MENNONITE LIFE

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COVER AND BACK COVER

Mennonite Disaster Service, Kansas, Mennonite Central Committee.

PHOTO CREDITS:

Pages 73-75, Mennonite Central Committee (by Larry Kehler, Arlin Hunsberger, *Ebony Magazine*, Richard Blosser, Wichita *Eagle-Beacon*, R. Wayne Clemens); Page 82, Robert Schrag; Pages 86-91, Gary Waltner.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Delbert Wiens analyzes our Mennonite heritage in an article entitled "New Wineskins for Old Wine." This treatise, applicable to most religious groups, may jolt some but will stimulate all who read it. (Those who would like to have the complete text should write to the Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, Hillsboro, Kansas, where it appeared in a booklet form. The reprint constitutes excerpts from the booklet.) "The Renewal of the Church" by John Miller presents a similar but more radical challenge. "Interpreting the Signs" by Harold H. Gross presents the same concern in the context of Christian's attitudes toward the world. Similarly, the following two articles by Gordon D. Kaufman and James Douglass treat the question of the Christian's responsibility in a world of power and struggle, the latter being a voice from a Roman Catholic. ¶ The "Work of the Mennonite Disaster Service" by Clayton Koppes gives a glimpse of Mennonite activities in communities with emergency situations. The articles by Reinhard H. Vogt and Elmer F. Suderman, although in a different way, pick up the thread of the issue and present it as a challenge in the life of a student and scholar. How a scholar can also be a prophet is featured in the article dealing with Ludwig Keller, whose large archival collection was recently "air-lifted" from Eastern Germany to the prairies of Kansas. ¶ Gary Waltner, who returned recently from several years of service abroad, relates what he found in an area in Czechoslovakia where 300 years ago there was an "ideal" communal Christian life. Museum pieces presented in illustrations still tell the story of the witness of the Hutterites of that day. The bibliographical and research information of this issue gives a glimpse of the work that was done this past year in getting and presenting information about the Mennonites, past and present.

Former millrace of Habaner mill. Wooden shaft is visible.

New Wineskins for Old Wine

By Delbert Wiens

"New Wineskins for Old Wine" is reprinted from a more complete treatise under the same title published by the Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, Hillsboro, Kansas, where copies can be ordered.

Emphasis on the Package

IT IS FASCINATING how tenaciously a group can cling to its forms and institutions. The original spirit can evaporate all unnoticed. With that gone, we cling ever more firmly to the shell that housed it. We let the kernel go because we concentrate upon the husk. Then we cling to the husk lest, that gone, we should see that we hold nothing.

One of the great revolutions of our time is the revolution in packaging. We sell the same old contents by wrapping them in vivid orange and red. It is the package that counts. Does the Sunday school have five departments (at least) and two teachers for every class? Is there a men's organization and a ladies organization and a youth organization? Are budgets met? Is the building new and shiny? Are there more members at the end of the year than at the beginning? These may all be good things.They may be evidence of inner life. Or they may be the measure of our diligence at sprucing up the package while the contents mold away.

And so we laymen, who have identified ourselves with a good Christian church are anxious to put on a good appearance before the world. We want to present a shiny package. We are concerned about our "image" (to use an almost-sacred modern word). We cut our ministers to fit our needs. We want someone who will represent our ambitions, someone who will be respected as a "good Joe" by the rest of the community.

We want someone who will be an expert at sprucing up our package. And may heaven help him if his suit is shabby or if he cannot "wow" a Chamber of Commerce banquet with funny stories.

Most important of all, we hire him to reassure us that our husks are all-important. He had better be "orthodox" in every way—and use the King James version. Since we have almost lost the capacity for personal trust in God, we need him to assure us that beliefs in propositions are our guarantee. Because we have ignored discipleship and ethics, we want him to tell us of the glories of our long-ago "conversion." And we want him to win an occasional outsider so that, by proxy, we can be reassured that our teachings have yet the mark of truth and power upon them (but not too often; the complexion of our group might change). Above all, he must not meddle with reality. Our business dealings and home life are none of his affair.

Well, we have not yet entirely come to this. Perhaps we never will. But who can deny that this trend is upon us? Would we recognize an Amos or a John the Baptist if he were to come upon us? Or would our piles of stones be ready?

It is my thesis that our forefathers had what was, for the most part, a genuine and fresh experience with God. In order to teach and preach what they had received, they set up systems of explanations, rules, and institutions. In time, the systems tended to become central. And so these "forms," which for the fathers were walls of defense and channels of power, have tended to become, for us, walls of imprisonment and rituals.

What, then, shall we do with these forms?

One answer is to learn to live with them, to pretend that these formulas are adequate substitutes for the new wine that intoxicated our fathers. No doubt many of us, failing to escape our forms because even the revolt against them has been ritualized, have been content to settle down in packaged conformity.

Another answer is to attempt to turn the clock back. Some of us would like to recapture the old meanings by returning entirely to the former "simplicities." Hardly any of us have the courage to attempt this, however. The Hutterites and the Amish have demonstrated the irrelevance and futility of such an answer.

The Forms Are Secondary

It seems to me that we must begin by admitting that no forms, no wineskins, can contain forever the rich wine of the Holy Spirit. *All* our wineskins will finally burst—or spoil the wine. No set of doctrinal statements can comprehend God. No set rules can formalize the law of love. No institution can unleash the Holy Spirit by opening up its faucets.

An experience is an event, and no event can be fully analyzed, though historians fill the world with books about it. Our fathers knew an event (and so, of course, have many of us). They then worked out the subjective conditions of that event. But, though necessary, these sets of descriptions can never say what an event says to those who lived it.

Shall we then cast out the forms and deny the long descriptions? Of course not. The forms are secondary to the event, but the event cannot come unless there are the forms.

This is something that we Anabaptists and Pietists have difficulty learning. In rebellion against the choking mass of forms, the extremists of the Reformation thought to undercut them all by making Christianity a "heart" religion beyond the need of "churchly" trappings.

Even love requires forms. Love is not the kiss, not the flowers, not the walk across a moonlight field. Neither can it be expressed without such tokens. The meaning of a marriage of true minds is not in the rituals of the home, nor can this meaning be without such rituals.

And so it is with God. We cannot talk with Him directly, face to face. We are natural; he is supernatural. We canont hear the voice of God, just as stones cannot hear a symphony. Therefore, he must come to our level and deal with us by direction. He must enter into forms, "speaking" through smoking mountains and visions and culture forms like words and institutions.

We Need Forms to Transcend Forms

Then what of forms and rituals? We cannot do away with them. The assumption that we can do so in some new "revival" is profoundly wrong. Indeed, it would seem that we need more of them.

We need more of them because we have lost one sort of consensus. Our fathers could group together because they all were like each other. Because of this they could derive the same meaning from the same kind of experience. But we are not alike anymore. To receive the same experience with God we require somewhat different forms. Only in a world of carbon copies would all families have precisely the same rituals. Only in a world of robots would the same conversion experience take exactly the same forms.

Though essential, forms tend to displace their meaning. Meaningful rituals become routines. That is another reason why we need a manifold of forms, a variety of rituals. That through which grace once flowed may become barren; while another channel, which was once strange and incomprehensible, suddenly opens the life-giving streams.

Finally, we need a multitude of systems to teach us that systems are only systems, that none of our sets of descriptions or institutions are absolute. Contradictory theologies (for example, Arminianism versus Calvinism) are no embarrassment to us. All of them help us to see and to understand. No one of them can be "the truth," although all are necessary. They are like photographs of a city. No one of them can reveal very much. Each of them gives us a glimpse from yet another angle. Even all of them together cannot help us to translate two-dimensional representations into the three-dimensional reality of the city.

Surely God can begin with us at whatever level we are. But to enter more deeply into the meaning of our experience, we must understand more and more. This is why Christians must learn to know each other. We must deepen and correct our experiences by comparing ourselves with and entering into the experiences of other Christians—*all* other Christians. Christ wills that His body be one. He who stands in the way of that oneness stands in the way of the will of Christ.

There are those who fear that this unification will destroy some of the forms, some of the expressions, through which men have met God. This is a legitimate fear. When it is gathered together, the body of Christ must be present in all its parts, for each has its function. Each contributes to that whole before which even the principalities and powers must bow and through which the whole meaning of the event of Christ can become manifest and by which we shall be able to read the Scriptures with fuller understanding.

But we will only grow beyond our forefathers by rediscovering the reality of the experience that came to them. Like them we need to meet God. Like them we need to be open about our experiences and our feelings, being willing once again to sit around tables, struggling in all honesty to study the Scriptures in the light of our experiences and those of many other sorts of Christians, into whose experiences we must be willing to enter. We must be willing to bring our hard questions, our unsolved problems, to the Scriptures and to each other, trusting that the Holy Spirit will lead us into new and deeper experience with Him who is the way, the truth, the life. Then we will grow from glory to glory—and from form to form—until, beyond the need for present forms, we meet the one toward whom they ever point.

Beyond Bibliolatry

Recently I went to the local old people's home and discussed the "good old days" with a dozen or more of the older people. One of the ladies related how the

adults used to ". . . sit together in the long winter evenings and discuss the Bible. We young ones listened eagerly. It was so interesting."

Our fathers could handle the Scriptures roughly; they had no fear that the Bible would break in their hands. And so they could disagree, and argue, and remain in uncertainty about some passage. But we have become too frightened to imitate their freedom. The modern methods of biblical criticism have especially frightened us. Formerly, when few people doubted the authenticity of Scriptures, it hardly occurred to us that the Bible needed defense. Higher criticism has shaken that confidence so that now we have actually become convinced that we must put protective wrappings around the Bible and label it "Handle with Care." (There is something ironic and pathetic about Christians desperately using tooth and claw to protect their sword.) Moreover, there are those who are afraid that further insight into the Scriptures will, in leading us to different conclusions, cause us to doubt our competence in interpretation and the very possibility of finding final answers.

Our fathers interpreted the Scripture in the light of their experience and they checked this interpretation with those who shared their experience. They were right so to do. We need not think, however, that we are slighting them if we admit that the character of their experience was governed in large part by the circumstances that had shaped their character and their need. Our children have been shaped by a different set of circumstances and their experiences require different forms if they are to be expressed adequately. Their experience also must be taken into account when we search the Scriptures.

In fact, *every* form through which men have in *every* age experienced the saving grace of God is another clue which helps us to interpret the meaning of the event of Jesus Christ, who made these experiences possible. Is this not part, at least, of the reason why the church has always insisted that it is the guardian of the interpretation of Scriptures? Is not our Anabaptist insistence on group Bible study a recognition of this? For where "two or three" are gathered together, there Christ is in the midst of them. And where Christ is, there is the church.

However simple they may be, these two or three can then experience the reality of being the church of God. But they will eventually need also the doctors of the church to help them avoid the heresies and the one-sidedness into which a person with limited experience can so easily fall. And the full experience of the church is needed so that what truly is heresy can be recognized.

We must enter more deeply into the life and experiences of all others who have named the name of Christ. To do that we will have to learn to enter again into the world of the ancients, learning to ask the questions that the Hebrews and the early Christians were asking. Only then will we more fully understand the answers they received. (We are not aware that even thought categories as fundamental as *time* and *space* were basically different for the ancients than they are for us.)

Our problems with evolution and Genesis are good examples of the trouble we get into because we read the Bible asking our modern scientific questions rather than the ones that the ancients were asking.

But we miss this because we are bound by our modern thought categories. For us something is either a fact or it is a fiction. And so we cannot understand the sophisticated ways the ancient Hebrews had of employing mythic material to express theological truth without at all accepting the myth of the pagan world view that underlay it. (For example, the word *tehom*, the deep, in Genesis 1:2 is derived from the name of one of the principal figures in the Babylonian creation myth. The word brings with it certain connotations to which the writer wishes to allude. Yet the Babylonian myth is clearly not being accepted as such.)

Because we fundamentalists cling to the rationalist thought categories of the last two centuries, we have even distorted the doctrine of the inspiration of Scriptures. We judge whether or not the Bible has "contradictions." But our definition of that word derives from modern scientism rather than from the world of the Bible. We speak of "infallibility" as if the Chronicles of the Old Testament must fulfill the criteria of modern historiography. The trouble with us "literalists" is not that we are too biblical; the trouble is that we have not become biblical enough. We are too much the children of our age afflicted by the shallowness (and strength) of the almost-modern mind, to make good our claim that we are biblicists. (The same criticism must be made of the modernists.)

Our modern ways of thinking are also forms which must be affirmed—and which must be overcome. We can only overcome them by entering into the forms of past ages and other peoples. We will have to learn the languages and study what scholars have discovered. But, finally, as we study the Scriptures together, really *using* them, we will have to depend on the moving of the Holy Spirit to speak in and through the written words. For even these long-hallowed words are, as natural objects, dead forms unless the Spirit causes them to live for us as they have lived for others throughout the centuries of the church. And then they will again become a ". . . two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, . . . a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Most of us, perhaps, have made our peace with the systems. We hardly imagine that there is something more important to us or our church than an honored name, a satisfactory image, an attractive "package." After all, our forefathers worked hard to make it possible

for us to "live the good life." Let us now gather our children around us and enjoy the many things we think we have well earned.

But there is the rub. The children are not satisfied with the forms we have provided. They have all too often gone through the form-conversion and the ritual baptism. But then comes emptiness. So they rebel against the ruts we have so thoughtfully provided, and they find that even the rebellion (unless they are very intelligent or imaginative) is also a ritual to lead them back to orthodoxy.

But there are other young people who, for various reasons (not the least of which is their sincere attempt to avoid sins of any sort), do not follow this well-marked route. Oddly enough it is from this group that the more deeply troubled come. It is from this group that those come who discover that sin is a great deal more terrible than can be expressed in drinking and smoking and fornicating. It is quite likely the sensitive and pious "good" boy who comes to the shattering understanding of the force of evil that is in us. It is from these that the future of our church depends. Without them, we may continue to exist. But we will not live.

Pelagius thought that man was a free agent who could choose whether or not, in any situation, he would do the right. What a man then needs is to "have courage to say 'no'." This interpretation is compatible with the idea that sins are either "dos" or "don'ts."

St. Augustine disagreed. Man does not simply come to a sin situation. Even if, in any given situation, a man should choose not to commit a certain sin, he nevertheless chooses as a sinner. Man cannot choose not to be a sinner. His very choice of what he conceives to be good is the expression of a sinner who is such from his birth. Even man's attempt to be moral, his attempt to escape his sinfulness, is the act of a will that is already distorted. Indeed, one must say that man's attempt to be good is the expression of his deepest and most subtle sinfulness. Only radical grace can free man from his guilt.

I suspect that Anabaptists have always been carriers of an overstrong dose of Pelagian doctrine due to an uncritical carryover from Renaissance humanism. In any case, we have found it easy to oversimplify sin into cases of doing and not-doing. And by this we have been satisfied with a shallow understanding of sin—and, therefore, a shallow understanding of grace.

How then shall we find this grace? Our forefathers found salvation in a climactic conversion experience which asured them that their sins had been forgiven and in which the decision was made to turn from one form of life to another. This decision meant a complete turn-around. Although there may have been later crises and further growth, this experience was basically unrepeatable.

We have seen, however, that this conversion form has a different meaning among children raised in godly homes. They are taught from birth to follow the same life-form that our fathers adopted late in life as a special call from God. The children's problem is to continue a process whose beginnings they cannot remember, for it preceded their birth in the resolve of their parents.

Do we want a date for our salvation? To find one we would do better to keep our eyes fixed on that event which we proclaim to be the center of history, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul never seems to think of "salvation" as an act completed on earth; it was a process to be "worked out with fear and trembling." But we do not live in fear. What has taken place once-and-for-all is our justification before God. This took place on the Cross.

Perhaps sometimes the spiritual "new man" is built up so gradually within us that we are aware of no moment when we first recognized its presence. We have all heard testimonies by those who live in faith but yet are unable to give a date when that faith was first recognized. Perhaps there are saints who simply keep growing in their Christian life without periods of rebellion and doubt.

What then can we say about the experience which the child of six or ten claims is his conversion? Unless the child has been emotionally overwhelmed, we need not question the validity of the experience. Nor should we deny its importance. But neither should we pretend that it is something that it is not. I do not think that its importance rests in its character as an isolated event which guarantees the future. It seems to me that its final meaning can rest only in the fulfillment through life of the promise that is here sincerely made: that this person has chosen to walk and to grow in the way to which God is calling him.

Those who would grow must suffer. But it is to those deeply disturbed ones who discover the meaning of sin that the deeper discoveries of the meaning of grace will also come. It is these who discover that even our Mennonite way of life, however pious it may be, is just another form, another system. As a way that is adopted as the best among alternate ways, as an end in itself, *our Mennonite "style" is just another form of worldliness.* Ultimately, *all* our culture-forms are of this world. Only after we have been saved *from* our pious forms will we be able to receive these forms again. We will not see them anymore as absolutes for all mankind, but as God's gracious gift and life command to us. Then this way will be our free calling, not our childish slavery to a law. Then we will surely know who is our Father—and that we are his sons.

Toward Brotherhood

The old form of leadership, in its time and place, achieved impressive results. But we cannot simply

translate the old forms into the present. The specific methods and answers for a particular time and place are often irrelevant in a new time or place. We need not carry over all the old specifics, but we need to discover the old spirit. Grounding ourselves in the past, we must learn to do in our own way for our time what our grandfathers achieved in their own way in their time.

What was essential for our fathers were not the specific forms and answers which were given. What was essential was their experience with God and the honest commitment by all members of the brotherhood to search out the mind of Christ through prayer and Bible study and a common waiting for the Spirit of God to move in the church.

We may as well get used to the fact that the consensus of the past will never be restored. Nor will there ever be a new consensus in which we will think alike on all important topics. Instead we will have to develop several levels of consensus matching, to some extent, our stages of maturity and the differences in our economic and cultural settings. And we will need forms and institutions appropriate for each of these levels.

The old specifics and old forms were meaningful, not in themselves, but as expressions of a relationship of trust and love. This relationship was the essential concensus that went deeper than any of its external forms. This relationship included the entire brotherhood and found its final meaning in its relationship to Christ.

Those who despair before these complexities plead for us to return to the "simple faith," as if we could go on playing games appropriate to children. They believe that our sophistication is robbing us of a victorious faith. And they are partly, hopefully temporarily, right. But their appeal is both ambiguous and impossible.

What they mean by "simple faith" is a complex of a devout assurance that God is with us, an uncomplicated outlook on life (*Unschuldigkeit*), and a less complex social structure. To the simple life of the oldtime farm community we can never return. Nor to the simple outlook can we return except at the cost of our own selves. Education, whether we like it or not, will reveal the relativity of this world and all its forms just as it shows us the ambiguities in all our bravest statements. And education we must have. Those who refuse to question "because it might shake their faith" are precisely the ones who testify by this that they have no faith to begin with.

The Wilderness Is in Our Soul

We will have to admit openly that we are perplexed. We will have to speak as openly of our doubts as we do of our certainties. We need to become brothers again, each of us taking responsibility for melting away the fear and suspicion that surround us. And as we are humbled together before God and each other, we will be able to begin again to search the Scriptures together and to help each other realize the meaning of the experiences that have overtaken us. Even though many of the difficult questions will not have been automatically answered, God will grant us grace to find a new level of relationship, of trust and love, with God and with each other.

In this common quest we will rediscover our consensus, a consensus that is better expressed by the relationship in which we stand than by the "answers" that are found. That consensus will not have all the same forms or content as did the consensus years ago. We are poor sons if we have not grown beyond our fathers. Nor will we be likeminded on all points. But we will have found a consensus of Christian discipleship that will help us accept each other even though we are at different points along the way to becoming the sons and heirs of God. Then we will discover that our basic consensus is only Christ Himself, who is the end of our journey as He was the beginning and who is standing by to give us grace to walk the paths we do not always understand.

And, once again, there will be need for all of us to become leaders. We will not all address ourselves to the overall problems as we did in the past. But we will all find areas in which our direction and responsibility are needed. We may then rediscover in exciting ways, the priesthood of all believers and the importance of the brotherhood.

The Mission of the Church

Our fathers have always had an answer. From the very beginning they have claimed that our task was the preaching of the Gospel to our neighbors and to the whole world.

Four years ago the Southern District Conference solemnly voted to begin a drive to increase by five percent per year for five years, a resolution that has had no noticeable effect on its membership rolls. At present we are entering a decade of enlargement.

Unfortunately, I do not believe that we can expect these new churches to do what our older communities are not able to do. We will remember that when our fathers moved to America, the first several generations were preoccupied with the problem of establishing themselves in the new land. They were not only absorbed with poverty, but also with the need to restructure their cultural patterns and customs to a form appropriate to their new setting. These things cannot be done in a day and not in a generation either.

Meanwhile, it is rather optimistic to expect our young people in the cities to be able to accommodate large numbers of converts. A man who has grown up within one kind of community knows who he is within the limits of that community. He knows what is expected of him and he knows "his place." But when

that man moves to a radically different setting, the boundaries by which he defined himself are removed. He now does not know quite who he is or what can legitimately be expected of him. Nor can he tell when he has "arrived," for the definition of success is unclear. Since our people have always been workers, his typical response is to work very hard. But there are few limits to the possibilities of the city. And hard work is *not* always the way to success. So he cannot always tell whether or not he has succeeded.

With such large personal problems for them to face, one can predict (a prediction based on meager evidence) that the result will often be anxiety, depression, and an increasing number of emotional breakdowns. Without a major miracle, I do not believe that we can look to our city churches for a breakthrough in outreach. (Those new churches which begin with a large proportion of non-Low German names on the charter roll may escape some of this problem. But then they will have the problem of relating themselves meaningfully to the rest of the conference.)

I believe the implications are clear. Our churches are not "filling stations" to which members repair on Sundays for recharging so that they can spend the week in witnessing to those they meet. Our churches are not, and have never been, particularly effective centers of evangelistic outreach. Not, at any rate, of the sort of outreach that would lead to the growth of our own church. We have participated in jail services, gospel teams, Christian businessmen's groups, and the like, but these seldom were tied to the church in such a way that members were added to it.

Is "Relevancy" Our Mission?

What then is our mission? How can our churches be centers of outreach when they need first to be schools and hospitals? For *we* need to mature and *we* need to be heard. We will hardly have the right to preach to others as long as we ourselves are as poor and needy as those we thought to help.

What this will mean for us I do not know. I am not sure that keeping true to the road God sets before us will mean popularity and the gathering in of grateful throngs. God has given us a distinctive road. He has not given us our past as Mennonites just so we can escape its meaning in a kind of generalized evangelicalism. I cannot believe that we are meant to give up our rich Anabaptist moorings for the pretentious fumbling of the National Association of Evangelicals and the doomed rationalism of too many modern fundamentalists or the jingoistic heresies of anti-communistic preachers of capitalistic patriotism as the gospel for today.

Perhaps God has not meant for us to win the masses. But I am completely sure that he wants us to be obedient. And surely obedience means holding to the heritage and truth that have been given to us. Perhaps he does *not* mean for us to be obviously "relevant."

Though our fathers were simplistic in their definition of what *separation* means, they may well have been right to stress its importance. "Be peculiar . . . be separate . . . be holy" is God's call. If the spirit of this age is activity piled up on activity and the frenetic chase to "succeed," then perhaps it is time to withdraw, to "be still and know that I am God." If the frantic chase is the "spirit of our age," then is it not the final distortion to discover it in the church? It is often to the desert that prophets go to hear again the Word of God. Perhaps from such a place of stillness we will hear again the call of God to speak. And perhaps, after this civilization has crumbled about us, men will know that God has kept his own who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

Perhaps it is only the broken who have a message for today's shattering world. Perhaps only those who have not "known their place" can speak to a world in which all are becoming displaced persons. Perhaps we shall yet discover that witnessing is, in the words of D. T. Niles, ". . . one beggar telling another beggar where he can find bread."

No Substitute for God

Of one thing I am sure. No *cause* will save us from ourselves. Neither will dogmas or principles or forms or systems or institutions or ideologies. All of these, like the Sabbath, have been made for man, not man for them.

Christianity delivers us from all these. Our "cause" is not an abstraction or a principle or a program. Let us be forever suspicious of "crusades" which run roughshod over the lives and sensibilities of people in the name of some shining "truth." Our truth is God Himself, not God in the abstract, but made real as a *person*. We are delivered from "causes" to a fellowship with a heavenly Father. We have been delivered from our guilt through the love of Jesus Christ. Having been loved, we find the grace to love ourselves. Having found ourselves, we are free to love our neighbors. Our cause is no ideal. It is a "He" through whom we discover all other "he's" whose needs can then be met by the resources God has given us. And who is our neighbor? When Jesus was asked that question, he did not respond with a principle or a doctrine. He answered, "There was a man . . ."

And yet, the dogmas, principles, forms, systems, and institutions have been made for man. They are necessary channels of grace and life. Sometimes, in affirming their relativity, we forget that God has given them to us to meet our necessity. We even need them to go beyond them. They are not life to us, and yet they can transmit that life. And their emptiness can drive us to seek that life.

This essay is also a systemization. It attempts to think *about* these things. It even attempts to think *about* our thinking about. No doubt others will then

think about the way in which I have been trying to think about our ways of thinking about. We need this sort of sophistication, not because we shall find the truth through all these efforts, but because they will help us to understand our systems. And these efforts will force us to understand that all analyses, like all forms, are only relatively helpful. Pushed to the limit, they can drive us back, not to the experience but to the understanding of the *necessity* of primary experience and thus to the openness of those who await once again the moving of the Spirit through the rituals of our works and days.

In slower times, our forms changed so slowly that one could think that they did not change at all. Today the opposite danger threatens us. Now change is so rapid that the only constancy seems to be the certainty of change itself. If this is what is happening, then the results will certainly become demonic. Change as a way of life robs life of meaning. Then *no* form will be taken seriously enough, or last long enough, to deliver to man the life and meaning that it carries. Having exorcised the demon of false absolutisms, we may yet awaken to discover that our empty house has been filled with seven demons more wicked than the first.

But, for many of us, the first demon is still our demon, the one that binds and chokes and destroys us. Too many are dying in what have become their ruts. But God does not want to let us stay in ruts, even safe ones. No doubt many of the bumps of life are meant to jar us out of these ruts. Even our own soul conspires against us. Deep within us is a constant protest against becoming robots. In response to this conflict, many of us become neurotic or worse. These symptoms and fears are the price we pay for our "security."

We yearn for life, for love, for genuine relationships with each other and with God. Too often our code hampers us. We are afraid to express our real selves, afraid either of what we would see in ourselves or at what our neighbors would think were they to see us. And so we turn to *things* to take the place of persons. We become absorbed in our jobs, or our machines, or our hobbies, or in our quest to pile field on field. This is our materialism, the turning from personal relationships to relationships to things. But *things* are shoddy substitutes; they give us nothing in return. And so we turn back to people again and, sometimes, to what we hope is God. But the thing-habit is upon us, and we treat even them as things.

I believe that we are already far down these roads. I believe that scandal and fanaticism will increasingly trouble us. I believe that many of us are in for a personal shattering. But I also believe that there is hope. To the broken pieces may come again a humbling and a healing. To the dry bones of our drained lives can come the reviving touch of the Holy Spirit. To our shame will come the miracle of God's forgiveness. And sinners shall yet again behold and tremble, saying, "Behold, how they love one another."

The Renewal of the Church

By John Miller

WHEN WE SPEAK about the renewal of the church we are touching on the problem of a faithless and disobedient church. We are thinking about a church that has lost its way, and we are asking how this church might find its way again. In this sense we might say that the Christian church at the very beginning was a renewal movement within the disobedient church of Israel. It challenged that church to bring forth the deeds of repentance. This being the case, it must seem strange that the Christian church should today be so preoccupied with its own renewal as it seems to be. And we might well ask, did Jesus foresee a development of this kind? Did he realize that even his own movement, so new and vital in its time, would one day grow old and lifeless and itself need renewal? If so, did he leave us any instructions as to what to do in such circumstances?

To both questions we can answer "yes." I have long felt that ecumenical Christianity has paid insufficient attention in its discussions of church unity and church renewal to the warnings of Jesus recorded at the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount. In those warn-

ings Jesus clearly indicates that he had no false optimism about the future of his movement. John says of Jesus that he knew the hearts of men and did not need anyone else to tell him what was in a man. Unlike many a sectarian leader, Jesus saw straight through to the possibilities of corruption in his would be disciples. "Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 7:21) One of the most fearful things Jesus ever said is contained in a statement that immediately follows this one: "On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you evil-doers' " (Matthew 7:22-23). Jesus goes on to distinguish with unmistakable simplicity two types of churches, two types of houses, houses built on rock and houses built on sand. And what distinguishes them is that in one instance there is hearing and doing, and in the other hearing only.

Jesus clearly did anticipate the problem of faithlessness within his own following. On down through the ages, these statements seem to imply, there will be many who take the name of Jesus in a hypocritical way. There will be a false church, in which Jesus is worshiped, in which prophesying goes on in his name, in which even miracles of healing take place, but in which there is no good fruit, in which the words of Jesus are not obeyed. And there will be a faithful church, a church that follows Jesus in simple obedience and does the will of the heavenly Father. This situation Jesus saw clearly, and consequently the apostasy of many of his followers came as no bitter disillusionment to him.

This is a side of things which I fear the ecumenical movement has not sufficiently grasped. The ecumenical movement has done a great service in helping many Christians see that the lines between the true and the false church do not run along the established denominational lines. It has helped us acknowledge the increasing meaninglessness of these artificial bodies. At the same time it has created an atmosphere of tolerance in which a genuine horror for the evil perpetuated by the churches is squelched. It has blinded us to the fact that many churches which make a very orthodox confession of Jesus are no true churches at all, if measured by obedience to his words. It is only a rare, courageous soul who will break the tranquility and self-congratulatory atmosphere in which the churches live in this ecumenical era with words like the following taken from a letter received from Clarence Jordan:

For years . . . , I have proclaimed . . . that the church is the realm of redemption. But during the past few years it has been dawning on me that what we call churches are no churches at all, and to naively expect them to rise up and respond to the Gospel is, to say the least, unintelligent. The average church member is about as serious about the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the average Klan member is. By and large, churches have so repudiated their head, and so identified with the world that the only thing they retain of their former spouse is his name, which they take in vain.

If this is the situation of the church, we might well cry out in despair. How then will the church ever be renewed? The fact is that Jesus does not anticipate the kind of renewal that many in our time seem to anticipate. He does not even speak of renewal. Instead he speaks of something about which none of us wishes to speak. He speaks of judgment. Those churches that persist in saying 'Lord, Lord,' while failing to do the will of the Heavenly Father cannot look forward to renewal but to judgment. In our optimistic way we want to think about renewing these disobedient churches. Many earnest Christians today feel torn as to whether they should work in congregations where there is much disobedience and try to renew them, or go out on mission into new places. Many make the choice to work with these disobedient congregations. There they may even compromise themselves in order to keep peace with their people. They do not know that even while they are trying to renew these churches, God has already set in motion forces of judgment. "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men." That is the destiny of a disobedient church. There is a condition that cannot be renewed. There are churches that are beyond reformation. To speak about the renewal of such churches is like speaking about resalting salt.

Instead of speaking of the renewal of the churches, which may lead us into a false optimism, we must learn from Jesus and the prophets before him to face up to the reality of judgment. If we want to persist in using the word renewal, we might say that God renews the church by judgment. We can see in our own time how the fruitless branches of Christendom are being lopped off and thrown upon the trash heap. The saltless salt is being cast out and trodden under by the foot of men. I am speaking of the purging that has come upon the church in Hitler's Germany, in Communist Russia and elsewhere in our time. That is God's answer to hypocritical Christianity in history, and on the day of judgment there will be heard the words, "I never knew you."

If there is a disobedient Christianity that will not be renewed, according to Jesus, but judged, purged and destroyed, what is there for us to do? The only hope that Jesus holds out for any of us is that in the midst of all this false Christianity, all this hypocrisy, some might have ears to hear and hearts to obey. The hope

of Jesus lies in the expectation that somewhere those will gather who have understanding enough, boldness enough and integrity enough to follow him, not in word only but in deed. All his warnings and urgent admonitions are designed to call this forth, to prick the conscience and challenge the will.

Many people lament the condition of Christianity with its confusing array of movements, sects and cults. They are looking for a day when there will be one church, one united Christian body. That is not the expectation I get from reading the words of Jesus. There I get a picture of just the kind of confusion I see about me today. But there too I hear a ringing warning to watch out in the midst of this confusion. There I am led to hope in a church that will, in the midst of all the confusion, and in the midst of the judgments of history, stand firm on a solid rock. There I am led to believe that a people can follow Jesus, can live faithfully under his easy yoke, and in so doing will season and light the world.

That is what Jesus leads me to care about, and to care supremely about. I do not know about the renewal of the church. Under the banner of Christianity fearful things have been and are being perpetuated. Under the banner of Christianity wars have been fought, slavery practiced, injustices defended, heretics killed and much more. Jesus has not sent us to renew all that. He sends us forth as his disciples to disciple the nations, teaching them to obey all the things he taught. My uppermost desire in life is to do just that, and my concern is to encourage you to do the same.

I think a complete stranger to our age looking in on the Christian movement today and then examining those texts which the movement professes to look to as authoritative for its style of life, would shake his head in great perplexity. If someone says, "I am a Marxian," or "I am a Gandhian," we assume that we can go to the teaching and life of Karl Marx or of Gandhi and discover there something about that person. Likewise, if someone says, "I am a Christian," one would think that something could be said about that person by reading in the Gospels about Jesus the Christ. But here an objective observer would discover an absurdity. The church for the most part callously disregards the most central and clear teachings of Jesus on a host of critical issues like war, racial prejudice, and economics and preoccupies itself with a series of activities about which he said nothing. And not only is it a matter of misunderstanding, but in many instances of neglect and disinterest. If Jesus is Lord, one would suppose that every word of his is a command. If he is King of history, one would suppose the Christian church would rather suffer and perish before neglecting one of his standing orders. But the situation is such that even in our seminaries, even among our ministers, not to speak of others, the teaching of Jesus on many matters is disregarded. The market is flooded with books from the great theologians. Students eagerly debate the different philosophical, ethical and psychological trends of our time with scarcely a reference to Jesus. His words are no longer marching orders for the Christian movement.

How can we explain such a situation?

(1) I will mention first of all an answer to this question which Jesus himself pointed to again and again: hypocrisy. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, Jesus said, which is hypocrisy. And no one who has read the Gospel will ever forget with what stinging irony he exposes the hypocrisy of these respected religious leaders of his time. Hypocrisy has to do with profession without reality. It is the kind of danger into which religious professionals are prone to fall, and when they do, it can become a stumbling block to many who look to them for leadership. This was the case with the Pharisees. Their own failure to practice what they preached acted as a stumbling block to many others. It made the common people content to remain at the same level of disobedience as their Pharisaic teachers. If such respected men could do as they did, why not we? So the argument went, and so it goes. Do not do as the Pharisees do, Jesus had to say to his disciples, do as they say.

This same Pharisaic leaven is with us today. Even our Anabaptist churches with their strong emphasis on discipleship are not free from it. There are scholars and teachers in the church who have made a kind of profession out of writing and speaking about the "Anabaptist vision." They are respected members, not only of a particular denominational party, but of the ecumenical community.

However, it is questionable whether they would have joined the Anabaptists in the sixteenth century, and as of now on their own admission and for reasons they consider justifiable do not practice what they advocate. A good friend of mine was critical along similar lines some years ago. In letters which were subsequently published in the fourth issue of *Concern* he wrote: ". . . the bright child of neo-apabaptism is not adequate —is impotent to make new Anabaptists . . . Neo-anabaptism is chiefly academic, an interesting subject to build libraries, journals, lectures around—but not to adopt personally in our daily lives. . . ." Ironically, this friend is presently in process of adding still another library devoted to the memory of these persecuted forebearers. Our Mennonite schools it seems do not feel complete without such a collection of Anabaptistica, or at least some sign of loyalty to the Anabaptists of old.

Our Lord himself has taught us to be highly suspicious of this bent toward glorification of the past while rejecting in the present the way pointed to by these heroes of righteousness. Would he not have to say to us, as he walked among our fine libraries, as he witnessed the names of the martyrs of old engraved everywhere over our buildings and institutions, as he saw

how we adorn the monuments of the righteous—would he not have to say what he said to the religious leaders of his own time: Woe! Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

Several weeks ago a seminary teacher spoke to me about his deep agony over precisely this point. At a conference where one of the leading exponents of the "Anabaptist vision" delivered a challenging address on the need for recapturing in our time the disciplined and disciplining life characteristic of the Anabaptists, he asked at the close of the speech whether the speaker might tell the group something of the way in which the group of Christians with whom he is associated practices these disciplines of which he had just spoken. The question went unanswered because the speaker did not know from experience such a congregation. The seminary teacher who asked the question is himself deeply convicted that he must find his way to the reality of the "Anabaptist vision" or be quiet about it.

Until others are similarly convicted this kind of hypocrisy will continue to act as a dangerous leaven in our midst, confusing many.

(2) A second hindrance to the kind of straight forward discipleship which, if I understand correctly, is close to the heart of the Christian movement, is one that is difficult to pin down, but is nevertheless a very real menace, especially in our time, in our urbanized culture. I refer to a set of mental and cultural attitudes which we might call 'sophistication.' Robert Friedmann has repeatedly called my attention to this stumbling block in letters he has written to me during the past few years. He has again and again questioned the possibility of following the disciples' way in the midst of the corroding sophistication of the city. At first I roundly countered his questioning with familiar theological arguments about the power of the Gospel. But now after seven years of city living I feel more deeply than ever what he has been trying to say. The mood of our time is an eclectic mood. It is filled with wisdoms and alluring distractions of all kinds. Soon we will have not just eleven TV channels in the Chicago area to select from but scores. We are overwhelmed in our cities with the possibilities of art, music, drama and dance, experts in this field and that. The communication and travel systems allow us to tune in on all the great and not so great minds of our generation.

Not only this, but there is also an almost intangible spirit that begins to possess the atmosphere. One sees it in the attention to style, the shade of the hair, the set of the table, the model, the color and the care of the car, the preoccupation with the lawn and the decorations of the house. What I am talking about requires the sensitivity of a novelist, but all of us must become more aware of it. I am calling it here, for want of a better term, sophistication. And I suggest it can eat away at a vital center of what it means to be a Christian, because it takes us away from simple and wholehearted obedience to Jesus. In the midst of all this distraction, not by some great and agonizing rejection, but slowly and imperceptibly Jesus, his words, his example and his spirit become less important to us.

To be a Chritsian disciple requires a certain narrowing down. It is not a narrowing that makes us narrow, but like in marriage a narrowing that is the very fountain of new life. But nevertheless and definitely it is a narrowing. If we are serious about going the Christian way, painful sacrifices will have to be made along many unsuspected lines. Our houses may not be as neat, our cars as new, our grades as high, our scholarship as proliferous, our degrees as advanced, our reading as up to date, our theater going as regular, our wardrobe as stylish, our food as fine, and our life as cultured as society around us. And for many this will stand in the way of discipleship as firmly and definitely as the greatest sin.

I do not need to elaborate on the stories in the Gospel where Jesus rebuked just these kinds of things. It will suffice I am sure to remind you that not simply bad things frequently kept men back from following Jesus and called forth his urgent warnings, but just things like these: enamorment with riches, preoccupation with what to wear and what to eat, attentions to a newly married wife, concern over a new piece of recently purchased property, anxiety about the proper serving of a meal.

Your lives will set a certain style, one that will be emulated by others. What will be the dominating motif of that style? To what will it witness? Will it mark time with the vain sophistries of this age, or will you cast off all that for the one treasure of wisdom and knowledge which we have in Jesus?

(3) Finally I want to mention 'churchianity' as a barrier to simple obedience to Jesus. If we can imagine again a stranger coming to visit our churches, one who is wholly unfamiliar with the tradition from which they supposedly spring, and who tries now to draw some conclusions about the Christian religion by what he observes, there are certain things that he would, I am sure, quickly conclude. To begin with he would surely assume that the founder of the Christian movement was a man with strong architectural interests. He might wonder whether the founder did not in fact leave some specific laws in this respect, perhaps a series of commandments, such as: Let my people build themselves buildings for assembly, one building for every two hundred or so. Let them stain the glass and adorn them with crosses. Let them have wooden benches and a raised platform-pulpit in front. And so on. After visiting these buildings and seeing how they are used our visitor might quickly come to a second conclusion. The founder of the Christian religion had a strong interest in days and seasons and in certain types of assemblies. Here too he might suspect some specific legislation was left behind: Thou shalt meet together

for one hour on Sunday morning. Thou shalt hire a speaker, skilled in delivering a discourse not exceeding a half hour and not less than fifteen minutes. And so forth. And finally this visitor would surely assume that the founder of this religion was profoundly concerned about the religious instruction of children. Perhaps he commanded: Thou shalt have a Sunday school.

In any case it is undeniable that great numbers of people can barely conceive of the Christian church apart from these three essentials: A religious looking building, a Sunday morning preaching service, and a Sunday school. From my own experience and from reports of others who have been in on the organization of new congregations the preoccupation of the religious community with such matters as these is evident even among those considered mature and intelligent members. Lacking a special religious building, lacking a preaching service, lacking a Sunday school, something essential is missing, they feel. Having these they have what is necessary to a church. It is not that these people do not believe also in other crucial matters, or that their lives do not conform in many respects to the highest ideals of the Christian gospel. It is that they have become attached to something that has little to do with Jesus, something which although harmless in itself, when coming to occupy the place in their thinking that it does, tranquilizes and protects men from the reality of Jesus himself.

Do we never learn any lessons from history? Do we not see how again and again by their buildings the people of God have been betrayed into false illusions about themselves? Do we not know how the prophets spoke out in the most bitter and passionate way against this fascination with religious buildings and religious services? When I visit even the more modest of these religious sanctuaries which sprout up all over the place these days, and into which religious people in this country are pouring more than two billion dollars every year, and as I witness the artificiality and superficiality of what frequently goes on there, I hear the words of the prophets of old ringing in my ears: "Who requires of you this trampling of my courts . . . I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies . . . Take away from me the noise of your songs. . . ." I am afraid that many of these buildings and much of what goes on in them stands under the judgment of God, are in fact being swept away from the church in many lands, even while we pour out our wealth for them here in America.

But my main point here is that all this becomes a hindrance to a simple and radical obedience to Jesus. So long as we keep these religious buildings and services, so long as we have our Sunday schools, we feel secure. When actually, helpful as these things might be, in themselves they have little to do with Jesus Christ. About the only thing Jesus says concerning religious buildings is to announce judgment on the one so admired by his own disciples and his contemporaries. The only thing he says about worship services is that a day is coming when men will worship, not here in this building or there in that place, but in spirit and in truth. One of the few things he says about children is not that we should educate them but that they should educate us and for that reason we should hold them close to the bosom and lap of the church. It is not children who need repentance, but we who are adults, repentance along the lines of some very clearly stated words.

Interpreting the Signs

By Harold H. Gross

You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. MATTHEW 16:3

FORECASTING THE weather is surely one of the most ancient of the pastimes and occupations of men. Men of the sea, such as fishermen of Jesus' own day, as well as those who tilled the soil, have always kept their 'weather eye' sharp with practice. Carefully watching the risings and settings of the sun, the formations of clouds, as well as other weather factors, men have long been able to make predictions of weather conditions which frequently exhibited unusual accuracy. Even when such artful forecasting has been said to result from 'intuition' it has perhaps actually been based on a synthesis of unconsciously observed factors, the result of subtle sensory discrimination.

In other areas, such as those of the complicated political and economic realms, it requires an expert to interpret or forecast events with anything like rea-

sonable accuracy. This, of course, is not what Jesus asks us to do, even though our lives must be constantly lived within the context of such events which affect us. When the Pharisees and Sadducees testily ask him to show them "a sign from heaven" (such, perhaps, as a voice, or thunder and lightning, or even fire) we are reminded that Paul wrote to the Corinthians that "Jews demand signs." (I Cor. 1:22). And, according to Matthew (16:3b) Jesus replies to his enemies in chiding words (which are not found in some ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, but which are quite in keeping with the general tenor of his teaching) to the effect that while from the appearance of the sky they can tell what sort of weather to expect, their moral and spiritual blindness prevents them from reading off the "signs of the times" which are before them in the affairs of men. And, sensing that their sign-seeking was designed as a trick to be played on him, Jesus declares that "a wicked generation . . . asks for a sign" of that sort. What he seems to be saying is that the moral and spiritual weather is as 'readable' in its observable signs as is that of nature, if only we will apply our experience and understanding to reading these signs with equal sincerity and openness. Our failure in this 'spiritual science' is not caused by lack of ability, learning, or talent. It is rather a consequence of being influenced more by what we want to have happen than by our determination to know what *is* and what really ought to be. Our attention to the passing scene in our time seems to be characterized by a trained distractedness, so that we become too easily expert in the superficial and the irrelevant.

In our fast-paced living we find it more expedient to react hastily to mere surface impressions in the panorama of daily events, rather than to respond selectively and reflectively—much as one would 'read' the newspaper by merely scanning the headlines. And the fact that we need in our day to distinguish between pseudo-events (*i.e.,* humanly contrived) and spontaneous events adds to the confusion of 'signs' which we are called upon to interpret. In any case, however, Jesus has in mind a spiritual enterprise when he calls upon us to interpret the "signs of the times." Being spiritual has to do with our being able to penetrate to the core-meaning of events, and this by means of a discernment of principles which transcend and judge these very events. Thus to discern the signs of the times means to interpret the world and the events of history from the standpoint of God's judgment upon them. It appears that what stood in the way of the Pharisees' interpreting the spiritual signs of the times was that their whole attitude was distorted. A 'sign' was a kind of messianic trick; and Jesus frankly declares that "no sign shall be given . . . except the sign of Jonah." To Matthew's account Luke adds (11:30), "For as Jonah became a sign to the men of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation"—possibly suggesting the proclaiming of judgment to each respective generation. At another time, Matthew has Jesus saying to the Pharisees: "Why do you put me to the test, you hypocrites?" (22:18). Cadbury suggests that the Greek word in the gospels rendered 'hypocrite' refers to "incongruity of behavior, straining out the gnat and swallowing the camel . . . rather than . . . conscious insincerity" (*Jesus: What Manner of Man*, p. 83), though some sort of insincerity seems indicated as clouding their sight. At any rate, what seems quite clear is that these enemies of Christ stand under his judgment in allowing their distorted perception of the times in which they lived to prevent them from accurately interpreting their age—and God's purpose in it!

Presumably the times in which we live, with their respective 'signs,' require interpreting also. And it is conceivable that there is enough of the pharisaical in us to warrant our asking what we can learn from this encounter of Jesus with his Jewish contemporaries.

Honesty of Purpose

We might, first of all, do well to note that the interpretation of the signs of the times necessitates sincerity and honesty of purpose. Extensive learning and technical know-how—as important as these are in our age—are no substitute for sincerity before God as a basis for spiritual and moral discernment. Honest sincerity and openness to divine truth is to the moral and spiritual life what sheer consistency is to logical thinking. And appropriate consistency is required in moral and spiritual discernment as well! Hypocrisies come in all of the "fifty-seven varieties"—from unconscious bias and inconsistency to conscious, deliberate action. The Pharisees prayed in public and then robbed widows' houses—applying the same careful attention to proper legal form in both actions. A young man might, according to Jewish law in Jesus' day, avoid responsibility for financial care of his aged parents—simply by dedicating his entire fortune to God. Insincerity is expressed in an effort at satisfying some selfish desire while outwardly giving an appearance of meeting all the requirements of respectability and even of righteousness. The Pharisees evidently demanded of Christ that he validate whatever messianic claims he might have made by performing some sign of the approaching age of the Messianic reign. The insincerity and the hypocritical element lay in the egotistical hope that the coming of this reign would give Israel as the specially chosen nation—the righteous ones—victory over their enemies, and final justification in the sight of God and man. However, no hypocritical, self-righteous man or nation is capable of discerning the 'signs' which might usher in a reign of righteousness and peace. Neither is any individual or nation ever righteous enough to deserve being sole recipient of such a blessing. This lack of interpretative

insight is not so much a defect of the mind, in calculating the signs, as it is a corruption of the heart which prevents one from recognizing and living by the Truth as it comes to us in Love. Insincerity does not allow us to face the truth as it really is, and inconsistency is the other side of the same coin—both being counterfeit representations. Our human capacity to penetrate with imagination into things and events around us so as to discern the truth about them, is at the same time the capacity which enables us to cover up the truth and to shield us from reality.

In medieval times man cowered in fear of the unpredictable, uncontrollable forces which terrified him, internally and externally, from disease and warfare. European cathedrals to this day seem to reflect this medieval horror in the gargoyles which peer down from the roofs, thus objectifying and to some extent controlling their fears in artistic creations. The modern mind is likely to look upon this as involving more than a faint suggestion of medieval superstition.

The Domestication of God

There is much reason to believe, however, that we in the twentieth century have somehow fallen under the spell of the notion that we too have domesticated whatever 'demonic spirits' there might be (along with God)—in a one-storeyed or one-level universe. The only 'signs' to be interpreted seriously are, it might seem, the mathematical equations which make atomic power and technological control possible. As communism has 'mummified' religion, turning churches into museums and God into a museum piece, just so do we immunize ourselves from the treacheries of a demonic past by 'freezing,' as it were, the mistakes of wars fought "to save the world for democracy" and 'Bay of Pigs' debacles into monuments and history books. Monuments objectify deeds of courage and heroism—often as though these were the only important moral virtues. And frequently in our day history is construed as a way of objectifying the past as a sort of 'demonstration' that our present-day problems have only 'historical causes,' so that contemporary leadership (at least on our side of the fence) is absolved of all blame. In this way the 'signs of the times' are abstractions of our own creation which we therefore manipulate freely according to our whims and fancies. Like the Pharisees, having thoroughly domesticated the evil spirits and God, we seem to believe that we have a rule-of-thumb—a 'sign'—for every occasion, such that in order to bring in a reign of the kingdom of God and peace, all that is necessary is a sign of fire from heaven. We might, as so-called Christian nations, still talk about God as being our hope for world peace. We demand objective signs in routing out what are no doubt real demons (in other nations, of course!). But, mistake it not, our real trust is in the threat of the sign of atomic fire from heaven! There is overwhelming evidence that we have more faith in show of force than in free discussion.

Ordinary language is made up of patterns of symbols which we call 'words,' the flexibility of which makes genuinely communicative discussion possible. However, when human relations become tense language tends to be handled with rigidity, and words are construed as signs designed to emit signals. Thus, in order to signalize patriotism only certain 'signs' are permissible—since the wrong signal might cause defeat in battle. How else than on the basis of such an adulterated use of language are we to account for the fact that while we talk—and, I think, with some sincerity of intent—about "negotiated peace," we stifle free negotiations which must be undergirded by critical conversation and debate at home? Even if we grant that there are many "rebels without a cause" in colleges and in 'demonstration' groups today, we are blind if we do not see the relationship between rebellious demonstration and the suppression of free, critical discussion. Aside from the debatable question as to whether we 'belong' in Viet Nam, we face the moral and spiritual threat of the curtailment or elimination of free, critical discussion of government foreign policy. This is ominous at any time—but especially so in the absence of any official declaration of war, combined with the presence of a nearly hysterical popular reaction to the fears and anxieties entailed by prospect of an "escalating" war. As of now, it seems to have become unpatriotic either to criticize or protest against government war policy . . . being tantamount to making pronouncements against belief in the existence of God. Has patriotism become identical with religion, and governmental policy with divine truth?

What sort of a 'sign of the times' is it when the respected editor of a leading Kansas newspaper declares, with reference to the soap being collected for Vietnamese villagers by a California woman, that "Those protesters against the war should wash out their mouths with it"? What would Jesus have to say for our generation? On the editorial page of another issue of this same newspaper we find the following remarkable admixture: 1) guilt by association (shades of McCarthy!) in the headline above a well-known syndicated column: PROTESTS AGAINST VIET NAM WAR IN LINE WITH COMMUNISTS' AIMS; 2) the representation in one of several cartoons, of a tacky, bearded demonstrator bearing a sign which reads "Viet Nam War is Immoral"—which by subtle innuendo suggests that THERE EVER IS A WAR WHICH (surely from the Christian standpoint) CAN BE SAID NOT TO BE IMMORAL! 3) And then an excellent editorial commenting on National Bible Week which reads in part as follows: The Bible is too far "out of the realm of daily living . . . in our

Western society. It is no longer considered dangerous by those in our part of the world who use and abuse their fellowman and scorn their God . . . Because its electrifying truths have become blanketed in an insulation of respectability. The Bible, God help us, has become a part of the Establishment (*sic*!). The common man, dealing with his common, course and unbeautiful problems, finds it difficult to see any relation between his life and the beautiful and respected Bible. That's the shame of it . . . the Bible contains *a revolutionary message,* (italics added) straight from God to every man . . . Somehow non-Bible readers (*sic*!) need to become aware not only of the truth and splendor of the Bible, but of its great pertinency to every human life."

"Unbeautiful Problems"

To be sure, that is the shame of it! As for "coarse and unbeautiful problems," why not take the war in Viet Nam, or war as such? And, let us not forget, war too has obviously become "a part of the Establishment." Of course the editor did not draw the possible conclusion, as he might have, that the Establishment's Bible has become a sort of handbook on the waging of a moral war. So where is this "revolutionary message" concerning which he generalizes? Ah! He tells us what the problem is . . . It is those "non-Bible readers" who stand in need of becoming aware of "its great pertinency to every human life," and who apparently do not see its revolutionary character. And who, pray tell, are the "non-Bible readers" . . . if they aren't the Communists?!

The signs of the times seem, indeed, to suggest that we have gone a long way in domesticating God and the Bible. Language has become a technology, a set of signs by means of which the very Word of God can be manipulated to satisfy the dictates of the Establishment within which our patriotism has become our religion! We can domesticate the demons also, simply by turning to the TV channel or to the newspaper which presents our particular point of view.

We have been noting how easy it is, in our kind of world, to see as "signs of the times" only what we want to see rather than what actually is the case. We have also seen how difficult it is to be sincere and honest, even with God and the Bible, in a world where ordinary language has come to be used as a technological device for creating pseudo-events and for controlling man's response to his world.

Let us note, in the next place, that the request on the part of Jesus' Jewish enemies bears the mark of impatience and faithlessness, for Jesus declares that it is an evil generation which seeks for a sign. One is reminded, by contrast, of a very different apocalyptic setting (recorded in Matthew 24 and Mark 13) in which Jesus discourses, in the presence of his disciples, on the destruction of Jerusalem and the approaching close of the age. But the note of patience and faith is struck when he declares that "of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only." (Matt. 24:36) The obvious emphasis here is on the need for watchful expectancy—for patience and faith in God's own signs of His Kingdom's coming. And surely, response to God's signs requires the faith-response of the whole man—heart, mind, and soul.

But this is not the fashion after which modern man has been trained to respond to "the signs of the times." The "image-makers" of our time require that we react to our world as fragmented men—appealing now to our emotions, next to our abstract reasoning, now to our sensibilities, and then to our prejudices, etc. As Daniel J. Boorstin, the American historian, has put the matter so well: "Two centuries ago when a great man appeared, people looked for God's purpose in him; today we look for his press agent." (*The Image, Or What Happened to the American Dream*, p. 45.) In any genuinely spiritual interpreting of the signs of our times we can do nothing less than seek God's loving purpose—in the whole of our lives, and with our whole being. But our interpretations are too often oversimplifications, fragmented responses to fragmented views of our world. Do we, like the Pharisees, ignore the clear and visible sign of the Christ in our haste to overcome our anxiety with action, to bring in the reign of righteousness and peace? The biblical prophets saw signs of judgment in a people who went through certain religious motions without a cleansing of the soul—who, like us, tried to persuade God to be on man's side apart from "doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God." An evil and adulterous generation seeks for such signs!

Finally, we might do well to observe that Jesus cautioned his tempters that there would be "no sign . . . except the sign of Jonah." The sign of Jonah was the prophetic voice of judgment and of truth itself . . . and the Pharisees and Sadducees were confronted with one greater than Jonah—just as we are today.

Now, if we are through with this man Jesus Christ, then let us say so and dismiss him. Yes, of course we would like to think of him as a man who could perform the 'sign' of miraculously making our particular prejudice become the truth, making our war a morally righteous one without the taint of sin on our hands. But, of course, let us at the same time be honest enough to admit that asking for this is precisely like asking him to jump off the temple without being hurt, like requesting that he turn a stone into bread—and, in fact, like asking Him to kneel down and worship the devil himself!! Apparently the Pharisees and Sadducees did not really want the sign of truth . . . they much preferred their kind of sign. And this is the trouble with sensational signs . . . they never satisfy our appetites for such magical tricks, such as we want in

Vietnam.

We find it difficult to let the truth in "the signs of the times" speak for itself. Everything must be made to appeal to the eye and the ear to deserve attention, and so we polish up 'truth' with signs of our own making. Like Christ's enemies of old, we want a sign of power in order to test His truth. But it won't work!! For, be it known, "men can be tested (only) by what they already have, and if they do not respond to that, they will not respond to miracle or sign—not even to the sign of the Son of God." (Cadbury, *op cit.*, p. 97)

The Christian in a World of Power

By Gordon D. Kaufman

THE BIBLE IS a history of the relations of God and man. Now it is to be noted that this is no ordinary history of two parties who happen to become acquainted with each other, see something of each other for a time, and then go their separate ways. Rather, the two parties in this history are of very unequal weight, for at the beginning one of them, man, does not exist at all, but is brought into being by the creative act of the other, by God. Moreover, the parties never really become equals, for throughout this history it is only because God continues to sustain man in being that man continues to exist at all as one over against God, one who can enter into communication and community with him. Man's position here, then—indeed that of the entire universe—is in every respect secondary and derived; God's is primary and creative. It is for God's purposes that man and the world have been brought into being in the first place, and it is because he yet intends to achieve those purposes that God continues to sustain his creation in being and to work with and in it. The history, then, of God's dealings with man is really the story of the process through which God is realizing his intentions. Nonetheless, it is a genuine history between two parties because in his creation of man God has brought into being a creature who himself has the power to act and to respond, to create and to love, to obey and to rebel. Because he has made man in this way a free being there can be and there is genuine intercourse and interaction between God and man as God works with man to achieve his intention, the creation of a community of genuinely free beings who can and do respond to him and to each other in love. It is to be recognized that God has not yet brought this history to its goal. The men with whom he is working have turned out to be rebellious and stubborn and intractable, and progress toward that end has therefore been slow and painful. Nevertheless, for those who know this God, who know something of his ultimate intentions and who know his love and patience and long-suffering, there is every reason to look forward to that grand and glorious future in which God's kingdom shall finally be realized.

The Bible now, as we can see, is the story of the meanderings and the struggles in this history. It opens with the creation of the world and of man; it continues with stories of man's rebellion against God and his refusal to be what God had created him to be; it tells of God's response to his continuing disobedience through choosing a special people with whom he would work in a special way in order to, at last, bring all mankind round to obedience of his will and thus genuine fulfilment; it details the unfaithfulness of this people, the children of Israel, and God's reaction to that, involving finally the destruction of the two Hebrew kingdoms and the carrying-off of the people into exile, but involving also the sending of prophets or spokesmen who could interpret to the people the real meaning of those unhappy events; it relates, finally, the story of how, after centuries of preparation of this people, "when the time had fully come," (as Paul put it) "God sent forth his Son" (Gal. 4:4) in order finally to make plain who he is and what his will is, and in this way established a community, the church, in which his spirit of love was alive and at work within history itself. It is this community which knows God's spirit and his love, naturally enough, for whom the Bible is the real history of man and his dealings with his creator. It is this community, therefore, which has cherished the Old Testament of Jewish Scriptures and written the New Testament to relate and interpret the great events surround-

ing Jesus of Nazareth. It is this community which looks forward to the final achievement of God's purposes in what the seer of Revelation called "a new heaven and a new earth, ... (a) new Jerusalem, ... (in which at last) the dwelling of God is with men" (Rev. 21:1-3).

Now it is in the context of this historical movement which has its beginning with God's act to bring a world and man into being, which moves gradually toward a central point in Jesus Christ in and through whom the meaning of the whole of history and the purposes of God for history come into the view of man, which can be expected finally to reach its culmination and climax in the full establishment of the kingdom of God—it is in the context of this historical movement involving all creation that we must ask the questions: What ought we to do? What is the right?

It should be clear that the answer to these questions —given the premise of Christian faith that God is really moving all creation through a history which will finally culminate in the realization of his purposes— are to be found wholly and exclusively in the will of God and in the character of the kingdom toward which he is moving us. If it were the case that man were alone in the universe, responsible to no higher will than his own, or if God were not a historical God who has brought the world into being to realize certain objectives and who is even now acting to transform this world and man so that those objectives will be fulfilled, then our ethics might find some other basis: perhaps we might base it in human need or human pleasures or human desires, perhaps we might develop a rational or a utilitarian ethic, perhaps one founded in the human sense of duty or virtue or in the human appreciation of value. But for the Christian understanding that we are in a history which is actually going some place, and that we have been placed here intentionally so that the purposes of God to achieve his kingdom might be realized, these other bases for ethics become irrelevant. The only proper consideration is, where in fact is history going? what is its goal? and how do we fit into this movement? If we can find our proper place within the inexorable movement we shall find such fulfillment of our beings as is open to us, and our lives will enjoy real meaningfulness; if not, we shall always be frustrated and unhappy and insecure, square pegs in round holes. It is of decisive importance, therefore, if the Christian understanding of man and history are true, for us to come to some genuine insight into the nature of the kingdom which God is ushering in and the methods through which he is accomplishing his end.

For Christian faith such knowledge is available, not in the form of truths to be learned from the Bible or elsewhere, but in the form of an event exemplifying at once God's ends and his methods, the event which we call the appearance, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For Christian faith this event—particularly the self-giving and suffering of Jesus' passion and death—is the outstanding example and expression of the redemptive love which characterizes God's kingdom and which is the means through which God is transforming the chaos of present human existence into his kingdom. This event, then, of self-sacrifice and self-giving, of bearing whatever burdens others cast upon him, of refusing to resist those who were evil, but turning instead the other cheek (Matt. 5:39), of refusing to revile in return those who had reviled him (1 Peter 2:23)—this event exemplifying and expressing in a concrete way actual love for actual enemies is the paradigm or model which defines right action for Christian faith. For in and through this event we see that God himself is not one who conquers by overwhelming power but by overwhelming love, and his kingdom is no tyrannical kingdom of terror but a compassionate kingdom of love. Little wonder that the cross has always been the supreme symbol of Christian faith!

However, if we take seriously the meaning of that symbol for ethics, we must say that the life to which we are called is life in the same kingdom of love under the sovereignty of the same God of love, a life and a love which manifest themselves in this world not by threat or hate or power but by self-giving and nonresistant redemptive love. "Have this mind among yourselves," said Paul, "which you have in Christ Jesus, who . . . emptied himself, taking the form of a servant . . . and became obedient unto death" (Phil. 2:5-8). "Christ . . . suffered for you," says 1 Peter, "leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. . . . When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he trusted to him who judges justly" (2:21, 23). "In this is love," says 1 John, "not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (4:10-11). This understanding of what is required of the Christian, drawn from the powerful example of Jesus' cross, was of course fully consonant with Jesus' own teaching:

> "But I say to you that hear love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. . . . If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as

your Father is merciful." (Luke 6:27-28, 32-36.)

What, now, are we to make of this demand that we lead lives of nonresistant love in the world in which we live, a world governed by power and powers? The answer should be clear. Such self-giving and self-sacrificial action is all that makes real sense in our world. It does not make sense, of course, in terms of worldly standards. For there is little evidence that such action gets one ahead in the world, or brings one wealth or prestige or power, or even happiness or friendship. In its outstanding exemplification it brought death on a cross, shame and public ridicule, scorn of enemies and desertion by friends. There is no particular reason why we should believe in or hope for anything better. What we know of gas chambers and brain washing and atomic bombs can hardly lead us to suppose that the character of the world and the men in it have changed materially for the better since Jesus' time. Nonetheless, I repeat, this sort of life and this model of action makes real sense. It does, that is, on the Christian presupposition that God has actually created this world to establish his kingdom of love and that even now he is acting in this world to usher in that realm, that, in fact, it is precisely through just such self-sacrificing love that he is acting to transform the chaos of evil and hate in which we live into his perfect kingdom. If the course of history is really under God's sovereignty, and if his sovereignty over the human heart is really achieved and exercised precisely through such redemptive love, and if in this way he is in fact bringing our history into the perfect community of love he created it for—and these are very big "if's" indeed!—then surely right action can be understood only in terms of finding our proper places within this actual historical movement toward the redemption of all history. For it is this movement that is the real meaning of history and it is this movement which shall finally overcome all others in history; it is in and through this movement that the ultimate reality with which we men have to do—God himself—is present and active, and it is here, therefore, and here alone, that we can find such reality and fulfillment as is open to us. To find our place, not among spurious or false historical movements, but within the central reality of the historical process—that is to have life and to have it in abundance. To live, thus, in response to what is revealed in the cross, is to live the only life which makes genuine sense, even in a world of power. But the Christian ethic makes such sense, not to any pragmatic or prudential or rational analysis of experience, but only in light of the Christian eschatological hope for the actual coming of God's perfect kingdom.

Since Jesus' crucifixion is, for Christian faith, the event in which this underlying movement of the historical process becomes both visible and decisively effective in the actual transformation of history, it is to this event above all that we must look in seeking to understand both ourselves and what is required of us and also the significance of the world of power in which we live. In this event Christian faith believes it sees into the very heart of God. Here, then, is encountered the ultimate authority for Christian faith, God himself; here must be the source of all norms for Christian ethics. Since this event understood in this way reveals suffering love to be the ultimate power in the universe, the power which shall overcome all other powers which now seem to control our world, it is in terms of and as expressive of such suffering and redemptive love that we are called to live—even in this world which, superficially viewed, appears to be ruled by force and power. For we are called to live in this world. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord" (Zech. 4:6).

EASTER, 1966

Talk of "kill-ratio" half a world away . . .
Our peach tree blooms today.

Cries of orphaned children in my ear . . .
Such greenness here!

Jellied gasoline bursting into flame . . .
Is spring the same?

Oh God,
What can we do,
What can we do
To show the resurrection
To be true?

—Elaine Sommers Rich

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The Human Family and Vietnam

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By James Douglass

WE ARE TOLD that the first war in the human family was between a farmer and a shepherd. "Now Abel was a keeper of flocks and Cain a tiller of the soil." They were both men of faith, and each brought his offering to the Lord. But the offering of the farmer proved unacceptable one day because it represented something less than his whole self. It is said that the farmer then became angry and downcast and was further rebuked by the Lord for his attitude.

So the farmer suggested to the shepherd that the two of them take a walk in a field, perhaps to discuss the religious differences which had arisen between them, and there Cain killed Abel in the first war of aggression. We do not know if Abel tried to defend himself, and so we can only speculate if this was also the first war of defense. But the brevity of the only battlefield report we have—"In the field Cain turned against his brother Abel and slew him"—suggests that Abel did not wage much war in return. He may not have had time, of course, and may have barely seen the flash of death descending.

But there may be another reason why Abel offered so little resistance, and why this first act of aggression ended so quickly in his death. If in the quiet of that field, as the two men talked together of their problems, Abel suddenly saw Cain turn against him with upraised knife, his surprise would have been due to more than the stealth of the farmer Cain. The bewilderment and helplessness of the first casualty in war may have come primarily because Abel knew in a deeply personal way who his aggressor was: that he was Cain, his brother, whom he loved and whom he could not kill in defense without killing something of himself. And if the identity of his sudden attacker, his own brother, shocked Abel and made him hesitate to draw his knife in defense, then the war would have ended quickly. For a soldier's life on the battlefield is already half gone when he begins to act on the personal recognition of the enemy as his brother.

But Cain had no hesitation. No thoughts of brotherhood kept him from raising the knife. We can understand why this was so from Cain's answer to the Lord's question afterwards, "Where is your brother Abel?" Cain answered with a denial and another question, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" It is this question which makes it possible to wage war on one's brother, a question which is an effective denial of the bonds of care and responsibility which make two brothers one in active love as well as in flesh and blood. "Am I my brother's keeper?" is the sinner's recurring response through history to God's invitation to join his brothers in a community of love.

But what can I say to the brother advancing on me with a bayonet other than the question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" implicit in the pull of my trigger. I am reassured, however, by the thought that he is the murderer Cain advancing once again on the innocent Abel, whose innocence has simply been fortified by the adoption of Cain's weapons, or perhaps something with more firepower. In war the enemy is always Cain, and ourselves a more realistic Abel.

From the standpoint of revelation, and of Cain and Abel, it is therefore not difficult for the Christian to recognize that every war is a civil war. The Christian's faith goes a dimension deeper than the humanist's affirmation that our humanity makes us all citizens of the same city of the world. Today believers and nonbelievers alike of every nationality, drawn together by the effects of modern technology, are being forced to recognize the interdependence of mankind and the crucial need for worldwide political institutions to embody that interdependence. A belief in man alone—in his dignity, his achievements, and his future—is sufficient to see the deep civic failure of war in a world grown small by positive inventions and menaced by modern weapons. Every war is a civil war because men live on the same homeland, earth, and are thus destined to share the same political institutions, especially when such global institutions have become the social condition for man's survival.

But the Judeo-Christian vision, while affirming the truth of this typically modern perspective, goes beyond a recognition of the civic failure of war in the one city of man. For the Christian, men are not only citizens

of the same city of the world, in which every war is a civil war, but more basically all men are members of the same family, sons of the same father creator, bound to one another in origin and nature, so that war is waged not so much by fellow citizens as it is by brothers. The mutual civil dependence of men rests on their deeper brotherhood in the human family under one Father, so that the essential nature of man's division and counterviolence is not civil but rather family war. The history of wars is the history of fratricide, of brothers slaying one another before the eyes of their God. It is also the history of the survivor's unvarying response to his brother's blood on his hands: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Genesis tells us that war is an expression of the kingdom of sin. First Adam sinned, disintegrating his integrity and splintering the community of God's children. Harmony became conflict, and unity division. Death entered the world, and with it the possibility of murder. Then in the wake of Adam's sin Cain arose and in his sin slew Abel. All wars and all killing are an expression of sin. They have the same ultimate source, our human father's rebellion against our divine father. But the immediate source of war is always our personal renewal of this rebellion. Sin is our declaration of war. We go to war only when our love has failed.

Just as war is an expression of the kingdom of sin, so is peace an expression of the kingdom of heaven. To the perspective of Genesis, and to an Old Testament filled with the vision of battle, must be added the final perspective of Christ and the coming of a new kingdom. Christ is our peace. With the advent of Christ God has become present in man, and man in God, Adam's sin has been overcome, and death itself has been killed by the death and resurrection of Christ. All men have been reconciled in Christ.

But war has continued. And Christians have continued to wage war. How is that possible?

The question has been raised by a French Jew of Polish descent, Andre Schwarz-Bart, in his novel *The Last of the Just.* It is a question which in the novel occurs to a young Jewish couple in Paris destined to die together in a Nazi gas chamber, the culmination of a centuries-old war of Christians against Jews:

" 'Oh Ernie,' Golda said, 'you know them. Tell me why, why do the Christians hate us the way they do? They seem so nice when I can look at them without my star.'

"Ernie put his arm around her shoulders solemnly. 'It's very mysterious,' he murmured in Yiddish. 'They don't know exactly why themselves. I've been in their churches and I've read their gospel. Do you know who the Christ was? A simple Jew like your father. A kind of Hasid.'

"Golda smiled gently. 'You're kidding me.'

" 'No, no, believe me, and I'll bet they'd have got along fine, the two of them, because he was really a good Jew, you know, sort of like the Baal Shem Tov—a merciful man, and gentle. The Christians say they love him, but I think they hate him without knowing it. So they take the cross by the other end and make a sword out of it and strike us with it! You understand, Golda,' he cried suddenly, strangely excited, 'they take the cross and they turn it around, they turn it around, my God . . .' "

The transformation of the cross into a sword has been a recurring phenomenon in the history of the church, so that the Christian today stands on a history of sword-like crosses, discovering the blood of his Savior on the weapons of the faithful departed. Nor have the faithful present ceased to militarize the dying Christ against his own humanity in an age where Christians give massive support to a nuclear nationalism. Today anti-communism is the badge of a renewed crusade in the name of Christ, which preaches the gospel, as we have come to know it, in the form of counter-repression and counter-terror to the Communists.

This story of cross into sword is perhaps symbolized best at the point of transition in the church's attitude toward violence and war, the Age of Constantine, when war began to be accepted into the Christian ethic. At that time Christians began to bear the cross into battle as the imperial military emblem, and saw nothing incongruous or tragic in the fact that the supposed nails of the cross, sent to Constantine by his mother, were made into bridle bits and a helmet, which were used in battle. The victory of God's absolute non-violence and patient suffering unto death became the sign of imperial conquest. The power of redemptive suffering made way for an ethic of self-defense. The sword was baptized and sought confirmation in the guise of the cross.

The basic problem with the Christian tradition of the just war is that it has so little to do with the person and teaching of Christ. From the theological perspective of man's origin from a creator, the just war is legalized fratricide. From a Christological perspective, it is the substitution of the sword for the cross as the norm for the Christian's response to evil. Combining the two perspectives, it is difficult to see how killing a brother in God's image is compatible with the Christocentric norm of suffering love. Nor does the New Testament at any point suggest a reconciliation of such apparently opposite responses to aggression as are represented by the just war doctrine, on the one hand, and Jesus of Nazareth, on the other: homicidal counterforce and accepted crucifixion.

Ever since St. Augustine, whom we should revere for other reasons, made his sharp distinction between a violent act of war and a benevolent intention, the Christian conscience has found itself unable to confront problems of violence and war with the full power of the Gospel. What Augustine's distinction did, in effect, as elaborated by the great scholastics and eventually

corrupted and exploited by chauvinists, was to render impotent in war Christ's doctrine of an agape-based non-violence which is summarized in his cross and that of his disciple. The Christian conscience, divorced from its fundamental resistance to all war as a witness to the peace of Christ, has subsequently dug itself into a deeper and deeper pit of rationalization where today we can construct theoretical nuclear wars that will squeeze into our just-war categories and where any light from the words of the Gospel seems to have become all but impossible. Yet, through a grace for our age, it is at this point that the Vatican Council in its Schema on *The Church and the Modern World* may fully restore to the church her peace mission in the world and set her unalterably against the nuclear sword of world-destruction.

All war is a family war, for men are brothers made to the image of God. Our peace in war is the cross of Christ. Even if we grant the scriptural basis for such a theocentric and Christocentric vision, we may still ask of what value it is in interpreting the world and living as Christians in it. What does such a vision mean today in the concrete situation where we as American Catholics live?

In response it must be said that we Americans are today guilty in Vietnam of waging a war which can only be understood as the destruction of brotherhood on whatever level of truth we wish to interpret it, philosophical or theological. Our war policies constitute a violation of the deep civil and familial bonds of men in three major areas: in the country of Vietnam, in the community of nations, and in the community of Christ. It is not surprising therefore to find such deep opposition to our policies coming from precisely these war violated communities: the Vietnamese people, the world community, and more and more, the churches. Moreover, the overlapping and co-operating membership of internationalist organizations, on the one hand, and church-affiliated groups, on the other, has given to the current peace movement a strength and diversity which neither a liberal world view nor a sectarian pacifism could have achieved by itself. The redemptive effect of our military policies has therefore been a peace movement whose size and vitality could not have been imagined short months ago.

The peculiarly fratricidal character of our policies in Vietnam can be seen with reference to that formulation of human brotherhood by which we have declared our own independence as a nation, namely, our belief that all men are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

First, as a country which believes in the human family's right to liberty, we have prevented the people of Vietnam from choosing the system of government they want and have maintained instead by military and economic force a series of pro-American dictators.

The basic assumption of our publicly stated policy in Vietnam during the last five years is untrue, namely that the war against the Saigon government is due primarily to aggression from the North. The insurrection in the South began as a reaction to the Diem regime's systematic repression of all groups that had taken part in the Vietminh struggle against France. It gradually took on the character of a civil war after Diem's American-supported refusal to permit elections in 1956 as specified by the Geneva Convention for the reunification of Vietnam. Our obstruction of elections then, which as President Eisenhower states in *Mandate for Change* would almost certainly have resulted in an enormous victory for Ho Chi Minh, and our continuing refusal since to settle a growing conflict by allowing Communist representation in the South Vietnamese government, are the basic causes of the war. These policies, carried out as elements in our overall policy of containment, raise the question: Do we as Americans and as Christians believe in the inalienable right of liberty only when it is used to ratify our own interests?

Secondly, as a country which believes in the human family's right to life, we have joined in the systematic destruction of the Vietnamese people in the name of preserving a freedom we have already denied them.

Hans Morgenthau among many commentators has warned that the war in Vietnam can be won only "by the indiscriminate killing of everybody in sight—by genocide." We have embarked on a scorched-earth policy by destroying villages, forests, and crops. We constantly saturate jungle areas with bombs and napalm without knowing who is beneath them. Our reaction to Viet Cong terror, which we rightly condemn, has been American terror, which we are slow to acknowledge. We are daily becoming more and more indiscriminate in our killing simply because discrimination in such a war is virtually impossible. Fighting against the guerrilla tactics of a native force leaves us little choice. To destroy the Viet Cong we must destroy the Vietnamese people, and with them our own moral integrity.

Thirdly, as a country which believes in the human family's right to pursue happiness we are moving inexorably toward a third and final world war.

Both the enormous build-up of our forces in Vietnam and the increasing proximity of our bombing raids to Hanoi are evidence enough of the dangers ahead. China and the Soviet Union cannot be expected to tolerate the obliteration of North Vietnam industrial centers. Few steps are needed now to bring Eastern and Western nuclear forces to the point of an all-out conflict. At this point in history, on this question, is it so impossible for us to identify our values as Americans and Christians closely enough with that of the world to avoid world destruction?

It is obviously not enough to say that the war in Viet Nam is against our national self-interest. The war is against our self-interest because it is, more basically,

against our moral self-identity. It is against the moral principles on which our American revolution rests, and as such raises serious questions about our future in a world of growing aspirations where only a revolutionary America holds out any promise. We must recognize the urgency of the questions, how we can hope to encourage anti-Communism in Southeast Asia by decimating one of its peoples, or how we can heighten our prestige in a world of newly independent nations by repudiating the moral base of our own independence, or how we can keep the world safe from Communism by igniting a thermonuclear war.

It is world noting that it is only on the basis of a counter-theology to the theology of the human family under God. that one can dismiss these questions and argue for our present position in Vietnam: namely, the theology that the Communists are Satan, that the United States is God, and that it is time for God to show Satan what hell is really like. For God cannot compromise with Satan, nor agree to his presence in any government. The only basis for negotiations between God and Satan is Satan's total surrender, and God's sensitive antennae know that Satan has not yet been reduced to that.

The Communist theology, on the other hand, normally reverses these roles, so that Satan appears in a grey flannel suit and God in a pair of overalls. Christians do in fact believe that God once appeared in overalls, or their equivalent for a Jewish carpenter 2,000 years ago. The Communists at least celebrate those closest to God, the oppressed and exploited. But any cold-war theology, whether it be of the East or the West, which tries to confine God to one ideology or one side of a border, can only stifle hope today, for the divinity of both sides is too much in question to promise much salvation. It is not surprising to see such a God, whose only purpose is to annihilate Satan, taking up the arts of napalm and flamethrowers to meet any enemy beyond redemption.

These absolutized politics are theologies of despair, and their common heresy is the denial of man's humanity. We are not God, and the Communists are not Satan. They are men like ourselves, beautiful and ugly, great- and small-minded, humanitarians and terrorists. We are all men, all members of the same family, and we are all capable, Americans and Viet Cong alike, of rising up from our mutual slaughter to a recognition of our mutual human dignity and brotherhood.

For we must go beyond national self-interest, and beyond our self-identity as a revolutionary nation, to reach the ultimate ground of a politics which can be both moral and realistic in Viet Nam today and in the nuclear age as a whole.

This politics has been described by an Italian peasant who became first a saint and then, in one of God's wisest jokes, a pope. In *Pacem in Terris,* John XXIII developed his theme of peace in the family of mankind. He wrote, "There will always exist the objective need to promote the universal common good, that is, the common good of the entire human family." *Pacem in Terris* is both a hymn to the unity of the human family and a political program embodying that unity institutionally for the sake of man's survival. In the nuclear age the universal common good demands the abolition of war and the gradual surrender of national sovereignty to world order and government. Mankind has always been a family, by nature if not by practice, but today we must either begin to live together as brothers, without war, or die divided in nuclear chaos.

Pope Paul summed up the size of our task in his address to the United Nations: "The hour has struck for our 'conversion,' for personal transformation, for interior renewal. We must get used to thinking of man in a new way; and in a new way also of man's life in common; with a new manner too of conceiving the paths of history and the destiny of the world, according to the words of St. Paul: 'You must be clothed in the new self, which is created in God's image, justified and sanctified through the truth.' "

Our reigning philosophy of "political realism" must today give way to a politics of global realism. We must learn a politics which can truly respond to man's development of what can be called "eschatological" weapons, that is, weapons which can draw down on man the end of his world and of himself. As a working philosophy political realism rests on national self-interest and the power of matter as an ultimate arbiter of conflict. But in an age where the power of matter has revealed its essence as global self-destruction, in eschatological weapons, we must develop a politics of spirit whereby man can both settle his conflicts and live.

In such a situation, which will continue as long as man continues because we cannot forget nuclear knowledge, the only politics realistic enough to be able to prevent, rather than simply postpone, man's self-destruction, is a politics of the entire human family, a politics in which national and global interests will converge more and more in the conscience of mankind. This is the political vocation of our time, and a vocation which corresponds to our vision as Christians: to learn to act in international politics only from the widest loyalty to the whole of mankind. The politics of global realism is a recognition of our radical dependence in every sense on the entire world community.

As the politics of the human family, global realism is also the politics of moral rather than armed resistance, because members of the same family must fight only with the weapons of truth. It is therefore a politics which was tested and explored by Mohandas Gandhi in South Africa and India and applied brilliantly by Martin Luther King in America. It possesses a power of resistance through conscience which must be developed in a world community made fragile by nuclear power.

Global realism is also the politics of an open world expressed by John F. Kennedy in his American University Address, and practiced by Kennedy and Khrushchev together in the limited test-ban treaty. It is a politics which has been practiced habitually by the statesmen Dag Hammerskold and U Thant, and by Adlai Stevenson when he was free to speak his own mind. It is a politics we have only begun to learn and a politics which so clashes with our actions in Vietnam and Santo Domingo that it must now seem a wonder that we shall ever learn it.

In Vietnam the politics of global realism, the politics of reason and of spiritual power in an age where the power of matter has revealed its essence as self-destruction, is a politics of negotiation and reconciliation. It demands our attention to the people of Vietnam, to their history and their present needs. It demands our recognition that the program of social reform so long and so desperately needed by these people cannot be accomplished in the intervals between bombing raids on their villages. Such a politics asks that we give our attention to the position of a revolutionary party which enjoys massive support among the South Vietnamese, and thus requires our openness to those interests which constitute half of any possible settlement of the war. In short, global realism in Vietnam means that we must scale down our self-image and our demands from the divine to the human level, recognizing that here as elsewhere war comes from the baptism of our own interests, and peace from the acknowledgement of God's presence in our enemy.

For our deepening commitment to a politics of the entire human family, and our increasing support of institutions which embody the truth that all men are brothers in the family of mankind, represent our only hope today as Americans, as world citizens, and as Christians. We shall either go out to meet in negotiations, and eventually know in brotherhood, the Viet Cong guerrilla and the Chinese Communist, or we shall learn what it means to live and finally die in an America of deepening hostility, suspicion, and fear toward a gathering global storm.

"NAKED AND YE CLOTHED ME": The Story of Mennonite Disaster Service

By Clayton Koppes

A CYCLE OF vicious rains began in Kansas in mid-May, 1951. When the third cycle hit June 21-30, nearly all the streams in eastern Kansas surged out of their banks at record levels. In July rivers again roared out of their banks. Marion and Florence were flooded four times in two months.

Besides many small towns in central and eastern Kansas, especially hard hit were Topeka and Kansas City, since many of the state's eastern streams empty into the Kansas (Kaw) River, which flows through Topeka and joins the Missouri in Kansas City. In Kansas and Missouri, 49 persons died in the flood, more than 100,000 were left homeless, two million acres of rich farmland was inundated, property damage exceeded a billion dollars.

In the summer of 1950, a young married couples' Sunday school picnic of the Pennsylvania (now Whitestone) and Hesston (Kansas) Mennonite churches, had established the Mennonite Service Organization. Living in an area plagued by drought, tornadoes, and floods, they sought a practical application of Christian beliefs. Even earlier, in 1947, the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, had established a continuing organization in time for cleanup after a tornado in Woodward, Oklahoma. In the service organization, these groups believed they had found a way to show concern for their neighbors by helping them when disasters struck.

The first call to action came May 17, 1951, when 45 volunteers helped sandbag the Little Arkansas River in Wichita. As floods worsened in 1951, many central Kansas churches sent truckloads of emergency relief supplies to stricken cities and many persons volunteered to help clean up and rebuild damaged areas.

A continuing program to help disaster victims was established by a Mennonite Central Committee unit

Volunteer cleans up "muck" after Dodge City flood, July, 1965. It was three to six feet deep.

Volunteers work in what was once business district Udall, Kansas, after tornado of 1955.

M.D.S. helps rebuild Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Mississippi, one of the thirteen churches the organization is helping rebuild after they were bombed or burned.

in Topeka. Soon it became apparent, however, that better organization of volunteers was necessary if the church wanted access to disaster areas. In addition, tornadoes had struck White County in central Arkansas early in 1952. A meeting was called at Hesston College, March 31, 1952, to provide immediate relief in Arkansas and to set up an organization capable of meeting needs in any future catastrophe. Peter J. Dyck, pastor of the Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, read James 2:14, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? can faith save him?" Following the meeting, attended by 80 men, Peter J. Dyck was elected chairman and John Diller of the Hesston College Church was chosen secretary-treasurer. In addition, more than 200 men traveled 550 miles to give several days of service in Arkansas.

Three directives were established for the Mennonite Disaster Service, as the group was called. (1) The committee is not to supplant any present relief organizations, but should function where other groups cannot. (2) Whenever a disaster occurs, the committee shall immediately investigate the need and avenues of help. (3) The organization is not to solicit funds.

From those beginnings in central Kansas, the idea spread to other Mennonite groups in the United States and Canada. Today there are five area organizations—Atlantic States; Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and south; Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, and south; Pacific states; and Canada—and 30 local organizations grouped under MCC. Each group not only tries to cope with disasters in its own area, but also sends volunteers to other areas when major tragedies hit. After the call for help first comes to the area coordinator, string-

Dog guards remains of home at Belize, British Honduras after Hurricane Hattie had gone through.

ers call church members; some small congregations can organize within twelve minutes, almost all within an hour. Area representatives of the sponsoring groups, (Old) Mennonite; General Conference Mennonite; Church of God in Christ, Mennonite; Evangelical Mennonite Church; Brethren in Christ; Mennonite Brethren; and the Amish, meet annually to review their work.

From their original relief and rehabilitation work MDS has branched out to include training schools for field directors, a mobile office, rescue teams, and radio equipment. (1) A national office was established in Akron, Pennsylvania in 1962. (2) Delmar Stahly is national coordinator.

The MDS service roster reads like a roll call of national disasters. After the floods of 1951 in Kansas, there was a tornado in Flint, Michigan, in 1953 that spurred the northern Indiana area to organize. A tornado at Udall, Kansas, in 1955 killed more than 70 persons, completely destroyed 173 homes and ripped 16 others beyond repair; MDS sent more than 1,875 volunteers to Udall and to Blackwell, Oklahoma, scene of another devastating tornado the same May evening. The organization's most active year was 1965 with tornadoes in northern Indiana, floods along the Mississippi, and again through the entire length of Kansas. From 20 to 30 men also went to Louisiana to rebuild homes wrecked by Hurricane Betsy.

But MDS has not stayed in traditional Mennonite areas, nor concerned itself solely with floods and tornadoes. When Hurricane Hattie battered Belize, British Honduras, in 1961, MDS went abroad for

M.D.S. workers from Lancaster County erect home in Dunlap, Indiana, following tornado, 1965.

Rescue service during Newton flood, 1965.

Mennonite Disaster Service at Cotes De Fer, Haiti, December, 1963.

M.D.S. transported Russian Old Believers from New York City airport to Seabrook Farms.

the first time. Twenty-eight men helped. Thirty-six persons worked in Haiti after Hurricane Flora, the worst Caribbean storm of the century, devastated the already poor country. An earthquake in Skopje, Yugoslavia, in 1963, and the Alaska quake of 1964, worst recorded in the United States, saw MDS workers help rebuild the cities. "Operation Midnight Sun" began in Alaska in May 1964 and eventually included 40 volunteers working on 43 houses.

A brutal drought in much of the Great Plains in 1956 was forcing many farmers to sell their farms or leave them abandoned. Hay was bringing more than $1 per bale. The Hillsboro, Kansas, community was particularly hard hit. Mennonites in the Mountain Lake, Minnesota, area and central Illinois shipped more than 200 carloads of hay to Kansas and Oklahoma, not only providing relief to farmers who received the hay, but also helping stabilize the hay market. Mennonite Disaster Service also helped settle 224 Old Believers, and rebuild burned down or bombed churches in the South.

From its beginning, MDS has benefited not only victims of tragedy, but volunteers themselves. Victims come first. By cleaning up or rebuilding homes only a few hours after disaster strikes, MDS volunteers give hope to persons stricken as well as homes to live in. Their service has won praise from many quarters.

"From the standpoint of the WAHB, there are not enough words to express our appreciation of the work these people did," said William C. Salome, executive vice president of the Wichita Association of Home Builders, of MDS after a late summer tornado in Wichita in 1965.

The *Hutchinson* (Kansas) *News* in 1965 chose MDS "Citizen of the Year" for its service at several tornadoes in Kansas and floods in central and western Kansas. The city of Hebron, Nebraska, sent MDS $919.42 in appreciation for rehabilitation work there after a 1953 tornado. When Hebron sent several parties of men to help clean up after the Udall tornado, they refused to work under anyone except Mennonite Disaster Service.

Praise alone cannot justify the existence of MDS. The right of being for such a group lies in being a practical extension of Christian teachings. For Mennonites it is a way of living a faith, united by a common bond of helping a neighbor in need.

"For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked and ye clothed me. . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:35, 36a, 40b)

Some Marks of a Christian Scholar

By Reinhard H. Vogt

As a little boy I was sometimes told that it is very easy to identify a Christian and to distinguish him from a non-Christian. Even the passing stranger on the street, I was told, can be judged on the basis of certain clear criteria. One such criterion was a smiling personality. Somehow, through my well-intentioned mentors, I was given the impression that a Christian is someone who is always in a gay mood, while a non-Christian walks the street with a permanent frown. A Christian is someone who greets you cheerfully, who is not dismayed by the vicissitudes of the weather or the family fortune.

I walked the streets with these criteria or marks in mind, but the more I measured the more inadequate the yardstick seemed to be. The results, in fact, were quite confusing. I seldom encountered a stranger in our small Mennonite town, but I knew persons who openly professed to be Christian, and I knew others who were openly anti-Christian. As I observed these persons I found that not everyone in the first group was a smiler, and not everyone in the second group was a frowner. Moreover, the smilers in the first group did not smile all the time, while the frowners of the second group could be downright graceful and cheerful. The criteria that I had been given were certainly not as clear or as helpful as I had been led to believe.

This youthful experience illustrates a problem that has bothered Christians through the centuries. Does Christianity really make a difference in the working methods or in the quality and purpose of a person's

life? Can this difference be seen? For a church which stresses the visible nature of Christ's redemptive work this problem of "identification" is particularly acute.

I would like to begin a brief analysis of this problem as it applies to the life of the scholar by citing a few marks which, in my opinion, should characterize the work and purpose of the Christian scholar. At first nothing will be said about whether such marks will distinguish the Christian scholar from his non-Christian colleague. They are simply a few marks which one should find in a scholar who is trying to carry on his work within a Christian context. Whether, and in how far, such marks are unique to the Christian scholar is a question that cannot be answered fully in this paper. The question would certainly be answered differently in each of the various scholarly disciplines. However, some attempt will be made to deal with this problem in the concluding section of this paper.

A number of the characteristics mentioned in this section are given on the assumption that the Christian scholar works within a Christian tradition which he has understood and assimilated. Actually, however, there seem to be few Christian scholars who bring to their task a reasonably mature and thought-through Christian philosophy of life. They have not come very far in deriving a biblical view of man, of the world, of vocation, etc. Because of this it needs to be emphasized that one of the things which should most clearly characterize a Christian scholar is his attempt to develop a biblical, Christian view of life. The scholar must learn—above anything else it seems to me—to live in the "biblical world." There is such a thing as a biblical view of man, a biblical view of man's purpose in this world, a biblical view of the orderliness and end of creation. The Christian scholar should attempt, in a way which is just as rigorous and intellectually respectable as the methods of study he uses in other disciplines, to develop a profound biblical view of things. Only if he does this will he be able to infuse the assumptions and viewpoints which he learns within his particular discipline with true Chritsian insight.

A Christian scholar, then, is first of all someone who is vigorously seeking to develop a profound Christian or biblical philosophy of life. This will naturally require a great deal of time and effort, but it is impossible to see how else the Christian scholar's faith will come to permeate his scholarship in any deep and lasting way. In a secular university setting where this kind of biblical concern is ignored, if not disparaged, the Christian scholar may find it necessary to fall short in certain areas—or at least fall short of fulfilling certain intellectual and social ideals which the university community at large has deemed important—in order to devote enough time to the nurture of a proper Christian perspective. Certainly the kind of informal "one-hour Bible study a week" which has come to characterize student Christian groups is thoroughly inadequate for the building of such a foundation. Thorough, critical, and honest study of the Bible is an urgent prerequisite for any Christian scholar, not simply a soothing pastime for those "religiously inclined" or a dangerous exercise which our critical scholars might take up if they really feel they must. Disciplined biblical study on campus—some of it possibly through lecture courses and seminars—and at least one or two years of more concentrated study before, during, or after university—these would seem to me to be clear and absolutely necessary marks of the Christian scholar. This is not intended to be an idealistic suggestion, but a realistic conclusion based on the alarming inadequacy with which most of our scholars enter upon their fields of work today. When one observes the uncritical, shallow, and restricted Christian views which characterize many of our scholars it should occasion no surprise that some of them—in a quite unscholarly fashion—feel called upon to discard these views completely as their critical faculties develop. It takes time and serious effort to inquire into the biblical roots of the Christian faith. There must also be a basic desire to arrive at a profound philosophy of life. Unfortunately much of the direction of higher education in North America has stifled concerns of this kind. The emphasis on practical vocational training on the university level and —perhaps even more damaging—the divorce between "credits" and personal development, with emphasis on the former, have influenced even our Christian scholars. Certainly these factors would go a long way to explain the apparent lethargy with which many of our scholars approach the roots of their faith once they have embarked on a course of studies. It might also explain the ease with which scholars can compartmentalize their faith. They have their uncritical, shallow faith in one pocket, and their more critical studies in another pocket, and they manage to keep the latter from impinging on the former (which might destroy the small faith they have) and the former from permeating the latter (which would certainly complicate their studies.)

These last remarks are meant to underline the seriousness of our problems. It is no easy matter to develop an adequate, Christian foundation in the environment of the modern American university. Which leads us to a second main point.

The Christian scholar, being aware of the sin of pride and ambition, will try consciously to combat those pressures which would substitute prestige for truth, tangible signs of progress ("remember to write at least two scholarly articles a year if you want to get ahead") for inner growth. As we have said, the Christian scholar is deeply concerned about a true understanding of life—its basic meaning, social, political, and economic expression, etc. He is deeply concerned about truth—not because the life of the scholar is envied by many today but because he realizes that this is God's world.

In such a world truth is good, because it explains and facilitates the working of God within this world. Archbishop William Temple once put it in these words: "We affirm, then, that unless all existence is a medium of Revelation, no particular revelation is possible." (C. A. Coulson in *Science and Christian Belief,* p. 14). The scholar's research into the natural world as well as into the world of social relationships is then a labor of love, a form of worship. "Pure research," in this sense, is not only a possibility for the Christian scholar but a very vital experience. Similarly, the Christian scholar can truly enjoy art, music, etc.,—the whole world of aesthetics—as perhaps no one else can. "Whatever, is pure, whatever is lovely" . . .upon these things he can and should reflect with joy and disciplined attention. Dietrich Bonhoeffer is perhaps an outstanding example of how a Christian scholar can profoundly enjoy the pleasures of a world created by God. The kind of enjoyment and "pure" research which I have just mentioned will, however, always be kept in tension by another concern of the Christian scholar. The Christian is called to be a servant in this world—to re-create with God a world that is fallen. Martin Marty once said: "I sometimes conceive of heaven as a place where I can sit in a rocking chair all day and listen to the music of Bach. However, in this world I cannot give myself completely to such enjoyment—because there is injustice that needs to be corrected, there are problems that need to be solved and suffering to be alleviated." The Christian scholar should constantly be aware of his responsibility to serve. He should concern himself with social problems—it is difficult to conceive how any Christian scholar today can be unconcerned about the economic inequalities of the world, about the hideous dimensions of the east-west struggle, etc. It need not be the American concern for practicality which should restrain the Christian scholar from holing up in an ivory tower. Such practicality is overstressed and often misplaced. A Christian's concern to serve should, however, dictate the kind of research work he undertakes (in this sense there seems to me to be something ultimately "utilitarian" about the Christian scholar's work. One should constantly be thinking of the benefit to mankind). It should restrict his complete withdrawal into the academic community. This, then, is another necessary mark of the Christian scholar—the mark of the servant.

The Christian scholar is also someone who is called into personal fellowship with God and with other Christians. He should be aware that God is a person actively working in this world, there where men open themselves to Him. He should also know that God has created a new redemptive order in this world—the church. It is within the fellowship of Christians that moral and spiritual healing takes place, and it is from the midst of this fellowship that the redemptive forces of the world emanate. The Christian scholar should be very much concerned about his own involvement in such a fellowship. It should certainly influence him initially in the choice of a university (for how many of our scholars has the possibility or existence of such a fellowship been a major consideration in choosing a college?) and it should be the focus of his life as a scholar. Where the fellowship is not the kind of redemptive order which it should be, the Christian scholar should be motivated not to withdraw, but to change it. This may be an exceedingly difficult adventure—since in many of our fellowships our scholars are suspect—but it seems that the scholar should earnestly try to work positively even in a difficult situation.

To sum up, the Christian scholar will be marked by his earnest efforts to develop a Christian philosophy of life, by his drive to understand and enjoy the true and beautiful things of this world, by his constant awareness of being a servant in this world, and by his participation in the fellowship of the church. These are simply a few of the marks that one might isolate, and the writer is painfully aware that even these are much more complicated and difficult to identify in practice than has here been indicated. However, in spite of a basic simplicity about them, many of our scholars, it seems to me, need to recapture a zeal to implement some of these suggestions.

It will be apparent to any of our Christian scholars that a number of the marks of the Christian scholar which I have mentioned here can also be applied to non-Christian scholars. The Christian is not the only one who is concerned about truth, and its enjoyment. In fact, at certain points the Christian may have to overcome some peculiar difficulties in this regard. His Christian background may tempt him to force the truth which he is learning into a certain mold—so that he is not always as open to the truth as he ought to be. Non-Chritsian scholars may be equally tempted, however, to force their insights into an "anti-Christian" mold, or will shape them by other biases which afflict them. Similarities of this kind—between the concerns of the Christian and the non-Christian scholar—should not lead one to conclude that the "Christian" character of the Christian's search for truth is in any way diminished. The Christian believes that where there is any regard for truth and excellence, any genuine concern for the good, there the image of God has not been effaced. There God is present, both for those who acknowledge this and for those who do not.

The similarity in methods should also not alarm us. In the social sciences Christian insights may conflict directly with a modern humanist appraisal of man and his purpose. Christian methods may also differ in this case from non-Christian approaches to a problem. In the physical sciences, however, both the non-Christian and the Christian scholar begin with the biblical presupposition that the world is orderly and behaves according to laws. Here the nature and method of work

may be strikingly similar, again without diminishing the essentially Christian character of the presuppositions which underlie the methods.

Other apparent similarities between Christian and non-Christian scholars may stem from similar considerations, as well as from inabilities of the Christian to overcome the general pressures of the modern academic community—such as the pressure to seek prestige. These kinds of pressures should not be minimized.

In general, then, it seems to me that the Christian scholar will be marked by some peculiar and vital concerns, some of which will be unique to him and some of which will also characterize his non-Christian colleagues as well. The Christian scholar has a unique mission, unique biblical insights which can inform his whole work, and a unique opportunity to serve effectively from within a peculiar community, the church.

General Reading:

Georges A. Buttrick, *Biblical Thought and the Secular University* (Louisiana State University Press, 1960); C. A. Coulson, *Science and Christian Belief*, (Collins, Fontana, 1961); H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, (Harper Torchbook, 1956); Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers From Prison* (Fontana Books, 1960).

Being and Doing

By Elmer F. Suderman

After India had achieved independence from England, Nehru was asked by an American newspaper reporter: "With independence accomplished, what will India do now?" Nehru smiled and replied that no Indian would have thought of asking the question in that particular way, but would rather have asked, "What is India going to be now?"

Most of us would not have given the reporter's question any thought. Indeed, we are surprised that another question, especially the one Nehru posed, could be substituted for and even considered more important than the one asked by the reporter. We pride ourselves on our practical-mindedness and our concern with problems that we can do something about. It is so natural for us to ask "What shall I do?" that it never occurs to us to ask "What should I be?" The latter question puzzles us. We don't know how to deal with it; we aren't sure what it entails.

Soon after we are able to talk we learn to ask, sometimes a hundred times a day, "What shall I do now?" and we never forget the lesson. It is an ubiquitous question; it is always on the tip of our tongue. When we get up in the morning, we ask "What must I do today?" When we finish our work at night, perhaps even earlier, we ask "What shall we do tonight?" When we are disturbed about civil rights in Alabama we ask, "What can we do about it?" and we organize committees to find out and tell us what, if anything, can be done. When we deplore the low state of religion in our society we ask "What can we do about it?" or, more likely, turning to the preachers we ask them "What are you going to do about it?" We suffer an injustice, and we ask, "What can be done about it?" We face the momentous issues of our time: survival, nuclear warfare, race relations, civil rights, overpopulation, poverty, automation—always we ask "What can we do?"

Even in our use of the language our reliance on action as the universal answer to the basic questions of life is revealed in our concern to use, as much as possible, the active verb in our writing and speaking. Avoid the passive verb which drones like nothing under the sun, bringing active English to a standstill, the English handbooks tell the young writer. The passive verb which merely connects or shows relationship "liquidates and buries the active individual," and results in dullness and drowsy, soporific pomp. We are an active, energetic, dynamic, brisk, alert, wide-awake vigorous race, and we must express these traits in the verbs we use. The ease with which we change nouns into verbs, even when a verb already exists, is indicative of our predilection for action.

We act, strive, perform, achieve, work, pursue, win, operate, hustle, race, push ahead, make progress, keep moving, and hurry. At least these are our unannounced goals. We buy, sell, collect, trade, bargain, negotiate, invest, and charge. We modify, change, alter, tamper with, transform, innovate, and revolutionize. We talk, chatter, speak, and gossip. These verbs, as well as the activities for which they stand, please us; they add color and zest to our lives. They have a healthy, wholesome sound, whereas verbs like being, abiding, enduring, prevailing, relating, and especially the forms of the verb to be—is, am, was, were, are—seem inert, moribund, unhealthy, un-American.

And the question of what we ought to do is an

important one; I do not mean to disparage it. Indeed, very often we ought to act more and with greater dispatch. But, strange as it may seem to Americans who like to believe that the difficult can be done immediately and the impossible takes only a little longer, there are many experiences in life—and they are not the least important ones—where action is futile and where the pertinent question is not what we can *do* but what we can *be*.

In the presence of crippling pain we ask in vain for something to do because no action is possible, but it is pertinent to ask "How can I be patient?" Some pain leaves us only with the possibility of suffering—not a very active verb. When we shrink in terror as we contemplate a universe which seems in the words of Carlyle to be "void of Life, of purpose, of Volition," to be "one huge, dead, immeasurable steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind [men] limb from limb"—the question of what to do does not loom as large as the question of how to be faithful to the best we know. When we feel our isolation from other men, when we cannot unlock our heart to reveal to those we love what we fear and feel, action is fruitless, but we can continue to love even when we cannot communicate. When we feel, day and night, the burden of ourselves, when we are afraid of the empty spaces between the stars in a universe too vast for us to contemplate, and we fear, even more, the desert places in our hearts, action is not enough; we must accept the necessity of being alone. When we approach our death—or the death of our friends—it is most irrelevant to ask what we can do. We can only be faithful and steadfast. And in our day when we must consider not only individual death but corporate death, atomic annihilation in which all that men have worked for can be destroyed by the simple push of a button, either accidental or purposeful, and when we know that in spite of anything we may do that button may be pushed, what is there left to do? How futile the question "What can I do?" becomes. How significant the question "What can I be?" How can I submit, accept, bear, suffer? Our only hope is in being—in being creative, courageous, and hopeful.

But it is not only in the intractable experiences of life that what we are is as important as what we do. Many traits of character depend as much on what we are as on what we do. Love, for example, is a state of being as much as a series of actions. We speak of being in love, rather than doing love, although one would expect being in love to result in actions stemming from that love. The beatitudes of Jesus can be realized as easily by being as by doing. Jesus did not say blessed do the poor in spirit, but blessed are the poor in spirit. The meek, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers and hungerers and thirsters after righteousness achieve their blessedness by being something before they do something.

To achieve these conditions of being requires a discipline from us to which we are unaccustomed. To be pure in heart demands right action, but it also requires silence, contemplation, reflection, meditation, simplicity, prayer, communion with God, and these states are alien to our action-filled lives. We distrust them. They seem morbid; they won't make bigger and better atomic bombs, pave streets, pass laws against segregation, produce television shows, raise salaries, provide jobs, or increase the budgets of our churches.

When we stop to think about it, it does seem a little strange that at its inception the early church waited for the Holy Ghost and "with one accord devoted themselves to prayer." Anyone knows that's no way to build a church. Why didn't they do something, appoint a committee to map out a strategy for a campaign to go out and save the world—with the help of subcommittees, of course? We are not inclined to wait for the Holy Ghost. He is too ephemeral, and we grow impatient with his slow methods. We should have, if we had been around, devised ways of manipulating him, appointing him to a committee—public relations and publicity probably—where his talents as an interpreter could have been put effectively to work. But the early church did not know any better; they waited for him; and after they had answered the question of what they should be, they were ready to ask, "What shall we do?"

Religion must consist of action, to be sure, but it must also be an inner experience. No committee, duly appointed, can tell us how to wait for the Holy Ghost. Asking what we should do will not help us to devote ourselves to prayer, to be pure in heart, meek, meditative. To achieve these virtues we will have to step outside of our productive, active, busy, everyday life, and to step into the invisible and intangible world. We will be forced to leave our sanitized life, where even death is charming and beautiful, our sleek shallow souls nurtured on the Beattles and Ed Sullivan and face the facts of evil, suffering, and death. Indeed, we will have to renounce the world of our eyes and ears, mouth and fingers for a dimension of being which transcends the familiar world of Gunsmoke, Rock and Roll, cigarettes and sex, and discover the presence of a transcendent world in which it is possible to engage in a "direct, vital, joyous, personal experience of the presence of God." But such a direct encounter with the supernatural would be embarrassing. Who would believe us if we recounted such a mystical experience? And what could we do about it? If we take purity of heart too seriously, it might lead us to saintliness and that would be embarrassing, too. What does a Disneyland world need saints for? Who ever heard of a saint in a gray flannel suit? Perhaps it is safest after all not to ask "What shall I be?" but to be satisfied to ask "What can I do?"

Ludwig Keller as a student in 1890.

Ludwig Keller: a Prophet and a Scholar

By Cornelius Krahn

THE RECENT acquisition of the large and unique Ludwig Keller collection by the Bethel College Historical Library is enough cause to make brief mention of this outstanding scholar and prophet who pioneered in many areas and particularly in the field of Reformation research which included the Anabaptists.

Archivist and Scholar

Ludwig Keller, who lived during the second half of the past century, was a devoted scholar holding responsible positions as an archivist in the city of Münster and the State archives of Berlin. While in Münster he found in his day a parallel in the struggle between church and state with that of the days of the Reformation. Consequently, he published a two-volume history dealing with the Counter-Reformation in Westphalia and the Rhine territory (1881-1887). Prior to this he had devoted a volume to the Münsterite Anabaptists (1880) and another book to the peaceful and most gentle leader of Anabaptism, Hans Denck (1883). Amalie Keller, his daughter, stated that this book "caused a great deal of surprise." No one had expected "a soul so noble and a thinker so deep and pious as Denck" could have been found among the Anabaptists. Keller continued his research and published numerous books dealing with the Reformation

The summer cottage of Ludwig Keller in Northeastern Germany in which his archives and books were preserved.

and particularly the groups and movements which had paved the way for a strong reform movement. Among the forerunners he counted the Waldenses, the Moravians, and other related "Old Evangelical" representatives. Although Keller found many sympathizers and followers in Münster, the stronghold of Catholicism, he and his family were not popular.

In 1892, at the occasion of the 300th birthday anniversary of Johann Amos Comenius, he founded the Comenius Gesellschaft (Society). He started the publication of a magazine entitled *Monatshefte,* published by this Society. In this magazine, as well as in his books and his large correspondence, he promoted the ideals which he found expressed among the "Old Evangelicals" including the Anabaptists. He aimed to make them effective in a spiritual brotherhood, and in the field of education and international peace and understanding. The educator Comenius, who was born in Moravia and died in The Netherlands, was his ideal. He succeeded in winning friends at home and abroad. Public libraries, reading rooms, and evening courses in *Volkshochschulen,* were introduced as a result of his activities. Numerous articles to promote a more spiritual type of Christianity and other ideals were published by him and his friends in the *Monatshefte* and many other papers, including those published by Mennonites. In 1895 he received a call to the state archives of Berlin.

Keller deeply influenced the German, Dutch and American Mennonite leaders. How voluminous his correspondence and how great his influence was, will become apparent only when someone will undertake to study the files. Keller seems to have had hopes to realize some of the faith and idealism of the early Christians, the "Old Evangelical" movements and the Anabaptists within his contemporary Mennonite congregations of Germany, Holland and America. To a large extent, he succeeded in influencing them so

A part of the Keller Collection described in this article consisting of the Monatshefte (top), the correspondence, and the books and manuscripts written by Keller. The beautiful book on the table contains two chapters by Keller.

that they started studying their own history and basic beliefs. Evidently he found this a slow process and consequently he directed his efforts to others. During the last years of his life he studied the connections between the medieval piety and mysticism, the guilds and the free masonry of his day. He became quite influential in the latter movement promoting his ideals of tolerance and religious freedom, and humanism and international understanding within this framework. His book, *The Spiritual Basis of Free Masonry*, was translated into many languages.

It was my privilege to meet two of the daughters of Ludwig Keller after World War II. Magda Keller was a teacher in the city of Lübeck while Amalie Keller had held a significant government position prior to the rise of Hitler. Both of them were spiritual heirs of their father. The latter, as a consequence, lost her position because she could not fall in line with the dictatorial methods of Hitler's government. She was an active member of the Society of Friends.

Amalie Keller has recently been joined by her sister, Mathilde, who has come from East Germany. They live in a suburb of Darmstadt, Germany.

The Keller Library

The Ludwig Keller collection of books, manuscripts, and correspondence, preserved for many years in East Germany, was recently moved to the West, arriving finally at its destination—the Bethel College Historical Library where it is now on display.

It all started in the early days after World War II. Mennonite Central Committee workers made contacts with various German people in desperate need. Among these was a teacher by the name of Magda Keller. Mrs. Elizabeth Ruth of Reedley, California, received her address and mailed her some packages. She soon discovered that her newly-won friend in Germany was none other than a daughter of a well-known scholar, Ludwig Keller.

During my first postwar visit in Europe, I received much information about their parents from Amalie and Magda Keller. Amalie Keller submitted an article for publication in *Mennonite Life* entitled "Ludwig Keller—a Scholar with a Mission" (October, 1953). Soon the sisters expressed the wish that their father's collection go to the Bethel College Historical Library. Whenever some items were sent or brought along from the East to the West, they were shipped to Kansas.

The miraculous "lift" of the rest of the collection from the East to the West was successfully completed recently. An MCC worker then brought the total shipment of the remaining unique correspondence, manuscripts, books, medals, etc., which constitute the Ludwig Keller collection, with him when he returned to America.

It was through the MCC activities that the contact with Magda Keller, who has meanwhile passed away, was established. It was again through the help of European and American MCC personnel, especially Peter J. Dyck, Director of the European MCC services, that this valuable collection was brought from Europe to America.

The shipment contains all of Keller's printed books and articles and also their original manuscripts, the reviews of the books and the lifetime correspondence of Keller. His correspondence with European and American Mennonites is impressive. A beautifully bound album with an unusually large number of handwritten letters of condolence to his family at the time of his death is a monument in itself. Among the writers are Adolf von Harnack and other scholars and leaders of his rank.

This is one of the most unusual collections acquired by the historical library in years. It should also be added that it took the longest time to bring the negotiations to a successful conclusion. Above all, the transfer of this collection from the East to its present location was miraculous.

Influence on the Mennonites

The most valuable part of the Keller collection are his letters, neatly arranged chronologically in 33 folders from 1875-1915. This includes letters received and very often also copies of the answers written by Keller. He was in touch with many of the scholars, professors and educators of Europe. Letters written by John Holdeman of Kansas and Adolf von Harnack of Berlin, are found side by side. A check of only two years of correspondence spread over 30 years reveals that he maintained a lively correspondence with at least 25 Mennonites from Germany, The Netherlands, and America. Among them are Christian Neff, A. Brons, J. P. Müller, Christian Sepp, H. van der Smissen, U. Hege, B. C. Roosen, A. M. Cramer, Samuel Cramer, Cornelius Jansen, Peter Jansen, Jacob R. Toews, and C. H. Wedel. Among his American correspondents we find such names as August Rauschenbusch, Henry S. Burrage and Philip Schaff.

When the German Mennonites announced and recommended his book dealing with Hans Denck in a publicity sheet, it was signed by all their leaders. Keller wrote on this pamphlet with great satisfaction: "This is the first united effort of the German Mennonites, August, 1883." Jacob R. Toews of Newton, Kansas, in 1889, wrote with a certain pride that there was a circle of Keller admirers which was meeting to discuss his writings. Even in 1909 the Krefeld textile industrialist, Heinrich Müller wrote Keller that he and Karl Rembert of Krefeld had a long discussion dealing with Keller's ideas about the origin and contributions of Anabaptism and how to make this heritage relevant in their day. When Peter Janzen reported to Keller about the death of his father, Cornelius Jansen (1894), Keller wrote that he would

report about it in the *Monatshefte* in which he was trying to promote the principles of the Anabaptists which had unjustly been persecuted during the days of the Reformation and after.

Although Keller did not spend all his time on Anabaptist research and writing nor on trying to revive the spirit of early Anabaptism among the somewhat petrified Mennonites of his day, he did succeed in ushering in an Anabaptist renaissance which is noticeable to this day. Many of the Mennonite writings dealing with the beliefs and history of the movement would not have appeared had it not been for Keller. C. H. Wedel produced the four-volume set entitled *Abriss der Geschichte der Mennoniten* (1900-1904) in which he not only lists all the publications of Keller but also states that he follows his writings in part almost literally. John Horsch who was in close touch with Keller indicated in his book, *Kurzgefasste Geschichte der Mennoniten* (1890) showing his dependence on him by saying that "with Keller a new era of historiography of the Old Evangelical churches has begun" (139). Johannes Bartsch in his *Geschichte der Gemeinde Jesu Christi* (1898) lists the writings of Keller as primary sources and uses as his subtitle, *Altevangelische-und Mennoniten-Gemeinden*. This title was also used by C. H. A. van der Smissen (1895) and P. M. Friesen in his monumental *Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft . . .* (1911). As this title indicates, Keller believed that the basic ideas of Anabaptism could be traced back to "Old Evangelical" groups prior to the Reformation. This view was shared by many scholars at that time. C. H. Wedel devoted one out of four volumes of his Mennonite history to these "Old Evangelical" forerunners.

With the complete correspondence, a large collection of the reviews of Keller's books and other sources of information at hand, a thorough study of Keller's historiography, his basic views in regard to Anabaptism and his contribution to the following interest in Anabaptism is now possible. Scholars can now go to work and study this large collection, making use of it in any direction they choose. Above all, this enables them more fully to understand, evaluate and present the vision of a prophetic scholar who inspired so many during his lifetime.

Among the Habaner of Czechoslovakia

By Gary Waltner

DURING SIX DAYS I spent in Czechoslovakia in 1965, I visited some twenty former Bruderhofs or Bruderhof sites with my host and friend, Herman Landsfeld of Straznice. Herman Landsfeld has established contact with the Hutterites of the Bon Homme Colony in South Dakota in 1961. It was there that I first learned about Landsfeld and his excavation work on former Hutterite Bruderhofs throughout Moravia and Slovakia. He is an authority on Hutterite ceramic work and has collected some 300 boxes of potsherds unearthed on former Hutterite Bruderhofs, besides some very fine examples of Hutterite and Habaner ceramics. Landsfeld, together with an interpreter, as he does not speak fluent German, was my guide to the Bruderhofs that we visited during my stay. (See Landsfeld, "The Discovery of Hutterian Books" and "Thirty Years of Excavation," *Mennonite Life,* July, 1962 and October, 1964.)

The sign read "Sobotiste" and about a fourth of a mile ahead, nestled in the valley lay a small Slovakian village that was our destination. On a small knoll one and a half miles to the northeast stood the ruins of the old fortress Branc (in the Hutterian *Chronik* called Brän(n)itsch, Brainisch or Prantsch) where the Hutterites had taken refuge in the 16th and 17th centuries. In 1546 the Hutterites established their first Bruderhof in Sabotiste (in the *Chronik* called Sabatisch), but due to severe persecution in 1605 it was abandoned that same year and resettled in 1613.

From 1613 until now, Hutterites and their descendants who accepted the Catholic faith and gave up complete community of goods (*Gütergemeinschaft*) in the 18th century have lived on the Bruderhof in the village of Sobotiste. These Catholic descendants are known as "Habaner." Through their German ethnic background, they have remained somewhat separate from their Slovakian neighbors until the last two generations. Today language and different customs no longer separate them from their Slovakian neighbors.

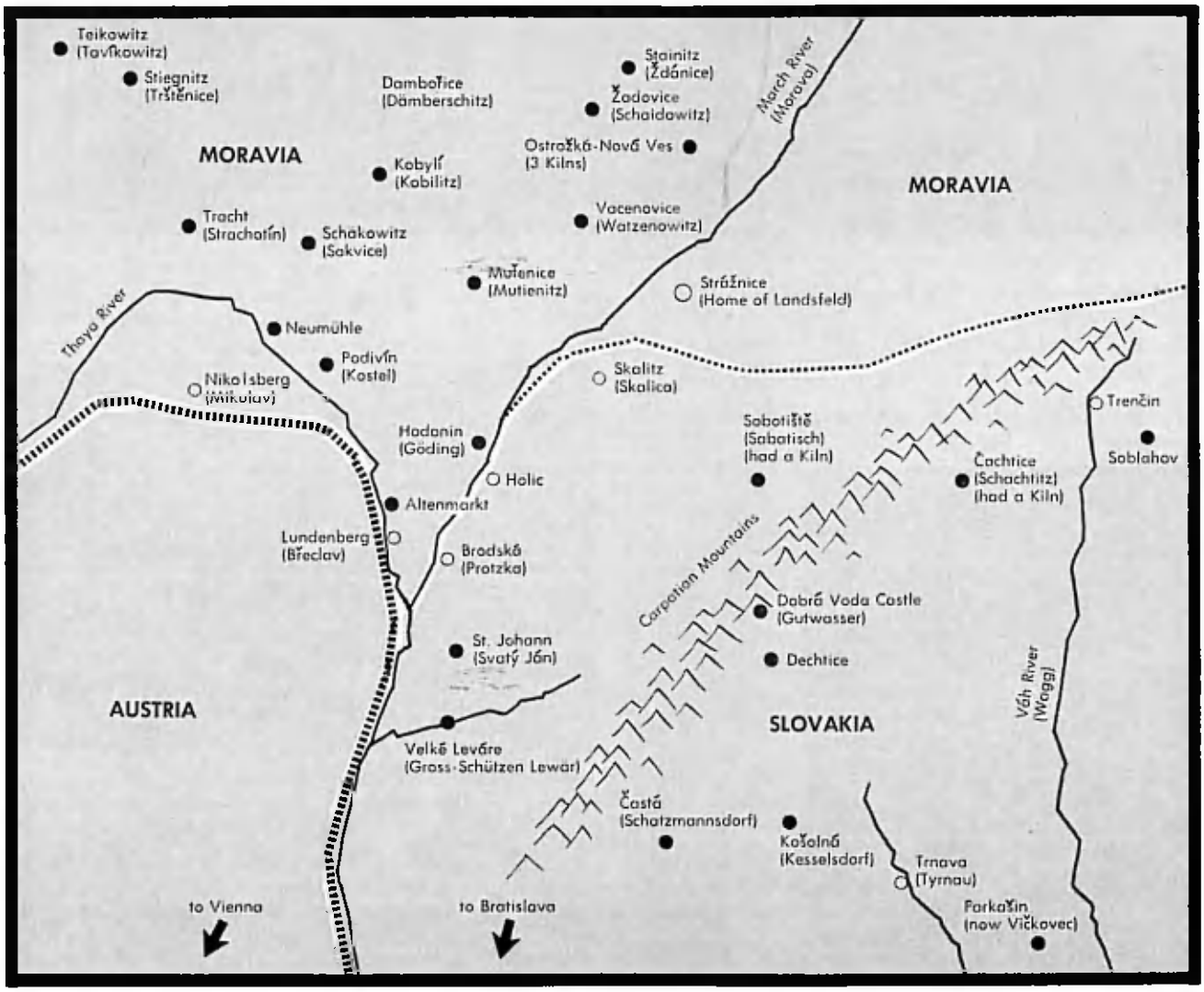
Driving through the village of Sobotiste one notices the low-roofed houses so typical of Slovakia. All of a sudden it seemed as if we were in another village. The houses had high, steep roofs, and were often located in a long line along the village street. Indeed we had come to a different village. We were now in the Habaner *Hof*. Formerly there were empty fields be-

tween these two villages, but the growing village had engulfed the former Bruderhof and today they appear as one unit.

Driving along, we were soon in front of a fifty-foot tall bell and clock tower which seemed to dominate the Habaner *Hof*. The dirty-white tower had been built in 1753 and still had the original clock, built by some Hutterite craftsman, and the bell. The clock had only an hour hand. At the base of the slender six-foot square tower was the entrance to a former community cellar which I shall mention later. The bell was in the small cupola at the top and was rung noon and evening by some person (the Habaner called him the *Kirchendiener*) appointed by the group. At the back of the tower was a doorway and inside stairs that led to the top.

In front of the tower we turned to the right and found ourselves in what appeared to be the village square. On the west stood the large Habaner mill and on the north side the *Stübel* or city hall of the Habaner. The other two sides of the square were closed in by houses, in one of which some 150 printed and handwritten books had been found in 1961 during its remodeling. (See *Mennonite Life,* July, 1962, p. 140 ff.) In this house we made our first visit. Unfortunately, the woman of the house, Mrs. Blazek, *nee* Müller, was not at home. But her mother, who lives in the next house, was there to greet us. Mrs. Müller showed us her house which looked like one of the older houses of the *Hof*. It was of brick or rock, neatly whitewashed and had the two-foot square windows, typical of the old Hutterite houses. The ceiling beams ran the width of the house and extended about one foot beyond the walls. Onto these beams the roof rafters were neatly fitted. This house had at one time been the potter's

Map of Czechoslovakia showing places where Hutterites lived and survived as Habaner after becoming Catholic. This article deals primarily with the Habaner at Sabotiste in northern Slovakia.



Habaner group with belltower and former mill in background at Sabotiste.

Hallway and entrance of the Stübel, the community hall at Sabotiste.

Landsfeld talks to Mrs. Müller.

Habaner house where old Hutterite books were found during renovation, 1961. Small windows common among the inhabitants of that day.

workshop and in 1936, Landsfeld had dug in the present garden and found the foundations of a Hutterite kiln. The house on this garden plot had been torn down some 100 years ago after the Habaner ceased to do ceramic work. Later Mrs. Blazek returned home and invited us to sample some of her baking and homemade applewine. She then showed us some of the potsherds that she and others had found on the *Hof*. Neither Mrs. Blazek nor her mother speak German, although they understand some. The German language is not generally spoken among the Habaner anymore.

Our next visit was to the mill. A middle-aged man (Anton Tschetterle) stood at the front as we arrived. He spoke some German and offered to give me a tour of the mill. Tschetterle, whose forefathers were shoemakers for the Habaner, and later farmers, worked at the mill not as the miller, but as a wagon maker. After 1948, the mill, which formerly was community property, had to be turned over to the state. It continued in use until 1953, when small mills such as this one were closed down. It now became a wagon repair shop. The huge mill, with walls three feet thick, was formerly operated by water. Later steam power was used and shortly before it was closed the mill was converted to electricity. In this mill the Habaner miller ground wheat for bread as well as feed for the cattle. Until 1948 it served the Habaner exclusively.

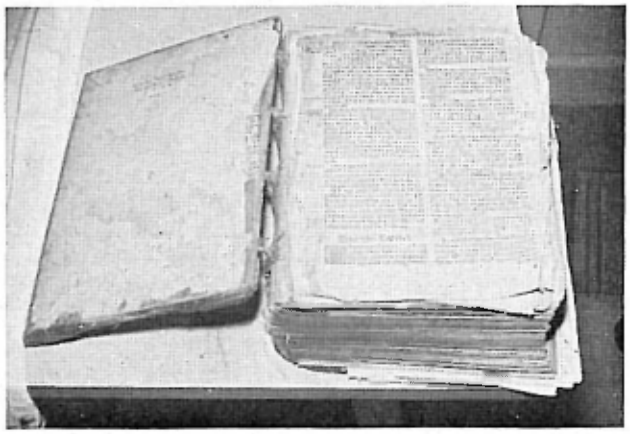
The first story or ground level consists of the former living rooms of the miller (now work rooms) and the power room (now storage room). The former large living room with two large windows facing south, served as a bedroom and sitting room. There was a small kitchen with one window to the south and the main entrance. About one-third of the kitchen was taken up by the remains of a large open fireplace hearth very much like the ones that I would see in other Habaner houses in Velke Levare (*Gross-Schützen*).

The power rooms still contained the huge six-foot diameter wooden cog wheel set on oak bearings, connected by a wooden shaft on which the water wheel had been built just outside of the wall. The thick soft-wood ceiling beams were neatly and tastefully engraved with ornamental designs. The handsomely carved lone pillar in the center of the room supported the huge cross beam. On one side of the pillar, Tschetterle showed me a wooden peg with a hole in it; its purpose was to hold a candle, he said.

Entrance to the second story was either by the sturdy outside covered stairs at the front or by the inside stairs in the northeast corner of the power room. At the head of the inside stairs was a small doorway which led outside. Upon opening the door, we found the remains of a platform which was used in repairing or servicing the waterwheel. The second floor contained the grain bins, and three modern grinders and elevators to elevate the grain to the upper story. There were also two rooms on the second floor, one served as the miller's office and the other as a supply room. The third story, located directly under the roof, contained the elevators and more storage bins. Since the liquidation of such small mills, the Habaner mill has fallen into a bad state of repair. As it no longer belongs to them, the Habaner do not repair it and the state takes no interest in it. The top part of the north gable has fallen out and the temporary wooden wall erected in its place does not keep the water from coming in. The boards which have held for some 200 years are now rotting. Outside, on the south gable end of the mill is a date "1765" and the remains of an old sundial. At another place inside the mill is another date. In general, the mill is still in good condition, even though a few patches of outer plaster have come off revealing the baked mud bricks underneath.

The *Stübel* attracted our attention next. Formerly this small square three-story building had been the "city hall" of the Habaner, and it was here that the *Vorsteher* (mayor) of the *Hof* was elected until World War I. The doorway opens into a hallway and staircase which lead to the upper stories. The ground level has two small rooms about nine feet square which now serve as storage rooms for heating fuel. The six-foot high ceiling is held up by thick wooden beams two feet apart, and in parallel corners of each room a thick brick stove extends into the rooms. These stoves were heated from the hallway or entrance. The stone staircase leads to the second floor which has only one large room. This may have been the former meeting place for the brethren but now serves as an apartment for a Slovakian family. Only four small windows let in light from the outside. The tops of these windows are arched, giving them the appearance of larger windows from the inside. Prior to World War I the *Stübel* (in spite of the Slovakian language the Habaner still use the word *Stübel* when speaking of this building) served as a Habaner museum, but during the war and follow-

Froschauer Bible formerly used by Hutterites preserved in Catholicized Habaner family with inscription: Uh! Amster.



ing the revolution of 1948, most of the items and papers disappeared. Many of the papers were buried in an old Habaner chest, but it was discovered, stolen and has completely disappeared. The third story serves merely as storage space. The 21-foot square *Stübel* is remarkably solid, and in spite of the missing patches of plaster on the outside and the warped floors in the downstairs rooms, remains a tribute to the workmanship of the Hutterites. There is no date on the building and no one knew when it was built.

From here we went to the Catholic chapel built in 1832 by a Habaner, J. Baumgartner. By now a long line of curious people followed us and each new Habaner that had come to see what was going on was introduced to the "Habaner" from America. The Jesuit priest who had converted the Hutterites to the Catholic faith had requested that he be buried under the front step of the chapel so that the Habaner could "step on him" every time they attended mass. Inside, the small (approximately 20 by 14 feet) chapel were many religious pictures with German inscriptions from the turn of the century. I was told that until World War I German had been the language of the Habaner and all of their sermons and spoken prayers had been in German. The hatred of the Germans by the native Slovakian people had forced them to give up that language, although it was still retained as a language in the home for some time. The Habaner (and this is also true for the Habaner of St. Johann and Velke Levare) had their own German-speaking priest until after World War I and only in the 1930's did they join the village parishes.

Lanterns standing at the end of some of the simple and austere pews were for funeral processions—a tradition that exists only among the Habaner. At the front of the chapel was the altar, decorated with fresh linen and flowers. Mass had been said here only a few days before on Easter Sunday. Mass is celebrated only a few times during the year in this chapel. The rest of the time the Habaner attend the village church.

The ornately carved pulpit with cherubs and saints on it had votive cards which the faithful had placed there. To the right side of the altar was a small room which served as the vestry.

To the right of the yellow chapel with white trimmings were two houses, one a small yellow one-story house (yellow seems to be a favorite color of the Slovakians) and at the right of it, a tall two-story recently

Anton Tschetterle, whose forefathers were Hutterian cobblers , works as wagon maker in former Habaner mill, Sabotiste.

remodeled house. The small yellow one was the former schoolhouse for the Habaner. It had been converted into a house after the Habaner ceased to have their own schools after World War I. Until then they used both Slovakian and German in school. Later the children attended the Slovakian school in the village and learned German only in this schoolhouse. The newly-remodeled house may have served as a dwelling place for the teacher in the earlier Habaner times.

Behind the chapel and schoolhouse, further up the hill, were the remains of one of the community barns or sheds. It too was built of mud baked bricks and was about 75 by 50 feet, but the roof had been removed in the 1950's and the lumber sold. Inside was an old McCormick reaper, half covered by dirt and debris. Beside the barn was a large orchard which had been community property prior to 1948. Formerly this had been a vineyard.

The *Wirtshaus*, another example of Habaner community spirit, was located near the right side of the bell tower. The *Wirt* (inn Keeper) was one of the Habaner. In the *Wirtshaus* the Habaner men would gather to drink beer or wine, to play cards and visit. The prices of the beverages were set by the Habaner community and the purchasing was done by a committee. Today the *Wirtshaus* serves as a home for a Baumgartner family. The date 1781 is carved into the ceiling beam. I was shown some ceramics, woodwork and eating utensils which had been made in the early days.

In another Baumgartner home I was shown some German Catholic books which had been given to the Habaner as replacement for their own Hutterite handwritten books in the 18th century. The most interesting book was an old Froschauer Bible which carried the name of Uhl Amsler, 1623. Uhl Amsler was a minister (*Diener am Wort*) in Sobotiste and Kesselsdorf from 1623-49. The first letters of most sentences were inked in a red which even after 300 years has not lost its original luster. Notes and comments by the score were added in the margins. The Habaner are not allowed to sell anything of historical value, as it belongs to the state.

Albrecht showed me three former community cellars. One was located on the hillside behind the bell tower, another under the bell tower, and the last one under and behind the *Wirtshaus*. The entrance to the first was in bad repair. Formerly there was a small building to cover the entrance, but it was removed and the entrance has caved in some ten feet. The sides of the cellar are made of unmortared flat stones laid like brick. The ceiling is vaulted with brick. A small niche at the entrance was for a lamp or candle to light the way. There are no steps leading down, only the inclined dirt floor. Two levels connected by the inclined dirt floor make up the 90 foot long cellar. The other two cellars are about the same size. These cellars are

Habaner house, former pottery workroom at Sabotiste. Behind the house potsherds are still noticeable.

The former Habaner schoolhouses (Grosse and Kleine Schule) now used as apartments (Sabotiste).

Former ceramic workshop of Hutterites now used as home located at Dehtze.

Habaner in front of chapel. Some of the names still indicate their Hutterian background: Tschetterle, Baumgartner, Schultz.

now used by the Habaner to store root crops.

Albrecht and his wife earn some money in their spare time by making rope. He showed me his large spinning wheel used to spin the hemp into threads. These threads are put onto the rope machine and twisted. He learned this trade, which goes back a long time in his family, from his father.

Standing in front of the *Stübel* and mill, we talked about the days prior to World War II and the Revolution of 1948. As we visited, a policeman walked past a few times, took note of my license plate, gave us a good looking over and went on. The Habaner had as common property 140 acres of forest, 75 acres of meadows, and about eight acres of orchards and vineyards. In addition to the land they had three cellars, a few large sheds, the mill, the *Stübel,* the bell tower, the school, the *Wirtshaus,* and the chapel. These common properties were not all given up to the state in 1948. The schoolhouse, for example, had been given up between World War I and II, the meadows had been divided among the families earlier, but one can say that some common property had been held until 1948. Even though these properties have been turned over to the state, the Habaner continue to use them.

Today there are some 40 Habaner families living on the Habaner *Hof* which consists of some 40 houses. Not all of these families are "pure" Habaner, some have Slovakian husbands or wives. The houses do not all date back to the time of the Hutterites, as many have been built within the last century. Today many of the old houses have been remodeled, giving them large windows instead of the small two feet square old type. The straw roofs have all disappeared. The names of the present day Habaner include Albrecht, Baumgartner, Pullmann, Müller, Schultz. Wirt, Tschetterle and Weny. Many of the Sobotiste Habaner have relatives in Velke Levare, or St. Johann, which are also Habaner communities. This shows that in spite of the change to Catholicism the Habaner have preserved their sense of belonging together and kept alive the idea of separation from the rest of the population. This was reinforced by their use of the German language in a Slovakian environment and by the fact that they were of a different ethnic background. They have lost their Hutterite faith, their common properties, their German language, and many of their own customs. Their children go on to higher schools of learning and rarely show an interest in their own background and tradition. Formerly they were all farmers while now many take up other work. Their communal life has disintegrated. It will be a matter of time when these Habaner will be completely integrated into the Slovakian culture and their past will be a mere memory. I found them to be a very friendly people, and they opened their doors to the American "Habaner," went out of their way to show me their family heirlooms and treasures, and their *Hof* and homes. For me a bit of history came alive among the Habaner of Sobotiste.

A Hutterite Mill of 1612

By Gary Waltner

On April 23, 1965, my host, Herman Landsfeld, our interpreter, Skazel and I drove to the part of Czechoslovakia known as Moravia. There we looked up some of the former Bruderhofs which were all abandoned between 1620 and 1622. After stopping in Brno (Brünn) to see the collection of Habaner and Hutterite pottery in the city museum, we drove on to the former Bruderhof site in Ivancice (Eiben(t)schnitz, Eibantschitz, in the *Chronik.*) Nothing remained of the former Hutterite Bruderhof so we drove on to the village of Tavikovice (Teickowitz, Teickhwitz in the *Chronik.*) Today there are no original Hutterite houses; the last ones were torn down some 30 or 40 years ago. The woman told us that things did not grow very well in the garden since there were too many potsherds in the ground. Landsfeld asked for a box and began to gather some of the potsherds, all the while showing me parts of dishes, stove tile (*Kachel*) and crocks.

Our real destination lay some 15 km. southwest of Mor. Krumlov (Mealirerisch-Kronau in the *Chronik*) near the village of Trstenice. At the edge of this village is a mill locally known as the "Anabaptist Mill" (*Täufermühle*), and the people of this area still say that the Anabaptists used to operate this mill. Leaving our car

about a half mile from the mill we followed the now-dry mill race which led to the pond (also dry) behind the mill.

The mill itself measures about 30 x 60 ft. and has changed little since it was built. The two north corners are round towers which begin to taper out about five feet above ground level and then form a cylinder about six feet in diameter all the way to the roof. They give the appearance of medieval fortress bastions. In one such corner tower is a large window, but in the opposite tower a similar one has been walled up. The windows in the lower story are all small with bars across the openings, whereas the windows in the second story are larger. The three-foot-thick, well-kept, whitewashed walls are in good condition, with the exception of the south side where some of the outside plaster has begun to crumble.

Stepping through the five-foot-wide door we found ourselves in the power room. In the beginning the mill was powered by a large water wheel, but was later changed to a water turbine which provided power for the mill until about 1935 when it ceased to operate. A few shafts, pulleys and belts gave mute evidence of the days when it was a bustling mill. As in other Habaner houses and buildings, one could see the huge, soft-wood beams which rest on an even larger crossbeam. This large crossbeam is supported by a single large pillar in the middle of the room on which one can read the date, 1612. The extremely plain pillar has only the corners rounded off, and the plaque on which the date was carved, is set off by carving around it. The crown of the pillar is of scroll formation and the base consists of two round wooden plates on which it rests. Compared to the Habaner mill at Sobotiste, it portrays more of the austerity of the early Hutterites. On the right side of the entrance is another thick wall and a small doorway which leads to four rooms. It can be assumed that these rooms served as storage rooms or stables, as two rooms were accessible from the outside as well. Some of the dark soft-wood beams have begun to rot, as it is very damp in these rooms.

In the power room are the stairs which led to the second story. Behind these stairs is a Hutterite well about twelve feet deep which was the source of water for the families living in the mill. At the head of the stairs is a doorway which leads outside. This doorway is on the ground level behind the mill and very near the mill dam and spillway. Beyond the millpond is a small knoll and a clump of trees on which, I was told, another Hutterite building, a "drying house" was located. Legend has it that a tunnel leads from that knoll and the mill to the village church about a mile away. No one seems to know the exact purpose of this tunnel, but one may assume that it was used for escape during times of persecution.

Outside, the south gable is graced by a sundial and above that a few circles, one inside the other embossed in the brick and plaster. This design may be purely decorative.

The second floor arrangement is much like the ground floor: one large room of the same proportions as the power room directly below, and a center pillar with the date 1612 engraved in the top. This pillar also supports a large crossbeam (about 18 in. x 18 in.) on which the ten crossbeams supporting the ceiling rest.

Two families live in the second floor apartments. They were our friendly guides and showed us all that was of interest to us, even though they spoke no German. My interpreter translated for me. These farm families also have some barn and shed space in front of the mill. Today the mill serves as a home for two families, and the large power room and the second story are empty.

The second floor of the Habaner mill with decorative pillar in center.

Mennonite Research in Progress, 1965

By Melvin Gingerich, Cornelius Krahn, J. P. Jacobszoon

In the April 1964 issue of *Mennonite Life*, we reported about various research projects including M.A. and Ph.D. theses. Preceding April issues since 1947, contain similar information under the headings "Mennonite Research in Progress," "Mennonite Bibliography," and "Books in Review." Of special research value is the article entitled "Anabaptism-Mennonitism in Doctoral Dissertations" which appeared in the April, 1958, issue. The editors of *Mennonite Life* will be pleased to receive information to be included in future issues.

Doctoral Dissertations

Bakker, Johannes, *John Symth. De stichter van het Baptisme*, Ph.D., University of Utrecht, 1964. Published by H. Veenman & Zonen N. V., Wageningen, Netherlands, 1964.

Blake, W. "John Calvin and the Anabaptists," Ph.D., University of Utrecht (in progress).

Beltz, Oliver Seth, "German Religious Radicalism from 1522 to 1535," Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1944.

Crunican, Paul E., "The Manitoba School Question and the Canadian Federal Politics," Ph.D., University of Manitoba (in progress).

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Jost, Walter James, "The Hymn Tune Tradition of the General Conference Mennonite Church," Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1965.

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M.A. Theses

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Other Projects and Research Centers

Among the numerous research projects in progress, Ph.D. and M.A. theses are only one aspect. Many scholars and laymen pursue projects of longer and shorter duration as a hobby or scholarly endeavor. Some are in the realm of community studies and others deal with family history. Many of these are being published annually. At this point, mention should be made of some specialists in Mennonite genealogy. Kurt Kauenhoven, Ritschlweg 2, Göttingen, Germany, and Adalbert Goertz, 3003 Dover Drive, Boulder, Colorado, are qualified to help and advise people seeking information about their Prusso-Russian background. Delbert Grätz, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio, is well informed about Swiss Mennonite family histories.

Among the Mennonite research centers aiding those seeking general and specialized information pertaining to the Anabaptist-Mennonites, many individuals could be mentioned. We refer to some of the Mennonite libraries and sources of information in America and Europe. Among the college libraries are, Menno Simons Historical Library, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va.; Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana; Mennonite Historical Library, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio; and Bethel College Historical Library, North Newton, Kansas. The Institute of Mennonite Studies, Elkhart, Indiana, undertakes research projects and sponsors the production of books.

In Europe, the library and archives of the Mennonite Church of Amsterdam should be mentioned as the best and most complete collection of rare books and manuscripts anywhere. Its close proximity to the Mennonite Seminary and the University of Amsterdam makes this library the most strategic Mennonite center of information. Unfortunately its potential has thus far not been fully developed. Perhaps the World Conference which is to convene in Amsterdam (1967) will focus on and call attention to this unique opportunity of the Mennonite world brotherhood for the days to come.

Significant Periodicals

In Germany the Mennonite Church of Hamburg has the oldest library. Unfortunately, it has been dormant for some time. The Mennonite Library of Christian Neff, Weierhof, is being utilized. Attention should be called to the valuable publications of the German Mennonites, *Der Mennonit* and particularly, the *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter*. The latter is now being published by Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein, 6719, Weierhof, Marnheim/Pfalz. The annual periodical of some 100 pages can be ordered by joining this organization ($2.00 annually), which can be

done by writing to that address, or to *Mennonite Life*. The annual magazine was started prior to World War II and was revived after the war and now performs an excellent task under an editorial board headed by Horst Quiring. Only brief reference is being made to some of the articles which appeared in the magazine in 1964-65: Education and research among the Mennonites of Europe and America (N. van der Zijpp, L. Froese, Cornelius Krahn), the oath (H. Fast), the Catholics and Anabaptism (Eisenblätter), the Wismar Articles (ten Doornkaat Koolman).

In The Netherlands, a similar magazine, *Stemmen*, discontinued publication recently, after it had made an extremely valuable contribution during the postwar era. The editors hope to continue it in some other form. Reference should be made to the *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, edited by Dutch scholars (including the late N. van der Zijpp), and published by Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague. From time to time the magazine publishes articles dealing with Anabaptism.

Attention should be called to the *Heimatbuch der Deutschen aus Russland* edited by Karl Stumpp and published by the Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland (Stuttgart-S, Stafflenbergstrasse 66, Germany). This annual magazine deals with the German population in Russia, and all those who have come from Russia and are now scattered in all parts of the world. This includes the Mennonites. Particularly the last two editions of the *Heimatbuch* are of interest. The 1964 volume was devoted to the spread of those Germans who had come out of Russia since 1874. Numerous articles and charts and maps portray this event and the present location of those who migrated. The last volume (1965) presents in numerous articles, the location and economic, cultural, religious and educational conditions among Soviet citizens of German background, since World War II. Copies of these volumes as well as preceding ones, can be obtained from the address given, or by writing to *Mennonite Life*.

Interest in the unique life and the fate of the Hutterites in the United States and Canada, and their European background is growing. Robert Friedmann, the best informed scholar in the field, (see his *Hutterite Studies*), has completed a collection of Hutterite testimonies to be published in the near future, and has published a complete bibliography of all books and manuscripts produced by the Hutterites between 1529-1667. It is entitled *Die Schriften der Huterischen Täufergemeinschaften* (Vienna 1965). A review will follow in the near future. (See also articles about the Habaner in this issue.)

Mention should be made of a new periodical jointly published by the Mennonite Brethren schools of the U.S.A., entitled, *The Journal of Church and Society*, of which the first volume is Spring, 1965, containing articles dealing with "The Theology of James Armenius" (Orlando H. Wiebe) and "What Mode of Baptism?" (Jacob P. Becker). (Subscriptions, $3.50 per year, can be sent to Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas).

New Organizations

Recently a Mennonite Brethren Historical Society at Hillsboro, Kansas, and another division at Fresno, California, have been founded. An inter-Mennonite Historical Society has been organized in Ontario, of which J. Winfield Fretz, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, is the chairman. The Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society is erecting a Mennonite Village Museum as a "contribution to Canada's Centennial celebration by the Mennonites of Manitoba" (1967). The Museum is expected to cost $250,000 and will be located on a 15 acre site, one and a half miles north of Steinbach on Highway No. 12. The Canadian Conference of Mennonites and the Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Manitoba, are planning a joint organization which will collect, preserve and make available valuable printed and written records dealing with the Mennonites of Canada and their background.

Special attention is being called to a book which has appeared abroad. Ernest Behrends of Mölln, Germany, was so impressed by the fate of the Mennonites from Russia, who found a temporary shelter in his vicinity, that he devoted years of research to their beliefs and history. Volumes of his findings emerged in the form of fiction. Now the first novel dealing with Menno Simons has appeared in print. It is entitled *Der Ketzerbischof. Leben und Ringen des Reformators Menno Simons* (Agape-Verlag, Basel). It is a very well-written portrayal of the life and times of Menno. The book can be ordered through Mennonite bookstores including *Mennonite Life* ($5.00).

Mennonite Bibliography 1965

By John F. Schmidt, Nelson P. Springer, and J. P. Jacobszoon

THE "MENNONITE BIBLIOGRAPHY" is published annually in the April issue of *Mennonite Life*. It contains a list of books, pamphlets and articles dealing with Mennonite life, principles and history.

The magazine articles have been mostly restricted to non-Mennonite publications since complete files of Mennonite periodicals, yearbooks, and conference reports are available at the historical libraries of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas; Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana; Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio; and the Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana.

Previous bibliographies published in *Mennonite Life* appeared annually in the April issues since 1947 (except July, 1961, and July, 1963). Authors and publishers of books, pamphlets and magazines which should be included in our annual list are invited to send copies to *Mennonite Life* for listing and possible review.

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