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### Minutes of the Classis in Ommen Starting on December 27, 1837

A. C. Van Raalte

E. Dunnewind

Gerrit W. Sheers

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27 December 1837

Minutes of the Classis in Ommen, of which Rev. Albertus C. Van Raalte, was a leading member, beginning on this date and continuing through 25 January 1844

In Dutch; translation by Rev. Gerrit W. Sheers, October 2001.

Original translation is in Calvin College archives, Van Raalte collection 300, box 1, fldr. 7.

First Classis Meeting, December 27, 1837

Present were from the Consistory of Ommen: Dirk Jan Kleinjan, Johannes Jaspers, Jan Bosch, Jan Schepers, Evert Dangremond and Albert Woertink; from Heemse: Egbert Dunnewind, Derkjan Katerink, Egbert Koekman; from den Ham, Jan Bartels, Gerrit Volkerink, Jan Hendrik Steen, Gerrit Jan Klaassen, Willem Hekman, Jan Vlierman, and from: Dedemsvaart: Jan Wolters Giethoorn, Fredrik Drok and Rev. van Raalte.

- Art. 1. The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. van Raalte.
2. Appointed as clerk E. Dunnewind.
  3. Objections were presented by the brothers regarding the Church Order regulations pertaining to the overseers of the Church of Jesus Christ by the Synod of Utrecht of the 28<sup>th</sup> and days following of September 1837.
  4. The entire Church Order was read and compared with the Church Order of Dordt and explained by Rev. van Raalte from the first until the last article.
  5. The objection of D.J. Kleinjan is that said Church order appears to be imposed. This objection was voided completely by the explanation that said Church Order is intended to serve as a useful and loving guideline for unity.
  6. The objection of Js. Jaspers is that said Church Order will have evil consequences, upon which he is asked if he has found in it anything contrary to God's Word. He acknowledged that this was not the case, but that he had a heavy heart about it, for the rest he promises to [ ? difficult to read] and to promote unity in word and in deed.
  7. The objection of J. Bartels is about art. 6 of said Church Order regarding submission of the Church of God to earthly powers; he is wholly convinced that this submission is to be rendered only to the King of the Church, and for the rest the earthly power is to be acknowledged but not submitted to.
  8. The objections of J.W. Giethoorn and F. Drok regarding lay-readers are taken care of by encouraging the profitable use of persons who may possess teaching gifts with the approval of the overseers of the church, while watching lest such become puffed up as we find in God's Word.
  9. Agreed by common consent that no church dues are to be collected on Sundays.
  10. The meeting is adjourned in love and unity with the singing of Ps. 133:3 and prayer by Rev. van Raalte.

A.C. van Raalte, Chairman

E. Dunnewind, Clerk

Classis Meeting of May 30, 1838.

Present were the brothers from the Church at Ommen: D.J. Kleinjan, Js. Jaspers, Js. Bos, A. Batterink, J. Schippers. From the church at Heemse: E. Dunnewind, J. Hofsink, M. Jansen. From the church at den Ham: J. Bartels, Gt. Volkerink, G.J. Klaassen, W. Hekman, J. Vleerman, Rev. van Raalte.

- Art. 1. Opening with prayer by Rev. van Raalte.
2. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.
  3. Regarding the matter of A. Woetink, deacon of the church at Ommen,

who has been suspended from office because of adultery, and having checked the distinguished and time-honored Church order, and also the present Church Order of Utrecht 1837, art. 93, Classis is asked furthermore how to deal with him. It is unanimously agreed to continue the suspension for the duration of six weeks and following, that upon public confession and good behavior, to restore him to his office.

4. The case of Willem Hurkus is discussed. He has been placed under discipline for over a year because he willingly serves sin by having hired himself out for a job where on the Lord's Day he has to work outside as a driver, while indoors he has to serve guzzlers and boozers as a bar keeper, and in addition, during the above mentioned time period he has been seen not once at a public worship service, nor has he been seen at the mutual gatherings of God's people, even though he has been warned numerous times by the elders of the church of Jesus Christ at Heemse, and also has been admonished recently in writing, and when the pastor encountered him he was informed that the final step of discipline had to be taken in his case, for the perishing of his flesh but for the salvation of his soul, but to no avail – upon which it was decided unanimously and with deep sorrow on the basis of God's demand to proceed with his excommunication on Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> in the assembled congregation.
5. The matter of Hendrikje Soeppenberg is discussed. She is a member of the church of Jesus Christ at den Ham who has made herself guilty of breaking her marriage vows and who in addition to that is guilty of an exceedingly immoral life, and who in spite of having been placed under discipline and having been admonished continuously has gone from bad to worse – it is decided unanimously to proceed to excommunication on Sunday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June in the assembled congregation.
6. Discussion follows regarding Zwaantje Slot, a member of the church of Jesus Christ at Heemse, who is guilty of spreading unfounded rumors regarding the Church Government such as the overseers of the congregation, thereby totally denying the God ordained order of Teacher and elders, and who in addition neglects the mutual gatherings of the congregation, and who also has withdrawn her children from religious instruction during the winter season, in which case it is decided to exercise Christian discipline.
7. Discussion regarding the divisive crowd in the church of Jesus Christ at Ommen who were investigated and admonished, among whom E. van Elburg, who made himself guilty of unseemly conduct towards the overseers and also of drunkenness, and also a Jakob Makkinga who refuses to incorporate his child in the church of Jesus Christ. It is decided to exercise discipline in the case of these two persons.
8. Regarding the Five Points Against the Remonstrants as written in the Canons by our Fathers at Dordrecht, it is approved unanimously that every family should have a copy because it as well as the Catechism and the general Articles of Faith are part of our Form of Unity.
9. Discussed the care to be exercised in guarding against incest which is contrary to God's command regarding marriage.
10. *Censura Morum* was conducted which resulted in a few mutual admonitions made in truth and love to the effect that our Minister [litt.: Teacher] is guilty of paying less attention to distant congregations than to others, upon which he acknowledges to have been at fault, and that he recognizes the comments to be true, though upon further reflection the fault lies with those congregations because they are guilty of not living up to the promises

made in the Letter of Call which mentions that he will be provided with a rent-free residence, while they let him live in the Southern corner where he is locked in by water, and since only a few Ministers [lit.: teachers] have been placed in this region of the Netherlands they can not be too far away from their residence. \*)

11. Appointed church visitors in this Classis I. H. Steen, elder in den Ham, A. Batterink, elder in the congregation of Ommen, and E. Dunnewind, elder in the congregation of Heemse.

\*) Continuation of Art. 10. Decided unanimously to inform the congregations involved of the above mentioned breaches of faith, to wit, in this Classis: Ommen, Rijssen, Hellendoorn, Nieuwleusden, and Dalfsen, and to assist them in word and deed to correct this matter, and also to inform our brother overseers at Genemuiden and Mastebroek, not doubting that they will approve of and agree to this matter which rests on solid grounds.

12. Decided that every congregation will have the freedom to take up collections for the Church Fund on Sundays.
13. With thanks to the members the meeting is closed with prayer by elder D.J. Kleinjan.  
Signed: A. C. van Raalte, Chair

E. Dunnewind, Clerk

Sidebar: Comment on Art. 12, Every congregation is given the freedom to either take up collections for the church or not.

Classis Meeting of 15 September 1838.

Present were the brothers from the congregation at Ommen: D. J. Kleinkjan, Jan Bosch, S. Jaspers, A. Batterink, A. Woltrink, J. Schepers, E. Dangremont. From the congregation at Heemse: E. Dunnewind. From den Ham I.H. Steen, Jan Bartels, G.I. Klaassen, G. Volkering, W. H. Numan. From Dedemsvaart F. Drok and F. Prins and Dr. van Raalte.

- Art. 1. Rev. van Raalte opened the meeting with prayer.
2. Minutes of the previous meetings were read and approved with the exception of art. 12, as noted.
3. A call was read (from the ? at Duur, province of Gelderland) for a general day of prayer, fasting, and thanksgiving set for October 24 next. Unanimously adopted and acknowledged.
4. Discussed to keep the major assemblies to a minimum to avoid much expense and the storms of the spiritual powers of the air.
5. The chair proposes to endure the lukewarmness of many brothers as long as this is not accompanied by evil actions.
6. Voluntary sign-up for overdue Provincial church debts such as Ommen, fl. 10,0, Heemse F.7,0, Ham 5,00, Dedemsvaart f. 5,00.
7. Voluntary support of students as proposed by the last Provincial Assembly nets f.8,00 from the congregation of Heemse and f. 5,53 from the congregation at den Ham.
8. The meeting concluded with the singing of the last verse of the Evening Song and prayer by brother I.H. Steen.

Was signed: A.C. Van Raalte, Chair

E. Dunnewind, Clerk

Meeting of Classis of 3 November 1838.

Present were from Ommen the entire Consistory; from den Ham I.H. Steen, G.I. Klaassen, G. Volkerink; from Heemse; E. Dunnewind, E. Kolkman; from Dedemsvaart F. Drok and Rev. van Raalte, as well as two delegates, A. Kooiker from Nieuwleusden and (Hs) Langheid from Hellendoorn.

- Art. 1. The meeting is opened with prayer by Rev. van Raalte.
2. Two proposals are presented: the first one concerned a general meeting consisting of two elders of each province at the request of the Provincial Assembly of Noord Brabant for the promotion of unity. Which request is adopted unanimously and H. Batterink from Ommen and G. I. Schoenmaker from Nieuwleusden are elected to attend. The other proposal from the Consistory of Genemuiden recommends the adoption of the Church Order of Dordrecht *in toto* and to list in a preface those articles which we cannot possibly live up to. This proposal is defeated in its entirety since this would not be workable, and it is also decided to notify said Consistory of our decision in writing.
3. Approved unanimously to proceed with Christian discipline in the case of dissenters and schismatics.
4. Decided to call a special consistory meeting of the congregation of Ommen on November 20, to notify all dissenters there and in case they are absent from the meeting to have elders appointed to visit them at their homes, and thereafter to report at the meeting in order to decide how to deal with such people. Also invited to this meeting are F. Drok, elder of the congregation at Dedemsvaart, and G. Bartels and G. Volkering, both elders of the congregation at den Ham.
5. The Chair utters a serious warning against mixed marriages.
6. The meeting is adjourned with the singing of the last verse of the Evneing Song and prayer by Br. Drok.

Signed E. Dunnewind, Clerk

Meeting of Classis Ommen at Ommen, the first of March 1839.

Present were the entire Consistory of Ommen and den Ham, from Heemse E. Dunnewind and none from Dedemsvaart.

- Art. 1. Opening with prayer by brother elder Jan Bartels from den Ham.
2. Examined the request with the accompanying regulations of the Congregation of Jesus Christ at Utrecht and adopted as fully acceptable, and decided to forward it to his Majesty the King on behalf of each congregation with a petition to be granted similar freedom.
3. Discussion about building a house of worship for each congregation.
4. Decided to copy 7071 Art. of the above mentioned regulations (containing mutual Christian admonition) and to submit to each congregation to prevent slander.
5. After having sung Ps. 147:1,2 the meeting is adjourned with thanksgiving by brother D. J. Kleinjan.

Signed: E. Dunnewind, Clerk  
A.C. van Raalte, V.D.M.

Meeting of Classis in Ommen, January 29, 1840

Present were from Ommen: Derk Jan Kleinjan, A. Batterink, K.J. Bos, E. Ten Toorn, J. Schepers, A. Woertink, E. Dangremond; from the congregation at Heemse: E. Dunnewind, Marten D. Dunnewind, H. Moddejongen; from the congregation at den Ham: G. Volkering, W. Hekman, Gerrit Jan Klaassen.

- Art. 1 Opening with prayer by Rev. van Raalte.
2. Action taken concerning the marriage of people who have conducted themselves in an ungodly manner, not to solemnize such marriages publicly in the church, since their beginning was not in the Lord, but to accept them upon preceding confession of guilt for having cohabited.
  3. Decided that discipline and excommunication [lit.: "cutting off"] are matters that do not belong in a preaching service, and should not be dealt with there, but rather in fraternal assemblies/meetings.
  4. A lengthy discussion is held about people who have separated themselves from the church. Decided to admonish such urgently to see their duty. However, if they persist in their hard-heartedness to proceed to excommunication. [lit.: "cutting off."]
  5. The meeting is concluded with a prayer of thanksgiving by brother A. Batterink.

Classis Meeting held 3 September 1841 in the church at Ommen.

- Art. 1. Present are the following brothers – from Ommen: A.C. van Raalte, A. Batterink, D. J. Kleinjan, E. Dangremond, J. Zanding, A. Ridderink and A. Ten Toorn. From den Ham: J. Steen, G. Volkering, H. Hekman, G. Kooijker; from Heemse: E. Dunnewind.
- Art. 2. The Chairman A.C. van Raalte opens the meeting with prayer, and then reads the minutes which elicit the following remarks, 1. That article 2 should not be interpreted to mean that when people who have lived together may not use the normal Form for the Solemnization of Marriage, but that when they are accepted circumstances should be taken into account, namely in the changes and application of the Form. 2. Regarding art. 3 it should be noted that the intent of exercising discipline is that the same should not be exercised or announced in the respective worship services [litt.: preaching places] but rather at congregational meetings to avoid giving worldly people cause for slander.
- Art. 3. Elder Dunnewind mentions how profitable classis meetings are and he requests therefore that when the brothers together deal with important truths of our Reformed religion the publication of the renowned C. Olevianus, one of the authors of our Catechism, dealing with the 12 articles of the Christian Faith be used as a guide, which is agreed upon.
- Art. 4. This booklet will be purchased and the cost is to be charged to the consistories, as follows, den Ham 6, Heemse 8, and 11 copies for Ommen.
- Art. 5. The next meeting will be held on the second Wednesday of December next.
- Art. 6. The education in our schools is discussed, but since there is no unanimity about this matter it will be further discussed in our consistory meetings.

- Art. 7. The matter of deacon W. Hekman of den Ham is discussed. He feels burdened about continuing to serve any longer in his office of deacon because the congregation has called him only for one year. The response is that the congregation should be asked to state whether or not they want him for a longer term as deacon. The general principle should be that those once elected should stay on if they serve well until legitimate reasons should hinder them from doing so.
- Art. 8. Since there is nothing more on the agenda the meeting is closed with prayer and thanksgiving by elder Dunnewind after the singing of Psalm 25, verse 6.
- Signed: C. G. de Moen, Clerk.

Classis Meeting held at Ommen at the home of brother J. Schepers on Friday, December 10, 1841.

- Art. 1. Brother de Vries opens the meeting with prayer at the request of the clerk. Hereupon the clerk reads the minutes of the previous meeting which are approved.
- Art. 2. The meeting consists of the members: E. Dunnewind from Heemse, I.H. Steen, G. Volkering and H. Hekman from den Ham, and I.A. van Eerde, also from den Ham, as well as J. Bosch and C.G. Deeltoen and J. Schepers from Ommen. Appointed as chair of this meeting elder E. Dunnewind, and as clerk elder C.G. Deeltoen.
- Art. 3. Since the Classis meeting of the 8<sup>th</sup> of this month was cancelled because the brothers were prevented from attending today's meeting is therefore considered to be its substitute.
- Art. 4. The Clerk reads a request from the Consistory of the Secessionist Congregation at Vriezenveen as follows:  
 Brothers, does the following matter carry your approval?  
 We declare that the minister we have called, H. de Vries, will also serve the Christian Secessionist Congregation of Heemse as long as this is mutually agreeable, and in case the congregation of Heemse no longer desires this arrangement it will be free to call another minister.  
 Classis judges that to serve two congregations is justified in our day because of a lack of ministers, but it counsels most urgently to find ways in which to care for the congregation since every flock needs a pastor of its own which generally speaking is much more advantageous for the expansion of Christ's kingdom.
- Art. 5. Since the brothers S. Bolks and H. de Vries will be examined on Tuesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of this month, Classis is pleased to grant them a testimony of godliness, humility, meekness, sound mind and the gift of oratory, and has instructed the chairman and the clerk to sign this testimony as a token of its authenticity.
- Art. 6. Since part of the Consistory of Heemse is absent once again, it is admonished by means of a fraternal letter to attend the meetings faithfully henceforth.
- Art. 7. It is decided that the next Classis Meeting will be held the first week in March 1842, and in case that should be designated Prayer Day for Crops eight days later.
- Art. 8. Nothing more being on the agenda the meeting is closed with thanksgiving by elder I.H. Steen.

Signed: C.G. de Moen, clerk.





ministers wear such costumes or not; one brother declares himself to be in favor while a few others express the wish that all ministers would agree on how to be attired.

- Art. 11 The chair reads an article from the 3rd part of the Reformation that was inserted at the time at the request of Rev. Gezelle Meerburg, being a condensation of G. Arnold's "Portrait or History of the first Christians," dealing with the so-called clergy costumes so that the brothers who are not convinced of the harm of such attire might be persuaded by hearing the truth and testimony of antiquity that this superstitious dress code and custom is a practice of the devil and originated in a degenerated Christendom from which Rome's prominence resulted to the true detriment and harm of a simple Christianity which always has been inclined, even though it suffered abuse and vilification for its conviction as a result and to reject such practices as human inventions and teachings of the devil which served to blind an ignorant crowd and to reach the hearts of the simple in order to, under the guise of piety, be better able to make a god of the belly, like the Pharisees who wore broad hems and phylacteries to devour the houses of widows and orphans. That in times past godly teachers followed that custom is immaterial here. We like to believe that they did this without giving it any thought, out of custom or from the fear of men, just like it happened in former days by wearing long pig tails and whigs, even though the apostle Paul emphatically testifies that it is a dishonor for a man to wear his hair long, yet this does not take away from the wrong of this custom, and in these days of Reformation which we experience we are obligated before God to reject such coverings of disgrace, and to forcefully fight against them on the basis of God's Word.
- Art. 12. At the request of brother Rev. de Vries the clerk will send a copy of the minutes pertaining to the discussion regarding clergy costumes to the consistory of Vriezenveen for their information and guidance.
- Art. 13. Nothing more being on the agenda the meeting is closed with prayer and thanksgiving by brother H. de Vries.

Classis Meeting held the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 1842 at the home of Rev. A.C. van Raalte.

- Art. 1. Present DD. A.C. van Raalte and H. de Vries as well as elders D.J.Kleinjans, C.G. de Moen, G. Schrotenboer, M. Jansen, E. Dunnewind, I.H. Steen and G. Volkering. From Ommen, Heemse and den Ham besides the deacons, J. Schepers, E. Ten Toorn, H. Schrotenboer, T. Pasma and H. Hekman from above mentioned congregations.
- Art. 2. The meeting is opened with prayer by Rev. A.C. van Raalte after which the clerk reads the minutes which are approved, with the sole exception that the model petition to the teachers is not to be signed on behalf of the Consistories, but only by the ministers of each congregation.
- Art. 3. Appointed as chairman for this meeting Rev.H. de Vries, and as clerk

elder C.G. de Moen.

- Art. 4. The chair asks the brothers if they have anything to bring to the floor upon which the clerk says that matters from the previous meeting have to be dealt with first such as the matter of the schools. The chair responds by saying that the Mayor of Heemse is reported to have said that he does not acknowledge a minister at Heemse since brother de Vries does not reside there, while the clerk states that schoolteachers at den Ham and Ommen wrote that they are prepared to supply the requested information provided the request is made only by the ministers and not on behalf of or by the Consistory, which will be complied with.
- Art. 5. The Consistory of den Ham asks a judgment about an earlier election as deacon of brother G. Meijer who at the time did not feel free to accept the call, even though he never declined it outright, but who now feels a desire and conviction to serve because his former doubts have vanished and while the congregation is disposed to accept him as such a few object being of the opinion that a new election is required. The brothers judge that Meijer may accept his office though it might be advisable that in a prayer meeting petitions would be offered for a blessing from the Lord upon his acceptance, while then it certainly will become clear whether the installation will take place or not.
- Art. 6. Brother E. Dunnewind submits a petition from the congregation at Heemse in which an urgent request is made to transfer Rev. de Vries of Vriezenveen to Heemse, but the judgment is that the congregation is duty-bound to call someone as Shepherd and Teacher seeing there is a great need for this.
- Art. 7. Brother de Vries asks for a statement of congregational membership of members who left the congregation of their residence and moved elsewhere. His request is approved.
- Art. 8. Rev. A.C. van Raalte reads a letter from the Provincial Assembly of Churches of Noord Brabant with an accompanying letter from Rev. Brummelkamp in which an urgent request is made to hold a General Assembly to discuss how to end the disagreement between the Revs. Scholte and van Velzen and also to be able to take counsel together on other important matters. It is decided to discuss this further at the Provincial Assembly to be held 30 April at Nieuwleusden.
- Art. 9. Rev. van Raalte also reads a letter of Rev. Panchaud of Brussels and Rev. P. Baehler at Mons in Henegouwen in which their sincerest thanks is expressed for the support received, while Rev. Baehler recommends himself for continued support since he serves a congregation from which he does not receive any financial help because it is without any means. His post however is quite important because he lives in a region where nearly everyone bows the knee to the kind of worship which makes itself a visible God and Christ as ordered and advocated by the Pope in Rome. It is decided to discuss this at the Provincial Assembly, and then to leave it to the judgment of the brothers whether or not to take up a collection in the various congregations.

- Art. 9. [sic] With nothing else on the agenda the meeting is closed with prayer and thanksgiving by the chairman and the singing of Psalm 119:3.  
Signed: C.G. de Moen, clerk

Classis Meeting held the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 1844 at the home of Rev. A. C. van Raalte at Ommen.

- Art. 1. Present were the Consistory of Ommen as well as the delegates from Heemse and den Ham.
- Art. 2. Rev. van Raalte opens the meeting with prayer, while A.C. van Raalte is appointed as chairman and C.G. de Moen as clerk.
- Art. 3. The chair states the reasons for this meeting: accusations have been leveled against deacon T. Ten Toorn at Ommen for not having conducted himself properly during the time that he lived in his father's house; for since his father had made debts and was unable to pay them back, and after that had signed away his property to the above mentioned T. Ten Toorn his son with whom he had made his home, suspicion arose whether the above mentioned deacon had conducted himself properly in all of this, while deacon T. Ten Toorn also incurred suspicion by people outside the church. This was the reason why the Consistory of Ommen would appreciate that deacon Ten Toorn would resign his office voluntarily since he is not a good witness to those outside of the church, and thus might become the reason for the congregation to be defamed and slandered.
- Art. 4. Since deacon TenToorn was not present at the meeting it is proposed to send for him so that the brothers could have a conversation with him.
- Art. 5. Deacon Ten Toorn having appeared at the meeting the clerk, on behalf of the assembly, explains the accusations leveled against him, and although TenToorn declares to be innocent of any sinful action, he is nevertheless requested to voluntarily relinquish his office in order to safeguard the congregation from defamation and slander. Subsequently TenToorn declares that he is prepared to do so.
- Art. 6. The chair informs the meeting also that he has strong objections to mixed marriages and that he invites the judgment of classis in this regard. In his congregation is a girl who is about to enter upon a marriage with someone from outside the congregation who does not desire to join the congregation. This girl, having been warned and admonished repeatedly not to be unequally yoked with an unbeliever, has until now not been willing to listen to the warnings, reason why the chair judged it useful that henceforth all who take similar steps be cut off from the congregation, the reason being that the Lord continually showed his displeasure when his people mingled with the children of this world, and it is an emphatic command that a member of God's church is not to take on a yoke with an unbeliever, and that he that marries shall marry in the Lord, while also usually there is no fear of the Lord in such households, and the children are neglected in their upbringing or sometimes are brought up in a false religion – reason why the church of the Lord is duty bound not to permit

such sinful practices. After the brothers had voiced their opinions which were answered by the chairman Classis decides to accept the advice of the chair being in full agreement with it.

Art. 7. Nothing being left on the agenda the meeting is concluded with prayer and thanksgiving by the clerk.

Translator's Comment: Throughout the original Dutch copy ministers are referred to as "*leeraar*" lit. teacher, "*Ds.*" (short for "Dominee" from the Latin "Dominus:" "Lord,") "predikant" ("one who preaches). Whenever these appellations are used as titles I have translated them all as "Rev."

The above minutes were translated from the Dutch by Rev. Gerrit W. Sheeres, October 2001.

Note by translator: In the above minutes of 25 January 1842 mention is made of "clergy costumes." Dr. J. Wesseling in his Afscheiding van 1834 in Friesland,<sup>1</sup> page 101, deals with the matter of "ambtsgewaad." (clergy costume). He writes the following (translated):

It is well known that at the outset there was a lot of division in the secessionist churches. One of the points of contention dealt with the customary clergy costume of a minister. Should a minister [in the Secessionist churches] wear such a clergy costume? "*white dickey,*" It consisted in those days of a black coat, knee-breeches, a "bef" and a three-cornered hat. "*or 'ru'!*" Many desired to see their preacher in the pulpit wearing this costume, without the hat of course, since they thought that a minister should set himself apart by wearing a special clergy costume. People had forgotten that originally this had been the attire of well-to-do citizens of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, even though they might not always have worn black. But a person like Rev. Scholte soon no longer appeared in the pulpit wearing the accepted clergy costume, among other things because some saw this as a "priestly garment." And Scholten did not want to feed such superstition. Already at the Synod of Amsterdam in 1840 the matter of "the attire of ministers" was discussed. The members of the synod, generally speaking, thought it was all right that ministers should continue to wear simple, tasteful attire, which would not be subject to changing fashions, especially so as not to cause offense. It was noted at the same time that one should not get attached to one single form of attire. That is the reason why synod advised to appear in the pulpit in the traditional costume (meaning that it was not mandatory).

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The matter continued to agitate a number of churches as the above minutes of 25 January 1842 indicate. The clergy costume in question resembled the one worn by Rev. Cornelis van den Oever – see the next page.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wesseling, J. De Afscheiding van 1834 in Friesland, Deel 1 (Groningen, the Netherlands, Uitgeverij de Vuurbaak, 1981), p. 104

<sup>2</sup> The picture is taken from Koers, N.H. Editor, Vier Eeuwen Domineesland, (Utrecht, Museum Catharijnenconvent, Zoetermeer, Uitgeverij Meinema, 1997) p. 24.

De oefenaar Cornelis van den Oever (1802-1877). Na 22 jaar als schippersknecht te hebben gewerkt, wordt Van den Oever tijdens een ernstige ziekte 'geroepen' om de Hervormde Kerk te verlaten. Hij wil 'liever als een eenzame Gereformeerde musch op het dak ... verkeerden dan gemeenschap hebben met de verlaters van de zuivere godsdienst'. Van den Oever gaat optreden als oefenaar bij een Gereformeerde Gemeente onder het Kruis in Rotterdam en wordt in 1844 predikant. Hij draagt het ambtskostuum met steek en bef. Traktement krijgt hij niet. Hij preekt 'op de zak': hij leeft van de collecte tijdens de kerkdienst. (cat. 20)



laatste combinatie is, meer dan bovengenoemde deftige titels, een vaststaande en geliefde aanduiding geworden. Ze verwijst zowel naar de private, individuele als naar de openbare, collectieve aanpak van het domineeswerk. Intussen heeft het latijnse woord *pastor* (herder) een enigszins oecumenische, katholiek-protestantse lading gekregen. Daarentegen heeft het woord 'leraar' in bevindelijk-gereformeerde kringen nog altijd een dierbare klank. Het verwijst dan niet naar een docent van een middelbare school, maar naar een godzalige dienaar des Woords.

Predikanten mochten, evenals andere geleerde beroepsbeoefenaren, in vroegere eeuwen graag ook hun persoonsnaam latiniseren. Wouter Adriaensz. werd Gualtherus Adriani en Evert Bogaert werd Everhardus Bogardus. In de dagelijkse omgang was het niet ongebruike-