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Educators
Journal*

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Christian Educators Journal Association, composed of several member or sponsoring organizations, publishes the Journal on a quarterly basis as a channel of communication for all educators committed to the idea of parentally controlled Christian schools, whether at the elementary, secondary, or the 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 favors those contributions that are normative and evaluative rather than merely descriptive of existing trends and practices in 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.

Business correspondence concerning subscriptions to the Journal or membership in the Association should be sent to the Business Manager. Subscription price is \$ 2.00 for four issues per year.

Correspondence concerning articles or book reviews should be addressed to the editor of the appropriate department or to the Managing Editor.

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FROM ME TO THEE

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THE USES OF A CREED

Unless my ear to the ground is full of wax, it would seem that most Christian school teachers and principals agree that we do not have in writing a well-developed philosophy of education for the Christian school. By it they seem to mean that there is not a body of literature to which they can turn with the expectation of receiving substantial help in the making of the thousand and one educational decisions that are thrust upon them by the events of the day and week. While the literature contains scores of hortatory moral preachments,¹ and a number of theological treatises,² and even several exploratory documents on general aims and purposes,³ these have not appreciably helped the practicing educator to make explicit to himself or others the connections between his religious commitment and the specific decisions he makes on content, methodology, or general school policy.

All this is not to say that he receives no help from the literature on the Christian school. The moral preachments have often inspired him to greater effort, the theological treatises have often given him the assurance that there is sound theology behind his efforts, and the exploratory statements have for some expressed our common aims and assumptions about the child and the school.

However, granted the usefulness of all this, what is thus far lacking in the literature is a serious and systematic attempt to relate theology

to specific school practices, or religious aims to specific positions taken on controversial educational issues. And yet, unless I am thoroughly mistaken in reading the mind of the Christian school educator, what he wants most desperately to know better is the connections between specific items in his theology or world-view and one or more of the alternatives that face him at every turn in his school day. What textbook should he choose out of what is perhaps a bewildering array? Should he practice or prevent corporal punishment? Should he favor or fight movements to seek government support of private schools? Should he agitate for or against a student council with real decision-making powers in his school? Should he choose Huckleberry Finn or The Red Badge of Courage as a novel to be taught in the ninth grade? Should he support, teach against, or ignore racial apartheid at home or abroad? These are but illustrative of the choices that constitute the warp and woof of the educator's working day, and often his nights. If he reads one or more professional education journals or books on curriculum he sharpens considerably his grasp of the alternatives, and sometimes simply heightens his confusion about what he believes. Thus, both his day-to-day experience and his reading in education serve to sharpen his awareness of both the range and depth of the choices that shape any educational enterprise. They jar him loose

¹See the convention speeches of any ten years as published in the NUCS Annual.

²See, for examples, Sections I and II of Fundamentals of Christian Education, edited by C. Jaarsma (Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1953).

³See "Toward a Philosophy of Christian Education," containing statements by Drs. C. Jaarsma and J. L. De Beer, and published by NUCS, 1953 and 1958.

from any complacency into which he may have fallen.

On the one hand his experience and his reading in education present him with alternatives. On the other hand the literature on the Christian school gives him mainly theological beliefs and broad generalizations. The literature does not help him relate these two influences in his thinking. He perhaps could be content with this state of affairs were it not that from pulpit and platform he is constantly told and taught that his religion is relevant to all areas of life, as well as that the Christian school is distinctive because it is a concrete manifestation of a religious commitment. It is this third influence on his thinking that makes him uncomfortable in the presence of the other two.

It would seem that what we need is not more preachments from preachers or 'philosophy' from philosophers, but formulations from firing-line educators, those who teach in the Christian day school. The lack of literature which translates theological positions into educational policies may be due simply to the fact that the vast majority of the writings about the Christian school were produced by those who were not practicing educators. The gap between theology and educational policy (in our writing) will not be closed until teachers themselves commit their perceptions to print. They are the best equipped to build clear bridges between policies and philosophy, having some training and experience in both.

I have argued elsewhere⁴ that this effort should take the form of building an "educational creed." This would exhibit many of the characteristics of our church creeds, with the major difference being that the focal point of each major item would be a live educational issue, with some fairly clearcut educational policy being both defined and defended.

Several features would be indispensable if it is to be an improvement over what we have. Each major item, or "Article" (Cf. Belgic Confession), or "Canon" (Cf. Canons of Dort) would contain, and in the following order: (1) a statement of some educational practice, whether a curriculum emphasis, administrative policy, or what, with a companion statement of what educational policy is being rejected thereby.

(2) a statement of the theological concept(s) which support such a practice or emphasis, along with what theological errors are implicit in the educational practice rejected.

(3) a statement of the Biblical events, evidences, "proof texts," which give clearcut Biblical grounding to the theological concepts and the educational practice. (Here much of the

work may already be done for us in the church creeds.)

The time is not yet ripe, I judge, for any "Synods of Dort" to produce such an educational "Canons of . . .", nor do we have, as yet, a pedagogic Guido De Bres to write, singlehandedly, for us a ". . . Confession." Neither of these can happen until we educators have searched out systematically those points at which our theology cuts most cleanly into educational questions.

The Journal is the place for this systematic searching out process to be recorded. In this year a beginning has been made. In this special "debate issue" our writers were instructed to deal with live curriculum issues in a definite pro and con manner, and to defend their positions theologically. The careful reader will note that several have succeeded in doing just that. Hopefully, this emphasis, but not necessarily this format, can be pursued in the future.

Unless the "Christian" dimension of our shoptalk is consistently and explicitly fostered, this journal will deteriorate into just another Education rag, with its pages full of bland summaries of trends, and/or the outpourings of the vocal grippers and snipers in our midst. We need all kinds of writing in this journal, but what the Christian School Movement most desperately needs are those writings which reveal sensitivity to educational issues in which our theology is at stake.

Let us, then, begin to build our deeds into creeds.

D.O.

⁴The Roots of the Calvinistic Day School Movement, Grand Rapids: Calvin College Monograph Series, 1963, pp. 28ff.





*Department editor,
Sam Greydanus*

THE CONTROVERSIAL CLASSROOM

-- Kathryn Schuringa*

One of the most challenging problems that faces teachers is, "How shall I handle controversial issues in the classroom?" Some of these issues do not touch the lives of the students immediately and can be handled more or less objectively. ("Was the American Revolution justified?" or "Should President Truman have dismissed General Mac Arthur?")

Other matters of a controversial nature are more difficult to handle because they are fraught with emotional aspects. They touch the life of the student directly and he becomes personally involved. Consequently, a cool dispassionate approach becomes well nigh impossible. The issue of racial understanding is such a problem. Any mention of this subject reveals deep feelings and prejudices which militate against clear thinking and understanding.

The teacher then is faced with the question whether he will open his class to a discussion of this problem at all. The easiest decision one can make is to say, "Since we cannot discuss

this matter calmly and sanely, we are not going to talk about it at all," or "This subject does not pertain to our lesson for today. Now we will discuss the impeachment of President Johnson. We will talk about Selma some other time." I have resorted to both of these ruses from time to time and each time have felt guilty of cowardly evasion. Part of my problem was that I myself became emotionally involved. My difficulty was to meet passion with impassiveness, to meet extremism with moderation rather than extremism, to meet deep seated prejudice with cool socratic questioning rather than tirade.

This year I decided that evasion of racial issues was no longer possible. Living at a time of social revolution, I had to help my students analyze this revolution, understand it. I had to make an effort to have them make this area of their thinking relative to their concepts of

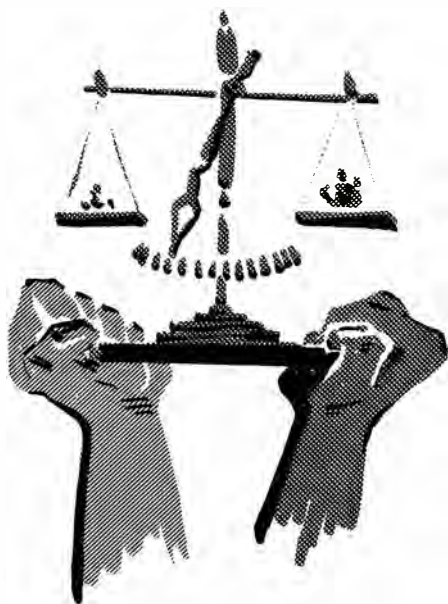
*Kathryn Schuringa, M.A., is a member of the faculty at Illiana Christian High School, Lansing, Illinois.

Christianity. I had to bring all of my skill as a teacher to bear upon these discussions in order to break through a wall of prejudice.

At times I had to be forthright in my approach. A student raised his hand and said, "What do you think of these negroes (they have learned that 'niggers' is not tolerated) stirring up all that trouble in Alabama?" "Yea, this Martin Luther King--all he wants is to make trouble," another said. There it was--out in the open. I took a deep breath, rose from my chair and faced my class of thirty juniors, many of them products of homes that had moved to the suburbs to escape an advancing color line in the city. For forty minutes I attempted calmly to get my students to understand just what the negroes want, the nature of the non-violent movement, the purpose of freedom marches. Constantly I attempted to steer away from the old cliches that negroes are dirty, lazy, stupid, untrustworthy. At the end of the period one boy lingered and said to me, "How does it feel to stand alone?" I felt clean inside. Whether or not I had broken a chink in any wall of prejudice, I had tried. My students had heard me; I would continue to try. But the next day when there was an effort to reopen the subject, I said, "No, we have talked enough for a time. Now do some thinking about it."

At times I have introduced the subject of racial understanding indirectly or subtly. In discussing the Supreme Court decision in Munn versus Illinois in 1876:

. . . When therefore one devotes his property to a use in which the public has an interest . . . (he) must submit to be controlled by the public for the common good



I mentioned that this would apply not only to railroads, but to restaurants in setting up health standards, to hotels for safety standards, etc. I caught the light in one student's eye before his hand went up and he asked the question I was hoping someone would ask, "Is that why the government can pass open occupancy laws and require that restaurants serve negroes?" He had caught the implication and the door was open for a discussion of the legal basis for non-segregation laws.

There are many facets to the problem of racial understanding. An opportunity to discuss the matter from the point of view of the relativity of freedom presented itself rather unexpectedly one day. Our class discussion centered around President Hoover's campaign speech delivered in Madison Square Garden, October 22, 1928, in which he lauded the principle of decentralized self-government for America. The question we considered was "Does centralized

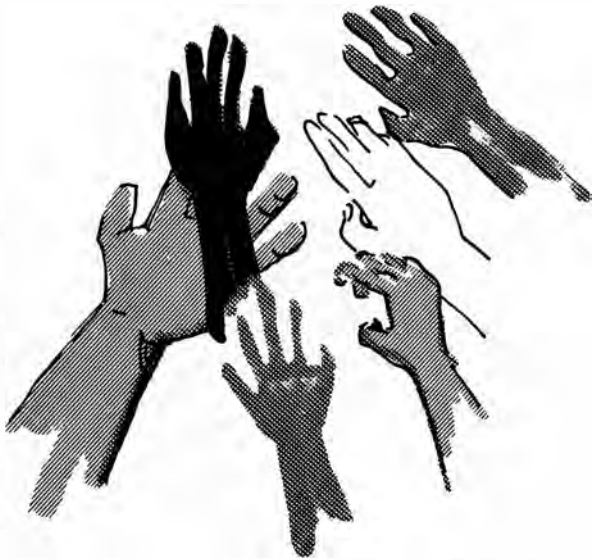


government destroy liberty? Do we have less freedom today than the American people had prior to the 1930's?" One boy thought that we did and gave as an example of the limitation of our freedom the Civil Rights Bill! The door was again open to discuss the race question, this time from the point of view that all freedom, all liberty is relative; not absolute. We brought out the axiom that there is an invisible line circumscribing every man's liberty in a democratic state; one man's freedom ends where another man's begins.

Among the faculty members at our school there were others who shared my concern about the hard core of prejudice evident among our students. We discussed the possibility of securing a speaker who could discuss racial relations with diplomacy and conviction. One day we heard that a local Christian Reformed minister had been to Selma, had marched. Here was an opportunity to secure an eye witness account. So Reverend Peter Huiner was invited

to talk in chapel about the significance of his experience. Walking through the halls, passing among the students as they stood around after chapel, I heard the comments "I felt like walking out," "If I had been down there I would have thrown rocks."

In spite of this, I felt a breakthrough had been made. During the remainder of the day my students insisted on talking about Selma, and an increasing number of voices were raised in sympathy and understanding of the negroes' freedom movement. In one class the question was asked in all sincerity, "Miss Schuringa, do



you think the faculty should have gone to Alabama to march?" My answer was, "Not unless the burden on their conscience is so great that they could not do otherwise." "Do you feel that you should march?" "No," I replied, "the burden on my conscience is great, but I feel my mission is right here. If by the end of this year I shall have succeeded in some small way in breaking down prejudice and creating understanding, then the burden will be eased a little."

As Christian teachers we may not be silent on the issue of race relations, we must work for understanding, we must march--in our classrooms.

"HEARD IN HALLS"

Our cartoonist is Mr. Robert A. Jensen, B.F.A. and M.F.A., Ohio University, who draws under the name of "Robin." He is presently instructor of art at Calvin College and is teaching art in grades 4, 5, 6 at Seymour Christian School, Grand Rapids. The periodicals in which his cartoons have appeared include Friends, One, Scope, Classmate, Motive, Youth, His, Eternity, and Writers Digest.

QUOTABLE

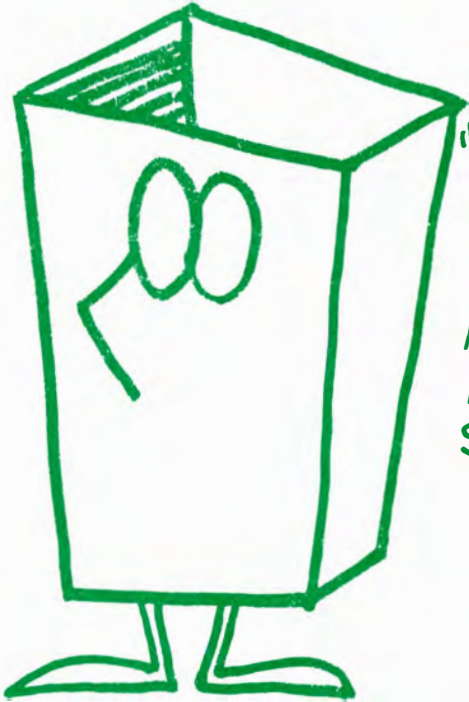
If it be objected that with many students not the capacity to learn but the inclination is lacking, and to compel these against their will is as unpleasant as it is useless, I answer: In these cases the external distraction must first be removed; nature will then assert itself with its original vigor, and the desire for knowledge will once more be apparent. But how many of those who undertake to educate the young appreciate the necessity of first teaching them how to acquire knowledge? The turner shapes a block of wood with his ax before he turns it; the blacksmith heats iron before he hammers it; the clothweaver, before he spins his wool, first cleans, washes, cards, and fulls it; the shoemaker, before he sews the shoe, prepares, shapes, and smooths the leather; but who, I ask, ever thinks it necessary that the teacher, in the same way, make his pupils eager for information? Teachers almost invariably take their pupils as they find them; they turn them, beat them, card them, comb them, drill them into certain forms, and expect them to become a finished and polished product; and if the result does not come up to their expectations (and I ask you how could it?) they are indignant, angry, and furious. And yet we are surprised that some men shrink and recoil from such a system. Far more it is matter for surprise that anyone can endure it at all.

--John Amos Comenius
(1592-1670)

The secret of education lies in respecting the pupil. --Emerson

The acquisition of knowledge depends on the will to learn, and this cannot be forced. --Quintilian

Heard in Halls



"I WONDER WHY I CAN'T MOTIVATE MY STUDENTS"



"I NEED MORE THAN MOTIVATION"



"I'M NOT YELLING I'M MOTIVATING!"

ROBIN

A TRIBUTE

He was a man of boundless energy. One year ago I had the privilege of making a school visiting tour of Eastern Christian Schools with him. The schedule called for all day visits to schools, afternoon meetings with teachers, and evening meetings with school boards. Sometimes this routine was followed by a two or three hundred mile drive and another day of the same routine. After two or three of these energy-absorbing days I was often ready for sleep, but Mr. Yff always had residual energy for a walk, a review of his notes, or for beginning a report of the day's activities.

Mr. Nick Yff retained his youthful outlook throughout his career as an administrator. Children loved him. One colleague described his magic with children as a Pied Piper quality. He reported that whenever Mr. Yff appeared on the playground swarms of little children were sure to be present around him.

Few ever find a cause which can so absorb their whole being as Christian education absorbed Mr. Yff. As a teacher, a writer, an administrator, and as a tireless participant in all activities related to Christian education, he reflected this great absorption to the cause.

He was a leading advocate and a primary motivator in establishing the Christian Educators Journal. Until this year he served as business manager of this publication and still retained his position on the Board at the time of his passing. We of the Christian Educators Journal Board join with all other friends of Christian education to pay tribute to our departed colleague and friend. While we mourn, the angels join in joyful chorus. Mr. Nicholas Yff is in a new, a heavenly home and we are left to carry on the work he began.

Philip Elve

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

This is in reply to the provocative "Money Is the Root...." article in the Winter CEJ....

The author has convinced me that almost all of our constituents are able to pay considerably more to maintain a private school system, perhaps by something no more sacrificial than driving an older car or living in a more modest house.

But I do not look for the salary situation to improve a great deal under our present semi-cajoling, semi-begging financial structures. Perhaps the sooner our schools can have their democratic fair share of tax support for education the sooner will salaries significantly improve.

Until that time, or as an alternative, I have a suggestion, a pipe dream with which I occasionally muse. It is "foolishly unworkable," and "impractical" and all the other labels given to any scheme counter to the status quo, but here goes: I would like my salary each year to be simply the AVERAGE of my constituency's income. (Negate and disregard, for the moment, my \$ 20,000 investment of time and money for an A.B. and M.A., and also assume for the moment that my labor carries no pro-



portionately higher price tag than the proverbial ditch-digger.) Thus, let my income have empathy with my school community by sharing its prosperity, and pulling in the belt in the lean season.

To effect such a dream-scheme, let tuition be adjusted for each student on the basis of family economic prosperity, perhaps in proportion to the amount of taxable income of the preceding year. (And why wouldn't professing Christians be able to handle this honestly and confidentially?) Thus, when the local shopkeeper makes \$ 14,000 a year, let his tuition

be perhaps triple that of the previous year, when he made barely \$ 5,000.

Such a relative and sliding tuition and school financing scheme, although knotty and difficult to implement, would, I feel, have far more rooting in New Testament teachings and ethics than our present practices. And earning the average of my local constituency's income would provide me some pleasant surprises as well.

Vernon J. Boerman
Illiana Christian High
Lansing, Illinois

CHILDREN'S LOGIC:

Pupils in an elementary school class came up with these health rules:

1. When you are sick in bed you shouldn't be up and running around.
2. Don't eat unlabeled cans.
3. You should stay inside after a cold so your body can put out the germs.

--Bellflower, California
"Schools Report"

States should spend money and effort on this great all-underlying matter of spiritual education as they have hitherto spent them on beating and destroying each other.

--John Galsworthy

You would probably be alarmed, and rightly so, to see your doctor, lawyer, or dentist working on the side to make ends meet. It is just one of those things which should not happen. When a teacher is forced by economic necessity to take on unrelated tasks, it is a drain on his energy and a disservice to his students and the total community. A tired teacher is no bargain; neither is a worried one....

--from a pamphlet published by the National Association of Manufacturers



SCIENCE- MATH

Department editor,
Roger Bratt

EDITORIAL :

It has always been a basic tenet of Christian educational philosophy that every area in the curricula of day schools is subject to a Christian approach and can demonstrate Christian principles inherent in these areas. This is in agreement with the Calvinistic idea that the Christian religion must pervade every aspect of human experience.

It has been in the area of mathematics that probably the greatest difficulties have arisen in the implementation of Christian principles. This is not to say that Christian teachers have been unable to teach mathematics in a uniquely Christian way and so to demonstrate the necessity of its presence in Christian school curricula. Rather, it may be true that fewer opportunities arise in mathematics to be explicit in the demonstration of Christian principles.

The new mathematics has been adopted by many of our schools. The questions now arise, "Is the new math better suited for the implementation of Christian principles? Or, is there little in the new math which makes it more or less advantageous for this purpose?"

In this issue of the Journal, two experienced Christian educators present different views in the discussion of this problem. It is hoped that the two articles here presented will stimulate thought and further discussion on this basic question.

*Dr. Zwier is a member of the Department of Mathematics of Calvin College. He received the Ph.D. in mathematics from Purdue University in 1960. Prior to taking his present position at Calvin College, he taught for five years at Grand Rapids Christian High School.

A Symposium on Modern Mathematics--Part 1

-- Paul Zwier *

I shall take the position that the new mathematics presents a unique challenge in the Christian mathematics classroom and that it is better suited to the goals of mathematics instruction in the Christian school than the traditional materials. I do not say that the materials of the new mathematics are intrinsically Christian and that they must be used in our schools. I am merely saying that these new materials can help create a climate in our mathematics classrooms which will be consistent with our goals and which may be an aid in accomplishing them.

BASIC THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. God has not hid Himself from man, but has revealed Himself in His creation, in His Son and in His Word. This revelation has opened the way for man to know God, to worship Him and to live in communion with Him.

2. In each aspect of God's creation there are evidences of God's power and majesty.

3. God has created man in His own image in "true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness,"

a spiritual being, rational, moral and immortal.¹ Man is thus capable of this communion with God and is endowed with the capacity to investigate the universe in which he lives and "to subdue it."

4. Though sin has distorted creation and has clouded the image of God in man, through Christ the image is restored and the redeemed man is again to have communion with Him.

5. For the redeemed creature general revelation and special revelation are complementary; general revelation "promotes a proper understanding of special revelation," while special revelation corrects and interprets truths which are gathered from general revelation in order to illumine man so that he can once more read the handwriting of God in nature."²

Some relevant statements about Christian education:

1. In Christian education, the maturing Christian's personality is formed and molded, so that a living intimate relationship with Christ may be fostered. This relationship is enriched and stimulated by a study of God's creation.

2. In Christian education the maturing Christian personality is trained to function effectively as a citizen of the kingdom of God in a sinful world.

3. No area of study in the school is exempt from contributing to the full development of the Christian personality. In each area God is the originator of the orderliness and the pattern and the internal consistency is derived from Him and reveals Him in his works. Facts are interpreted and applied, and appreciation is cultivated, and all of this is carried out in the Christian perspective.

4. The Christian teacher is the primary interpreter to the student, and explicitly or implicitly the interpretation is made by his attitudes toward the subject matter and by his day-by-day handling of it. The materials used in the classroom are a secondary interpreter and hence are important also.

5. The contact of a young person with a discipline (in contrast to a skill) provides an excellent setting for Christian education to take place since in a discipline one seeks structure, order, and unity and in a discipline one develops unique techniques for the formulation and solution of problems.

6. Christian education must be excellent; it must be faithful in its presentation of a discipline, showing its power and limitations. All

materials used in the classroom must be excellent, carefully written, and correct.

7. Christian education must prepare the student to meet the needs of today.

Some relevant statements on the new mathematics:

1. It seeks to present mathematics as more than a skill consisting of operation procedures and problem-solving tricks, but as a discipline with basic unity and structure.

2. It seeks to develop understanding of the underlying nature of computational algorithms and seeks to give insight into their "why" and "wherefores."

3. Although it employs a well-balanced diet of the intuitive and the deductive, it does pay more attention to the deductive nature of mathematics than the traditional mathematics.

4. It portrays mathematics as an exciting, a -live discipline, in which the individual student creatively participates and discovers relationships, patterns, and order.

5. It is correct and up to date, embodying some of the more recent discoveries and containing topics more relevant to this modern age.

6. It seeks to develop a terminology which is consistent and which can be applied at all levels of mathematical maturation.

Conclusions:

1. Since God speaks to us through His works and since the world of mathematical ideas is also of His creation, God portrays Himself to us in the world of mathematics also.

2. The appreciation of the work of God in the world of mathematical ideas is better fostered in a setting where real effort is made at understanding and less emphasis is placed upon rote



¹L. Berkhof, Manual of Reformed Doctrine, p. 129.

²Ibid., p. 32.

learning. This attempt at understanding is made in the new mathematics.

3. A person better represents the image of God in him by endeavoring to discover patterns and unity and thus having insights into the rules of manipulation than by merely blindly applying these rules to get answers to problems.

4. Mathematics presents a unique opportunity to present ideas which can be developed in a systematic, logical way and which can be discovered by the student. Thus, in mathematics the students can be creatively involved in the exciting enterprise of deductive thinking. A-

gain, the new mathematics seeks to accomplish this goal.

5. There is Christian virtue in being careful in definition, in being precise, in reasoning carefully, and, frankly, in being correct. The new materials are written in this spirit.

6. Since our students must be trained to be effective citizens, the materials taught must be relevant to the age in which they live and must train them for the problems they will face. The new mathematics is an attempt to bring school mathematics up to date.

A Symposium on Modern

Mathematics--Part 2

-- Raymond Peterson*

The discussion of this topic centers essentially on whether modern mathematics is particularly suitable for use in a Christian school because of its peculiar contribution to an understanding of mathematics and because of its methodological approach. This involves some expression of the writer's view of Christian education, and it is possible that differences in conclusions may not be due as much to disagreement on the modern mathematics as to differences in view as to what Christian education should be doing with the study of mathematics. The necessary brevity of exposition may leave questions unanswered and involve the risk of misinterpretation, but a line of thought will be suggested in the hope that a basis for discussion can be established.

There are some factors which differ not at all, or only slightly, in Christian education as compared with non-Christian education. The process of learning, basic to all education, is the same for everyone. It involves interaction of the individual with his environment and resultant change in behavior as goal-oriented responses are reinforced and others discarded. Variability in learning among individuals is also a product of the same basic factors. Heredity

characteristics determine the limits of possible achievement and environmental factors determine the nature and extent of realization of the individual's capacity to learn. Nor can curricular differences be considered as being in themselves the characteristics distinguishing Christian from non-Christian education. Apart from the study of the Word and devotional activities, the subject matter studied in Christian schools does not differ greatly from that offered in non-Christian schools.

Christianity does not change the learning process, is not hereditary in the ordinary sense of the word, nor merely environmental, nor a body of knowledge as found in a curriculum. It is a personal relationship. The distinctiveness

*Dr. Peterson is Associate Professor of Psychology at Plattsburgh State University College in Plattsburgh, New York. He received an A.B. degree from Calvin College and the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Michigan. He has been a teacher in Christian schools of Grand Rapids, Michigan, Kalamazoo, Michigan, and Sheboygan, Wisconsin; he served as principal of Seymour Christian School in Grand Rapids.

of Christian education lies in the individuals involved, more particularly, I would suggest, in motivation--motivation of the student, the teacher, or of both.

Two fundamental components of motivation are needs and goals. Organisms are impelled by needs to achieve goals which satisfy these needs. The basic needs of all may be common, but the Christian has found the goal and the satisfaction for his needs in God through Christ. The Christian student studies creation, not to use it as a tool to satisfy needs for personal prestige, but to satisfy the need to know God more perfectly. Students are also being prepared for their future positions in life. For the Christian student this is not determined in terms of need for honor, wealth, or success, but in terms of need to serve according to ability and opportunity.

The knowledge of God and the knowledge of what one is best qualified to do and called to do in service are both obtained progressively and individually. The capacity for knowing God and opportunities available through which He can be served are limited by a person's hereditary abilities and capacities. The progressive nature of learning and the variability in ability suggest that there are many intervening needs which arise throughout life and in the educational process which are related to individual differences.

Man does not live apart from others but is a social creature. This introduces the factor of needs of groups. The Christian view of the Church as the body of Christ places emphasis upon the collective aspect. However, the same analogy emphasized the distinctiveness of each part and the importance of each part. It is the non-Christian society which seeks to submerge the individual within the group while Christianity has long been associated with an emphasis on the worth of the individual. The concept of the organic unity of the body of Christ suggests that the functioning of the group effectively depends upon the efficient functioning of each organ in its particular capacity. This requires the nurturance of each organ according to its need.

In the light of the foregoing, the particular suitability of a subject or methodology for Christian education would depend on its usefulness in providing for the individual a better understanding of God through His creation, and better equipping him for his particular place of service.

A consideration of the appropriateness of modern mathematics for Christian education implies the question: Does modern mathematics contribute most effectively to satisfying the

mathematical needs of the students in terms of knowledge and appreciation of creation and in preparation for their roles in life.

Christians believe that man is more than a responding organism which is conditioned to behave in a particular manner. He is a rational creature, and we expect more from him than mere performance of a skill. Modern mathematics can contribute to Christian education in that it does emphasize comprehension and appreciation. It may also contribute to general reasoning ability through logical procedures and by encouraging student discovery. The assumption underlying the modern mathematics approach is, however, that this approach is best for everyone. This assumes that each individual has the same mathematical needs and learns to understand in the same way.

Individual differences in ability to learn are not merely a matter of amount of intelligence. Intelligence differs in quality as well as quantity. Individuals learn in different ways and see problems in different perspectives. Christian education particularly, recognizing the infinite variety of manifestations of God in the perceiver as well as in the perceived, should be very cautious in accepting any one approach. The present



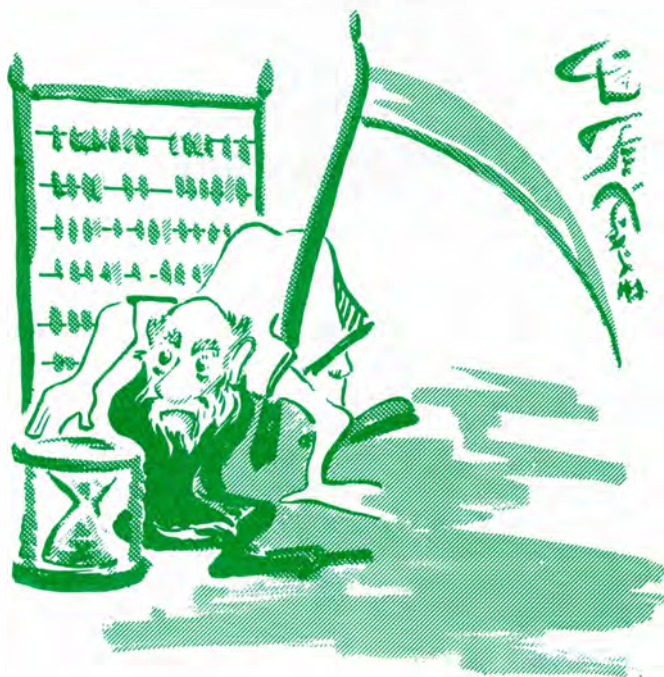
"modern" mathematics cannot claim to be the only approach which leads to comprehension and appreciation. It is the individual who comprehends and appreciates and this in terms of his particular abilities and capacities. To bring him to the goal of understanding and appreciating creation according to his abilities requires the satisfaction of his particular needs. The approach of modern mathematics is a limited approach which meets the needs of some, but fails to meet the needs of others.

Mathematics is more than a skill. True, but it involves a skill. The needs of individuals

differ in terms of their later occupations in life which, as Christians who have yielded themselves to God's guidance, they are peculiarly prepared to fill. Many of these occupations, as well as the ordinary activities of life, require certain skills in mathematics. The Christian school should be concerned with these needs also. In so far as modern mathematics does not meet these needs it falls short of being the method most appropriate for Christian education.

The Christian is particularly interested in the order and unity manifest in creation. A well-ordered disciplinary study can contribute to the appreciation of God's order. A discipline, such as mathematics, has a particular structure, an order, a unity, which reveals the creator of all order and unity. It is possible, however, for a person to have an intellectual knowledge of a discipline, to know all the interrelationships and structure, but fail to relate it to life--his own or another's. So modern mathematics may be an excellently conceived intellectual discipline yet fail to become relevant to life, even in those who appear to understand its internal order and consistency.

The reference in this discussion to "modern" mathematics indicates that it is particularly appropriate to the present day. As such it cannot be separated from the philosophy of the present day. This philosophy, it appears, is more concerned with meeting the needs of our particular American society than the needs of individuals. Study of mathematics and science has not been emphasized because individuals need to know more about creation, but because we need experts in these fields to meet national needs for prestige in the space race and power



in the international race for control. In the process the schools become factories for turning out persons with specific characteristics to meet the needs of society. They are goaded on by the extrinsic motivation of acceptance for college, better jobs and higher pay. What matters if but a few ultimately reach this goal? The nation and its industries are more important.

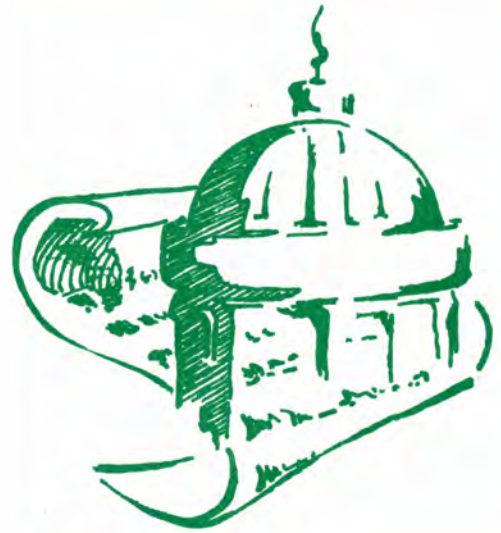
Christian education recognizes the importance of the individual. As a Christian he is motivated through his needs, individually determined by hereditary and environmental factors, toward the goal of a Christian--knowledge of God and service in the place of His choosing. Christian mathematical instruction should be broader than the modern mathematics. It should be taught by teachers who know mathematics, including modern mathematics, but who are also aware of the needs of individuals as well as needs of the discipline.

It would be a great advantage to some schoolmasters if they would steal two hours a day from their pupils, and give their own minds the benefit of the robbery.
--J. F. Boyse

Those having torches will pass them on to others.
--Plato, The Republic

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Herm Beukema,
Department Editor



SOCIAL _ STUDIES _ STIRRINGS

I am sorry to report that thus far there have been no replies to Mr. Rothi's article regarding football in our Christian schools. Once again, I would like to urge you to put your opinion into words and send the product to me. The fall issue of '65 would be an excellent time to continue a review of this controversial problem. There are many opinions, pro and con, which I believe we should share publicly.

Congratulations to those of you who have been selected as participants in summer institutes in our area of studies. You are the first to receive these benefits and I hope many more will be chosen next year.

The following article is the first of several which will appear in our section regarding the best way to teach social studies in the primary grades. This is an experienced teacher's view of the method she feels to be the most effective. Teachers at this level are asked to give their views on approach and content. Teachers on the other levels are also urged to share opinions and practices. Our whole area is in a state of flux and we as Christian teachers have a unique opportunity to improve our distinctiveness in this whole area of man's relationship to God, fellow man, and his environment.

Have a nice summer!!!

*Mr. John Brondsema, A.B. Calvin College, M.A. University of Michigan, is a teacher of Bible at Grand Rapids Central Christian High School.

A Proposal for the Study of Bible in Christian Schools

-- John Brondsema*

It has been said that in a perfect Christian school, Bible would not have to be taught. That is, if every subject were well taught in the light of God's Word, the real purpose of our schools would be achieved--which is saying that the essence of our schools is not that Bible is taught in addition to many "secular" subjects.

Nevertheless, it is quite unlikely that our schools will cease teaching Bible. The home is very desirous that Bible be taught, and delegates, possibly improperly, this task also to the school. And the school is well qualified to teach Bible. Trained teachers guiding young minds five days a week for 40 weeks a year have unquestioned advantages over Sunday school or catechism.

Desire plus qualification does not necessarily equal success. That our students learn more Bible than their public school counterparts is unquestioned, but this does not mean that our students are gaining the greatest profit

from the great number of hours spent studying Bible. Nor does it mean that they are learning what the parents want taught.

What do we want the student to learn as he studies "Bible" for twelve years? As soon as the question is asked the first step has been taken in curriculum building. But the question is seldom asked and still more seldom answered. The tremendous resources of governmental agencies and private foundations have been poured into curriculum research projects that seek answers to the what and the how of teaching mathematics, science, language arts, and other subjects. We need not expect that they will add Bible to this list.

How have we answered the question to date? We have said that if the pupil just studies the Bible everything will come out all right. So the kindergartener hears the Bible stories from Genesis to Revelation in chronological order. The next three grades make the same trip twice. The three intermediate grades make the trip once again, and the junior high student takes a final cycle from Genesis to Revelation.

Each cycle, of course, has greater depth. In order to achieve this depth, each cycle drops some of the "less valuable" stories of previous cycles. Nevertheless most of the stories are



found in all five cycles. Some incidents are found in none of the cycles. As is true in all subjects, the material at the first part of the year is taught thoroughly and the material at the end of the year is skimmed or neglected altogether. Our children know the details of the Genesis stories far better than those of Ezra and Nehemiah.

But this is not the crux of the matter. What are we teaching? The answer is: Bible. The facts? Certainly. And there are applications. "Central thoughts" and "lesson truths" are listed. So the pupil is told one day that the story shows that God hates sin; the next day he is told that he should be honest; the next day that he should pray; the next day that salvation is by faith; the next day that he should obey his parents; the next day that Jesus is divine; and so on. Possibly the tenth day after the first story that il-

lustrated honesty another story will illustrate the same point, and the wise teacher will relate the two. All of these truths are wonderful and we want them taught.

There are two unanswered questions. First, are these truths being taught meaningfully? Second, are we teaching honesty, faith, prayerfulness, etc., by moralizing on these stories or are there other methods to be utilized?

To answer these questions will require that we set about the enormous task of building a curriculum, answering the questions of what we want taught and how these goals can best be achieved.

This cannot be done in a single paper such as this, but until it is done, I have one concrete suggestion to make. Instead of having five cycles through the Bible chronologically, have one or two of these periods of time used to teach a series of concepts as units.

For example, in September a unit on "The Home" could be taught. This would include not only various home-stories of Joseph and Samuel and others, but the teachings of Jesus about the home and even the teachings of Paul from Ephesians 6. Such a unit could be followed by one on the miracles of Jesus or on Angels or on the Church or on God or on any topic which had been selected, preferably topics which had immediate relevance to the students.

At the proper seasons, units on Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and the Holy Spirit could be taught without inserting some special lessons at a point quite inappropriate to a chronological series.

The chronological method of studying the Bible has merit. In fact, it would be very in-

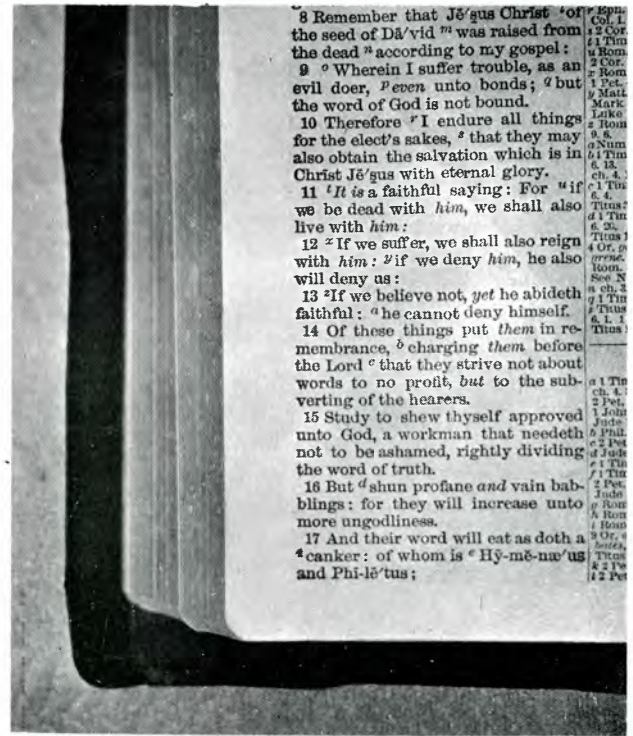
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structive for a pastor to begin a sixteen-month series some June, study the development of the Kingdom from Genesis through the prophets during the summer and fall, fit the advent season in its chronological position, follow the life of our Savior during January and February, study the passion, death, and resurrection, and ascension of Jesus in their proper order, follow the Church through its early years with the epistles set in their chronological order, and conclude the series with the sermons on the events at the end of time. The fact that this is never done would seem to indicate that as adults we do not feel that this method is nearly as valuable as the topical method of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Specifically it would seem appropriate to follow this plan in place of the third cycle in grades 2-3, 3-1, and 3-2. At this point the pupil has had two cycles through the Bible and, as yet, his sense of time is undeveloped. In his intermediate years and junior years he will still have two extended chronological cycles through the Bible.

This plan is used in both Lutheran and Roman Catholic schools. Its success at the level suggested could be a guide to using it at other

grade levels. The teacher or teachers who would work out the units would receive the first blessing. It would be a plan that could be put into immediate operation without waiting for a complete curriculum analysis and revision.



SOCIAL STUDIES IN PRIMARY

--Margaret Smith*

Do you teach social studies in the primary grades? When do you teach social studies? How do you teach social studies?

When I was asked these questions, I had to stop and in all honesty ask myself, "Am I really teaching social studies?" So I would like to begin by asking you the same questions.

BASIC OBJECTIVES

First of all, there must be a reason for teaching social studies. It is a requirement if we follow our course of study but there surely must be reasons for it being required. If we only teach a subject because it is required and have no basic objectives, we aren't teaching with a purpose. I would like to suggest the following objectives to remember in our teaching

of social studies:

1. We must teach the child to understand the world in which God has placed him.
2. We must enable the child to become a better citizen in this world.
3. We must help the child develop an understanding of himself and his needs.
4. We must teach the child to understand and help others.

THE UNIT METHOD

Now that we have objectives to follow, how are we going to teach social studies? Social

*Margaret Smith, A. B. Calvin College, is a teacher at Cutlerville East Elementary School, Cutlerville, Michigan.

studies can be taught in many ways and there are many opportunities for integrating it in the primary grades. I have used and found successful the unit method of teaching social studies.'

For example, let's try a unit on railroad transportation. Children are extremely interested in trains and at an early age are familiar with books and songs about trains. There are many excellent books about trains--thus giving you an opportunity for using reading skills. Arithmetic concepts can be taught by buying and selling tickets, and in the use of the timetable. New words and their meanings can be taught, thereby developing language skills and the spelling vocabulary. Art can be taught by making murals, studying the movement of trains and conveying these impressions to painting. In music, songs about trains can be learned, activities can be done with the rhythm of train movement, and perhaps even some creative song writing can take place. These are just a few activities--perhaps you could suggest even more.

This study of railroad transportation will help the child understand the world in which he lives and his dependence on railroads. It is important that you select areas of study which are familiar to the children and then branch out into less familiar territory. By following such

a plan, the children will be well informed citizens. This will also prepare them for social studies in later grades.

Perhaps a reminder is in order to be sure to emphasize Christian citizenship. This is easy to talk about but not always put into practice. If there was ever a time for witnessing, the time is now. Let's let others know we have a God-centered philosophy of life.

CONCLUSIONS

One problem remains and this is, how do you find time for all of this? We are already trying to teach so much in one year, we just don't have time. I will agree that our time is at a premium but perhaps we have become so textbook conscious that we feel we are not teaching unless we use the selected textbook. If a unit is well planned so that it includes all areas of the curriculum, the children will learn more and gain many new concepts never taught in a textbook alone. The creative teacher can do much to enhance the learning process by using a wide variety of activities.

How about some discussion on this problem of social studies in the primary grades? Do you feel that our program needs some revision? What ideas do you have and how have you taught social studies? There must be many of you with excellent ideas--let's hear from you!





*Department editor,
Vernon Boerman*

The Delights of Good Religious Music--the Children's Hymnbook

It was an exciting evening two years ago when I first met the newly-published Children's Hymnbook. From mid-evening until past midnight my wife and I sat at the piano discovering page after page of treasures.

Since that time, by watching our own 7- and 9-year-old daughters, we have seen this book become a meaningful part of their classroom and home life. Risking over-optimism, I feel this book is one of the finest helps yet to those Christian school teachers who want to pull feet from the swamp of musical sludge in which we have sometimes entangled ourselves--with the generous quantities of whoop-de-do Sunday school ditties which many think, mistakenly, that youngsters prefer . . . and those Action and Singspiration books aplenty . . . and some syrupy Zondervan publications . . . and shades of old Homer Rodeheaver, too!

Offering a parent's viewpoint, I like the Children's Hymnbook for its honesty or integrity; that is, the emphasis in both word and music is at the youngster's level. It does not try to take "adult" lyrics or theological concepts or figures of speech and force them through juvenile mouths, while missing their minds. (It seems both funny and blasphemous to hear a third-

grader sing, entirely foreign to his own experiences and understanding, "My soul in sad exile was out on life's sea, All burdened with sin and distress . . . And I entered the Haven of Rest"!)

Refreshing, then, is the Children's Hymnbook emphasis on simplicity, as well as its most excellent literary and musical quality, drawn from several centuries and many traditions.

Another stress of this book is its fostering, already in the lower grades, an important principle of religious music: participation rather than entertainment. This will later evolve into adult understanding that worship should glorify not the worshipper but the One worshipped. Along with its fine lyrics, the fine music of this book discourages the notion that religious music is first of all (or even last of all) a device for arousing religious fervor or mass enthusiasm.

If the aesthetic and artistic principles such as balance, restraint, and unity, need implanting early, the music of the Children's Hymnbook deserves high praise. These principles are upheld by music in the book, but are also honored by that which is notably absent from the book: catchy tunes, jazzy rhythms, self-conscious ditties, and other common musical gimmicks

which draw attention to themselves and thereby lack religious or artistic worth.

A recent event has made the Children's Hymnbook even more stimulating. This is the 12" LP record, released by the NUCS, which includes over two dozen songs from the book, sung by the 20 youngsters of the Whitinsville Christian School choir of Whitinsville, Massachusetts. To quote the two paragraphs on the record jacket: "This rendition of songs selected from the Children's Hymnbook shows what can be done by a typical day-school classroom in its devotional period. The songs are among the most appropriate for worship in the primary and intermediate grades. The skillful and confident singing reveals good basic training in rhythm, enunciation, pitch, and time values--all important elements for children in the grades for which the Children's Hymnbook is intended.

"The singers are not a choir in the strict sense of the word. They are rather a classroom at worship. The entire fourth grade of the



Whitinsville Christian School, augmented by a few pupils from the third and fifth grades, make up the 'choir.' The recording may, from these perspectives be considered a teaching tool, a model for classroom teachers using the Children's Hymnbook as their devotional songbook. It is, of course, intended also purely for enjoyment in the home and school."

And "a teaching tool" the record is, both positively and negatively. Negatively, for example, by avoiding the voice-wrecking, all-too-common "Come on kids, let's really sing!" approach. (Perhaps the Sunday school has to take first blame for this fallacy that volume is somehow equated with either religious sincerity or

singing quality?) Also pleasant on this record is the unobtrusive piano accompaniment, a reminder that good accompanying and good piano playing are not the same thing.

In a positive way, the Massachusetts youngsters show a buoyant, sensitive singing quality which makes it possible for their delight and enjoyment of the words to shine through. (Music is a witness!)

If some parents and teachers hesitate to use the Children's Hymnbook because "much of it sounds strange," a reminder is in order: Of course the truly fine stuff sounds strange if it has been neglected, or unappreciated, or undiscovered. Prime steak would taste strange, too, to the person who had eaten hot dogs all his life. Further, it is not the child's prerogative to say on first exposure, with a pseudo-democratic air, "I don't like it." But the task of stimulating the best will perhaps be up to the classroom teacher alone; not much support for really good music is going to come from either home or Sunday school, I fear. It's perhaps too late to expect them to leave the impossible hodge-podge of religious music as they gallop "Down the Jericho Road" for "Just a Little Talk with Jesus" "In the Garden." Instead, work with the youngest! My hat is off in respect for those teachers who are working subtly and positively to save the little ones--before it is too late--from the musical poverty and spiritual malnutrition of "Do Lord, Oh Do Lord" and "Oh That Will Be Glory for Me."

A meaningful music job can be done from an early age. I saw it happen last year when my first grader, thanks to a marvelous and sensitive teacher, came to assimilate "Father, Bless Our School Today" as her own thought. Later, "All Things Bright and Beautiful" and "Father, Lead Me Day by Day" became her way of sensitively expressing her own world. For this kind of musical growth, worthy of both the terms Christian and education, I give much credit to the Children's Hymnbook.

--V. B.

Next to theology I give to music the highest place and honor. And we see how David and all the saints have wrought their godly thoughts into verse, rhyme, and song.

--Luther

Music is the language of praise; and one of the most essential preparations for eternity is delight in praising God; a higher acquirement, I do think, than even delight and devotedness in prayer.

--Chalmers

AT RANDOM

Teachers pretend to know more than they do; they talk a great deal, repeating the talk of the texts. The students repeat the talk of the talk of the text talkers.

--Nathaniel Cantor, in
Educational Forum

We must cultivate the open mind, which at its best is blessedly greedy. It reveres all revelation whether it be the mystery of the stars, the secrets of the human heart, or the being and purpose of God--though we cannot all be scholars and specialists, we are the poorer and live the more fractionally if our senses are not keen to all the worthwhile that beats on our doors.

--Bastian Kruithof

Not until individual man rebels against mediocrity, spiritual illiteracy, and group subservience will our unique experiment of universal education become once again a bright hope and promise in American life.

--Mortimer Smith

The humanists may, unfortunately, put forth a utilitarian argument; they promise personal happiness or social harmony. This missionary role puts the humanities in an untenable position; for, they, too have been powerless to solve the riddle of the Sphinx or chart the course of Utopia. If they could, and this were their utility, their importance would come to an end in the very instant of success. For such is the fate of all mere devices.

--Jacques Barzun

Independence is death. Suppose a watch wheel said, "I am tired of being kicked in the teeth! I will turn when I choose and I will refuse to turn when someone kicks me around."

--Dr. Kenneth L. Pike
With Heart and Mind

I must have a broad background of knowledge that does not appear in speech; I cannot teach right up to the edge of my knowledge without a fear of falling off. . . . A teacher does not live for himself, but for his pupil and for the truth which he imparts: he must keep himself entirely out of the way, fixing young attention on the proffered knowledge and not on anything so small as the one who brings it. . . . Let us display our subjects as lucidly as possible, allow our pupils considerable license in apprehension, and be content ourselves to escape observation.

--G. H. Palmer

Our civilization has decided, and very justly decided, that determining the guilt or innocence of men is a thing too important to be trusted to trained men. If it wishes for light on that awful matter, it asks men who know no more law than I know, but who can feel the things that I felt in the jury box. When it wants a library catalogued, or the solar system discovered, or any trifle of that kind, it uses its specialists. But when it wishes anything done which is really serious, it collects twelve of the ordinary men standing round. The same thing was done, if I remember right, by the Founder of Christianity.

--G. K. Chesterton

Thelwall thought it very unfair to influence a child's mind by inculcating any opinions before it had come to years of discretion to choose for itself. I showed him my garden, and I told him it was my botanical garden. "How so?" said he; "it is covered with weeds." "O," I replied, "that is only because it has not yet come to its age of discretion and choice. The weeds, you see, have taken the liberty to grow, and I thought it unfair in me to prejudice the soil towards roses and strawberries."

--Coleridge



Department Editor,
Merle Meeter

Build the Bookshelves

Are you satisfied with your school library? With your classroom library? Certainly you can get enough money from the P.T.A. or from the women's guilds to buy 25 books a year.

These you should have: the C.S. Lewis Narnia Chronicles, his science-fiction trilogy, and three or four works like the Screwtape Letters and The Great Divorce; the four Grace Irwin novels; The Pilgrim's Progress, Paradise Lost, Robinson Crusoe; Oxford volumes of American and English poetry; Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, the Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Edith Hamilton's Mythology; a large atlas, and an American Standard Bible with a comprehensive concordance. Enough for the first year.

For the second year, the following: Don Quixote, Shakespeare's Plays (one volume), The Iliad, The Odyssey, The Aeneid; novels by Graham Greene (e.g., The Power and the Glory) and Charles Williams (e.g., War in Heaven); Gulliver's Travels, Moby Dick, The Scarlet Letter, A Tale of Two Cities, Pride and Prejudice, The Return of the Native, Treasure Island,

Animal Farm, and a few novels by Willa Cather; Chesterton's Orthodoxy and Heretics; meditations by Thomas a Kempis and Thomas Merton; an anthology of classic American and English essays; a volume of fables, folk tales, and fairy stories; Sandburg's one-volume revision of The Life of Lincoln; a Psalter Hymnal, a single-volume Bible commentary, and a Bible dictionary.

And that's a worthwhile contribution for any one person to make in two years. How to add thereafter? Book lists are, of course, available. However, become a chronic reader of reviews and a fanatically optimistic recorder of titles, authors, publishing houses, and prices (usually 25% to 40% discounted). The reviews await you in The English Journal, Time, Saturday Review, The Christian Home and School, C.E.J., The Banner, and other professional and theological periodicals.

Take a guilty look at your school library and at those barren classroom shelves.



PATTERN AND PRAISE IN LINGUISTICS

-- Louis Rus *

LANGUAGE AS TOOL

Language concerns everyone for it is the chief tool of communication among human beings. Language, however, remains the tool for communication; as a tool, it can be used for different purposes. A hammer is also a tool. It can be used for its intended purpose, to build homes and churches, or it can be used to kill another person. As Christian teachers who use and teach the English language, we attempt to influence students to use language for its intended purpose: the glory of God. We cannot deny, however, that many people use it very effectively to glorify evil. Although language itself is a tool that in itself is neither moral nor immoral, the English teacher has an obligation toward the English language: to teach its full potential and to analyze it by means of the most consistent method available so that it can be used effectively by the Christian student.

WHIRLING WORDS AND THE CHANGELESS WORD

T. S. Eliot, the great Christian poet, knew several languages and cultures. He saw the variety in language and culture, but accepted Christianity as containing the absolutes for which he yearned. In his famous poem "Ash Wednesday," Eliot hinted at the predicament of the Christian poet: he must use varied, ever-changing human language to express the Absolute.

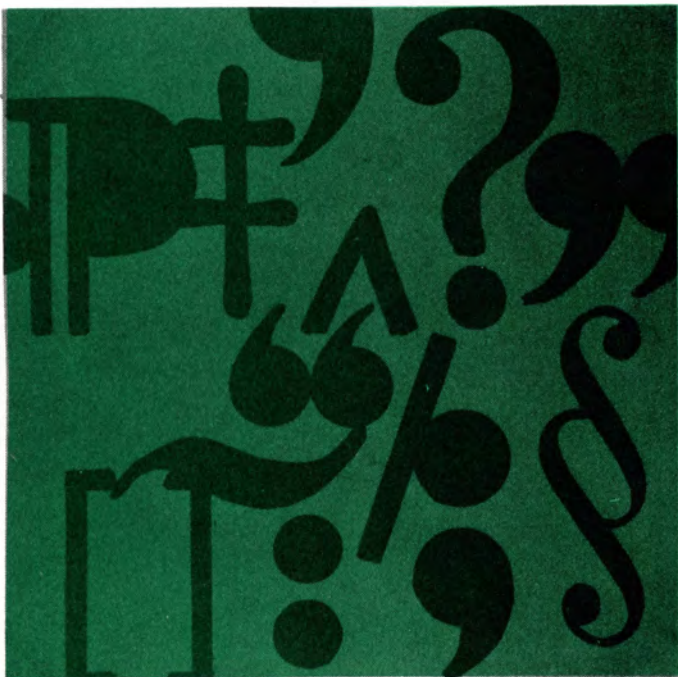
Eliot presented the figure of a wheel which keeps whirling around. This is the wheel of time and represents our changing human culture and language within time. At the center of the wheel is the axle, the still point about which the wheel turns. This axle represents The Eternal, The Absolute, God, The Word as revealed through Christ. Eliot writes:

The Word without a word, the Word within
The world and for the world;
And the light shone in darkness and
Against the Word the unstilled world still
whirled
About the centre of the silent Word.

Like Eliot, the Christian teacher accepts the facts of human language and culture. He sees the immense variety in present-day English and the radical changes English has undergone throughout its history. These are facts which he cannot deny. Indeed, our world is "whirling" in time. But the teacher also sees the pattern that is essential to language; and the Christian teacher sees this pattern as a reflection of and an analogy to the Absolute Pattern of God.

ADAPTABILITY OF DICTION

Our language is varied. This is obvious if we examine objectively our own speech as we adapt it, perhaps unconsciously, to the situations in which we find ourselves. A teacher, for example, speaks differently to his class than to a student privately, to his children than to his colleagues, to his wife when he is in an amorous mood than to her when he is disturbed with her for buying an expensive dress. He speaks one variety of English when excited at a basketball game, another when delivering a prepared speech at a Rotary Club, and still another when addressing God in prayer. And if he writes an article for a journal, his variety of English will differ somewhat from all the other varieties. Not only does our individual use of the language vary, but every person's language differs somewhat from every other person's. A girl's English is different from a boy's; a child's is different from a teen-ager's; and a mature person's speech is different from both. The language of a highly educated person is different from that of the eighth-grade graduate; and the



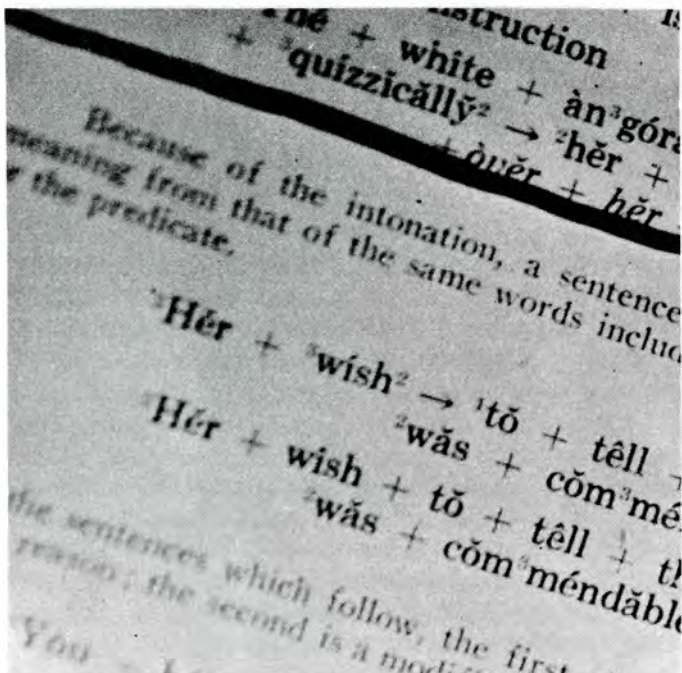
*Dr. Louis Rus is Professor of English at Grand Valley College, Allendale, Michigan.

language of a Bostonian is different from that of the Iowan.

The duty of any English teacher is to accept these varieties in language as varieties that are not morally "right" or "wrong," but rather as "appropriate" or "inappropriate" in certain situations. However, he must teach primarily that type of English with which the ordinary student is not well enough acquainted: the educated, formal variety which is appropriate to good formal writing and acceptable educated speech. The student can then function more effectively in our society as an educated person. The Christian English teacher is not satisfied with this minimum, however. He attempts to show the variety in the English language as a God-given abundance which the Christian poet and novelist can use to the glory of God, or from which the Christian essayist can select the formal style for an article. The Christian is not satisfied simply with the selection of a style; the appropriate style furthers his purpose in writing as a Christian.

PATTERN THROUGH STRUCTURAL GRAMMAR

Just as important as the abundant variety in our language is the patterning that we find in it, for this is the reflection of The Absolute Pattern. In order to analyze our language to see its patterns, we should not be satisfied with a



method that does not accurately describe the pattern. So-called "traditional" grammar is full of overlapping definitions that can hardly be satisfactory after they are examined carefully. For example, a noun is defined as the name of a person, place, or thing, an adjective as a word that modifies a noun or pronoun, and an adverb as a modifier of any other part of speech. Working logically with these definitions, a stu-



dent can analyze a noun phrase such as "my sister's hat" as follows: hat is a noun, sister's is an adjective, my is an adverb. But any teacher knows that, although hat is a noun, sister's is a possessive noun, and my is a possessive pronoun. The definitions of "traditional" grammar simply do not describe accurately the patterns we react to in language. The "traditional" definition of noun is based on the symbolic meaning, and the definitions of adjective and adverb are based on the grammatical meaning of modification within a sentence. Since the basis for definition changes from one grammatical term to another, the analyses are bound to be inaccurate and overlapping.

An approach older than "traditional" grammar is structural grammar. Using a consistent structural approach, the great grammarian Panini analyzed the Sanskrit language 2400 years ago. Twenty-three hundred years ago Aristotle, the Greek philosopher-scientist, made perceptive comments concerning the Greek language. In the Poetics, Aristotle wrote that the verb in Greek is the part of speech which, through inflections, indicates time and that the noun can indicate the plural and the singular. Comments such as these are a good beginning for the structural approach. Basically, the structural grammarians attempt to define accurately the parts of speech by a consistent application of the grammatical signals of English--the function words, the inflectional endings, the derivational

endings, and the intonation. Then, by means of word order, they analyze the relationships these parts of speech have to each other within the patterned sentence as subjects, predicates, modifiers, and complements. This method, as presented in grammars such as Paul Roberts' Patterns of English and English Sentences, James Sledd's A Short Introduction to English Grammar, and W. Nelson Francis' The Structure of American English, has achieved a consistency and accuracy lacking in "traditional" grammar.

ANALYSIS OF VARIETY AND PATTERN:
PRAISE

In a short article it is impossible to do more than briefly illustrate why one of the newest--and one of the oldest--approaches to language is consistent with a Christian approach. The point is that the human word is within time; it is varied and changing and partakes of the abundance of general revelation. But the human word is

always patterned for it reflects the Divine Word. It seems, consequently, that the duty of the Christian teacher is to teach that grammar which most clearly and consistently analyzes the pattern.

Another great Christian poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, looked at all nature and at all human activity. In his poem "Pied Beauty," Hopkins, after describing the variety and change, writes this line: "He fathers--forth whose beauty is past change." The poet means two things: 1) changeless God is the creator of ever-changing and varied nature and thus He is nature's Father; 2) the patterns of ever-changing and varied nature reveal a changeless God so that nature "fathers" God by revealing Him to man. I have looked specifically at variety and pattern in language; Hopkins beheld them in all nature and human experience. All Christians exclaim with Hopkins as he writes the last line of his poem: "Praise Him!"

HAVE THE LINGUISTS PROVED THEIR CASE ?

-- Steve Van Der Weele *

THE OAK AND THE PARASITES

The battle is on. The strategy of the proponents of the new kind of language teaching is becoming more obvious by the month. Governmental, quasi-governmental, private, and educational agencies, together with textbook publishers, are intensifying their efforts to make some sort of linguistic approach the educational law of the kingdom of language. Our Christian school system, from top to bottom, may wish to join the throning devotees. But we should know what we are about. The educational highway is littered with costly and futile experiments. We have a great deal of homework to do before we enter such a program. From what I have read so far, the claims of the linguists are long on promise, short on soundly based arguments or

demonstrations to support these claims.

Let's face it. The dissatisfaction with traditional grammar is a psychological one. The substantive arguments against it are contrived and unconvincing. It has served the civilized world well. It is part of a complex of ideas and attitudes and practices about language which underlie the literature we have inherited and it has served to fulfill the requirements of effective communication. It is there--massive, impressive, elegant, difficult to dislodge and circumvent. The linguists are parasitic to it. Noam Chomsky, pioneer in the development of "transformational grammar," concedes as much (though he does not regard it as adequate for a

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complete science of language):

Paired with an intelligent and comprehending reader, a good traditional grammar often achieves a high degree of success. . . .

("Explanatory Models in Linguistics," in Logic, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science, edited by Ernest Nagel et. al., Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 1962), p. 528.

PROLIFERATION AND PTOLEMAIC REGRESSION

But all this is being judged obsolete out of hand, and proponents of the new are seeking to displace it with other categories. Many of the difficulties they presume to find in the traditional grammar are trumped up, and disappear when grammar is taught imaginatively and creatively in the classroom. Many of the new techniques are gimmicky, though they may be temporarily effective to illumine a fact about our language. But definitions, when the linguists attempt them at all, are often capricious ("an adjective is a word like. . ."). And so much of the information seems sterile. It is inert. It lacks generative power and force. The conventional science of grammar was discovered centuries ago; it possesses the elegance and simplicity that all creative theories of science try to approximate. Does the new linguist have anything to compare with the simplicity of the categories Subject, Verb, Complement, Modifiers? Their proliferation of information seems a reversion, a regression comparable to returning to the Ptolemaic astronomy against the evidence of the Copernican.

Consider how swiftly things have gone. It is true that some aspects of language science are centuries old, and that certain developments have been afoot for a century. But as recently as five years ago the Webster's pamphlet Word



Study, published periodically, carried an article entitled "What it Takes to Get English." It was convincing and persuasive. What do you suppose it took to get English five years ago? Especially two kinds of discipline: Latin, and diagramming sentences. The author's parting line was this: "Latin and diagramming: Long may they endure." But the Webster's people have changed all that. The pamphlets published in the last several years in one way or another contradict, nullify what was until recently assumed to be a set of useful approaches towards the appropriating of language. Latin and diagramming are obviously to be waifs in this new kingdom of language.

UNDER THE BANNER OF FLUX

A good site for the linguist battle is the issue of usage. I realize that this is only one of the parts of the linguistic campaign, but it will serve to delineate the varying approaches to the kingdom of language. The typical linguist is content to describe change; he does not feel called upon to expend his energy bemoaning language mutations. I realize that there is a spectrum of opinion on this, ranging from those who revel in change, who try to induce language to change, who suppose that all change is improvement, who decry our national mania for correctness--written, of course, in impeccable prose, the result still of their training in traditional rhetoric--to those who try to give some direction and control to linguistic alterations. But the definition of language underlying this attitude is nevertheless this, that language is mainly process, or, at most, a set of signals for transmitting messages, and that whatever will serve to achieve this end is quite adequate. Some, though not all, formulations even posit an evolutionary origin to language. Once one is committed to the evolutionary theory of man, this view of language follows: there is nothing fixed, permanent, abiding in the counters we use for our ideas. Language, as everything else, is dynamic, on the move, continually evolving, and it is a waste of time to tamper with this peristaltic process.

GOVERNMENT OR GOVE FOR KING?

But the Christian must demur here. He supposes that it demeans man to submit to forces that will hurt him, if these forces can be controlled. He learns how to manage his soil to prevent erosion, he constructs dams to eliminate floods, he has learned how to apply various measures to control the economy so that the earlier violent gyrations of economic cycles can be eliminated. Why, then, should he so blithely and unheroically yield to linguistic changes without a battle? Some linguistics say, "Language grows by ignorance." Paul Roberts, a popular

purveyor of linguistics, insists: ". . . if we are talking about directness, there is simply no criterion but somebody's usage. Do we really accept this kind of argument for the important concerns of life? The eighteenth-century humanists, in their dread of rapid linguistic changes which would break the link between generations, lashed out against abusers of language. They regarded these as menaces to a sound and healthy society. They stabilized the language. They made it easy for us to converse with good writers of the past and present, to maintain an easy liaison with them. The typical linguist takes his recorder and graph paper and seeks data to report, instead of wisdom. He is afflicted with the fallacy of presentism--the new must invariably be better than the old, or, at least, there is no sense in trying to prevent the new. With apologies to Shakespeare, I paraphrase the popular demand that Laertes replace Claudius as king of Denmark:

. . . as the world were now but to begin,
 Antiquity forgot, custom not known
 The ratifiers and props of every word,
 Their cry "Choose we--Dr. Gove shall
 be King!"
 Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the
 clouds--
 Dr. Gove shall be King. . . ."

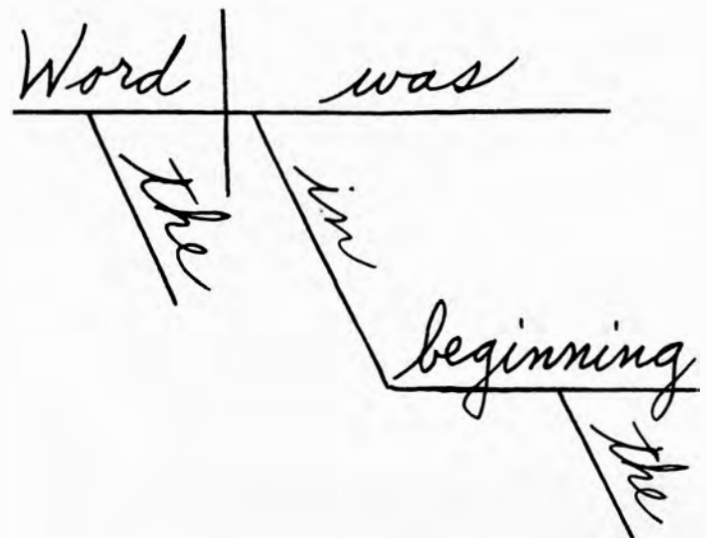
(Dr. Gove, you know, said in a public meeting, "We are manufacturers of dictionaries, we are not watchdogs of the language.")

POPULAR PRACTICE OR PRESCRIPTIVE
 PARSING?

The linguist alleges that traditional grammar does not tell the whole truth about language. But I see nothing in this statement which does not apply to the whole theory and practice of education. Education is and is not life. It is primarily a preparation for life, and a student has a right to expect that his teacher will use the classroom time in a way that will most adequately anticipate the situations he will meet in his maturity and that will develop most effectively the skills which his calling in life will some day demand. I maintain that the traditional grammar works at a more profound level of language analysis than does the new approach. It deals with significant structures, not with local and superficial variations. It deals with language as logic, as a discipline, as having normative force. Linguistics raises other elements, such as audio-phonology, to a level of major importance. One linguist I spoke to recently said, "A person must choose through which door he wishes to enter society. He must decide whether he wishes to have tea in the living room or eat with the maids in the kitchen. And he will wish to work at his language skills accordingly." This, you see, makes language a matter of applied

sociology and psychology. Instead of learning to speak well for its own sake, one must, in the new program, tailor his expression in terms of his environment. This seems to me to demean the language. Instead of the traditional norms of clarity and good taste, popular speech practice is the highest one need aspire to.

This person also mentioned that he and his classmates beat up a newcomer to their third grade class because he said hōg instead of hōg. But this kind of provincialism can surely be cured in other ways, and should not usurp the time that ought to be used for getting at the true genius of language. Instead of sponsoring surveys about community linguistic idiosyncrasies, the teacher should be preparing the student pedagogically to cope with great thoughts and noble sentiments. I see little of such concern in the linguistic platform. Typically, the linguists are more concerned with statistics than with language as the embodiment of thought. (Incidentally, a teacher who teaches his students to read sensitively and accurately will impart most of the important values which the linguist concerns



himself with when he works with the oral dimension of the language). Winston Churchill, whose voice and pen are among the most effective produced in this century, describes for us, with approval, the manner of his training in the English language:

Not only did we learn English parsing thoroughly, but we also practised continually English analysis. Mr. Somervell had a system of his own. He took a fairly long sentence and broke it up into components by means of black, red, blue and green inks, Subject, verb, object: Relative Clauses, Conditional Clauses, Conjunctive and Disjunctive Clauses! Each had its colour and its bracket. It was a

kind of drill. We did it almost daily. . . .
I learned it thoroughly.

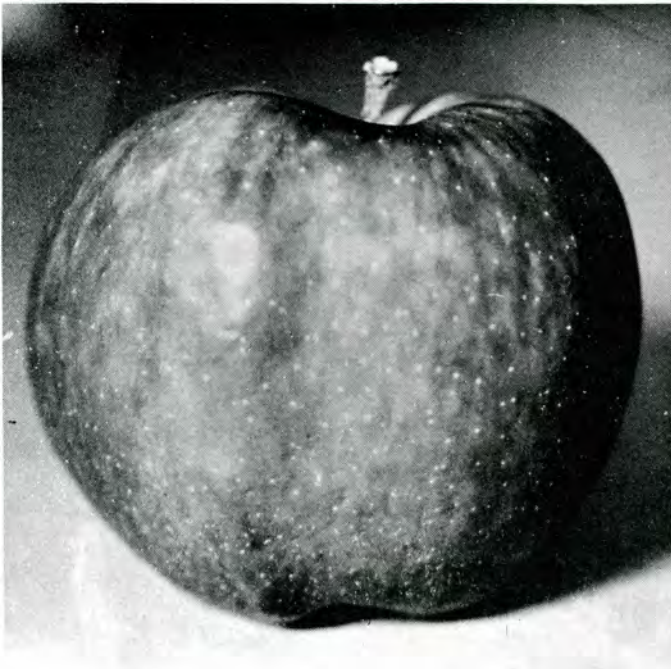
He continues:

Thus I got into my bones the essential
structure of the ordinary British sentence
--which is a noble thing.

Now, this may not be the whole truth about lan-
guage. But his master used the time wisely and
purposefully. He had a fine sense of priorities.

AN ART AND AN APPLE

This is my chief complaint about the linguis-
tic approach. What the linguists report about
their findings may be true enough. Maybe some-
thing interesting can be learned from the vari-
ations in the electronic squiggles produced by
two different speakers reciting "The Gettysburg
Address" (the design on a text book published
recently). But the complexity uncovered seems
incapable of being reduced to any meaningful
patterns. Language is an art, and when linguists
try to cope with it in narrowly scientific terms,
on the analogy of the physical sciences, they are
dealing with the formaldehyded remains of lan-
guage. The conventional grammar operates at
the level of language where it is creative, liber-
ating. It offers alternatives. It helps one in-
tuitively to avoid ambiguities and to give struc-
ture and direction and muscle to the sentence.
It helps one to write and speak effectively. It
imposes discipline on one's style; it makes it
firm, and gives the sentence organization and
purpose. It chastens and refines his thinking.
It helps him to hew and hack and chisel away the
incongruous, the indirect, the imprecise in his
expression. In conclusion, I playfully offer the



following poem, the thrust of which, in the con-
text of this essay should be obvious:

"The Conference"

An apple sat upon a plate
And waited calmly for its fate
As twenty wise men gathered round
To start debate in tones profound,
Their bounded purpose to compute
A definition absolute.
"It is an apple," claimed the first,
But only caused a scornful burst
Of quick retorts: "Why not a ball?"
"The color red?" "A rounded wall?"
"A carbohydrate citric sphere?"
Till one mischievous mutineer
Said, "It's my lunch," and ate the plum,
So rendering the council dumb.

Richard Aldridge

* * * * *

COMPOSITION: 50% OF OUR JOB ?

At Calvin College from July 26 to August 6
will be held the Language Arts Workshop on
Writing (K-12). Lectures, group discussions,
unit-designing seminars, evaluations of essays
on teaching composition are scheduled.

Registrants may attend major lectures and
informal sessions from July 26-30 for \$ 20
(meetings, materials, luncheons, and housing,
if needed). Noted lecturers and leaders: Dr.
J. Sledd, Dr. D. Gordon Rohman, Dr. J. Mc
Crimmon, Miss Jean Reynolds, Mrs. Zack
York, Mrs. John Buelke, and Calvin College
faculty members.

I'm sure many of you visit Michigan every
summer; make it the last week in July this
year--your school board can send the registra-
tion fee to Dr. Donald Oppewal, Calvin College.

Perhaps this session will held you regain
that practice-teaching zest for reading student
essays.

(NOTE: At the time of this writing, the
second week of this NUCS-sponsored Work-
shop--the stipend-awarding sessions from Au-
gust 1 through 6--is closed, registered to ca-
pacity. But as of June first there are still a
few openings for the first great week: get the
\$ 20 in the mail now!)
--M.M.

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