

THE COMING OF THE HOLLANDERS TO IOWA

TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH BY JACOB VAN DER ZEE

[*Eene Stem uit Pella* (A Voice from Pella) is the title of a pamphlet in the Dutch language written by Henry Peter Scholte in the month of March, 1848, printed at Amsterdam by Hoogkamer & Company, and now preserved in the archives of The State Historical Society of Iowa. The following pages are a more or less literal translation of this notable historical pamphlet. As the reader may judge, it was prepared specially for dissemination in The Netherlands.

Most memorable in the history of emigration from Holland are the years 1846 and 1847, because they represent the dates of the founding of prosperous Dutch colonies in Michigan and Iowa and mark the beginning of an exodus which has never abated. Thousands of Hollanders have since found homes in all of the north central States.

After William I. came to the throne of Holland in 1814, irregularities in the State Church and deviation from its doctrines so alarmed the orthodox, conservative party throughout the country that in 1834, under the leadership of a few clergymen, scores of people seceded from the State Church and formed small congregations. Of these clergymen, all of whom were suspended from their churches, Scholte was perhaps the foremost figure: he has been called "the Father of the Separation".

Despite the Dutch government's relentless persecution for many years, the Separatist congregations thrived and flourished; but even after they were recognized by royal decree in 1839 the members of the new sect were despised and cast out so that the economic distress throughout Holland was only aggravated among adherents of the new faith. Under these circumstances Scholte organized an Association at Utrecht in 1846; and in the spring of 1847 over eight hundred members of the Association, "the flower of the Dutch emigration of that day", departed for the United States, arriving in Iowa late in August, 1847. Such were the facts in brief which led to the coming of hundreds of Hollanders to the Pella colony southwest of Des Moines.—
TRANSLATOR.]

[1]

THE PREPARATION

Numerous former fellow-countrymen of mine must long ago have expected some article from my pen. The reason for my silence hitherto lies not in any indifference toward the land of my birth; for during my domicile in the United

States of North America I followed as closely as possible the fortunes of The Netherlands. It pained me to hear that affairs after my departure were so conducted that the blood of citizens had to be poured out, due not to differences with foreign potentates but to civil dissensions. Just as little must the reason for my silence be sought in dissatisfaction arising from my past experience. With grateful acknowledgment of God's good hand over me for the unusual honor which has come to me in my new country, I have sincerely forgiven the land of my birth for the unjust treatment meted out to me in various ways. The reason for my silence hitherto is that I did not like to trouble my former fellow-countrymen with matters which they can read in every book on America, and I did not care [2] to tell them facts which in themselves are of trifling importance but when colored a little have a certain charm for the minds of men. I believe I have become well enough acquainted with human nature to know how little it takes to portray a situation in light wholly different from the real, and I am convinced of having so much regard for my fellowmen that I do not wish to be instrumental in deluding them in any way.

As soon as I arrived in the United States of North America, I took pains to secure all possible information, useful and necessary for our colonization. The rumor of our coming had preceded me; and hardly had I reached America when I was stormed from various sides with offers of land so tempting that I am not surprised when foreigners who come here unprepared fall into the snare set for them by some land speculator. For the sake of our future peace of mind I took the trouble to investigate as accurately as possible the opportunities presented to me in various States.

Since the door to different circles was opened to me both by means of letters of recommendation from the North

American Minister in Holland and by influential friends, whose acquaintance I had previously made, I had abundant opportunity to obtain instruction in everything which I desired. At Washington too I found the higher government officials so ready and willing to help me in every way that [3] I could hardly trust my own experience, and I was involuntarily driven to compare them with officials in Holland — a comparison which did not redound to the credit of the latter country. Not only did I not experience any gruffness, not only was no greedy hand anywhere extended, but with the greatest modesty and willingness in answering my questions of investigation printed documents were presented to me free of cost, while a few days later a set of maps of the various States indicating the unsold government lands was sent to me at New York free.

Everything which I came to know as a result of those investigations convinced me more and more that the attention which we had fixed upon the western States during previous investigations in Holland was due to the good guidance of Providence.

During my sojourn in the old States I did not forget that Hollanders had made a settlement in Michigan. While I was at New York City the gifts of Christian charity were collected there to enable the Hollanders in Michigan to build a saw-mill. These tokens of good-will toward the Dutch colonist did not, however, induce me to trek to that region. I perceived the same thing at Albany, and I received also a letter from Sleijster who had journeyed from Wisconsin to Michigan to examine that colony's situation and who had obtained such a bad impression that [4] he returned again to Wisconsin where he lives at present.

The reasons which caused me to turn away from Michigan entirely, so far as the establishment of the colony of Netherlanders there is concerned, were: 1st, that region is

situated too far north; 2nd, the entire want of suitable roads by which to get there; 3rd, the lack of sufficient prairie adapted to agriculture, because nearly all the land is covered with a heavy growth of timber; 4th, the proximity of the Indians and the distance from other settlements of whites. All these reasons taken together caused me to judge that for the class of Netherlanders, with whom I should colonize, that region could not be considered desirable.

To the farmer who had already spent a part of his life in the level hay lands and fields of Holland, the unusual battle with trees and the constant view of stumps in the midst of meadows and cultivated fields could not be agreeable. Not to detract from Michigan's fertility, nor from the value of many kinds of wood, nor from the pleasure of hearing the warble of birds in the cool shade of virgin forests, I had, however, experienced enough of real life to know that stumps of trees are disagreeable obstacles to farmers, and that the value of wood decreases very much when everything is wood. Besides, I was too well convinced that the Hollanders who were coming to North America were more prosaic than poetic, and consequently they thought not so much of pleasing their eyes and ears as of buying soil suitable for farms, [5] the easier to cultivate the better. I knew that the Dutch farmers, of whom our Association chiefly consisted, were especially eager to be able early to possess pastures and milk-cows, to use plow and harrow on the land, and that they were not at all inclined to prefer ax to spade or to become dealers in wood.

Before my departure from Holland I had read a published letter from Michigan in which the healthfulness of that State was reported as far superior to that of Iowa. Having arrived in North America, I received quite different opinions of Iowa; while I was reading some newspaper tes-

timonials at New York as an advertisement of a certain kind of pills, I came across a letter also from the Michigan colony praising the pills and ordering more, so that I became convinced that people there as everywhere else in the world had to wrestle with indisposition and disease.

In addition to all this, I received, while at New York, letters from St. Louis from the Hollanders who had been there some months, informing me that they had been invited by Rev. van Raalte to come to Michigan, but that after some correspondence and by investigating opportunities nearer by they had decided not to go to Michigan, but after our arrival to have Iowa inspected first. Keppel, a member of the Committee of Investigation previously appointed in Holland, had gone thither [to Michigan] with a couple of other men in order to make a personal examination and to be able to give an accurate report.

[6] Another part of my work was to investigate the best means of inland transportation for the Hollanders who were coming. I was thus enabled to come into touch with a class of persons whom people are accustomed to call kidnappers and deceivers, who storm each incoming ship of emigrants like bands of hungry wolves. Everyone of them attempts to gain the foreigner's confidence by telling him with the utmost concern that all other people are liars, but that they know of good lodging-houses and can point out the cheapest means of transportation. Every transportation office has a few such way-men in its service, and this method of exploiting the purses of foreigners is so involved that even now, after having experienced everything, I can not yet confidently recommend any office as one upon which people can safely rely.

If all foreigners who arrive knew English, if they had familiarized themselves with conditions in North America before their departure from Europe, then the safest plan

would certainly be that everybody should inform himself of steamboat and railway service in order to proceed in the most advantageous manner. These kidnappers have become so accustomed during recent years to see incoming ships filled with half-starved Irishmen or ill-smelling Germans that the rumor of the coming of so many Hollanders, who were bringing some money and a fairly cleanly appearance with them, goaded their zeal anew to give chase after what people [7] here have already quite generally learned to call "willempjes". Among the ship's assailants who were interested in the oncoming "willempjes" were also several Hollanders, Jews as well as Gentiles, who were acquainted with the relatives and circumstances of some of whose coming they had heard, obviously obliged by allies equally concerned in Holland. One can form no idea of this branch of industry at the sea-ports and especially at New York; one should almost be able to read the hearts of these men if one wishes to be secure from paying toll in some form or another to this host of unofficial officers.

What I learned to know of the busy world in the ports, and particularly New York, compelled me to recognize the necessity of waiting for the arrival of our ships but also caused me to long ardently for the glad tidings of their arrival, when I should be able to proceed on the journey inland. Finally the glad tidings were telegraphed to me that one of our ships had reached Baltimore and later that the others were in sight. I hastened by rail to the place where I could rejoice in the safe arrival of those with whom I should henceforth live in common. St. Louis was made the general meeting-place.

In a long time Americans had seen no foreigners who made so good an impression and brought so much property with them. Various newspapers spread the report of the arrival of the Hollanders, and some accounts were so exag-

gerated that one [8] would almost believe the treasures of Peru had been transported to the New World in the boxes and baskets and bags of the people come from The Netherlands — a belief which was strengthened in many places since the Hollanders usually had to exchange gold in order to pay for things. This circumstance has created for us what is called credit, but it also caused people in some cases to charge us more than they were accustomed to take from Irish or Germans.

Packed into railway carriages, canal-boats and steam-boats, the whole Association at length arrived at St. Louis. For so large a number not enough suitable dwellings were to be found, and those who could get no houses were provided with sheds, for the construction of which space was willingly offered. After a brief breathing-spell from the fatiguing journey, the Committee of Investigation set out to look for a site for the settlement, while everyone at St. Louis looked for work, a search wherein some who like to work were very successful, while others who had formed of America a picture such as children have of Cocagne were less fortunate in finding what they did not seriously seek.

During the sea voyage a few had died, on land only four so far as I remember. At St. Louis, however, the number of deaths was greater. The unusual experiences of the trip, the cramped quarters at St. Louis, the extraordinary heat in that daily growing city, the irregular and careless use of food and [9] drink, and the disregard by some of Dutch cleanliness caused illness and consequent death. Some who were not very sick at St. Louis or had partially recovered had to pay the toll of nature after arrival in our new settlement. Without judging those who departed this life, we can sincerely say of some that they died as Christians and testified that death was their gain.

Having arrived at this point, I must cast a glance back-

ward to what surpasses everything in importance, namely, religious and social life.

At Boston I stopped but a few days to give my family a rest from the very tiresome voyage. Particular persons I did not visit in that city; those in whom I was especially interested were absent. I quickly perceived that Americans were very much concerned about Dutch emigration and that they were frank in their friendliness.¹ But common religious ties I did not find in that capital of American rationalism, while the Christians whose addresses I had were away traveling at that time.

After a few days' rest I departed to Albany, the capital of the State of New York. I at once found Christian friends, apprised of my arrival, awaiting me, and I was taken to a hotel such as I had not met with in Europe. The first thing to attract my attention in the rooms assigned to me was the printed list of hotel regulations and therein the notice that each evening [10] at 9 o'clock religious services were held by all guests in common. It was a unique experience to find myself in a hotel where strong drink was never sold, and where also a great number of the guests finished the day listening together to God's Word, praising the Lord with enthusiastic song and thanking God on their knees for all His blessings, humbly confessing their sins, and beseeching that their sins be forgiven and cleansed in the beloved blood of Christ. Sometimes when a minister was present, he was asked to lead, but ordinarily the respectable head of the house did so. My stay at this hotel was so pleasant that all the guests really seemed to be members of one large family. If any Christian ever comes to Albany from Holland and desires respectable Christian lodging, let him go to the Delavane House.

At Albany I quickly found Rev. Wyckhoff, a man very

¹ See below Appendix B, p. 567.

much interested in the Hollanders, who placed me at once in a position to preach the gospel in my mother tongue. There were many in the city who understood Dutch, but beside these the church was filled with other inhabitants who, though they themselves could no longer understand Dutch, still remembered that it was the language of the founders of this city and State. The Christians who had arrived there from The Netherlands a month before rejoiced to hear the Word of God publicly preached in their own tongue. It was a striking incident that while in the land of my birth [11] most public places for the worship of God were closed to me, and even those who in their homes called me brother in Christ would not have dared to allow me to take charge of services in their churches, here in a strange land one of my first experiences was to be urged to preach God's Word in one of the principal churches.

On this occasion I preached about the parable of the ten virgins, and so far as human judgment goes, not without blessing. Later at New York I was invited several times to come to preach once more at Albany. Circumstances, however, did not permit me to do this. In and near New York City, where dwell many who understand Dutch well, I preached for various ministers in numerous churches on the Sabbath day and during the week. Had I not been tied to our Association, I certainly could not have withstood the pressure of persons who urged me to stay in the State of New York and once more to hold regular services in the Dutch language. At Pittsburg too I had the opportunity to preach God's Word in our language when I happened to be there one Sunday with a part of our Association, and there too one of the ministers was ready to make room for me.

Everywhere among the Christians of America I met with a hearty, lively interest in the emigration from The Neth-

erlands.² I believe that in general they cherish a too lofty opinion of us. In their conversation and newspapers we [12] are represented as resembling the God-fearing Pilgrims who first settled in the United States. They regard our coming to this land of civil and religious liberty as one of God's blessings on their country. Our settlement in the West they regard as a beneficent act of Providence to spread the saving knowledge of the gospel among people who belong to no religious sect at all, since they do not believe and they seldom if ever hear the preaching of the gospel. They regard us as a banner to be raised by God's Spirit in the West against the ubiquitous, insidious ambassadors of popedom. Oftentimes a sense of shame and embarrassment comes over me when I stop to look at myself and our Association, and then consider the high thoughts which people entertain of us: while the Germans who come here are less highly regarded, the Hollanders are held in honor and are often placed on an equality with the Americans.

One sees and hears of such favorable treatment of Hollanders not only at the hands of individual Christians and Christian circles but also at the hands of State officials and State Assemblies. I myself had an experience of this sort at Albany, where the legislature had just convened and I wished to look on for a moment. Recognized by one of the members, I was compelled to take a seat in the midst of them. How different from Holland! In the land of our birth branded and treated as a despised congregation, [13] misunderstood by everyone, shoved aside, trampled upon and bruised; in the land of strangers and above all in its most respectable part honored and treated as a costly gift of God to improve their country!

At St. Louis where people do not know our language,

² See below Appendix B, p. 567.

where they once hardly ever thought of Hollanders, they have the same impression of us, the same respect for us. So long as the Dutch Christians remained in this city a Presbyterian congregation allowed them to make regular use of a large room for Sunday services, with heat in the winter and without cost, and they even helped our needy sick. The Hollanders have had the same experiences in Michigan and also in Wisconsin. In the latter State we recently had a striking example: on Lake Michigan, which is especially dangerous to navigate in the autumn and winter, a steamboat disaster occurred, and besides a few Americans and Germans, one hundred and twenty-five Netherlanders from Upper Gelderland and Overijssel lost their lives. Only twenty-five Netherlanders were saved and set on shore at Sheboygan, but all that they owned was swallowed up in the waves. Immediately on the following Sunday a collection was taken up in the various churches of Milwaukee for the surviving Netherlanders.

In this way America speaks and thinks of Hollanders, in this way America treats the Hollanders who were so oppressed in their native land in matters civil and religious that they were forced to leave. That God has done for us. If we must answer the question: what are we doing [14] for God, then shame and humiliation join within us; for since we ought to shine as lights in the world, some would surely have to admit on meeting God: "our lamps are going out."

THE SETTLEMENT

During my investigations in the old States I frequently heard the remark that it would be extremely difficult to find unsold lands suitable for us, unless we were willing to be cut off from intercourse with all human beings except the Indians. The latter experience none of us desired, and the truth of the former statement became more and more clear to us. There are extensive unoccupied areas in Iowa and

Illinois, but removed from wood and water and therefore certainly not to be chosen for a young colony of people who are entire strangers to this country.

Leaving St. Louis the Committee of Investigation went first to inspect the State of Iowa, and in case nothing desirable was to be found there they intended to go to northern Illinois. The first land to be examined in Iowa, and the nearest to St. Louis, was the district which is called The Half-Breed Tract, once set aside as a reservation for Indians, who later sold out not to the Government but to private persons. A company at New York owns a great portion of this tract, and while I was at New York I held [15] a conference with the principal owners. There I obtained some impressions unfavorable, not to the land, which is good, but to the people living on it. Having made an accurate investigation in Iowa, it became clear to us that a purchase in this region was very dangerous because lawsuits were constantly brought to quiet title; while so many people lived there without being owners of the land that it was far from our thoughts to buy them out.

Now our path lay to the nearest land-office where unsold government land can still be bought for the fixed price of \$1.25 per acre. Among several letters of recommendation for various places in Iowa and Illinois I had one addressed to General van Antwerp, Receiver of Public Lands at Fairfield. With the greatest good-will he showed me all maps of the State to indicate to me what land in the State had not yet been paid for; but I was also informed that, as far westward as it was deemed advisable for us to go, the most important lands had been "claimed", that is to say, settled and cultivated by the first settlers who had employed all their time and money to bring the land under cultivation but had not yet saved enough to be able to pay the government for their "claims" (generally a half-section in area).

Since the right of these people is honored, it is almost impossible to buy such lands from the Government until one has satisfied the demands of the people themselves by [16] buying them out. Only in such a district was a settlement possible for us: because, wherever the inhabitants had progressed so far as to be able to pay the government for their land, it was hardly to be expected that a more numerous population would make room for new-comers without demanding prices so high as to be out of all proportion to the means of an Association like ours.

Whither should we now direct our attention? The best and latest map of Iowa directed us no farther than Fairfield the place where we then were. I decided therefore to copy a list of various localities which we intended to inspect, and to copy my own map as accurately as possible from the government map. Besides, I had already asked the Receiver for a good guide and some one who could negotiate with the Americans for us. I was quite convinced that the site of our settlement was predestined. I saw no light, however, by which to find that site. Accordingly, I did what my hand found to do, namely, I set about to finish the map, and for that purpose I had to visit the land-office.

While my fellow-committeemen went to inspect the neighborhood of Fairfield in order to gain some information from this or that inhabitant, I went to work. It soon appeared that God had seen to it that I should need no map. On the day previous there had occurred the death of a child of the Register in whose house the land-office was. As I was going to work, preparations were made for the child's funeral. [17] The Receiver, who happened to be there at that time also, invited me to follow the body to the grave. I complied with his request; and then it appeared that without human aid or deliberation a guide had been provided.

On the previous day, Sunday, I had been introduced to the

Presbyterian minister at the place where religious services were held. This man said a prayer at the grave, and when the dust had been consigned back to earth and we were returning home, this minister made me acquainted with a person unfamiliar to me, who was introduced as the minister of the Baptists. Very quickly I entered into conversation with him, and when he heard who I was and what our object was, he told me that he had traversed this section of the State as a missionary for six years, and that he was convinced there were two districts which would suit us, if the few settlers would consent to sell out. I paid close attention to his story, and recognized the good hand of God. I asked him if he would serve us as a guide. He deemed this impossible because he was under obligations to preach at Fairfield the following Sunday, when the scattered members gathered together from the surrounding country.

Once having noted the hand of God I did not let loose, and after speaking with the other members of the Committee who shared my conviction I persuaded that minister to let us call upon his deacons; and having informed them of the case, they decided to write a letter at once to [18] the nearest minister telling him that he should take charge of services on the following Sunday and that we would set out the following day. This we did, and by Thursday noon we were at the place where I now write, without a possibility of a rumor having preceded us. This was necessary in order that the settlers might not know our intentions and so be prepared to come to some agreement among themselves.

We began straightway with the man at whose house we had dinner at noon, and with him agreed upon the price of his farm, reserving the right to give him a definite answer not later than one o'clock Saturday, because we wanted to be assured of the other farms first. He gave us a short list of the various settlers, and by constant riding, before dark-

ness set in, we had everybody's promise to sell at a stipulated price. Some whom we did not well trust were bound by cash payments in the presence of witnesses. Our work, however, was now but half done, for we had to have access to the Des Moines River also.

Early Friday morning we rode thither. There too the settlers were not informed, and after coming to terms with each one separately by evening we had bound all of them till Monday. Saturday we appeared at the appointed time and place, when written contracts to be executed within one month's time were signed by them as sellers and by me as purchaser. To accomplish this, however, I had to purchase also the growing crops, [19] the stock belonging to the various farms, and other personal property. I had no authority to do this, and the money invested was not nearly sufficient for the purpose; but mindful of the Lord's guidance, perceiving the excellent situation and exceptional fertility of the soil and the facility of cultivation, I did not hesitate to buy on my own responsibility.

On Sunday I heard two excellent sermons by our guide and mediator; on Monday we signed contracts with settlers near the river; and on Tuesday we commenced our journey back to St. Louis to convey to the members of our Association the glad tidings that we had found a good place for our homes, and to make preparations for the departure of a first column.

Keppel, who was mentioned above, had returned from Michigan just before the Committee departed. He was at once appointed to accompany us; he too did not hesitate to acknowledge openly that we should regard the district now occupied by us as preferable to Michigan.

I am compelled to come back to Michigan since I notice that attempts are being made in The Netherlands to exalt this State and its Dutch Colony and to make them prefer-

able to Iowa, not by simply furnishing facts but by giving false colors to affairs and conditions. As I said above, I have not been in Michigan but I have made inquiries, and I knew I could not go thither without also having to decide [20] to direct those who were to follow me to go thither, and I have given the reasons why I had to give up Michigan. With regard to what I have written here, I refer the reader to the first appendix³ where he shall be able to find satisfactory evidence.

When the Committee arrived at St. Louis and announced the finding of a place, general rejoicing prevailed. The report of the purchase was quickly spread abroad by various newspapers, and I have not read a single article which did not speak favorably of our choice. It is the general opinion of Americans that we are established in one of the best parts of Iowa.

I unite herewith a small map of this State, a copy of a map drawn by order of the Government and, so far as I am acquainted with the land, a trustworthy map so far as the course of the rivers is concerned. I must add, however, that this map extends as far west as the land was then surveyed. Iowa's area extends twice as far westward now. The government surveys also extend farther. The site of the new capital, fifteen or seventeen miles northwest of us, is approximately the center of the State.

The farms and government lands which were purchased lie in two townships, numbers seventy-six and seventy-seven. One was named Lake Prairie Township, after a small lake situated in it; the other was called Jefferson Township, after a leader in the war of independence. The former is traversed by the river Des Moines, [21] the latter by the river Susquehanna or Skunk, while various creeks can be found containing living springs. The land is in gen-

³ See below Appendix A, p. 565.

eral rolling or undulating. The heaviest timber is to be found along the rivers, but from time to time one finds larger or smaller lots of trees, of which some may bear the name groves, while others are only clumps. The city is platted in the midst of prairie on one of the highest points, so that the houses can be seen about eighteen miles away in clear light. The farms are scattered over the entire plain, along and between both rivers. Along the rivers there is excellent opportunity to construct water-mills.

When the Des Moines River becomes navigable for ships and steamboats, the site of the little lake in Township Seventy-six will offer an inestimable opportunity for the erection of factories driven by water-power. There is also a sulphureous spring of especially good quality, which manifestly can be very useful in cases of sickness. At several places coal is to be found, of excellent quality, also lime and sandstone. The burnt lime is first-class. At a few places stones have been found which will apparently be good for mill-stones, while in digging wells metals are found. In general, however, we can only say what can be found upon the surface; what still lies concealed in the earth's bosom the future will tell. Wherever wells existed or were dug we have [22] excellent water. Some struck good water at a depth of twelve feet; others had to dig down about thirty feet.

The soil is suitable for all sorts of grain. On the farms we found exceptional summer and winter wheat, oats, buckwheat, flax, hemp and Indian corn, cabbage, turnips and onions of especially good quality, all sorts of potatoes and many kinds of melons which ripen upon the cold ground in the corn-fields here as well as they do in the hot-beds of Holland, not only the coarser but also the finer sorts. When the prairie is once broken the ground is easily tilled; in general it resembles rich, mellow, black garden soil. Tame or

grafted fruit trees are not numerous, but in the groves wild fruit-trees are met with in profusion, as also grapes.

Live stock is of very good quality here, and was accustomed under former owners to run loose upon the prairie both winter and summer. It seemed to us, however, that it is preferable to stable stock in the winter time. The cows yield exceptionally rich milk, and we are already convinced that with proper care butter and cheese can be made which can compare with the best in Holland — something of incalculable value to this Colony, since the butter and cheese made by Americans in the West is generally bad and sometimes unfit for consumption. There were hogs in plenty upon the farms because they are regarded as a profitable investment: [23] they roam in the woods all summer and are only driven home a few weeks before slaughter time, to be fattened with Indian corn which is raised upon the farms.

During the time that we have been here the needs of the colonists have been provided for. Some farmers have sold their hogs cleaned to be shipped away; at this moment others have about 25,000 pounds of ham and bacon and nearly 5,000 pounds of lard ready for shipment. If one stops to think that this section was first turned over by the Indians to Americans in May, 1844, and that the original settlers who are now bought out were people of little or no financial means, and if one takes note of the additional fact that there were farms which with the property on them were valued by their owners at from one to three thousand dollars, not counting the money which had to be paid to the State for the title, then one can judge for himself how excellent the colony's situation is.

The Netherlanders, however, have more needs than the Americans, and are of course unfamiliar with the conduct of affairs. The first American settlers, generally speaking, do very little to secure comfort in their houses, furniture,

and clothing. In the fullest sense of the word they help themselves, as Netherlanders can not. The Americans themselves produce many things which the Hollanders are accustomed to buy. The former not only make their own bread and all kinds of eatables from the products of their soil, but they also spin [24] the wool of their sheep, they make their own linen and clothes, and thus progress without needing much money. Only when they get money into their hands by selling their claims do they begin to buy, and in that case they are generally very liberal in giving or paying.

The American people in general know how to make money, as is well known, but they are also inclined to be generous in giving it away. That economy which is sometimes called stinginess is not a reigning evil with them. They do not turn over a dime four times, as the saying goes in Holland, before spending it, and therefore they part with everything more quickly, sometimes too quickly for some Hollanders.

Access to our colony is very easy. We are about one hundred and twenty miles distant from Keokuk, which is the best landing-place if one comes from St. Louis or New Orleans. From St. Louis to Keokuk there is a regular steamboat service so that merchandise can be conveyed between these places for fifteen or twenty cents per one hundred pounds. The road from Keokuk to Pella runs upon a high prairie ridge, along which are located many small towns, most of them laid out in recent years. With the exception of the short period of time when the ground is soaked with rain, one finds this road easier for travel than the highways of Holland, and even in winter when the road is called bad here, it is better than many in The Netherlands. This may be shown by the fact that when I brought my family here from St. Louis during the latter part of November, [25] I made the journey on this road, then con-

sidered very bad, in a very good two-horse carriage; and nowhere were we stopped at toll-gates to pay a tax levied upon us for road purposes. Under ordinary conditions we pay seventy-five cents for freight from here to Keokuk, occasionally one dollar, a few times, when hauling was most difficult, \$1.12½.

After fixing the site of the new capital, talk of laying a railroad has become stronger, and it is certain that as the population of the more distant parts of the State increases such a railway would be finished in a few years, and from the lay of the land such a road must almost necessarily pass through our colony. The Des Moines River, which also passes through our colony, they have already begun to render navigable for ships and steam-boats; one-half of the distance to be made navigable has already been surveyed to fix the places where dams and sluices must be constructed. Prospects indicate, therefore, that after a few years the expense of transportation will be decreased and the means therefor will be facilitated.

A scholarly man living in this State, Professor Newhall, who is known in Europe by certain writings and by public lectures on America, is busy at present preparing for the press a small book on the Des Moines Valley, for which purpose he made a journey through this country last summer. He is the author of a story in one of the newspapers, which we insert as an appendix,⁴ [26] from which the reader can gather what the Americans think about the Hollanders.

Then, there is the additional circumstance that almost contemporary with our settlement here a State Commission appointed for the purpose selected the site for the new State capital fifteen or seventeen miles northwest of us; it appears now that the road to this new capital must necessarily pass through our colony. Furthermore there is now

⁴ See below Appendix C, p. 568.

an agitation for the construction of a railroad from Dubuque, one of the chief places of the lead-mine district in the north part of this State, to Council Bluffs, an important point on the Missouri River. If this railroad ever comes into existence it must pass either through or very near our colony — another avenue of transportation which would open a cheap and easy outlet for various products.

In addition to all this there is another circumstance which should not be allowed to pass by unnoticed. The present seat of justice of the county wherein our townships lie is Knoxville, about twelve miles from here on the other side of the Des Moines River. This place is deemed inconvenient for the county, and this winter an attempt was made by the inhabitants to have the county seat removed to this side of the river. The American people are quite generally convinced that the best situated place in the whole county would be in our townships, and for that reason I have received several requests to lay out a town near the river, where the river is easily forded, and to offer lots in that town [27] for sale to the public, convinced that if the selection of a county seat ever comes to a vote the choice would undoubtedly fall on this place if I should meet the county half way by appropriating a site for the public buildings. It is not improbable that I shall decide to lay out such a town near the river, and that a survey in compliance with the law shall be begun within a few weeks.

I believe I have said enough about local affairs to place the Netherlander in a position to form a pretty accurate idea of the geographical location of Pella and surrounding country where a part of the Christians who emigrated from Holland live. Now a word as to the work that has been done.

The larger part of the Hollanders who sojourned at St. Louis took passage to Keokuk on a steamboat chartered for

the purpose, and thence traveled by wagon and on foot to Pella. On Sunday, which we spent on the steamboat, the Word of God was preached to the assembled multitude, and in memory of God's goodness the history of Israel was recounted, showing how in return for fidelity to God and His service God's blessing is assured also in temporal affairs, and also how as a result of disloyalty to God even the most fruitful land can be turned into a desert. The rumor of the coming of the Hollanders to Keokuk had attracted a large concourse of curious people from various places, many also expecting to reap some profit, and I [28] do not doubt that some succeeded in this when they sold certain articles.

At Keokuk an old man and a woman died, while a child which had died upon the steamboat was buried there. Besides this, we were pained when one who professed to be a Christian rendered himself guilty of drunkenness, and as a result he suffered such a bad fall that the effect is still visible, and alas! without causing him to acknowledge or confess his sin, so that the Christian congregation no longer recognizes him as a member. A heavy downpour of rain shortly after our arrival rendered the commencement of our journey in our new State no more agreeable, and did not add to the order in loading up our property or hasten our departure.

Human beings and freight arrived within a short time of one another. I had contracted with certain Americans for the completion of fifty log-cabins during my absence; but upon my arriving at the place I found nothing but a lot of boards which I had ordered at the same time. Of this lumber a few sheds were constructed as hastily as possible. Then the farms were vacated and a settlement was made with the Americans. As fast as the farms were vacated, I had a few families take possession in order to look after the live-stock and crops. During that time the county surveyor

laid out the middle portion of the city, so that those who wished to build might go to work as soon as possible. We offer the official description as an appendix.⁵

After the [29] farms were vacated, they were apportioned among the Netherlanders who wanted to take possession. Since the Association had not assumed the burden of the entire expense incurred in the purchase of the farms and other property, this became my own personal affair. Meantime a competent surveyor commenced a survey and description of all the land that was purchased, in order that the division might take place in proportion to the amounts of money subscribed. I saw to it that the Government was paid in order to be assured of the title to the claims as protection against possible and partly apparent intrigues of deceitful speculators.

Meanwhile I calculated how much the land cost per acre, purchase money and Government price, and then I calculated how much land each one should have as his share; then lots were drawn to fix the order of the owners and to fix the numbers of the sections in which they should settle, whereupon the surveyor had to proceed to divide the land according to the share which fell to each one's lot. That survey will be completed this week. According to the provision that the lots drawn by those who had already come to Pella were to be surveyed and numbered first, these men were helped at once. All vacant farm houses not otherwise occupied were temporarily assigned to the use of some families, while the rest constructed temporary dwellings for the winter.

From time to time new accessions of persons arrived from St. Louis, and as fast as suitable lumber could be [30] obtained from neighboring saw-mills, the construction of buildings was begun in the city and on some of the farms.

⁵ See below Appendix D, p. 570.

Moreover, there was abundant work attending to crops in the fields and caring for live-stock. Some people were quickly engaged in the making of butter and cheese, in sowing winter wheat and preparing barns for stock. The need of lime and brick compelled me to decide to begin a brick-kiln and try to build a lime-kiln. The inexperience of our workmen in this kind of work made the brick and lime expensive; the quality of this burnt lime is so excellent, however, that our masons aver that they can accomplish as much with one bushel of lime here as with three in Holland. The difficulty of getting sufficient sawed lumber and the inconvenient situation of the nearest saw-mills forced me quickly to recognize the need of a good saw-mill, and when a competent American mill constructor appeared I was persuaded to erect a good water-mill on the Skunk River. This work is now so far completed that we expect to be able to saw in April, as the necessary machinery is already on the way.

The river dam is so constructed as to enable us to use all the water-power, and if my money does not run out, after the saw-mill is working, a corn-mill can at once be placed next to it. There will be no lack of coal, as soon as I shall be in a position to present the mines to suitable persons who understand mining.

The ordinary day's wages for laborers is fifty cents, for [31] artisans one dollar. In general the Hollanders know very well how to receive American wages; some are not ready to acquire the American habit, i. e., to work fast. A few, who do not care for work and imagine that people can get a living in America without exertion, find themselves badly deceived, since here too God's universally established rule applies: "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread."

Four men returned from here to St. Louis, men of whose

wrong principles people here are generally convinced. Two of them, after gadding about for some time and molesting the colony, ended by entering the military service in Mexico. A few other persons, who seem to have thought that by means of a magic wand they could cause suitable houses to rise up out of the ground just as in fairy tales, complained of the hardships, as the people of The Netherlands may have noticed in their newspapers; but these persons have already expressed their grief for being so obstinate, and now entertain contrary opinions. Some now own land and stock, but their quantity of money has diminished so that they shall have to learn for the first time how to succeed in the American way, i. e., to do much with little money. Whether this art can be learned quickly and well, the future will tell.

With regard to our social condition the following is to be noticed. Immediately after our arrival, we wished to have it known that we intended to reside permanently in this State. [32] When we had requested the proper State official to come into our midst so that all of us would not need to journey to the county seat, and when this officer had willingly acquiesced, we declared our intention to become citizens of the United States of North America, so that our relation as subjects of William II came to an end once for all. We append a description of an American who was present on that day.⁶ This hasty manifestation of our readiness to be incorporated into the American people made a good impression. Let one incident be given to show the attitude toward our colony.

According to the laws of America one must live in the country five years to be qualified for citizenship, to be able to vote on State matters and to be qualified to hold any office or government post. As a result we should for a long

⁶ See below Appendix C, p. 569.

time have been deprived of our own township government, something which would have caused many difficulties in daily transactions and the administration of justice.

Since a special session of the legislature was to be held in January, in company with the other members of the Association's Council appointed in Holland, I prepared a petition to that body, requesting the legal union of the two townships into one with the name of Lake Prairie Township, and furthermore requesting the privilege that the inhabitants who had declared their intention to become citizens [33] be allowed to vote as citizens for township officers and to be elective to offices established by law. When this request had been presented to the Senate, a bill on the subject was at once read three times and unanimously adopted. This same thing happened in the House of Representatives, and so this became a State law.⁷ Accordingly, on the first Monday in April the legal election of township officers will take place so that we shall have law administered by justices of the peace, local township government, public instruction, and public care of the poor, so far as this is not a church affair, and to such an extent we shall stand on a par with American citizens.

How different this is from our condition in Holland I need not point out to anyone who remembers how we were treated as people who should be denied everything and be kept out of all positions; while here the various parties in the State unite to assure us that they prize our presence among them and that they will grant us as many privileges as possible without breaking the Constitution. May the people's representatives in Holland upon hearing this feel ashamed, and may the Dutch Government in general recognize its own folly, for the benefit of the Christians who are still in Holland. If not, there is still room here for thou-

⁷ See below Appendix F, p. 572; also *Laws of Iowa*, 1848, p. 16.

sands; America receives with open arms and warm affection the liberty-loving Hollanders, always remembering that sons of that same Holland [34] have been the founders of one of the most flourishing parts of the American Union, and hoping that the present immigrant Hollanders will be to the West what the earlier ones were and have remained to the East — powerful supporters of the development and prosperity of the United States of North America.

Another evidence of good-will toward the colony is the following. There was a post-office on the Des Moines River. But since the postmaster sold his farm to me, his position there ended. Recognizing the need of a post-office, with the other members of our Council I wrote at once to Washington, requesting with an assignment of reasons that the old office and post-route be removed to Pella, at the same time recommending a competent person for the postmastership. We received a speedy and favorable reply and the necessary authorization. Since that time we have had a post-office in our city, with I. Overkamp as postmaster, while we receive mail twice a week from the Eastern States and The Netherlands. We have also received assurance that another post-route to the county seat will be relocated so as to run through Pella.

As to the religious condition of our colony, from a previous statement many a reader must have observed that we have nothing special to boast of. To the person who judges superficially, as happens all too often, the religious tone is not so very noticeable. [35] Ever since our arrival regular Sunday services have been held, first partly in the open air on account of the lack of sufficiently roomy houses. Later when G. H. Overkamp finished his house in the city, he kindly allowed it to be used for Sunday meetings, which were generally very well attended. The congregation has been reorganized, elders and deacons have been chosen.

Besides, there are weekly gatherings at which the members practice reading and interpreting the Holy Scriptures.

The building which must serve as a school-room and also as a house of worship is fifty feet long and twenty-five feet broad and will be ready very soon. One of the school-teachers is busily engaged every day instructing children at his house. One may converse with many on religious subjects; and although our people were adherents of different sects in Holland, they are all Christians and thus form but one congregation here. The preaching of the Word is listened to attentively, and although a difference of opinion exists this is not productive of disputes; sometimes differences are debated but without resulting in hostility or bitterness.

Notwithstanding all this, to be frank in what I say, I must admit that religion does not flourish, because there is no evidence in daily life that seeking God's kingdom and righteousness assumes a foremost place, but rather the things of this world. Nearly all appear to be taken up with their new social and worldly condition [36] — so much so that they are lost in it — and judging from some of their dealings one would almost say that they do not know that God's kingdom is "righteousness, love, peace, joy, happiness in the Holy Ghost". Consequently they are in a position which the Bible would describe: "from afar they see not".

Self-interest and self-seeking so affect some that one would doubt that they are real Christians, if we did not know how far a child can wander from its father's house and still continue to be a lawful child who on its return is received with a father's love. It is certain that the incidents of the journey, the new, strange and busy pressure of life in our present unsettled condition contribute much to shatter our ideals; but this is no real excuse. "To shine as lights in the world" is the calling of God's children, and

“by bearing much fruit is the Father glorified”. Of such a glorification of God one does not now meet with abundant examples. It will be a source of great joy to me if it shall subsequently appear that only a few have damaged their faith.

Here in America one frequently hears that a revival has taken place in this or that town or district. A few weeks ago a revival took place at St. Louis, where for more than three weeks daily services were held by a talented preacher who makes a business of traveling around for the purpose. Our people are not yet accustomed to such a method, and even if someone could preach to them several times a day, most of them would obviously find no time to come to listen.

I hope and pray that the Lord out of the fullness of His mercy in one way or another shall cause such a revival that there shall be evidence once more of the bloom and growth of spiritual life to the glory of God. We have no excuse here that we are forced or restricted from without; we have the most boundless freedom to turn the qualities and means poured out to us by God toward the development, revelation and propagation of God's kingdom. It appears, however, that the hasty change from a condition of oppression and anxiety in Holland to one of space and freedom has caused a dizziness, and that therefore the American love of material things is more attractive than Heaven. This can not result in anything but harm since Earth pulls down while Heaven draws up.

Within a few weeks those who spent the winter at St. Louis expect to join us; it appears that their spiritual condition, at least of some, is better. It is to be hoped that their presence among us will serve to enliven the others. They will not have to anticipate the difficulties of life with which we have wrestled, and which therefore cannot have a bad influence on them. We shall also soon see some

Christians who have had to spend the winter in and around New York, Albany, Buffalo, and Chicago. Christians in America remember not only our temporal but also [38] our spiritual welfare in their private and public prayers. Of this fact many proofs were shown to me, one of which I offer as an appendix.⁸

As we now know that there is One who hears prayer and who is almighty, so we trust that He will visit the vineyard planted in this place with such blessing that the present winter shall make room for a beautiful spring and a fruitful summer. May His blessing continue then until the possibility of a new winter time shall be past, when we shall rest from our labor and our works shall follow us.

CONCLUSION

Directing my words to Netherlanders, I can no longer speak as a Netherlander. I have severed myself from social position in the land of my birth. I have become bound to the American people; and before Netherlanders can read this I shall have been engaged with American citizens in the selection of our governors and shall apparently occupy a position of which I should never have thought in Holland. My native land, however, lies close to my heart, and in the midst of all sorts of work I have not neglected to take an active interest in its fortunes.

I am grieved to note that the government of Holland has not yet forsaken its fatal course, and that newspapers in support of the government are not ashamed to [39] print articles which place immigrants to America in a false light. Christians have not refrained from adding their mite also to create a wrong impression. This, however, has not prevented many from following us. Neither anonymous addresses to local government officials, false rumors from America, nor honest representations have been able to turn

⁸ See below Appendix E, p. 571.

away God's hand, but the minds of men have been moved, and the eye and heart have been turned toward this land of civil and religious liberty, where everyone who wants to work can find his daily bread in abundance without the intriguing and elbowing of others, without being driven to practices opposed to a Christian conscience (because they are not to be reconciled with the first principles of justice), and without creeping as slaves before the possessors of any power.

Here every person is respected and treated according to his merits; there are no spies for a suspicious government: the rulers know that this would not profit them because a subsequent election might at once deprive them of the chance to lord it over the people by putting others in their places. It is God's hand which in many ways directs oppressed Netherlanders to a land where they first learn what freedom is and how the country's inhabitants make a worthy use of it.

Ask yourself: has history since our departure belied our opinion of Holland's unfortunate condition? Has not the blood of citizens flowed [40] as the result of attacks by other citizens who were bound blindly to obey the orders of men higher up to aim their murderous weapons against their fellow-countrymen? That sort of thing has no place here; for that sort of thing no soldiers are available here.

Here too the ruling class sometimes makes laws which are rejected by the people as detrimental to the people. The people gather in mass meetings, condemn such law, pass resolutions and propose what they think is right. The government never thinks of resisting such conventions by means of police force or armed power, but listens to the people's voice; occasionally the unwillingness of certain self-seeking officers is checked by the unanimous public action of the people. A subsequent General Assembly in-

investigates the grievances and if it does not agree with the people, then at the next election the American people show that they understand how to secure rights in a lawful manner without causing an uproar. I attended such a mass-meeting here and was really struck by the way in which matters were conducted. Not only did political party lines disappear and the people act as companions in misery, but the distinction between American and Hollander attracted no notice; while the advice of persons who had just recently arrived was listened to and consulted just as freely as that of native-born citizens.

Despite God's blessings as manifested in an abundant harvest, does not the same distress continue among the poor and needy in The Netherlands? Is not the shamelessness of Anti-Christendom increasing from day to day? [41] Does not the same hostility toward the spread of truth hinder the institution of Christian schools? Does not the government constantly give the advocates of liberalism reason to revile prince and ministers to their faces, and so openly that the echo of it can be heard on this side of the Ocean?

With happiness and thankfulness we have learned that since our departure renewed proof has appeared in The Netherlands that God's Word is not restrained in the conversion of sinners. But have these evidences of God's gracious power forced the Christians to rise from their former lukewarmness and inactivity to real and united activity? Is it not still the same as when we were in The Netherlands? One may make mention of "opinions, votes and observations, brotherly words, protests", but everything is on paper. Do not deeds survive?

Would that when these lines see the light the condition might be so altered that Christians could say: so it was according to the latest reports, but now it is different. Christians in Holland! Here in the land of freedom we

feel that you are with us flesh of Jesus' flesh, bone of His bone, members of His body, as the Word bears witness. The waves of the ocean and the light of the New World's freedom have not swallowed up nor dimmed the relation of members of the one and indivisible body to their brethren who have stayed behind and have misunderstood them in many respects.

The social bond is severed, but such a bond is only of the earth; the bond which [42] shall also hold the body together in heaven can not be broken on earth, even if the existence of various "ists" and "ians" would seem to belie the existence of the bond. Though we have cut ourselves loose from Holland, the land is still dear to us because the brethren whom we knew by sight are still there. Out of our affection for Christians we think of the unchristianizing land of our birth. Therefore we have been frank also in our address to you.

I have given you a short and, so far as I could, trustworthy account, and you must admit that it is not trimmed up, that it conceals no deformities in our midst: it gives facts and nothing more. Always repelled by exaggerated reports from America, I am now all the more opposed to them, because I have seen the tragic results of such excited writings in the miscalculations and disappointments of our people upon coming face to face with realities. You doubtless must have read many letters which revealed a picture more attractive, more stimulating to the emotions than mine; but I feel obliged to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, without giving it a color of my own.

I shall not invite you to leave Holland and come to us; you have to know and to decide that for yourselves. But I would induce you, if you remain in Holland, not only to think, contemplate, speak, protest and write, but also to act.

Holland is in danger socially and spiritually. If you think you must remain inhabitants and citizens of the [43] country, discuss and describe not only that which is leading Holland to destruction, but fight it with deeds, not only on paper but also in actual life. Do not behave yourselves as the Jews at Jerusalem, who sit down and weep when they see the heaps of ruins of the old city of God, not knowing or admitting that Israel's Messiah, the King of the Jews, lives. We know that our God is king and lives, and that He is almighty in heaven and earth.

If you are convinced that you must stay in Holland, seize upon His strength, and make yourselves active as soldiers of Christ. If you are convinced that the former national church is God's house, do as did He who testifies that "the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up", and believing in Him who set you an example, drive from the holy dwelling of the Almighty those who turn God's house into a soul-murdering pit by their anti-Christian teachings. For a long time I did not cherish this conviction, and therefore I followed a later example of our Lord, believing that their house would be left in ruins.

If you do your duty to the Church, you will as a result feel your calling in regard to The Netherlands. You should not associate with those who desire a change, you should not range yourself with unbelieving liberalism, you should not revile the chief men of your people, but as Christians you should have the courage, not to speak about King and authority behind closed doors and to discuss their personal and social sins, but to tell them to their faces what Daniel said, and in the way in which he said it, [44]: "Therefore O King! let my counsel please you", etc.

Do your duty as Christian Netherlanders, then it will not be long before you will know whether it is your calling to suffer oppression in Holland in the Lord's name, with loss

of honor, respect and temporal things, then, just as we did, under the Lord's guidance, you will go to find a place of refuge in that section of the world which has never been a part of the Roman Empire. The soil on which we now dwell has never actually been occupied by a European power.

We bought the right of occupation from those who had scarcely four years before succeeded the original Indian population. Our land was not wrested from the original owners by means of the conqueror's bloody sword; it was voluntarily sold to the United States government which passes title for a very trifling sum of money after the difficult work of the first clearing has been accomplished. In such a country now live your former fellow-countrymen, your present fellow-believers. Among us are many who left The Netherlands in extreme want, aided by a few wealthy ones among us. There are others who had just enough money to enable them to reach this place, and some had enough to become owners of land sufficient to support their families. Thousands of wretched people, however, still gasp for breath in Holland, so eager to come here to work and eat their own bread, but they lack the means to pay the expense of the journey.

[45] Wealthier Christians in The Netherlands! You are under obligations to help the oppressed. When I was still among you, I was convinced it was my duty to give my God-given wealth for the good of my miserable fellow-countrymen whether in Holland or elsewhere. In Holland there were but two ways: to furnish work to the needy, or to give them food so long as I had anything to give. The former was impossible for me as a consequence of social conditions, and the latter was unreasonable and unchristian: unreasonable because, knowing my own means, I was certain I should soon be classed among the needy, a position which I did not

wish to bring about so long as there was another way open; unchristian because eating without working is harmful to body and soul, for it promotes idleness which, according to a true proverb, is the devil's pillow.

Thus shut in on all sides in Holland, restricted besides in the matter of freedom of worship, reviled because we insisted upon our forefather's rights to educate our children in Christian schools in the fear of the Lord, I was forced to look to foreign lands. It appeared that Holland's colonies also were closed by the government to Christian freedom, and North America was open, receiving our fellow-countrymen with hearty affection. For me this was the only way, and I am not sorry to have followed it. Despite many difficulties, cares, and vexations, I say from the bottom of my heart: thanks be to God who brought us here!

Such were my thoughts and actions, and I repeat it, well-to-do people in Holland, you are under obligations to help the oppressed. If in your own land or your colonies you cannot offer them [46] work and bread and freedom of worship, besides Christian instruction, send them hither, help transport them, and make it possible for them to live among their fellow-countrymen here.

In order to be able to supply all his bodily wants in North America, a poor man who likes to work needs very little more than the money to pay his passage. There is so much work to be found everywhere that no one need suffer hunger. Spread among English-speaking people, however, the older generation of people will not be able to satisfy their spiritual needs, and thus while they promote their bodily welfare they lose their souls. Therefore it is necessary that they should come to a colony where they may speak their mother-tongue, where they may hear God's Word preached in their own language.

To be able to do this they must not only have money to

pay for transportation but also find work when they come, and to provide them work money is necessary so that certain enterprises may be undertaken which require human labor. If such a colony has an abundance of labor but lacks money with which operations may be commenced, the poor will naturally be forced to seek work in some other locality where they can neither speak nor hear their mother-tongue. Since there is now in both Dutch colonies in North America sufficient opportunity to work with profit, in some cases with great profit, if fresh accessions of poor people arrive and there is insufficient money to commence operations, I judge that it is the calling of the rich, [47] if they do not personally accompany the poor, to use their money to help them and at the same time gain a profit for themselves.

An advance of money at moderate interest with a mortgage on the lands which are bought would be a good way to begin such enterprises as would yield enough sure profit for the entrepreneur, the money-lender, and the workman. The last will earn good wages, the second will get good interest on his money, and the first will be reimbursed for his trouble by keeping the surplus after wages and interest have been deducted. This is true of the Dutch colony in Michigan as well as of the colony in Iowa. Let everyone go to the locality where he is convinced he can place most confidence in the persons with whom he has to deal.

One bit of advice I should like to add. Well-to-do Hollanders so often take long and expensive journeys: if a company of three or four well-informed Hollanders should secretly make a little visit to the United States, inspect the various Dutch settlements, examine the business personnel, the conditions and opportunities, they would be enabled to give a trustworthy report to their fellow-countrymen who in this way would find it easier to choose in what way and to what end they should be able to help their needy fellow-

countrymen. To entrust the needy ones themselves with money to enable them to get a start in America is in general not advisable. Those who are not used to money [48] are not at once able to use it discreetly when they come into possession, not even in the midst of their own people. From the opportunity to work and save they learn gradually how to manage money matters, and when they have succeeded they become instructors and models for others.

I believe I have said enough for the present; and I think that the profit from the sales of this pamphlet will cover the expense of printing and postage. I shall rejoice if it is eagerly read, if thanks be rendered to God for the blessings vouchsafed to us. Some day The Netherlands and America will exist no more, but the memory of what has happened in them will remain, and the communion of saints will last forever.

APPENDICES

[Pages 49 to 63 of the pamphlet of which this paper is a translation are devoted to six appendices arranged in parallel columns. The right-hand column contains the matter in the English language, while the left-hand column contains Scholte's Dutch translation. For the sake of convenience the appendices have been designated as A, B, C, D, E, F.—TRANSLATOR.]

[49]

To confirm our judgment with regard to the situation of the Dutch Colony in Michigan, we append the testimony of the Governor of that State in a recent address to the legislature, reported by the *Christian Intelligencer* of New York.

APPENDIX A

From the *Christian Intelligencer*

Settlement of Hollanders in Michigan.—We are pleased to see the following notice of the settlement of Hollanders in the Western part of the State of Michigan, in the recent message of the Governor

of Michigan to the Legislature. This settlement is in the county of Ottawa, on Lake Michigan, and was commenced about a year since, under the auspices of Ds. van Raalte. A Township by the name of Holland has been organised by the Legislature. Everything indicates the fairest promise of prosperity.

[50] I can not permit the present occasion to pass without directing your attention, for a moment, towards an interesting, and I think, valuable class of foreigners, that for the last few months have been arriving in our State. They are a colony of Hollanders, settled in the county of Ottawa, near Lake Michigan, remote from the inhabited parts of the country. Their language is the Low-Dutch. They are located in a thickly timbered region, without roads, without mills, without mails, without magistrates or police regulations of any kind, and indeed without most of those facilities and conveniences that are deemed indispensably necessary to civilized life, even in its humblest conditions.

Still, they ask not private charity, nor do they solicit appropriations from the public treasury, but they do invoke the interposition of State legislation so far as to extend to them the benefits of an organized township government, and of such opened and constructed highways as will afford them access to mills, merchants, mechanicks, and post-offices. They are a hardy, industrious, frugal, moral, and religious people, of what is denominated the free church of Holland, and like the Pilgrims of 1620, came to this country to escape the intolerance of their own, and in [51] quest of liberty of conscience, where no alliance exists between the Church and State, and where they may be permitted to worship God in their own way. The Colony now numbers about two thousand souls, and it is believed will be increased annually by many thousands of their countrymen, should they receive the fostering care of our Government, and tokens of welcome and encouragement from our people. I recommend the organisation of a township which shall embrace the principal purchases made by those Colonists.

They have now no Government among them save the restraints of religion and the rules of their Church. Roads for their accommodation and use should be opened and wrought, so far as it can be done with the means properly applicable to that object. Their settlement is in the midst of a wide, unbroken wilderness, most of which, however, has been purchased by individuals, or selected by

the State for the purposes of internal improvement. A large amount of highway-taxes is assessed upon these non-resident lands and brought into the treasury.

Would it not be just to all concerned, to appropriate a portion, at least, of this fund to the construction of such roads as are deemed essential to the growth and prosperity of this important Colony? One, [52] perhaps, from their principal settlement to: Grandville, in the county of Kent; another, to the mouth of Grand river, in Ottawa county; and a third, to some point on the Kalamazoo river, in the county of Allegan.

APPENDIX B

To confirm my statement about the good opinion which Americans entertain of Dutch immigration, I offer here from much evidence a resolution of a church convention in Illinois before our arrival.

From the *Christian Intelligencer*

CLASSIS OF ILLINOIS

The Classis of Illinois met at Pekin, in Tazewell County, Illinois, on the 7th of April; and among the several items of business transacted, was the following, which is of a public nature, and should come forth through the *Christian Intelligencer*.

Whereas, it appears from recent statements in the *Christian Intelligencer*, that a large emigration from Holland to the Western States may be expected during the present and succeeding years; and that the aforesaid emigrants are coming to this country, with a view to escape from the interference of the government of their own country with the exercise of their religion — the oppression caused by intolerable taxation, and the evils to which persons of small means are exposed, in consequence of a superabundant population — and to provide a home for themselves and their children, where they may enjoy [53] freedom in their religion, and educate their offspring in accordance with their views of Christian duty. Therefore

Resolved: That we welcome a people so proverbial for their love of civil and religious liberty, their industry and enterprise, and their attachment to the institutions of Protestant Christian duty.

Resolved: That should any portion of them see cause to locate in Illinois, we tender to them our sympathies, and such assistance as we can consistently render them, in various ways, to promote their comfortable settlement in suitable locations.

Resolved: That the following persons be appointed in their respective places as a committee to carry into effect the objects contemplated in the foregoing resolution, viz: Fairview, Rev. A. D. Wilson, J. G. Voorhees, J. S. Wijckoff; Pekin, Rev. N. D. Williamson, C. M. Grimwood; Brunswick, Rev. G. G. Sill, H. G. Bostwick; van der Veer, Rev. J. N. Schultz, E. M. Huff; Washington, Jas. Haslun, G. H. Higgins.

A true extract from the minutes.

GEORGE G. SILL, Clerk.

APPENDIX C

[54] With regard to our settlement here and the situation of our homes, we offer the testimony of Prof. Newhall, already referred to, who wrote for the newspaper published at Burlington in this State.

From the *Burlington Hawk-Eye*

A DAY IN PELLA

Methinks I hear you exclaim: "Where is Pella?" Not the ancient city of Macedonia, but a foreshadowing of the famous Holland settlement which has recently been located upon our beautiful prairies of the New-Purchase. To tell you how suddenly the inhabitants have been transferred from the low lands of Holland to the wide spread prairies of America, would be like telling you fiction. Just about two months ago, I halted about sun-set, at a lone cabin on the "ridge" road midway between Oskaloosa and the Racoon forks, and where Absalom Peters informed me that it was 7 miles to "Black Oak Grove." My Indian pony was compelled to quicken his pace to reach the nearest neighbour, ere the darkness of a stormy night entirely encompassed me.

Again, today (the 17th of Sept.) about noon, I find myself dashing along this beautiful road. I did not dream, neither was I in a trance, for my eyes beheld the same beautiful earth clothed in its rich garniture of green.— Yet I discovered a new race of beings.

The men in blanket coats and [55] jeans were gone! And a broad-shouldered race in velvet jackets and wooden shoes were there. And this is "Pella" of nearly 1000 souls and rejoicing in the antiquity of nearly a month. Most of the inhabitants live in camps, the tops covered with tent cloth, some with grass and bushes. The sides barricaded with countless numbers of trunks, boxes and chests of the oddest and most grotesque description that Yankees or Hawk-Eyes ever beheld. So far as my information extends, I will endeavour to give you a brief and succinct description of this interesting settlement, its origin, etc.

This settlement is composed of a colony from the kingdom of the Netherlands, in other words from Holland; they are all Protestants who have left their native land (much like the Puritans of old,) on account of political and religious intolerance and persecution. Their present population numbers something like 700 to 800 souls with the expectation of a numerous accession of numbers the ensuing spring. They appear to be intelligent and respectable, quite above the average class of European immigrants that have ever landed upon our shores. Mr. Schaulter, the President of the association, together with several others of the leading men of the colony, are men of education, refinement, [56] and a high order of intelligence. Mr. S., their President, was a student of the University of Leyden at the time of the Belgian insurrection and took a conspicuous part with that patriotic body of young men in vindicating the rights and honor of his country. He is the author of several works characterized by an unflinching advocacy of popular rights, and more recently as the Editor of a Periodical published at Utrecht (Holland), where he suffered much persecution and even imprisonment for the fearlessness and zeal with which he espoused the cause of religious and political freedom. Such is a faint outline of the character of the President of the Holland settlement.

On the day of my arrival, it was my good fortune to witness a most interesting proceeding. Most of the male adults went through the ceremony of declaring their intentions of becoming citizens of the United States. It was altogether an impressive scene, to behold some 200 men with brawny arms upraised to heaven [eschewing] all allegiance to foreign powers, Potentates, etc. And as they all responded, in their native tongue, to the last

words of the oath: "So help me God!" no one could resist the heartfelt response: "so help them God to keep their solemn vow!" All [57] appeared to feel the weight of responsibility they were about to assume. No tribute could be more beautiful or complimentary to our institutions than to behold the men of "Pella" coming up in their strength, on the prairies of America, and there eschewing for ever all allegiance to the tyranny of king-craft.

Their purchase or settlement occupies two entire townships situated in the north-east corner of Marion county and extends entirely across the "Divide" from river to river, (i. e.) from the Des Moines to Skunk or Checouque. A fact worth recording during the ceremony before the clerk of the court, was that of the whole number that took the oath of intended citizenship but two made their marks. The sudden and recent settlement of "Pella" in connection with the contemplated seat of Government in this region produces, as you might well suppose, a great deal of excitement in regard to "claim making." In fact the settlers, of late, hardly dare set a price for their "claims", for fear of being taken up instanter. Six [58] or 800 Doll. is no uncommon price, for claims, away up here, 100 miles west of the Mississippi. The commissioners are still looking about. I met them on Wednesday last at Oskaloosa. Public opinion seems to have settled upon Oskaloosa, and Fairview, better known as "Tools-point", as the most prominent situations for locating the capital. I think a very few days will decide the question.

P. S. The location is established, and called Monroe-city, a point unrivalled in natural beauty, yet I am constrained to question the expediency, or policy of this premature changing of our seat of Government. The early scenes of "Black Hawk Purchase" are re-enacted to the life. The country is literally "Staked off" for a dozen miles above "Toolspoint."

APPENDIX D

As for the situation of our city, we simply append the official description of the county surveyor rendered at the time of the first survey.

DESCRIPTION AND PLAN OF PELLA

Pella is beautifully situated on an eminence, from which may be

had a general view of the surrounding country; the streets are one hundred feet wide; [59] the Blocks and square[s] are four hundred feet square, and the Blocks are layed into eight lots each, as seen by the plat. It is situated about the center of the section line, dividing sections 3 & 10, running East and West. The Town is laid out at right angles. There is a stone planted at each corner of the square from which to make future survey.

State of Iowa, { I, Claiborne Hall, Surveyor of Marion County,
 Marion County. { certify that I have correctly surveyed sixty
 { four lots in the above named Town. Given
 { under my hand this 2nd day of September 1847.

CLAIBORNE HALL, C. S. M. C.

APPENDIX E

To show what Americans think of the choice and situation of our present residence, I shall select from much testimony only the following extract from a letter post-marked New York and written to me by the Rev. Dr. Thomas De Witt, well-known in Holland.

New York, Jan. 27, 1848.

My dear Friend!

I was pleased to receive your letter, giving information concerning your settlement and [60] Colony. From all that I have observed, and heard, I have no doubt that you have made a judicious and advantageous location. In the rapidly growing population of the fine State of Iowa, and being so near the recently selected seat of Government, your settlement must be most eligibly situated and bids fair to attain soon a more than usual degree of comfort and prosperity at so early a period from its commencement. With the growth of your Colony I trust you will receive and enjoy the blessing of the King of Zion in your spiritual interests, and gratefully realize that He has led your way across the Ocean to this land of civil and religious liberty, and He will here enlarge and establish you in temporal peace and prosperity, and still more in spiritual peace and prosperity. I have felt a deep interest in the recent emigration from Holland, have watched it with prayerful interest, and rejoice in the fair prospects opening to your Colony. . . .

I am anxious to hear from you, and trust that on the receipt of this you will write to me informing me how you are continuing to do in your Colony. Our Church feels a deep interest in you and the Colony with which you are associated, and (we) bear you before the throne of grace in our prayers.

A number of Holland families, who have reached here late in the fall or beginning of winter sojourn in the City, and [61] furnish an opportunity for me to attend the wants of some worthy poor and afflicted. My best regard, and that of my family to Mrs. Scholte, and believe me to be

Yours truly in Christian bonds

THOMAS DE WITT.

Rev. H. P. Scholte.

APPENDIX F

AN ACT

TO ORGANIZE THE TOWNSHIP OF LAKE PRAIRIE IN THE COUNTY OF MARION

Section 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa, That townships seventy-six and seventy-seven, of range eighteen west of the 5th principal meridian, in the County of Marion, be and the same are hereby set off and organized into a separate township by the name of Lake Prairie.

Section 2. The first Township election therein, shall be held at the house of H. P. Scholte in said township, on the first Monday in April next, at which time and place the white male inhabitants of said township above the age of twenty-one years, shall elect two Justices of the Peace, two Constables, and such other Township Officers as are required by the act for the organisation of townships, approved 17th February 1842, and such School Officers as are required by law to be elected at the township elections.

[62] Section 3. The powers, duties and manner of qualifications of such justices of the peace and other officers, shall be such as are provided by the general laws of this State.

Section 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from and

after its publication in the Iowa City Standard and Iowa Capital Reporter published at Iowa City.

J. B. BROWNE,
Speaker of the House of Rep's.
THOMAS HUGHES,
President of the Senate.

Approved
Jan. 22, 1848.

ANSEL BRIGGS.

Secretary's Office, Iowa.
Iowa City, Jan. 28 1848.

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the original act on file in this office.

ELISHA CUTLER JR.
Secretary of State.

As regards the accompanying map of Iowa, I have only to add that it does not show all towns in the State, but it serves only to show the surveys for the general land-office; therefore this map includes only that portion of the State which had then been surveyed; those surveys now extend much farther north and west. This map ends with Range 19, the newly-located State capital lies in Range 20, Township 78. I have inserted only the name Pella [63] so that everyone may see that it is situated pretty near the State's center. Every little square is a township.

The map of the two townships which contain our lands is a reduced copy of maps in the land-office and shows more accurately the situation of our colony. The dots represent the houses which were here when I purchased the farms. Everybody can see therefore that there is still room for more. If wealthy Netherlanders wish to be assured of more land in the future, I am always in a position to satisfy their desires and to send them title-deeds. One can still obtain land in our neighborhood, and the average price is not more than three or four dollars, including the Government price

of \$1.25; but attention is being so generally directed toward this State, and the population is increasing so rapidly that this price will be doubled in a short time. I believe I have said enough for the present, and with confidence offer what I have written to the serious consideration of the reader.

PELLA, MARION COUNTY, IOWA.
16 MARCH 1848

H. P. SCHOLTE, V. D. M.