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CONTRIBUTORS

H. VAN BILDERBEEK is pastor of the Mennonite Church Texel and active in peace work in the Dutch Mennonite brotherhood.

S. M. A. DAALDER, one of the pastors of the Haarlem Mennonite Church, is the chairman of the *A.D.S.*

J. P. KEUNING is pastor of the Enschedede Mennonite Church and active in the brotherhood work of the conference.

J. P. MATTHIJSSEN has been missionary in Java and will succeed Frits Kuiper in the Mennonite Church of Amsterdam.

R. DE ZEEUW is executive secretary of the Foundation for "Special Needs."

H. W. MEIHUIZEN, editor of *Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad*, is pastor of the Mennonite Church of The Hague.

GER VAN ZETTEN is an active worker of Mennonite Youth Agency (*D.J.C.*).

J. P. JACOBSZOON, one of the pastors of the Mennonite Church of Haarlem, is youth minister.

MARY F. VAN SLUIJS-BIJL is editor of *Hart en Handen* of the *L.F.D.Z.*

W. F. GOLTERMAN is professor at the Mennonite Seminary and University of Amsterdam and secretary of the Ecumenical Council in The Netherlands.

WILLIAM KEENEY has been MCC Representative in Holland for the past two years.

J. A. OOSTERBAAN is professor of theology and ethics at the Mennonite Seminary and University of Amsterdam.

N. VAN DER ZIJPP is pastor of the Mennonite Church of Rotterdam and professor at the Mennonite Seminary.

FRITS KUIPER is senior pastor of the Mennonite Church of Amsterdam.

J. H. VAN DER BURG is pastor of the Mennonite Church in Emmeloord.

JOHN F. SCHMIDT is Assistant Librarian in the Bethel College Historical Library, Acting Director of the Kauffman Museum, and Associate Editor of *Mennonite Life*.

MARY ELEANOR BENDER is Professor of French and German at Goshen College.

ELIZABETH BENDER is the wife of the late Dr. H. S. Bender. She has been Assistant Professor of German at Goshen College, and did much translation and writing for the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*.

S. P. HOEFERT, Assistant Professor of German at the University of Waterloo, Canada, wrote a Ph.D. dissertation on Max Halbe at the University of Toronto.

COVER

Front Interior of new church building at Roden (Groningen). *Back* Olijftak—church building in Amsterdam west

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IN THIS ISSUE

In the following pages the reader will become acquainted with the work of the Mennonite brotherhood in Holland. Increasing contact between North American and Dutch Mennonites has led to the growing recognition that they are all part of one brotherhood even though a good many differences are evident. This issue is designed to strengthen that conviction. ¶ The writers are, with one exception, themselves Dutch Mennonites. They have been invited to speak for themselves and the result is in the nature of a letter to Mennonites in North America in which the plea for a greater unity of faith and purpose is clearly heard. ¶ Four other articles appear in this issue. One deals with the publication activities of Bethel College, while the other three treat the subject of Mennonites in German literature, depicting both their social life as well as their conviction about the imperative to reconciliation in human relationships.

THE DUTCH MENNONITE BROTHERHOOD

By William Keeney

THE MENNONITE MOVEMENT had two major centers in its early years. The origin was in Zürich, Switzerland, and spread from there to South Germany. Another center was found in the Netherlands and North Germany where the movement had a rapid early growth. The writings of Menno Simons and Dirk Philips of the Netherlands have probably helped to shape and preserve the Mennonite brotherhood in America more than any other writings outside of the Bible. But American Mennonites often know more about the earliest beginnings in the Netherlands than they know of the present Dutch Mennonite Brotherhood.

The Dutch Mennonites are not as numerous as they were at some times in history but they still compose the largest group outside of America. There are some reasons why this large and significant brotherhood is not so well known. Those among the American Mennonites whose families were originally Dutch have usually traveled so far before reaching America that they have lost all real memory of the land of origin. They have come by way of Danzig and Russia, and have become more identified by language and custom with their German background. Due to the differences in language and culture, it has often been difficult to feel a sense of close identity with the Dutch, even though they gave major and much needed help in times of persecution and flight.

Furthermore, the Dutch Mennonites have as a whole not chosen to identify themselves as followers of Menno but have chosen the term *Doopsgezinde,* which when translated literally means Baptism-minded. Outsiders are for this reason often inclined to think of them as Baptists rather than as Mennonites. It has also been true that they have been more open to the culture around them and at times wished to repudiate what they believed to be the narrowness, the harshness and the divisive tendencies of the early Mennonites in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, even those who today are heavily influenced by theological schools of liberalism or continental crisis theology still almost always impart to these viewpoints a different character because of their Anabaptist background, as might be noted in the article by Dr. J. A. Oosterbaan.

The fellowship which resulted from relief work after World War II and cooperation in various relief and mission projects since then has brought American and Dutch Mennonites into new contact with each other. There is a growing awareness that we can strengthen each other by exchange and by cooperation where work can better be done together by one party or either alone. Certainly the Seventh Mennonite World Conference in Kitchener and the bus trip "along Mennonite streets" in the States afterwards contributed greatly to make this more real.

During the past two years, 1961-1963, the Mennonite

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Central Committee has had a representative in the Netherlands to help maintain the relationships between the two groups. Out of this experience came the realization that there were many aspects of Dutch Mennonite life which are little known or understood by outsiders. The articles in this issue are an attempt to give a survey of the activities and interests of the Dutch Mennonites from within the brotherhood itself. They give a rather comprehensive survey of it as it exists today and of its vision and possibilities for the future.

The Dutch brotherhood is rather loosely organized in certain respects because of the strong emphasis placed upon the independence and autonomy of the local congregation, and the desire to be free of any external, arbitrary authority over the church or the believer. Thus in the past, activities such as missions, relief work and peace work have been the result of persons taking the initiative and forming groups for the purpose of doing these tasks. A present trend is for these groups to be considered agencies for meeting these responsibilities on behalf of the whole brotherhood. An even more recent development is the attempt of these groups to coordinate their work in such a way as to express the unity among these three different types of undertakings. These groups have a greater impact within and outside the brotherhood than might be supposed by any statistical analysis of either their membership or budget, and they are growing.

If one reads the articles carefully it will be apparent that there is a desire and effort for inner renewal in the brotherhood. The production of Bible study guides, of leadership training courses and the whole effort of the Fellowship for Mennonite Brotherhood Work are indications of this concern. The articles on youth work, the Amsterdam congregation and the new church at Emmeloord also show this emphasis. A new attempt to start a form of training for laymen in the church is to begin on October 1, 1963, when S. A. Houwing will be employed full time to direct an educational program. The plans for this work were announced too late to be included in the articles, but are worthy of note.

A measure of how active the leadership of the work described in these articles has to be can perhaps be given by counting the number of persons in full-time employ for administration. The Secretary of the *A.D.S.*, R. de Zeeuw, with an office secretary and a bookkeeper represent the staff for the *Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit*. M. Hoogeveen for the relief organization, Cor Inja for the Peace Bureau, and the staff for youth work would include practically all others in full time service. Missions, publications, Sister Circles —all other work is done primarily by ministers with major pastoral responsibilities, or with lay volunteers and some part-time help. When compared with the staff located at places like Akron, Scottdale, Elkhart or Newton in America, this is a mere handful for the variety and extent of the work described in the various articles.

Mention was made earlier of the openness of the Dutch Mennonites to the culture around them. Already in the seventeenth century they had many prominent persons in art and literature. The largest congregation of Mennonites is located in Amsterdam and other cities have old and large congregations. The American Mennonites are moving very rapidly toward urbanization. They also are becoming more open to the culture, as can be seen by the number of students in Mennonite and non-Mennonite colleges and universities. This development has both new dangers and opportunities. An intimate knowledge of Dutch Mennonitism, both in its history and today, should be very useful for American Mennonitism as it confronts the problems with which the Dutch have long wrestled, both to avoid the dangers and to make the most of the opportunities.

Cooperation in many areas, both with other Mennonites and with other Christians, is increasingly evident among the American Mennonites. The divisiveness which still exists and the evidence of earlier divisions is something difficult for Dutch Mennonites to comprehend. The article by Golterman underscores their high evaluation of Christian unity. Out of a history of splintering they have come to a sense of unity despite differences of views and have given expression to it in the organization of the *Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit* to which all Dutch Mennonites belong. They have also given expression to what they believe Christ's command is for unity with other Christians by joining the World Council of Churches. The Dutch Mennonites feel that in this area they would have their greatest witness to give to the American Mennonites. They need to be taken seriously and their witness needs to be studied to discover what the Spirit may have to say to the American brotherhood through them on this topic.

This special issue on Dutch Mennonites can be significant not simply as information about fellow Mennonites in another land. The American Mennonites can also use them as a mirror in which to look at themselves anew. In them the application of the same Anabaptist principles may show both weaknesses and strengths because of the different situation in which they live. The differences and the similarities can help each understand himself better. Furthermore, the world brotherhood of Mennonites needs to work together to bear its witness and do its work. The heritage received is not simply to be enjoyed. To the extent that it is faithful to Christ, it needs to be shared and applied. Knowledge of each other is a step in the direction of strengthening the bonds of fellowship out of which we can more effectively labor together in the world.

By S. M. A. Daalder

The General Mennonite Society (Conference)

THE DUTCH MENNONITES who were in Kitchener and later took part in the trip through the United States (they still think back on it with joy and thankfulness) certainly were amazed to find so many groups of Mennonites in the new world. Gradually they have begun to comprehend how this has all come to be. They did not, however, need to look outside of Europe to know that there is more than one brotherhood in one country. Germany has two conferences.

In our country we have one General Mennonite Conference (*A.D.S.*) which represents the Dutch Mennonites to outsiders and which is working to coordinate and activate inwardly. This has not always been so. Our history also shows a multiplicity and diversity, which has only slowly grown into a unity in the midst of diversity.

Our conference originated in 1811. This was not because we were no longer true to the old structure of our church and faith which did emphasize the autonomy of the congregation with adult baptism upon the personal confession of faith, but because the need of the hour forced us to it.

In 1810 our country was incorporated into France. Among other things, it was determined that only a third of all income should be expended. This bloodletting in the financial area would have been a fatal stab for our Theological Seminary which up until that time had been entirely the burden of the Amsterdam congregation, had they not tried once more to rescue the Seminary by inviting all the congregations to help provide for it as much as possible. But our purpose here is not to give the full history of the *Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit* (*A.D.S.*). It is sufficient to report that this attempt at cooperation succeeded, even though only 50 of the 132 congregations cooperated in its founding. The word "society" (Conference) was chosen in order to acknowledge that every congregation could maintain its independence, while the adjective "general" indicated that all Mennonites could without exception participate. The purpose was stated to be "the promotion of the service of preaching," whereby it was indicated that the "society" was to care for the training of ministers who would serve our congregations.

Since then more than 150 years have gone by. Our brotherhood would no longer be conceivable without *A.D.S.* Not only are all the congregations autonomous members but the *A.D.S.* does much more than maintain the Seminary. A number of institutions active on behalf of our brotherhood also participate as members with advisory vote. Thus the *A.D.S.* has become a union or conference of actively serving congregations and institutions.

What are some of the activities of the society (conference)? Provisions have been made to raise the salaries of the ministers who have been trained in the Seminary to an acceptable level in those congregations where they cannot do that on their own. Recently

A hidden church in Poppingawier (Friesland)

Interior of church at Leeuwarden

(November, 1962) the ministers' pension plan was revised. These two regulations proceed from the primary purpose of the *A.D.S.*

The Executive Committee of the Conference has also decided, in cooperation with all the congregations, to put into effect a regulation whereby it will be possible to raise salaries periodically. In addition a regulation was put into effect to provide for salary supplements based on the number of children ministers have.

In our country the urbanization process continues. The industrial centers require more and more laborers. Members of the church may get lost in newly-opened areas. By means of a "Change of Address Office" (*Verhuisden Bureau*) we attempt to prevent the adverse effect of this migration as much as possible.

As publisher of the General Mennonite Weekly (*Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad*) the society promotes the spiritual life in the brotherhood and strengthens the mutual bonds of the congregations and the church members. The *A.D.S.* is the publisher of the paper for the brotherhood.

Because of the migration to the cities and industrial areas, the need arose for church buildings in new places. In order to help a new congregation or to support an existing church in the face of this need, a

Church Building Fund was set up on the recommendation of the *A.D.S.*, providing subsidies for new areas.

In places where there is no congregation a Committee for the Scattered Members takes care of the necessary contact, including house visits as well as a special publication that was instituted for these "scattered members."

Our times demand an expansion of the treasury of hymns. Some of the old hymns are no longer usable. A commission was appointed to examine the content and new musical possibilities of new hymns, from our own territory as well as from outside. A trial collection will be published shortly.

Our task is not finished. The Brotherhood Houses at Elspeet, Schoorl, Fredeshiem and Bilthoven began their work scarcely forty years ago, initially outside of the congregations and thus outside of the *A.D.S.* Those who took the initiative were at first rather critical of the *A.D.S.* But the time came when this organization, which is now known as the Fellowship for Mennonite Brotherhood Work and which did and is doing much and useful work, joined the *A.D.S.* as a member with an advisory vote.

The same thing happened in the realm of missions. This work first begun outside of the *A.D.S.*, often appeared to be nothing more than a union of private individuals. This organization is now completely incorporated into the *A.D.S.* and missions has become a responsibility of the total brotherhood.

Mention must also be made of the relief work performed in the name of the brotherhood by the Foundation for Special Needs. Youth work is conducted through the Mennonite Youth Union which can make its voice heard in the meetings of the *A.D.S.* along with the Peace Group which wishes to carry out the old Mennonite principle of biblical nonresistance in the context of the tensions of our age.

The *A.D.S.* is also the body which represents the whole brotherhood to outsiders. It is the central office of Dutch Mennonites. The representatives of the ecumenical movement and missions, radio and television, other congregations and churches, the worldwide brotherhood and the government, find their way to the Dutch Mennonites by way of the *A.D.S.*, Singel 454, Amsterdam/C., that agency which has the task of uniting, activating, stimulating, and acting as representative for the Dutch Mennonites to outsiders.

Hidden behind all this beats the warm heart of many among us who seek the way for our congregations in their autonomy, in their diversity of faith and confession, in their mixed social structure, to bear witness of Him who is the Lord, who is the light of the world and who also seeks us in order to make some of that light shine in this world.

We cannot imagine the brotherhood without the *A.D.S.* Naturally we cannot see into the future. But it is the explicit conviction of the writer that an important task awaits the *A.D.S.* as the union of the Dutch Mennonite congregations and institutions. That task is to make new plans ever again and to create possibilities whereby the brotherhood shall be able to function as the church of Christ. The old task of "maintaining the seminary" is not the only one. A new age brought new assignments. Certainly the coming age shall give us new labor in the service of the Lord of the church.

SOME OF THE CONTRIBUTORS: S. M. A. Daalder, J. P. Matthijssen, R. de Zeeuw, H. W. Meihuizen, Ger van Zetten, J. P. Jacobszoon, W. F. Golterman, H. van Bilderbeek, N. van der Zijpp, J. H. van der Burg.

By J. P. Keuning

Fellowship for Mennonite Brotherhood Work

In the years shortly before World War I the so-called Church Life (Day) Movement began. Mennonites from many congregations gathered for a day to strengthen their mutual bonds and to deepen their life of faith. These Church Life Days, set up regionally, were received with a heartening interest. The feeling that the members of the church needed to be activated to the service of Jesus Christ grew steadily stronger.

The need for more conferences where we could speak with one another about all sorts of religious topics became evident. Then came the desire to establish conference retreats where one could fellowship in a brotherly spirit. One longed for more contact and for open discussion beyond the limits of one's own congregation. Thus in the course of time several Brotherhood houses were erected: Elspeet, Fredeshiem, Schoorl, Bilthoven and a camp house at Giethoorn. The Elspeet Union originated in the Church Life Movement and this union organized meetings of various types in the Brotherhood House at Elspeet and elsewhere.

The Brotherhood houses were not only for reflection but also became vacation centers with spiritual leadership. They continue to maintain this character. Many members of the Mennonite brotherhood, as well as outsiders, find recreation here, both in the physical and spiritual sense. Renewed in the inner man and strengthened by being together with spiritual brethren, countless numbers think back with thankfulness on what they have found in these houses.

Dining hall at Brotherhood House in Elspeet.

After World War II the Elspeet Union was reorganized as the Fellowship for Mennonite Brotherhood Work. It became an independent inter-congregational organization to help promote the religious life of the Mennonites. It takes the initiative in all kinds of activities in order to do this. Its work can certainly best be described as drawing men together and equipping them for their spiritual task. The leaders are not exclusively ministers, but the leadership for a very important part of the work is given by laymen.

For a proper understanding of the Fellowship for Mennonite Brotherhood Work, it needs to be said that it organizes various types of activities, such as conferences, family weeks and fellowship weeks. But alongside this work it also brings together, overarches, organizes and coordinates work of many other organizations such as Youth Work, Summer Camps, the Federation of Sister Circles, the Peace Group, Missions, Special Needs (the relief and social work organization), Voluntary Service, and others. Thus twenty commissions and organizations are represented in the Fellowship for Mennonite Brotherhood Work in order to work together to serve the congregations.

The Fellowship also takes care of the publication and distribution of a Bible study guide annually, a leadership training course, and its own paper "Foundation and Building Stones" (*Fundament en Bouwstenen* —an insert in *Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad*). Retreat and educational work are also included within its scope. It also has a warm interest in ecumenical work.

The work of the Fellowship is directed primarily toward promoting unity among the Mennonites so that they will feel themselves to be not only members of the local congregation, but also members of the brotherhood as a whole. It sees as its assignment the service of Jesus Christ in many different areas of work.

By J. P. Matthijssen

Dutch Mennonite Missions

The Beginnings

The early Anabaptist movement was a missionary one, at a time when the great Reformers refused to hear about missions. However, this missionary zeal was soon lost. In the Dutch situation, this historic development from an Anabaptist missionary movement to Mennonite introversion has been analyzed very clearly by N. van der Zijpp.[1] Outside influences were needed to renew missionary concern among Mennonites. In Holland, this fact has even had negative results. It is also doubtful whether the first Mennonite mission board in the world understood that besides doing the actual mission work, it also had the task of trying to make the entire Dutch brotherhood conscious of its missionary calling.

In 1847 the members of the Dutch chapter of the (London) Baptist Missionary Society discovered that they were all Mennonites and decided to organize their own "Mennonite Society for the Propagation of the Gospel."[2] For a long time afterwards the mission work was carried financially by the committee members and their successors, aided by a very limited circle of Mennonites, most of whom had been touched by the pietistic revival.

Three other factors contributed to hindering the development of a broad basis for missions among Dutch Mennonites. Modernism came and was accepted by a majority. Though it brought many blessings, it also had disadvantages. A natural result was that soon most members accepted the relativity of the Gospel. This attitude is not exactly conducive to the development of a sense of missionary calling. Another factor is that European missionary strategy differs from the Anglo-American one, among other things in that it works with fewer people on its fields. The results do not necessarily suffer, but it must be acknowledged that the chance for personal ties between mission field and home congregation is reduced, and with it the opportunity to stimulate mission interest.

Again, mission interest was not promoted by the fact that most Dutch Protestant missions have limited their activities to the Dutch colonies, Holland being a small country and its colonies huge. However, Dutch colonial policy, until a few decades ago, seriously hampered missionary activities and the real or supposed relationship between colonial power and missionaries also did no good. In relation to its population, the Netherlands are at the bottom of the world list of Protestant contributions to missions, whereas the Dutch Roman Catholic contributions to their missions—which are not limited to the Dutch colonies—are the world's highest.

After a few decades, the work could not be carried on in this way. Fortunately, at that time Mennonites in Russia, Germany and Switzerland had become mission-minded. They gladly channeled their personnel and contributions through the Dutch committee. However, this much-appreciated help discharged the Dutch committee of the necessity of establishing a broader basis in its own brotherhood. After World War II, this European Mennonite cooperation found its organizational form in the "Europäisches Mennonitisches Evangelisations-Komitee" (EMEK), in which European Mennonites share mission responsibilities. The help from Russia had already been discontinued because of the Russian Revolution which had severed the Russian Mennonites from the rest of the world, and later the Hitler regime forbade the German Mennonites to send money abroad. In this situation the Dutch committee was finally forced to tackle its task with respect to its own constituency. A great stimulant came through several Dutch Mennonites who volunteered as missionaries after World War II; but more important is that the spiritual climate in the brotherhood has changed in a sense favorable to missions. One result of this latter factor has been that in the fifties the Missionary Society was replaced by the "Mennonite Mission Board," an official body of the *A.D.S.*

Mission to Java

Actual mission activity did not begin until 1851, when the first missionary was sent to Java where many difficulties were immediately encountered because the colonial government enforced many restrictions. Missionary Peter Jansz was able to begin his work only as

Jungle Transportation

Roadside food vendor and clients

New Hospital Building

a private tutor in Japara, in Central Java. Though after several decades he had only seven converts, a serious persecution arose forcing the small group of believers to flee into the forest.

Because of the strict Muslim environment in the Javanese mission areas, the converts continually faced the difficult problems created by being expelled from their anti-Christian communities, where, even had they remained, little could be accomplished in positive Christian living or fellowship. The need for this latter was even more serious because of the Javanese passion for opium and gambling at the time, so that missionary Jansz, long before the term "comprehensive approach" had been introduced into modern mission literature, developed an ingenious scheme to reverse and solve the situation. He planned to create Christianized communities to provide a new home for converts, but also with the prospect of offering non-Christians an existential Christian witness along with the opportunity of earning a living. He succeeded in getting a 99-year lease on vast tracts of government land. Under leadership of his son these were cultivated and "Christian" communities established. Any Javanese promising to abide by the "Christian" rules of these communities was welcome to rent a piece of land. Many people accepted this offer and most embraced Christianity, although there was no obligation to do so. Large congregations came into being where otherwise everybody would undoubtedly have been blind and deaf to the Gospel. However, these colony-type congregations never made any direct evangelistic efforts. They were—because of the enforced rules—too much isolated from normal Javanese society.

Besides this pioneer work, father and son Jansz (who together actively served 92 years on the mission field) deserve great recognition for their Javanese translations and their work in the educational field, where they are still remembered for their teachers' training school that has produced numerous leaders in higher functions.

At the end of the last century, a second field was opened in an isolated Muslim area in western Sumatra. The Russian Mennonites were especially interested in this field and provided many missionaries for it. The great faithfulness of some of them has brought about the establishment of several congregations. However, after the last remaining Russian missionary died in 1928, the lack of successors and funds forced the committee to abandon this field. Since then most members joined the (Lutheran) Batak Church; many went back to Islam and only about a hundred still are Mennonites. During the past ten years they have received financial and other help from EMEK.

In Java many more missionaries were employed from Russia, Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. The latter were especially active in the medical program, which was extensive, partly because the medical need was great, partly because this type of work appealed best to the Dutch Mennonites, who donated large sums for this cause. A number of hospitals were founded. The non-Dutch brethren concentrated on evangelistic work in the villages. The educational program continued to receive attention. Javanese evangelists were trained on the field. In 1941 five young men graduated from a theological school, and one, Djojodihardjo, the present leader of the Javanese Church, graduated from the interdenominational seminary in Djakarta.

How insufficient the number of trained native leaders was, became evident after the outbreak of World War II. After the German invasion of Holland, all Germans in Java were interned, including several of our missionaries. Schmitt and Stauffer drowned when the ship on which they were being transported was torpedoed by the Japanese. Some of the others were already very old. During the Japanese occupation of Java, one Dutch missionary was killed and the others interned. The Swiss couple, Daniel Amstutz, was not allowed to leave its house. Only the nurse Maria Klaassen, was able to continue her work. The entire foreign leadership was thus eliminated. The Javanese congregations declared themselves independent and joined to form the Muria Mennonite Church, but their plight was a serious one indeed. Both finances and sufficient leadership were lacking. In addition to the general war miseries they were forced to suffer from Japanese and Muslim persecutions which resulted in killing, tortures and destruction. After the Japanese capitulation, Indonesia declared itself independent. Four years of war with the Netherlands ensued. Until 1950 the Muria area was cut off from the outside world. The Mennonite church there had to rediscover itself, without missionary help, with few leaders, many open positions, most property destroyed and in a world in turmoil.

After World War II

Much had changed the Netherlands. The mission committee was convinced that it had to continue mission activity somewhere in the world. Java being closed, a Dutch Reformed mission field in New Guinea was taken over in 1950. In this area work had been carried on, without much success, for several decades, with the help of evangelists from Amboina, who had molded the young Papua congregations after the seventeenth-century pattern of their home church. The only condition was that the Mennonite missionaries, although allowed to teach specific Mennonite principles, were to join, with the native Christians, the island-wide, interdenominational Evangelical Christian church. This implied that besides believers' baptism they also had to tolerate, if not administer, infant baptism. This has created many problems. However, this experiment in ecumenical missionary cooperation

Theological School in Pati (1950-1955)

has been rather successful. Three missionary ministers have worked there, serving the existing coastal congregations, but also strongly promoting the penetration of the interior. To this end they trained native evangelists and scores of new congregations were established. Many Dutch Mennonite teachers were employed in our mission schools and medical missionaries in the Public Health Service.

Political developments forced us to discontinue this work at a point where the native church is still far from ready to be left alone. Perhaps the Javanese Mennonites could provide help to the young Papua church, for the Javanese Mennonites have changed considerably. The pitiful handful of survivors became a healthy, growing church. Immediately after we started in New Guinea, the Javanese doors opened again. First, an MCC team found its way to the Muria church; in 1951 we resumed activities there. However, this time we came because our help was requested by an independent church in a newly independent country, both still sensitive about their independence. The political and economic conditions were uncertain and continued to cause many problems.

Our primary postwar task was to help the Javanese church integrate into the Javanese society in order that the church would be able to give an existential witness—in a Mohammedan society the only truly effective gateway to men's hearts! This included efforts to make them conscious of their own missionary calling. The next most important task was leadership training so as to give substance to independence. A theological school was established in Pati. In 1955 it merged with the Reformed theological school in Malang, and last year this conjoint Malang school united with another Reformed school in Djogjakarta and was raised to the university seminary level. But Sunday school work, lay leadership training courses, a theological monthly, literature work must also be mentioned in this connection with the school program, including secondary schools and teachers' training. The medical program was also rebuilt, partly in cooperation with MCC.

All these factors have contributed to great growth, in spite of great economic poverty and of continuing pressures from Islam, communism and nationalism. In 1951 the Javanese Mennonite church had about 2,000 members; today it has about 9,000. In 1959, for political reasons, the doors of Java were once more closed to Dutch missionaries. However, this time financial aid could be continued, as well as the medical work (with German and French personnel).

Since the doors of New Guinea were also closing, we looked for new opportunities in Africa. In Tchad EMEK started in the capital Fort-Lamy. Dr. Kuitse is working in Ghana as an adviser to all churches and missions there on matters pertaining to the rapid advance of Islam.

History seems to repeat itself. After we had accepted responsibility for these new fields, word came that the Indonesian doors are to be opened again, as the political contest over New Guinea is subsiding.

Mention should be made of the postwar contacts with American Mennonites. Cooperation with MCC in the Java program has been mentioned. By now American Mennonites may have replaced Dutch missionaries in New Guinea. A Canadian theologian, Peter Fast, replaced a Dutch one in the Javanese seminary. Dutch doctors will shortly be serving in an American Mennonite field in Ghana.

The Dutch Mennonites surely will react positively to the expanded responsibilities, the new opportunities, the new challenges. May this, too, contribute to an ever more powerful witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by the Dutch Mennonite brotherhood.

[1]N. van der Zijpp, "Verloren Openheid. Van doperse zendingsgemeente tot doopsgezinde beslotenheid," Assen 1959.

[2]Doopsgezinde Vereniging tot Evangelieverbreiding, also called Doopsgezinde Zending Vereniging.

By R. de Zeeuw

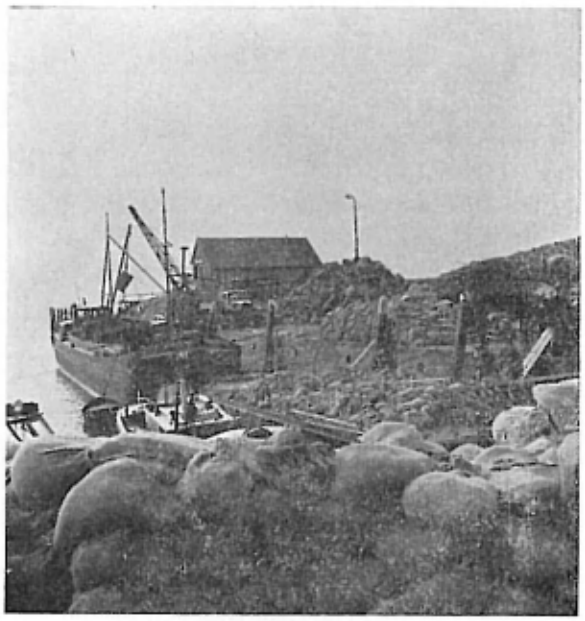
THE ORGANIZATION FOR "SPECIAL NEEDS"

HAVING THEMSELVES GONE through deep need occasioned by injustice, violence and hunger, the Dutch Mennonites began with relief work in the first years after World War II. Proceeding from an evangelical sense of being bound with their fellowmen in need they have built up the means for a modern form of giving aid. This led to the organization of the Foundation for Special Needs (*Stichting voor Byzondere Noden in de Doopsgezinde Broederschapen daarbuiten*).

In Dutch relief work the voluntary devotion of the church member still predominates. As of 1963 our relief organization had no full time person in charge of this work. The relief work is still carried out with the assistance of people who make their personal gifts available on a completely voluntary basis. Thus a large scale organization is lacking. Almost everyone who gives leadership to the Dutch relief work also has many additional functions to fulfill along with this work, either in the brotherhood or outside of it. Still this relief work has grown very rapidly in comparison with similar work done by the Dutch Protestant churches. This can only be explained by the fact that all 145 of the Mennonite congregations in the Netherlands have placed themselves behind this relief work and then have given the organization "Special Needs" the assignment and the trust to do this work in the name of the whole brotherhood. The biblical commission to show mercy unto the least of our brothers has been accepted in principle as the point of departure.

Post War Relief

Dutch relief work during the first five years (1945-1950) consisted mainly of assistance within the borders of its own country. The war had transformed the richness of our land into poverty, had caused ethical values to be lost, and had disturbed the social life. Therefore our relief work recognized that as its first problem it was called to restore the damage occasioned by the war. That signified the granting of material aid in the period from 1945-1950. Attention was therefore primarily devoted to young people and children from disorganized families.



Supplies to repair flood damage

After international contacts were reestablished, the basis of Dutch relief work was extended. Inspired by the example of the American and Canadian Mennonites the first international activities were developed. A role was also played in this development by the World Council of Churches (Interchurch Aid Department). An appeal was made to the Dutch Mennonites from our own world brotherhood to help refugees from Russia and East Germany build a new existence. An urgent appeal was made to our churches from the World Council center to accept and care for aged displaced persons from China, Russia, Hungary and other East-European states in our country until their death. The answer of our brotherhood to these appeals was positive.

Aid to refugees

Providing healthful recreation for German Children

International flood relief team 1953

Flood Emergency, 1953

The disaster of February, 1953, in which about 2,000 people were drowned within a few hours reached very deeply into the life of the churches. A flood of inter-church aid for the affected area brought once again the task and the blessing of such an aid program within our reach. Since that time the Netherlands is a devoted partner in lending aid after disasters similar to the flood of 1953.

The cooperation between the different groups of Mennonites in America and Europe was also strengthened during that time. International Mennonite teams worked together in the disaster area for a full year in the extensive reconstruction work needed for houses, roads and churches.

Berlin and Paraguay

At the time of the World Conference in Basel (1952) it was decided in principle—after a very urgent appeal from the Berlin Mennonites—to cooperate internationally on behalf of the so-called East Mennonites. Thus began International Mennonite Relief Work (*Internationales Mennonitisches Hilfswerk*). The Mennoheim (Menno-Home) was purchased later. Refugees from behind the Iron Curtain were intercepted in West Germany and assisted in the difficult beginning of a new life. In this task of granting aid as well as in that for the Mennonite returnees from Paraguay two kinds of aims are kept in mind: help for fellowmen in need, and the gathering together into a church relationship of Mennonite refugees.

The Present Situation

The program of "Special Needs" presently (1963) includes: Continuation of child welfare work and other social work, among others on behalf of displaced, repatriated and aged persons in the Netherlands; help for Mennonites in Berlin and for the Paraguay returnees via *Internationales Mennonitisches Hilfswerk;* sending of helpers to Algeria, Greece and Germany together with the MCC; support of the work of Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS); and participation in the relief work of the World Council of Churches, among others in Greece, Poland, Kenya and Persia.

In a complex world Christians are not only duty bound to help their fellowman in need but also have the privilege to be allowed to participate in such work. The offering of help enriches one's own emotional life; it gives content to our own existence. Nevertheless our relief work will only be of highest value when it takes place in obedience to the command to love one another with the same love with which God first loved us.

The relief work of "Special Needs" is a service to the Lord of the church. His love-filled service even unto death calls us to follow in trust and surrender.

By H. W. Meihuizen

Publication Activities

To EXPRESS IN print the assumptions of their faith and their manner of life has been very close to the heart of the Dutch Mennonites ever since the brotherhood came into existence. The following names are well known: Nicholas Biestkens, who published the much used translation of the Bible and perhaps the forerunner of *The Martyrs' Mirror,* "Het Offer des Heren" (The Sacrifice of the Lord): Jan Claesz, who had Menno Simons' *Doopboekje* printed and had to pay with his life for distributing it. The publication of the complete writings of Menno Simons followed, as well as the writings of later leaders of the brotherhood.

The possibilities for publication which the Dutch Mennonites possessed before World War II were almost completely wiped out during the German occupation. Only local church papers which might contain nothing more than purely business announcements and indispensable details could continue to exist. Moreover the size of these was reduced to the minimal two pages by a drastic limitation in the use of paper. Thus when the hour of liberation from these and other more serious limitations struck, it was no wonder that those who were called to lead the brotherhood immediately began to reflect on how this gap, so strongly felt, could be filled in the best manner.

The Executive Committee of the *Algemeen Doopsgezinde Societeit* (*A.D.S.*), in order both to provide for the lack of the old faithful publications, and satisfy the new needs appointed a Committee for Publication. It was to publish booklets and brochures which according to its insight were desired and in addition it was to serve as an advisory council for the editor of the *Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad* (General Mennonite Weekly).

The *A.D.S.* resumed the circulation of the annual General Conference report (*Verslag wegens de staat van de A.D.S.*), in which its activities on behalf of the brotherhood were made known to the congregations. Strictly speaking, these booklets do not belong to the popular periodical publications, but there is great interest in them.

The Brotherhood Days, instituted in 1959, were celebrated by the 140 congregations through programs which were written by different authors, and mimeographed as *stemmenspel* (responsive readings). They were included in the liturgy of the Sunday morning service as well as a hymn written by J. Nooter for this occasion. Thus the *A.D.S.* acted as publisher. Similarly the *Broederschapskalender* (Brotherhood Calendar) was published in 1956, which replaced the daily calendar published earlier by the Mission Union.

Already before the war the *A.D.S.* had cooperated in compiling the unified hymnbook (*Liederenbundel ten dienste van de Doopsgezinde Broederschap*) which after nine years of cooperative effort with the Dutch Protestant Union was introduced into the congregations for use in 1945. It was generally accepted and brought unity in church singing. Prior to its publication at least five different hymnaries were in use, which certainly was undesirable for those who moved from one congregation to another. Soon an experimental collection which includes some fifty hymns not yet used in the churches, will be published, so that if they are appreciated they can be included in a new general hymnary which is to appear later.

A Worship Service Manual of the Mennonite Churches in the Netherlands (*Kanselboek ten dienste van de Doopsgezinde gemeenten in Nederland*) was compiled by a committee under the chairmanship of S.H.N. Gorter and published by the *A.D.S.* to bring more unity to the liturgical forms of the Sunday morning worship services. Just as the choice of a hymnbook has often been the work of an individual minister, so the order of worship was also primarily determined by him.

The *A.D.S.* has also published the Leadership Course (*Kadercursus*) which appeared in mimeographed form in the winter of 1949-1950. In the "course" eight subjects were brought to the attention of those who were involved in the work of the church. Four of those who contributed to these courses have later published their sections in a more extensive form as books.

In 1954 the *A.D.S.* published the Mennonite Handbook (*Doopsgezind Handboek*) compiled by F. H. Pasma for orientation regarding the many organiza-

tional regulations within the brotherhood. The Committee for Publication published the portrait of Menno Simons etched by Arend Hendriks. It has been well received by the Dutch Mennonites and others.

The contribution of the Mennonite Yearbook (*Doopsgezinde Jaarboekje*) was entrusted to the Committee for Publication. The Yearbook, in addition to business details, contains lists of all congregations, ministers, institutions and committees, and other work in formation. The present editors are L.D.G. Knipscheer and D. Richards. It is printed by the firm T. Banda at Kollum, Friesland, which also prints the *Weekblad* (Weekly) for the *A.D.S.*

Before the war the weekly *Zondagsbode* (Sunday Messenger) offered welcome weekend reading for many Mennonite families. When, in June, 1942, the paper was forbidden, this means of communication for the whole brotherhood ceased to exist. Thanks to the initiative of S.H.N. Gorter, the time between the liberation (May 5, 1945) and the appearance of the *Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad* (October 5, 1946) could be bridged by twelve issues of a modest organ which he edited under the name *De Noodbrug* (The Emergency Bridge). The *Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad,* which was intended for and sent to all Mennonite families, was a weekly, edited by S.H.N. Gorter until October 1, 1955. In these nine years, he had the satisfaction of realizing the purpose originally set forth, that is to report "the typical Mennonite things that bind us together and of which we certainly need to become more conscious" while standing "in the middle of a world with innumerable manifestations in the area of the religious and social life with its values and questions." After him the editorship has been entrusted to the writer of this article.

There are eleven supplements to the Weekly so that one large city congregation and ten districts of the Conference can make their local announcements. In the first issue of the month two of these supplements for the respective districts are folded into the Weekly, and thereafter three of them with each issue during the month.

Although the Committee for Publication has not formulated it in these very words, it has nevertheless viewed as a part of its task the continuation of the series of Pamphlets for the Needs of Scattered Mennonites (*Geschriftjes ten behoeve van de Doopsgezinden in de Verstrooiing*). This series of 61 numbers, generally limited to 16-32 pages, has brought to a wide circle of readers information important for all Mennonites. Some issues were a great success. Among them were a sketch of the life of Menno Simons, a treatment of the characteristics of Dutch Mennonites, a study help for Bible reading, and a brochure telling why we are Mennonites. These publications express the same purpose as the Weekly and the Leadership courses, namely, to reflect upon our life and faith.

Personal initiative in the area of publication can be noted as a characteristic of the Dutch Mennonites. It has resulted in a large number of periodicals. Of course, those that come from certain organizations with special purposes need to be mentioned. The Commission for Scattered Mennonites (*Commissie tot de Doopsgezinden in de Verstrooiing*) was instituted to care for those who live so far removed from any Mennonite congregation that it is not easy to maintain close contact. The commission provides also a mimeographed paper for the visiting ministers who call upon these widely scattered members to strengthen the bonds with the brotherhood. The paper is called *Van Huis tot Huis* (*From House to House*).

The Mission Union, presently called the Mission Council, is publishing the paper *Evangelieverbreiding* (Extending the Gospel), which appears as a supplement to the Weekly since August 20, 1949, replacing *Onze Zending* (Our Mission). Although the intention was to include it as a supplement to the Weekly five times a year, this was not always done, because many reports from the mission field appeared directly in the columns of the Weekly. At present Extending the Gospel appears twice a year with double the former space as an insert in the Weekly.

In about the same manner since September 15, 1956, the Weekly has carried a supplement for the Fellowship for Mennonite Brotherhood Work, *Fundament en Bouwstenen* (Foundation and Building Stones), eight times a year. It takes the place of the earlier *Brieven* (Letters). In addition to reports from this union, earlier called the Church Day Movement (*Gemeentedagbeweging*), each issue is devoted to a separate topic with which the brotherhood is spiritually concerned and about which usually three authors express themselves.

As preparation for the 150th anniversary of the *Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit* in 1961, the Fellowship for Mennonite Brotherhood Work produced a Bible Study Guide (*Bijbelstudiegids*). The series will possibly be continued.

Since December 6, 1952, the sixth page of the Weekly is being used by the National Federation of Mennonite Sister Circles. Usually it appears in the second number of the month under the title *Hart en Handen*. The Sister Circles also circulate a mimeographed *Brief* (Letter) with reports for the leaders. Announcements of reports from the Mennonite Youth Agency have appeared in the fourth issue since May 28, 1960, under the heading Youth and the Church (*Jeugd en Gemeente*). These columns have their own editor, just as Extending the Gospel and Foundation and Building Stones.

The Mennonite Youth Union published its own monthly The Cornerstone (*De Hoeksteen*) which after the war was continued in a somewhat modified form. A mimeographed monthly with the title Course (*Koers*)

exists for the leaders. Separate sections are found in it for each of the groups bound together in the Youth Council: the Youth Union (for those 18-35 years old); the Mennonite Builders Federation (for 8-18 years old) which has as its official paper The Mennonite Builder (*De Menniste Bouwer*); Elfregi (Scout organization for 8-25 years old); and the Westhill Sunday schools (for 4-12 years old) which has the periodicals The Flower in the Bud (*De Bloem in Knop*), Unfolding (*Ontplooing*), and Young Blossom (*Jonge Bloei*). The three last-named publications do not appear for Mennonites only, although they are products of a Mennonite agency.

The Youth Union has published five brochures about the main items of faith under the general title *Operatie Columbus,* and a songbook Together One (*Samen Een*). The Mennonite Builders Federation has published a Handbook for Clubwork (*Handleiding voor Clubwerk*).

The Peace Group has published articles and announcements about the issues of peace and war monthly in the Letter of the Mennonite Peace Group (*Brief van de Doopsgezinde Vredesgroep*) since 1946.

The initiative for all these publications is undertaken by the directors of the agencies mentioned. Purely private initiative has given life to Voices from the Mennonite Brotherhood (*Stemmen uit de Doopsgezinde Broederschap*) which in the beginning appeared more often but now comes out four times a year. For a long time the wish was expressed to resume the publication of Mennonite Contributions (*Doopsgezinde Bijdragen*) which was suspended in 1919. It was not to be a periodical that would contain primarily historical articles as the *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen,* but would also include systematic and practical theology. In January, 1952, K. T. Gorter and Th. van der Veer presented the first issue of *Stemmen.* Since then many valuable contributions have appeared in this periodical, among others at the occasion of the 225th anniversary of the Seminary and the Menno Memorial of 1961.

Space does not permit a report about the books that have been published since the war. Moreover, they have been, in as far as they deal with Mennonite history, included in the surveys which *Mennonite Life* offers regularly in April. It is sufficient to mention that they venture upon all sorts of subjects, also outside of what touches the brotherhood directly. Some doctoral dissertations could be mentioned, and some books or booklets which treat the Dutch Mennonites or a topic of it, such as personalities, churches, districts, and organizations. For reflection upon the content of the faith, ethical and symbolical subjects have been treated, including, of course, the ecumenical question. Plays and treatment of drama in general, travel accounts and collections of poetry have also been published by private individuals. This writing has been done by the very young as well as by older writers, sometimes in cooperation with one or more other persons. With regard to the scope of these publications, they vary from a rather large brochure to very voluminous works. This then gives an impression of the publication activities among the Dutch Mennonites.

A Gift Suggestion

Someone you know would enjoy reading *Mennonite Life.* Why not send a subscription to *Mennonite Life* to that friend as a Christmas gift? There is stimulating reading in store for *Mennonite Life* readers in 1964. The January issue will be devoted to The Mennonite Church in the City. How do Mennonites, who have traditionally considered themselves a rural people, communicate the gospel in the big city? The April and July issues will concern themselves with Mennonites and the Bible. Still later an issue will deal with Mennonites and the Fine Arts.

A special offer is extended to you on this 75th Anniversary of Bethel College. Any person sending in a 3-year subscription to *Mennonite Life* for himself or for friends at the special subscription price of $7.50 will receive a copy of *The Story of Bethel College* by P. J. Wedel and Ed. G. Kaufman as a premium. The book consists of 632 pages and has many illustrations.

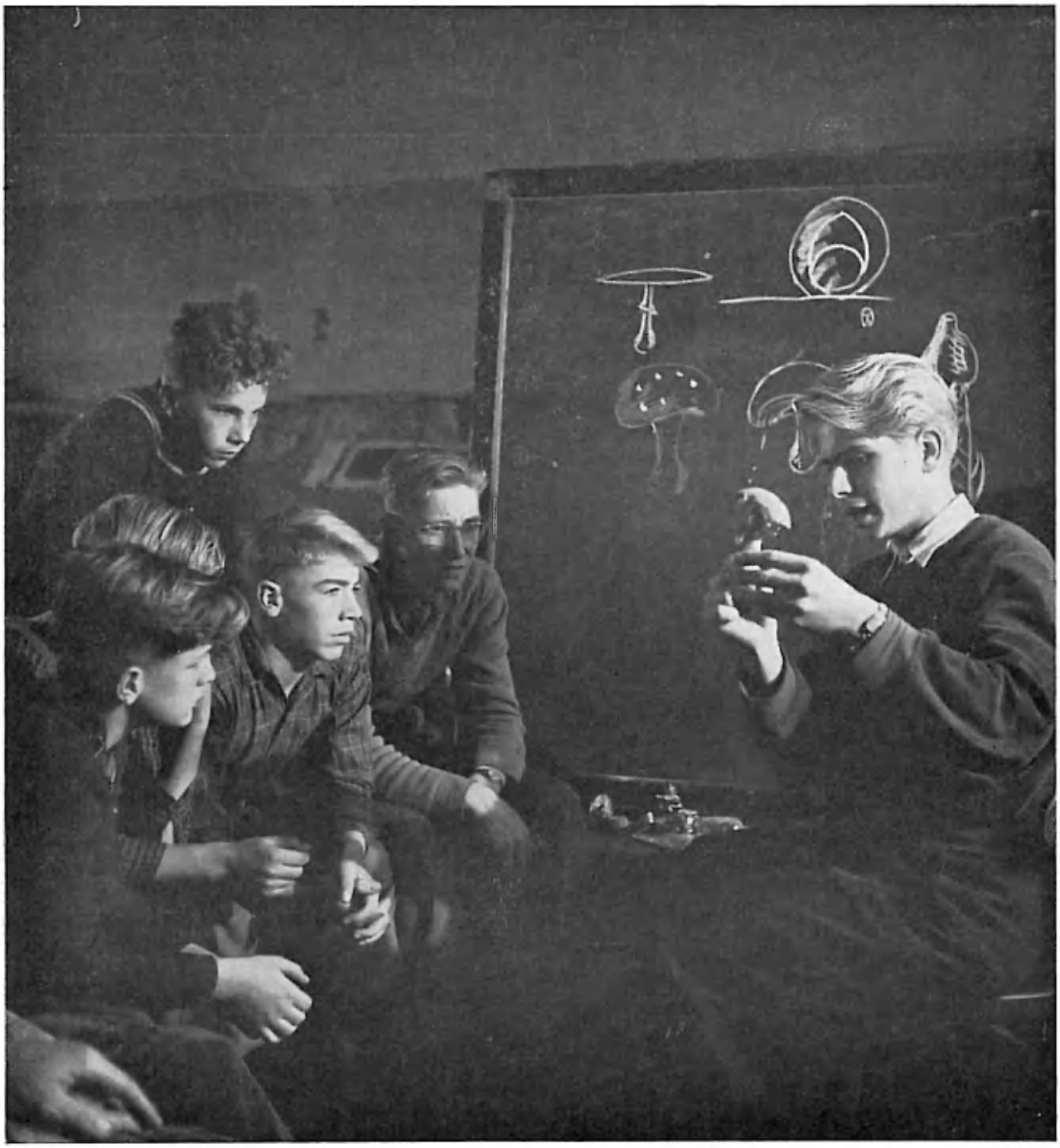
The Story of Bethel College can also be ordered independently through *Mennonite Life* at the special price of $2.00.

Address your orders: *Mennonite Life,* North Newton, Kansas.

By Ger van Zetten

Mennonite Youth Agency

The mushroom or toadstool is a very familiar symbol in the youth work in The Netherlands



The Mennonite Youth Agency (*Doopsgezinde Jeugd Centrale — D.J.C.*) in Amsterdam celebrated the tenth anniversary of its existence in 1962. Little attention was devoted to the birthday itself. But the work as it has developed in the past year and the course that must be charted for the coming years have required all the attention of those who are involved in the youth work.

It is understandable that in this age when so many things in every area all over the world are changing, changes must also be made in the church and thus also in the youth work of the church. Developments in the world influence directly the life, thought and activities of youth who must seek their place in society. Those who lead the youth work are compelled to take account of this and to seek new forms and new ways of working. They must always be actively engaged in making themselves and the youth conscious anew that the question of being a Christian in this world, in their own world, and in the large world around them, is the most important question to which they must give an answer with their life.

The purpose of the *D.J.C.* is described as follows: "The aim of the union is to help train and develop the Christian faith and life of its members through broad youth training, and to promote the application of the beliefs of its members in the Mennonite brotherhood and her congregations as well as outside of it."

The establishment of the *D.J.C.* is in itself a sign of the development of Mennonite youth work as a whole. In 1952 the three boards of youth organizations that had been in existence for some time decided to establish a coordinating agency in order to take better care of a number of interests they already shared. Among these were the appointment of personnel and the organization and representation of this work inside and outside the brotherhood.

The three youth organizations which set up the agency are the following:

The Mennonite Youth Union (*Doopsgezinde Jongeren Bond*) was set up in 1928 by a combination with Frisian Mennonite Youth Union which was established in 1924. It accepts as members young people between 18 and 35 and as aspiring members those between 15 and 18. The center of gravity for this organization is found in the local youth groups which have a close or looser contact with the congregation, depending on the local situation. About 40 local groups are affiliated with a total membership of over 800. The young people themselves provide the leadership for the national and district activities as well as in their own local groups. They publish a monthly periodical, The Cornerstone (*De Hoeksteen*); organize youth days, leadership training weekends, camps in the country and outside of it; and are connected with Mennonite Voluntary Service and the Youth Work Group of the Mennonite Peace Group.

The Elfregi Federation originated from club work that followed up catechism camps in the brotherhood houses at Elspeet, Fredeshiem and Giethoorn. They adopted the scout methods in 1944 and joined the world brotherhood of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. They do their scouting work in connection with the Mennonites and thus try to take their place in the church. This type of youth work is found in four places in North Holland. There are about 500 members.

The Mennonite Builders Federation was established in 1948 and includes the club work for young people from 12-18. The local group is sponsored by the congregation, but there are district activities for members. They hold summer camps and there is a paper for members. There are also district and national meetings for instruction of the leaders. The 40 affiliated sections have about 800 members.

The *D.J.C.* is composed of a representation from the General Mennonite Conference (*Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit*) along with representatives from the three youth organizations mentioned above. This agency makes it possible for the youth organizations to have a unified place in the brotherhood and to have a unified representation to outsiders, such as in the Dutch Youth Fellowship, the Ecumenical Youth Council of the Netherlands, and other organizations. The contact with the national government also goes by way of the *D.J.C.* A part of the finances for the youth work, in addition to the contributions from the church and the members, comes from the government and is based on a percentage subsidy, as is done for all other youth work in the Netherlands. Through the establishment of the *D.J.C.* a bureau was set up and a general secretary was appointed who greatly extended the administrative and organizational work. One of the most important tasks was the organization of the annual youth work collections held in all the congregations in February. The amount collected has grown from a few thousand guilders at the beginning to a total of 14,000 guilders (ca. $4,000). Increasingly more churches and church members are gaining an understanding of the importance of the whole youth work program in our brotherhood which has about 15,000 young people between 8 and 25.

It became necessary to add a clerk for the office because of the extensive administrative needs. In 1955 the rapid growth of the work made it possible as well as necessary to appoint a youth work instructor. The appointment of this person has in turn helped very much in promoting the organization.

The task of the youth instructor is among other things to stimulate, promote and activate the youth work. The leaders' manual The Course (*Koers*) is published for volunteer local, district and national youth leaders. Material is provided in this publication to help the leaders carry out their tasks.

The local youth work in each congregation is actually considered to be the main work. An indication of this is given in the appointment of a separate youth work instructor in the Province of Friesland in 1961. She was appointed from the *D.J.C.* by the Frisian Mennonite Conference. In cooperation with the national instructor and the youth board of the Frisian district she does the same type of work in this part of the brotherhood where there are many congregations and much youth work to be done.

The work has to be done where the young people are. There ought to be in each congregation enough capable young members to undertake the youth work, but it is not so everywhere. Also, it is not obvious and no longer traditional that the youth accept their place in the congregation. This comes about only by the continued exertions of those who see its necessity. In response to the needs arising from the churches the *D.J.C.* tries to appoint more trained personnel as youth work leaders. There is much difficult work that can no longer be done by volunteers alone. Trained personnel is needed to help them work in the right way and to stimulate them to do the work as well as they are able. Thereby the youth work and the life of the church will be able to proceed healthfully and with a clear vision for the future.

Because of the composition of the *D.J.C.* the work is mainly directed toward the affiliated national youth work, but beyond that there are still many other youth activities which can be touched upon marginally by the *D.J.C.* In the future these shall receive increasing attention since the *D.J.C.* will more and more move toward serving all the young people in the whole brotherhood.

The Mennonite Youth Council also exists for the service of the youth and the youth work. It is a study and advisory agency of the General Mennonite Conference, which among other things gives advice to the *D.J.C.* and examines the background of *D.J.C.* work. A commission has been begun from this Youth Council in the interests of national student work. Another commission exists to promote the national student contact by means of student conferences.

The General Camp Commission organizes each year entirely independently a large number of summer camps for 11 to 18 year olds, both in and outside the country. In the area of instruction and informing of the voluntary camp leaders, the General Camp Commission works cooperatively with the *D.J.C.* personnel. The National Westhill Commission also organizes annual national weekends in the interest of those who lead Westhill Sunday schools.

Camp in Elspeet

Teaching Children

By J. P. Jacobszoon

Youth Work in Large Cities

Wise investments in youth yield eternal dividends. The potential of young people in the church is beyond the measure of human calculations. To lose them is fatal to the Christian community. They are needed for leadership in spirituality, for stewardship of possessions, for vision of opportunity, for courage to undertake the difficult tasks, and for moral and financial support of the total Christian enterprise. They are the most significant segment of people in the church. But we are constantly confronted with the questions: "How can we conserve them? How can we train them? How can we involve them in the life and the work of the church?"

Thus wrote John R. Mumaw in the beginning of his introduction to the booklet by Ada Zimmerman Brunk and Ethel Yale Metzler, *The Christian Nurture of Youth* (Scottdale, 1960).

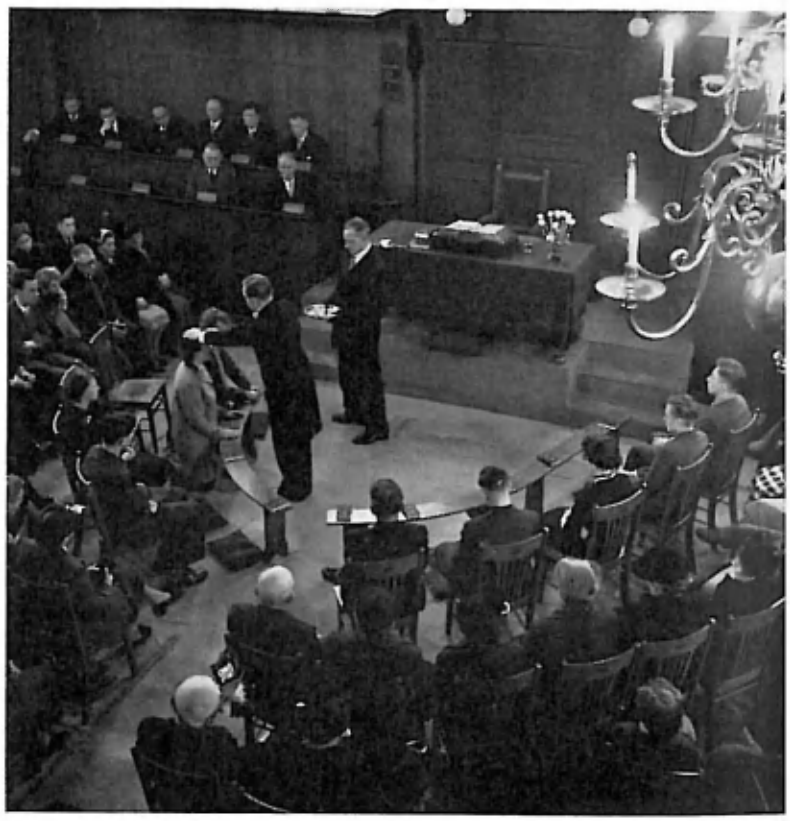
The problem is clearly stated here, for America, for Europe, and thus also for the Netherlands and the Dutch Mennonites. The Netherlands are more urbanized than the countries of many of our fellow-believers overseas, whose congregations frequently have an agrarian tint. But for all of us, together with all Christians of every age, the three questions which Mumaw puts are valid ones.

We will, however, restrict ourselves to our own tradition. About 1557 Menno Simons wrote a short treatise about the nurture of children, in which he stated the following for Christian parents: "For that is the chief and principal care of the saints, that their children may fear God, act rightly, and be saved . . . ."[1] That entire booklet is permeated with concern for the coming generation and is a unique contribution for a Mennonite pedagogy.

The modern Mennonites, certainly in western Europe, live in a world rapidly becoming unchristian. They have had a great past, and often still live on the honor and the money of the previous generations. But with the loss of Christianity and Protestantism in general—although the figures still show some "absolute" gain, the percentage is dropping—the Mennonites are also diminishing in number and influence.

Nevertheless, this situation can be a purification, a chance for rebirth and revival of the church, making it modern and up to date. One of the attempts of the church is youth work. It is no easy assignment, but one may under no condition neglect it. No easy assignment! After all, in contrast to other churches in our land, it is not possible to speak about large numbers among the Dutch Mennonites. Therefore it is always less possible to do much, and that which does not strike fire, always is immediately obvious or disappointing. This applies not only to the small congregations, but to the larger as well. It applies often in the city, where one is also always a small minority spread over what for the Netherlands are great distances. Furthermore, we do not have our own schools and send our children to public schools which naturally bear no special Mennonite character. In addition, while the baptism of children creates a strong bond between parents and children, school and church, for other denominations, the Dutch Mennonites baptize

A baptismal service in the church an Zaandam. (Ds. H. Luikinga)



their young people at the age of 17 or 18, which is later than is the custom in the majority of Mennonite circles elsewhere in the world.

Relatively small congregations, no schools of our own, late age of baptism, irregular attendance of church, poorly attended catechism classes, laxness in speaking about faith in the family, the family not being at home in the Bible, living in conformity to or in the midst of the world—these factors make youth work a formidable challenge for the Mennonite congregations, certainly if they want to understand properly their calling with respect to the world and act in response to it.

Yet much is happening in the area of youth work. There are about 8,000 Sunday school pupils and 5,000 in catechism classes. Officially there are 2,100 young people included in three different forms of youth work, under which scouting is also found. Nine hundred have participated in camps and Mennonite Voluntary Service. All these figures are taken from the summer of 1962. Naturally these figures often in part or in the whole overlap, so that the picture is somewhat flattering. Through the work mentioned above and through yet other types of work (student work, societies, ecumenical and other youth groups) only part of the Mennonite youth is reached. This is clearly visible in church attendance and the life of the congregation.

Still this all belongs to what Mumaw calls "to conserve." But Mennonite youth work should along with the conserving, be concerned with the winning or recruiting, born from a missionary vitality. Since one of the most essential characteristics of the church is the apostolate—and it was that for the earliest of our churches—the youth work should be permeated with the same characteristic. The techniques and tactics may well be borrowed from others, but in using them Mennonites in their youth work should clearly confront the youth with the decision with regard to Jesus Christ. This must be done precisely because they are not many in number, lack the support of their own schools, and only baptize after puberty! According to Menno's word in the writing earlier cited, believing parents ought to nourish their children otherwise than the world does. They are precisely the ones who know that "human nature was entirely perverted in Adam, and from youth on is rebellious to the word of the Lord."[2] Both with regard to their "own" youth and with regard to those reached in whatever manner otherwise, the following is valid as a basic principle for a Mennonite approach: the missionary responsibility which has grown out of obedience to the Lord's Word.

Mennonite youth work wants no Christian-in-general type of person, no superficial Christianizing and an outward observing of all the holidays of the church; neither any fearful hiding of the Gospel by a withdrawn group; nor does it desire an almost biologically formed *Corpus Christianum* that brings forth Christian generations. Mennonite youth work ought rather to be open, directed to the world from out of the church, and called into that world to manifest a church as the body of Christ, which people will join out of their own convictions, out of their own free, new birth. That goes also for the youth who live in the sphere of the congregation, thanks to their parents. That the primary concern is not the instilling of "Mennonite principles," but the encounter with the living and saving Lord may be presupposed for Bible thinking churches as obvious. Our own Mennonite tradition is a precious affair, worthy to stand for and to fight for, but it is only that when it is inspired by the life-giving Holy Spirit. A typical Mennonite faith and life pattern—as it already is—should be derived from it and corrected by it.

Do we as Dutch Mennonites have that? Do we at least have it for this age? We seek it, whether in traditional or experimental ways, or even in a combination of both. The Haarlem congregation was the first in the brotherhood to appoint a full-time youth minister in addition to a director of a youthhouse. This example has been imitated in other large cities and will be followed by still others.

The work in Haarlem was begun in, and in its deepest essence proceeds from, the old fundamental Anabaptist motive of a missionary obedience nourished by the Gospel and, in accordance with our prayers, is being carried out as an attempt to respond in a modern way to a challenge to the church in a world that has let go the traditional Christian bonds.

Therefore it is wrong to cherish illusions. The heart of all church work—also for the youth work—beats on Sunday morning in the worship service, where the sermon is preached, where there is prayer and baptism, and where the Lord's Supper is administered. One of the many concentric circles around this central event is the youth work. It is not a hobby, not a useful way to spend one's time, not a program of the world which the church must copy in order to be able to compete. Certainly it is one of the attempts which may not be neglected in order to bring people, who are growing up, into contact with Christ.

In the free world of western Europe this possibility exists. To make use of it does not signify that salvation can be expected through it. Also under other social orders, where religious youth work is forbidden or very difficult, a Christian church is conceivable. And not only that, it does exist. Youth work is important but one will find salvation primarily where parents and educators fold their hands for the children, *live* their faith before them, as our forefathers did almost entirely without our "modern" aids.

By J. P. Jacobszoon

Youth Work around the World

THE DUTCH MENNONITES are not strongly organized in their own institutional bodies. We do have our congregations, our General Mennonite Conference (*Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit*). We have too, our mission and peace work, and give our help to the needy, nationally and internationally, through our relief work.

For all these things we have our own Mennonite organizations, but very often we work together with other denominations in an ecumenical spirit. We do not now have Mennonite schools, although formerly there were two at Haarlem. There are no Mennonite Bible schools or colleges, except the seminary in Amsterdam for our theological students, who also attend the local university there. Mennonite hospitals are unknown to us, nor is there a youth work that reaches all, and only, Mennonite boys, girls, or students.

Our country is small, and Dutch Mennonites cannot very well live separated from the world, as is possible to a greater degree in other parts of the globe. Many of our congregations are located in cities, the largest of them in Amsterdam—also the largest in the world, I believe, with 5,500 members. So we can say that especially in the western part of the Netherlands, the Mennonite brotherhood has an urban character. Only in the northern part, Friesland, where Menno Simons came from, are there small, agricultural communities, but the distances are also small and so the influence of the cities is very great.

The Dutch Mennonites are very open to cultural influences, with all the dangers involved; they are ecumenical, but not to the extent that they lose their principles; they are progressive in their living, and partly liberal in their thinking. The last, I say "partly," for there are many who have a more orthodox point of view. They all work together as Mennonites, not in isolation, but in the midst of the whole nation, practicing a way of life which is almost two centuries old. Before that time, when they did not have religious freedom, it was otherwise, but it would no longer be a possibility now, and personally I believe we have to see the Lord's guidance in this situation also. Dutch Mennonites have their own way and history, different from some other Mennonites in being somewhat less separated from the world, but not therefore separated from God, by whose grace we still are heirs of Menno Simons' reformation.

But enough about the background of Dutch Mennonites. Now I should like to present some facts and details. We have some 15,000 young people between the ages of 8 and 25 among the 36,000 members of the whole brotherhood in the Netherlands. The Dutch Mennonite Youth Union (*Doopsgezinde Jongeren Bond*) founded in 1926, has some 800 members. They all are above 18 years. Scouts (*Elfregi*) and other young Mennonite groups (*Menniste Bouwers Federatie*) together have about 1,300 members. There are 8,000 Sunday school pupils and 5,000 catechumens. In summer and work camps we reach 800 participants, including one hundred Mennonite Voluntary Service people.

All these figures could be better, far better! But we are very thankful for this result, built up especially after World War II. We now have an official youth office in Amsterdam; there are some trained youth leaders and two youth ministers (one in Haarlem and one in Rotterdam). At the seminary, courses are given in youth work; trainees go around the world; interest in missions is growing; there is also work among soldiers and conscientious objectors. As to the students at the different universities, plans have been drawn up to appoint a special student minister and cooperation with foreign Mennonite students is sought. Generally, a large part of all this work is done by the young people themselves, with ministers only advising them. As often happens in other groups in our country (e.g. the Reformed Church) and also among Mennonites elsewhere, the official leaders come from the youth itself, which means that they are laymen. There are no ministers leading and ruling clubs; what they do is advise.

In Haarlem a new experiment in youth work was started in 1959. The writer of this article was appointed as the first Mennonite youth minister in our country. An old Mennonite school has been rebuilt as a youth home. In this school we try to reach youth

Mennonite Children's Home, School

with the Gospel. The Bible lessons and services are attended very well. We have sports, discussion groups, movies and dancing in our own circles, and plans are made to be an evangelical service institute for the youth, whether Mennonite or not, because there are thousands and thousands who have never heard of Christ as Lord and Savior. In Rotterdam such work has also started in 1961.

The work is difficult and hard. People do not listen to the Gospel of reconciliation and resurrection very eagerly, because listening to Jesus involves obedience to Him and following Him. Nevertheless, we who trust Him and believe in Him, try to give witness of His redeeming work, in the situation we are placed, and in a way which best suits our day. We do not know all things but we seek and try, hoping the Lord will bless us.

Old Mennonite principles are being revived again, faith is deepening, as far as I can see. Contacts with other Mennonites in the world are helping us to recover the Anabaptist vision. We are becoming more and more conscious of our heritage, which has its roots in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Dutch Mennonites are perhaps less aware of Mennonitism than Mennonites in America. On the other hand we are, I think, more in contact with other denominations, and thus have more ecumenical interests. Can we not help each other?

It is necessary that the world conferences receive a more established form. I wish to plead for a more organized world-wide brotherhood — an alliance, a council, a union, such as other denominations have. We have to make clear that we have received from the Gospel and we have to learn it from others. In New Delhi the absence of representatives of the whole of worldwide Mennonitism was felt very painfully. We have to form one brotherhood, in order to exert more influence in the meeting of other children of God. In brief, we have to be ecumenical, or we shall be merely a sect, living in isolation.

But just for that purpose, to be ecumenical, we need each other. When we succeed in having a worldwide Mennonite conference, it is necessary too, I believe, to form a world federation of Mennonite youth. Perhaps even youth can begin by starting such a close cooperation. Together we can support mission and relief work better and in a less divided manner than we now do it. Together we can take up a project to work on. Together we can form a kind of youth department of such a proposed Mennonite youth federation. Together we have to be a creative minority.

I know that this is happening to a certain extent. But it must be possible to do all things better, and more and more all together, with all Mennonite people all over the world interested. We could collect money; hold conferences and camps, attend Bible schools, publish a periodical, starting for instance apart in different continents, and then growing closer together. We should not exclude others, cherishing our Mennonite principles, but should bring these principles into the world as a form of Christian believing and living which is, by the grace of God, given to us, also for this twentieth century of Jesus Christ our Lord.

By Mary F. van Sluijs-Bijl

National Federation of Mennonite Women

ALMOST ALL OF the Mennonite congregations in the Netherlands have one or more Women's Societies. In a great many instances the Women's Society is an appreciated center of activities for the benefit of the life of the church. Often, above all in the smaller churches, the Women's Society or Sister Circle is a nucleus of the most interested members in the church.

Practically all of the Sister Circles are members of the National Federation of Mennonite Sister Circles (*Landelijke Federatie van Doopsgezinde Zusterkringen* —*L.F.D.Z.*), which since 1952 has aimed at improving the unity of the Sister Circles. The Sister Circles themselves are often much older. In various congregations Sister Circles were organized at the end of the former or the beginning of this century.

The purpose of the Sister Circles was primarily of a practical nature. The women made fine handwork which was sold and the receipts directed to good purposes, or else they made useful handwork that was intended to reach its welfare purpose directly. These welfare purposes sometimes lay far away—on the mission field—but sometimes also right next door among the poverty-stricken families within or outside the congregation. For decades it was the custom in various churches for the Sister Circle to knit socks as Christmas gifts for poor children of the Sunday school.

Nowadays it often happens that the financial return from the activity with needle and thread flows into the church treasury, most of the time with the special purpose of renewing or redecorating the church or the sanctuary.

In our Dutch situation over the years one did not only do practical work at the meetings of the Sister Circles. Nearly everywhere the spiritual and religious elements were also present from the very beginning. The meetings were opened and closed with a hymn; usually a section from the Bible was read or a selection from a book of a devotional character, for example a book of daily readings from the Bible. Also as a part of the program the leader frequently read aloud from a suitable novel.

In order to strengthen this spiritual and religious element by combining forces and giving information, there originated in 1952 a union of all Sister Circles. The *L.F.D.Z.* thus started, meets a need, as may be seen from its activities which arouse great interest. Of these activities we mention the following: the mass national day held once every five years with participation of more than 2400 women from the whole land; the annual conference held in the Brotherhood House at Elspeet, which lasts three days each time and where almost every circle is represented; the publication of Heart and Hands (*Hart en Handen*) which appears once every four weeks as one of the pages in the General Mennonite Weekly; the publication of the

Women's meeting in the Singel Church, Amsterdam

Letters (*Brieven*), the internal organ of the Sister Circles, which appear approximately six times a year; and the representation of the Sister Circles in our own Mennonite brotherhood and outside of it, this latter in ecumenical relations.

How is it organized? The Board of the *L.F.D.Z.* consists of at least nineteen members, of whom seven constitute a working committee. The Board is chosen from and by the members. The actual leadership is exercised by the working committee. The leader of this working committee is, in addition, president of the *L.F.D.Z.* The committee tries to be a spiritual and administrative focal point for the whole federation. Many things which happen in the circles have repercussions in the discussions of the working committee, and the other way around.

Altogether the *L.F.D.Z.* contains 220 affiliated Sister Circles with over 4,300 members. The present officers are: Mrs. W. G. Nooter-Hulsen, president; Mrs. A. v.d. Zijpp-Alberda, vice-president; Mrs. N. Aafjes-Vogel, secretary; Mrs. A.M.J.E. van der Zee-Kwist, treasurer; Mrs. R. S. Faber-Fopma, members-administration; Mrs. M. F. van Sluijs-Bijl, editor of *Hart en Handen*, and T. Blanksma-van der Zwaag, editor of Letters.

For me it is a joy to greet our American sisters very heartily at this occasion in the name of the 4,300 Dutch Mennonite Sisters, along with a wish that the American churches and the families represented in them be richly blessed in their faith and life.

By W. F. Golterman

MENNONITES IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

WHAT IS THE foundation of Dutch Mennonite participation in the Ecumenical Movement? My answer is: obedience to Christ speaking through the Holy Scriptures. Before His death our Lord Jesus Christ prayed: "I have given them the glory that you gave me, so that they may be one just as we are, I in union with them and you with me, so that they may be perfectly unified and the world may recognize that you sent me" (John 17:22, 23). Or I read the promise: "They will all become one flock with one shepherd" (John 10:16). The apostle Paul writes about "one body and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" (Eph. 4:4-6). and elsewhere "just as the body is one and yet has many parts, and all the parts of the body, many as they are, form one body, so it is with Christ. For we have all been baptized in one spirit to form one body" (1 Cor. 12:12, 13). It is extremely difficult to comprehend how some denominations and Christians, though listening to the Word of the Lord, neglect His ardent desire for the unity of His church, and do not try to realize this unity in one manner or another, such as, for example, through the World Council of Churches.

What were the reasons that led the Dutch General Mennonite Conference (Society) to become one of the members of the World Council of Churches in 1948? There were three reasons. The first was the obedience to the commission of the Lord Jesus Christ to be one. The second was a consciousness of associa-

tion with the church universal, the church of all confessions and of the whole world (oikumene). Thirdly, there was already in the years before World War II an understanding of the distress of the human race. The extreme suffering of the Dutch people under the occupation by the Germans strengthened this understanding and it was clear that only the churches together would be able to render some relief, spiritually and materially. The oneness of the churches in wartime was strengthened by their spiritual resistance against the cruelty of the occupying National-Socialists towards Jews, students, and laborers.

Immediately after the war, in 1946, the Dutch Mennonite Church joined with the Dutch Reformed Church, the Lutherans, Baptists, Arminians and Old-catholics in the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands, and in 1948 became a member of the World Council of Churches (W.C.C.). Now there was one difficulty. The W.C.C. is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior (the so-called basis). A number of liberal Dutch Mennonites objected to the Christological implications of this formula. Many Dutch Mennonites reject the drafting of a formula because they believe that it never expresses adequately God's revelation. On the other hand the majority of the Mennonite assembly thought that a little church cannot put pressure on the opinion of many big churches. So some of us asked if we should remain outside of the World Council by rejecting the basic formula. Besides, the W.C.C. in process of formation declared that the basic formula is not intended to give a creedal test and that the churches are free to give their interpretation to the formula. Because the Dutch General Mennonite Society (*A.D.S.*) would only want to remain aloof from the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church in the last extremity, it resolved to associate with the Council, while still maintaining its principle that it can never recognize any formulation of the faith as obligatory. The W.C.C. accepted this restriction.

What is the significance of this association? I believe that for the Dutch Mennonites, the association with the other churches is important because it breaks through the barriers we erect and makes us more open to the distresses of the world and in support of the church universal. The service of the church to the world in social, economic and particularly pastoral respects, is a continuation of the service of the Lord in the situation of this time. A short article cannot describe the many concerns which the Ecumenical Movement has for evangelism and missions, for assistance to the nations in rapid social change, for the service to refugees and to victims of various calamities (evils of war, famines, floods, fires, etc.). This service breaks the exclusiveness of the churches. In addition, the discussions about topics of faith and order are of great importance because they challenge the churches to reconsider their traditions in a new light. Is the attitude of Mennonites about the Lord's Supper as a mere symbol in accordance with the revelation of the Lord? Does not the letter of Paul to the Ephesians, the so-called pastoral letters and the Acts of the Apostles give a clear image about the ministries of God in the church and are our Mennonite ministries in harmony with the intentions of the Lord?

On the other hand, the Mennonites may not only learn in the Ecumenical Movement, they also have an important contribution to make. Many member churches exist as national or established churches. Some consider all the people in their country members of the church as a matter of course. Many churches practice infant baptism and neglect the connection between conversion, belief, baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit to the baptized, which the New Testament teaches. Together with Baptists, Disciples of Christ and some of the other Free Churches, the Mennonites are obliged to remind the churches of the biblical practice of baptism. And the Free Churches should warn against the institutionalism of many churches and plead for the freedom of the Spirit to break through each institution of church—order, ministry, and liturgy. Finally, the Mennonites should warn the other churches against identifying church with nation, state or society because the church is the gathering of God's people living as pilgrims *in* the world but by no means *of* the world. Every church which is a member of the World Council as representative of the Ecumenical Movement is obliged to serve the others by staying together and by testifying in the common discussion to the faith that the Spirit has given. Every member church is called to evangelism and to service to the world, and in the critical days we are going through, both evangelism and service are possible only if "the whole church proclaims the whole Gospel to the whole world." (Bishop Newbigin of the Church of South India.) Ecumenical work is not just a desire of a number of ecumenical-minded persons but the most urgent mandate the living Christ has given us.

Because the Dutch Mennonites are trying to fulfill this commission, they are willing to come to the Lord's table together with members of other churches. They participate in the evangelizing tasks through mass-communication agencies, through catechism in elementary and high schools, through pastoral care in correctional institutions, the army and laboring groups. They have a joint mission with Reformed churches to help some younger churches in their difficulties. They participate in the work of the Division for Inter-church Aid, Refugees and World Service. And they discuss with the other churches the problems of faith and order, seeking for ways to realize the unity given in the Lord Jesus Christ, "so that the world may believe that you sent me." (John 17:21.)

By H. van Bilderbeek

The Dutch Mennonite Peace Group

THE PEACE WITNESS has never been entirely lost within the Dutch Mennonite brotherhood. For years it was largely a special interest of certain individuals, until primarily through the work of T.O.M.H. Hylkema they were united in what was named "The Work Group Against Military Service" (*De Werkgroep Tegen de Krijgsdienst*).

After World War II this group was reorganized into the "Mennonite Peace Group" (*Doopsgezinde Vredesgroep*). The group is not an official organ of the brotherhood, such as has become the case with missions in recent years. It still remains too much a task of some individual Mennonites, but who are then united into a common fellowship without much influencing the official Mennonite position. We hope that the time when the whole brotherhood adopts this position will still come.

Principles of the Group

The Peace Group which is now functioning has the following as a statement of principles:
We know that we are called, in obedience to Jesus Christ our Lord and motivated by His love, to witness to Him in His love as the only way to be kept in a world rent by strife.

We believe that the only deliverance for the world as well as for ourselves lies in that serving, nonresistant and self-sacrificing love which has come to us fully in His life and His death. The Cross is for us the sign of God's reconciling and conquering love, and at the same time the sign of the Way which we must go.

We know that we also must have love for each other, also for our enemies, according to the commandment of our Lord, just as He has loved us; even if because of this love we have to accept a cross, and that we must and may do this in the firm trust in the conquering power of God's Spirit and in the coming of His Kingdom. We know that this is only possible for those who in prayer and surrender, and by being constantly joined to Christ, receive ever new power from Him in the face of their own inabilities.

We want to try with His help to be true to His call by striving for a life of faith and prayer and fellowship with Him, and by this we strive that His love, unweakened, may lead us personally in all things, even against the enemies and those who act unjustly or with violence; helping each other in a realization of our mutual responsibility and by intercessory prayer; standing by those who experience difficulties because they do this, with those who consider themselves called to refuse military service out of obedience to Christ; serving through relief work friends and enemies "in the name of Christ"; striving for reconciliation wherever enmity reigns between men, groups or peoples; arousing others, namely those in our churches, to this persuasion and task, and providing leadership and information for this purpose.

By studying this statement you will discover that not much is said negatively against the military machine, but that much greater stress is placed on the confessing that Jesus Christ should be Lord; the consciousness that proceeds from this that we may live out of His love; being joined to our fellowman by love of neighbor; the work of reconciliation, as a task which is entrusted to the church of Christ; and by mutual aid by which we may strengthen and support one another.

Activities

Cor Inja is employed full time by the Peace Bureau to which prospective Conscientious Objectors turn for help. They direct themselves to him for information about the various steps which they must take. There is a law in the Netherlands which makes it possible to refuse military service on the grounds of conscientious objections. To be recognized one must direct an appeal to the minister of war, and then a commission set up for this purpose will grant or refuse recognition as the consequence of a hearing held with the young man involved. The first contact which Inja has with these youths is primarily concerned with the written appeal.

The Peace Group organizes three annual conferences, including the regular annual business meeting in April. The Youth Work Group of the Peace Group has local circles in several places in the country. Their meetings include Bible study, discussions, assistance to prospec-

Lunch at peace camp

Peace camp. Second from left is Car Inja, head of the Peace Bureau.

Anti-bomb demonstration. The banner reads: "Committee 1962 for Peace. Action against making, stocking, testing, and using of nuclear weapons, any place in the world, and for whatever purpose."

tive CO's, and practical work. The Youth Work Group board is responsible for the organization of four summer camps on the island of Texel and nine orientation weekends for CO's each year, where those present discuss the problems associated with the questions of war and peace. The Texel camps afford an excellent opportunity for introduction to the Bible, discussions and lectures during the camp period. Many young men who come from a non-church milieu also attend these camps, and there they come in touch with the Gospel for the first time. We can be thankful for the fact that by these means many also make a confession and are baptized.

From that which has already been said you will notice that our work is not directed to Mennonites only. The report of the Peace Bureau's work with prospective CO's from the past year presents the following figures: two hundred twenty-one cases were handled. Of these 26 were Mennonites, 56 Dutch Reformed, 11 Christian Reformed, 4 Baptists, 2 Remonstrant, 1 Lutheran, 11 Roman Catholic, 1 Salvation Army, 1 Buddhist, others such as Pentecostals, Rosacruscians, Humanists and 78 belonging to no church. Here is a great variety of churches and groups, but it gives us joy that we can serve these youths with our witness.

We also work as a Dutch Peace Group in relation to the International Mennonite Peace Committee. In addition to the Dutch, there are representatives from Germany, Switzerland, France, Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg and America in this committee.

In addition there are contacts with the peace movement in the Dutch Reformed Church, with the I.F.O.R. and with the *Pax Christi* movement in the Roman Catholic Church.

All of our work is supported by the members of the group. In most of the churches in our brotherhood a collection is held for our work once a year, but the major financial responsibility rests with the members. We have about 600 members, the greater majority of which are young people. It may be reported that more than half of the ministers are members of our group.

When it is possible we send young people to projects of Mennonite Voluntary Service and *Eirene*. Financial limitations prevent us from realizing some possibilities.

In everything that we do, however, we are happy that we can be in the service of our living Lord Jesus Christ. We believe and confess that He will complete the work that we as men perform with difficulty. By His grace, power and love the impossible and offensive work of the reconciliation of His cross will take shape in this world.

By J. A. Oosterbaan

Mennonite Theology in The Netherlands

To tell something about theology in our Dutch Mennonite brotherhood is no simple task. For if it has been said that all Dutchmen are by nature very individualistic and like very much to hold an opinion entirely their own, then this certainly is also valid for the Mennonites in our country. Almost from the beginning of our brotherhood in the 16th century there have been different trends and directions among us. Until the beginning of the 19th century there have even been various brotherhoods and in many places at the same time even various churches which all called themselves Mennonite but yet were not one either in organization or in their concept of the faith.

But even since the *Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit* (*A.D.S.*) (General Mennonite Conference) was established in 1811, which all the congregations in our country have joined, so that one can speak of one brotherhood (when shall it be that far along in the U.S. and Canada?), it is still not possible to speak of one theology. Within the external unity there is still place for various kinds of theology although there are naturally some limits within which one can really speak of a Mennonite theology. At the establishment of the *A.D.S.* the only requirement that was set for congregations who wanted to become members was that they must maintain the baptism of adults. But the *A.D.S.* was not intended to be the government of a "church," but a union of entirely independent congregations for the promotion of certain common interests, namely the maintenance of the seminary and the subsidization of the congregations needing help to call as pastors students who had completed their studies at the seminary. Therefore it was good that at the establishment of the *A.D.S.* the maintenance of some confession of faith or another was not accepted but only the practice of adult baptism as the minimal sign of being Mennonites.

Thus our brotherhood does not have a generally accepted confession of faith, and the congregations themselves also do not have such an explicit confession. Each one who wants to be baptized writes his own personal confession of faith and reads this to the congregation (usually to the church council). If this confession is considered satisfactory, then he is baptized on his confession. Every personal confession is thus tested by the living faith of the congregation where the baptism will take place and of which the baptized person will become a member. Since the theological position in all the congregations is not entirely the same, it is theoretically conceivable that someone could be accepted as a member in one congregation on the basis of a confession, while another congregation would not accept him on that basis.

Thus there are no explicit standards for a Mennonite theology. But our brotherhood would not have remained in existence through so many centuries and would not, in that time, have grown to a greater unity if there had not always been a theology hidden in the living faith of the members. This implicit theology has never yet, according to my opinion, been made entirely explicit, neither in our earlier 17th century confessions of faith, nor in the writings of early or later theologians. These statements of faith emphasized traits which often appeared to be in conflict with each other. Through this the theological history of our brotherhood in earlier centuries often gave an image of strife which also sometimes expressed itself in church factiousness or external divisiveness.

In the second half of the 19th century and in the beginning of this century one could certainly say that the large majority of our members and of our ministers were liberal. Until the thirties of this century the so-called "modern theology" prevailed. But in that period there were also several congregations where a more orthodox spirit dominated. In the rural areas, for example, there were the congregations on the island Ameland and the churches at Blokzijl and Ouddorp; among the city churches Amsterdam must be mentioned where the fixed tradition has existed that it continued to have two more or less orthodox ministers alongside of two "modern" ones.

In the twenties a shift to the right originated in the modern theology in the Netherlands, whereby the

so-called right-wing modernism originated. This trend also had its adherents and precursors in our brotherhood, among others, let us mention A. Binnerts who was minister in Haarlem until 1932. This trend took much more seriously all kinds of Biblical concepts which were no longer understood by the older modern theology. Alongside the influence of this right-wing modernism there also originated an important movement in our brotherhood which was deepened by the contacts with the English Quakers in Woodbrooke. T. O. Hylkema, J. M. Leendertz, J. E. van Brakel and C. Nijdam were the most important ministers of this group. They gained considerable influence on the spirit of the brotherhood partly through a few small pamphlets, but primarily through a Union for Church Life which they set up in 1917, which enjoyed a rapid growth and through the establishment of the Brotherhood Houses obtained an important place in the practical work of the brotherhood. The deep personal piety which had to penetrate one's whole life caused this movement again to emphasize the call to missions and to the peace witness as one of the characteristics of being Mennonite. Above all through the members of this group the contact with the Mennonites elsewhere in Europe and America was promoted.

But other, more purely theological influences made themselves felt in our brotherhood. W. Leendertz taught theology at our seminary from 1934-1954. He received his doctorate in 1913 on the basis of a dissertation about S. Kierkegaard which along with other things brought him to take a critical position with regard to the modern trend of theology. Of his later works I would mention also: *Levensspanning,* 1916; *Gelijk of Ongelijk,* 1920; *Rangorde van Geestelijke Waarden,* 1940; *Profielen van Gedachten,* 1952; *Gods Woord in Mensenhanden,* 1956. By his influence and also by that of W. F. Golterman, who has taught practical theology at the seminary since 1946, one-sided liberal education at the seminary came to an end. Under the influence of this training a younger generation of ministers has grown up, above all during and after World War II, which was of another spirit than many of the older pre-war generation. A number of these young ministers joined together in the so-called "Eleven," that witnessed to its views in two small booklets *Doopsgezind Belijden Nu* (Mennonites Confess Now), which appeared in 1954 and *Doopsgezind Gemeenteleven* (Mennonite Congregational Life) appearing in 1957. The writers of these volumes are not in all respects in agreement among themselves, but they are all animated by the desire to think biblically and thereby to maintain more of the original Anabaptist faith. There is a growing influence of these ministers in our brotherhood although they are no longer active as a closed group.

Of the pre-war generation of our ministers the names of Frits Kuiper and H. W. Meihuizen are probably well known to the readers of this periodical. Kuiper, who in his thinking is influenced by the Barthian theology, but also by his emphasis on the relationship of the Christian church to Israel, wrote among other things *De Gemeente in de Wereld* (The Church in the World) in 1941, and *Leven uit de Hoop* (Living out of Hope) in 1958, which is an original synthesis of an historical and a theological view of the faith. Meihuizen wrote among other things his book *Galenus Abrahams* in 1954 and his book *Menno Simons* in 1961. He is also the editor of the *Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad* (General Mennonite Weekly).

Of the younger ministers, two have received doctorates in theology since the war; S. L. Verheus in 1958 for a dissertation entitled *Kroniek en Kerugma* (Chronicle and Kerygma, concerning Sebastian Franck and Flacius), and H. B. Kossen for a dissertation about the theology of Albert Schweitzer entitled *Op Zoek naar de Historische Jezus* (In Search of the Historical Jesus), 1960.

Those now teaching at the Seminary in Amsterdam are W. F. Golterman, practical theology; N. van der Zijpp, the history of the Mennonites; and J. A. Oosterbaan since 1954, Christian doctrines and ethics. The last is also professor of philosophy of religion and ethics at the University of Amsterdam. Golterman, who has been secretary of the Ecumenical Council in the Netherlands for several years and since a few years ago also an assistant professor at the University of Amsterdam, is interested in the ecumenical movement, and has written *Geloof en Geschiedenis* (Faith and History) in 1948, *De Kerkelijke Situatie* (The Ecclesiastical Situation) in 1951, *Liturgiek* (Liturgy) in 1951, *Een Heer, Een Kerk* (One Lord, One Church) in 1956, and *Eenheid in de Chaos der Kerken* (Unity in the Chaos of the Churches) in 1962. A strong passion for the unity of Christendom rings through his writings. In our brotherhood he is probably also the one who thinks most "high churchly."

Van der Zijpp, who is well known in America, wrote his *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Nederland* (History of the Mennonites in the Netherlands) in 1952. But his greatest work is found in a large number of articles in *The Mennonite Encyclopedia.* Oosterbaan received his doctorate in 1953 on the basis of a dissertation on *Hegels Phaenomenologie des Geistes en de Theologische Kenleer* (Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit and Theological Epistemology). The whole set of problems concerned with the dialectical tension between philosophy and biblical theology have received his special attention. In an article about the "Theology of Menno Simons" (1961) he has demonstrated the parallels between the Anabaptist and Barthian theology (see *Menn. Quart. Review,* July, 1961 and *Legacy of Faith*).

Along with the ecumenical discussions with other

churches our brotherhood has found it necessary to become deeply conscious of its own heritage of faith and to make it more explicit. We need to proceed with the development of our "Anabaptist Vision" and to set it forth in a scholarly manner. The growing contact between the Dutch and American Mennonites, an example being our world conferences, will certainly help us to become more familiar with each other's theological writings and thereby promote the development of our theology.

By N. van der Zijpp

The Future of the Dutch Mennonites

To SAY SOMETHING about the future is always a precarious undertaking, because—while there is a certain continuity in history, including also of church groups —numerous factors which one does not and cannot know are working together in the historical process. With this reservation we will attempt to say something about the future of the Mennonite brotherhood in the Netherlands.

Theoretically considered, there are three possibilities. The first is that our Mennonite brotherhood will disappear within a shorter or longer term. Voices are heard here and there among us that say this would actually be the best thing. We are a small church group with about 36,000 members. We are different —one says—from other Protestant churches only by the fact that we recognize baptism of adults and refuse to swear oaths, and generally have a less fixed organizational form, by which the authority is not vested at the top of the brotherhood but rests more in the autonomous, local congregation. Are these differences —thus one wonders—of such importance that our little group should persist with its separate existence, especially in this time when the trend is to join forces? Would we not do better to unite with others? Still I do not believe that it will quickly come to such a union. The differences that have grown historically with other forms and traditions will not be broken through so easily. Do we, with our emphasis on the voluntary attachment to the church as a fellowship of responsible believers, with—above all in the Netherlands—our rejection of every binding creed or dogma, not have something more essentially our own which is more than simply a tradition, and which we should not simply abandon?

It is also conceivable that our brotherhood in the Netherlands could break down from a lack of members. The course of history during more than four centuries shows us a powerful movement in the 16th century in which the Mennonites, especially in the provinces of Friesland and North-Holland, formed an important percentage of the population, after which followed a great decline in membership in the second half of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, so that there were only about 14,000 members left at the beginning of the 19th century. There followed again an increase to about 32,000 in 1900 and 38,500 in 1940, after which again a slow shrinking appeared which still persists. If one calculates according to the percentage

of the total population, then the Mennonites, who in the beginning of the 17th century composed at least 7 percent of the population, now form only .04 percent. If this process continues, and there is nothing to indicate that it will not continue, then one must assume that the number of Mennonites in the Netherlands will become very small in the long run. But I do not believe that the brotherhood will disappear for these reasons. Ultimately the existence and above all the significance of a church is not determined by the number but by the faith of the members.

The second possibility is that a flood shall come to us from other churches and from the unchurched who cannot remain where they are on account of the armour of dogmatism or ecclesiastical discipline and who nevertheless have need of a church relationship. I do not consider this a serious possibility, at least not that there will be a mass movement to get into the brotherhood. In the second half of the previous century an increase of membership could be confirmed—as was said above—and this increase was principally due to those who transferred from other churches. That still occurs regularly, and primarily in our larger city congregations an important contingent among those baptized is still from persons who are not of Mennonite descent. But these numbers are not of such a nature that they can give rise to the expectation that our brotherhood shall expand to a large fellowship.

The third possibility is that we shall remain what we are, a small fellowship of faith in the midst of many other churches, in the ecumenical movement with those churches and maintaining incidental contact, cooperating in some points and for certain purposes. In the future areas of cooperation will expand. Much of the work which the church of Christ is called upon to do in this age can no longer be borne by one denomination, and certainly not by a small denomination, because of the complicated nature of the problem, the high requirements for investment of manpower, and the costs associated with it.

It is known that in general we are very much attached to traditions. And that is good, I believe, for traditions are often precious heritages from the past. But a tradition may never be a hindrance for spiritual unfolding in the present, and new times demand a new approach and new ways of working. We should have the courage to be critical of that which has been delivered to us, and when we have come to the insight that the preservation of this or that is harmful for the spiritual life today and in the future, those traditions need to be revised. We should adjust to the changed world in which we live, not in the sense that we must be "conformed to the world," but we must know that we as a brotherhood and as churches do not only have the task of strengthening the religious life of our members, but that we must open the door to the world; not to bring the world "and her desires" to us, but to go out through the door into the world. We have received God's Word, not only for our own souls, but also to proclaim it to all others who are outside, far away or nearby. It was a good understanding, according to my view, when the brotherhood in the Netherlands decided a few years ago to consider missions as a responsibility of the congregations and the brotherhood, instead of letting this interest develop into a Mennonite union of mission friends, as had been the practice for more than a hundred years.

We must also follow a new course for a new church economy. At present our ministers are, with a very few exceptions, persons who have received a theological and scholarly training in the University and the Mennonite Seminary. In order to prevent a shortage of ministers, and give assurance to men and women who feel a call to the ministry that the brotherhood can offer them work, and also that materials and finances are on a healthy basis, greater sacrifices will need to be made. I do not mean offerings of money only, in order to establish reasonable salaries and pensions for the ministers, but also acceptance of the fact that the small and the smallest congregations cannot have a minister for their small group alone, not only because that is too expensive, but also because that is not desirable for the total economy of our brotherhood. To a greater degree than is now the case small congregations will have to combine. This is quite possible with the modern means of transportation.

Furthermore, the care for our youth, and above all for the students at the universities, must be taken in hand much more intensively than is the case at present. With the probable exception of a few of our larger churches, this cannot be done by a single church. It must be the work of groups of churches, or even better, a matter for the central leadership of our brotherhood. This applies equally well with regard to information about and support for social work.

Alongside with these problems, now that so many small churches no longer have their own minister, the layman must be involved more extensively and be prepared to stand beside the ministers.

I have only mentioned a few things. Naturally, there are many more that demand attention. All that has been discussed above is of extreme importance for the continued existence and functioning of our churches and our brotherhood. But there is one thing that is still more important, and that is a strong, healthy spiritual life. "If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established," said Isaiah the prophet. Our faith shall grow under the work but we must first of all pray to God for it. We are no union for the promotion of Christianity but of a church, an establishment of God.

The future is also entrusted to us, but it is first of all an affair of God.

By Frits Kuiper

"In Dit Amsterdam"

In the early sixties of this century one of the oldest Mennonite congregations seeks new ways for her Christian life. This congregation—the United Mennonite Church of Amsterdam—still has by far the greatest membership of any Mennonite congregation. The oldest of its five church-buildings, the *Singelkerk,* is very well known to Mennonites all over the world. It was founded in 1608 and with its two large balconies it can accommodate nearly half the congregation, which numbers about 5,000 members. But alas . . . most of the members very seldom come to church.

It is not easy to tell why church life among Amsterdam Mennonites has declined since the middle of the last century. During the last hundred years the town has quadrupled its population—from about 250,000 to about a million inhabitants—but the number of Mennonites has only doubled. And the number of church-going Mennonites—now worshipping at five places—has not doubled but was halved. The decline came gradually, after a period of rather rapid growth from the beginning to the middle of the 19th century. The reasons can surely not only be found within the Mennonite church itself, but should for the greater part be sought in the context of the whole social and spiritual evolution on the Western part of the European continent since 1848.

This time has been characterized as the end of the Christian era. That is surely true. The Christian certainties in the realm of thought and in the realm of habits broke down. There was a great industrial and commercial upheaval; science was spread much wider than ever before; the awful poverty of the slums was conquered! But the old churches—the Roman Catholic and the Protestant alike—lost much of their importance. New churches and sects came up, but they occupied only a rather small part of the field that had been lost by the old churches. And until lately the fate of the Amsterdam Mennonites was linked chiefly with that of the old traditional Protestant church of the Netherlands.

When church life among Mennonites in Amsterdam seemed to have reached its lowest point in recent years, there were clear signs of a new awakening. When this was felt, the church council decided to start with a small Mennonite monthly magazine *In dit Amsterdam* (In This Amsterdam), which is now in its third year of publication. The editor is A. J. Koejemans, a former leader in the Dutch Communist party who joined the Mennonites with strong conviction five years ago. Co-editors are A. Oosterbaan, a psychologist and educator, and one of the six ministers of the church. Although *In dit Amsterdam* is primarily intended for the members of the Mennonite church, especially for the many that do not care much for their membership, it is edited in the firm belief that Mennonites nowadays have a message for the whole population of this great city.

The city of Amsterdam arose in the middle ages from a small fishing village to a merchants' town. In the early days of Anabaptism there were several uproars in sympathy with the Münsterites, but soon the more peaceful form of Anabaptism which found its leader in Menno Simons, prevailed. Towards the end of the sixteenth century Anabaptists from many parts of the Low Countries found a new home in the then rapidly growing city. And when, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, a Mennonite merchant from the Rhineland settled at the outskirts of the city, he built a rather large church behind his new house. He wished to unite the different groups of Mennonites in his town, and offered them a place where they could worship together. Rather soon this meeting place was enlarged and brought to its present shape. What was then the outskirts, is now the center of the town. And it may be said that in the succeeding centuries all Mennonites, not only of Amsterdam but of the whole of the Netherlands, found their center in this church building "Near the Lamb." (The name was not derived from the symbol of Jesus Christ but from the house mark of the brewery that stood next to it.) In this church the seminary was founded in 1735 and the *Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit* in 1811. Since then Amsterdam has to a certain extent put its stamp on the brotherhood. But the Amsterdam church itself has not flourished during the last hundred years.

Although the missionary work of the Dutch Mennonites had been begun by Amsterdam Mennonites, it was a long time before this work got sufficient spiritual and financial support from the congregation. There surely was a lack of missionary zeal, not only

for the work far abroad—although the bustle of the harbor reminded the Amsterdam population day by day of the Dutch Indies, where the Mennonite missionaries were doing their fine work, but the need for the preaching of the Gospel in the town itself was also not adequately recognized. Personal conviction had dropped to a poor individualism without force to bring in others.

Now things are changing for the better. Within the kernel of the congregation people are becoming aware of the vocation that Mennonites have nowadays, especially in the big cities. Christian faith is not primarily meant for people in the restful countryside, where life goes on in more or less the same way from generation to generation. The gospel is the most dynamic force in history and therefore relevant to the whole modern trend of history that is transforming society in our age.

Although the world's most modern harbor, Rotterdam, and several Dutch industrial centers, such as Eindhoven, are changing and growing much faster than Amsterdam, the Dutch capital is still the center of national life in the Netherlands. If the Dutch Mennonites will be able to give a new impulse to the spiritual life of their people—and they surely have a calling to do so—then their church at Amsterdam will have a prominent task. In preaching and teaching, in gathering and strengthening its members, it will have to cast a light on the whole life of our time. That this church may not be deficient in fulfillment of its task, should be the prayer of Mennonites throughout the world. Holland is only a small country, and among the capitals of the world Amsterdam is not one of the greatest. But in the history of the church of Christ, in the way Mennonites know that it should be transformed, this old but living city is situated at a strategic point. Therefore I conclude this article in asking the readers, "Brethren, pray for us."

By J. H. van der Burg

A NEW CHURCH IN THE NORTHEASTPOLDER

In a small country it is not an everyday occurrence that a new Mennonite congregation is brought into being. Before the origin of the Northeastpolder Church is described, it is necessary to tell something about how the new land area, called the Northeastpolder, has been snatched from the sea.

Already in the seventeenth century there were plans to dam up the inland sea, which until about three decades ago was called the Zuiderzee, to put dikes around a part of it and pump it dry. However, technical advances were not yet sufficiently developed that they could take hold of such a project. The idea existed, but as so often happens the time was not yet ripe to carry it out. This was reserved for the twentieth century. The minister of the Department of Buildings and Roads in the Cabinet that piloted our country through turbulent waves during the war years 1914-1918, Engineer C. Lely, had the satisfaction of having his plan to close off the Zuiderzee and making a part of it dry, put into law. For the execution of this law the twenty-mile long enclosing dike (*Afsluitdijk*) between the provinces North Holland and Friesland was completed in 1932. In the waters that remained closed in, rechristened as the Ijssel Lake, five polders are projected of which three are now entirely surrounded by dikes.

The polder under consideration is the second. It was ready in 1942. In order to give you some idea of the Northeastpolder a few statistics will be of value.

The Northeastpolder contains about 120,000 acres. The longest distance from east to west and from north to south is about twenty miles. In this area the main town is Emmeloord with around eight thousand inhabitants. The Church building of our Mennonite congregation is located there. Ten villages are located in the immediate area. The whole polder is administered as one municipality. Considered according to the population of almost 30,000, it belongs to the medium size municipalities, but when considered according to surface it is the largest of approximately a thousand municipalities in our country.

Private capital is insufficient for a project upon such a large scale and over such a long period of time. For this reason the whole development of the polder work is financed and regulated by the government. This applies not only to the construction of the dikes, the pumping, the digging of waterways and the construction of roads, but also to the building of farms

Inside view of new Mennonite church at Emmeloord.

and dwellings.

The state has set as its aim the granting of equal opportunity to the whole Dutch population to populate the new land, as much as possible according to the proportion of the richly varied religious composition of our people, among whom the Mennonites constitute not more than .03 percent.

Thus not everyone is free to migrate to the polders, but the government subjects the aspiring occupants to a comparative examination, at least as far as it concerns the farmers and the small business people, who form the backbone of the new area.

This makes it clear that the Mennonites make up only a fraction of a percent of the polder population. They did number 76 members on November 1, 1962. Furthermore, the farmers and small businessmen are most strongly represented among the Mennonites. The members coming from this group are more than two-thirds of the Mennonite population of the polder.

The new Northeastpolder congregation is thus with regard to its composition a pronouncedly rural church, as is the case with the majority of the Dutch Mennonite churches. It is also the smallest church group in the polder, excluding from consideration a few sects. In most respects it is not to be distinguished from the small Mennonite churches in our country. The fact that the congregation is young—it was founded in the spring of 1953—and that the establishment of the religious institutions is still going on at top speed, requires great readiness to sacrifice. In September, 1961, the congregation, through much aid, began using a church building with meeting rooms. In order to use the building to greater advantage, it was built in cooperation with the Reformed Congregation at Emmeloord. The latter makes use of our space for its purposes on days when we do not need it.

As far as I know this cooperation between Mennonite and Reformed is unique in our land. But such a combination is certainly worth considering, even on other than financial grounds, for many small churches.

The primary contact between the Mennonites in the extended Northeastpolder is maintained by the attendance at the worship services held every two weeks under the guidance of an advisor, recently a minister from one of the eight churches forming the Zwolle district, to which our congregation belongs. The ministers from this district also help our congregation by taking their turns at filling the pulpit. The advisor visits the members who are distributed equally over the whole polder. He does so regularly on days of sadness and happiness, and thereby helps to strengthen the mutual bonds and to soften the feeling of loneliness caused by what to the Dutchmen are great distances.

In the second place the mutual contact is promoted by the so-called congregational evenings. These are held from time to time in the winter. Generally a religious subject is presented, after which those present are offered the opportunity to exchange thoughts about it.

Furthermore, the religious life is nourished by a Bible course, meetings of the Women's Society, catechism for the young people, and a Westhill Sunday school for children up to twelve. The interest in all these activities is satisfying.

Although the members of our congregation come from different parts of our country, just as is the case for the total population of the polder, they are beginning to form a unity. The growth in membership by immigration and baptism is slow but steady.

It is noteworthy that our membership is often increased by the addition of transfers of members and by baptism of those from other denominations spiritually related to us. The largely orthodox and religious conservatism of the Protestants in the Northeastpolder is not strange here.

Bethel College and the Printed Word

By John F. Schmidt

THE STORY OF Bethel College publications is a story of faithfulness and loyalty to a great heritage with constant adjustment to circumstance and response to changing needs. It is noteworthy also that publication efforts have never taken the full time interests of faculty members but have enlisted the part time efforts of many and diverse people.

Early Periodicals

Fortunately, the founders of Bethel College included men with high literary ability. David Goerz, first secretary of the college board and first business manager of the college, had been involved in extensive publication enterprises by the time Bethel opened its doors in 1893. From 1875 to 1881 he had edited *Zur Heimath* and in 1884 he began the publication of a *Christlicher Familien-Kalender*. As secretary of the Board of the Halstead Mennonite Seminary and of the Mennonite Mutual Fire Insurance Company he knew the value of the printed word. He edited the annual reports of the Bethel College Board of Directors beginning in 1888 so it was natural that he should intitiate college publications.

The *School and College Journal,* the first official college publication, made its appearance in January, 1896. By this time there was a growing number of graduates and former students of the Halstead Seminary and of Bethel College, which had opened its doors in 1893. This was the first group of readers that the editor of *School and College Journal* had in mind. "To them," said Goerz, "we hope our paper will bring items of supreme interest, so that they will cheerfully welcome our enterprise." He then addressed himself to all people engaged in some form of educational endeavor and finally to all friends of the college. Aware that his English readers would be in a minority he appealed to readers that "they will not frown at the English columns of our paper, but acknowledge the necessity, practical value and mental profit of the cultivation of English." Of course more than half the material in the *Journal* was in German.

With the close cooperation of C. H. Wedel, the first president of the college, Goerz was able to edit an interesting journal, still of great value to the historian and researcher. Not only were college events reported but many articles of general educational and religious interest were also carried. In addition, reports were given of the Mennonite Teachers Association, the Mennonite Mutual Fire Insurance Company, the college board of directors and later the Mennonite Deaconess Society, also promoted by David Goerz. Leafing through the pages of the *Journal* one finds book reviews, articles of Biblical and religious nature, travel articles, observations on current events and findings of interest in various areas of study. Of interest are the railroad time tables and the extensive advertising.

In 1902, G. A. Haury took over the English department while David Goerz continued as editor of the German department until 1908. In the meantime the name of the monthly had been changed from the *School and College Journal* to *Bethel College Monthly* and *Monatsblätter aus Bethel College,* published independently of each other beginning in 1903.

The *Monatsblätter* was to consist of twelve pages solid reading material plus four pages of book and commercial notices. It served as a semi-scholarly journal with Goerz contributing accounts of his trip around the world and an extensive series on deaconess work. There were articles on the Bible, articles on church history, accounts of Mennonites in Russia and Europe generally, minutes of the meetings of the board of directors and college promotional material.

Publishing Books

The page of book notices which became a regular feature indicated an expanding horizon of college activity: the publication of books written or edited by faculty members. The *School and College Journal* of December, 1898 announced the first of many publications by C. H. Wedel entitled, *Bilder aus der Kirchengeschichte für mennonitische Gemeindeschulen.* In the following years he produced many more books until ten of his works were published by the college. In addition, the college published *Kleiner Liederschatz,* for the German church schools. Of Wedel's books only two are available in English—*Sketches from Church History for Mennonite Schools* and *Words to Young Christians,* the former translated by G. A. Haury and the latter translated by Theodore O. Wedel, son of C. H. Wedel.

For many years (after this early productive period) the college did not sponsor the publication of books until the acquisition in 1936 of sufficient printing equipment to proceed with the printing of books. In that year the play, *Let My People Go,* by Howard Williams was published as well as a volume from the pen of J. W. Kliewer, president emeritus, *Letters on a Trip Around the World.* Among other books published by the college and printed by the college press are *An Introduction to Child Care* by Ella M. Wiebe (1941) and the *Memoirs of J. W. Kliewer* (1943).

In 1949 the college press was merged with General Conference publication interests and continued operation as the Mennonite Press in its present location. Since then books published by the college include *The Story of Bethel College* (1954) by Peter J. Wedel and edited by E. G. Kaufman, and *No Other Foundation* (1962) a volume of commemorative essays on Menno Simons by Walter Klaassen, William Keeney, Russell Mast, Vernon Neufeld and Cornelius Krahn.

Faculty members have also written for various journals, produced dissertations, some of which have been published, and contributed editorial efforts toward the publication of books, especially the volumes in the Mennonite Historical Series, published by the Faith and Life Press, and the four-volume *Mennonite Encyclopedia* of which Cornelius Krahn was co-editor.

Monatsblätter to Bulletin

With the retirement of David Goerz as editor of the *Monatsblätter* in 1908 the publication of separate English and German monthly periodicals was discontinued and the periodical continued as the *Bethel College Monthly* with a German department. The German section was continued under the editorship of such people as E. R. Riesen, P. H. Richert, P. J. Wedel, J. H. Langenwalter, J. F. Balzer, J. H. Franzen, A. Warkentin and J. R. Thierstein until the summer of 1936. After the issue of February 1935 the name *Bethel College Monthly* was dropped in favor of *Bethel College Bulletin.* The latter had, in fact, been a parallel publication, confining itself to such official matters as catalogs, summer school announcements, etc. For several years the *Bulletin* was published twice and sometimes three times a month, with one issue being a regular news issue and others containing promotional material. The first directory number as well as the first annual report number were published in 1936. The annual or semi-annual catalog has always been an issue of the *Bulletin* series.

Editors of monthly publications who served for longer periods include G. A. Haury, J. R. Thierstein, D. H. Richert and John F. Schmidt. Other editors include H. L. Stump, J. E. Linscheid, Willis Rich, Lester Hostetler, I. G. Neufeld and Henry Dyck. For a time the *Bulletin* was edited by the president with the secretary to the president being directly responsible for the publication. At present the president and the director of public affairs are editing it. For the last twelve years issues have been reduced to one a month.

Student Publications

Student publications of news and opinion date from the school years 1917-18 when E. E. Leisy of the faculty negotiated with the Newton *Kansan* to give one-half page a week for the publication of Bethel College news. Known as the *Bethel Breeze* this news sheet was first edited by Nelson M. Krehbiel. In the fall of 1921 the name was changed to the *Bethel Collegian,* as it is still called. With the change in name it became a full page in the *Kansan.* Students and college authorities felt fortunate in being able to operate under this cooperative arrangement as it provided extensive circulation for college news.

The luxury of an independent paper was enjoyed for the school year of 1926-27 with Herbert R. Schmidt as editor. It appears to have been financed by subscriptions and advertisements. For the following ten years the *Bethel Collegian* was again issued as a one-page supplement in the *Kansan.* Since the fall of 1937, the *Collegian* has remained on an independent basis. However, until 1946 it was free from advertising. With the coming of World War II it became a bi-weekly and during 1944-45 a monthly. With the fall of 1946 weekly issues were resumed and continued through 1953-54. Since then it has appeared every other week. Four editors of the *Collegian,* Robert

Kreider, Robert Schrag, Jim Banman, and Melvin Schmidt have the distinction of receiving First Class Honor Rating from the Associated Collegiate Press for the excellent quality of the student publication under their leadership.

Students have also been responsible for the college annual, published as the *Echoes* in 1908, 1911, and 1913 and as the *Graymaroon* from 1915 to 1960 and the *Thresher* since 1961. The early issues constituted a special outlet for the literary and artistic talents of students with poetry, essays, and descriptive articles. The issue of 1911, for example, includes "A Bethel Song," and a poem entitled "The Bees."

"The dormitory is a hive
In which the bees are kept alive.
At present they're forty in all,
Who buzz and swarm about the hall. . . ."

A pen sketch shows the dormitory (Carnegie Hall) on Saturday evening with boys dressed and waiting while the house mother is at the buzzer panel. Another sketch shows bees from Carnegie pursuing a luckless lad.

Mennonite Life

The most recent continuing publication sponsored by the College has been *Mennonite Life* issued as a biannual in 1946 and appearing as a quarterly since then. With the first issue it announced as its policy, "Published in the interest of the best in the religious, social, and economic phases of Mennonite culture." An illustrated journal, it was to embrace material of a variety of literary forms and include in its treatment and appeal all groups of Mennonites all over the world.

Cornelius Krahn participated in the early planning sessions and has served as editor since the first issue. John F. Schmidt joined as associate editor in 1947 and Walter Klaassen in 1962. Among the other associates, J. Winfield Fretz and Melvin Gingerich deserve special mention. With the completion of ten years of publication a commemorative issue appeared October, 1955. A tenth anniversary dinner was also held at which Frank Laubach, literacy missionary, was the speaker. The January, 1962 issue announced changes in appearance and layout as well as introducing a group of department editors.

In its seventeen-year history readers have paid tribute to the catholicity and ecumenicity of *Mennonite Life* and to the fact that it has given such extensive treatment to the cultural aspects (fine arts, folklore) of Mennonite life. Back issues and bound volumes of *Mennonite Life* from 1946 to the present are still available. They constitute one of the richest sources of information pertaining to the Mennonites.

From the *School and College Journal* to *Mennonite Life* and from *Bilder aus der Kirchengeschichte* to *No Other Foundation* Bethel College publications have always been more than promotional in the narrow institutional sense. Admittedly, they have served to promote convictions and ideals and, being sponsored by an educational institution, they have sought to be truly educational. They have often served to awaken readers to new issues and provide a focus from which stabilizing and unifying influences could radiate. These publications have made no apology for championing the Mennonite heritage and maintaining a warm evangelical spirit. In publications too, the words of the oft-quoted hymn are relevant. "The work is thine, O Christ the Lord, the cause for which we stand."

Some Outstanding Publications

1. C. H. Wedel, *Bilder aus der Kirchengeschichte für mennonitische Gemeindeschulen.* 1899. (Reprinted and translated into English with several printings by other publishers.)
2. C. H. Wedel, *Kurzgefaste Kirchengeschichte für Schulen und Familien,* 1905.
3. C. H. Wedel, *Abriss der Geschichte der Mennoniten.* Ersten Teil, 1900. Zweites Bändchen, 1902. Drittes Bändchen, 1901. Viertes Bändchen, 1904.
4. C. H. Wedel, *Randzeichnungen zu den Geschichten des Alten Testaments,* 1899.
5. C. H. Wedel, *Randzeichnungen zu den Geschichten des Neuen Testaments,* 1900.
6. C. H. Wedel, *Geleitworte an junge Christen zunächst in unseren mennonitischen Kreisen,* 1903. (Reprinted in German and translated by Theodore O. Wedel and published as *Words to Young Christians,* 1926.)
7. C. H. Wedel, *Briefliche Blätter an einen Lernenden über Bildung Gesellschafts und Heiratsfragen,* 1906.
8. J. W. Kliewer, *Letters on a Trip around the World,* 1936.
9. J. W. Kliewer, *Memoirs of J. W. Kliewer or From Herd Boy to College President,* 1943.
10. A. Warkentin, *A Harmony of the Kings,* 1939.
11. A. Warkentin, *Who's Who Among the Mennonites,* 1937.
12. A. Warkentin and Melvin Gingerich, *Who's Who Among the Mennonites,* 1943.
13. P. J. Wedel and E. G. Kaufman, *The Story of Bethel College,* 1954.
14. Walter Klaassen, William Keeney, Russell Mast, Vernon Neufeld, Cornelius Krahn, *No Other Foundation: Commemorative Essays on Menno Simons,* 1962.

Copies of the above, together with privately printed works by these authors (Wedel, *Meditationen* and Warkentin, *Die Gestalt des Teufels*), are still available. Inquiries should be addressed to *Mennonite Life,* North Newton, Kansas.

Truth in Fiction

By Mary E. Bender

One of the chief functions of good fiction is to place life before us so that we see it more clearly or in a fresh way or in better perspective. Many aspects of life which we do not perceive in our inevitably fragmented daily rush from task to task the literary artist is equipped to show us. Reading perceptive fiction produced by an outsider about one's own group has a doubly pertinent function.

One such work about Mennonites is Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl's long short story set in sixteenth century Germany and entitled *Mein Recht* (*My Right*). The reasons for the story's being written are as interesting as the story itself.

Wilhelm H. Riehl

Wilhelm H. Riehl's maternal grandmother lived near the Weierhof, an important and interesting Mennonite community center and school, and his parental home was at the foot of the Donnersberg in the midst of "old and well-established Mennonite settlements." As manager of the castle of the Nassau regents, his father learned to know Valentin Dahlem, an outstanding Mennonite farmer and elder. It was Dahlem who rebuilt the Mennonite Congregation in his area by re-establishing strict discipline following the moral decadence resulting from the Napoleonic wars. He was also one of the first in Germany to employ scientific farming methods. Christian Hege writes: "With amazement (his rural neighbors) saw that Dahlem planted potatoes, which were still unknown and were considered poisonous by many, saved the 'rank weed' clover and thus made use of fallow ground, but still always had the best crops."

Although of a younger generation, Riehl must have been impressed by his contacts with this great Mennonite, and it is thought that the Mennonite farm depicted in his first work may have been Dahlem's.

Riehl expressed his admiration for Mennonite agricultural and religious life in *Die Pfälzer, Ein Rheinisches Volksbild*:

"In addition to the two chief German confessions, Mennonites are also spread through the province and located especially here in large numbers. . . . That is a good indication of the growing agricultural significance of the Palatinate, for where the plow goes through golden meadows, there the Mennonite builds his church. Among the educated preachers of the Mennonites along the Rhine there are, furthermore, men before whose scholarly and humane education the light of many a Catholic and Protestant (Mennonites were not considered Protestant, a term reserved for the state churches growing out of the Reformation) minister may become as dim as a street light in Westrich (a back-woodsy area of the Palatinate). For many generations the Mennonites have found greater tolerance in the Palatinate than elsewhere, and even in earlier centuries, the Protestants shared their churchyards with the men of this peaceful sect."

As a Christian professor of the nineteenth-century equivalent of social science at the University of Munich, Riehl had other interests which led him to study the Anabaptist-Mennonites. One of these interests was minority groups. A second was practical, as opposed to dogmatic Christianity. A third concerned the conflicts between folk and Biblical ethics. These interests also led him to study the medieval Brethren of the Common Life, whose "purpose was to counteract the secularized life of the church by creating and promoting a truly pious Christian life shut away from worldly life, but actively engaged in earnest work for their fellow men." Possibly his knowledge of Anabaptist-Mennonite history may have come via the historian C. A. Cornelius, who taught in the same field with him at Munich and who once published an article in a magazine which he edited.

Riehl's literary output was prolific: 753 articles by the time he was thirty and over fifty short stories, many of which are of quite high literary caliber.

The Novel

Mein Recht treats the conflict between Biblical and folk ethics in a psychologically and aesthetically authentic manner. During a rather casual Sunday afternoon neighborhood dispute, Joachim Gulzow, one of three "prosperous and proper" young farmer brothers, is accidentally stabbed as a result of his own carelessness by a neighbor, Peter Grauman. As his wound heals, he plans a bloody vengeance. Klaus, the youngest brother, agrees to his plan; but the oldest, Hennecke, a quiet and cool-headed man, is of the opinion that the fault is equally divided on both sides, and quiets Joachim.

When, however, one night Joachim carelessly reopens his wound and dies from infection two weeks later, the tables are turned. Joachin dies without resentment, but Hennecke, normally the most sensible of men, neglects his work and begins to brood. To Klaus's urging that Peter be immediately pursued he replies "sternly and coldly" that such an action would only create more murderers, preferring to let the courts bring justice. While they are talking an old man and a girl, exhausted and dusty from walking, appear and ask for temporary harvest work and shelter.

Innocence and Vengeance

Henneck's sense that the court is properly caring for his brother's justice brings him gradually back to himself, and he returns to his normal habits; but his lawsuit completely occupies his mind. One evening sitting on a bench resting from the day's work, he tries to talk about it with Matthias, the traveler. Four witnesses have sworn against Peter.

He stopped and looked at Matthias. But Matthias remained silent. At that, Hennecke cried in a rising voice, "I said, four oaths. That's a word." Again he stopped and glanced expectantly at the old man. But again he was silent. "What do you think of four oaths?" asked Hennecke, upset. "I say that four oaths are four sins, for it is written: Swear not at all: let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay." Hennecke flared up, "And how is one to carry on a legal battle without oaths?" "I don't know anything about legal battles," answered the old man.

"Do you also perhaps consider it a sin to achieve justice through legal channels?"

"I consider it unchristian to accuse my neighbor."

"You people from Switzerland probably consider it more Christian to avenge the death of a brother by feuding and violence," cried Hennecke in angry derision.

Quickly, but still quietly, Matthias answered. "Feuding and violence, like all war, is still less Christian than a trial or an oath."

Hennecke was astonished. "Good man," he said after a long consideration, "no injustice must ever have been done to you. to say nothing of vengeance for the death of a brother burning on your soul."

Thereupon Matthias Plattner answered, "Believe me, I would have the murder not of one brother but of many brothers to avenge; but it is written, 'vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." . . . He showed many deep scars left by torture.

Then he said to Hennecke softly, so that Martha would not hear it . . . "For this child I should have a father to avenge, who was my brother. The child knows who is responsible for her father's death. She mourns, . . . but in her innocence knows nothing of vengeance. We should all become as little children."

Hennecke is too preoccupied with his trial to pay much attention to Matthias's strange words, and they disappear from his mind.

Shattering news awaits Hennecke when he discovers that the court has decided in favor of Peter Graumann and that he cannot speak with the judge, for the latter has gone hunting and left his wife in charge of the office. The court was holy as the church to Hennecke, and he suffers intensely to think that it has defied justice. The judge's wife said in giving him the verdict, "Now you know what you have to do," and her words bear for him the weight of a divine call. He practices marksmanship throughout autumn and then announces to Peter the opening of the feud. In January, he and Klaus do kill Peter with the words, "We demand the blood of our brother."

For the most part the villagers agree that since the court had failed to avenge the dead brother, the Gulzows had to do it. The Graumanns, however, take the case to the Imperial Court at Speyer, for they have just as strong a sense of duty toward their dead brother as the Gulzows have toward theirs. To Hennecke, the Speyer trial seems to have the sole purpose of vindicating his rightness. He is very proud of "his trial," and pleased beyond measure that such a high court, as he is convinced, will declare him to have acted justly. He is so firmly set on obtaining justice that he could not even have died without first hearing that he had obtained his rights. Year after year goes by without visible progress, a fact which pleases Hennecke the more as it proves to him the care with which the court is proceeding. He devotes himself to harder work to raise the extremely high costs of his defense.

Within Hennecke, however, conflicts develop that are invisible to others and which he himself does not understand. He begins to hear Peter Graumann's voice: "The case will not be ready for a verdict until eternity." One part of Hennecke has begun to doubt his so honorably and maturely arrived at conviction of his duty to kill the murderer of his brother, but he cannot admit this fact to himself. Eleven years pass.

Martha, the refugee child of years before, is rehired and Hennecke gradually falls in love with her. But he does not dare to tell her of the lawsuit, since it began with murder. Finally he gathers courage to ask her about the death of her father. She tells him

hesitatingly, "Through the executioners," and relates the story.

Martha's father and uncle had come from Moravia and settled as weavers in Switzerland, where they had quietly joined the Anabaptists. After some years they were taken to the castle and tortured in the child's presence: the father was beheaded, whereas uncle and child escaped. The father forgave the executioner and judges, as all the Swiss Brethren did. "And he often told me, too, to pray for our persecutors, for those who have been unjust to us need our pity and intercession." Hennecke is silent for a long time with astonishment and emotion. Then he says:

"It seems that justice is really rarer in the German states . . . than I thought. But had you and your following been as strong as the Prince . . . you would have avenged yourselves anyway and atoned for blood with blood. 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' says the Bible."

The maid answered: "The saying which you quote is in the Old Testament, but in the New, which is stronger than the Old, it says, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord,' and he who willingly bent his back to the whip and cried on the cross, 'Father, forgive them,' was nevertheless the strongest man who ever walked on earth."

"We Admire a Saint"

Hennecke is puzzled. He cannot understand Martha's spirit of reconciliation and does not want at all to follow it, but he admires it. Riehl comments, "We do admire a saint without understanding him, to say nothing of wanting to imitate him." He is as convinced now as ever that he has acted properly. But Martha seems better than he; he himself doesn't know why. Since she has been in the house, Peter's voice has ceased to plague him, just as earlier, simply remembering her has calmed him.

Finally Hennecke gains sufficient courage to propose to Martha. She confesses the terrible truth that she is an Anabaptist. Hennecke knows little of the Anabaptists except that people say they baptize their children twice, "first like other Christians when they have just come into the world, but then again when they are big enough to eat at their own baptismal feast." That seems terrible blasphemy to him. The same key which, turned once, opened heaven, seemed to him, turned twice over, much more surely to open hell." When he asks Martha what she was taught, she replies. "They taught me to love God above all and my neighbor as myself, not to take vengeance for injustice suffered, not to engage in quarreling, rather to bless those that curse me, to swear no oath, to work diligently, and to pray and to await in happy hope the return of the Lord, which will be soon." She could not be baptized because of their flight, she says, and Hennecke is happy about this simple solution.

What People Say and What God Says

Martha, however, tells Hennecke that she can marry him only if he seeks reconciliation with the Gulzows and repents of his murder. "I can not do that," he cries. "My vegeance was my right."

That night Klaus hears Hennecke talking with Peter Graumann again. In the morning he sees Hennecke solemnly seated before the old family Bible which he has cut apart between Old and New Testaments. Hennecke imagines that he is the judge of the imperial court with the task of pronouncing judgment on Peter Graumann's murderer. "You spectators help me bring this big book in harmony with the smaller. There it says, 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.' But here, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' The little book will break Hennecke's neck if it conquers the larger one." Finally he calls the whole family to his room and pronounces judgment. "The world famous trial, Graumann vs. Gulzow, is ready for a verdict. The little book has defeated the large book, which first justified me, condemns me afterward: Romans 12:19 is copied from Deuteronomy 32:35." After declaring himself guilty, Hennecke dies.

The history of the world is the history of the conflict between what people say and what God says. There is no sharper battleground than that between the mores of society and the mores of the Bible. And the battleground of this conflict is the human soul.

In Hennecke the battle is tragic because of what he is. He is a man who cannot run and hide. He must have things in order, do things properly, and believe that society also is properly in order. He decides on courses of action carefully and slowly, and having come to a conclusion, is almost absolutely convinced that it is right. How hard for such a man to admit that the foundation of the fullest years of his life was wrong! He is above all a good man who cannot tamper with integrity for the sake of his comfort, who cannot be even somewhat dishonest with himself for the sake of easing emotional pressure. There is therefore no escape from the new truth which seems to be tugging at the foundations of the social order so important to him, and which does destroy the foundations of his own existence.

Hennecke is impressive as a tragic figure. His very goodness destroys him, as it forces him to recognize a condemning truth and doubles his abhorrence for his previous mistake. Although physically and emotionally he is not able to withstand the pressure, spiritually he is triumphant. The broken Hennecke, not the compromiser with truth who saves all but his soul, or the adapter to the easiest allegiances which happen to present themselves, is the real man.

One is amazed by Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl's grasp of the Biblical ethic of nonresistance. He understands that it is no sentimental or easy attitude of toler-

ant acceptance, but a dedication of the individual and the church, at their own great and painful expense, to seek the other's good and not their own. Because this command is so foreign to an unredeemed society, because the way of the cross defies both natural and civil right, it can only be practiced by those who are willing to live by either/or, and who chose Christ. It cannot be arrived at in a culture-religion. Riehl makes clear not only the ethic of the New Testament but also its great cost. The Mennonites of the twentieth century will do well to see their own either/or as deeply and to make a clear and committed choice.

Grimmelshausen and the Hutterites

By Elizabeth Bender

An interesting account of the Mennonites of the seventeenth century, in this case more specifically the Hutterites, is found in the more or less autobiographical novel, *Der Abenteuerliche Simplicissimus,* by Joseph Christoff von Grimmelshausen (1668). It is perhaps the only literary work of the seventeenth century to mention them at all. Grimmelshausen gave Chapter 19 of Book V the heading, "A Bit About the Hungarian Anabaptists and Their Way of Life (Etwas wenigs von denen Ungarischen Widertauffern, und ihrer Art zu leben.) This chapter, which is a complete but somewhat parenthetic unit in itself, is significant for the development of the story in that it marks the return of Simplicissimus to Christianity.

After his varying fortunes and adventures in the Thirty Years' War, Simplicissimus devoted himself for a time to reading and study, "It was my greatest joy and delight to sit behind books especially those which demand much reflection." Beginning with elementary school subjects, he went from arithmetic and music (which he hated "like the plague") through mathematics and geometry to astronomy, astrology, and alchemy. Tiring of all these subjects, he finally concluded that *theologia* was the only one worth devoting oneself to.

But I found finally, that of all my arts and knowledge there is no better art than theology when one loves and serves God by means of it. In its guidance I discovered a manner of life for men which could be more angelic than human if one would bring together a society consisting of both married and single people, both men and women, who, like the Anabaptists, would dedicate themselves under an understanding leader to keep themselves alive by the work of their hands and the rest of the time to devote themselves to the praise and service of God and to the Salvation of their souls.

In connection with these reflections Simplicissimus recalled having seen among the Anabaptists of Hungary a kind of life that made this practical theology possible.

On the Anabaptist farms in Hungary I had previously seen such a kind of existence, so that I would have joined them of my own free will or at least considered their life more blessed than any other in the whole world if these good people had not been involved in other false . . . heretical opinions. . . . First of all, they had great wealth and more than enough food, which they, however, by no means squandered. No cursing, complaining or impatience was felt among them. One did not hear an idle word. There I saw the artisans working in their shops as though they were doing it on contract. Their teacher instructed the youth as though they were his own children.

Then he describes their rigid division of labor, and the excellent health and long life resulting from the regular habits inherent in this kind of life. He continues:

There was no anger, no competition, no vengeful spirit, no envy, no enmity, no worry about the temporal, no pride, no regret! . . . I would also have liked to bring into being such a blessed life as that of these Anabaptist heretics, for it seemed to me superior to

that of the cloister. I thought if you could create such worthy Christian behavior under the protection of your own authorities, you would be another Saint Dominic or Saint Francis. "Oh," I often said, "if you could only convert the Anabaptists so that they could teach our fellow believers their manner of life, what a blessed man you would be. Or if you could only convince your fellow Christians that they should live such a worthy and (in appearance) Christian life as these Anabaptists, how much you could have accomplished! I would gladly have given my farm and entire fortune to such a unified Christian body in order to be a member of it."

It is not surprising that Grimmelshausen was so favorably impressed by the Hutterites, in view of the description that the late A. J. F. Zieglschmid gives of the brotherhood life of this group. It is based on authentic early documents and makes a distinct appeal to the modern reader.[1]

The modern professor seems to have become almost as enthusiastic as Grimmelshausen of nearly three hundred years ago. In their seclusion and their devotion to the brotherhood community the Hutterites developed a culture of their own that was in most respects superior to the general level of the time. Their progressive school system consisted of a kindergarten (three centuries before Fröbel) for children from two to six years of age and a "grosse Schule" for those from six to fifteen. In their hygienic precautionary methods they were well in advance of their time, as for instance in the segregation of the sick child and the washing of the nurse's hands after she had handled a sick child. Their nurses and midwives were known throughout the country for their skill. The Hutterites' unusual skill in the manual crafts is mentioned in nearly all the sources. The artistic products of their ceramic shops have been described by Robert Friedmann.

The carefully maintained Christian ethical standards of the Hutterites are equally worthy of note. Grimmelshausen's statement that swearing was not heard among them is attested by the following well-known story which Zieglschmid quotes from the *Hutterian Chronicle*. When in the year 1555 a brother stood before the executioner a final attempt was made to save his life. "He was told that if he just swore a tiny oath he would not be harmed. But he refused to do it because of love for God and died a bitter death."

Though Grimmelshausen has Simplicissimus say specifically that he saw these Anabaptists in Hungary, research has shown that this statement is not accurately autobiographical. Grimmelshausen made no extensive trips; he did not even reach Vienna. Earlier critics thought that he had acquired his information by reading about the Anabaptists, since it is known that he was a voluminous reader, or perhaps by building on Thomas More's *Utopia* and other similar literature. Others supposed that he had come in contact with Anabaptists (Swiss Brethren) living in the Black Forest. If any of these suppositions were true, Grimmelshausen's account could not be taken as literally true or as historically reliable.

Zieglschmid came to the plausible conclusion that Grimmelshausen's account is reliable in every detail, and that his source of information was direct contact with Hungarian Hutterites, either through Hutterite missionaries from Sobotiste who had been sent to the Palatinate, or perhaps with missionaries from the Hutterian colony founded in Mannheim in 1654, which existed there until 1684. He suggests that it is not impossible that Grimmelshausen himself was in Mannheim at some time between 1655 and 1668 (date of publication of *Simplicissimus*) and thus had direct contact with the colony itself. He bases his conclusion that Grimmelshausen's information could have come from no less direct a source than personal contact with Hutterian missionaries, on the following facts: Item by item (as described by Grimmelshausen) the colonies of Hungarian Anabaptists were identically like those of their modern descendants, the Hutterian Brethren of South Dakota and Canada; Grimmelshausen's account agrees with other historical documents, especially those of the Hutterites themselves, both as to their manner of living and their prosperity; and finally, the detail of the description as well as its glow of enthusiasm seem to indicate that Grimmelshausen had received his impression from direct contact with Hutterites. The words "Ketzer" (heretic) and "dem Schein nach," (apparently) obviously inserted by Grimmelshausen as a concession to religious "public opinion," do not in the least detract from his enthusiastic picture and deceive nobody.

Zieglschmid's hypothesis is supported by the following evidence from a history of Mannheim,[2] which, moreover, justifies the conjecture that Grimmelshausen must have visited the colony, inasmuch as he gives them the same name (*Ungarische Widertäuffer*) as that given the Mannheim Hutterites.

Neither state nor civic authorities hindered the settlement of churches other than the state church as long as they did not demand the rights of public and unlimited practice of their religion. . . . In a special section, the Palatinate Provincial Decree of 1582 had threatened the followers of the "abominable, poisonous, seductive teaching and sect of Anabaptism, which is injurious to temporal and eternal wellbeing," with banishment. However, Karl Ludwig permitted an Anabaptist sect, the Hutterites, to settle in Mannheim for an annual fee. But they had to remain quiet and were not allowed to try to convert anyone. . . . In 1655 the first of them settled in Mannheim; at this occasion they were also called Hungarian Anabaptists. The Elector granted them permission to settle under the condition that they give no public offense and not attract any of his subjects to them.

The fact that the Hutterites were forbidden to make any converts in the Palatinate makes the probability of Grimmelshausen's contact with missionaries more remote, and leaves direct contact with the "Bruderhof" in Mannheim as the only plausible possibility.

The Hutterites and their way of life as depicted by Grimmelshausen stand in sharp and favorable contrast to the conditions prevailing in the seventeenth century, torn as it was by religious strife and was marked by social and economic chaos. Their tolerance, high ethical standard of living, thrift, and superior social and economic order, must have deeply impressed Grimmelshausen, as his inclusion of them in his novel indicates. The fact that he has Simplicissimus, at his return to religion, seriously consider accepting their way of life, may indicate that Grimmelshausen himself was influenced for the better by this contact with a way of life that was morally far superior to that of his environment. As a soldier during the Thirty Years' War (he fought on both sides) he was thoroughly familiar with the moral and economic deterioration prevalent throughout Germany at that time, having himself taken part in the brutality and lawlessness of the soldiery. His spirit of tolerance toward the "heresy" of the Hutterites in an age of desperate intolerance is a tribute to Grimmelshausen as a man.

[1]A. J. F. Zieglschmid, "Grimmelshausens Ungarische Wiedertäufer," *Publications of the Modern Language Association,* LIV, (December, 1939), pp. 1031-1040.

[2]*Mannheim in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart, Jubiläumsgabe der Stadt.* Vol. I, *Geschichte Mannheims von den ersten Anfängen bis zum Übergang an Baden* (1802), Mannheim, 1907.

Mennonites in the Work of Max Halbe

By S. P. Hoefert

IN MODERN GERMAN literature we find only isolated traces of the Mennonites. This situation would be different if, for example, a dramatist like Gerhart Hauptmann had received lasting impressions (instead of the ones which he gleaned from the Herrnhut brethren in Silesia) of the spirit of a Mennonite community and its inhabitants. The situation would also be different if one of the writers who were inspired to write of the fate of German groups abroad had had more intimate contact with the world of the Mennonites. A novelist like Josef Ponten, for example, would have been able to portray the migrations and wanderings of the Mennonites. But Ponten had only rather superficial connections with the Mennonites[1]; he mentions them severally, alas in a cursory manner, in his work *Volk auf dem Wege, Roman der deutschen Unruhe,* a series of novels in which he shows the fate of the Russo-Germans. Death, moreover, overtook him shortly before the completion of the sixth volume of his *Romanreihe,* just when he was about to branch out toward describing the German emigrant groups in the Americas. That in the later, already more or less planned novels of the American cycle, the Mennonites would have fared better is quite conceivable, a supposition, incidentally, that was raised and substantiated in J. W. Dyck's discussion of the Mennonites in the novels of Josef Ponten.[2]

There is thus no portrayal of the Odyssey of the Mennonites in German literature, and it is unlikely, considering the present state of German letters, that such a portrayal will come into existence within the near future. It is, then, only here and there that we find in modern German literature a reference to the Mennonites, and we have to be content with these references if we seek to form a picture of the Mennonite in German literature. Several such references can also be found in the writings of Max Halbe, and it is our intention to bring these to the attention of the reader.

Max Halbe

Max Halbe (1865-1944), famous around the turn of the century, is a writer who, although he ought not to be called a Naturalist, is counted by many literary historians as one of the naturalistic triumvirate (Hauptmann, Halbe, Sudermann). Long after Halbe had consolidated his place as a dramatist in the history of literature he turned his hand to novel writing. But this phase of his creative activity remained (undeservedly) largely hidden to critics and public alike. His epic venture came to an end with *Die Friedensinsel*, a historical novel which remained a fragment as Halbe died shortly before the completion of its last chapter. In the year following Halbe's death (1945), however, *Die Friedensinsel* appeared as the last volume of his *Sämtliche Werke*.[5]

In this novel Halbe deals with the fate of Martin Opitz von Boberfeld (1597-1639), a well-known poet and theorist who was once proclaimed "father of modern German poetry." Halbe's *Die Friedensinsel* is a work of formidable dimensions, a many-sided painting of Danzig in the Baroque age, and woven into its texture one also finds a reference to the Mennonites in northeastern Europe.

In the beginning of the novel the reader meets Martin Opitz who, accompanied by a Captain von Proen, is on his way to Danzig, that isle of peace where he later (1639) fell victim to the plague. On their way to this city the two riders also traverse the Werder regions, those lowlands on the upper Vistula which already during the rule of the Order of Teutonic Knights had been an area of settlement for German farmers. Opitz observes the obvious contrast between the well-kept villages of this region and the uncared for and shabby Polish villages through which they have just passed. His supposition that they are old German settlements is confirmed, and Proen also points out that in these lowlands no Pole has ever settled, a fact for which a difference in faith was reason enough. For the inhabitants of this region are protestants and a great number of them, so we hear, are Mennonites.[4] This statement astonishes Opitz somewhat, for he knows that in the Netherlands, where he had lived some years, the Mennonites were always tolerated. Proen, however, informs him that the members of this evangelical-reformed brotherhood were not treated well in all parts of the Low Countries:
"Nicht in den spanischen Niederlanden. Auch mancherorten nicht in den Generalstaaten. Man hat sie in den letzten Zeitläuften ihres Glaubens wegen arg angefochten. Da sind sie hierher ins Preussenland gekommen!"[5]

A discussion about religious freedom then follows. Upon Opitz' question, whether the Mennonites are indeed tolerated in Danzig and Prussia, Proen answers in the affirmative, drawing into the discussion members of different faiths:
"Ja, man toleriert sie trotz ihrem Nonsens vom Tauf-sakrament. Wie man ja bei uns in Danzig auch den Baptisten und sogar den Jesuiten freien Weg lässt, nur dass sie ihren Gottesdienst ausserhalb der Stadtmauern verrichten müssen."[6]

After this statement there is no further mention of the Mennonites. Proen's remark regarding the regulation of Jesuits having to hold their services outside the city evidently displeases Opitz, for it is his sincere conviction, so we hear, that every Christian ought to be allowed to pray to his own God in his own way. Whether these words can justly be put into the mouth of Opitz (his activities as secretary to Count Dohna, a fanatic official of the counter-reformation, remain largely clouded) or whether Max Halbe gives here expression to his own views, is worthy of speculation. But, apart from our opinion that it is Halbe rather than Opitz who is speaking here, it is more relevant, within the framework of this contribution, to ascertain why Halbe (he was a catholic) specifically mentions the Mennonites.

Scholle und Schicksal

The answer to this question can be found in Halbe's autobiography *Scholle und Schicksal* (1933). On several occasions the author speaks here about Danzig. Among other things he mentions that this city, around 1600, looked quite like a Dutch town and that it has remained more or less so until the present day (the early thirties). Halbe then cites a number of details which underline the Dutch character of Danzig, and he also draws attention to the many Dutch names, a great number of which reveal the Mennonite origin of their bearers. He then remarks that around 1600 the Mennonites emigrated from the Netherlands to Danzig and its hinterland. Thinking about these people, he is reminded of his home in Güttland, for there too were Mennonites. They are, indeed, part of the earliest memories of his childhood in the Werder:
"Ich habe fast seit meinem ersten Bewusstsein meine Umgebung von ihnen sprechen hören, manchmal missfällig, aber immer mit Respekt. Gleich das nächste Nachbarsdorf, aus weitverstreuten Einzelhöfen bestehend, war und ist fast ausschliesslich von mennonitischen Bauern bewohnt."[7]

After he once again points out that the ancestors of these farmers had been driven into exile on account of their faith and that they here, in West Prussia, had found a new home, he elaborates upon them, portraying their life, customs and character:
"Die Nachkommen lebten noch ganz in der Vorstellungswelt der Väter und Vorväter, waren ebenso stark im Glauben wie im Erwerb, tüchtige, sparsame, emsige Leute, die die Bibel im Herzen und die Hand fest auf dem Geldbeutel hielten, den Krieg und jede Art von sündhaftem Lebenswandel verabscheuten und in dieser gottlosen Welt sich um so enger aneinander und auch um den strauchelnden Mitbruder schlossen, so

dass nicht leicht einer von den Ihren ganz dem irdischen und himmlischen Verderben anheimfallen konnte. Als äusseres Zeichen dieser ihrer Besonderheit und Erwähltheit vor anderen Christenmenschen hatten sie natürlich auch ihren eigenen Kirchhof, den etwas seitab vom Dorf, mitten zwischen Wiesen und Feldern, etwas eine halbe Wegstunde von Güttland entfernt lag. Man sah seine hohen Eschen, Weiden und Ulmen sich dunkel in der flachen baumlosen Landschaft abzeichnen. Ihre Kronen bildeten zusammen die Form eines riesigen Sarges, der über dem Kirchhof gleichsam in der Luft zu schweben schien und für meine kindliche Phantasie etwas Schreckhaftes hatte. Der Tod hat auf diesem und anderen Wegen schon frühzeitig Eingang in meine Vorstellungswelt gehalten."[8]

We see thus that the Mennonite environment stimulated Halbe's imagination and that the Mennonite neighbors left a favorable impression with him (the somewhat ironic tone behind the "Erwähltheit vor anderen Christenmenschen" need not be taken seriously). The fact that the cemetery in particular impressed him is of special interest to the Halbe-scholar, for it touches upon the problem of imagery in Halbe's work. It is quite possible that images like the one mentioned, "the giant black coffin hovering in the air above the cemetery," have left their mark upon his work. But to verify this point would require further investigation.

When, in conclusion, we ask ourselves about the stature of the Mennonites in Halbe's work, the answer is definite and clear. The poet saw in them hard-working, frugal people who clung together and rejected a sinful life, relying on their particular tradition and faith. As such people they made their way into Halbe's childhood memories and as such people they were given a place in his autobiography. Later, during work on his last novel, Halbe's recollections of the Mennonites in the Werder (an area that has been completely polonized by the Polish administration) gained new life and found their last expression in *Die Friedensinsel.*

[1]J. W. Dyck, "The Mennonites in Joseph Ponten's Novels," *Mennonite Life*, July 1957.

[2] J. W. Dyck, p. 137
[3]Max Halbe, *Sämtliche Werke*, Salzburg, 1945.
[4]Max Halbe, vol. XIV, p. 19
[5] Max Halbe, vol XIV, p. 19
[6]Max Halbe, vol, XIV, pp. 19-20
[7]Max Halbe, vol. I, p. 59
[8]Max Halbe, vol. I, pp. 59-60

BOOKS IN REVIEW

T. Mateboer. *Tot de laatste druppel. De ondergang van het rijk der Wederdopers te Munster.* Utrecht: Drukkerij-Uitgeverij "De Banier" 1960. 148 pp., illus. $3.75.

Another novel about the Munster kingdom of the Anabaptists. Why the perennial interest in this theme? How many score of novels have been written about Munster? On this tragic event the artist outdoes the historian, for all the human pathos associated with misguided idealism comes through to the reader in a way the historian could never capture. The modern reader, too, understands the agony, for he has known or seen his share of false utopias.

The action in this story centers around Jacob and Aaltje Vis, their son Geert, and daughter Hille, married to an ex-monk. Under the stir of Anabaptist preaching they leave their simple life as fisherman in Friesland and travel to the New Jerusalem at Munster. In the tyranny which follows they all perish, except Geert who rescues his sweetheart and betrays the town to the prince-bishop. Alongside *The Siege* by Vansittart, the recent American novel of the same events, the account given here seems meager and melodramatic. The characters are not developed and events are strung together with sensational effect. The portrayal of folk life with its simplicities and uncanny sense of evil is interesting and convincing. At the end the author tells the reader his book has a didactic purpose: even today we can be misled; we must place our confidence in personal religion rather than in all the accoutrements of church life.

—Irvin B. Horst

Humanism and the Reformations

The Two Reformations in the 16th Century. A Study of the Religious Aspects and the Consequences of the Renaissance and Humanism by H. A. Enno van Gelder. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1961, 406 pp.

This book constitutes a new approach to the classification and the interpretation of the 16th century Reformation. For four centuries the Reformation of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin has been considered the true return to the biblical church. The efforts of the humanists were considered as those of forerunners and the more radical reformation as "sectarian." Today the "Left Wing" or the "Radical" Reformation is generally taken seriously by Reformation research scholars.

The author presents another concern pertaining to the evaluation of the Reformation efforts of the 16th century. He speaks of "two reformations." One was caused by the Renaissance and Humanism which started in Italy and spread to Western Europe where its chief representative was Erasmus. According to van Gelder the humanistic

reformation efforts did not end with the beginning of Luther's reformation as is usually assumed. The influence of Humanism continued in the Reformation, in Catholicism, and outside of the two, the results of which are being noticed to this day. In fact the author claims that the influence has been and is so great that he speaks of Humanism as the "major" Reformation and the reformation of Luther as the "minor" Reformation. These "two reformations" are presented and compared as far as their theology, spread and significance are concerned.

According to the author the humanistic reformation is the "major" reformation since it constitutes the most radical break with the theology and the tradition of the Middle Ages and since "modern man" is a disciple of Humanism and not of the theology of the Reformation of Luther. Thus the most significant reformer is Erasmus and those who preceded and followed him.

The author states that Humanism presents a philosophy of life based on the classic philosophy of life in which the Christian doctrines and ceremonies of the Middle Ages, and what is left of them today, have become meaningless. Modern man in the steps of the great humanists stands on his own feet and finds his "salvation" in living a moral life. Old theological concepts and doctrines can be used symbolically but not in a real sense. The author states that Erasmus had already stripped the theological vocabulary of its real meaning. In his introduction the author states: ". . . in Western civilization since the sixteenth century religion evolved from the idea of salvation to that of morality. . . ."

It is indeed very interesting and exciting to follow the author through the pages of history and to discover with him new facts in support of his theses as well as to review with him well-known facts in the light of this point of view. Although the Renaissance of Italy is treated in great detail the "Prince of Humanism" is still Erasmus, whose activities and influence are featured in The Netherlands, Switzerland, England and Germany. Under Erasmus's contemporaries Thomas More, Bude, Paracelsus, Ulrich von Hutten, Dürer, Lucas van Leyden and others are treated.

The relationship between the Reformers and Erasmus is interestingly featured. The Anabaptists (referred to as Baptists) are treated very briefly and not very accurately. Sebastian Franck gets full recognition. Strangely, the Socinians are not presented at all. Among those featured we list only the following: Castellio, Ronsard, Cassander, Coornhert, Spenser, Shakespeare, Dolet, Bodin, etc. Some of them are referred to as "half way" humanists.

There is no question in the reviewer's mind that orthodox Protestantism, including the heirs of Anabaptism, has often underestimated the influence and significance of Humanism in connection with the origin of the Reformation. Nevertheless there are some questions that can be raised when the case is overstated as is done by our author. In addition to this we are at times under the impression that in our day and age there is a renewed acceptance of the basic theological ideas of classic Christianity since man is realizing that he in his own "goodness" is insufficient. For some the author's point of view may sound like an echo out of a past world and for others it may be refreshing to be inspired by his idealism. We must take his concern seriously and assume that he speaks for many. The new light he sheds on developments of the past is also helpful.

Whether the Erasmian reformation can actually be referred to as the "major" reformation is debatable. Even if Erasmus had more "followers" today than the "classic" reformers, because most of Christianity today is closer to Humanism than to the reformers in doctrines and tradition, the question could still be raised whether this change was caused by Humanism or by other factors. This is likely due more to the fact that these "moderns" have undergone influences of contemporary life rather than the philosophy of Erasmus and his followers. The scientific discoveries, the world wars and revolutions of our day and the industrial and social changes all over the globe have uprooted millions and estranged them from their social and religious background. Most of them have vague and unorganized religious notions and are unaware of a tradition of Humanism not to speak of being influenced by it.

In spite of these critical remarks this book is a challenging review of the events which took place in connection with the great movements of the 16th century: the Renaissance, Humanism and the Reformation.

BETHEL COLLEGE *Cornelius Krahn*

The Urgency of Preaching by Kyle Haselden, New York: Harper and Row, 1963, 121 pp., $2.75.

This little volume, consisting of four lectures delivered by the editor of *The Pulpit* ought to be read by ministers and laymen alike. In a time when the urgency and importance of preaching seems to be in a state of decline, there is need to rediscover what preaching essentially is, and why it cannot be displaced by other forms of religious work. The problems and weaknesses of the preaching ministry in our modern world are frankly and honestly faced, but in the end it is set on solid foundations that cannot be shaken by new winds of doctrine or contemporary fads. Chapter 2, the Urgency of Preaching, is a great chapter. In it he says that the good sermon, "warns men of the threatening peril and declares to them the assured Promise, it must also proclaim the alterant operating decisively between the two. Preaching that does that will always be 'urgent.'"

BETHEL COLLEGE CHURCH *Russell L. Mast*

The Miracle of Dialogue by Revel L. Howe. Greenwich, Connecticut: Seabury Press, 1963, 154 pp., $3.50.

"Dialogue is that address and response between persons in which there is a flow of meaning between them. . . ." It is that interaction between persons in which one of them seems to give himself as he is to the other, and seeks also to know the other as the other is." Making abundant use of the ideas of Martin Buber, Dr. Howe focuses his attention on the important problem of interpersonal relations. In his concept of authentic dialogue he uncovers a wealth of meaning and shows how it applies to specific problem situations wherever man must deal with his fellowman. The book reflects clarity both in thought and in style, which makes it good reading. It will be unusually helpful since all people must deal in one way or another with other people.

BETHEL COLLEGE CHURCH *Russell L. Mast*

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