MENNONITE LIFE

July, 1957

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in the religious, social, and economic phases
of Mennonite culture

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COVER
Sarasota Jungle Gardens, Sarasota, Florida
Photo Sarasota Chamber of Commerce

Contributors in This Issue

(From left to right)





MR. AND MRS. FRANK L. WENGER, retired farmers of Aberdeen, Idaho. He is a deacon in the Mennonite church (p. 120).
ROSELLA REIMER DUERKSEN received her Ph.D. degree in Anabaptist hymnology from Union Theological Seminary (p. 128).
JOH. P. CLASSEN, Winnipeg, is a carpenter by profession and a Mennonite musicologist by avocation (p. 115).
JOHN H. HARSHBARGER, North Newton, Kansas, spent several years in Austria assisting in the movement of refugees (p. 116).
J. WILHELM DYCK, wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on the subject of the article, teaches German and Russian at Oberlin (p. 135).





VONNA HICKS ADRIAN, lecturer in English at Western Reserve, has had verse published in poetry and popular journals (p. 126).
ESKO LOEWEN, pastor of the Johannestal Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kansas, was MCC representative in Holland (p. 142).
EMMA K. BACHMANN, Woodlake, California, has written articles from recollections and the story of the Krehbiels (p. 131).
ALVIN C. CURRIER is pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Mt. Lake, Minnesota, a unit of the Westminster Larger Parish (p. 99).
MAYNARD SHELLY is assistant in the office of the Mennonite General Conference Board of Education and Publication (p. 130).





LENA WALTNER, instructor in art, Bethel College, spent a summer in Colombia, helping to develop a native crafts program (p. 104).
HILDA W. KRAHN, homemaker and teacher, spent a year in Holland where her husband was a Fulbright scholar (p. 100).
MAYNARD KAUFMAN, graduate of Bethel College, will be a Woodrow Wilson scholar at the University of Chicago this winter (p. 139).
JOHN UMBLE, professor emeritus of English and speech, Goshen College, spent the past winter in Florida (p. 108).
MRS. MYRON S. YODER, one of the first Mennonites to establish home in Florida, is principal of Pinecraft public school (p. 106).

NOT SHOWN

Ida Erne-Fleischer, daughter of F. C. Fleischer, homemaker, Delft, Netherlands, is active in church and social work (p. 133).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Drawings p. 99, Alvin C. Currier. Photos, p. 100; top, p. 102; bottom, p. 103; Netherlands Information Service. Photos, bottom right, p. 101 and bottom left, p. 102, A. G. van Agtmaal. Photography, top, p. 106 and top, p. 107, Chamber of Commerce, Sarasota, Florida. Photos, p. 116-118, World Council of Churches.

JAPAN ISSUE COMING!

The October issue of MENNONITE LIFE will deal with Japan, and the impact of Mennonite mission and relief work there. It will be a valuable aid for church study groups, mission societies and all interested in the promotion of the Gospel in Japan.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Early Mennonites walked with a certain righteous pride above the revelry of the world. . . . Yet confronted by the unattainable holiness of the God revealed in Scripture they bowed low in humility.

The Lost Chord

By ALVIN C. CURRIER

HOW can we be proud and humble at the same time? How can we maintain that righteous pride in being a regenerate people separated unto God and still at the same time walk with the lowliness and humility that Scripture demands? This is a necessary question because the hard truth seems to be that all too often the Mennonites who desire to be nothing but the plain and humble servants of the Most High only succeed in impressing their brothers as being aloof and even at times self-righteous. Indeed, after the 1948 worldwide Mennonite Conference American Mennonites were given this warning by a French brother:

> Dear brethren and sisters, take note of the fact that a church never reaches a state of "having attained," of being established in perfection; rather read again the letters to the seven churches of Revelation. It is so easy to believe that we are the best one of the churches, or still better: the best one among the best! May God preserve you from this for it is a real danger for you.[1]

What then is the answer to this charge? I think it is this. We must at all times keep our eyes upon heaven as well as upon earth. This is the clue to the combined pride and humility of a true Christian.

When we look at the world then we do have a real reason for a certain pride for as Menno Simons writes of his people: "We put off the old Adam, with his whole nature and deceitful lusts . . . and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."[2] Yes Menno is proud, but his pride is in his new relation to the world, for with Christ's help he has risen above the world.

However, this is only half of Menno's life for although he and all early Mennonites walked with a certain righteous pride above the revelry of the world, they also sighted their lives by the glory of the holiness of God revealed in his Word and confronted by this unattainable holiness they all bowed down in humility. Even the same Menno who rejoiced in his new being, when he beheld the still greater righteousness and holiness of God cried out: "I find day by day that my righteousness is as filthy rags. When I think that I walk, I fall; when I imagine that I stand, I am down; and when I think to be something, then I am nothing."[3]

Could the truth be that we have too often only looked at the world and have become proud because we have risen some degrees above it while at the same time we have failed to look to the heavens to behold the glory of God to which we have not yet come near? If so, then perhaps the lost chord that gives the richness to the symphony of Mennonite piety as well as to all Christian piety is exactly this continual need to look to the glory of God as well as to the evils of the world from which we are only so slightly removed. Perhaps Mennonites need something like the traditional confession of sins which is such an integral part of Reformed, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Roman, and other Christian worship. Maybe this is what Menno Simons had in mind when along with freedom of conscience, peace, separation unto God, adult believers baptism, and the ban, he included a daily sighing and lamenting over their poor, unsatisfactory evil flesh as an integral part of the faith of the people to which he belonged. The statement in full reads:

(Continued on page 119)

How the Dutch Love of Beauty Finds Expression

Art in Daily Life in Holland

By HILDA W. KRAHN

THOSE who have not gone to Europe to see for themselves are hardly able to fathom the difference between American and European cultures. One cannot easily grasp the extent to which a few generations of life in America can alter customs and values. Among these cultural differences the appreciation for and use of art looms large.

That the Dutch people love beauty becomes evident the minute one sets foot in this little country. Dutch cities have their own unique splendor evidenced by quaint distinctive, ancient architecture or modern well-designed streamlined structures, neat and clean streets, and well kept flower beds, hanging baskets, planters, and bouquets everywhere.

In the Home

As one enters a Dutch home he sees that the functional and utilitarian must yield to the artistic and beautiful. To the American the homes may appear to be a bit overloaded with pottery, vases, large plates, brass, copper, and pewter utensils of many kinds, ivory and wood carvings of the highest order, original paintings, a variety of draperies, and the ever-present tea service consisting of dainty china cups set out to use on a moment's notice. The abundance and arrangement of these items lead the American housewife to gasp at the amount of dusting thus entailed. One often sees a wall arrangement consisting of a lovely plate and a piece of tapestry, a yard or more square. Or again a wall or shelf of plates catch the eye. One sees at a glance that there is a vast difference between the quality of the china, pictures, wall hangings, and bric-a-brac actually found in Dutch homes and that which is displayed in inexpensive shops to catch the attention of tourists. Many a Dutch friend has said to me, "Better buy one good item than several cheaper ones." Therein lies the secret of the fact that many a Dutch home is really a small museum. Each item purchased is selected with care for its permanent qualities and then handed down from generation to generation. Many an item that we Americans would probably discard is given a place of honor in a Dutch home. I am reminded of the large

(Right) Open air museum in Arnhem showing corner in a typical old Dutch kitchen with brass utensils and Delft blue tiles. (Below) An elementary schoolroom in the province of Zeeland showing pupils in native costume.

blue Delft urns (vases) with lids on them that one saw everywhere but could purchase only in antique shops and wondered why such utensils had ever been invented. They were too deep to be bean pots and not large enough in circumference to be cooky jars. All that my questionings yielded was, "They have no purpose. They are only beautiful."

Many a home now modernized proudly displayed a tile wall, relic of the days when the tiles had served as protection from the stove. These antique tiles—artistic and durable—sell for premium prices in antique shops. The intricate ivory and wood carvings originate for the most part in Indonesia and are now rare and costly.

A dutch student describing American living rooms said, "They are like swimming pools without water with furniture along the outside." By contrast the Dutch living rooms always boast a center table. Any conversation group is built around a table. All these tables are covered by a heavy rug-like fabric which serves two purposes. It is never smuggy or wrinkled and it gives complete protection to the table. It might be in place to mention at this point that many Dutch kitchens are dingy and impractical and the family never dines there. Mealtime, especially dinner, is an occasion for genuine family fellowship. Much effort is put forth to make the table appointments attractive, chafing dishes are in common use to keep food hot, and many people regularly serve in courses even when family members must do the work themselves. I cite the above to show that the Dutch not only have artistic items, but they also incorporate art into their daily practices.

The pictures one sees on the walls in Dutch homes are usually either originals or very fine reproductions from famous Dutch masters. Paintings are cherished far above photographs and one often sees portraits of family members. Most Americans prefer American colored films because the colors are brighter. The Europeans, on the other hand, consider them gaudy and unreal and much prefer their softer colored films.

One notices a vast difference in the type of cards used for all types of correspondence. A hand-made card is cherished far above a bought one. All their cards are much more reserved in appearance than ours and are free from gaudiness. Birth announcements that we have

(Right) A woman of Zuid-Beveland knitting a scarf while below is a woman in Frisian costume serving tea against an artistic background.

A weather-beaten typical Dutch fisherman.

received are all dignified printed messages simply stating the facts—something like our wedding invitations.

Clothing and Food

The art in the homes thus far described has not taken into consideration those areas and villages where the inhabitants wear the same type of dress or costume. In some areas the costumes are beautiful in their own right, as in Friesland, Marken, and Volendam; in other places the attractivness lies in the fact that all the people are dressed alike, as in Spakenburg or Staphorst. There is a distinctive, unique beauty in any village where everyone is dressed alike. Furthermore, there is also a pronounced similarity in the architecture and interior arrangement of homes in such a village.

The artistic element is evidenced in the schools in various ways. One could find practically every kind of art work practiced in our own schools. As early as grade three girls are taught sewing, embroidering, and knitting along with drawing, painting, weaving, raffia work, etc., while the boys are introduced to woodwork. Children are encouraged to illustrate their original stories and sometimes to decorate the borders of their papers. Written work is done with ink beginning in grade one and neat work is an absolute necessity, with much emphasis placed on penmanship.

The Dutch love for beauty is also carried over into the realm of food. Pastry shops reveal astonishingly beautiful cakes and candies, including varieties entirely foreign to us. Each season calls for special items. For St. Nicholas Day the items made of almond paste are amazing both for their beauty and variety. Almost every conceivable item has been reproduced in miniature in this delicious confection including fruits, flowers, animals, household items, homes replete with fenced in yards, flowers, shrubs, and caricatures.

At Easter time the eye-catching items for us were the delicate Easter bunnies made of *white* chocolate. They also make many bird shaped candies—birds on branches with their nests, bird eggs, etc.

Leisure and Art

And how do the Dutch people spend their leisure time? It seemed to me they were either out walking or bicycling or in museums studying the works of the famous Dutch masters—Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Paulus Potter, the Ruisdaels, Hobbema, van Gogh, Mauve, the Mesdags, and many others.

Most astonishing to the American Mennonite is the fact that in Holland art and the Mennonites have gone hand in hand. The early Reformation in Holland was for a time largely a movement of the Anabaptists. Af-

Interior of Dutch home in Spakenburg showing decorative plates and vases and, at right, women in native costume bicycling.

Dutch farmers closing a deal while their wives watch.

ter severe persecution the Anabaptists were accepted and soon found their places in the rise of the Golden Age of Holland. The Anabaptists were among the merchants, seamen, doctors, and artists who led Holland to become a prominent world power. Many of the Dutch artists were Mennonites.

The Dutch Mennonite interest in art is not restricted to paintings. The church officials often order lovely plates to be made for certain occasions. Any profit made on these commemorative pieces goes to the church. The Dutch youth group continually sells artistically designed plates bearing the Dutch Mennonite motto:

"Dopen wat mondig is;
Spreken, dat bondig is.
Vrij in't Christelijk geloven;
Daden gaan woorden te boven."

Strolling along the canal in holiday finery. (Spakenburg).

Children of Marken playing "London Bridge Is Falling Down."

Dutch Mennonite motto in Delft ware (see text).

(Freely translated "Baptize those who are of age; speak that which binds. Free in Christian belief; deeds are above words.") These plates are made by the famous Makkum factory and sell for three, four, or five dollars, depending on size.

The Dutch Mennonites were once divided into groups much as we are today. Gradually they came together. One can buy a coffee spoon in either sterling or plated ware picturing a "sun" and a "lamb" to commemorate the joining of the church of the Sun and the church of the Lamb of Amsterdam.

Whether Mennonites in America have shied away from art because it was considered worldly or whether it simply did not fit into the economic pattern of frugal and pioneering people is open to question. By contrast the Dutch Mennonites are noteworthy exceptions to the general Mennonite pattern. Whatever opposition early church practices may have included quickly faded away and a keen interest in and appreciation for art soon developed. It was required that the early Mennonite churches be "hidden churches," and even today they are simple in construction, but many of them are very beautiful. The Dutch Mennonites have provided a field where art may truly flourish.

TRENDS IN ART EDUCATION

By LENA WALTNER

IN surveying the development of art education during the last fifty years one finds that remarkable changes have taken place as to our conception regarding the importance of art in a child's life as well as in methods of teaching art. Likewise, our conceptions of the importance of art in our mechanized industrial society have also changed.

Instead of the antiquated idea of art as being something to be hung on the wall, we think of it more in the terms of Emmy Zweybruck who was editor of *Everyday Art*, when she said "Everything in life can be put on a higher level where it becomes art; every day can be a Sunday — a holy day." This was her attitude toward life; it was the faith she lived by and tried to impart to others. Her career was a dramatic search for the best means to put this faith into effect.

To Emmy Zweybruck art and life were interdependent. Instead of feeling that an industrial civilization is deadening to the arts because it rightfully claims machines, technology, and mass production among its major achievements, she believed that it must also develop its own special art forms, and likewise, our artistic sensibilities must enter our industrial activities and production. Art, she maintained, grows not in spite of industry but through industry, just as industry at its best develops not against art but with and indeed, into art.

Her idea of making art a part of life finds a hearty response in the minds of many art educators today. Whereas we formerly had at times a very limited conception of art we now believe that art should reach all phases of living. People are coming to realize that the artist is also a useful member of society. Industry is beginning to realize that it cannot get along without the artist. Richard A. Florsheim, artist, lecturer and printmaker says, "We who live in a very material, very picked up and very productive world have to realize that the artist is more needed in a strongly materialistic society than in almost any other kind. We cannot live with our deep freezes and our jet airplanes and our multiplicity of gadgets and devices alone. They have to have some meaning, and this is what art can help to provide."

During the last twenty or more years our American culture has been displaying steadily more confident understanding of the urge toward creative self-expression and its meaning in life. For almost the first time in our history there is evidence to suggest that powerfully indigenous art forms have now taken root in our collective art experience and are evolving on a continental scale. There is a living excitement as well as a peculiarly American quality to such things as the imaginative assertion of our

skyscrapers, the livable convenience of our new homes, the terse originality of our commercial design. The same drive is expressing itself in such further expressions as interior furnishing, landscape gardening, parkway construction and the beginnings of city planning. These related developments have grown so clearly from everyday life as the average citizen knows it. Business and the home have so far yielded the most fertile soil for authentically American self-expression. Folk pageantry and multinational festivals have flourished, especially in the larger cities; community singing and folk festivals have become recognized aspects of life in most parts of the country. There has been rich and varied development of industrial hobbies and handicrafts.

Many art schools have been established, organizations like the American Association of University Women recognize the arts as part of their program having study groups and programs pertaining to art. We now have not only state and regional art organizations, but a national and international one as well, all of which are doing much to promote various phases of art. Organizations like the American Red Cross and others have been sponsoring international exhibits of child art. Art is not merely something an individual says to another, it often is an expression of a people. Also through the art work by children of other countries our students realize how much they have in common. Where students discuss a painting by a boy from Indo-China they are not speaking of a foreigner, but of someone who like themselves has something to say and has said it in a language that everyone understands. This may be one step in the direction of better international understanding.

Speaking more specifically of our art education we can note the following trends in contrast to previous methods, particularly in the progressive schools:

1) Free creative expression versus copy work and tracing, for we have come to believe that children are potential artists.

2) We let children experience the handling of many materials, such as clay, yarns, wood, metals, plastics, papers, etc.

3) Instead of being an isolated subject, we now integrate art with most of the other subjects in school.

4) We believe in drawing out rather than pouring in through dictation and set formulas.

5) There is a strong emphasis upon motivation which will lead to creativity under proper guidance.

6) We consider children's capacities, interests and age level, and do not expect results according to adult standards.

7) We believe that art should become a way of life permeating everything we do.

Furthermore, we believe that important as it may be to have children produce the best art of which they are capable, the art produced is actually a by-product. The most important product of an art program is a properly educated child, and not a piece of art or craft work. We are concerned as to what the producing of art does to the child. To see the unfolding of the intellectual, emotional, and mental capacities of students from which arises a corresponding ability, should become our primary concern, for many a warped personality has been straightened out through the medium of art.

Through group activities such as doing friezes, stained glass window effects at Christmas, presenting a puppet play, etc., children learn to co-operate, they develop manual dexterity, and learn to solve problems and develop a greater appreciation of art.

In recent years we have come to realize the tremendous therapeutic value of art in the rehabilitation of people who are physically and mentally ill. Consequently we have established occupational therapy schools for specialized training in this area.

While some ground has been gained in the field of art, yet it is regrettable that there are still too many forces militating against our becoming true creators. D. Kenneth Winebrenner, editor of the *School Arts Magazine*, who wrote an editorial entitled "Peeping Toms and Copy Cats" in the December, 1956 issue, deplores the fact that television is detrimental to our creativity. He says

> "Truly we have become a world of Peeping Toms, satisfied in merely watching someone else. Not all of us, all of the time, but too many of us too much of the time. Television is not the only guilty party; we have had an upsurge in the number attending various kinds of amusements where all that is expected of the audience is to keep in their seats so that others will not be distracted. Parallel to this new emphasis on spectator sports is a growing "do-it-yourself" movement, which has much which deserves commendation if it were not for the commercial emphasis on merely putting things together, or the emphasis on following stereotyped directions in packaged kits (which feed the ego, but do not feed the soul). We are not only Peeping Toms, but we have become Copy Cats as well."

He further points out the facts that if we want to prepare the children of today for the future we must not permit muscles, physical and mental, to become flabby through inactivity, but to guide the drives of an individual, to steer his urges and to direct his talents, so that in old age he may be a contented and unique individual.

The internationally known museums of art and great masters have their place in our culture to stimulate and develop art appreciation. However, museum programs need to be integrated into the life of the community. They should show people something of what they are about, what their world is, what they can hope for in the future, something about city planning, the relationship of sculpture to architecture, murals to architecture, the process of printing etc. Once we as Mennonites along with others realize that it also is a part of art to make all of our surroundings more attractive then we shall be on the way to a happier tomorrow.

The Appeal of Florida

By MRS. MYRON S. YODER

Lido Beach with Sarasota Bay and the City of Sarasota in the background.

SUMMERTIME is no longer the only time to take a vacation. Today industry has made it possible for virtually everyone to get away from work for a week or a month or more. The Gulf of Mexico provides beautiful beaches to be enjoyed any time of the year. One of the largest vacation spots on the Gulf is Sarasota, about fifty-five miles south of Tampa, the largest industrial city and port on Florida's west coast.

The population of the city of Sarasota has grown from eighty-five hundred in 1930 to an estimated thirty-five thousand in 1956, and Sarasota County from twelve thousand four hundred in 1930 to an estimated sixty thousand in 1956. There are a number of reasons for a city covering seventeen square miles and a county of five hundred and fifty square miles to grow so rapidly.

Christian people who plan to spend a winter vacation in a warm climate are interested in church facilities. Sarasota has one or more church buildings for each of the Protestant denominations, besides a Catholic church and a Jewish synagogue. Each of these is filled to overflowing during the tourist season.

Many people choose to vacation or winter in the Sarasota area because of the mild climate. According to the U. S. Weather Bureau the average January temperature over a period of twenty-four years is 62.3 degrees. The winters are warm and sunny with an occasional brisk day to make the season even more delightful.

Sarasota Jungle—famous for its flock of flamingoes.

In summer the Sarasota area is just as delightful. The Gulf of Mexico warms the area in winter and cools it in summer. The summer evenings are cooled by refreshing afternoon thundershowers or by fresh sea breezes rolling in from the Gulf. The average temperature from eight p.m. to eight a.m. for June to October is 75 degrees. The average annual temperature for the Sarasota area is 72.4 degrees.

Health-seekers find at Sarasota healthful conditions—low elevation, freedom from extreme temperatures, low pollen count, greater iodine content in vegetables, and invigorating salt air from the Gulf. Sarasota actually has seven hundred hours more of ultra-violet rays per year than the sunlight cure areas of Switzerland.

The annual rainfall is about sixty inches with the heaviest rainfall in July, August, and September. Hurricanes in Florida receive much publicity because of the hurricane warning service. No real hurricane damage has been experienced in the Sarasota area for many years and no hurricane has ever killed or injured anyone in Sarasota.

While there are some one hundred light industries and the area is nationally known for its celery farms and cattle ranches, it is primarily a resort center. Its varied attractions range from carnival to culture providing things of interest for everyone.

Sarasota is sometimes called the "Cultural Center of the South" for it boasts several museums and an extensive colony of artists, writers and musicians. The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art contains this country's great collection of the Flemish master, Peter Paul Rubens, and many other famous works of art. Experts have called it one of the finest art museums in America. Both the Ringling residence near the Museum, and the Museum were presented to the State of Florida by the late great circus magnate, John Ringling. Another museum honoring the late Ringling is the Circus Hall of Fame. Exhibits housed there record the history of the circus. Many people spend much time at the circus wh-

Garden Court of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota.

ter quarters watching the performers perfecting their acts.

To those interested in sports the area has much to offer. There is both salt and fresh water fishing, water skiing, boating, sailing, and swimming. There are municipally owned shuffleboards; tennis, lawn bowling and croquet courts, and private golf courses.

Those interested in music practice can sing with the Sarasota Choral Society. The Society presents public programs at Christmas and Easter. Instrumentalists practice and play with the West Coast Symphony who give four concerts each year under the direction of Alexander Block, in the Sarasota Civic Band who give concerts during the winter season. The Sarasota Concert Association presents a series of five All-Star Concerts.

Not all who visit the Sarasota area do so because of poor health or of their eagerness to take advantage of the city's cultural opportunities. Many come to enjoy the surf and sand of the thirty-five miles of beaches. Here they pass many hours gathering shells—some to take along home for a collection, others to be used in shell craft. Probably most people go to southern Florida merely to enjoy the beauties in a tropical country. They like to relax in a lounge chair on the beautiful grass-carpeted lawns to watch the rhythmic swaying of the Spanish moss, an air plant which uses the branches of trees for its support.

From the tall, long-leafed pines and the graceful water oaks come the beautiful songs of the mocking bird. The cardinal's brilliant red dress makes it one of the most attractive birds. The bold blue jay in his colorful attire is a favorite too, even though he is possessive at times. Many Sarasotans feed birds on their lawns and are rewarded by having scores of them nest in the trees and shrubs about their homes.

Flowering trees of many kinds make it possible to have a tree in bloom almost every month in the year. The royal poinciana with its huge red umbles is probably the most attractive, but the African Gold Tree and the lovely blue jacaranda are almost as popular. Other beautiful ones are the tree hibiscus, the flowering tulip and the poor man's orchid tree with its orchid-like flowers of purple and white. The dainty blooms of the citrus fruit trees are less colorful but fill the air with sweet perfume.

Tropical fruit-bearing trees always interest visitors from temperate climates. The citrus trees are colorful during the winter bearing flowers, green and ripe fruit all at one time. Other fruit-bearing trees found on many lawns are the guava, mango, avocado, pear, banana and papaya. Cocoanut palms and pecan trees are rather common.

Many varieties of ornamental palms and the variegated leaves of crotons always draw their share of attention. Almost every lawn has several flowering shrubs. The most common are the hibiscus, alamanda, bougain-villaea and poinsettia. Beautiful flowering vines range in color from the very colorful orange flame vine to the delicate pink of the coral vine. Annual flowers: roses, gladioli, petunias and scores of others, bloom as well here as in any northern garden.

Lovers of wild life find much of interest in Sarasota County. Water birds, the cormorant, pelican, sea gull and sandpiper visit the mangrove islands of Sarasota Bay, while inland along drainage canals are many cranes and herons and a few egrets. In the wooded areas are wild turkeys and many covies of quail.

In the wild animal preserve of Myaka State Park, seventeen miles east of Sarasota, deer roam undisturbed. Grey fox, bob-cats, racoons, opossum, alligators, turtles, snakes, and squirrels are found in the less populated areas.

It is truly remarkable that so many exciting, interesting and unusual things are found in such a relatively small area as Sarasota, city and county. Rarely does one find a city like Sarasota with such a broad appeal to a great variety of tastes for both summer and winter vacationers.

Sarasota fish story with accompanying evidence.

The Pinecraft Mennonite Church (Lancaster Conference) and Tuttle Avenue Mennonite Church (Virginia Conference), both in Sarasota.

The Mennonite-Amish Invasion of the South

The Mennonites in Florida

By JOHN UMBLE

ALTHOUGH the first Mennonites to come to Florida made their home in Tampa, the Amish and Mennonite settlement founded in Sarasota, south of Tampa, a quarter century ago has now developed into five congregations, the largest concentration of Amish and Mennonites in the Deep South. The Amish worship service, held on alternate Sundays in the homes of Daniel D. Kurtz and Roman Miller three miles east of Fruitville, on the eastern edge of Sarasota, during the winter of 1928-29, now meets in the home of Levi Yoder in Pinecraft, a suburb of Sarasota, on Sunday afternoons. Here, to preserve the Amish tradition of holding the worship service in a private residence, a dwelling house was remodeled in the fall of 1956 in order to accommodate a larger congregation. Meeting in the afternoon allows some of the Amish to attend the union services at the Pinecraft church in the morning and also provides a "wholesome place to go" for the Amish young people in the afternoon.

Amish and Mennonites Worship Together

A union organization, formed by Amish, Amish Mennonite, Conservative Amish Mennonite and Mennonite families conducted a German-English Sunday school for about ten years and in 1941 purchased the abandoned school building in Fruitville. The organization, then officially designated "The Mennonite, Conservative and Amish Church of Sarasota, Florida," is a unique creation among American Mennonites. Later the trustees sold the Fruitville building, purchased the First Presbyterian church in Pinecraft, sold it because it was too small, then purchased a large bakery in Pinecraft and remodelled it into the present Pinecraft (union) Church in 1946. This union effort is the oldest legally constituted Mennonite and Amish church organization in the area. One of the first trustees, the venerable and highly respected Daniel D. Kurtz, formerly of Ohio, still serves on the board and helps to preserve the original agreement that the meetinghouse must be open for services to any of the Amish and Mennonite groups without discrimination. Otho B. Shenk, a Mennonite minister formerly of Elida, Ohio, but not now a member of any Mennonite conference, is the year-round spiritual leader.

The Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Conference has organized a small congregation in Pinecraft and has appointed Joseph Nissley, former superintendent of the Altoona, Pennsylvania, Mission as pastor. His congregation meets with the other worshippers at the Pinecraft church, but it has no separate legal title to the building.

Pinecraft—An Amish-Mennonite Paradise

The area known as Pinecraft has become the "summer and winter" home of a considerable number of Amish, Mennonites, Amish Mennonites and Conservative Amish Mennonites. The two latter groups are gradually dropping the word "Amish" from their official designation. During the winter months an estimated two thousand or more members of these church groups crowd into Pinecraft and into the section north and east of Pinecraft officially laid out as the Homecroft Addition, but not recognized as apart from Pinecraft. Laid out originally as the "Sarasota National Tourist Camp," Pinecraft was intended to furnish cheap living accommodations for the annual flood of winter tourists visiting Sarasota. It lies in the triangle formed by Bahia Vista Street on the north and Phillippi Creek which at this point runs southeast. The lots are forty feet square. Be-

The quarterly Mennonite Christian Workers meeting of Sarasota congregations, assembling at the Bayshore Church, Christmas, 1955.

tween each two rows of lots a street, thirty feet wide, runs south from Bahia Vista Street, eleven streets in all numbered from One to Eleven in the original plot. The area lies about one mile south of Main Street in Sarasota and nearly five miles east of Sarasota Bay. One not too laudable reason for its popularity is the lack of building restrictions. Lying outside the city limits of Sarasota, it escapes the high city taxes but it has no sewage disposal facilities except the septic tanks easily installed in the sandy soil. Some dwellings lack even these. Few of the winter residences are modern. Single dwellings, duplexes, apartments, motels, trailers of all kinds, large and small, even tents, crowd the area.

Covering four of the tiny Pinecraft lots, the Pinecraft church, eighty by eighty feet, has an average winter attendance of over seven hundred worshippers. True to the Amish and Mennonite tradition the men sit on the west side of the auditorium and the women on the east. Amish, Mennonites and Conservative Amish from scores of sections in the United States and Canada meet together for the English services held on Sunday morning and evening. The geographical differences are reflected in the dress of both men and women but especially in the style of the devotional prayer head covering of the women. At a recent Sunday morning service a visitor distinguished at least nine different styles—black and white, press-pleated and plain, narrow crowned and wide crowned, stiffly starched and unstarched. The tie strings were just as varied—black or white, narrow or wide, tied or untied, the latter hanging down over the chest or thrown back over the shoulder or both ends sewed together and worn in a loop down the back. Most of the worshippers were Old Order Amish or Conservative Amish, but Mennonite women with the abbreviated prayer head covering worn in the Middle West also were present. Mennonite men wearing the conventional American suit (referred to in the sermon as "the necktie crowd") mingled with long-bearded Amish men wearing the "broadfall" trousers and

View of interior of the Bayshore Mennonite Church (Ohio and Eastern Conference) and an exterior view with the Sunday school annex.

The Gospel Chapel conducted by the Tuttle Avenue Mennonite Church and the Palm Grove Mennonite Church (Conservative Mennonite).

short-bearded Conservatives wearing the collarless coat or suspenders without the coat. One of the temptations which such an audience presents to some of the visiting preachers is to refer repeatedly and indiscriminately to "educationalism, intellectualism and modernism" in an apparent attempt to strike a popular note. But in spite of certain shortcomings the Pinecraft church fills a real need. Attendance at its Sunday morning services exceeds that of any other Mennonite church in Florida. In spite of the large attendance the small parking lot is never filled. The Old Order Amish own no cars and all prefer to walk the few hundred yards from their homes.

Bayshore Mennonite Church

The Mennonites in the fashionable Bayshore section in the northwestern part of Sarasota were the first to organize a congregation under a district conference. In 1945 northern Mennonites, mostly winter residents, formed a society, "Mennonite Christian Endeavor," and purchased a block of city lots, intending to erect a tabernacle for worship services. Some of the early promoters were J. E. Brunk, of Goshen, Indiana; the late J. M. Long, of Nappanee, Indiana; the late Robert M. Luther, of Johnstown, Pennsylvania; and Benjamin F. Zehr, of Lowville, New York. About the same time the permanent Mennonite residents of Sarasota, nearly all of whom were members of the Ohio and Eastern Amish Mennonite Conference, petitioned that body to organize them into a congregation. Two Ohio bishops completed the organization of the "Bayshore Mennonite Congregation" in April 1945. During the same year the congregation erected on land donated by members of "Mennonite Christian Endeavor," a stucco concrete block building and dedicated it on February 3, 1946. The first trustees of the new organization were the heads of all the families residing permanently in Sarasota County; Henry Crossgrove, Irvin Eicher, Olen Eicher, and Ernest Miller, all formerly of Fulton County, Ohio, and Myron S. Yoder of Goshen, Indiana. This congregation has by far the largest membership of any Mennonite church in Florida

The Bayshore radio chorus and the home of T. H. Brenneman, pastor of the Bayshore Mennonite Church.

T. H. Brenneman recording Sunday school lesson for later broadcast.

The Pinecraft Public School attended by children from Mennonite families and former Presbyterian church now an Amish home.

and is currently studying the possibility of enlarging the auditorium of its church building. Within recent years it has enlarged the Sunday school building on an adjoining lot. This now contains Sunday school classrooms, a fellowship room with a huge open fireplace for women's sewing circle and Mennonite Youth Fellowship activities and library. Nine landscaped lots furnish ample room for expansion and parking space. The congregation supports a full-time pastor, Bishop Timothy H. Brenneman, formerly of Elida, Ohio, and former missionary to Argentina. His wife, nee Rowena Leedy, is also of Elida.

Tuttle Avenue Mennonite Church

About five years after the Ohio group organized the Bayshore congregation and erected a meetinghouse in the northwestern part of the city of Sarasota seven or eight miles from Pinecraft, Henry Brunk and several other members of the Virginia Mennonite Conference decided to build a church in the southeastern section about a quarter of a mile west of Pinecraft. Brunk had previously purchased a tract southwest of the intersection of Tuttle Avenue and Bahia Vista Street and laid it out in lots as "Brunks Addition." Three of the four blocks in the addition contain twenty-two lots each. Brunk supervised the erection of the Tuttle Avenue Mennonite Church, financed in part by the sale of lots, chiefly to Mennonites. On June 9, 1951, he and his wife, Nora E. Brunk, deeded

(Right) The Ybor City Mennonite Church (Spanish) in Tampa and (below) the Sharon Christian Day School on the same lot as church.

nine lots on Tuttle Avenue (between Floyd Avenue and Temple Court) to Jason H. Weaver, Luman H. Yoder and Henry Brunk, "trustees of the Tuttle Avenue Mennonite Church, an unincorporated religious society under the jurisdiction of the Virginia Conference of the Mennonite Church." Under the pastorate of Myron Augsburger the congregation made commendable growth. After he left to do evangelistic work, Paul Martin served as pastor. Later H. Michael Shenk served as acting pastor. During the current year he was installed as pastor by the Virginia conference.

About the middle of this century certain problems arose in the union organization known officially as the "Mennonite, Conservative and Amish Church of Sarasota, Florida," that led to unhappiness and misunderstanding. Most of the original founders of the organization enjoyed its informal fellowship. Ministers of any of the cooperating groups were welcome to preach to the congregation assembled for worship on a Sunday morning or at other times by appointment. But after the Ohio and Virginia Mennonites built churches at Bayshore and Tuttle Avenue, the Conservative Amish Mennonites gradually assumed a leading role in the Pinecraft church. A member of that conference circulated a paper to be signed by those who wished to organize a Conservative Amish Mennonite Church. Meanwhile, a member of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference circulated a paper to organize a congregation at the Pinecraft church under the Lancaster Conference. Through some misunderstanding several Amish and Conservative Amish Mennonites, including a minister and bishop, Menno Coblentz, signed this petition thus signifying, in effect, their uniting with the Lancaster Conference. When the promoter of the Conservative congregation returned to Sarasota in the fall, Menno Coblentz applied to the Lancaster Conference for a church letter. The Lancaster bishops took no action on the application.

Conservative Amish Mennonite Church

Finally, in 1953 the annual Conservative Amish Mennonite Conference meeting at Hartville, Ohio, decided "since the Lancaster Conference has delayed Bro. Coblentz's church letter, . . . to accept him as a member of the C. A. Mennonite Conference recognizing his bishop office and officiating at the Pinecraft Conservative Church, Sarasota, Florida." The Conference decided further "in the event of necessity, that plans be formulated to erect a church building in the Pinecraft area for public worship services."

Residence of Negro Mennonites in Newtown, near Gospel Chapel.

This action resulted in the building of the Palmgrove Conservative Amish Mennonite Church in the addition originally named "Homecroft" but now included in the general area known by the older name, "Pinecraft." On March 30, 1954, David Miller, Edward Yoder and Clarence Miller, "trustees of the Palm Grove Conservative Mennonite Church of Pinecraft," purchased a plot of ground two hundred forty-four feet long, facing the north and south street running past the Pinecraft school building and extending one hundred eighty feet back from the street. The building, forty by eighty feet, of white stuccoed cement block construction, makes an imposing appearance.

The ministers and congregations of the Bayshore, Tuttle Avenue, Palm Grove and Tampa churches enjoy particularly amicable relations. They cooperate in a quarterly Sunday school meeting and in the annual four-week "Shekinah Bible School" held each January in the Tuttle Avenue Church. Over two hundred people, old and young, from nineteen states and one Canadian province registered for the 1957 school and attendance at some of the evening sessions exceeded two hundred fifty.

Beginnings in Sarasota County

The Mennonite hegira to Sarasota County was sparked by a hunting-fishing trip to Florida by five young Amish men in the winter of 1924-25. They equipped a truck with tent-like double-deck sleeping quarters and visited Tampa and Miami, cooking their meals enroute. One of the group, Moses Kurtz, of Ohio, played the mandolin; the others told him that they would cook the meals if he would play his instrument. The young men were delighted with the winter climate of Florida and the opportunities for remunerative employment at the building trades. The next fall, Moses Kurtz persuaded his father, Daniel D. Kurtz, to spend the winter in Florida. They drove to Florida with a young friend in the latter's automobile. Kurtz' wife, two younger sons and three daughters followed him to Tampa by train. They were accompanied by several other Amish families for whom the Kurtz family provided shelter while they were finding a home.

During their residence in Tampa, Kurtz learned of a tract of muck land, "Venice Farms," about seventy miles farther south. There a development company promised productive land and easy access to good markets. Daniel Kurtz and several others purchased lots in Venice Farms in the fall of 1926, but the venture resulted in disappointment. The tannic acid that developed from the decaying pencil-like palmetto roots stunted or killed most of the plants cultivated by the new settlers and for the crops that

Mennonites in Florida play a large part in the production of pascal celery to be shipped north. After the ground is prepared (above) a celery setting machine plants five rows simultaneously (right). Celery is harvested and placed in baskets (below) for transport north.

did mature there was no market because the development company was unable to keep its promise to provide markets for the muck crops. Watermelons that did mature could not be sold for even a nickel each.

Thoroughly disheartened and disillusioned by his reverses in Venice Farms, Daniel Kurtz was ready to give up farming and to devote all his time to the carpenter trade. But his wife visited the Palmer Farms development about seven miles east of Sarasota Bay and persuaded her husband to invest about five thousand dollars in a partially cleared tract of muck land with water rights on November 1, 1928. He built a substantial cement block house, still in excellent condition and now faced with permastone. In Venice he purchased twelve cottages of the prefabricated type, dismantled them and had them transported to his new land purchase to house the host of seasonal workers needed to cultivate, harvest and market the muck crops. Later he rented an additional six acres. His brother-in-law, Roman Miller (now deceased) purchased twenty acres near by. The Kurtz and Miller families moved to their new vegetable lands in the fall of 1928-29. These Amish families and their young friends, who came to Florida to seek winter-time employment, formed the nucleus of the present Amish and Mennonite settlement in the city and county of Sarasota.

Early Religious Services

From the time of their first arrival in Tampa in the fall of 1926 the Amish decided that they must not neglect holding religious services. No minister being present, they conducted a kind of informal Sunday school or Bible reading. Without formal organization by the election of officers they merely began at the first chapter of Matthew reading chapter after chapter from their German New Testaments each Sunday until they returned to their northern homes in the spring about April 1. They marked their New Testaments so that they would know where to begin in the fall.

The first Amish worship services in Florida were conducted by Moses Coblentz, an Amish bishop, the father of Mrs. Daniel Kurtz and Mrs. Roman Miller. During the winter of 1928-29 he held services in their two homes alternately. The next winter two Amish Mennonite families from Fulton County,Ohio, the Menno Nofzigers and the Jacob Griesers, joined the Amish families and met with them in their worship services. By 1930-31 when the resident families and the Amish boys who helped in the vegetable fields could no longer be accommodated in the homes, the group had services in the Tatum Ridge school house about a mile east of the Daniel Kurtz home for four years. Mennonites, Amish Mennonites and Conservative Amish Mennonites met with the Amish in their services and visiting ministers of any of the groups would be invited to preach after Sunday school.

By 1934-35 an English class was organized for some northern visitors unfamiliar with the German language. When a violent windstorm blew the school building off its foundation the next fall, the Myron Yoders, who were the first Mennonite family to make Sarasota their "summer and winter" home, secured permission from the Board of Public Instruction of Sarasota County to conduct Sunday school and church services in the Fruitville public school building about four miles nearer Pinecraft which was becoming something of an Amish and Mennonite winter residential center. Now for the first time the Sunday school with John F. Slabaugh of Goshen, Indiana, elected as superintendent, was conducted for the most part in English. "Singings" continued in the Amish homes on Sunday evenings. But a group of Mennonites and others also held an open-air outdoor religious service in Pinecraft. A Conservative Amish Mennonite minister usually preached a sermon following the service. Later they initi-

ated an outdoor young people's meeting held in the evening. The number was small, seldom over fifty, and members of all the Amish and Mennonite groups needed each other for a satisfactory social and religious fellowship. So long as no conference organized a congregation, members of all groups worshipped together, sang each other's hymns, and heard each other's ministers preach. Bearded Amishmen, their wives and daughters wearing the prescribed cape, black hose, full pleated skirt and devotional headdress, worshipped with the more conventionally dressed Mennonites and both groups were equally at home with the Conservative Amish Mennonites who formed a sort of cultural link between the other two.

This amalgamation as already mentioned resulted in 1941 in unique official action by the associated groups. They learned that the Board of Public Instruction of Sarasota County intended to sell the Fruitville school building in which they were holding their Sunday morning worship service. On February 23, 1941, Bishop Eli B. Stoltzfus, of Aurora, Ohio, a member of the Ohio and Eastern A. M. Conference who happened to be visiting in Sarasota, presided at an organization meeting (184 being present) which elected trustees for the Mennonite, Conservative and Amish Church of Sarasota, Florida.

From this parent organization, as already mentioned, have sprung the Bayshore Mennonite, Tuttle Avenue Mennonite and Palmgrove Conservative Mennonite congregations, each with its own meetinghouse, program of weekly services and separate board of trustees, as well as an Old Order Amish congregation meeting in the home of Levi Yoder in Pinecraft on Sunday afternoons. In addition to these five is the Lancaster Conference congregation meeting in the Pinecraft church.

During the period of gas rationing the number of winter visitors declined sharply; but in recent years the Mennonite and Amish population has been making prodigious gains. This population is made up of three groups: people from a dozen or more northern states who are building or buying dwellings and making Florida their permanent year-round home; a large number who maintain their northern home but purchase a Sarasota property for a winter residence; and a constantly growing number who rent a house or an apartment or who occupy a unit in a motel for from one or two to eight or ten weeks to escape the coldest winter season in the north.

The official membership figures of the Mennonite congregations in Sarasota County and city do not register accurately the permanent Mennonite population. Following baptismal services at Bayshore in February, 1957, the membership was 189. On account of the number of young families at Bayshore and Tuttle Avenue the number of year-round residents is considerably larger than the membership figures indicate (Tuttle Avenue, 56). At all but the Bayshore church, however, attendance at the Sunday services is very small in summer. At the regular preaching services at the Tuttle Avenue, Pinecraft and Palmgrove the churches' attendance fell below fifty during the past summer.

But the scene changes as winter approaches. Every fall the northerners arrive a little earlier and they remain longer in the spring. In the Bayshore and Tuttle Avenue areas and in Pinecraft where many Mennonite-owned residences stand empty during the summer months, November and December witness the return of the owners. Lawns revive, gardens are planted and automobiles hum along the quiet streets. Church attendance soon doubles and trebles and Sunday morning offerings rise in proportion. But after Christmas and New Year the annual stampede of tourists fills every church to the doors. Even in December the Bayshore congregation found it necessary to provide two worship services, one at nine and the other at eleven with the Sunday school hour in between at ten. During February the ushers carried chairs from the Sunday school rooms to accommodate the overflow audiences on the broad sidewalks in front of the church. To make it possible for the local congregation to be together for baptismal services and the reception of a class of applicants for membership, it was necessary to hold a special midweek service in the evening. Since a large proportion of the winter residents are older people their gray heads lend a distinctive character to a Sunday morning congregation. A few who leave the freezing temperature in the North, find the mid-day eighty to eighty-five readings rather oppressive at first.

What Attracts Mennonites to Florida?

What induces the northern Mennonite and Amishman to choose Florida as his permanent residence or to return year after year for the winter season? The climate, undoubtedly, is a large factor. To enjoy spring or fall and even summer temperatures while northerners are enduring the hazards of icy streets, suffering broken bones and skidding cars, is in itself a prime inducement to live in Florida. Balmy breezes, blooming semi-tropical flowers, singing birds all lend their bit of charm. Climate and economical living conditions were a leading attraction for the first Amish and Mennonite settlers in the Sarasota area. Located on the Gulf coast instead of the Atlantic, Sarsota is not subject to damage from the destructive hurricanes that periodically ravage the east coast of the state. Situated only a short distance from the Gulf, the area enjoys a milder climate and is less liable to frost damage than Tampa fifty miles farther north. There some of the first Amish and Mennonites settled and there the Lancaster Mennonite Conference still conducts two missions and a school for the children of the Spanish descendants of the Cuban cigarmakers attracted to "Ybor City" in Tampa when northern tobacco processors moved their factories south to avoid labor trouble. Congenial living conditions attract thousands of northerners to Sarasota every year, especially older people, who remain for the winter season.

Leisure and Work

But to attract Amish and Mennonites as permanent residents a location must offer more than agreeable weather conditions. It must provide job opportunities and modest financial rewards for the farmer, the laborer, the artisan. These, the Sarasota-Pinecraft area offers. Mennonites and Amish who make Florida their permanent home are builders and farmers. The Bayshore congregation includes contractors, carpenters, masons, plumbers, cement workers, lawn caretakers, teachers, nurses, saleswomen, cabinet makers and at least one realtor whose name appears regularly among those who have made sales. Three members of the congregation are members of the Palmer Farms Cooperative Growers Association which raises, processes and ships truckload after truckload and carload after carload of pascal celery to northern markets from December to May. Two of them are the Florida representatives for the celebrated "Bil-Jax, Inc." steel scaffolding and add materially to their annual income in this manner. Members of the other congregations list in addition to some of these occupations a radish grower, hardware dealer, groceryman, restaurant owner, and a produce merchant. One member and his family are doing well raising and packing the highly prized "Bibb Lettuce." At the beginning of the present season they purchased two hundred thousand artistically lettered plastic bags in which their product appears in selected stores in the Sarasota area. The pastor of the Bayshore congregation, until a year ago a part-time painter, is now receiving full-time support by means of monthly offerings. He conducts "The Sunday School Hour," presented each Sunday morning over the local radio station and meets with the Bayshore Radio Chorus each Tuesday evening to practice and record the program. The pastor of the Tuttle Avenue Church works half time at the carpenter trade and receives the remainder of his support from free-will offerings. He also presents a fifteen minutes gospel radio broadcast each Sunday morning following the "Sunday School Hour." The pastor of the Palmgrove Church works as a painter and serves part-time as an evangelist. One of the Pinecraft preachers is employed as vegetable man at one of the "Qwik-Chek" grocery chain stores.

A few years ago a post-graduate sociology student at the University of Florida made a careful study of the Bayshore congregation and concluded that the Mennonite community in Sarasota had the necessary economic and sociological foundation to insure its permanence as a religious organization. Its solidarity, its fine Christian fellowship and its spirit of unity amid diversity promise well for its future growth and influence in the city.

AUSBUND

By JOH. P. CLASSEN

Ausbund is a name of the oldest Swiss Anabaptist songbook, which has been in use since the days of the Reformation. No doubt many people including those who are still using the *Ausbund* in their worship services have been and are wondering what this title means. During the days of the origin of the songbook *Ausbund* many other books appeared under this title. This title was particularly popular with secular and folk songs.

In present-day German the word "Ausbund" implies as a rule that a person is unruly, wild or unusually bad. During the sixteenth century, "Ausbund" meant just the opposite. It was something or somebody very desirable, beautiful and model. It could also mean top performance, the best available. It is in this manner that the title *Ausbund* originated and a selection of early Anabaptist hymns was thus designated. The title implied that the editor had selected the best hymns.

(See article, "Early German Anabaptist Hymn Books," *Mennonite Life,* April, 1957, page 61.)

Audio-Visual Aids for Church and Community

As a service to churches and communities, *Mennonite Life* has available various materials on the story of the Christian church. The following is a partial listing of these.

1. The widely-acclaimed *Martin Luther* film is refreshing and challenging. If you have not seen it, arrange to have it shown. Some communities make a practice of showing it every year in connection with Reformation Sunday.

2. A color film strip with sound entitled, *The Living Church,* in three parts with accompanying sound record, is now available. This film strip includes a treatment of the Mennonites in its presentation of the Christian church from its beginning to the present. Excellent for youth meetings and church family nights.

3. Two colored slide sets with scripts entitled, *The Middle Ages* and *The Protestant Reformation* have been secured from *Life* magazine. Either set will be found useful for program or study material.

4. Colored slides with scripts are available on the Mennonites in various countries as well as on Mennonite institutions and activities. We are constantly adding to these slides. A unique series of slides on Mennonites in art is in preparation.

For details concerning reservations, rental fees, etc., write to *Mennonite Life,* North Newton, Kansas.

Out of darkness—two refugeees make it to the Austrian border.

Century of

By JOHN H.

PROBABLY never before in the history of mankind have so many people been forced to flee or been driven out of their homelands (over 35 million since World War II alone) as in this "modern, progressive" twentieth century.

Just What Is a Refugee?

The *Oxford Universal Dictionary* states that a refugee is ". . . One who, owing to religious persecution or political troubles, seeks refuge in a foreign country . . ." And yet this definition would not include millions of uprooted peoples, since they are still living in their own countries, nominally at least; witness Korea, Viet Nam, and Germany, to mention only a few of the most obvious ones. Yes, there are many shades of meaning to this word "refugee" nowadays.

In Austria, officialdom has arbitrarily labeled three categories of stateless persons as follows: 1) Displaced Persons, 2) Expellees, 3) Escapees. The first group includes mostly eastern Europeans, who were brought to Germany during the war to work in the war arsenal. Though now in the minority as a result of activity by the International Refugee Organization (IRO), these people have perhaps gone through the most hardships. They are the ones, who have been living in crowded barrack camps for nearly a decade and a half. The term, "expellee," usually refers to ethnic Germans, who fled before advancing Soviet armies, or were forced out of Eastern Europe, during and immediately following the war. Finally, the large horde of unfortunates, who escaped from their respective homelands after the Iron Curtain was rung down, have been named "escapees." A subdivision, so to speak, of this last category would include the "New Hungarians," as those of that nationality were called who have escaped since October 23, 1956.

The World Council of Churches through its Division

Fleeing through the snow-covered woods toward freedom and hope.

Gypsies among the Hungarian refugees at reception center.

the Refugee

I. HARSHBARGER

of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees has, since its inception, attempted to ameliorate the conditions of uprooted peoples, wherever they might be found throughout the world. This has been done in various ways, and it has been a great privilege for me to be able to help in my own small capacity as a resettlement officer in the W.C.C. service to refugees office in Salzburg, Austria.

Helping the Refugee

The job in the Resettlement Department had many facets. The first task was to interview the refugee and counsel with him as to his best chance for resettlement in the light of the immigration programs being sponsored by various countries and of his own aptitudes and desires. Some governments operated labor schemes through their foreign services, W.C.C. lending to the refugee moral, advisory, and monetary support when needed. In other countries sponsorship schemes were in operation, and our overseas offices then played a direct part in procuring these sponsorships through the churches.

In any case, the second step of our operation involved assembling a so-called "dossier" on each case (single person or family). This file included a basic immigration form, containing the refugee's personal data, amount of education, language abilities, work history, health condition, and the general impression of the interviewer regarding the applicant. Also present were photos, professional documents, and work recommendations wherever available. These dossiers were then sent in several copies via our Geneva headquarters to the respective overseas office, where it was used either directly or indirectly, as the scheme demanded.

A church converted into refugee reception center.

It was then more or less a job of guiding the applicant through the usual maze of red tape attached to consular processing for a visa. There would be medical examination (principally X-rays), collecting of personal documents, i.e. birth certificates and other pertinent pa-

A refugee is registered and interviewed by WCC worker.

A typical refugee camp—the only home many thousands have.

pers, procuring a travel document, and appearance for personal interview (usually after a long period of waiting) at the respective consulate. All this activity also cost money, and W.C.C., if need be, was always ready to give the necessary amount to the refugee on a loan basis to be repaid in the country of immigration.

The final stage was to help the emigrant in his final preparations for departure, more specifically in his arrangements with the Austrian government, such as the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Finance, and customs officials. In addition to this advisory assistance, there was the ship or air booking to be made, and the arrangements for inland travel to be settled. Finally, very often it was our privilege to stand on the train platform and wave goodbye to migrants going forth into a new future.

Of course, at every stage of the aforementioned processings, snags could be struck. The road almost never ran as smoothly as it appears on paper. If the applicant was rejected anywhere along the line it was our job to console him and begin all over with the counseling. At any given time, W.C.C. had in its files cases of people who had been waiting as much as four or five years for their plans to materialize. To counsel with these people to remain patient was seldom an easy job. Ten years or more after entering the West, some refugees are still sitting in camps today and staring a meaningless future in the face.

Ethnic Germans and Others

At the time I entered upon my duties in Austria during the closing months of 1952, there were in that small country over 250,000 refugees, made up of all three of the aforementioned groups. The majority, however, were ethnic Germans, and so there was sincere hope that many of them would be able to integrate into the Austrian economy and life. This hope proved to be well-founded during the course of the following years, since many of the ethnic Germans decided to do just that.

However, for the seventy-odd thousand non-ethnic Germans, or foreign speaking refugees as we called them in Austria, the problem was different and more difficult. Furthermore, this number was being constantly added to during my entire period of service by a steady influx of new escapees.

Because the majority of them did not know the German language well enough, they were relegated for the most part to the menial tasks of the economy, ones which were unskilled. Therefore, very few could visualize any type of a secure future within the extremely stratified Austrian economy. On the other hand, for reasons too complex to be entered upon here, several major countries of immigration preferred ethnic Germans to non-Germanic immigrants in their programs. One can see the dilemma which was presented.

Fortunately, an organization was called into being in 1952 by the United States government, which was designed specifically to alleviate the position of these unfortunates. It came to be known as the United States Escapee Program (USEP), and considered as its responsibility all non-ethnic German refugees, who had escaped from behind the Iron Curtain after January 1, 1948. These escapees were issued food, clothing, and the entire costs of their emigration processing were assumed by USEP. Food and clothing were only to be issued, however, in case of genuine need. Finally the ship or air passage to their country of immigration was paid. All refugees of the aforementioned category, who were successfully screened by the security office of USEP, were eligible for these benefits.

A refugee camp on the outskirts of Linz, Austria.

W.C.C. and the half-dozen other voluntary agencies helping refugees were given the job of administering these benefits. We had our established caseloads and knew pretty well which of our applicants were most in need. However, we then had the thankless job of being mediator, whenever a refugee was found ineligible for USEP benefits for some reason. We were to advise the applicant of his ineligibility, and attempt to ascertain whether or not there might be a ground for asking reconsideration of the decision. In recognition of the work involved in dealing with "USEP cases," each voluntary agency was allowed a certain amount of money for its payrolls. In addition, there were other special projects for helping the refugees. Although often encumbered with red tape this organization became an integral part of the total refugee picture, especially in Austria.

Two other organizations, which proved indispensible to the movement of refugees on a large scale, should also be mentioned here. One was the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In each country the deputy representative dealt with the problem on a governmental level. The UNHCR was instrumental in calling into being several special programs for placing difficult-to-resettle cases. Special monies are also allocated by the parent United Nations for making

possible some of these programs, as well as for integration in the country of residence.

Originally conceived only as a huge "passage booking agency," the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) has grown into a large concern of 27 nations, operating in the spirit of, but outside the framework of, the U.N. It has, for several years, been running special programs for migration between its member nations, not limiting itself only to refugees. However, it is still the organization which moves the refugee. All passages (air or sea) booked by the voluntary agencies are made through ICEM. In this way, substantial reductions in fares can usually be obtained.

Cooperation between the Austrian government, the UNHCR, ICEM, USEP, and the voluntary agencies was usually at a maximum, since each realized how important the others were to the total picture.

By autumn of 1956, the number of refugees remaining unsettled in Austria had dwindled steadily to the point, where we could conceive of an end to the problem, even if that end was not yet in sight. In other words, the number of refugees moving out exceeded that of the new ones coming in.

The Hungarian Crisis

Then the dam burst! On November 4 the Soviet armies dealt their crushing blow to the Hungarian freedom fighters, and the following month saw Austria flooded with over 100,000 new Hungarian refugees. No one was prepared for this unusual onslaught of new escapees, and the country was literally inundated. Without thought of any assistance from the West, Austria threw wide its doors, and the inflowing unfortunates were given all the assistance which it was possible to give, but it was not enough. It became immediately apparent that the situation was impossible. European countries began following up their shipments of food, clothing, and medical goods with offers of second asylum for portions of the overwhelming numbers pouring into Austria.

ICEM took over the job of coordinating the work of the selection missions sent by the various nations and, of course, had full control of the transportation of the new Hungarians. But the job was too big, and ICEM called on the voluntary agencies to provide workers who could help with the tremendous registration, which was a bare minimum necessity.

It was my privilege to work for two weeks in Graz, where every day we registered for the United Kingdom selection mission refugees who had crossed the border only the previous night. Between 120 and 140 Hungarians were registered, visaed, and flown to London every day for a period of approximately 10 days, but this represented only a fraction of the almost 1,000 refugees a day being brought into Graz during the same period of time. At the peak of the movement, 10,000 Hungarians were crossing the border every 24 hours. Other missions were, of course, also active at the time. Despite the efforts of these nations (the U.S. took 21,500), there remain in Austria at present time approximately 60,000 "new" Hungarian escapees—this on top of the well over 100,000 refugees still there from previous years.

Yes, this is the age of the refugee. Dedicated Christian workers are needed in this type of work, since behind all the numbers must be seen individuals, each with his own particular problems, hopes, and fears. Each person must be counseled in the light of his own personality. Mainly because of the lack of sufficient funds, it is very rarely possible to have enough counselors to be able to give the individual attention to each case which would be desirable. The Lord's guidance is needed at all times in working with people, but especially with the uprooted and homeless, who are in a totally strange situation and many times don't know where to turn.

We Christians in a land of plenty must look on assistance to these millions of unfortunates not only as a duty but also as a great privilege. No matter how much we help, there will be more suffering. And the Lord has pointed the way.

THE LOST CHORD

(Continued from page 99)

> They daily sigh and lament over their poor, unsatisfactory evil flesh, over the manifest errors and faults of their weak lives. Their inward and outward war is without ceasing. Their sighing and calling is to the most High. Their fight and struggle is against the devil, world, and flesh all their days, pressing on toward the prize of the high calling that they may obtain it.[1]

Could it be that this sense of the filthiness of our best righteousness is what needs to be re-emphasized in our preaching and prayer? Is it the lost chord?

Well, of course much more needs to be said, especially about the relation of this idea of confession to the idea of a believers' church, or again of the relation of this type of continual corporate confessing to the type of special individual confessions that are now such a Mennonite custom. Yet I feel the basic thesis rings true and if the symphony of Mennonite piety will again be played with the richness of yesteryear, then it will be pitched not only to the negative chord of pride in separation from the world, but it will also be pitched to the even broader chord of humility before the perfect holiness of the Most High God our Father.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Pierre Widmer. *Mennonite Life*, Vol. IV, No. 2, April 1949, page 24.
[2] *Menno Simons, The Complete Writings of*, Herald Press, 1956, page 113.
[3] *Ibid.* page 78. [4] *Ibid.* page 95.

The Mennonites of

Commemorate Fifty Years

By F. L. and AN

A group of settlers make a temporary camp for the winter.

THE BUSY little town of Aberdeen, Idaho, with its modern homes, its churches, schools, and business houses, nestles in the midst of a prosperous farming community that has the distinction of being in the second largest potato producing county of the United States. The Idaho Russet Potato, grown here, is nationally known for its superior quality.

Transforming a Desert

Fifty years ago the Mennonites, who were among the first to arrive with the intention of establishing their homes here, found it a sagebrush plain; the domain of the cattleman. They scarcely visualized the change which time would bring about. They were encouraged by the promise of water for irrigation. The Aberdeen-Springfield Canal, which was under construction, was to bring the water for the irrigation of 65,000 acres of this desert area.

The varied background of these first settlers is indicated by the names taken from the list of charter members of the church which they organized; Bartel, Dirks, Enns, Fast, Hege, Hunsinger, Leisy, Schroeder, Tiahrt, Toevs, Wedel, and Wenger. The origin of these Mennonite people traces back to the countries of Europe where the Mennonite faith had its beginning, namely, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland. One group came directly to the United States and finally to Aberdeen. To another group, who stood firm on the Mennonite doctrine of non-resistance, the road to Aberdeen was a long way, full of privation and hardship which they endured in order to live the faith so precious to them. These people of diverse and heterogeneous backgrounds united to form what today is known as the First Mennonite Church of Aberdeen.

Credit goes to F. B. Wedel of Newton, Kansas, for promoting an interest in this western land. According to information given by his son, the churches of Goessel and Gnadenberg in central Kansas delegated Wedel to look for a place where a new settlement for Mennonites might be started. While in Montana he met W. H. Philbrick, a business and stockman of American Falls, Idaho, who told him of a tract of land to be irrigated, lying across the river north of American Falls; this land was to be opened up for settlement in the near future. At one time, Philbrick had been connected with one of the banks in Newton, Kansas. Having had an opportunity to become acquainted with the Mennonite people he was anxious to locate a settlement there. Upon investigation, Wedel became an enthusiastic booster for this country. Here was a place where the crowded conditions of the Mennonite settlements could find an overflow.

Encouraged by Wedel, the brethren G. A. Bartel, Will Bartel, Henry Toevs, John Toevs, and M. Wenger came out to see the land and made a filing.

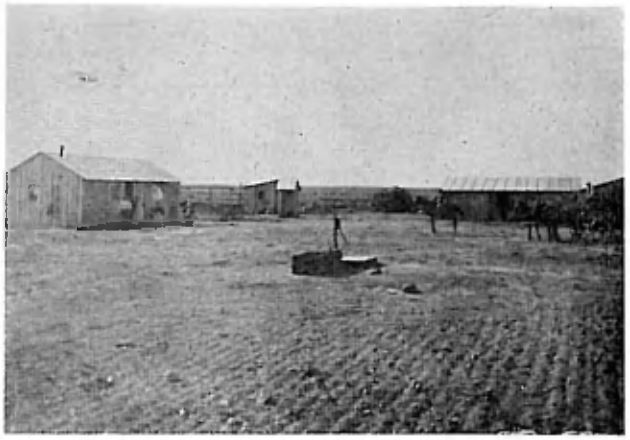
In the Aberdeen area land, including the water-right, sold for $25.50 per acre. This land was about 600 miles from Colfax, Washington, the nearest General Conference Mennonite Church. Soon delegates from other communities began coming in.

Town of Aberdeen looking southwest about 1922 and the Main Street of Aberdeen looking north, about 1949.

# of Aberdeen, Idaho

rs in Community Building

ANNA WENGER



First house of John Toevs in the spring of 1907.

In the fall of 1906, a number of families from Kansas and California were added to the few who had already come out earlier. The next two years saw an influx of more people from other Mennonite communities. To some the new community offered opportunities to establish places of business. The majority, however, settled on the land where they found much hard work awaiting them. Temporary homes were erected, the land cleared of sagebrush and prepared for irrigation. Others settled on the dry land west of the irrigated land. The Turkey Red Wheat, which had been brought out by some of the people from Kansas yielded satisfactorily. Later, when on account of diminishing rainfall and the ravages of gophers and jack rabbits, crops began to fail, many settlers became discouraged and moved away.

Places of Worship

The need for a place of worship and a school was keenly felt from the beginning. Worship services as well as the Sunday school, which was organized Oct. 28, 1906, were held in a small tent. This also served for the first German school held here. Marie Wedel served as teacher. Later services were held in the Hege and Hunsinger homes.

In the year 1907 a permanent school building, known as the Central School, was erected. There being no school district the people donated the labor and material for this building. Later the cash contributions were refunded after the organization of a district. This building also served as a place of worship for the steadily increasing numbers.

Jacob Hege, who had arrived from California, organized the Salem Mennonite Church, later known as the First Mennonite Church of Aberdeen, on July 4, 1907 with a charter membership of 36. Five of these are still members of the present church. J. P. Wedel was the first deacon of the church.

After having served the church for two years, Hege accepted a call to serve a small group farther west in the dry farm area. The Salem church invited J. B. Baer, who had purchased some land here, to serve as pastor. During his pastorate (1909-1911) the congregation decided to build a permanent house of worship in town. This building was dedicated in the year 1910 and the church was subsequently known as the First Mennonite Church of Aberdeen.

On account of some dissatisfaction and other differences, among which was the language issue, a number of families withdrew their membership from the First Mennonite Church and joined with the group being served by Jacob Hege. This church was known as the Emmanuel Mennonite Church. Even though there had been differences, these two churches worked in harmony side by side.

Original building of the First Mennonite Church and (right) Jacob Hege, who organized and was first pastor of the church.

Heading wheat on the Schroeder homestead and early years on the John Toevs place with growing fruit trees.

About this time several other small groups were organized to serve those widely scattered people in the dry farm area, namely: The Mennonite Brethren, the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren and the Congregationalists. As the population diminished and dry farming was no longer profitable these churches were disbanded.

After Jacob Hege of the Emmanuel church was no longer able to serve, the brethren Leonard Dirks and John Toevs were called to the ministry. Dirks was chosen by lot to the office of elder.

A matter which concerned both churches was the hostile attitude of some among the non-Mennonite population during World War I. Being of German descent and of a non-resistant faith, the Mennonites were thought to be in sympathy with the enemy and were charged with disloyalty.

In the early years, a twenty-bed hospital, known as the Bethany Deaconness Hospital, was built in American Falls. F. B. Wedel was instrumental in the organization and erection of this institution. Upon his resignation as manager, the two churches joined in its operation until it was sold to the Bureau of Reclamation to clear the right-of-way for the American Falls Reservoir. Of the $19,000 proceeds, $12,000 was given, by vote of the Hospital Association, to the General Conference Mission Board. One half was given for a hospital in India and one half for one in China. After deducting expenses the balance and the hospital equipment was given to Power County for a new county hospital at American Falls.

The minister of the two churches co-operated in serving the Mennonite communities at DuBois and Minidoka, Idaho. One cemetery served both churches.

About the year 1919, on account of dry years and poor crops, the Mennonite people who had settled near DuBois, Idaho, decided to give up their homesteads and move elsewhere. A number came to Aberdeen, some joining the First Mennonite Church and others the Emmanuel Mennonite Church. Names represented in this group were: Friesen, Schmidt, Isaak, Dalke, Brandt, Lehrman, and Ensz.

Following the death of Leonard Dirks, John Toevs was installed elder of the Emmanuel church in 1920. Toev's failing health was the principal factor that brought about the decision to accept the invitation of the First Mennonite Church to join their fellowship in 1929.

Following the resignation of J. B. Baer of the First Mennonite Church, Pletz, a Baptist minister who resided here, filled the pulpit. Of the three evangelists chosen from the membership to serve the church, Henry Toevs was the only one to accept the charge. He served until E. J. Neuenschwander became the first full-time pastor

(Left) Aberdeen settlers gathered for a Bethel College reunion, 1908.

(Below) View of American Falls Dam, American Falls, Idaho.

Homestead of D. J. Becker, owned by his son, David D. Becker, and residence of J. D. Toevs.

in 1914. During his ministry the $4,000 parsonage was built. Then followed the pastorates of E. D. Schmidt (1920-1922) and M. J. Galle (1922-1929). In the fall of 1929, John E. Kaufman became pastor of the First Mennonite Church, (1929-1936). Soon after his arrival Kaufman welcomed those coming from the Emmanuel church, as members into their fellowship. In the fall of 1928 a number of families withdrew and joined with others to form the Assembly of God Church, in Aberdeen.

A Growing Church

It soon became evident that more room was required to accommodate this increase in membership. Accordingly, plans were made for an addition to the original church building. A basement was dug and the concrete poured but the depression brought financial difficulties and it was decided to postpone building. This new addition, begun during Kaufman's term of service, was built and formally dedicated June 5, 1938, during the ministry of P. A. Wedel (1936-1944). Through the efforts of some of the churches, a Christian ethics class was taught by P. A. Wedel in the high school in Aberdeen. H. J. Brown, missionary on furlough from China, served as supply pastor (1944-1945).

Parsonage of the First Mennonite Church of Aberdeen.

During the pastorate of H. J. Harder (1945-1954) the church was again enlarged by an addition to the south, now known as the educational building. An apartment house, adjacent to the church, was also purchased and remodeled for additional Sunday school classrooms.

Working through the Evangelization Committee of the Pacific District Conference, Harder took an active part in promoting the organization of the Sweet Home Mission Church, Sweet Home, Oregon, the First Mennonite

First Mennonite Church of Aberdeen as remodeled 1938 and (below) Educational Building of the Church.

Representative homes of the Aberdeen community. (Left) Home of Carl Hege and (right) home of Armin Schroeder.

Church of Caldwell, and the Faith Memorial Mennonite Church at Filer, Idaho.

Following Harder's pastorate, Rudolf Toews became our supply pastor while Walter H. Dyck, who had accepted a call to serve the church, was given a year's leave of absence to work among the Mennonites in Uruguay and Paraguay.

Each year a series of Pre-Easter evangelistic meetings are arranged. The church also joins with three other Protestant churches of our town for a union service on Thanksgiving Day, Good Friday, and World's Day of Prayer. The church sponsored the Jan Alma family, immigrants from the Netherlands.

As a service to shut-ins the pastor's messages are tape-recorded and brought to the homes. Other homes are connected to the loud speaker by wire. A number of substantial memorial gifts have been given to the church and missions in memory of loved ones.

The church owes a debt of gratitude to the ministers who have served down through the years and have led us in our worship and held before us the need of a deeper consecration and devotion. The church has had the joy of sending out missionaries and ministers of the Gospel. The missionaries include: LaVerne (Linscheid) Boschman, Esther Wiebe, Paul Wenger, Malcolm Wenger, Henry D. Becker, Florence (Wiebe) Nickel, and Wilma (Harder) Friesen. Among the ministers are Peter Becker, Arthur Isaak, Paul Isaak, Willard Wiebe, Edgar Toevs, and Arthur Wenger. A number have entered the field of Voluntary Service. One has served in a Pax Unit. In late years most of our young men have gone into 1-W service. Several of the pastors who served here have held positions of responsibility in both the Pacific District and General Conferences.

The church joined the Pacific District Conference in 1907 and the General Conference in 1917. It is the second largest of the eight churches in Aberdeen and has a membership of 325. It is exceeded in membership only by the Mormon Church.

The Sunday school is an active organization of the church. Besides the Bible study classes, a Daily Vacation Bible school is held, a teacher training class is sponsored, and a library of well chosen books is maintained. A Sunday school picnic is an annual event. The total enrollment in the four departments is 283. In the year 1924, during the time of the late H. C. Wiebe, who served as superintendent for 25 years, an effort was made to organize a Sunday school in one of the neighboring communities.

There are two Christian Endeavor societies. Besides their regular activities the young people sponsor their annual Young People's Bible Conference. They also go to the mountain for a few days of Bible study and recreation. The juniors also have their retreat.

Besides the Sunday school and Christian Endeavor there are five ladies and girls mission societies, a brotherhood, two boys' clubs, and a disaster service group. These organizations each have their own projects in the missionary and relief activities of the church.

The church choir, organized in the early years, adds a worshipful attitude to the church services. A Bethel College Fellowship promotes an interest in our church school.

Aberdeen Community

Aberdeen has a consolidated school district, with three large school buildings in town and two smaller ones in the country. Thirty-eight teachers are employed and approximately one thousand pupils are in attendance. Eleven school buses serve the system.

The town of Aberdeen has an estimated population of 1650 and is the terminus of a branch railroad coming from Blackfoot, 40 miles to the north. Built in 1911 it gave the community a much needed outlet for the produce of the area.

The best land on the tract, together with one of the best water-rights on the Snake River, gives the Aberdeen community the distinction of being the second largest shipping point for potatoes in the state.

Idaho Russets are without doubt the number one cash crop. Many large potato storage cellars, some holding 300-400 carloads, are located in Aberdeen and surrounding area. Most of the potatoes are put into storage.

Later on they are run over the sorting table, graded and packed ready for shipment to the various markets. About 2,500 carloads are shipped out of this area annually. Sugar beets are also an important crop. Dairying, beef cattle, and sheep feeding are carried on quite extensively.

A newly-built potato starch factory processes low grade and cull potatoes. A Kraft Cheese factory and an apiary are other small industries located here. Aberdeen has two grain elevators, one of which is owned by a member of the church. One of the four potato warehouses, as well as a number of stores and business establishments are Mennonite owned.

In this area successful farming is largely limited to the availability of water for irrigation. In late years those who still owned dry farm lands began drilling wells, tapping what is believed to be one of the largest known underground reservoirs. In the Aberdeen area alone 114 wells for irrigation have been drilled. Adjacent to the town of Aberdeen is the largest experiment station in the state. It is operated jointly by the state of Idaho and the Federal Government.

Several men, former members of the church, have been closely associated with the work of the Experiment Station. Dr. G. A. Wiebe is head of the Field Crop Branch of the Cereal Crop Section of Agriculture Research Service in the United States Department of Agriculture. He is in charge of the barley work at the Aberdeen Experiment Station as well as all other similar stations in the United States. John L. Toevs has served as superintendent of the Experiment Station for a number of years. He also worked with the Bureau of Reclamation on the Columbia River Basin project. Toevs took an assignment to Yugoslavia with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. P. F. Funk has served two terms in the State Legislature and Peter Isaak two terms as County Commissioner of Bingham County.

Many other young men and young women of the church have attended colleges and universities to prepare for the work of their choice, such as: agriculture, engineering, science, medicine, nursing, dentistry, architecture, business administration, and education. They are holding various positions of responsibility in the local community and elsewhere.

Mennonites have taken an active part in various local organizations, such as: Commercial Club, Rotary, Farm Bureau, City Council; and as managers of the Aberdeen-Springfield-Canal Company and the local branch of the First Security Bank.

The church was host to the 1957 session of the Pacific District Conference. At this time the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the church was also commemorated.

Looking back over the past fifty years our hearts are filled with gratitude and praise. "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Ps. 126:3. In view of this, we are obligated, as Christians and citizens, to make a worthy contribution to church and community.

Young people leaving for a retreat session at Ketchum, Ida. (below) (Left) Riding the ski lift at Sun Valley, Idaho.

Mennonite Saga

By VONNA HICKS ADRIAN

Russia: Early Spring, 1874

Before the winter wheat rows greened in March,
  Migration fever burned in south Ukraine,
And Jakob stood and looked his last at level
  Acres, black and fertile, sown to grain
By his own hand, and deeded by that hand
(For half their worth) to swell another's land.

Odessa, Hamburg, Liverpool, the sea:
  Strange paths ahead for Jakob with the tide
Of peaceful Mennonites—the Dutch and German
  Farmers, flowing west from Russia's wide
Domains a century after Catherine's given
Word (invalid now) to grant a haven

To men who till the ground (as God bade Adam),
  A haven where none need wield the Russian saber,
Stamping Cain's red mark upon his brow
  By bearing arms in hate against a neighbor.
(Bright dream that pruning hooks and plowshares might
Replace the sword forever in God's sight!)

Westward tide, follow the prairie star,
Follow the star away from the land of the Czar.

Mid-Atlantic: Summer, 1874

The waters moved like wind-stirred harvest fields
  As Jakob watched, recalling how his wheat
Grew heavy headed in Ukrainia now,
  Rippling, ripe in fiercest summer heat;
And gray Atlantic merged within his brain
With amber Russian steppe and Kansas plain.

Then Jakob's fingers longed to sift the hard
  Red-kerneled seed wheat sleeping in the hold
Around the family goods his Anna'd laid
  Inside her painted household chests: the old
Black German Bible, hymn books, tin-lined copper
Kettles, butter molds, and all the proper

Gear for home and farm. But always, first,
  The seeds that promised gardens, fruit trees, shade:
The little rounded Russian watermelons,
  Mulberry hedges, soft and silver-grayed
Wild olive foliage moving in balmy wind,
Smooth apricots—all warm and golden-skinned
In sheltering leaves, and nodding sunflowers round
  The lonely homesteads. . . . So Jacob went below
To dream of morning dew on new-plowed land,
  Of sprouted wheat-rows safe beneath the snow,
Of wind across a sea of grain, and far
Off waving grass beneath a prairie star.

Westward tide, follow the prairie star,
Follow the star to skies where free men are!

Kansas: Late Summer, 1874

They came to Harvey County with a single
  Silver dollar and a sack—the last—
Of Anna's zwieback, toasted hard (for keeping)
  On Russian oven bricks full five months past.
They came to Harvey County with precious seed
Destined to make the Kansas granaries lead

The nation—Old World seed that found a second
  Home so like the first: the same fierce sun,
The drought, the piercing cold, the far-stretched plain—
  Even the soil that Jakob's grandsire won
On Dnieper's shore some ninety years gone by
  Lay fallow here beneath a western sky.

Mile on mile of blowing prairie grass
  And searing heat along the Santa Fe,
And wide and treeless plains beneath a wide
  High-clouded sky—and always, night and day,
The wind. But such a wind and wideness stood
For home to Jakob, Anna, and their brood.

Westward tide, in Kansas come to rest;
Under the prairie star you end your quest.

Kansas: 1874-1904

Labor and prayer, seed and harvest time:
  So the cycle ran. And daughters came,
And sons, to share the work. So Jakob throve
  And added acres to bear the family name,
While Anna taught her growing girls to make
Feather pillows, to render lard, and bake.

But when their Lena wed (the last of nine
  To leave the homestead) then the parents knew
That they were old. But children's children shouted
  Underneath the cottonwood and grew
As fast as tender shoots around the tree;
And far as old folks' dimming eyes could see.

Their land lay spread. Where once the wind found only
Prairie grass to ripple, now waved wheat
And corn and rustling groves around a thousand
Scattered wooden houses, bare and neat,
The homes of "Dutchmen," alien still on soil
They'd vanquished—alien, yet at home, but loyal

Still to speech and folkways brought from far
Away and long ago: the Penners, Friesens,
Harmses,Schmidts, the Klaassens, Kroekers, Ennses,
Schellenbergs, the Sudermanns and Riesens—
Names that marked the headstones under cedar
Boughs behind the church where *Kirchenlieder*

Rang on Sabbath mornings; where the women
Sat together, meek in bulbous, ample
Skirts whose pockets promised *Pfeffernüsse*
To wailing *Kinder* (thus the holy temple
Might be stilled) where many a wagging beard
Bespoke a grave regard for sacred Word.

Prairie sun, shine bright on peaceful farms
And churches—farms and churches, prairie charms!

Kansas: 1924

Beneath the cedars near that plain, white-painted
Church, they laid old Jakob when the fall
Had rounded out a full half-century since
The westward trek—a silver dollar all
His holdings then. But now the countryside
All talked of how the old man, when he died,

Bequeathed to each of nine an eighty-acre
Tract. (The neighbors had sometimes asked about
His fortune just to hear old Jakob say,
"Get out and plow the dew down under. Out
Before the sun! and keep on plowing till
The evening dewfall finds you plowing still.")

Prairie sun, smile down on field and town;
On peace and plenty, prairie sun, smile down.

Kansas: 1924-34

Old Anna followed Jakob in the spring,
And five stout sons and four plump daughters took
Her painted chests and gilded wooden bowls
Across the fields. To Menno's went the Book
That held the record of family births, a list
Of generations where such names persist

As Johann, Abe, Cornelius, Menno, Lena,
Isaak, Peter, Tina, Christian, Klaas.
And Menno, as the oldest, through the years
Grew more and more his father's child: could toss
More forks of hay than stalwart sons who shared
His task. (They always said he sometimes spared

His horses, but never, never spared the boys.)
"Seek pleasures *after* work," he often said,
But work was never done. Whenever Ike
Or Abe or Peter finished tasks and pled
For half a day of fishing, Menno sent
The boy to drudge at chores that he'd invent:

To clean the corners of his fences out,
To oil the harness, mend the henhouse door.
And yet the more they toiled in sun and wind
And breathed the prairie sweetness in, the more
The older two set value on the land,
For Abe and Isaak loved the soil and planned

To school themselves in farming lore. But Peter
Longed to leave the prairie for the East,
To teach and write and be a scholar there. . . .
Before the three were grown, the old ways ceased,
The old tongue passed away from church and farm.
Then only prairie sun and wind and storm

Remained of what the westward tide of migrant
Aliens knew. And Menno shook his head
At shiftless modern ways, and hoped before
He saw them seize his family, he'd be dead—
Far better dead than live so heathenish! . . .
The spring of '34 fulfilled his wish.

Prairie sun, and rain with clover sweet
Upon your breath, cherish our Kansas wheat.

Kansas: 1944

Abe and Isaak's wives drive station wagons
Into town, they paint their lips and nails
Geranium red, they picnic wearing shorts.
(Oh, do you see them through the smoky veils
That drift between the living souls and dead,
Old Jakob, Anna, Menno, in your bed

Beneath the cedars?) Both their households purchase
Bakers' bread in town; their milk they'd rather
Buy homogenized than keep a cow;
They often doubt it really pays to gather

(Continued from preceding page)

Eggs from one's own hens. (Lie still beneath
The ragged cedars, where the granite wreath

Encircles family names; lie still and never
Know your Isaak calls his first-born son
La Verne, your Abie's wife knows only *ja*
And *nein* in German, Peter took a gun
And killed in war. . . . Lie quiet now, for even
Yet the star that drew the tyrant-driven

Tide to freedom shines. And "the earth is the Lord's,"
His sacred trust to Adam's sons, your prairie
Children know. You bred it in them: "God Bade Adam till the ground"—hereditary
Knowledge even Peter shares, now far
Enough from home to watch the first pale star

With longing when it rises over westward
Rooftrees, far enough from home to lie
Awake and plot a pioneering tale
Of simple lives—your own to dignify.
So knowing birth and death and toil and rest,
Sleep soundly now in earth that God has blessed.)

Lord of earth, look down on prairie soil:
Lord of harvest, sun, and rain, and storms:
As prairie children bless Thee by their toil,
So bless Thou them, and smile on prairie farms.

Early Dutch Anabaptist Hymnbooks

By ROSELLA REIMER DUERKSEN

THE hymns of the Anabaptists of the Netherlands appear to have been used more freely in the books of their non-Anabaptist contemporaries than those of Anabaptists in any other region; for this reason, together with the fact that many early Dutch hymnbooks have been lost, it is impossible to make a conclusive list of their hymn collections. One of the earliest extant Dutch hymnbooks was printed by Magnus van den Merberghe van Osterhout in 1556. This hymnbook was known as the *Veelderhande Liedekens*. . . . Although it was very likely not an Anabaptist publication, but one of the Sacramentarian group,[1] it is of interest because it incorporated a large number of Anabaptist martyr hymns, and because the same title was later used for an Anabaptist book containing many of the same pieces. Non-Anabaptist publications with a similar title and similar contents appeared also in 1558 and 1563.

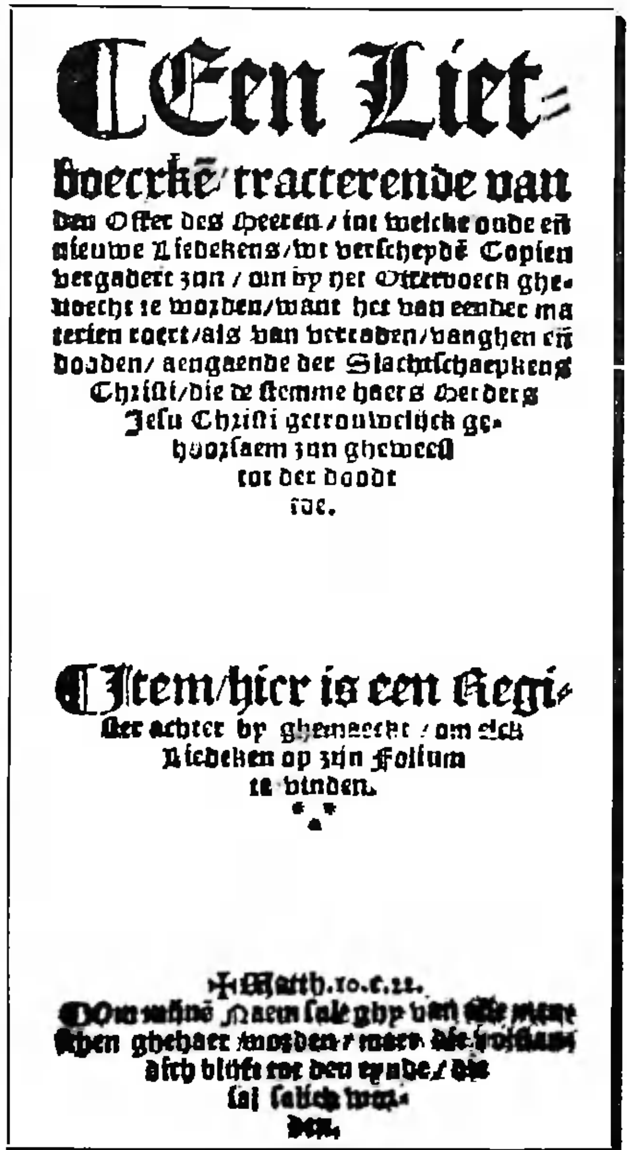
In 1566 there appeared a book with the title: *Veelderhande Liedekens gemaect wt den Ouden ende Nieuwen Testamente die voortijts in druck zijn wtgegaen: Waer toe noch veel Liedekens ghestelt zijn die noyt in druck geweest en hebben ende zijn in ordinige van den A B C by den andern gevoecht.*[2] According to F. C. Wieder, Dutch scholar of hymnody, this book, published by N. Biestkens, is the oldest copy in existence of the *Veelderhande Liedekens* published by the Dutch Anabaptists;[3] but there is strong evidence to believe that this Dutch Anabaptist publication had two previous editions: the first on May 28, 1560, and second on February 19, 1562.[4] Both of these books are now lost; but if they actually existed, they would indicate that the Dutch were the first among the Anabaptists to publish their hymnody. The popularity of this book is evidenced by the many subsequent publications: another in 1566, others in 1569, 1575, 1577, 1579 (two editions), 1580, and 1582 (three editions). Translations of eight of its hymns were printed in the German book *Ein schon gesanghüchein*, and the preface of the latter book, too, was taken directly from the *Veelderhande Liedekens*.

A second collection of hymns of major importance to the study of Dutch Anabaptist hymnody is one which first appeared in 1562 with the title: *Een nien Liedenboeck van alle nieuwe ghedichte Liedekens die noyt in druck en zijn gheweest ghemaect wt den Ouden ende Nieuwen Testamente nv eerst by den anderen vergadert ende niens in Druck ghebracht.*[5] Because this collection has no hymns in common with the above-mentioned *Veelderhande Liedekens* of 1566, and because the preface specifically states that the publication of this book was in preparation while an earlier book went through two editions in 1560 and 1562, it is reasonable to assume that the present book was intended as the second of a two-volume series of which the *Veelderhande Liedekens* served as the first.[6] This book was reprinted in 1583 with the title *Het tweede Liedeboeck* . . . (See Fig. I), the second of a series in which the 1582 publication of *Veelderhande Liedekens* was apparently the first. The hymns of both *Een nien Liedenboeck* and *Het tweede Liedeboeck* also appeared in a publication of 1569 entitled *Veelderhande liedekens*. . . .

In general, the authors of the hymns of these Dutch collections remain unknown; most of the hymns are concerned with the contemporary situation, lamenting the persecutions which the children of God are undergoing. Consolation is sought in the Scriptures; complete faith in God is expressed again and again. But in at least two


Het tweede
Liedeboeck/ vā
vele diuersche Liedekens/ ghe-
maect wt den ouden ende nieuwen Testa-
mente /

Title page of LIEDEBOECK published by N. Biestkens in Amsterdam in 1583.


Een Liet-
boecxkē tracterende van
den Offer des Heeren / int welcke oude eñ
nieuwe Liedekens/wt verscheydē Copien
vergadert zijn / om by het Offerboeck ghe-
noecht te worden/want het van eender ma
terien roert/als van verraden/vanghen eñ
dooden/ aengaende der Slachtschaepkens
Christi/die de stemme haers Herders
Jesu Christi getrouwelijck ge-
hoorsaem zijn gheweest
tot der doodt
toe.

Item/hier is een Regi-
ster achter by ghemaeckt / om elck
Liedeken op zijn Folium
te vinden.

Matth.10.c.22.
Ghy sult van allen menschen ghehaet worden / maer die volstandich
blijft tot den eynde/ die
sal salich wor-
den.

Title page of 1562-63 martyr hymn collection with quotation from Matthew 10:22.

respects the hymns differ greatly from those of the Swiss and German Anabaptists: (1) they are less concerned with purely Anabaptist doctrine; and (2) they are not joyful songs, but *Klagelieder* (lamentations). The books are filled with outbursts of protests against the persecutions, although there is no evidence of anger. Many times there are admonitions to fellow Christians not to lose the faith in spite of persecutions and martyrdoms; sometimes there occur admonitions to the persecutors not to spill innocent blood, for God will surely try them in turn. Running through all the hymns is the belief that those who denounce the way of the world will enjoy the blessing of the cross—but in this temporal world there is no joy. Persecution and martyrdom are not too great a price to pay, however, for an eternal fellowship with God.

The emphasis on the martyr hymns reached its height among the Dutch Anabaptists in a very interesting hymnbook which appeared as the second part of *Het Offer des Heeren*, first published in 1562-63, also by N. Biestkens. This second part had the title: *Een Lietboecxke tracterende van den Offer des Heeren int welche oude en nieuwe Liedekens wt verscheyde Copien vergadert zijn, om by het Offerboeck ghenoecht to worden, want het van eender materienroert, also van veraden, vanghen en dooden, aengaende der Slachtschaepkens Christi, die de stemme haers Herders Jesu Christi getrouwelijck gehoorsaem zijn gheweest tot der doodt toe.*[7] (Fig. II) With the exception of the first, all twenty-five hymns in this collection tell the stories of martyrdoms occurring in the Netherlands from 1546 to 1561. The first hymn is apparently intended as an introduction for the Anabaptist martyrology, for it tells the story of the crucifixion of Christ, placing Christ at the head of all Anabaptist martyrs. As the title of the book indicates, the hymns were collected from various other sources and were perhaps, in the opinion of the editor, the most significant of the circulating martyr ballads. Eleven of these twenty-five hymns were printed also in *Een nieu Liedenboeck* of 1562; five appear also in the *Veelderhande Liedekens* of 1566 (and

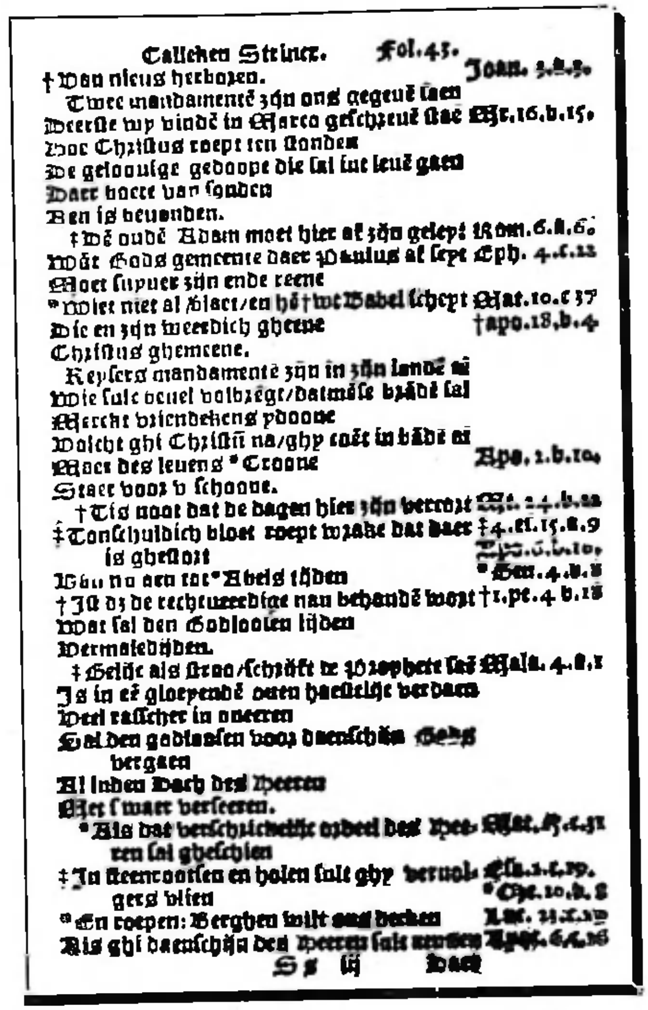
presumably also in its 1560 and 1562 editions); for the remainder this is its earliest known source. One appeared later in a German translation in the *Ausbund*. *Een Lietboecxke*, as part of the complete *Het Offer des Heeren*, enjoyed many subsequent editions: in 1566, 1567, 1570, 1578 (two editions), 1580, 1590, 1591, 1595, and 1611.

In the 1570 edition, the first part of *Het Offer des Heeren* was greatly enlarged with the addition of twenty-nine hymns correlated with the letters and confessions of Anabaptist martyrs it had previously contained. Thirty-one martyrs were represented in the first part; thus, with two exceptions there was a hymn based on the story of each martyr. In two instances the hymns combined two martyr accounts. Ten of these hymn appeared also in the first section of the *Ausbund*, and were probably printed there in a German translation at approximately the same time as their printing in the original Dutch. Later editions of *Het Offer der Heeren* added several more hymns.

Although none of the original manuscripts of this long list of martyr hymns has been preserved, it seems logical to conjecture that most of them were written very soon after the time of the martyrdom with which they are concerned. Perhaps some martyr hymns were used as memorial for the victim.[8] This would indicate that the hymn was written at the time or soon after the martyr's death. All martyr hymns follow a somewhat stereotyped form, commencing with a brief introduction, giving the places and names involved in the tragedy, and then preceding in a chronological order to give a brief description of the capture and imprisonment of the Anabaptist victim, an account of his trial and, finally, a vivid description of his execution. The major part of some of the martyr hymns may have been composed by the victim himself while still in prison. Upon his execution, a friend may have added the concluding stanzas depicting his death.

Several additional Dutch Anabaptist hymnbooks appeared later in the sixteenth century; these tended to place more emphasis on Scriptural hymns, including, for example, some of the metrical Psalms of Peter Dathenus. In the seventeenth century, the popularity of the martyr hymn waned, and these hymns were gradually dropped entirely from the new publications.

From this brief survey, it is apparent that the Anabaptists produced hundreds of hymns within a very short period of time. That there should be many hymns of little poetic or artistic value in this group is only natural. With few exceptions, the Anabaptist writers were common folk, a great many perhaps with little or no formal education. This is evident in both the poetic form of the hymns, as well as in their necessity to depend upon existing tunes, both secular and sacred. Nevertheless, the great productivity of the sixteenth century Anabaptist, and his intense desire to make known his religious belief and experience, present a tremendous challenge to Mennonites today, who can point to very little original hymnody produced in this country.


Callchen Striuer. Fol. 43.
† Van nieus herboren. Joan. 3.
Twee mandamente zijn ons gegeuē saen
Deerste wy vindē in Marco geschreuē staē Mr. 16. b. 15.
Hoe Christus roept ten sonden
De gelouige gedoopt die sal int leuē gaen
Daer vocht van sonden
Ben is beuonden.
† Dē oudē Adam moet hier al zijn gelept Rom. 6. a. 6.
Wāt Gods gemeente daer Paulus al sept Eph. 4.
Moet suyuer zijn ende reene
* Wilt niet al [illegible] Babel schept Mat. 10. c. 37 † apo. 18. b. 4.
Die en zijn weerdich gheene
Christus ghemeene.
Keysers mandamentē zijn in zijn landē [illegible]
Wie sulc ouel volbrēgt [illegible]
Merckt vriendekens [illegible]
Volcht ghi Christū na/ ghy [illegible]
Maer des leuens * Croone Apo. 2. b. 10.
Staet voor v schoone.
† Tis noot dat de dagen hier zijn vercort [illegible]
‡ Tonschuldich bloet roept wrake dat daer [illegible]
is ghestort
Vā nu aen tot * Abels tijden * Gen. 4.
† Ist dat de rechtueerdige nau behoudē wort † 1. pe. 4. b. 18
Wat sal den Godlooten lijden
Vermaledijden.
‡ Gelijc als stroo / schrijft de Prophete [illegible] Mala. 4.
Is in eē gloeyendē ouen haestelijc verdaen
Veel rasscher in oneeren
Sal den godloosen voor [illegible]
vergaen
Al inden dach des Heeren
Met swaer verseeren.
* Als dat [illegible] des Heeren sal ghescien
‡ In steenrootsen en holen sult ghy [illegible] * Ose. 10.
gers vlien
* En roepen: Berghen wilt ons decken Luc. 23.
Als ghi daer [illegible] des Heeren sult [illegible]
Ss iij Daer

A page from EEN LIETBOECXKE, showing heavy scriptural documentation.

Footnotes

[1] The Sacramentarians sprang up under the influences of Johan Wessel Gansfort, Hoen, Zwingli, and others, their name arising from the fact that they rejected the sacraments of the Roman Church and accepted Hoen's symbolic conception of the Lord's Supper. Being very numerous in the Netherlands, the Sacramentarians put their stamp on the Reformation in that country until 1531, when the Anabaptists superseded them. The majority of Dutch martyrs before 1530 belonged to the Sacramentarians.

[2] "Many hymns based on the Old and New Testaments, which have been previously printed: added to these are many hymns not previously printed, arranged alphabetically with the former."

[3] F. C. Wieder, *De Schriftuurlijke Liedekens* ('S-Gravenhage: Martinus-Nijhoff, 1900) p. 155, No. 71.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 145-46.

[5] "A new hymnbook of all newly composed hymns from the Old and New Testaments, not previously printed, together with others, now first collected and printed in a new volume."

[6] Wieder, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-50, No. 56.

[7] "A songbook concerned with sacrifice to (for) the Lord, for which old and new songs have been collected out of various sources in order to be added to the *Offerboeck* (book of sacrifice), relating the stories of the betrayal, capture, and martyrdom of the lambs of Christ, who have been loyally obedient to the voice of their shepherd Jesus until their death."

[8] This is a suggestion made by Cornelius Krahn, North Newton, Kansas.

DER BUBENDIEB

A Kidnapping in the Olden Days

By EMMA K. BACHMANN

JACOB Krehbiel of Randeckerhof near Sembach, Rhein-Pfalz (Palatinate) Germany, was born Jan. 5, 1835 at Obersülzen, Pfalz; he died July 26, 1918. He was a successful agriculturist. Although he had no scientific education, he acquired an extensive knowledge in different intellectual spheres, like literature, history, religion, politics and others. He was a respected member of the Mennonite Church at Sembach, where he faithfully filled the office of deacon for many years. He was quite active at conferences of the South German Mennonites as well as in other useful enterprises.

He wrote a number of short stories, which were published in *Jugendblätter* 1865-1869. I remember only three of these stories, "Der Rote" (Red), "Die Werber" (The Recruiters), and "Der Bubendieb" (The Kidnaper).

The latter deals with an episode out of the Krehbiel family. In this narrative Jacob Krehbiel relates how the son of Jost Krehbiel, who lived on the Pfrimmerhof, Pfalz, during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, was kidnaped. His wife, Anna, was a daughter of Adam Krehbiel, who was for over thirty years minister in the Weierhof. Five children, Jacob, Adam, Dorothea, Johann, and Maria, were the joy of the parents.

Johann might have been about 10-12 years old, when his father sent him on an errand to a neighboring village. Joyfully he started out on the footpath that led through the forest. He loved the forest, and it was so nice to walk in the shade. The birds were singing in the trees; once in a while a fawn or a rabbit ran over the path and disappeared in the thicket, or a covey of quail or partridge took to flight, scared by his coming. There was always something different and interesting, and there was no time for boredom.

Johann had gone this way before, and knew the way, so his mother was in no way anxious about letting him go by himself. When, however, evening approached and Johann had not come home yet, she became restless. Might he have left the path and perhaps have followed a rabbit or a squirrel? If so, he might be lost in the forest. As time passed on, the mother's apprehension grew. The father and the two older sons and the hired men came home from the field; but Johann was not yet at home. The father also could not imagine why the boy stayed so long, for he should have been home long ago. A hired man, who was sent to the village, returned with the information that Johann had started on his way home early in the afternoon.

In the meantime it had become dark and the anxiety of the parents rose to new heights. The father with the two older boys and the hired men went to look through the forest, for most likely Johann was lost. In the meantime the mother with her two daughters waited anxiously at home.

The girl's aunt had just repeated the story of grandfather's black poodle when suddenly they heard somebody calling outside. The mother opened the window. A rough voice called out of the forest, "Jost! Jost!"

"I am the *Schinderhannes*," came the answer out of the forest. Then the man said that he had Johann in his power, and if they wanted to see him alive again, they would send someone with 200 Gulden to a certain place the next evening. There he should lay the packet with the money on the large rock at that place and leave. After that Johann would come home unharmed.

At that time the *Schinderhannes* terrorized the country with his band of robbers. It certainly was no balm for the sore heart of the mother to know that her child was in the power of this cruel robber who deserved the name the people had given him.

In the meantime, the men looked all over the forest. They carried torches or lanterns and called, "Johann" again and again, but they neither received an answer nor did they find him. So they finally returned home where the mother told them the message of the stranger.

Now let us look and see what happened to Johann. He had discharged his errand in a short time and started on his homeward way. Some distance from the village, a stranger joined him and started a conversation with him. He asked him about his father's business. As children do, Johann answered freely. After they had gone a stretch through the forest, the stranger forced the boy to leave the path and to go with him into the forest. He led him in a circle and zigzag until Johann did not know where he was or which way his home was. At a place where there was quite a bit of underbrush, the man stopped. He told Johann to stand still. Then he went around him several times making all kinds of hokus-pokus. Then he said to him, "Now you are charmed. You can not get out of this circle. You better not try it; for I can always see you even if you can not see me. If you get out of this circle or make a sound, you have to die."

By this time poor Johann was so filled with fear and terror that he sat down on the ground and kept as quiet as a mouse. The man left him and returned after a considerable time with something to eat for the boy. By and by it became dark and the man left again, after he had again pressed upon the mind of the boy not to leave the circle or make any noise.

So Johann was all by himself in the dark forest and was afraid to move, but sat softly sobbing on a pile of dry leaves. The quietness of the night was oppressing, but the cry of a bird or the cracking of twigs caused by some animal breaking through the brush, terrorized him still more. After a while he heard some one call his name and he saw lights floating here and there. This frightened him still more, for he thought they were evil spirits which tried to lure him out of the circle so they could kill him. If he had only known that it was his father and brothers who were searching for him and that he had only to answer to be released from all his trouble. But being entirely under the influence of the superstition impressed upon him by the robber, he did not answer the call, but instead crawled deeper into the underbrush. The voices went farther and farther away and finally they were gone althogether.

The next day was a very long one for our Johann. His abductor provided him with plenty to eat, but fear and loneliness almost ate the boy's heart out. Toward evening his kidnapper took him to a different part of the forest. Here he very wisely again drew a magic circle around him and left him alone again.

In the meantime, Father Jost had been busy too, and when the evening came he went with a package which contained the ransom money, to the designated place. There he laid the package on the large rock and left.

As soon as he was out of sight, the man came out of the forest and got the package. After he had convinced himself that it really contained the money, he went and got Johann and took him close to his parental home. Here he said good night to him and told him to go home, after which he vanished in the forest.

Now Johann ran as fast as he could and was soon at home where he was received with shouts of joy. He had to tell all about his experience, and was told that the evil spirits he thought wanted to kill him, were no one but his father and brothers searching for him.

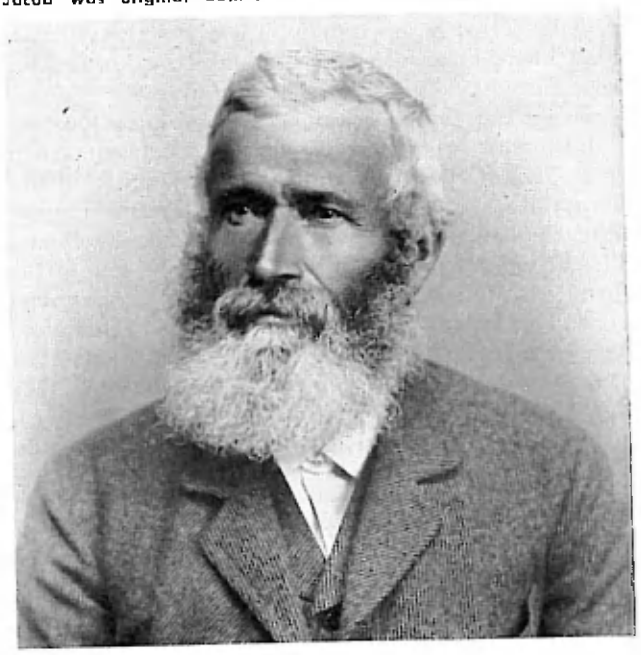
There is a maxim that says, "The pitcher goes to the well until it breaks." So it happened to our kidnapper. He finally was caught and brought before the court. Now it came to light that although his name was Johann, he was not the defamed "Schinderhannes" for whom he had passed himself off, so the people would have more respect for him.

At his trial, our Johann also sat on the witness bench with six or seven other boys. At that time there was not much love lost on robbers when they were once caught. The death sentence by hanging was pronounced on this kidnapper.

Johann never forgot this experience. He later became a respected merchant. He was a cousin of my grandmother. My parents knew him. He died in 1851, at the age of 64.

His oldest brother, Jacob, was better known in Mennonite circles by his work as well as by his descendants. For a number of years he was minister at the Weierhof before he emigrated to America. In 1831 we find him in Clarence Center, New York, where he served as minister of the Mennonite church for many years. His oldest son had a family of ten children of whom the oldest son, also named Jacob, followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, being minister at Clarence Center for many years. One of his daughters, Mrs. D. C. Krehbiel, lives in Reedley, California, while two of his sisters lived for many years in Kansas, Mrs. David Krehbiel in Moundridge, and Mrs. Henry Martin at North Newton.

Anna and Jacob Krehbiel, Randeckerhof, Germany. Jacob was original author of "Der Bubendieb."



Founder and director of Dutch Green Cross

Frederik Cornelis Fleischer, 1868-1929

By IDA ERNE-FLEISCHER

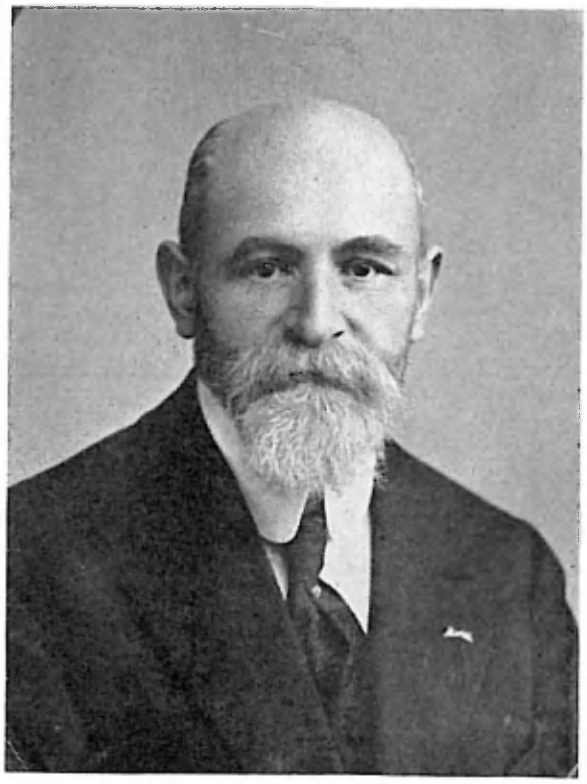
MY father was a typical Dutch Mennonite of the early twentieth century. Fully convinced that love to fellow men was the principal law Christ had given him, he devoted his entire life to the help of those who were in need. His fine feeling for a practical solution of difficult problems and his excellent intellect made him, the idealist, a good organizer, too. But his heart prevailed over his intellect. I remember he once said to me when he was lending money rather recklessly, considering his small income at the time and his growing family, "It may be a long time before they can pay me back the money, but all in all I have never been disappointed. You can trust far more people than you think you can." When he could spare the money he did not want it returned but instead asked the borrower to pass it on to someone else in need, thus demonstrating that everything we have is given us by the Lord to use it in His name.

Minister and Benefactor

He taught me another lesson. One time as we were walking together I said: "Just suppose one could hear everything you think, what nasty things there would be in the air." "Indeed," he answered, "but what a lot of beautiful thoughts you would hear that you never know about now!" It was this faith in the good qualities of man that enabled him to work as he did and to co-operate with men and women of entirely different views, making them all into personal friends.

The group of Mennonites he had to lead at Broek op Langendijk, North Holland (1899-1904), the first village where he preached and worked as a minister, was not very large and left him enough energy for all kinds of social work. Soon he became president of the local White Cross Society, whose members tried to improve the nursing of the sick at home by buying collectively and lending out among themselves the articles necessary for good nursing and by spreading the principles of hygiene among the population. The amazing thing was that these societies had been formed only in the province of North Holland. On his visits to Mennonites in the province of South Hol-

Frederik Cornelis Fleischer, active Dutch Mennonite minister, social worker and reformer and Mrs. Fleischer.



land my father spoke about the good such a White Cross Society did to the population and the plan grew to have people join in similar societies in South Holland.

Founder of Green Cross

In preparing the foundation for this he heard of a physician, Dr. W. Poolman, having founded a Green Cross Society with a similar purpose in a small village (Lange Ruige Weide). They met and discussed the matter. As the headquarters of the White Cross Societies did not like their name "White Cross" to be spread to other provinces, the name of "Green Cross" was given to the local societies my father founded in South Holland and later on in Friesland, where he served as a minister for seven years at Makkum, a village quite near to the now famous Zuiderzeedijk. From Friesland he traveled all over the country to prepare the foundation of Green Cross societies and enlist the local societies in joining provincial Green Cross organizations. The work grew, the visiting-nurse appeared, the fight against tuberculosis and infant mortality began. Courses for prospective mothers in urban as well as in rural areas were given. The societies were agencies of co-operation. Each member contributed an annual fee if he could, and had the privilege to borrow the things necessary for bed patients, to secure the help of the visiting nurse in bathing the patient, making his bed and applying the bandages, if prescribed by the physician. Their motto was "by all for all." They were religiously democratic.

"Dellahove," home of the Fleischers in Utrecht.

Through father's enthusiasm others believed in his ideals and now, nearly 30 years after his death, these societies all over the Netherlands, either nondenominational or Roman Catholic in the province of Limburg, are still growing in members and in activities. Again and again new leaders are found who make the old ideals their own and carry on the work. The Central Bureau which Fleischer founded at Utrecht is still there (Nieuwe Gracht 69 a).

Of course this social work led to all sorts of other activities. Fleischer became president of the Red Cross Society in the years that the Prince Consort of Queen Wilhelmina was the president; secretary of the Government Committee of First Aid to the injured; member of the board of the Orange Cross, etc. As a Christian he wanted to help wherever he could.

Helping the Russian Mennonites

Small wonder that when the Russian Mennonites needed help, he was ready to assist. As the secretary of the Dutch Relief Committee he went to Varna to buy food for the Mennonites of the Ukraine with the money which the Dutch Mennonites had collected for the starving brothers. They also sent out an ambulance and nurses to the Ukraine, but the scarcity of food and consequently the frightful scenes of starvation and disease were too much for the team and they came home disillusioned and ill, not having been able to give much help. Nothwithstanding all the efforts of my father to rouse the interest of the Dutch Mennonites in buying seed for the Mennonites in the Ukraine not enough money was collected. Fortunately, the American Mennonites helped out.

Fleischer persuaded Mennonites of the Dutch brotherhood to adopt Russian Mennonite students, who were thus enabled to finish their studies at Berlin or other German universities. One of them, Walter (Jakob) Quiring, published his doctoral dissertation dealing with the Low German spoken by the Russian Mennonites which he dedicated to Fleischer.

He always knew that God wanted him first of all to be a preacher in his Mennonite brotherhood and that he had to spread the Gospel wherever he could. From Broek op Langendijk he went to Makkum (near Witmarsum). He had no easy time in the beginning since Frisians are not very open to strangers. But having won their confidence, they became friends for life. A new Mennonite church was built in the years he was a minister there. But the climate was unfavorable for his children, who were constantly ill. He accepted a new pastorate at Winterswijk in the southeast of the Netherlands in a sheltered woodland area with a group of old Mennonite families and an old church. On the occasion of its second century of existence in 1911 he wrote the history of the church (*De Doopsgezinde Gemeente to Winterswijk*).

The care of the small church left him time for other work. His growing deafness became a great hindrance to

him. It cut him off from ordinary conversation and made it impossible to have an intimate talk with him. We children discussed everything with our mother and after bedtime she tried to make him understand our problems and get his advice. It was a serious handicap for him in his pastoral visits. People could not tell him of their needs as the little things were often not important enough to shout into his ears. In 1923 the Central Bureau of the Green Cross Society made him director and he gave up his ministry. It hurt him very much to leave his Mennonite church and I remember him standing forlorn on its steps on the Sunday he had announced his decision. He never complained about his deafness and often said: "Well I miss a lot of nasty things too because I cannot hear so well." He liked his active life and two days before he died, he told me he hoped that after his death the Lord would grant him as active a life as he had had in this world. That idea was new to me, as I had always looked upon Heaven as a place without activity. Six years of directorship and its worries were too much for him. He died of a weak heart, July 19, 1929, not yet sixty years old.

Visit in America

In September and October, 1907, he was in the U.S.A. on the occasion of a Congress at Philadelphia. For this occasion a booklet was published by him under the title *The Green Cross Societies in Holland* (New York, 1907), in which he tells the story of his life work and the rapid spread of this benevolent organization. He states in the preface that he is describing "briefly the aims of these societies by way of a letter of introduction to those who will be so kind as to show him a glimpse of their own similar, and, doubtless, much greater work. This is the only purpose of the following pages."

W. I. Fleischer, son of Frederik Fleischer, and Mrs. Fleischer in Fleischer summer cottage, soon after their marriage.

W. I. Fleischer is now one of the ministers of the Groningen Mennonite Church. He has turned over his father's library, rich in Mennonitica, to the Bethel College Historical Library, where the Fleischer collection is a monument to the many interests and activities of Frederik Fleischer.

In closing he says: "The benevolent reader will be disposed kindly to forgive a man who has had to relate the story of his own aims and whose daily task at times has been very hard—though finally full of an infinite pleasure for himself and of praise to the Most High, Who in His mercy has bestowed upon him His richest blessings by means of this successful work."

THE MENNONITES IN JOSEF PONTEN'S NOVELS

By J. Wilhelm Dyck

TOWARD the end of his career as a writer Josef Ponten (1883-1940) started the gigantic task of portraying the German settlements of Russia in a series of novels entitled *Volk auf dem Wege, Roman der deutschen Unruhe*. Although this series was not completed, six volumes were published (1934-42). In this novel series he also occasionally refers to the Mennonites of Russia.

Ponten has adopted an approach which finds its expression in a predominantly ethnic and racial interpretation rather than in a religious exposition. Strange as it may seem, the author, of Catholic background, chose a Protestant village as a symbol to illustrate the Russo-German life at large. (The Ponten archives in Düsseldorf, Germany, show that Ponten withdrew his membership from the "römisch-katholische Religionsgesellschaft" on February 10, 1922.) If and when Ponten refers to a specific group, he does so merely to point out the religious separatism within the group which he considers as not quite as prominent as the colonist's racial isolation. Yet in delineating the average Volga—or Russo-German—he never assigns him directly to one of the major religious divisions: Protestant or Catholic.

The same observation can be applied to Ponten's hero, Christian Mikhailovitch Heinsberg, as he travels to the land of his forefathers, Germany, and then to Rome, Africa, and Spain. Of utmost interest and concern to him on his journey are the racial dissimilarities, the cultural lag or differences which the centuries of separation have actively fostered between the land of origin and the foreign settlement. Nevertheless, some episodes do occur in Ponten's novels in which he finds occasion to characterize a representative of a religious group. In these instances the individual chosen is distinctly described, embellished with a name, with virtues, and many other specific attributes.

Josef Ponten, novelist treated in this article.

Into this category fall the Mennonites. When Ponten visited the German settlement of Russia in the year 1925, the Mennonites had spread from the western plains of the Ukraine to the central steppes of the Volga and even farther east into Siberia. The history of German migration into the Ukraine and Crimea is to a large extent a Mennonite chapter although many Lutherans and Catholics settled in and around Odessa, Kherson, and many other places in South Russia.

Josef Ponten never visited the Mennonites in the Ukraine. He must have gleaned his impressions of Mennonite life from the few settlements that existed in the Volga-German Republic and from his Catholic and Protestant acquaintances whose knowledge of the Mennonites was confined to everyday observations, legends, tales, and often jokes. A second source for his material can be detected in comparing Anger's notes on *Siberia,* which remain to this day in the possession of the Ponten archives at Düsseldorf, together with Ponten's own interpretation. In addition, there is a third and well-recognizable source. Only Mennonites as pictured in the literature of past centuries are described in Ponten's great work. He was not interested in their cultural achievements nor did their educational advancements contribute to his characterization of a Mennonite representative.

The state of economic development of the Mennonites in Russia is included by Ponten, however, in his discussion of other problems relating to the Russo-Germans in general. Whenever mentioned in a few general remarks, the Mennonites are in possession of well-established estates (see Ponten's *Rheinisches Zwischenspiel,* p. 436) and are readily distinguishable from the other German settlers and the neighboring Russians, whether in the fields or at any other type of work, by their efficient methods. In describing their industriousness, Ponten writes in *Der Zug nach dem Kaukasus* (p. 171): *Wo mit Pferden gepflügt wurde, da waren Deutsche, wo mit Doppelgespannen, gar Mennoniten, wo aber mit Ochsen, Russen oder Tataren am Werk.*

Much more eloquent is his insight into the moral, ethical, and religious outlook of the Mennonites. Their spiritual life is visualized only in the expression of good deeds and the maintenance of certain moral standards. *Die Mennoniten . . . seien Heilige,* he says in *Im Wolgaland* (p. 385) *und täten Gutes um Gottes Lohn.* And this performance of good deeds is typical of Ponten's Mennonites.

Nevertheless, his description of Mennonite religious life remains on the periphery of reality. Ponten illustrates the Mennonite philosophy of non-conformity to the world, to which Alexander Brückner refers in his book, *Die Europäisierung Russlands* (p. 389), through Klaas Menning, a Mennonite, who together with three other Mennonite families and a few Russians had founded the small Siberian settlement Yablonoffka. Yet the Mennonites scarcely noticed the Russians. In *Der Sprung ins Abenteuer* (p. 138), Ponten says, somewhat ironically, that they lived with, . . . *Gott im Herzen und Gott all um sich auf der Steppe,* and he grants that only religion can give the necessary strength to live a life of worldly solitude on earth. Yet at the same time Ponten was realist enough to recognize that not every Mennonite was traveling along the same narrow path which Klaas Menning had chosen and he indicates that, especially among the younger generation, there existed a propensity towards adjustment and conformity to the world. (*Der Sprung ins Abenteuer,* p. 139).

In creating his Mennonite characters Ponten was influenced to a large extent by the "saints" in his *Die Heiligen der letzten Tage,* a fictitious reconstruction of the Schwaikheimer separatists and other religious fanatics of the nineteenth century. In this third volume of the *Romanreihe* Ponten describes a group of religious fanatics with attributes similar to those of the Templers, the Peters Brethren, or Klass Epp's *Auszugsgemeinde* as presented by C. Henry Smith in his *Story of the Mennonites* (pp. 438, 455 f.f.)

In comparing the characteristics of Ponten's Mennonite characters and bearing in mind the fact that Ponten visited the Russo-Germans in 1925, one must conclude that most of his sources could be traced back to the literature of the nineteenth century rather than drawn from his own personal experience.

The following passage taken from Ponten's *Die Heili-*

gen der letzten Tage (p. 513)—almost identical word for word to C. Henry Smith (p. 438)—serves to illustrate very clearly reminiscences of nineteenth century Russo-German life from the history of a few fanatic groups in Russia, as well as some of the author's impressions which he received from conservative American groups of Mennonites whom he visited during 1928-29:

> *Die Heiligen fühlten sich bei den ihnen fast gleichgesinnten Mennoniten zuhause. Denn auch die trugen keine Bratenröcke, keine Taschenuhren und Halsbinden, die Frauen keine Ohrringe und Schleifen, sie lasen keine Zeitungen und führten keine Gespräche über politische Fragen, sie tranken keinen Branntwein und rauchten keinen Tabak, sie boten nicht guten Tag, sondern sagten unter Handaufheben: Friede sei mit dir, Bruder! Ihr Aeltester schrieb sich Epp. Und sie erklärten, eher ihr eigenes als fremdes Blut vergiessen zu wollen. Sie erklärten, ein Christ und ein Mann brauche nicht zu schwören, sondern es genüge sein Ja und sein Nein. . . . Sie schnitten auch das Brot nicht und kannten also kein Brotmesser, sondern sie brachen es, weil Christus beim Abendmahl den Jüngern das Brot zubrach; und also Brotbrocker genannt, lebten sie unter den katholischen und evangelischen deutschen Landsleuten und Mitkolonisten auf der russischen Südsteppe und verachteten beide als sinnliche Heiden, mieden sie wie das schwarze Pech und betrachteten sich selber als Heilige.*

Here Ponten clearly refers to the followers of Klaas Epp, who went to Central Asia to meet the Lord and those of Herman Peters, the *Brothrecher* who went to Siberia. They were exceptions in the total Mennonite constituency of Russia. A survey of the schools and social institutions established by the twentieth century Mennonites of Russia proves that reading papers and magazines was not at all unknown by the group. Ponten's remark, *sie lasen keine Zeitungen*, does by no means express the total Mennonite cultural level of his time. By 1914 the Mennonites of South Russia were in possession of more than 450 schools, educational and social institutions, as well as agencies of mutual aid and support. (See Walter Kuhn's survey on "Cultural Achievements of the Chortitza Mennonites," *Mennonite Life*, III, July, 1948.)

In comparing the feeling of the Mennonites toward Germany with that of the other Russo-German colonists' attitude, Ponten makes an interesting analogy (*Im Wolgaland*, p. 538): *Deutschland war für den Mennoniten kein Begriff, er erwähnte es mit keinem Worte. Was für die Wolgaleute Deutschland war, das war für diesen Steppenmann der Himmel, das Gnadenreich.* This is to some extent correct but it can also be applied to the average member of all the other groups. If Ponten meant to imply with the above-quoted statement that Mennonite convictions and Mennonite piety had replaced national feeling with the hope of the heavenly kingdom or vice versa, then it must be stated that religion is no substitute for national feeling and the Russo-German Mennonites were affected by the latter to the same extent as the other settlers.

But Ponten was willing to revise constantly and if necessary to correct any of his statements by incessant search for new information. If he could have completed his three cycles of the *Romanreihe* as he planned, it is conceivable that the Mennonites of the Americas would have played a more active role than the Mennonites in the Russian cycle. Unpublished material from the Ponten archives indicates that such a turn of events was likely. The author had made a detailed study of a map, which had been prepared by Mennonites from the Slavgorod region, of the Siberian Orlov and Chortitz districts. In the year 1939 Ponten chose as his personal dentist a Dr. Reimer who was of Mennonite background. Ponten's visit to Paraguay in the fall of 1936 provided him with many friends among the Mennonites of the Gran Chaco and other colonies. After Ponten's death his widow found on his desk a registered envelope bearing the following address: Herrn Lehrer N. Siemens, Kolonie der Mennoniten Fernheim im Gran Chaco, bei Puerto Casado am Alto Paraguay, Südamerika.

Ponten also collected many newspaper clippings about the Mennonites. The Ponten archives quote *The World* of November 23, 1929, under the headlines, "Villages empty as 10,000 strive to leave Russia," and "Mennonites fight Soviet Farm Policy." Reports from the archives state that numerous books about the Mennonites were filled with notes by the author and his writings in shorthand mention them repeatedly. In the *Illustrierte Deutsche Bücher-Zeitung*, Nr. 2, 1937, Ponten himself relates his adventures in South America.

On one of his scheduled lectures in Paraguay, Ponten did not expect an audience because the rain had made the country roads difficult for traveling. Therefore he was surprised to find in front of the local inn a long row of dirt-splattered horses and the hall full of listeners. One man, he wrote, drew his special attention. When the lecture was over he wished to talk to him but the man had already left. Inquiries showed that the man had made a special three-hour trip by horse to listen to a man from the distant world. Of particular interest to Ponten was the fact that this man was a Mennonite.

Sources of the above nature indicate that Ponten's interpretation of the Mennonites may well have changed radically if he could have written the American cycle of novels.

From Dachau to Hymnology

The Mennonite Encyclopedia

By MAYNARD SHELLY

THINGS I would never have known if I hadn't opened Volume II of the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* include:

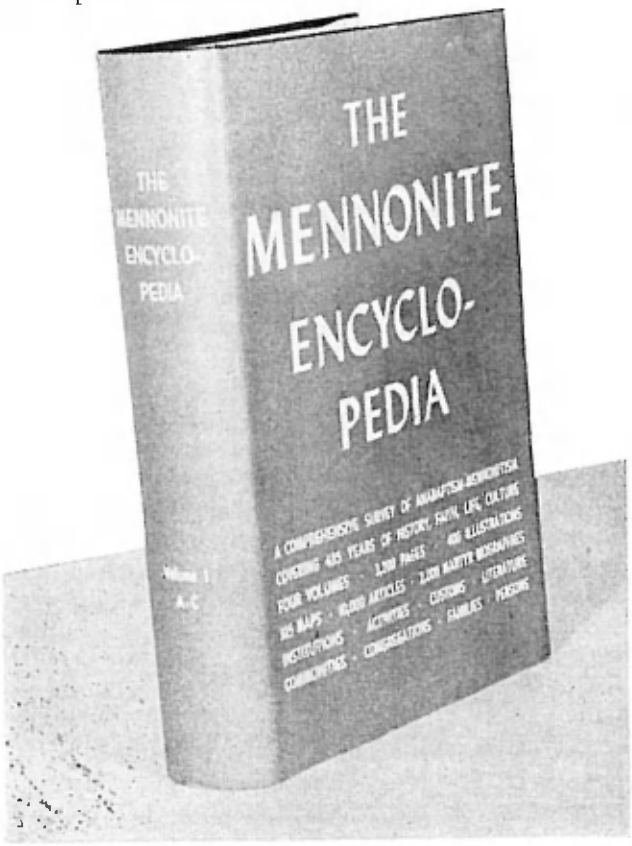
That Christopher Dock, besides being American Mennonitism's mentor of mentors, was also an artist. He specialized in beautifully illuminated manuscripts, an art known as *Fractur-Schrift*.

That while some groups require their ministers to wear a certain garb, Mennonite ministers have never worn gowns except at a few places in Germany. Among the Old Colony Mennonites the prescribed clerical garb is a special coat and boots.

That Ludwig Hacker established a Sunday school at the Ephrata Cloisters forty years before Robert Raikes got started in England.

That the *Martyr's Mirror*—published at the Ephrata Cloisters—was the largest book printed in America before the Revolutionary War.

That the Joseph Funk Press was the first Mennonite printery in America. It was installed in the top story of a springhouse in Singers Glen, Virginia and made its first impression in 1847.



That *Diener am Wort* is the term applied by the Hutterites to their preachers. Among the Amish the saying is *Diener am Buch*.

That the Hutterites have three kinship groups. Discussed in Volume II are the *Darinslent*. Besides them there are also the *Schmiedelent* and the *Lehrerlent*.

The Amish were once called *Häftler* (hookers) and the Mennonites *Knöpfler* (buttoners). This was in South Germany some days ago.

That fasting was once practiced by our folks in Pennsylvania. They skipped breakfast on the Saturday before Communion.

That the old Swiss name Derstine is the same as Thierstein. Distinguished members of this family include J. R. Thierstein and C. F. Derstine. This is from just one of several hundred family histories in this good brown book with the red cover.

That the Mennonites in Russia out-mccormicked an American named Cyrus and invented and manufactured their own reaper.

That Michael Fischer, one of 2,000 Anabaptist martyrs, conveyed so much courage that he unnerved the executioner who failed to behead him correctly—unnerving thought!

And so it goes all the way from Dachau to Hymnology; not missing deacons, Dukhobors, hell, or the Holy Ghost, the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* plods on its merry way through Anabaptist-Mennonite land stopping at stations marked footwashing, French Revolution, Froschauer Bibles (very interesting), evangelism, Denver, Detroit, Java, Ediger, Epp, and the Eight Square Mennonite Church with its five members. And then there's Eby, Enns, eternal security, four and a half pages on dress, seven pages on Emden, and an enlightening discussion on the English language. You'll not want to miss comparing the map showing the extent of European Anabaptism in 1550 with the map of Mennonites in Europe in 1938. I don't know what you'll do about it, but it's part of your education.

And for sheer intellectual stimulation I recommend the article on Foppe Ones to you. If you can close the book, look me in the eye, and tell me the difference between Foppe Ones and One Foppes I'll make you associate editor of Volume V.

But enough of this. It's time to put out the light and go to bed. But first thing in the morning I know you'll be standing in line waiting to buy your copy of Volume II because it weighs five whole ounces more (886 pages) than Volume I, tipping the scale at three pounds, fourteen ounces. (D-H covers more letters than A-C.) In addition to the many maps this volume has 21 pages of illustrations.

Anabaptism As an Existentialist Philosophy of Religion

The Quest for an Anabaptist Theology

By MAYNARD KAUFMAN

IN this study the term "Anabaptism" is used in a general way to designate the left-wing religious movement during the Reformation that made the most radical attempt to re-establish genuine New Testament Christianity. This study is focused particularly on the period covering the second quarter of the sixteenth century on the assumption that this period saw the fruition of Anabaptism in its pure and original expression. Since the Anabaptist movement, already during this period, had spread over most of Europe and consisted of several different factions, it is difficult, if not impossible, to generalize on the precise nature of Anabaptism. Among its leaders were such diverse types as former humanists, spiritualistic mystics, former Catholic priests, professors of theology, Bible-reading laymen, political and economic reformers, and chiliastic revolutionaries. All were united, however, in their protest against, not only the existing Catholic church, but also against the Lutheran and Reformed branches of Protestantism. Anabaptists, in one way or another, tried to carry the Reformation to its ultimate conclusion.[1] Since there was no unanimous agreement on just how this was to be done, it may be said, with Franklin H. Littell, "that the problem of later historians to define and classify Anabaptism is not far from the one-time problem of the radicals themselves."[2]

This entire study is intended to contribute to the attempt to define the nature of Anabaptism, not by historical research, but by elaborating a theory which integrates the results of various scholars of Anabaptism. The title of this paper implies that Anabaptism will be considered as an existentialist philosophy of religion, which points to the assumption that Anabaptism was a type of existential Christianity. In Mennonite circles this view has been set forth primarily by Robert Friedmann, who defines it in this way:

> The term "existential" means here above all an extreme concreteness of the Christian experience. Such an experience is neither of an intellectual nature (doctrinal understanding) nor is it emotional. For lack of a better description we will call it "total," something most typical with all conversion experiences. In this total or concrete Christianity the distinctions between doctrine and ethics, belief and practice, no longer exist.[3]

Cognitively, the existential attitude is one of involvement and participation in contrast to a merely theoretical or detached attitude. Thus an existential religion could be contrasted to a strictly rational or intellectual religion, where the emphasis is on objective knowledge or belief rather than on a subjective experience or mode of belief. It should be clear, therefore, that a religion or faith is, or should be, "existential,"—related to one's existence—while a theology or philosophy, which refers to this existential situation and attempts to understand and explain it, is "existentialist."

From a psychological point of view, the total response characteristic of existential Christianity might be called a *Gestalt* pattern which involves the whole person in a most urgent and intimate way. The various parts of the *Gestalt* religious experience do not exist prior to the whole, but derive their character from the structure of the whole. It now becomes obvious why it is so difficult to define patterns of life such as Existentialism or Anabaptism. A definition is a conceptual process in which the component parts are first analyzed and then synthesized to form the structure of the whole. But this conceptual process reverses the existential process; consequently, the definition distorts the existential reality. For this reason no amount of analysis will produce a true picture of Anabaptism.

Assuming, therefore, that the whole of Anabaptism is more than merely the sum of its parts, no attempt will be made here to analyze the various characteristics peculiar to Anabaptism such as non-resistance, adult baptism, nonconformity, et cetera. Rather, some of the suggestive ideas recently set forth in books and articles concerning the essential or key idea in Anabaptism will be reviewed. The distillation of the essence of Anabaptism is admittedly a difficult task because the Anabaptists did not develop a systematic theology. The confessions of faith and doctrinal statements they did produce were largely personal expressions of a few articles of faith, and not the elaboration of a generally accepted and representative total system. Nor did they, of course, make a philosophical explanation of their religion. Perhaps this in itself indicates that they were wholly concerned in *being* religious—in living a Christian life. In any case, it is the aim of this study to attempt such an explanation. It should be understood that when the "Anabaptist theology" is discussed, it refers to their *implied* theology, which we today are trying to articulate into the terms of a *systematic* theology. The same applies to their philosophy of religion, which was also implicit.

The outstanding fact before us, which will be documented especially in the succeeding parts of this discussion, is that the original Anabaptist theory and practice of Christianity conforms in so many essential respects with the contemporary existentialist theological interpretation. This should not be surprising, nor does it mean that the sixteenth century Anabaptists were four hundred years ahead of their time. Actually, the Anabaptists went back to the New Testament for their inspiration. But,

inasmuch as it is the New Testament view of man and human existence, with its sense of urgency and seriousness about life, that has shaped present-day Existentialism,[4] it is obvious that both movements find their point of contact in the New Testament. Genuine religion is existential, and, in view of the Great Commandment (Mark 12:29-30), this is, or should be especially true of Christianity.

The question is, to what extent was this really true of Anabaptism? At this point it becomes necessary to review some of the essays toward the formulation of "the Anabaptist theology." Two types of interpretation will be summarily rejected. The one asserts that Anabaptism was simply an orthodox, Biblical, and evangelical type of Protestantism, differing perhaps only in degree from the Reformed and the Lutheran Church. The other type of interpretation, the liberalist ethical approach, tended to identify early Anabaptism with ethical or political or economic ideologies. While such interpretations may contain some truth, they are rejected here because they do not contribute to the understanding of Anabaptism as Anabaptism.

However, recent interpretations have contributed toward a more precise definition of the essence of Anabaptism. Representative examples of these interpretations will therefore be listed, each of which contributes to the total picture.

Ecclesio-Centric Theology.—Cornelius Krahn has consistently expressed the idea that an Anabaptist theology is "ecclesio-centric." Menno Simons' chief concern, after breaking with the Catholic Church, was to re-establish the true church in the Apostolic tradition. It was at this point that he differed most sharply from the other Reformers.[5] While the other Reformers tried to reform the existing Catholic Church, the Anabaptists, sensing that the church idea itself was wrong, worked toward the restitution of the church fellowship in the New Testament pattern. One of the chief issues over which the Swiss Brethren broke with Zwingli in 1525 was infant baptism versus believer's baptism, and, as Littell pointed out, "the real issue here was not the act of baptism, but a bitter and irreducible battle between two mutually exclusive concepts of the church."[6]

What were these different church concepts? Perhaps the clue lies in the German word used to designate these concepts. Unlike the other Reformers, the Anabaptists did not use the term *Kirche* or *Volkskirche* in referring to the true church. Rather, they used the words *Gemeinde* or *Gemeinschaft* or *Bruderschaft,* which may be translated as "community" or "fellowship" or "brotherhood."[7] The Anabaptist rejection of an institutional church in favor of a more informal and voluntary fellowship of believers was surely one of their main theological concerns.

Theology of Martyrdom.—Ethelbert Stauffer has defined the Anabaptist theology as the "theology of martyrdom."[8] His review of Anabaptist literature certainly lends weight to this thesis. The early Anabaptists were apparently obsessed with the idea of suffering—in fact, Menno Simons lists it as one of the signs of the true church. Undoubtedly this seemingly morbid preoccupation with martyrdom grew out of the fact that the Anabaptists were hunted and persecuted by practically all other churches, both Catholic and Protestant. As non-resistant Christians, they could do little else but suffer passively. This led to the strong eschatological consciousness which was so influential in shaping the historical orientation of the Anabaptists, or *Schwärmer,* as they were called.

But the value placed on suffering and martyrdom is significant, regardless of its origin, because it implies a definite concept of the nature of the Christian life. Being a Christian was more than just a theoretical matter. It involved all of life, regardless of the consequences.

Theology of Discipleship.—Harold S. Bender has been most active in promulgating the idea that the distinctive and regulative concept of the early Anabaptists was their idea of discipleship. Although he admits that he also thought for a time that the church-concept was the main idea, he argues that it was not the generic idea in Anabaptism.

> In a sense, is not the concept of the church also a formal concept? The character of the church is determined by something beyond the church itself, for it ultimately derives from the concept of the nature of the Christian experience and the Christian life. The concept of the church is actually a derivative idea. We have not yet arrived at the heart when we stop with the church, even though the concept of the church is certainly one of the most distinctive features of Anabaptist theology.[9]

The theology of martyrdom also may be thought of as an effect, the cause of which lies in the concept (and practice) of discipleship. Robert Friedmann distinguishes between the "suffering Saviour" of the Anabaptists and the "sweet Saviour" of the more Pietistic groups who were satisfied with a joyful emotional and subjective experience of salvation.

> Anabaptism was essentially a movement which insisted upon an earnest and uncompromising endeavor to live a life of a true discipleship of Christ, that is to give expression in fellowship and love to the deepest Christian faith, with full readiness to suffer in conflict with the evil world order. So long as this unwillingness to suffer as an expression of deepest faith, and this readiness to enter into a non-resistant struggle for salvation, was a living reality, just so long was Anabaptism a great and powerful movement.[10]

The Anabaptist ideal of *Nachfolge Christi* was not an easy way because it demanded unqualified obedience or commitment, the result of which was to be a life of active witnessing and apostleship. This very interesting concept of obedience, which is basic in discipleship, will be discussed more fully in Part II of this study.

Creedless Theology.—Another significant concept of the essence of Anabaptism is the idea that it has no central theological principle because it is basically a creedless church. This view is held by some Dutch Mennonites today who defend their position on the basis of its having been the early Anabaptist position.[11] They hold that the early Anabaptists were united not by creeds but by Christ.

Although this view is vaguely expressed and difficult to maintain, this does not detract from its potential significance.

The idea of a "creedless theology" (a contradiction in terms!) is especially significant in view of the generally admitted lack of a systematic theology among the Anabaptists. This fact has led Robert Friedmann to suggest that they were not a Protestant church or sect at all, inasmuch as the other Protestant groups were eminently theological, i.e., united on general theological principles.[12] This is not to say that Anabaptists had no beliefs; they did, and they formulated creeds as expressions of their beliefs. But they had creeds *because* they believed, and not *in order to* believe.

Not only Dutch Mennonites, but outside interpreters, such as Walter Koehler, Fritz Heyer, Ernst Troeltsch, and Rufus Jones, also have called attention to the spiritualistic tendencies in Anabaptism. Such tendencies (a rather free, semi-mystical, nondogmatic understanding of the Christian faith and an emphasis on the invisible church) were so pronounced in some Anabaptists that Anabaptism is often identified as a form of spiritualism. And the fact that the Anabaptists themselves recognized such "creedless" mystics like Hans Denk as part of their exclusive fellowship ought to indicate that the idea of a "creedless theology" is not at all entirely foreign to the nature of Anabaptism.

Biblical Theology in Paradox.—Don. Smucker suggests that the Anabaptist theological triumph was the rediscovery of the genuine Biblical theology which, being paradoxical, could not be systematized in the terms of a rational theology.[13] He points out that for this reason a genuine Biblical theology is difficult to maintain, and implies that Luther and Zwingli, who originally also caught the Anabaptist vision, lost it when they tried to reduce it to a systematic theology. A strictly "Biblical" theology is bound to be paradoxical, because the Bible contains existential religious truths and not doctrines of systematic theology. Paradox arises when these truths are existentially appropriated in finite existence.

Smucker's emphasis on paradox is certainly important, but it should be understood that this concept is not a theological, but a philosophical, and more specifically, an epistemological concept. It will therefore be discussed in the next part of this study.

Existentialist Theology.—Robert Friedmann contends that the Anabaptists did not systematically develop a theology, not only because of a lack of time or qualified men, but because Anabaptism was an existential and not a theological type of Christianity. The concluding task of this section is to show that the preceding interpretations support each other and culminate in the assertion that Anabaptism was a type of existential Christianity.

An "existentialist theology" is implied in the concept of discipleship. Bender calls it that when he says that "it's this quality of what we moderns call 'existentialism' which was deeply characteristic of the Anabaptist theology of discipleship the inseparability of belief and practice, faith and life."[14] Soren Kierkegaard, the so-called father of modern Existentialism, also stressed discipleship Christianity. A man becomes a Christian through a decisive act of obedience to Christ, who is not only worshipped and admired sa Saviour, but followed as the "Pattern" for one's life. Furthermore, according to Kierkegaard the Christian life is experienced in conflict with the world, and it is known that Kierkegaard, like the early Anabaptists, valued the martyr higher than the monk, while the theologian represented the lowest type of Christian life.[15]

The ideas of discipleship and martyrdom certainly support the interpretation of Anabaptism as an existential religion. But what about the idea of a "creedless theology"? Again Kierkegaard speaks to the point. His theses that "a logical system is possible; an existential system is impossible,"[16] which implies a dichotomy between abstract reason and concrete existence, is pertinent here. Existential truth is subjective; the important thing is the mode of belief. At the same time, the content of belief is apt to be paradoxical, especially when the eternal truth is placed in juxtaposition with concrete existence. It may appear logically absurd and yet be existentially true. Smucker's emphasis on the Anabaptist rediscovery of Biblical theology *in paradox* implies that Anabaptism was an existential Christianity; paradox is one of the main epistemological categories of an existential religion.

Finally, does the assertion that Anabaptism had an ecclesio-centric theology contradict the idea that it was an existential type of Christianity? If the church is considered as a brotherhood of believers, or community of saints, as Menno Simons continually stressed, and not an institutional church (*Volkskirche*), there is not necessarily a contradiction. In fact, the attempt toward the restitution of the Apostolic church (a band of disciples) implies that this is what they meant by *Gemeinde*. The question as to which concept—the church or discipleship—is central in Anabaptism is therefore really beside the point. The fact is that the concept of the church as a brotherhood is implied in the practice of discipleship and true discipleship is possible only in a Christian fellowship or church.

So far in this study we have merely pointed out certain characteristics of Anabaptism which indicate, superficially at least, that it may be considered as an existential type of religion. Even the term "theology" is valid only insofar as it means that an attempt was made to interpret the essence of Anabaptism rather than describe the Anabaptist religion as such.

(Concluding Note and Footnotes page 143)

A New Medium of Mutual Aid

The Hay Lift of the Great Plains

By ESKO LOEWEN

THE drought of 1956 which held the Great Plains states in its grip, will go down on record as the most disastrous in the history of the area. The year 1956 was the driest year on record in the state of Kansas. It climaxed a dry cycle which began after the devastating floods of 1951, very likely the wettest year on record.

The effect of this cycle, as it ate deeper and deeper into the reserves and economy of agriculture, was the subject of conversation on the street, in the news, radio, and TV, and in the halls of Congress and on Capitol Hill in Washington. An ever greater number of farmers took jobs in town to buttress their dwindling incomes. Many others quit, sold out, and either moved away or found employment in nearby towns and cities. Where once proud communities with painted and well-kept buildings were the general norm, there now stood empty farmsteads, ramshackle and unpainted buildings, with remaining farmers expanding their acres hoping in this manner to overcome a pinched economy.

In the autumn of 1956, with little or no forage to feed the cattle, farmers faced the acute problem of finding hay for their cattle or selling them on a market deeply depressed in price. As demand for hay increased, the price likewise increased.

To help alleviate this situation, the western railroads announced they would haul hay at half the regular price to drought stricken areas. The government likewise announced a subsidy of $7.50 per ton in drought areas, but of necessity limiting this because of the vastness of the drought area.

Part of South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois had a surplus of hay. To move this hay at a price that would not become prohibitive became the problem. Throughout the area, there were meetings called by county agents, or dairy organizations, and other similar groups. These would send one or two men into the hay producing regions to contract for hay. In the meantime, truckers and speculators had bought hay to be held until the price was high enough for a substantial profit. The result was that by November hay prices were steadily rising, daily huge truck loads of hay were being hauled into the drought area, and prices of from $35 to $40 per ton and above $1.00 per bale of good quality alfalfa were reported at auctions and on the street. The situation looked quite desperate.

About this time, reports from the Mountain Lake, Minnesota, Mennonite community indicated that there would be a considerable amount of hay available in that area and a similar report came from the Illinois Mennonite churches. It occurred to us that the Mennonite Disaster Service, a service designed especially to make it possible for our people to give assistance in disasters such as floods, tornadoes or other natural calamities, had in recent years been organized on an inter-Mennonite basis. Why would it not be possible to obtain the needed hay at a non-speculative price through this channel?

From the Hillsboro, Kansas area composing seven churches, a carload of four men were sent to Mountain Lake, where already a committee had been organized representing the Mennonite churches of that community. These four men, under the guidance of the Mountain Lake committee, purchased fifty carloads of hay to be located within the next six weeks and shipped to Hillsboro.

At the same time the Mennonite churches in Illinois were just completing the organization of their Disaster Service. To this meeting two men were sent from the Kansas churches to request a similar program on a much wider and larger scale. Hay was to be bought throughout the Illinois Mennonite communities, shipped according to order to any of a number of different points in Kansas. It was only a matter of days and the hay began to move into the disaster area.

During the winter months, from December to March, a total of 215 carloads of hay was received in the Kansas communities. The Mountain Lake community shipped 72 carloads, almost all of which went to the Hillsboro area. In addition, they shipped 25 or 30 carloads to individuals in Kansas and Oklahoma. The Illinois communities shipped 143 cars which went to other Kansas Mennonite communities.

The effect of this program was to tend to stabilize the hay market, not only for the Mennonite communities, but for the general community as well. This was realized because the heavy demand for hay was reduced. It was very quickly seen at auctions and by truckers that the hay market no longer was frantic.

The committees that participated in setting up the program expressed general satisfaction and gratitude that this was an effective way of serving a disaster.

In a letter from Thomas M. Potter, assistant County Agent of Marion County, he states: "Again I would like to emphasize that it not only benefited the ones that got some of this hay but also helped those that did not because it took the competition off of the local hay market and made more hay available to them at prices that were

plenty high but still would have been higher if it had not been for your work and hay program."

While memory of the drought of 1956 will be vivid in the minds of those who have experienced that year of hot winds and brown vegetation, and anxious looks at a rainless sky, the Christian cooperation expressed through this inter-state hay lift will also be remembered with gratitude.

The Hay Committees

The Mountain Lake Hay Committee:

Menno Wiens, Cor-ordinator.....Menn. Brethren Church
Edwin Ratzlaff.....Emmanuel Mennonite Brethren
H. H. Bartel.....First Mennonite Church
Peter Dick.....Delft Emmanuel Church
L. P. Suderman.....Mennonite Brethren Church
Jacob W. Nickel, foreman of shipping
Gospel Mennonite Church
Willard Friesen.....Bethel Mennonite Church
Gene Suderman.....Delft Menn. Brethren Church
Arno Friesen.....Bethel Mennonite Church

In Illinois, Arnold Funk was co-ordinator for the shiping program.

For the Kansas Mennonite Disaster Service, the group responsible for receiving orders and consigning the hay were: Eldon Goering, Newton, Kan.; Randolph Schmidt, Newton, Kan.; and Paul W. Claassen, Whitewater, Kan.

The Committee in Hillsboro was:

Chester Unruh, chairman.....Johannesthal Menn. Church
Esko Loewen, sec.-treas.....Johannesthal Menn. Church
Ed. Winter.....Mennonite Brethren Church
Walter Kliewer.....First Mennonite Church
Menno Jost.....Gnadenau Menn. Brethren Church
William Hiebert.....Lehigh Mennonite Church
P. L. Loewen.....Ebenfeld Menn. Brethren Church
Edwin Funk.....Brudertal Church

ANABAPTIST THEOLOGY

(Continued from page 141)

Editorial Note: In Part II of this paper, "Toward an Anabaptist Epistemology" (which is to appear in the next issue) the author will attempt to explicate the Anabaptist theory of knowledge in the light of the observations set forth here. Particular attention will be devoted to the significance of a lack of a systematic theology, to the Anabaptists' view of Scripture, and to their concept of obedience. This analysis will be guided by insights derived from the writings of men like Kierkegaard, Emil Brunner, Rudolf Bultmann, and Paul Tillich.

Part III consists of a discussion of some of the ontological dimensions of Anabaptism and an evaluation of its contemporary relevance.

Footnotes

[1]Harold S. Bender, "The Anabaptist Vision," *MQR*. XVIII April, 1944), pp. 76-78.

[2]Franklin H. Littell, *The Anabaptist View of the Church* (American Society of Church History, 1952), p. 49.

[3]Robert Friedmann, "Recent Interpretations of Anabaptism," *Church History*. XXIV (June, 1955), p. 144.

[4]John Macquarrie, *An Existentialist Theology, A Comparison of Heidegger and Bultmann* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 239.

[5]Cornelius Krahn, *Menno Simons, 1496-1561. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Theologie der Taufgesinnten* (Karlsruhe, i.B.: Heinrich Schneider, 1936), pp. 113-123.

[6]Littell, *The Anabaptist View of the Church*, p. 29.

[7]Erland Waltner, "Anabaptist Concept of the Church," *Mennonite Life*, V (October, 1950), p. 40.

[8]Ethelbert, Stauffer, "The Anabaptist Theology of Martyrdom," *MQR*. XIX (July, 1945), pp. 179-214.

[9]Harold S. Bender, "The Anabaptist Theology of Discipleship," *MQR*, XXIV (January, 1950), pp. 26-27.

[10]Robert Friedmann, *Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries* (Goshen, Indiana: The Mennonite Historical Society, 1949), p. 11.

[11]H. W. Meihuizen, "Basic Beliefs of the Dutch Mennonites," *Mennonite Life*, XI (October, 1956), p. 185.

[12]Robert Friedmann, "Anabaptism and Protestantism," *MQR*, XXIV (January, 1950), p. 14.

[13]Donovan E. Smucker, "The Theological Triumph of the Early Anabaptists: The Rediscovery of Biblical Theology in Paradox," *MQR*, XIX (January, 1945), pp. 5-26.

[14]Bender, "Anabaptist Theology of Discipleship," *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[15]Reidar Thomte, *Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), pp. 171-178.

[16]Soren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), p. 99.

Books in Review

The Farmer Gives Thanks, by Samuel R. Guard. New York: Abingdon Press, 1956. 64 pp. $1.00.

Here are fifty-six prayers in the language of the soil and the Bible arranged chronologically to cover the entire year. Having their roots in rural life, Mennonites will appreciate these earthly, albeit reverent, meditations.

Bethel College — John F. Schmidt

Writing for the Religious Market, edited by Roland E. Wolseley. New York: Association Press, 1956. XIV 304 pp. $4.

Roland E. Wolseley of the School of Journalism, Syracuse University, New York, and author of several books in the field of journalism has asked such experts in religious writing as Roland Bainton, W. E. Garrison, Margaret Culkin Banning, Georgia Harkness and many others to tell of their specific insights and skills for the benefit of those who would like to develop their talents in religious writing.

Fiction, drama, poetry, the feature article, biography, reviews and books of sermons are all treated. We are also given an insight into the problems of writing for radio, television, and films. An appendix lists channels and literature for further reading. The various writers have done well to enliven their articles with testimonies of personal experience in various fields of writing.

Bethel College — John F. Schmidt

Old Testament

Bible Atlas, by Emil G. Kraeling. New York: Rand McNally and Company, 1956. $8.85.

This book contains a wealth of information about the Holy Land. It brings together the latest information about Bible geography. "40 pages of completely new full color maps," and "300 photographs, illustrations and sketch maps" add vivid, graphic, detail to the presentation. The vast experience of Rand McNally in the field of geography is here made available to the Bible student in convenient and attractive compass.

Especially helpful is the arrangement of the book combining historical narrative with geographical and archeological data. The narrative material is interesting and non-technical so it can appeal to members of the family as well as to teachers of Bible and ministers of the gospel.

Bethel College — H. A. Fast

The Faith of Israel, by H. H. Rowley. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957. $3.50.

H. H. Rowley, in this book, pictures the thread of unity that runs through the Old Testament and that makes it possible to speak of "The Faith of Israel." This is a wholesome trend in Old Testament scholarship. Without minimizing the obvious diversity in the Old Testament, Rowley proceeds to picture the living elements that give the whole a meaningful unity. He calls this a "unity of growth," not a "static unity" nor a "dogmatic unity" which one imposes upon it from without.

Chapter headings like the following indicate the "aspects of Old Testament thought" which he discusses and the manner in which he develops his thesis: I. "Revelation and Its Media," II. "The Nature of God," III. "The Nature and Need of Man," IV. "Individual and Community," V. "The Good Life," VI. "Death and Beyond," VII. "The Day of the Lord."

Bethel College — H. A. Fast

Ethics

Christian Ethics, by Georgia Harkness. Abingdon Press, New York.

A book by Georgia Harkness is always stimulating and worth reading. This book is no exception. This book is written in the field of applied Christianity where she is especially qualified to speak.

"Any Christian ethic to be valid" the author states, "must take its starting point from the revelation of the nature and the will of God as this has come to us in Jesus Christ." "The foundation of Christian ethics is epitomized in 'Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus.'" This emphasis on basic "biblical foundations" is much needed today in discussion on Christian ethics. This emphasis gives this book its unique value.

The first four chapters fittingly present the basic biblical foundations. The two chapters following, then discuss the relationship between Christian ethics and Christian theology. The last half of the book selects great major problems of contemporary society like chapter titles VII to XII inclusive and seeks a Christian answer in the light of the gospel. Discussion of these problems is fresh and incisive, and they reflect the careful consistent thinking of a mature Christian scholar.

Bethel College — Henry A. Fast

Wesley

Selected Letters of John Wesley, edited by Frederick C. Gill. New York Philosophical Library, 1956. 244 pp. $4.75.

Of the many hundreds of letters John Wesley wrote, a cross-section is given here from his first letter as a student at Oxford in 1721 to his last preserved letter written to William Wilberforce in 1791. The letters reveal Wesley's greatness in his pastoral work as well as his weakness in his home and family relationships. These letters are enjoyable, enlightening, and inspiring.

Bethel College — John F. Schmidt

The Prayers of Suzanna Wesley, edited and arranged by W. L. Doughty. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1956. 63 pp. $2.50.

This is booklet of forty prayers, adopted from the meditations of Suzanna Wesley, each prefaced by hymns from the first complete Methodist hymnbook. A brief biography of Suzanna Wesley is very helpful.

Bethel College — John F. Schmidt

Pennsylvania

The Amish Year, by Rice and Steinmetz. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1956. 224 pp. $5.

This well illustrated and interesting book presents typical incidents that take place in the life of Pennsylvania Amish within the course of a year. The book has many excellent photographs, in fact between five and nine full page photographs in each chapter. There are twelve chapters and a narrative for each month of the year.

The descriptions of Amish life and thought and changes in custom are on the whole quite accurate. There are instances where one wonders whether the descriptions are not somewhat far fetched and whether some of the stories are not apocryphal, but on the whole the book is enjoyable and would make an excellent gift for people who are interested in becoming more familiar with the Amish.

Bethel College — J. W. Fretz

Historic Germantown, From the Founding to the Early Part of the Nineteenth Century, by Harry M. Tinkcom and others. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1955. 154 pp. $5.

This is a carefully documented account of the history of Germantown, Pennsylvania, where so many of the churches with Germanic background had their origin in America. It is well illustrated with many photographs, diagrams, and charts. One feels that there has been a minimum of attention paid to Mennonites as over against other groups. The author has depended heavily on English and Quaker sources for his information. It has primary interest for the historian and especially the specialist interested in local lore and background data.

Bethel College — J. W. Fretz

The Iron Collar, a novel from the days of the Counter-Reformation, by Fedor Sommer. Translated by Andrew S. Berky. Pennsburg, Pa., The Schwenkfelder Library. 1956. 261 pp.

This historical novel, first published in 1911 and now available in English, treats the story of the Silesian Schwenkfelders during a counter-Reformation movement early in the eighteenth century. The story of the persecution of this small group of followers of Caspar van Schwenkfeld and their subsequent flight is graphically told. The book should find a welcome response from Mennonites as another account of martyrology suffered by a minority group.

Bethel College — John F. Schmidt

Understanding Your Parents, by Ernest G. Osborne. New York: Association Press, 1956. 122 pages.

This book is a guide to help the adolescent understand his parents. The author talks in the language the teen-ager understands and has an appealing sense of humor. He treats the "teener" as an equal and discusses such problems as money matters in the family, who is boss in the home and why, choice of friends through parent's consent, etc. The book presents different views on how to understand each other better in the family. It is good reading and can be beneficial for parents as well as the teen-ager.

Bethel College — La Vera Goering

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