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CONTRIBUTORS

NORMAN KRAUS is Professor of Bible at Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana.

WALTER KLAASSEN is Associate Professor of Bible at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario.

HENRY POETTCKER is President of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

JACOB LOEWEN is Professor of Modern Languages, Missions, and Anthropology at Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas.

LLOYD L. RAMSEYER has just resigned as President of Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio.

RUSSELL MAST is minister of the Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kansas.

PHOTO CREDITS

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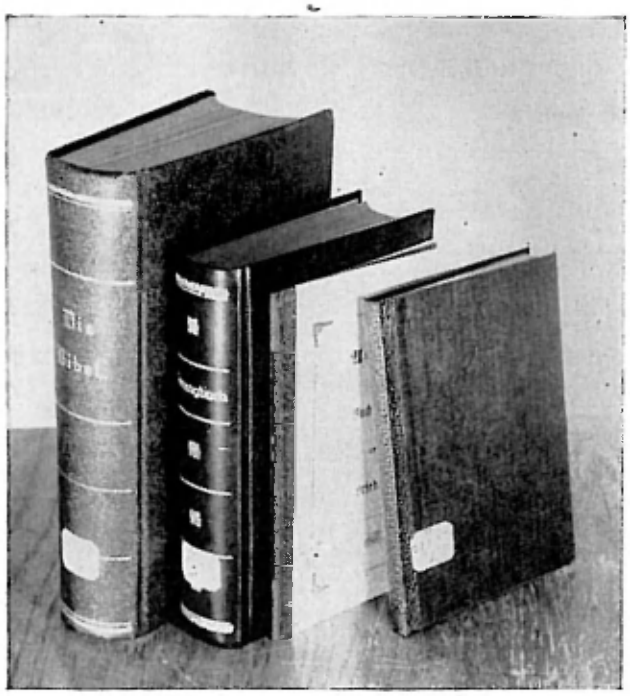
IN THIS ISSUE

The April issue concentrated on the nature and authority of the Bible, the Bible and the scholar, the transmission of the Bible, and Bible interpretation from Old Testament times to the days of John Wyclif. ¶ In this issue we deal with some more aspects of the Bible and the Word of God. What happened to the interpretation of the Bible in the 19th century? What about the multiplicity of versions? How did our fathers in the 16th century view the Bible? What have Mennonites contributed to Bible translation? How can we be helped in our understanding of it? ¶ Again all the writers are Mennonites. We hope that our readers will find these two issues of real assistance in understanding the Book of books.



The Bible in the Nineteenth Century

By C. Norman Kraus

The significance of nineteenth and twentieth century developments in the interpretation of the Bible must be seen in the light of developments in and immediately after the Reformation. In the upheaval of the sixteenth century the centrality of the Bible as the authority for Christian experience and the life of the church was re-established. The Bible became again the dynamic, the quick and powerful sword discerning men's hearts. It no longer was made to share the throne with the authoritative tradition of the church. It alone was given the right to rule the conscience, to correct theology and to regulate the church.

In the latter part of the sixteenth century and on into the seventeenth the whole mood of church life changed. In a climate of theological conflict interspersed with wars between Roman Catholics and Protestants, and bickering among Protestants themselves something of the vibrancy and warmth of the initial Reformation was lost. The transforming experience of God's gracious calling and salvation accepted through faith which had overwhelmed men like Luther, Calvin and Menno Simons gave way to a more intellectualized acceptance of the theological doctrine of salvation by faith without works based upon God's "unconditional election." In this context the Bible came to be used more as a source book for formulating and proving doctrines than as a powerful resource for nurture and nourishment for the life of the church.

It was in this historical setting that the "orthodox" Protestant doctrine of the Bible was shaped. No longer was its authority and power over the conscience of the church made to rest upon its infallible spiritual vitality and message. Instead, its authority was based upon its alleged perfection or technical "inerrancy." Because the Bible is a perfectly inerrant book, inerrant even to its syllables and letters, it was argued, it has absolute authority over the mind of man, and what it says dare not be questioned in any detail.

As might be expected, vigorous reaction to this view of the Bible soon set in. One reaction may be seen in Pietism which attempted to make the Bible relevant to the life and experience of individual Christians by stressing its value as a devotional stimulant and moral guide. A second reaction in the opposite direction is to be seen in Rationalism. The earliest, extreme form

The study of science raises questions about biblical interpretation.

of rationalism appeared in England in the late seventeenth century movement called Deism. The Deists elevated human reason and "nature" to the throne. They used reason and logic to criticize the Bible and sift out from its prescriptions and stories a rational residue. Whatever did not meet their canons of rationality was discarded as legend, myth, or poetry.

At the opening of the nineteenth century, then, these three major positions were established. *Rationalistic Orthodoxy* viewed the Bible as a technically perfect book from whose texts theological propositions might be deduced, and by whose literal prescriptions the church's polity and morals might be regulated. *Pietistic evangelicalism* viewed the Bible as the source of a warm, vital Christian experience and an instrument of revival. "Back to the Bible" and "the Bible only" were its enthusiastic slogans. *Rationalism* was openly critical of the Bible and ready to dismiss many of its stories, doctrines and precepts as the product of an earlier, uninformed age.

Of course each of these traditions continued on into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Traditions of this nature do not suddenly die or reform. But new interests and forces were at work in the church which led to a new understanding of the Bible and its place in the life and mission of the church.

There were two major developments in the nineteenth century that have a direct bearing on the interpretation of the Bible. The first was in the field of scientific discovery and theory. The second was in the field of historical studies. For the first time in the intellectual life of the western world the significance of historical development began to be understood.

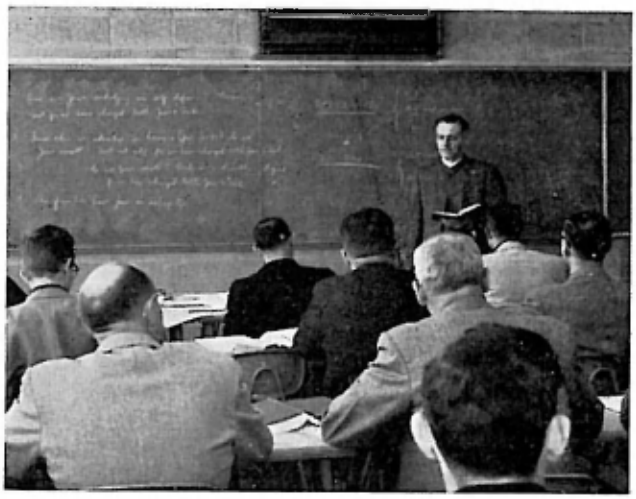
Just as the name of Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) dominates the scientific scene in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, so in the nineteenth the name of Charles Darwin (1809-82) stands out. Just as Copernicus (1473-1543) and Newton had shaken the world of their day with their new views, Darwin and his associates again caused a major tremor in the intellectual landscape of the nineteenth century. Careful and painstaking observations had convinced Darwin that the "species" were not absolutely fixed. He concluded that they were only relatively more stable than "varieties" within species. This in itself does not seem like such an earth-shaking conclusion, but its implications in light of other discoveries caused an immediate and unexpected explosion. Years of study by some of Darwin's contemporaries in the field of geology had led to the independent conclusion that the earth, and even mankind, is much older than six thousand years. These and other observations were put together to form a theory of the "descent of man" as a long process of infinitely slow adaptation and development.

This is not the place to further elaborate or debate the theories of evolution, but it is clear that such theories flew in the face of the generally accepted theory that Adam was created a perfect, full-grown specimen of manhood in 4004 B.C. on October 23 at 9:00 a.m. as John Lightfoot had calculated in the seventeenth century.

Reaction was immediate and violent! Some men like Bishop Wilberforce and Prime Minister Gladstone were ready to throw out the whole idea as absurd and patent blasphemy. Others felt that in one way or another the biblical narrative could be accommodated to the new discoveries.

Some of the orthodox theologians pointed out that the Genesis account of creation is very brief and even cryptic in its description. They suggested that the creation which is described in the first two chapters of Genesis is not the primal creation referred to in Genesis 1:1, but the re-fashioning of the chaotic elements caused by Satan's overthrow. Thus they accounted for the great age of geological phenomena by inserting an unknown period of time between the first and second verses of Genesis 1. Others suggested that the word "day" in the accounts did not necessarily mean a literal twenty-four hour day. They interpreted it as a figurative expression for creative ages of unknown length. Thus they made room for more time and development in the plant and animal kingdoms which scientific discoveries indicated were necessary. Still others pointed out that the genealogies of Genesis 1-11 cannot be used as a chronological chart to fix the date of Adam's creation. B. B. Warfield, the doughty champion of orthodoxy at Princeton Theological Seminary wrote in 1911, "It is to theology, as such, a matter of entire indifference how long man has existed on earth. . . . The Bible does not assign a brief span to human history: this is done only by a particular mode of interpreting biblical data, which is found on

The Bible in the seminary. Dr. Howard Charles, Goshen College Biblical Seminary lecturing.



examination to rest on no solid basis."[1]

Reinterpretations such as these were made by men who held to the theory of verbal inerrancy of the Bible and accepted the biblical account of creation as a "literal" historical account. There were other scholars and theologians, however, who came to the conclusion that the nature of the biblical accounts themselves had been misunderstood. They argued that the early Genesis accounts were not to be understood as either scientific explanations or literal historical accounts. They held that God's truth can be communicated through poetry, parable, legend, and myth as well as the more literalistic uses of language, and that the creation accounts belonged to these literary categories. Therefore they held that there was no direct conflict between the biblical accounts of creation and the new scientific theories since they were not using language in the same manner or speaking to the same point.

This way of looking at the matter was the result of the new, intensive examination of the Scriptures by men who had begun to apply the methods of secular historical studies to the sacred history recorded in the Bible, and we must now turn our attention to that development.

The methods of historical criticism (from the Greek word *kritikos,* relating to judging or evaluating) were first applied to the study of the Bible by men who were attacking orthodox Christianity. It is therefore understandable that the first reflex of the churchmen was to reject such criticism and defend their position against the attacks. But second thoughts led to more careful evaluation of the criticisms which the Deists and other Rationalists had made. The orthodox theories and interpretations of the seventeenth and eighteenth century church were not infallible! The strength of Protestantism has been precisely that it has rejected the idea of the church's infallibility or the perfection of any one system of theology. The Bible alone stands at the center of our faith, and not certain views or theories about it.

Developments in the nineteenth century may be understood as the second thoughts of the church about the criticisms that had been leveled at it. Some churchmen were convinced that the new methods of investigation could be put to work for the church as well as be used against it. The early stages of this new investigation were hazardous, and German critics of the first half of the century seemed more in open revolt against than in sympathetic criticism of the traditional interpretation of the Bible. Gradually however, the new critical methods were perfected; more data, both literary, historical and textual were compiled and a new view of this Bible took shape.

Christian scholars came to understand revelation in a new light. God, they said, has made Himself known to us in the web of historical events, and particularly in the events leading up to and including the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He has made *Himself* known and not merely truths *about Himself.* He has done this by Himself entering into man's life so that man's history becomes *His* story.

First German Bible printed in America. Philadelphia, 1743.

This view of the dynamic, personal nature of God's disclosure led to a new understanding of the Bible's place in the process of revelation. The importance of the Bible as history took on new significance. The Bible came to be seen as the historical record of God's dealings with mankind, or more explicitly that particular segment of humanity through whom He would disclose Himself to all mankind (Genesis 18:18). Scholars began to study the Bible as pre-eminently a *history* book rather than a source book of theological texts. To understand its meaning, they said, one needs to know the historical context (*Sitz im Leben*) in which it was written. He must know the vocabulary and style of its writers—how they use words to convey their meanings.

It was this new conviction that led these scholars to use the methods and techniques of study and evaluation which secular historians were applying to other ancient documents. They began to open questions that for many centuries theologians had considered finally and unalterably closed. For example, they began to question the authorship of various books as well as the dates of their composition in their attempts to correctly interpret the historical context out of which the work had arisen. They began to study the languages in which the Bible was written in light of new manuscript discoveries. For many years it had been assumed that the Greek language of the New Testament was a unique "biblical" Greek—a special heavenly language for the use of the Holy Spirit—because it contained words and grammatical constructions which were different from classical Greek. The textual and literary critics of the nineteenth century discovered that there was nothing unique about the original language of the New Testament after all. With the perusal of many newly found papyrus fragments from the first century, they discovered that it was simply the common dialect of the Hellenistic world of that period.

Some of the early conclusions of "higher criticism," as it was called, were quite unfortunate. The critics were far too confident that at last they had the ultimate method for deriving an "objective" interpretation, and in their overconfidence they were blinded to their own presuppositions which were influencing their conclusions. They did not sufficiently recognize the biases of the age in which they lived, and were far too uncritical of the secular, evolutionary philosophy that provided the basic assumptions for their investigations. D. F. Strauss and F. C. Bauer of Germany relied on Hegelian philosophy and read the Hegelian dialect into the formation of the New Testament. Julius Wellhausen interpreted and rearranged the materials of the Old Testament in accordance with an evolutionary theory of religious developments. But in spite of these mistakes some genuine new insights were gained.

It is almost needless to say that this new interpretive approach caused furious controversy in the church. Men of the orthodox persuasion were quick to point out the subjectivity and fallacies of the higher critics. Further, they held that the very use of this method of interpretation implied that the Bible is merely a human book. From their point of view the doctrine of inspiration solved the questions of historical accuracy. If God wrote it, they argued, it must be infallibly true. They fully concurred with the pronouncement of Dr. Burgon, a British theologian and churchman, when he said:

> The Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it, (where are we to stop?) every letter of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High. The Bible is none other than the Word of God, not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike the utterance of Him who sitteth upon the throne, faultless, unerring, supreme.[2]

Therefore no critical evaluation of its historical or scientific statements was necessary. Indeed, to apply critical techniques to its study was tantamount to denying the Bible's supernatural inspiration and finally its authority as revelation.

Not all conservative Bible scholars took this position however. James Orr, a devout Scottish theologian, held that because the Bible is a human as well as a divine book it is open to the same kind of historical investigation as other books. He was confident that the Bible could stand up under any kind of fair investigation because he was convinced that it is indeed God's true word to man. Theodor Kaftan, another conservative theologian and bishop in the German Lutheran church, held much the same position. He said that it was precisely because the Bible is so central to all the church's life and thought that it must be subjected to the most thorough critical investigation. These men were convinced that if the Bible is true, it has nothing to fear from the scrutiny of historical critics.

In the United States and Canada the controversy over these issues came to an acrimonious climax following World War I in what we know as the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy. There were many issues at stake in this conflict, but the biblical issue was central. Unfortunately the debate became so heated and bitter that the conservative third option of men like James Orr and Bishop Kaftan was lost sight of. The fundamentalists took an extreme position and refused to yield even the slightest point to their opponents. Frequently they indicted even conservative evangelicals as unwitting or incipient liberals. The modernists on the other hand called the fundamentalists obscurantists with whom it was impossible to carry on rational debate.

Fortunately, however, even as this debate was raging there were men who refused to be drawn into the whirlpool of partisan debate. They continued to refine and reverently apply the new interpretive methods to the study of Scripture. It became more and more clear in their study that if the tools and basic insights of nineteenth century criticism were to be used in the understanding of the Bible, they would need to be used within the interpretative framework of biblical presuppositions, not evolutionary, naturalistic, or Hegelian ones. They saw that the critic must deal seriously with the Bible's unique claims for itself as the special Word of God if he is accurately to understand its message. This new insight has not led to a less critical study in the twentieth century. Neither has it led to the rejection of all that rationalistic critics of an earlier age have propounded. But it has led anew to a profound reverence for the value and vitality of the message of the Scriptures. In a significant and authoritative way Scripture is coming again into the center of the church's life for both Protestants and Roman Catholics.

Today the biblical field is probably the most exciting and fertile field of research in the theological world. New translations of the Bible by both Protestants and Roman Catholics, new commentaries, Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias are being published daily. New manuscripts and artifacts discovered by archaeologists constantly add stimulation to the study. In short, it is probably not too much to say that biblical scholars today—Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Protestant—know more about the biblical world than have any scholars since the second century.

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[1] B. B. Warfield, "The Antiquity and Unity of the Human Race" reprinted in *Biblical and Theological Studies*, Philadelphia, 1952, pp. 238-9.

[2] Burgon. *Inspiration and Interpretation*, p. 89. Quoted in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, Cambridge, 1963, p. 283.

VERSIONS

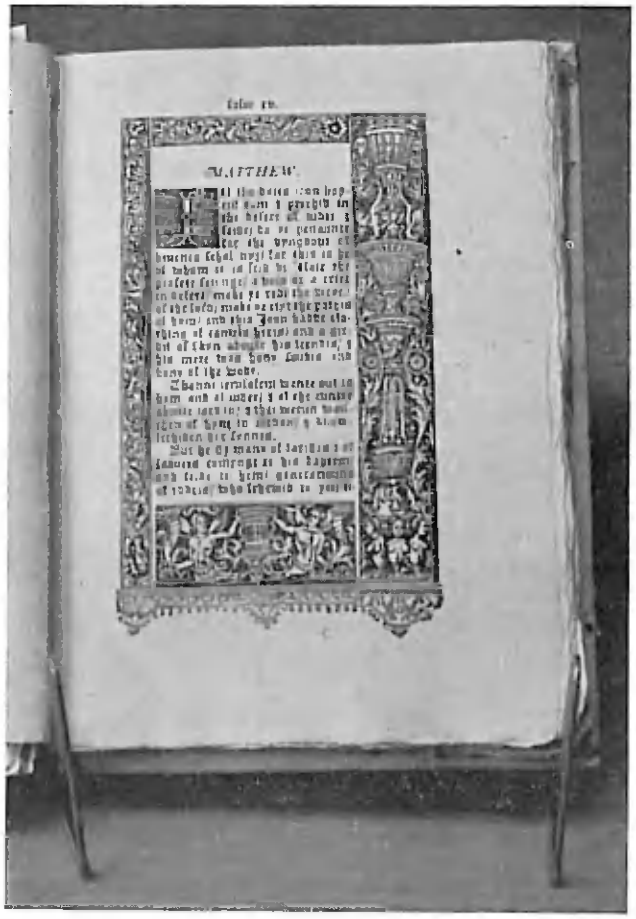
Ancient and Modern

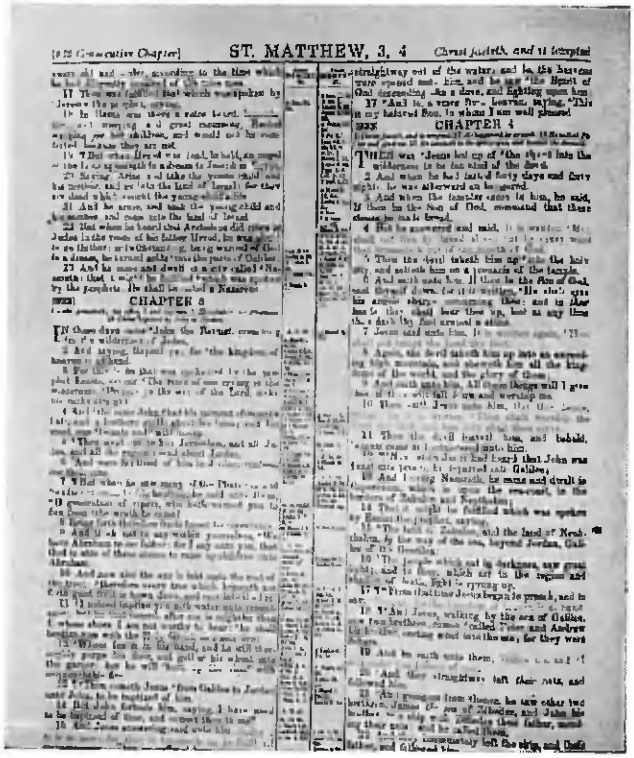
By Walter Klaassen

THOSE OF US WHO have been raised more or less on one particular version of the Bible may not be aware that the version we know and love is only one among a great many that have been produced, served their time well, and have then given place to others. William Klassen discussed the transmission of the text in the preceding issue on pages 59-63. His main concern was with the various manuscripts which have helped us to establish the best possible text for the Bible of today. The concern of this article is to draw the reader's attention to the centuries-long story of the different versions of the Bible that have been used, and that are the ancestors of the King James Version and its modern successor, the Revised Standard Version.

The story begins long before the time of Jesus. Beginning with Jewish exiles in the 8th and 6th centuries B.C. many Jews continued to live away from their Palestinian homeland. Many others joined those forcibly moved, from commercial motives. During the 4th century B.C. the world came under the domination of Greece and in a short time Greek had become the world language. The Jews who lived in Egypt and Babylon and Asia Minor could no longer read Hebrew, and therefore they were unable to read their sacred Scriptures, which in turn meant that they lost their religious heritage.

To meet this need a Greek version of the Hebrew scriptures was produced in the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. which has come to be known as the Septuagint. It helped preserve the faith of many a Jew.





Comparison of Matthew 3 in Wycliffite Version, King James Version 1611, and King James Version 1964. Note changes in spelling and type.

It is interesting to notice that the Septuagint differed markedly from the Hebrew text in some ways. The Greek version of Job, for example, is about 17 percent shorter than the original Hebrew version. Proverbs and Daniel are considerably longer in the Greek, and Esther is over twice as long in the Septuagint. The current critical edition of the Septuagint prepared by Alfred Rahlfs contains two complete texts of Daniel which differ a good deal at some points.

As it turned out the Septuagint became highly important for the Christian church, for most of the New Testament writers, when they quote from the Old Testament, use this Greek version rather than the original Hebrew. It has thus come into the New Testament. Because it was used by the Christians, the Jews repudiated the Septuagint. That other Greek versions of the Old Testament circulated in the early centuries after Christ can be seen from a few surviving fragments and from quotations in early Christian writers.[1]

The other great ancient version, this time including the Old Testament was the Vulgate, which was prepared by the great scholar Jerome at the end of the 4th century A.D. This was the Latin version of the Bible prepared on the basis of the Greek. People were suspicious of it because it departed from the Greek text at some points where the latter did not agree with the Hebrew. Even the great Augustine thought that this procedure cast doubt on the inspiration of the Septuagint.[2] This version, which was revised in the 16th century is still normative for Roman Catholics.

The first version in a Germanic language was the Gothic Bible, produced by Ulfilas, the missionary to the Goths in the middle of the 4th century A.D. This was the forerunner of all the north European versions which were to follow a thousand years later.

Although the Gospels and the Psalms had been translated into Anglo-Saxon, the first English version of the entire Bible appeared in 1382, inspired by John Wycliffe, a professor of theology at Oxford University. The translation was based on the Vulgate and was prepared with the common people in mind. It influenced the translations which appeared in considerable number in the 16th century.

The first English translation during the Reformation was prepared by William Tyndale. He was trained in the classics at Oxford and had a good knowledge of the biblical languages. His work was violently opposed by the church. Many of the copies of his New Testament were hunted down and burned, so that today only two copies of the original 18,000 survive. Tyndale himself was burned at the stake in Antwerp in 1536. His translation, however, was the foundation stone of the great tradition of the English Bible.

Tyndale's translation was followed in 1535 by the Coverdale Version, the Geneva Bible of 1560, which was the Bible of the Pilgrim Fathers and of Shakespeare, and the Bishops' Bible of 1568 which became the basis for the King James Version.

In 1604 King James I of England ordered a new translation of the Bible upon the urging of the Puritans. The purpose was to provide one standard translation that was to be used by all, since at this time several of the above-mentioned Bibles were being used. Groups of scholars in London, Oxford, and Cambridge therefore prepared the new translation which appeared in 1611 and which was to be the English Bible into our own day. Its exalted style and force of utterance made it an incomparable vehicle of the Word of God.

This was not immediately recognized, however. It was sharply criticized by many, and simply ignored by many of the bishops who continued to use the older versions. Forty years passed before it was accepted universally in England, and this was primarily because no other Bibles were printed.

This Bible, which became known as the King James Version, underwent its first revision only four years after its initial appearance, and was revised thereafter in 1629, 1638, 1762, 1769. These versions were concerned mainly with modernization of spelling and the correction of printing errors.

Some people even today appear to think that the English King James Version was at that time the only Bible in a modern language. The fact is that wherever the Reformation spread Bible translation into the language of the people was one of the first concerns of the reformers. Translations into German, the Scandinavian languages, Dutch, Italian, French, Spanish, Polish, and Czech appeared in the 16th century. Some of these were Roman Catholic translations, prepared simply in self-defense against Protestant versions. Through all of these versions men of many tongues heard the voice of God as English-speaking people heard it through the King James Version. If the original text is adequately translated that translation is "inspired" for God can use it to call men to repentance and obedience.

Between 1611 and 1881 no fewer than ten paraphrases and translations of the whole Bible, and 17 of the New Testament alone appeared in English. None of these, however, had any significant effect on the authorized version. The fact that so many appeared, however, particularly towards the end of this period, indicates that the time had come for a major revision of the King James Version. Thus the English Revised Version appeared in 1881 and the American Revised Version in 1901. These versions were called for at this time particularly because of the discovery of more ancient texts than those available to the King James scholars. These versions were, however, never popular because of excessive and wooden literalism.

The wysdome of Solomon.

The first Chapter.

1 How we ought to searche and inquire after God. 2 who be those that finde hym. 5 The holy ghost. 8. 11 we ought to flee from backbiting and murmuring. 12 whereof death commeth. 15 Righteousnesse and vnrighteousnesse.

A 1 LOue righteousnesse ye that be iudges of ỹ earth, consider deepely of the Lorde in goodnesse, and seeke hym in singlenesse of heart:

2 For he wyll be founde of them that tempt hym not, and appeareth vnto such as put no distrust in him.

3 For wicked thoughtes seperate from God, and [his] power when it is * tryed, reproueth the vnwise.

4 For why? wysdome shall not enter into a wicked soule, nor dwell in the body that is subiect vnto sinne.

5 For the holy spirite of discipline fleeth from deceipt, and withdraweth hym selfe from thoughtes that are without vnderstanding, and is declared when wickednesse commeth.

6 For the spirite of wysdome is louing, and will not absolue hym that blasphemeth with his lippes, for God is witnesse of his raynes, and a true beholder of his heart, & an hearer of his tongue.

B 7 For the spirite of the Lorde filleth the rounde compasse of the worlde, and the same that vpholdeth all thinges hath knowledge also of the voyce.

8 Therefore he that speaketh vnrighteous thinges can not be hid, neither shall the iudgement of reproofe let him escape.

9 And why? inquisition shalbe made for the thoughtes of the vngodly, and the sounde of his wordes shall come vnto God, so that his wickednesse shalbe punished.

10 For the eare of ielousie heareth all thinges, & the noyse of the grudginges shall not be hid.

11 Therefore beware of murmuring which is nothing worth, and refraine your tongue from slaunder: For there is no worde so secrete that it shall go for naught, and the mouth that speaketh lyes, slayeth the soule.

12 O seeke not your owne death in the errour of your lyfe, destroy not your selues thorowe the workes of your owne handes:

13 For God hath not made death, neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the liuing: ℂ

14 For he created all thinges that they might haue their being, and the * generations of the worlde were healthfull, and there is no poyson of destruction in them, nor the kyngdome of hell vpon the earth.

15 For righteousnesse is [euerlasting and] immortall: but vnrighteousnesse bringeth death.

16 Neuertheles, the vngodly call * it vnto them both with workes and wordes, and whyle they thinke to haue it their friende, they come to naught, & they haue made an agreement with it, for they are worthy to be of her part.

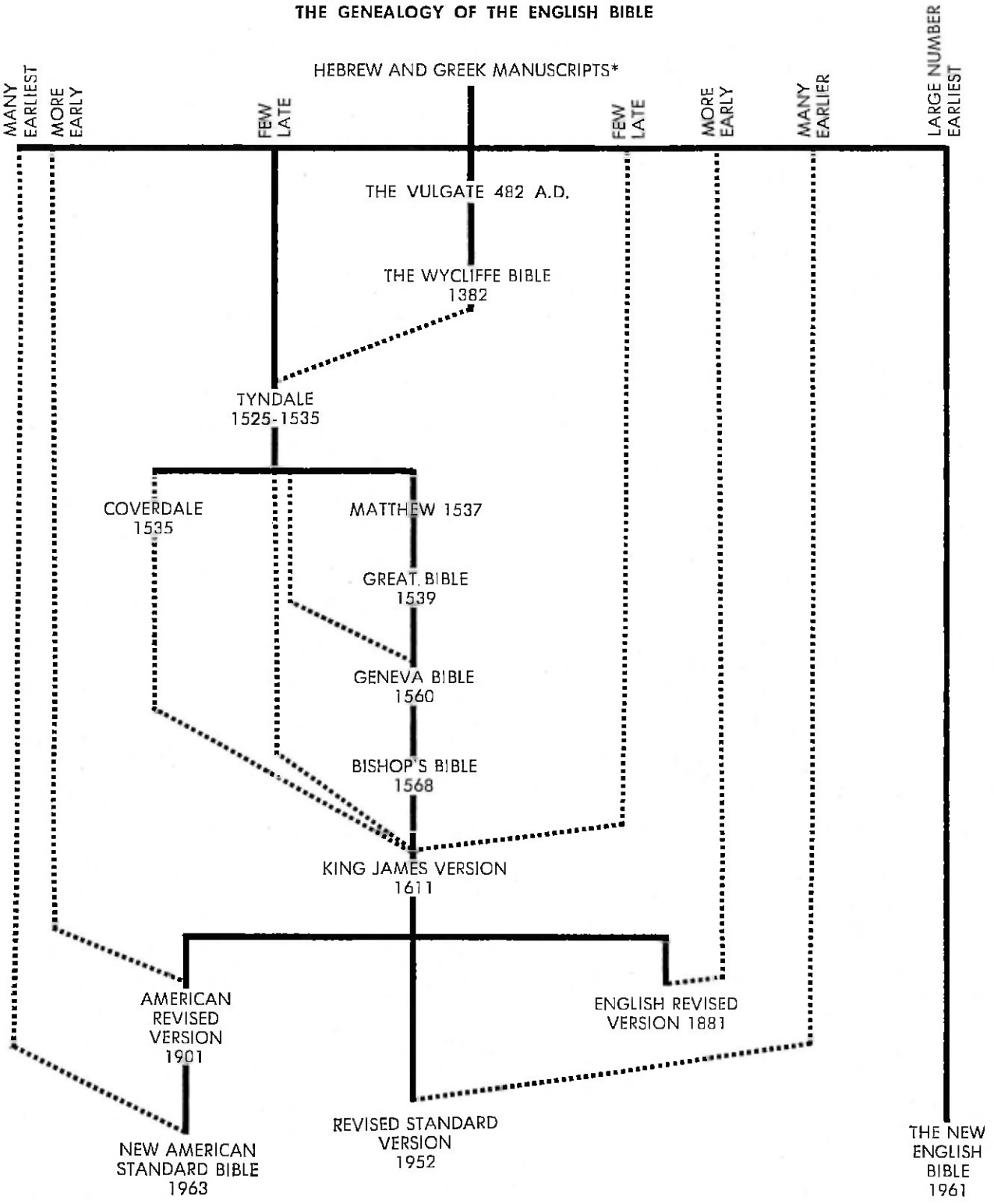
* Or, tempted.

* Or, beginninges.

* Or, to hell, death.

Page from the Bishops' Bible.

THE GENEALOGY OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE



*See William Klassen, "The Transmission of the Bible," *Mennonite Life*, April 1964, 59-63.

Swiss Froschauer Bible of the 16th century found by Herman Landsfeld.

Before the next major revision several other private translations appeared such as that of James Moffatt, Weymouth, Goodspeed, and J. B. Phillips.

In 1929 the first steps were taken in America for another revision of the King James Version which was by then over 300 years old. It had become archaic. Words had changed their meaning, syntax had undergone changes, verb endings and spelling had been modified. The Bible is not a literary monument; it is the Word of God, and therefore it must be allowed to speak in a language people understand. Work on the Revised Standard Version began in 1937. The revisers had even more ancient and more numerous manuscripts to work with than had been available in 1881 and 1901. Thus this revision was closer to the original in both Old and New Testaments than any earlier version. The Revised Standard Version appeared in 1952. It encountered the same kind of blind, emotional, and ignorant hostility as had its predecessor, the King James Version. There is no doubt that it will win its way since it stands in the tradition of Tyndale and the Geneva Bible and the King James Version.

Recently a revision of the New Testament of the American Revised Version of 1901 has been published under the title New American Standard Bible, but it is doubtful it will ever become anything more than a study aid. (See book review.)

The most recent significant event in the history of the English Bible is the appearance of the New Testament of the New English Bible. This is a completely new translation prepared by British scholars, which has departed altogether from the King James Version tradition. It comes in completely contemporary English. It is much too early to make any predictions about its ultimate place in the tradition of the English Bible.

This is only a segment of the great and fascinating story of Bible revision and translation. It is going on today in many places in many languages. God's word is not bound to any particular version; whenever men accurately and faithfully translate the original into the words and idioms of another language another avenue for God's word has been opened.

[1]Bruce Metzger, "Versions, Ancient" in *I.D.B.*, IV, 751-2.
[2]*Ibid.*, 752.

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THE ANABAPTIST VIEW OF THE SCRIPTURES

I

By Henry Poettcker

To MELCHIOR HOFMANN goes the credit of transplanting Anabaptism from southern Europe into northern Germany and the Netherlands. Unfortunately there were those who endeavored to use this movement for their own gain. After Hofmann was imprisoned and thus put out of circulation, a number of questionable individuals came into places of leadership in the North, among them Jan Matthijs and Jan van Leyden. Exploiting the chiliastic aspect of Hofmann's teaching, resorting to spiritualistic interpretation of Scripture, and using the intensified persecution which resulted as the stimulus to whip up enthusiasm for action, they succeeded in transforming a part of the hitherto peaceful Anabaptist movement into an OT "Israel" decidedly militant in character. The numerous prophecies which were proclaimed by the self-styled prophets finally led to the establishment of the "New Jerusalem" at Muenster in 1534-35.[1]

Among those who recognized the unscriptural teachings of this radical group were Obbe and Dirck Philips, and a short while later also Menno Simons. These men, destined to become leaders in the peaceful group of northern Anabaptists, came to the Bible with a basically different presupposition. Hofmann's followers insisted that one might legitimately add to what the Bible gave as the content of God's revelation—in fact, new revelations were periodically coming to the Muensterite prophets. But this the other group could not grant. For them the Scriptures as they knew them were the all-sufficient revelation of God, the indicator of His plan and His will for men. Both Obbe Philips and Menno Simons came to their understanding of the Scriptures through intense spiritual struggles. It was the study of the Scriptures that gave them the answers and that led to their spiritual rebirth. The Scriptures therefore were to be taken seriously and adequately interpreted. And that related closely to the command to proclaim the message. This imperative must be heeded so that the "wandering sheep" might be led into Christ's fold.

Following the defection of Obbe Philips, a fact which proved heart-rending to the others, the leadership passed to Menno Simons. Together with Dirck Philips he gave direction to the peaceful Anabaptists of their area, and the biblical approach of these two may well be taken as normative for the early Dutch Anabaptists.[2]

The Authority of the Bible

Along with the other Reformed groups of the 16th century the northern Anabaptists operated on the principle of "the Scriptures only." Authority was

vested in these Scriptures. Both Dirck and Menno found herein the authority that released them from the bondage of the Roman Catholic Church, from the State Church and also from the revolutionaries and spiritualizers. For Dirck the Scriptures were the "only touchstone and the only plumbline," the "sure, all-sufficient and unwavering foundation of truth."[3] For Menno God's Word "is the truth and His commandments, life eternal,"[4] and even his enemies referred to the high regard which he had toward the Scriptures. With this key (the Scriptures) and the Spirit, God has opened the saving truth and has redeemed man from the power of darkness, leading him into the Kingdom of His dear Son—all to the end that they might love Him and serve Him by publishing abroad His glorious redemption. As a seed, these Scriptures are sown, and these result in redemption, the Christian life, life eternal.[5]

Interpreting the Scriptures

Placing authority in the Word did not in itself solve all the interpretative problems, for these interpretations continued to vary. For the Northern Anabaptists a part of the solution lay in the starting point: they began with the Lord Jesus Christ. The centrality of Christ figures prominently in the problem of understanding. He regenerates men so that they can understand. And He becomes the key to the understanding of the Scriptures.

This centrality of Christ spoke directly to the relationship of the two Testaments. Along with most of the other Anabaptists, those in the North saw the OT as the figure pointing to Christ, containing the promises that find their fulfillment in Him. Because the NT presents the reality of that which is only sign in the OT it takes precedence over the Old. The latter serves several functions: that of preparation (preparing the way for the Gospel), that of promise (pointing to the fulfillment of the OT figures in Christ), and that of inspiration (serving a devotional purpose). To give the true understanding of the OT it must be interpreted spiritually, always coming to terms with Jesus Christ. The text of Scripture must be taken seriously, but one must interpret according to the sense and spirit of Christ.

This sense, naturally, is gleaned from the NT text as it is opened to the hearer by the Holy Spirit. For all practical purposes Spirit and text of Scripture are inextricably tied together. Menno adheres to the text closely to avoid spiritual excesses. Dirck went further than Menno was willing to go. On occasion the latter cautioned Gillis van Aken against the use of allegorical interpretation.[6]

A further comparison of Menno and Dirck brings to light some interesting observations. In many of their statements they are identical. Both appeal to the pattern of the Apostles; both believe that the key for the use of spiritual interpretation and the use of literal application is to be found in Christ's commands and in His example. But Dirck went beyond the usage of the Apostles in spiritualizing the OT, yet believed that their example gave him this right. On occasion he said, ". . . but the Apostolic interpretation is the foundation on which we build. And if we explain some things a little further, nevertheless it is on the same basis."[7] Menno called a halt at that point because he was ever confronted with the vision of Muenster.

A similar problem confronted Menno when the followers of David Joris insisted that the leading of the Spirit is paramount in a Christian's life even to the point where one knows himself to be above the Scriptures—at least, the letter of the Scriptures. This position manifested the same traits that led to the Muenster tragedy, and this Menno could not tolerate since the Word of God had to give way to the mystical prophetism of Joris. Any spiritualistic thrust must be kept in check by the Scriptures. That a man would put his own ideas or "inspirations" higher than the Word of God and the command of Christ was a serious charge. But both Dirck and Menno held that the Holy Spirit must be active to make real what the Bible teaches and proclaims.

From the above it is clear that "obedience to the command of Christ" permeates the approach of both Menno and Dirck. These commands become normative for the believer. Where there is any question about diverse commands (as for e.g. between the OT and NT) the "evangelical" test is applied. Does it breathe the spirit of the NT? Yet in the application of ethical or theological principles there must be a distinction. Certain ones are basic and allow no latitude in their application (e.g., it is the *believers* who are to be baptized, hence infant baptism is ruled out). Others are not so basic and permit of some leeway (e.g. the ban). As time went on Dirck became much more rigid in his total approach and in the building of his ecclesiastical structure than did Menno.

One final comment may be made about the criterion for interpretation. There is just one basic criterion: the centrality of Christ—His Spirit, conduct, Word and example. And the correlative to this is the evangelical life of the believer. He who lives the Gospel has understood the Scriptures.

1This chapter in Reformation history is discussed in detail by C. A. Cornelius, *Geschichte des Muensterischen Aufruhrs* (Leipzig, 1855-60).

2Divisions among the Dutch Anabaptists came early, and with these came shifts in the use of Scripture. Where the deviating views warrant it, attention will be drawn to them; however, this article purposes to be a general survey, not a detailed analysis.

3*B.R.N.*, X, 82, 220, 473.

4*Opera Omnia*, fol. 605b.

5*The Comblete Writings of Menno Simons*, 92, 393 ff., 409 ff. Dirck Philips, *Enchiridion or Handbook*, 25, 184 ff., 301 ff.

6K. Vos, *Menno Simons 1496-1561* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1914), 97.

7*B.R.N.*, X, 284.

Anabaptists frequently bewildered their Roman Catholic interrogators by their knowledge of the Scriptures.

THE ANABAPTIST VIEW OF THE SCRIPTURES

II

By Walter Klaassen

ANABAPTISM BEGAN IN 1525 in Zürich, Switzerland, and spread into what is today southern Germany and Austria. It is with the views of Anabaptists in this geographic area that this article is concerned. The following article deals with the north German and Dutch Anabaptists.

The Swiss, South German and Austrian Anabaptists of the 16th century did not constitute a unity either in organization or in thought. This is reflected in their view of the Scriptures. Four more or less distinct views on the Scriptures are represented among these people. The first view is that of the Swiss Brethren; the other three are associated with the individuals Hans Denck, Hans Hut, and Pilgram Marpeck, respectively, expressed either by themselves, or by others associated with them. In the interest of simplification I shall deal with the subject under the headings *nature, inspiration, interpretation* and *authority.*

The Nature of the Scriptures

With the exception of Hans Denck all the Anabaptists referred to the Bible as God's Word without hesitation. All of them, however, clearly express the view that the Bible is not all there is to the Word of God. The true Word of God is Jesus Christ. "Our faith," wrote Balthasar Hubmaier, "is not built on the church, but on the preached Word of God which is God himself and has become flesh" (71).[1] The Bible is the witness to the Word of God which is Christ and leads men to him. It is the only source of man's knowledge of Christ. "Without the Scriptures," wrote Pilgram Marpeck, "one does not know how, why, and in what manner Christ died, was buried, and rose again" (292). In them the voice of God is heard, and therefore they are utterly indispensable. Because the Bible as it were participates in God's act of making himself known to man, it is legitimately referred to as God's Word. Hans Denck refused to call the Bible God's Word because he believed that doing so would detract from the centrality of Christ. The Bible, he said, is a witness to the Word of God and that if this were always borne in mind it would not so readily become an idol.

All of these Anabaptists were aware that the Bible could become an idol in itself. Externally, they said, it is a book of paper and ink. "Every natural man," wrote a fellow worker of Pilgram Marpeck,

knows full well that the letters with which the Holy Scriptures are written are, without the true understanding and knowledge, in themselves merely dead

ink and paper, as in other worldly writings. But according to the true understanding, sense and meaning such New Testament Scripture is not dead ink nor letter (298).

The Bible is an earthly product which can be called the Word of God only because the Holy Spirit of God works through it to bring men to obedience to Christ.

Inspiration

The question about the inspiration of the Scriptures is rarely raised as such by the Anabaptists since it was generally accepted by Protestants and Catholics alike. However they did speak about it and had a distinctive conviction about the relationship of the Spirit to the Scriptures that is worth taking note of in our day. They did not believe as some people today do that the Scriptures were at the beginning infused with a divine quality which they have retained since then and which adheres to each word and letter, and that therefore the Scriptures speak for themselves. They believed that the Bible, which in itself is a book like other books, is used by God anew in each generation to speak to men. As a man reads the book God's Spirit leads him to understand, repent, and obey. The emphasis is on God's act in the present rather than on some act in the past. The evidence for the present hearing of God's voice through the Scriptures is overwhelming in all segments of Anabaptism. (Pages 97-117, 163-171, 216-233, 288-326 of the dissertation referred to bring the evidence together.) The Holy Spirit originally spoke to the writers of Scripture, wrote Marpeck, and when the Scriptures are heard, it is the voice of that same Spirit (293). But the voice is recognized only by those who have faith. Unbelievers are left with a mere book (299).

Interpretation

The question of Anabaptist interpretation has already been ably dealt with in a broad way by Alvin Beachy in the preceding issue, pages 86-89. It is necessary, however, briefly to speak to the question in the context of the whole view of the Scriptures as held by the Anabaptists.

The Anabaptists never said that the Bible must be believed simply because it was the Bible. It must be taken seriously because it tells us that God has revealed himself in a final way through Jesus Christ. Now the Bible as a whole speaks of God's revelation, beginning with Adam and continuing with Abraham, Moses, and the prophets. But the supreme revelation came when God's word became a man. Here God is most clearly seen. Consequently Jesus Christ becomes the norm for the interpretation of the Bible.

At the Berne debate this Anabaptist conviction emerged clearly when the Reformed clergy insisted that the Bible's authority was uniform throughout Old and New Testaments. The Swiss Brethren said that the Old Testament was normative for the Christian only where it did not conflict with "Christ's doctrine and life" (95-6). "Read mostly in the New Testament," wrote Leonard Schiemer, martyr, to his congregation in Austria. "You must know that God spoke through Moses and the prophets in an obscure way, but when Christ Himself came, He and His apostles spoke everything plainly with a clear understanding" (252). Hans Denck also clearly taught this. He writes:

Thus it is with the teaching and works of Moses, David, and all the patriarchs, however good they may be. Where Love, that is Jesus, has supplanted them with something better, we must, for this reason, regard them as evil (178).

The principle of interpretation that Scripture interprets Scripture was held by Balthasar Hubmaier and Pilgram Marpeck. Both said that when a passage is not clear in itself other passages on the same subject should be studied with it, for by itself it may lead to error. Together with other passages it will become clear (116, 355). A further variation on this is found in Marpeck when he says that "it is not legitimate to take . . . a saying out of the middle of a chapter and to interpret it wrongly as one pleases without regard for what goes before or what follows" (355). These men did not regard an isolated passage as necessarily authoritative in itself, but emphasized the total meaning and sense of Scripture.

Finally all Anabaptists stood firmly on the conviction that all human interpretive efforts must fail unless God's Spirit leads man's mind and heart to understand. One quotation from each of the four Anabaptist variations discussed in this article will be sufficient to make the point clear.

Swiss Brethren:

He is not troubled about the doctors [interrogators], . . . but he clings alone to the teaching of Christ, who says that we must all be taught of Him, and he hopes that this conviction of his is from God, the Holy Spirit (104; taken directly from the 16th century minutes of the interrogation of Julius Lober).

Hans Denck:

Whoso does not have the Spirit and thinks to find Him in Scripture, he seeks for light and finds darkness, seeks life and finds only death, not only in the Old Testament but also in the New. That is why the most learned always take the greatest offence at the truth, for they think that their understanding will not fail them (166).

Hans Hut:

Therefore ought and must the teaching of Christ be guided only by the Holy Spirit, without any mixture of human understanding and desire. . . . As it was in

An Anabaptist Bible study meeting in a boat to escape detection.

the days of old it must still be, that men speak not of themselves but let the Holy Spirit speak and teach in them or through them. . . . It must be so still if the word is to bring forth fruit (233; words by Peter Rideman).

Pilgram Marpeck:

. . . where the Holy Spirit, the true teacher, does not precede in all knowledge of Christ, everything is misused and wrong where one attempts to exhort where he himself has not learned, or to chastise where there is no conviction of sin (318).

Authority

In the light of the foregoing, how did these Anabaptists view the authority of the Bible? They accepted the Reformation principle that the Scriptures only could be the sole authority for the church. This was so because in the Bible were laid down the convictions of the earliest Christians about Jesus and who he was. A written document is not subject to change as unwritten tradition is. But whereas for Luther, and after 1525 to some degree for Zwingli as well, this principle was interpreted in a limited sense as applying to man's personal relationship to God and not to his relationships in society at large, the Anabaptists insisted that the principle was basic to man's personal relationship to God (justification by faith), his place in the believing community (baptism, Lord's Supper, discipline), and for his relationship to the unbelieving world (discipleship, witness). Through the Bible, wrote Pilgram Marpeck, God's authority comes to man in visible, clear, unmistakable form. The Scriptures have the same authority that Jesus and the apostles would have were they still with us. Because the Bible is the authority of God himself it must be obeyed (345-6), and since it speaks to all of man's life and behavior careful attention must be given to the words in which it comes. Anabaptists have often been charged with being literalists. It is true that, along with Lutheran and reformed Christians, they were at times guilty of the charge. But literalism cannot be said to characterize their attitude to the Bible. When at the great public debate in Berne in 1538 the brethren were charged with literalism one of them replied that the word of Jesus is

no dead letter, but that which makes alive those who trust in it and are comforted and taught by it. . . . We know that this is right, and can have comfort of no other; we will seek its aid and use it as Christ has directed. . . . If anyone can suggest a better way, let him do it (74).

Although Hans Denck usually avoided speaking about "the letter" as the Swiss Brethren did, in essence he agreed with them. He who is a learner of Christ, wrote Denck, may do nothing without permission, and may not neglect the Master's commandments which are given in the letter as a guide and help to the believer. The fulfillment of Christ's commands marks a person as a disciple (180-181).

That this view of the importance of the words of Jesus was also found in the Hans Hut group is clear from the following words of Hans Schlaffer, martyr: In all things one must stay in the pure, clear teaching of Christ, in which teaching not one tittle or jot, that is the smallest letter, can be changed, otherwise everything becomes perverted (257).

This insistence on taking careful account of the very words of Scripture reflected their concern for obedience to Christ the Lord. It was not a superstitious awe of the words as though they were in themselves holy or sacred. Any passage, any Word, was authoritative simply because it was related to Christ and thus part of the revelation of God's will for men. This was all the more important since the Bible was the only objective source of authority available to Christians.

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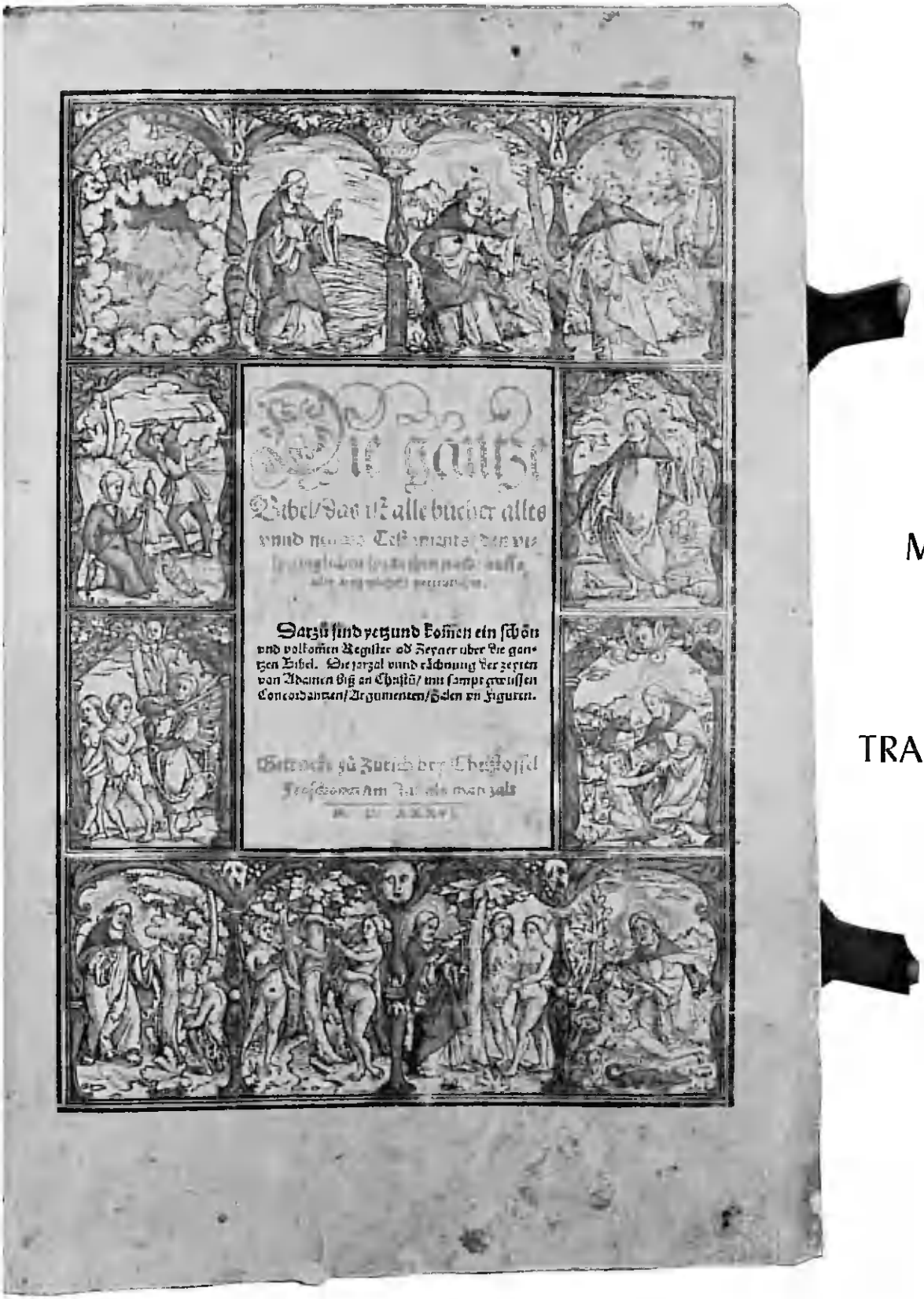
[1]All page numbers refer to the 1960, typewritten Oxford dissertation of the author, *Word Spirit, and Scripture in Early Anabaptist Thought*. Copy in Bethel College Historical Library.

It should be clear to all from these two studies that all Anabaptists held a vigorous, demanding, and dynamic view of the Scriptures, a view which their descendants can still hold with a good conscience. It was a view that led them into the world rather than out of it, witnessing to the gospel of the transforming power of God's love.



Title page of Froschauer Bible published in 1536. Original in Bethel College Historical Library.

MENNONITE BIBLES AND BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

By Walter Klaassen

MENNONITES HAVE THROUGH the centuries for the most part used the standard translations and versions of the Bible. The Dutch Mennonites have used the *Statenvertaling,* the German-speaking Luther's translation, and English-speaking Mennonites the King James Version. There were, however, two versions, one Swiss and the other Dutch, which can be described as Mennonite Bibles, although neither of them was a Mennonite translation.

The first is the Froschauer Bible, so-called because it was published by Christoph Froschauer, Zürich printer and publisher. The version was that prepared by Zwingli and his aides between 1524 and 1529 on the basis of Luther's work. It differed from Luther mainly in word order and vocabulary since the German spoken in Zürich differed considerably from the German of Luther's translation. For some reason, perhaps the familiarity of the dialect, the Swiss Brethren preferred this original version to others and continued to use it long after it went out of use in the Swiss Reformed Church. From 1588 onwards reprints were made in Basel and elsewhere especially for Anabaptists. A Froschauer New Testament was reprinted in America in 1787 for Mennonites in Pennsylvania.

The second is the Biestkens Bible, again called by the name of its printer, Nikolaes Biestkens of Emden and member of the Mennonite congregation there. This Bible was a Dutch version printed especially by Biestkens for the members of his brotherhood in 1560. The basis for this version appears to have been a Low German version done by Jacobus van Liesveldt, and published in Antwerp in 1526. Mennonites continued to use this Bible in spite of the fact that an official Dutch translation, approved by the Reformed Synod, had been published in 1556.

The Biestkens Bible went through as many as one hundred printings at Amsterdam and elsewhere.

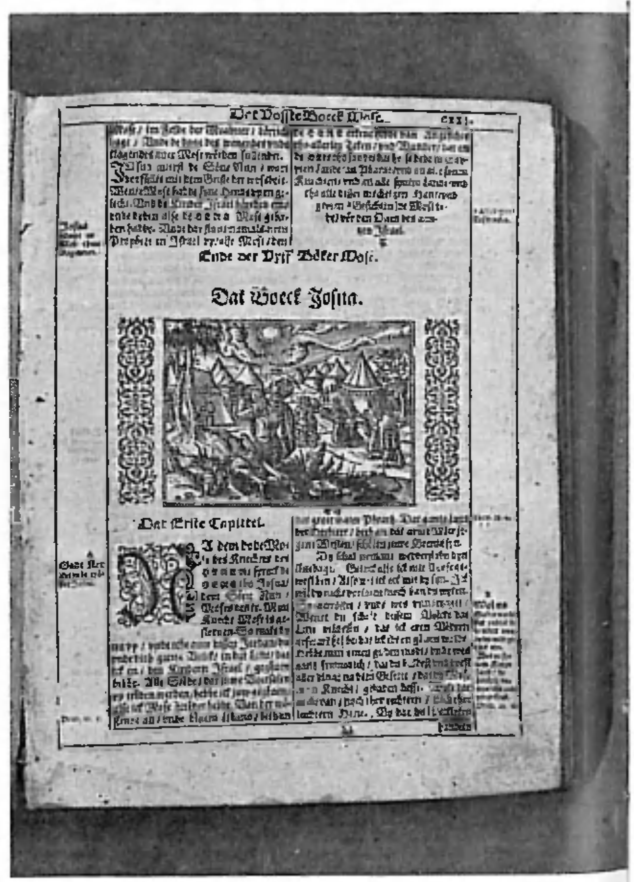
It was published again by the Dutch emigres in West Prussia near Danzig, some copies of the Bible finding their way to Russia in the 18th century and thence to America in the 19th. In some congregations in Holland it continued to be used into the 19th century, but has since been replaced completely by the more accurate *Statenvertaling.*

Mennonites have from the beginning insisted that they were more biblical than some other Christians but they have done relatively little in a practical way to prove this contention. Mennonites have produced no great biblical scholars to date, and, as can be seen from the following notes, can show only isolated cases of solid achievement in the biblical field in the course of 440 years. Such achievement as there has been should, however, be recognized.

Three outstanding efforts at Bible translation by Mennonites deserve attention, connected with the names of Hans Denck, Pieter Jansz, and Rodolphe Petter.

Specimen page of Froschauer Bible 1536.

Specimen page from Low German Bible printed in 1587. Copy in Bethel College Historical Library.



Das erst büch Mose. XXVII

folhen hatt / vnnd fürtend jn ins land Canaan/vnd begrübend jn in der zwifachē hüle des ackers / die Abraham erkaufft hatt mit dē acker zur erbbegrebnuß von Ephron dem Hethiter gegen Mamre. Also zoch Joseph wider in Egypten mit seinen brüderen vnd mit allen die mit jm hinauf zogen warend/seinen vatter zebegraben / als sy jn begraben hattend.

C Die brüder aber Josephs forchtend sich do jr vatter gestorben was/vnd sprachend: Joseph möcht vns gram sein / vnd vergeltē alle boßheit die wir an jm thon habēd. Darumb hiessend sy jm sagē: Dein vatter befalch vor seinem tod / vnnd sprach: Also söllend jr Joseph sagen: Lieber vergib deinen brüderen die missethat vnd jr sünd / dz sy so übel an dir thon habēd. Lieber so vergib nun diß missethat vns den dieneren des Gottes deines vatters. Aber Joseph weynet do sy sölichs mit jm redtend.

Vnd seine brüder giengend hin vnd fielend vor jm nider vnd sprachend: Sihe hie sind wir dine knecht. Joseph sprach zů jnen: Förchtend euch nit. Dann ich bin vnd Gott. Jr gedachtend böses über mich / aber Gott hat es zů gůtem gewendet/ das er thett wie es yetz am tag ist zeerhalten vil volcks. So förchtend euch nun nit / ich wil euch versorgen vnd euwere kinder. Vnnd er tröstet sy/ vnd redt freüntlich mit jnen.

D Also wonet Joseph in Egyptē mit sines vatters huß/ vnd läbt hundert vñ zähē jar/ vñ sach Ephraims kind biß ins dritt glid: desselbē glychē die kind Machirs Manasses sun gebarend auch kind vff Josephs schoß.

Vnd Joseph sprach zů seinen brůderen: Ich stirb/ vnd Gott wirt euch heimsůchē/ vnd auß disem land füren in das land / das er Abraham Isaac vnd Jacob geschworen hat. Darumñ nam er einen eyd von den kinderen Israels/vnd sprach: Wenn euch Gott heimsůchen wirt/ so fürend mein gebein võ hinnen. Also starb Joseph/ do er was hundert vnd zähen jar alt/ vnnd sy salbetend jn vnd legtend jn in ein laden in Egypten.

End deß ersten bůchs Mose.

Exodus/Das ander bůch Mose.

Das erst Capitel.

A Ds sind die nāmen der kinder Israels die mit Jacob in Egyptē kamend/ ein yetlicher kam mit seinē huß/ Ruben Simeō Leui Juda/ Isaschar Sebulon BenJamin Dan Nephthali Gad vñ Aser. Vnd aller seelen die auß den lenden Jacobs kommen warend / deren warend sibenzig. Joseph aber was vorhin in Egypten. Do nun Joseph gestorben was vnd alle seine brůder / vnd alle die zů der zeyt geläbt hattend/ wůchsend die kinder Israels vnnd wimmletend / vnnd meeretend sich / vnd wurdend seer mächtig / dz jr das land voll ward.

B Do kam ein neüwer künig über Egyptē der wußt nichts von Joseph/ vnd sprach zů seinem volck: Sihe / des volcks der kinder Israels ist vil/vnd sind mächtiger dañ wir: Wolauf/ lassend vns weyßlich mit jnē vmbgon/das jren nit so vil werdind. Dann wo sich ein krieg vnd vns erhůbe / möchtend sy sich auch zů vnseren feynden schlahen / vnnd vns überwinden/vnd zů dem land vßziehē.

Vnnd er satzt Fronvögt über sy / die sy mit lästen peynigetind: (Dañ man buwet

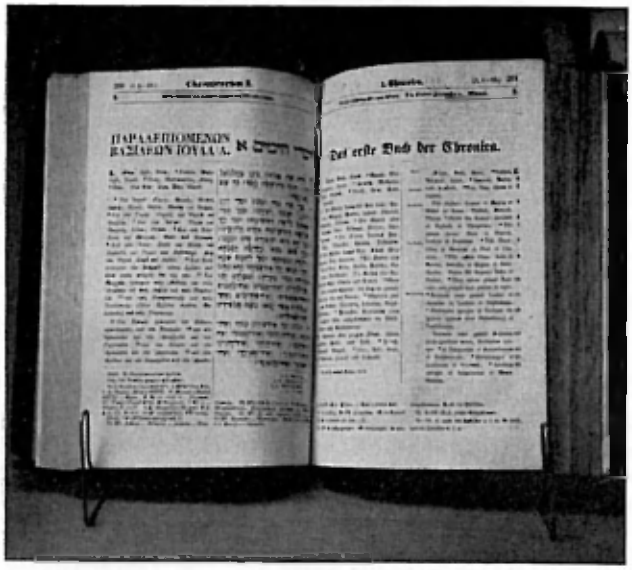
D iij

From the original manuscript of Rodolphe Petter's Cheyenne grammar.

Hans Denck (1500-1527) was one of the best-educated Anabaptist leaders in the 16th century. In the course of his university years he acquired a good knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. This enabled him to assist Ludwig Hätzer in translating the Old Testament prophets into German. The work was begun towards the end of 1526 when Hätzer and Denck were both in Strassburg, and completed in 1527 in Worms. The translation was a good one, and according to the judgment of one 20th century expert on Luther's Bible translation, in some instances an improvement on Luther's own German style as seen in his first New Testament.[1] Luther, who had not yet translated the prophets at this time, complimented the zeal and workmanship of Hätzer and Denck, and was stimulated by the appearance of their translation to complete his own work.

The work first appeared on April 13, 1527 and within four years it was reprinted eleven times. It was used extensively during the years 1527-1532 because it was the only Reformation translation in existence. As soon as the Lutheran and the Swiss translations appeared, however, the "Worms Prophets" were totally rejected, never to experience a renaissance. The reason for this total rejection, writes Gerhard Goeters, is not because the translation was philologically deficient, but because both Hätzer and Denck belonged to the Anabaptist movement and held theological views that diverged from those of Luther and Zwingli.[2] And yet, says Goeters, it must be admitted that this translation influenced both the Lutheran and Zwinglian translations in that it was for them the main text next to the originals. More cannot be claimed.[3]

Polyglot Bible used by Dr. Rodolphe Petter in translating the Bible into Cheyenne. Contains the Greek, Hebrew, German, and Latin texts.



The next significant effort in Mennonite Bible translation took place 350 years later. Pieter Jansz (1820-1904), the first missionary of the Dutch Mennonite Missionary Association, was sent to the mission in Java in 1851. After thirty years of hard evangelistic work he resigned due to ill health and entered the services of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which commissioned him to translate the Bible into Javanese. The New Testament appeared in 1888 and the Old in 1892. He had done much basic work in his two-volume Dutch-Javanese and Javanese-Dutch dictionary. His literary efforts won for Jansz the Order of the Knight of the Dutch Lion from the Netherlands government.

The third outstanding Mennonite Bible translator was Rodolphe Charles Petter (1865-1947). Petter received vigorous linguistic training in the Basel Missionsschule, and having become acquainted with American Mennonite missions among the Cheyenne Indians, became a missionary under the General Conference. He began his work at Cantonment, Oklahoma, in 1891. In 1916 he took over the Cheyenne mission at Lame Deer, Montana, where he stayed until his death.

-nowosanettaite — No doubt its so.

7. Attributitive Mode.

This mode is extensively used to express anything heard said, or attributed. The German foll. renders the meaning of this attributive mode: [illegible]

[illegible] evozanesz.

1. The attributive suff. for the intransitive and mediate state and for reflective and Passive Voice are the following:

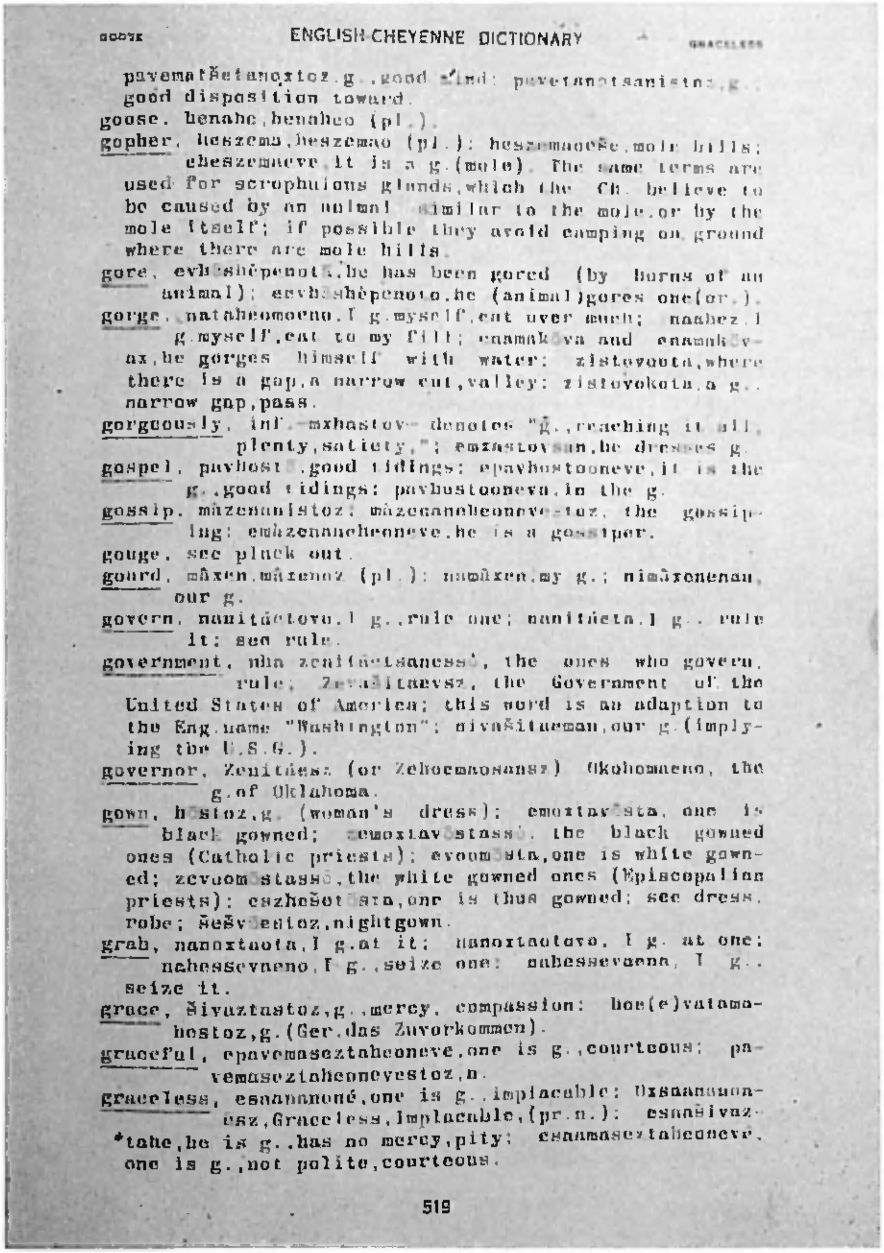
Ich soll — -emåsz
Du sollst (2d. pers. plur.) — "
Er soll — -esz
Wir sollen — -hongnösz
Ihr sollt — "
Sie sollen — -sesto

In the third person plur. the final -o is dropped and replaced by -sesto.

a) When the verbal forms mentioned above incorporate or simply an acc. obj. suff. then the attr. suff. are the following:

1st pers. sing. esz and plur. sesto instead of nothing
2d " " " " " " " " " " " "
3d " " " " " " " " " "
1st " plur. (novesz " " (novsesto — nothing differ.
2nd " " (novösz " " (novsesto " "
3d " " (novösz " " (novsesto " "

Whenever -ne- -mo- -ho- -he- are infixed these above suff. are used.



GOOSE ENGLISH-CHEYENNE DICTIONARY GRACELESS

pavematšetanoxtoz.g.,good mind; pavetanotsanistoz,g., good disposition toward.

goose, henahe,henaheo (pl.).

gopher, heszema,heszemao (pl.): heszemaoeše,mole hills; eheszemaeve,it is a g.(mole). The same terms are used for scrophulous glands,which the Ch. believe to be caused by an animal similar to the mole,or by the mole itself; if possible they avoid camping on ground where there are mole hills.

gore, evhoshèpenot.,he has been gored (by horns of an animal); eevhoshèpenoto,he (animal)gores one(or.).

gorge, natahemomeno,I g.myself,eat over much; naahez,I g.myself,eat to my fill; enamakova and enamakovax,he gorges himself with water; zistovoota,where there is a gap,a narrow cut,valley; zistovokota,a g., narrow gap,pass.

gorgeously, inf.-mxhastov- denotes "g.,reaching it all, plenty,satiety,"; emxastovsan,he dresses g.

gospel, pavhost.,good tidings; epavhostooneve,it is the g.,good tidings; pavhostooneva,in the g.

gossip, mazenanistoz; mazenanoheoneve-stoz, the gossiping; emazenanoheoneve,he is a gossiper.

gouge, see pluck out.

gourd, mãxen,mãxenoz (pl.): namãxen,my g.; nimãxenenan, our g.

govern, nanitãetovo,I g.,rule one; nanitãeta,I g., rule it; see rule.

government, nha zenitãetsanessè, the ones who govern, rule; Zevašitaevsz, the Government of the United States of America; this word is an adaption to the Eng.name "Washington"; nivašitaeman,our g.(implying the U.S.G.).

governor, Zenitãesz (or Zehoemaosansz) Okohomaeno, the g.of Oklahoma.

gown, hestoz,g. (woman's dress); emoxtavosta, one is black gowned; zemoxtavostassè, the black gowned ones (Catholic priests); evoomosta,one is white gowned; zevoomostassè,the white gowned ones (Episcopalian priests): eszhešotosta,one is thus gowned; see dress, robe; Šešvoestoz,nightgown.

grab, nanoxtaota,I g.at it; nanoxtaotovo, I g. at one; nahessevneno,I g.,seize one; nahessevaena, I g., seize it.

grace, Šivaztastoz,g.,mercy, compassion; hoe(e)vatamahostoz,g.(Ger.das Zuvorkommen).

graceful, epavemaseztaheoneve,one is g.,courteous; pavemaseztaheonevestoz,n.

graceless, esaananoné,one is g.,implacable; Oxsaananoesz,Graceless,Implacable,(pr.n.); esaašivaztahe,he is g.,has no mercy,pity; esaamaseztaheoneve, one is g.,not polite,courteous.

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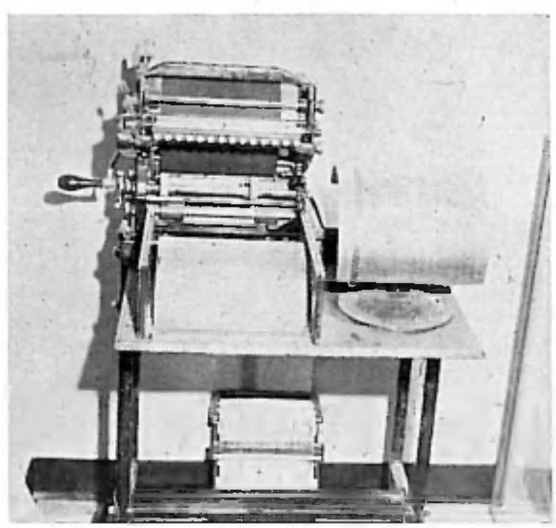
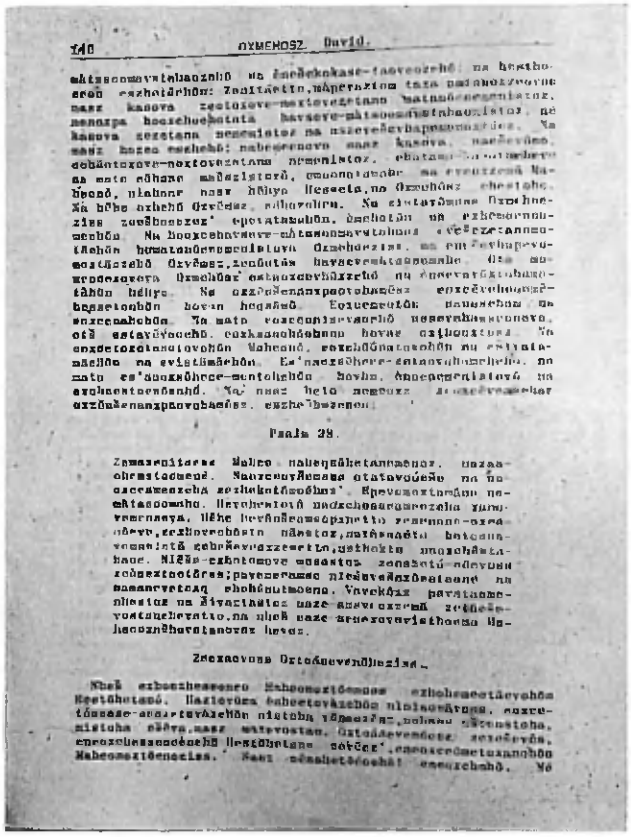
Specimen page of Rodolphe Petter's English-Cheyenne Dictionary.

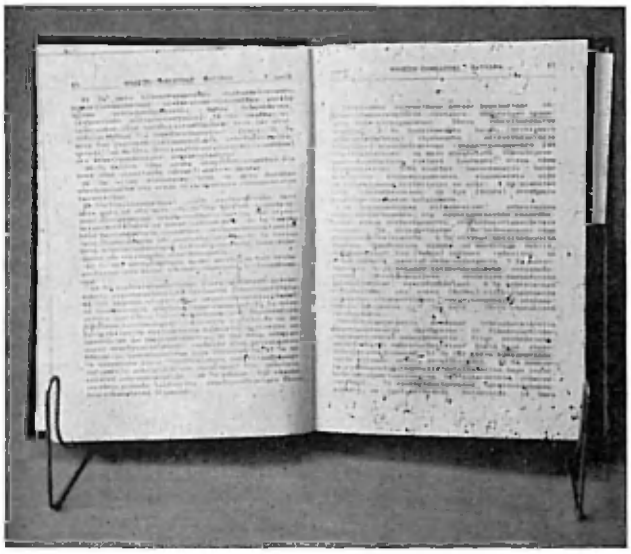
Gammeter Multigraph on which Petter printed his dictionary and the Old and New Testaments.





Psalm 23.

Specimen page of Rodolphe Petter's Old Testament translation.



Rodolphe Petter's Cheyenne New Testament.

Petter's translation work was preceded in the years 1901-1902 in the writing of a Cheyenne Grammar. For years it was circulated in the mission in manuscript form and was finally published posthumously in 1952. While working on the grammar Petter and his wife were also busy from 1900 onwards in the preparation of a Cheyenne-English dictionary. The main work was done in the years 1913-1915. The book turned out to be a volume of 1126 pages. It was printed on the Gammeter Multigraph for which each line of type had to be set by hand, and each page turned out manually. It is no wonder that only 100 copies were produced.

Although some translation work was done from the beginning, it was not until the basic linguistic work was done that Petter proceeded to extensive translation of the Scriptures. In 1926 major portions of the Old Testament appeared in print, and the entire New Testament in 1934. The American Bible Society encouraged and supported the publishing of the New Testament.

The work of translation was, as Petter himself tells us in the introduction to both volumes, done on the basis of the original texts of Hebrew and Greek. He used all the scholarly tools available to him, drawing on the most recent discoveries that shed light on the text, especially of the New Testament. He diligently compared his work with a variety of translations and versions in English, French, and German, as well as using commentaries by Calvin, Godet, Barth, and others. All of his biblical translation was printed on the Multigraph by hand.

Dr. S. K. Mosiman, a close associate and friend of Rodolphe Petter, said at the session of the General Conference in Perkasie Park, "If this man belonged to any other denomination they would hang all the scholastic mantles in the category around his neck." Certainly men have been honored for far lesser achievements. Dr. Petter himself would have regarded as his greatest reward the fact that the Word of God can even now be read and understood by the Cheyenne Indians in their own language.

A modern Mennonite who will without doubt make a notable contribution in this area is Jacob Loewen, contributor of an article in this issue. His extensive linguistic and anthropological training suit him uniquely for his task.

Although Mennonite efforts in Bible translation have been comparatively small, the work has been worthwhile if even a few men and women have responded to the gospel through such efforts.

1*Hans Denck Schriften* 1. Teil: Bibliographie, ed. George Baring, Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1955, p. 33.

2J. F. Gerhard Goeters, *Ludwig Haetzer*, Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1957, p. 102.

3*Ibid.*, p. 104.

THE BIBLE ON THE MISSION FIELD

By Jacob A. Loewen

ALL OF US TEND to accept as axiomatic that the missionary and the Bible are inseparable. The Bible is more or less synonymous with the missionary's message and mission. Without it the missionary loses his reason to be.

All too often we think of it as a "black" book with a fancy leather cover. But what about those mimeographed pages by which the missionary brings his earliest translation attempts to the people? Can they also claim to be the Word of God? Translation of the scriptures is an important aspect of mission, but only very few people ever stop to consider all that is involved when the missionary pioneer begins to translate the Bible—God's Word—into the language of an aboriginal people. To undertake Bible translation is not only a difficult task, it is fraught with awesome responsibility; for on its success or failure depends the eternal destiny of men.

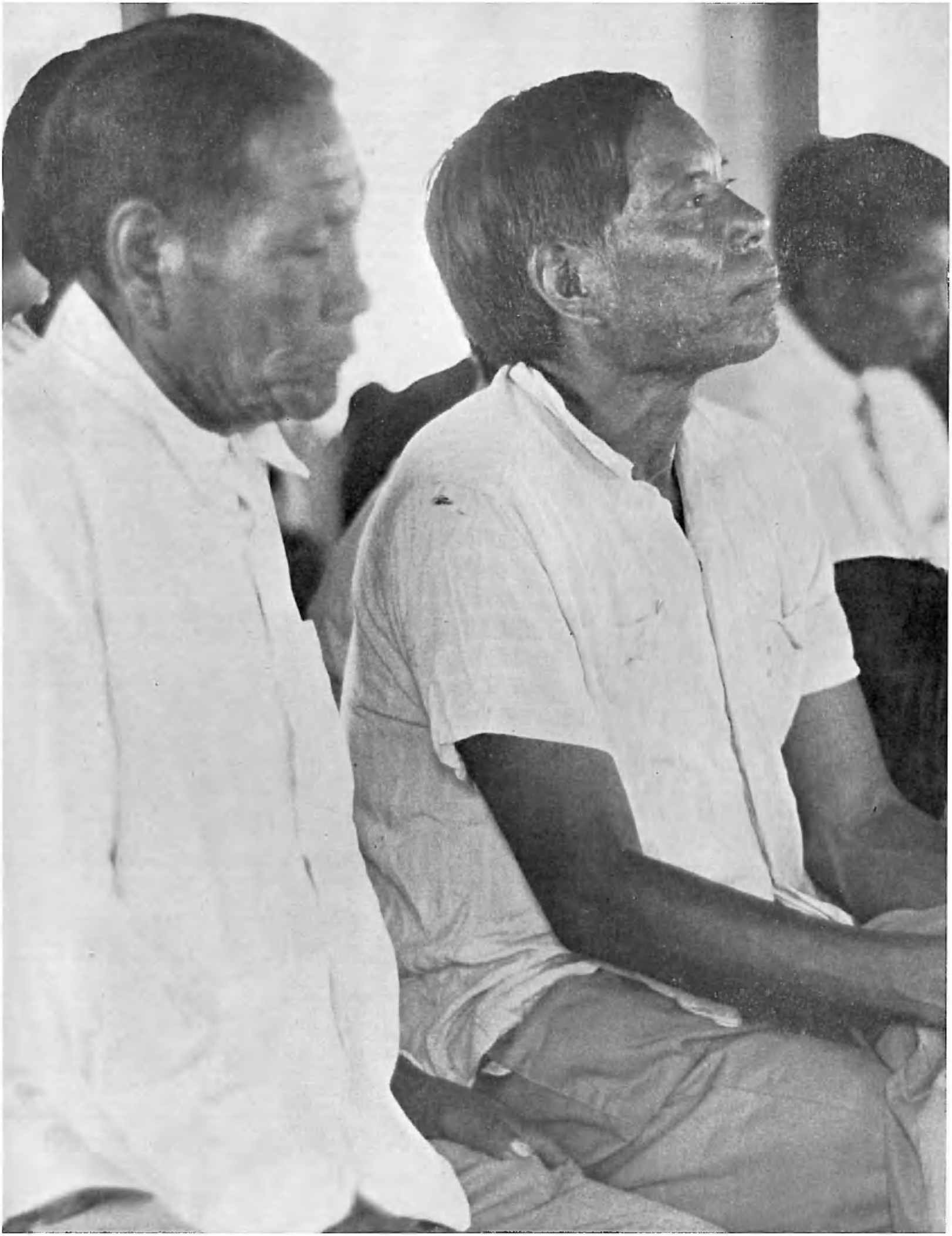
Since 1912 when the British and Foreign Bible Society published a number of books of the Bible in the language of the Lengua, a tribe of Indians living close to the Mennonite colonies in the Chaco of Paraguay, they supposedly have had the Word of God. In actual fact they had a "black" book, not the *Word;* for it did not "speak to them." And why did this "Bible" not speak to them? Was and is not God's Word "quick and powerful as a two-edged sword"? It was supposed to be, but the limitations in the missionary translator's knowledge of the Lengua language and culture had robbed this book of the essence of "the power of God." Before you cry: "Shame," let me hasten to underscore that this situation is by no means unique; it can be duplicated in many parts of the world. And only in recent years as linguistics and anthropology have been brought to bear on the work of translating the scriptures have we begun to understand something of the magnitude of the problems and the depth of the pitfalls that the task involves.

In this paper we want to highlight by examples several of the kinds of problems the missionary translator is bound to encounter in his attempt to reproduce the message of the Bible in the language of a people who come from a cultural and intellectual background so very different from our own Indo-European heritage in which the Bible was born and in which we personally have come to know it.

Differing Worldviews

As the *first* of these problems we mention the conflicts in the unspoken premises of differing worldviews. By this we mean (a) that both the missionary and the aboriginal think, speak, and act on the basis of certain fundamental concepts about the universe and man; (b) that these basic assumptions may not only differ very radically from each other, but that they may also be quite difficult to transform into each other's categories, even when the latter are overtly stated; and (c) that neither the missionary nor the aboriginal is actually fully aware of the extent to which this unspoken worldview colors, shapes, and limits his mental, linguistic, and even overt behavior. If the translator

Chulupi Indians in Filadelfia, Paraguay, listening to the reading of the Scriptures in their own language.



does not become aware of these differences, serious mistranslation is bound to result. If we return briefly to the Lengua New Testament, we find that just such a conflict of worldview was part of the problem that was undermining its effectiveness as the Word of God.

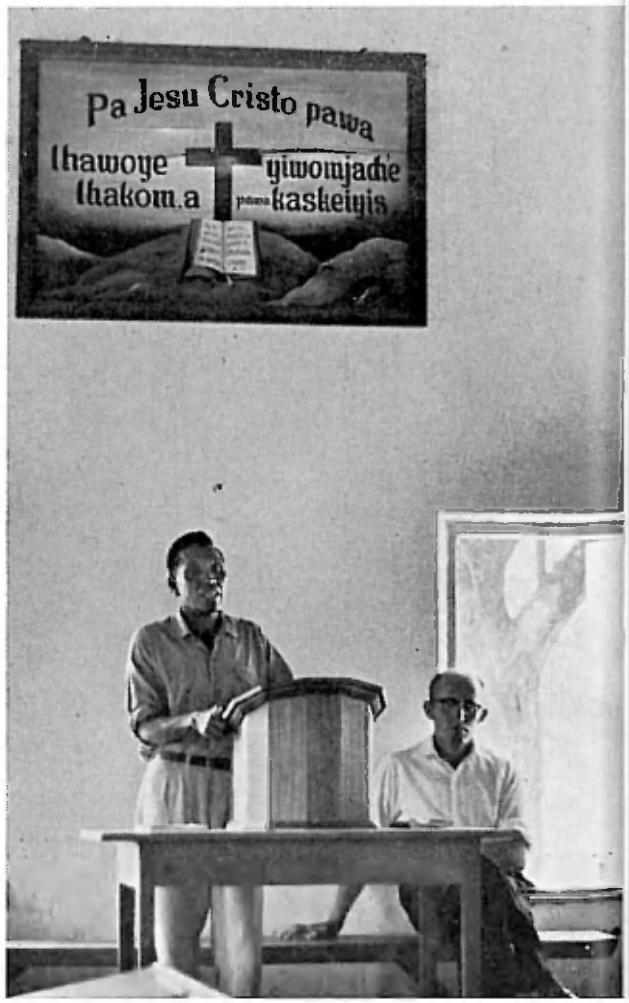
The Bible speaks of man having a soul. He has it during life, and it survives him after his death. The Lengua however "know" that man has several kinds of souls. They are most concerned about the *hangauc*, which does designate a *soul*, but not the soul of a living person (which is called *vanmongcama*) but rather the soul of the dead. As stated, the Lengua are not afraid of the soul-of-the-living, but they live in dread fear of the soul-of-the-dead. Thus when *hanguac* was used to designate the souls Christ came to save, it made the gospel a message for the dead, and not for the living. Today missionaries, Mennonite, Anglican, and New Tribes', are cooperating and are revising the translation of the New Testament to correct this and other problems in order to truly make the Bible, God's Word in the Lengua's own language.

As an example of such a differing worldview and the difference in the reaction between national and missionary consider the following account of a common bushfire hunt in Africa. In this hunt all the men and most of the children and young people take part. They form a big circle around an area and light the grass in front of them. Then driving the fire toward the center, they decrease the circle intending to finally trap the animals and kill them. But on this day it is unsuccessful. The missionary says to himself: "I could have told them so. There was a very heavy thunderstorm that passed through the area last night, and all the animals retreated before the storm; so there just weren't any animals there." The "pagan" natives went home and beat their wives. Why? Because they were bad tempered on account of the hunting failure? Not really. According to their worldview, they "knew" that for a successful hunt certain things must be done by the hunters. These they had performed faithfully. They also "knew" that there are other taboos which the wives at home must keep if the hunt is to be successful. These taboos involve the spirits of the previously killed hunting prey which they "knew" were lying asleep around the hunter's house. Should a wife talk loudly, or sweep on the day of the hunt, she would awaken these sleeping spirits who would then learn of the hunter's intent and would go and warn the animals in the circle. Once warned the animals would change into their spirit forms and jump out of the circle and thus escape the hunters. Now since the men had faithfully done their part and yet killed no animals, they "knew" that the wives were at fault and for this reason they beat them. But the national Christians knew the missionary would not understand if they beat their wives, so they were walking around wringing their hands and saying: "Sometimes one gets the feeling that God doesn't have any stomach."

The missionary had a naturalistic explanation because he believed in a distinct separation between the physical and the metaphysical, the material and the spiritual. For the aboriginal these are but differing manifestations of the same realities, since things may change to spirits and spirits constantly assume form. The Christian nationals, on the other hand, were in a real dilemma trying to do at least partial justice to both.

Just how such discrepancies create confusion in Bible translation can be illustrated with the following translation scene. Aureliano, the Choco Indian who visited Hillsboro, and the author were translating the Great Commission. The informant had just translated the statement "to the uttermost part of the earth" as "to the last earth." The translator was afraid that this might tie into the Choco view of the universe. In this view there is an underworld that is both older and lower than this current earth, then there is the present earth, and above is a world that is both higher and future. Unable to find out why he

Indian preacher with missionary Gerhard Hein at Filadelfia, Paraguay.



insisted on this translation but desirous that it be correctly translated, the translator explained the whole idea of world evangelism in great detail before undertaking to translate the same expression in Acts 1:8. When the Indian again rendered it as "to the last earth," the translator reprimanded him saying: "Why don't you translate it the way it says 'to the uttermost part,' which is like saying 'to the most distant shore of the earth'?" The Indian countered: "But what about that long explanation you gave? And what about the people who live on the other side of the bank?" It was very apparent that Indian and translator were talking past each other, but where? Suspecting that the Indian viewed the world on a flat plane, the translator asked: "Did you know that the world is round?" To this the Indian answered with a forceful affirmative. So it couldn't be a flat plane that was causing difficulty. Every imaginable way was tried, but to no avail. Finally, on a sudden inspiration the translator wheeled the globe into the room and said: "Did you know the world is round like this?" After locating Panama, the United States, and Russia, the informant followed the course of his flight to Hillsboro via Portland, Oregon, and his return route via Cuba. The Indian sat as if glued to the globe and further work became impossible. Suddenly he said: "So it isn't true?"

"What is not true?"

"That the world has seven seas?"

"We generally speak of five oceans, but you can have as many as you please by giving different names to different sections."

"That is not what I mean. The earth is really one sea and a number of islands."

To this the translator countered, "No, do you see this light blue? That means shallow water. This dark blue means deep water. There is a 'land' bottom under the sea."

He remained at the globe turning it and asking questions. Finally he got up, went to the blackboard, and said: "I always knew the world was round, but I thought it was like this." Then he drew a circle. And in this circle he placed Panama and the United States. Then he drew the earth as seven concentric rings of land and water for the seven "lands" and the seven seas. "But the last earths are frozen to the sky, and there are no people living there," he added. "What you are making me translate is utter nonsense, for there are no people living there."

This is a simple but revealing example of how the unspoken premises of the worldview of the two members of the translation team led to misunderstanding and mistranslation.

Language and Culture

A *second* type of problem is related to the culture-boundness of language. Language is always an intimate reflection of the culture of the people. This is true not only in terms of the inventory of the differing items of culture—a language may have no word for bread since the culture does not include wheat and baking—but also in the areas of meaning a word can cover in a given language. Thus, for example, the meaning area of the English word "have" compares with the area of meaning of two Spanish words: *tener* and *haber*. *Haber* must be used when "have" the auxiliary verb is intended, and *tener* must be used to indicate "to possess." The more abstract the meaning of a word the greater the possibility of difference and of error.

The author was a graduate student at the University of Washington, where a professor once tried to embarrass him publicly by telling a story of a "stupid" missionary mistake in Australia. In Northern Australia where the professor had been doing anthropological research, a mission was trying to convert the people to Christianity. His evaluation was: after thirty years of sacrificial work they only had a handful of converted Christian natives and that for fifty cents apiece he could have "converted them to anthropology," since they knew little more about the former than about the latter. Then he went on to give the reason why. "When I came there I heard all the people singing the chorus: 'Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, all are precious in his sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world.' So I said to the natives, 'What in the world are you singing?' They answered, 'Oh, that is a song that the missionary taught us. But we don't do that any more.'

'What did the missionary teach you that you don't do any more?'

'Oh, the people in the hills still do that, but we are civilized.'

'Well, what do the people in the hills do that you don't do anymore?' " These people used to be cannibals and when the missionary asked them for the word for "love," he got one that had the connotation of "passion" and so he asked for another word—one that describes strong concern for others regardless of sex. Finally one native had asked: "Is it a real powerful word? Something you feel inside of yourself for another person?"

"Yes, that is it." And so the missionary got the word for the feeling that a person experiences when his spirit is depleted and he yearns for human flesh to replenish his spiritual strength. It was a powerful word from their cannibal heritage. Thus in that chorus they were singing that God was the great big cannibal who had such an intense desire for human flesh that he sent his son into the world, and this son really specialized in children: red and yellow, black and white. So by a single word the entire concept of the love of God was so distorted and misconstrued

that it completely undermined the Good News value of the Word.

But words do not only have a central meaning, they also carry differing connotations in each culture of sub-culture. When used in certain contexts these marginal meanings can produce an image vastly different from the central meaning. Thus in some sections of Latin America referring to a woman with the pronoun "she" always implies that she is a public woman, because with good women one always uses the name or title. Similarly in German one can speak about objects being "verrueckt" and thereby mean "moved out of place," but woe betide the speaker who labels a person as "verrueckt" when he is not in his proper place.

Literal Translation

A *third* major problem is the danger of literal translations. All languages have certain special expressions and idioms. Such idioms always mean more than the sum of their parts, and for that reason they cannot be translated literally. Take the English idiomatic expression "he's on the ball." When translated literally into German "Er ist auf dem Ball," it would probably mean more or less the opposite of its English idiomatic meaning.

Literalism has produced some rare and unbecoming expressions in Bible translation. For example, the sentence "gave breath to the image" (Rev. 13:15) when rendered word for word in one translation read, "He made the image stink." Or consider the language that did not have a generic word for "to lead," but rather many specialized words, each for a specialized kind of leading. The nationals were very upset with Paul when the translator rendered "to lead a wife" with the word meaning "to lead an ox" (1 Cor. 9:5) instead of the word for "to lead by the hand or to accompany." Occasionally non-idiomatic expressions in the source language must be rephrased into idioms in the target language. Thus the Waunana expression for "carry no money in the belt" appears as "carry no money tied in the end of your loincloth." This is the cultural manner for a man to carry his money.

Literalism sometimes grows out of a frame of mind that appears to be associated with the greater sophistication of literate cultures. With the advent of dictionaries it is very easy to begin to treat words as entities in themselves. We must not forget that communication is only possible because words are deeply imbedded in life and experience and that they really have no meaning apart from the culture and the situations in which they occur.

I recall an early language learning experience with the Waunana. We had just finished a wonderful first morning in the language study and had made very encouraging headway in recording the names of objects. For the afternoon we now decided to concentrate on verbs. I was so eager to get ahead that I skipped my siesta and furiously wrote out verb forms: I run, you run, he runs, she runs, it runs, we run, you run, they run. Then in other tenses, as far as I could go with the English verb. I was expecting that in the afternoon I would only have to fill in the equivalent Waunana forms. Then we started. I asked, "How do you say 'I run'?" The Indian was quiet for a while, looked down, then out; and suddenly his face lit up as he said something, which if I had been able to write it, would have spread several times across the page. I started to write bravely, but after a few syllables I bogged down. "How did you say that again?" I added two more syllables and bogged down again. When I asked for the third repetition, the story began to change and I had to give up entirely. To my half-defensive, half-accusing: "But all this doesn't mean only 'I run'," the informant said, "Why of course not. It means: I was sitting down here with you teaching language. Then I looked out of the door and saw a deer. So I quickly grabbed my spear, and now *I am running* after it." Then almost philosophically he added: "Only a fool would run for nothing." Words are not loose entities which one manipulates promiscuously; they get and retain their meaning only in the contexts of life.

Another problem of literalism involves the matter of word order in clauses and the interdependence of clauses in a sentence. Many translations have had to be discarded because the translators, in their effort to follow the original very closely, came up with word orders that paralleled those of the source of their translation. All languages have their own unique sequences; and if the word or clause sequence is too foreign, the meaning will always be lost in spite of correct and seeming intelligible individual words and correct grammatical structures. There is of course no misunderstanding when a German-speaking person speaking English says: "He was yesterday here" (*Er war gestern hier*) except that it sounds foreign. But I remember sitting in a farewell service for a missionary at which a German-speaking minister attempted to deliver a short message in English. He quoted the German verse portion: "Moege Gott euch Gnade geben" (May God give you grace), but proceeded to paraphrase it: "God *may* give you grace." Now for those of us who understood both languages there was no real problem. But for those who understood only the English he was not saying what he intended to say. Instead of a polite wish or prayer that God might give them grace, he was saying one of two things: He was giving God permission to give them grace, or else he was expressing doubt about the possibility that God would give them grace.

The missionary translator faces an awesome, but wonderful task. His is the privilege to again make "the Word become flesh" in the different cultures of men.

The Bible in Modern Life

By Lloyd L. Ramseyer

Of the thousands of books published most are relatively unknown after the passage of a few decades. Even best sellers have wide sale only for a relatively short time. After a few centuries practically all books have lost their appeal to the common man. Very rarely there is one studied and quoted by students and scholars after a thousand years or more, such for example as Plato's *Republic*, Caesar's *Commentaries on the Gallic Wars*, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and the like. In contrast the Christian Bible, the latest sections of which were written more than 1800 years ago, is still read by large masses of common people. To be sure its reading and study are encouraged by an organized institution, but certainly unless the common man had found something in it which met his need he would not have continued to study this ancient document over this long period of time.

It is the purpose of this paper to explore the appeal of this book in the modern world and to discuss its relevancy for an age such as ours. By the term "modern" as used here we mean almost the same as current appeal and relevancy. We will go back some thirty or forty years for illustrations in some cases but our interest is primarily in today's world.

Translation

No other book has been made available to so many people in their own language. It is probably safe to assert that in our day there is no literate person who cannot read at least a portion of the Scriptures in his own tongue. The entire Bible has been translated into some 220 languages and parts of it into nearly 900 additional ones. This could not be explained merely on the basis of interested promoters distributing the Scriptures. It must be explained on the basis of the Bible meeting the human need of many and varied types of people throughout many different eras.

Among English-speaking people there was a demand for the Scriptures in the language of our own day. Furthermore additional research discovered more ancient copies of the Scriptures than those used in previous translations. Consequently there has been a veritable flood of new translations in the English language. While they have raised protests in some quarters, they have also served to create a new interest in the Scriptures and helped readers to get a fresh approach to an old book. They have jarred one out of stereotyped ways of thinking.

There is little sound reasoning back of many of the protests. The question which should always be raised concerning any translation is "Does this say to me what the authors intended it to say?" rather than, "Does this correspond to previous translations and to my own ways of thinking?" These modern translations have been the result of years of painstaking work by many outstanding scholars using the most ancient sources available, and as such they should be the best interpretation we have of the intent of the authors.

Some object that new versions do not have the beauty of the King James Version. This is undoubtedly true, but one should remember that the Scriptures are not intended primarily as studies in beautiful English poetry and prose, but rather to faithfully com-

municate truth. They cannot communicate unless they speak to us in a language which we can understand and contain the meaning originally intended.

It is amazing that the oldest available documents vary so little from later manuscripts. Apparently the copying errors were not as great as one might have supposed. It is safe to say that no major doctrine of the church has been altered by the discovery of these more ancient manuscripts.

The fact that new translations have stimulated a renewed interest in the Scriptures is illustrated by the fact that in England in 1963 the New English Bible outsold all other books but one. The best seller was a book attempting to understand the Bible, John Robinson's *Honest to God*.

Critical Research

The Bible has been the subject of another type of research which, while it is good, may cause some potential readers to doubt whether they can know the meaning of the Scriptures. This is research into the life and times of the period when the Bible was written in an effort to discover what this writing was meant to convey to their own people. This research had not been carried on by the enemies of the Bible in an effort to destroy it, but by its best friends in order to understand it better. We need this kind of research. Loyalty to truth is in itself a religious value. Certainly we need to know the intent of the biblical writers, and this is hardly possible without a knowledge of the situation in which and to which they wrote. However, it has caused many average readers to wonder whether the Bible has the meaning which the words seem to indicate to be obvious, or whether the real meaning is something he is in no position to understand.

The remedy for this difficulty is not less research, nor is it closing our eyes and ears to the research which has been conducted. It is rather to have more Bible study for our young people and adults conducted in such a way that through learning the real intent of the writers their respect for the Scriptures is increased at the same time that they gain greater insight into their real meaning.

Ignorance of the Bible

While sales of Bibles remain high, especially with the publication of new translations, we face at the same time a decreasing knowledge among youth of biblical facts. It is no longer as safe as it once was to assume that an audience will know what you are talking about if you use an illustration from the Bible. Many studies indicate an alarming lack of knowledge of biblical facts among present day young people. This may be partly due to the fact that we are teaching fewer biblical facts in our Sunday schools, trying instead to teach interpretations related to present day problems. Certainly many people waste their time memorizing meaningless facts, such as the number of chapters in each book, the number of times certain words appear in the Scriptures, and the like. However, factual knowledge must precede accurate thinking. We cannot think spiritually in a vacuum any more than we can in other fields. It is doubtful whether our young people have the actual basis in factual knowledge needed to think intelligently about the application of these facts to their own spiritual lives and to the problems of our day.

There is some real reason to doubt, however, whether the Bible is actually read as much as it was a few generations ago. It is doubtful whether the average child now sees his parents and grandparents reading the Bible for its own sake as frequently as present grandparents saw it being read by their parents and grandparents. If this is true there are various reasons for it. In the first place other books and papers to be read are more numerous. Not only has there been an explosion in knowledge, but there has also been an explosion in publications. A research scholar remarked recently that even to keep up with published research in one field of specialization, computers must be used to scan the materials. No human being can even expect to scan it all. Furthermore, the average Christian reads many publications about the Bible rather than reading the Scripture itself. He does this partly because he feels that he can understand these other materials better, and partly because they often apply the Scriptures to the current problems of our day. Just as in England the best seller for 1963 was a book about the Bible, so it is often true that books about Christian life rank high in the best seller lists.

Bible and School

One wonders whether the controversial Supreme Court ruling on Bible reading in the public schools will have any noticeable effect on either the amount of voluntary Bible reading or in biblical information possessed by youth. Likely much of the reading was of a perfunctory nature which had little real influence. Routines such as this can be very easily overlooked by the child and little gained from them. For example, one can have justifiable doubts as to whether daily repetition of the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag makes many children more patriotic. In Illinois the Supreme Court declared Bible reading illegal more than forty years ago, and one wonders whether the religious devotion of children in that state differs noticeably from those in comparable states where it has been permitted. If the court ruling makes parents and churches more conscious of the fact that religious instruction is really their job and cannot be transferred to the state, perhaps the effect of the ruling will be a positive one.

Suggestions are sometimes made that the Bible should be taught as content material in public schools just as one would teach other history or great literature. Whether such "objective" teaching of the Bible

is either possible or desirable is a moot question. It would aid in securing Bible knowledge, but it is a question as to what effect it would have on religious attitudes.

Modern Ideology

One must recognize that for the first time in modern times there is a concerted, organized, and massive attack on God and the Bible. This is directed chiefly by Marxian communism, but the cause is aided and abetted by some self-styled noncommunist "intellectuals." These attacks can hardly help but have some influence on youth, particularly on those who want to be considered objective intellectuals in their own right.

There is no doubt that the rapid increase in scientific knowledge during the last few decades has had its effect on the concept which modern man has of God and in his interest in the Bible. New scientific knowledge has come faster than we have integrated it into our religious concepts. There has been a spiritual as well as a cultural lag. If our concept of God has been a diminishing one, perhaps it is because we have stressed the wrong things in trying to give our young people evidences of His existence and greatness. We have tried to prove God's existence by saying that we need an all-knowing God for those things we cannot understand or about which we know little. Some one has called this the "God of the cracks" concept of God, God merely filling in the gaps of man's unverified knowledge. God is used to account for these unexplainables. Thus the more facts man discovers the smaller the area in which God operates and is needed. A paper written little more than a decade ago concerning God in the college science curriculum used some of these unexplainables to demonstrate the necessity of God. Yet most of the things stressed in this paper are now understood by the scientist. Does this make God less necessary than He was ten years ago?

Sharing the Word of Life.

If godly men have this concept it is no wonder that they often fear having their children secure a higher education, for especially in science, they might well lose such a God. On the other hand the best evidence of God is in the glorious things we know about His creation and the things we learn through a life lived with Him. Thus the more one learns about scientific facts the greater the glory of God becomes, and the longer one lives the more meaningful the experiences with Him. The scientist in his research laboratory is only thinking God's thoughts after Him, trying to unlock the secrets which God has known about from the beginning.

To be sure our concept of the universe changes with increased knowledge. The ancients thought the sky was a ceiling for the earth and a floor for the heavens where God dwelt. No intelligent person can have this concept today. We know that God is really not "up there" or "out there" nor is He an old man with a beard sitting on a distant throne. He is everywhere, all around us. The writers of the Scriptures knew this, for they spoke of God as a spirit that does not have flesh and bones as we have. It is hard for the human mind to conceive of a spirit, so we conceptualize God as having a body and a place of residence although we really know this is not strictly true. The Russian astronaut who did not find any God up there and then said he had disproved God was merely displaying his ignorance and naivety.

Some theologians have tried to make the Bible more acceptable to scientific man by radical "demythologizing" of it. One wonders, however, after studying this attempt, whether they leave enough of the scripture to have any power to meet man's need, whether as a matter of fact it is very acceptable to anyone after this attempt. They make the Bible merely a book written by ancient philosophers, and who would sacrifice much for that, or where is the power left in it to show the meaning of life to a frustrated world or to save the human soul. The God of the early church was a God of power to save the prostitute and the drunkard from evil and to start a new way of life in Christ. This is a power beyond what we can fully understand through science. The apostles knew all about the so-called myths in the story of Jesus the Christ and yet they were willing to lay down their lives for him. Can a "demythologized" scripture direct one to such a God of power?

Purpose of Bible

The Bible was written to show man how God has revealed himself to man, to tell us of God's will for man, and to show him the way of salvation. When used for this purpose it is still a source of power even in our scientific age.

The respect which man has for the Bible will depend on his concept of its origin. The concept of what the Bible is varies through a continuum, from the belief that "it is the word of God," through "it contains the word of God," "it is a book about God written by inspired men," "it is a book about God written by ancient wise devout men," to "it is a book about a god created by man in his own image growing out of his own weakness and sense of need." Men of great biblical faith have not all held to any one of the above concepts, yet one could hardly respect the Bible as a book of great spiritual importance if one held the ones at the latter extreme. To be really deeply revered in the religious sense of the term it must be considered as divinely inspired in those areas in which its purposes lie.

Some moderns reject the ethical teachings of the Scripture because they have come to reject moral and ethical absolutes. There are some theologians who are willing to accept only one absolute, the absolute of Christian love. Jesus himself gave some encouragement to this concept when He spoke of love to God and love to man, saying, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." If one could take a dispassionate and Christian view of all of life's problems perhaps this would be guide enough. But man is too limited to do this. Without doubt the one who assassinated the president might have rationalized in his diseased mind that by so doing he was acting in the greatest love to the greatest number. Man still needs the "Dos" and the "Don'ts" of the Scripture, interpreted not coldly and legalistically but in the light of the law of love. The Scripture is still our best source of guidance in morals and ethics.

Man's basic spiritual needs do not undergo drastic change over the centuries. To be sure, the environment in which these needs operate changes drastically, but the same basic needs remain. The Bible spoke to those needs in past centuries and still speaks to them today. One of these basic needs is to feel a sense of meaning and belonging in life. If the Bible shows man what he is and what he may become, holding out to him hope and power for that becoming, then it is relevant. Men have found that the Bible has done and continues to do that for them.

During the days of stress preceding World War II sales of Bibles in Europe increased tremendously. Kenneth Scott Latourette reports that while Hitler was consolidating his power in Germany from 1930 to 1938 each year the sales of the Bible outstripped those of *Mein Kampf* by more than 200,000, and that sales rose from 830,000 in 1930 to 1,120,000 in 1939. This seems especially significant in view of the anti-Jewish propaganda of that time and the effort to eliminate anything tainted with Jewish connections or authorship. Sales of Bibles in Belgium rose from 54,000 in 1938 to 135,000 in 1939. In Belgium, Romania, and Hungary 1939 sales about doubled those of 1938. The United States government was glad to distribute copies of the Scriptures to soldiers during the war because it was felt that it would build morale. In October 1946 the War Assets Administration announced that it had one million pocket-sized Bibles to be given away to anyone who would use them.

An aviator crashed in the north woods a few years ago with his lady passenger and they were marooned for several weeks. They turned to the Bible which he had with him and found therein spiritual sustenance. Certainly a large proportion of adult Christians have at some time experienced the need for the comfort and encouragement which the Scriptures can provide in times of trouble, and have found that need supplied when they turned to the Bible.

It is the opinion of many psychologists that we now live in an age of neuroses brought about by the confusion of our age. The forces that seem about to destroy us are so great that man's feeble efforts to control them seem insufficient. We live in a time of conflicting ideologies. We have put our faith in physical power only to find that power may become so great that it will destroy all of us. We have felt that if we could only gain economic prosperity and security then we would find the solution to our problems, only to discover that the affluent society can also be a spiritually bankrupt society. Millions have an enduring faith to which they will give their allegiance. In such times as this the Bible can speak to human needs, giving meaning for this life as well as for the life to come. The tragedy is that so many seem unable to turn to the source of strength that is available to them and recapture this faith.

In this age we speak so much in terms of billions of people and millions of light years that we are likely to relegate the individual to a minor position. In a world of big things, individuals are often considered expendable, merely as things to be manipulated by some architect of a new society. No wonder that the individual himself loses his sense of purpose in life. The Bible stresses the importance of individual human personality. Throughout the Scriptures, and especially in the New Testament, there is the constant assertion of the sacredness of human life and personality. This emphasis is needed in the modern world, both for the sense of meaning which it gives to the individual and for its impact on a society that thinks in terms of masses. The more intense the population explosion becomes, the more the world needs to have this importance of the individual emphasized.

Closely connected with this is the need of every individual for love. This is one of man's basic psychological needs. The larger the masses of people the more difficult it becomes for some individuals to feel this love. Large cities are often our most lonely areas. In oriental countries, such as Korea or India, where more children are born than will be adequately

cared for with parental love this is an acute problem. The Bible not only stresses the love of God for the individual, but also the importance of shared love between individuals. In the modern age people need personal assurance of the love and concern of God. In the Bible love between man and God is not substituted for love shared between individuals, but both are important. Note Jesus' first and second great commandments. The modern world needs this emphasis.

The Bible contains an authentic story of God's relationship with man. It is not an argument for God, but it begins with the assumption that there is a God and that His chief interest is in man. The record shows the development of the concept of God's relationship to man and His revealing of himself, first through the prophets and later through His Son. It never tries to gloss over man's weaknesses, showing even the sins and weaknesses of the heroes of the faith. It is thus an encouragement to modern man still struggling with the same human weaknesses and trying to overcome the same problems.

The Bible is also of great worth in its record of the development of the early church. The enthusiasm of the early Christians is a thing which every church member should try to recapture. Sometimes, to be sure, there is confusion as to which of the regulations of the early church were intended for that day alone and which have universal and timeless significance, but this question applies chiefly to the less important aspects of church life, the "one and two button" affairs. Nevertheless this story of the early church is of very great significance to our day.

Finally, but of most importance, the Bible contains the "good news" of Christ's coming, His life among men, His sacrificial death on the cross, and His resurrection. Nowhere else but to the Christ of the Bible can man turn for his redemption. The entire Bible is the story of the saving work of God, reaching climax in the good news of Christ. There is no way in which God's work in saving human souls can be proved scientifically in a world which is calling for scientific absolutes. But neither does science give us as many absolutes as the pseudoscientists would have us suppose. Our chief proof is the type of proof which Jesus gave when men came seeking some sign of His power, and He referred them to the works which had been done. So the chief proof of the good news is what it has done for people who over the centuries have had faith. It inspired men in Jesus' day to leave all and follow Him. His followers after His death and resurrection were so sure of the reality of that in which they believed that they gave their lives for it. Throughout the centuries men and women have found new life through faith in this good news.

Not long ago a minister who had retired from a church in Akron, Ohio, after a long pastorate read a paper on "Religion in the Age of Science" before the members of a professional club. He prefaced his paper by telling his experienec in his church located in one of the "shady" areas of the city. Prostitutes had been redeemed from their lives of sin and had become active and respected members of his church. Then he read a scientific paper raising some doubts concerning many of the accepted principles of Christianity. In the discussion he stated that he really didn't believe the things he had written in his paper, he raised them for discussion only, because, "This kind of religion would never have saved the prostitutes who came into my church. That is why I told you of them in the beginning." The chief proof of the saving power of the revelation contained in the Scripture is what it has done and is continuing to do for those who have faith. A Scripture with this power is relevant to our age, because there was never an age in which this power was more needed.

In conclusion, there are conflicting data on the extent of the use of the Bible in the modern world. Sales of Bibles remain high, but there seems to be much evidence that it is read less extensively than in former years. This is partly due to the flood of other reading material available and partly to the rapid advances of science which have adversely effected a deep faith in God and the Bible which contains His revelation. This is not due to the direct influence of our top scientists, but rather to the worship of science by many who really understand little about its own weaknesses and inadequacies. Many of our great scientists see that the Bible has the truth needed in the modern world more than their own discoveries, and more needed because of their discoveries. This apparent loss of interest in Bible reading should not discourage us but should rather lead to greater emphasis on the type of biblical instruction which will help the Bible to recapture its place in the modern age.

The Bible is relevant to our age to him who has faith when used for the purposes for which it was intended. The case for the Bible in this age or any other should not be overstated. Not long ago a play was given in which the statement was categorically made that if one accepts Christ all of his problems will be solved. This obviously is not true. The most devout Christians still have problems. We were never promised freedom from problems. Even Christ had them. The Christian does have the motivation and spiritual help for the solution of his problems. He must still struggle. So the Bible will not immediately solve all of our problems. But it will give us comfort in time of trouble, a meaning to life which will motivate us in the solution of our problems, the promise of the aid of the Holy Spirit in the solution of these problems, the only guide to divine forgiveness of sins and strength to live a new life, and the only hope for life eternal with God. We can say of the Bible as Peter said of Jesus, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

Aids to Bible Study

By Russell L. Mast

ANY DISCUSSION OF aids to Bible study should be carried on with the understanding that what we have in mind are aids and not substitutes for Bible study. The temptation is always upon us to read books about the Bible instead of the Bible itself. Never has this temptation been greater for there has never been a greater quantity of books which are aimed at helping the reader to understand the Bible. Yet even Luther in his day felt some uneasiness about this, when he wrote, "The Bible is now buried under so many commentaries, that the text is nothing regarded." Then, thinking of the many books about the Bible which he himself had produced, he concluded, "I would not have those who read my books, in these stormy times, devote one moment to them which they would otherwise have consecrated to the Bible." *The Table Talk or Familiar Discourse of Martin Luther*, trans. by William Hazlitt (London: David Bogue, 1848), p. 369.

General Principles

All simplified versions or condensations, or anything like a Reader's Digest edition of the Bible should be used with care. For no book about the Bible should ever be used as a crutch for lazy minds, nor can it ever take the place of hard digging or solid thinking which any serious study requires. Every Bible reader must finally do his own thinking, and no Bible study aid can ever do it for him, or tell him exactly what God is saying to him through the words of the Bible.

This is not to say, however, that Bible study aids are not necessary, that the results of generations of biblical research have nothing to teach or that one person's opinion as to what the Bible says or means is as good as that of another. When Jesus came to Jacob's well and asked a Samaritan woman for a drink of water, she replied, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep." (John 4:11). One might say that the wells of biblical truth are deep. The truths which lie within them are not easily visible on the surface or

readily drawn from the shallows. They must be drawn from great depth. Yet often the reader comes with so little to draw with, so little of the necessary equipment, so few of the tools and aids that he cannot touch the great depth of biblical truth.

What one receives from the deep wells of the Bible depends on what one has to draw with. It depends on the depth of personal experience, the sensitivity of spirit and the vigor of mind that he brings to his reading and study of the Bible. More than that, it requires a certain amount of knowledge about the Bible, a certain facility with the recognized tools and aids of study. God cannot speak through the Bible to a vacuum or touch an empty life with His truth. The well is deep and there is no way to its life-giving truth without something with which to draw.

Part of what we mean when we say that the well is deep is that the Bible is not an easy book to read or understand. There are many reasons for this, one of which is merely the fact that the Bible is an ancient book. The biblical writers used the thought forms and categories that were current in their day, but which may be quite foreign to our day. Moreover, the Bible is also an oriental book which imposes still another strangeness on it as far as the western reader is concerned. It takes some degree of understanding for the occidental mind to penetrate the oriental mind. The Bible is also a translated book. All the problems of transmitting an idea from one language to another clearly and accurately without losing important modes of meaning are present in the Bible. All this plus the fact that the Bible deals with the deep things of God and the baffling issues of life makes the Bible a hard book to read and understand, and requires the use of specific aids. We proceed with the assumption that in the Bible God speaks to man, He sends his personal word to the individual who reads. But the Bible also represents an ancient writer addressing himself to the people of his day in terms of the situations, the problems and the needs of his day. We cannot expect an accurate understanding of what God says to us through the pages of the Bible without knowing as clearly as possible what the ancient writer meant to say to the people of his day. In other words, the Bible reader needs to know as much as there is to know about the author of a given book of the Bible, the people to whom he is writing, the problem or situation to which he is addressing himself, and the purpose which he had in writing.

The Place of Variant Translations

Thinking now of this essential information that we need for an intelligent reading and understanding of the Bible, let us consider first of all some of the English translations and editions of the Bible. *The Westminster Study Edition of the Holy Bible* makes this kind of information available with introductory articles to each of the books of the Bible and explanatory footnotes running throughout the entire text. However this is based on the King James Version of the Bible and in view of the coming of better translations, this limits its value. A study edition of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible similar to the one based on the King James Version has been published by the Oxford University Press under the title *The Oxford Annotated Bible. The New Testament in Modern English* by J. B. Phillips includes a brief introduction to the books of the New Testament.

It is not our purpose to evaluate the many fine translations of the Bible that are now available. But the fact cannot be doubted that Bible readers have never before had so many readable translations to use for study and comparison, and enrichment. No one translation has all the advantages and none of the disadvantages. Some are better for devotional reading, some for study, some for majesty of expression and some for simplicity. The reader will soon learn how to use the various translations profitably together.

Translating the Bible into the language of the people will very likely be a continuing task. Language itself is subject to constant change. Words in one generation will not necessarily mean the same thing in generations to come. Moreover, scholars are forever adding to their knowledge of ancient languages and older and more reliable manuscripts are coming to light. So the translator is not only better equipped for his task, but he has better Hebrew and Greek manuscripts with which to work. The translations of the Bible which are available to us are surely important aids to Bible study. As we read these ancient words it is as though new light were breaking forth from old lamps. Or to change the figure, fresh water rises up from old wells.

Commentaries As Aids

Another Bible study aid which helps us to draw out of the deep wells of the Bible is a commentary. What we said in the beginning about making aids to the Bible study into substitutes for Bible study applies particularly to Bible commentaries. It is very easy to let a commentary do our searching, our seeking, our thinking for us. Let us remember that the commentary is not the well, but only a part of the equipment we need to draw from the well.

Certainly from the Bible commentaries we do need to get the best scholarly opinion about what the ancient writer meant to say to the people to whom he wrote. We need to get the exact meanings of words, to see every phrase in its proper setting, and to view every passage in its historical perspective. This is what we mean by exegesis.

But with all this factual information, important as it is, the task of biblical interpretation is not complete. The Bible has more to say than it once said to an

ancient people. The well is deep. But if modern man has something with which to draw, then out of its great depth he can bring forth the abiding truth. And in a modern situation, with modern categories and a a modern language, he can speak relevantly to modern men. This we call exposition.

Exposition must always be based on sound exegesis. The two must remain in tension as well as union with each other. Always we must resist the temptation to read into the Bible what we do not read in the Bible. Yet it is at the point of exposition that the creativity of the individual Bible reader needs to find its freedom of expression. Here a commentary should do no more than point the way, or enumerate some of the possibilities, or set the individual mind on its own search. Here the reader should draw from his own experience, look through the eyes of his own needs and listen for God's personal word to him. Here the Holy Spirit should guide him into new and fresh expressions of the abiding truth, that it may have contemporary relevance.

The Interpreter's Bible (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951) a monumental publication of twelve separate volumes, bringing together the work of 146 scholars, is one of the most complete, the most thorough and the most adequate commentaries in the English language. In addition to the full text of both the King James and Revised Standard versions, there is an introduction to each book as well as an exegesis and an exposition on each page.

The Layman's Bible Commentary (John Knox Press, 1959) when completed will comprise twenty-five small volumes. They are written in non-technical language by very reputable scholars. *The Abingdon Bible Commentary* (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1929) has long been the standard one-volume commentary. Obviously any one-volume commentary will suffer the limitations of brevity and sketchiness. Furthermore, since its publication in 1929 much has happened in the field of biblical scholarship. Nevertheless with its general articles on the Bible it is still the best one-volume commentary available. Mention should also be made of *The Daily Study Bible* by William Barclay, which includes seventeen small volumes on the New Testament. He is fully aware of the findings of biblical scholarship, however his use of the material is strongly homiletical. He is excellent in his word studies.

Defining Words and Terms

Another effective tool that will aid us in drawing from the deep waters of the Bible is a Bible dictionary. Much of the material found in a commentary is found also in a dictionary. One important difference, however, is a difference in the arrangement of the material. In a dictionary the arrangement is alphabetical, which in a sense makes the material more easily accessible. On the whole, Bible dictionaries confine themselves to

Bible study group in Japan.

the meanings of words, to facts of an historical nature and to background information. There is no attempt at interpretation or exposition. For the Bible reader who prefers to do his own work, to see for himself what a passage means and what it says to him, a Bible dictionary is an excellent resource. There are discussions of all the major words and ideas of the Bible, the historical and archaeological background of the cities and places of the Bible, summary statements of all the books of the Bible, as well as biographical sketches of all the people of the Bible.

To illustrate the way in which a Bible dictionary can aid the Bible reader, let us take, for example, the passage in the sixth chapter of Matthew where Jesus discusses the subject of prayer. A commentary will discuss prayer primarily as it relates to the particular passage. However, under the word "prayer" in a Bible dictionary there would be a discussion of prayer as it relates to the entire Bible. It will trace the development of the concept of prayer throughout the Old Testament and the New. While, therefore, there is some duplication of material as far as commentaries and dictionaries are concerned, the arrangement of the material and the approach to it is different thus making both Bible study aids very necessary.

Bible dictionaries vary in size and completeness from one-volume dictionaries to *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* which is a four-volume work. Like its companion *The Interpreter's Bible,* it is undoubtedly the most recent, the most scholarly, complete and exhaustive Bible dictionary available. It is meant to serve the needs both of the technical scholar and the general reader. (The technical material in each article is arranged in such a way that it can easily be bypassed.) Yet the entire article can still be read by the general reader with great profit.

A less technical one-volume dictionary is *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (Harper and Brothers, 1952). The articles are interspersed with numerous illustrations and photographs from the Holy Land. Another one-volume dictionary, written from a more conservative point of view is *The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible* (Westminster Press, 1944). A lexicon like Alan

Richardson's *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* is also in a sense a Bible dictionary, but confines itself more strictly to the meanings of biblical words as they come from the Greek and the Hebrew.

Geography and Archaeology Serve Us

The Bible Atlas is still another tool that will aid us in drawing from the deep waters of the Bible. Biblical religion is uniquely an historical religion in the sense that the literature of the Bible deals with historical events. The historical events were shaped and influenced by the geographical setting. Most of the events of the Bible focus on the little country of Palestine. Its geography and its position with respect to the rest of the ancient world along the fertile crescent have had an important bearing on its unique place in history. The Bible can be better understood, and read more intelligently with some knowledge of the land and its geographical setting.

Archaeology—the study of the material remains of the past—is continually shedding new light and is giving us a larger and larger body of knowledge of the land that gave us the book. It helps us to put the Bible into the material setting which gave it birth. All of this is of inestimable value in understanding.

In the area of archaeology, two works are especially pertinent. *The Westminster Historical Atlas of the Bible* (The Westminster Press, 1956). The first edition was published in 1946, but was revised to include more recent archaeological finds and particularly the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. This is an important and helpful comparison to the Bible and a most competent aid in its understanding and study. There are colored maps and photographic illustrations, mostly of actual sites and places in Egypt and Palestine. There is an introductory article on the methods which the historian and the archaeologist use in recovering the historical and geographical setting of the biblical story. Following this each map is accompanied by explanatory chapters. These constitute a marvelously succinct, historical geography of the lands of the Bible from the time of the patriarchs to the present day.

Light from the Ancient Past (Princeton University Press, 1946) by Jack Finegan is less a geography than a study of the archaeology of the Bible. It is well illustrated with photographic plates and written in a very readable style. The story begins in Egypt and follows the trail all the way down to Athens and Rome.

Some have questioned the value of a concordance as an aid to Bible study. While recognizing its necessity because of the obvious limitations there are to the human memory, we might regard it at least as a secondary tool. It does not in itself promote a greater understanding of the Bible. Yet it does help the Bible reader to locate with greater ease and facility a passage to which he has some clue. It also makes it possible to see at once how frequently certain words are used in the Bible. A concordance is an alphabetical index to biblical words. Each instance in which the word is used is given in the particular phrase in which it appears with the listing of the chapter and verse.

Cruden's Complete Concordance (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1949) contains more than 200,000 references to both the King James and Revised Versions (1881). This has long been a standard handbook to the Bible, and will continue to be so wherever the King James Version of the Bible is used. With some of the words there are explanatory notes that are given before the references.

Nelson's Complete Concordance of the Revised Standard Version Bible (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957). This work was not done by a group of scholars, as in the case of older concordances, but by an electronic computer. This process had the advantage of speed, but at the same time imposed certain limitations. Nevertheless every possible human or mechanical means was used to guarantee accuracy in work.

We have confined ourselves almost entirely to reference books on the Bible. There are, of course, many individual books on specific phases of the Bible and its meaning, all of which can immeasurably enlarge and enrich our understanding of the Bible. What we have said here has been in an effort to encourage the use of all available aids. They are, however, to be used as aids to Bible study and not as substitutes for it. They are meant to give us the equipment that we need to draw from the deep wells of the Bible. Without this equipment we will have too little to draw with and the well is deep.

It is not likely that every Bible reader will have access to all of the aids we have suggested, some of which are quite costly. Yet on the other hand, it is surely not too much to expect that every home could have a one-volume commentary, dictionary and concordance available to all family members. Church libraries could and should have the larger and more exhaustive reference works readily available to the members of the church for their use.

For too long a time the results of biblical scholarship have been locked up in the theological seminaries. As they become pastors and take up their parish duties, seminary graduates assume too easily that laymen will not accept the ideas which their young pastor acquired during his seminary training. Often this is true. But I suggest that this is not true as often as it is supposed. The teaching ministry is an important part of a pastor's duty. And an important part of what a pastor needs to teach is what the aids to Bible study are and how to use them. Let us not suppose that the truth of the Bible will rise up to meet us. We need something with which to draw and the well is deep.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Amish Society by John A. Hostetler. Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1963, 347 pp., $6.50.

As the author has observed, the Old Order Amish are the subject of a maze of books, pamphlets, and articles. His own pamphlet, *Amish Life*, certainly ranks as one of the best selling items ever produced by a Mennonite. Not many books on the Amish have the virtue of being written from the position of an insider or a former member. Good books have been written by outsiders. However, they usually fail in having a grasp of the unspoken basic assumptions shared but not discussed by the small society.

Hostetler can speak as an insider while also assuming a detached stance and filling the role of a student and critic. In the context of sociological norms he describes the Amish society in its religious orientation. As would be expected, he is sympathetic and discerning.

The special contribution of Hostetler's book is his analysis of internal conflicts caused by social changes. He has a wealth of material of a testimonial nature to present which shows the direction of individual and group responses to tensions and crises arising within the community and responses to pressures from without.

The kaleidoscopic variety of rules, customs, and responses among the Amish are frankly presented to further illustrate the fact of change and adjustment. There is cohesiveness, but problems of divisiveness are more and more recognized by the Amish leadership. It seems that the community cannot be preserved without sacrificing some individuals. Change has come and more will come; it dare not move too slowly and it must not move too rapidly and uncritically.

BETHEL COLLEGE — *John F. Schmidt*

Basic Writings in Christian Education ed. by Kendig Brubaker Cully. Philadelphia, Pa.: Westminster Press, 1961, 350 pp., $4.95.

This selection of writings in Christian education covers a time span of 18 centuries from Clement of Alexandria to George Albert Coe. There are letters (pp. 41-48, 83-87), writings on method and procedure (62-73, 74-82), treatises on the theory of education (205-215, 177-184), and other selections like *American Free Schools* by Horace Mann and *My Pedagogic Creed* by John Dewey. The preface is by the editor and indicates that the book is intended to be used as a collection of original sources for a historical study of Christian education. The book hardly lends itself to criticism except perhaps for the selections the editor chose for his anthology. Even there one is driven back to the author's purpose which prompted the selection and this is certainly laudable. This book should of course be used with current writings on Christian education.

CONRAD GREBEL COLLEGE — *Walter Klaassen*

Readings in the History of Christian Thought by Robert L. Ferm. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., xix plus 619 pp.

Why another book of sources from Christian history when we already have *A New Eusebius* by J. Stevenson and Petry and Manschreck, *A History of Christianity* in two volumes in which the sources themselves are the text? And yet this book has a place, primarily because it concentrates on Christian thought and not on historical events. The arrangement of the book is admirable, for it provides one with a kind of history of dogma of the main elements of Christian thought such as the knowledge of God, the person and work of Christ, the human condition and its remedy, and the church and the sacraments. The time covered is from Irenaeus to William Ellery Channing. The editor has omitted the Apostolic Fathers and contemporary theologians because these are readily available elsewhere.

He has avoided "novel or eccentric byways of Christian thought" and concentrated on the "main line of Christian teaching." That the Anabaptist movement is represented in this collection indicates that at least for this editor it is part of the "main line" and not a negligible eccentricity.

The book has a chronological as well as a topical table of contents and contains a valuable bibliography of sources and histories for the various periods of Christian history.

CONRAD GREBEL COLLEGE — *Walter Klaassen*

Early Gentile Christianity and Its Hellenistic Background by Arthur Darby Nock. New York: Harper and Row, 1964, xxi plus 155 pp. $1.45.

From the pen of a highly reputable scholar comes a brief work on the relationship of early Gentile Christianity to the religious and philosophical environment of the day. For minister and layman who are looking for answers to charges that Christianity borrowed from the other religions of the time and was therefore not unique this book will come as a welcome aid.

Clearly a comprehensive treatment is not possible in 155 pages but Nock's essay is a masterful summary of a vast field of study. Anyone desiring to pursue any single aspect of the problem into greater detail will find the voluminous documentation helpful. Although the essay was first written and published in 1928 an extensive up-to-date bibliography on the subject has been included.

The Christian teaching of the "Resurrection on the third day had its origin in Near Eastern myths of dying and rising gods, and . . . the description of Jesus as Lord and again the sacramental character of baptism and the Eucharist were likewise importations from the Gentile world" (vii). Claims like these which have frequently been made by students of first century religion are challenged in this

essay. That there are similarities between some aspects of Christian belief and pagan beliefs is true but there is no compelling evidence, according to Nock, that Christianity borrowed basic ideas and concepts from pagan religion and philosophy. New Testament writers deliberately and daringly used language and concepts that were current, but they were filled with a specifically Christian content.

This is a scholarly book but it is not difficult reading and the informed layman ought by all means read it.

This volume, although in the Harper Torchbook series, is bound, not simply glued. This will extend its lifespan considerably.

CONRAD GREBEL COLLEGE *Walter Klaassen*

Anabaptism in Flanders (1530-1650); a Century of Struggle by A. L. E. Verheyden. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1961, 136 pp., $3.75.

Verheyden is a well-known Belgian scholar who has published numerous books on the Reformation and the Anabaptists in Flanders. The translation into English and the publishing of this book were initiated by H. S. Bender, who received the manuscript in 1947. Research on Anabaptism in present-day Belgium is scarce and hardly any results of such findings have been published in the English language. The publishers, translators and editors must be congratulated with their accomplishments in this project. The maps and the translated documents are helpful aids; however, an index is missing. The author dedicates the book "to the overseas successors" of the martyrs presented in the book.

The story of the Flemish Anabaptists is presented in four chapters: The Rise, Growth and Struggle, Relative Freedom, and Gradual Emigration covering the time from 1530-1650. Although the author emphasizes the interrelatedness of the Flemish Anabaptists with those of the rest of the Netherlands he also points out where they differ (p. 2). He states that among the early Anabaptists those who "shunned violence, and devoted their best efforts to the building of a peaceful brotherhood" were "originally a minority" (p. 14 ff.). As soon as the "quiet" Melchiorites took the lead "Flemish Anabaptism followed the path of Northern Mennonitism" (p. 19). From here on the author speaks of Mennonitism instead of Anabaptism and strongly emphasizes their dependence on Menno Simons, although Menno seems never to have visited either Antwerp, Brugge or Ghent, while many of the northern evangelists came to Flanders (L. Bouwens, David Joris, Adam Pastor).

During the *Religionsfrid* (religious peace) between the Catholics and Calvinists, the Mennonites, although not included, benefited by it to some degree (p. 79). Generally speaking the Calvinist leaders, such as Guy de Bres and Marnix van St. Alegonde, fought them fiercely, possibly because of their "competition" (pp. 63, 82). Nevertheless when the Spanish regime was restored (1586) the struggle for survival, both of the Calvinists and the Anabaptists, became final. The emigration to the north increased; some settled in the liberated northern Netherlands, East Friesland, Schleswig Holstein, and even in Danzig and the surrounding territory. A careful study of this emigration, although it was not possible within this context, is due.

BETHEL COLLEGE *Cornelius Krahn*

Die strafrechtliche Verfolgung der Täufer in der Freien Reichsstadt Köln 1529 bis 1618 by Hans H. Th. Stiasny. Münster: Aschendorf, 1962, 158 pp., DM 16.50.

This is the second doctoral dissertation (the first by Schraepler) dealing with the legal aspects of the persecution of the Anabaptists. The first part of the study treats the historical development of the persecution of the Anabaptists of the Free Imperial City of Cologne and the second with the legal aspect. The significance of this study lies to a large extent in the fact that the author makes fuller use of the archives of Cologne and Düsseldorf than has been done thus far. As far as the first part is concerned the results are in a way disappointing.

A greater familiarity with Anabaptism and the theological questions of the Reformation in general would have enabled the author to integrate his presentation more fully. He also bypasses the significance of the Sacramentarian movement of the Lower Rhine which would have helped him to understand better the beginning of Anabaptism. The greatest weakness is the lack of a comprehensive and systematic presentation of the yield of the archival sources in terms of a lay-theology of the Cologne Anabaptists; however, some attempts are made (pp. 53, 63 f.). This matter as well as the question of the origin and the relationship of the Cologne Anabaptists to the Münsterites needs more attention. At times the author depends too heavily on Meelink.

Most helpful is the second part of the book in which the author presents a brief account of the treatment of the heretics and Anabaptists in general and the specific edicts and releases as well as the legal procedures of the authorities of Cologne who dealt with Anabaptists. He comes to the conclusion that on the basis of the records the reports about the number of martyrs and their treatment have been exaggerated. Of the total of 320 persons who became known to the authorities as Anabaptists 170 were apprehended. Of this number 70 were turned over to the "High Court," which condemned nine to death. Four were executed in 1533-34 and the other five between 1558 and 1565, among whom were Thomas von Imbroich and Matthias Servaes. The method of execution was beheading, drowning and burning (p. 149 ff.). Of the others, those who remained steadfast were exiled. The author comes to the conclusion that the Cologne authorities were extremely humane in their treatment of the Anabaptists in comparison to other cities and countries, particularly the Low Countries. Cologne barely used torture instruments common elsewhere. In spite of some weaknesses this study will remain a very valuable source of information and set the pattern for scholars to make similar investigations of other territories.

BETHEL COLLEGE *Cornelius Krahn*

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament edited by Gerhard Kittell and Gerhard Friedrich, transl. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Vol. I, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964, XL plus 793 pp., $18.50.

Eerdman's could hardly have rendered biblical scholarship a greater service than to publish this unabridged English translation of *the* theological dictionary. This first volume includes Alpha through Gamma.

All the major words of the Greek New Testament are examined for their theological meaning. Citation of one example might be helpful. Verb, noun, and adjective of the word *love* (agapao, agape, agapetos) are dealt with by E. Stauffer in the following manner.

A. Love in the OT
   1. Lexical analysis
   2. The Profane and Immanent Conception of Love
   3. The Religious Conception of Love
B. The Words for Love in Pre-biblical Greek
C. Love in Judaism
   1. OT
   2. Hellenistic Judaism
   3. Rabbinic Judaism
D. Jesus
   1. The New Demand
   2. The New Situation
E. The Apostolic Period
   1. Paul
   2. James
   3. John
F. The Post-Apostolic Period

The whole article requires 33 pages.

When the work is complete it will run to eight volumes which are expected to appear at intervals of a year or 18 months. This gradual appearance will make the high price of about $20.00 per volume a little more bearable.

The publishers have preserved almost perfectly the pagination of the original, a service which makes possible the checking of references to the original.

The work is primarily for those who have knowledge of Greek and preferably also Hebrew, but lack of such knowledge is not an insuperable obstacle to using the dictionary.

For further detail readers should consult the review of the original German edition which appeared in the January, 1962, issue of *Mennonite Life*, p. 46.

CONRAD GREBEL COLLEGE *Walter Klaassen*

New American Standard Bible-New Testament. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1963, Second Edition, 441 pp., cloth $4.95.

One wonders why we need to revive the American Revised Version. It was never very popular because of its wooden style, the result of literal adherence to the original texts.

The motivation for this publication becomes clear from the preface, and one suspects more particularly from the following statement made in the Foreword: "The New American Standard Bible has been produced with the conviction that the words of Scripture as originally penned in the Hebrew and Greek were inspired by God." The reason for this is presumably that the ARV was a more literal rendition of the original texts than either the KJV or the RSV. This would explain the emphasis on the inspiration of the autographs.

High claims are made for this publication. On the dust cover we read that "faithful to the original Greek text, this translation confirms the position of the Lord Jesus Christ as the eternal Living Word." The aim states that this publication "shall give to the Lord Jesus Christ His proper place, the place which the Word gives Him." Statements like this appear to be aimed at people who rejected the RSV because it allegedly tampered with the lordship and divinity of Christ. They imply that some translations and revisions apparently do not allow Jesus Christ his proper place. Such an attitude is divisive and unbecoming to serious Bible publishers. People should know that the critical apparatus in this revision is much like that in the RSV or the NEB. For example, it indicates that John 7:53—8-11 and Mark 16:9-20 are included on slim manuscript evidence and this is indicated by square brackets and marginal notes. Disputed passages that caused a great outcry in conservative quarters when the RSV appeared in 1952 like Mark 15:39 and Matt. 6:13, are rendered according to the Greek text, the first translating, "Truly this man was a son of God," (even the RSV has "the Son of God") and the second is in square brackets with a marginal note explaining that it is not found in the earliest manuscripts.

When we are told on the dust cover that this is "the literary masterpiece of this generation" all we can do is recognize that such a judgment will hardly be upheld by the product itself. First of all the practice of paragraphing each verse (which is an arbitrary unit) runs counter to all practice of presenting prose in print. In fact, at this point the present editors have departed from the ARV. This unfortunate reversal simply encourages the abstraction of texts from the context, giving as it does a wrong impression of the nature of biblical prose.

The literary quality is further impaired by the unfortunate decision of the revisers to render the Greek imperfect tense in the clumsy fashion in which it appears in Matt. 15:36, Acts 13:49, 21:33 and elsewhere. Although this practice does distinguish the imperfect from the aorist, it is not good English, nor does it contribute to a clearer text. Furthermore the slavish capitalization of all pronouns referring to Jesus or God gives the text an antiquated appearance. Presumably this is one of the ways, and a highly artificial one at that, in which Jesus Christ is given his proper place. The retention of antiquated words like "behold" in John 18:21 and James 3:4 is hardly modern English usage. John 18:11 is neither fluent nor in readable style.

After all that, this New Testament has much to commend it. The revisers have used the Nestlé text as a basis. This rests originally on the texts of Westcott and Hort, Tischendorff, Weiss, and Weymouth; in other words, it stands at the center of the tradition of the critical study of the New Testament. The work rests on a scholarly basis. The practice of indicating the plural or singular in the second person pronoun by "s" or "pl" is an excellent one, and does in fact shed light on the text here and there (example; Matt. 6:2-7). The extensive cross-referencing can be a great aid to Bible study. The wide reference margin and the type size of the notes make this volume easy to work with. All Old Testament quotations are set in upper case letters making for easy identification.

The book is printed on fine white paper, in very readable type. Its overall appearance is excellent.

Whatever its weak or strong points, and men will disagree on these, to those who use it, the Word of God will surely come with its comfort, blessing, promise and demand.

CONRAD GREBEL COLLEGE *Walter Klaassen*

Greek-English Analaytical Concordance of the Greek-English New Testament by John Stegenga. Jackson, Miss.: Hellenes-English Biblical Foundation, 1963. (Distributed by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.) xv plus 832 pp. Cloth, $14.95.

This volume consists of "an alphabetical listing of every Greek word in its original case form and inflections brought together with all relative, prefixed and compounded words in alphabetical arrangement under its particular root stem; a grammatical analysis of each word, prefixed word or compounded word; a systematic listing of every Greek and English word given by book, chapter and verse. . . ; English translations given in every form used. . . ."

It is a pity that a volume so genuinely useful to students of the New Testament should have such a poor introduction. It is replete with misspelled words, grammatical errors, and incomprehensible sentences (see top page vi). This cannot help but create an unfavorable, unscholarly impression. The compiler claims too much for his work on the progress report to reviewers which was included in the volume. He says that any translation from Greek into English can with the help of this concordance, be spotted immediately as true or false; that the use of this volume will prevent distortion of the Word of God. This claim seems to proceed from a verbalism that does not sufficiently recognize the complexities of a language. Words in themselves do not contain truth; they are symbols, and a combination of such symbols in certain syntactical arrangements conveys meaning. A theological word book is needed as a supplement to this lexical aid.

In spite of criticisms this volume should prove a very useful reference work for the student of the New Testament. All the forms of the Greek words are listed alphabetically. By a system of cross-reference, which could be explained more adequately, the word is then identified under its root stem, along with the references in the New Testament when it appears. Thus any form can be quickly located.

The Greek text basic to this concordance is the Textus Receptus of 1550 which underlies the King James Version, which is the English Stegenga uses. The reason given is that these represent the Greek and English texts in their most expanded form. This makes it possible to use any Greek or English version subsequent to 1550 and 1611 respectively. Although neither of these represents the best text available, the compiler's reason for using them is convincing.

The translations of the Greek words are not always exact or accurate. An example is *theopneustos* which is translated in the King James Version phrase "given by inspiration of God." A more accurate translation of this adjective would be "God-breathed" or "inspired by God." The following of King James Version usage limits the lexical usefulness of this volume.

One can easily believe that it required ten years to compile this concordance. Without doubt it is a labor of love and will be valuable to the student of the New Testament for decades to come.

CONRAD GREBEL COLLEGE *Walter Klaassen*

Call to Commitment by Elizabeth O'Conner. New York: Harper and Row, 1963, 205 pp., $3.50.

This is an interesting and valuable book for Mennonite reading. It is the story of Washington, D. C.'s Church of the Savior, often referred to as "the most exciting church in the country." The book is written affectionately and with detail although it is not outstanding from a literary view. It has the warmth of a letter from someone describing the deep spiritual values that person has discovered. The feeling of the narrative makes it clear that the author is not just an observer, but a participant in what she seeks to describe.

The Church of the Savior is shepherded by Gordon Cosby, an ordained Baptist minister, but the church is not denominationally connected. Different from many "independent churches" this one is strongly ecumenical. Cosby is a man of great understanding and exceptional insight and he has set for his church the task of being a gathered group of adult disciples whose ministry touches all walks of life. The exciting part of the story to this reviewer is the perceptive way this congregation has been able to touch lives at the point of their deepest need. The Potter's House, a coffee and conversation gallery in the Northwest section is a mission in the market place where profound questions of life are asked. The church farm at Dayspring is a retreat and renewal center with facilities recently added for care for the disturbed. The Potter's House Workshop is a craft center where people discover God's love and acceptance in intimate working conditions. And now, most important to Washington's economic and moral problems, members of the church are seeking to build small businesses where the concept of the church can be carried out through vocational structures.

The church is small for membership requires an annual commitment to a discipline, but the story is challenging because of the far-ranging impact of this small group. The church is convinced that every member is a missioner. Giving is phenomenal. It is convinced that adult education in the church is even more important than that of the children (then active, growing, Christian parents will teach their children spiritual values). And it stands on the conviction that the work of the church need not be ringed with dinginess and poverty, but should be done with beauty, as unto God.

Although a highly practical church in its outreach, the mystical tradition seems to run deeply through this writing. The Rev. Mr. Cosby, called "Gordon" by the members, would appear to be the real inspiration point for the congregation's vision. Frequently the book seems to be quoting whole paragraphs from his sermons. A genuine effort has been made to keep this from being a personality-centered situation, but it seems evident at this point that the church's dependence on Gordon is deep seated.

It is always the temptation of a disciplined group to fall into the traps of pride and ease that result from that discipline. This church seems to be conscious of the hazard and apparently makes a genuine effort to deal realistically with the besetting sins of pharisaism. In addition, their genuine effort to support ecumenical missions ($17,550 in '62, '63) is a guard against the inbredness that is a temptation to independent churches. Interdependence is an antidote for self-righteousness.

The experience of this fellowship should be read and studied by every student of the Anabaptist view.

WASHINGTON, D. C. *Robert J. Carlson*

The Lordship of Christ. Proceedings of the Seventh Mennonite World Conference, August 1-7, 1962, Kitchener, Ontario. Cornelius J. Dyck, Editor. Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1963. 702 pp., $4.00.

It is not possible to review this entire volume of some 150 addresses, sermons, responses, reports and meetings adequately in a short review. There are scores of addresses which need to be independently reviewed in order to treat thought content. The volume contains seven days of solid presentations, and often ten sectional meetings took place simultaneously. I will give a broad overview of content, and then concentrate on a few addresses to whet your appetite.

The late Harold S. Bender, president of the conference for fifteen years, to whom these proceedings are dedicated (large Bender photo included), attended all conferences since 1930, except the first held in 1925. He states the conference purpose as: 1) renewal of the spiritual life of the churches, 2) appreciation for historic heritage, and 3) mutual understanding, appreciation and helpfulness.

C. J. Dyck, the editor of the proceedings of this seventh Mennonite World Conference held at Kitchener, Ontario, August 1-7, 1962, gives a brief summary. This was likely the largest representative gathering of Mennonites ever. Some 12,207 persons registered, and a total of about 25,000 participated, representing at least 25 countries. The theme of the conference was, "The Lordship of Christ." The conference received excellent news coverage by church and daily papers. Over $22,000 was received in offerings.

In a way this volume is a miniature *Mennonite Encyclopedia.* It brings us up to date on the general work of Mennonites around the world in 1962. Erland Waltner reports on the beginnings and growth of six Mennonite seminaries. Carl Kreider traces the emergence of seven Mennonite colleges in the USA since 1893 and their enrollments and problems, while J. A. Toews does the same for Canadian colleges. John Diller describes the beginnings of MDS and service at more than seventy disasters since 1950. Willard Claassen develops curriculum building; Guy Hershberger reports on alternative service past and present in all countries; J. Howard Kauffman reviews all sociological studies on Mennonites; and women's organizations are reported in detail. These are but a few examples.

Biblical and theological depth studies on the theme make up almost half of the volume. These were presented as five theme addresses, four sub-theme addresses with from two to four responses on each, four sermons on Sunday, seven evening addresses, and open meeting addresses.

The ten sections which met were on: Women's work, Men's work, Young People's work, evangelism, historical-sociological, missions, peace, literature, Christian education, and theological basis. The volume includes from five to fifteen presentations of various lengths in each of these sections.

The report also includes miscellaneous information on greetings sent to the conferences, minutes of meetings, financial statement, conference statement, delegate list, report on exhibits, conference program, constitution, author index, photos and illustrations, prayers, and responses.

There is much overlapping in the theme addresses. They are also the longest and most theological. Perhaps this accounted for some of the complaints we heard during the conference. Possibly the themes were too well divided, and the writers could not compare notes because of distance. In the book they are all together, while at the conference they were given on different days, so the overlapping is more apparent now.

What is the purpose of responses? Some are little treatises by themselves, paying little attention to the address to which they were to respond. Other responses simply reiterate what was already said in the address, agreeing most of the time with little evaluation. One senses a lack of bold critical analysis. Many responses are disappointing.

This reviewer found the papers on peace, the laity and sociology most challenging. Robert Kreider's address, "The Peace Witness and the Gospel" is possibly the most biblical and incisive of them all. It is a systematic use of the Bible, by a layman, speaking squarely to the relation of peace and the gospel, with many rich illustrations of application from his tour in Africa. It conveys simplicity and personal experience, saturated with concern and deep faith. It is not wrapped up in theological generalities and vocabulary which often fail to communicate to the layman.

The address by Vincent Harding on "The Christian and the Race Question," is cutting. It speaks because he just came out of jail, which is so much (although not as terrible) like the experiences of the early Christians and the Anabaptists. Here is prophetic boldness. The address by E. G. Kaufman asks some hard questions on payment of taxes.

Winfield Fretz on "The Role of the Laity in the Life of the Church" raises some serious questions about professionalism of the ministry and our concept of the priesthood of every believer. He expresses concern about popular, watered-down religion where the layman hands the work of the church to the minister. The work of the layman in MDS, relief service, Mennonite Men, VS, Pax and women's work is expressed as one of the real hopes of the Mennonite church. Laymen should serve as "priests" and even preach sometimes, if we believe in "the priesthood of every believer." Mennonite customs have not always encouraged practice of our creed in this area.

It is amazing how much of the spirit of the conference has been captured in this volume of proceedings. Those of us who attended, know that the enthusiasm, the meeting of friends, the international spirit, cannot be recorded on paper, but these proceedings convey much of the thought, concern and direction in which Mennonites around the world are moving. Christ is Lord in many Mennonite hearts, minds and actions. These conference writings will be referred to many times for information and inspiration.

EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN — *Leo Driedger*

Two sermonbooks to be remembered

Strength to Love by Martin Luther King, Jr. New York: Harper and Row, 1963, 146 pp., $3.50.

Christoph Blumhardt and His Message (introduced and edited by Rev.) R. Lejeune. (Translated by H. Ehrlich and N. Maas). Woodcrest, Rifton, New York: Plough Publishing House, 1963, 238 pp., $3.75.

Sermons are by their very nature primarily to be listened to and not to be read. And yet—great sermons have an

inherent power which makes them permanent values also to be enjoyed and profited by only when read. The two books here considered belong definitely to this category. They certainly deserve widest attention.

Martin Luther King, Jr., hardly needs special introduction. He is widely known as the courageous and Gandhi-minded Christian leader of the Negro movement in our South towards full equality. His first book, *Stride Toward Freedom,* telling the Montgomery story, was likewise a document long to be remembered. [Ed. note: A new book by Martin Luther King, Jr., entitled *Why We Can't Wait* has recently been published by the New American Library, N. Y.] Now he presents to us a selection of his sermons in his second book, the title of which is a program in itself, revealing the spiritual caliber of this outstanding man. "Strength," we need from On-High, that we may be able "to love. . ." not only our brothers but our enemies as well; in fact, them first of all that they may be won over to the cause which they so violently oppose.

I do not hesitate to call this small book "great." It offers a genuine lesson for all of us to learn what it means to be a Christian in practice. Also Mennonites (who in Europe for centuries had been looked down upon as second-class citizens, as now the Negroes in America) should appreciate this reminder of an authentic Christian attitude in situations of distress and torment. Where else can one truly practice this revaluation of values if not under conditions as they are prevailing, unfortunately, also now in our country?

Sermon Five, called "Loving Your Enemies," gives the leading motif of the entire collection, which comprises a total of sixteen sermons, three of which had been written (of all places) in jails in Georgia. Strength they certainly emanate and, let us hope, will also convey to open-minded readers. The climax, however, appears to be item number Seventeen called "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence," an autobiographical report of the author's spiritual development up to the point where he felt able to lead his colored brethren through the dangers of nonviolent political action. Here we find profound thoughts on suffering as few other persons in today's Christendom have ever expressed.

"My personal trials have taught me," King writes, "the value of unmerited suffering. As my sufferings mounted I soon realized that there were two ways in which I could respond to my situation—either to react with bitterness or to seek to transform the suffering into a creative force. I decided to follow the latter course. . . . I have attempted to see my personal ordeals as an opportunity to transfigure myself and heal the people involved in the tragic situation which now obtains. I have lived these last few years with the conviction that unearned suffering is redemptive. There are some who still find the Cross a stumbling block, others consider it foolishness. But I am more convinced than ever before that it is the power of God unto social and individual salvation" (p. 141). Anyone who has read the *Martyrs Mirror* or some similar document of the great Anabaptist past will easily realize that here we encounter the same spirit and the same strength of faith to overcome suffering by love.

The other sermonbook has Christoph Blumhardt for its author. Who is he? Not many Americans have ever heard his name or his message—worth, indeed, to be listened to. Thus there is need to be somewhat more elaborate in introducing the man and his book to our readers and in explaining also the background of this fine though somewhat remote publication.

Christoph Blumhardt "the son" (1842-1919) lived the greater part of his life in Bad Boll, Württemberg, where his equally exceptional father, John Christoph Blumhardt "the father" (1805-1880) had established a strange spiritual center for Christian healing and inner renewal. Both father and son were Protestant ministers, but Christoph Blumhardt, the son, later renounced readily his church office within the state church of Württemberg. From then on he continued exclusively to serve as spiritual leader for and counselor to untold guests and attenders at Bad Boll, a real place of pilgrimage at that time. His message was neither Lutheran nor Reformed and certainly in no way theological in nature. In the plain language which is used, it shook the listeners in the depth of their hearts. Seen from the traditional Protestant theology, his was a rather unconventional message. He did not preach an easy doctrine of "Salvation by faith alone" nor a doctrine of "cheap grace" as (Bonhöfer called it), but rather the core of the Gospel message as he understood it: *"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness."*

In this Blumhardt had undoubtedly prophetic power. As R. Lejeune of Zurich, the editor, makes clear in his Introduction, this man had a tremendous spiritual vitality which enabled him to break through all conventional and preconceived religious ideas. He freed himself of all sentimental pietism, so tempting to an inward Christianity. He understood readily that to "seek the Kingdom of God and its righteousness" is a task to be pursued with complete dedication yet soberly and unemotionally. This was the main contents of what he called "The Cause of Christ" (*Die Sache Christi*), which he preached in ever new variations throughout his long life. "Be strong in the Lord," he admonished his listeners in an address in 1914; "be strong in the fight and stand firm at the side of the Lord. A fight is raging in the world today and in this fight we must be steadfast and faithful every single day. . . ." At Bad Boll they did not live communally like Hutterites or the Society of Brothers, but rather as an unorganized fellowship of believers and seekers, what Lejeune aptly called "a waiting church community."

The nineteen sermons, which Lejeune had culled from a far bigger opus to present to us a small but condensed column of devotional material, give us a good idea of the forceful and as a rule novel thoughts and insights of this unusual leader. His predominant concern as a Christian were the "lowly and despised ones," the "sinners and down-trodden" who are in need of our first attention, a concern well expressed, for instance, in Sermon Fifteen, "Jesus among the Wretched."

Blumhardt had impressed his message upon many seekers. In this country Walter Rauschenbusch got his idea of the Social Gospel at least in part from Bad Boll. And Leonhard Ragaz of Zurich (d. 1945), another forceful but little known fighter for the Kingdom idea, was likewise deeply indebted to Blumhardt and his work for "the cause of Christ." R. Lejeune belongs to his circle—hence his dedicated work to bring out the legacy of Blumhardt.

We have before us a book published by the Society of

Brothers in an English translation which opens to the American reader spiritual food for inner renewal and strengthening of faith. This is a remarkable event in itself. In the early 1920's Eberhard Arnold established in Germany what is now called the "Society of Brothers" on an outspoken Anabaptist pattern. They lived and still live communally, very much like the Hutterites with which group they also entertained close ties, using their writings and sermons for their own guidance. In recent years, however, they rediscovered Christoph Blumhardt and his message and felt the strong impact of his substantial faith in their own midst, even though it is somewhat different in emphasis from their erstwhile Anabaptist orientation.

KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN *Robert Friedmann*

Death Row Chaplain by Byron E. Eshelman with Frank Riler. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., c. 1962, 244 pp.

Byron Eshelman is a minister's son who had his first encounter with the violence of crime and law when he was just nine years old. During the school lunch hour he saw a shooting victim writhing in pain on the main street of his home town of Partridge, Kansas. The victim was an escapee from the Hutchinson Reformatory and the death wounds were inflicted by the sheriff.

Today Eshelman serves as Supervising Chaplain for the California State Department of Corrections, and as such he has watched many die at the hands of the state. He has strong feelings about capital punishment; and the book, containing personal glimpses of the lives of many who have so died, seeks to make a strong plea for penology motivated by rehabilitation instead of retribution. The contribution of the book is therefore especially valuable for the examples of murderers who have made or who are now making positive contributions to society. He suggests that both David and Moses are examples not to be overlooked.

The book is quite readable, even though it is somewhat disorganized and very subjective. It is in a way a very human story about the author himself, a dedicated man, but far from being perfect. Being psychiatrically oriented, Eshelman describes in detail his own history and family so that amateur analysts can indulge in the same sport he seems to enjoy: "psychosleuthing."

To a Mennonite, it is strange that a man who professes such allegiance to the goodness that exists even in society's so-called "bad" people should say that he "had to grow out of pacifism" (p. 54) after having registered as a conscientious objector in World War II.

The descriptions of the inside of San Quentin and of the death chamber are detailed and accurate and several pictures are included.

The book is also valuable for what it says about the role of a chaplain in the lives of law violators and, by implication, mental patients. This issue is not discussed in any complete fashion and not from the viewpoint of a church-operated institution, but there are numerous examples that reveal the Chaplain's philosophy.

WASHINGTON, D. C. *Robert J. Carlson*

The Presence of Eternity: History and Eschatology by Rudolf Bultmann. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957, 170 pp. $3.00.

This is a relatively short book, considering the fact that it constitutes the 1955 Gifford Lectures delivered at the University of Edinburgh. Moreover, important historically-oriented sections of the work (which constitute a large share of the basic material presented) are probably too highly compressed except for the purposes of the dilettante who is not concerned with thoroughness. At best Bultmann's treatment (of, e.g., historiography) indicates something of where *he* stands in relation to his great groundbreaking predecessors in the fields under consideration. And in this connection one is tempted to say that what he has to say about Collingwood makes his best contribution to such a purpose.

While Bultmann deals with man's historical nature in Chapter VII, in a sweeping survey of how man has been understood in the great periods of history, one has to wait until Chapter X to discover where it is that his own view of man leads theologically. Man is "the core of history . . . its real subject," so that "knowledge of history is at the same time self-knowledge." "The unity of history is to be understood" in that "every moment is the *now* of responsibility, of decision." And thus "the genuine life of man is always before him" since "human actions are caused by purposes and intentions."

If these lectures are too compact for certain purposes and needs, perhaps one should at least be appreciative of this as evidence that they are written by one who is thoroughly familiar with the terrain which he covers, no matter how much one might think his binoculars need wiping.

BETHEL COLLEGE *Harold H. Gross*

Ressentiment by Max Scheler, trans. by W. W. Holdheim; edited with an introduction by L. A. Coser. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1961. 201 pp., $4.00.

Scheler, who died at Frankfurt in 1928, was one of the most original ethical thinkers during the first part of the twentieth century. *Ressentiment* is a quite creative reinterpretation of the concept of "ressentiment" which was used by Nietzsche in connection with the latter's idea of "slave morality." While not his most important work, this book represents Scheler's first important writing on ethical and social theory. Enlivened with illustrative material, it is a critical analysis of the "universal love of mankind" and of "work" considered as professed foundation-stones of moral value in the modern world. The idea of "ressentiment" anticipates certain developments in modern depth psychology with its concept of 'reaction formation' associated with expressed feelings of envy, hatred, and revenge which are covertly expressed in the overtly professed values.

BETHEL COLLEGE *Harold H. Gross*

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I exhort you my brethren and my fellow-anointed in the Lord . . . that you earnestly take note of everything that is written for our sakes, for the Lord has not said in vain through the power of the Spirit what we are to do and what not, for everything that is pleasing to Him He has bidden us do through the Scriptures and the law in our hearts.

WOLFGANG BRANDHUBER
Anabaptist Leader
and Martyr, 1528