Daryl Alan.

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Truett Hugg and two baptized children were sent to our Faith Church.

The papers of Mr. & Mrs. Jay Stellinga were received from the Christian Reformed Church along with those of their two baptized children. This family was also blessed with a daughter, Brenda Jae, born on February 10.

FROM OUR SOUTH HOLLAND CHURCH:

Public confession of faith of Esther

VanBaren, Mary VanBaren and Karen Zandstra took place on February 29.

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Lewis H. Bruinsma have been transferred to our Redlands Church.

Rev. & Mrs. D. Engelsma were blessed with the birth of a son on February 14.

Miss Alice VanBaren and Mr. John Dykstra were united in marriage on March 5.

FROM OUR REDLANDS CHURCH:

The public confession of faith of Charles VanMeeteren and Ronald VanVoorthuysen took place on February 1.

The Young People's Society also sponsored a roller skating party on February 23.

FROM OUR FIRST CHURCH:

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Gary Bylsma and three baptized children have been sent to our Faith Church.

FROM OUR HOLLAND CHURCH:

The membership papers of Mrs. Bruce Jabaay, nee Cheryl VanKampen, have been transferred to our Faith Church.

The membership papers of Mrs. D. Hengst, nee Pauline Woltjer, have been sent to her home upon request.

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Ben Huizinga were sent to their home upon request.

Mr. Glenn Kotman's membership papers were received from the Christian Reformed Church.

At their request, the membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Tom VandenBerg and two baptized children have been sent to their home.

CONVENTION-NOTE

ATTENTION YOUNG PEOPLE!!!!

Remember the phones at Calvin? FORGET IT!! Remember the private baths? FORGET IT!! Remember the closets and dressers? FORGET IT!!

Remember the long bus rides to Lake Michigan? FORGET IT!! Remember the blah meals? FORGET IT!! Remember those closed-in city surroundings? FORGET IT!!

NOT THIS YEAR!!!

Let us describe to you Camp Geneva, the location chosen for the 36th annual convention. Overlooking beautiful Lake Michigan, far from the crowds of the city lies the site chosen for this year's activities.

The camp contains numerous facilities for outdoor recreation. The Big Lake is available for swimming, but if that doesn't suit your taste, a heated 80 foot pool is handy. There are basketball courts, tennis courts, an area for volleyball, teatherball and a baseball diamond.

Delicious homemade meals will be served in the spacious dining hall with no limit on the amount of food you may eat. Meetings and lectures will be held in a little chapel overlooking the lake. An outdoor amphitheatre surrounds a huge fire pit: a perfect spot for get-togethers at night. If the evening just happens to be cold the fellowship hall contains a huge enclosed porch with a gigantic fireplace.

Jim Schipper, the youth co-ordinator at last year's convention, describes Camp Geneva as, "A place with an entirely different atmosphere." Char, his wife, who everyone knows, says, "I think it's going to be fun!!!" Knowing Char like we do, it's sure to be exactly that!! We hope to see you there!!!!

Greetings from the
Publicity Committee
Sandy Vander Woude, Chairman

JOHN ZANDSTRA, JR.
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