MENNONITE LIFE

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MENNONITE LIFE

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COVER AND BACK COVER

Fellowship during communion around the table.

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IN THIS ISSUE

We continue the discussion on the fine arts started in the January, 1965 issue. In addition to products of literature, the architectural aspect of the fine arts is presented with numerous illustrations indicating trends followed by both Mennonites and non-Mennonites in America and the Netherlands. The changes and the contrast will be particularly apparent if this issue is compared with the January, 1957 issue, devoted to church architecture and worship. A trip through European countries would make this even more apparent. ¶ In the tradition of the Catholic Church and closely related liturgical churches, the altar is one of the most significant factors in determining the church architecture. It is the focal point and centrally located. At the altar, the priest mediates between God and man, particularly in the consecration of the bread and wine which are miraculously transformed into the blood and body of Christ. On the altar the Lord is ever present. ¶ The front and back cover of this issue focus on another center of the church. "The curtain has been rent" which separated God and the worshiper. A plain table has replaced the altar and has been set in the center of the place of worship. The "priest" has come out of "the holy of holies" and is joining the fellowship around the "Lord's table." Soon the believers will enter and sit down around the table, in order to fellowship together as the bread is broken and the wine is served in memory of Christ's death. In breaking and eating the bread and drinking from the cup, they will experience Christ's spiritual presence and invisible ties will bind them even closer into a fellowship of Jesus Christ and each other. ¶ Where do Christians observe communion the way it is shown on the cover and described here? This happens to be a new Mennonite church at Hengelo, the Netherlands. But this tradition goes back to the days of the Reformation when a minister named Aportanus, stepped down from the altar area in a church in Norden, East Friesland, in the year 1527, in order to observe this kind of fellowship communion. The back cover illustrates such an event in the early days. Some Mennonites of the Netherlands have continued this tradition to this day. Has this ever been done among the Mennonites in America? Not to our knowledge. This is, however, no reason why it should not be done. We have always emphasized the fellowship idea. Why not practice more of it and encourage it through symbolism and church architecture! ¶ We are happy to have so many samples of the productive pen of Mennonite poets in this issue. We hope this will encourage others to do the same and make the fruits of their labor and inspiration available for print. We are also happy to feature in this issue one of the older Mennonite settlements in North America of which the Mennonite Publishing House of Scottdale, Pa., is best known. ¶ We would like to call the attention of our readers to the fact that with this issue MENNONITE LIFE is completing its twentieth year of publication. We are grateful to all those who made valuable contributions to the magazine and to all the readers, new and old, for faithfully subscribing to MENNONITE LIFE from year to year. Why not win at least one reader a year!

Observing the Lord's Supper in fellowship around the table in Holland, past and present. (See also covers.)

PROPHETS UNAWARE

By Russell L. Mast

"THUS SAYS THE Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and ungird the loins of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed: I will go before you and level the mountains, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut asunder the bars of iron, I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I surname you, though you do not know me. I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I gird you, though you do not know me, that men may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none beside me; I am the Lord, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:1-6).

This passage is positively exciting: it is provocative; and it is bold and daring. It speaks of Cyrus who is referred to as God's "anointed," a term used only in special circumstances and later applied to the long awaited Messiah. Moreover, Cyrus is described as one whose right hand God has grasped, whom God has called by name, and one whom God has girded.

Cyrus, the Pagan King

Anyone unfamiliar with Old Testament history would certainly gain the impression that Cyrus was some great and holy man of God, or perhaps one of the noblest of the Hebrew prophets. But the fact is that not only was Cyrus not a prophet, or a man of God in the accepted sense; he was not even a Hebrew! He was a pagan king, the powerful head of one of the greatest empires of the ancient world, and a successful administrator and military strategist. And yet he was the one who was divinely anointed, whose right hand God had grasped, whom God had called by name. But what is even more remarkable is the fact that Cyrus had no idea that this had happened or that he was in any way the special emissary of the God of Israel, even though he had been liberal in granting them freedom to return to their home land. Yet this, according to our passage, is what God had said of him, "I gird you though you do not know me."

When Cyrus issued this famous edict which permitted the Jews to return to the home land, he committed himself to a policy that was inherently right and ethically sound, and from the standpoint of the prophet, a concrete expression of the will of God. So even without knowing God, in his righteous act Cyrus became the emissary of God. This passage suggests, therefore, that all righteousness, as all truth, is of God; and that there is no righteousness, as there is no truth, that is not of God. And because God had reminded Cyrus, "I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God:" he could go on to say, "I gird you, though you do not know me."

If, in the time of Isaiah, God did not limit the people through whom he worked to those who knew him, or speak only through these who acknowledged him, is it possible that this is still true of God in our day? Are there voices in our day which do not pretend to speak for God, which nevertheless do proclaim his message? Are there those who deal with theological

questions but use non-theological terms? To consider only the field of writing as an example, are there those to whom God might say,"I gird you, though you do not know me"?

The names of T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden and Dorothy Sayers might be given as examples. Here are Christians who have made the grade as writers. They communicate theological truth in non-theological terms, and many who read or listen to their words have not been in the habit of crossing the threshold of a church door. I would, therefore, insert here parenthetically that there is need for more writers who have these splendid qualifications. However, this is not exactly the point I am trying to make. Christian writers are hardly analogous to the pagan Cyrus, and the words hardly apply to them: "I gird you, though you do not know me."

Non-Christian Writers Proclaim God

To get at the full application of our text, we will need to ask the question whether non-Christian writers can be used of God as proclaimers of his truth and instruments of his purpose. What about writers like John Steinbeck, J. D. Salinger and Tennessee Williams who are among the top writers of our time? I submit that we cannot dismiss them as unimportant, because they have some important things to tell us about ourselves and our world, which we need very much to hear. I suggest, moreover, that the words of God in Isaiah might very easily apply to them. "I gird you, though you do not know me." They are truly prophets unaware, because insofar as what they say is true, God speaks through them.

This was the position of Justin Martyr, one of the Christian Apologists of the second century, "Whatever has been well said anywhere or by anyone," he wrote, "belongs to us Christians" (*Apology*, II, 13). And Calvin put it, "Whenever, therefore, we meet with heathen writers, let us learn from that light of truth which is admirably displayed in their works, that the human mind, fallen as it is, and corrupted from its integrity, is yet invested and adorned by God with excellent talents. If we believe that the Spirit of God is the only fountain of truth, we shall neither reject nor despise the truth itself, wherever it shall appear, unless we wish to insult the Spirit of God" (*Institutes*, II, ii, xv).

We have said, then, that what these non-Christian writers have to tell us about ourselves and our world is important. But let us hasten to add that it is none too pretty a tale! It is not always uplifting and inspiring. It is often depressing and shocking. In his book, *Catcher in the Rye*, J. D. Salinger tells about a confused teen-age boy, fed up to the gills with the phony world of hypocrisy in which he lives, and yet he is unable to find any meaning in anything else. No one can enter into the mind of this miserable unhappy and misguided creature and feel good or happy or smug. That is not the purpose of the book. It is not to tell us something happy, but something true; not to lead us off into a dream world, but make us really see and face the world that is.

The prophets of the Bible were like that, and were always impatient with those who were "not grieved for the affliction of Joseph," and who cried, "Peace, peace, when there was no peace." Perhaps then, God has girded these modern writers to make us see something about ourselves and about our world. In discussing modern art in general, Paul Tillich says, "Modern art is not propaganda but revelation. It shows that the reality of our existence is as it is. It does not cover up the reality in which we are living." To do so, he says, is "Dishonest beautification" (*The Courage to Be*, p. 147). There is a place for beauty in the world in general and in the arts in particular, but never as an escape, never to cover up the festering sores in our common life.

Another example of a non-Christian writer who has something very true to tell us about ourselves and our world is Tennessee Williams. Let me read this section from his preface to *The Rose Tattoo*, "Men pity and love each other," he writes, "more deeply than they permit themselves to know. The moment after the phone has been hung up, the hand reaches for a scratch pad and scrawls a notation: 'Funeral Tuesday at five, Church of the Holy Redeemer, don't forget flowers.' And the same hand is only a little shakier than usual as it reaches, some minutes later, for a highball glass that will pour a stupefaction over the kindled nerves. Fear and evasion are the two little beasts that chase each other's tail in the revolving wire cage of our nervous world. They distract us from feeling too much about things. Time rushes toward us with its hospital tray of infinitely varied narcotics, even while it is preparing us for its inevitably fatal operation. . ." (Preface to *The Rose Tatoo*).

After such a penetrating analysis of modern man and his abysmal failure to manage his own life, one can feel gratified that our generation of theater-goers is exposed to such devastating realism and such painstaking honesty. Perhaps Tennessee Williams does not intend to speak for God; yet since what he says is true, it may be that God has girded him even though he has not known him. In any case we Christians need to listen, for it is against the background of such a world and such a deep spiritual need that we must proclaim the Christian faith. Only by seeing the abyss of destruction over which modern life hangs can we proclaim the good news of God with any kind of relevance or meaning. That we need to understand the Christian faith goes without saying; but we need also to understand our world and the dilemma of modern man if we are ever to make it relevant or meaningful.

We have been applying the implications of this passage in the book of Isaiah to the field of literature.

Actually, the issue is larger than that; it is the issue of Christ and Culture. In addressing himself to this particular problem some years ago, H. Richard Niebuhr summarized the typical answers that have been made across the centuries. (1) Christ against Culture, (2) Christ with Culture, (3) Christ above Culture, (4) Christ and Culture in Tension and (5) Christ Transforming Culture. All of these categories represent a partial truth and have an important function to perform. But in every possible relation which the Christian faith can have with culture in a given age or a given moment of time, the followers of Christ must know and understand both Christ and culture, and they must know what both of them have to say for themselves. And since another college year is about to terminate, it is certainly not out of place to say that this is the position to which a Christian liberal arts program is committed.

Christ with Culture

I have given particular stress to what Niebuhr would call, Christ *with* Culture. I have suggested that there are times when culture itself speaks a Christian word or at least a part of it and that the truth of God can come from unexpected sources. For we are in no position to place any kind of limits on the way in which God must speak or the means through which he can communicate. God can gird even those who do not know him. It is the mark of an educated Christian that he can recognize God's truth when it comes, and whatever route it comes. In so doing he can make the Christian faith relevant to the world in which he lives, that by God's grace, Christ may yet transform culture into his own likeness.

Sources of Poetry

By Warren Kliewer

A GOOD MANY difficulties in reading, comprehending, or even defining poetry disappear, I think, if readers look at poetry from the inside rather than the outside. That is, in reading poetry a reader must become a poet, at least temporarily. I realize that I am asking for a great deal in asking people to become something other than themselves. And yet, this is about what one must do in other areas of life. In order to make the checkbook balance, for example, one must adopt the point of view and system of values of a bank teller. Accuracy, neatness, and balanced equations become significant issues. If this is true in other areas, it is not surprising that poetry demands the same kind if imaginative shift to another viewpoint.

Now, it happens that I do not make the shift to the bank teller's point of view easily, and this explains why my check stubs do not always come out right the first time. When this happens, it's my fault, of course, not the fault of the check stubs. It's a failure of my imagination. Similarly, a good many difficulties which readers find in modern poetry can be explained by pointing to readers' not being willing to "become poets." Even professional critics lapse from time to time and betray their unwillingness to participate in the act of writing a poem. A lapse of this sort does not reflect on the poem but on the critic.

There is another aspect to this story, however. Not all poets are willing, for one good reason or other, to take their readers into the workshop. Therefore, I should like to make an attempt to show what goes into the making of a poem. I shall break up the process into four stages. These stages may be a little arbitrary, and they should not be confused with four steps which occur one after another in time. Nor do

I think that a poem which fulfills part of the process is an incomplete or inferior poem: a poem does what it does, and to say that a poem should have done something more or something else is to ask the poet to write a different poem, which may very well be a good idea but is not relevant to the poem under consideration. But I do think that my order of priority is very accurate. The first point is essential to all subsequent stages. One cannot bypass a preliminary stage for a later stage. The tradition and the present state of poetry force a discipline with its system of values and priorities on the poet, and he is not free to modify the discipline according to his wishes. He cannot, for example, decide that his poems shall result in a certain theological conclusion, and then modify the discipline so that his poems can be forced into his preconceived conclusions. One cannot cheat with logic: one cannot cheat with poetry.

1. Perception

Poems begin in the perception of material reality. A poet, like an artist of any other kind, is always deeply concerned with what "the things of this world" (to quote Richard Wilbur) look like, how they sound, how they feel. Simple, unconsidered, pre-rational sense impressions are the basis of the epistemology which leads to artistic creation. Perhaps I might illustrate this with a little poetic sketch in which almost nothing happens except that the speaker of the poem sees something which he had not seen before.

Mist films the window
and grays the ash
and hollyhock
until a drop slides
down the window,
rips mist into half-panes,
and the tree peers in.

The perception in the next poem is slightly more complex, for the speaker of the poem perceives not only colors but relationships. He sees that three shades of red are unlike each other, and this unlikeness is similar to one in another color spectrum. But even so, the perception is simple.

GIRL EATING TOMATO

Three shades of red—
fruit, lips, and cheeks—
like sunrise paling out
from a crimson center.

2. Form

It does not take long for the poet to get around to expressing the very basic human wish for organization. Even in the poem above there is a rudimentary sort of form in the juxtaposition of similarities and differences. A more complex structure occurs in the next poem. There is not only a relationship established in the speaker's noticing what reflected blue light does to the skin, but the poem develops a slight movement in the speaker's discovering an attitude toward the object. This is one of the simplest kinds of poetic form.

All but hidden
beneath blonde hair,
the skin of her ears
seems white in the blue
light from her sweater.
I shall not touch them.

Even in a very simple poem one can develop complex forms. In the next poem the speaker discovers that things in reality do have formal relationships to each other—specifically, in this case, that a thing is surrounded by another thing, which is surrounded by another thing, and so on.

A GIRL WATCHING THE SNOW

The porch is railed with twists,
spirals and ovals of blued
gray wrought iron—
a solemn metal playing
at acrobatics.
A girl leans on the railing;
her living palms bulge over
embracing the blue iron
like her hair that falls over her gray
collar, like her breath
chilled white that spirals and curves
over her white forehead,
like the snow that floats
embracing the cloud of breath.

3. Language

There is another way of approaching form, and this is by way of the poetic tradition. It happens that the English poetic tradition has dipped into another—a tradition which is foreign in more than one sense. We have frequently borrowed poetic forms from French and Italian poetry, as in case of the villanelle. This particular form sets up serious obstacles to the poet, for it requires that he fulfill the demands of a tight, repetitious form without succumbing to the danger of boredom.

PIGEONS AND WORSHIP

Three pigeons searching on the spire
Hum a well-fed harmony;
Their hymn is answered by the choir

Whose dissonant treble tumbles higher
Than steeple or silent bell, whose plea
Three pigeons searching on the spire,

Those three fat burghers, could not aspire
To know. Birds sing of satiety;
Their hymn is answered by the choir

In anguished chorales of human desire
For the Dove bringing peace to agony.
Three pigeons searching on the spire

Coo about corn and dove desire
And fat rose-gray reality.
Their hymn is answered by the choir

Hungry for what the silence inspire,
What the spirit tell to the bent knee.
Three pigeons searching on the spire:
Their hymn is answered by the choir.

It may very well be that tight forms of this kind are a little alien to our taste. The British and American poetic tradition has never quite decided whether it is better to perform well by respecting obstacles or to perform well by doing away with obstacles. At any rate, flirting with these artificial forms has resulted in poets' becoming interested in playfully examining language for its own sake. The artificial form opens up the possibility of a very natural thing—becoming interested in the medium in which the artist works.

4. Illusion

Samuel Taylor Coleridge argued that the reader should approach the poem with a "willing suspension of disbelief." One can also reverse this: a poet aims toward creating an illusion as one of the final effects of the poem. He is interested, that is, in creating an imaginative and temporary belief in his treatment of the subject. This might be distinguished from persuasive prose such as political campaigning, which is an attempt to create genuine and enduring belief in the reader. The discipline of poetry does not really allow for such didactic purposes, no matter how badly the poet as believer or private citizen may wish that more people agreed with him.

Possibly another poem might illuminate this aspect of poetry, though of course it will take a longer poem to say something about illusion. This poem is a little unusual in that it uses poetic techniques to discuss artistic theory itself. But there is still a little distance between the poem and the subject in that the theory is discussed in terms of another art form, drama.

THE PLAY WITHIN THE PLAY

1. Premise
The question is, "What's Hecuba to him?"
The answer's all but obvious: nothing at all,
A useful nothing, or a colored toy,
A toothless, tattered myth of a mask to wear
With love or hold at arm's length for a laugh,
A mirror, which is nothing in itself,
Properly cold and hypothetical,
Held up, reflecting nature with a dare
That nature answers with another mirror
Reflecting an image that reflects an image
Of images reflecting on and on
Spiraling down into the center of things.
The premise, therefore, is that the dumb show
Of actors playing actors acting a play
Is real as long as it remains illusion
And true as long as it engenders tricks.

2. Assumption
Behind the dumb show's tapestry a playful
Metaphysic, a jerry-built and water-
Colored super-system made of slats
And ropes and canvas: all the world's a stage,
A necessary inference if the stage
Can represent the world.
This street, then, is a stage, this vacant lot
A stage, this bush, this ash tree only setting,
The candy bars this boy is eating props.
This couple holding hands who smile, who kiss
In the shadow between the front gate and the house—
They must be actors, walk-ons I suppose,
Illusions who create illusions of love.
If all the world's a clever mise-en-scene,
The theater is a play within a play.

3. Conclusion
Who says that men are playthings of the gods?
It might be that the gods are actors' toys,
For on the stage all things are possible:
Ghosts walk the battlements, the Capulets
And Montagues are reconciled, Lear dies
And then goes home to his apartment, wife,
And cats in Brooklyn Heights. And yet the stage
Is like the world it imitates—both rule
By law: one can have ghosts but, having called
Ghosts up, not griffins nor a ghostless rampart—
Choose Ariel, if you like, and Caliban
But do not look for their reconciliation.

The play within the play is free, it leaps
In lawless fandangos within the minuet;
Free because untrue, because unplanned,
Because a crepe-haired mask of papier mache
That even actors laugh at from the start.
The pious, masked, can doubt, released from truth,
The skeptical have faith, redeemed from fact.
Hamlet can prove the guilt he believes and doubts,
Prospero entertain those whom he loves
Too shyly to tell, Prince Hal burlesque friends, father,
Himself, the kingship—games made of sacred things
Because they're sacred and because they're games.

POEMS

By Jacob Sudermann

Elijah

Down below Tyre and west of Endor
the Great Sea parries the thrusting shore
or sometimes lilts his ancient tunes
for the whirling stars and their satellite moons;
and while they bathe in his rhythmic deep
to shed the dust of their cosmic sweep,
their host begins a favorite lay
with a nod at the land that cradles the bay:

"There where the rock runs into the sea
Mount Carmel shrouds a mystery;
but see where its head is bared to the sky
by the clouds caressed while the sun rides high,
circled there by the hounds of Baal
bold stands Elijah, Jehovah's flail."

The stars and their moons are caught in the spell
of the cunning web of a tale spun well.
Spontaneous, unrehearsed into song they burst:

"Jehovah, Creator uphold this man,
the voice of your will from Beersheba to Dan!"

"On the left, on the right a churning cloud,
Israel's thousands surge and crowd:
Zealots of Baal, four hundred and more,
impatiently waiting to settle the score;
Ahab's men, swords half drawn,
sworn to rid Israel of this thorn!
Ahab's queen, spawn of Hell,
Israel's blot, black Jezebel;
but no one dares to lift the hand
as long as the people take no stand!"

"Jehovah, Creator uphold this man,
the voice of your will from Beersheba to Dan!"

The priests of Baal their Bullock slew,
then to the altar its carcass drew;
lifting their arms for the crowd to see,
they invoked their idol industriously,
but when the fire still failed to appear
they slashed their bodies in frenzied fear,
for well they knew their fate congealed
as long as Baal's power stood unrevealed.

Elijah mocked their impotence,
chided their god's indifference:
'Perhaps he sleeps, or is gone for the day,
perhaps the hunt has led him astray?'

'He may be dead!' a cynic said.

As stillness follows the sudden shock,
so the crowd stood dumb, a stricken flock;
but then arose such a roar of assent
that the rocks reechoed, the clouds were rent!"

"Jehovah, Creator uphold this man,
the voice of your will from Beersheba to Dan!"

"Jehovah's hand wove in and out
touching minds still devout
that remembered days when with mighty hand
the Lord broke trail to the Promised Land:
'the Plagues of Egypt!' an old man shouted,
'the dread Red Sea, Pharaoh routed!'

Like sparks to tinder, the words took fire;
staccato shouts rose higher and higher:
'the fire by night!' 'the cloud by day!'
'the hoar frost's white where the manna lay!' "

"Jehovah, Creator uphold this man,
the voice of your will from Beersheba to Dan!"

"The prophet of God with practiced hand
slew his bullock, took his stand;
sons of Levi sprang to his aid
their sinewy arms the offering laid;
they drenched it well at his behest,
filled the trench at his request.

And Time contained its wayward pace;
his was the fight! his the race!
With hands outstretched toward the God he knew,
his heart spoke fully; his words were few:
'Hear O Lord my prayer's refrain—
Return these sheep to your fold again!'

All Israel heard these fervent words
that soared to heaven, fleet homing birds.
Before his lips had ceased to move,
the bolt descended truth's straight groove:
it burned the wood, the flesh, the bones!
it licked up the water, devoured the stones!

Prone, on their faces the people fell,
refined like ore in the furnace well.
While fingers groped for the cooling earth,
old faith experienced a new rebirth!"

The stars and their moons rise out of the sea.
One vast, resplendent fraternity
they resume their orbit's invisible track;
ecstatic, clear their chant rings back:

"Jehovah, Creator upholds the man
who voices His will from Beersheba to Dan!"

Oct. 14, 1964

The Intruder

"And who are you? I asked,
surprised to see
his shape loom large
so suddenly.
I could not guess
how he came in
and time was short,
too short for explanations
and there was much to do
before it was too late
and much to win.

"Now, this is strange," he said;
his eyes were wide,
too wide for measure,
and they were deep
as deep can hide its treasure.
"Men speak of me quite frequently.
Yes, I have had the accolade
at every human thought parade
and you should know me better."

"Some other time!" I said impatiently.
"You see that it is late,
so little time is left;
I have a rendezvous at eight."
"I know," he gestured with his head
and coming close,
he touched me
with his fingertips.
He touched me once upon the eyes;
then stooping low,
he kissed my lips.
I felt as strange
as strange as only new can be.
I looked into his eyes again
and recognized Eternity.

Cain

With this cedar burl I cudgeled him.
Powered by these arms it struck
till in its crest shell
the fluttering beat dropped cold:
My brother of the cherub countenance,
who will mend it for you now?
Speak face and I'll mar you more!

He won't speak?
Why then, Glib-Tongue's dead—
Dead—? O alien sound:
No grace of symmetry,
flat expectorate;
vomit of expiration,
you have been born!
Go! Hiss-kiss your way along—
Pell-mell!
You and your jolly brood.

Who's there?
Shadow, walking bush, gyrating tree—
Speak! I am Cain—Cain!
Cringe at that name?
My eyes confound me;
my ears ring voices—
Down this well I'll shout them:
Silence!
What multiplicity of sound,
what clangor now assails me—?
Drown—Drown!

Voices, these plaguing voices—
How should I know?
How should I know where my brother is?
Am I his keeper?
Ask his mother, his father!
Always petting him,
preferring him: "Abel! Abel!" (mimic)
He was the brighter.
Why ask me? Ask him!
That's courtesy—Ask him!
Let me sleep.
How should I know—
Let me sleep!

It was always Abel this, Abel that:
"Why can't you be more like Abel?" (mimic)
Why did he mock me with his offering today?
Why did his gift find respect with HIM?
And mine—?
Mine, a deviate wreath,
seek vainly the divine acceptance?
This visual preference!
Wormwood!
Gall!
Hate!
Yes, I hated him!

Venom of my rage dilates my veins,
flames the poison rose upon my forehead,
impels me toward the frightful deed:
to beat, to rip, to gouge, to strangle,
to sire all the progeny of hate!

O world of light!
You were so fair—
Ingest me stark night!

The Beginner

Did I ask to live?
Life was crushed upon me,
a thorn crown, forcing
the cry of pain—
You heard it.

Before awareness,
survival's milk bubbled
into my mouth,
trapped life into continuance;
Fear kept me drawing,
that and curiosity,
that and a gentle warmth—
You know it.

What did my eyes behold?
Mystery pervading
all my horizons,
posturing threat
from all points of the compass,
yet beckoning too.

I raised my guard:
instinctive stance
of the beginner.
The gentle warmth
was my solace,
it embraced me.

Then curiosity burgeoned:
senses brazed to instinct,
tensed by fears without,
groped in prevailing mystery.

It was timorous action,
muscled involuntarily,
reflex of desperation,
a parry, hardly a thrust.

Do you believe in miracles?
I drew blood from
obscuring mystery.
Truth flashed illumination,
percipitating brief intelligence,
encouraging me.
Reencounter swelled confidence,
fed exhilaration,
emboldening me;
and the gentle warmth
remained constant.
Can you feel my feeling?

I began to know what I "knew."
Fear eased within,
fear from without was endurable.

Then, yes then,
hope tried the lift of faith,
testing for buoyancy,
finding its shoulders,
bearing me up forever.

Reciprocity

My student:
Four years I have known you,
looked into your eyes
violet in round surprise,
jet in deeps of contemplation,
watched you grow.

Where now the expectation
so wide revealed, so bright
it braced me, the delight
when comprehension charged
the mind, attuned the soul?

More subtle you have grown, I find
as now I watch you hold the scroll,
move in those vestments raven-droll,
so poised accept the accolade,
your previous openness more veiled.

Growth is change along the grade.
Four years I urged this inclination,
gave what I had our brief relation
to live a grain above myself in you,
discovering you grew me too.

The Defiler

Snow, man-trodden,
weeps its virginity,
pleads the slow sun
for sudden compassion:
the coup de grace.
Soon crystaloid fingers,
tapers inverted, reach
down the window, each
pearling emotion,
soft lacrimal cadence,
a funereal mass,
and grounding their passion
join beauty's brief fashion.

Now earth, new sodden,
cracks her blue lips,
lights a slow smile
for the death-dealing star:
her hapless lover, both
waxing and waning
the constant killer.
But preening herself, now
in virginal green, she
bares her immaculate bosom
unthinking, forgetting
where stalks the defiler.

Skylark at Marbach

What impulse sparks this singing?
What knowledge makes you rise
to throw your ringing song,
so positive, into these Schiller skies?*
And soar up after it
to cry it down again,
so that a world caught up in listening
does reverence to your refrain
and face upturned, in silence
drinks the healing rain of praise,
filling its soul's dry void—
long dead to affirmation—
and setting hope ablaze?

Your poet had this knowledge too;
In your spring notes
his faith glows through.

Rise, rise sweet bird:
Upon the wing wind up
your vibrant song,
sing it long,
this hymn to joy.

*Friedrich Schiller, born at Marbach a/Neckar 1759, whose "Hymn to Joy" was used by Beethoven in his choral symphony, the ninth.

When We Pray

By Helen H. Mueller

Each day
We pray.

And when we pray for peace,
What do we ask of God—
That conflict cease,
That the scorched sod
Of Earth
Be fruitful once again,
That joy and mirth
Return to men?

Or do we pray for mind
And heart renewed,
So that, no longer blind,
We face the world, once viewed
In doubt and dark despair,
With courage and with trust,
Knowing that God is there—
And He is just?

Only One

By Helen H. Mueller

Children who have colored faces
Don't belong to different races;
There is just *one* human race,
And each one with friendly face
Is a part of God's great plan
That each child and youth and man
Should show love one to another
And should call each other brother.

Shattered Sky

By Elmer F. Suderman

Forked, sharp,
intensely bright,
brilliant line of light in
crooked, sinuous curve shatters
the sky.

Still, Small Voice

By Elmer F. Suderman

Jacob
in a dream saw
a ladder connecting
earth to heaven. But my sleep is
dreamless.

Moses
saw the burning
bush and turned aside and
heard God speak. Today bushes burn
no more.

Earthquake,
wind, fire. God was
absent. Elijah more
intently listened to the still
small voice.

Communion

By Helen H. Mueller

The far-off song I heard—
It was no music to my ears,
Only a fearful din
As the night sky bethralled me;
And I alone on the vast plain.
The bread I ate was bitter—
It turned to ashes in my mouth,
And I was choked with loneliness and dread.

And then *you* came.
You stood beside me on the plain—
And it became my home;
The dark night sky
Was suddenly star-filled;
The song, that far-off song,
Came near—and it was
Melody and harmony and joy.

We broke the bread,
And it was sweet to taste;
And in my heart, comfort and cheer
Because the loaf was shared.

*Olive Branch (*OLIJFTAK*) Mennonite Church in West Amsterdam, with the "Bird" as symbol, built after World War II.*

Architecture and Our Faith

By V. Gerald Musselman

THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS of the Christian life for North American Mennonites have always held precedence over the aesthetic. In all likelihood posterity will remember the church of our time for its social action programs: relief aid, Pax, Voluntary Service; probably not for its awareness of architectural values.

Mennonites have generally regarded themselves as utilitarian and practical. Architecture has been valued as a shelter for worship and judged by standards such as economy and planning efficiency. Rarely has it been welcomed for design excellence—on occasion fears have been expressed concerning the danger that the aesthetic element might confuse or even replace worship. Our view of architecture has been primarily social rather than artistic.

Neither do I sense any significant trend away from this view. The exciting new directions of our faith appear to be more toward service to the community at large than in the refining of our quality of formal worship. The function of the church building in the "rhythmic" relationship of the Christian going out into the world to fulfill the commission and returning for spiritual food, seems to be directing us toward an emphasis on the educational function of the church, potentially to the neglect of subtler aesthetic values which man alone on earth has been given the capacity to experience. Yet surely a renewed sense of Christian responsibilities is not incompatible with a similarly renewed sense of his potential to appreciate aesthetic values, to worship his creator with a wider vocabulary for response, and to communicate with his neighbor on other than solely a verbal basis.

The arts throughout history have been the most eloquent means of expressing the central theme of religious faiths. Architecture particularly has been privy to a most intimate dialogue with religion—almost all historical styles we have known have developed largely from a concern with how best to honor God. So the pyramids remain supreme monuments to the cult of the dead. The Greek Parthenon abstracts the ideal of man: beautiful of form and refined in intellect. The Mayan temple terraces provide a literal stage for bloody human sacrifice to placate a brutal, demanding god. The Gothic cathedral symbolizes the mystery of a heavenly deity while baroque spaces soar to the glorification and magnification of God Almighty. And the Pennsylvania Mennonite meetinghouse pays instinctive tribute to moderation and simplicity in earthly matters.

Limitations inherent in precisely expressing principles of our faith in architectural terms, should neither be exaggerated nor underestimated. I recall several years ago attending a Committee on Worship called to formulate a philosophy of church architecture, and being faced with a rather challenging series of questions including "How can 'Eschatological inbreaking' be expressed in architecture?" Even after discovering the meaning of the term, I had to confess then as I do now, that I simply don't know. There is a category of subject matter which is on a sufficiently basic level to be symbolically expressed, understood and accepted by everyone. This category of symbolic expression is generally capable of verbal explanation: a handshake, the ordinance of feet washing, the cruciform plan of a cathedral. On the other hand the specialized nature of certain ideas defies precise visual expression: nonresistance, the incarnation, or perhaps, "eschatological inbreaking." To these principles our obligation becomes more one of refraining from the use of inappropriate symbolism. The use of towers on some of our midwestern churches, reminiscent of medieval fortresses, is a case in point.

In addition to difficulties inherent in expressing certain principles visually in a precise manner, the very

The interior of the old Alexanderwohl Church, Goessel, Kansas, was typical of the simple meetinghouse patterned after those in Russia, Prussia, and Holland.

*The style of the old Dutch Mennonite churches (*VERMANING*) is preserved in the wooden structure (1703) at Krommenie, Holland. The pattern of this meetinghouse was transplanted to West Prussia, Russia, and to the prairie states.*

Goshen College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana, built in 1959.

nature of our society and direction of theological thought tends to reduce the emphasis on denominational identity. The increased ecumenical thinking of the last ten or fifteen years has had the effect of sorting out and identifying basic religious principles, with a simultaneous reduction in the importance of regional cultural values. I think of a recent example of this in my own practice in which a design proposal for Conrad Grebel College—an inter-Mennonite residential college at the University of Waterloo in Ontario—was rejected largely because what to us represented an attempt to express in contemporary terms a Mennonite character, instead communicated to the building committee a pioneer-rural oriented image which its members preferred not to propagate.

Regional identity has similarly been largely destroyed as a result of modern communications which enable an architect in Canada to be fully conversant with the most significant architectural work being undertaken in the United States, Italy or Japan—often while that work is still on the drawing boards. As a result the same influences are at work in each country, and regional characteristics which once existed are no longer as obviously apparent.

Within the framework of these limitations, however, the communication of religious faith is still a valid function of the design of religious buildings. The symbolic expression of spiritual values in church architecture is of very great antiquity. Plans such as the cruciform, mentioned earlier, are perhaps the most obvious. In this category also would be drawings dated 1783 recently acquired by McGill University of a "Temple for the Holy Trinity" with three porches arranged equilaterally around a central rotunda, or a star-shaped synagogue plan based on the "shield of David."

Peter Collins describes symbolic detailing as also being of great antiquity, but less of a tradition than might be supposed. During the initial era of persecution it was not uncommon for Christians to adorn the subterranean quarries in which they secretly worshiped, with crudely drawn pictorial symbols; but once a church architecture began to flourish, isolated symbols vanished, and says Collins,[1] "in no period before our own would it have been thought an act of creative genius simply to scrawl 'Mary' on a sheet of glass."

The symbolic alternative to detailing is to make the composition of the building itself into some sort of symbolic ornament. A church roof may express, so Frank Lloyd Wright said of his Unitarian Church in Madison, Wisconsin, "the attitude of the hands in prayer," (and how often we have heard the same symbolic claim made for every A-frame church since that time!) A church may literally resemble, as in the case of the First Presbyterian Church, Stamford Connecticut, some religious symbol, in this case the fish, which it resembles in both plan and section. And if the architect cannot think of a symbolic roof shape, Collins muses with tongue in cheek, he can always introduce a tower, which as everybody knows, "points a finger to God."

The above types of symbolic expression are easily understood and therefore communicate well. They are also easily achieved. They may be understood to be of the same quality of expression ecclesiastically as the disc-shaped office building for Capital Records is commercially. It does not necessarily lead to architectural significance, but it can communicate quite clearly and literally, messages appropriate to the client served.

Such communication however implies on our part as Mennonites, an awareness of the central theme of our faith; a knowledge of what qualities we wish to make manifest in our architecture. If we do not have a clear idea of what it is we wish to say in our buildings, it is unlikely that communication of any significance will result, and our architectural expression will continue on its bland and inarticulate way.

In the article "What Is Central in Worship" Elmer Ediger suggests high priority for the proper expression of a believer's church as opposed to the priestly system.

"Historically it is clear that the Old Testament liturgy was built around the priestly system of the altar and sacrifices. The word 'liturgy' in its Greek form as used in the Septuagint Old Testament means the 'public work or duty' in the work of the temple priests. The mission of the Son of God in relation to the priestly ritual is clear. God in Christ made a once-for-all sacrifice to save sinners. Was not the simple direct worship which he advocated 'in spirit and in truth' the opposite to the altar-centered system of the temple? When, about the third century after Christ, Christianity became watered down, a semi-priestly system developed, first from martyr's relics to rituals, and then to the holy shrines. In effect, the church borrowed and reverted to the ancient priestly system of the Hebrew altar worship."[2]

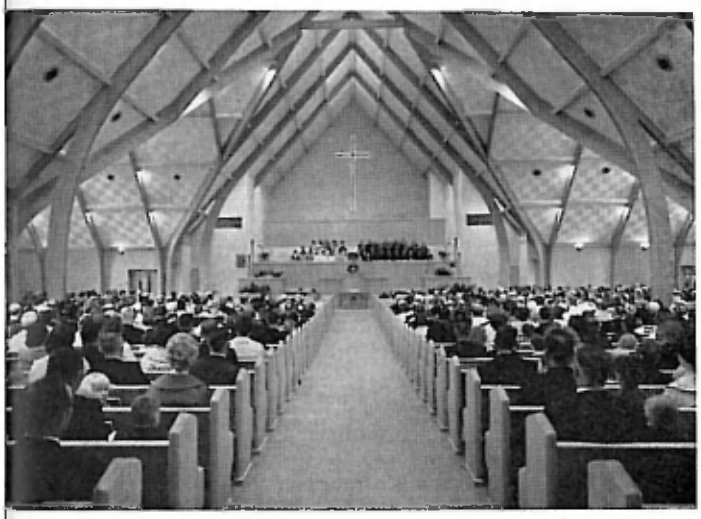
The architectural implications of a "proper expression of a believer's church" are several. For one thing it denies an essential difference between clergy and laity. For another, it implies a worshiping community, participating actively as a brotherhood rather than passively as spectators. Plan as a result will probably avoid the long, narrow Gothic proportions and may very well reflect a circular or semicircular seating arrangement which could give symbolic expression to the "family gathered together" concept of the church brotherhood. Our belief in the "priesthood" of all believers will very clearly find architectural expression in the unity of the worship area. We will probably avoid sharply distinguished spaces called "chancel" and "nave" and will certainly avoid the screens and chancel railings which separate both physically and psychologically the brother leading the worship service

Interior of new Mennonite Church in The Netherlands at Hengelo, with pulpit. (See also cover.)

Exterior and interior of Valparaiso, Indiana, University Chapel.

from those participating in it. No worshiper should be able to feel physically detached from that which is taking place. It will also probably be necessary that we examine very closely any use of galleries or balconies to ensure that these do not become the means of separating the worshiper mentally and emotionally from participation in the corporate worship.

One obvious example of symbolism which most Mennonite churches now possess, but which is understood remarkably little by Mennonite members, is our "chancel" furniture arrangement. Traditionally Mennonites have avoided the "split chancel" arrangement of most other Christian denominations. The reason is partly due to the avoidance of dramatic ceremony in our worship service, and partly due to a more positive expression of theological principle. To Mennonite adherents, the church is still clearly the Body of Christ and the church building is still clearly a shelter or meetinghouse. The extra holiness and mysterious presence implied in a deep chancel and remote altar are obviously contrary to our Mennonite theology. We therefore don't have an altar—we have a communion table; and this table is not remote—it is on level with and amidst the brotherhood. Again, we believe in unity of the spoken and written word, a principle which the separate pulpit and lectern denies. It would be a pity if, in the process of our search for more meaningful symbolic expression, we should discard some of the valid symbolism we already possess.



Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Nebraska, built 1964.

Another principle clearly relevant to our church architecture has to do with our understanding of the individual's relationship to God. Clearly a brotherhood which sees God as a loving heavenly Father should reasonably worship in a church with a character differing from a religious group which regards God as a mysterious unknown. The magnificent cathedrals of the past spoke eloquently to their conception of an all-powerful unknowable being. The worshiper could only stand in awe—a diminutive creature in the presence of his creator. At the same time this environment symbolized an overwhelmingly vertical concept of worship, a relationship between the individual and his God rather than a family of believers worshiping a common heavenly Father. Gothic proportion and structural lines were vertical. The worship service was individual to the extent that one could conceive of a celebration of the mass almost as satisfactorily with no lay members present as with a crowded congregation. The contrast with a Mennonite service with its emphasis on the fellowship of believers is apparent. Architecturally these differences of attitude will be reflected in the size of the church, the characteristics of its spatial quality, the scale relationship between the worshiper and the building.

Closely related to the individual's relationship to his God is the church congregation's relationship to the surrounding community. Does the faith withdraw

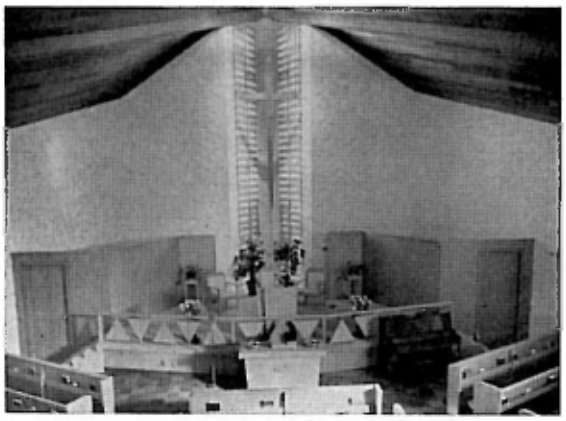
from the world or accomplish its work within the world? Architecturally these attitudes should be expressed faithfully. Basic form and size will be affected, with the medieval concept of hierarchy of building types giving way, for a Mennonite church, to a scale and character more sympathetic with neighboring buildings. Siting an entrance will be affected, with accessibility and warmth symbolizing the welcome to be experienced on the inside, in preference to monumentality and impressiveness. The location and degree of transparency and opacity will be affected, with awareness of a balance which will produce openness and welcome as well as privacy for comfort.

By means of our architecture we express to the world subtleties of attitudes which characterize our faith. Conscious decisions on our part should select between alternative qualities of feeling we wish to make manifest in our buildings, and responses we should attempt to engender in both observer and worshiper. Do we wish to express mystery or clarity, majesty or humility, serenity or exultation, intimacy or impersonality, fellowship or isolation, the temporal or eternal? To identify these themes is a theological matter. To make them articulate in our construction is a matter of design.

Perhaps the quality which best characterizes great architecture just as it characterizes the best of our Mennonite tradition is that of simplicity. And surely the better aspects of this simplicity should be an integral expression in the design of our churches. The simplicity of which I speak is a very difficult quality to achieve. It imparts serenity and frequently embodies conscious understatement, while intimating a sophistication and understanding which belies naivete. It is a simplicity made more significant by the excellence of its detailing. It is perhaps the most demanding of all architectural concepts and must clearly be distinguished from the pseudo-simplicity of the untalented.

To thus distinguish the moving from the dull, the restrained from the vacuous, the permanent from the transitory implies an appreciation, wisdom and dedication on the part of our church brotherhood as client every bit as much as a deep understanding and sensitive artistry on the part of the architect. How a discipline requiring the degree of discrimination necessary to select the subtle values can be achieved from a cultural heritage which has been largely anti-artistic

Exterior and interior of Beatrice Mennonite Church, Beatrice, Neb., built in 1961.



is a very real problem, but one which must be solved.

One of the great anomalies of our society is the disparity between our quality of knowledge in one field compared with that in another. The very principles which give significance to architecture are those which give significance to faith: restraint, honesty, refinement, clarity, directness, integrity; and the very principles which rob significance from architecture are those which rob significance from faith: ostentation, egotism, frivolities, faddishness, gimmickry, artificiality. The search for meaning in our architecture is therefore the search for consistency in our lives.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the pitfalls of "a little learnin'" represents our greatest dangers architecturally. The characteristics of the early pioneering "meeting-house" had the instinctive honesty of a child. Our future architecture, as the result of sincere effort and diligence, will have the self-assurance of maturity. But the adolescence of our present, while possessing all the excitement connected with our potential, also contains the misgivings of me-tooism and the appeal of inadequate values.

The design of an inspired religious building, perhaps more than that of any other field of architecture, expressess both the reality and the aspirations of man. In a church designed for worship, planning is not complicated. Practical considerations are important but not the sole criterion. What is paramount is the character and quality of space and its appropriateness to the faith served. In this respect the very fact of our undistinguished (architecturally) past can be turned to good advantage in that we have no need to divest ourselves of the sort of tradition which denies change and substitutes historical form for vital contemporary thought. The hollowness of this copying of the past tended to weaken the spiritual resources of its proponents and condemn their creative gifts to impotence. Our escape from this entire phase of architectural decadence, albeit perhaps through no fault of our own, has nevertheless had the fortunate effect of restricting our preconceived ideas, expressed in the classical meaningless cliche[1] "I want our church to look like a church." There is even some valid thought being proposed in opposition to the generally accepted meaning of such a remark, suggesting that a universally accepted church-image in our architecture, might well be instrumental in documenting the final and complete divorce of our "church-life" from our "real" everyday experience.

Freedom from this misinterpretation of traditionalism does not however imply unrestricted innovation. This danger at the opposite end of the pole comes from the conception of architecture as an exercise in cleverness, as a motivating influence rather than an interpreter of principle. Innovation may be justified only after passing the tests of appropriateness and depth of reason. It must express what is central and lasting. The outstanding American architect, Pietro Belluschi, spoke to this danger in his address at the 1963 National Conference on Church Architecture in Seattle, Washington, almost as eloquently as he continuously speaks in his moving and sensitive architecture, when he said, "It is essential that our efforts be honest, that innovation be a reflection of inner longings, the result of having found what is central and lasting. Unfortunately, the ways leading to abuse have been multiplied by the means placed at our disposal by technology. It is essential for the architect to discriminate and to choose until his work sings with purpose and unity."

Surely this quality of a work which "sings with purpose and unity" must be the ultimate objective of buildings which express our faith. This is poetic simplicity. This is restraint with meaning. This is the combining of modesty and excellence. This represents the best in our lives—and our architecture.

[1]Peter Collins, "Form in Churches" in *Progressive Architecture*, December, 1961.

[2]*Mennonite Life*, Jan. 1957, p. 29.

The new Chapel of The Sermon of the Mount of the Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.

Moving from the old to the new house of worship at the Tabor Mennonite Church near Goessel, Kansas.

Exterior and interior of new Emmen Mennonite Church in The Netherlands.

The Artist, Jan Luyken

by Jan Gleysteen

In one of the destroyed churches in Amsterdam could be found the grave of a famous Dutch artist who lived a bohemian existence in his younger years, but who died as a dedicated man of God at the age of 63. Jan Luyken, famous engraver, artist and poet (especially of religious poems) April 16, 1649. His father, Caspar Luyken, was originally a barber, later became a schoolteacher and lived with his wife Hester in their own home after 1635. The four oldest children, Christoffel, Rebekka, Susanna and Michael were baptized in the Remonstrant Fellowship in Amsterdam, but Jan was not baptized, probably because at the time of his birth the Luykens had joined the Flemish Mennonite Congregation in Amsterdam.

Jan Luyken received his literary training at home from his father, an able writer. One of Caspar Luyken's books was titled, *Unfailing Rules for Profit without*

* * * * *

Free tranlation of verse below portrait:
Here's Jan Luyken. No—wait—'tis but his likeness.
His soul, engaged to God, has upward thrust
To bathe itself in heaven's beauteous brightness,
By virtue of its hope and simple trust.
It rises soon to realms much more celestial,
Though lingering midst his lyrics and his art;
Godwardness beckons thee through this page terrestrial:
"Awake, and follow Heaven with thy heart!"

Loss, a thesis on stewardship, benevolence and brotherly concern. This book saw several reprints. Jan Luyken's brother Christoffel also did some writing.

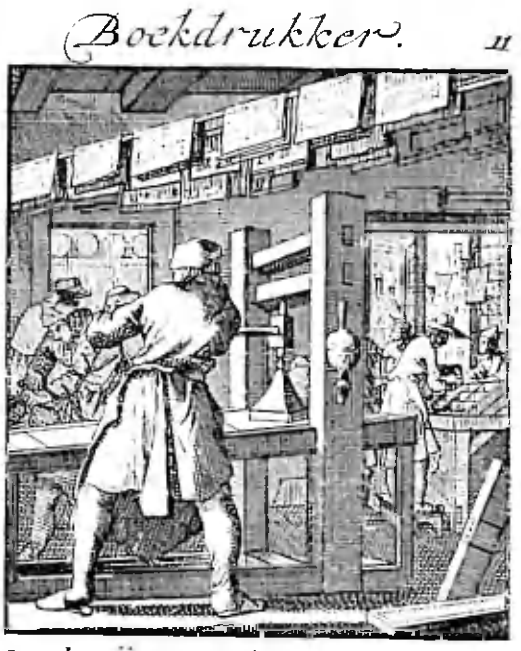
In 1668 Caspar died, and Jan received an inheritance of 500 gulden, which he used to study in the atelier of the painter Martinus Saeghmolen, who was known as an excellent instructor. Although Jan Luyken progressed rapidly in his studies, and became an excellent painter, it was not long until he traded his brushes for an engraver's needle. Because he was more attracted to graphic arts than to the painter's palette, he became an engraver, probably the most important and creative Dutch etcher after the days of Rembrandt. We have records of 3,275 works which are definitely his, many etchings so beautiful that they still command the admiration of connoisseurs.

Jan Luyken holds the distinction of being one of the most prolific etcher-illustrators of all time. His favorite field was book illustration. He produced many illustrations for Bible stories, travel literature and historical works. He cut full page plates for P. C. Hooft's *History of the Netherlands*. His larger engravings are praised for their originality, extreme clarity and good craftsmanship. The smaller vignettes also have a character of their own and give evidence of Jan Luyken's great talent. All these fine prints were based on his own detailed preliminary sketches, many of which can be seen in museums in Amsterdam, London and Vienna. One collection in Holland alone consists of 897 sheets!

During his apprenticeship at Saeghmolen's studio, Jan began to keep company with a frivolous, irreligious group of seventeenth century beatnik artists and poets. And despite the pleadings and admonitions of his pious mother, Jan literally chose the road of wine, women and song for which artists are at times noted. In the tavern "Sweet Rest" of the innkeeper-poet Jan Zoet, Jan Luyken gave recitals of his love ballads before an admiring crowd of colleagues. And when he took time out to enjoy a glass of wine, a group of chorus girls, called the "Amstel-hymphlets," would take over, singing still more of Jan's poetry.

In 1671 Jan Luyken's lusty songs were published under the title: "Jan Luyken's Dutch Harp, producing the newest and happiest of melodies." The collection immediately became popular and received excellent reviews, of which the following quotes are but samples: "Some verses are as beautiful as those written by Vondel (Holland's Shakespeare), and not heard since Vondel's death"; and "Luyken's talent is not force but grace; beautiful stanzas are not rare with him." Unfortunately, the seventeenth century Dutch poetry loses much of its beauty in an English translation.

On the fifth of March, 1672, Jan Luyken married one of the inn girls, Maria den Onden. They moved into his parental home in Amsterdam, while Jan's mother went to live with her oldest son, Christoffel.

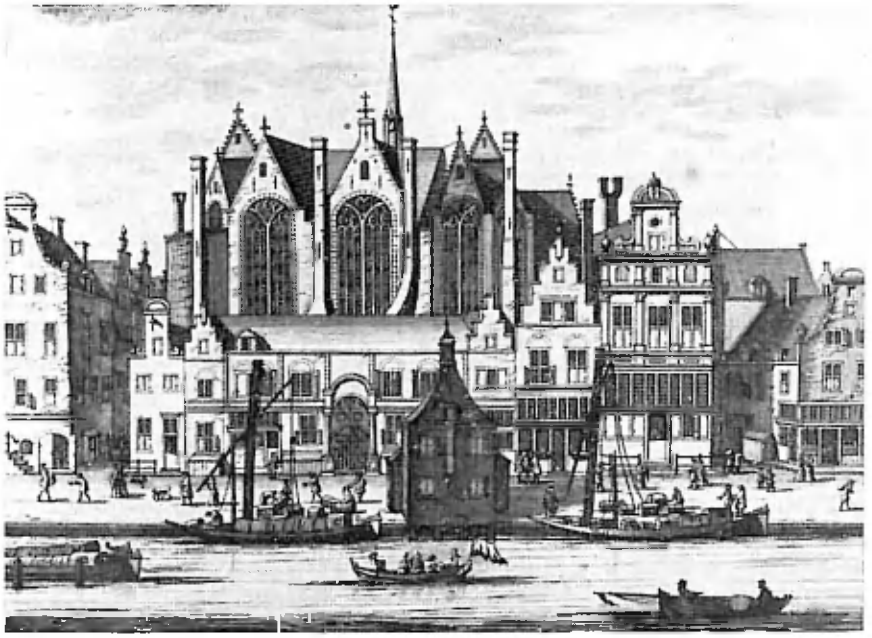


Engraving by Jan Luyken featuring a printer. "Whenever I am printing a book, I am the first one to pick the fruit."

Jan Luyken featuring a carnival during the 17th century.

A page from the Martyrs' Mirror *illustrated by Jan Luyken*

Jan Luyken's horror scene from the Martyrs' Mirror



Jan Luyken was buried in the Nieuwezijdskapel in Amsterdam. (The church has been torn down.)

On December 18, 1672, a son named Caspar, was born to Jan and Maria. In time Caspar also became an excellent engraver working in close partnership with his father. Of Caspar's work 1187 pieces are known. There were four other children, all of whom died in infancy.

Jan Luyken was by this time a celebrated artist and poet, but in 1673 at the age of 24, the frivolous young man turned his back on his former way of life and his loose-living comrades, and became a devout Christian. He was accepted and baptized in the Lamist Mennonite Church in Amsterdam, and shortly afterward transferred to the Mennonite Church in Beverwijk, about eighteen miles northwest of Amsterdam. He no longer used his poetic talents to write worldly songs: in fact he tried to buy all the copies of his "Jan Luyken's Dutch Harp" with the intention of burning them. He did not succeed in this, for the booklet was reprinted numerous times later without either his knowledge or consent. Another change in his life came in 1675, when after studying the writings of Jacob Böhme and Jean de Labadie he joined a group of Böhme's followers. Galenus Abrahamsz, the physician-preacher, must have had some influence in Jan's choice of becoming a God-fearing mystic. Now in solitude and meditation Jan continued his etching and religious poetry. With his engraver's needle he earned his daily bread, and would undoubtedly have reached a state of financial independence, but more and more Jan Luyken believed all daily work for a livelihood to be sinful. He finally became a hermit, spending all his time in meditation, writing only an occasional pietistic poem. His son Caspar finally brought him back to reality and production in art and poetry, but with the agreement that he would not accept more money for his work than would be needed for a subsistence standard of living.

During this period he wrote many books of poetry: "Treasures of the Soul" (1678), "Jesus and the Soul" (1687), "Sparks of Love" (1687), "This Unworthy World" (1710), all profusely illustrated with etchings. A number of these poems, set to music, are found in many Dutch Protestant hymnals, including the present Dutch Mennonite hymnary. In 1685 he also furnished 104 copper plates for Tieleman van Braght's *Martyr's Mirror,* illustrating the martyrdom of the 16th century Anabaptists.These plates, with eleven additional plates by a later artist, were reprinted without text, but with French and German captions in 1698, and in 1730 with Dutch captions. Again they were used in the 1780 German edition of the *Martyr's Mirror* printed at Pirmasens. After 1780 the plates were supposedly lost. H. S. Bender saw them in South Germany about thirty years ago, but was unable to buy them from the owner.

In 1711 he published a last book of poetry, again illustrated with his own etchings. After living in Beverwijk, Haarlem and Hoorn, at one time or another, Jan Luyken returned to Amsterdam for the last years of his fruitful life. On March 30, 1712, he became ill, and on April 5 he died. The funeral details were handled by his publishers, Arentz and van der Sius. They were also the signers of the following funeral notice:

A° 1712

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE FUNERAL OF JOHANNES LUYKEN ON MONDAY, APRIL 11, IN THE UTRECHTSE DWARSSTRAAT, NEAR THE BINNEN-AMSTEL. FRIENDS SHOULD VISIT THE HOME AND THEN PROCEED TO THE NIENWEZYDS-CHAPEL BEFORE 2:00 P.M. (YOU *must* BE ON TIME.)

A P.S.: "Your worthy name will be read from the pulpit" was an added incentive to be present. Jan Luyken, who outlived both his wife and sons, was buried fourth class at a cost of three Dutch florins (now about 80 cents). But his work remains in collections around the world.

Universal Values in Rudy Wiebe's *Peace Shall Destroy Many*

By Elmer F. Suderman

ALTHOUGH OVER SEVENTY novels have been written by and about Mennonites in North America, not very many can be called good novels. After one has named Peter Epp's *Eine Mutter* (1932), Gordon Friesen's *The Flamethrowers* (1936), Otto Schrag's *The Locusts* (1942), Arnold Dyck's *Verloren in der Steppe* (1944), Marcus Bach's *The Dream Gate* (1945), and Helen Brenneman's *But Not Forsaken* (1955) the list of Mennonite novels worthy of the name is almost exhausted. As literature the list is not particularly impressive, especially if one eliminates the novels of Epp, Schrag, and Dyck which belong more to the German than to North American fiction. Of the other three only Brenneman's can be considered as the product of a Mennonite writer, for Bach is not a Mennonite, and Friesen had left the Mennonite church when he wrote *The Flamethrowers.*

Although the two best novels in the above list, *Verloren in der Steppe* and *Eine Mutter,* are by Mennonites, it is nevertheless true that Mennonitism, especially in North America, has not been a fertile ground for the development of fiction writers. The complaint of J. H. Janzen expressed in 1946 in his article "The Literature of the Russo-Canadian Mennonites"[1] that a writer, especially a novelist, among the Mennonites

is regarded as a sort of renegade hasn't changed significantly. Mennonites still distrust fiction, and more important, often do not understand it as the reviews of the most recent Mennonite novel, Rudy Henry Wiebe's *Peace Shall Destroy Many*[2] clearly reveal. I need only cite the otherwise perceptive review of Marlin Jeschke [3] in which he confuses the function of a novel with the function of a theological treatise. There are, however, happy omens that more and more Mennonites are becoming receptive to the arts, including the art of fiction, and that we can expect more Mennonites to give their attention to fiction, both as writers and critics.

Rudy Wiebe's novel is both encouraging and discouraging in this regard, encouraging that the Mennonites should have at last a young North American novelist writing in English of undoubted talent and discouraging that most of the Mennonite reviews often do not go beyond asking the usually irrelevant question of how realistically or how sympathetically Wiebe portrays the Mennonites, or how valuable the novel is as a social document, or how viable it is theologically.

Wiebe's novel is an important novel, an excellent novel, though by no means a great novel. And Wiebe's novel must be judged seriously as a novel, not as a portrait of the Mennonites that should have glossed over their faults with more skill. A Mennonite novelist should not be a Madison Avenue press agent whose most important function is to mount a good image of the brotherhood so that the larger public can see the Mennonites in their best dress. Wiebe very fortunately knows this fact, but he also knows that a novelist must use the materials he knows best to develop his theme. While this novel takes place in a typical Mennonite setting, depicts thoroughgoing Mennonite characters, and exhibits unique Mennonite themes, its greatest virtue is that it transcends the particular Mennonite concerns and untimately touches universal concerns.

Peace Shall Destroy Many takes place in 1944, the year of the decisive battles of World War II. It has an obvious Mennonite setting. The Wapiti Mennonite community in an isolated section of northern Saskatchewan has what we expect of an effective literary scene: verisimilitude and probability. Wiebe gives his community verisimilitude, however, not in the superficial sense of adding ample touches of local color. The Wapiti Mennonites do not bake zwieback, at least not in the novel, though we are quite certain that, given the other facts that we know about them, they must bake zwieback every Saturday. Indeed, Wiebe relies very little on the peculiar mores and folkways which we associate with the Mennonites to give the Wapiti community its particular Mennonite atmosphere. Yet those who have grown up in a Mennonite community would immediately recognize it as such. The church is the center of the community. All roads lead to the church. It imposes its discipline upon the members of the church, demanding when necessary that its members reveal the most intimate affairs of their life to the congregation. The Bible and the traditions of the church—one almost suspects that Wiebe is saying the Bible as filtered through the traditions of the Mennonite church—is a sufficient rule for all aspects of life. Pacifism, because it is a central tradition of the church, is accepted by most of the Wapiti Mennonites, not necessarily because it is a viable doctrine but because Mennonites have traditionally been pacifists.

The Wapiti Mennonites are isolated from the rest of the world. This isolation is no accident. When they immigrated from Russia during the early 1920's, they carefully chose a place separated from the world where they could live in their own way and avoid the corruption of the world. Isolating the community from the wickedness of the outside world are the forests and the bush, though the radio leaps over the bush and serves as a connecting link with the great outside world where a world war is being fought over momentous issues. The German language (Low German for everyday matters, High German for religion and cultured conversation) is another isolating factor, although English is the language used almost exclusively by the young people. But isolated though the community may be, Wiebe makes us sense how near and how important the world out there is. The events in Wapiti are played out against the backdrop of a world war, the impact of which impinges upon even isolated Wapiti.

Living in Wapiti is decent, simple, elemental and frugal, reduced wherever possible to fundamentals, although Wapiti Mennonites use modern farming methods. Education is limited to the local grade school, which is carefully controlled and watched over by the church. The hard work of farming precludes many outside interests, and recreational activities are limited to the annual baseball game at the last-day-of-school picnic.

Its church-centered life, its isolation, and its simplicity of life stamp Wapiti as a Mennonite community, but they do not separate it so completely from other communities that Wapiti has relevance for Mennonites only. The effect of Wiebe's portrayal of Wapiti is not that it exists as a Mennonite community recognizable to Mennonites but that it exists in its own right as a living community understandable to all readers, even those who have never known the Mennonites or simple rural life.

Wapiti, then, is any community which is unaware that it is living in the twentieth century, when distance has been annihilated and isolation from the larger world has become impossible, though, of course, it is still possible to be in the world without being of it. Wapiti is any community which thinks that it can depend upon a tradition which has been handed down

from earlier generations and uncritically accepted by the present generation without any attempt to reinterpret the values in the light of present needs. Wapiti is any community which refuses to ask questions simply because they are embarrassing and unanswerable. Wapiti is any community which hides its sins hoping that what cannot be openly seen will not be noticed. Wapiti is any community which assumes that it can reject a segment of the community as unfit for inclusion in the total society because of its race, creed, or color. Wapiti is Mennonite, thoroughly and uncomfortably Mennonite—and this is important—but even more important is that Wapiti is also Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, *et al.*, and therein lies one of the strengths of the novel.

The characters of *Peace Shall Destroy Many* are moreover, thoroughgoing Mennonites. The Unger brothers—Herb, a careless, unkempt, dirty-minded bachelor farmer, and Hank, a flier in the Canadian Air Force who enjoys shooting down Nazis—are unfortunately no strangers in Mennonite communities—nor in most communities. Other characters, too, are recognizably Mennonite and universal: Elizabeth Block, the daughter of the deacon, whose womanhood is squandered because of a repressive father; Pete Block, the quiet son of the deacon who can't break away from the patterns of thought of his domineering father but who disastrously falls in love with Razia Tantamont; Razia herself, the pretty, young, sensual schoolteacher at Wapiti, lonely in a community of strange people she tries futily to understand, longing for the gay life of college and the big city; Joseph Dueck, the young Mennonite schoolteacher who is trying to use his education to reinterpret and understand Mennonitism in the light of his best knowledge only angers the leaders of the Wapiti church for trying to tamper with the traditions of the fathers; Helmut Wiens, the grade school boy still too innocent to comprehend the turmoil around him. There are others: Deacon Block's wife, subservient to her husband, meek, mild almost to the point of invisibility; Pastor Lepp, progressive, but too ineffectual to make an impact. Again what is important is that the particular is also the universal. The characters are Mennonite, but they are present in all communities.

Thomas Wiens, the eighteen-year-old Mennonite, waiting to receive his draft call, is the central character of the book. Thom is sensible and sensitive, an example of young Mennonite manhood at its best. But he is also any young man searching for identity and self-knowledge. Like so many heroes of modern fiction Thom is in conflict with the values of his society because he finds them inadequate and because they seem to be false, even phony. He is perhaps a little naive, certainly innocent, and even self-righteous at the beginning of the novel, but he is honest and unafraid to face unpleasant facts. In the end he has learned the important lesson of the novel: that no forest and bush, no matter how dense, can keep evil from his life, for it is present in the Wapiti community and within his own heart.

Thom waiting for his draft call and listening to the radio reports of the war in France, is only too aware of the upheavals in the world outside Wapiti and agrees with his friend Pete Block that "It'd be nice to just stay in the bush--never to go out" (p.28). But Thom is uncomfortable in the security of Wapiti while other men are giving their lives while the Mennonites practice their way of life undisturbed. This uneasiness becomes even more pronounced when deacon Peter Block in his attempt to keep the world outside the community, objects to Thom's teaching a Sunday school class of half-breed Indian children who live around the edge of Wapiti. It is important to send missionaries like Thom's brother David to Africa to convert the natives, but it is inconceivable, as young Pete Block, echoing his father's views points out, that half breeds join the Wapiti Mennonites because they speak Cree and English rather than Low German, because they aren't neat enough, and because they're just not like the Mennonites.

In his quest for viable standards it is shattering for Thom to discover that he cannot find them in the staunch defender of the Mennonite traditions, the man who sacrificed much to bring the Wapiti Mennonites to Saskatchewan from Russia. It is shattering for Thom to learn that Peter Block not only opposes his efforts to help the natives but also is guilty of heinous sins. Thom's plight is a familiar one; all men have experienced it.

In his quest for a faith to live by Thom discovers further that he cannot find this faith inside himself, for he discovers his own unworthiness. He deplores Herb Unger's unfair needling, but discovers how difficult it is for him to keep his temper as a non-resistant Christian. He resents the lascivious looks Herb casts at the willow teacher Razia only to discover himself looking at her with more than friendly interest a moment later. He resents Hank's reliance on force and his glory in killing, but discovers his own inability to substitute love for force. Thom, then, is more than the young Mennonite trying to understand his heritage; he is any man disillusioned with the values of the traditions he inherits, with the leaders he has been taught to honor, with his own sense of values. He is any man who must find new values for the inadequate ones he must discard. Through Thom, Wiebe helps all of his readers to be a little more aware of the deeper, unnamed feelings which form the substratum of our being.

Thom's stumbling block, the deacon, is one of the difficult characters to assess. He is one of the most vividly realized characters in the novel, and he easily ranks as one of the strongest character portrayals in

all Mennonite fiction. Peter Block is not a good man, and one is not surprised that the Mennonite reviewers are uncomfortable in dealing with him. On the other hand, the deacon is not a villain. Under extreme provocation he has killed a man in Russia, and he has never recovered from the shock. Instead of confessing his sin and living with it, he has tried to atone by attempting to provide for his children and for other Mennonites an environment that will be an island of holiness in a sea of despair. He attempts honestly to provide for his fellow Mennonites the kind of leadership and strength that will make it possible for all to live the pure life.

At first there had been enough bush between Wapiti and the nearest other settlement, and the world had rarely intruded, but now the war had come, and the world was once more intruding into Mennonite Wapiti. The encroachment of the world makes him more determined than ever to keep Wapiti pure, and for that reason he opposes Thom's efforts to bring the half breeds into the Mennonite church.

But the deacon cannot keep the world and evil at bay. It finds its way into his own home at the point where he least expects it and where it hurts the worst. In an effort to protect his daughter he has forbidden her to marry Herman Paetkau because he has been born out of wedlock. Out of frustration she engages in sexual immorality—"the nadir of sin for all Mennonites" (p.180)—with Louis Moosomin, a dirty, irresponsible half breed whom Block has had to hire because the war had made other help unavailable. When Elizabeth dies in childbirth during the threshing at the Block farm, Block's hope for a pure, isolated world receives a severe blow. His subsequent brutal treatment of Louis Moosomin is understandable, but in the light of Block's own guilt and his own pretensions to purity, the act is revolting. Still he is not altogether bad, and Wiebe's treatment of this despicable yet remarkable man is admirable. Though Block is unable to admit his sins openly, he is not calloused and suffers inwardly. Though he is obviously wrong in his treatment of Elizabeth and Pete, he is, nevertheless, willing to damn his soul in order to save Pete's, and he does love Elizabeth. Though he feels that the best way to answer difficult questions is never to raise them but depend upon the traditions of the fathers, he can yet sympathize with Thom's questioning spirit. And there is never any question about the generous contributions Block has made, both in time and money, to establish a Wapiti Mennonite community. Still there is no question about his perfidy.

Deacon Peter Block is a vividly realized character; he is clearly etched on our consciousness. He is one kind of Mennonite, a kind we could do without. But he is not unique to Mennonites. As one reviewer, a Baptist minister, puts it: "I have known some Baptist deacon Blocks!" Indeed, there is too much of deacon Block in all of us.

It is necessary here to say a word about Wiebe's treatment of evil in Wapiti, or to put it another way to say a word about the treatment of evil in literature. It is always dangerous for a reader to expect a novelist to show him life as he deludes himself into thinking that it is or to expect the author to create a world which is more to his liking than the real world. The latter may occasionally be permissible; the former never is. The novel is not a lyrical soporific to restore faith's flagging energies but a sacrament of disturbance involving the reader in the most drastic sort of exposure to unwelcome experience and unfamiliar truth.

It is more important for the novelist to give the reader a vivid and imaginative reconstruction of reality so that reality can be better understood than to give him an escape from or a perversion of reality. The novelist must take reality seriously which means that he must take sin seriously as the Bible always does. The novelist must realize that one of the most fundamental truths of human experience—and of religion—is the staggering evidence of human depravity. He cannot hide from his readers this depravity. The Bible never does. It is important for the novelist to make it uncomfortably obvious, as Wiebe does, that underneath the thin and brittle crust of decency lurks the savage, not only in corrupt men like Herb and Hank Unger but also in good men like deacon Block and Thomas Wiens. To put it in theological terms modern novelists cannot be very sanguine about the perfectibility and the essential goodness of human nature but must exemplify Paul's old and bitter truth that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Wiebe knows that it is so easy to forget: that *all* includes even the Mennonites and, of course, everyone else. Thom finds it difficult, as we all do, to translate Paul's *all* into the first person singular. It had been difficult enough for Thom to realize that an inner rot lay at the very root of the Wapiti community, that the people he admired for their Christian standards were culpable, but he found it even more difficult to learn that "such wells of depravity yawned in his empty self that he could only shudder and pray for diversion" (p. 227).

Wiebe is quite right, then, in throwing the strong beam of his searchlight on our sin, and the church especially needs to be attentive to the somber prophecies and maledictions which he utters. Even in our violent time it is easy to forget the deep wells of depravity within us. But Wiebe does not end with a portrayal of man's sinfulness. He recognizes the possibility of grace and redemption. Contemporary fiction does not often depict a world which has experienced the incarnation. It is more inclined to present a world like that of Hemingway's in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in which old Anselmo laments: "We do not have God here anymore, neither his son nor his Holy Ghost."

Wiebe is very much aware of the incarnation as the last scene in the book makes forcefully clear.

The events at the Christmas program at Wapiti school had made the necessity of redemption even more clear to Thom than they had already been. When Thom enters the crowded schoolhouse, Hank Unger, home on furlough from the Canadian Air Force is bragging about the twenty-seven Nazi planes he has shot down and gloating in the death of their crews: "When I shoot down a Nazi pig, it's strictly fun for me. Only one question crosses my mind, watchin' them make that slow loop down, as they blaze. 'Will he blow or fry?' " (p.223). Against such a background the Angels' promise of peace which Thom can see just above Hank's head on either side of the tip of the Christmas tree seems ironic: "Peace on Earth, Goodwill towards Men."

After the Christmas play, "The Star and the Three Kings," the necessity for redemption becomes even more clear, and the hopelessness of obtaining it more difficult, for Thom becomes hopelessly aware that there seems to be no redemption in Wapiti. Deacon Block, grateful for the religious tone of the school Christmas program, presents a gift of appreciation to Miss Tantamont, only to discover that she has disappeared. She and Frank Unger, whom she had met while Hank was in training, are discovered in the barn. When Thom and Herb Unger reach the barn, they find Hank on the straw knocked down by Pete Block's fist. Herb, angered, attempts to hurl himself at Pete, only to be struck by Thom's powerful fist. Deacon Block's last hope for his remaining child is shattered as Pete tells his father, "Pa, you have to do what you think is right" (p.236). Despite their abstention from the war in the world, the Mennonites find themselves at war with one another.

On the way home from the Christmas program, Thom, ashamed of the defection of the Mennonites from their faith in love and even more ashamed of his own outburst of anger and reliance on force, reflects on the play presented by the school. The play had ended with the Wise Men, bedraggled and footsore, at an old barn in Bethlehem where one of the Shepherds, played by a half-breed child, Jackie Labret, assures them that this is the end of their journey and leads them into the stable to the manger.

Thom is not sure that he has come to the end of his quest. His discovery of evil in Wapiti, his constant awareness of the war in Europe which will soon call for his response, his bitter confrontation with his own worst nature—could he find answers for the questions these problems posed at the barn of Bethlehem? Certainly he could not find them in "the paths of conscienceless violence of the Unger brothers," nor in "one man's misguided interpretation of tradition. They brought chaos" (p.237). Reflecting upon the scene of the schoolhouse, he sees Jackie Labret, the half breed, leading the Mennonite children into the stable where the manger is to be found, and Thom realizes that his way must also lead him to the manger, to God's revelation of himself in the incarnation and teachings of Jesus Christ:

> Christ's teachings stood clear in the Scriptures; could he but scrape them bare of all their acquired meanings and see them as those first disciples had done, their feet in the dust of Galilee. He must (p.237).

The value of *Peace Shall Destroy Many* does not lie in its faithful portrayal of the Mennonites as a peculiar people or even in its holding up a mirror in which the Mennonites can see their dirty faces and wash them. The value of the book must finally lie in its ability to present characters and a community that come alive within the confines of the novel and to embody universal themes. Indeed, in many ways the Mennonites are not the primary focus of the novel, but they are used by the author as the means by which he has presented the universal theme of man's search for meaning, man's discovery of his sin, and his need of redemption, and, finally, of the possibility of redemption in the incarnation. As such it is a significant achievement.

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[1] *Mennonite Life,* Jan. 1946, 22-25.
[2] McLelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1962.
[3] *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* Oct. 1963, 335-337.

Church Architecture

The issue of January, 1957 features Mennonite church architecture and worship with many pictures of churches. Other articles on church architecture are "What Type of Church Architecture" by LeRoy Graber (July, 1959) and "Building a New Church" by Robert W. Hartzler (October, 1962). All of the above issues are available from the publishers at 75 cents a copy. (*Mennonite Life,* North Newton, Kansas).

Mennonites in Southwestern Pennsylvania

By Gerald C. Studer

EXTINCT MEETINGHOUSES, an obscure cemetery, several distilleries, and many "Mennonite names" in the churches of other denominations—all are a part of the story of the coming of the Mennonites to the counties of Westmoreland and Fayette in southwestern Pennsylvania in the late 18th century.

Beginnings in Jacobs Creek Valley

Before Mennonites arrived in Westmoreland County in 1790, the land had already been settled by the Scotch-Irish some 20-30 years before. In 1789, 1790, and 1791 four families bought land in Fayette County: a Jacob Strickler purchased 395 acres about a mile southwest of Scottdale; John Stauffer purchased land where Owensdale is now located; Abraham Stauffer where Everson has since been built; and John Shallenberger at the site of present Pennsville. Many others came soon after with such names as Sherrick, Newcomer, Galley, Shupe and Detweiler.

Those families settling in Westmoreland County in the 1790's were George Mumma (Mumaw), Henry Fox, Martin Overholt, Henry Rosenberger, Adam Tintsman, Henry Yothers, Christian Stoner, David Strohm, David Funk, Henry Oberholzer, and Abraham Ruth.

Farm building in Jacobs Creek Valley near Scottdale, Pennsylvania.

The "Old Overholt" Story

Since Mennonites disapprove of the use of alcoholic beverages, why does the label on a bottle of "Old Overholt" whiskey carry a picture of an early member of the Scottdale Mennonite Church? As recently as one hundred years ago, the present-day emphasis on temperance and abstinence was practically unknown. Among the early Mennonite settlers, the distilling and use of whiskey was considered as legitimate as the milling and use of flour.

In those earliest days, these southwestern frontier counties could produce little else that was marketable. Pennsylvania was the only state in the newly formed Union which was producing more grain than its inhabitants needed. But the packhorse was the best means of transportation and since bulky grain can hardly be transported on horseback, the people engaged in the manufacture of whiskey in order to dispose of their surplus grain.

Next to salt, whiskey was the most important medium of exchange. By 1792 this industry had grown so rapidly that "still houses" were scattered all over southwestern Pennsylvania. These stills were small but they made whiskey and that was what mattered. If a farmer did not own his own still, he took his grain to a neighbor who did. These were generally located near a mill since milling the wheat was a necessary step in the distilling process. Storekeepers took whiskey in exchange for their goods and sold it to their customers. Most farmers kept a barrel of it in the cellar and the family had free use of it. Few indeed drank to excess. It was taken more as a tonic and a medicine than as a beverage.

Abraham Overholt began distilling whiskey at West Overton, scarcely a mile from Scottdale, in 1810 and

A. S. R. Overholt and Company, West Overton, Pennsylvania, founded 1810.

Abraham Overholt, founder of A. S. R. Overholt and Company.

Label of Old Farm Whiskey produced by A. S. R. Overholt and Company.

the whiskey bearing his name has been on the market continuously ever since. He was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in 1784. His father had settled on a tract of "wild land" in East Huntingdon Township in 1800. In 1812 Abraham purchased 150 acres of it including the log distillery from the family for $7500. He replaced this with a stone structure and later with a larger brick building which is still standing and which today houses the Westmoreland-Fayette Historical Society collection.

Abraham Overholt married the daughter of the Abraham Stauffer, the first minister and bishop among the Mennonites in this area. They had six sons and two daughters. Abraham Overholt was not only a member of the Mennonite Church throughout his mature years but served several terms as a church trustee as well.

Overholt also owned and operated another distillery at Broadford near Scottdale. Here is where the Old Overholt brand was made and bottled while at West Overton the Old Farm brand was made and bottled. This latter brand has not been on the market for years.

None of the Overholt children became Mennonites. The reason is not known but it could have been because of the growing conflict between the family's involvement in the distilling industry, on the one hand, and the rise of the temperance societies, on the other. Other Mennonites also had to decide either "to get in or get out" as the tide of conviction turned from permissiveness to prohibition. No wonder the mother of several sons, and the wife of Christian Stoner (1811-1892) of Alverton is reported to have replied to her husband's suggestion that they either increase the output of their still or go out of the distilling business altogether by saying: "Christian, let's stop it altogether before we lose our sons. They are learning to like it too well."

How a Farm Became a Town

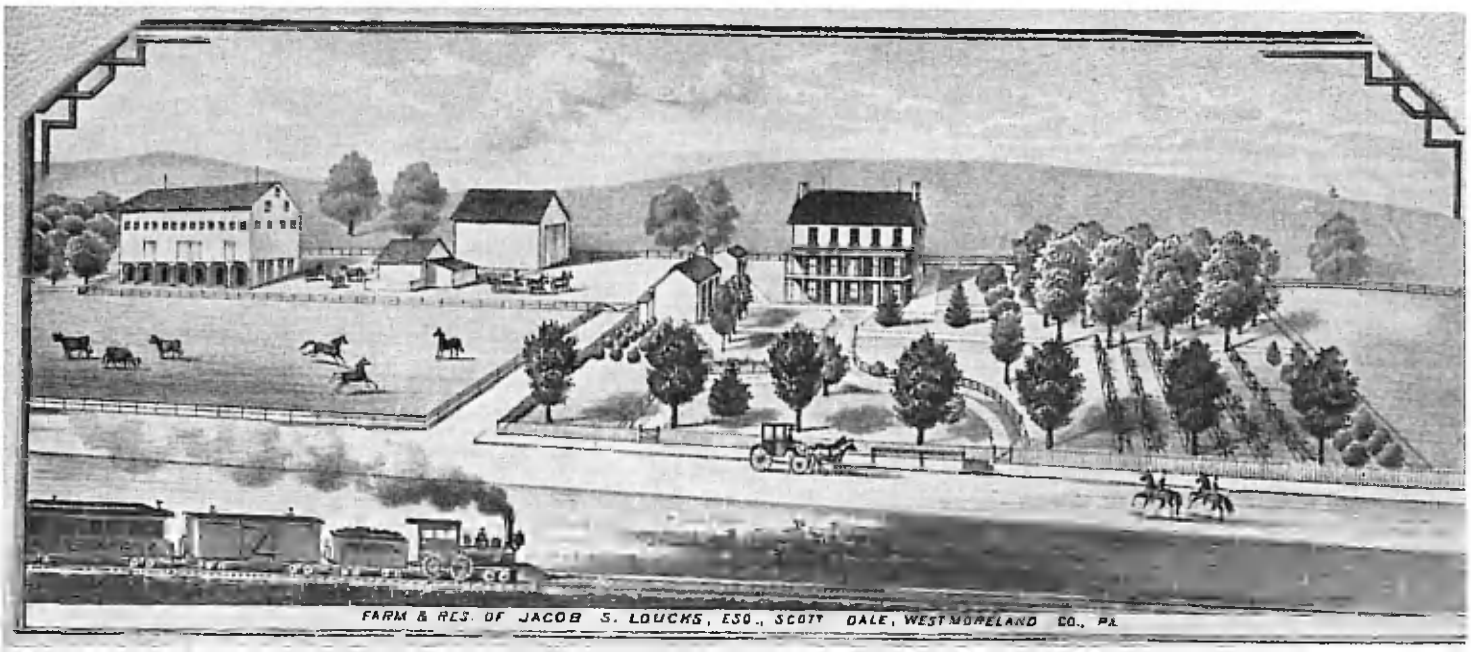
A stranger to Scottdale seeing the name Loucks in the various sections of the town, i.e., Loucks Avenue, Loucks Park, Loucks Lane, might guess that the Loucks family had something to do with the founding and early history of the city. The story begins with the arrival in 1800 of the first Loucks family, pioneer Peter Loucks, in this area.

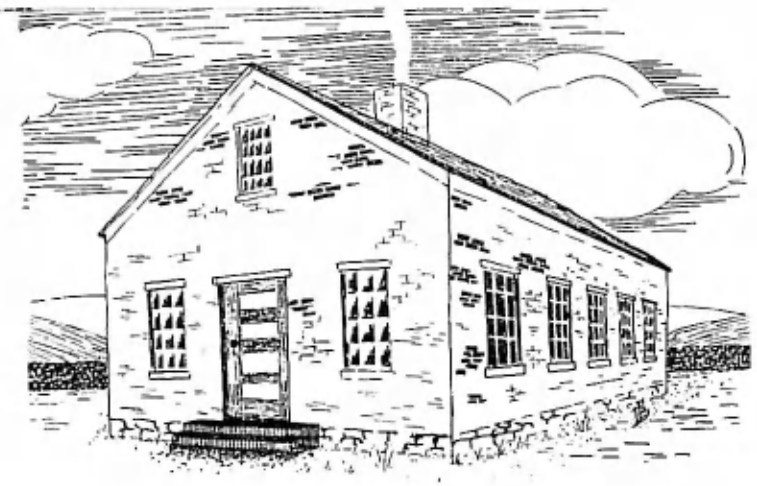
Peter Loucks was born in Bucks County, Pa., in 1760 and lived there until he with his wife and five children joined a covered wagon train which arrived in Westmoreland County in the summer of 1800. By a series of purchases Peter became the owner of most of the area now covered by the borough of Scottdale.

Moving down in time to the third generation of Louckses, we find that Peter's son, Martin, divided his farm into two parts in 1868. That part south of what is now Pittsburg Street in Scottdale (then a dirt road) he deeded to his son, Jacob S., and the part north of the road to another son, Peter S. Few, if any, of the settlers at that time were aware of the rich deposits of iron ore and the heavy seams of bituminous coal that underlay adjoining areas of this section of Pennsylvania which they had settled. But as industrialists turned their attention to the development of these resources, Scottdale found itself in a strategic location. The Southwest branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad was completed in 1873 and when the town was incorporated as a borough in 1874, it was named for Thomas A. Scott, president of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Industries associated with the mining of coal and smelting of iron located in Scottdale. H. C. Frick, with his cousin A. O. Tinstman, grandsons of the Henry Overholt who came to West Overton in 1800, organized the company which became the largest coke-producing company in the world. From the Loucks brothers, acreage was bought on which to build the Charlotte furnace and rolling mill.

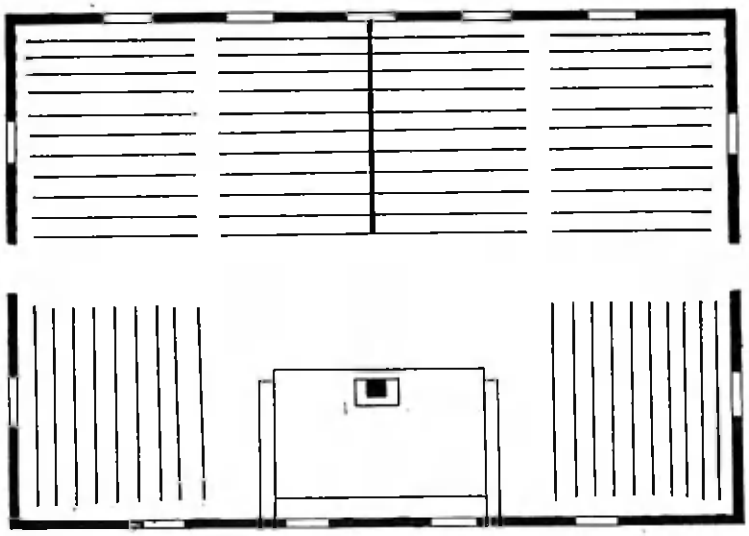
In 1872, Jacob and Peter Loucks laid out the first lots, 24 in all, 74 x 150 feet selling for $125.00 each. This was the beginning of the process of attrition by which the Loucks farms gave place to industrial enterprise far outrivaling the returns from agriculture.

But the dark days were to come when the depression hit. Scottdale was said to be the second hardest hit town in the entire country. The Casket Factory and





Stonerville Mennonite Meetinghouse, erected 1841, drawn from description. The meetinghouse near Pennsville, built in 1852, was almost identical in construction.



Floor plan of the Stonerville Mennonite Meetinghouse, drawn from description. The plan of the Pennsville Meetinghouse was similar.

the Mennonite Publishing House managed to continue operation throughout this period and as time passed, other businesses, idled temporarily, resumed operation.

How does a farm become a town? The process is so gradual that natives are scarcely aware of the transition. All the while the Jacob S. Loucks farm, standing so close to the business district, was a source of amazement to visitors. There it stood long after the incorporation of the borough—a typical and complete farm outlay! The two Loucks homesteads still stand, one on North Chestnut Street and the other south of Pittsburg Street. The acres of farmland of which they were once a center are now seated land where are found homes, schools, and business houses.

Historic decisions affecting the entire Mennonite Church were made in the home of Jacob S. Loucks. At a congregational meeting at this home on July 22, 1893, the decision was made to abandon the meetinghouses at Alverton and Pennsville and bring the congregation to Scottdale where a new meetinghouse would be erected. Another historic decision associated with this home pertains to the location of the Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale. There can be little doubt that the matter of locating a church-owned publishing house had its origin in discussions held in this home which was a center for the entertainment of visiting Mennonite bishops and preachers.

"The Mennonites"

A chair in the Westmoreland-Fayette Historical Museum is designated as a "Mennonite chair." What does this mean? Did a Mennonite *make* it or *use* it? If so, does this make it a *Mennonite* chair? Residents tend to generalize about "the Mennonites" in a way not typical of attitudes toward other denominations in the community.

Many people in the area still attribute to the

Mennonites some of the practices and ideas that were held by some of the inept leaders of a former day when many members left the Mennonite Church for a more vital form of Christianity. Then, too, local or community rapport with the Mennonites has been further complicated by the many persons who came here to work at the Publishing House from widely scattered conferences of the church with diverse practices and concepts. Other mistaken ideas are that all Mennonites are honest, all pay their bills, all are well-to-do. Concerning the latter notion, perhaps it is the way in which many members of the Mennonite church use their income that leads people to conclude that they are "well off." For example, since most Mennonites dress simply, do not drink nor smoke and live frugally, they may have more financial resources than many others. But the fact is, "the Mennonites" are people with the same needs, problems, temptations, as others.

Mennonites are sometimes asked whether anyone can become a Mennonite or if you have to be born one! The answer is simple. You can not be born a Mennonite any more than you can be born a Baptist or a Republican or a Kiwanian. Choice is involved. This is close to the heart of Mennonite belief and underlies the practice of believer's baptism.

Even today to be a member of the Mennonite church is an uneasy matter. Theologically, the church is conservative—that is to say, it believes in an inspired, authoritative Bible and holds that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of the world. Socially, the church is liberal—opposing warfare and capital punishment, greatly concerned for the physical needs as well as the spiritual growth of people, and standing for integration rather than segregation.

Had all the descendants of these early Mennonite pioneers in the Jacobs Creek Valley remained in the church, its membership today would likely number in the thousands. The opposite however is true. The growth during the first fifty years was such that by 1840 there were about 200 members in the two congregations. But by another fifty years, only 16 members were left. By 1899 the Stonerville (Alverton) meetinghouse was sold for public school use and the Pennsville church finally fell into disuse.

As the Mennonites became more and more successful in the business and civic life of the communities here, the church life declined. From 1840 on, fewer and fewer members were added. Some united with other denominations; some moved to Ohio and other states; and some died. One historian, Boucher, gives three reasons: first, the church insisted on the German language for worship while English was used increasingly in all other areas of communication; secondly, no special effort was made to hold the youth; and thirdly, there were no Sunday schools, no Sunday evening services nor revival meetings while the other denominations had all three. Edward Yoder suggested that an untrained ministry was another reason for decline. According to Yoder the three groups to which the Mennonites in this district turned for the most part were the Church of God, the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Association.

Mennonite names can be found among the charter members of churches of the various denominations in Scottdale. In fact, only a very few of the descendants of these hardy Mennonite pioneers can be found today on the church rolls of Scottdale's three Mennonite churches.

Scottdale Mennonite Church

It was not long after these first Mennonite settlers arrived in Jacobs Creek Valley that they felt a need for houses of worship. In 1799 ground was purchased by the trustees of the Mennonite congregation for a meetinghouse, schoolhouse, and burial ground at Alverton. At about the same time or before, ground was also acquired for a meetinghouse at Pennsville. Log structures were first built at both places. These were replaced by almost identical brick structures—1841 at Alverton and 1852 at Pennsville.

Contrary to expectation, these new buildings were not symbols of vitality and growth. From a group of 200 members in the area, the number of Mennonite church members dwindled to 16 by the close of the 1800's. The two houses were closed—Alverton in 1893 when the Scottdale church was built but Pennsville still met spasmodically until about 1902.

Until 1893, the remnant of the congregation had continued to meet on an alternating schedule at the two meetinghouses at Pennsville and Stonerville (Alverton). Then at a meeting at the home of Jacob S. Loucks in Scottdale, it was decided to abandon the old meetinghouses and build a new meetinghouse at the present site of the Scottdale Mennonite Church on the corner of Market and Grove streets, which was

Booklet Available

An illustrated booklet can be ordered from the 175th Anniversary Committee, in care of Scottdale Mennonite Church, Scottdale, Pa. Friends are cordially invited to attend the Anniversary celebration to be held October 16-17, 1965.

then a piece of farm land owned by the host of the meeting. The church was soon erected at a cost of $3,000. Dedication services were held on December 3, 1893. The congregation was incorporated in February, 1898, probably the first local Mennonite congregation to take such legal action in America.

On January 7, 1894, the Sunday school was organized with John R. Loucks as superintendent. Prior to this for four years Joseph and Aaron Loucks had conducted an afternoon community Sunday school at the White Schoolhouse, a building still standing and visible from the church's rear parking lot. At the third General Mennonite Sunday School Conference held in Indiana in October, 1894, the Scottdale Sunday school reported an enrollment of 50 with an average attendance of 35. The basement was excavated in 1914 and equipped for the use of the Sunday school classes.

Aaron Loucks, ordained September 18, 1892—more than a year before the new meetinghouse was built, was interested in a progressive church program and attempted to find young leadership to assist him. Jacob A. Ressler of Ronks, Pa., was invited to locate here and within three months after his arrival was ordained to the ministry by a congregational vote. Under the leadership of these men, the congregation initiated programs of activity for the youth including Bible meetings and teacher meetings.

In the fall of 1895, Jacob S. Loucks erected a frame dwelling house on the lot just west of the meetinghouse for the use of a minister and his family. This may well be the first Mennonite parsonage in America. Pastor Ressler lived in this house as well as several ministers since, and by his last will and testament Mr. Loucks bequeathed it to the congregation.

The history of the congregation parallels the history of the Mennonite Publishing House. It is difficult to say what one would have been without the other. As the church showed growth during the late thirties, agitation began for the erection of a new building. After much planning, the old 1893 building was razed in March 1939 and replaced by a new modern brick structure at a cost of $20,000. It was dedicated in August of the same year. Present membership is 201.

The work of this congregation has since expanded in the establishment of two other congregations. In 1906 a Sunday school was begun in a schoolhouse in East Scottdale. By 1952, the congregation had become strong enough to build its own church and today worships in the red brick structure known as the Kingview Mennonite Church. It has a membership of 50 members.

In July, 1934, the Scottdale congregation began another church and Sunday school in the North Scottdale area. Today this congregation, pastored by Edwin Alderfer, who also is pastor of Kingview, has a membership of 58 and is a separate congregation.

Scottdale Mennonite Church. This church building was erected in 1939 after the old building of 1893 had been razed.

Where the Action Is

By C. Wayne Zunkel

I STAND BEFORE you as one who shares your definition of the good life. Like you I believe that goodness is clear blue skies and green rolling hills and fields carefully tilled and warm golden sun. Goodness is rich black earth and well-kept homes and spacious yards. Goodness is neighbors one knows and trusts. Goodness is a community one can believe in; a stable, respectable job. Goodness is strong family life. It is clean hands and well-scrubbed faces and well-fed, healthy bodies and worthy, middle-class goals.

"The Good Life"

Goodness suspects bigness and power. It believes in personal dealings, in honest persuasion, in simple, warm, direct relationships.

Goodness is stability and respectability; it is fiscal responsibility. Goodness is level-headed common sense.

Goodness is a college education and classical music and sensitivity to that which uplifts.

We believe this. We have given ourselves to it.

As a denomination, these goals are incorporated into all that we do. For more than any theology or any interpretation of the Bible, these deep emotional commitments are conveyed in all our denominational materials, even to the pictures on the printed page. Underlying our program at home and abroad is an effort to bring people to this view of goodness. If only the world accepted these views, it would be a most decent and desirable place to live.

The only problem with all of this is that we are a church. We are not a society for the dissemination of our definition of goodness. By our own admission we are here because every one of us has taken vows of obedience to Jesus Christ and are under orders from him. And as such, two other imperatives come down hard to bear upon us.

One is the necessity to discover what, in fact, is God's will, what is His concept of the good life. This is not always easy. Our understanding grows and develops. Jesus himself said to his followers, "Much I have to say to you which you are not yet ready to receive. But as you are ready the Holy Spirit will share it with you; he will make it known." The discovery of God's will is an unfolding process, never a once-and-for-all possession to be grasped.

God Loves the World

And the second imperative which weighs upon us is the realization that this good news is not our own little personal possession to hoard, but that somehow it relates to, and is for, all the world. "God so loved the world. . ." John's gospel says. And these words have tumbled from our lips so many times that it scarcely has meaning.

Until two years ago every time I heard that phrase I thought "church"—"God so loved the *church* that he gave his only begotten son. . . ." It may be that I came on my misconception honestly. Some of our hymns had already twisted this—". . . for the church his blood hath purchased."

But that is not what the Bible says. The scriptures say it was for the world that he died: "God so loved the world that he gave his son." "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

We have called ourselves a New Testament church. Out of the turmoil and sin and ignorance of the Europe of the 17th and 18th centuries our forefathers returned to the scriptures, determined to fashion a new kind of church. Theirs was an attempt to share again with all the world the convictions, the ideals, the vitality, the life of that first century church.

And in so many ways they succeeded. The ancient forms were made to live again: the full beauty of the communion with the bread and the cup restored to their rightful setting, growing out of a meal and the sacraments of love and service. The New Testament concept of believer's baptism and total immersion symbolizing the radical, total dedication demanded. The recovery of the New Testament's understanding of spiritual health as related to mental and physical health and the recovery of the beautiful service of anointing which dramatizes this, a service practiced

for eight centuries and then lost by the Christian church. The emphasis on brotherhood and simplicity of life. The rediscovery of the fact that no Christian for the first three hundred years had gone to war. The valid New Testament emphasis on morality and clean, temperate, purposeful living. These they found and reintroduced to a world which, for the most part, had lost them. And they were right. And these values still are valid for our day. And they still are needed.

It seemed to that little fellowship that these New Testament values could best be realized in the kind of setting we talked about earlier—out where life was less hurried and cluttered; conveniently removed from people who may not share our high ideals; in a setting where the sinful lure of the world is less evident. And so, as a people, we have settled the richest farmlands of America. From Pennsylvania's Lebanon and Lancaster counties, we have moved out to the rich valleys of Maryland and Virginia, of Ohio and Indiana and Illinois and Iowa, and on out to the fertile areas of California. We have realized that these values are more easily sustained in a rural setting. If not on a farm, we have limited ourselves for the most part to small towns and suburbs, for here is where our feelings about goodness are most readily realized.

The names of our churches reflect our philosophy: Spring Creek, Blue Ridge, Rocky Run, Pleasant Valley. What a disturbing revelation it is to return to the New Testament and, in leafing through its pages, to discover the names of their churches. Their names do not identify insulated, idyllic settings but are instead Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Galatia, Pergamum, Philadelphia.

They, too, were called to a demanding way of life, to a pure standard of morality, to an impossible quality of devotion and goodness. But it was to a level of expectation not to be lived out in isolation somewhere, not out on the fringes, but at the very center of the biggest and most wicked cities of their day.

The mother church was Jerusalem. From there it spread to other cities: Rome, the largest city of that time and the capital of the ancient world. If you want to get an idea of the living conditions there, the kind of atmosphere in which that little group of Christians were trying to build their redemptive fellowship, when you go back to your room tonight read the first chapter of the letter to the Romans, beginning about verse 24 and continuing on to the end of that chapter.

Jerusalem, Corinth, New York

A couple of weeks ago I was down on Times Square in New York City and I was startled again at what I saw there—the forms of perversion so obvious, the twisting of human nature to feed sub-human appetites. But I didn't see evidences of a thing which is not discussed in those early chapters of Romans.

In that kind of setting Paul writes: "I am not ashamed of the gospel: It is the power of God for salvation." Not out in a secluded farm protected by acres of fields of grain, not in a warm and friendly, well-churched suburb—but in the heart of that city. He believes his faith has answers and can stand up to the worst conditions of man.

Ephesus, site of the temple to the pagan goddess Diana, with its fertility cults and prostitution. Pergamum with its defense installations. Corinth, called by some the most sinful city of that ancient world; a port city attracting adventurers from the whole Mediterranean world who gathered to transact business by day and to patronize the night clubs after dark. They had one massive shopping center of taverns in Corinth —33 of them in a row, behind a colonnade 100 feet long and 80 feet wide, the largest nonreligious structure in ancient Greece, with nightly activities which make Hugh Heffner's bunny clubs look like so much kid's stuff.

Re-read Paul's letters! re-read the early chapters of the book of Revelation which catalogs the problems of the seven churches to which that book is addressed, and note the setting of each.

Why did Paul go there? Why did Paul insist time and again on going down into the midst of the biggest and most sinful cities of his day, into the most unlikely settings, to found his new, struggling churches?

We have called ourselves a New Testament church. And in many ways we are. But in one area—in that of choosing the battleground, in that of choosing the place where these high ideals are to be tested and shared with greatest urgency, we have simply overlooked the New Testament record.

The early Christians over and over again talk of God as a God of peace, a God of truth, a God of love and purity and power, a God of courage. But they seem to insist that this takes on meaning, it becomes rich and full, in the areas where these truths are most on trial—in those areas where there is turmoil and ignorance and discord and sin, the very areas where our faith is most ridiculed and denied.

This failure of all of us to see this dimension of the life of the New Testament church was not crucial in the past. Early America was predominantly rural, dotted with small towns. To equate the gospel with clear skies and vast open spaces was no serious obstacle. And at times we even dared to venture into some of the budding young cities, so long as we could stay out near the edge, so long as we could maintain a large enough collection of "our kind of people."

But America is changing. And not only is America changing, our world is changing. A revolution is going on around our globe. Masses of people on virtually every continent are deserting the rural areas.

"City" is the word to describe the new shape of the landscape, and the picture is much the same whether the name is Bombay or Chicago or Rio de Janeiro.

It is a picture of slums and poverty in the midst of great wealth. It is a picture of great educational institutions and medical centers surrounded by ignorance and disease. It is a picture of beauty and culture threatened to be overrun by filth and ugliness. It is a picture of the fulfillment of some of man's loftiest ideals surrounded by crime—by civilization's finest flowers beset with fear and violence.

The Power of the City

Yet it is a fact. The city is here. And the world's people are moving to the city in a massive, unending flow.

And the other fact of modern life is the almost universal conspicuous absence of the Christian church. We are not in the city. We are not prepared to be there. The very words we use in the formation of our faith are rural words. We talk of Jesus as a "shepherd"; we talk of "pastors" and "flocks." For people who lived this kind of life, this was descriptive and graphic. But it is strange and removed from the understanding of urban man. The very structure of our church life is rural; even our church year is geared to rural harvest time rather than to the fiscal year or urban America.

We find it difficult to move into the new, fretful world of busy streets, high rise apartments, of miles and miles of asphalt and concrete. Cities increasingly are the center of influence in our nation and around the world. And even we who live in the most remote rural areas find our lives directed, our values formed, our resources channeled by what happens in the great urban centers.

Cities will increasingly control our political life.

And with the growing interdependence of our lives in a complex industrial society, government will play an even larger role in every area, regulating, setting limitations, formulating the guidelines by which we live. Even now, to a large degree, the size of the vote in Chicago determines what happens in Illinois. The nature of the vote in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia and four or five smaller cities shapes the politics in Pennsylvania. As goes Detroit, so goes Michigan.

From our cities come our radio and television programs. From our cities come *Time* and *Life* and *Newsweek* and the unending flood of sex magazines. From our cities come our news media. Our whole understanding of our world is funneled through the mind-set of our cities—we see the world through their eyes, and we make our judgments on the kind of information *they* think important to share with us.

A few years back, who sold hula hoops? or, this past year, who sold skate boards to an entire nation in a few short weeks? Power to mold the minds and wills of people—vast power—and it rests in our cities. The truth is, we will help to shape our cities or our cities will shape us. The ironic part is that at the very time the city has been mushrooming in its dominance over every aspect of life, the Christian church, usually at great financial loss, has swiftly been pulling out.

Truman Douglass in an article in *Harper's* magazine back in 1958 entitled "The Job Protestants Shirk" said, "In almost direct proportion to the increasing importance of the city to American culture has been the withdrawal—both physical and spiritual—of the Protestant Church."

Today one out of every eight people in the United States lives in a city of more than a million inhabitants. Four out of every ten live within cities of at least 25,000. From these cities come the ideas, tastes, standards, folkways and value judgments which through radio, TV, newspapers and magazines become those of the nation.

If Protestantism gives up the city, it virtually gives up America. Yet this is precisely what it is doing. And then Truman Douglass lists some examples. In Detroit, fifty-three churches deserted the heart of that city within a fifteen-year period. Within the past century in New York City, one denomination dissolved fifty-four churches, and merged forty-two more with other congregations.

And I know why we do it. I know how we feel. The city is so big and so bad and so dirty. It goes against all our feelings about goodness.

"I Hated God's World"

My own experience as I entered Bethany Seminary at the old location on Van Buren Street is probably typical. When I went to live in that part of Chicago I hated every minute of it. The soot, the crowded quarters, the constant press of people, the uncertainty of knowing whether you'd ever make it home after you'd cashed your paycheck from Sears.

Quite frankly, I lived for the weekends when I could take the "third rail" forty miles out to the end of the commuter line, away from the dirt and filth, to my parents' home in Elgin; or drive from Elgin along country highways—skirting as much of Chicago as possible—down to the small, peaceful college town of North Manchester. Back where the sunshine was a real golden and not a dirty yellow. Back where the sidewalks were swept clean and green lawns led up to tidy, well-painted homes. Back where you could look up at night and see the stars and not just the reflected haze of city lights. Back where the trees grew large and tall and spread their full-leafed branches out gracefully over the quiet streets. Back where the dirt on children's faces was a good, clean, small-town dirt and where the man who passed you on the sidewalk spoke to you and called you by name.

I hated Chicago. I hated the community. I confess I even hated having to live among that strange assortment of people.

. . . Until one day when I was attending an interseminary conference and we were going around telling what denomination we represented, I said "Church of the Brethren." An Episcopalian lad, a wise guy, said, "Church of the Brethren, what's that?" I explained, "It's predominantly a rural church. Maybe that's why you never heard of it." Quick as a flash he said, "What do you mean, 'a rural church?' How can a church call itself 'rural'? Isn't the Church of Jesus Christ for all people? Doesn't that just demonstrate you aren't preaching all the gospel?"

He made me mad. And I had all kinds of arguments welling up inside me to hurl back at him. But I closed my lips tight shut because some of these Episcopalians, I had found, were pretty smart, and I wasn't about to get myself worked over in such a company of strangers.

I went home upset, feeling he was unfair. I returned cherishing all sorts of warm feelings about my heritage. But the brash young fellow had planted a disturbing idea in my head and, as Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "Man's mind stretched to a new idea, never returns to its original size."

Gradually I began to realize that the community around the old Bethany which I hated with such intensity was really God's world at my doorstep.

The people who spoke in a different tongue or with a strange accent. The Negroes. The Puerto Ricans who occasionally came into the gym and played volleyball with a vengeance and were sometimes quick-tempered. The foul-mouthed kids, the unwed mothers, the good-natured little Greek shopkeeper down the side street who each year tried to sell Christmas cards to his Jewish customers. The sickness, the poverty, the ignorance, the despair on so many faces. This

was the world we send Brethren Service workers across an ocean to feed and clothe. This was the world we send missionaries to Africa and India and Ecuador and Puerto Rico to heal and to try to convert. This was the world we sang hymns about in chapel and got all choked up over hearing someone else tell about, and would wring our hearts to want to meet. This was God's world, stacked up several floors deep and from my fourth floor apartment stretching out in every direction as far as the eye could see. This was God's world . . . and I hated it!

The Forgotten Mission Field

The first Assembly of the World Council of Churches meeting in Amsterdam in 1948 said: "There are three great mission areas of our world which the Christian church has not really penetrated. They are: Hinduism, Islam, and the culture of modern cities."

Does it really make sense to pour out thousands of dollars year after year for missionaries and service workers across an ocean or even to the crowded core of neighboring cities, if we also, at the same time, deliberately close our eyes and our hearts to the toughest, most critical mission area in the entire world which may lie at our very doorstep?

There's a story about a drunk down on his knees under a street lamp, looking for a key. A friendly fellow came along and joined in the search for a time. After covering the ground rather thoroughly, he asked, "Are you certain this is where you lost it?" "Oh no," replied the drunk. "I lost it over there." "Then why are you looking here?" came the question. "Because it's too dark to look for anything over there." And this is a parable of the mentality which we of the church have so often shown. We are not yet willing to seek out the lost where they may be found.

Archie Hargraves compares the genuine Christian to a compulsive gambler, and the arena of action to a floating dice game. Every morning on waking, the compulsive gambler wants to know "where the action is" that he may go and be a part of it.

The Christian is like a dedicated doctor with medicines and skills, longing to share them at the point of sickness; like the teacher, hungry to share his learning at the point of ignorance.

There is a study book out entitled *The City: God's Gift to the Church.* And the city *is* God's gift to the church, for by being challenged to stop running away, but to turn and face it, in so doing we are pulled back again to recover the deeper truths of our faith.

The city does not demand a cheapening of faith, singing happy gospel ditties and mouthing the cliches of an uninformed and trite theology, as some imagine. On the contrary, it demands that we go deeper to rediscover the very essence of our faith.

The city forces us to go beyond Ladies Aid gossip circles and chit-chat over a cup of tea. In the heart of the city, with its pressures and demands, that kind of watered-down religion cannot survive.

The city forces the church to do more than offer silly little games for its young people. If it wants to hold them, it has to begin sharing a bolder kind of gospel—one that leads to active involvement in the name of the Christ in the world. One that leads to entering into the struggle where some even suffer and die. It has to offer a gospel with substance.

On one slum street in New York City, Negro, Puerto Rican and white youth are engaged in difficult and serious drama—drama which demands skills and teamwork. Drama which gives them a creative opportunity to work out their aggressions. Drama with a message.

In our church our senior hi's did the play, "The Boy with a Cart" by Christopher Fry. I don't think half the older people understood it, but most of the youth ate it up. And I think the lad who liked it best was a red-headed teenager from the neighborhood who rarely makes it to Sunday school and church, who learned a few weeks ago that the man who lives with them isn't his father, who a few short years back was a part of a tough little gang of boys, but who, through drama, is finding a medium that has helped to get an important message through.

The city forces Christians to stop playing at religion, to cease being a social club and to start "being the church."

The church of Jesus Christ was never meant for "the right kind of people." The reason you and I are members of the church today is because a man named Paul dared to share the gospel with the Gentiles, with our kind of folk. And for daring to bring the gospel into the heart of the cities, he got called back before a church council in Jerusalem because *we* were not "the right kind of people." We were thought to be common and unclean.

George McLeod has said: "I simply argue that the cross be raised again at the center of the market place as well as on the steeple of the church. Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles but on a cross between two thieves; on the town garbage heap, at a crossroad so cosmopolitan that they had to write his title in Hebrew, Latin and Greek; at the kind of place where cynics talk smut and thieves curse and soldiers gamble. Because that is where he died, and that is what he died about, that is where churches should be and what churchmen should be about."

The city forces us to recover the depth of God's concern and the breadth of his love. The city forces us to brotherhood. You cannot close your doors to the whole people of God in the heart of the city and long survive. In some of the urban areas where Brethren have been strong, once healthy churches are near death right now over this very issue. They don't

want minority groups entering their church to pray to their God. And you cannot long survive in an urban world on that kind of basis. They may choose to take a terrible financial loss and spend several hundred thousand dollars moving to a nearby cow pasture, and do the same thing in another twenty or thirty years—but run as they will, there is no ultimate running away. And in the end they will die.

The city forces us to brotherhood—the kind of brotherhood evident in the New Testament church where Alexander and Rufus, Negroes, sons of Simon of Cyrene who bore Christ's cross, were members, a brotherhood which included slaves and masters, rich and poor, a few brilliant scholars and unlettered fishermen. A brotherhood which, despite the disciple Peter's early objections, for he was one of the most deeply prejudiced of all, even included gentiles like ourselves.

The city forces us back to the New Testament. The city's sin and ugliness make its message of redemption stand out with even greater power and beauty.

The city helps us grow strong. It forces us to hammer out our faith on the hard anvil of life. It forces us to test the things that we say with our lips, not in a vacuum but in the midst of battle.

The City and the Full Gospel

And above all, the city demands that we share the full gospel in all its richness as it touches every aspect of life. So often when we talk of the gospel we think of preaching. But very little of Jesus' ministry was preaching. In all the scriptures only one sermon has been saved and scholars tell us even that, in the form that we have it, may be a collection of shorter conversations. Jesus did much more than preach. He taught. He healed. He ministered to troubled spirits, disturbed emotions. He fed. His was a ministry to the whole man. He even got involved in a protest against the political corruption of his day, walking into the temple to overturn the tables of those involved in abuse of the poor and in graft. And on Palm Sunday, instead of being in church he found himself at the front of a demonstration down the streets of his nation's capital because, he said, the very stones would cry out if he turned aside.

On the mission field in other lands we have attempted a full ministry. Our work in Ecuador began with a boy's club. Overseas we establish schools and hospitals. We teach people how to farm. We introduce new seeds and new tools. But where we live, for some strange reason, we try to confine the gospel to two hours of talk on a Sunday morning.

But the city forces us to a full gospel. The church must concern itself with the total man if it is to survive in the city.

A half century ago Wibur Stover, Frank Crumpacker, Stover Kulp, and others stood before annual conference and challenged us to a mission endeavor in India and Nigeria, West Africa, and China. Had American Christians not responded to such pleas, for example were it not for the educated, restrained leadership, the product of Christian missions in Nigeria, to be specific, sitting at the tables of the United Nations, present in the councils of the world to soften the fevered emotions of the emerging nations, our troubled globe would be in far worse shape today.

And just as Wilbur Stover and Frank Crumpacker and Stover Kulp and a noble procession of others placed on the church the mission imperative in their day, so in our day we need strong voices to call us to enter our great uncrossed mission frontier—to begin to recruit not only our own finest young men but members of minority groups to re-enter the battlefields we have deserted, to return not with a halfhearted attempt to salve our consciences, but with the same determination and financial resources with which we entered new suburban communities immediately following World War II. And where we already have established beachheads, we must determine to stay not to maintain "services as usual" for a closed fellowship for a few hours on Sunday, but to share the full gospel with them.

Isn't it interesting that the biblical writers, for all their rural and small town background, after they have finished talking about the cities with their sin—Sodom and Gomorrah and the rest—when, in the closing chapters, they get around to setting forth their dreams of a new heaven and a new earth, don't spell it out in the terms so dear to their hearts. They don't talk of a new "rolling hills of Judah" or a new "suburban Bethlehem." When they get around to projecting God's will for his people, they use the figurative speech of the largest city they know anything about—they talk of a new heaven and a new earth in terms of a new Jerusalem.

And isn't it interesting and frightening that unless we, too, can think in terms of a new Jerusalem—in terms of a new Chicago or a new Philadelphia or a new Baltimore, breathing into it all the hopes and dreams, seeing it through the eyes of God himself—then these visions about the peoples of our world becoming the peoples of our Lord and of his Christ may ultimately fade into the shadows of the America and the world of tomorrow.

Mennonites in the City

Special issues of *Mennonite Life* have featured Mennonites in the city. The Mennonite involvement in Chicago was featured in the April, 1953 issue. The issue of January, 1964 was a general issue on the challenge the modern city holds for Mennonites. Some issues have dealt with Mennonites in Winnipeg (January, 1951, July, 1956), Ontario (October, 1950, July, 1952) and Dutch Mennonites in the city (October, 1963).

All the above issues are still available from *Mennonite Life*, North Newton, Kansas, at 75 cents a copy.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Violators, Warren Kliewer, Marshall Jones Co. (Franestown, N.H., 1965), $3.00 151 pp.

This is a collection of ten short stories, at least two of which have appeared in *Kansas* magazine, although no mention is made of the fact. Warren Kliewer is well-known to *Mennonite Life* readers. He is a Quaker and Assistant Professor in English at Earlham College. These stories are set in an isolated Canadian village, Waldheim. Elmer Suderman in a hortatory introduction warns readers not to look for Waldheim on any map. Waldheim is psychological rather than geographical. "There is too much of Waldheim in all of us," Suderman says.

The Mennonitism in the book is incidental ethnic furniture rather than spiritual dynamic. The characters portrayed here would be quite incapable of founding colleges, missions, or an MCC. But this in no sense invalidates the book.

Kliewer is at his best in poking fun at the foibles of the human race. His funniest story is "Uncle Wilhelm's Love Affair," in which self-righteous Sam Engeler refuses to talk German to his eighty-eight year old, almost-deaf father until he feels called upon to reprove the father for seducing a young girl, an event which the reader suspects exists only in Sam's warped mind. It is hilarious. In "The Revenge of Boy" Kliewer sustains a mood, then spoofs the reader with a humorous surprise ending. In "The Death of a Patriarch" he takes the familiar old folk tale of the "most obedient wife" and transfers it into the Waldheim setting.

The stories are not all equally well-written; this is usual in a collection. Warren Kliewer is to be congratulated as a growing writer for this work.

North Newton, Kansas — *Elaine Sommers Rich*

To the Editors: Some weeks ago I received a solicitation for the new book of Warren Kliewer, "The Violators." The book came yesterday, and I have read it. In view of the fact that Kliewer has left the Mennonite brotherhood, it is hard to see how this can be considered a social protest, which assumes participation. As the voice of an outsider, it must then be considered a series of portraits of a Mennonite community. Any mature person offering a general appraisal of the particular group would normally give a whole picture; showing both darkness and light.

I fail to see such a treatment in this collection. As an urban Mennonite, committed to the maintenance of our faith, I have run across a great number of examples of rejection of the Mennonite position on the basis of naive and immature hostility.

I am not as traumatized by the discovery of sin and shortcomings in the Mennonite community as some people seem to be. I am able to accept the basic human frailties of our people without alienation; I have lived among other groups and denominations, and I know that these have the same problems and the same "hypocrites" these people find so hard to take in our midst. There simply is no running away from this problem; it is everywhere. Our problem is that of all of rural America.

It is very obvious to anyone with Canadian background that Kliewer has not done very well at moving the location of his Mennonite community northward; much Mountain Lake soil clings to Waldheim. Nor is he too well versed in the relations of French Canadians and other non-Mennonite types in Canada. There are some glaring inconsistencies with regard to this problem.

SAVAGE, MINNESOTA — *Victor A. Dirks*

Dirk Philips. Vriend en medewerker van Menno Simons. 1504-1568. By J. ten Doornkaat Koolman. Haarlem: H. D. Tjeen Willink & Zoon N.W., 1964, pp. 235, fl. 12.50.

The story of this book in itself is unique. As a student of the Mennonite Seminary and the University of Amsterdam the author wrote a paper dealing with Dirk Philips which grew into a dissertation which, however, he never submitted. Only after he retired in 1957 as pastor of the Reformed Church in Switzerland did he resume his research which culminated in the publication of this book and numerous scholarly articles on related subjects in various magazines.

The book has twelve chapters and four appendices, two of which consist of unpublished writings by Dirk Philips. This constitutes the first full-size biography of the significant co-worker of Menno Simons, some of whose writings were translated and published in German and English. The author chose to write the biography in Dutch, the language of the home country of Dirk Philips. This book is written with unusual care, scholarly and well-documented. It is the record of the life and activities of one of the earliest and most significant leaders of Dutch Anabaptism. Dirk Philips started his work in Leeuwarden, Friesland, fled to East Friesland, traveled much in visitation work and for a time served the Danzig Mennonite Church, at that time an outpost of the eastern frontier. He returned to Emden, East Friesland, to attend a significant meeting, where he died in 1568. The author left no known source untouched that could contain some information about Dirk, and used all he found judiciously to present a rounded life of this leader.

In the early years his life and work runs parallel to that of his brother, Obbe. When the latter "goes into solitude" we often find Dirk in the company of Menno, whom he survived by seven years. Although not always in agreement, the two shared many views and much work, which has been more strongly emphasized than it has been done by some other writers. It could easily have been that Dirk accompanied Menno on his trip to the Cologne area and to Danzig. However, the arguments presented as proof do not seem convincing as final evidence.

The accuracy of the interpretation of Titus 1:6, that a bishop must be "the husband of one wife," is questionable. The author, basing his view on K. Vos, assumes this to mean that he must be married. Does the text not simply mean that he should be the husband of *one* wife only? For the newly converted Christians to whom Titus wrote this could not be taken for granted (p. 5).

The analysis and summary of the writings of Dirk are thorough and carefully worked out. So is the description of the role Dirk played at the many conferences he attended and the controversies he entered into, particularly in regard to church discipline. As is generally known, Dirk and Leenaert Bouwens followed the most rigid line in discipline. Even though Menno identified himself with Dirk by stating that they were one, it is apparent that Menno was more readily inclined to take circumstances into consideration when dealing with a case before applying blindly the rule agreed upon. The author succeeds in presenting sympathetically the motivations back of the more rigid disciplinary actions of the early Anabaptists, including Dirk, in their attempt to present a church "without spot and wrinkle" pleasing unto the Lord, the head of the church.

The index, the bibliography of Dirk Philips and the unusually complete footnotes, which run from 39 to 239 per chapter are very helpful. It can only be hoped that this book will inspire an American scholar and translator to produce an English edition and a publisher to make it available before the 400th anniversary of the death of Dirk Philips approaches.

BETHEL COLLEGE — *Cornelius Krahn*

Children in Community by Society of Brothers; Roswith Arnold, photography and art editor. Woodcrest, Rifton, New York: The Plough Publishing House, 1963, 108 pp. $3.00.

This delightful book with more pictures than text is the attempt of the Society of Brothers to answer the questions of people who ask, "How do your children react?" and "How do children fit into the community life?" In their communities groups of families try to live in accord with the teachings of the New Testament, living together and sharing all things.

The book is also a witness to what they believe children's education should be as they attempt "to lead children to unity, which is God's idea and God's will for men on this earth," in the words of Eberhard Arnold, the founder of the society.

By means of photographs showing the activities of children in their communities, and by stories, poems and drawings which let the children speak for themselves they give a very interesting and sympathetic portrayal of child development, and of their place in community life. This is augmented by brief statements of the parents or teachers who work with the various age groups in which they share their thoughts about the nature of the child, and by excerpts from the writings of Eberhard Arnold. The children described range in age from infants through high schoolers.

Even the youngest children spend most of the day in groups with others of their own age, but along with this is an emphasis on the importance of family life. The book gives an interesting insight into the life of children in the communities of the Society of Brothers. The sensitive photography and careful selection of the creative efforts of children will also be received with appreciation by all who love children.

Bluffton, Ohio — *Martha F. Graber*

Christian Education in the Home by Alta Mae Erb. Scottdale, Pennsylvania: The Herald Press, 1963, 92 pp. $2.50.

The author is well known in Mennonite circles as a teacher of child psychology and child study classes for more than thirty years at Hesston, Bethel and Goshen colleges, and writer and editor. In her latest book she performs a service for parents as well as other Christian workers by writing about the desirable relationships of the child to God, to Jesus, to the Bible, to the church, to others and to himself. In so doing she interprets these six major relationships in simple language and in terms of the child's experiences with much emphasis on the basic importance of establishing desirable relationships in the child's early years.

The six areas discussed are familiar to church school workers as the areas frequently used to outline the goals of Christian education. Mrs. Erb approaches these goals more from the point of the home than of the church school in her writing and attempts to translate the traditional language of adult Christians into ideas, words, and experiences that will be meaningful to children. She tries to help parents develop clear aims for use in directing the spiritual growth of their children.

To facilitate use of the book she puts the desired relationships in each area in outline form at the beginning of each chapter, and to enable parents and Christian workers to use it as a study text she suggests a learning activity or project at the end of each chapter.

Bluffton, Ohio — *Martha F. Graber*

Kansas: Enchantment of America, From Its Glorious Past to the Present, by Allan Carpenter. Chicago: Children's Press, $3.50.

This is one of the series of Enchantment of America State Books written for children. With its limited purpose in mind the author uses quick and colorful brush strokes to present the Kansas story. Interesting elements are lifted out of the mass of detail available to a writer. While some statements should be checked for contemporary historical accuracy, the treatment very wisely is in terms of creative and outstanding personalities. The book will serve its purpose well of developing a greater appreciation for the rich heritage of Kansans.

Bethel College — *John F. Schmidt*

Sense and Incense, by Omar Eby. Scottdale, Pa., Herald Press, c 1965. 160 pp. $3.00.

With a facile pen the author gives us delightful vignettes of his three-year experience in Somalia as a teacher of English under appointment by the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities.

So often missionaries have been under compulsion to tell us about the progress of the missionary enterprise in terms of the souls saved, contacts made, and churches built that they have not told us what life—everyday life—was like in a faraway land. This lack Eby very capably remedies. He proved himself to be an alert observer and skillful in turning a phrase so that scenes are presented with precision and clarity.

Incidents at home, in the school, on the road and on the hunt are relived by the reader. Other missionaries could and should write similar tales of the experiences of living, as well as writing of the big problems and challenges of building the church in other lands.

Bethel College — *John F. Schmidt*

The Reformation: A Narrative History Related by Contemporary Observers and Participants. By Hans J. Hillerbrand. New York: Harper and Row, 1964. 495 pp., $5.50.

This volume by Hans J. Hillerbrand of the Divinity School, Duke University, sets out "to tell the story of the Reformation with the help of contemporary sources." By using diaries, letters, pamphlets, and other documents, private and public, the author has reconstructed a narrative account of some major events of the Reformation era. The eight chapters deal primarily with Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, the Radical Reformation, the English and Scottish Reformations, and the Catholic Reformation. The selections are generally brief and are organized well. In the wide range of selections one can find, for example, contemporary accounts of the debate between Luther and Eck, of Calvin at Geneva, and of Henry VIII explaining his estrangement from Catherine. The emphasis is upon the men and events of the Reformation rather than on theological and intellectual developments.

Each chapter begins with an essay introducing the documents; and a bibliography of important books is provided for each topic. Some excellent portraits and polemical cartoons add much to the interest of the book. The volume provides access to material, especially biographical, often not easily found. Teachers and ministers will probably find it of special interest for reference.

Bethel College — *Keith Sprunger*

Moralities and Miracles, by Warren Kliewer, Francestown, New Hampshire; Golden Quill Press, 1962. 88 pp. $3.00

A book of poetry by one of Mennonitism's sons is an event of signal importance and should be given proper note. However, as John Ciardi says to people who ask, "You call that a poem?" "Why should any man use up the hours of his life explaining to people what they have already shown themselves unwilling to understand?" With that understanding we can look from a non-poet's viewpoint at the work of a sensitive and talented poet.

Moralities and Miracles by Warren Kliewer is a collection of poems and plays gathered in an attractive format by the Golden Quill Press and dedicated to Cornelius Krahn. As with any collection, this book of twenty-five separate items is difficult to review. The selections are of varying quality and deal with a variety of themes. Most of the early selections in the book deal in some way with peace and war.

Many of the poems strike a chord of responsive sentiment that is the mark of the author's great talent. "War Bride" is a deeply moving, albeit ghastly, story of a soldier who took the life of a civilian. The poem is a profound picture of guilt that forever etches itself upon one's mind, and as such it is a significant commentary on Paul's question, "Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

"Faustus on the Playground" is another grim poem, but this time mixed with a soft respectful humor. "Suddenly a Brief Smile" catches the pathos of a meeting between two persons that is fleeting and then lost forever. In "Meeting" there is a beautiful view of the religious quest likened this time to a struggling, dog-paddling effort to shallow-dive in search of the pearl of great price. In "The Sky in the Meeting House Window" the unutterable, quick, glimpse of the infinite is familiar and yet not within the grasp of words.

Of interest to historians is Kliewer's view of the strong but ambivalent feelings of a leader of the ill-fated Turkestan move, now arrived in mid-winter in Hutchinson, Kansas.

These are religious poems in the deepest sense, for they reflect a genuine effort to understand man and his meaning in relation to Christian truth. They are not "easy poems" in that they demand meditation and even suffering in order to absorb. But the effort is indeed rewarding.

The book also includes two plays and the libretto for an opera. "The Summoning of Everyman" was published previously and has been reviewed on these pages in the past. "Bird in the Bush" is an opera, first performed at the University of California. It is a strange piece and difficult to understand. If this is "theatre of the absurd," it makes Edward Albee seem like a comic book for transparency. What is it about? Could it be a graphic description of the way possessiveness permeates and destroys love? Perhaps! You could even make a case for a religious miracle play out of this. Could Magdalene really be Mary? Could her dead husband be the carpenter Joseph? Could Natura be nature itself in whose lineage Mary justly was? Could the policeman be the government that stood impotently by while Magdalene—Judaism, indeed mankind —slew the difficult-to-understand inbreak of Real Love that sought to move in freedom in the world? If such a construction gives Kliewer a fright, he may blame the small mind of the reviewer, but yet he cannot entirely exonerate himself from publishing something that seems to be a little more than a collection of words. Words are not necessarily the same as communication. Perhaps this bit of esoterica is not a joke. Perhaps it is meant to be an outline for projection like a verbal Rorschach. If so, he should not be surprised to have it appear to some to be mostly "arranged ink."

The other play, "The Prodigal Son," features the Father and the Elder Brother, with the audience identifying with the third character, the Prodigal. The play develops the thesis that the Prodigal really chooses depravity to the demands of forgiveness or the example of ethical virtue. The play is moving and impressive and points to the fact that times today are so out of joint with the past that even the beautiful and instructive story of the Prodigal Son leaves dangling many issues related to contemporary life.

I placed this book in the hands of a sophisticated expatriate Mennonite while on vacation last summer, and when she had read it, she expressed disappointment that it expressed the general pessimism of most contemporary literature. "I had hoped to find some joy, some hope in a Mennonite's view of things," she said. I'm not sure she was really fair in that comment, for Mennonite artists must uncover the reality of life just as honestly as others. Often our wish for "peace and tranquility" in art is perhaps just longing for escape. But isn't there still some hope and some joy at the center of real life?

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

Hymnolgy

Die Melodien der deutschen evangelischen Kirchenlieder aus den Quellen geschöpft und mitgeteilt by Johannes Zahn. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1963, six volumes.

Das Deutsche Kirchenlied von der ältesten Zeit bis zu Anfang des XVII. Jahrhunderts by Philipp Wackernagel. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964, five volumes.

George Olms has launched a large reprinting project of valuable scholarly books of the past century now out of print. Among them are many books dealing with church music, hymns, and folk songs. The two sets of books mentioned above have been standard sources of information in hymnology. Since they were long out of print, it is of great significance that they have been reprinted and are now being made available to libraries and specialists in the field.

The first set is of particular significance for the study of the melodies of Protestant hymns; while the second set is primarily devoted to the text of the church hymns from the beginning of German hymnology to the seventeenth century. Wackernagel, who has published many other studies, is an authority in the field.

It has been the reviewer's privilege to make use of the Bethel College Historical Library, which has a growing section in the field of hymnody and hymnology. Numerous doctoral dissertations have been written by making use of this library.

BETHEL COLLEGE *Walter H. Hohmann*

Das Ambraser Liederbuch vom Jahre 1582 by Joseph Bergmann. Hildesheim: George Olms, 1962, 380 pp.

This selection of songs, found in the castle of the village of Ambras, near Innsbruck, Austria, is now located in the Ambras Collection at Vienna. It was first published in 1582, and reprinted in 1845. Of the first edition, only one copy is extant and the 1845 edition is out of print. For this reason, it is of great significance that the publisher was willing to reprint the book which contains 260 folk songs in the original vernacular, often in a non-artistic rhythm. The songs reveal the feelings and the spirit of the common people of that day. This new edition will be very helpful in the study of folk songs.

BETHEL COLLEGE *Walter H. Hohmann*

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