

BACKGROUND BRIEFS

by Agatha Lubbers

With the appearance this spring, 1982, of *Perspectives*, the Protestant Reformed Teachers' Institute completes the seventh publishing year. Volume VII is the first volume in which there are three issues (fall, winter, and spring). Previously we published only twice a year. We hope the reader is happy with the somewhat smaller size of the magazine.

With the rise in printing costs, mailing costs, and other costs, the editorial staff continues to be busy with attempts to find the most economical ways of publishing and distributing the journal. May we hear any helpful comments? We are also interested in keeping our magazine as attractive as we can.

We also continue to receive enthusiastic comments concerning the contents and the perspective of *Perspectives* from readers who request materials and additional subscriptions. (These are usually not Protestant Reformed readers.) Here is an example received just recently:

Trusting we shall receive your solidly Reformed literature in the near future, . . .

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Finally and in a sense most importantly, we express our gratitude to God for the generous support both in prayers and financially that we receive from societies and individuals who are friends of *Perspectives*. Without your support we could not publish as we do now.

Thanks and don't forget us as you make decisions concerning the distributions of any monies you might have.

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The appearance of the spring, 1982, journal marks another first. This is the first time one of our writers has received specific written response or rebuttal to an article in an issue of the journal. (There may have been personal correspondence between a writer and a correspondent but this editor does not know of this and this editor has not previously received copy of this kind.)

The winter, 1982, issue contained an article by Mr. Gary VanDer Schaaf, "Reading with the Heart . . . The Fantasy Literature of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien." Two rebuttals to this article of Mr. VanDer Schaaf have come into the editor's hands and these were forwarded to Mr. VanDer Schaaf for his response. These two articles — one from Mrs. Barb Dykstra and the other from Mr. Bernie Kamps — appear in this issue along with a response from Mr. VanDer Schaaf.

We are most happy to see such activity among our readers and only remind others, who might wish to write, that our editorial policy is as follows: "All manuscripts must be signed and all authors are solely responsible for the contents of their articles." (Cf. Editorial Policy, inside front cover of each issue.)

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Our entreaty appearing each issue has resulted undoubtedly in the short and provocative article by Mr. Harold Tilma, one of our subscribers. In the article "Witnessing the Gospel of Parental Christian Schools" Mr. Tilma urgently calls all who participate in Reformed Christian education to be more active in promotional efforts that should result in the funding and founding of more Christian schools such as Reformed Christians have founded.

May I suggest in this connection that these schools have always been schools *controlled* by parents through boards of directors. These schools are not to be *controlled* by the state nor the church.

We establish schools that attempt to submit to the laws of the state. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well" I Peter 2:13, 14. This same Peter tells us that we will obey God rather than men. Such obedience is the "higher law" for it indicates that we have the law written in our hearts.

This also means that the church and ecclesiastical creeds do give direction to the instructional program. The Consistory shall see to it that parents establish proper instruction for their children. (Cf. Article 21 of Church Order of Dordrecht.)

In this connection permit me to quote from an article appearing in a newly established magazine appearing for the first time in 1982, i.e. *Reformed Perspective*: a Magazine for the Christian family. This magazine is published in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, by a non-profit organization that intends to "publish periodically a magazine

promoting Reformed principles in all spheres of life, especially the social, political, and economic spheres.” So reads a part of Article 2 of the constitution of this organization. Article 3 of the constitution provides the following basis:

In carrying out its objectives, the Society is bound by the Bible, God’s infallible Word as it is summarized and confessed by the American and Canadian Reformed Churches in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort.

That tells you something about the magazine (\$26.00 a year to U.S. subscribers). I salute the founders of this magazine in their avowed attempt to bring the Scriptures and the Confessions to bear upon all aspects of life particularly the social, the political, and the economic. This is fraught with its usual hazards — witness the devolution of the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (1965) into the post-millennial stance found in the writings of the leaders of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Studies, sometimes known as the Toronto movement. (Cf. *Perspectives*, Spring, 1980, by editor.)

Here is the quote from an article by Dr. J. Faber, principal of the Canadian Reformed Theological College in Hamilton. This quote is part of an article appearing in the February, 1982, issue of *Reformed Perspective* (Volume 1, No. 2). Writing about “Schools and Creeds” Dr. Faber concludes an article in which he defends the placement of the ecclesiastical creeds as part of the basis and purpose for Reformed Christian instruction as follows:

One could elaborate on the contents of the ecumenical creeds and the Reformed confessions and show their significance for all education on elementary, secondary, and tertiary level, from grade school to college or university. The doctrine of the trinitarian God and the means by which we know Him is fundamental for Christian education. What the Reformed churches confess concerning creation and the place and function of man is of primary importance. In Hamilton, Ontario, there is a Reformed high school and the pupils enter it through a hallway adorned with a simple plaque with the words: “to the end that man may serve his God,” taken from the Confession of Faith concerning the creation of all things. The Canons of Dordt provide excellent ammunition over against the onslaught of humanism in twentieth century education. The exposition of the Ten Words of God’s Covenant in the Heidelberg Catechism give good guidance in ethical questions that undoubtedly will be raised in the classroom. . . let us leave the historic Christian Creeds and Reformed Confessions in place, also in the Christian schools. We will need them there, in the eighties, and in the further future, more than ever before.

This, in my judgment, is good advice.

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A speech by Mrs. Marilyn Decker (kindergarten teacher at Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School) at a monthly meeting of the Mothers' Club of the Adams Street Christian School is aimed particularly at the responsibility of the parents of young children in their pre-school years. In the article "Early Years' Training in the Home" Mrs. Decker suggests ideas that can also be applied to the training parents give their children during other years than the pre-school days.

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Rev. C. Hanko, a retired but very active minister in the Protestant Reformed Churches, used the contents of the article "Teaching Our Children to Pray" as a speech for the Adams Street Christian School Mothers' Club. Some important emphases concerning the importance and place of prayer in our children's daily lives are included in this article.

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Miss Connie L. De Vries is the author of the article, "Art Education in the Christian School." For many years I have known the father of this young woman because we were both catechism students in a class taught by my father. Today this young woman is a graduate of Calvin College and wrote this paper to satisfy the requirements for one of the art classes she was attending at Calvin College. (She was an art major.) This paper affords insights into the value and limitations of art that we Reformed Christians often neglect.

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"... for the sincere Christian, the only legitimate and obedient commitment is to serve Christ. To make that Christ-serving concrete, the Christian serves the students in the name of Christ. Teaching for the Christian is not an ultimate end; it is the way by which he can fulfill his calling and serve the Lord of his life. It is not an attempt to gain reward, but, if it is done in the name of Christ, it will certainly bring rich blessings. Cf. Mark 9:41, Matthew 10:39, and Proverbs 8:35."

Education in the Truth, p. 146
by Norman DeJong