

MENNONITE LIFE

APRIL 1969



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MENNONITE LIFE

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FRONT COVER:

Old Farm Home in Chortitza, Ukraine. Sketched by Heinz Hindorf, 1943.

BACK COVER:

Thousand-year Oak of Chortitza. Sketched by Heinz Hindorf.

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CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS

CORRECTIONS AND additions in regard to the article by David G. Rempel, "From Danzig to Russia," *Mennonite Life*, January, 1969.

On page 12, column 1, second paragraph from the bottom, the paragraph should read: "The text of the petition, . . . can be found in German in David H. Epp's¹¹ and in Russian in Pisarevs:ii.¹² and in S. D. Bondar."¹³ On page 26, column 2, second line of the last paragraph, should have the date 1800 instead of 1788.

The author, David G. Rempel, used the designation "New Russia" throughout his article when referring to the area of the settlement of the Mennonites on the Dnieper River in 1789. The editor added the word "Ukraine" to New Russia in a few instances and also changed new Russia to Ukraine (see pages 10, 13, and 17). It was not meant to convey the impression that the two terms have the same meaning, but was to serve as an aid for those who are used to the term "Ukraine" and are not so familiar with the term "New Russia."

IN THIS ISSUE

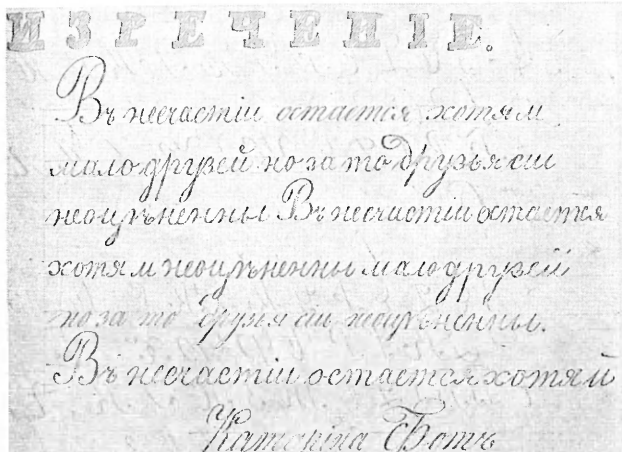
We continue with some aspects of the development of the Mennonites in Russia. N. J. Klassen has undertaken the task of presenting the emergence of a nucleus of a Mennonite "intelligentsia" in Russia. No one has ever presented this account based on firsthand information and supported by statistics.

¶ Walter Quiring relates how the Mennonites of Russia were influenced by their Russian environment and how they, in turn, exercised an influence on their neighbors. The autobiography of Heinrich Heese is a unique record and portrayal of the early economic, educational, and administrative developments among the Mennonites of the Chortitza and Molotschna settlements. He appears to be a counterpart to the better known Johann Cornies. The maps and illustrations vividly portray some aspects of the articles.

¶ Another almost completely unknown figure is Abraham Thiessen whose activities coincide with the struggle of the landless Mennonites for their right and the first migration of Mennonites from Russia to America. He was exiled from Russia under circumstances similar to those of Cornelius Jansen.

¶ Arnold Dyck is featured in connection with his 80th birthday (see also January issue). It is most appropriate to have this contribution in an issue devoted to the cultural life of the Mennonites of Russia. Jack Thiessen gives an evaluation of the life, work, and literary contributions of Arnold Dyck, while Victor Peters honors Dr. Kurt Kauenhoven at his 80th birthday with a selected bibliography of his writings. Adalbert Goertz presents a statistical report on the Mennonites in Prussia. "Mennonite Research in Progress" and the "Mennonite Bibliography" increase with the growing interest in this field of research and publications. They have appeared in *Mennonite Life* since 1949.

These Russian lines signed by Katherine Voth are taken from a penmanship notebook of 1872 indicating the introduction of the use of the Russian language into the elementary Mennonite schools of Russia. It says: "During a misfortune few friends remain; however, those who remain are most helpful". (Courtesy Mrs. Otto Unruh).



The residence of Peter Braun in Halbstadt, Russia, a well-known educator referred to in this issue (p. 55).



J. A. Rempel, who studied at the University of Basel, was an educator and a leading minister in the Ukraine. He is shown in a concentration camp where he perished.



Abraham Dyck, Chortitza, born in 1859. Sketched by Heinz Hindorf.

Mennonite Intelligentsia in Russia

By N. J. Klassen

BY INTELLIGENTSIA we mean the layer of society of intellectuals with a higher education and enlightened views obtained through formal education or personal studies coupled with talent and intellectual activities. The *Oxford Dictionary* defines "intelligentsia" as follows: "The part of a nation that aspires to independent thinking" and the Thorndyke - Bernhart *Dictionary* states: "persons representing, or claiming to represent the superior intelligence or enlightened opinion of a country."

A higher education is, not so much, criterion as to whether one belongs to the intelligentsia, but the mental activity and its knowledge and its application in society. Leo Tolstoy had no completed formal education, but became a philosopher and writer with a world reputation. On the other hand, there are many people with a formal higher education who prove to be reactionary in their social and economic views and do not participate in the progress of society and consequently, do not belong to the intelligentsia. Many examples of this could be found among the government representatives of the Russian nobility in the days of the tsars.

In the history of Russia the intelligentsia played a very significant role in the promotion of liberal reforms which had as an objective, the improvement of the social conditions among the common people. Professors, writers, artists, actors, lawyers, students, and prominent liberal persons were spearheading the improvement of conditions in a backward country. Most prominent were such writers as Pushkin, Turgenev, Nekrassov, Dostoyevsky, Tchekhov, and Tolstoy. The writings of these men critically analyzed the Russian society. As an example, Turgenev's *Sapiski Okhotnika (The Memoirs of a Sportsman)* could be cited. Nekrassov said, "Name one hut in which the Russian does not suffer." This liberalizing movement among the Russian intellectuals gathered like-minded people or an "intelligentsia" of which one can hardly find a comparable group in any other country. Ovsyanikov-Kulikovsky has presented

the story of this movement in his book, *The History of the Russian Intelligentsia*. This explains how the word "intelligentsia" has been transplanted from Russia and accepted in other countries.

The intelligentsia, in Russia, originated under Catherine the Great. The French era of enlightenment during the 18th century and the struggle for human rights coupled with scientific research had a considerable influence in the upper crust of Russia. It inspired scientific, literary, and historical interests and the founding of scientific academies, universities, libraries, etc. Thus the foundation of the activities of the Russian intelligentsia of the 19th century was laid.

The Beginning

It was under Catherine the Great that the Mennonites settled in the Ukraine. In order to describe the Mennonite "intelligentsia" of Russia during the beginning of this century, we must reach back to the earlier roots. The development of the Mennonite minority and its economic and educational achievements took place independently of the origin and development of the Russian intelligentsia. The Mennonites lived more or less isolated perpetuating their religious, ethnic, cultural, and economic practices. They lived in about 400 villages and some of them on some 300 scattered estates totaling approximately 4,300,000 acres of land owned by some 120,000 Mennonites. They had 40 village schools, 25 secondary schools, 2 teacher training schools, 1 business school and numerous hospitals and other institutions, such as insurances, orphanages, libraries, etc. The Mennonites had an industry with some 25 larger factories, several hundred flour mills and numerous businesses, banks, and other establishments. Of special interest in this context, is the fact that at the turn of the century, some 500 Mennonites attended Russian and foreign secondary schools and universities. This was the major factor in the breaking of the isolation in which Mennonites lived and the emergence of a Mennonite intelligentsia.

Comparing the difficult beginnings at the time of the settlement with the above achievements, one involuntarily raises the question, who were the leaders who made this rapid progress possible. It would be among them that we would find the Mennonite intelligentsia that we are looking for. Who belonged to this group and from what layer of the Mennonite population did they emerge?

To answer this question, we must divide the history of the Mennonites in Russia into two parts. The first one, starting with the settlement in 1789, goes up to approximately the time of the first migration of Mennonites from Russia to America (1873-1880), and the second period ended with the outbreak of World War II (1941). During the first period most of the leaders had no formal education or training, but had developed, through self-study and personal experience, their native talent and an intellectual education. This brought them leadership positions. Among these men were Johann Cornies and Heinrich Heese, who opened the gates to a progressive and formal education among the Mennonites in Russia. (See article on H. Hesse in this issue.) During the second period, there were leading men who had acquired a higher education, were progressive, mastered the Russian language, and were in touch with leading educated circles in Russia and foreign countries. Among them were such educators as A. A. Neufeld and B. H. Unruh.

The intellectual beginnings during the first period were extremely meager and difficult. Most of the emigrants were craftsmen, laborers, and small-scale farmers with a very poor education. There were hardly any teachers and ministers with any training for their calling. D. H. Epp¹ had the following to say about the teaching in the early schools.

The meager appearance of the interior of a schoolroom coincided with the educational level of the teacher. No great demands on his knowledge were made. Some reading, writing, and arithmetic in adding figures in a rote fashion, with a frequent use of the educational rod was about all that was required of him. The language of instruction was Low German. Little did the pupils learn in reading the texts of the meaning of what they read.

However, leading men like Johann Cornies, Heinrich Hesse and others realized the necessity of obtaining qualified teachers for the schools. Through the founding of progressive elementary and secondary schools (*Zentralschulen*), they succeeded in preparing qualified teachers for elementary schools. Each village maintained its own school. Attendance was compulsory. Illiteracy did not occur. In the secondary schools, Russian was first introduced by employing native Russian teachers. As a result, the teaching of the Russian language was also introduced in elementary schools. In 1897 Russian,

as the instructional language, became compulsory, but the law made provision "that all classes pertaining to religion and all German language classes could be taught in German." Thus, it was not before the end of the 19th century that the leading men and elementary school teachers were fully conversant in the Russian language. D. H. Epp² relates the following incident: When Baron Medem introduced the elders, Dyck and Leonhard Sudermann, to the Minister of the Interior in 1871, he remarked that these representatives were not able to speak Russian and that he would serve as interpreter. After the visit the Minister of the Interior remarked, "The fact that the Mennonites, who have lived in Russia for 70 years are not yet able to speak Russian, is simply a sin (*greshno*)".

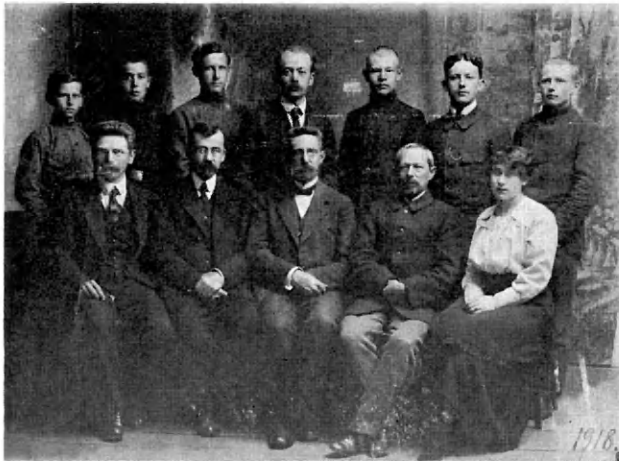
Thanks to the opening of the *Zentralschulen* and the secondary schools for girls, the educational level among Mennonites rose rapidly. D. H. Epp stated that during the 80 years of the existence of the Chortitza *Zentralschule*, it served as a strong promoter of the cultural level of the Mennonites. Over 3000 pupils graduated from the school and took what they had acquired into their villages and congregations and thus served as promoters of cultural values, be it teachers, ministers, or in other leading positions. One can estimate that between 5-8% of the Mennonite population attended the secondary schools. The book, *Die ehemaligen Schüler der Chortitzer Zentralschule in Kanada* (1944), lists 360 former graduates among the emigrants who had come to Canada during 1923-24.

Higher Education

Already during the end of the 19th century, a strong desire for higher education was noticeable. This came to full fruition at the beginning of the 20th century. The *Zentralschule* and the girls' schools served as a prerequisite for entrance in the third and fourth class of the Russian *Gymnasium*, School of Commerce, and technical schools. After they graduated from these schools, many continued their study at the universities in Russia and abroad (see the attached list of graduates). In Halbstadt, a private Mennonite school of commerce (*Kommersschule*), was started which was fully recognized and whose teaching staff consisted of Mennonites with a full graduate education. This was one of the centers of the Mennonite intellectuals. Even though there is no statistical account in regard to the number of Mennonites with a secondary and graduate training, we can conclude that these 25 *Zentralschulen* had some 2,000 pupils and over 150 with a university education. H. Goerz, Peter Klassen and I have compiled a list of 133 Mennonites who attended and graduated from Russian and foreign universities up to the Russian Revolution of 1917. This list includes information about name, home, vocation of father, study, marriage, etc., which is not complete in all cases.



Zentralschule (secondary school) in the Crimea prior to World War I.



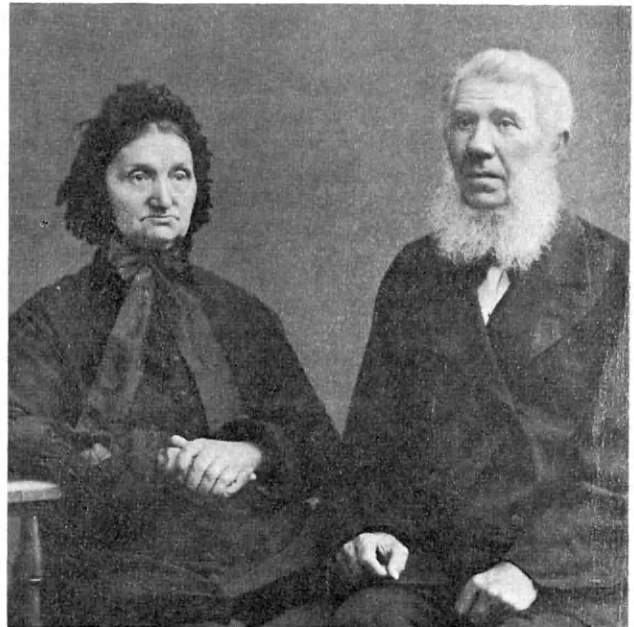
*Mennonite teachers of the Teachers Institute, Halbstadt, 1918.
(Front: Abr. Töws, Abr. Klassen, Peter Braun, Corn. Wiens.
Others are unidentified).*

The Mennonites of Russia had some 50 settlements consisting of 400 villages which each had an elementary school. There were some 25 secondary schools like those shown on this page.

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Neufeld. Neufeld was a pioneer teacher of the Zentralschule of Halbstadt.



Mennonite Teachers Institute, Halbstadt Molotschna (Lehrerseminar).



If the figure of 150 university graduates among the Mennonites in 1917 is correct, this would mean that among 1000 Mennonites in Russia, 1.5 graduated from a university. This was a high percentage in comparison to the Russian population.

The following are some findings from our list in percentage. (List is found on p. 59.)

1. Occupation of Father		
a. Teacher, minister, employee		33%
b. Farmers		32%
c. Large estate owners		10%
d. Businessmen, industrialists, etc.		25%
Total=100%		
2. Field of Study and Occupation		
	Practiced in	Practiced in
	Russia	Canada
a. Physicians	18	7
b. Teachers	40	200
c. Commerce	12	1
d. Engineers	34	26
e. Lawyers	9	4
f. Theology	5 (abroad)	0
3. Home Community		
a. Chortitza Settlement		28%
b. Molotschna Settlement		31%
c. Daughter Settlements		25%
d. Cities		16%
Total=100%		
4. Denomination of Marriage Partner		
a. Mennonite		67%
b. Evangelical		12%
c. Russian Orthodox		21%
Total=100%		

From the comparison of the students in respect to their majors, we find that most of those that came to Canada chose the teaching profession, regardless of what their field had been in Russia. In Russia many of them had become physicians, engineers, lawyers, business and bank employees. Most of the time they practiced these occupations in the Mennonite communities. This was not easily possible for them when they came to Canada.

In order to attend the university, a graduation certificate from a Russian *Gymnasium* was necessary. For other graduate schools, a certificate of corresponding schools of commerce, *Real Gymnasium*, etc., was necessary. In most of these schools, uniforms were worn.

For graduate studies the Mennonite students attended mostly the universities of Odessa, Kharkov, Kiev, Moscow, and Petersburg and the secondary schools of Ekaterinoslav, Alexandrovsk, Halbstadt, Berdyansk, and Kharkov. In these schools Russian was the only language of communication, but the Mennonite students spoke High German or Low German among themselves. The latter was preferred by those from Chortitza. There was no Mennonite organi-

zation for the students, but they practiced fellowship informally with each other. In Petersburg the Mennonite students arranged for a meeting in March, 1914, which was also attended by the Duma representatives, H. Bergmann and P. Schröder. This meeting had no particular objective with the exception that it was to strengthen the sense of fellowship among the Mennonite students.

Favorite schools for the Mennonites of Russia were the University of Basel, the Evangelical Seminary of Basel, the Barmen Theological Seminary, the Hamburg Baptist Seminary, the Seminary at Neukirchen (Mörs) and other leading universities such as Berlin, Jena, Heidelberg and engineering schools such as Dippoldswalde.

The political movements among the Russian students had little influence on the Mennonite students. However, they were informed about the political situation of Russia, particularly during World War I through the press, the literature, the theater, and the lectures of the professors. Two Mennonite students were accused of political activities during the days of the tsars and were arrested. One of them was Wilhelm Klatt, a student in Petersburg who spent one year in the Peter-Paul prison and was dismissed after having been found innocent. The other was the later forest ranger, Peter Klassen (now in Vancouver). He was apprehended in 1908 and put into the prison, *Kresty*. He was arrested because he had been found in the same building in which a secret meeting of students took place, of which he had no knowledge. After seven weeks in prison he was dismissed as innocent. (See also articles on Abraham Thiessen in this issue.)

In the Mennonite settlements, the students did not organize as students, but participated in all social and religious functions of the community. When the Revolution of 1917 started, some of the Mennonite students suffered as representatives of the intelligentsia and opponents of Communism and some perished. Some escaped to foreign countries where they continued their education.

The question was raised from which social layer of the Mennonite society the students had come. The Mennonite society consisted of (1) farmers, (2) business people and large estate owners, (3) craftsmen and laborers, and (4) employees and free occupations. The largest number were teachers, ministers, and free occupations, after which followed the farmers, the businessmen and large estate owners (see table under "Occupation of Father"). We note that those who studied came from various social groups and that they represented the various interests of the Mennonites and did not belong to any one class. It must be stated that the differences between well-to-do and less prosperous Mennonites was greater in Russia than is the case in North America. The Mennonites were in danger of developing extremes on economic levels. The "privileges" which Mennonites enjoyed as a minority

group were an incentive for the dissatisfied elements to remain within the group.

The Heritage and the Russianization

The gap between the poorer and the more prosperous Mennonites has been presented by P. Klassen in his booklet entitled, *Bei uns im alte Russland* (1959), in which he features the life of the Mennonite large estate owners, industrialists, farmers, and those without land. More critical is the description of the Mennonites of Russia prior to the Revolution presented by H. H. Epp in his paper at the Grünfeld Congress (Feb., 1921), entitled, *Aufgaben der russischen Mennoniten in der Gegenwart*. The educator and leader of the Chortitza Teachers' Training School appraised the ethical and religious level of the Mennonite population and analyzed the conditions by pointing out the weaknesses and how they could be remedied. The following is his conclusion:

The serious observer before the outbreak of World War I came to the conclusion that new ways and views should be made room for in our religious life. Next to a certain indifference in regard to religious questions one could detect a critical look and search in regard to some of our major Mennonite religious views. The Mennonites had always been very thrifty and displayed an eagerness to acquire positions mostly in a legal way. That brotherly love suffered under this materialistic effort was apparent. We have parted from the ideals of our forefathers. Where do we find the former steadfastness of character, courage, honesty, Christian modesty, and sympathy. I insist that we will disintegrate if we continue in the direction in which we have thus far moved.

The speaker concluded his paper by stating, "My picture is probably too dark. I may not have sufficiently underscored the good qualities which are still found among us. If so, I did this out of love to my brethren whom I would like to see emerge strengthened and cleansed in these days of tribulation."

These and other observations are evidence that the Mennonite intellectuals of that time were much concerned about the future and welfare of the brotherhood. Most of them felt closely connected with the brotherhood. Only a few of the intellectuals left the fold, and mostly those who had married outside of the brotherhood.

Herewith, we have come to the question to what an extent the Russian environment had influenced the Mennonites who received an education at Russian institutions of higher learning. Mennonites lived, generally, in isolation from the Russian environment and had little direct contact with the Russian population. As a rule, Russians did not live within the Mennonite communities nor did the children of the Russians attend Mennonite schools. Many of the Mennonites could not communicate in the Russian language. Rus-

sians were hardly ever accepted into the Mennonite brotherhood as church members. It was very different with the Mennonites who had graduated from Russian institutions of higher learning and had been fully exposed to Russian life.

Mennonites with a secondary or university training and a long teaching experience mastered the Russian language perfectly. They would recite Russian poetry and folklore by the hour. They loved the Russian literature. Only a few names need be mentioned: B. H. Unruh, A. H. Unruh, Franz Thiessen, and others. P. M. Friesen stated in his introduction to the monumental book, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland*, that he had constantly struggled with a linguistic problem while writing the German book. His dual interest in the Russian and German languages and cultures had led him at times to the point where the Russian predominated. He stated: "During the last forty years of my life, the German and Russian languages have been struggling in my life for predominance. There were times when I was not as fluent in the German as I was in the Russian language." P. M. Friesen was not the only one. Some of the Mennonite educators in Russia who had been stronger in the mastery of the Russian language than the German came to Canada and continued their educational efforts. Some critical observers pointed out that some of them now turned into staunch promoters of the German language at the expense of the English language and, of course, the Russian.

During their studies in Russian schools they made use of the Russian language, learned to know and appreciate Russian literature, history, theater, art, etc., and they associated in Russian circles with people of like-minded interests. The ethnic and religious differences were not so significant in this contact. This led to intermarriage, as is shown in the statistical report. Twenty-one percent of all students at Russian universities married Russians. The problem that arose was that the Russian partner had difficulties in adjusting to the isolated Mennonite group. In addition, it was forbidden for the children of a Russian Orthodox church member to join any other but the Russian Orthodox Church. Consequently, these families remained in or moved to a city and were lost to the brotherhood. The Russian government favored intermarriage in line with its Russianization policy. During World War II the land of the German speaking population was to be liquidated. An exception was made where an intermarriage with a Russian partner had taken place. H. H. Epp, previously quoted, remarked:

The Russianization policy of the government was the beginning of an assimilation and acculturation of the Mennonites which during the Revolution and later, will continue and ultimately lead to disintegration, if nothing is done in order to stop the process. Through

the animosity in regard to everything German during the war, our ethnic and religious self-esteem has been strengthened. Whoever likes his background and wants to preserve the heritage of his forefathers and does not want to surrender everything, must counteract the disintegrating process of our time.

Some of the Mennonite intellectuals were in favor of the Russianization process and others opposed it in order to prevent disintegration. When, at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution, the danger of losing our heritage existed, many left the country. Among them were such intellectuals as Peter Epp, Daniel P. Enns, A. A. Friesen (teachers), and Johann Klassen (artist). They and many other played a leading role in the emigration. Some who took measures to counteract the Russianization process were the intellectuals who had studied in Germany and Switzerland and were now educational and religious leaders. Many of them, however, joined those who left Russia and went to Western Europe and North America and later also to South America. Among them were B. H. Unruh, A. A. Friesen, Abraham Fast, Jacob Quiring, D. Navall and others. Many of the younger ones did graduate work either in Germany, the United States, or Canada. Among those who studied in Germany prior to World War II were Walter Quiring, Hans Harder, Eugene Duerksen, Cornelius Krahn, and Hans Rempel. Among those who did graduate work in North America were Abraham Warkentin, David G. Rempel, Gerhard Wiens, and Victor Peters. All of them have made a substantial contribution in research, education, and other areas of cultural pursuit. One evidence of this effort is the magazine, *Mennonite Life*, and the Mennonite Library and Archives, both sponsored and promoted by Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

Those Who Remained

If we look at the impressive list (at the end of this article) of those who attended graduate schools in Russia, we must ask what happened to them after the Revolution of 1917. It has been pointed out that some of them lost their lives during the Civil War or through the bandits that destroyed villages and populations in the days of turmoil. Others were later exiled and perished in labor camps. Many of those who survived were employed in Russian industries and other branches of work. Few remained at the original place where they were born and grew up. Engineers, architects, accountants, specialists in agriculture, forest rangers, physicians, etc., continued longest in the fields of their training. Their professional skill was not directly related to their ethnic background or religious and philosophical views. This was different in the case of the teachers. Many of them lost their jobs or left Russia soon after the Revolution.

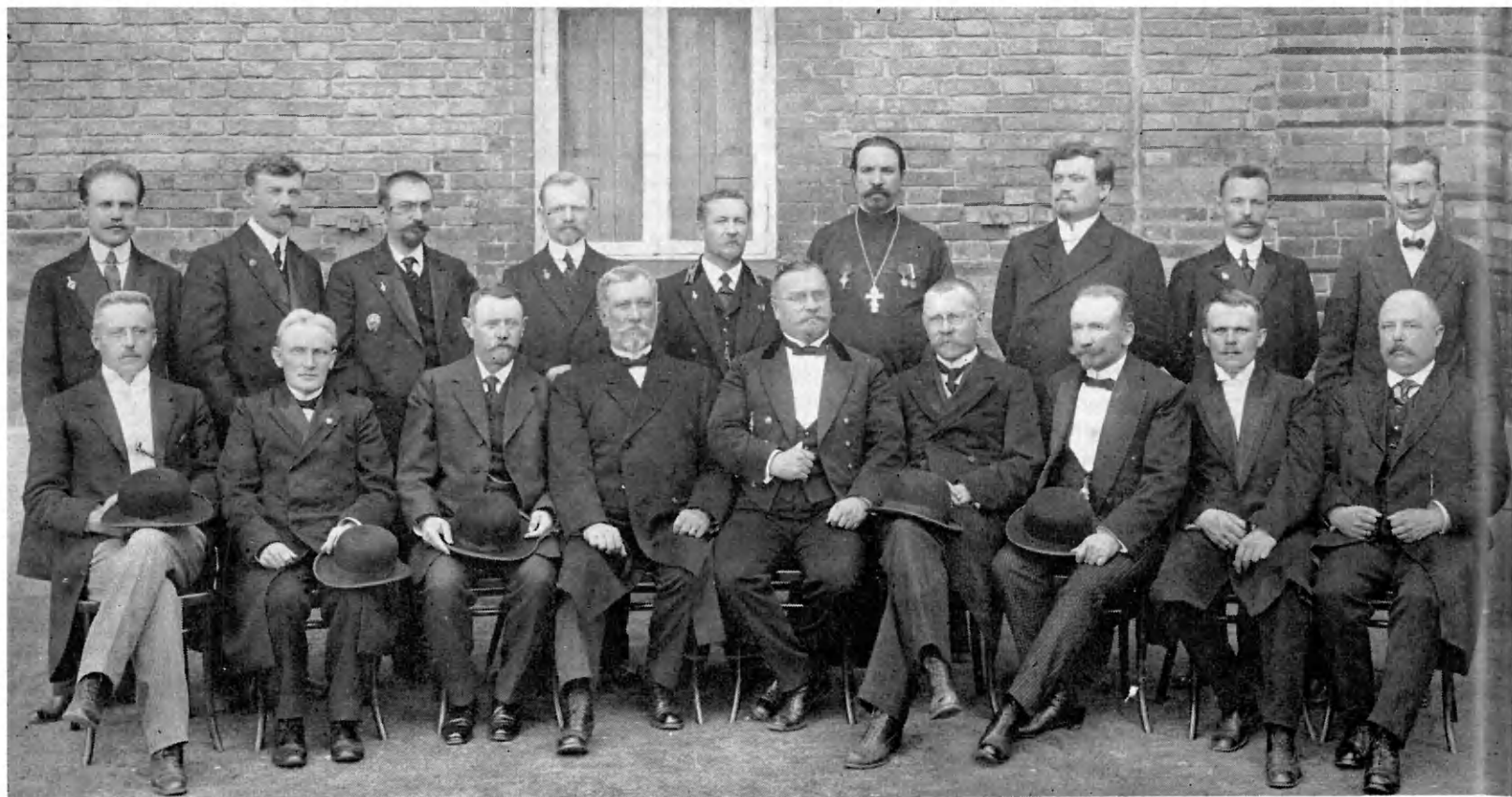
I am not aware of any Mennonites that attained high

positions in the early period of the Soviet regime, particularly not in positions of the Communist Party. However, it is known that many of them became recognized engineers in the production of agricultural machinery, as managers of various offices of construction and similar occupations. Some of the Mennonite technicians held significant positions in the administration of the agricultural industries in Kharkov and Moscow. Among them were J. Koop and J. Bock in Kharkov and Armin Lehn in Moscow.

The first combines of the Soviet Union in the factory, *Kommunar*, of Zaporozhe were constructed with the help of Mennonite engineers, such as P. Dyck, G. Hamm, and Cornelius Unruh. They received the Lenin Order because of their superior contribution. Unfortunately, in the changing times of 1937, they were exiled as "enemies of the people" and no one ever found out what happened to them. This was the fate of many of the Mennonite specialists at that time. It is in place to relate something in regard to what happened to the agricultural factory, *Kommunar*, which was a merger of the original agricultural factories begun by A. A. Koop, Lepp and Wallmann, and Hildebrand and Pries. During World War II the factory was, in part, destroyed and in part, evacuated. After World War II, it was rebuilt for the production of cars, known as *Zaporozhets*. For the centennial of the existence of the undertaking started by A. A. Koop, an article appeared in the paper, *Izvestiya*, with the following statement. "A hundred years ago at the place of the present factory, *Zaporozhets*, a German capitalist, Koop, produced primitive agricultural machinery with the help of manually operated equipment. The Soviet Union converted this establishment into a factory which produced the first combines which were delivered as a present to the 16th Congress of the Communist Party in Moscow. The combines, *Kommunar*, were hailed and given great recognition by those who produce grain."

From time to time we hear and read about Mennonites who have survived exile and labor camps and have found recognition as engineers, physicians, agriculturalists, teachers, and business managers. The magazine, *Neues Leben*, published by *Pravda* in Moscow reports about the progress made in agriculture, education, and other areas in which German speaking Soviet citizens are engaged. Again and again one finds among the contributors, "Mennonite" names who have distinguished themselves in some area or endeavor. They represent a later era than the intellectuals or intelligentsia featured in this article.

However, the actual involvement of the Mennonites in social, economic, and political questions goes back to 1874 when Abraham Thiessen was exiled or imprisoned because of his activities in favor of improving the social and economic conditions in Russia. He wrote a number of booklets along this line. (See article in this issue.)



Board (front row) and faculty (back row) of the Mennonite School of Commerce (Kommerzschule), Halbstadt, Molotschna, 1910. Among the teachers are P. J. Wiens, B. H. Unruh, A. A. Friesen, P. P. Letkemann. In 1910 the school had 124 students.

Mennonite teachers in South Russia prior to the Russian Revolution.



Gerhard Hamm belonged to a team of engineers of the factory Kommunar of Zaporozhets which produced the first combines in Soviet Russia and received the Lenin Order, as shown on this illustration. In the changing times of 1937 their distinction was renounced and they were exiled and died as "enemies of the people." (This photograph was made available by Mrs. Gerhard Hamm), who recently came to Canada from Siberia. (See page 57.)



On the other hand, after the Russian Revolution of 1917, some Mennonites became active politically and promoted Marxian views. An example is the book by A. Reinmarus (Penner) entitled *Anti-Menno* which was to "enlighten" the Mennonites and disperse their "prejudices" in favor of the Marxian insights.

Graduate Students

The following is a list of Mennonites of Russia who received a higher education between 1890 and the Russian Revolution of 1917, be this in Russia or abroad.

The list illustrates that the Mennonites of Russia had a strong percentage of intellectuals qualified to furnish leadership among the Mennonites of Russia or in the countries to which they migrated.

This list is not complete. Additional information is solicited. The information given here consists of name, place of birth, name and place of study, and in parentheses, the place or country where the individual did most of his work. This information was compiled by the author of the article with the help of Peter Klassen and H. Goerz. Additional information on some of the individuals can be found in the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, P. M. Friesen's book, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland*, and other books and articles devoted to the Russian Mennonites.

I. Theologians and Ministers

(Universities and Seminaries)

1. Dirks, Heinrich, Gnadenfeld, Molotschna; Barmen Theological School, (1864-68). (Missionary and Minister).
2. Ediger, Salomon S., Gnadenfeld, Molotschna; Basel Theological Seminary. (Russia).
3. Fast, Abraham, Molotschna; University of Basel. (*Lic. theol.*). (Emden).
4. Kröker, Jakob, Crimea; Baptist Theological Seminary, Hamburg. (Wernigerade a. H).
5. Lenzmann, Hermann A., Gnadenfeld, Molotschna; University of Tübingen. (Russia).
6. Martins, Heinrich, Crimea; Basel Theological Seminary. (Brazil).
7. Quiring, Fr., Saratov; University of Dorpat. (Russia).
8. Quiring, Jacob, Köppental, Samara; Universities of Berlin and Columbia. (Bluffton and New York).
9. Rempel, Jakob, Schönfeld, Borzenko; University of Basel. (Russia, minister).
10. Unruh, B. H., Timir-Bulat, Crimea; University of Basel (*Lic. theol.* 1907). (Karlsruhe).
11. Wiens, David, Kleefeld, Molotschna; University of Dorpat, (1914). (Russia).

II. Teachers and Professors

1. Bergmann, Cornelius, Neuhoffnung, Samara; Universities of Leipzig, Berlin, Zürich, Ph. D. (Germany).
2. Bräul, Alexander, Ohrloff, Molotschna; University of Petersburg. (Russia).
3. Braun, Peter J., Alexanderwohl, Molotschna; Teachers Institute, Petersburg. (Germany).

4. Ediger, Alexander, Berdyansk; University of Petersburg. (Russia).

5. Ediger, Heinz, Crimea; University of Petersburg. (Russia).

6. Enns, Abram, Altona, Molotschna; Universities of Basel and München. (Lübeck).

7. Epp, H. H., Chortitza; University of Moscow. (Chortitza).

8. Epp, Peter G., Petershagen, Molotschna; Universities of Basel and Heidelberg, Ph. D., 1912. (Columbus, Ohio).

9. Fast, Peter P., Münsterberg, Molotschna; University of Moscow (1890). (Russia).

10. Friesen, Abram A., Schönau, Molotschna; University of Odessa. (Halbstadt).

11. Friesen, P. M., Sparrau, Molotschna; Studied in Switzerland, Moscow, and Odessa. (Russia. Historian).

12. Fröse, Franz, Waldeck, Memrik; University of ? , (Russia).

13. Goossen, Dietrich, Schönsee, Molotschna; University of Moscow. (Russia).

14. Goossen, Peter, Alexandertal, Molotschna; University of Petersburg. (Russia).

15. Günther, Viktor; Universities of Basel and Heidelberg. (Winnipeg).

16. Harder, Hans, Neuhoffnung, Samara; University of Königsberg. (Germany, writer).

17. Harder, Johann G., Molotschna; University of Petersburg. (Halbstadt).

18. Heese, Peter H., Ekaterinoslav; University of Moscow. (Ohrloff).

19. Isaak, Peter; University of Petersburg. (Taught at U. of Vancouver).

20. Janzen, Johann, Ohrloff; Academy of Art. Theodosia (Feodosiya). (Ohrloff).

21. Lehn, Ekaterinoslav; University of Kharkov. (Barvenkovo).

22. Letkemann, Peter P.; University of Natural Sciences. (Halbstadt).

23. Neufeld, Abram A., Fürstenau, Molotschna; Universities of Odessa and Berlin (1883). Chortitza and Berdyansk).

24. Neufeld (Navall), Dietrich, Sagradovka; University of Basel. (Chortitza and U.S.A.).

25. Penner, Hans, Ekaterinoslav; University of Kharkov. (Teacher).

26. Penner, Heinrich, Gnadenfeld; University of Petersburg. (Teacher).

27. Penner, Hermann J., Molotschna; University of Petersburg. (Halbstadt).

28. Wiebe, Heinrich, Steinfeld, Molotschna; University of Petersburg. (Schönwiese).

29. Wiens, Peter J., Altona, Molotschna; University of ? . (Halbstadt).

III. Physicians

1. Dirks, Wilhelm, Waldheim, Molotschna; University of Kharkov. (Gnadenfeld).

2. Dyck, Franz, Fürstenau, Molotschna; University of Kharkov (Molotschna).

3. Dyck, Peter, Fürstenau, Molotschna; University of Kharkov. (Ohrloff-Brasil).

4. Esau, Jakob, Ekaterinoslav; University of Kiev. (Chortitza and Ekaterinoslav).
5. Esau, Peter J., Ekaterinoslav; University of Odessa. (Ohrloff).
6. Hamm, David, Chortitza; Military Academy of Petersburg. (Chortitza and Canada).
7. Hausknecht, David, Gnadenfeld; University of Odessa. (Gnadenfeld).
8. Isaak, Johann; Military Academy of Petersburg. (Alexnadrabad and Los Angeles).
9. Klassen, Rudolf, Am Trakt; University of Saratov. (Russia and Winnipeg).
10. Neufeld, Nikolai, Davelekanovo, Ufa; University of Saratov. (Winnipeg).
11. Peters, Peter, Chortitza; University of Odessa. (Ekaterinoslav and Grünfeld).
12. Thiessen, Isaak; Universities of Odessa and München. (Bethania, Russia).
13. Warkentin, Heinrich, Waldheim; University of Kharkov. (C.P.R., Winnipeg).
14. Zacharias, Dietrich, Osterwik, Chortitza; University of Odessa. (Chortitza).

IV. *Science of Forestry*

1. Dueck, Crimea; Petersburg Institute of Science of Forestry. (Russia).
2. Klassen, Peter, Chortitza; Petersburg Institute of Science of Forestry. (Russia and Vancouver).
3. Schmidt; Petersburg Institute of Science of Forestry. (Saratoff, Russia).

V. *Lawyers*

1. Funk, Peter, Neuenburg, Chortitza; University of Moscow. (Ekaterinoslav).
2. Heese, Jakob, Ekaterinoslav; University of Kharkov. (Ekaterinoslav).
3. Janzen, Peter, Schönwiese; University of ? . (Alexandrovsk).
4. v. Kampen, Julius, Chortitza; University of Moscow. (Alexandrovsk).
5. Siemens, Jakob, Schönwiese; University of ? . (Alexandrovsk).
6. Unruh, Kornelius, Ohrloff, Molotschna; University of ? . (Ekaterinoslav).
7. Wallmann, Hermann, Chortitza; University of Petersburg. (Russia).

VI. *Engineers and Architects*

1. Appenrodt, Heinrich, Chortitza, Institute of Technology, Karlsruhe. (Kharkov and Germany).
2. Ediger, Nikolas, Berdyansk; Institute of Mining, Petersburg. (Russia).
3. Epp, David, Ekaterinoslav; University in Germany. (Ekaterinoslav and Chortitza).
4. Esau, Alexander, Ekaterinoslav; Institute of Mining. (Ekaterinoslav).
5. Esau, Johann, Ekaterinoslav; Institute of Technology, Riga. (Manufacturer and Mayor of Ekaterinoslav).
6. Fast, Abraham, Schönsee, Molotschna; Institute of Technology, Petersburg. (Petersburg).

7. Heese, Heinrich, Ekaterinoslav; Institute of Milling Industry, Zürich and Dippoldiswalde. (Russia).
8. Heese, Peter, Ekaterinoslav; Institute of Technology, Riga. (Ekaterinoslav).
9. Hildebrand, Kornelius, Chortitza; Institute of Engineering, Germany. (Schönwiese).
10. Klassen, Johann, Chortitza; Institute of Technology, Kiev. (Russia).
11. Klassen, N. J., Chortitza; Universities of Petersburg and Kharkov. (Alexandrovsk and Vancouver. Writer of this article).
12. Klassen, Wilhelm, Melitopol; Institute of Mining, Ekaterinoslav. (Russia).
13. Klatt, Wilhelm, Melitopol; Institute of Technology, Petersburg. (Russia).
14. Lehn, Armin, Chortitza; Institute of Technology, Germany. (Moscow).
15. Lepp, Hermann, Schönwiese; Braunschweig Institute of Technology. (Schönwiese).
16. Martens, Jakob, Ekaterinoslav; Institute of Mining. (Krivoy Rog Industry).
17. Neufeld, Eugen, Chortitza-Berdyansk; Institute of Technology, Petersburg. (Russia).
18. Penner, Jakob, Rosenthal, Chortitza; Institute of Technology, Dippoldiswalde, Germany. (Berlin).
19. Penner, Wilhelm; Institute of Technology, Darmstadt, Germany. (Yevpatoriya).
20. Rempel, Gerhard, New York, Bachmut; Institute of Electrical Engineering, Petersburg. (Russia).
21. Schulz, Jakob, Schönwiese; Institute of Technology, Kiev. (Millerovo, Russia).
22. Thiessen, Heinrich, Ekaterinoslav; Institutes of Technology and Commerce, Riga. (Russia).
23. Unruh, Abram, New York, Bachmut; Institute of Mining. (Russia).
24. Willms, Heinz, Halbstadt; Institute of Architecture. (Russia).

VII. *Others*

1. Bock, Jakob, Schönwiese; Institute of Commerce, Germany. (Alexandrovsk and Kharkov).
2. Dyck, Arnold, Hochfeld, Chortitza; Academies of Art, München, Stuttgart, Petersburg, Moscow. (Canada).
3. Epp, Heinrich, Ekaterinoslav; Institute of Commerce, Belgium. (Russia).
4. Froese, Heinrich, Grünfeld; Academy of Agriculture, Moscow. (Chortitza).
5. Isaak, Margarete; Academy of Bestushev. (Russia).
6. Klassen, Johann, Grünfeld, Academy of Art, München. (Chortitza and U. S. A.).
7. Reimer, C. C., Wiesenfeld, Institute of Commerce, Moscow. (Russia and Canada).
8. Sudermann, Anna, Chortitza; Academy of Bestushev. (Chortitza and Winnipeg).

FOOTNOTES

1. D. H. Epp, *Die Chortitzer Mennoniten*, Rosenthal bei Chortitz, 1888, p. 81.
2. D. H. Epp, *op. cit.*, p. 102.



The traditional Russian cap and kerchief were common among the Mennonites of Russia.



Cultural Interaction Among the Mennonites in Russia

By Walter Quiring

AT THE TIME OF the outbreak of World War I, Mennonites had been in Russia for 125 years. That is a span of time after which the cultural and economic exchange between the nation that hosts a foreign ethnic group has developed to the point that it can be measured in depth and width.

Russian neighbors did not have a significant influence on Mennonite methods of agriculture. Even the first Mennonite emigrants arrived with superior agriculture methods and knowledge. Naturally they had to adjust themselves to the climate and soil. The situation was different in regard to culture. In this respect the exchange came naturally in spite of the intended isolation of the Mennonites. It is true that there was no very close relationship because the Mennonites intentionally lived in isolation, but there were numerous points of contact which could not be bypassed.

Cultural Contacts

In order to answer the question to what an extent Mennonites in Russia were influenced by the Russian culture, we have to look at the channels of contact which enabled them to influence the Mennonites. We must make a sharp distinction between two periods. The first one runs from 1789 to 1917 which marks the Revolution and the second one begins with the establishment of the USSR. We deal here primarily with the first period. With the exception of a few who lived on large Russian estates, the Mennonites of Russia lived in isolated villages. During the first period, no Mennonite was ever permitted to sell his farm to a Russian. With few exceptions, there were no Mennonite urban congregations. The Mennonites lived in compact settlements, such as Chortitza and Molotschna

and numerous daughter settlements, most of which were founded by the mother colonies. The settlements were established on land purchased from Russian large estate owners which enabled the Mennonites to continue to live in isolation from the neighboring Russian villages. This barrier almost completely prevented an influence from the outside.

What reinforced this isolation was the fact that the Mennonites were almost one hundred percent farmers. All lived in rural areas and usually far away from larger cities. They disposed of their products, above all, grain, mostly on Mennonite-owned markets and mills, but also at larger Russian places. Other products, such as cattle, were sold to Russian merchants who came to the villages from time to time. Butter and eggs were usually purchased in the Ukraine by Russian women merchants (*Pinjelweiber*). At some places they were purchased and disposed of by Mennonite merchants. Groceries were obtained through the local Mennonite stores. Wholesale or larger purchases were occasionally made in the cities or larger Russian villages. During the Revolution and immediately after, Mennonite merchants (called *Spekulanten*) bought up food supplies in the villages and disposed of them in the larger cities such as Alexandrovsk, Ekaterinoslav, Orenburg, etc.

Educational Interaction

The Mennonite elementary school had the official name "Russian-German School". In reality, however, it was a "German-Russian School". As late as the 1870's all subjects were taught in the German language. At that time Russian was introduced in all schools. Soon the teaching of all courses, with the exception

of the subjects religion and German, was in the Russian language. The Russianization process became effective. However, the influence of the Russian on the children remained limited. They learned to understand the Russian, but not to speak it fluently. Hardly any of the elementary Mennonite schools employed Russian teachers. However, the Mennonite *Zentral-schule* (secondary school) usually had one or more native Russian teachers who would teach the Russian language and instruct other subjects in the Russian language.

Comparatively few Mennonite boys went to the secondary Russian *Gymnasium* and *Realschule* and fewer went to the universities and other institutions of higher learning. The number who obtained certificates for teaching in secondary schools or who became engineers, forest rangers, etc., was limited. Nevertheless, the Mennonites had their own medical doctors, lawyers, secondary teachers, etc., with academic training. Most of them returned to their own communities after their training. They belonged to those who had learned to know the Russian people, its history and its literature. They mastered the Russian language and contributed considerably to the promotion of the Russian language in secondary schools and in teacher training schools. Although they were in a special way the mediators of Russian cultural values, most of them had not been Russianized to the extent that they had lost contact with or had become estranged from their Mennonite environment during their study in Russian or foreign cities.

Russian magazines and newspapers were occasionally read by Mennonites. Among the subscribers were usually teachers of secondary schools, while the average elementary teachers did not always read the German Mennonite papers, *Der Botschafter* and *Die Friedensstimme*. Occasionally Mennonites would subscribe to such German magazines as *Der Gartenlaube*, *Bibliothek der Unterhaltung und des Wissens*, etc. It was different in regard to the purchase of Russian books. Most of the teachers possessed the writings of such Russian writers as Alexander Pushkin, Turgenev, N. Gogol, L. Tolstoy, and others. Some teachers had an impressive little Russian library. The libraries of the secondary schools had a considerable number of Russian books which were read as much as those in the German language (see article by N. J. Klassen).

Administration, Business, Language

The administration in the villages and settlements was exclusively in the hands of the Mennonites. In the village it consisted of the *Schulze* (mayor) and two *Beisitzer* (assistants). The latter were also called *Dessyatniki* and had police power. Even the next highest office of the *Volost* (district) consisted of Mennonites, namely the *Oberschulze* and the secretaries or *Skhodmänner* of the villages. The representatives of the villages at the settlement meetings (*Schultebott*,

Low German) and known as *Skhod* (Russian) and *Skhodmänner* were Mennonites. The *Volost* (county) office naturally dealt with higher Russian authorities and offices, such as the district administration (*Kreisverwaltung*) and *Zemstvo* and occasionally also the provincial government. In the larger Mennonite industrial centers, such as Chortitza, Schönwiese, Einlage, Osterwick, New York, Halbstadt and others, there were always Russian policemen (*Uryadniki*) and considerable contact with the Russian population.

The significant Mennonite milling industry and the half dozen factories producing agricultural machinery in the Ukraine and the Northern Caucasian Mountains employed from sixty to seventy percent Russian workers. But contact with the Mennonites was limited. The factory owners had special schools for the non-Mennonite workers, the so-called "factory schools".

Russian salesmen seldom came into the Mennonite villages. More common were Jewish salesmen known as *Pinjel-* or *Pudeljuden*, some of whom at times picked up the Low German language. In Eastern European Russia and Siberia, Russian salesmen at times bought hides, calves, pigs, butter, eggs, etc., from the Mennonite farmers. In the fall they would sell fruit on the village streets. In the Ukraine the Russians often sold pigs, geese, ducks, etc., in the Mennonite villages. These contacts required some knowledge of the Russian language.

In the many daughter settlements in which a Mennonite hospital could not be established and maintained, Russian physicians were employed. In the larger settlements, such as Chortitza and Molotschna, the physicians were Mennonites (Hamm, Dyck, Zacharias) or they were Germans from the Baltic Coast (Schneider, Meder, Hottman, Tavonius).

Some Russian influence came into the villages via the Russian or Ukrainian hired men and girls, particularly in the Ukraine, the Crimea and the Caucasian Mountains where they were kept throughout the year. Some of the Mennonite settlers between the Volga River and the Ural Mountains, as well as in Siberia, were not always prosperous enough to employ hired help. However, during the summer, families who did not have enough grown-up sons would make use of hired Russian help. Through this contact the Mennonites picked up the Russian language, folksongs, and the use of Russian food. Numerous Russian words thus found their way into the Low German language of which they became an integral part.

The common language of communication among the Mennonites of Russia was Low German, which they had brought along from West Prussia and which was intermingled with Dutch, French, Polish, and Litvanian words. For the grade school beginners, High German was, consequently, a new language. Even during the six or seven years of their elementary school, few acquired a mastery of the High German language,

particularly since High German was usually not the mother tongue of the teachers.

The influence of the Russian language on the Low German was considerable. More than a hundred words were accepted. It must, however, be taken into consideration that not the same words were accepted in the scattered Mennonite settlements. Generally speaking, approximately twenty-five Russian words were used by the Mennonites from their contact in the realm of agriculture (*Shtap*-field), seventeen belonged to the household (*Bulke*-bread), seven to clothing (*poys*-belt), fourteen to administration and travel (*Zvoshik*-coachman), and two dealt with sicknesses. Seventeen words were first names for males (*Yash* - Jacob) and ten for females (*Katya* - Catherine). Fifty-eight words were taken from the various other realms of life (see *Mennonite Life*, July, 1967). Fifty-nine words were taken over from the Russian because there were no equivalents in the Low German. Twenty-one Russian words were accepted in spite of the fact that there was a similar Low German or High German word in use.

During peace times, the Mennonites of Russia fulfilled their duties in forestry service in lieu of military service. For example, the young men lived in the Ukraine in barracks in complete isolation. The lower administrators (*Starshy* - Elder) were Mennonites. Only the forest ranger and his representative in charge of the forestry work done by the Mennonites were Russian. The influence of this life together on the young men far away from their home villages and the necessity to maintain order and discipline without any outside supervision was very strong and lasting. However, very little influence from the Russian environment penetrated such a unit.

The Russian national holidays, such as the birthday of the tsar, the day of crowning, and others, as well as religious holidays, did not have a great influence on the Mennonites, although they became fully aware

Even the Hutterites showed the influence of the Russian environment.



of them because the public offices displayed the flags and school and public buildings were closed on these days.

Travel during vacations was not common among the thrifty Mennonites. The farmer had enough time during the winter to rest from his hard work during the summer. However, around 1900 prosperous Mennonites began to undertake longer trips. There was some visitation between relatives of various settlements. Some visited the Caucasian Mountains and the Crimea. Even more common was the travel abroad to German summer resorts and also to Switzerland and Italy or even to America. Business travel in various parts of the country was common. Some secondary schools took their graduate classes to Moscow or Petersburg for a few weeks.

Characteristics, Music, Clothing, Food

Has the typical Russian character had some influence on the Mennonites in spite of their isolation? For example, has the lack of punctuality among the Russians or the lack of orderliness and some inclination to fatalism, or the Russian expression *nitshevo* (it's all right, it makes no difference) had an influence on the Mennonites? Mennonites brought along their typical German and Mennonite characteristics, such as orderliness, reliability, discipline, which were not the typical characteristics of the common Russian with whom they came in contact. In the Russian environment they were facing typically Russian problems and practices. At times the concept of honesty was altered. The common practice of bribes in dealing with officials influenced the Mennonites to follow the pattern of the country. Unfamiliar with the language and practices of the country, the Mennonites were inclined to hold back in a conversation with the Russian population and they probably even developed a tendency of distrust, particularly in the time of the Russian Revolution.

It can be said that the Russian folk songs and tunes found an acceptance among the younger generation of Mennonites. However, much of the rich heritage along this line never became an integral part of the Mennonite population, with the exception of those who received a thorough secondary training, and particularly if they were teaching in secondary schools. In many schools folk songs, such as the Volga Boatman and others, became accepted. Such folk songs as *Akh, popalas ptitchka, stoy*, or *Druzhno, bratse* . . . became fully accepted and used side by side with German folk songs.

Russian games for children or grownups were in use in Mennonite homes and schools in limited numbers. One would see boys play the game *Klepka*, which consisted of the use of pointed blocks which were hurled into the air with a stick. *Pollack*, a ball game for boys, was very common.

The Mennonites were strongly influenced in the use and style of their apparel, partly due to the climatic conditions. In Central Eastern Russia the sheepskin coat (*Tulup*) with long sleeves and high collar were common. Felt boots were also common, as well as a wide coat made of heavy black or blue cloth and worn over a fur coat (Russian *Chalat*). Also common were the *Tshumarkapelz*, a short sheepskin coat, and the *Bashlik*, a cap with long wide strings tied around the neck. In the Ukraine and some other settlements, the Russian shirt (*Bluse*) was worn over the pants with a belt or a string. Caps with a bill were common among the young people. The girls often wore Ukrainian embroidered blouses.

The baking and cooking of the Mennonite kitchen were strongly influenced by Russian recipes and practices. Quite often they were introduced by Russian maids and neighbors. Many of them continued to be in use among the descendants of those who have gone from Russian to North and South America, generations ago. Among the foods are *Borshtsh*, a soup with cabbage, etc.; *Shtshi*, *borshtsh* with sauerkraut; *Golubtse*, ground beef wrapped in cabbage; *Varenike* (*Vreneke*), dumpling with cottage cheese; *Piroshki*, a fruit or meat dumpling; *Trubotshki*, a roll of dough filled with fruit or ground beef; *Selyanka*, a beef soup; *Bline*, buckwheat pancake with sour cream; and *Paskha*, an Easter cake.

Intermarriage, Patriotism

There was little social contact between the Russians and Mennonites. It was limited primarily to contact with the hired help, such as kitchen help, hired men for farm work and the cowherd, who was usually a Russian. The young people, of course, had the occasion to observe the social life of these people during a get-together. Purchases, sales, and other business transactions brought Mennonites in contact with Russian neighbors in the shopping centers. In some instances social contacts of Russian and Mennonite families could be observed. At times intermarriages took place, but they were rare. It would occasionally happen that a Mennonite boy married a Russian hired girl or that Mennonite students married Russian girls as a result of their graduate studies. If such couples lived in Mennonite communities, the Russian partner adjusted to the environment; otherwise the Mennonite adjusted to the Russian environment (see also article by N. J. Klassen).

What was the Mennonite attitude toward the Russian nation and state? Did they become full-fledged loyal Russian citizens? They were grateful for the hospitality and loyal citizens, but few of them had become an integral part of the country and nation with a strong Russian patriotism. They were too much isolated geographically and their way of life was different. However, there was always a sense of patriotism

in regard to the royal house of Russia. The Mennonites were grateful to the tsars who had given them a home, but basically they were never patriotic in regard to Russia or to Germany, from where they had come. They were developing their own minority identity in Russia.

World War I marked the first time that they really came in contact with their Russian neighbors. During the war years, 1914-1918, some twelve thousand men were mobilized. Most of the younger men served at the front in three large organizations. They were sanitary or hospital workers in the Red Cross, the *Zemstvo*, and the city organizations. The older men served as workers and guards in national forests. All of them lived together with a Russian population and consequently learned to speak the Russian language fluently and learned to understand and appreciate their Russian countrymen better. Many gave up their sense of superiority. How much of this influence would have become effective in the home community if the Revolution had not disrupted it, is another question. Their ties of culture, faith, blood, and tradition were too strong to cause a complete breakthrough of the Russian influences.

Mennonite Influence

Have Mennonites influenced their Russian environment? There is no question about it that Mennonites had some influence on their environment. This was, however, mostly in the realm of agriculture. The Mennonites brought along the four-wheeled wagon which prior to that was rarely seen in the Ukraine. They also introduced summer fallow and the rotation of crops. The Mennonites contributed to the fact that the Ukraine became the greatest producer of wheat in the world. They were also leading in the milling industry. Best known were the firms by Niebuhr, Thiessen, and Heese. In the production of agricultural machinery the firms of Lepp, Wallmann, Koop, Martens, Niebuhr, Franz, and Schröder were outstanding. The influence of the Mennonites on the Russians would have been much stronger if the latter had had more land. On the few acres they had, the progressive methods of the Mennonites could not very well be applied.

The influence of the Mennonites on the Russian laborers was very strong. For them a completely new world was opened as they entered the villages and homes of the Mennonites. Much of what they had learned they took along to their Russian homes and villages. For the surrounding Russian farmers the Mennonites were model farmers from whom they could learn to till the soil and to build their homes and their yards better than they were used to.

In conclusion, we can say that the influence of the Russian culture on the Mennonites up to 1917 was limited in many respects. For 150 years they lost little of their heritage in exchange for Russian influences.

They retained their language, rarely intermarried or moved to the city. For most of the Mennonites, the culture and the way of the Russians with whom they had little contact remained alien. Even during their spread through European and Asiatic Russia they continued to live in isolation. The influence of the Russian culture was not strong enough to break through this ideological barrier. This, however, happened with the beginning of militant Communism ushered in in 1917. But even now the penetration happened only because Marxism had no scruples about physically overpowering a small minority.

Recent Cultural Interaction

During the last fifty years the conditions among the Mennonites of Russia have changed radically. There is no resemblance to the life prior to 1917. In 1922 after five years of revolution and civil war, at the time when Lenin introduced the more liberal New Economic Policy (NEP), the Mennonites had already experienced many hardships, particularly in the Ukraine. World War I was followed by the Civil War, murder, rape, a period of starvation, and an epidemic of typhoid fever. In one village alone, Eichenfeld-Dubovka, eighty-four men were murdered in one night. Nevertheless, during the five or six years of NEP, a recovery took place. The confiscation of wagons, horses, and other property was no longer permissible. The means of transportation were improved and some personal initiative was again permissible in the economic and social life of the country. During this NEP period everybody felt relieved and participated in the reconstruction of the country.

But in 1928 the great change for all farmers came suddenly. It was ushered in with the collectivization of all agricultural life. Already in 1917 the land had become property of the state. Bigger villages had to organize collective farms and smaller ones had to join for the same purpose. The government was aware that many farmers would object to the procedure. They were made willing to join in the collectivization of the country by being taxed beyond what they could pay. Ultimately, they joined the collective farms. Many of the so-called *kulaks* (middle class farmers) were removed or exiled to the primeval forests of the Northern European and Siberian territories. Millions of Russians, among them some eighteen thousand Mennonites, perished in exile or slave labor camps. Those remaining at home joined the collective farms.

Around 1937 many of the representatives of the German minority were exiled out of fear of Hitler's plans in regard to Russia. Again in 1941, when the German army occupied the Ukraine, all those of German nationality were evacuated eastward as far as was possible.

At the time when the German army retreated in 1943, all those of German background who had re-

mained were taken along to Germany to the Warthegau. Among the 350,000 about thirty-five thousand were Mennonites. During the flight westward, even in Germany many of them, some twenty-five thousand Mennonites, were repatriated by the Red army. They were not returned to their home villages, but were shipped into Asiatic Russia beyond the Ural Mountains. Consequently, there were no Mennonites left in the old settlements of the Ukraine, the Crimea and the foothills of the Caucasian Mountains. After the death of Stalin, the Soviet government announced an amnesty on September 17, 1955, to the effect that all those who had survived the exile were now free citizens. This, however, did not include a return to their former homes. Free movements were restricted to the newly opened territory beyond the Ural Mountains. Many moved at this time to the southern areas, east of the Caspian Sea to Kazakhstan. That is where most of the Mennonites now live. Frunze, the capital of Kirgisia, has some twelve hundred Mennonites and the city of Kant, not far away, has six hundred. The settlements that existed prior to 1917, those of Orenburg on the west side of the Ural Mountains, and Slavgorod, Barnaul, Pavlodar and a few others in Siberia have survived. All other settlements and villages were evacuated and turned over to the native population.

Consequently, today very few of the Mennonites live in closed villages, as was the case prior to the Revolution and World War II. They have no administration of their own, no German schools, no papers and libraries, and not even churches unless they share those of the Baptists. All children attend Russian schools and consequently learn the Russian as their mother tongue. However, in some of these schools German is taught. Attendance of secondary schools and universities has become very common. Young Mennonite men are all doing their military duty similar to others. There has been no provision for exemption from this duty since the days of Stalin. Mennonites very often work together with Russians as doctors and teachers, in collective farms, factories, hospitals, stores, banks, offices of administration, post offices, railroads, etc. The contact with the Russians is very close. Whatever there was previously of a feeling of superiority, is gone. Inter-marriage is common and consequently the German language is quite often replaced by the Russian. Many of the Mennonites join Baptist congregations, but rarely do they organize and register independent Mennonite congregations.

Can the Mennonites of Russia, in this situation, survive as a religious and ethnic group? It would be pure speculation to answer this question with a hesitant yes. From our point of view it seems impossible that the scattered, unorganized, and leaderless Mennonite brotherhood can survive the impact of united aggressive representatives of a world view determined to disintegrate such groups as the Mennonites. It is most likely

that a minority, in its helplessness, must gradually disintegrate and become a part of the melting pot which surrounds the group.

The independence and identity of the old villages and settlements west of the Ural Mountains and in Siberia may have some hope for survival. But even they will have no chance, in the long run, to maintain their

identity. The heritage and the characteristics of the Mennonite brotherhood are not big and strong enough to carry the burden and pressure which have now been placed on them for fifty years. In addition, there is no possibility of finding a protective isolation even in the wide expanses of the Soviet Union, which would give the Mennonites and similar groups a chance for survival as religious and ethnic minority groups.

Heinrich Heese (1787-1868)

Autobiography

Translated by Cornelius Krahn

Introductory Note: Heinrich Heese was born October 14, 1787, at Pommerndorf in West Prussia of Lutheran parents. He went to Russia and became an outstanding pioneer educator among the Mennonites. His autobiography, written at the age of 80 for his children and grandchildren, is a colorful portrayal of the early life among the Mennonites of Russia.

He begins by relating how his teacher, Döring, and the preaching in his Lutheran church moved his spirit and his ambitions. He was also influenced by the liberal professor, K. F. Bahrdt, through whose "atheistic" writings, his faith was undermined. He was, however, brought back to the Christian faith.

In the days of Napoleon (1808) he hid a Russian soldier who had escaped French imprisonment and saved his life. He himself faced the danger of being enlisted in Napoleon's army so he decided to migrate from Danzig to Russia, bidding farewell to his parents and his teacher, Döring. The following is a free translation of his autobiographical travel account and his life story in Russia.

From Prussia to Russia

I began my trip in Marienburg in company of a good Mennonite friend . . . We went to the Niederung of Graudenz and from there we continued our trip on a wagon with two Mennonites from Berditchev who had come to visit in Prussia. They lacked the training of both church and school. In Pastva, I had an unusual experience while sitting at the coffee table. I had been reported. A French officer looked for me, but I managed to escape.

During this trip a commander of a Cossack unit

tried to persuade me to become his office worker. On the fifth day I told him that I would report his insistence to the tsar. Then he let me go.

At Graudenz we approached the Polish border where our papers were checked and we were permitted to continue our trip. The Prussian control did not even notice us because of the terrible noise in the house. A new unpleasantry of a different nature came my way. Almost every innkeeper in Poland and Russia is a *Mauschel* (Jew). Our traveling companions constantly quarreled with them. Since I was brought up not to tolerate the injustice and offense of the weak, I found this rudeness unbearable. When it came to a fight and they did not listen to my warning, I let it be known what I had in mind. I chose the right medium (the use of force?) and from then on we continued our trip to the colony, Michalin, the home of my companions, without difficulty. There we stayed at the home of very generous and hospitable (Mennonite) people.

Michalin is not a closed village. Each farmer lives on his own land. A prosperous farmer was robbed during the night and died in the morning because of mistreatment. After a two-week stay in Michalin we continued our trip in an enclosed sleigh drawn by two Ukrainian horses in weather that was 26 degrees below zero. Fortunately we made good progress and in nine days we made the trip from Berditchev to Ekaterinoslav which is 600 verst. However, the trip was not entirely without problems. In the hotel, Breslau, at Berditchev, the lady owner offered me the position of manager of the hotel. The eyes of her niece, named Line, were moist when I told them farewell. I was

making this trip primarily to accompany my friend, and I could not let him continue alone.

Already in Michalin we were told about a band of gangsters which we might encounter. During the fourth night we were surrounded by some Jews and thieves which was most likely a gang from a chain of gangsters (*Judenbande*). A few years later the music director, Fliege, was killed here. Five Mennonites from the Chortitza were also murdered here.

Late in the evening we arrived at the tavern. A *Mauschel* (Jew) looked suspicious and we decided to keep watch and keep the lantern burning. Soon we were surrounded by some gangsters. I thought of escaping but all of a sudden a big sleigh drawn by four horses drove in and the gangsters disappeared.

(The author continues his report enumerating many adventures and robberies with constant reference to an involvement with Jews.)

One of our last adventures took place 60 verst before we reached Ekaterinoslav where I was miraculously saved from drowning. In the city of Ekaterinoslav we had reached our temporary goal. Here we stopped at the home of Heinrich Thiessen who was a grandfather of the future wife of my companion, Heinrich. It was already dark when we saw a man standing next to a German house and mill. At last we had made it. We and our horses were taken care of. During the evening I related many an anecdote from the war. I also reported to our host that I had seen how his cousin was killed by some Poles in Dirschau before I left. After five days we continued our trip in order to reach the Chortitza Mennonite settlement which was a trip of 70 verst.

My travel consisted of a succession of fears and dangers of all kinds. The hope and faith in a good end was now fulfilled. The trip was only an example of what problems, struggles, untruthfulness, and hypocrisy of all kinds I would encounter. Now at the end of my life, I long for a peaceful end. "Watchman, will the night be over soon?"

After the new year (1809) I began my work as teacher of the German language at the estate of an honest Russian nobleman. I was teaching his only son who was in turn my teacher of the Russian language. Sometimes the situation was very funny, but with persistence and hard work, we were successful. Soon I had three and finally four pupils. I gained much more by teaching than did the young gentlemen in learning. I missed no opportunity to learn. When there were guests at our place, the gentlemen were mostly playing cards which left me with the enjoyable task of entertaining the ladies with jokes. I did this by making use of the Russian language with amusing and amazing results. Once I tried to relate that I had my horse shod which turned out to be that I had declared my horse to be a general. The laughter of the ladies was so hearty and hysterical that even the gentlemen were disrupted in their cardplaying. How-

ever, I finally gained a mastery of the Russian language.

Chortitza and Einlage

In the year 1810 I chose to marry Catherine Penner who had just arrived from West Prussia and was now at the home of Heinrich Thiessen at Ekaterinoslav where I had stayed. I went to get her. We felt rather comfortable among the Russians, but after three years my four pupils transferred to the *Gymnasium*. I quit my job and became secretary in the *Gebietsamt* of Chortitza. Here, among Mennonites who used the German language, I could make use of the newly acquired Russian language. Unfortunately, this terminated in 1812. The Mennonites here were not the honest kind I had learned to know in my youth in Pommerndorf, Germany. Their poverty and lack of understanding had transformed them into a lower type of creatures. Here I had to find out with regret that an independent and free group of people can become a miniature papal church in which the pope (*Kirchenältester*) is not missing. The elder, Johann Wiebe, was a father-in-law of my traveling companion, and the cousin of my sponsor in Prussia. I had become a member of the Mennonite church through him and trusted him. He had much confidence in me and expected me to watch what was going on and report to him as the head of the church about all events. I did as he wished, but it soon became apparent that he was not primarily interested in the well-being of the congregation. The *Gebietsamt* had discontinued secretly, contributing financial aid derived from public revenues to him. When Johann Wiebe managed once again to get this additional money, he made me a scapegoat by placing his holy hand on my head and banishing me into the desert with the whole burden of sin on me.

The Mennonite community was ruled in accordance with governmental instructions, or the gracious *Privilegium*. The head of the church had banned me and I was disillusioned in my people. There was no opportunity for me to continue to stay with the Mennonites. Thus, I went to the Russians again, namely to the manager of the estate of Countess Sievers who lived in Petersburg. Among these people I earned much gratitude. Men and women shed tears when I, after two years, left the estate when it was sold because of debts. I declined to become the manager of the estate under the new ownership because the police, officers and the lawyers made it too hard for me because of their unquenchable thirst for bribes.

I accepted a position as a teacher in the village of Einlage near Chortitza at which place my wife's family was well known. The three years of teaching at this place belong to the best ones of my life. Relatives came to visit us and the parents were happy about the progress of their children. My friends in Ekaterinoslav and Molotschna helped me financially to acquire a horse and a buggy which enabled me

to make some trips with my cheerful wife. We went to Altona of the Molotschna settlement to our aunt taking along some fruit (*Krushke*). At that time there was no fruit available at the Molotschna. We lived on the Dnieper River at a ferry surrounded by oak trees and *Krushke* trees. In spring time we enjoyed *Katran*, a plant with a much sweeter fruit than the best water beet, in Pommerndorf where I came from.

Again in Chortitza

In 1818 I again became the secretary of the *Gebiet-samt* of Chortitza under the same boss, who was well liked. Here I spent ten years, partly enjoyable and partly under disappointments and worries. After the first year I introduced some changes which, however, were against the age old tradition and disturbed the peace and security of the "Holy Synod". The protector and president of the *Fürsorge-Komitee* in Ekaterinoslav, General Samuel Contentius, was opposed to me right from the start. He considered me a prose-

lite and found me too assuming. I had no support except my trust in God. There were long sleepless nights, but the work started could not be dropped. The chairman could not take it anymore and resigned. His excellency was gradually won even though Becker, who was in charge of the sheep, left because of me, as he himself stated in my presence. The newly elected *Oberschulze* had to get used to the new business practices which I had recommended and which proved to be beneficial.

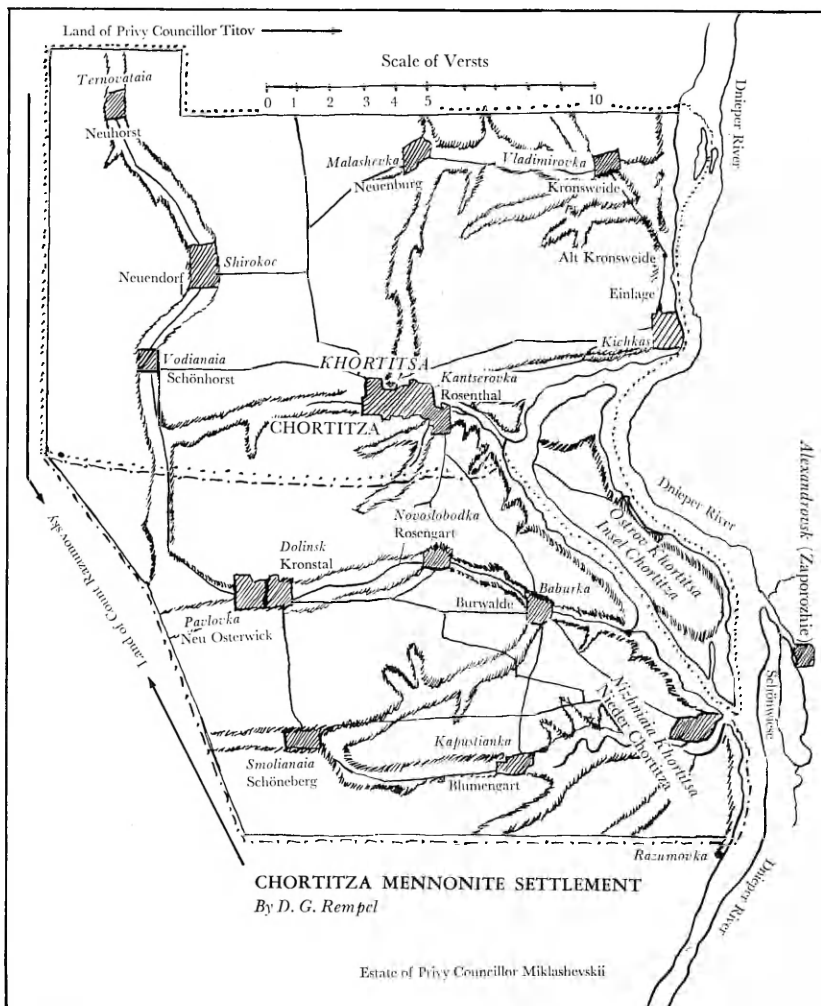
The newly bought Remont ram from Tsarkoye Selo improved our flock of sheep through careful breeding, sorting, etc. Through these efforts, I won the full confidence of his excellency. Our formerly indebted treasury had now a surplus. The next *Oberschulze*, Jacob Penner, the brother of my wife, bought another Remont ram. This time it was a failure and very disappointing for me. I was silenced and the *Schulzen* of the villages were encouraged by the clergy to oppose me. Thus far they had not succeeded to discredit me.

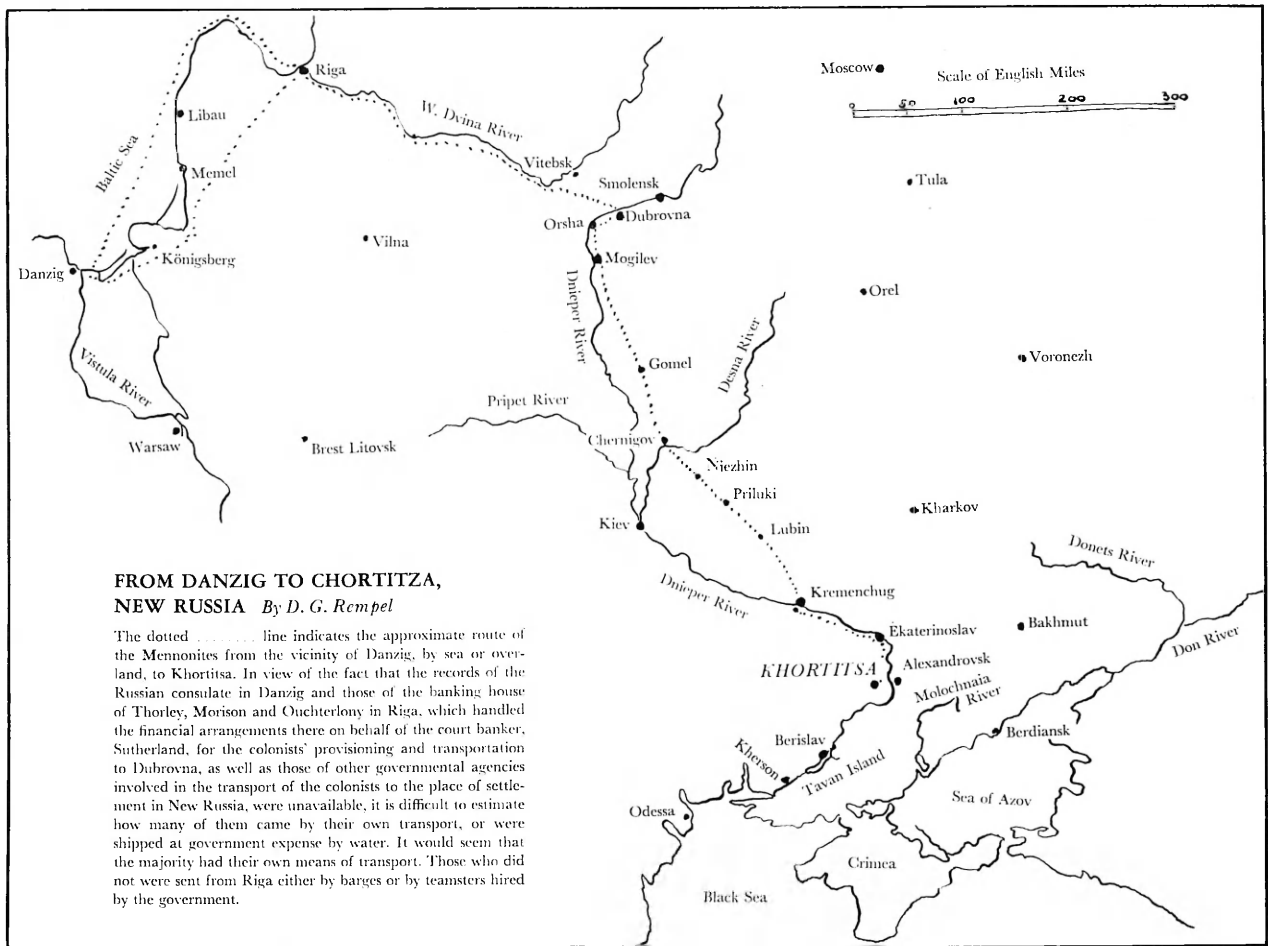
Khortitsa-Chortitza

Khortitsa was the name of a place on the Dnieper River when the Mennonites settled there in 1789. This is the proper spelling. In Mennonite Life and the Mennonite Encyclopedia the traditional German spelling, *Chortitza*, has been retained.

Chortitza Mennonite Settlement was established in 1789 on the Dnieper River in South Russia. Numerous villages surrounded Chortitza. A similar larger settlement was established later southeast of Chortitza known as *Molotschna Settlement*.

The map "From Danzig to Chortitza" shows the route which the Mennonites took on their voyage to their new home in 1788. (See article by David G. Rempel in January issue of *Mennonite Life*.) The map "From Prussia to Russia" indicates the route of most of the settlers who migrated to the *Molotschna Settlement*. This was also the approximate route taken by Heinrich Heese, described in this article,





But after it happened that some fellows were forced to do some public work because of their insurrection against the *Gebietsamt*, my fate was sealed. The whole community was called to a meeting. The church could not hold all of them. I appeared like a heretic before the holy tribunal. All expected me to ask for pardon. However, when I said that I was ready at any time to give an account in regard to my actions before God and the government and that I did not fear the aroused masses, then voices shouted from the crowd, "He is a devil". Penner was greatly dismayed. He was barely able to quiet the crowd. Now an *Oberschulze* and *Beisitzer* of "pure faith" were elected to counteract my work. It is true, his excellency sent a member from his office with the admonition that my plans and suggestions would be carried out, but it was too hard for me to stay longer than a year which had included many unpleasant fights. I asked the government to accept my resignation and accepted the position of teaching at the *Vereinschule*, Ohrloff, Molotschna. Before my transfer, I was fortunate in obtaining several hundred rubles, through court proceedings for distant friends, for which I received a fee.

Encounter with Cornies

The Molotschna Mennonites are an active and gifted group of people among whom Samuel von Contentius loved to spend some time during his inspection trips. Contentius was awarded the rank of a general by Alexander I in 1818 while on his way through the villages. His excellency, von Contentius, visited me in Ohrloff as an old man and honored me by asking me to accompany him in his carriage through the villages. We parted with the warmest handshake and best wishes. Soon after this he passed away as a perfect philosopher expecting salvation through the grace of God and not because of merit. This was one point on which he and I did not agree.

For twelve years I taught in Ohrloff. In the beginning I was fearful because I succeeded a learned man, but my success soon became apparent. Already during the second year, the school had a surplus in the treasury which depended on voluntary contributions. Formerly, the expenses had been taken care of primarily by Johann Cornies. My class increased from 20 to 60 pupils and the treasury grew stronger. My efforts were rewarded through the noble pupils, mostly boys, and the satisfied parents. There was only one problem that ultimately caused my resignation.

Cornies demanded so much work of me that I sacrificed my free hours and even nights in secretarial work for him. With the increase of his prestige and prosperity, the hardness of his heart increased. We had a number of sharp encounters which led to our parting.

I planned to start a school of my own in Ohrloff supported by friends. The community was willing to give me a piece of land, and David Cornies offered

the bricks on credit. Thus, I was ready to establish a school, but I was not granted a release from Chortitza which I needed for this purpose. Instead, I was asked to return to Chortitza and establish a *Zentralschule* according to my own plans. In 1842 I arrived in Chortitza. My faithful wife had been buried in Ohrloff in 1833; however, the saddest part of my life was still to come. The opposition to the school was as strong as previously, and the local authority wanted me to devote my time to elementary teaching since "the more you learn, the more mixed up you get". Once again, this became a stumbling block between us.

Meanwhile, an event destroyed my faith in the infallibility and the dignity of our elders. The new president, his excellency, Eduard von Hahn, removed the two elders of the Molotschna. Jakob Warkentin was dismissed as elder and Heinrich Wiens was exiled from Russia because both had been opposed to Cornies, who was now the domineering protector in every respect. I had tried to prevent this by counseling with our elder, but found no hearing. He made some remarks in regard to lack of trust in his spiritual dignity and remained unmoved.

Cornies was extending now his influence from the Molotschna to Chortitza and came personally to select someone for the office of the Chortitza Agricultural Association and to make him responsible to fulfill his wishes. The wolf had entered the herd of sheep. The sheep fearfully looked up to their shepherd, but he willingly bowed his head and accepted the yoke, as if this was a just revenge of God for sins committed. I was now the only one who was a bulwark against Cornies and who knew his game.

Eduard von Hahn, who was suave and courteous, met me with great friendliness, even after he had listened to the accusations against me by the representative of Cornies, namely that I was making efforts to stop him in his work. Although I had been accused of meddling in the finances and had reputedly encouraged resistance to the representative of Cornies, von Hahn remained friendly, which was displeasing to Cornies. Hahn found that I was doing wrong in keeping a Russian pupil which he had told me to dismiss. When he saw him in my class, he could not contain his anger and lost control of himself. I endured his resentment, but looked him straight in the eye and stated my responsibility in the following words: "The boy has a brave father who is a retired officer of the guard and has lost his property through unfortunate speculations. He intends to get his son, but has not been able to meet his financial obligations. However, I am not willing to send the boy away even if I have not been paid."

Noticing that he had gone too far, he tenderly stroked the boy and promised to be considerate. Such eruptions did not confuse me, since I had undergone even harder tribulations. My dealings with the people

won respect for me and no one dared to do harm to me. Unfortunately, I, myself, was not careful enough. I became too sure of myself and put arms into the hands of my opponents. Thus, Pilate and Herod rejoiced over my fall. "Heese has played his role", they said. I looked around and found no helper. His excellency forced me out of my position as a teacher and Cornies claimed that I had housed and taught Russian pupils illegally. I left Chortitza and went to my first place, Einlage.

Own School in Einlage

I purchased a piece of land with a poor hut, which had been flooded, which I occupied with my young wife and two children and went to work to cultivate the land. First, I burned the weeds which had grown like a forest, filled the ditches and made a driveway between the rocks. At sunrise I was at work with a spade and the moon was shining when I was still pushing my cart. Even during the night it was difficult to sleep because of my aching hands and feet. My wife always helped me when the children were sleeping. I had been overworked in the office of Cornies in Ohrloff, but this physical work, now that I was over sixty, was more difficult. By the time fall came, I had planted a thousand mulberry trees. I planned to start a silk industry. This was made impossible because a disease spread among the silk cocoons. However, after I had imported some Japanese cocoons, I was more successful.

At this time I became tired of life, not so much because of the hard work, but because of the evil intentions of people which pierce my heart and make me shudder when I think of it. The village, Einlage, which I had helped and sacrificed for so much during my first stay, seemed now to be ready to finish me off. During the last ten years, I am enjoying peace, not because of a noble sense, but because of fear on part of the neighbors. Meanwhile, certain events have changed local politics. The constant opposition to the rigid orders and firm instructions which could not be enforced through physical punishments, finally broke the mighty ruler, Cornies, and he passed away. His excellency, von Hahn, who was the president of the *Fürsorge-Komitee*, turned his post over to his excellency, Baron von Rosen.

Public Life

This change gave a breathing spell to our community and *Oberschulze*, Jakob Bartsch, approached me with certain propositions. The successor of Cornies, Philip Wiebe, his secretary and son-in-law, did not manage, in spite of his good characteristics, to temper a despotism with the proper amount of humanism. This was even less the case with our chairman, Siemens. Great protests were registered at Molotschna and Chortitza. Philip Wiebe of the Molotschna offered Siemens money

to balance the budget. Our clever secretary, Gerhard Penner, foiled this plan and confusion arose. New struggles started between the *Oberschulze*, Bartsch, and the chairman, Siemens. They competed to win the confidence of our superiors, the inspector at Josephstal and the representative of the *Fürsorge-Komitee* at Grunau and also Baron von Rosen at Odessa. This competition in their administration resulted in a disturbance in the total brotherhood.

When they made no progress toward their objective, they turned to von Hahn in the *Ministerium*. I sensed this and shared my views with von Hahn and informed him in detail about the situation at Chortitza and the Molotschna settlements of which he was weary. Siemens went to him after a few weeks, was kindly received, and with formal recognition graciously dismissed. As a result, the outraged Siemens became ill and died. Wiebe, on the other hand, whose project to raise the cultural level of the Mennonite brotherhood was not accepted, joined the rank of common brethren. His patron, Baron von Rosen, died and his influence vanished.

Oberschulze Bartsch was now again on top. However, besides his pleasant manners, he was of little significance for the brotherhood. Nevertheless, he boasted with pleasure that he deserved some credit for the high income of revenues for which I had once worked hard. He now felt secure again also because the elder of the church was his brother-in-law and the flexible inspector, Biller, was his favorite. His nephew was interested in becoming the *Beisitzer*, but was not elected to his post because of his unfriendly dealing with people. I had a considerable part in these quarrels aiming to bring our community back onto a level of success. The above-mentioned usurpers did not have this objective. I now confronted the real problems. How could I face these problems in view of my sensitive feelings? I cannot act cynically in such a situation. I had told Bartsch before this that his action was to the disadvantage of the brotherhood. He disregarded my advice and I gave him a written statement about his lack of qualifications with the suggestion that he withdraw from the candidacy and nominate his nephew, Johann Siemens. If he would not do this, I continued, I would request that he would be removed from the position. He did everything possible to prevent my undertaking. However, my plans were accepted and Siemens was elected *Oberschulze*. Even the new president of the *Fürsorge-Komitee* was pleased and assured us a good future, but matters turned out differently.

The Crimean War began and demanded all possible support from everyone. All our Mennonite people had to furnish transportation to provide supplies on difficult roads. Our transports brought the wounded from the front into our homes. Our ovens baked the *Zwieback* for them and our hospitals cared for the unfortunate

in a Christian way. The wounded were grateful to their last breath. *Oberschulze* Siemens used all his strength without hesitation. The matters of the war took all his time. There was no thought of finding time to improve the conditions of the community. The state of war made it difficult for everyone in office. At last, the war was over, but unfortunately, it also marked the end of the life for Siemens. He died exhausted. In his place we now got the speculating businessman, Jakob Dyck. The above-mentioned president had been dishonest and got into legal trouble. In his place we had the Russian, Islanin, who in order to prevent making mistakes, did absolutely nothing.

The superiors succeeded each other rapidly. Islanin, who was assisted by Hamm, was succeeded by von Lisander, who surprised everyone with his unusual program of administration. He used the income from the raising of community sheep to pay the employers of all administrative offices of the settlements. He issued an order that the *Zentralschule* also be made available to students of the Lutheran settlements. He first used our educator, H. Epp, for this purpose and later appointed H. Ettinger. It also seemed like our *Fürsorge-Komitee* would soon be discontinued, which I agree is of little significance. This is enough about my active and passive experiences. I cannot continue my work for the well-being of my people. I have reached a stage of the horse which was still whinnying when it heard the sound of the trumpet, but was too weak to join in the battle.

Conclusion

Here follows a brief report about my property which is not much. On the piece of land which I cultivated with my own hands, I lived only two years. After this I bought the home of the former teacher, David Hausknecht, which was of the same size as mine. I now had a debt of 1400 rubles. I immediately removed all wild shrubs and planted fruit and mulberry trees. Laziness and debts were never characteristics which I tolerated. I accepted children of higher class families in my school, wiped out my debts, built a barn and a shed on a high foundation, and erected a high strong barrier which protected me against the rushing waters from the mountains which threatened to engulf us. The flood waters were the direct result of someone's jealousy. Some of the beds for the streams had been closed and only those which were moving in the direction of my house were left open. These were tricks of the mob.

I had planted *Kruschke* trees along the street. My son, Johann, had painted the fence . . . my fence, barn, shed, and garden were beautiful. My class of pupils was in good condition. I was happy and thought again of acquiring a vehicle, but something unexpected happened and ended my independence and made me

sad. A Friesen, formerly my pupil in the *Gymnasium* of Ekaterinoslav, now a good-for-nothing teacher, had reported that I was teaching and housing Russian pupils. The director appeared suddenly in my class and told me that I would have to take an examination which would qualify me to teach the Russian pupils. I declined even after he sent a teacher to me for this purpose. Consequently, I received notice from the highest school administration of Odessa that I was to pay a fine and was forbidden to give instruction. However, my son, Heinrich, who delivered goods for the *Gymnasium* spoke to the director and appeased him. He now had me examined and gave me a certificate which was submitted to the department of education. I received a certificate which permitted me to teach and keep German pupils, but not Russian pupils. However, I could not part from my well-paying "little lords", even after I had received this written statement. All of a sudden, the inspector appeared and I had to send my "little lords" to their homes, never to see them again.

"A misfortune never comes alone, it has company", says a saying. The teacher, David Hausknecht, had in his Swiss tradition, built his house without a solid foundation. I was compelled to build it more substantially. Since my income had decreased, I built as frugally as possible. Nevertheless, I had a debt of some several hundred rubles which made me unhappy. It not only deprived me of my former income, but it also broke my willpower. In this situation a good old friend from the Molotschna called on me. He grabbed my hand and said, "What are you doing, my old fellow?" I could not say much and crying is not my manner of doing things. My friend gave me more than enough money to cover my debt. It was indeed a nice token coming from my pupils at the Molotschna settlement. My educational field of labor is now limited to German children, including my own, with limited income. I now sit in a wheelchair, but still energetically teach a class of ten pupils.

My earthly wishes have reached an end. My pilgrimage has bowed me down. My longing for the rest of the eternal peace is great. The angel of the covenant, our Lord Jesus, will now soon lead me into the bliss of Canaan. To him be honor and glory in all eternity. Amen.

(Translators' Note: Heinrich Heese (1787-1868) died soon after he had written the last lines of this autobiography. A biography based on the original autobiography was published by David H. Epp in the Botschafter, 1910, entitled "Heinrich Heese und seine Zeit." This biography was reprinted in the Historische Schriftenreihe des Echo-Verlages, Buch 8, 1952, Steinbach, Manitoba. This English translation in Menonite Life is based on the original autobiography.)

Abraham Thiessen: A Mennonite Revolutionary?

By Cornelius Krahn

DURING THE TIME that Russian literary figures such as Turgenev, Gogol, Belinsky, Dostoyevsky, and others were raising questions about the social and economic conditions of the common people of Russia, a movement was born that promoted radical changes of the social and economic status of the underprivileged masses. Among these movements was the one known as *Narodnaya Volya*.

Landless Mennonites

At about the same time there happened to be a movement among the Mennonites of the Chortitza and Molotschna settlements to improve the deplorable conditions among the landless families of the settlements. The settlements had existed for about two generations. The number of inhabitants had increased, but the amount of land had remained the same. This created the problem of the "landless" or *Anwohner* who lived on the outskirts of the villages in poor shacks and had little income. Some of the documents pertaining to the struggle of this deprived group were collected by Franz Isaac,¹ who was active in an effort to improve their lot. He was not alone in this effort. Ultimately, the creation of a commission to remedy this problem resulted in a practice whereby the mother settlements would buy land at distant places for the establishment of daughter settlements consisting of landless Mennonites. This led to the spread and creation of new settlements in European Russia and even in Siberia.

One colorful and interesting champion of the cause of the landless in their deplorable state was Abraham Thiessen. So persistent and vehement was his fight for justice and a fair distribution of the land in the Molotschna settlement that he was arrested in April, 1874, and spent two years in prison in Siberia and the province of Moscow. When his appeals were without results, he succeeded in escaping and arrived in Zürich, Switzerland, in May, 1876. With the help of the Russian Consul in Berne, he made an appeal to the Russian government to be freed and to be granted permission to return. The response was that Thiessen had been exiled because he had promoted a migration to America, advocated mistrust in the government, and ultimately had escaped from Russia. All this made him all the more guilty.²

In a number of writings published abroad and in written appeals, Thiessen made it clear that he had been a peaceful citizen in pursuing his occupation as a farmer, businessman, and grain dealer. However, during a distribution of land in which he had been involved, he discovered some gross dishonesty among Russian and Mennonite men in leading positions. He revealed this and, as a result, was exiled and unjustly accused of promoting the migration to America. In a number of booklets he tried to point out the real reason for his imprisonment and the fate of the landless in the Mennonite settlements of Russia.

The Leningrad Archives also have a number of handwritten petitions by A. Thiessen addressed to the Taurida governor,³ in which he points out what his real concern was, how his interest in the landless originated, how he aimed to promote justice, and how he was imprisoned. The local government of Taurida managed to suppress the information and distort the case of Thiessen so that he could not return to Russia. Thiessen came to America and ultimately settled in Fairbury, Nebraska, where he raised a family. Some of his descendants still remember the story.

This article is in no way an exhaustive presentation and analysis of the problem which A. Thiessen faced in Russia that led to his imprisonment and exile. However, a few items from less known sources as well as some observations will be presented in order to call attention to problems worthy of a more thorough investigation.

Thiessen, with others, felt a burden in regard to the way in which middle class Mennonites of Chortitza and Molotschna handled the surplus land which the colonies had, while they ignored the fate of the landless younger generations living at the outskirts of the villages, seeking out a meager living where they could. Some of this material has been treated by a number of writers, such as Franz Isaac, Adolf Ehrh, David G. Rempel and others. But the information about Thiessen's share in this work has only recently come to the attention of scholars which will shed additional light on this case. Significant is the correspondence which Thiessen submitted to the *St. Petersburg Herold* (Petersburg) in 1886. This is a rich and significant source which supplements the

writings and petitions he submitted to the Taurida authorities in 1871.

Fighting for Justice

From his articles to the *Petersburger Herold*⁴ we learn that a petition was submitted to the General Adjutant Selenoi already in the 1860's in which attention was called to the fact that the surplus land was not being distributed among the landless Mennonite population. This petition was forwarded to the tsar (Petersburg) who on February 14, 1886, approved the proposal of the Domestic Ministerial Office which read as follows: "All land of the settlements not occupied by settlers is at once to be distributed among the landless Mennonites who have their own homes. This distribution is to be executed by a commission chosen by the representatives of the settlement. Any objection to the distribution must be submitted within two weeks. If there is no appeal forthcoming, the distribution of the land is to be considered legal."

This seems fair and should have caused no problems. However, most of the surplus land was rented by prosperous Mennonite farmers, some of whom again sublet it to the landless for a higher rent. The income thereof was used for the administrative, economic, and cultural promotion of the settlement. Heinrich Heese, whose autobiography appears in this issue, refers repeatedly to this practice already in operation in the first decades of the settlement. The major objectors to the proposal and law approved by the highest authorities thus came from the prosperous renters and the well-to-do farmers (*Vollwirte*). That they

Abraham Thiessen. Picture taken in Petersburg during one of his trips. (The photograph was made available by Mrs. A. A. Dick, a niece of Thiessen.)



could stop legal action was due to the fact that they, at times, found cooperation and help in the office which was in charge of the welfare and administration of all German settlements in Russia, including the Mennonites.

The renters contacted H. Ettinger, the chairman of the *Fürsorge-Komitee* (Guardians' Committee), requesting that at least ten thousand dessiatines of land remain undistributed and available for rent. Ettinger inquired about this matter in writing on August 10, 1868, at the Department of the Royal Domains. The response was that, according to the law, the land had to be distributed immediately. Now a map and a Proposal for the distribution of the land was worked out and presented to Selenoi for approval. The fifty-six villages of the Molotschna settlement had approved the project and thus it had legal status since December 1, 1869. However, according to Thiessen, Ettinger did not submit the map nor the detailed Proposal, but instead made a falsified presentation to the Department of the Royal Domains on September 13, 1870. He reduced the number of landless families, as well as the land available for distribution. One thousand two hundred and sixty-six families received only twelve instead of sixteen dessiatines each, while 297 received no land. The intention was to retain a large amount of land for prosperous renters. Ten thousand dessiatines still remained in the hands of the renters.

According to Thiessen, the 1563 landless families chose Franz Isaac, a member of the above-mentioned Commission who had worked out the Project, and Thiessen to present this case. Isaac was among the 1266 "fortunate" who received twelve dessiatines of land and Thiessen belonged to the 297 who received nothing. When Isaac heard that he had been chosen to continue the struggle against the "establishment," he is supposed to have said: "The throne of God is high up and the emperor is far away. I cannot and will not be unfair to my family in defending a cause in which government representatives lead a struggle of life and death against us. In order to be consistent, they are forced to do so after they have taken the first wrong step." Thus Thiessen was left alone. In May, 1870, he had an interview with Selenoi and found out that the Department of Royal Domains had neither received the proposed Project of land distribution nor the map. He was told to remain in Petersburg until they had clarified this matter. A few days after this, Selenoi had a stroke and the director, Baron Medem, told Thiessen that they would request a response from the *Fürsorge-Komitee* in regard to Thiessen's petition. Nothing happened until Count Valuyev became director of the Department of Royal Domains in 1873.

Between Russia and America

When Thiessen appeared in his office, he found out that Ettinger and the prosperous Mennonite land rent-

ers had denounced him as a scoundrel because he had enticed the people to "rebel" against the government. Valuyev simply said, "The accusations against you are severe". In response to this Thiessen said, "I am being denounced and accused because more than fifteen hundred of my brothers have been cheated out of ten thousand dessiatines of land which was given us by the tsar and the proof thereof can be found in the office of the *Fürsorge-Komitee* where it has been lying for four years".

In January, 1873, A. Thiessen, Isaak Fast and Jacob Wiens received an invitation to see Ettinger. After he had listened to the accusation of Thiessen, Ettinger said that Thiessen's arguments were based on a lie since there was no such Project and map in existence. After an argument, Thiessen finally pulled out of his pocket a copy of twenty-four pages representing the Project and the map which Ettinger claimed did not exist. Thiessen had managed to obtain a certified copy from the office of the *Fürsorge-Komitee* of which Ettinger was the director. The latter turned pale and stuttered some words in French. Thiessen and his friends were excused and asked to come back the following day. After a sleepless night, they appeared again and were told that the Project and map would be forwarded to Petersburg and were dismissed. Thus Thiessen and his friends went to Petersburg where they were told that the papers were being sent to the governor of Taurida. When Thiessen arrived at the governor's office, he was surprised that the papers did not include the proposed Project and map. He now intended to go back to Petersburg, but was suddenly arrested and kept in prison without any charge or given reason for two years. Then he escaped and went to Switzerland and ultimately to the United States where he lived in Fairbury, Nebraska.⁵

After his escape from Russia, Thiessen arrived in Zürich on May 15, 1876, where he published a pamphlet about *Die Lage der Deutschen Kolonisten in Russland* and *Ein Rätsel, oder die Frage: Weshalb war ich vom Jahre 1874-76 in Verbannung?* Thiessen must have proceeded to the U.S.A. soon after his arrival in Switzerland. In Nebraska he found friends and relatives among the *Kleine Gemeinde* members at Jansen.

Thiessen remained in contact with his brethren in Russia and did not give up hope to help the landless. In the summer of 1887 he went to Russia, stopping in Berlin. Here he published his pamphlet entitled *Die Agrarwirren bei den Mennoniten in Süd-Russland*, which he had completed on June 10, 1887. In this pamphlet he optimistically reports about the expected positive outcome of his plea in Petersburg. He relates that he has printed a thousand copies of this twenty-four page booklet and that he is sending copies to all high officials in Petersburg and other places, along with seven hundred signatures of the petitioning landless Mennonites. He is expecting a speedy execution

of the royal and ministerial orders of February 13 and 24, 1870, under Numbers 1349 and 1534, so that the Taurida governor will be forced to carry through the order of the Senate II. Department of December 30, 1885, Number 249. Optimistically Thiessen concludes that he hopes that within a year everything will have been brought to a successful conclusion. If not, he would despair in regard to the future of Russia. "Justice will be done to your case", are Thiessen's concluding words.⁶

After his return to the Ukraine, Thiessen contacted the American Embassy. He was now an American citizen. He also contacted the local Russian authorities, since he had left Russia as a fugitive. After this, he contacted the members of the Commission in charge of the problems pertaining to the landless. Thiessen got in touch with the Commission of petitions headed by General von Richter, chief of the Royal Headquarters, who promised him to do his utmost in establishing justice. First of all, von Richter inquired at the Department of Public Domains in regard to the original documents consisting, among other things, of the Project and a map. They could, however, not be located. It was assumed that they were never sent from Odessa to Petersburg. However, a notarized copy was procured and found as sufficient evidence. In a report published in the *St. Petersburger Herold* dated November 10, 1886, hope was expressed that this document would be presented to the tsar and a favorable action would be soon forthcoming.⁷

P. M. Friesen relates that Thiessen was soon expelled by the Russian government without achieving anything in behalf of the landless.⁸

Final Appeals and the Press

The files, pamphlets, and other bits of information indicate that A. Thiessen was an unusual person. There are, however, many questions which cannot be fully answered on the basis of available information at this point. Among other things is the question of why the contemporaries of Thiessen, who fought with him for the same cause or who opposed him and wrote about the matter, hardly ever refer to him. Franz Isaac—he is supposed to have been on the same commission as Thiessen and is quoted by the latter—in his collection of original sources makes no mention of Thiessen. P. M. Friesen, in his voluminous history of the Mennonites in Russia, has little to say about him. Did Thiessen become such a "hot potato" in the Mennonite communities that no one in leading and responsible positions wanted to have anything to do with him? What about the writers of the several hundred letters that Thiessen referred to? Were all of them of the landless? That must not have been the case. The *Petersburger Herold* printed a letter in which a *Vollwirt* (well-established farmer) in the name of

many others praises Thiessen and laments the fact that he and many other well-to-do farmers had been persuaded to contribute twenty-five rubles to help in the fight against Thiessen's petitions. According to Thiessen, a large amount of money and ham were collected by the opponents and taken to Odessa to H. Ettinger of the *Fürsorge-Komitee* in order to bribe him to counteract Thiessen's efforts.⁹

Thiessen claims that many of the Mennonites who left Russia for America during the years that his struggle was on did so because, as landless, they lost all hope for justice and the acquisition of land. He even goes on to say that the question of nonresistance was for many not a real issue. This, to say the least, is an issue which must either have been completely lost sight of in the minds of those who came to this country and later lost sight of it, or it was overemphasized by Thiessen.

The accusations of Thiessen and also of H. Heese against some of the responsible leaders of the Mennonite settlements, such as the *Oberschulzen* and even the leaders of the church, not to speak of the various Russian directors of the *Fürsorge-Komitee*, mostly with German names, are a commentary throwing some new light, or at least new questions, on the desk of the historiographer of this period.

On his way to Russia Thiessen stopped in Berlin where he had *Die Agrarwirren* . . . printed. There he was shown the issue of the underground Russian paper *Narodnaya Volya* in which this revolutionary paper relates an incident pertaining to the Mennonite struggle for justice in case of their landless people. Thiessen, in reviewing this report, found it objectionable that this Mennonite struggle was referred to as a "purely nihilistic action". This would indicate that Thiessen did not belong to the radical revolutionary movement of Russia represented in *Narodnaya Volya*.

Of interest, however, is that Thiessen reports about, what seems like a modern march of protesters in a Mennonite community in 1885. The landless farmers had to pay rent for the communal land for the pasturing of their few cows. They were unable to pay the rent and objected to it because this land really had already been officially designated to be used by the landless. The community was now having an auction to sell the cows of the landless who declined or were unable to pay the rent for the pasture. When the banner with the inscription "In the name of His Majesty" of the marching Mennonites went up, the Russian neighbors came to aid and the officers of the law had to retreat. As a result thirty-three of the landless Mennonites had to appear in court, but all were freed. The petition of the thirty-three in regard to their need of land received a favorable hearing in Petersburg, but the distribution of the land was not carried out locally.

There is another item of interest. The revolutionary

Narodnaya Volya took delight in the "exposure" of the Mennonite *kulaks* who were exploiting the Mennonite proletarians. They hailed Thiessen and were ready to include him in their ranks in the class struggle. There is, however, no evidence that Thiessen was pleased by this reference to him. On the other hand, he reprinted it in one of his booklets. We can take note of the fact that the commonly used word, *kulak*, in the days of the Russian Revolution, was already in use at the time of the *Narodnaya Volya* and the struggles of the landless Mennonites (1887).¹⁰

Biographical Notes

Abraham Thiessen was born on November 1, 1838, and died on May 7, 1889. His first wife died in Russia and Thiessen sent his son, John A., along with Peter Thiessen to Jansen, Nebraska, where he stayed in the home of John P. Thiessen until his father, who was imprisoned in Russia, also arrived. Peter and John Thiessen were Abraham Thiessen's brothers. After his arrival Abraham Thiessen married Anna Heidebrecht and they lived on a farm about a quarter mile west of the town of Jansen. From the second marriage, there were three sons, Herman, Henry, and Peter. The latter died as a child. Henry died when he was fifty and Herman died in Long Beach, California, in 1967. He is survived by his wife and two grandchildren. Abraham Thiessen's oldest son, John A. Thiessen, lived in Los Angeles where he observed his golden wedding anniversary in 1939.

Abraham Thiessen developed a silk industry on his farm near Jansen. The Marion County *Anzeiger* of July 22, 1887, carried an article about the silk industry of Peabody, Kansas, and also a letter by Abraham Thiessen which indicate that he was well informed about this industry and its problems in the United States. The big industries made it difficult for the small ones to survive. The same source related on October 23, 1887, that Abraham Thiessen had become the manager of the Peabody silk station. It was hard for him to give up his farm and come to Peabody. Evidently, even Thiessen could not keep the industry alive. It was soon closed. Thiessen returned to his farm in Nebraska where he died on May 7, 1889. He was buried on his own farm near a mulberry hedge. He was a member of the *Kleine Gemeinde* which had founded the Jansen community.¹¹

The Significance of Thiessen

Reference should be made to another source of information. P. M. Friesen speaks of A. Thiessen as a resident of Neuhalbstadt and as a well-known and strong promoter of the cause of the landless Mennonites. He also states that he was a man of great talent and a child of the *Kleine Gemeinde* which excommunicated and banned him because he had made a financial contribution to a Bible society. This treatment,

according to Friesen, drove him to atheism and materialism and to the destruction of the *Kleine Gemeinde*, of which neither branch nor stump remained in Russia. He relates that Thiessen fanatically promoted the migration to America and that he had severed all relationships to Christianity.¹²

This statement would almost indicate that the "well-known" Thiessen was not too well-known to P. M. Friesen who was otherwise quite well informed. It is such statements as Thiessen's "fanatical promotion" of the migration to America and his alienation from Christianity that do not seem to find verification in other sources. That he destroyed the *Kleine Gemeinde* is not correct because it continued to exist in Canada, Nebraska and Kansas. In fact, Thiessen lived near the *Kleine Gemeinde* community of Jansen, Nebraska, for the rest of his life. If there was any primary cause that Thiessen lived for, it was the fate of the landless Mennonites in Russia.

In closing we must say that the efforts of Thiessen and others were not in vain. By the time Thiessen returned to Russia in 1886 to fight for justice in the Molotschna community, the situation had changed considerably. Maybe this explains, to some extent, why Thiessen's struggle is not fully recorded in the annals of Mennonite history. Some justice was gradually done. The landless families living at the outskirts of almost all of the original villages were given opportunity to join in the establishment of new settlements financed by the mother settlements. By the beginning of World War I the two mother settlements, Chortitza and Molotschna, had established some fifty daughter settlements throughout the Ukraine, in the Caucasus, along the Volga River and in Siberia and in Central Asia. The awakened conscience of the Russian Mennonite brotherhood and a new sense of responsibility

were back of this development.

Among the prophets and fearless fighters for the new dawn was A. Thiessen. No monument, book, or significant article has thus far been devoted to his life. Even if we are not certain to what a degree he actually did influence the cause of justice and Christian love in a community that had almost forgotten what this ingredient was, Thiessen belonged to the few who fought uncompromisingly, suffered, were arrested, imprisoned, and exiled because some branch of the tsarist government found them uncomfortable, to say the least. It is not by accident that A. Thiessen established his home near Jansen, Nebraska, named after Cornelius Jansen, who was "exiled by the tsar" because he was "enticing Mennonites to migrate to America." This accusation is also found in the records pertaining to A. Thiessen. He, however, denied this and wanted to be considered a champion for justice.

FOOTNOTES

The information in the article is based primarily on sources quoted. They consist of pamphlets written by Thiessen, the D. G. Rempel Collection, and some correspondence with the descendants of Abraham Thiessen.

1. F. Isaac, *Die Molotschnaer Mennoniten* (Halbstadt, 1908).
2. P. M. Friesen, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland . . .* (Halbstadt, 1911), p. 498.
3. Central State Historical Archives, "Fond", #381, "Dielo", #7813, pp. 60-63.
4. Leningrad Archives, *St. Petersburg Herold*, "Fond", #381, (1886), "Dielo", #15109, pp. 69-72.
5. A. Thiessen, *Die Agrarwirren bei den Mennoniten in Sued-Russland* (Berlin, 1887), p. 24.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *St. Petersburg Herold*, No. 302, p. 3, pp 3-5.
8. P. M. Friesen, *op. cit.*, p. 498.
9. *St. Petersburg Herold*, p. 1, No. 302, October 29, (November 10), 1886, *Beiblatt*.
10. A. Thiessen, *Die Agrarwirren . . .* p. 24.
11. Based on letters from Mrs. John A. Friesen, Fairbury, Nebraska, dated March 29, 1969; Mrs. A. A. Dick, Mountain Lake, Minnesota, of April 24, 1969; A. P. Schultz, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, January 10, 1967; and the notes gathered by James Juhnke from the *Marion County Anzeiger* (July 22, 1887; October 23, 1887).
12. P. M. Friesen, *op. cit.*, p. 498.

Arnold Dyck— the Mennonite Artist

By Jack Thiessen

BY ANY STANDARD of judgment, it must be conceded that H. Boeschstein is right in terming Mennonite verse "blatantly dilettante."¹ Arnold Dyck, a contemporary German-Canadian Mennonite artist, is a notable exception to the dearth in Mennonite letters. A master of observation, description and wit in both the High and Low German, Dyck has written numerous dramas, a *Bildungsroman* and several tales as well as some *Novellen* which he prefers to call *Rahmenerzählungen*.² When the *Steinbach Post*³ was still in his hands, Dyck penned a series of humorous insights which he titled

Belauschte Gespräche, depicting Mennonite rustic types swapping dialect yarns around a general store counter. Aside from several articles of recognition published in *Mennonite Life* in April, 1959,⁴ practically nothing has been done on a critical level on Dyck's works until this year.⁵ The Mennonite artist, A. Dyck, has realized more than anything else that Low German is more than a dialect, it is a way of life. It is this way of life which his writings breathe.

In his paper "Arnold Dyck: *Verloren in der Steppe*

—A Mennonite *Bildungsroman*”, Michael L. Hadley made the first serious study of Dyck’s artistry.⁶ *Verloren in der Steppe*⁷ is an autobiographical sketch of Dyck and his major work describing the development of the protagonist Hänschen in search of Hans during the Mennonite sojourn in Southern Russia. Hadley’s argument might best be summarized by quoting briefly from his paper.

Some have said that Dyck’s work has nothing whatever to say either to or about Mennonites; it is claimed that this collection of anecdotal incidents is necessarily of transitory value because of its being a fragment of one man’s view of an obscure situation which in turn involved a minority group. But what is striking about these judgments is that they are based upon the assumption that *Verloren in der Steppe* is merely a piece of Mennonite writing. It is this type of bland reasoning that has militated against the novel’s being recognized as part of the broader German tradition. What must be recognized is that while this work has its own distinctive character and ‘mystique’, it takes its rightful place in a genre peculiar to German literature, namely that of the *Bildungsroman*.

It is not the purpose of this paper to determine the validity of Hadley’s contention. However, in capturing the spirit of Dyck’s art Hadley has been instrumental in combating the sad charge that “this story is a jewel that would not have gone unnoticed in the larger world of High German letters if only it had been given a chance to be seen there. But, like all other works, Dyck published it modestly in *Selbstverlag*, and was content to have his own people know about it and read it”.⁸

The placid mystery of the lonely Russian steppes is probably best captured and described when Dyck touches up the completed picture of *Verloren in der Steppe* by reflecting:

In solchen Stunden wird der Mensch der Steppe stille, er vergisst den Alltag, seine Erdgebundenheit fällt von ihm ab, und Augen und Seele strebt dann in die Himmelwelt und holt sich von den Sternen Glück und Unruhe (Teil V, p. 35).

Or when Dyck acknowledges the beauty of the Russian voice and song:

“Gott, wo haben diese einfachen Menschen nur diese Sangesfreude und dieses Stimmgut her? Wuchs es ihnen wirklich nur in Mondnächten am Strassengraben? Oder hat die Natur sie für etwas anderes, das sie ihnen vorenthielt, entschädigen wollen!” (Teil VI, p. 56).

It could be claimed that Hans, the protagonist, is somewhat over idealized, one who can do no wrong and is punished once or twice for no reason at all. Yet his suffering, the suffering of extreme *Einsamkeit* of the artist, certainly traces tangibly a credible literary figure.

Hadley’s concluding observation that “there is an effortlessness in the narration which suggests the work

has almost written itself, and one cannot resist the speculation that perhaps Arnold Dyck was not always aware of a rigid plot or even a definite plan” is probably the highest tribute that could be paid to Dyck’s artistry.

In *Zwee Breew* (Two Letters), easily the most successful of his *Rahmenerzählungen* in the dialect, Dyck exploits the very raw material of the language to the best advantage. In this short story, as in no other work in the dialect, the claim . . . *eher könnte man behaupten, die Mundart sei die eigentliche, die “natürliche” Sprache und die Schriftsprache entstehe aus ihr als ein künstliches und ziemlich spätes Produkt der menschlichen Kultur*⁹ is substantiated. The story depicts a refugee woman in her mid-fifties who is sitting in a lonely cottage in the Canadian west. She is the victim of a terrible turmoil, paralleled by the raging turmoil of a prairie blizzard outside. The woman has lost all *Lebensinhalt* after hearing that her daughter, shortly before embarking on a trip to Canada, has been forced to return East. The trip was to achieve the aim of their mutual lives by reuniting them after twenty years of separation. On learning that her daughter is dead, the mother’s *Immigration nach Innen* is complete. Once more, she holds the doll Mascha, the symbol of the past, and then, realizing that there is nothing left to an existence in which she cannot play her destined role of serving others, she releases her hold on life.

In this narration, Dyck has fully utilized the evolution of the Low German as the vehicle of literary art. There is masterful dialogue and description: the physical setting of the blizzard, admirably and powerfully depicted, set against the inner struggle for hope, drawn with sensitivity, empathy and sympathy. The two conflicts are developed separately but concomitantly until they merge with all the pathos and inevitability of great tragedy.

In this short story Dyck succeeds in characterizing Mennonites. They are serene, purposeful, never demonstrative, yet always contesting their fate on the steppes or prairies. The artist who has visions of fleeing the steppes, yet always longs to be back when he is away from them, is merely saying what his people sense in their melancholy, enigmatic existence.

In his master tale of humor, *Dee Millionäa von Kosefeld* (p. 21), Dyck describes a primitive, kind-hearted Russian boor who performs menial tasks in a Mennonite settlement. The fate of Koschinj, the potential millionaire, takes a sudden turn when he is informed that he has fallen heir to a million dollars from a relative in the U.S.A., who has bequeathed the sum to Koschinj and his shrewish wife. As a result, Koschinj must make a visit to Odessa, which he is most reluctant to undertake.

* * *

Ommtje Koschinj stiepad sitj enn deed hee wull nich no Odass. Hee wisst nich, woa Odass wea säd’a, hee

wurd vebiestre, enn dee Isabon kunn meteens omstelpe, enn Jerje Pannasch äre Koo lach doch op Tjrepere, wää dee dann aufladre wurd, enn aul dee Spetzube rund om Kosefeld, enn etj weet aul njih, waut doa noch aules wea, jenoag hee wull njih, enn doamet basta. Oba hee musst. Daut Schultenaumt säd hee musst, dee Leera säd, hee musst, enn uck dee Betjse-Hiebatsche säd, hee musst, enn dee wurd'et je woll weete. Enn dee aulatoop tjraeje däm wadaspanstjen Millionäa schliesslich marood.

* * *

Old Koschinj was most reluctant and dug up excuses, he was not about to go to Odessa. He didn't know where Odessa was, he said, he would get lost and the train could suddenly capsize and Gerhard Penner's cow lay dying and who would skin it and all the thieves around Kosefeld and I don't know what else there was, in any case, he did not want to go and that was it. But he had to. The local authorities said he had to, the teacher said he should and also Mrs. Pants-Hieber said he should and she knew. And all of them together finally wore the stubborn millionaire down.

* * *

In Odessa exploiters capitalize on Koschinj's illiteracy. Making him sign with an X on the dotted line, they dupe him out of a million rubles. Koschinj and spouse return from a memorable trip that, they say, was far too luxurious to be comfortable. Immediately the local village boys crowd around to hear Koschinj's stories which he invariably relates to them. Odessa cannot measure up against Kosefeld, he says, concluding his grand adventure, and he happily proceeds to skin Penner's dead cow.

The works on which Dyck's reputation rests with the average Mennonite reader and which have gained him widespread recognition are the *Koop enn Bua* series. Koop and Bua, two hard-working *Struckfoarmasch* (brushfarmers) from Musdarp—a fictitious town south of Grünthal, Manitoba—decide to test their coffee-cup philosophy of life and set out on several trips. The first trip takes them to Herbert, Saskatchewan, and back to Musdarp in a Tin Lizzy; the second to Toronto via Chicago; and the third to Germany.

On returning from each trip Bua, a stout-hearted and barrel-chested man, relates humorous incidents to all and sundry who are gathered around the kitchen table, cracking sunflower seeds and listening to the adventurer's tales. Invariably Bua, in expressing Dyck's sentiments, strikes a reflective note that occasionally takes on truly grand dimensions.

The rustic Bua is easily the hero of the three trips. He is a courageous man of reserve, dispensing no foreign aid and asking for none. After he has resolved the complexities of his own life—which consists of mastering stony land, combating hordes of mosquitoes and rounding up his stray heifers—Bua is ready to face whatever life holds in store for him, on either

the physical or the metaphysical level. Yet he is drawn with great warmth and an exceptional sense of humor.

Dyck's types are *Urmenschen* who possess pleasant cunning and *Schadenfreude*. Yet they are more than that in their humorous make-up. Bua, particularly, perceives what is funny, amusing and ludicrous and no issue or observation, physical or metaphysical, escapes his ready eye without being quickly fitted into his wholesome frame of reference.

While Bua and his cronies on their journeys exclusively speak Low German, Bua always reverts to High German, biblical style, whenever an issue of formidable dimensions presents itself. Bua resolves issues by getting to the point. During one of his journeys, he insists that they all attend a Mennonite conference in the Niagara Peninsula, where he soon discovers the issue under discussion—conscientious objection—and he has his say.

* * *

"Ladies and Jentlemen," he begins. Then, correcting himself, he continues, *Liebe Brieder! Weils mich daus so vorkommen tut, dauss hier mit die Wehrlosigkeit waus los ist, waus festjemacht werden soll, dauss es nicht wieder so jeht wie im letzten Tjriejh, dauss unsre Junges erst lange im Busch im Verborjenen sitzen müssen, wo die Polis sie nicht finden kann, und wenn der Tjriejh dann ieber ist, dann kraufen (kriechen) sie hervor an die Offenbarlichtjeit und werden dann in den Jail jestetjt, meist bis ein neier Welttjriejh aunfangen tut. Ja, und die Junges von unsre rusche Nachbars, dauss heisst, die bauen sich jetzt scheene Heiser vor ihr Tjriejhsjeld. Und daurum soag ich, mit die Wehrloisgkeit, daus muss (Koop enn Bua faore nao Toronto, Volume II, p.7).*

* * *

Dear Brethren! Since it appears to me that there is something out of joint with this business of conscientious objection which has to be righted, so that we shall not repeat the experiences of the last war when our boys had to hide in the bush where the police could not find them and when the war was over then they crept back into the open and were thrown into jail where they stayed almost up to the next war. Yes, and the boys of our Russian neighbors, they were busily building beautiful houses from their war money. And therefore I say, this business of C.O.'s, it has to . . ."

* * *

At this point, the chairman interrupts Bua with the question, *Wie ist Ihr Name, bitte?* Bua, ruffled, continues, *Wie ihr Naume ist, meine Alte ihrer? Justina heisst die.* When he finally realizes the implications of the German polite form, he hastens, *O, Ihr meint mir. Ich heisse Jakob.*

Aside from the humor of the rustic-sophisticate encounter, Dyck lets his readers know through Bua that he is not one for conferences or large meetings. Bua's

suspicious of large gatherings are based on election meetings which he attended in his impressionable years, he claims. And, he muses, there was always considerable discrepancy between promise and fulfillment.

The biblical connotations in Bua's High German are evidenced by the following: *Jeich kommt die grosse Wissenschaft und wird dich voraus hinsetzen und du tust von deine Szähne plaupern wie die Heiden!* (*Koop enn Bua faore nao Toronto*, Volume II, pp. 58-59).

After relating their sea voyage to Germany, Bua is questioned about seasickness. His descriptive answer relating the misery of the malady is probably without parallel in any language:

* * *

Oho, njih Storm, njih seekrank! Froag disem mau mol. Isaak, vetal de Ommtjes, wo daut es, wann eena aul Plutz enn Läwa utjekoltjt haft enn de Dorm dann uck noch pertu hinjaraun welle. Etj woa ju saje, Noabash, dann woa eena mack aus 'ne dodje Pogg. Eena lijht op eine Prosch enn stänt enn kojinjat tweschenenn aus'n junga Hund, wann däm de Hupsfleaje unjanäme. Daut bruckt dann bloss to Moltiet tjlinjre, daut eena aun Äte dentje mott, kann kockhaulst eena uck aul, enn bold schulpst'et dann uck (*Koop enn Bua en Dietschlaund*, Volume I, p. 23).

* * *

Oh, no storm, no sea-sickness! Ask this fellow. Isaac, tell these fellows how it is when you have thrown up spleen and liver and you have trouble keeping your guts from following. Let me tell you, friends, then you're as tame as a dead frog. One lies on his bed and moans and groans as a young dog when the fleas get to him. As soon as you hear the dinner bell and you think of eating then you immediately let fly.

* * *

Watermelons, consumed and enjoyed by most Menonites, could have an ecumenical effect on healing the widespread schisms within the Mennonite church, Dyck implies.

* * *

Met Arbuse es daut gaunz waut Wundaboaret. . . . dann es daut gaunz eendoont, to woone Tjoatj wäa aum Sindach jeit, Noad-Tjoatj, Wast-Tjoatj, Süd-Tjoatj, Ost-Tjoatj, eendoont es uck, wo wäa jedeept es, Japs, Fluss, Schmaundkauntje—de Arbus, de jlittjt aules ut enn vereenijht aules. . . . Sull ons Voltj sitj mol welle 'ne Flagg toolaje, musst de witt senne met wieda nuscht doabowe aus 'ne scheene riepe Arbus. —Aumen (*Koop enn Bua faore nao Toronto*, Volume I, p. 63).

* * *

Watermelons have a strange effect—suddenly it is immaterial who attends which church, North church, West church, South church, East church, and it is also immaterial how one was baptized, by hand (sprinkling), in the river, by cream pitcher—watermelons

remove all differences and unite them all. If our people will ever choose a flag then it should be white with nothing at all on it except a good ripe watermelon. Amen.

* * *

On passing the American border, Bua accounts for Koop's foot ailment by explaining to the custom's official, "Chicken eyes, two pieces"—a literal enough translation of the German for corns (*Koop enn Bua faore nao Toronto*, Volume I, p. 38).

When he finds American cities exceeding his expectations, Bua resorts to catechism-lesson German, demanding of Koop in ecclesiastic style, *Wannca enn woa heet Schikaugo op, so antworste!* (*Koop enn Bua faore nao Toronto*, Volume I, p. 68).

Dyck has his characters take a breather when they suddenly run into a district with a church topped by a *Zippeldak* (*Zwiebelturm*). Obviously at home in the Russian world, he narrates:

* * *

Nich emma bloos tom Både, doa spazeede see uck, knackte Sot, enn en Russland drunke see doa uck Schnaups, tuschte met Päed, schloage sich enn leete sich 'et uck sest goot gone (*Koop enn Bua op Reise*, Volume II, p. 45).

* * *

Not only to pray but also to linger and chat, to eat sunflower seeds and in Russia they also drank liquor there, they engaged in fights and in other kinds of fun.

* * *

On hearing the history of Casa Loma in Toronto, Bua holds forth the most solemn and timely message he has yet delivered to Koop:

* * *

Do you hear, brother Isaac. . . . *Aulso dän Tjessel wie die Engländer so 'ne grosse Schedd benennen tun, haut ein verrickter Mensch gebaut, weils er szu viel Jeld hautte. Davon kommt daus. Ich haub dir daus schon immer jesoagt, Bruder Isaak, haub ich jesoagt, sei nicht so vedoltt hinterm Mammon hinjaraun, wie daus in die Schrift steht, sonst wirst du auch noch verrickt und baust dann miteins auch so'n Tjessel. Und wenn dann die sieben beesen Joare kommen, wie bei die Agypter, und du kaunst die Tax njih bezahlen, dann nehmen sie dich daus gaunze Dings wejh, wie diesem Hendritj. Ich soag dir, so'n Tjessel, daus ist der reinste Turmbau szu Baubel, wo die Menschen auch grossmietig werden taten und in dem Himmel hineinbauen wollten* (*Koop enn Bua faore nao Toronto*, Volume II, p. 50).

* * *

Do you hear, brother Isaac. . . . This castle as the English call such a big shed was built by a crazy person who had too much money. This always happens. I have always told you, Brother Isaac, I have told you not to chase the dollar as is written in the Scriptures for otherwise you will go crazy and build such a castle,

too. And if the seven lean years come as with the Egyptians and you can no longer pay your taxes, then they will take the whole business away from you, like from this Henry. Let me tell you, such a castle is nothing but the tower of Babel where people also became too big for their hats and wanted to build into heaven.

* * *

When he comes upon the Isaac Brock memorial, Bua quickly grasps the entire situation and explains it to those of lesser aptitude by saying that such was in store for our Yankee friends when they crossed the river for a visit and forgot to leave their rifles at home.

Three other works which have introduced Arnold Dyck to practically every Mennonite Low German audience in the continent are his dramas *Wellkaome Forstei*, *De Opnaom* and *Dee Fria*. The first two depict humorous, albeit grossly exaggerated, episodes of Mennonite youths working in Russian forest camps. This camp labor is the stage for alternative service which the Mennonites chose to taking up arms.

Dee Fria relates a series of complications and happy accidents involving a suitor who has trouble shaking the wicker-basket jitters.

A final example may serve to illustrate the Twain-Thoma type of humoristic description. In his earlier work, *Verloren in der Steppe*, he describes his group of adolescent friends trying their first smoke in Tom Sawyer style:

... Isaak entnimmt dem Döschen zuerst ein Blatt von einem Abreisskalender (a religious block date calendar gracing the breakfast table of every self-respecting Mennonite family). Augenscheinlich aber nicht zur geistlichen Erbauung, denn ohne es zu lesen, faltet er es zweimal zusammen, reisst es durch und reicht Hans ein Viertelblättchen. Dann schütten sie sich da Tabak hinauf aus dem Döschen (Verloren in der Steppe, Volume IV, p. 24).

This type of humor, a presentation of the comical, or "life as it is"¹⁰ is Dyck's chief literary device. While it is characteristic of heavy Mennonite humor and the point-device of sophisticated writers might not be in place, it is nonetheless exceptionally successful.

A passage from *Verloren in der Steppe* reveals the first response to his artistic awareness. Dyck never fails his artistic sense and in his later works, particularly in the *Koop enn Bua op Reise* series, his artistic intensity mounts.

Denn mit Hänschen ist is so, wenn er abends, sobald es schimmer zu werden beginnt, sich in die Schlafbankecke lehnt und seine Augen durch den von der Dämmerung umfangenen Raum gehen lässt, dann beginnt es da lebendig zu werden, und wo er auch hinschaut, überall sieht er die wunderlichsten Bilder. Am Tischbein, wo die gelbe Farbe anfängt abzuschälen und der dunkle Grundton frei word,—und der Ofen-

tünche, die von der Wärme immer wieder zerreisst, und an der sich dadurch ein Gewirr von durcheinander laufenden Linien bildet,—in der Aderung der vor Alter gebräunten Balken und Bretter der Zimmerdecke,—am schweissbedeckten Fenster, an dem sich langsam Tropfen zu Tropfen findet, bis sie dann mit einmal abstürzen und klargezeichnete Zickzacklinien auf dem Glase hinterlassen—überall hockt es voll von den wunderlichsten Dingen und Gestalten. Für einen, der sie sieht, einen, der mit Hänschens Augen in die Welt schaut (Verloren in der Steppe, Volume I, p. 21).

Long since realizing that the Mennonite concept of theology, permeated as it is of late with American fundamentalism and resulting in sectarianism, has very little to offer by way of solution to the complexities of life today, Dyck ever so often has one of his characters reflect nostalgically on their station in life. He does this so artistically and suggestively that it often escapes those readers who look exclusively for slapstick humor and fail to realize that this is the medium employed to convey a *Weltanschauung*. In these moments of subtle prophetic reflection, the artist Dyck employs language to perfection. He realizes that superficial and dead weight as they may be, habits and dogmas—including religious ones—once acquired are difficult to shake and somehow constitute the human make-up. Thus Bua, after strenuously cycling through Germany reflects on losing his paunch,

* * *

Enn schliesslijh es je de Mensch doch so, wann'a eascht waut haft, dann well hee daut uck hole, enn wann'et 'n Buck es (Koop enn Bua en Dietschland, Volume II, p. 75).

And, after all, man is such that if he once possesses something, he wants to retain it, even if it be a paunch.

* * *

Dyck makes a Mennonite acquaintance in Germany, a spokesman of his linguistic tenet. Resting on a pile of hay in the Rhine area, the traveller's friend Schulz, philosophizes:

* * *

So es daut. Jie beid kome von'e aundre Sied Ead, wor'n 6000 Kilometa wiet. Enn meist 100 Joa senn daut, aus june Grotvodash emol ut Russland wajh-jinje enn onse Grotvodash doa bleewe. Meist 100 Joa hab ji manke Enjlända jesäte enn wi manke Russe; enn wann ons dann hia aum Rhein, medde manke Wienboaj meteens 'ne Kopitz Hei ver'e Feet tjemmt, dann mott wi doahan, ju uck wi, wiels ons daut Hei no waut Scheenet ritjt, ju uck ons. Enn wi sette hia dann enn råde toop-nijh englisch, nijh rusch uck nijh 'emol hoagdietsch, wi råde plautdietsch. No 100 Joa. Enn daut es meist, aus wann 100 Joa enn de 6000 Kilometa nijh jewast senn, oda aus wann 100 Joa enn 6000 Kilometa ons nuscht have done kunnt (Koop enn Bua en Dietschland, Volume II, pp. 60-61). That's the way it is. You two come from the other side

of the earth about four thousand miles away. And it's almost one hundred years ago since your grandfathers once left Russia and ours stayed there. For almost one hundred years you lived among English people and we among the Russians; and if here by the Rhine we suddenly see in the midst of vineyards a pile of hay we make for it, you as well as me because the hay smells good and familiar to us all. And here we sit and converse—not in English, not in Russian, and not even in High German, but we speak Low German. After one hundred years. And it is as if one hundred years and four thousand miles have not been, as if one hundred years and four thousand miles have not been able to affect us.

* * *

Previously, Dyck has already noted that in Russia and Germany people sing joyfully and spontaneously. Why not in Canada?

* * *

Wo tjemmt daut wohl, daut'et bi ons tus njih sowaut jefft? (*Koop enn Bua en Dietschlaund*, Volume II, p. 61).

Why is it that we do not do this at home?

* * *

He approaches the theme of harmony—or lack of it—again when he describes the architecture:

* * *

De Jebieda sage aula so olt enn so, aus wann de njih von Mensche jebut weere worde, aus wann de doa ut'e Ead jewosse weere, so aus de Beem rundom (*Koop enn Bua enn Dietschlaund*, Volume II, p. 35).

* * *

The buildings all seemed so old and not built by human hands but to have grown from out of the ground like the trees around them.

* * *

The Mennonite artist, A. Dyck, has realized more than anything else that Low German is more than a dialect; it is a way of life. It is this way of life which his writings breathe. This is illustrated in the following account. On reflecting on the American mastery of creation by machine, whereby, however, all the magic of the essence of life is extinguished, Dyck reflects through Bua:

* * *

Saj wi mol so: Wie Amerikauna jleewe, wann wi ons 'ne ni'e Maschin utjedoct habe, saj wi 'mol, sone, tom bāta Mest op'm Laund veschmiete, dann jleew wi, wi habe waut jekunnt enn waut jedone, worāwa aule Welt sitj wundre enn fre'e sull. Wann etj dann oba so aus nu dise Gisela so tohea enn totjitj, wo se dise Jeschijhte von dām Münchhausen enn von dām Rautejripa vetalt, wo scheen ar daut jeit; enn woväl scheena haud ons daut jegone aus wi noch Schooljunges weere—enn wann etj mi dann saje mott, daut dise Rautejeschijht so aul 600 Joa vetalt woat enn de Lied tom Lache enn tom Roare brinj, wann etj daut so dentj

enn āwalaj, dann fang etj aun to jleewe, daut sone Jeschijhte de Mensche noch jrod so vāl Freid moake done aus ons Mest, etj wull saje, aus onse Mestmaschin (*Koop enn Bua en Dietschlaund*, Volume II, pp. 101-102).

Let's put it this way: We Americans believe that by thinking up a new machine with which to spread manure more effectively, we have discovered something about which the whole world should marvel and be glad. But if I listen and observe with which delight Gisela tells her stories about Münchhausen and the Rat Catcher; and how we would have enjoyed these stories as schoolboys—and if I reflect on how this story of the rat catcher has brought laughter and tears to people for six hundred years, then it begins to dawn on me that such stories provide as much joy as our manure, or our manure-spreader, as I was about to say.

* * *

The artist's reverence of life and nature is not strange to Dyck, and frequently, although briefly, he withdraws into a pensive mood to speak thereof. One example from Koop and Bua's first trip suffices to reveal the sentiment:

* * *

Soone Lied woare dann met eemol met Vewundrung en, daut heet, wann see nich grad von dee Sort senn, dee āwahaupt nuscht enwoare—woo erbärmlich weinig see doch von'e Welt enn vom Lāwe, en's Welt weete. Eck meen dee Welt enn daut Lāwe, wiet auf von Hiesa enn Gedrusch. Enn see woare uck met eenmol en, woo erbärmlich weinig see vom leewen Gott en'e Welt weete. Eck meen dān Gott, wietauf von Hiesa und Gedrusch. Waut see von am soolang gewisst, daut habe see aules von aundre Mensche. Enn daut es uck aules sea menschlich. Enn hia nu, en Sonneschien enn Kleedoft, bie Geschirk enn Gefleit, hia woare see met eenmol en, daut see uck 'mol waut ut easchta Haund von onsem Harrgott habe kenne. Enn see senn gaunz vewundat enn awarauscht, wooval deepa daut packt. Soo deep, daut see daut goanich met Wead saje kenne, enn see begriepe nu, daut uck keen aundra an daut haft met Wead saje kunnt (*Koop enn Bua op Reise*, Volume I, p. 36).

Such people are suddenly amazed to discover—that is, if they are not the kind who discover absolutely nothing—how precious little they know about the world and life in the world. I mean the world and life far away from houses and noise. And suddenly they discover also how pitifully little they know about the dear Lord in the world. I mean the Lord far away from houses and noise. What they knew about Him up to now had been handed down by other humans. And it certainly was only human, indeed! And here in the sunshine and fragrance of clover, during the humming and the buzzing, here they notice that they can have something firsthand from the Lord God. And they are startled and amazed how much deeper (much more

profoundly) this affects them. So profoundly that they are not capable of reproducing it with words and now they realize that no one else has been able to reproduce it with words, either.

* * *

Intrinsic in everything Dyck writes is the *Einsamkeit*, and *Verlassenheit* of the artist who is *heimatlos* in Canada. In capturing this mood, Dyck has indeed made a distinct contribution to German-Canadian letters.

If we accept Goethe's observation that *Die Gewalt einer Sprache ist nicht, dass sie das Fremdwort (das Fremde) abweist, sondern, dass sie es verschlingt* (Goethe, *Maximen und Reflexionen*), then Dyck's language is powerful indeed. Hadley makes a brief but appropriate reference to this when he writes about *Verloren in der Steppe* as a work written in High German (showing the influences of both Russian and Canadian sojourns) . . .¹¹

Among the numerous loan-words Dyck uses—chiefly to augment humorous effects—are words taken from Slavic—such as, *prost*, meaning ordinary or vulgar, *Plemmenitj*, meaning nephew, and *Beschtsaund*, meaning plot of land where melons were grown; from Yiddish—such as, *Baulabess*, meaning canon or heavy rifle, and *Yankel*, meaning a dandy; from English—such as *Koffeeschopp*, *aunketche* (to catch on) and *Schortcutt*.

Dyck is not at his best when he becomes involved in polemics which give rise to didactic proclamations. In Volume V of *Verloren in der Steppe* (pp. 38 and 39) is a passage which relates how Warwara Pawlowna, the Russian teacher in Hänschen's village, finding in the young boy an understanding listener, harangues him with the entire scale of Russian-German-Mennonite differences. While the incident is depicted with exacting honesty, it somehow seems out of place and lacks the artistic *Abstand* which Dyck otherwise always manages to uphold. These moments

of undeclared in-fighting are self-defeating, and when he lifts a warning finger, the web of storytelling wonder crumples, broken and tattered.

And so Dyck, through Bua, who carries on the largest part of all the narration, says:

* * *

Najo, Broda Koop, daut hast du nu woll so opp ver-eascht aules vetalt waut du von onse Reise vetale vullst. Enn wann dise Onkels noch mea weete welle, dann molte se aul froage (Koop enn Bua en Dietschlaund, Volume II, p. 115).

Well, Brother Koop, you have related everything there is to relate about our trips. And if these fellows would like to know more, they'll simply have to ask.

* * *

As the artist Dyck, unacknowledged, misunderstood and never known, adds plaintively in the last lines of his latest work, "*Koop enn Bua en Dietschlaund*": *Und wenn diese Herren (sprich: mein Volk) noch mehr wissen wollen, dann müssen sie schon fragen . . .*

FOOTNOTES

1. Hermann Boeschstein, "Is There a Canadian Image in German Literature?" Seminar, *A Journal of Germanic Studies*, Vol. III (1967), No. 1, p. 13.

2. Personal communication from A. Dyck to the writer.

3. "*Steinbach Post*", later "*Die Post*", was owned and edited by A. Dyck from 1928 to 1936.

4. Five articles in *Mennonite Life* on Dyck's seventieth birthday, *Mennonite Life*, North Newton, Kansas, U.S.A. Vol. XIV (April 1959), pp. 80-90.

5. Elizabeth Peters, "The Poet Arnold Dyck", an M.A. thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, 1968.

6. Michael L. Hadley, "Arnold Dyck: *Verloren in der Steppe*—A Mennonite Bildungsroman." The paper was presented to a seminar at United College, Winnipeg, in February 1967.

7. Arnold Dyck, *Verloren in der Steppe, Teil I*, Selbstverlag, Steinbach, Manitoba, 1944; *Teil II*, Selbstverlag, Steinbach, Manitoba, 1945; *Teil III*, Selbstverlag, Steinbach, Manitoba, 1946; *Teil IV*, Selbstverlag, North Kildonan, Manitoba, 1947; *Teil V*, Selbstverlag, North Kildonan, Manitoba, 1948; *Teil VI*, unpublished manuscript, sequential to the series I-V, but staged twenty years later.

8. Gerhard Wiens, 'Arnold Dyck at Seventy', *Mennonite Life*, North Newton, Kansas (April, 1959), p. 83.

9. Victor Schirmunski, *Die deutschen Kolonien in der Ukraine*, Moskau, 1928, p. 41.

10. Robert W. Corrigan, *Six plays of Chekov*. 1625 pp. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, N.Y.

11. Michael L. Hadley, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

The Mennonites in Prussia A Statistical Distribution

By Adalbert Goertz

WHEN KING FRIEDRICH II, the Great (*Der Alte Fritz*) of Prussia acquired West Prussia during the first partition of Poland in 1772, the first systematic census of Mennonite families was taken¹. An additional census listing all Mennonite heads of families by name and village is known for 1776². The *Populations- und ehmaligen Propagationstabellen* for 1774-1798 give annual numbers of married, born, deceased and com-

munion-sharing members of the Mennonite faith³. The *General-Nachweisung* of 1789 again lists the Mennonite heads of families by villages, and is of high genealogical importance as is the one of 1776². A copy of this 1789 census has been preserved in the Mennonite archive of the Montevideo church, Uruguay. During the 1795 Prussian census a number of questions and columns were added to the census table, among

them a detailed table on the Mennonites. The finance commission appointed by King Friedrich Wilhelm III may be regarded as the first census bureau of the Prussian states. By royal order of March 13, 1798, the Statistiscal Table of Cities received a few more columns (e.g. foreign colonists, Mennonites, etc.).

The statistical papers by Leopold Krug marked the establishment of the Statistical Bureau of 1805 in Berlin. The population table designed by J. G. Hoffman had 352 numerical columns and contains also data on persons enjoying special privileges due to birth and religion (noblemen, Quakers, Mennonites, Jews, etc.). The census table of 1810 designed by J. G. Hoffman distinguished five separate religious groups (Lutherans, Reformed, Roman Catholics, Mennonites, Jews), and gives the numbers of church buildings and ministers. The first data for *Kreise* (counties) are available for 1816 (partly with errors) and 1821⁴. The statistical survey of the Danzig district for 1820 is unique in listing the number of Mennonites in all villages⁵. Since 1822 it was decided to replace the costly annual census by triennial censuses. Table I gives the total number of Mennonites in all provinces of the Prussian kingdom. Table II gives the number of Mennonites by districts (*Regierungsbezirk*) from 1816-1864. Of special interest here is the number of Mennonites in the first four districts of Königsberg, Gumbinnen, Danzig, and Marienwerder. The numbers for Frankfurt an der Oder reflect the church in the Netzebruch (Brenkenhoffswalde and Franzthal) and the emigration to Volhynia in 1834. The numbers for Oppeln in Upper Silesia (*Kreis Kosel*) are puzzling, since no Mennonites are known to have lived there during that time. The numbers for the Rhineland reflect the statistical development of the Krefeld (Düsseldorf) and Pfalz (Koblenz and Trier) congregations.

Table III gives the number of Mennonites by districts (*Regierungsbezirk*) from 1867-1925 reflecting the newly acquired provinces of the 1866 war. Two major Mennonite groups were added in Friedrichstadt (Schleswig) and East Friesland (Aurich). For the Danish period several figures for Schleswig are known: 229 (1835), 202 (1840), and 254 (1845) Mennonites, respectively⁶. At this time, it should be pointed out that the term Prussia in the 19th century has two meanings: It either applies to the province of Prussia in the East of the kingdom (East and West Prussia with the districts of Königsberg, Gumbinnen, Danzig, Marienwerder) or it applies to the kingdom as a whole comprising the provinces of Prussia (East and West), Brandenburg, Pomerania, Posen, Silesia, Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein (since 1866), Hanover (since 1866), Westfalia, Heese - Nassau (since 1866), Rhineland, Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. The American Mennonite literature does not always distinguish these two meanings of Prussia clearly.

Most of the Kleve district (Table II) merged with

the Düsseldorf district after 1817, and the southern parts of the Königsberg and Gumbinnen districts formed the new Allenstein district (Table III) after 1900. Because most of the Mennonites lived in the province of Prussia (East and West), data are also given by counties (*Kreise*) in Table IV. As one looks at these census tables, one cannot help admiring the details available in the Prussian census. No other country seems to have produced similar details on Mennonites as early as the ones in Prussia. In fact, later Prussian censuses have not included the Mennonites as a separate religious group, but rather included them among miscellaneous Protestant churches (after 1905). The reason for this neglect may be understood by the change of the legal status of Mennonites in Prussia. Before the establishment of parliamentary democracy in Prussia (1850), the relation between the Mennonite church and the state was basically a personal relationship between the Prussian king and the church, and the king was anxious to know how many religious groups enjoyed special privileges in his state. Thus, there was a need to include the privileged groups in the census. The rising Prussian parliamentarism was not willing to extend the royal privileges into the new era, and, therefore, the new government did not feel the need to know the number of privileged minority or religious groups. Thus, the decline of the details of data on Mennonites in the Prussian census reflects the decline of the Mennonite privileges in Prussia. The new democracy did not care about minority groups asking for special privileges. The modern census in Germany even goes as far as not to ask any question relating to the Mennonite faith for the forthcoming census of 1970, although it will distinguish between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics and "others."

FOOTNOTES

1. *Spezial-Consignation of 1773; Mennonitisches Lexikon*, vol. 4, p. 235.
2. Cf. G. E. Reimer, *Ein Mennonitenverzeichnis aus dem Jahre 1776*, in: *Danziger Familiengeschichtliche Beiträge* 5, 33-46 (1940); 6, 31-51 (1941); 7, 47-66 (1943); and K. H. Ludwig: *Zur Besiedlung des Weichseldeltas durch die Mennoniten*, Marburg 1961, pp. 159-269.
3. G. L. Reisz and Wadzek, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Mennonitengemeinden*, Berlin 1821, p. 331.
4. L. Krug, A. A. Muetzell, *Neues topographisch-statistisch-geographisches Woerterbuch des preussischen Staats*, vol. 6, Halle 1825.
5. *Uebersicht der Bestandteile und Verzeichniss aller Ortschaften des Danziger Regierungsbezirkes*, Danzig 1820.
6. *Tabellen ueber die nach der Allerhoechsten Resolution vom 24. Mai 1834 in den Herzogthuemern Schleswig und Holstein am 1. 2. 1835 vorgenommene Volkszaehlung*, Kopenhagen 1836; *Statistisches Tabellenwerk*. Hrgg. von der allerhoechst ernannten Commission, 1. Heft, Kopenhagen 1842; 2. Heft, Kopenhagen 1846.

Table I: Number of Mennonites in the Kingdom of Prussia

1816:	14,954	1822:	14,981	1840:	14,476	1858:	14,052	1890:	13,833
1817:	15,114	1825:	15,812	1843:	14,313	1861:	13,725	1895:	13,951
1818:	14,782	1828:	15,655	1846:	14,531	1864:	13,786	1900:	13,876
1819:	14,785	1831:	14,756	1849:	14,509	1867:	14,644	1905:	13,860
1820:	15,126	1834:	14,289	1852:	14,780	1871:	14,040	1910:	13,851
1821:	15,079	1837:	14,495	1855:	14,139	1880:	13,849	1925:	7,599

Table II: Number of Prussian Mennonites by Districts (*Regierungsbezirk*)

District (Reg. Bez.)	1816	1817	1821	1828	1831	1837	1843	1846	1849	1852	1855	1858	1861	1864
Königsberg	363	441	466	445	375	367	340	385	336	266	243	217	198	231
Gumbinnen	312	423	422	550	651	641	707	736	749	779	766	762	752	829
Danzig	9177	9122	9028	9486	8859	8682	8765	8750	8727	8782	8669	8618	8485	8349
Marienwerder	3320	3527	3238	3438	3194	3286	3046	3255	3158	3218	3015	2918	2683	2625
Posen	62	27	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	4
Bromberg	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	90	11	2	1	13
Berlin	-	2	5	-	-	} 10	6	1	} 15	7	19	13	17	55
Potsdam	160	57	42	6	2		-	-		-	1	1	17	5
Frankfurt/O	266	248	280	238	231		31	16		13	8	13	-	11
Stettin	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	3	9	25	23	27	16
Köslin	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	73	147	3	2	13	10
Stralsund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Breslau	-	9	80	-	1	-	1	11	2	38	14	7	5	45
Oppeln	202	219	280	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Liegnitz	-	1	11	-	1	1	12	-	-	-	3	1	2	6
Magdeburg	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	6	-	13	15
Merseburg	-	3	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	27	8	-	1	1
Erfurt	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	4	5	2	1	1	1
Münster	-	-	-	-	1	4	8	6	10	13	17	38	32	32
Minden	24	25	29	58	63	44	49	49	37	66	71	70	71	76
Arnsberg	96	101	78	115	72	44	50	41	43	30	51	48	26	26
Koblenz	305	263	292	315	321	260	226	213	235	226	224	214	205	231
Düsseldorf	708	715	835	895	863	931	908	917	967	923	861	962	1052	1035
Köln	-	2	3	2	4	15	33	25	20	17	8	7	12	24
Trier	16	16	30	99	113	174	140	125	119	121	122	133	127	149
Aachen	2	2	3	4	3	2	3	1	-	3	1	1	-	2
Kleve	138	126	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Sources: 1816, 1821: Krug, Leopold, *Neues topographisch-statistisch-geographisches Wörterbuch des preussischen Staats*, vol. 6, Halle 1825, pp. 386, 388, 118 ff. 1817: J. G. Hoffmann, *Übersicht der Bodenfläche und Bevölkerung des preussischen Staates*, Berlin 1818 p. 51; 1819 pp. 49-56.

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Table III: Number of Prussian Mennonites by Districts
(Regierungsbezirk)

District (Reg. Bez.)	1876	1871	1880	1890	1895	1900	1905	1925
Königsberg	239	193	237	184	191	191	193	251
Gumbinnen	712	789	791	811	841	737	691	491
Allenstein	-	-	-	-	-	-	43	40
Danzig	8256	8298	7979	7937	7892	7863	7862	x
Marienwerder	2664	2403	2369	2137	2148	2075	2113	3120
Posen	3	10	2	4	6	4	4	(24x)
Bromberg	13	12	16	35	26	17	25	
Berlin	53	59	87	187	187	208	228	599
Potsdam	21	10	14	58	108	159	182	144
Frankfurt/O	20	2	4	18	18	8	12	74
Stettin	8	7	3	9	17	16	9	40
Köslin	16	-	40	14	10	10	10	50
Stralsund	6	1	8	1	6	2	4	9
Breslau	13	10	19	16	23	39	21	128
Oppeln	-	-	1	-	1	5	4	10
Liegnitz	15	15	21	6	8	20	8	11
Magdeburg	10	3	8	17	24	10	23	105
Merseburg	5	13	1	2	3	6	19	62
Erfurt	10	6	7	4	2	5	7	9
Schleswig	187	154	159	165	184	182	228	227
Hannover	23	10	20	24	32	33	50	75
Hildesheim	8	7	2	3	10	11	15	29
Lüneburg	36	13	9	12	3	16	22	49
Stade	14	4	2	8	25	28	17	24
Osnabrück	15	13	38	35	28	20	22	34
Aurich	396	399	380	362	356	339	319	231
Münster	29	31	29	52	67	68	68	131
Minden	11	11	10	6	7	15	17	16
Arnsberg	22	17	15	19	20	31	29	159
Kassel	87	55	48	39	34	33	29	46
Wiesbaden	181	159	119	122	123	113	110	89
Koblenz	200	168	155	146	129	125	110	66
Düsseldorf	1092	1007	1140	1223	1240	1274	1200	1121
Köln	34	18	24	51	33	63	50	76
Trier	135	127	84	120	145	142	112	33
Aachen	2	6	8	6	4	8	4	5
Sigmaringen	3	6	-	-	-	-	-	21
Army out of country	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Waldeck-Pyrmont	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-

Source: *Preussische Statistik*, Berlin, vols. 5, 30, 66, 121 I, 148 I, 177 I, 206 I. The 1925 census excluded territories lost after World War I.

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Table IV: Mennonites in the Provinces of East and West Prussia by Counties (Kreis)

Kreis	1821	1849	1852	1855	1858	1861	1871	1895
Memel	28	12	8	10	5	7	1	-
Fischhausen	5	10	2	13	15	15	3	3
Königsberg-Stadt	222	126	121	110	80	77	60	79
Königsberg-Land	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	1
Labiau	17	1	1	2	1	-	1	-
Wehlau	5	5	2	7	22	15	1	2
Rastenburg	5	-	-	-	-	-	15	6
Friedland	2	1	-	1	-	2	15	1
Pr.-Eylau	10	4	12	5	4	8	5	3
Heiligenbeil	14	22	18	13	11	11	11	9
Braunsberg	36	44	42	30	29	32	17	10
Heilsberg	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Rössel	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	6
Allenstein	-	9	8	-	-	-	-	1
Ortelsburg	-	1	-	-	12	-	-	1
Neidenburg	-	1	2	1	-	1	1	3
Osterode	6	1	3	-	-	-	2	24
Mohrungen	35	19	6	7	5	9	26	19
Pr. Holland	81	80	40	44	29	20	35	17
Reg. Bez. Königsberg	466	336	266	243	217	198	193	191
Heydekrug	-	14	25	40	54	60	49	48
Niederung	323	445	449	457	423	397	438	617
Tilsit-Stadt	-	28	-	-	-	21	39	62
Tilsit-Land	99	239	272	239	256	230	223	91
Ragnit	-	21	29	24	21	23	24	10
Stallupönen	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1
Gumbinnen	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	3
Insterburg	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Darkehmen	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	-
Angerburg	-	-	-	-	2	9	6	-
Goldap	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Lyck	-	2	3	3	1	1	-	1
Lötzen	-	-	-	-	2	2	3	6
Sensburg	-	-	-	1	-	5	2	-
Johannisburg	-	-	-	2	-	5	2	-
Reg. Bez. Gumbinnen	422	749	779	766	762	752	789	841
East Prussia	888	1085	1045	1009	979	950	982	1032
Elbing-Stadt	2174	348	2105	2147	2117	391	405	511
Elbing-Land	-	1750	-	-	-	1684	1495	1283
Marienburg	5679	5525	5584	5437	5415	5343	5420	4979
Danzig-Stadt	629	482	458	474	481	459	487	608
Danzig-Niederung	486	565	571	533	540	544	420	291
Danzig-Hohe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80
Pr. Stargard	47	55	63	74	60	52	69	7
Dirschau	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	96
Berent	5	2	-	1	1	12	1	-
Karthaus	8	-	1	2	3	-	1	1
Neustadt	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	34
Putzig	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Reg. Bez. Danzig	9028	8727	8782	8669	8618	8485	8298	7892
Flatow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Graudenz	33	63	64	72	68	67	77	155
Konitz	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Deutsch Krone	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Kulm	752	735	742	692	627	580	507	378
Löbau	1	-	9	2	-	2	5	14
Marienwerder	420	396	349	365	348	332	321	323
Rosenberg	54	40	39	33	32	35	25	73
Schlochau	-	-	8	-	95	-	3	-
Schwet	1020	843	861	813	807	772	626	510
Strasburg	9	2	2	3	-	6	1	2
Stuhm	727	917	1011	888	800	759	716	571
Thorn	222	162	133	147	141	130	122	100
Briesen	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Tuchel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Reg. Bez. Marienwerder	3238	3158	3218	3015	2918	2683	2403	2148
West Prussia	12266	11885	12000	11684	11536	11168	10701	10040

Kurt Kauenhoven Bibliography

Selected by Victor Peters in Honor of the Author's 80th Birthday.

ON DECEMBER 15, 1968, Dr. Kurt Kauenhoven, of Göttingen, Germany, observed his 80th birthday. Surrounded by his family he received the well-wishes of numerous friends and colleagues. Kurt Kauenhoven was born in 1888 in Dortmund and attended school at Hildesheim and Dresden before enrolling at the University of Berlin. He graduated with a Ph.D. at the University of Königsberg (now Kaliningrad). A noted linguist, educator, and art critic, Dr. Kauenhoven spent most of his life, before retirement, teaching at the Felix-Klein Gymnasium in Göttingen. He is married to the former Edith Gehricke and has four daughters. The oldest daughter, Reinhild, is married to the Bethel College anthropologist, Dr. John Janzen.

For many years Dr. Kauenhoven was the editor of the *Mitteilungen*, a bulletin published by the Danzig Mennonite families of Epp, Kauenhoven and Zimmermann. He is also on the editorial board of *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter*, a journal published by the Mennonitische Geschichtsverein of Germany. Throughout the years Dr. Kauenhoven has written on a wide range of subjects and the following bibliography consists only of a selected list of articles dealing with the Mennonites.

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59. Die Sankt-Georgen-Bruderschaft zu Elbing und die Elbinger Mennoniten.

In: Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter, 25. Jg., Neue Folge, Nr. 20, 1968, S. 14-17.

Mennonite Research in Progress

By Cornelius Krahn and Melvin Gingerich

IN THE JULY, 1967, issue of *Mennonite Life*, we reported about numerous research projects including M.A. and Ph.D. dissertations. Preceding April issues since 1949 (except in 1961, 1963, 1967 and 1968 when they were in the July issues) contain similar information under the headings "Mennonite Research in Progress," "Mennonite Bibliography" and "Books in Review." Of special significance is the article entitled "Anabaptism-Mennonitism in Doctoral Dissertations" which appeared in the April 1958 issue. The listing of additional dissertations is being continued annually in this column. The editors of *Mennonite Life* will be pleased to receive information about research in progress and dissertations to be included in subsequent issues.

Doctoral Dissertations

Doerksen, John G., "History, Philosophy and Development of Mennonite Brethren Bible College," (Winnipeg, Manitoba), D. of Ed., University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, 1968.

Eskew, Harry, "Shape-note Hymnody in the Shenandoah Valley 1816-1860," Ph.D., Tulane University, New Orleans, 1966 (Includes Joseph Funk).

Habegger, David Luther, "A Study of the Mission of the First Mennonite Church of Upland; Historically, Currently, and Prospectively," D. of Rel., School of Theology at Claremont, California, 1967.

Holland, Robert, "The Hermeneutics of Peter Riedemann, Anabaptist Theologian and Missionary (1506-1556), with Reference to I Corinthians 5:9-13 and II Corinthians 6:14-7:1," Ph.D., Basel, 1965.

Jensma, Th. E., "Doopsgezinde zending in Indonesie," Ph.D., University of Amsterdam, 1968.

Martens, Helen, "Hutterite Songs: The Origins and Aural Transmission of their Melodies from the 16th Century," Ph.D., University of Columbia, 1968.

Melton, Jim, "Mental and Physical Health Conditions Among Amish," Ph.D., Ohio State University (in progress).

Miller, Wayne, "A Study of Amish Academic Achievement," Ph.D., University of Michigan (in progress).

Rechlin, Alice, "Geographic Study of the Old Order Amish Settlements of Northern Indiana," Ph.D., Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana (in progress).

Schepansky, Ernst W. "Die Mennoniten im Wirtschafts- und Kulturleben von Hamburg and Altona vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert." Ph.D., University of Hamburg (in progress).

Shenk, Stanley, "The Image of the Mennonites in American Novels 1900-1964," Ph.D., New York University (in progress).

Smith, Paul R. G., "Legal Aspects of the Amish School System," D. of Ed., University of North Dakota, Grand Forks (in progress).

M.A. Thesis

Grosjean, Ardis, "Rembrandt and the Mennonites," M.A., Stockholm University (in progress).

Hesselgrave, David D. "Anabaptists in England," M.A.,

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (in progress).

Nickel, Arnold, "The Pastoral Ministry in the General Conference Mennonite Church," S.T.M., San Francisco Theological Seminary, 1968.

Schnitzler, Nelle, "The Mennonite Historical Library," (Goshen, Indiana), M.A., University of Chicago (in progress).

Wilson, Edmond, "Anabaptist Historiography," M.A., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Waukegan, Illinois (in progress).

NORTH AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR DOCUMENTATION OF FREE CHURCH ORIGINS (NACDFCO)

At the Annual Meeting in New York, December 27-28, 1968, the NACDFCO planned its program for the year and thereafter. (About the background and general projects of the Committee, see the July, 1968, issue of *Mennonite Life*, p. 134 ff.)

The Executive Committee agreed on a dual publication project which is to consist of 1) a topically arranged *Series of Paperbacks* consisting of selection from writings of early leaders of "Free Churches" for college and graduate school use, and 2) a *Series of Scholarly Editions* of writings by Free Church leaders.

I. THE PAPERBACK SERIES

The Paperback Series is to consist of books, probably of 156 pages including an introduction. The texts are to be selected from the writings of Free Church spokesmen and arranged in accordance with the title and outline (prospectus) of each book. Editors have prepared the prospectus and are selecting the documents. They will prepare them for print in cooperation with the Executive Committee and the members of the Sub-Committee for Paperbacks. The following is a proposed list of titles.

Some Proposed Titles of Paperbacks

Editors, Franklin H. Littell, Chairman of Committee for Paperbacks; George H. Williams, Chairman; and Cornelius Krahn, Executive Secretary of NACDFCO.

1. The Christian Dialogue
2. The Two Kingdoms (Church and State)
3. Faith, Reason and Scriptures
4. Believers' Baptism
5. The Witness and Mission of the Church
6. The Theology of Suffering
7. A Theology of History (Nonconformity, etc.)
8. The Nature of the Church
9. The Eschatological Hope
10. The Church of Pilgrims
11. The Covenantal Marriage
12. Christian Communism
13. The Conscience (16th Century)

II. WRITINGS AND SOURCES

(Some in cooperation with the Institute of Mennonite Studies)

1. Caspar von Schwenckfeld - Norman Baxter
2. Pilgram Marbeck - Walter Klaassen and William Klassen
3. Czech Reformation Writings - J. K. Zeman
4. Hans Denck - Clarence Bauman
5. Balthasar Hubmaier - John Howard Yoder and William Estep

6. Dirk Philips - William Keeney

7. Dutch Anabaptism (Basic Sources) - Cornelius Krahn

III. FOUR PROJECTS AND COMMITTEES

1. Free Church Sources, John S. Oyer, Chairman
2. Translation, C. J. Dyck, Chairman
3. Monographs, Clyde L. Manschreck, Chairman
4. Paperbacks, Franklin H. Littell, Chairman

MENNONITE URBANISM IN CANADA

The July issue of *Mennonite Life* was devoted to research pertaining to the urbanization of Mennonites in Canada. Numerous areas, such as Winnipeg, Vancouver, Edmonton, and Toronto were selected and studied by Canadian Mennonite scholars. The findings were presented at an Urban Study Conference in Winnipeg (1968) which was made possible by a grant from the Canada Council. The director of the Study Conference and project was Leo Driedger, professor of Sociology at the University of Manitoba. This constitutes a pioneer research project to be continued in Canada and worth imitation by scholars in other countries.

INSTITUTE OF MENNONITE STUDIES

The Institute of Mennonite Studies is located at Elkhart, Indiana. It has an *Executive Council* consisting of members of the Joint Administrative Committee and the Faculties of the Associated Seminaries of Elkhart-Goshen. This Council plans together with the Directors the activities in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement. Appointments to the *Advisory Council* are made by the Joint Administrative Committee or the IMS. The role of the Council is consultative.

The present Director is Cornelius J. Dyck and the Associate Director is John H. Yoder. In the Annual Report (June 15, 1968, p. 3) twenty-eight projects are listed which were initiated by IMS during its ten years of activity. Among them are the preparation and publication of the *Bibliography of Anabaptism, 1520-1630*, and its continuation under the title *Mennonite Bibliography, 1631-1961* (in progress). Numerous translation projects of Anabaptist sources and their preparation for publication have been undertaken.

The Institute has no library, but avails itself of the facilities of the Seminaries and the Goshen College Library. The contributions made by the Institute and those involved in the projects is impressive.

FRITZ BLANKE MEMORIAL

Special attention should be called to the "Fritz Blanke Memorial Issue" of the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (January, 1969). This issue is indeed a worthy monument to an outstanding Christian Reformation scholar, who showed and demonstrated an increased interest in Anabaptist research. The following is a selection of Blanke's publications dealing with the Anabaptists.

"Der Ursprung des Täuferturns," *Reformierte Schweiz*, 1945, pp. 196 and 205 f.

"Zollikon 1525. Die Entstehung der ältesten Täufergemeinde," *Theologische Zeitschrift*, Basel, VIII (1952): 241-62; English translation in *MQR*, XXVII (1953), 17-33.

Brüder in Christo. Die Geschichte der ältesten Täufergemeinde (Zollikon 1525) (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1955),

88 pp. English translation: *Brothers in Christ. The History of the Oldest Anabaptist Congregation, Zollikon, near Zürich, Switzerland*, (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1961), 78 pp.

Aus der Welt der Reformation (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1960, 112 pp. Contains: "Das Reich der Wiedertäufer zu Münster 1534/35"; "Täuferum und Reformation"; "Reformation und Alkoholismus"; and "Verzeichnis der Veröffentlichungen des Verfassers" (Blanke).

Among those who wrote their doctoral dissertations under Fritz Blanke at the University of Zürich are John C. Wenger (*History of the Mennonites of the Franconia Conference*, 1938), Paul Peachey (*Die soziale Herkunft der Schweizer Täufer in der Reformationszeit*, 1954), J. F. G. Goeters (*Ludwig Hätzer*, 1955), Ekkehard Krajewski (*Felix Mantz*, 1956), Jan J. Kiwiet (*Pilgram Marbeck*, 1956), and Jarold K. Zeman ("The Anabaptists and the Czech Brethren in Moravia," 1966). Others, such as Walter Klaassen, also studied under Blanke.

MENNONITE QUARTERLY REVIEW

The *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, published since 1927 by the Mennonite Historical Society for Goshen College, reorganized slightly at its last meeting (1968). Its present editor is John S. Oyer, Professor of History at Goshen College. The editorial staff consists of Melvin Gingerich, Managing Editor; and C. Norman Kraus, Book Review Editor. The Board of Editors consists of six additional persons, all of Goshen and Elkhart, Indiana. The number of Consulting Editors has been increased considerably. They are located in North America, as well as European countries. The appointments to the Board and as Consulting Editors are for a three-year term, subject to indefinite renewal.

The *MQR* is "A Journal devoted to Anabaptist-Mennonite History, Thought, Life and Affairs." The magazine has played a significant role in pioneering research in this field and inspiring young scholars to write doctoral dissertations and books in this area. Within the total framework of Anabaptist-Mennonite research the sixteenth century has received most attention and the stress has been placed on the stream of Swiss-South German Mennonites and less on the Dutch-German-Russian wing. It should be pointed out that the Mennonite Historical Society is also instrumental in publishing the *Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History*. (See *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, April, 1969, p. 186).

CONCEPT OF BELIEVERS' CHURCH

In 1967 representatives of denominations of "free church origin" met in Louisville, Kentucky, presenting and discussing papers dealing with "The Concept of the Believers' Church." Some of the papers were published in *Mennonite Life*. All are to appear in book form. Meanwhile the date has been set for a second Conference of this nature under the topic "Is there a Christian Style of Life for Our Age?" The Conference will convene in Chicago June 29 through July 2, 1970, at the Chicago Theological Seminary. Local arrangements are being made by Clyde L. Manschreck of the Chicago Theological Seminary.

The breakdown of the topic includes "The Marks of a Disciplined Church", "Conflict, Conscience, and Consensus Within the Congregation", and "Tension and Reconciliation in a Divided World". An invitation and statement about

the Conference has been drafted and sent out by John H. Yoder, Donald Durnbaugh, and Clyde Manschreck.

THE SOCIETY OF BROTHERS AND ITS BACKGROUND

The Society of Brothers, founded by Eberhard Arnold in 1920 in Germany, will soon be able to look back on fifty years of the movement. (See article in next issue.) It was started in the disastrous years of post-war Germany in the *Jugendbewegung* which gathered around *Das Neue Werk*. This movement led to a revitalization of a large segment of German Protestantism. Among the spokesmen were representatives of the pulpits and universities, such as Karl Barth, Eduard Thurneysen, Friederich Gogarten, and others. Christoph Blumhardt can be considered the forerunner of this total revival.

The Society of Brothers, which aimed to establish a truly Christian communal living, was spiritually related to the early Hutterites of Moravia. Under Hitler, the Society had to leave the country, establishing itself temporarily in England and in Paraguay. Its headquarters are now located in Rifton, New York. Of particular significance are the publications started in Europe (*Quellen, Lebensbücherei christlicher Zeugnisse aller Jahrhunderte*) and continued in America.

The post-World War I church renewal movement in Germany culminated in the Confessional Church which was severely tested under Hitler. Karl Barth was exiled, Dietrich Bonhoeffer was executed, and others perished. The movement now continues although in an altered form within and outside of the Protestant Church of Germany. One of its mouthpieces is *Die Stimme der Gemeinde* (Frankfurt).

Karl Barth, who died recently, devoted his last volume of *Die kirchliche Dogmatik* to a systematic treatment of baptism. He as well as his son, Markus Barth, have questioned the practice of infant baptism and introduced a lively dialogue in this matter (see "Bibliography").

RESEARCH PROJECTS

A Center for Reformation and Free Church Studies has been set up by Franklin H. Littell, Clyde L. Manschreck and others in the academic Ph.D. program at the Chicago Theological Seminary. Garrett, McCormick, Seebury, Western, Luthern Seminary and some Catholic institutions are expected to join in this effort. A Melancthon Committee has been set up to translate the writings of Melancthon.

John S. Oyer, Goshen College, did archival research in East German and North German archives and in Copenhagen and the Vatican Library (1967). He located significant Anabaptist materials in Zwickau, Dresden, Leipzig, Jena, Erfurt, Weimar and other places. Oyer found good cooperation everywhere in getting materials located and microfilmed.

James C. Juhnke has received a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C., to do research pertaining to the Conscientious Objectors in World War I. The proposed study will deal with the problems posed by conscientious objection to war in a society which demands military service as a prerequisite to acceptable citizenship. The specific focus will be upon Mennonite dissenters in World War I and how both the national government and the acculturating German-American

Mennonites reacted to the situation. Three kinds of study and research, centered in Washington, D.C., are proposed:

- (1) General reading of secondary works on the topic;
- (2) Primary research in the National Archives, 1917-18;
- (3) Interviews with conscientious objector draftees in the vicinity of Washington, D.C.

Arnold Nickel, Personnel Director of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Newton, Kansas, is engaged in a research program at the San Francisco Theological Seminary leading toward a doctorate in theology. He has completed the requirements for the degree of Master in the Science of Theology (S.T.M.). His research is devoted to the Pastoral Ministry.

Keith Sprunger will be doing research in the Netherlands and England during the 1969-70 academic year on the topic of sixteenth and seventeenth-century Puritanism and English churches in the Netherlands. At least two dozen English and Scottish churches were situated in the Netherlands in those years, the Pilgrims of Leiden being perhaps

the best known. Dr. Sprunger will be on sabbatical leave from Bethel College. He has received grants from the Social Science Research Council and the American Philosophical Society.

RESEARCH BY J. TEN DOORNKAAT KOOLMAN

J. ten Doornkaat Koolman was born in East Friesland and studied at the University and the Mennonite Seminary of Amsterdam. He started his research in Anabaptism more than fifty years ago when he wrote a thesis on Dirk Philips. He intended to develop it into a Ph.D. dissertation, but in 1915 he was compelled to discontinue his research because of ill health. Until 1957 he served as a chaplain in a Swiss hospital. After this he resumed his research and has since published a book entitled *Dirk Philips* (Haarlem, 1964) and numerous articles dealing with the Dutch and Swiss Anabaptists. On April 9, 1969, J. ten Doornkaat Koolman observed his eightieth birthday with his family in the quiet of his home in Zürich.

Mennonite Bibliography

By John F. Schmidt and Nelson P. Springer and others

THE MENNONITE BIBLIOGRAPHY is published annually in the April issue of *Mennonite Life*. It contains a list of books, pamphlets and articles dealing with the Anabaptists-Mennonites or the radical Reformers.

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.

Mennonite publications, featuring Mennonite history, life and thought are the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (Goshen College, Goshen, Ind.), *Mennonite Life* (Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas), *Mennoitische Geschichtsblätter* (Weierhof), *Mennoitischer Gemeinde-Kalender* (Monsheim bei Worms), *Doopsgezinde Jaarboekje* (Amsterdam, Singel 454).

General magazines which quite often feature Anabaptists and Mennonites are *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* (Gütersloh); *Nederlands Archief voor Kergeschiedenis* (Leiden), *Church History* (Chicago) and others.

Previous bibliographies published in *Mennonite Life* appeared annually in the April issues since 1949 (except July, 1961, July, 1963, July, 1967, and July, 1968). 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.

BOOKS—1968

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BOOK REVIEW

A Leader's Guide to Nature-Oriented Activities, by Betty van der Smissen and Oswald H. Goering, Iowa State Univ. Press, 1965, pp. 210.

How to make a Navajo loom, kabobs, a safari grill, play buried birds, and the development of a nature center and community programs—these and many other topics are covered in this sourcebook. An outgrowth of their extensive experiences as leaders and teachers, this guide is a must for those who plan to assist with any outdoor education program.

The authors begin by describing their philosophy of nature-oriented activities. In our urban culture this appreciation-and-action-skill approach is sorely needed. The crafts

and games sections cover a wide area and directions given are clear and helpful. The Wire-o Binding and the bibliography are additional helpful features.

One could ask if the scope of the book is too great. The section on "Outing Sports" and part of the cooking section have been given a light treatment. One could also wonder if it would not have been possible to delineate religious values more clearly. Nevertheless the book is deserving of a wide circulation among those who are concerned with nature programs.

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