

DRTS NEWSLETTER

The Dutch Reformed Translation Society
Number 17 –December 2014
“The Heritage of the Ages for Today”

Major Actions in 2014

In major actions this year, the board approved two large new projects, adjusted editorial assignments on one in progress, re-elected the slate of officers, renewed expiring terms of several board members, and regretfully accepted the resignation of Mr. Paul Heule—the latter with deep thanks for his years of service and continuing support. Once again, the board met in April and October for its semi-annual sessions.

Honey from the Rock

Abraham Kuyper wrote in excess of 2,200 meditations during his career. These were published weekly between December, 1877, and November, 1920, the month he died. They appeared in *De Heraut* [E.T.: *The Herald*], his weekly religious magazine that was read widely by his following in the Netherlands. They significantly shaped and deepened the spirituality of the movement known as Neo-Calvinism, both in his country and among his emigrant following abroad. By popular demand, collections of these meditations were republished in book form. Eight such collections appeared in the Netherlands between 1880 and 1908. Each has been reprinted at least once in the Dutch language, some several times. Between 1915 and 1938, several of these collections were translated into English. *To Be Near to God* is the last collection that Kuyper published and undoubtedly is the one best known in English translation. Since W.W. II, interest in Kuyper’s meditations has been greatly diminished.

Kuyper in mid-career



Interest in all other aspects of Abraham Kuyper’s richly varied contributions has been sustained since his death. Translations of his works never seen in English before have recently appeared or are underway. His life, especially his early career, has come under new, superb scrutiny. But his devotional material has been substantially neglected. Yet, his spirituality is what drove and guided all his other endeavors.

In order to draw fresh, appreciative attention to this side of Abraham Kuyper, the board has approved the translation of *Honig uit den Rotssteen*. It consists of 200 meditations in two volumes. These are the first Kuyper meditations published in book form, thus are a window into the soul of the early Kuyper. Volume one appeared in 1880, volume two in 1883. They have never been translated into English before. James De Jong is translating and editing this collection. A sample of a Christmas meditation is sent with this newsletter. Pending acceptance by a publisher, *Honey from the Rock* could appear in 2016.

Van der Groe on the Heidelberg

The second major project approved by the board this year is a collection of sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism delivered by Theodorus van der Groe, 1705-1784. Entitled *Des Christens eenige troost in leven en sterven: of Verklaring over den Heidelbergschen catechismus* [E.T.: *The Christian's Only Comfort in Life and Death: An Exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism*], it was only published some twenty years after his death. But remarkably, it was reprinted a number of times subsequently and read fairly widely by people in the 1834 *Afscheiding* [E.T.: Separatism] tradition that had such a shaping influence on Dutch immigrants in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Many sermon collections on the Heidelberg Catechism were published in the Netherlands during the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. The best were often read by elders in worship services when ministers were unavailable. Van der Groe's is among the best and will give English language readers appreciation for this type of material.

Van der Groe is often seen as the last representative of the Further Reformation movement. He was also one of the more balanced, in that his warnings against the sins and failures of the Enlightenment era in the Netherlands were coupled with solid affirmations of God's grace and assurances of reconciliation. A graduate of the theological faculty in Leiden, he served only two congregations during his lifetime, but was widely known, read, and respected.

A number of van der Groe's devotional writings became classics among his following. In the work approved by the board, each Lord's Day receives at least one sermon, and many of them two, several even

three or four. The full work runs to 1250 pages. The society's translation is being done by Rev. Bartel Elshout and will be published by Reformation Heritage Books in two volumes. It should be off the press in late 2015 or early 2016.



Van der Groe in his preaching "toga"

Editorial Assignments

In an effort to expedite the rather complicated editorial process of working with three languages (Latin, Dutch, English), the board has engaged two new experts to work on the Petrus van Maastricht translation already in process. Dr. David C. Noe, Associate Professor of the Classics Department at Calvin College and an expert Latinist, has been retained as translation editor. Dr. Rebecca Rine of George Mason University will now serve as English editor. Mr. Todd Rester remains as translator and Dr. Joel Beeke and Dr. Nelson Kloosterman as general co-editors.

Blessed Holidays!

The board wishes all receiving this newsletter a blessed Christmas and joyous New Year. Thanks for your continuing support of the society's important work.

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