MENNONITE LIFE

April 1948

Sing Unto The Lord

Published in the interest
of the best
in the religious, social, and economic phases
of Mennonite culture

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Contributors in this Issue

(From left to right)





JOHN ANDREW HOSTETLER, student at Goshen College, also does secretarial work for the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*.
LESTER HOSTETLER, is author of the book, *A Handbook for the Mennonite Hymnary*, now in the press.
BRUNO EWERT, a leading minister of the Prussian Mennonites, expects to emigrate with them from Denmark to Paraguay.
VERNON NEUFELD, student at Bethel College, has been active in Mennonite youth work on the Pacific Coast.
MENNO SCHRAG, editor of the *Mennonite Weekly Review*, Newton Kansas, visited Europe and Palestine in 1947.





VICTOR and ELIZABETH PETERS are teaching in the schools of Horndean, Manitoba, Canada. They are both members of the Southern Manitoba Musical Festival Committee.
BERNARD W. REGIER has taught in Kansas schools and now teaches at Western Washington College of Education.
MRS. D. PAUL MILLER, active in church music, teaches music in the public schools of Hillsboro, Kansas.
DAVID SUDERMAN received his doctor's degree in music for a study of the music programs of Kansas church colleges.

FOR PICTURES SEE ARTICLES

MARGIE WIEBE, graduate of Bethel College, is now serving under the Mennonite Central Committee in Europe.
PAUL ERB has been professor of English at Hesston and Goshen Colleges and is now editor of the *Gospel Herald*.
WINSLOW AMES, director of the Art Museum at Springfield, Missouri, is a member of the Episcopal Pacifist Fellowship.
J. E. HARTZLER, professor and lecturer, is author and publisher of the book, *The Supremacy of Christianity*.
P. S. GOERTZ, Mennonite Central Committee representative, is assisting with the migration of the Prussian Mennonites.
WILLIAM T. SNYDER is director of the Mennonite Aid Section of the Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pennsylvania.

NOT SHOWN

LOTTE HEINRITZ, formerly Danzig, tells her story which is typical of thousands of other Prussian Mennonites.
ELMER SUDERMAN has taught in Hillsboro, Kansas, and is now doing graduate work at the University of Kansas.

OTHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Menno Schrag, photo, p. 4. John A. Hostetler, photos and map, pp. 5-9. Melvin Gingerich, photos, pp. 19 and 35. Swiss Information Bureau, photo, top right, p. 23. Sawatzky, Winkler, photo, bottom left, p. 23, p. 26. Riediger, photo, bottom right, p. 23. Orland Gibson, photo, bottom right, p. 25. Carl Andreas, photos, p. 27 and bottom left, p. 28. Foto-Bieling, Goettingen, photo, left, p. 18. Victor Sawatzky, translation, *Four Centuries of Prussian Mennonites*. Walter Adrian, translation, *Women's Odyssey*.

The quotations in the article, "Vachel Lindsay Among the Mennonites," are taken from the book, *Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty*, published by The Macmillan Company, New York City.

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Mennonites and the Fine Arts

BY CORNELIUS KRAHN

WHAT IS the attitude of Mennonites toward the fine arts? Have they made any special contributions in this field? If so, in what realm? If not, why not? This issue of *Mennonite Life* contains a partial answer to these questions. Let us here briefly point out some attitudes of the Mennonites toward the fine arts in general.

When we seek an answer to these questions, we must first of all agree on what we mean by fine arts. We will use the term here in its widest sense "as an application of skill and taste to the production of beautiful things." Have the Mennonites throughout their history shown any skill and taste along these lines and, if so, what objects of beauty have they produced?

The Mennonites originated over four hundred years ago as a wing of the Reformation movement that separated from the Catholic Church. The Reformers attempted to purge Christianity of its un-Biblical traditional practices and beliefs. In those days all works of art were religious in motive and purpose. They centered around salvation and worship. Paintings, stained glass, sculpture, musical instruments, choirs, drama, etc., were used as aids to religious education and as media of inspiration in worship. Works of art were the Scriptures of the Middle Ages!

When Protestantism discovered the Bible as the *word of God* and the highest authority in matters of faith and worship, works of art came to be regarded as hindrances rather than as aids in salvation and worship. For some, everything except the *word of God* became associated with idolatry. Hence, the house of God became a plain, white-washed building with nothing but the Bible in the center. This was the *church of the word* in opposition to the church of ritual, aesthetics, and tradition.

Another significant matter to be considered is the fact that the early Mennonites were severely persecuted in Switzerland and South Germany, being driven out of the cities into the isolated valleys and rural areas. Here they developed skill as farmers; and as such they worked in the studio of the Master Artist. Thus, in their own way they developed skill and taste in creating beautiful things. It was this simple and plain beauty that attracted the poet and preacher of beauty, Vachel Lindsay, when he visited the Mennonites of Kansas. Only those who worship our streamlined gadgets as the climax of all human achievement will be unable to understand that the traditional peasant has a set of values and a sense of beauty all his own which in many respects surpassed those commonly accepted in our day. Perhaps it may also be said that these values are more true to life and the Creator of life. The farmer at his best is a co-worker with God. When he adds furrow to furrow, each as straight as the other, and watches the corn unfold in its beauty, who would dare claim that he has no appreciation of art and does not produce beautiful things? When he returns home, he finds that his helpmate, a spotless and systematic housekeeper, has prepared a delicious meal, itself a work of art, based on generations of experience, intuition, and vision. Yes, there may be much more creative beauty in an old-fashioned household than in the average streamlined homette of our day.

Do the Mennonites have an appreciation of the fine arts? During the Reformation they shared with others the radical break abolishing most of the traditional works of art from the house of God. As persecuted Anabaptists they fled to isolated areas where, in close contact with the soil and their Creator they developed their own sense of values which could be found in other rural communities. They were probably just a little more consistent in averting the influences of Paris and Hollywood, and thus their sense of values fluctuated less and remained more sturdy. Whatever of beautiful things were produced were quite Puritan, but they were not limited to plowing the fields and cooking the meals. Even though the "aids" for the worship of God had almost all been eliminated, there was always a songbook accompanying the Bible from the earliest days of the *Ausbund*. Singing became one of the chief means of beautifying their lives, and adoring God. (See articles on music in this issue.)

This does not mean that Mennonites have not been productive in creating beautiful things in realms other than those mentioned. Whenever a Mennonite group breaks the cultural isolation in which it has lived for generations, other hidden talents are revealed. The story of the Dutch Mennonites amply illustrates this point.

It is to be hoped that American Mennonites artistically inclined who heretofore considered it necessary to leave the fold in order to develop their talents and find a receptive field for their endeavors, will more and more realize that their contributions are greatly needed in their own constituency. It is to be hoped that the constituency will realize its need of this talent to broaden its appreciation of things beautiful.

In a world where styles and tastes change over night, let our sense of values remain sturdy and solid. Let us take into account our background which made us what we are. Throughout our history our endeavor to live as followers of the *word of God* and our vocation as *children of the soil* have combined to give us an insistence upon directness, simplicity, and integrity. This quality is fundamental in the production and appreciation of all art. Let us enlarge the circle within which we develop skills and tastes and produce beautiful things in harmony with our heritage that we may thereby strengthen our possibilities of service as co-workers with God.

I, Too, Shall Live.

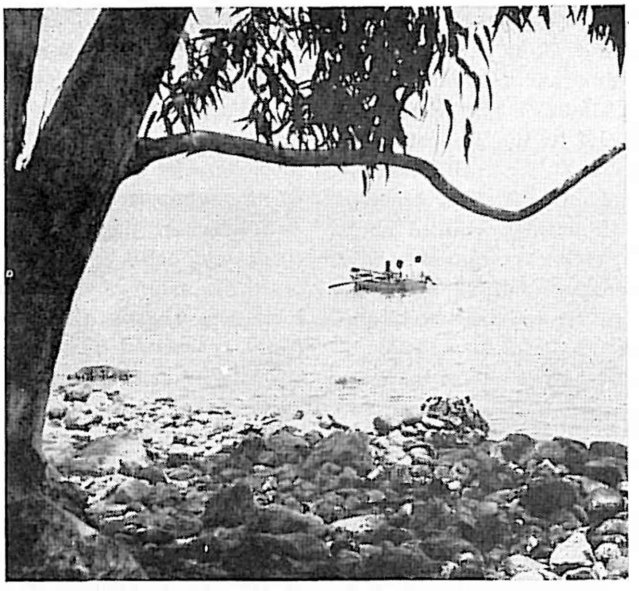
BY MENNO SCHRAG

It is significant that the Christ who was laid away in the evening arose again with the break of morning light. Darkness enveloped the land as the Saviour of the world hung on the cross. The triumphant burst of radiant power on the resurrection morning dispelled that gloom forever.

The bodily Resurrection of Jesus is of timeless significance in two particular aspects: Through it the church universal was born! Through it every redeemed individual has the assurance of life everlasting!

For the early church the Resurrection of Christ was more than an idea. The believers recognized it as a divine act through which the church received not only its life but also its authority and power. The Apostle Paul spoke frequently of the power of the resurrection. It was one of the main points of emphasis in his message to the Athenians.

As the French pastor, Philippe Vernier says, in his recent book, *Not as the World Giveth,* the disciples could not have invented the resurrection story because they had such difficulty believing it. In this respect the Old Testament has its heroes of faith, while the New has its heroes of unbelief—notably Thomas and the disciples of the Emmaus Road. Yet through them, too, God's truth was established.



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On the Sea of Galilee.

The fact of the resurrection, and its implications for the individual as well as all of Christendom, left a new impression with me when I visited the Holy Land early last year. Side by side with its unforgettable memorials of the nativity, the crucifixion and ascension, Palestine has also its landmarks of the resurrection. Its Emmaus Road, winding through the rugged, rocky, and in parts quite barren countryside, still is a sacred symbol of the risen Christ walking life's perplexing road with His own.

The shores of the incomparable Sea of Galilee still tell us of His pleading question, "Lovest thou me?"

Then there are two sepulchres about which the opinion of scholars and archeologists is divided. The Roman and Eastern churches hold that the now bejeweled and ornate grave in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is the actual place where Jesus lay. As I stooped to enter it, the guide said, "This is a holy place; step into it with great reverence."

Into the large and ancient shrine which stands over this tomb the kings and mighty men of earth have for centuries brought their choicest gifts and costliest treasures. Gold, silver, diamonds, and sapphires valued in the millions of dollars adorn it.

The other sepulcher, known as Gordon's Tomb, is situated on the other side of Jerusalem in a secluded garden and near Gordon's Calvary. It is a simpler grave and appears much more genuine than the one in the church. Its naturalness and peaceful atmosphere is soul-refreshing. As one looks at the unpretentious, rock-hewn ledge on one side —large enough for the average-size body—it is not hard to imagine that the Lord could have lain there.

Which of these two graves is the right one has not been established for certain. In one important aspect both are alike. Both are open! Both are empty!

Merely to say that Christ arose means nothing unless those whom we have laid away live again . . . . Unless we assuredly know that, we, too, shall arise to a glorious forever.

To this problem the divine Lord Himself gives the answer. "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). "He that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

In this conviction the Church of Christ has gone forth, conquering. Men of God, rather than being creatures of circumstance, they have changed defeat into victory.

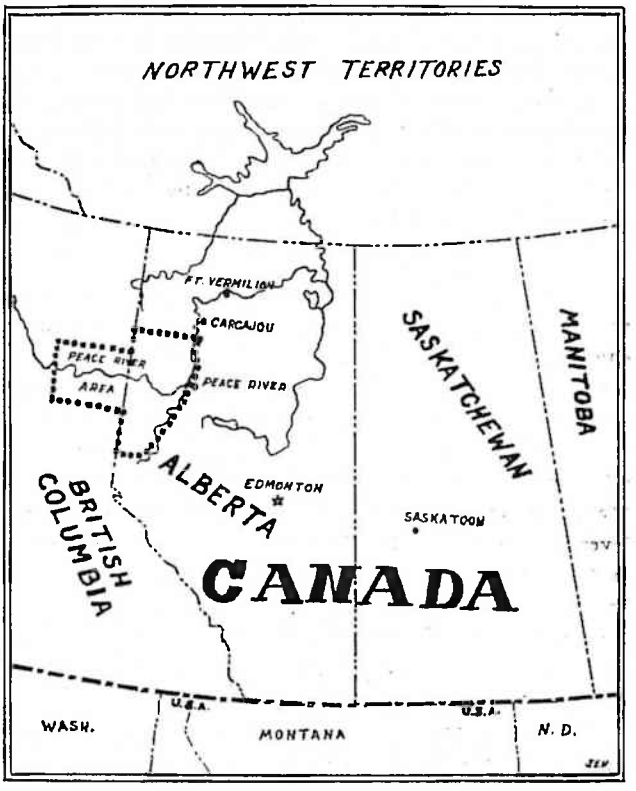
"I know that my Redeemer liveth . . . . I, too, shall live."

PIONEERING IN THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN

BY JOHN A. HOSTETLER

In far northern Canada among the bush, the spruce, and poplar trees, Indians, and squatters, hundreds of miles from a road or railway, is a young Mennonite community in the pioneer stage. Where did these Mennonites come from? Why are they there? How do they make a livelihood? The writer set out to discover the answers to these questions during the summer of 1947.

Our party of three left Indiana on August 13, 1947. After driving 2,400 miles, we arrived at Peace River in northern Alberta. We were advised from several sources along the way and also from previous correspondence with Elder Wiebe, at Ft. Vermilion, that it would be impossible to drive to our destination because there were no roads in that part of the country. From Peace River we were told to take the boat three hundred miles north or to go by plane. The journey by boat would take two weeks. Flying was much too inconvenient, for we would have had no assurance of arriving at our destination. After some discussion with local people, we learned that a new road was being built to the gold mines near Yellowknife in the Northwestern Territories, and that this road would take us to within 50 miles of our destination. We also learned that several motor cars had made the trip from Peace River to Ft. Vermilion and, according to several individuals with whom we talked, the road was passable. With this information



we decided to take the risk of driving to Ft. Vermilion. What was supposed to be a passable road turned out to be one hundred miles of freshly graded road, 125 miles of mud, and 95 miles of Indian trails fit for horseback riding only.

Origin

The Old Colony settlement north of Peace River dates from 1932, when J. R. Unrau, Isaac Hiebert, and Isaac Wieler left their homes in the vicinity of Saskatoon and, with their families and all their earthly possessions, sailed north on the Peace River to Carcajou. The following year two more men, Frank Dyck and Jacob Braun and their families, left the mother colony to join the pioneers. It was neither the love for the cold winters nor the desire to convert the Indians that moved the hearts of these people to go north. They were motivated rather by the desire to get away from the thickly settled mother colony, the increasing industrialization, and the "worldly" influence about them, and to "hack out" a new community where they could live peacefully and quietly—this was their ambition. But it was not long until the half-dozen families in the flatlands of Carajou were weary of their choice. Sometimes the rains came and flooded their fields of wheat and oats; at other times there was drought. Their money was almost exhausted. There were no stores to buy clothes and groceries, and there was no place to get employment. In 1934 the small community moved from Carajou north to the vicinity of Ft. Vermilion, a small trading post on the banks of the Peace River. Here land was cheap. With much hard work small grain crops could be raised. The first Mennonites to squat there worked hard, for it was a matter of survival. The newcomers were very poor, having lost most of their capital in previous years. Convinced that this was a land of opportunity away from civilization, they built log houses and barns; they cleared the bush and laid out fields and gardens. For several years the Mennonites had to crush their own wheat to make bread, and make their own clothing from skins and from wool.

In the year 1937, the new settlement experienced rapid growth. By this time the five initial settlers were well enough established to own some livestock. Their cows provided an abundance of milk and butter; eggs and vegetables were plentiful. The news of the success of the few pioneers spread to their relatives and co-religionists in other provinces. Individual families in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and in Mexico afflicted with the migrating fever, moved to the Ft. Vermilion settlement, beginning in 1937. Of the entire community of Mennonites near Ft. Vermilion, which consists of 377 souls, approximately one-third of the families are dissatisfied colonists who have returned from Mexico. As to the reason for their coming, A. H. Wiebe, an old resident from Mexico, explained: "In Mexico we had to lock up everything at night—even the harness and the horses. Then we had to have several good watch dogs around the houses. Some of our people in Mexico have been shot. Here we can live peaceful lives, and we need not lock the doors of our houses and barns."

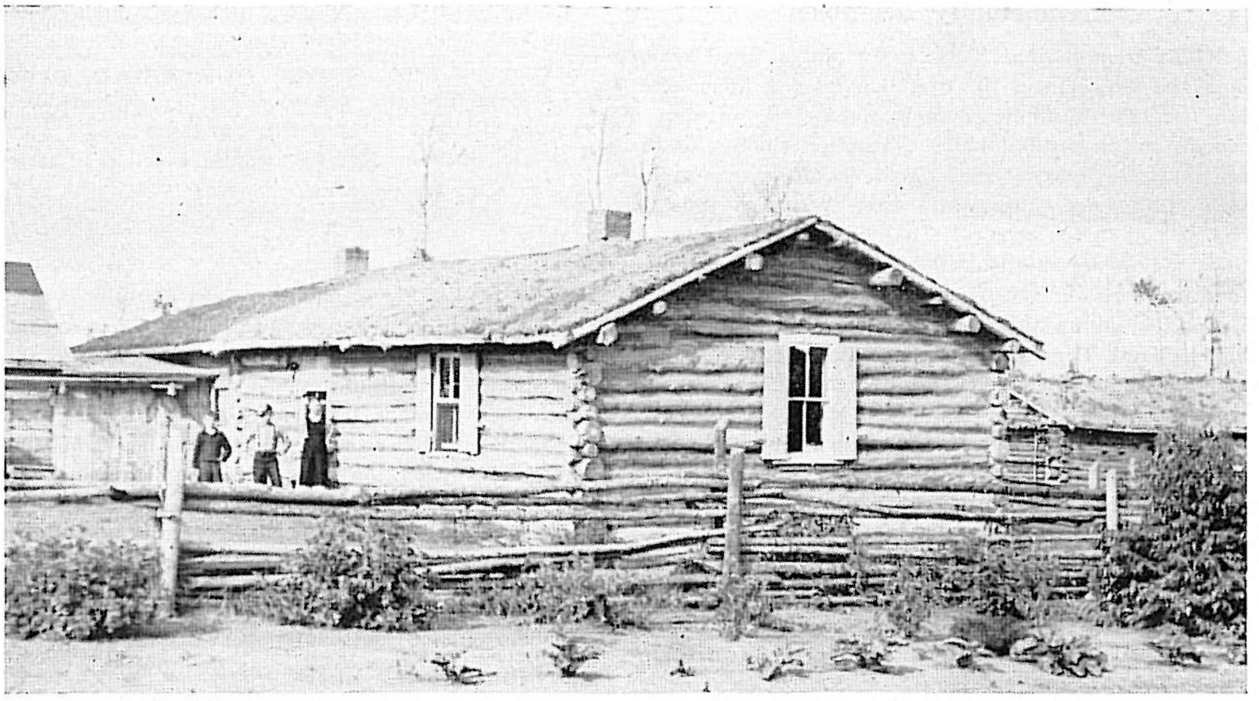
The Settlement

The land now owned by the Mennonites was not secured in a single block as was the case in Mexico. Of the sixty-five families in the Ft. Vermilion settlement only about one-third are landowners. Some own as much as one quarter-section; a few own a half-section. The only land purchasable in the Ft. Vermilion area is that which may be secured from private settlers who wish to sell. No land is available from the government in that area at the present time. The provincial government has also discontinued the Agricultural Lease in northern Alberta except to veterans. The reason for this action on the part of the government is not known. This policy is not directed against the Mennonites or any one particular group. Some feel that the government's reason for refusing to sell land is influenced by the Roman Catholic Church and the Hudson's Bay Company since both wish to keep that as much as possible an "Indian" country. The Bay Company, because of its large amount of business with the Indians and half-breeds, is interested in keeping its trade with the Indians and trappers.

Unlike the colonists in Manitoba and Mexico, the Old Colony Mennonites at Ft. Vermilion do not live in villages. There is, fortunately, one country store operated by a Mennonite. Some live as far as forty miles from town. Until such a time as more land can be purchased, it will be impossible for the Mennonites to live in a comparatively compact area.

Of the sixty-five families of Old Colony Mennonites now living near Ft. Vermilion, the following are familiar Mennonite family names: Wiebe, Unrau, Krahn, Neufeld, Peters, Banmann, Fehr, Martens, Penner, Hiebert, Derksen, Friesen, Dyck, Harms, Heinrichs, Wieler, Neustaeter, Woelk, Wall, Knelsen, Braun, Teichroeb, Letkemann, Bergen, Driedger, and Schmidt.

A typical Mennonite farm consists of two or three buildings enclosed by a rail fence. All structures are made of logs and the roof of every building is covered with a thick layer of sod. All farming is done with horses. To live in a land with nine months of winter and with temperatures as low as 70° F. below zero requires hard work and careful preparation during the remaining three months of mild weather. Since there is no well-digging equipment in that country, all wells had to be dug by hand. These are dug about five feet square and from 18 to 30 feet deep. Boards or sometimes poles are used for casings. There are no pumps, and all the water for livestock as well as for home consumption must be pulled up with a rope and bucket. There are no steel water tanks, but instead, wooden logs are carved out for stock tanks. In more than a hundred ways the Mennonites



An Old Colony homestead in the Fort Vermilion area of Northern Alberta, Canada.

have used their skill to make necessary devices for use around the farm.

Wheat and oats are the principal crops. Other small grain crops are rye and barley. One farmer reported that he had reaped a crop of oats which averaged 117 bushels to the acre, but that does not happen frequently, he said. Potatoes grow in abundance; so do peas, carrots, and beets. Raspberries, ground cherries, gooseberries, wild cherries, and currants are native. Weeds are scarce; there are no thistles and no potato bugs. Wild oats is the outstanding pest. The growing season is very short, but the summer days are extremely long and plants grow very rapidly. When the days are at their longest one can read a newspaper any time at night. Summer comes suddenly early in June. The temperature for July, the warmest month, seldom rises above 60° F. Except for the extremely cold winters the climate is delightful.

Religion and Culture

The entire community is roughly divided into three districts: (1) Rosenfeld, sometimes called Buffalo Prairie; (2) Blumenort, near the center; and (3) Rheinland, nearest to Ft. Vermilion. An excellent description of the customs and moral codes of the Old Colony Mennonites may be found in *Mennonite Life,* April, 1947. The meeting houses are very simple, two-room log houses with plain, backless benches. The preaching service, which lasts about two hours, is conducted in German, but the everyday language spoken in the homes is *Plattdeutsch.* Sermons are read and, as a matter of custom, the minister makes comments with closed eyes. The dress of the preacher differs from the laity on Sunday only, and then it consists of a black shirt, black trousers tucked in high-topped black leather boots, and a coat which reaches almost to the knees. The men are clean shaven. The women dress in plain, somber clothes fashioned after the traditional prescribed pattern. All the older religious practices and customs which were held by the Mennonites in Russia a century ago are strictly adhered to. The church life in the Ft. Vermilion community is well organized and is administered by one elder, one deacon, and two ministers.

One of the chief concerns of the Old Colony Mennonites has always been freedom in controlling their own school system. This has caused them to migrate time after time. Since there are no state schools as far north as Ft. Vermilion, the Mennonites are free to conduct their own schools. The three schools operated by the Mennonites have 25-40 pupils each. The teachers are selected from the interested members of the church who are inclined to teach; they receive no special training. Subjects taught are reading, arithmetic, Bible stories, and the catechism. The language used in the schools is, of course, German and *Plattdeutsch.*

Reading matter in the homes is very limited. The Bible, a catechism, and sometimes the *Martyr's Mirror* or the writings of Menno Simons may be found in the homes. The *Steinbach Post* is a welcome newspaper in many homes; it contains news about Mennonites in Mexico, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan.

Community Relations

Other than Indians, half-breeds, and a few Ukrainians and Frenchmen, the neighbors of the Mennonites are few. The Catholic Church operates a mission, a school, and a hospital in Ft. Vermilion chiefly for the Indians and "breeds." When a Mennonite becomes seriously ill or needs surgical attention, the patient must be transported to the hospital. The one and only doctor in town makes no country calls. The relationship between the Mennonites and their neighbors is commendable. The "breeds" are more interested in trapping than in developing the land. The Indians are a roaming sort of people and are frequently employed by Mennonites, but after several days' work the Indian will leave the job never to return. The Mennonites, being an agrarian people, have accomplished much in developing agriculture in the Buffalo Prairie region.

Transportation

A real problem in the north country is transportation; this is keenly felt when the livestock is ready to market. The only means of transportation is horse-drawn equipment. A shopping trip to Ft. Vermilion, which is as far as forty miles for some of the Mennonites, requires two days going one way. This means camping overnight or staying with other Mennonites along the way. In winter dog-sledges are used. There is, of course, no rural mail service. Any person of the community making a trip to town brings groceries and mail for the neighbors. Mail comes to town once a week; before airways led to the "Fort," mail came only once a month and then only by boat.

To market grain, livestock, and other farm commodities, the Old Colony Mennonites haul their produce to the landing dock on the Peace River. Here it is picked up by the boat which stops about once a week. The Mennonites have at times found it difficult to make connections with the boat, since they must haul their hogs, chickens, and other livestock overland as far as thirty miles. Sometimes the boat does not run on schedule. In case the boat has already left, the farmer must wait at the river until the next boat comes which may mean a wait of several days. Until the year 1944, there was no market outlet for cream, eggs, livestock, and other farm products.

The Old Colony Mennonites at Ft. Vermilion, in general, consider themselves very fortunate. They are happy and content with their new community. As long as seclusion and isolation from the busy world is the goal toward which their thinking is oriented, they will have to bear the handicaps that go with pioneering. They would much rather take a loss on their livestock shipments, which frequently happens, than to live in the main stream of society. The two great difficulties in the north—severe winters and lack of transportation—are for them not obstacles but blessings.

The problems confronting them are chiefly problems resulting from the encroaching civilization. Will the government in the near future build schools in the community and compel the children to attend state schools? The new road now being built to Yellowknife will inevitably result in bringing more tourists and squatters to the north, consequently more automobiles, tractors, and more of the "world" in general. What effect will this new development have on the Mennonites? To the leaders of the church this is a serious question, since the use of automobiles is forbidden to members of the church. For a people who would endure economic privations for the perpetuation of their religious ideals, who prefer isolation and seclusion instead of contact with the "world," and who seek a quiet, peaceful, albeit a cold and lonely haven, this is a great country.

Above—The new road to Yellowknife.

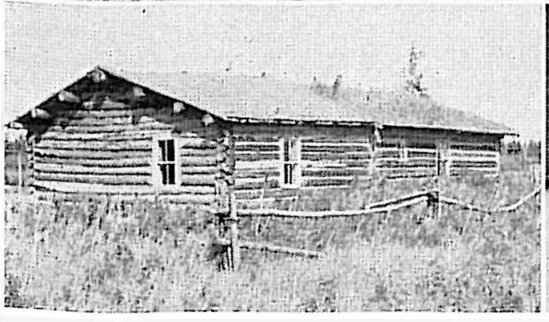
Mennonite sled with built-in stove.

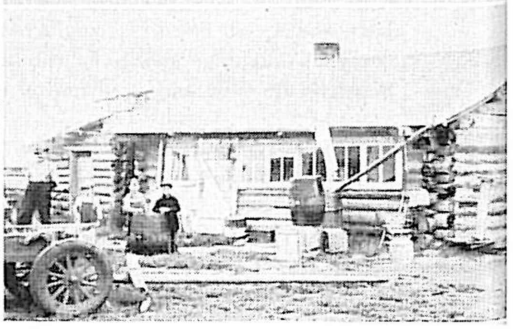
Winter transportation—a team of huskies.

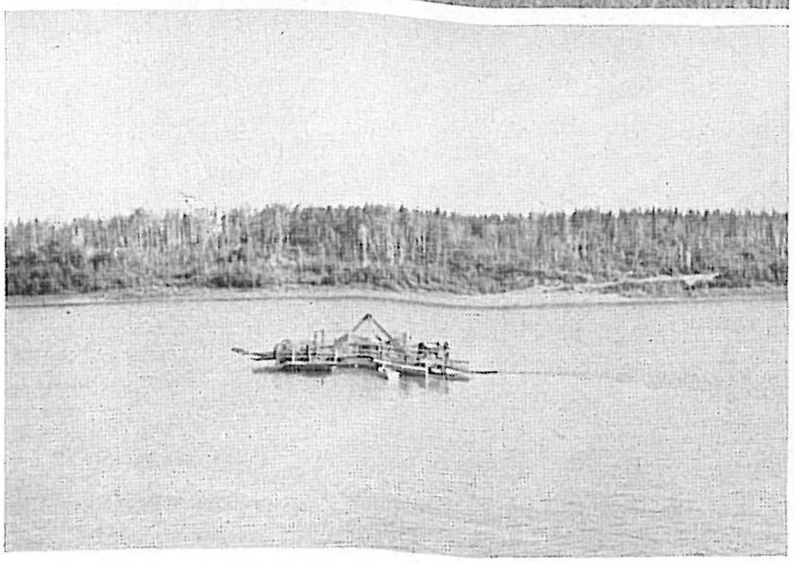
Below—Log-house used as church and school.

A group of Mennonite school children.

Country-store operated by a Mennonite.



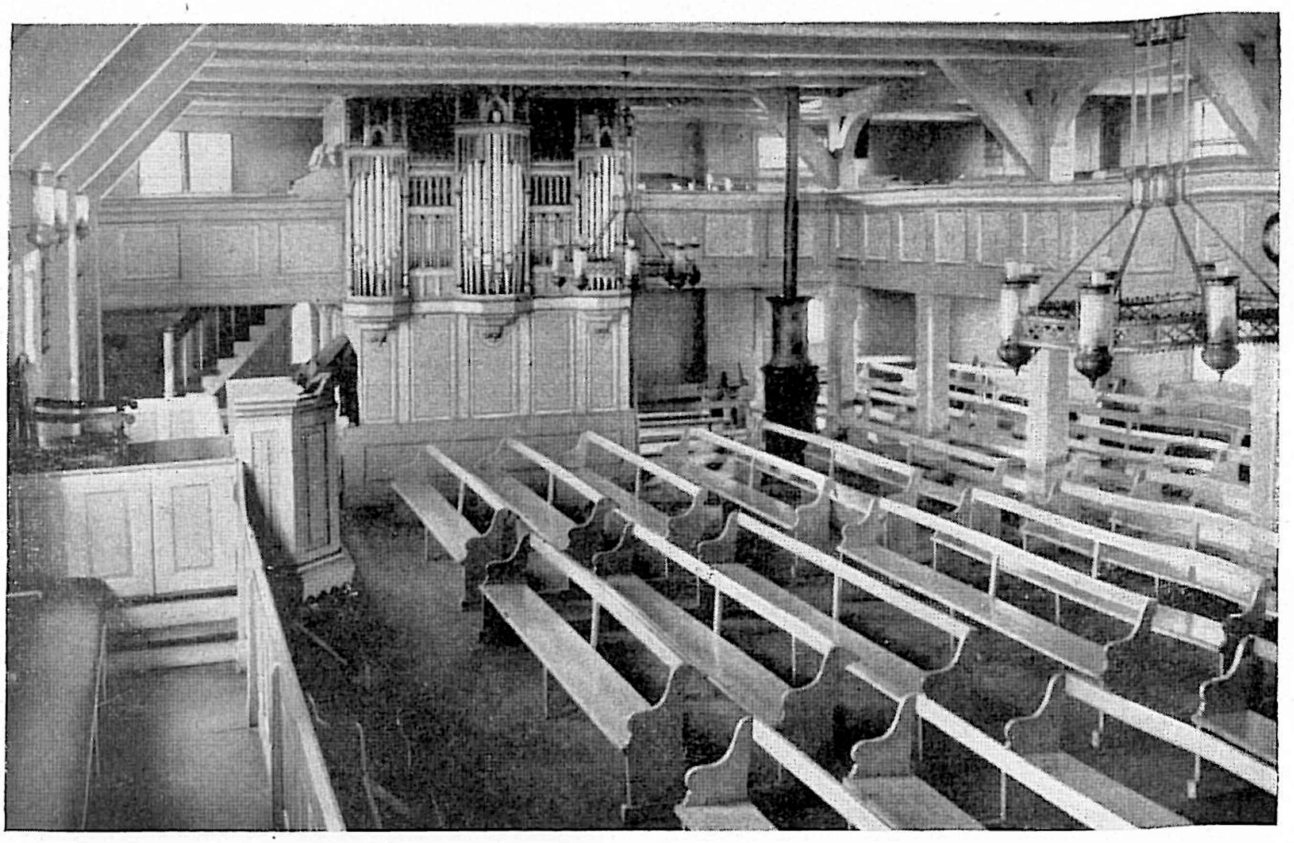




Scenes From Fort Vermilion

Above—A view of the town of Peace River.
Center—Crossing the Peace River at Fort Vermilion.
Below—Main Street in the town of Fort Vermilion.

Above—Road in the unchartered Northlands.
Center—On the trails through bush and grass.
Below—It takes two days to make the trip to town.



Mennonite pioneers east of Newton, Kansas, and of Beatrice, Nebraska, worshipped in the Heubuden Church near Danzig.

FOUR CENTURIES OF PRUSSIAN MENNONITES

BY BRUNO EWERT

SOON after the establishment of the Anabaptist movement in Holland, it reached Danzig, Thorn, the Schwetz Niederung and the regions of the present city of Preussisch Holland. That several congregations existed in West Prussia as early as 1549 is evidenced by a letter of Menno Simons which he wrote during that year to "The children of God in Prussia." In 1550, according to ancient Polish documents, Mennonite farmers and laborers were asked to come from Groningen to Kulm and the Schwetz-Neuenburg Niederung. Congregations were established in these areas and by 1562 the lowland areas surrounding the present-day city of Tiegenhof were settled by Mennonites. These settlers drained the swamps and in a few years produced from the sedge country and the willow thickets fertile pastures and arable land. Much work had to be done by hand. Immense energy and patience were required to build water mills, dig endless numbers of ditches, construct dams, and improve the already existing German built dams on the Vistula and Nogat Rivers.

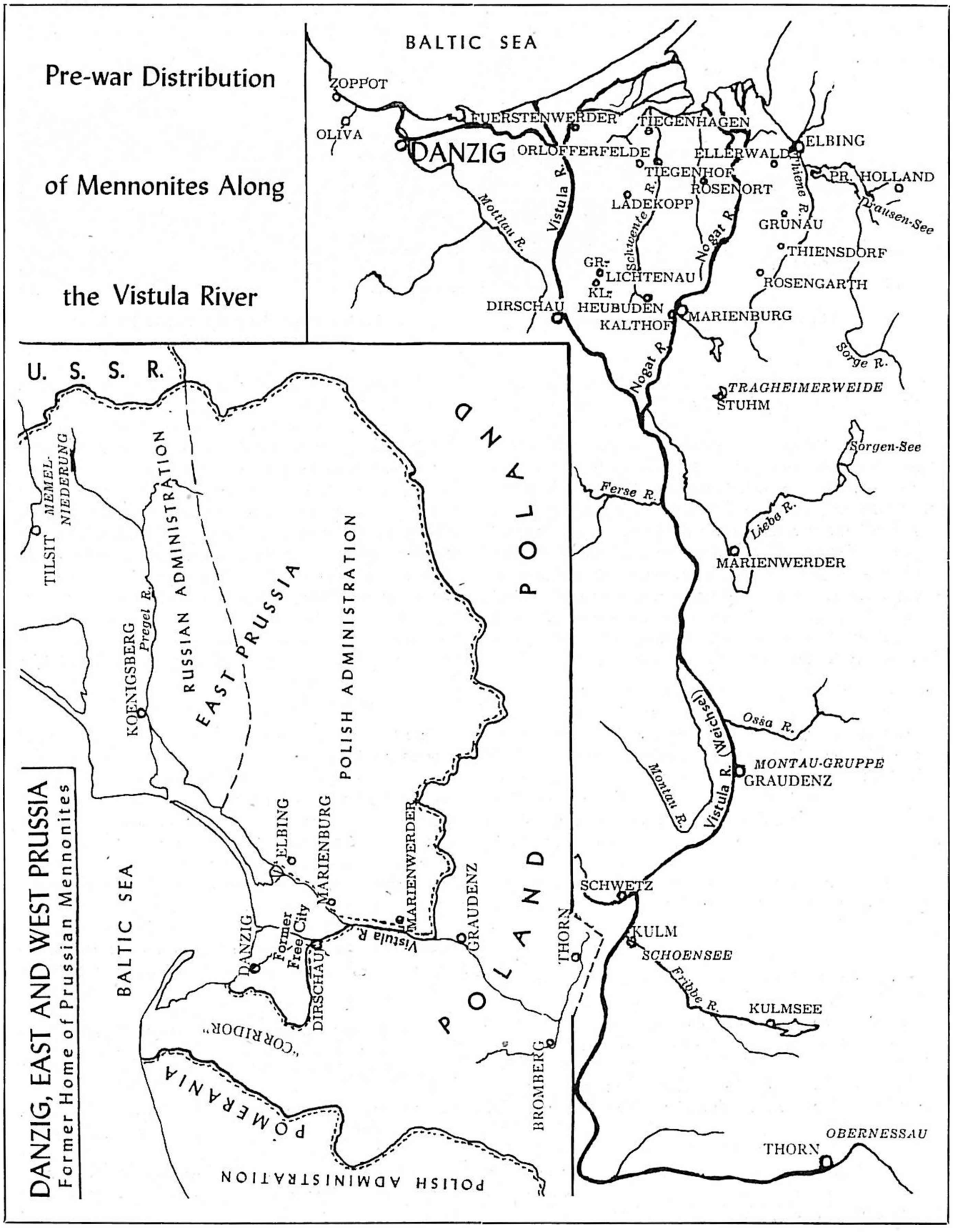
The church of Danzig, first mentioned in 1569, was, in all likelihood, the oldest of the West Prussian Mennonite churches. By 1600, we already hear of the Grosswerder congregation, whose first elder was Hans Siemens, ordained in 1639. Ministers visited the various homes in the villages to hold meetings. In one of the old reports we read: "For their meetings, these wandering ministers chose large rooms, or in the summer made use of machine sheds and cowbarns, which were thoroughly cleaned and decorated with green foliage for the occasion." Until 1700 the meetings were conducted entirely without music. This can perhaps best be explained by the fact that religious freedom was not granted to them by the King of Poland until 1694. In 1695, the Mennonites in West Prussia were granted full religious freedom. At about this time the Frisian congregation, Tragheimerweide, was established in the Stuhm Niederung near the older and smaller Flemish settlement.

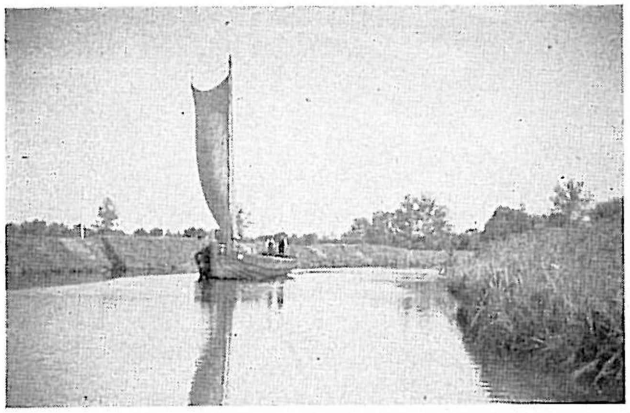
Along the Vistula River

Many of the people from the Thorn congregation left around 1700 because of the almost inevitable yearly flood damages. As a result, the Mennonite congregations, Deutsch Kazun and Deutsch Wymisle, were established

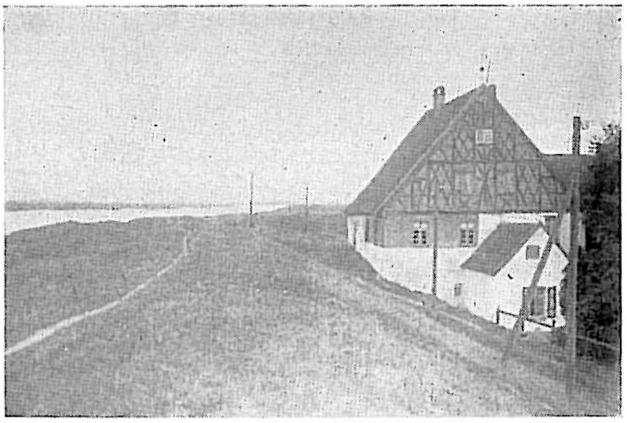
Danzig and Surrounding Territory

Communities where Mennonites lived prior to World War II.





The Tiege River near Tiegenhagen.



On the dikes along the Vistula River.

near Warsaw, Poland. At this time also the church of Memelniederung at Tilsit, East Prussia, originated, its members coming from the region of Preussisch Holland and Thorn. Exiled Swiss Mennonites also joined these East Prussian congregations. By 1720 we hear of a Mennonite congregation in Koenigsberg. The town of Elbing and adjoining lowlands, called the Ellerwald, as well as the low-lying swamp areas of the Drausensee, must have been inhabited by Dutch Mennonites prior to 1700. Here the congregations, Elbing Stadt and Elbing-Ellerwald, originated as well as Thiensdorf and Preussisch Rosengarth. In 1720, the church Elbing-Ellerwald chose its first elder, Hermann Janzen. The Heubuden congregation also chose its first elder, Jacob Dyck, in 1728.

In 1735, the Grosswerder congregation divided itself into four sections. Thus originated the congregations: Rosenort, Tiegenhagen, Ladekopp, and Fuerstenwerder. In 1768, these four churches received permission from the Bishop of Kulm to build a church, provided it did not distinguish itself from other houses (with a straw roof and protruding chimney). Many petitions and deputations were necessary so that these Mennonites could secure religious freedom, possession of their land, and be secure in their vocations and occupations. Often they were threatened with exile, confiscation of goods, punishment, and brutality.

Economically, too, they had many disappointments. Often, after decades of work and strenuous effort to make these lowlands arable, everything was ruined over night when the ice-pack of the Vistula flood waters would break the dam. These icy waters would flood the spring landscape for miles and miles and cover the most fruitful fields with sand. Tremendous effort was required to rebuild these dams, repair the ruined buildings, and dig new ditches. Often the crops were completely ruined. If there had not been so much co-operation in helping those greatly afflicted it would have been impossible for many to build anew. They remained faithful, however, to their chosen home, hoping for better times.

After the Polish division in 1772, the Danzig region with about 13,000 Mennonites was given to Prussia as the province of West Prussia. At the feast of homage in Marienburg, on September 7, 1777, the Mennonites sent a petition to King Frederick II, asking for a confirmation of their special privileges which they had been able to enjoy for two hundred years under the kings of Poland. The petition was granted. The birth rate among the Mennonites was so high that in spite of re-divisions of their farm property, the land was insufficient to maintain a family. This is clearly indicated from statistics taken in 1774 which show that in the congregation of Tiegenhagen, with a membership of 1836, only about 4.5 acres of land was available per person. In 1787, a deputation was sent to Berlin to buy land which, however, was unsuccessful.

In addition, through unfair means and through false information from the evangelical church authorities, the King sent out an edict to the Mennonites in 1789 which made it extremely difficult for the Mennonites of West Prussia to buy new land. Only those Mennonites who at the time of the edict were in possesion of land were free of cantonment, i.e., the men of military age were free from conscription. If the Mennonites, however, bought any land from the Evangelicals or the Catholics, then their sons would be subject to conscription. Since the Mennonites wished to remain a non-resistant people, the surplus of the people emigrated to Russia, starting in 1788.

Economic and Cultural Adjustment

The Mennonites in West Prussia tried to conduct themselves as the "quiet people" *(Stillen im Lande)*, wanting nothing more than to live true to the Bible, following their Lord, and serving God and their fellowmen. Yet this complete isolation from all the worldly activities could not be carried through. In addition to holding offices in the church, which were executed in greatest faithfulness, these Mennonites were soon elected

into political offices, yes, even assigned by the government to administrative offices such as mayors and magistrates. After the Revolution in 1848, the diets in Prussia were dissolved and a parliament was chosen. It was then that our forefathers were really drawn into political life. They came into closer contact with other denominations, especially through the farm-unions, credit and milk associations, breeding-unions, dike-societies, and flood-control agencies. In this way many Mennonites came to take leading roles in industries such as horse-breeding, cattle- and swine-breeding, and ranked high in the great success of increased milk and fat values of pure-bred cattle. The fire, hail, and liability-insurance, which had been cooperatively established by and for the Mennonites of Tiegenhof, were soon opened to all who sought insurance. Gradually the denominational differences were erased. Marriages also occurred between Mennonites and Lutherans as a result of their neighborly associations.

A great loss resulted when the prosperous Mennonites gave their children a higher education. Only a few returned; while most of them obtained positions away from home. They married away from home, had no affiliation with Mennonite churches, and were thus lost to their people. This was all the more tragic since it involved young people of greater intelligence who could have been such a help and service to the Mennonites.

Because of the above-mentioned development and a growing lack of intelligent leadership, there was very little resistance in the church against militarism when the Prussian Government in 1868 removed by law the privilege of non-resistance. This was the cause for another migration, this time to America. The brother of my grandfather, Elder William Ewert and family, from the Thorn congregation, who was among these emigrants, later established the Brudertal church at Hillsboro, Kansas. Part of the Heubuden church with its ministers under the leadership of Elder Gerhard Penner, also migrated to the United States. They were not satisfied with the compromise as passed by the Order of the Cabinet of King William I in 1872, which permitted the Mennonites to serve in a non-combatant service such as hospital attendant, ambulance driver, or office secretary. Most of the remaining Mennonites took advantage of this privilege.

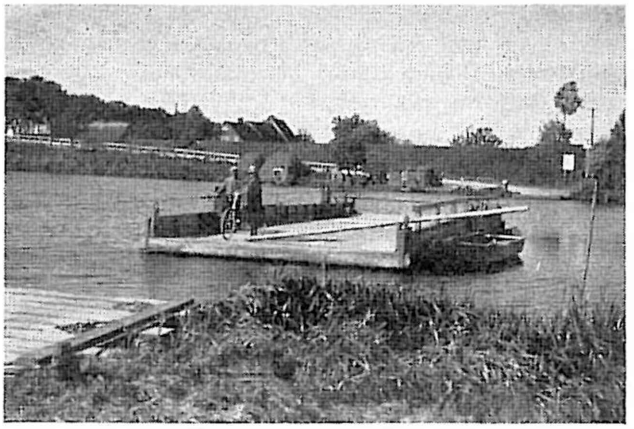
After 1900, however, many of the Mennonite boys joined the army, especially the cavalry. The Hussars with their appealing uniforms proved a strong attraction to the boys. In the first World War, many boys still served according to the Order of the Cabinet as non-combatants. When peace was declared and Germany was allowed only 100,000 in her professional army, we thought that the problem of non-resistance would be solved for us Mennonites. Yet the future was to teach us otherwise.

After the First World War

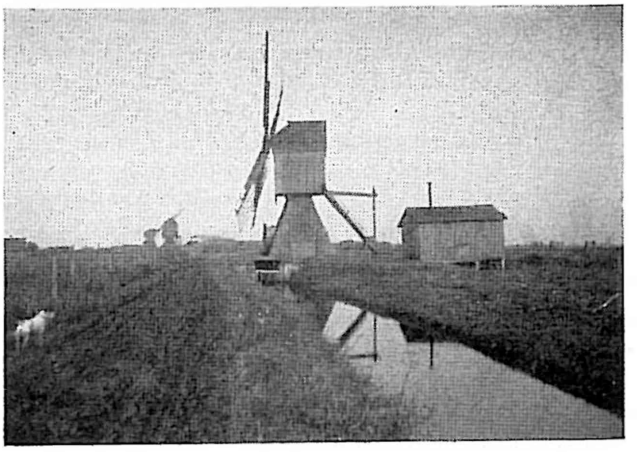
The lost war resulted in a completely new picture for West Prussia. According to the Treaty of Versailles, almost the entire province became Polish territory and so the Mennonite churches of Obernessau at Thorn, Schoensee at Kulm, and Montau-Gruppe at Graudenz came under the Polish administration. In 1920 Danzig became a Free City attached economically to Poland by a customs-union.

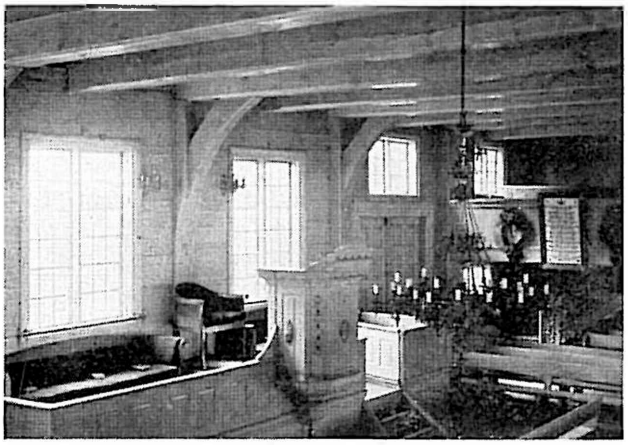
Two-thirds of all Prussian Mennonites were now located within the limits of the Free City of Danzig. They composed the congregations of Danzig, Fuerstenwerder, Ladekopp, Orlofferfelde, Tiegenhagen, Rosenort, and Heubuden. The other congregations, now belonging to the province of East Prussia, were: Marienburg, Elbing Stadt, Elbing-Ellerwald, Thiensdorf-Preussisch Rosengarth, Tragheimerweide, Koenigsberg, and the church of Memelniederung near Tilsit. The Mennonite congregation located at Kiernicza, near Lemberg in the province of Galicia, had been Austrian but now belonged to Poland. Together, these congregations of Danzig, Prussia, and

Ferries and windmills were used in Prussia.

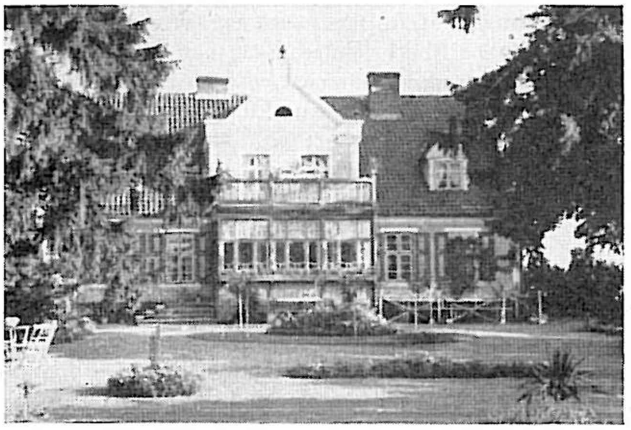


Reminiscent of the Mennonite homeland—Holland.





Interior of Mennonite church in Fuerstenwerder.



Former residence of Heinrich Bartel, Reichfelde.

Poland, formed the Conference of East German Mennonites.

The representatives of these churches met annually on the second Thursday after Pentecost for discussion of common problems and questions concerning their spiritual life. This conference of fifteen churches was represented by fifty to sixty brethren. It was always a time of joyful fellowship. The discussion together with the joint dinner usually took place in the spacious house of the elder or some other minister of the church. Those were blessed and refreshing times of brotherly fellowship. The minutes reveal that almost all decisions of the Conference were unanimously reached. Special meetings were called only for specific purposes, such as the consideration of nonresistance and the acceptance of the Articles of Faith of the Flemish and Frisian congregations in 1895. A common catechism was to follow this, but the work was interrupted by the war. Matters which concerned the Conference but required more prompt decision were taken care of by a committee of four elders of which the writer was the last chairman. After the first World War, the Conference was always held at Kalthof, on the Nogat, near Marienburg, where all the churches could send their representatives without visa difficulties. Many important sessions have been held, and important decisions reached here since 1920, as, for example, concerning joint youth work, the appointment of a youth secretary, and various other activities. Many a dear guest from afar has spoken to us and served us also in our congregations, a few of the outstanding ones being Benj. H. Unruh, Christian Neff, Abraham Braun, Michael Horsch, W. Fellman, David Toews, P. C. Hiebert, P. R. Schroeder, Ernst Crous, H. H. Ewert, A. Fast, and many others. These were never-to-be-forgotten hours where we felt the inner ties that bind us together, especially in considering subjects such as "Brethren in need" and foreign missions. This work of the Kingdom, together with the work of the local church, remained our commission and responsibility until our flight brought all further work to a sudden termination.

Even though the prosperity of the people increased until the close of World War I, and continued in the Danzig area for sometime after the founding of the Free City of Danzig, a strained economic condition developed, because the tariff-union of the Free City and Poland created a hardship for the farmers of the Free City area. Much-needed farm machinery could be obtained only from Germany, but the high tariff made it almost prohibitive in price and difficult to procure. Wages rose from year to year, taxes increased, but the incomes became smaller, so that the farmers faced bankruptcy. Because of continued pressure from the creditors, a number of farms were foreclosed. Poverty stricken, the farmers were forced to leave their homes, making way for the new owners. Some farmers sold out earlier, and could thus make a new beginning in some foreign country with their rescued possessions. For others, no matter how they economized, the load of debt became more and more pressing. Grains, cattle, and milk had to be sold at ridiculously low prices. The situation was somewhat more hopeful after Germany promised to buy a certain amount of sugar beets, wheat, beans, rape-seed, cattle, and butter. But the load of debt remained, and measures of relief from the banks did not provide the desired benefits. The situation was similar in the Province of East Prussia. Separated from the Reich by the "Corridor," subject to high freight and sea tariffs, Prussian land shrank in value so that many farmers became paupers, leaving farms which had belonged to them for generations. Financial measures of relief followed but were inadequate to save all of them. Inflation and deflation, too, had been destructive, the consequences of which are well known.

Situation under Hitler

This was the situation when Adolf Hitler came to power and introduced extraordinary measures to save Germany from economic ruin. Many statesmen had tried unsuccessfully to revive employment and to overcome the economic crisis. Government assistance to the unem-

ployed did not suffice to cover the bare necessities of a livelihood; begging was beyond control; crime increased; and the country was threatened with anarchy, starvation, and misery. Forty different political parties claimed their own to be the only right party to restore order, but the people became more confused than ever. It is, therefore, not surprising that not only ordinary laborers, but also skilled workers, as well as farmers, joined the Hitler movement. A solution was promised through firm and just social measures. These people supported the National-Socialist movement in many elections, and finally, when the National-Socialist party gained leadership in 1933, large numbers of them wanted to be accepted as members. This trend was seen as a check against all radical elements which would have governed public affairs by placing its men in power. That explains why so many Mennonites entered the party, especially those who held responsible positions. Even elders and ministers, who were really sincere, and honestly strove to proclaim the glad tidings of Christ, and were examples of their churches, joined the party.

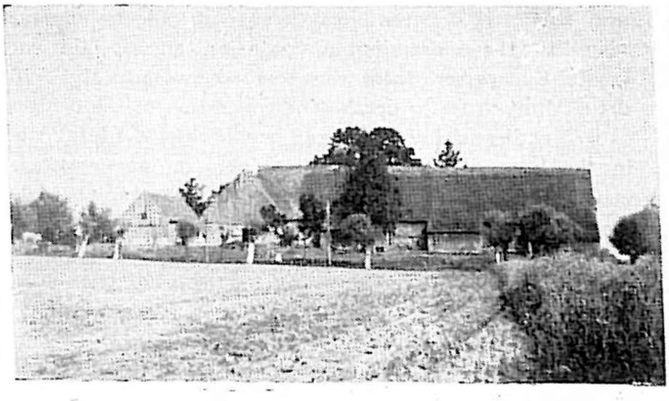
At first everything went smoothly; the ascent had begun, all who desired employment received work again and with it bread; beggars disappeared from the streets, and social misery was averted. Millions of worried people in all walks of life could breathe freely once more. Business and industry flourished. Agriculture was newly organized, a steady market introduced, and the stock exchange method removed. Steady prices for grains, cattle, and milk enabled a sure calculation of the budget. The interest on debts was reasonably lowered, large debts were sufficiently liquidated by the state that a pretty good management of one's property was made possible. According to the new farm-inheritance law, *Erbhofgesetz,* property up to 125 hectare could not be sold; all farm debts were liquidated by long-range government loan programs so that a man could become free of debt. The farmers in the Free City of Danzig also received indirect help from Germany. This contributed to the majority which the Free City of Danzig gave Hitler's party in the new election. The prevailing sentiment was: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." Yes, we were even proud of the fact that Mennonites who were idealistically minded and strove to do the best, were given responsible positions such as chief magistrate, district leader, district officer of the farmers, etc.

We discovered our grave error only when it was too late, when the war, and even earlier, when the struggle against the Jews and the Christian church opened our eyes. Now warnings against this trend were disregarded and open criticism was silenced through the threat of concentration camps. In the years immediately following 1933 we were quite ignorant of the fact that the Fuehrer possessed dictatorial power, and that a new philosophy *(Weltanschauung)* was to be imposed upon the people. Did not Hitler in his book "Mein Kampf" speak of a "positive Christianity"? Upon this we based our faith. I remember when at a ministerial meeting in 1932, Rev. Gerhard Fast said, "This is the only party which we as Mennonites can support."

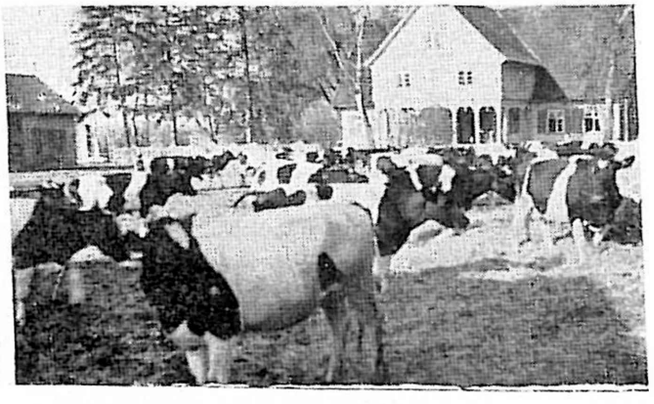
A skillful propaganda system veiled the true intentions of the party. Gradually all the youth of all ages were instructed by anti-Christian leaders who criticized everything that was traditional and despised everything that was Christian. This had a degrading influence upon the family and religious life in general. However, this program was not as successful as was expected, or as our foreign brethren thought it was. A Canadian brother asked in 1936, "Are you permitted to preach Christ?" We could in truth answer, "Yes, thank God, we are permitted to do that!"

Most of our youth continued to attend our worship services with their parents, to take catechetical instruction, to attend baptismal services, and to partake of the Lord's Supper. There were, of course, also some who tried to raise their status in the party by avoiding the church. Some, also, who had good positions in the party expressed official denunciations of the church. From our congregations at Heubuden, which comprised a membership of 1,500, only 8 families, or a total of 32 people, left us. Within the church there was increasing dissention, for in our midst also there were a number of nominal

Prussian Mennonite farmyard. Summer, 1942.



Dairy herd on Elizabeth Janzen farm, Marienburg.



Symbol of peace: Erich Claassen on Ford tractor.

Symbol of destruction: Wrecked implement of war.

Christians, who believed in a human and heroical Christ who had died for his convictions. They agreed that he had spoken wonderful words and had left good ethical teaching, but He was not for them a Saviour from sin and death, and could not give eternal life to those who believed in Him as the Son of God and Saviour of the world.

Naturally, the so-called "enlightenment" of the party which presented Christ as merely another founder of religion, like Moses, Buddha, Mohammed, and Confucius, and claimed that Christianity with its "inferiority complex" of sin and guilt had to be replaced by a new philosophy, was back of this inner conflict. The Jewish religion especially was severely attacked by the party and since Christianity developed within the Jewish religion, it too, was cast aside. These destructive propaganda sessions led by party leaders, were usually carried on during our worship services. Attendance at these meetings was patriotically urged, in order to keep young and old from attending church. Under these conditions, it was often difficult for the minister to proclaim the Word of God uncompromisingly.

Christians spent much time in prayer to the end that they might remain firm in their loyalty to Christ and His Church, that God's spirit might save the youth from disaster, and that the faith of their fathers might be preserved. That God answered their prayers has been the experience of many. Even though some remained defiant, the majority of the young people came to the Youth Bible Meetings which had been established for some time at Thiensdorf-Pr. Rosengarth, and Elbing in connection with the Sunday school. The Conference appointed Aron Mekelborger to be youth worker. His visits to all the churches proved a great blessing. We also gratefully remember Ernst Fellman, who served jointly the South German Conference and the West Prussian youth.

During the war a monthly bulletin of four pages was sent to our soldiers on the battle field and in the garrisons by the Heubuden congregation. This paper contained a short sermon and news of the church. In return we received many letters of appreciation from our 200-250 members in uniform. For many of our young brethren this bulletin provided comfort and encouragement even to the end. Just how great our loss has been we will never be able to determine accurately—our Heubuden congregation claimed casualties of approximately one hundred deaths by the end of 1944, and about as many prisoners and missing. The majority of these have remained in Russia; not a trace can be found of many of them.

The Battle Front Approaches

Weeks before Christmas, 1944, it had been impossible to entertain the right Christmas spirit: there was a fearful dread of what might happen. During the month of October long processions of refugees had come from East Prussia, going towards the west. The battle front came ever closer, proclaiming its approach by the thunder of canons. Some people were inclined to hide while the battle front passed on, and then continue with their work. Yet the incoming refugees related stories of the fury of the Russian soldiers even against civilians. We no longer remonstrated, but obeyed the evacuation orders. That we had done right we soon discovered.

Imagine millions of people in the streets at the same time, in the bitter cold, snow and storm. A plan had been devised so that the evacuation should proceed in orderly fashion, but because of the retreating German troops and the traffic of the mobilized columns all plans were overthrown. Whoever has not had the experience of being thrust into the midst of over-crowded streets, and squeezed between army transport vehicles, cannot visualize the indescribable confusion an air-raid can create. Everywhere there were sorrowing women and children. Many froze to death. The congestion at the bridges caused endless delay. Many old people caught a fatal cold in the blizzard. We spent the nights on our covered-wagons and it is indeed amazing that so many people have survived the hardships of the flight.

The great snowdrifts along the streets and the impassable country roads made progress a torturous procedure for man and beast. Thousands from the cites walked, pulling a little wagon or sled, loaded with their few belongings which in their haste they had gathered. There

was so much weeping, despair, and discouragement that many even committed suicide on the way.

Thus many of our Mennonites, together with many other refugees, fled across the Oder River, pursued by the Russians, and were taken into various occupational zones. The largest number are now in the British Zone, where they survive in a meager existence. They are in a land of refugees where they sigh and hope for better days. Looking across the ocean for help, they are eagerly awaiting the time when they will be able to embark for a new home.

A large number of the refugees, who had taken the road to Pomerania were overtaken by the Russian Front. They have suffered the most horrible experiences. They were plundered, the women of all ages were dishonored, many were taken captive, others suffered affliction and death. Families were brutally separated, nearly all men below the age of 65, as well as the able-bodied girls and women, were forcefully taken away and assembled in camps where already many others before them had died of deprivation after days of questioning. The largest number were placed in cattle cars and taken to Siberia, a journey of several weeks, there to do forced labor. Broken in health, only a few of these people have come back, one of these being the Reverend Otto Bartel from Grunau near Elbing. We may never know the circumstances surrounding the death of these people and how hard their lot has been.

(Continued on page 18)

From One Who Survived

Dear W——

How glad I was to hear from one more dear old friend who has survived. I will tell you something about myself. In September, 1944, I was drafted into the German infantry and sent to the Hungarian front. Soon I was wounded and returned to a hospital at N—— from where we fled when the Russians approached in January, 1945. Now I was sent to the Czechoslovakian front. These days before the capitulation were filled with unnecessary losses and bloodshed. When we were encircled I tried twice to escape to the American side but was caught and taken back again. During the third attempt I ran into the Russian artillery and my fate was sealed. We were sent to Schachty in the Don Basin near Rostov. I arrived completly exhausted from the effects of travelling—120 men being crowded into one freight car during extremely hot weather without sufficient water. First I was put to work loading coal and then sent into the mine. We worked like the galley slaves of the Middle Ages with the exception that our masters did not care whether we survived. Finally, nothing of our muscles was left. With all my belongings I weighed only 102 pounds. By comparison Gandhi was a heavy-weight champion. After a complete collapse one was permitted to recuperate a little and then the process was repeated until it was impossible to get any more work out of the wretched human being. Then one was dismissed for repatriation. Worse than hunger was the daily hopelessness with no information from home, no Sunday, no holiday, living like an animal in dirt and filth . . .

Before I was taken prisoner I had destroyed all my papers. Since I had been born in Russia I decided that my only chance of ever returning to my family in Germany was to pretend that I knew nothing of Russia or the Russian language. Thus in all questionings I required an interpreter even though I understood everything that was said.

Finally I was released. In May, 1947, I arrived in Frankfurt-on-the-Oder and transferred to my family in Berlin. Our joy was great when I was united with my wife and three children. I had no knowledge about the conditions in Germany. My wife told me that it was impossible for me to stay in Berlin for any length of time. After I had regained some strength I managed to get out of the Russian Zone westward. As yet I have no work, but I hope to find some. It is even more difficult to get a permit for residence somewhere. And yet I must get work and a place to stay so that I can get my family out of Berlin. My wife is weary of the struggle in the Russian Zone. My father-in-law, who was with her, starved to death in 1945.

If you know of anyone who would be willing to send my family a food package I would greatly appreciate it. I will take care of my needs.

With best regards,
Very sincerely yours,
R—— C——

Editor's Note: The editor knows this Mennonite personally and will be glad to forward packages you may wish to send his family.

Survivors—just returned from the East.

The fate of those who were sent home, mostly women and children who came back afoot, hungry and cold, was similar to that of the others. They were able to remain here for only a short time. When the Poles took possession they had to move into worse shelters and huts. They received no food ration cards; only those who were ordered to work received food. All the estates were completely plundered; not a living animal was left in the village except cats and dogs; no grain was available, and only once in a while were potato scraps or unthreshed grain found. It was but a meager existence. Added to this were the constant annoyances suffered by the women at the hands of the Russians and Poles. Very few men were left. The men and women were frequently beaten by terror commandos as they drove through the villages in their cars. Many have starved and perished of sadistic treatment. Since medical aid was not available, many of these pitiable people died of typhus, and of starvation. There were, of course, a few sympathetic Poles who helped some of these Germans; but on the whole, the misery of the Germans was indescribably great.

By and by the Germans were sent to Western Germany, hatred following them as far as the boundary. They were robbed even of the little they did possess, so that many crossed the border without shoes or overcoats. There are still some German people over there, Mennonites as well, who are able to work. Those who have escaped tell us of the most horrible things they have experienced. They tell us that the Werder, once so well taken care of, is unrecognizable, the fertile soil lies barren, many estates are burned, the beautiful gardens lie waste, the fruit trees are hewn down for fuel—it is no more our home.

In the hope that the battle front would not reach Danzig, a large group from the Werder gathered in the Danzig region. Later these were gradually taken by boat to German harbors and to Denmark. Carrying only what we could hold in our hands, we were taken aboard ships. Many perished with thousands of others never reaching their goal because of torpedoes and air-raids. We Mennonites, too, sorrow for beloved relatives and friends who were on these ships, but who have never been heard of again. We shall never know when they died or where they rest at the bottom of the Baltic Sea.

We are thankful that we are able to continue our worship services in camp. They are well attended and have been a source of great strength and comfort in the monotony of life in the barracks, a life which often seems so aimless to us. And when I think of our first camp—without order, without any necessities, only heaps of straw on a concrete floor, no tables, no chairs, irregular attention, much sickness, many deaths—we have much to be thankful, for now everything has been greatly improved. When arrangements were made by the *Kirchendienst,* Copenhagen to hold worship services for all denominations, Elder Enns, Brother Epp, and I received permission to leave our own camps to conduct services in other camps. During that time there were over one hundred camps in Copenhagen alone, all of which we visited. In each camp we inquired after Mennonites, making a list of all of them. Thus we were able to give C. F. Klassen, representative of the Mennonite Central Committee, when he surprised us with a visit in August of 1945, a list of nearly 2,000 Mennonites among 200,000 German refugees. And then, when Reverend Walter Gering, Elma Esau, Dr. and Mrs. P. S. Goertz and others came to us as Mennonites Central Committee workers, and served us in word, deeds, and much love, we became more conscious of the inner ties that unite us in Christ. It was so overwhelming that many a hard burden became lighter and many a denial became easier to bear.

Thus I close with heartfelt thanksgiving for all kind thoughts and sacrificial love, which we have received from you brethren and sisters in North America. To you go to the words of the Apostle, as found in I Thess. 1:2,3.

Market place, 1946, in the once beautiful city of Danzig.

WOMEN'S ODYSSEY

BY LOTTE HEINRITZ

WHEN on the 9th of March in 1945, the daily bombing raids on Danzig and surrounding areas began, it became increasingly certain to us that the end of the war was at hand. Yet we did not suspect that our beloved Danzig would go down to ruin in the gruesome fashion that it did.

My mother, Gertrud Heinritz (*nee* Zimmermann), and I lived on one of the thoroughfares of Langfuhr, a Danzig suburb, until the 22d of March, when we were forced by this reign of terror to live with friends, often in basements or cellars. Hour after hour the terrifying sirens sent out their nerve-wracking sound until our nerves were taut. The normal, everyday social and commercial activities were at a standstill. The gas and water facilities were shut off, and we were forced by circumstance to exhaust our meager food supplies.

Then, suddenly, one morning during a bombing raid, several adjacent homes were plunged into ruin causing our own home to be unroofed and all its windows and doors to be ripped from their frames almost instantaneously. Rag-clad refugees and homeless victims began to roam the streets daily. No one could help them, fearing only in the next moments a similar fate.

On the 25th of March, through a neighbor's radio, we discovered that the Russians were at the Danzig city gates. Our hopes that Danzig might be declared an open city were shattered when the defense forces made a counter-attack and within two days nearly three-fourths of the city and surrounding territory was in smoldering ruins. Larger and yet larger groups of refugees continued to pass through the streets. "Save yourself if you can" was uppermost in everyone's mind. Many found refuge in the air-raid shelters; others risked their way to the harbor hoping to escape this hell by ship.

At four o'clock, the morning of the 27th of March, came the terrible news, "The Russians are coming!" Be-

lieving that our fatal hour had struck, we shuddered as we recalled the gruesome tales we had heard of the Russians, little realizing that we were to have similar experiences. Ere long, ten or fourteen drunken Russian soldiers stormed into our home with shouts of "Hurrah!" While two of them leveled revolvers at us, the rest searched our bodies and home for valuables and for German soldiers and weapons. The girls and younger women were soon overpowered and raped. Anyone trying to defend herself was either shot or horribly mistreated and left to die. We were all driven out of our home. The ill and injured stayed behind; most of them dying a horrible death of torment and pain shortly thereafter. With one blanket and a handbag the Russians had overlooked, we fled into the unknown!

The sight that greeted our eyes on the streets after these many days in the cellar is one beyond description. The lifeless bodies of men and beasts littered the streets amidst ruined and still smoldering homes. Houses that had escaped burning during the raids were soon set afire by the Russians. Smoke and very fine ashes filled the air making breathing well-nigh impossible. Telephone wires crisscrossed the ruined and rubble-filled streets everywhere. Blood flowed on sidewalks and pavement.

Where were we to go? Several times when we had located a passage through this horrible mess, a Russian soldier with fixed bayonet would drive us back. So we stumbled among the ruined and burning houses for hours on end having no definite goal in view hoping only to find an avenue of escape. Finally, somehow, we reached the woods. But here, too, the Russian soldiers pursued us. My mother and two other old ladies, friends of ours, could go no further. As if by a miracle, we found ourselves in front of a familiar place, the home of Hermann Ensz and his sister. Although the house had been thoroughly plundered, it was as yet undamaged. Upon seeing us they eagerly invited us to stay with them for the night.

That night I shall never forget. No sooner had we arranged sleeping facilities on the floor for the ten of us, when three Russian soldiers entered, set up a machine gun and trained it on us. No one dared move an inch. While one of the soldiers held his cocked revolver to our chests, another searched our bodies for money and other valuables.

How were we to escape this hell? We began to pray. Above the soft murmurs of our prayers, we could hear the clatter of the belt of machine gun cartridges as the soldier playfully handled it. We sat there motionless while the minutes seemed like an eternity.

Suddenly, the Russians in the process of pillaging the house, discovered a barrel of wine in the cellar. Sensing an opportunity for escape, one of the women accompanied them into the cellar and engaged them in lively conversation.

In a split second the rest of us fled wildly into the forest. Alas, a small band of Russian soldiers soon drove us into a large garden within easy range of their machine guns. Sensing less security than ever, I began to investigate our surroundings. At the end of the garden, I discovered a large unguarded hole in the fence. Commanding my three old ladies to follow me, I led them silently to escape into the cold, black night.

After some wandering, we saw in the distance a group of men warming themselves around a camp fire. We joined this group of Germans to discover that we were in the garden of the commander of the Russian occupation troops. A man brought us some food which we eagerly devoured after having been without food for two days. Later we were shown a basement room in the commander's house for a lodging place. We felt safe and very thankful for food and lodging.

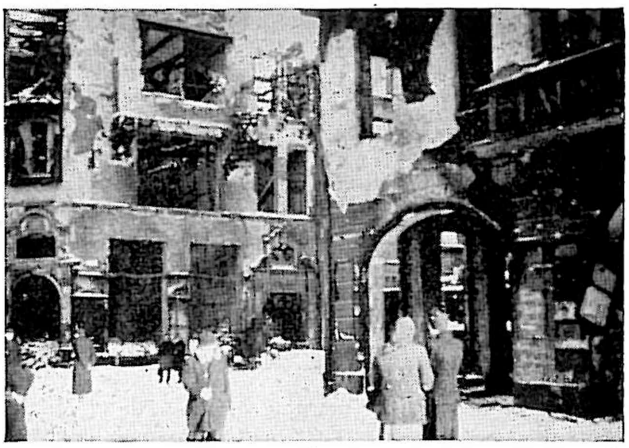
Suddenly, however, the door was flung open and four Russian soldiers ordered me into another room where I was then raped. When finally I was able to return to my three old ladies, we immediately decided to try to seek an avenue of escape. After a bit of exploration we discovered an unguarded exit and fled back to the heart of the city.

At one of the street corners, a Russian automobile came careening along, hit my mother and sped on. My mother collapsed. What were we to do now? Fortunately, a woman who had seen the accident, offered us shelter in her temporary home. Previously the wounded had been housed here, yet we barely noticed the blood-stained mattresses on which we sank in exhaustion.

* * *

The next day one of my old ladies became ill with dysentery. No medicine nor physician's aid was available. I tried to take care of her while also trying to find food and fuel amidst the ruins. Further misery was added to our already deplorable condition when the Russians trained their huge guns on Hela, Oxhoeft, and other fishing villages in a final mopping-up campaign. The earth shook and the badly damaged houses became more insecure than ever, to say nothing of the noise and the flash of explosions throughout the entire night.

Even snow cannot cover the scars of war.



In the beginning of April the Poles took over Danzig. Now began a new reign of terror. Daily orders issued by the Polish government were almost immediately rescinded by the Russian government. Everyone had to register at both the Russian headquarters and at the Polish militia headquarters. All Germans between the ages of seventeen and seventy were required to report daily for labor battalions. They cleaned up houses, cleared away rubble and ruin, removed and buried the swollen and stinking bodies of men and beasts. However, neither pay nor food were forthcoming for this work, and we became increasingly hungry each day.

On the 14th of April we received the good news that the Russians had vacated our home. We immediately decided to return. Our main problem was how to transport our ailing and feeble members to our old home. This we laboriously accomplished, but nevertheless one of the ladies died the next day.

We found our home in an indescribable condition. All modern conveniences as well as all clothing, linens, and bedding had been taken by the Russians. The remaining furnishings were either scattered everywhere or demolished beyond repair. Books, papers, and kitchen utensils were scattered throughout the ruined streets. Later we discovered a few of the linens and clothing among the coal and demolished fruit jars in the cellar. Feathers from the ruined pillows and feather beds were everywhere. Every window pane in the entire house was broken. The bomb-damaged roof admitted rain in torrents. Our first job was to bring some order to this chaos.

Under the watchful eye of Russian soldiers, we dug a huge hole which was then filled with our rain-soaked upholstered furniture tightly wound by barbed wire. Our hands bled and throbbed with pain. Books and other materials were piled in heaps and burned. This type of work lasted for several weeks.

Our water supply was a pump, a full twenty minutes from our home. En route I was in constant danger of being picked up by either Russian or Polish soldiers and forced into labor battalions. Early in the morning before the day sentries came on duty, I began the daily search for food, ransacking the garbage cans and rubbage heaps of the Russians. I was always fortunate enough to find some moldy bread, slightly rotten fruit, potatoes or similar foodstuff. Gathering fuel from amongst the ruins was far more dangerous.

An insufficient amount of proper food left my mother bedfast in a very weakened condition. I, too, had to seek the aid of a physician after my experiences with the Russian soldiers. The hospital, reached only by a long and tedious route through the ruins, had a long continuous waiting line to see the German doctor and his Polish assistant. He was one of the few German physicians left in Danzig. Most of the hospital's doctors and nurses had chosen death rather than torture and rape, and a huge grave in the hospital's garden testified to this sad fact.

On the 9th of May we were awakened by sounds of cheering crowds accompanied by rockets. We hoped it meant deliverance, but fourteen days later discovered it was only the Russian victory celebration.

* * *

In the middle of May, the Polish people themselves moved into Danzig, confiscating and occupying all available business establishments and homes. Three refugees whose home had been confiscated now joined us. With Polish managed business houses in operation we were able to sell our piano for 10,000 zloty. Now we were assured life for at least another month. For the first time in three months, we were able to purchase bread and other food. We were breathing much easier again and hoped to rebuild our home. But alas, our hopes soon vanished.

Almost immediately vagabonds began to plunder and rob throughout Danzig and vicinity. No home was safe. They forced entry into homes, threatening the owner with guns while they stole everything in sight. In this manner, we, too, lost some of our few remaining household articles and food. The Polish militia made no efforts to stop them. After several weeks of such plunder, the Russian government officials ordered the Russian army to drive them out of town.

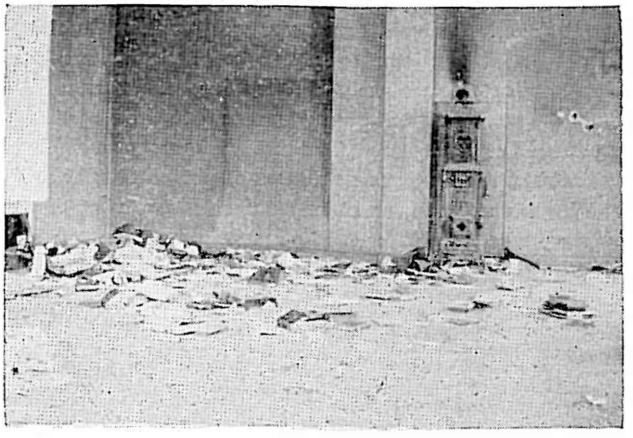
One morning several weeks later, we heard in the distance the singing of German troops as they were being marched to unknown destinations as Russian prisoners. For days on end they kept marching through the city.

Meanwhile an epidemic of dysentery and typhus raged, closing all city exits and entrances. Several times we were inoculated. Throughout this time I tried to maintain daily contact with friends and relatives. Their number decreased steadily through death by typhus or suicide. Our morale became increasingly lower day by day. Finally, our home, too, was confiscated by the Poles. There remained only one thing to do — escape!

* * *

From time to time, Red Cross transports or convoys left Danzig for points in Germany. Possibly we could

What was once the beautiful Mennonite Church.



join one of these and thus escape. We had hoped somehow to establish contact with my brother and his family during our return stay in Danzig but to no avail. The necessary permits required for joining these convoys, I acquired through a Pole whom, in return, I taught the German language. We sold our few remaining household furnishings and were able thus to secure the necessary travel money which was one thousand zloty (approximately $200 in pre-war days). Our preparations for the journey had to be made in all secrecy, usually during the night. Our luggage consisted of a knapsack, a parcel of food, and one blanket.

At 6:30, on the morning of September 25, 1945, we left our home in Danzig never to return. It was raining when we were picked up and delivered, in company with others, to the Danzig railway station. En route we took a long, last look at the pitiful scenes this city now offered. We drove by the scorched brickwalls of what was once the beautiful Mennonite church, a grim reminder of former, happier days.

After several hours the train, minus benches and windows stopped at Kuestrin, where Polish soldiers entered and forcibly threw us from the cars. We spent the night in a pouring rain out in the open without shelter of any kind.

The next morning before daybreak, a group of us decided to venture into the unknown. After many hours of aimless wandering, we came upon an almost completely demolished railway station where already thousands were awaiting transportation out of this chaos. The scene was one of horrible, indescribable pity—old people, ailing, feeble, ill, and young children, crying, hungry, starving, burning with fever!

How long we waited in this place, I don't know. However, when suddenly a freight train arrived, we welcomed it with feeble shouts of joy while tears streamed down our faces. With great efforts we succeeded in climbing into a car half filled with potatoes. A Russian soldier tried to force us out but a few cigarettes and one hundred zloty (approximately $20) bought us some security, at least for the moment.

The trip began and for a day and night continued, stopping only to bury the dead. It began to rain and we sought shelter in vain under our wet blanket. Suddenly, in a wooded area, the train was stopped. Several Russian soldiers immediately climbed into the various box cars, dragged girls and young women into the woods, and captured the young men for Russian forestry work. Others robbed the remaining refugees of personal belongings.

We were spared, as if by a miracle, through the terrifying cries of one partially insane person in our car. Hearing these shrieks, the Russians, believing our car to have been plundered and robbed, moved on and left us alone. Strangely enough, the full moon, hidden by clouds, suddenly shone brightly as though protesting these horrible deeds of men towards their fellowmen. Finally, we moved on.

Four days after leaving Danzig, we reached a refugee camp in Berlin. There, on straw mattresses, we were able to rest our swollen feet and aching bodies for a while. Soon, somewhat recuperated and in possession of some provisions, we went to the Lehrter railway station, realizing that we couldn't remain here in Berlin. Twelve hours later we found opportunity to board an already overflowing train, and ten of us crowded into the toilet space.

Three days later, after innumerable change of trains and spending hours in crowded railway platforms or tunnels, we arrived at a village near Wismar. Weeks of difficulty followed. Since we had no ration cards, we lived on potatoes and turnips found in the fields. Farmers were able to give us some bread once in a while but couldn't feed all the refugees that came to beg for food.

Since both of my hands had been injured, I was able to secure little fuel to heat our cold and damp room. My mother remained in bed for the greater part of the time. Three times a week I walked four kilometers (approximately two and a half miles) to see a doctor. We were both noticeably getting thinner each day.

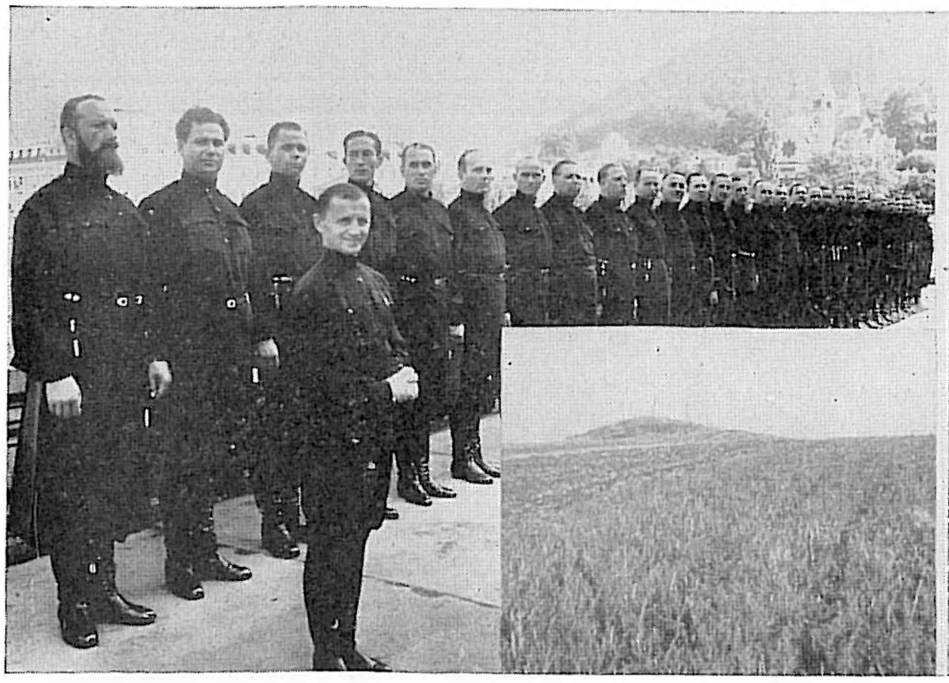
One day in November, we were overjoyed to learn through my uncle in Hamburg that my brother and family were all alive and safe in Holstein. Hoping to be reunited, I applied for the necessary papers to move to the British zone of occupation. On the 8th of November we joined a transport which, unfortunately, after a three-hour ride, was forced to stop, due to lack of fuel and damaged rails. After spending two nights in a tunnel in 10° below freezing weather, we were forced to return in an open box car amidst a blinding snow storm. Feverish and destitute, we returned to our former quarters. After several weeks the Christmas season arrived.

* * *

The 1st of January, 1946, we were fortunate in securing passage again. Three days and nights we traveled without any warm food, in unheated cars in 15° below freezing weather. When, on the morning of January 4, we arrived in the British zone and were fed a warm meal in a refugee camp at Luebeck, we were sure that we were in paradise at last.

Here a refugee organization took care of our needs and desires for permanent settlement. My mother was taken to the Glensburg-Muerwiek hospital for two months while I remained at the camp. How indescribably happy we were when finally we were all reunited after such a long gruesome separation.

After many an up and down, sickness and misfortune, our hearts are overflowing with praise for having been led so wonderously to present safety. My mother is being lovingly cared for in the Neumuenster Home-for-the-Aged. I, too, am well on the road to health now and able to work for my livelihood at a hospital near Neumuenster.



The Don Cossack Chorus.

The Russian Steppes.

The Swiss Alps.

OUR HERITAGE OF MUSIC IN MANITOBA

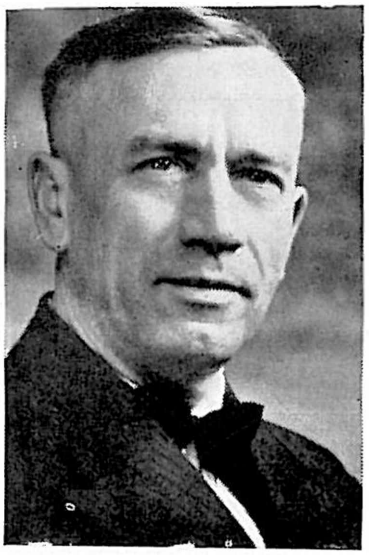
BY VICTOR AND ELISABETH PETERS

WE HAVE come a long way on our journey across this world and are the heirs of many ages. From our forefathers we inherited the nostalgic *Heimatlieder,* which were born of their deepest sentiments—the love for hearth and home. The shores of the Dnieper, the melody of the steppes, have given us a sad, sweet song we will never forget. We have settled in mountain regions and grassy prairie lands and have felt the tang of a new-world breeze that softly caressed and boldly invigorated. The lowlands, the Dnieper, mountains and prairies, they all have gone into the pattern of our development and played a vital part in our Mennonite make-up. But no matter where we have come or whither we have gone, with us have come our music and our song.

A wandering people, we have kept them simple—

Cultivating our heritage of music in Manitoba through instrument and song.

The third annual concert of the Mennonite Symphony Orchestra, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1947.



K. H. Neufeld, Winkler, Manitoba, organized the first festival in rural Manitoba: the Southern Manitoba Musical Festival Society.

these songs—and our singers have until now had to rely on the sweetness of their voices and their emotional interpretation rather than on training. Yet the last quarter of a century has brought amazing development to us, particularly to our music.

We have become music-conscious. Throughout the Mennonite settlements of Manitoba a great desire for musical expression has manifested itself, in church and school choirs, as well as in instrumental music. We have not disregarded our former concepts of music. Our free, spontaneous singing of nature- and folk songs is, as of old, heard wherever we gather in groups or in the twilight hours at home. Our truest expression of worship is still our wonderful choral. We have merely broadened our musical ideals and have added to our musical treasures the finesse of the art song, and the delicacy of the strings. We have made sacrifices and tireless efforts until by now we have trained Mennonite instructors whose work is recognized in musical circles.

Much, perhaps most, of this progress we owe to our music festivals. These annual competitions have been growing for the last fifteen years. The object at these festivals is "not to gain a prize or to defeat a rival, but to pace one another on the road to excellence." Two of

Ben Horch conducts this orchestra composed of members from Winnipeg, Winkler, and Steinbach

these musical competitions are held every spring among the Mennonites of Manitoba: the Southern Manitoba Festival convened by K. H. Neufeld, and the Southeastern Festival under the leadership of Neil Unruh. Great credit goes to our teachers for their part in the festivals.

Soon after Christmas the public schools and high school, in town and country, begin their practices. The training thus acquired by the students is invaluable—voice placement, tone production, expression—all carry over and become a part of the education the student takes with him into life. He has learned what to listen for and has a criterion by which to judge musical performances. Even without the valuable adjudications, the choirs usually place themselves according to merit and carry back with them new ideas and inspiration. Entries in solo classes have encouraged children to get the necessary training for solo work. One of our voice instructors, Mrs. Justina Wiebe, of Winkler, with her diploma from the University of Manitoba, discovered her ability at one of the first festivals.

Yet these festivals had a very humble beginning, and were born of the inspiration and enthusiasm of a few. To K. H. Neufeld, well-known choir leader, goes the credit for organizing the first festival in rural Manitoba,

Victor Klassen, well known Winnipeg tenor and radio performer, is heard weekly on Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

moulded along the lines of the famous Winnipeg Festival. Although the first competition lacked sadly in taste and refinement as to choice of pieces, most of which were personal selections, the adjudicator was of the best in the person of Professor Bernard Naylor, of Oxford, at present Toronto. The severe criticisms of adjudicators have proved very effective, for today only the best that the world of music has to offer is carefully selected by competent committees who make up the syllabus for the competition.

The unique character of these early festivals sometimes almost bordered on the grotesque, and on the other hand the earnest zeal of the contestants was touching. There were large numbers of rural schools who had come great distances, sometimes on open trucks, with occasional dire results due to inclement weather and muddy roads. There were drawn faces of country school teachers still haggard from the difficult task of persuading parents to allow children to attend, or school boards to provide transportation.

In a comparatively short period of years all this changed. Rural school districts now take great pride in their entries at festivals. People who never before were willing to listen to good music have begun to foster it through the festivals.

In the years to come there will become apparent one more influence of the festivals, our church music. Our churches had of late manifested a trend of abandoning our wonderful chorales and substituting light sentimental songs and choruses. The festivals place particular emphasis on good church music, and already there are indications of a revival of the best in our hymns.

The formerly popular guitars are now rapidly giving way to violins, violas, 'cellos, and pianos, and the festival syllabuses record classes in brasses, woodwinds, and percussions. Excellent music teachers are available. Winnipeg has John Konrad, head of the violin section, Bornoff School of Music, and Altona and Winkler are fortunate to have Mrs. Hilda Friesen, Mrs. Elsa Redekopp, and Arnold Spohr.

Parents and music lovers take time off, sometimes for all sessions of two or three days, to go to the festival to hear the performances. As a result, the number of violins and pianos are rapidly increasing and some of the most unpretentious homes are suddenly alive and become beautiful with music.

The school inspectors and school boards are giving all the support they can to festivals. The late Inspector Gerhard G. Neufeld made it almost compulsory for teachers, no matter how young or inexperienced to enter their classes at the festival. Probably the best proof of our musical progress lies in the fact that many of our thrifty school boards have supplied their schools with radios, phonographs, and records so as to provide the students with the best in music.

Thus our young men and women of tomorrow are learning to think and feel and understand the language that our mothers and fathers long ago loved and passed down to us—our heritage of music!

Musically gifted children win scholarships.

Mennonite homes become alive with music.

The Newton community chorus and orchestra presenting the *Messiah*, December, 1947, Walter H. Hohman, conducting.

MUSIC AND MENNONITE YOUTH IN THE PRAIRIE STATES

BY BERNARD W. REGIER

WITHIN the past twenty years, it has become an accepted fact among music educators, that music organizations from public schools in Mennonite centers, have proved to be of superior quality in comparison with the majority of groups from other schools. This has long been true of choral groups; and, of late, the instrumental organizations have ranked with the vocal ensembles. In fact, this circumstance has come to be taken for granted by local citizens and school administrators, so that a heading such as, "High School Musicians Rank High at District Festival," in the weekly newspaper, hardly calls for more than a casual scanning of the story and a cursory comment.

Observers outside the Mennonite circles are asking, "What is the explanation for the consistently high ratings that music groups from Mennonite communities receive at competition-festivals?" We are compelled to take stock and see what phenomena peculiar to our people exist that produce this record of excellent music among our young people.

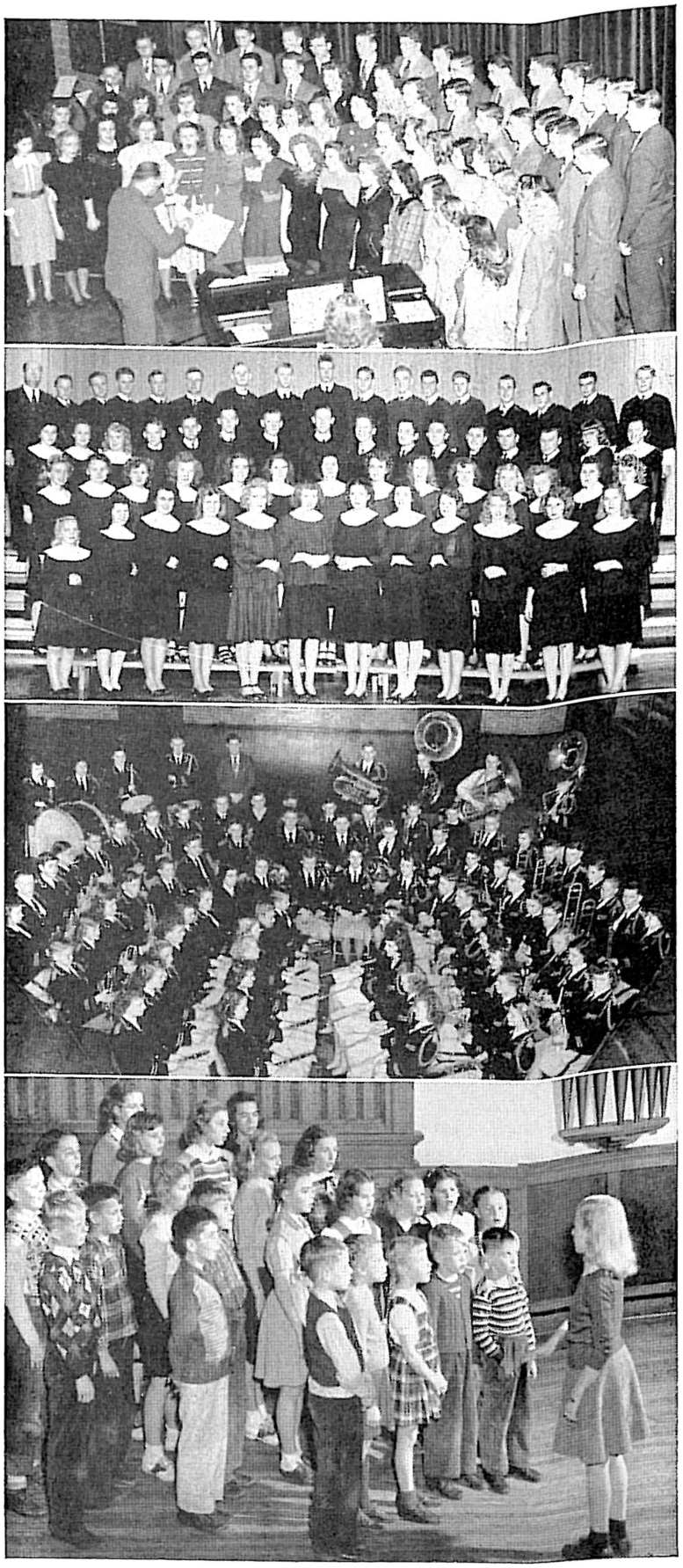
As one who has spent half of his life among the Mennonites and the other half outside the circle—most of it on the very fringes — I wish to give subjective and objective viewpoints relating the the question posed in the preceding paragraph. One of the most common reasons advanced by the Mennonites themselves for the excellence of their choral music, is that they possess voices and talents of superior quality and quantity. I cannot subscribe to this theory after singing and working with peoples of differing religious and national backgrounds. This may seem surprising but a further analysis will substantiate this opinion.

Mennonites stem from the Teutonic race, and are similar in physical characteristics to all other European peoples; such as the Scandinavians, Dutch, and Anglo-Saxon. There is nothing structurally peculiar to the Mennonites that would give them superior quality of tone due to enlarged resonance cavities of the nose and head. It has been pointed out that the Negro race has a distinctive Negroid quality resulting from a broad structural base of the nose. The Mennonites cannot lay claim to any similar distinctive physical characteristics.

Nor are such indigenous talents as pitch and rhythm found in superior degree among our youth. They seem to be developed to a higher degree, generally, but are not found to be any more in-born than among others. We must look beyond inherent characteristics—to social, cultural, and religious practices that have influenced the trend of musical development—for the answer to our question.

Music plays an important part in the social life of the Mennonites. Singing in the home, around the dinner table, and at the family altar is customary. Probably the most popular form of leisure-time activity is singing in a community or church organization. Because the churches frown on movie-going, dancing, and certain other purely social pastimes, the people find an outlet for their gregarious instinct in music groups. The young people early seek to emulate their elders and join a choir or organize an ensemble of their own. One of the greatest honors in school is to be accepted as a member of the *a cappella* choir, orchestra, band, or ensemble. Boys are often as eager to make the high school quartet as they are to make the football team. Training of the singing voice and instruction on an instrument, therefore, starts comparatively early and assures a continuity of music training from generation to generation.

By way of a slight digression from the main topic,



Musical activities in Mennonite Communities. Top right—Mountain Lake. Top down—Buhler; Goessel; Mountain Lake; North Newton.

I would like to make the observation that men singers outnumber and excel women singers, generally, among the Mennonites. Of course, there are exceptions to this broad statement, for we do have excellent individual voices among both sexes. But in choral groups the men's voices are nearly always more numerous, more developed, and more aggressive. This is the more remarkable because the opposite condition prevails in most other communities.

The man's predominance in music is merely a reflection of his traditional social dominance in the Mennonite community and home. This dominance is not so obvious on school and college levels, but in the home and church life it is easy to discern. Once a home has been established, the woman's primary duty is to be a home-maker and mother of the family. There is little or no opportunity for leisure-time activities or development of personal gifts and talents. The husband, however, usually has time for activities outside the family circle. I am familiar with a church which at one time within recent years boasted a large church choir of mixed voices (men outnumbering women), two male choruses, and a male quartet. There were no women's groups as counterparts of the men's choral organizations. This church was not exceptional in this respect; two or three other churches could be cited in which a similar predominance of men's voices existed. This indirect, seemingly inadvertent, social encouragement of male singers is, in my opinion, the logical explanation for this circumstance.

The Mennonites have succeeded in transmitting certain cultural attributes and folk-ways, which they acquired over two hundred years ago as residents of Germany. They have to a remarkable degree retained these attributes, despite sojourns in other countries. The innovation of congregational singing of Luther's time and that of his contemporary, Menno Simons, has come down through the generations. The chorale with its vertical harmonies is still a great favorite. Children and young people learn to sing these grand hymns in the home and church, and so develop a facility in part singing that is often lacking in the young people of other communities. This gives them a decided advantage over other groups in competition-festivals, because accurate part-work is fundamental to other factors in good choral singing. This singing ability also helps the instrumentalist, for band and orchestra directors have come to recognize that a performer must be able to sing his part, at least aurally, before he can play it accurately.

Musical activities the year round. Top left—Christmas carolling, Ebenfeld. Top down—Kansas song festival; Hillsboro; Goessel; College octet.

Another fact that impresses adjudicators at contests is that choral groups from our centers sing with a great sonority of tone. There is a certain maturity, even in young voices, that is generally lacking in school groups.

This can be attributed to the singing of sacred and serious music, nearly always of a homophonic nature, where the voices proceed in vertical alignment. Music which is largely perpendicular in harmonic arrangement is likely to demand heavy and dark quality of tone to give it proper solidity and profundity. This sombre, almost throaty, tone gives the voices a depth and fullness that is impressive, yet not exaggerated to the extent that it is too harmful or constricting to the voices to permit a reasonably free negotiation of the range involved in songs of this type.

I must add that much of the depth and beauty of tone comes from a sincere religious feeling that our young people put into their singing. They sing "from the heart" instead of from the head, and the result is an expressive coloring that is thrilling. Our youth, for the most part, sing songs that express beautiful thoughts and sentiments—beautiful words suggest beautiful tones.

Certain church beliefs have had an important effect on musical practices and concepts among our people. Where instruments are not used in our churches, the congregation has to supply the accompaniment to the melody by harmonizing, by ear if necessary, the other parts. Thus it becomes essential to learn to carry the alto, tenor, and bass. This practice of part singing in congregations has been retained, even with the acceptance of pianos and reed organs. I sincerely hope that it will not be lost, now that many of our churches are installing pipe or electric organs. The temptation will be to sit back and enjoy the full-tone consonances of the organ, or merely to sing the melody and let the organ supply the harmony. May the Mennonites never let the mechanical organ replace their God-given voices in the praise and adoration of God but only accept the instrument as an aid to more effective and beautiful worship.

We have delved into the religious, cultural, and social background of the Mennonites for certain constant and fundamental determining factors in their musical development. There have been additional present-day circumstances that have contributed to the pre-eminence of their choral groups within the past two decades. It was approximately in the year 1929 when *a cappella* singing became popular in schools, both secondary and collegiate. With their tradition of unaccompanied singing,

students from Mennonite localities came into their own. Sacred music has more and more been accepted as good contest materials. The world's greatest *a cappella* music is sacred in nature. I recall that in the frivolous 20's, following the first world war, the most common contest selections were of a light and airy type. No choice of selections was permitted—everybody had to perform the same number—and singers from our schools were frequently rated down for singing too heavily and not properly portraying the spirit of the music. In present-day contests the directors are permitted a choice of materials and they wisely choose music that is adapted to their groups. Therefore, our singers have been able to capitalize on those fine disciplines of training and worthwhile music which their forebears passed down to them.

All of these contributing factors would count for little if our school music groups were not given competent leadership.

What about music in the future for Mennonite youth? I hope that it will retain its importance in the social life of each community. With more modern conveniences available and a higher scale of living possible, the women of the home will have more time to participate in music as an avocational activity, and as a form of individual development and expression.

Music should in the future broaden the cultural base of study for our youth. Yes, we do want singing of familiar and accepted music. When we do an impressive work such as the "Hallelujah Chorus" from the *Messiah,* let us do it with musical taste and in conformity with the best interpretations that have become associated with this masterpiece through the years. But let the director of a group also show intellectual initiative and musical individuality by seeking out unfamiliar music of worthwhile character. There is a vast treasury of music yet unknown to our youth that would depict our highest ideals of worship, love, work, and play, and broaden our cultural horizons.

May the future see a retaining of the stately, reverent church hymn of the type that was used in the earlier Protestant church. Subtly, almost unnoticed, the rhythmic, "jazzy," gospel song has attempted to come into our worship services and to usurp the place of the worshipful hymn. Not only is the music of some gospel songs trivial but the words are shallow and sentimental and succeed largely in producing an emotional satisfaction that blocks true spirituality.

The fine training that our youth have received in public schools and colleges during the past generation should carry over into the church music of the future. Directors should constantly raise the standards of religious music, both musically and devotionally; for the new recruits to the church choir will have the technical skill to meet the demands of these better anthems. Because of the challenging music being used in schools, choir directors will be compelled to offer a better type of church music to retain the interest and loyalty of the in-coming choir members. Good music can be a tremendous force in attracting and holding our young people to the church.

The future holds many challenges for our Mennonite youth, musically speaking. The fine record they have made in the past and are making now, should serve as an incentive for further development of music as an art, as a form of group and individual expression, and as a form of worship.

TESTING MUSICAL ABILITY

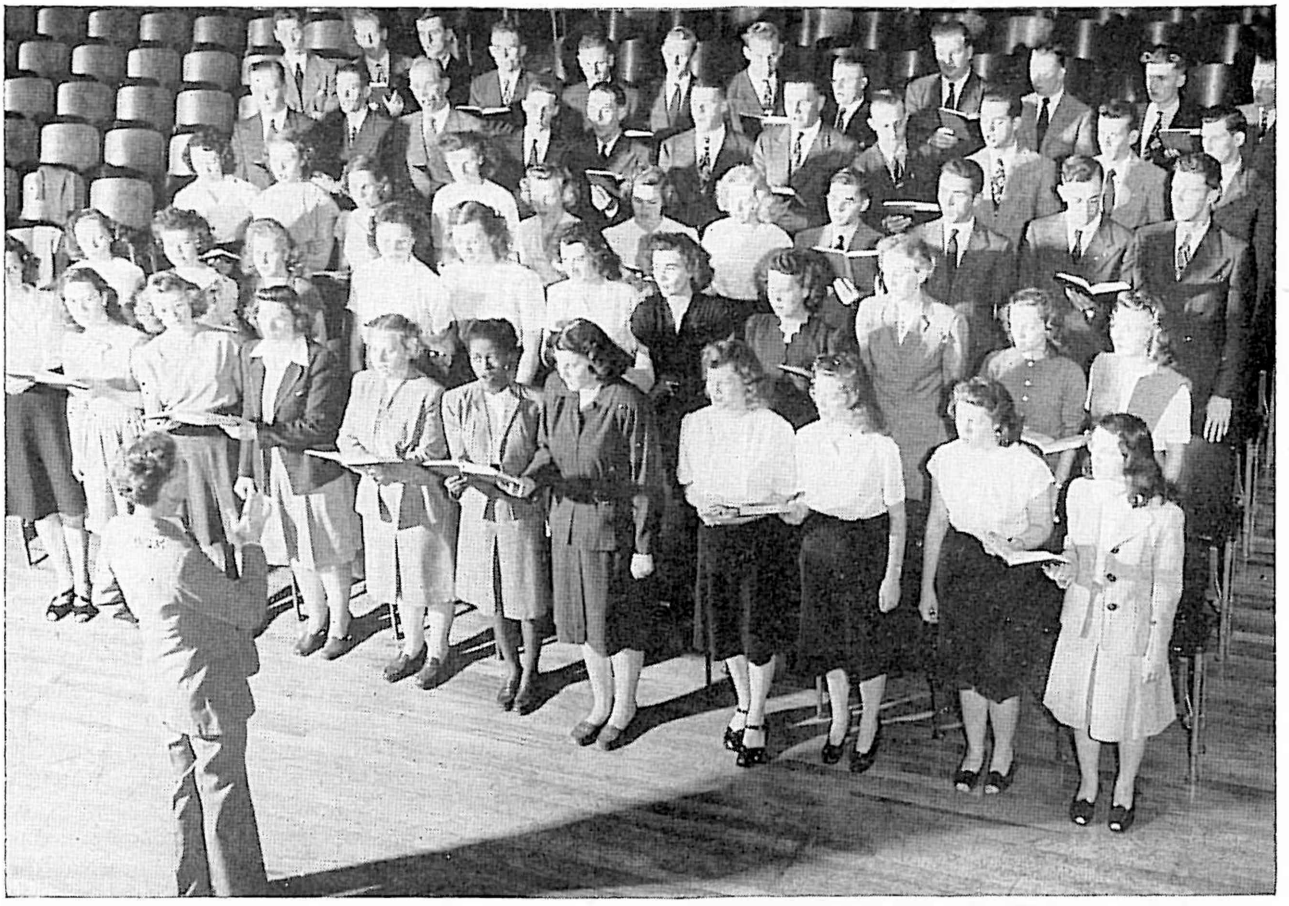
BY ANNE WIEBE MILLER

ARE Mennonites superior in musical ability? Some public schools consisting largely of students of Mennonite background produce music superior to that of the average school. Do students in Mennonite communities have more native musical ability?

To discover this inborn capacity of students in a public school composed largely of Mennonite background the *Seashore Measures of Musical Talents* were given. This test covers six of the most fundamental capacities for the hearing of music, namely: pitch; loudness; time; timbre (tone quality); rhythm; and tonal memory. These elements function in all music. The test is standardized for content. It does not measure achievement or training in music. High ratings in these tests do not guarantee high achievement in musical performance; they are, however, indicative of greater potentialities.

The results of the testing program are tabulated as follows: rank No. 1, superior, represents the scores of the highest 10 per cent in a normal, unselected community; rank No. 2, excellent, includes scores made by the next 10 per cent; rank No. 3 & 4, good; No. 5 & 6, average; No. 7 & 8, low average; No. 9 & 10, poor, or those scores made by the lowest 10 per cent of a normal population. The test was given to students, Grades 5 through 8, and to all high school students enrolled in vocal and/or instrumental music.

(Continued on page 34)



A typical college choral group in practice session.

OUR MUSICAL HERITAGE IN THE COLLEGES

BY DAVID H. SUDERMAN

MENNONITES have demonstrated great interest in music; and their ability to sing their hymns, particularly the chorales, gives testimony to this statement.

Whether this emphasis will continue to be a part of Mennonite culture in the next century will depend largely on the kind of leadership that will be responsible for our Mennonite churches. And since our leadership will come more and more from our colleges, the responsibility for developing this talent will increasingly rest with the Mennonite colleges.

A brief survey of the statement of aims as outlined in the catalogs of our Mennonite colleges might be helpful in learning what they set out to contribute toward the development of this talent.

The following statement of aims is taken from the Bluffton College catalog:

> "The Division of Fine Arts aims to teach music and art in the noblest, fullest and highest sense and also to encourage the development and refinement of the characters, minds, and tastes of its students under the influence of a Christian college.

In the Bethel College catalog appears the following statement:

> The Department of Music offers courses in theory, history, applied music and school music which are planned to meet the requirements of students preparing for professional work in music, as well as for those whose interest lies chiefly in the cultural value of music. . . . .

Freeman Junior College defines the objectives of the fine arts thus:

> To cultivate by means of the fine arts, an intelligent understanding and appreciation of values within the fields of music and art

The purpose of the music department of Tabor College as outlined in their catalog is as follows:

> . . . . . to stimulate an appreciation and love for the tonal art and to develop the ability to form more complete and mature judgments in matters artistic. . . . .

Instrumental groups learn coordination and emphasis.

In colleges like Eastern Mennonite School, Hesston College, or Goshen College no direct statement of aims of their music program appears.

From the above quotations, it appears that the aims of music programs of some of the Mennonite colleges are much the same as one would expect to find in a state university; namely, thorough training for a high type of musicianship. In only one college is there a direct reference to a Christian influence in the program of music. The fact that several of the colleges have no direct statement of aims suggests that probably the purpose of their music program is not too clearly outlined.

A more detailed outline of the music program of some of the Mennonite colleges is gained by surveying briefly the course offerings. It is found that, of eight catalogs studied, all have course offerings in music which are recognized toward the bachelor of arts degree though the extent of offerings varies greatly. Bluffton College, Goshen College, and Bethel College offer a bachelor of arts degree with music as a major field of concentration, whereas colleges like Eastern Mennonite School, Beulah College, and Messiah Bible College offer only a limited study in the field of music. Course offerings in all the colleges follow largely the traditional pattern of theory, music history, and applied music. *A cappella* choir singing is emphasized in all the colleges, and in some it is exclusively adhered to. A considerable amount of instruction on the organ, piano, or on one or several of the orchestral instruments is offered only at Bluffton College and Bethel College, although Tabor College and Goshen College have a strong offering in piano and a limited offering on the orchestral instruments. Only Bluffton College and Bethel College have offerings in instrumental music which are somewhat comparable to the offerings in vocal work.

Of the three Mennonite colleges offering a major in music, none of them require a course in church music or hymnology for graduation. Hence, the "music specialist" who often is responsible for the music in the church and who is considered an authority may not have had any direct course work in church music, although he may have gained considerable musical experience through his other extra-curricular activities during college.

The general student who is pursuing his college education toward a bachelor of arts degree is not required to take any music. Two colleges suggest two hours in music or art. This is true also for those who are majoring in Bible, many of whom will enter the ministry.

Without data from students who are the products of our colleges, it is difficult to state the extent to which our Mennonite colleges are helping to foster this particular emphasis in our heritage. Surely Mennonite colleges have wielded a strong influence in helping to nurture this love for music and especially church music. Also, many graduates have come from Mennonite colleges who hold important positions of leadership in the church through the ministry of music. Furthermore, many important teaching positions in our public schools are held by graduates coming from Mennonite colleges. To illustrate, one Mennonite college graduated some thirty-five students over a period of seven years who were majors in music. Of these, approximately three out of four taught music in the public schools, and of those who taught, nearly all were also responsible for the choir leadership in the churches of their communities.

In view of our heritage, and the limitations suggested by this brief survey, it would seem that the following minimum outcomes based on curriculum offerings might well be considered as we view the desired end-product of students coming from our Mennonite colleges:

First, every student who majors in music should, in addition to his standard courses in music, have a thorough knowledge of the development of hymnology and include a study of the development of Mennonite

hymnody. (A special music degree in church music might fill a real need.)

Second, every student who is majoring in Bible and is planning to enter the ministry or some form of Christian service should have a thorough knowledge of and much experience with the hymns of the past with special attention given to the development of hymnody in the Mennonite church. This would include the ability to sing the hymns in an acceptable manner (not necessarily solo voices) and to have some reading knowledge of the language of music.

Third, at least one course in the field of music should be required for the general college student whereby he would hear some of the finest music literature including also the music literature of the church.

Mennonites have a rich heritage in their love for and experience of much music, especially the music of the church. Mennonite colleges have done much informally to nurture this heritage though the course offerings in the curriculum have been rather limited. Whether Mennonites will continue to foster this genius and use it as a background for making a greater and more significant contribution to the Christian church at large and in the realm of music will depend largely on the emphasis and support given to it in the colleges. Certainly the possibilities are many and the doors are open to much further development.

The Deknatel organ in the Bethel College Museum.

The Musical Instrument in Worship

BY VERNON NEUFELD

THOUGH the introduction of musical instruments into the meeting houses of Mennonites is of rather recent date, many congregations are today using organs and similar instruments to assist in the worship service. The transition from the practice of singing under the direction of *Vorsaenger* to instrumental accompaniment in the history of the Mennonite church, is, however, not yet completed. Even though the first appearance of an organ into a Mennonite church was some 200 years ago, the practice has, by no means, been adopted by all Mennonite groups. Some Mennonites, such as the General Conference and Mennonite Brethren, use the organ or piano, while others, such as the Old Mennonites and Amish, do not use any instruments in church worship.

The earliest mention of a pipe organ being introduced into a Mennonite church is that of the church in Hamburg in the year 1764. The first Mennonite church in Holland to install an organ was that of Utrecht in 1765. The well-known M. Schagen, who wrote a book in which he attempted to demonstrate that music has a legitimate place in worship (1771), was instrumental in this innovation. The churches of Haarlem, Leiden, Amsterdam, and others followed in rapid succession. Very soon the Prussian Mennonite congregations began to replace their *Vorsaenger* system by introducing the organ. The congregation of Neugarten made this change in 1788 and that of Danzig in 1806. This innovation met some "vigorous protest by a minority" in the Danzig congregation. Similar protests were made elsewhere. It must have been hard to break a two-hundred year tradition of worshiping without a musical instrument.

As far as it can be determined at this time the first

pipe organ to be used in Mennonite worship in America came originally from Amsterdam. It had been used by the Mennonites in North Germany and was then brought to Wadsworth, Ohio. Here, in brief, is the thrilling story of an organ and the early history of pipe organs among the Mennonites in America.

The well-known minister of the Mennonite Church, of Amsterdam, Johannes Deknatel (1698-1759), whose sermons are still being read in some Mennonite homes, was a lover of organ music before organs were officially used in worship. He gave each of his daughters a pipe organ as a part of their dowry. Thus when Hillegonda Jacoba Deknatel married Jakob Gysbert van der Smissen of Hamburg, she took her organ from Amsterdam to Hamburg where it was used in their home and later also in some churches. Later, when Reverend Carl Justus van der Smissen, in whose possession the organ now was, received a call in 1868 to teach at the Wadsworth Seminary, Ohio, the family took the organ along. The organ was used for worship purposes in this institution until it closed its doors in 1878. This could very likely have been the first organ used for worship purposes among the Mennonites of America. Later, when the van der Smissens moved to Kansas they again took the organ along. David Goertz purchased the organ for Bethel College and it is now on display in the Kauffman Museum on the campus of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

Soon after the founding of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America which was caused by a revival of interest in missions, religious education, and other activities, organs were introduced for use in congregational worship. The first Mennonite congregation on record and known to this writer to have installed an organ was that of West Swamp, in Pennsylvania. The pipe organ was dedicated on November 7, 1874. Other congregations of the Eastern District soon followed. By 1890 most of the Eastern District Conference churches were using either a reed organ or a pipe organ.

With these initial beginnings in the east, other churches began using organs, always, seemingly, encountering some protest from the constituency. The Berne, (Indiana) church, which was founded in 1838, used an instrument as early as 1890, when a reed organ and a piano were borrowed for the presentation of Haydn's "Creation," but it wasn't until 1902 that opposition was sufficiently overcome to install a reed organ permanently in the church. On March 1, 1914, their first pipe organ was dedicated.

The Western District Conference, in 1881, passed a resolution leaving the decision regarding musical instruments in worship to the individual congregation. It is probably safe to say that early in the twentieth century most General Conference churches were using organs or pianos in their worship services.

The present situation among the more conservative Mennonites has been well stated in the *Mennonite Cyclopedic Dictionary:*

> The increasing use of musical instruments in the home tends to break down the scriptural rule against their use in worship . . . Conditions at this writing are such that their prohibition is becoming increasingly difficult. . . .

Testing Musical Abilitiy.

(Continued from page 30)

Average results for Grades 5 through 8:

	Rank No.
Pitch	3 & 4, or good
Loudness	3 & 4, or good
Time	5 & 6, or average
Timbre (tone quality)	5 & 6, or average
Rhythm	3 & 4, or good
Tonal memory	5 & 6, or average

Average results for high school:

	Rank No.
Pitch	3 & 4, good
Loudness	5 & 6, average
Time	5 & 6, average
Timbre (tone quality)	5 & 6, average
Rhythm	3 & 4, good
Tonal memory	5 & 6, average

This test reveals only average or slightly above average native ability. However, a high rate of music interest, appreciation, and participation and performance have been in evidence in this school over a period of years. What contributing factors are responsible? Here such elements as early home training in music, as well as music in our churches must be considered.

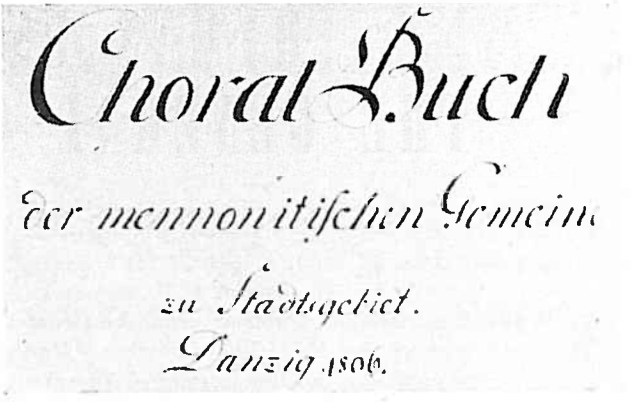
In *our* homes music is an activity in which everyone in the family participates. Families gather around the piano and sing. Often the great chorales of the church are used. Children learn to love and appreciate the best in church music at an early age.

The church also has had a great influence. Upon reaching a certain age, boys and girls in most of our churches naturally join the church choir. They are not questioned as to whether or not they have outstanding talent in music. They sing because they like to sing.

In considering the average results of the talent-test and the quantity and high quality of music produced in a public school of mostly Mennonite background, we can conclude that the plus factor must be attributed to the environment—the home, the church, and the school.

The Danzig Choral Buch

BY VERNON NEUFELD



This *Choral Buch* measures 9 by 14 inches.

A few years ago a valuable and unique book of Mennonite origin was added to the growing collections of the Historical Library at Bethel College. This was the Danzig *Choral Buch*, which was brought to this country from Europe by William Andreas. He had rescued the book intact from the ruins of the once large and beautiful Mennonite church in Danzig. This work, written expressly for the organ, is in all probability, the oldest Mennonite book of chorales. (1806).

In looking at the book, one is immediately impressed with its artistic beauty. The entire work was performed by hand; the amount of patient labor required to complete the book can only be imagined. With the exception of the last thirteen chorales, which were added at a later date, the beauty in the structure of the chorale titles and the notations, not to mention the music itself, never diminishes; to the end the book remains a work of art. The music is written in only two parts, according to the practice of the day; these are the melody, which is written on the soprano clef, and the bass voice, which is figured to indicate the harmony of the chord. The index at the back of the book indicates which chorale was to be used with a particular hymn of their songbook, the *Geistreiches Gesangbuch*.

If one values the musical accomplishments of Johann Sebastian Bach, it may be said that the *Choral Buch* contains some of the best church music of the 16th and 17th centuries. Of the 111 different chorale titles in the book, 86 are found among the Bach harmonizations. This does not mean that Bach composed all of these chorales, but rather, that he considered the existing hymn-tunes worthy of harmonization.

The immediate occasion for the writing of the book was the installation of the first organ in the Danzig church, completed in July of 1806. A number of instrumental chorales in the book indicate that the organ not only assisted the congregation in the singing of hymns, but also served to render special selections. So well written and selected were the chorales, that the book was in use for a hundred years in the church, from 1806 to 1905, at which time the contents were re-edited and printed. Twice the original *Choral Buch*, of which there is only one copy, escaped destruction from the ravages of war: in 1813, when the Russians burned the church structure, and in 1945, when the Russians drove the German army from the city, partially destroying the church building.

It is difficult to determine to what extent the Danzig book served as source material for the chorale books which were published later in different parts of Europe. A *Choral Buch* of 1858, which was published for the Mennonites on the Volga in Russia, contains 55 per cent of the chorales of the 1806 book; yet a comparison of the melodies of the two publications shows that exact duplication is noticeably lacking. The *Choralbuch*, by H. Franz, of 1860 for the South Russian Mennonites, even though it contains almost 60 per cent of the chorales of the Danzig *Choral Buch*, shows little evidence that would tend to link the two books; here both the melodic and the bass lines differ from each other. The same is found to be true of the other chorale books. Even though those Mennonites who later migrated to other localities did not copy the Danzig *Choral Buch* without alteration, it helped them to determine the type of music that they compiled in the later chorale books.

That the Mennonites have a priceless heritage is seldom denied; in the realm of music this is equally true. Few congregations in America sing the really great hymns of the church as do many of our Mennonite groups. This is obviously due to the fact that the Mennonites have always sung such music. We are highly indebted to our forefathers, such as those of the Danzig community, for the propagation of good church music in the Mennonite church.

HYMNS USED BY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

BY MARGIE WIEBE

IN 1940 the Board of Publication of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America published the first edition of *The Mennonite Hymnary,* edited by Walter H. Hohmann and Lester Hostetler. By 1946 five reprints had been made and nearly 20,000 copies had been sold. This book contains 623 songs. The book is divided into seven parts as follows: hymns; hymns for children; gospel songs; the church year in chorales; metrical psalms; and responses, chants, doxologies, and amens. The last part contains aids to worship. These include prayers, benedictions, the Apostolic Creed, calls to worship, invocations, and responsive readings. It contains a number of indexes—index of first lines, topical index, alphabetical index of tunes, metrical index of tunes, index of authors and translators, index of composers, index of responsive readings, and index to Scripture passages.

A questionnaire was sent to seventy-seven churches out of the one hundred fifty-two in the General Conference. An attempt was made to get a fair sampling by sending a proportional share to the Pacific, Northern, Western, Eastern, and Middle Districts and to the large and small churches. A return of 66 per cent was received — 100 per cent from the Pacific District, 53 per cent from the Northern District, 71 per cent from the Western District, 69 per cent from the Eastern District, and 40 per cent from the Middle District.

The tabulation of the returns showed that 78 per cent of the churches use *The Mennonite Hymnary*—90 per cent of the Pacific District churches, 25 per cent of the Northern District, 86 per cent of the Western District, 89 per cent of the Eastern District, and 100 per cent of the Middle District. There is a wide variety in the rest of the books used. The *Tabernacle Hymn Book* is the next book used most frequently; it is found in 22.5 per cent of the churches, most of them being found in the Western District. It contains 352 songs for all occasions and responsive readings. The next is *Hymns of Praise,* found in 18 per cent of the churches. The *Mennonite* Hymn Book, which served as a basis for *The Mennonite Hymnary,* is used in only 2 per cent of the churches now. *Gesangbuch mit Noten* is now used in 10 per cent of the churches. For a list of the others refer to the chart.

The average number of books used per church is a little over two with the Eastern District having the lowest average and the Middle District having the highest average number of books per church. Most of the books now in use were purchased within the last ten years.

An attempt was made to determine which songs are favorites and are sung most frequently. "O Pow'r of Love, All Else Transcending," was first. It is especially popular in the Western District. This might be due to its popularization by the Bethel College *A Capella* Choir. Other favorites are "O Have You Not Heard of That Beautiful Stream," "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name," "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," and "Holy, Holy, Holy." All these songs are found in *The Mennonite Hymnary.* Two of them are chorales, two are hymns of worship, and two are hymns of Christian life. As shown by the chart, the hymns, which are of universal appeal, are most popular. Chorales are next in popularity and the gospel songs last. This same order holds for each of the five districts. The metrical psalms, chants, and amens are sung only infrequently.

Ninety per cent of the churches have choirs. A number of them have three or four; men's, ladies', young people's, and junior and mixed choirs. Most churches make use of their choirs every Sunday; a few sing only occasionally. The average number of voices in the choirs is twenty-eight—ranging from ten to seventy-five.

The choirs use music from the following publishing houses primarily: Lohrenz Publishing Company, G. Shirmer, Theodore Presser, Homer Rodeheaver, Paul A. Schmitt Music Company, Gamble Hinged, Hall and McCreary, and the Mennonite book stores.

Some of the choirs use hymnbooks, *The Mennonite Hymnary* and the *Tabernacle Hymns* particularly.

Most of the special music is furnished by the various choirs in the churches. Most churches also have solos, duets, trios, and quartettes. Some have special numbers of that type every Sunday; others use them only occasionally. Instrumental music, such as trumpet, violin, organ, and piano are also used occasionally, but mostly in the meetings of the Christian Endeavor societies.

The churches use an average of three songs during the worship service, in addition to two responses or the "Doxology" and "Gloria Patri." The number of songs used varies from two to seven. Three or four are used during the Sunday school.

Even though this study was not exhaustive or

(Continued on page 38)

The Future of Our Church Music

BY LESTER HOSTETLER

MENNONITE life has been nurtured and perpetuated to a considerable degree by its music. We have a rich musical heritage although we have not been particularly creative in this, the most universal of the arts. We have been too "practical" and too busy making a living to produce poets and composers of great significance. But we have done reasonably well in selecting from the large field of hymnody, and we have succeeded in making some of its choice fruits a part of our life. Many of our people know the grand old chorales from memory. They quote and sing them continually, finding in them a source of strength and inspiration.

But what of the future? Will our music in the church be as good as it has been in the past? Our lives are not lived in a vacuum but in a social environment which affects us sometimes more than we affect it. We are in the world, and we hear the music of the world and its influence is felt in the church. Many of the good hymns and chorales which our elders absorbed in their religious training, are no longer known. When the change in language was made from German to English, the younger generations were cut off from the culture, the songs and books which nurtured their elders. In some cases at least, a light type of song which is musically thin, poetically inferior, and spiritually shallow was substituted.

The future, however, is filled with real possibilities for good. We say this because we see certain powerful influences in modern life working in the direction of good music in the church.

Public school music.—For one thing, there is the influence of the public school music now widely adopted as a part of the school curriculum. Our young people are becoming musically literate. They read music, learn its forms, and come to an appreciation of the best in choral and instrumental literature. This has created both a problem and an opportunity for the church. Its problem is to raise the standard of music so that it will be at least as good as that taught in the schools. The opportunity lies in the possibility of enlisting the interests of young people in new ways of expressing music in and for the church.

Radio and phonograph.—Other powerful influences are the radio and the phonograph. To be sure, one must choose radio programs with care, for some rank very low. Many of the religious programs are pathetically so. On the other hand, there is much of genuine value, with music that is worthy of the praise of God. Great choirs may be heard in choral music which is truly inspiring and often something of a rebuke to our own efforts in the church. Besides the Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir programs, one might name the Lutheran Hour, the Catholic Hour, and the Chicago Sunday Evening Club programs, as examples. The miracle of radio brings the best of church music into our homes, an influence bound to improve the standards of church music.

The phonograph is another influence growing in power. It is now possible to hear in your own home, no matter how isolated, Bach's *Mass in B Minor,* or his *St. Matthew Passion;* or the best in Christmas carols, as well as anthems and chorals, to say nothing of the whole repertoire of music for the keyboard or orchestra. While not a perfect medium for the transmission of music, it nevertheless constitutes a factor in the development of taste for good music. More and more, people are developing an ear for the best in music, and the church must reckon with this fact.

Choral organization.—Another influence for good music is the growth of choral groups now organized all over the country. Young people may be "going to the dogs," as some claim, but I do not think this is true in communities where there are musical organizations under adequate leadership. The writer knows of a dozen Mennonite churches where the *Messiah* and other oratorios are sung each year. Members of these singing groups learn something of music and as a by-product enjoy the wholesome pleasure and social life that accompanies their activities. The danger is that these special concert programs are prepared at the expense of the regular Sunday morning music. The most important singing any group can do is that which forms an integral part of the worship service, a fact which singers, unfortunately, do not always recognize. When organized to study and render the best choral works and stimulate interest in the church choir, the oratorio societies perform a legitimate and wholesome function in the church.

Song festivals.—The song festival has become popular, especially since the day of automobiles and good roads. One reads enthusiastic accounts of them, held in various Mennonite communities, nearly always attended by large crowds. They form a part of the picture of our church life. We venture to offer a few criticisms of the song festivals and a few suggestions as to what they should be like. The criticism is that they sometimes lack adequate objective. They are large mass meetings assembled for a "big sing" of miscellaneous hymns and anthems, but often not much more. All this has some value, to be sure, but this type of festival is not all it could be and does not result in anything very important for the future of our church music. Song festivals at their best are planned with the definite objective of

improving congregational music. They must be planned, not after the pattern of a school music contest where each contesting group appears on the platform in succession to sing for the audience, that is, for the approval of the audience; but rather as hymn festivals with a maximum of participation by the people. Their purpose should be to learn the words and music of hymns of high quality which are not commonly used, or to revive interest in time-honored hymns which have been sung over and over to the point of becoming hackneyed and worn.

Well-planned hymn festivals can result in unforgettable experiences in congregational singing. As for the choirs, their selections should be chosen for their value as church music, not as concert music or show pieces. The difference is important. Real church music adds to the drama of worship, reinforces religious teaching, lifts the people into the presence of God and opens their hearts to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Often a hymn sung by the choir will do all of this. Not all music in the church is church music. Some is cheap and sentimental; or some may be concert music, better adapted for the stage than for the church worship service. The song festivals can do much to give direction and inspiration to our choirs so that their service to the church becomes increasingly helpful.

Children's choirs.—The church music of the future must pay more attention to the singing of children and young people. We do not have adequate leadership in this field. Besides a sound musical education, the leader of children's choirs must have an understanding of child psychology and of children's voices. He must have a knowledge of suitable music for children, a thorough acquaintance with the history of the church and its worship, and possess, above all, a love for children. It is a great field and one is disappointed in the reluctance of our young people to prepare themselves for this service. One of the outstanding choir schools of the country finds the demands for its product far in excess of its supply. Graduates are engaged several years in advance of the completion of the course. Ministers of music, adequately trained, should find a big place in the future of the Mennonite church.

Architecture.—The church of the future will pay more attention to the proper architectural setting for its music. Our churches need to be planned and arranged to make them more worshipful. Churches with organs will do away with the practice of putting rows of dummy pipes in the front of the church, and they will not place the console of the organ where the organist becomes the center of attraction. The choir will be seated where they will not distract the attention of worshippers and the singers will appear in simple gowns to avoid any display or disparity of clothes. More attention will be paid to the order of service and the choir will sing with spirit and understanding, bearing in mind that the basis of church music is congregational singing.

Christianity has a powerful ally in the art of music and the church of the future will give music a worthy place so that it may be the elevating influence for which God designed it. The singing church worshipping before the throne of the Almighty is a moving and dramatic spectacle and constitutes a foregleam of the multitude before the great white throne singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.

Hymns Used by the General Conference

(Continued from page 36)

thorough, we can say that in respect to their heritage in music as carried over by the *Gesangbuch mit Noten* and now continued in *The Mennonite Hymnary*, there is a great degree of unanimity among the General Conference Mennonites. It would be valuable and instructive to have at hand a similar study of the use of hymn books and hymns among the other Mennonite groups.

Hymn Books used in General Conference Mennonite Churches, 1946

	Pacific District	Northern District	Western District	Eastern District	Middle District	Total
Mennonite Hymnary	90.0*	25.0	86.0	89.0	100.0	78.0
Tabernacle Hymns	50.0	12.5	75.0	0	0	22.5
Hymns of Praise	12.5	50.0	10.0	11.0	25.0	17.6
Evangelium's Lieder	0	50.0	18.1	0	0	15.9
Gesangbuch mit Noten	0	12.5	18.0	0	0	10.0
The Service Hymnal	0	25.0	9.0	11.0	0	10.0
Devotional Hymns	12.5	0	0	0	25.0	3.9
Hymns and Sacred Songs	0	0	4.5	0	25.0	3.9
Selected Gospel Hymns	0	0	9.0	0	0	3.9
Triumphant Service Songs	12.5	0	0	11.0	0	3.9
Worship and Praise	12.5	0	0	0	25.0	3.9
Evangelistic Service Songs	0	12.5	0	0	0	2.0
Greatest Hymns	12.5	0	0	0	0	2.0
Hymns of Service	0	0	4.5	0	0	2.0
Little Branches	0	0	0	0	25.0	2.0
Mennonite Hymn Book	12.5	0	0	0	0	2.0
Revival Gems	0	12.5	0	0	0	2.0
The Cokesbury Hymnal	0	0	0	0	25.0	2.0
Youth Hymnal	0	12.5	0	0	0	2.0

* Per cent of churches

Songs Most Frequently Sung in General Conference Mennonite Churches, 1946

	Hymns	Gospel Songs	Chorales
O Pow'r of Love, All Else Transcending			20
O Have You Not Heard of That Beautiful Stream	11		
Holy God, We Praise Thy Name			10
All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name	9		
What a Friend We Have in Jesus	8		
Holy, Holy, Holy	7		
Come, Thou Almighty King	5		
Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing	5		
Near to the Heart of God	5		
O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing	5		
O Worship the King	5		
The Church's One Foundation	5		
Blessed Assurance		4	
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee	4		
Dear Lord and Father of Mankind	3		
Holy Spirit, Faithful Guide	3		
Sinners Jesus Will Receive		3	
The Work Is Thine, O Christ Our Lord			3
There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood		3	
Are ye Able			
Be Still, My Soul			
Break Thou the Bread of Life			
Have Thine Own Way, Lord!			
I Am Thine, O Lord			
I Know Whom I Have Believed			
I Love to Tell the Story			
My Faith Looks Up to Thee			
Rescue the Perishing			
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us			
Take My Life and Let It Be			
There Shall Be Showers of Blessing			

VACHEL LINDSAY AMONG THE MENNONITES

BY PAUL ERB

ON SUNDAY, June 30, 1912, the Pennsylvania Church, six miles northwest of Newton, Kansas, included among its worshipers a sandy-haired young man with small but unusually keen, gray eyes. He had been working through that week in the wheat fields on the John Longenecker place a mile east of the church. The practical piety of the Longenecker family and the artless beauty of their simple living had made a strong appeal to him. Of course, he would want to go to church with these good people. And there, seated near the rear on the "men's side," he continued his appraisal of these followers of Menno Simons.

His artist's eye was attracted by the "Quakerish" dress of the older women, the black bonnets, and the prayer-coverings, which he thought, as his eye wandered to the younger women, to be "awfuly coquettish on a pretty head." He noted with pain that the bonnets grew fewer and fewer toward the rear of the church. He delighted in the children who, with more color in their faces and their clothes, squeezed "in among the black rows in front" and made "piety reasonable." He saw certain daughters of the Mennonites who, with "shame and defiance in their faces," dressed after the fashions of Paris and Kansas City and Emporia. "Poor honest souls! They take to this world's vain baggage and overdo it." These costumes seemed to him only "a disconcerting mixture of cherries, feathers, and ferns," with "too many mussy ribbons."

What hurt his "Franciscan soul most" was the discovery that the buggy-shed of the meeting house was full of automobiles. "To meet a Mennonite on the road without a necktie, his wife in the blackest of bonnets, honking along in one of these glittering brazen machines, almost shakes my confidence in the Old Jerusalem Gospel," he says. But in spite of their faults, he recognized that "the Mennonites have a piety as literal as any to be found on the earth." On Sunday evening he came back to church with Longeneckers to attend a quarterly Sunday school conference. There he heard J. M. R. Weaver point out distinctions between the four gospels. He says he never heard better discourses on the subjects.

This keen observer was Vachel Lindsay, who was the next year to be recognized as one of America's great poets. That summer he was taking one of his walking tours, begging or working his way, and preaching the "gospel of beauty." Like Ruskin in England almost a hundred years before, Lindsay was an advocate of the good life which he thought aesthetics could bring to the masses. He thought of modern industrialism as the enemy of beauty. He was opposed to railroads on principle, and so walked through the country. He eschewed money, using it on occasion only under necessity. To him ugliness was sin, and beauty was religion. He preached the doctrine of a new America—an America rooted in the soil, the village, and the town. One can understand why the rather primitive simplicity of the Mennonite people appealed to him, and why he felt that their compromises with modernity were lapses from virtue.

Nothing but Hymns

While Lindsay was tramping through the Midwest that summer, he sent back to Springfield a series of letters, a sort of a running diary concerning his experiences. These later found publication in book form, under the title, *Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty*. In this book about thirty pages are devoted to the account of his week among the Mennonites of Pennsylvania-German background in the vicinity of Hesston. He calls them "a dear people." He holds that "they are perfectly correct in allowing no fashion magazines in the house." He is deeply interested in thumbing through the dialogue-epic called *The Wandering Soul*. He finds time even in harvest to read of Mennonite hardships in the Shenandoah valley in the days of Sheridan. He finds on his dresser table a tract against church organs "embodying a plea for simplicity and the spending of such money on local benevolences and world-wide missions. The tract aptly compares the church-organ to the Thibetan prayer-wheel, and later to praying by phonograph. A song is a prayer to them, and they sing hymns and nothing but hymns all week long."

He is "thrilled to see the fairest member of the household enter, not without grace and dignity. Her prayer covering was on her head, her white feet were shining like those of Nicolette and her hymn book was in her hand. She ignored me entirely. She was rapt in a trance. She sat by the window and sang through the book, looking straight at a rose in the wallpaper." It is interesting to note his reaction as he writes, "I would like to insert a discourse here on the pleasure and the naturalness and the humanness of testifying to one's gospel whatever that gospel may be, barefooted or golden-slippered or iron-shod. The best we may win in return may be but a kindly smile. We may never make one convert. Still the duty of testifying remains, and is enjoined by the

invisible powers and makes for the health of the soul. This Mennonite was a priestess of her view of the truth and comes of endless generations . . . . Let me again go forward, testifying to my particular lonely gospel in the face of such pleasant smiles and incredulous questions as may come."

This singer of hymns, whom he later calls Tillie, is really Mary, who shortly after this became the wife of Ezra King, the builder of concrete bridges. Mrs. King only recently, on November 24, 1947, passed away.

Helping in the Harvest

Lindsay's description of the Longenecker wheat fields is a classic reminder of the days before tractors and combines. The hot sun, the sweat and dust, the mad prickling of the wheat beards is there. But he does not miss the romance and poetry of it all. He senses the "noble dignity and ease in the motion of a new reaper on a level field. A sturdy Mennonite devotee marching with a great bundle of wheat under each arm and reaching for a third makes a picture indeed, an essay on sunshine beyond the brush of any impressionist." He delights also in the patriarchal character of the harvest, particularly on this Mennonite farm where John Longenecker, Sr., too old and stiff to work, supervises the task from the back of a prancing pony, and where the beautiful daughter brings the noon meal to the hungry men in the fields. After dinner they continue with the harvest.

"The sun has become like a roaring lion, and we wrestle with the sheaves as though we had him by the beard. The only thing that keeps up my nerve in the dizziness is the remembrance of the old Mennonite's proverb at breakfast that as long as a man can eat and sweat he is safe. My hands inside my prickling gloves seem burning off. The wheat beards there are like red-hot needles. But I am still sweating a little in the chest, and the Mennonite boy is cheerfully singing:

When I behold the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride."

When the harvest is done, Lindsay says, "I could fully enter into the daily prayers, that at times had appeared merely quaint to me, and in my heart I said 'Amen' to the special thanksgiving the patriarch lifted up for the gift of the fruit of the land. I was happy indeed that I had the strength to bear my part in the harvest of a noble and devout household, as well as a hand in the feeding of the wide world."

Lindsay had a religious background of his own that helped him to appreciate the religious life of the Mennonites. His parents were active members of the Disciples Church in Springfield. The children attended Sunday school regularly, where they recited their verses and answered the questions and lustily sang, "Bringing in the Sheaves." In the Lindsay home the Bible lesson before breakfast was an inescapable part of the day's program. His sister, Olive, grew up to marry Dr. A. Paul Wakefield and to spend a number of years as a missionary in China. Both Vachel and his sister spent their childhood summers on their grandfather's farm in Rush County, Indiana. Grandfather Frazee had been a student of Alexander Campbell, and was always quoting the opinions of that great leader of the Disciples. He preached in a little country church for forty-five years, and was the inspiration of Lindsay's poem on "The Proud Farmer." In the home of his parents and his grandparents Vachel developed a deep regard for Alexander Campbell, who was memorialized in another of Lindsay's more serious poems. Years later the poet wrote to a friend that he had always considered himself a Campbellite of the Campbellites. That was the faith that he inherited. His father was elder of the church, and his mother was long president of the missionary society. Vachel was destined by his parents for the serious profession of medicine, and they were concerned about his choosing to be instead something of a fantastic artist, and poet and dreamer of social betterment. His mother, even after the beginning of his success, anwered the congratulations of T. A. Clark with the words, "Oh, yes, but I wonder whether he shouldn't be doing something else."

At the age of eleven Vachel joined the Disciples Church. At that time he wrote a poem, one stanza of which runs thus:

"Come sinner, Come, Why longer delay?
Hear what the Master has to say;
I have been crucified for thee.
Why not come? now come to me."

When he went to Chicago in 1901 to attend art school, he became a member of the congregation of Edward Scribner Ames, of whom he was an admirer, and who no doubt helped to liberalize Lindsay's religious views. In Chicago, according to his biographer, Edgar Lee Masters, he taught a Sunday-school class and led endeavor and prayer meetings. Some years later, during his residence in New York, he organized a class for the literary study of writers of the New Testament.

But although Lindsay seemed to have an active interest in Christianity, his personal religion was of a pretty unorthodox kind. He may have been "a Campbellite of the Campbellites," but his loyalty was to the personal qualities of Alexander Campbell rather than the theological ideas for which he stood. In 1918 the poet wrote to a friend, "I have not many fixed ideas in my personal religion or religious practice outside the boundaries of the Lord's Prayer." As he grew older his religion became more and more a mere aestheticism. "I am starting a new religious idea," he wrote. And that idea was the transformation of America from ugliness to beauty. "The quest of beauty," he said, "is worth a lifetime."

Good as the Mennonites

It was not a theological point of view among the Mennonites which appealed to him, but rather the resistance to ugly modernity that he saw in their un-

spoiled lives. "I wish I could start a sturdy sect like old Menno Simonis did," he wrote in the *Adventures*. "They should dress as these have done, and be as stubborn and rigid in their discipline. They should farm as these have done, but on reaching the point where the Mennonite buys the automobile, that money and energy should go into the making of cross-roads palaces for the people, golden as the harvest field, and disciplined, well-parked villages, good as a psalm, and cities fair as a Mennonite lady in her prayer-covering, delicate and noble as Athens the unforgotten, the divine."

How much the Mennonites contributed to Lindsay's thinking we do not know. But his later references to them are always kindly and grateful. He said of later employers near Great Bend that "these people do not attend church like the Mennonites." To describe his good health he says, "I can eat and sweat like a Mennonite." He thinks working in a header-barge is more fun than shocking bundles, "even when one is working for a Mennonite boss." "Good as the Mennonites" becomes a measuring stick for good folk. In the Colorado mountains at the close of his Kansas tour he was singing lustily one day a refrain from a gospel song: "Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?" One cannot forget that in the General Booth poem which shortly after brought him fame that line occurs again and again. He expressed in his journal in Colorado that August a desire to write poems to the rhythm of gospel songs. Were they the songs, one wonders, that he heard Mary Longenecker sing that Sunday afternoon when she sang the songbook through without turning to look at her appreciative visitor? It was at this time, too, that he wrote: "Sometimes I think I would like to preach in some country church on Sunday, like Grandpa Frazee." Was this desire stirred, too, by his visit in the little Mennonite church, the only church service that he tells of attending on that walking tour?

About 1928, when Lindsay was trying to make a living by giving readings of his poetry in schools and colleges, he lectured one evening at Hesston College. He was in my home for the evening meal, and it was in conversation with him that I learned where it was that he worked in 1912. His face softened as he told of those happier days. "I would give every shirt that I own to be the boy I was then," he said. For Lindsay's closing years were not happy. He carried in his pocket for years, up to his dying day, Browning's

> "Grow old along with me,
> The best is yet to be,
> The last of life for which the first
> was made."

But it was not so for him. He was disillusioned in the failure of his dreams of a more beautiful America. He had fame, but it brought him few rewards. Being impratical in business affairs, he had a hard time to support his wife and two children. He became disgusted as he realized his audiences enjoyed his readings chiefly as a kind of an exhibition. His nerves were badly frayed. He took to smoking, and smoked excessively. That night of his lecture at Hesston, having starved for cigarettes at my home and at the college, he chain-smoked all the way to Newton. He spoke of himself as an old and broken man, although he was just past fifty. His last months were a torture to him, as he felt that his gift for verse had gone. Finally, one night in December, 1931, he drank lysol and died before a doctor could reach him.

Vachel Lindsay is an illustration of the inadequacy of aestheticism. Poetry, music, and beauty are good, but they are not good enough. The Mennonites needed and still need something of what Lindsay's gospel of beauty can give them. On the other hand, Lindsay needed the staunch faith which is the basis of the Mennonite way of life.

Thoughts of an Outsider on Mennonite Civilian Public Service

Philippians 1:3-18

BY WINSLOW AMES

CIVILIAN Public Service, despite its basic iniquity, gave good opportunities for mutual shoulder-rubbing to peaceable men of varying stripes. The writer, though he feels now by hindsight that the peace churches made a tragic error in assisting in the administration of conscription, is grateful for the enlargement of his circle of friends as a result of Civilian Public Service, and particularly for the insight into the ways of the Mennonite community which he got while in a Mennonite camp.

There were non-Mennonites who were dissatisfied with Mennonite nonresistance or its superficial accompaniments, and others who seemed to resent Mennonite prosperity. These men were not often able to make great contributions to camp except when they had sufficient

sense of humor to put aside the role of the voice crying in the wilderness.

There was another sort of *outlander,* who preferred to be remembered favorably in the long run rather than to be impressive immediately, who set out to incorporate himself sufficiently into Mennonite ways so that anything he might have to offer to the camp community would have a "respectable" status. Whether or not this should be looked on as contrived and disingenuous, it was in effect a special kind of social adaptation. I believe that such a procedure was almost always well motivated and candid.

For example, in the camp at Grottoes, Virginia, two Episcopalians were impressed by the fact that, in a group where three-quarters could read music and sing at sight, only about forty hymns out of a total of four hundred in two hymnals were being sung at all regularly, and that most of these were not of the first quality. They made a quiet campaign for the enlargement of the camp repertoire, and in six months had the pleasure of hearing considerable improvement in quality and quantity.

In the matter of hymns mentioned above, when the main body of Mennonites changed from German to English for use in church services, the King James version of the Bible, ready at hand, was not matched by any comparable hymnal. Compilations were made from existing English hymnaries: these compilations included good, bad, and indifferent things. So far, so good. Yet, most Mennonite congregations, faced with a sudden shift, and having little or no experience with the great body of English hymnology, tended to select the more obvious tunes and sentimental words; frequently, I fear, neglecting such good translations as already existed of German classics. I remember the first chorus rehearsal I attended in a Mennonite camp. We were skipping around in a hymnal, and I asked whether we might not sing the Passion Chorale, which I noticed therein. There was a silence and someone said, "We don't know that." I was so chilled that I did not think to ask how my friend had learned the ones he did know. I am glad to say that this very great music (to the words beginning, "Oh, sacred Head, now wounded") eventually came into the camp congregation's repertoire.

It is gratifying to find that on the basis of the sight-singing knowledge common to Mennonites, there is growing up in Mennonite schools and colleges a refined musical literacy which (without departing from church policy) takes full advantage of the central European inheritance of choral music.

It does take a long time to learn discretion on the basis of experience, but I believe such learning to be superior to the practice of living by an authoritative rule. For instance, when certain Mennonite groups decided that their people would not be breaking God's laws if they owned and used automobiles, the lack of experience and discretion in handling automobiles was a burden to these persons who became motorists almost overnight. I was appalled by the reckless attitude toward motor vehicles of many young Mennonites of my acquaintance, who apparently drive habitually at speeds that raise my hair. Experience rather than obedience to tradition would have provided a more proper approach.

Civilian Public Service contained some of the best company in the world, regardless of camp or administrative agency. In Mennonite camps there was, in addition to the good company of many individuals, a habit of good housekeeping, manual industry, and patience which provided a more tolerable climate than the almost professional disobligingness of an occasional other camp or group.

One of the temptations of the *outlander* in Mennonite Civilian Public Service, as everywhere, was that of calling attention to inconsistencies. It is much too easy to amuse oneself by complaining satirically of the materialistic view of property taken by many a pious brother, or by kidding a young Amishman for being a terrific dandy within the limits of the Amish dress. The secret, of course, is to remember the framework, the limits, the homogeneous background, and then to ask whether one's own background can be considered any better as a general category, and whether within one's own framework his action is any farther from standard than that of the "inconsistent" person under observation. The point is, perhaps, that we should be careful in making judgments across frameworks or beyond our cultural heritage.

This suggests a final thought which is the result of observing former Civilian Public Service men as foreign relief workers. The theory that Civilian Public Service would be a good training for relief workers goes back in part to the "honeymoon" period of Civilian Public Service when the belief was held that it would be on the whole a good experience and that conscientious objectors were a special kind of people. It has been my experience that only the physical difficulties of living in close quarters were useful preparation for relief work; and that the serious faults of Civilian Public Service were almost as disorganizing to individuals as war experiences. The effects were not normally visible in the men who after three or four years of Civilian Public Service still wanted to do foreign relief; but under stress they appeared.

Now, I doubt that pacifists, conscientious objectors, peaceable people, non-resisters—call us what you will—are truly a different *kind* of people. We are a minority which has a religion and a philosophy, which believes in the leavening power of such a minority in the world, and whose duty and pleasure it is to strive to become the majority. We cannot in however long a time, become a majority unless we can make the way of peace appeal to all kinds of people. This way of peace, a prompting of the Holy Spirit, is no respecter of persons: so we find many kinds of people in their varying imperfections seeking to follow it. I hope that, as more and more find this way, we shall agree in its truth but not lose our varying flavors.

PHILOSOPHY IN THE MENNONITE TRADITION

BY J. E. HARTZLER

FREQUENTLY the question is put: "Do Mennonites have a philosophy?" "No," we are told, "Mennonites have no philosophy." The truth of the matter is that Mennonites do have a philosophy; a very definite philosophy. Even so, to say that we have no philosophy, this in itself, if it were true, would be a positive philosophy.

Doubtless there were times and conditions during the past centuries which gave some reason for Mennonites to be suspicious of philosophy. The same may be said concerning opposition to the state. But it should be remembered that the world of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, and others is no longer with us. We mistake when we continue a hostile attitude toward philosophy, tradition, or custom when the original cause for such attitude no longer exists.

"Philosophy," someone has said, "is the distilled wisdom of the ages." Quite so. The philosopher seeks meanings, interpretations, of things and events; meanings in history; meaning of God in human experience; meaning of truth and reality. Philosophy means interpretative insight.

The keyword in science is causality; in philsophy it is rationality; in religion it is personality. Causality, rationality, and personality are the best of friends; there is something of each in the other. Science asks: "What is this?" Philosophy asks: "What does this mean?"

When the philosopher works in the area of reality, being, and causation we call it "ontology;" when in the area of origin, nature, and validity of knowledge we call it "epistemology;" when in the area of value we call it "axiology;" and when in the area of valid thinking we call it "logic."

Certainly there is nothing in any of these fields that would conflict with Christian Mennonitism. Mennonites have always been interested in reality, in knowledge, in values, and in correct thinking; and it is this interest that constitutes philosophy whether we call it that or not.

Our World Today

I do not say that ours is a better or a worse world than any in the past; I only say that the past fifty years have given us a new and a different world. Our world today is a world of power without adequate moral and spiritual control; a world of speed without moral and spiritual direction; a world of knowledge without wisdom; a world of wealth without spiritual riches, and a world of religion without divine experience. All of this is due to our lack of interpretative insight and appreciation of meanings. In other words, it is due to our materialistic philosophy of life.

Unless the 665,000,000 Christians in the world can do something about this, nobody else will. Certainly men are not saved *by* the church; men are saved by God through Jesus Christ *in* the church. Unless we Christian people become more vocal in the Christian interpretation of history and the world movements of today we have little right to expect a good world in the days to come.

Sometimes in human experience there just is no road back; the only way out is up and ahead. If the Mennonite church is to do more than "Hold the fort!" in the world ahead we must secure for ourselves and for others an interpretation of the present course of events which will recognize God and give to Him His place in the affairs of human life. Our philosophy of religion and of life must recognize the sacredness of human life. We must secure a philosophy of life which finds reality in the spiritual rather than in the material, and that will use our material resources as means to an end rather than an end in themselves.

Why Philosophy

Science, philosophy, and theology represent various ways in which men hope to come to the truth. These ways are not perfect, but they are the best we have. In the plan of human redemption philosophy—interpretative insight—has a very important place.

The central motive in philosophy is interpretation; interpretation that squares with reason. The meaning of history, the meaning of God in human experience, the meaning of the Church in the world, the meaning of any theological belief and the outcome of those beliefs in a man's life—these are philosophical questions—philosophical problems; and it is the task of philosophy to secure the solution and to determine meanings and results.

Faith, truth, and reason belong to the same family. Our religion must be reasonable, and our reason must be religious. "Come now, and let us reason together" is God's way. Faith always runs ahead of reason, but they both run in the same direction. The business of reason is to test the rationality of our faith. Someone has recently said that at the wedding of faith and truth, reason is the "best man."

Man is built for two worlds—the material and the

spiritual—and he lives in both simultaneously. Normal relationships between the natural and the spiritual worlds must be established. Science concerns itself with the material, religion with the spiritual. Philosophy is something of a mediator; it looks in two directions: toward the material and toward the spiritual, and it seeks for meanings. Science points man toward nature, and philosophy points him toward "ultimate reality"—God.

The philosopher believes that "mind" and not "matter" is ultimate; he knows that a "personal intelligence" is the only satisfactory explanation of the reality that operates in and through the universe. It is through *mind* that God and man meet. Looking in two directions, mind divides itself into sensation as the organ of science, and imagination and spirit as the organs of religion. It is through sense perception that we approach nature; through inspiration and revelation we approach God. Between the two—nature and spirit—philosophy operates with reason. Borderline disputes are bound to arise between mind, nature, and God, and philosophy must serve as conciliator. The intellect of science, the spirit of religion, and the reason of philosophy belong together.

Our Mennonite Philosophy

From the first, the Mennonites have maintained and given expression to a philosophy in at least three essential areas, namely, in religion, in education, and in daily life.

Our philosophy of religion.—In our earnestness to be "biblical," all of which in itself is to the good, some men among us have erroneously thought that it was scriptural to discredit, if indeed not to condemn philosophy on the basis of such texts as I Cor. 1:22-27, even though Paul himself was a good philosopher as well as preacher.

Among the Swiss Brethren, ancestors of the Mennonites 400 years ago, such men as Conrad Grebel, Hans Denk, Felix Manz, and others were interested in being "biblical" in their doctrinal positions, and they were quite as interested in correct interpretations of these doctrines. To interpret a doctrine puts one in the area of the philosophy of religion. Interpretative insight was a chief characteristic of these early Brethren.

"If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice . . . . ." "Questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean." "And he called one of his servants, and asked what these things meant." "And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant" (Matt. 12:7, Mark 9:10, Luke 15: 17; 18:36).

The voice calling for meaning is the voice of philosophy. The Pharisees and the Sadducees could discern the face of the sky, but they could not discern the signs of the times (Matt. 16:3). They were poor philosophers.

The Bible as an open book for all men; the right of every man to interpret that book as the Holy Spirit and experience may direct; freedom of the individual conscience in matters of religious belief; religious toleration toward those with whom we differ; and complete separation of church and state; these doctrines, along with others, represent early Mennonite interpretations of the Gospel message.

Our philosophy of education.—In the 16th century, during the time of theological and ecclesiastical reconstruction in Germany, Switzerland, and Holland, the Mennonites had among them men of unusual educational attainments—men who compared favorably, and in some cases surpassed men in the Lutheran, Calvin, and Zwingli groups. Some of these men such as Conrad Grebel, Denk, and Manz stood at the top and were recognized as scholars and philosophers.

Here in America Christopher Dock, "The pious Schoolmaster on the Skippack," about the middle of the 18th century, was a Mennonite and stood at the head of the educational profession in his philosophy of elementary education. It was Dock, the Mennonite, who gave to America the first printed book on pedagogy in his *Schulordnung*, or *School Management* in which he set forth the manner in which children may be best taught, and also how they may be instructed in the knowledge of godliness. The Dock educational philosophy would add greatly to our present-day system of education.

During the days of religious persecution in Europe the tendency among Mennonites to gravitate toward the more secluded sections of the country and away from the cities in order to avoid persecution meant moving away from centers of education and educational opportunities. Because some of the persecutions were promoted and sanctioned by educated men, it was sometimes concluded that education was a bad thing. Notwithstanding the fact that here in America during the past fifty years we have made considerable progress in our educational philosophy, schools, colleges, universities, and theological seminaries have not yet come fully into the good graces of our people in many areas. Higher education yet seems to many people as something "of the world" to be avoided, at least it should be engaged in very moderately. But even this position represents a very definite philosophy of education.

Our philosophy of daily life.—In matters of daily living the Mennonites have always advocated simplicity and modesty. Both scriptural and economic reasons are involved. Mennonites have always urged and taught biblical and economic living. The "simple life" has always been a major item in our thinking.

Charles Wagner, a Frenchman, in 1902, wrote a book entitled, *The Simple Life*. In this book he says that in essence simplicity is "a state of mind," and not a matter of mere externals. Some people, says he, confuse the secondary with the essential. Such people believe that simplicity presents certain external characteristics by which it may be recognized. Not so, says Wagner: Simplicity dwells in the main intention of our lives. A man is simple when his chief care is the wish to be what he ought to be, that is, honestly and naturally human.

We have always stood for simplicity in home, in worship, in manner of speech, dress, and business, in fact in every phase of daily life. In matters of thrift the Mennonites have been unexcelled. The finest and best-worked farms in America are Mennonite farms. This is due to our philosophy of thrift.

Generally speaking, Mennonite philosophy is a good philosophy; it attempts to interpret God, man, and the world on a Christian basis. In Mennonite philosophy there is no place for pantheism, materialism, or humanism. Mennonite philosophy recognizes God as the creator and preserver of the universe, man as the potential son of God, and the world as the scene where God is working out His redemptive purpose in man.

We have not always given consistent expression to our philosophy, nor have we always lived up to it consistently. The new world into which we are moving will demand that we be more positive and more vocal in our ideas of religion, education, and daily living if our culture is to remain and contribute to human redemption.

THE FUTURE OF THE MENNONITES IN DENMARK

BY P. S. GOERTZ

IN April, 1948, it will be three years since the West Prussian and Danzig Mennonites entered refugee camp life in Denmark. Denmark, then still occupied by the Germans, was regarded as a safe place for them. Soon these people from West Prussia found their home behind barbed wires and in barracks. The greatest per cent of them have never been out since then. This situation puts both the refugees and the Danes into a tense frame of mind. The refugees want to get away and the Danes want to be rid of them. Yet, for most of them their departure has not yet materialized.

Where shall we go? When shall we leave? Who will make our departure possible? These are questions constantly on their mind. Our Mennonite refugees in Denmark naturally want to make the best move that is possible. The Danes, while ethical and humanitarian in spirit, on the other hand insist on their leaving as soon as any place opens for them. Thus, the fear that they may be forced to go to the Russian Zone hangs over the refugees all the time. This prospect precipitated decisions that might have been delayed if those fears had not been present.

Various possibilities, however vague and remote, figure in decisions to leave or to wait as the case may be. Will the peace treaty with Germany eventually mean that their old homes will again be opened to them? If that were so, it would be worth waiting for. Is it possible that either the United States or Canada will open their doors to them? In that way they could maintain the solidarity similar to the solidarity they had in West Prussia. This, too, would be worth waiting for. In South America it has been Argentina that for climatic and cultural reasons makes more of an appeal than Paraguay. If they emigrate from Europe in a body, will their immediate family members now somewhere in Germany be allowed to join them? So far the Danish government has not allowed additional refugees to come into Denmark. All these problems enter into the course to be taken.

However, decisions have to be made whether to go back to Germany as some relative or friend is willing to furnish living quarters and as the authorities permit their return, or to wait for a chance to emigrate. A good many have returned to Germany because they feared that the future possibilities for emigration were too precarious. A few single women and elderly couples have found entrance into Canada and the United States. So far, however, the fences are very high against admission of German nationals into Canada and the United States. Somewhat over four hundred have decided to go to Paraguay under any circumstance and as soon as such an exodus is possible under the sponsorship of the Mennonite Central Committee. More than a hundred more would go if their relatives now in Germany were allowed to join them before leaving Denmark. This promise we were able to secure from the Ministry for Justice in Denmark. This involves about eighty persons now somewhere in Germany. Negotiations with the authorities in Germany will have to be undertaken before they are privileged to leave Germany. As things now stand, it is expected that six hundred of these refugees will go to Paraguay as soon as a ship can be secured for them. Those remaining in Denmark expect to return to Germany as the doors open up for them.

Finally, it seems clear that the refugee camps in Denmark will be emptied during the year 1948. One senses this determination on the part of the Danish Government. We cannot now determine how this will effect those that remain after the exodus to Paraguay will have been realized.

Immigration Laws

BY WILLIAM T. SNYDER

THE SUBJECT of admitting displaced persons to the United States has been a matter of controversy in the second session of the Eightieth Congress. President Truman, in his message to Congress on the state of the Union on January 7, again stressed the responsibility of the United States government in finding a solution to the displaced persons problem. He said: "Many thousands of displaced persons, still living in camps overseas should be allowed entry into the United States. I again urge the Congress to pass suitable legislation at once so that this nation may do its share in caring for the homeless and suffering refugees of all faiths. I believe that the admission of these persons will add to the strength and energy of this nation."

Both the House of Representatives and the Senate have received reports from special committees appointed to study the problem. The House Committee, headed by Representative Fulton (Pennsylvania) in an 88-page report entitled, "Displaced Persons and the International Refugee Organization," released on November 16, urged "the early admission by the United States of significant numbers of displaced persons." The Committee found that "most of these (displaced) people, given an adequate approach to the solution of their problems, will be an asset and not a liability to the Western world . . . . the United States is losing the opportunity to obtain much-needed immigrant material by delaying enactment of a special immigration statute for the resettlement of displaced persons." The Senate Committee, headed by Senator Revercomb (West Virginia) has collected a good deal of information during its trip to Europe, and states that more time is needed to prepare the report.

The United States immigation laws provide for the assignment of an annual quota to each foreign country and that each immigrant be charged against the quota of his country of birth. The countries from which today's displaced persons come have very low quotas which are oversubscribed far into the future. Pending legislation would admit displaced persons "above quota" or without regard to country of origin, thus leaving the basic immigration law of the United States unchanged.

There are several principal objections that are advanced by opponents of the legislation to admit D.P.'s; some of these present real but not insurmountable problems whereas others are based on prejudice. D.P.'s have been charged with Communistic tendencies whereas the very reason most do not wish to return to their former homes is that their countries are Communist-dominated, or they fear religious or political persecution from their own homelands. The housing problem is advanced as a reason for excluding D.P.'s, but proponents of the legislation point out that the immigrants will be housed by friends or relatives who would not under ordinary circumstances sublet rooms to strangers; moreover well-organized church and welfare groups which care for immigrants would direct newcomers away from large cities to small towns and farming communities which are sparsely settled. Opponents of D.P. legislation have also suggested that if the D.P.'s are desirable people, they should stay where they are to help rebuild the countries in which they now reside; the fact is forgotten that Germany and Austria do not have sufficient food and opportunities for their own people.

Six states are now surveying the possibilities of D.P. resettlement; these are North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin. More than 100 national organizations representing Protestants, Catholics, Jews, labor, business, civic, and educational groups have officially gone on record as favoring the admission of a fair share of D.P.'s to the United States.

If legislation passes Congress, increased numbers of Mennonite D.P.s will qualify for immigration. To help influence the passage of pending legislation, readers will no doubt wish to express their concern to their governmental representatives. There has been much interest expressed by various Mennonite communities and individuals who wish to receive Mennonite immigrants if favorable legislation makes its possible. There is every indication that all who qualify and pass the required government standards, will be given a warm welcome and an outstretched hand of Christian fellowship by our North American Mennonite brotherhood.

A Reader Says:

I Think MENNONITE LIFE is the finest magazine on the market anywhere at any price. I have saved all of the numbers received so far. I would not sell them for ten times their cost. Where else could I find articles like the one on D. E. Harder, who was one of my instructors in the "Kansas German Teacher's Institute," and the one about "Alexanderwohl Schnurbuch?"

Sincerely,
Henry Richert, M. D.
Newton, Kansas

Mennonite Bibliography, 1947.

BY MELVIN GINGERICH, CORNELIUS KRAHN, AND ELMER SUDERMAN

This *Mennonite Biblography* is published annually in the April issue of *Mennonite Life*. It contains a list of significant books, pamphlets, and articles that deal with Mennonite life and principles. The magazine articles are restricted to non-Mennonite publications since the historical libraries of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas; Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana; Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio; and the Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Chicago, Illinois; keep complete files of all Mennonite periodicals and publications. — The bibliography for 1946 appeared in the April issue, 1947. The following are some additional titles.

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(Continued on page 48)

From Contributing Readers . . .

"CHRISTIAN" BURIAL

Editors, **Mennonite Life:**

The July, 1947, issue of *Mennonite Life* carried an article written by R. C. Kauffman entitled "Our 'Christian' Funeral."

As a Mennonite and as a funeral director I would like to take exception to some of the author's conclusions.

In the first place this article shows figures to prove that there are too many funeral directors which makes for increased costs to the public. It fails to take into consideration that in many of our smaller communities the funeral director combines his profession with some other business such as furniture or hardware, thereby dividing the overhead and providing himself with work to occupy himself between times when his services as funeral director are needed.

The author agrees that most funeral in our smaller cities and towns are reputable and compare favorably in reputation and standing in the community with the doctor or minister. This, however, has only been made possible by increased educational requirements, and the incentive afforded young men to enter this profession. If we were to return to the type of burial advocated in the article, the care of the dead would again of necessity be entrusted to just anyone who would agree to undertake the unpleasant task. There would be no embalming, no scientific sanitary precautions, and funerals would of necessity be held within a few hours following death.

We do not advocate false pride or the spending of money beyond one's ability, but we do feel that each person should be buried decently and in proportion to his station in life. In giving funeral costs, the author deals in averages of course, but every reputable funeral director has funerals priced to meet the financial needs of any family, and does not try to oversell in any instance.

While it is true that the immortality of the soul is not dependent on our physical body, and that our body is but the house in which we live, it is still human nature to revere and respect this place in which we dwell here on earth. We often make memorials of the house in which our great men were born, just as we enshrine the burial place of those we love. Whenever we become so hardened and unsentimental that we discard the bodies of our dead as we would an old shoe, we will have lost one of the precious attributes of the Christian.

One of the main points of argument for decreasing the costs of burial is that the difference might be used for the expansion of Christian service. That, of course, is a worthy thought. However, if Christian service is to advance it must offer inducement that will draw men of high calibre, and if the funeral profession is to be kept on a high plane it must also offer sufficient incentive.

In keeping with the writer's reasoning we could save much money by wearing sheets or blankets wrapped about us as they do in India, where they have the burial customs which he advocates. This money in turn could also be applied to Christian service. Few of us would want to turn back the wheels of our civilization that far in this respect.

The truth of the matter is that very little of the savings we would make by returning to primitive methods in other things would be donated for worth while causes. Our whole standard of living and modern civilization is built on individual initiative and competition. The money we spend for funerals, for automobiles, for clothing or for Christian service is not gone, but is merely started on a round of service to the community as a whole. In most instances the funeral director in a community donates liberally of both his time and his money to the Christian activities and charities of the community. The citizens of a community take pride in the churches of the community, in the school system, in a good doctor, in neat and clean shops, and incidentally in their funeral establishment and the man who operates it if he is worthy. If you take away any of these things you weaken the morale and the spirit of the people in a commmunity.

Sincerely yours,
Ben E. Kim

Buhler, Kansas

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Music Abides

"Dynasties and empires come and are gone. Conquerors ride and ride no more. A gun speaks and a gun is silent, and time, the slow tendril, conceals the green years. What endures, then? Art, and music, and the imperishable convictions of the soul. Melody heard in an April garden will enchant a thousand Aprils. Fragments of song addressed to the heart will die only when time dies. Music abides. It stays and will stay. All our tomorrows reach out glad arms to embrace it."

Author Unknown