

and none need to submit to the church when that church arbitrarily demands submission, to her in respect to things that lie outside of her domain.

And, finally, only when the church wants to be nothing else but the instrument of Christ, submitting herself to the Word, and when the members have a supreme desire to be obedient unto Christ, we can expect the ideal relationship between the members of the church and the office bearers' whom Christ has invested with authority. For then the governing church will seek to glorify Christ, love the truth, maintain justice and be never a pleaser of men. And on the other hand then those who must submit themselves to church government will do so gladly, cheerfully, in the consciousness that the church seeks their spiritual and eternal wellbeing.

J. D.

The Christian School And The Church

Viewpoint of the Treatment of this Subject:

Looking at our subject, we notice that it is stated in its most general form. The main subject of this essay is not the "church" but the "christian school". And the idea is no doubt, that this school is to be viewed in its proper relationship to the church.

Whereas this relationship of the school to the church has various angles, it can be viewed from more than one viewpoint. First of all, the subject could be treated, from the viewpoint of the pedagogical need of essential harmony of the instruction given in the School and in the church. Viewing the subject in this light, the child to be instructed in both institutions would be brought into the focus-point. Secondly, to mention another viewpoint, attention could be called to the administrative relationship of the Christian School to the church. A question of interest in this connection would be: Should the schools be subsidized by the churches at large: This latter question is quite actual in some territories of our land, where the Christian school-movement is desired to be expanded to numerically small and financially-weak church&. A third viewpoint is the question of the rightful God-ordained calling of the Christian school in its teaching, in distinction from the church. What is the sovereign sphere of the school? Of the church?

To exhaust the subject from all these and other possible angles within the allotted space is out of the question. We will confine our treatment of the subject to the latter of the three viewpoints suggested in the former paragraph.

Definition of the Subject Proper:

It may be of merit to some of the readers of this essay, that we first of all define our subject. What do we exactly have in mind when we speak of the

"church"? Of the School?"

Speaking of the "church" there are two possibilities.

The first is, that we have in mind the church as a living, spiritual organism, in Christ Jesus. This is the church as she invisibly dwells in the hearts of the regenerated elect. It is the body of the risen, glorified Christ. And this church reveals itself in confession and walk, as the "one new man in the Spirit". This is the holy Catholic church of which we make confession in the apostolic confession.

The second is, that we have in mind the church in her *institutional* life. We here have reference to that institution in which the living church is able to, in an orderly way, reveal herself in the midst of this world. Her task is, the preaching of the gospel, and the administration of the sacraments and the exercising of the Christian discipline. Speaking of the preaching of the gospel we have in mind also the church's duty to train the ministry. To maintain the schools and the ministry, as spoken of in Lord's Day 37, Qu. 103.

In this article we will treat of the church as to her *institutional* calling, in distinction from the calling and sphere of the labors of the christian schools.

It is also necessary to define what to our mind is the *christian school*.

There is much in our day that is called Christian, that is not worthy of this name. In the most general sense of the term, all that is not Mohammedan, Buddhist, etc. is called Christian. In this sense both Catholicism and Protestantism is "Christian". To be sure, no well-thinking person, would concede that a school that is "christian" in that general sense is worthy of serious consideration. Neither is, to pass by Roman Catholicism, all that fall within the pale of Protestantism worthy of the name "Christian". Think of all the modernism, denying the very heart of the Christian religion, to wit, the Sonship of Christ, and His vicarious atoning labors.

A Christian school to our mind is one that is distinctively reformed, and-in this sense must of necessity of the present structure of things, be denominational. This latter statement is a "thesis" which the writer of these lines would be happy to defend in a separate article.

And a distinctively reformed school, be it primary, high-school, college or university, must be this minus cultural implications of-points II and III of the Synod of 1924. This point we wish to illucidate upon presently. Our subject in the light of this definition, calls for an answer to the question: what is the proper task of the Christian School in relation to the task of the Church.

The Duty of Both Institutions Subjected to God's Sovereignty.

In view of the virtue of God's Unity, and also the

unity of His sovereignty in every domain, both institutions must be considered as in the service of the living God and His Christ.

This implies that we cannot put the duty of the school in the realm of "nature" and that of the church in grace. Apart from the fact that the construction "nature and grace" is not reformed, but Aquinian, Roman Catholic, it must be rejected as an untenable dualism.

Both the Christian school and the church must view all things in the light of the glorious revelation of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and must insist, that apart from the regenerating influence of the Spirit of sanctification none can know God.

Neutrality, in either institution is out of the question. It is either teaching the subjection to the law of God, in subjection to it, or to oppose it in bitter hatred and denial.

Both must teach in their respective fields, having the Word of God as a lamp unto their feet and a light upon their pathway.

Is the Christian School a Complement of the Church?

If the school and the church did not have their own divinely sanctioned domain of prescribed duties, they would be overlapping each other, and either the one or the other would have to be declared to have no right of existence. We believe each has its own task; which the one cannot perform for the other.

The Christian school may never be an appendix to the catechism class. Its duty is not to teach reformed theology pure and simple. That is the duty of the church. Neither is the Christian school another *Sunday school*. This latter motive could never warrant the existence of a separate school-institution.

Still the question of the priority of the institutions may be raised? And then it is our conviction, that as to the interpretive element in the school-subject-matter of instruction, the school must borrow the principles from the church. The church has felt the need of Christian schools, to apply its teaching to all the field of the sciences taught on the school-curriculum. In fact, there is a separate article in the Church Order relative to the duty of consistories and the christian schools. During the annual "church-visitation" the question of the Christian schools is also mentioned, not to forget the question at the end of each classical meeting:

There is a sense in which the school complements the work of the church as an institution. We do not here have reference to the factual, historical, scriptural knowledge imparted in the school. Its merit is an undeniable fact. And many are the ministers who gratefully acknowledge this fact. But this latter is not what we have in mind, since it does not touch the

genius of the duty of the christian school in distinction from the duty of the church.

To answer this question attention must be called to the specific field of the school. The subject matter of the school is not gathered from the Bible. The Bible is written in very grammatical language, but it does not teach us scientifically the laws of grammar. It is not the duty of the minister in the catechism class to teach grammar. Neither can we very well speak of a biblical physiology, describing scientifically all the functions of the body. It would be utter folly to try to collect the data of medieval and modern secular (?) history from the Bible. It is also ridiculous to speak of a scientific knowledge of geography in the Bible.

The data of these subjects taught in school is collected empirically by men and women, apart from the Scriptures. And the scientist, provided he remains a scientist, can go on collecting data indefinitely, and never will he lock horns with the believers in the infallibility of the Word.

But the mere collection of the data is not knowledge, and instruction. Knowledge deals with the totality of things, in the origin, existence and purpose. And the interpretation of things, is either a matter of God's revelation or of man's reason. It is in its total explanation, either theology or philosophy! It is a biblical life- and world-view, or a philosophic life- and world-view.

The church must develop the dogma, and the school applies it. And so the application in the school, is the leaven of the church in every domain of life. Does this tell the scientific meaning, of every detail? No, it does not. But it does afford the "vantage-point" of faith for believing perspectives.

Some Practical Implications.

If the reformed life- and-world-view is to be applied to the subject matter in the school, it calls for instructors who have a deep and penetrating grasp of the reformed truth. This sets a high standard.

The Christian school teacher must be a theologian plus being acquainted with the subject-matter of his particular field. If one reflects a bit he will detect that not all subjects lend themselves equally well to be placed in the broad perspectives of God's sovereign will. The teacher in the reading class may be able to call attention to words as "God" "must", and explain them, but then she is, strictly speaking, not limiting herself to "reading".

One teaching history has a far greater opportunity. Thus also one teaching geography, and civics.

It has been my experience, that too little attention on the part of educational committees has been given to these questions. School boards also ought-to-stress the need of truly Christian schools. It is with mingled feeling that I visit the Christian schools of our day.

The majority of the teachers have not seen the genius of Christian schools. How can they teach?

In closing permit me to remark, that the goal set by our reformed fathers, is a lofty and exacting one. The difficulties are great with which a truly Christian school has to contend. There is always and again the element of sin and laxity. Walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith you have been called, is the watchword of the hour!

G. L.

Nieuws Van Onze Kerken

(Continued from last Issue)

Nu is het m.i. geen overbodige weelde om het zoo in te richten dat we jaarlijksche Synoden hebben. Men blijft beter op de hoogte met de samenleving der verschillende kerken van Oost en West. Zaken van meer ernstigen aard kunnen en moeten gezamenlijk worden verhandeld, en indien mogelijk spoedig afgehandeld, opdat het wel mag gaan ook met het Zion Gods onder ons. We moeten niet vergeten: de band der liefde moet niet worden gerekt maar wel nauwer aaneengesnoerd, en een Synode vermag dit dikwijls te bevorderen.

In de tweede plaats zijn we als Protestantische Gereformeerde Kerken nog jong, en het is van veel gewicht dat een Synode de leiding geeft. We moeten het pand bewaren hetwelk ons is toevertrouwd. We hebben op elkander toe te zien om uit ons eigen beginsel zoo veel mogelijk te leven.

Ik zag dan ook gaarne dat er werd beslist hoe b.v. Zendingswerk moet worden verricht. Dit is voor een kerkengroep als de onze van groot belang. Het is een vereischte dat er uitbreiding ook bij ons wordt gezocht. We hebben toch ook jonge mannen die worden opgeleid voor den dienst des Woords, om spoedig, te worden uitgestoten in Gods Wijngaard. Maar als er dan geen plaatsen zijn, wat dan?

Mr. Kort gaf dienaangaande onlangs wel een kleine vingerwijzing. Hij was van oordeel dat Ds. Hoeksema voor een jaar verlof kreeg van zijn gemeente om' Zendingswerk te doen. Dit is m.i. echter minder wijs. Een generaal heeft een eenige plaats in een leger, en in dezen is ook de voorzichtigheid de moeder der wijsheid.

Men hoort soms ook stemmen onder ons dat preeken en redevoeringen over de radio nuttig zijn voor Zendingswerk, en wie zou die durven tegenspreken. Dit heeft hier bij ons veel bijgedragen tot de verrijking van onze beginselen; tot' de verheerlijking van Gods

naam; en tot troost van Zijn volk. En ook buiten onze kringen waren deze redevoeringen welkom, en er werd elken Zondag door velen naar uitgezien.

Zij die dan ook goed hebben geluisterd zullen wel hebben bemerkt dat het algemeene-genade-huisje is omvergetrokken. De jonge mahnen vereeniging van Fuller Ave. doet dan ook goed nu ze weer een poging deed om de komende winter Ds. Hoeksema weer over de radio te laten spreken, D. V. Laat ons als gemeente deze poging ook financieel steunen.

Ook in het Westen ziet men zeer goed dat Zendingswerk over de radio doel-treffend is. Redlands' dominé doet dit op zijn eigen eenige manier. Ik verbindt dit doen meestal aan zijn naam. Om sluw te zijn in den goeden zin van het woord is niet verkeerd. Met al dit mooie hebben we echter nog geen Zending in het veld. We moeten het eene doen en het andere niet nalaten.

Het is ook zeer gezond dat we van binnen nit uitbreiden. Hier in Grand Rapids zou een mooie gemeente kunnen worden gesticht, b.v. in de Oakdale Park buurt. Een beetje meer Westelijk van de plaats alwaar we onze school hopen te bouwen in de toekomst. Wie geeft de eerste stoot?

Het is, dunkt me, een prijzenswaardige zaak van al onze vrouwen hier en rondom de stad onzer inwoning dat ze willen helpen tot het verkrijgen van een eigen school. Waar liefde woont gebiedt de Heere Zijn zegen; daar woont Hij Zelf, en wordt Zijn heil verkregen. . . .

Ik vernam het uit goeie bron dat het goed gaat met de Kalamazoo gemeente. Er kwamen eenige huisgezinnen bij, en anderen komen getrouw luisteren. Zeker een goed teeken, en een recht geaard Christen verblijd zich dat er welvaart is in eigen vesting. . . .

Ik wil ook nog eventjes vermelden dat Creston gemeente in haar leeraar Ds. J. De Jong de rechte man heeft gevonden. Oud en jong is wel tevreden. Voor het overige weet ik niet veel van onze gemeenten in en rondom Grand Rapids.

Het is soms wel eens een beetje lastig wanneer men moet timmeren zonder gereedschap. Aan de andere kant is het echter ook weer mooi. Men kan dan meer schrijven in het algemeen over dingen die toch ook niet heelemaal buiten de gezichtseinder van onze kerken liggen, en haar nut kunnen hebben 'ook voar onze Standard Bearer lezers.

Ik ga nu maar eindigen. De vorige maal was ik een beetje lang van adem en schreef meer als ik eigenlijk wel mocht.

Ik wensch u voorts allen den "zegen des Heeren" toe, en de rust der ziele die we wel noodig hebben in een wereld van oorlog en 'ontevredenheid, van jammer en ellende.

S. D. V.