



Christian Educators Journal

VOLUME 18

NUMBER 2

DECEMBER 1978-JANUARY 1979

**PERSONAL COUNSELING —
A COLLEGE PREREQUISITE**

MICHAEL VAN DENEND

6

**WHY CALVINISTS SHOULD STUDY
FRENCH AND SPANISH**

BRADLEY M. CLASS

9

**ATHLETICS AND
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

FRED YPMA

11

**ADVANTAGES OF
COMPUTER SPELLING**

HELEN BISGARD

20

**REMEDIAL READING:
EFFECTIVE CURE OR
PLACEBO FOR THE POOR?**

NORMAN DE JONG

22

... AND MORE ...

BETWEEN

THESE COVERS

If controversial issues could be settled neatly, nicely, and finally, billions of words would not be spoken or written. But seldom is settlement of issues neat, nice, and final, so the streams of words continue. **Clarence Menninga** addresses himself to such an issue in "Scientific Creationism . . . Again." A related exchange of correspondence between Menninga and Henry M. Morris, Director of the Institute for Creation Research, is also being shared.

Another controversial issue, the place, priority, and importance of high school inter-scholastic sports competition, is analyzed by **Fred Ypma** in "Athletics and Christian Education." Re-evaluation of one's position, be it pro or con, is necessary, says Ypma, to diminish the polarization of defenders and critics of sports in Christian schools.

Remedial reading is much less controversial, but its effectiveness is being questioned by **Norman DeJong** in "Remedial Reading: Effective Cure or Placebo for the Poor?" Schools now involved in the time and expense of remedial reading programs and those seeking to initiate such programs can profit from DeJong's second of three articles on the subject.

Another program to be considered, "Personal Counseling – A College Prerequisite," is **Michael Van Denend's** plea. College is not an extenuation of high school, and for many students the transition is difficult. Both colleges and high schools can use Van Denend's thoughts as a springboard for possible action.

Bradley M. Class, in the first of two articles, articulates, in "Why Calvinists Should Study French and Spanish," the need for Christians to study language, which is "God's preferred means of communicating with us."

And, speaking of communicating – there is still time to write about Christian schools and government . . . see page 32. The deadline for the consideration of manuscripts is January 1, 1979. Your contribution is encouraged.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL A medium of expression for the Protestant Christian School movement in the United States and Canada.

MANAGING EDITOR

Lillian V. Grissen,
3109 West Christy Drive
Phoenix, Arizona 85029

BUSINESS MANAGER

Donald J. Hunderman
1500 Cornell Drive, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

REGIONAL EDITORS

Gerald Baron
Trinity Western College
Box 789
Langley, British Columbia V3A 4R9

Allan R. Bishop
Ripon Christian High School
435 North Maple Avenue
Ripon, California 95366

Bette Bosma
Calvin College
Education Department
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Lillian Eiten
Eastern Christian High School
50 Oakwood Avenue
North Haledon, New Jersey 07508

Harriet M. Eldersveld
Roseland Christian School
314 West 108th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60628

Bruce Hekman
Covenant College
Lookout Mountain, Tennessee 37350

Henry Knoop
Beacon Christian High School
2 O'Malley Drive
St. Catharines, Ontario L2N 6N7

Harlan Kredit
Lynden Christian High School
515 Drayton Street
Lynden, Washington 98264

Gary Regnerus
Unity Christian High School
216 Michigan Avenue, SW
Orange City, Iowa 51041

BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

Mike Vanden Bosch
Dordt College, Education Department
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250

MEDIA REVIEW EDITOR

Frederick Nohl

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Christian Educators Journal Association, composed of several member or sponsoring organizations, publishes the Journal as a channel of communication for all educators committed to the idea of evangelical Christian schools, whether at the elementary, secondary, or college level. The general purpose of the Journal is to foster the continuing improvement of educational theory and practice in Christian schools. Therefore, its pages are an open forum for significant articles and studies by Christian educators on Christian teaching. Editorial policy encourages those contributions that evaluate as well as describe existing trends and practices in North American education. All articles and editorials appearing in it are to be regarded as the expression of the viewpoint of the writers and not as the official position of the Christian Educators Journal Association or its member organizations.

Indexed in Christian Periodicals Index

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

For the Christian Educators Association:

Joel Brouwer, (chairman of the board)
Edward Boer,
Art Tuls
Robert L. Otte
Cheryl Postma, (vicar)

For Christian Schools International

Philip Elve,
Gordon Oosterman

For Calvin College:

Henry Baron,
Leroy Stegink

For Dordt College:

Mike VandenBosch,
Abe Bos

For Trinity Christian College:

Dan Diephouse (secretary of board)

For Covenant College:

Jack Muller

For the Pacific Northwest Christian Teachers

Association:
Charles Pasma

For the Southwest Minnesota Christian Teachers

Association:
Linda Beckering

For the Eastern Christian Teachers Association:

Joan Huizinga

For the California Christian Teachers Association:

George Den Hartigh

For the Denver Christian School Association:

Ray Lucht

For the Association for Advancement of Christian

Scholarship:
Robert Vander Vennen

For the Ontario Christian Teachers Association:

Ary De Moor

MANUSCRIPTS AND BUSINESS MATTERS

Business correspondence concerning Subscriptions or membership in the Association should be sent to the business manager. Subscription price is \$3.00 per year if a majority of the members of a supporting organization subscribes and if a single check and mailing list is forwarded to the business manager. Subscription price is \$3.50 per year for individual subscriptions for all members of a school faculty, if a single check and mailing list are submitted, \$4.00 per year for individual subscriptions, and \$10 for three years. Checks should be made payable to the Christian Educators Journal Association. Issues are published in the months of October, December, February, and April.

Manuscripts and correspondence concerning articles should be sent to the Managing Editor or Regional Editor. Book reviews should be sent to the Book Review Editor.

Permission to reproduce any part of this issue is hereby granted by the Board of Trustees of the Christian Educators Journal Association. Any publication wishing to reprint any material may do so by observing the following:

1. Provide credit line stating "Reprinted with permission from the (month, year) issue of the Christian Educators Journal, Grand Rapids, Michigan."
2. Send two copies of the issue containing the reprint to the Managing Editor.
3. Provide honorarium for the writer, if that is your policy.

The Christian Educators Journal (130630) is published quarterly by the Christian Educators Journal Association, 1500 Cornell Drive, S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506. Second class postage paid at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL

CONTENTS

VOLUME 18

DECEMBER-JANUARY

NUMBER 2

EDITORIAL

LEADERSHIP IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION Page 4

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

— PHILIP ELVE Page 5

PERSONAL COUNSELING —

A COLLEGE PREREQUISITE
— MICHAEL VAN DENEND Page 6

ASYLUM

RUTS
— H.K. ZOEKLICHT Page 7

WHY CALVINISTS SHOULD STUDY

FRENCH AND SPANISH
— BRADLEY M. CLASS Page 9

ATHLETICS AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

— FRED YPMA Page 11

CARTOON

— ROBIN Page 13

IT WORKED

ZOO DAY
— GRETA REY Page 14

SCIENTIFIC CREATIONISM — AGAIN

— CLARENCE MENNINGA Page 16

READER RESPONSE

Page 18

ADVANTAGES OF COMPUTER SPELLING

— HELEN BISGARD Page 20

POETRY

PERSPECTIVE
— ROB BOSSCHER Page 21

REMEDIAL READING: EFFECTIVE CURE

OR PLACEBO FOR THE POOR?
— NORMAN DE JONG Page 22

POETRY

BEYOND THE WORDS
— BRYCE FOPMA Page 25

BOOK REVIEWS

Page 28

MEDITATION

EDUCATION, SKILL, AND THE YOKE
— NELLE TJAPKES Page 30



Editorial

LEADERSHIP IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

On his desk the late President Harry S. Truman had a small marker which read: "The buck stops here."

Most of us are better at passing the buck than stopping it – especially in the field of education. It seems to be understood, *a priori*, that "the teacher is the key." So it would follow, I assume, that on every Christian teacher's desk could rest a replica of President Truman's marker. I have never seen one, however.

The college prof cannot believe the high school teacher could pass a student who doesn't write complete sentences. The high school teacher wonders whether the middle school math teacher ever taught fractions. The middle school teacher wonders how come the elementary teacher never taught the student to read. The elementary teacher wonders how come the kindergarten teacher didn't teach the child to print the entire alphabet.

If Roger Staubach witnessed our passing ability, he might envy us.

In October in Ontario, California, one hundred Christian teachers met with leaders of Christian education to share in a discussion on "Leadership in Christian Education." The panel, moderated by Dr. Michael T. Ruiter, executive director of Christian Schools International (formerly National Union of Christian Schools), consisted of presidents Dr. Anthony Diekema, Calvin College, Rev. Bernard J. Haan, Dordt College, and Dr. Dennis Hoekstra, Trinity Christian College.

Three major challenges, said Dr. Diekema, face leaders in Christian education: The challenge to "maintain and develop a strong Christian community in support of Christian education," the need to "maintain and develop a distinctively reformed and excellent Christian education system," and the need to "maintain and expand enrollments." Dr. Hoekstra stressed that Jesus Christ is Lord of all, "from kindergarten through college, in every area of life, from post-hole digging to heart surgery and everywhere in between." He emphasized the need to recognize that Christian education is not limited to the school but rather is "the total set

of influences that go into shaping a young person from conception to adulthood and beyond." We must be much more concerned, he said, "about relating formal schooling to the rest of the total community and all of its institutions." Rev. Haan concluded by stressing the "amazing significance and responsibility we have as teachers . . . we must live before the face of the Lord as we ought . . . [for we] are so crucial in the molding of character."

And there it is again . . . the classroom teacher is the *key*. Emphatically the buck has been passed back to the classroom teacher. "Clearly," said Dr. Diekema, "we would all agree that the classroom teacher is the real educational leader . . . there is very little that the administrator can do as to what goes on in the classroom . . ."

No, Dr. Diekema, that is not clear to me. No, Dr. Diekema, we don't *all* agree. I don't, so at least there is a minority of one. Sometimes I feel like little Virginia who inquired whether Santa Claus was real; sometimes I feel like asking, "Are teachers really the educational leaders?" Is the buck (in this case, the responsibility for leadership) that is passed to us, seemingly by everyone, for real?

I do not think so. "A leader," said Dr. Diekema, "is simply one who influences that group more than that one is influenced by the group." But to be a successful leader one must have the concomitant authority and power, both delegated and implied, to carry out assigned or presumed responsibilities. I suggest we classroom teachers have neither that authority nor power. Yes, maybe we teachers are *keys*, but one must realize that a key has to be turned by another or it can never unlock a door, a mind, or a heart. And that is where *leadership* lies.

And so I pass the buck again . . . back to the Christian colleges where the *keys* are turned – educated, trained, and inspired. Aspiring teachers and teachers-in-service look to colleges for leadership. Christian teachers must be able to look first to Christian colleges. Meetings such as the one in Ontario and other cities on the west coast are important. We compliment

the alert administrators for their initiative in sponsoring these meetings, and we thank *Christian Schools International* and the colleges for their acceptance of the recognition of this need for their leadership.

Dr. Diekema also told the audience, "We are here to learn from you," and ideas were shared formally and informally throughout the afternoon and evening.

But more is needed. Many issues will not go away until Christian answers are found. Dr. Hoekstra alluded to one problem when he spoke about Christ as Lord of all, from post-hole diggers to heart surgeons. It seems to me that teaching in most Christian schools is geared primarily to those whose education will continue beyond high school, and in so doing we often, too often, miss the student whose formal education stops at high school graduation. We need the leadership of Christian colleges in applying the definition of Christian education for the whole man to the determination of content and methodologies to meet the needs of these students *fully* as much as those who are college-bound (who often drop out after their freshman year).

We need help in learning to accept that magnificent monster, television, as a fact of life. We are teaching television-bred students, and we have no idea how or how much that has changed the students we teach. We need insight and direction from the communications and education departments of Christian colleges.

We need help in learning to teach in and for an era where change makes "future shock" a present reality. Facts, facts, facts are added to the voluminous content already required to be taught, but the clock flouts us daily. Time moves inexorably on, taunting teacher and student. The year is gone and the history, geography, and science assigned to our year has not been covered. Meanwhile, more courses crowd the curriculum. Which facts should we teach in an age when it is not so important what one knows as it is to know where the information is retrievable when required?

We live in an age where speaking and listening occupy much more of our time than writing and reading. It sometimes sadly amuses me when I wish to convey a message by telephone and I hear, "Oh, just a minute; I'll see if I can *find* a pencil." How much writing does the average adult do? And how many months, semesters, even years are being spent in Christian schools to teach the parts of speech and traditional grammar when no research truly confirms a strong correlation between grammar and writing? But Chris-

Continued on page 15

what's in a name?

The staff of the National Union of Christian Schools — oops, sorry, ***Christian Schools International*** — is finding out that the answer to that question is, "Plenty!"

You read that first paragraph correctly — no mistake. There is no National Union of Christian Schools or NUCS any more; it is gone, done, "kaput." As of September 1, 1978, that name went into history, and arising out of the pile of ashes and bucket of tears is a brand new important-sounding name. Hear those trumpets? Here comes CSI, the ***Christian Schools International*** gang! Just think, overnight we graduated from being on the staff of merely a national organization to one that is now "International." WOW, we is overcome. We has arrived.

We are not only overcome by the grandeur of it all, but also by the complications that have materialized from a simple decision by the delegates at the August membership meeting. We really should have been prepared because this change was on the horizon for many years. But you know how it is; when the wolf appears regularly you come to ignore it. Well, this time he got in the door, and he's here to stay!

Really the change of name shouldn't be surprising because the NUCS has been international for many years. In fact Ontario (District 10) has more member schools than Michigan (District 2). That's how international we have become. The word "National" just didn't fit anymore. It's like fifteen-year-old pants on a forty-five-year-old man. It had not split in the seams but it sure needed a powerful lot of re-enforcement. It really is important to call "things and such" by their right name, too. I found that out when I called my wife's mother "grandmother" at our first meeting. Oh, she finally forgave me or perhaps I still wouldn't have a wife.

The truth is that our new name is not only more important-sounding and more accurate, but it's also easier to say. When you get to be as old as some of us are, you have to start looking for easier ways of doing things, and ***Christian Schools International*** is much easier on the tongue. With all these benefits it's a pity we didn't change the name long ago.

Continued on page 19

Philip Elve, Director,
School and Government Relations,
Christian Schools International,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

PERSONAL COUNSELING

A College Prerequisite

by Michael Van Denend

"Calvin perverts our children!"

"Calvin lets the kids run wild! They're too permissive!"

"See what happens when you send a kid to Calvin? He loses his faith!"

Calvin this, Calvin that. The fact is, Calvin, or any of the other Christian colleges, are not to blame for the lack of faith evident in many college students and graduates today. I think we have to look closely at our Christian educational system before we pin the blame on the Christian college, the last institution of Christ-centered learning that is entrusted with our children.

I am the product of two schools at Calvin: the classroom and the residence hall. As a Secondary Education major, I have learned how to approach the difficult task of reaching the high school student. I've been in the tug-of-war between the essentialist and the experimentalist, listening to arguments, debates, and criticisms. As a Resident Assistant and a Staff Advisor, I have observed the college students' lifestyles at close proximity. I know what they enjoy about college and what bothers them; how they succeed and fail.

What do I conclude from my study of and experiences with students? That the most desperate need in Christian *high schools* today is an increased emphasis on personal counseling. It's not so much that our Christian colleges are failing the Christian community; rather, it is the Christian high schools that, while doing their utmost to prepare the students academically, neglect to develop the *foundation* of that learning: the spiritual and social maturation of their students.

Quite an indictment, to be sure, but it is based on the experiences of one who has had to handle college students who have a background of thirteen years of Christian education, not to mention chapels, church services, catechism, even profession of faith, and yet cannot get out of the habit of going to the local bar every night. What's missing in

the Christian high schools too often is a personal counselor to address some of the social and spiritual needs of the students. It's one thing to know which college will suit one's academic needs; it's quite another thing to be ready for the radical change in lifestyle that necessarily accompanies college.

Too often there is little challenge for high school students to formulate their own opinions about social issues, and sadly, there is often little opportunity for definite Christian attitudes to develop.

Going to college is a traumatic experience for many, a major adjustment for most. The new student meets the issues head-on, all alone, for the first time in his life. He finds that his suitemates smoke marijuana. His new friends don't think going to church on Sunday is very important. He is pressured to go out drinking by other residents on his floor. There aren't parents, pastors, and teachers to hide behind. Too often there is little challenge for high school students to formulate their own opinions about social issues, and sadly, there is often little opportunity for definite Christian attitudes to develop. High school students "go with the flow" and are considered Christians when they have not been overtly questioned about what Jesus Christ means to them. What often happens to the new college student, then, is that he is not prepared to say no to the invitation to go drinking or to say yes to the invitation to go to church on Sunday.

I am happy to notice the breakthrough made by the Christian high schools in vocational guidance. It took a long time for many administrators to see the need for experienced counselors who will encourage students to think about their futures and guide them toward the college programs that will best suit their needs. Vocational guidance is a good and necessary thing. I only hope that it will not take the Christian high schools long to discover

Michael Van Denend is doing graduate work in College Student Personnel Administration at Michigan State University, Lansing, Michigan.



ASYLUM

H. K. Zoeklicht

"RUTS"

"Say, Karl, is it true you're getting out of teaching?" John Vroom, Bible teacher at Omni Christian High pointed the dark, overripe end of his peeled banana at Karl DenMeester who had been Omni's language arts teacher for the last 14 years.

Karl, about to open his daily carton of Yubi yogurt, paused. "You heard right, John. I'm getting out. I thought I'd let Rip know early so there's plenty of time to find a good replacement."

"But why, Karl?" Bob DenDenker, history teacher, took the seat across the table from Karl. "What's behind this sudden, dramatic turn of events?"

"Well," Karl replied, after his first spoonful of strawberry yogurt, "let me ask *you* a question. Do *you* ever think of quitting? Maybe you're the wrong person to ask because you're popular and successful. But . . ."

"No, you're not wrong at all," interrupted Bob. "And the truth is I *do* think about it — in my more despondent moments maybe, but still I have considered quitting."

"So what keeps you hanging in there?" asked science teach Matt DeWit, pulling up a chair and joining the other two while blowing the steam off his cup of Sanka. With a twinkle he continued, "Is it by chance a certain dimpled, brown-eyed, blond-haired maiden much seen around these premises?"

DenDenker dismissed the last question with a self-conscious grin and then turned serious. "I keep hanging in there because I'm really convinced that teaching is my life's calling — it's

what the Lord wants me to do. I'm committed to it and most of the time it's satisfying. But to tell you the truth, right now I feel I need a change too." Across the room Steve Vander-Prikkel, basketball coach, aimed his wadded-up brown bag for the wastebasket by the coffee urn. The spiral was perfect. Then he picked up on Bob's last comment.

"What are you gonna do, though. Stella has been after me for years to get a teaching job closer to her parents' place in Montana. And she's right. Kids oughta grow up knowing their grampa and gramma, uncles and aunts and cousins. I have practically no family here at all. But what are you gonna do? There's no job out there and likely never will be. A change would be good for me too, but where can you go?"

"It's interesting to hear you guys talk like this," Karl responded, scraping the bottom of the carton. "I had no idea you felt that way too. Only with me it's maybe more serious. To be perfectly honest about it, I feel I *have* to quit. I'm going stale, dry, and the students are getting me down. Most of them are no more interested in learning and in reading serious literature than Carter is interested in government finance for Christian education. Maybe it's not fair, but it seems to me that making money and having fun is their major preoccupation. TV and drive-in movies inspire their imaginations, not literature." Karl sighed wearily. "Anyway," he shrugged, "I don't want to face that anymore. It's getting to me and I want to quit before it spoils the rest of my life. I don't want to turn into a cynic, and I'm getting close to it."

"But did I hear right, you're going into business?"

"Yes, Steve, I plan to join my brother in the retail business."

"And you don't think that'll turn you into a cynic?"

H.K. Zoeklicht is a serious educator who speaks the truth in jest to stimulate discussion and action.

"I don't know. I want to approach it as another way of serving my fellow man. At least I don't want to get into a position again of trying to cram something down anyone's throat that's not wanted."

"Good luck," offered Steve skeptically. "And what about us, Bob? We stay stuck?"

Bob turned to Steve and thoughtfully scratched himself behind the ear for a moment. "You know, we've always had a problem to some extent. We've never been very mobile in the Christian schools, except maybe in the far out rural areas. But the tight job market has made it much worse now. And it's not hard to get into a rut, to get stultified and stale in teaching. I admire you, Karl, for the courage to get out, though I'm sorry to see you go."

"That stuff about getting stale is malarkey," interjected Kurt Winters. "I came back from a national math conference full of new ideas that'll keep me going for quite a while."

"OK," said Steve, "maybe you're right. But the only reason you went there is because you could afford to pay for it. I can't and the Board isn't about to pay my way."

Susan Katje, the librarian, cut in. "I have a brother that teaches in junior high. He just took a course downtown in Career Education and is all excited about all the places in the city he can take his students that he never realized before. So," she added testily as she continued peeling her Jonathan apple, "you don't have to travel to Atlanta to keep from getting stale. You can get stale watching a snowflake melt if that's your nature."

DeWit chuckled. "I don't know why you use that paring knife, Sue -- your tongue is sharp enough to do the job." Sue glared at Matt as DenDenker resumed the discussion.

"Kurt and Sue have a point. Going to conferences and taking a good class now and then help. I think you need that anyway. But the problem is deeper than that. We now have the peculiar phenomenon of a whole faculty growing old together. Once in a while a member is forced out -- like Jack Nieuwsma a few years ago, or a Karl DenMeester drops out. And Klaas Oudman is asked to retire early. The rest hang on. And when there's an occasional newcomer with some new ideas we manage to soon reduce the upstart to the status quo mentality; unless," he added self-consciously, "the newcomer is as strong-minded as a Lucy Bright."

John Vroom, in a vain attempt to duplicate Steve's accurate aim, had just flung his banana peel against the coffee urn. He grunted like a

pregnant pig as he rose heavily to drop the errant peel in the wastebasket. "Gentlemen," he began ponderously, "your discussion reminds me of the famous line: 'Change and decay in all around I see.' I'm not so fond of change as you appear to be. The Bible is basically conservative, and so am I." He lumbered back to his chair.

"But John, you don't mean to tell me that you never get in a rut?" asked Ginny Traansma unbelievably.

"This is where the Lord has called me, Ginny. And God's blessings are new everyday," John added piously. "Now, whether the students are sick of me is irrelevant. That would likely be the same in Miami, Seattle, or New York. All of them are sinners and in need of righteousness. That's the point. I can teach that here as well as anywhere." The sagging springs in John's chair squealed in protest as he changed his position.

Bob DenDenker picked it up again. "You're right in a way, John; still, after ten or twenty years together during lunch break and faculty meetings, we get so used to each other that we quit taking each other seriously. We quit listening because we've heard it all before. And we've said it all before, so we quit talking about professional things. We resort to small talk or we take refuge in silence. Sure, classes, conventions, conferences can help on an individual basis, and that's important. Some public school systems offer sabbaticals, and goodness knows how much I could use a sabbatical. But the whole faculty needs a shot in the arm occasionally, and that means new blood -- new faces, new ideas."

"How about a teacher exchange program," offered Matt. "The idea has been around a while, but nobody seems to have really picked up on it."

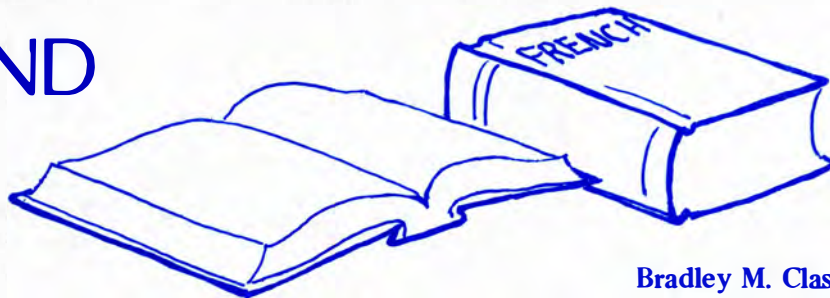
"You know, I've been thinking the same thing," DenDenker answered eagerly. "I'd love to teach in the Washington, D.C., area for a year, or in Philadelphia. And maybe there's a history teacher in that area who would like to exchange with me for a year. I'd keep my salary, he'd keep his; I'd live in his place, he'd live in mine. Why shouldn't that work? It takes some organization, that's all. How about it, Bill? Maybe you could set it up, charge a small fee if you have to and make it pay."

Bill Silver, bus ed teacher, shook his head. "Not enough money in it, Bob. Not enough people interested. People don't like all the hassles of moving. School boards would give you trouble too. Besides, I've got all the sidelines I can handle."

"See what I mean," said DenDenker, "nobody takes anybody seriously anymore." **CEJ**

WHY CALVINISTS SHOULD STUDY FRENCH AND SPANISH

(first of two articles)



Bradley M. Class

Part One: A Spiritual-Philosophical Rationale

Traditionally, the arguments defending the study of modern languages have turned on essentially these points:

it enables us to acquire increased awareness of another perspective through a linguistic structure other than our own;

we must know a foreign language in order to read it;

awareness of another culture through language study prevents cultural isolationism;

our planet has shrunk to the point that we cannot afford not to understand our brother with a different tongue;

there is a great deal of personal satisfaction on the part of the student who masters a new language.

While these reasons make a fairly good case for the pursuit of modern languages like Spanish or French, they do not provide sufficient philosophical justification for the time and sacrifice required to learn to manipulate the new tongue. This article and the essay following next month are written to demonstrate that the acquisition of French and Spanish in contemporary America is a serious matter Reformed Christians dare not underestimate.

LANGUAGE: GOD'S MEDIUM

It is axiomatic for Reformed Christians to regard all human knowledge as subservient to our Lord, under "whose feet the Father has placed

Bradley M. Class,
Department of Spanish,
Calvin College,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

all things" (Eph. 1:22 and Psalm 8:6). Immediately connected with this principle is the statement found in John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Greek word for "word" in this context is *logos*, meaning the Personal Word as title for the Son of God. The use of the symbol "word" or *logos* to represent the source of all human wisdom most appropriately introduces the idea of a Christian perspective of language study. Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, communicates His message to men with words (language) since language is the means of communication He has graciously given mankind.

In our contemporary, media-oriented society, it is vital that we understand language as the communication medium of all that God is saying to His creation. Language is the organizing key to our mental processes, and consequently, it dictates how we approach God, how we communicate His reality to others, and how others indicate their response to His message.

It follows, therefore, that since language is God's preferred means of communicating with us, and since it is our only method available for sharing the Christian way, the Christian student must be motivated to study language, and in particular, a language other than his native tongue.

We would be wise to listen to Peter, who exhorts us: “Love one another earnestly from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable through the living and abiding word of God” (I Peter 1:22-23). As Christians we are to love one another; Peter makes the point by the *logos* symbol of Jesus-word-language. The highest calling to language teachers is to model for students the manner in which love is revealed through the vehicle of words. I shall call it “the Logos Connection.”

LANGUAGE STUDY: THE CHRISTIAN'S MOTIVATION

As Calvinists, we entertain the view that we must express our gratitude to God the Father for His redeeming love, by living a life of service, wherein all of our activities are intended to glorify Him. Indeed, this is our central function as Christian educators, and as instructors our greatest charge is to imbue students with this vision. We are not to be an intellectual elite; instead we must avoid such activity and train our students for the service of God in both Church and civil society.

John Calvin especially felt that the gospel required the transformation of society in general, as well as that of the Church and individual. We must educate Spanish and French-speaking youth who understand this goal and are trained in understanding society to achieve that end.

Modern linguists have much to offer in this area of transforming society. When Calvin wrote his *Institutes*, he dealt with theology, philosophy, ancient languages and art, science, and the seven liberal arts as the subject matter to be governed by Reformed thinking. Today, the role of modern languages (particularly the Romance languages in the United States) has assumed far greater importance than it had in his day, and it must be seriously reconsidered as a vital part of Reformed educational theory. Since our primary business in this world is to change men's thinking about God and society, and since ours is an age of mass communication to an ever-growing world population, we have an imposing task to communicate for God to non-English cultures. It is imperative that students see that foreign languages are central to all humanistic pursuits pertaining to those cultures. It is equally imperative that our youth realize that they have a Christian responsibility not to retreat into an intellectual-cultural isolationism by avoiding

foreign language study; in other words, they must face the realities of a shrunken globe with myriad cross-cultural conflicts that can only be resolved through proper communication, i.e., foreign language and attending subject matter areas.

The means by which language teachers relate the religious and cultural aspects of foreign lands has been eloquently stated by Henry Zylstra in Calvin College's *Christian Liberal Arts Education*, wherein he argues that the teacher must handle "the religious in and through the cultural" (p. 33). We cannot divorce the spiritual dimensions of France, French Canada, Spain, or Latin America from their cultures. We must present these people as a totality of body, soul and spirit, and constantly encourage our students to try to comprehend their world view. It would be profitable to meditate on this interrelating of the spiritual and cultural, since our Father did not reveal all of His wisdom and totality in the English language. Ezra Pound stated it in these terms:

The sum of human wisdom is not contained in any one language, and no simple language is CAPABLE of expressing all forms and degrees of human comprehension.

In his endeavor to relate faith and learning, the Reformed, Calvinist language teacher must make it clear that in order to facilitate the sowing of the Christian vision in the French and Spanish speaking worlds, students must understand those cultures in every dimension possible. In order to do this, they must appreciate those people, their origins, world views, values, aims and ideals. We must become discerning critics of those societies if we plan to influence them for Christ.

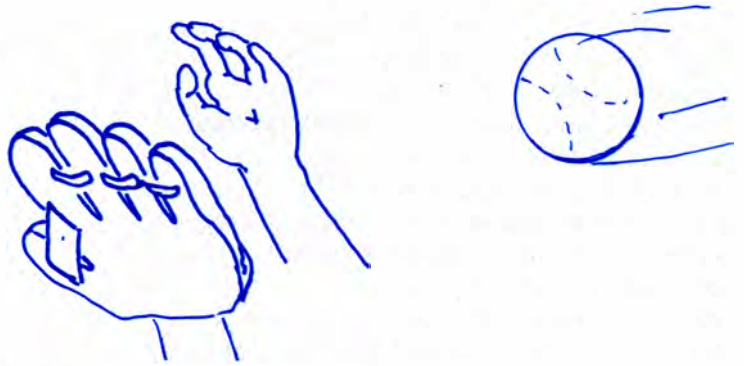
CEJ

The day is always his who worked in it with serenity and great aims.

– Emerson

PROFESSOR OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
for new Graduate School of Education located
in the South: Must have Ph.D. in Elementary
Education, hold to Reformed theology. Position
would require experience in integration of faith
and learning and desire to share in a vision for
equipping teachers on a graduate level from a
Christian world and life view. Send complete
resume to *Box B, Christian Educators Journal*.

athletics and christian education



Fred Ypma

During recent years the place of interscholastic sports in Christian high schools has come under close scrutiny, and much of the resultant writing by non-coaches has been negative. This in turn has polarized the two sides with coaches and people involved in sports defending the place of interscholastic competition all the more adamantly.

One must admit there are both good and bad athletics. The person who is not willing to concede at all – the coach who believes that no athlete could possibly be hurt by his participation in sports, or the principal who feels there can not possibly be any good in a football program – should re-evaluate his current position on this issue.

As Lynden Christian High School track and football coach for ten years, I have done considerable thinking on the subject. I have taken most stances one could possibly imagine: from being the gung-ho coach blinded by enthusiasm to any possible negative effects in interscholastic competition to being the cynic who felt he was wasting his time as coach because no good was possible in this overly competitive business.

We all change. I have, and my current philosophy incorporates some of both the positive and negative spin-offs in interscholastic competition. As I probe both sides of the question: "Should or should I not spend as much time, energy, and school money in interscholastic competition as I currently do?", allow me to

share my philosophy of education and of coaching with you because the two are closely interwoven.

EDUCATING THE WHOLE PERSON

We talk glibly about educating the whole person, but in order to get a handle on that kind of education we need to consider the whole person in four parts: (1) his intellect, (2) his spiritual being, (3) his physical body, (4) his creative capabilities. This is fine to do in order to comprehend what education is, but usually we go one step beyond and begin to teach, not the whole person but only a fragment of his being. What we then do is put the responsibility of intellectual development into the academic classroom; the challenge for the spiritual development is placed upon the Bible teachers or chapel speakers; the physical development is assumed to be the p.e. teacher's role; the creative development gets placed on the shoulders of music or art teachers! I may be over-simplifying a rather complex idea of what Christian education should or should not be but in practice I have seen teaching take place that demonstrates this fragmentation. Christian education should cross over these hypothetical boundaries and **touch** the student where he is. If we say we have no responsibility to the spiritual growth of a student because we teach English or math or shop or typing, we fail in our mandate as Christian educators. So if our job is to educate the whole person, then my role as educator becomes one of influencing lives, and this goes beyond just teaching material.

Then, one must ask, "Where does **total** education best take place?" From a teacher's viewpoint, I think it can best be done in classes and

Fred Ypma,
Track and Football Coach,
Lynden Christian High School,
Lynden, Washington.

ACTIVITIES where teachers become involved with small groups of students. As the school newspaper advisor, I work with 10 - 15 students after school or evenings, in the classroom or at the local newspaper office. We talk about responsibilities, failures, successes, and goals. We criticize the school in areas which we think need improvement and compliment it for the things it does well. We talk about journalism and try to practice it responsibly. In short, we share lives while we learn and I think I have been more instrumental in shaping the *whole* person of those students than the *whole* person of most students who come into my other classes.

Education means touching the life of a person; where a life is touched, education always takes place! When I hear a student exclaim, "Now I understand!" education has taken place. When I hear him boast for the first time, "Now I can do it," education has taken place. When I see him look at an art work or listen to music and whisper, "That's beautiful," education has taken place. As I listen to the tough guy crying in a moment of self-realization, education has taken place. And finally, when I hear the students singing, "My Jesus I Love Thee," in a moment of consecration, I know too that education has taken place. If we as teachers look at these experiences as education because they *touch* lives, then I believe we can defend the interscholastic sports programs that are currently being provided in Christian high schools.

I have a letter that demonstrates the education that crosses hypothetical boundaries we have set up. It came from an athlete last fall and it demonstrates Christian education that takes place in a football program at a Christian school. I believe what the student learned during those two hours each afternoon was of paramount value. He wrote:

Dear Coach:

I just want to thank you for all you've done for me these past two football seasons. I look back and see many hours of hard work in turnouts and games, moments of glorious victory and moments of heartbreaking defeat. But more than these, I see myself as a better person, a better Christian person.

I'm sure most of the spectators, fans and players look at these past two seasons as failures, but as for myself I see them as total success. Through them you've taught me discipline, how to work with others as a team, how to compliment rather than criticize and many other

values which will help me to better cope with life and its problems. They've brought me a better understanding of myself and of the people around me. They've also brought me closer to God and that's where real success comes in.

Of course, you and I didn't always agree and we had times of frustration and anger at one another but looking past that I'd like to say that I've really come to love and respect you as a coach and personal friend, more than I ever thought I could. And I hope you can love and respect me in somewhat the same way.

We may not have won all our football games; but when it comes to the game of life, I'm sure we'll both be eternal winners because with Jesus Christ as our coach we can't lose.

With Christian love,

We don't get letters like this every day; if I did I probably wouldn't have saved this one and it wouldn't be special. To me that letter is an evidence of Christian education taking place on the athletic field.

POSITIVE BY-PRODUCTS OF ATHLETICS

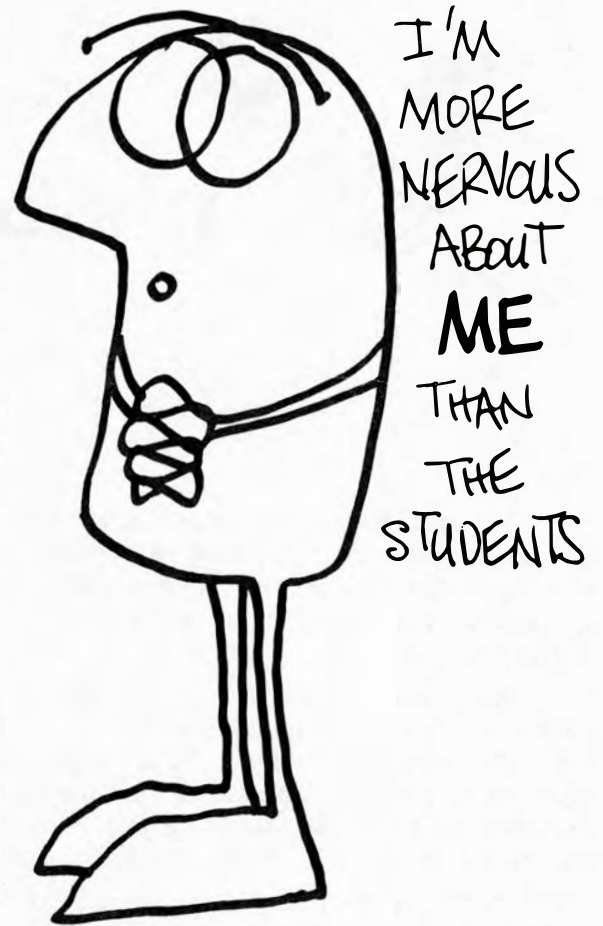
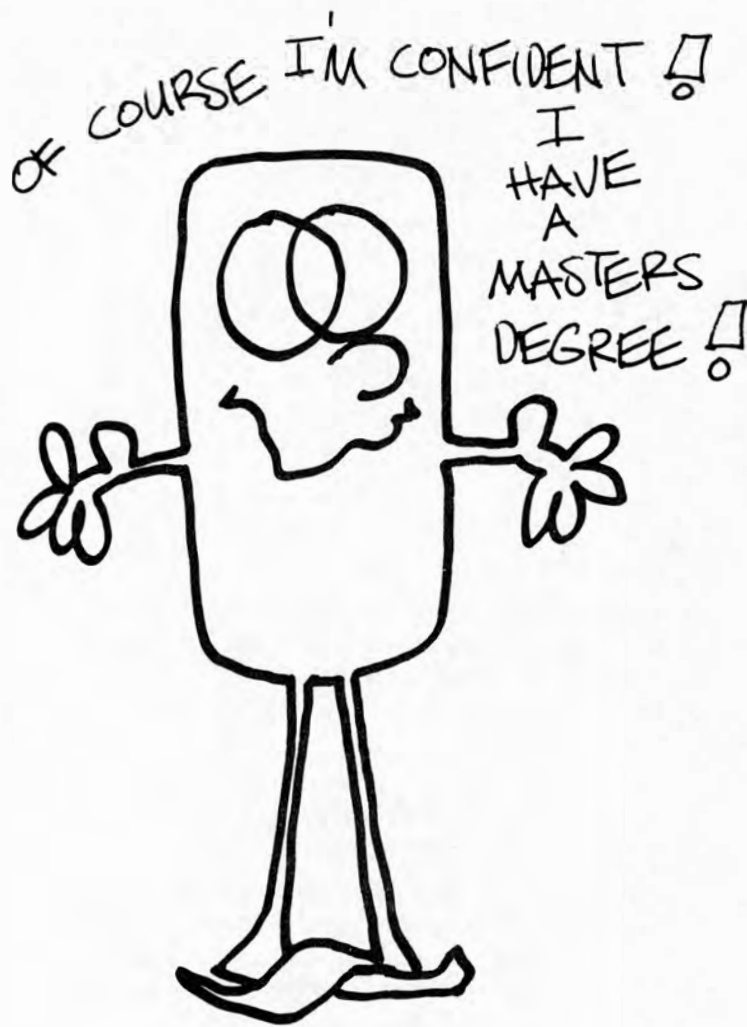
There are other positive by-products rising out of competitive interscholastic sports.

Self-sacrifice can probably be learned better in sports than in any other school activity.

(1) Competition leads to goal setting. I believe goal-setting is very valuable for functioning and achieving the potential for which we have been created. We can feel good about ourselves when we have met a goal; and we can and should also feel bad when we have failed to meet a goal that was reasonable and should have been achieved.

(2) Self-sacrifice can probably be learned better in sports than in any other school activity. Life in many ways is a series of choices. Choosing self-sacrifice over self-indulgence often leads to achievement. This is not always evident in a strong team-oriented sport like football, but the individual in track, cross-country, or wrestling often finds this out. In an affluent, indulgent American society, self-sacrifice is an especially valuable lesson to learn.

NEW TEACHERS





It Worked

ZOO DAY

I like special classroom days that are both fun and educational. "Zoo Day" is a special day which you may like to adapt to your situation as a change of pace during the upcoming long winter stretch.

Nine-year-olds unashamedly in love with their stuffed animals? Incredible, but true. Even the boys? Especially the boys. I don't remember how this subject came up in the class conversation, but it led to each child bringing one favorite stuffed animal to school on the appointed day.

When "Zoo Day" came, sure enough, there was, without exception, a much-loved stuffed animal proudly carried into class by each fourth-grader. All were seemingly undaunted by whatever comments may have been made by older children. I was again surprised by the love and life and personality breathed into the animals. The children treated them as dear and honored friends. They set the animals on or next to their desks, played with them, and talked to them as if they were perfectly real companions. Throughout the day, I had the pleasure of seeing how really dear and child-like fourth-graders are and of observing the wonderful delights and imaginations of childhood.

Our class was structured (this took advance preparation) in such a way that we could shift easily into an informal situation, and everyone would know how to handle it — groups, permanent partners, library passes and privileges, etc. Following is a list of activities that was given to the children early on Zoo Day. More activities were suggested than could be done in one day.

Greta Rey, editor and author of this column, teaches at North Kalamazoo Christian School, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Some, particularly in the math section of the research guide, may be too advanced for some fourth-graders, but I offer them with the hope they will inspire you to develop your own special Zoo Day.

ZOO DAY ACTIVITIES

Introduction of animals: The child individually introduces his animal to the class and tells something unusual about it, such as its name, where it came from, who made it, how he acquired it, experiences he has had with it, why the animal is special to him, or other interesting items.

Drama Small groups make up plays, using their animals. After about one-half hour of planning, the group performs for other groups in the class.

Music The teacher plays the recording of Saint Saens' *Carnival of the Animals*. The children guess the animals being portrayed by the music. Perhaps all the animals of the type being played can parade to the music. The other children can imitate the animals and parade too.

Writing Each child writes a story or poem about his animal. These stories and poems are later compiled into a class *Zoo Book*.

Drawing The animals are used as models for drawing. These drawings may be included with the stories in the *Zoo Book*.

Reading Each child finds an easy book, short story or narrative poem about his animal. The teacher or librarian likely will have to assist. The children practice reading their selections aloud. At the end of the day a first-grade class is invited to see the zoo, and the stories or poems are read to the younger children on a one-to-one basis. Other of the day's activities are also shared.

Research Each child gets a sheet printed with questions and provided with writing spaces. He answers as many questions as he can or that are of interest to him. I included, "If your animals were real, answer the following questions about it: Where does it live? In what climate and/or environment does it live? What does it eat? How does it acquire its food and how often? What does it do with its time? How large does it become? How old does it get? What are some of its outstanding habits, or for what is it well-known? What are its enemies? How does it help the natural environment? How does it protect itself? Does it have a natural camouflage? What is its sleeping place or shelter? How many young does it produce per year? Does it mate for life? Does it live alone or in a group? How is it used by man? Is it in danger of becoming extinct?"

For the mathematically inclined:
If your animal were a real, live pet:
Where would you keep it? What measurement of space would it need? What kind of shelter would it need? How much material would you need in order to build it? What would this material cost? What food (give the kind and amount) would your pet require per day? What would this cost per day? Per week? Per year?"

Yes, special days can be both fun and educational. The children loved Zoo Day. So did I.

CEJ

Changing the curriculum is like moving a cemetery. Until you try it, you don't realize how many friends the dead have.

— Sam Walter Foss

Editorial — continued from page 5

tian schools will continue to emphasize traditional grammar so long as Christian colleges require freshmen to pass an entrance test in grammar.

How do we teach listening? How much time is spent in teaching teachers themselves to listen? Really listen, I mean, to hear what is being said and to hear what is not being said? We need help so that as *keys* we may unlock minds and hearts and hurts. At a faculty meeting some time ago, only one teacher in the group remembered being taught how to observe student behavior which might indicate deep-seated emotional problems, problems that can be corrected with proper professional help. For the sake of the student and for the sake of the group, this skill is vital. We need help from Christian colleges in listening and observing.

How does the classroom teacher convince the college, or anyone for that matter, that junior high/middle school teachers need special training? It seems these teachers are more gap-fillers than specialists; either an elementary or a secondary certificate will assure an aspiring teacher the possibility of teaching in junior high or middle school. A college professor said his college would initiate such measures only when sufficient pressure comes from the schools or the teachers. Teachers do not realize the child-adult characteristics they must work with until they are in that position, and then most teachers wish only to hasten up or down the grade-ladder. Christian colleges must take the initiative not only in preparing of teachers, but also in promoting specific and special certification for junior high/middle school teachers. Only then can the *keys* truly unlock transescent minds and self-concepts.

"Jesus Christ is Lord of all," Dr. Hoekstra told the audience, and we are comforted and challenged by this truth. But we need to learn better how to team-teach to demonstrate this Lordship in all areas. We teachers contribute to fragmentation when we separate our subjects and duplicate our efforts and when for thirteen years we fail to complement each other's disciplines. I submit too often this is because we don't know how to work together. We need help from Christian colleges.

... and there are more problems. We *keys* acknowledge that part of the buck stops with us, but the bulk of the *leadership* should not be placed on our shoulders. That a meeting such as the one in Ontario was held verifies the recognition of the leadership responsibilities of Christian colleges, and this is proper. We classroom teachers will continue to need strong, visionary, and innovative Christian leadership from the colleges so that indeed we may better learn and teach that Christ is Lord of all. **CEJ**

SCIENTIFIC CREATIONISM — AGAIN

by Clarence Menninga

Some time has passed since my critique of *Scientific Creationism* (Henry M. Morris, Ed.) was printed in *CEJ* (May, 1976). Dr. Morris' response, you may recall, was printed in the same issue. I had intended to allow the discussion to drop at that stage.

However, I was discussing related matters with some students recently, when I again had occasion to reflect on the manner in which the authors of *Scientific Creationism* make use of quotations from eminent authorities from various scientific fields. With your indulgence, I would like to review that matter for the benefit of the readers of *CEJ*. It will be helpful to go into some detail.

The following paragraph is from my critique in *CEJ*, May 1976, (p. 20):

I object strongly to some of the persuasion techniques employed in *Scientific Creationism*. In particular, eminent authorities are quoted out of context, and these quotations are used to argue for an idea which the quoted authority does not support. For example, a paragraph from a book by Henry Faul is quoted on page 141 to support the idea that radiometric dating is unreliable. That quoted paragraph is from a chapter in Faul's book in which he discusses the determination of the ages of sedimentary rock strata by the radiometric dating of certain kinds of samples found within those strata. His discussion includes a section entitled "Questionable reference points" in which he points out that some kinds of samples are not reliable for dating purposes, and it is from that section that he is quoted. Faul is honest and open enough to recognize that radiometric dating has limitations — not all kinds of samples give reliable results — but he certainly claims that

reliable results can be obtained by radiometric dating. Such out-of-context quotations by the authors of *Scientific Creationism* are certainly misleading to the reader of the book. If that is an intentional deception, those authors should be strongly criticized for their dishonesty. If it is unintentional, they should be strongly criticized for their lack of understanding of a subject which they have chosen to discuss in print.

In response, the following is from Dr. Morris' remarks in that same issue of *CEJ* (pp. 23-24):

Professor Menninga makes a serious charge when he says the writers of *Scientific Creationism* quote authorities out of context as a "persuasion technique." No intimation was suggested in the book that the authorities cited were creationists or that they would agree with the writers. With few exceptions, every quote in the book was from an evolutionist; in fact, had only creationists been quoted, Professor Menninga would undoubtedly have discounted the entire argument because of their "literalist" bias. Evolutionists were quoted simply to document the facts reported in the book, knowing that at least they could not be charged with coloring these facts to support creationism. That this is an effective mode of argumentation is obvious from the consternation it seems to cause those Christians who, like Menninga, have so unnecessarily compromised with the evolutionary system.

That the quotations used have *not* [italics Morris'] been taken out of context, insofar as the facts are concerned, may be confirmed by anyone who wishes to check them out. Full documentation was included for just this purpose.

How many of you checked the quotation in question and compared it with the original

Clarence Menninga,
Professor of Geology,
Calvin College,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

statement in Faul's book? I dare say that very few readers of *CEJ* and an even smaller percentage of readers of *Scientific Creationism* did such a comparison.

Let me present the comparison on the pages of *CEJ*. The passage from Faul is in a chapter on the ages of the various rock layers in the geologic column, including sedimentary, fossil-bearing layers. These ages are based on the radiometric ages of *igneous* rocks which are intruded into or are inter-bedded with those sedimentary layers. Obviously, Faul considers the uranium-lead dating of those *igneous* rocks to be valid and reliable. Some attempts have been made to apply radiometric dating directly to certain types of sedimentary rocks or to certain mineral grains within sedimentary rocks, but these attempts have been generally unsuccessful. Faul comments on those unsuccessful attempts in a section of this chapter under the sub-heading "Questionable reference points." Following is the full paragraph containing the quotation in question:

"Uraniferous shale is another unreliable system. In several parts of the world are large shale deposits with fairly high uranium contents. Their stratigraphic position is accurately known, but these rocks are not closed systems. Uranium and lead both migrate in them in geologic time, and detailed analyses have shown that useful ages cannot be obtained from them. Similar difficulties prevail in attempts to date pitchblende veins. Here again much chemical activity is known to take place, and widely diverging "ages" can be measured on samples from the same spot. The uranium veins in the Colorado Front Range have long been used as one of the basic tie points in the time scale. These veins were deposited in Laramide time, considered to be the boundary between the Mesozoic and the Cenozoic eras. It is now definitely known that measurements on them are useless for the purpose of the time scale. The true age of the veins is completely masked by subsequent movements of both lead and uranium (Banks and Silver, 1964)."

(From Henry Faul, *Ages of Rocks, Planets and Stars*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1966, p. 61.)

In this passage Faul points out that there are some types of rocks which cannot be reliably dated by the uranium-lead method. But Faul's

comments, in context, cannot be used to support the position that the *method* of uranium-lead dating is always unreliable.

Now compare that with the following section of *Scientific Creationism* (pp. 140-141):

(a) *Uranium minerals always exist in open systems, not closed.*

Uranium is easily leachable by groundwater, for example. The intermediate element, radon gas, can easily move in or out of a uranium system. There are, in fact, various ways by which the components of this type of system can enter or leave it. One of the chief authorities on radioactive dating, Henry Faul, said:

"Uranium and lead both migrate [in shales] in geologic time, and detailed analyses have shown that useful ages cannot be obtained with them. Similar difficulties prevail in attempts to date pitchblende veins. Here again much chemical activity is known to take place and widely diverging ages can be measured on samples from the same spot."

Note that the statement attributed to Faul, though enclosed with quotation marks, is not a direct quote; the sentence has been changed. Note further that in *Scientific Creationism* the sentence has been altered so that the pronoun "them" in the statement "useful ages cannot be obtained with [sic] them" appears to refer to "uranium and lead," while in Faul the antecedent of "them" is clearly "uraniferous shale." The substitution of the preposition "with" for the original "from" promotes further the false impression that "them" refers to "uranium and lead."

So not only is Faul quoted out of context; he is actually misquoted in such a way as to alter the meaning from that of the original sentence itself. Faul clearly states that it is the sample — the shale — that gives unreliable results, while the misquotation in *Scientific Creationism* gives the false impression that it is the method which is unreliable. Such misquotations are grossly misleading. If that alteration of meaning by misquotation was intentional on the part of the writers of *Scientific Creationism*, I would consider that a reprehensible act. If not intentional, it is merely tragic.

I am sending Dr. Morris a copy of these comments. (See p. 18.) Since *Scientific Creationism* continues to be printed and sold, we have every right to expect that all future printings will carry the quotation correctly. CEJ



! READER RESPONSE

Readers are encouraged to respond positively or negatively to articles or ideas expressed in CEJ. Address your letters to the editor.

Trivial Difference?

A copy of "Scientific Creationism – Again" (p. 16) by Dr. Clarence Menninga was submitted to Dr. Henry M. Morris prior to its publication in this issue. Copies of the subsequent exchange of correspondence, mailed to CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL, are printed here with the writers' permission. Ed.

Dr. Menninga:

I appreciate your letter of May 30 and your courtesy in sending me a copy of your communication to *Christian Educators Journal* regarding our book *Scientific Creationism*. (See "Scientific Creationism – Again," p. 16.)

However, it does appear that your criticism is a classic example of gnat-straining and camel-swallowing. The replacement of the preposition "from" with "with" was apparently a typesetting error, which I failed to catch on the proofs and was certainly unintentional. That you could even suggest that it was intentional, with no evidence whatever, is more of a commentary on your own thinking than on mine.

Furthermore, the meaning of the sentence quoted is not changed in the least by the use of "with" instead of "from." It is perfectly clear that the whole statement refers to the use of uranium/lead to date shales. I even inserted the parenthetical phrase "(in shales)" for Faul's "in them" to make this evident. When the statement reads "useful ages cannot be obtained with them," it is obvious that the implied antecedent of "them" is uranium-lead dates from shales. The next sentence makes it even clearer by citing another example, that of pitchblende veins. Both cases (shales and pitchblendes) are examples of the general statement in the preceding paragraph that uranium/lead systems are open systems rather than closed systems. Surely no one who reads carefully could misunderstand this – regardless of whether "from" or "with" is used.

Furthermore, this entire argument is only one of many against the reliability of the uranium and other dating assumptions, and not the most important one, by any means.

If quibbling such as this is the only response to the substantial arguments and evidences in our book, then we are more confident than ever that a genuine scientific creationism, consistent with a literal interpretation of the Genesis record, is the norm for a truly Biblical witness today.

Henry M. Morris,
Director,
INSTITUTE FOR CREATION RESEARCH.

Dr. Morris:

I appreciate it that you took the time and effort to write concerning the comments I submitted to the *Christian Educators Journal*. I earnestly hope and pray that we Christians can continue discussing matters concerning the relationship between science and the Christian faith, and so may make some progress in our search for truth. Our unity in Christ certainly far outweighs any differences we may have regarding the validity of certain claims resulting from scientific study.

I readily concede that "from" and "with" may well have been changed by typesetting error. I also recognize that my comments were directed at a very small portion of the book "Scientific Creationism." But I disagree with your judgment that the matter discussed is trivial.

No one claims that *all* rocks form closed systems. Some pertinent quotations from Faul about closed systems include "Rigorously closed systems do not exist in nature, but surprisingly many minerals and rocks satisfy the requirement well enough to be useful for nuclear age determination." (p. 18), and about the gross uranium-lead method he says "Only the well-developed crystals of uraninite which are found in some pegmatites (coarsely crystalline igneous rocks) consistently give reliable ages by the gross method." (p. 19). His discussion of isotopic uranium-lead methods demonstrates his conviction that these methods are reliable.

You make the claim that *all* uranium-lead samples are unreliable for age determination because they are not closed systems. Your quotation from Faul is apparently intended to support that claim. However, Faul's statement only says that uraniferous shales and pitchblende veins are unreliable. It is only when your quotation is misunderstood that it seems to lend support to your position, and your rewording of Faul's statement can easily be misunderstood so that it seems to apply to all uranium-lead systems. Many of my

students who have read that chapter have misunderstood it in that way. It would be better had you quoted the statement in its entirety to avoid such misunderstanding.

Clarence Menninga,
Professor of Geology,
Calvin College,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Ridicule Isn't Ridiculous

Editor:

Partly I want to compliment you on your fine magazine. Those of us who serve on school boards are happy that our teachers can read such a fine Christian magazine filled with thought provoking articles and good ideas.

But I am not pleased with everything that you say in the article called "The Asylum," and I feel that a protest is necessary and in order. I think you are making fun of some teachers, as in the case of John Vroom, who is, I think, my nephew. Changing the name a bit doesn't help. He worked hard to get where he is. Did you know that he had a year in the seminary too? He stands against the use of bad language in the schools. Why don't you make a hero out of him, instead of ridiculing the good. He is hurt each time the *Christian Educators Journal* comes out. And, in a way, that hurts the whole family.

But as I said, you have a fine magazine. Keep up the otherwise fine work.

Lambertus Vroom

CEJ

**You cannot teach a man anything; you
can only help him to find it for himself.**

— Galileo

What's In A Name? — continued from page 5

Oh, there are some disadvantages in changing a name too. You have those legal papers to file and all those names to change on letterhead, and forms, and on and on ---

I guess from all this you can tell that we really are overjoyed here at *Christian Schools International* with our new 1978 name. Why don't you call us sometime — at the same old number, (616) 245-8618 — and hear our new receptionist say in her most serene manner, "*Christian Schools International*. May I help you?"

Try it, you'll like it! CEJ

Personal Counseling — continued from page 6

that implementing vocational guidance is to go only halfway. The foundation of the student's academic future rests on his spiritual and social development.

A personal counselor may be the first person to direct a high school student's attention to the situations he may face after graduation, whether he be college-bound or job hunting. In some schools, this personal counselor may be simply a teacher who has special rapport with the students. In schools with a bigger budget, a qualified counselor would be most beneficial. Regardless of who the individual is, there is a great need for a concerned adult to interact with the students. I have seen the products of our Christian high schools the last few years, and I am convinced that personal counseling is essential to educating students totally — spiritually, socially, and academically. All three are needed to call our system of education truly Christian.

Let's be careful when we claim that the colleges are to blame for turning students away from Christianity. The Christian high schools are to prepare students for college; they, too, have the responsibility and the capability to promote spiritual and social maturity. Vocational counseling is a major breakthrough. Let's not stop there. Personal counseling completes the job. It requires that the students review their attitudes on drinking and smoking marijuana, for example. Will they show consideration for their fellow dormitory students? Is going to church important to them? Have they thought about what it means to serve the Lord in an occupation? Emphasizing personal counseling for high school students is one important way in which the Christian high schools can work with the Christian colleges. Personal counseling should be considered basic to Christian secondary education.

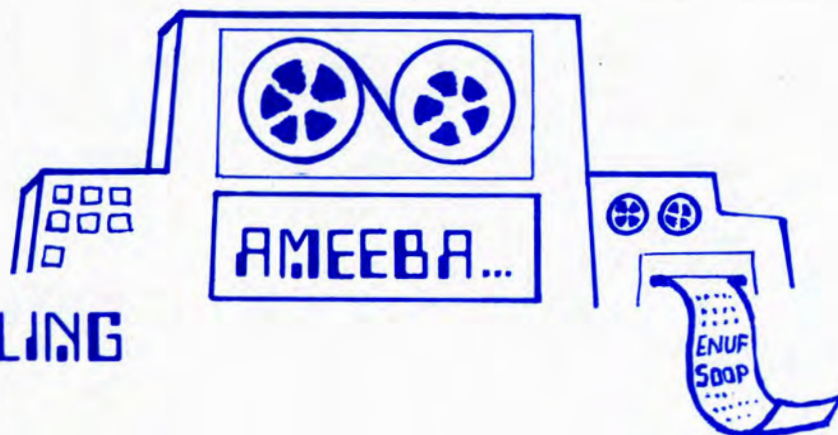
CEJ

TEACHER EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Are you interested in a one-year exchange of assignment with another Christian School teacher? The Christian Educators Association is offering a clearing-house service to set up exchanges. The individuals themselves will work out the details once initial contacts are made.

***For information and application forms, write:
Mr. John Riemersma, 939 Cricklewood SW,
Wyoming, MI 49509.***

ADVANTAGES OF COMPUTER SPELLING



by Helen Bisgard

The letter to the editor here printed will provide a context for this viewpoint. Helen Bisgard, Professor of Education, emeritus, Colorado Women's College, Denver, Colorado, currently serves as Phonemic Spelling Council secretary.

Editor:

I wrote this in a non-technical style hoping to appeal to the busy classroom teacher. Serious students of linguistics should be able to discover that I am rebutting the two points raised by Dr. Stanley M. Wiersma*. He seemed to be saying:

1. To memorialize historic facts of our language is a legitimate or even primary function of spelling.
2. Phonemic spelling would require a fixed standard of pronunciation that does not exist among the 300 million English speakers of the world.

I cannot share his views after traveling and visiting schools in Iran, Afghanistan, India, Nepal, Thailand, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Fiji, Hawaii, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Ireland, Netherlands, Italy, in many of which I observed the use of the *Voice of America Special Word Book*. I have been in classrooms in divergent speech areas of our country including New Orleans; Houston; Goodland, Kansas; Kearney, Nebraska; Detroit, Michigan; Los Angeles; New York City; and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

There is so much more that could have been said, but I felt a brief rebuttal would be more effective.

H.B.

*in "A Step Back for Spelling Reform: A Step Ahead for Reforming the Teaching of Spelling," *CEJ*, Nov. 1977.

In a story entitled *The Future of Hooper Toote* (Felice Holman, Scribners, 1972) an eleven-year-old boy struggles to accept the advantages and disadvantages of his unique ability to skim through the air wherever he goes.

An equally exciting story could be written about Hooper Toote as a first grader in the twenty-first century. After a few weeks of instruction, he is able to skim through books which today are written for sixth graders. His remarkable reading ability will have been brought about indirectly by the computers which are now being developed. The *Wall Street Journal* of April 13, 1977, describes voice-recognition machines being marketed by half a dozen companies. One type is used at the United Parcel Service in Baldwin Park, California. A person at the arrival dock unloads a package onto a conveyor belt and utters a coded destination into his wireless headset. This spoken code becomes a command and the computer channels each parcel to the correct outgoing truck area.

At the Chicago Mercantile Exchange an employee calls out prices on trades as they are being completed on the floor. A machine which "hears" him instantly flashes the prices on a screen.

Voice-system technologists see the future application of their product to the typewriting of spoken messages. An executive will dictate to a computer and have it type his message. The machine can write one symbol for each of the approximately forty-four speech sounds or phonemes it hears. Upon detecting the word *moon*, for example, the computer will write /moon/. Its response to the vowel sound in *soup* will likewise be /oo/, /soop/. Similarly, *crew*, *do*, *true*, *through*, and *fruit* will become /croo, doo, troo,

throo, froot/. It will write **bought, bough, dough,** and **enough:** /baut, bou, doe, enuf/. Since the machine will have no way of distinguishing between the vowels heard in **beet, thief, seat, mein** or **amoeba**, they will all come out /ee/. /beet, thief, seet, meen, ameeba/.

For a few years this computer system of spelling is likely to be limited to only a few industries. But as its efficiency is welcomed by an increasing number of organizations, more and more employees will be taught to read it. High school secretarial classes and commercial schools will require their graduates to read it. Television broadcasters and periodical publishers will spread its popularity through their commercials. Elementary schools will find it helpful in the initial learning of young children. By the time that Hooper Toote's son starts to school in 2022, he will find his primers written in the computer spelling. The books will be so easy to read that he will quickly figure out the sound of any word in his lessons, and even in the encyclopedia. He will not spend the endless hours his parents did in **learning to read** but instead can use that time in **reading to learn**. With his easily acquired reading skill Toote's son will master aspects of science, literature, mathematics, religion, social science and other subjects now delayed until fourth grade or junior high school. Best of all, from the viewpoint of certain diachronic linguists, will be his joyful excitement in being able to study the history of the English language. Etymology will come alive.

Because the frustrating inconsistencies of the traditional spelling system have been eliminated, Toote and his classmates will experience less psychological stress and have less need for remedial assistance.

He will write fluently any word in his own vocabulary and in the speech of those about him. After his first year in school Tooteson will need no further spelling lessons nor the rote memorization of word lists. His creative writing will be colorfully descriptive through the use of polysyllabic words.

Words as spoken by whom? By whose standard of pronunciation shall the new spelling be established?

By the same standard now used by a dictionary when it indicates the generally accepted pronunciation! For example: **pheasant** is shown as (fez'ənt). The pronunciation in parenthesis is a broad transcription and does not represent regional or individual practice. If, perchance, the Alabaman says (faz'ənt), an Australian (fiz'ənt), or a lisper (feth'ənt) each of these

speakers would nevertheless use the standard spelling. To the dictionary's key for pronunciation they would assign a slightly modified sound, unconsciously. Today travelers find English spoken comprehensibly by native people everywhere, whether in Asia, Europe, Africa, Ireland, Texas or the Bronx. The **Voice of America** broadcasts are understood throughout the world.

In order that today's educator may prepare his students to influence the direction of change, he should inform himself about the requirements and benefits offered by spelling systems of the future.

CEJ

PERSPECTIVE

Rob Bosscher

*Oh Lord, today was such a rowdy day,
What with a pitched battle before school,
And the wounded borne off to the Red Cross
Principal's office.*

*The nutmeg on the custard came at high noon –
Doug would or could not admit his wrong to me,
And stood in silent rebellion,
Darting glance at ceilingwallfloorpencil –
But not at me.*

*God, these walking wounded spirits,
Are they scarred for life?
All this potential, careening down time's road,
Carelessly denting each other's fender-souls . . .
When will they turn on the headlights
and perceive the narrow road ahead?*

*Ah, God, I ache for their insensitivity
And short sight, the unloving unconcern for
neighbor.*

*Yet, if I melt and moan in teacher concern
of student err,
How much more Your perfect anguish?
Thank You for the Cross.*

REMEDIAL READING: EFFECTIVE CURE OR PLACEBO FOR THE POOR?



(second of three articles)



by Norman DeJong

Does your school have a remedial reading program? Is it effective? Has your school board ever instructed the principal to research the program to determine whether or not it helps? Does a remedial reading program really help children learn to read faster or better?

Please, bother someone else with your nasty academic questions. We do not have time for research. We have 25% of our students who are reading at least one year below grade level. We are trying to help them catch up. Don't you have any sympathy for those poor kids?

Here are two sets of attitudes, one of which probably characterizes your school and community. Most schools, I suspect, operate with the emotional attitudes expressed in the second paragraph. Very few, if any, display the analytical, professional attitude set forth in paragraph one. If my assessments are correct, then the questions and comments I raise regarding remedial reading programs will not be very popular, even though they may be necessary.

But first a digression.

In the past it was not uncommon among medical doctors to prescribe placebos for some patients. A placebo, you recall, is an inactive medication or harmless substitute given merely to satisfy a patient's desire for medication. A nicely glazed sugar tablet, for example, will put many a nursing home resident quietly to sleep. A conscientious doctor, of course, will not charge his usual rates, but he must charge something lest his patient lose faith in the profession.

In many ways the teaching profession has chosen to emulate the medical doctor, conjuring up a program or a panacea, merely to buy time while the ailment remains undiagnosed or when no known cure exists. Sometimes, as in the geriatric ward, the illness exists only in the imagination. A placebo is necessary then to put the "patient" at rest while we tend to more pressing concerns.

During the 1974-75 school year I did my first serious study of remedial reading effectiveness. After spending considerable time in a large state university library, I came away with some disturbing conclusions. The first of these was that the International Reading Association, the recognized leader in the field, had no research reports available among its wealth of published information. My perusal of library sources and indexes also revealed that, while there are countless descriptions of remedial reading programs and "how to do" articles, there are very few reported studies aimed at determining effectiveness. The few sketchy studies that have been done certainly do not provide any significant evidence in favor of remedial or compensatory education.

When dealing with any kind of malady, it is crucial that one determine the cause before prescribing the cure. To concentrate on the symptoms and to ignore the cause is to prescribe a placebo for a high fever caused by pneumonia. Reading difficulties, like fevers, are merely symptomatic of underlying problems, the causes of which may be difficult to determine. Deficient reading habits may be caused by varying degrees of mental retardation, by neurological malfunctioning, by physical problems such as poor eyesight or impaired hearing, by cultural maladjustment, or by a host of sociological concerns unknown to either the teacher or the researcher.

Three examples will serve to illustrate. One girl I know performed badly in reading for three years. Her teachers were highly frustrated until,

Norman De Jong,
Superintendent,
Eastern Christian School Association,
North Haledon, New Jersey.

almost by accident, we noticed that for four consecutive years the girl had been absent from school on the days when eye-checks had been given. A quick examination with the Snellen chart and a subsequent visit to the optometrist brought almost immediate results. A second child, also doing poorly for years, was discovered to be emotionally disturbed by extreme marital tension in a home that appeared, on the surface at least, a model of harmony and happiness. Why dad and mom fought all the time was far more important to this sensitive little guy than reading the artificial stories of Dick and Jane. A third example, even more pathetic, involved a Cuban boy, newly emigrated with a family that spoke only Spanish. Shortly after arrival, dad had mysteriously disappeared, leaving mother alone and afraid, dependent on the help of a church and a cruel welfare system.

None of these had reading problems, yet all of them had a problem in reading. The same type of illustration could be repeated a million times in our larger inner cities, where cultural and social problems are magnified many times beyond our wildest middle-class imaginations.

NIE STUDIES AND CONCLUSIONS

In 1974 Congress tacked on some amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. One amendment required the National Institute of Education (NIE) to conduct an extensive study on the effectiveness of compensatory or remedial programs. That study was begun in February, 1975, and has been summarized in a series of reports published during the fall of 1977.

The first conclusion reached in these reports is that earlier studies conducted by the Office of Education, by the Educational Testing Services, and by the National Center for Educational Statistics were either invalid or non-productive or both. Out of frustration or dishonesty or desire to dupe, the NIE studies focused more on the types of services funded under Title I than on the actual effectiveness of the programs they were supposed to evaluate.* Throughout the

series of reports one detects the clear *assumption* that remedial programs are necessary and good, even though there is little or no data to corroborate such an assumption.

In their more objective sections, the NIE reports do give data which all of us should seriously consider. Some of the more important conclusions (from Allison Wolf, *The Relationship Between Poverty and Achievement*, Compensatory Education Study, NIE, December, 1977) are:

- a. In many large cities, the poorest schools are most often also the lowest achieving. Correlations are generally as high as .8 or .9. (p. 2).
- b. No other single social measure is consistently more strongly related than poverty to school achievement. (p. 2).
- c. Students from families with incomes of less than \$3,000 were three times as likely, and those with incomes of \$3,000-\$7,500 twice as likely, to be in the lowest achievement quartile as were those from wealthier families. (pp. 4-5).
- d. Students' achievement may be statistically related not only to family income, but also to other social characteristics which are commonly associated with poverty, such as their parents' education, or the jobs that fathers or mothers hold. (p. 6).
- e. There is evidence that children's achievement sometimes changes if other family circumstances change. . . It appears, therefore, that poor children are more likely to be performing below capacity in addition to having an average achievement well below their peers. (p. 8).

Other important NIE conclusions (*The Effects of Services on Student Development*, NIE, Washington, D.C., September 30, 1977) are:

- a. Students in the first grade gained most when they received compensatory instruction in their regular classrooms. (p. v.). This is especially significant since most remedial instruction took place in pull-out situations.
- b. Students in individualized instruction programs made substantial gains in achievement. In general, however, their gains were no higher than for students in less individualized classrooms. (p. vi.).
- c. These findings refute the contention that grouping students by ability, as in

* For a detailed statement of purposes, see *The Effects of Services on Student Development*, National Institute of Education, Washington, D.C., September 30, 1977, pp. vii - xi. Also, see *Compensatory Education Services*, National Institute of Education, Washington, D.C., July 31, 1977, pp. iii - xvi.

pull-out programs, leads to desirable outcomes in either achievement or affective development. Specifically, reviews of studies on ability grouping indicate that homogeneous ability grouping does not consistently help students

... studies [show] the slight gains for high ability students are offset by evidence of unfavorable effects on students of average and below-average ability, particularly the latter.

achieve. Moreover, among studies showing significant effects on learning, the slight gains for high ability students are offset by evidence of unfavorable effects on students of average and below-average ability, particularly the latter. (p. 7).

- d. Findings on the influence of homogeneous ability groupings on affective development are mostly unfavorable. (p. 7).
- e. First-grade students who received instruction in the mainstream setting made significantly larger gains in both reading and mathematics than those in pull-out settings. (p. 22).
- f. As is frequently found in studies of student achievement, the compensatory education students in the third grade were further behind their classmates than were those compensatory education students in the first grade. (p. 19).

In spite of all the above negative conclusions, the NIE jubilantly focused on one set of "remarkably high" statistics, hoping to put to sleep the very negative Educational Testing Services report of 1976. Claiming an average reading achievement gain of 12 months over a 7 month period of instruction, the NIE (in *The Effects of Services On Student Development*, p. 20) highlighted the following table:

	Grade Equivalent		
	Fall	Spring	Gain
Reading 1	0.4	1.6	1.2
Mathematics 1	0.4	1.5	1.1
Reading 3	1.8	2.5	0.7
Mathematics 3	1.7	2.8	1.1

On the surface at least, the above figures for grade 1 appear to show impressive gains. The test instrument used was the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), Level B, Form S.

The subtests that were used were Letter Sounds, Word Recognition I, Reading Comprehension, Word Recognition II, Math Concepts and Applications, and Math Computation. The fall tests were administered in either the second or third week of September. The spring tests were administered in April. Before the fall tests were administered, the students had already been targeted for compensatory or remedial education, thus allowing their inclusion in the study.

For a tests and measurements novice, the above procedure may seem to be proper. The United States Office of Education, however, should have very serious doubts about both the procedure and the publication of the data, for the CTBS materials are questionable as to both reliability and validity when used in the first month of the first grade. The non-score (0.4) should have clearly indicated that it is grossly inaccurate to test any child with a reading-required test before the person has had an opportunity to learn to read. In belated fashion, typical of reports put together by committees, the report (p. 24) does apologize, "There appear to be serious questions about the validity of using tests in the first weeks of grade 1 to assign children to a separate compensatory class."

With nothing more substantial than the spurious data from the above Table, the NIE reports go on assuming the legitimacy and continued necessity of federally-funded programs under Title I. If self-respecting Congressmen read these reports, they ought to question seriously whether another dollar should be spent on compensatory instruction. My most educated guess, though, is that Congress will go on funding Title I and will probably increase the appropriation. No one, in today's political climate, would want to go on record as being against the education of the nation's poor.

SOME PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

Having examined over the last four years the question of remedial reading effectiveness,

... these types of [reading] programs are not only unproductive, but are also apt to increase the magnitude of the problem.

my growing conviction is that these types of programs are not only unproductive, but are also apt to increase the magnitude of the problem. My own research clearly points in that direction, as does that conducted by the National Institute of

Education. Those who receive compensatory education should at least be able to hold their own as they advance through the grades, but the data consistently show them falling further and further behind.

Another dimension that comes through the studies with ringing clarity is the relationship between poverty and achievement. The NIE reports strongly suggest that the primary causes for poor reading performance are sociological in nature. A more recent study released by the Carnegie Council on Children (for a detailed report of this study, see: John G. Ogbu, *Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Academic Press, 1978.) corroborates this and attributes the poor performance to negative motivational factors. Assuming the validity of these extensive studies, one must conclude that the cure should address the cause and not the symptoms. Merely to pour more money into schools so as to hire more teachers and to further segregate the poor from the mainstream in no way addresses the problem at its roots. It only accentuates the problem and serves to convince the poor that they have no real chance of making good in the mainstream. No wonder the scores of students in compensatory education continue to drop as they progress through the grades.

... remedial or compensatory education is not the cure for the problems of the slow learner.

Based on all the data currently available, one must conclude that remedial or compensatory education is not the cure for the problems of the slow learner. Although there obviously are exceptions to this very negative conclusion, no one should build programs or plan cures on the occurrence of exceptions. Those persons who have seemingly been helped through these programs are students whose difficulties and solutions would need to be individually analyzed. To do that might be profitable, but it would not alter significantly the data already reported.

If remedial reading is primarily a placebo to placate the poor and the conscience of the rich, is there a cure yet to be found? Can we really help the poor, the unmotivated, and the under-achiever? I believe there is. For now, let me simply call it "Equal Opportunity in the Classroom." In the third and final article I will try to explain that program in some detail.



BEYOND THE WORDS

Bryce Fopma

Barry,
a sixth grader,
with jerky, unsure voice —
"I ain't got no eraser, Mr. Fopma."
Such primitive speech!
I sternly looked at the teary-eyed lad:
awkwardly between two dirty fingers
he held the stump of a pencil,
dull-pointed,
pocked with teeth marks,
a mere crust of an eraser
the result of overwork,
of spelling and grammatical
imperfections.
"You don't have any eraser, and my name
is Mr. Fopma."
"Yeh," he didn't smile.
I sighed.
I would civilize both his speech and writing.
Three years to give him a "feel" for proper
English!

Barry,
an eighth grader,
that same unsteady voice —
"I ain't got no eraser, Mr. Fopma."
Impulsively
I wished to lash out
reminding him of his verbal ignorance,
appeasing myself before the class.
But,
the teary-eyed look,
the stump of a pencil clutched between
two dirty fingers
made me pause.
"Here, I'll give you a new pencil."
He smiled —
so did I.

Barry's gone now —
probably struggling along in high school,
wearing down erasers,
still remembering me as Mr. Fopma.
But, thanks to Barry
I learned to civilize my teaching,
to feel for those who need
special love,
and to listen beyond the words.

(3) A by-product that closely relates to self-sacrifice is top physical conditioning. We teachers ought to learn from our athletes and carry over into our lives the concept that God expects more from our bodies than what most of us give Him. The person in good physical condition can function far more efficiently behind the desk than his out-of-shape counterpart.

(4) Improved relationships among coaches and athletes or among athletes themselves often result. Returning from a state track meet recently, an athlete remarked, "I never knew her before going to state. I knew her as a basketball player, but I never knew what she was really like – she's really neat."

(5) High school students who do not achieve well in the classroom have the chance to feel good about themselves through athletic recognition. An individual who during three years of high school had gained dubious recognition because of low grades, truancy, and other questionable activities, as a senior made the basketball team. He started the year on the bench because he had much to learn and was in poor condition; he moved up to a starting position late in the season and was the top performer in several contests. Local newspapers recognized him, he became the center of attention to the fans, the favorite of the student body, and, for the first time in his high school career, he felt good about himself in a school-related activity. Whether the story has a "and he lived happily ever after" ending I cannot tell, but he did go on to participate successfully in track this spring.

When the activity ceases to be positive and the coach and athlete begin to look at turnout and competition with dread or such seriousness that it becomes a life-or-death situation, then it has lost its correct perspective.

(6) In competitive athletics, teams try their very best. Students (and also teachers – I'm speaking from experience) often worry less about their classroom performance than their athletic performance. How one looks before Dad and Mom at Saturday's track meet is a much higher priority to many students than how well one will do on Friday's grammar test. The basic reason is that one is put on display while the other is not. Any time we put a product of our work on display we want it to be the best – whether a

school newspaper, a music concert, or an athletic contest. If we are going to compete, we want to be the best, and this consequently brings out the best effort in all of us. This too, God expects.

(7) Finally, most of the time, competitive athletics is fun. It is a good, positive, enjoyable activity. Despite what others may say or believe, I think it should remain that way whether losing or winning. When the activity ceases to be positive and the coach and athlete begin to look at turnout and competition with dread or such seriousness that it becomes a life-or-death situation, then it has lost its correct perspective. But lifting weights, turnout in the rain, 12-mile runs in track turnout, preparing for a football game, crying after losing, and giving it your best effort all can be fun and that is good!

NEGATIVE BY-PRODUCTS OF ATHLETICS

If it can do all that then why is there a hassle? Because there are some negative spin-offs that can hurt people and schools involved in competitive interscholastics as well.

(1) *Is competition good?* Seldom is the value of competition questioned. It is seen as a part of the American system and consequently assumed to be good. When competition takes place, the rules dictate a winner and a loser. We had a group of senior boys who went through the experience of losing nearly every football game and baseball game they played. In addition, this group had won few games during their athletic career since junior high. I'm sure that some of them have been branded as losers by the world's standards, and who wants to be a loser? Despite what we as Christian coaches may teach, the competition and end results leave a lasting impression that is difficult to erase.

(2) *How important is winning?* A coach wrestles with this question each time he fields a team. We compete to win! Why should we compete to lose? So we try to field the best team possible and may even try to win at all costs. It means that some kids may possibly be cut from the squad (an ego-devastating experience) and it means that others will pick up splinters sitting on the bench the whole season except for the times when the outcome of the game is no longer in question. It also means that the talented people will be representing your school even though they may possibly not be your best representatives. It becomes a complex maze for the coach to decipher when his choice has to be to win rather than to lose.

(3) *Is losing good for you?* Another thing that we have always assumed without further inquiry is that losing is good for an athlete. We have assumed it builds character. I no longer believe that; I believe that losing reveals character but seldom builds it.

Is losing good for you?

How many readers wanted to succeed at an endeavor so much that you began thinking about it months in advance, disciplined yourself to take two to three hours beyond your normal activities to prepare yourself specifically for this endeavor, then as the actual competition approached, you added an extra two hours each day for three months trying to accomplish this goal you set before yourself . . . and then failed? I believe we were created to succeed most of the time — it's good for us. I had boys who put in the amount of time just described and then lost ten consecutive football games! Not only was it a humbling experience for me and the team, but also it hurt some of the kids very deeply. Even though we try to teach alternate ideas of success other than the scoreboard reading, most kids do not look that far until some later date in their lives.

Our football players pay one-half the cost of their jerseys and at the end of the season they keep them. They often wear them to school or around town. A senior quarterback felt so responsible for one losing season that he refused to wear that jersey to school before the month of March, and then only after we discussed together at length his very negative feelings and self-recrimination. That label of "loser" this bright, positive, Christian athlete will not soon forget. Losing broke his character rather than built it up. Nor is this an isolated example, because for each winner there is also a loser.

(4) *Is the perfect season or state championship the ultimate in competitive athletics?* This, I think, is a cruel hoax. Few coaches, athletes, student bodies, or adult fans can handle this kind of success. Along with the chant "We're No. 1!" comes the air of superiority a No. 1 person is required to demonstrate. I've seen this air of superiority in the football player who has developed his physique more than many other students and now goes through the halls at school demonstrating what is known as the "stud image" or the "macho image" of the world. That is not good. We've had girl athletes get upset because the cheerleaders haven't given them the recognition "they deserve" now that they have reached par with their male counterparts.

Several years ago, after two days in the state basketball tournament, several players were suspended from the team for violating training rules. The press labelled the remaining players "the six iron lyncs." The six won the Washington State A basketball championship. Some of the six finished their senior year as outstanding examples of Christian athletes and students. Others could not handle being No. 1. Their arrogance and behavior suggested they felt they were above school rules; after all, they were the iron Lyncs.

(5) *Can a high school student handle the pressure put upon him as an athlete?* Outside pressure unconsciously put upon a high school athlete or team is very disturbing. For an athlete to put pressure on himself is one thing, but for an athlete to handle a community's subtle pressure is another thing. We get the most community involvement in boys' basketball. We have had a lot of success and have gone to state many times during the past ten years. In fact, we have gone so often that our supporters plan their winter holiday in expectation of the 4-day state "tourney." Reservations are made in Tacoma months in advance. This adds up to an unexpressed pressure on our basketball athletes. They sense an impending disappointment, perhaps even criticism of supporters, if they should fail to achieve the goals set up for them by parents, friends, classmates, as well as community supporters. No high school student needs to cope with this pressure while trying to keep the right perspective on the part athletics ought to have in his life.

If all these negative things can happen (and they do) then why are we still involved in interscholastic athletics?

CONCLUSION

As in any activity in which we are involved, we weigh the bad against the good and make a choice. All of life is not black and white and this is one of those areas shaded gray. As I stated at the beginning, I wanted to be very honest with you, sharing examples and looking at both sides and the gray area between the two. At this time in my life, I find that as a Christian educator, I can be a real influence in the lives of young people and I find the area of athletics to be a special and unique opportunity to touch young peoples' lives. Right now, for me, the good outweighs the negative.

That's why I'm deeply involved. [CEJ]



PROMISE AND DELIVERANCE, Vol. I

Author: S. G. DeGraaf

Translated by H. Evans and

Elisabeth Wichers Runner

Paideia Press, St. Catharines, Ontario, 1977

423 pp., \$9.95

Reviewed by
Wayne Kobes
Instructor in Theology
Dordt College
Sioux Center, Iowa

Promise and Deliverance, Vol. I, can hardly be described as a new book. It is the English translation of S. G. DeGraaf's *Verbondsgeschiedenis* which was written in Dutch over forty years ago. This book, which proved to be such a formative influence on the Reformed community in the Netherlands, is now available to English readers.

We can thank Dr. and Mrs. Evan Runner for their "labor of love" in translating the first volume of this work into the English language and Paideia Press for making it available to Christians in North America.

Can such a book written in Dutch so long ago be of benefit to Christians in a modern world? I am thoroughly convinced that it can and will be! *Verbondsgeschiedenis* was a significant influence in the Netherlands because it was written for the average Christian believer and because of its penetrating insight into biblical revelation. Such qualities will make *Promise and Deliverance* significant on the North American scene as well.

In the Preface to his work, the Rev. S. G. DeGraaf explains that his book grew out of his own wrestling with the question: "How do we tell the Bible history?" As leader of a class for Sunday school teachers DeGraaf was concerned with the practical application of a Reformed understanding of Scripture. The outlines in *Promise and Deliverance* are the fruit of that concern.

The reader of *Promise and Deliverance* will find DeGraaf's story outlines fresh and extremely helpful. The outlines show his concern not only to be true to the message of Scripture, but also to excite and involve the children who hear in them God's great deeds of redemption in Jesus Christ. Volume One leads the reader through God's written Word from the Creation account to the conquest of Canaan.

The reader of Volume One of *Promise and Deliverance* will profit greatly from the story outlines and from the brief introduction which discusses the principles which should govern our telling of the Bible's stories. The Rev. DeGraaf reflects on the nature of biblical revelation and how this should govern our reading of the Bible and our presentation of its message to others.

The biblical writings are given "in order that we might believe," writes DeGraaf. The context of Scripture can best be described as the self-revelation of God, the God who reveals Himself only in the Mediator, Jesus Christ. Old Testament and New Testament find their meanings only in Jesus Christ who is the Head of the covenant which God has established with his people.

Having stated this basic understanding of biblical revelation, the author goes on to elaborate. To understand the Bible as God's self-revelation, writes DeGraaf, means that we must avoid a man-centered reading of Scripture which passes over God's revelation in his acts and instead highlights man's response. Although such a reading of the Bible is widespread and easy to apply, it fails to convey the message of Scripture as God's self-revelation. The Bible is reduced to a book of "do's" and "don'ts" aimed at instructing man to live a "good" moral life.

To read the Bible and to tell its stories properly is not an easy task according to DeGraaf. It takes much prayerful preparation, but "if we are not determined to tell of God first and last, of God as the Alpha and the Omega, we should not even bother telling the Bible story." (p. 20)

Focusing on God's revelation of Himself in the Mediator, the Rev. DeGraaf writes:

The Mediator was operative throughout the Old Testament era. His work did not begin at the start of the New Testament. He already penetrated Old Testament history, moving among the people and shadows in order to reveal Himself. Everything is full of Him, and History has become one great miracle through His Spirit. (p. 22)

DeGraaf's focus on God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ, the Mediator, always takes account of Christ as Head of the new covenant. A proper understanding of the covenant is crucial to our proper reading of Scripture and to our obedient living of the new life in Christ. As DeGraaf notes:

In the covenant God always draws near to His *people* as a whole—never just to individuals. Because of the covenant, the entire people rests secure in God's faithfulness, and every individual member of the covenant shares in that rest as a member of the community. We need not always use the word *covenant*—the beginning of the Bible does not—as long as the children are told about the covenant relationship.

I'm afraid this does not always happen—not even when we talk about the Christ. We may be inclined to introduce Him as the Redeemer of certain individuals, but when we do so, we can no longer present Him as the Head of the covenant. Yet it is as covenant Head that He appears in Scripture.
(p. 24)

In sketching a basic approach to Scripture, DeGraaf shows a clear insight into the nature and content of biblical revelation. The principles he lays before us, if followed, help us avoid many pitfalls and lead us into an exciting and liberating hearing of the Word. As one reads DeGraaf's introduction, he is struck by its address to today's situation in the Christian community. *Promise and Deliverance*, Volume One, is a *must* for all who would gain clearer insight into God's Word. Teachers, parents, and preachers will benefit greatly from this important translation. A helpful study guide written by Dr. Gordon Spykman and published by Paideia Press is also available.

FAMOUS PERSONS OF NEW FRANCE

Authors: Ada Speyers, Gordon Oosterman
and Henry Kooy
National Union of Christian Schools
(now known as Christian Schools International)
Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976
68 pp., paperback, \$1.50

Reviewed by
G. Van Arragon
Lambton Christian High
Sarnia, Ontario

This booklet forms part of the Canadian Social Studies Series developed by the NUCS (now known as Christian Schools International). As the title suggests, it is a collection of short biographical sketches of leading figures of New France, such as Jacques Cartier, Samuel de Champlain, Bishop Laval, and Frontenac. Its accounts are competent, although somewhat romanticized. The writing appears to be geared to the senior elementary, or junior high level. Therefore, the book could be useful as a resource for students of that level.

In several respects, however, the booklet is disappointing. The addition of a bibliography of further readings to guide students and teachers would be beneficial.

The biographies are mainly summaries of material to be found in any good, standard textbook of the period. As a result, it does not deal adequately with the ideals and motivation of the people it describes.

An understanding of the culture of French Canada requires an understanding of the ideals and the vision that the founders of that culture had for the colony and for France. Such an understanding is especially important for the Christian student of history, who sees man as a former of culture, working in creation, in response to God's law-order. Since *Famous Persons of New France* does not attempt to do this, its usefulness is limited to being an informational resource.

I CAN'T STAND CINDY, LORD

Author: Barbara Bush
Zondervan Publishing Company
Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976
128 pp.

Reviewed by
James J. Veltkamp, Chairman
Education Department
Christian Heritage College

Here is a delightfully well-written book by an experienced teacher who relates many of her first-hand experiences as a substitute teacher. This book can be read in one sitting; it is easy reading, but relates directly to what goes on in school situations today at various grade levels. The author's Christian faith and resorting to prayer are not something superficial, but the means all of us should use on a day-to-day basis. Christian teachers in both the Christian and public schools can profit from reading this book.

Meditation

by Nelle Tjapkes

EDUCATION, SKILL, AND THE YOKE

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way: The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Mark 1:2).

John the Baptist, Christ's messenger, received the Jewish education of his day, and entered the desert-classroom with God Almighty as his teacher. A humble and contemplative student, John carried out God's plan for his life and constantly practiced what he preached. Every Christian teacher must realize an identical calling. Three prerequisites for Christian teaching, closely related, and overlapping, are necessary: education, skill, and the yoke.

EDUCATION

Education is an intellectual process which produces change for good or evil; it is a continuing, never ending process. It is regrettable that many teachers think they have "arrived" after some years in the classroom. Changing society demands constant re-evaluation of educational content, method, and interpretation. An alert, professionally minded Christian educator listens to and evaluates what other qualified colleagues have to say, and more importantly, spends much time in the school of God's Word where the mind can obtain an understanding of eternal truths.

Education is change; this change originates in the mind. Emotions are determined by what the mind perceives as

truth, and the intellectual fire must be kept burning by the dynamic of God's love.

Not only is Christianity rooted in the intellectual and emotional dimensions of man but, as the late Louis Berkhof has said, "it is also a matter of the will which determines the direction of life." Only as the Christian educator is controlled by the Holy Spirit through these three forces can he expect to have a meaningful and effective impact on the minds of students.

SKILL

Skill, according to the dictionary, is the ability to use one's knowledge effectively in doing something. It requires understanding and practice. Intellectual knowledge is useless as a tool to influence others if ability to communicate is lacking. John the Baptist applied the knowledge he had through his skill of communicating. "Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins" (John 3:5,6). He so skillfully communicated his knowledge that many were **compelled** to listen. Teachers must know which child needs a relatively

gentle prodding and which requires a sterner approach. Teachers must make knowledge relevant to the lives of students.

The study of math and music reveals a knowledge of God as much as a class in Bible doctrine. All three contribute to spiritual growth. It is possible that a chapel service could be less God-glorifying than a science class; does the maturing student discern this? Teachers, Christian teachers, must lead students to the realization that Christianity and subject matter are of one piece.

Skill is knowledge applied. A teacher may be sweet and sincere, but sweetness and sincerity by themselves will not "fill the bill."

THE YOKE

"Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me . . . for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:29,30.)

Society today rejects the thought of having a yoke or burden **placed** upon its freedom of thought, speech, or action; even less is it willing to **take** that yoke upon its self. The **yoke** requires action, the putting on of all the Christian moral virtues and the laying aside of all vice. Four traits particularly comprise the **yoke**: pride, integrity, patience, and love.

Nelle Tjapkes, past teacher, presently serving as secretary to the Center for Christian Scholarship at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

PRIDE "According to Christian teachers, the essential vice, the utmost evil, is pride. Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that are mere flea bites in comparison: it was through Pride that the devil became devil: pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind" (C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 94). Scripture clearly teaches that pride is abominable to the Lord. Pride is enmity – it breathes an attitude of superiority and brooks no criticism from the student regarding such an attitude. Pride cannot tolerate failure in the light of comparison.

Pride in Christian teachers leads to inferior performance; when a teacher is "really ticked off," pride can become a damaging factor in interpersonal relationships. "Pride is a spiritual cancer; it eats up the very possibility of love, or contentment, or even common sense" (Lewis, p. 97). It is a destroying process; it replaces love with hatred and resentment. It replaces sound Christian judgment with immature and rash reactions.

The daily prayer of the Christian teacher should also echo that of David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139:23,24).

INTEGRITY Integrity, defined by Webster as "soundness, adherence to a code of values, utter sincerity, honesty, candor," is indispensable in yoke-bearing. Past generations have faced life with turmoil and fear in the midst of confusion. So also the Jews in John the Baptist's day. But in John they saw a man of integrity, a man undaunted by confusion, a man with courage to speak of mercy and justice amid much confusion.

Do Christian teachers today, unwittingly perhaps, contribute to the confusion of many young people and children? Or do they teach love and equality by integrity . . . action that corresponds with words?

To live and teach integrity, teachers do need a Guide. Wise teachers heed Proverbs 11:3: "The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them."

PATIENCE A given word may have a different meaning for different people. Patience is one such word. For some, practicing patience means ignoring or allowing improper behavior. This indicates the vice of lazy negligence rather than the virtue of patience. To others patience means a passive, uncomplaining endurance of trials; this is half truth. Patience is an *active* response, *doing* the things that must be done with self-control and perseverance. Teachers must "run" with patience.

All teachers have times when they say, "This just wasn't my day!" Sharing such feelings with students not only demonstrates humility and integrity but also invites understanding and loving response to an apology for lack of patience. Children too need patient understanding. Perhaps a child's unacceptable performance is due to an unhappy beginning to his day. Maybe he has burdens and worries too heavy to carry because of his limited knowledge and experience. Surely he needs a classroom filled with security, love, understanding, and patience. Teachers can change schedules to fit their feelings; students don't have that option.

Patience is tested when it is repeatedly tried. Do teachers try patiently to find the answer — analyzing performance, counselling sensitively, and

seeking primary causes instead of superficial causes. "Seventy times seven" requires much patience. Taking Christ's yoke demands patience to do right regardless of personal consequences. Scripture says that those who hold fast the Word in an honest and good heart shall bring forth fruit with patience (Luke 8:15).

LOVE That Christian teachers must love is obvious. As pride is the "complete" sin that lies at the root of man's antagonism to God, so love is the "complete" virtue that provides the dynamic for God-centered living. Anyone who cannot or does not *love* God and *love* students has no right to be a teacher in a Christian school.

A teacher may be a walking encyclopedia, as skillful as the devil, or both, but that without love only adds up to chilling condemnation. Not only must teachers exercise Christian graces, but also they must be "perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Who on earth can meet such demands? No one on earth can, but obviously God is the only limit of ideals. Jesus said, "Take my yoke," — a restraining influence on the one hand and a sure formula for freedom and success on the other. This puts achievement in its proper perspective.

Christian teachers are privileged with a high calling. God's grace can enable them to

- be humble in spirit (Jer. 9:23, 24)
- be candid in self-evaluation (Jer. 17:9)
- recognize God as Judge (Jer. 17:10)
- be strong in the Lord (Phil. 4:13).

With Paul, Christian teachers can say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

SPECIAL ISSUE

GOVERNMENT-SCHOOL RELATIONS

Your questions, suggestions, and articles will be considered and appreciated.

Send them to:

*Lillian V. Grissen, Editor
Christian Educators Journal
3109 West Christy Drive
Phoenix, Arizona 85029*

Suggested

Topics:

TEACHERS:

Licensing:

*Examples
Methods suggested
Requirements
Control*

Legal Responsibility:

*Torts
Liability
Accountability
Case studies*

Teacher Education:

*Provincial or State
requirements
Federal requirements -
for special programs
Restrictions*

Civil Rights:

*Academic freedom
Compulsory retirement
Discrimination*

SCHOOLS:

*History: State or Province
Federal
Judicial*

*Implications: Legal
Philosophical
Scriptural*

Financial Aid:

*Examples of programs
Conditions
Effectiveness
Application procedure
Programs available*

Accreditation:

*Relationship to govern-
mental requirements
Importance
Course approval
Competencies required
Evaluation procedures*

CASE STUDIES

are especially invited.

THESE SUGGESTIONS

ARE JUST THAT: . . .

ADD YOUR IDEAS TO THEM.

DEADLINE: JANUARY 1, 1979