

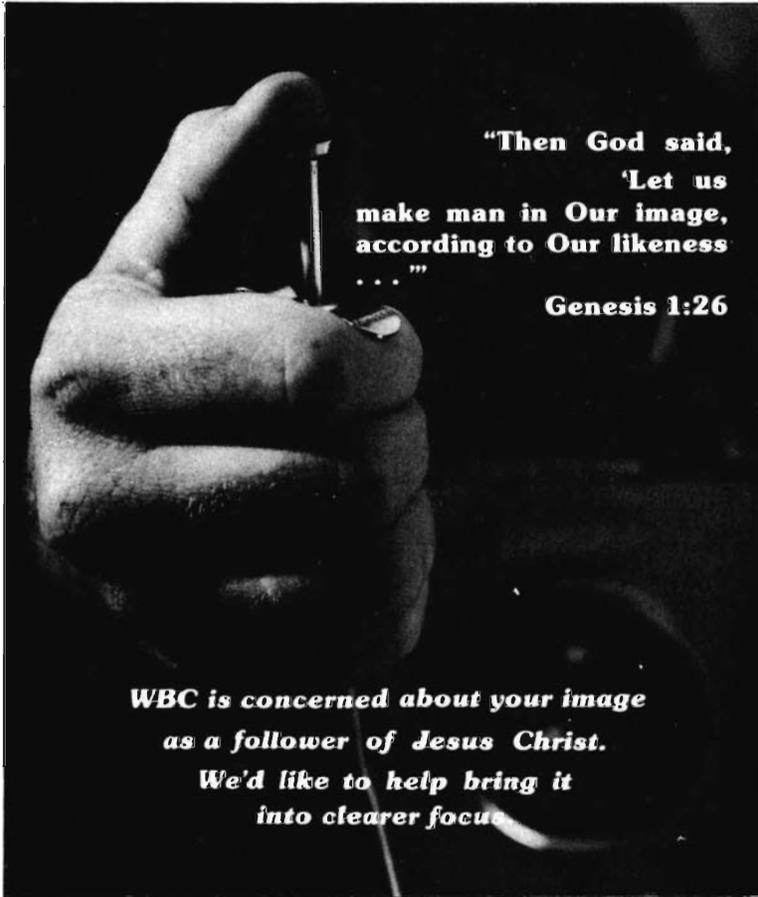
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mennonite mirror





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SPRING GOLD



Here is another Mirror mix-up.
The winner of the January contest is O. Drieche of Winnipeg.
Answers for the January contest are frost, sunny, storm, frolic, plenty, resolve, and contentment.
The letters are to be rearranged and written in the squares to form real words. Letters which fall into squares with a circle are to be arranged to complete the answer at the bottom of the puzzle.
A winner will be drawn at random from among all the correct entries and a cash prize will be awarded.

Entries must be sent to the Mirror Office by February 28, 1977.

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inside

volume 6 / number 5
february 1977

Mix-up/3
An impudent question/7
The Immigrant/9
Review: Doubting Castle/11
Manitoba news/14
Review: Anna's art/12
More reviews/15, 16
Sports: king's tale/15
FYI: historical yarns/17
Dorleben/19
Our word/22
Your word/23

The Cover: Drawing by Anna Weber, 1882; A review of a book featuring Weber's work is found elsewhere in this issue.

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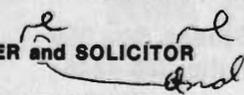
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An impudent question interrupts East German guide and tourists end up in park

This is the second in a series of articles in which Roy Vogt writes about his experiences in East Germany over the past 14 years.

by Roy Vogt

Irene Vogel was a guide in the famous Zwinger Art Gallery and Museum in Dresden which I visited with a few academic friends from Canada. One member of our group had written to the mayor of Dresden informing him that an official delegation of Canadian scholars wished to visit the city. My friend predicted that the term "official delegation" would impress a government bureaucrat, and so it did. On our arrival at the Rathaus in Dresden we were given a very warm welcome and the keys to the city. What this meant in practice was that we were allowed to see documents and artifacts not usually seen by tourists, and we were provided with expert guides in the various museums and galleries that we visited.

Irene Vogel was the guide chosen for us at the Zwinger. She appeared on first sight to be a very severe and prim young woman and I assumed immediately that she was a dedicated member of the party though she wore no party pin. She proceeded to show us around the gallery and for a while we found her earnest and knowledgeable comments most interesting and helpful. However, after an hour and a half even we "official" scholars got tired of the cultural diet and

we tried to find some way of changing the subject and relieving the monotony. Our inventive letter-writing colleague found the solution. He suddenly interrupted Miss Vogel in the midst of a lecture on Goethe's color theory with the irrelevant question: "Miss Vogel, you have just been telling us some interesting things about the great author Goethe. Would you be willing to affirm that the relationship between Goethe and Mrs. Charlotte von Stein was entirely platonic?" Nothing had been said about platonism or Mrs. Stein so the guide looked at us in dismay and confusion. Then I began to laugh at the impudence of the question, and to our surprise a smile slowly formed on her face and she said to us: "Oh, that is the way it is, I have been boring you. I am not surprised and not hurt, but what is it that you would like to do? I am responsible for you for another two hours, till 4:30." One of my "learned" friends responded: "Well, in that case why don't we go outside and sit in the park and have a more informal conversation." To our amazement she readily agreed to this suggestion and we left the museum for a nearby park, where we spent a few wonderful hours in animated discussion.

It turned out that she was a graduate art student living with an architect and one small child. She believed in the theory of socialism and talked favourably of the culture of East German as compared to what she had observed on West German

T V. However, she and her partner had experienced numerous difficulties with the state. They had chosen a rather free way of living, had made friends with Russian troops in the city, and had a circle of friends in Prague. Because of these contacts they had been investigated several times by the state police and were not sure of holding down their jobs. She had been a teacher but was not considered politically reliable enough for that position. She asked us many questions about Canada and the U. S. and wished so much that she could visit these countries. She always added, however, that she would freely return to her country because there were many things in it that she liked. As we said goodbye to her in the late afternoon she admitted that we were the first Canadians that she had met and meaning to compliment us (which we think she did) she said: "I always thought that Canadians were like the British, reserved and sometimes a little bland. However, now I know that they are much more like the Italians!"

Herbert Behrens is the communist party secretary for the district of Karlshorst, a section of East Berlin which contains the headquarters of the Russian army, the Chinese embassy, and a large economics institute. I am spending several weeks at the institute and Mr. Behrens is present at my first meeting with the head of the institute. The head himself is a professor and also a member of the par-

ty. He and I discuss my research program and among other things he invites me to take part in a panel discussion that will be held with students and professors in a few days on the topic of "Western Capitalism".

Mr. Behrens says almost nothing in the professor's office. Later, in the hallway, we have a lengthy discussion by ourselves. Mr. Behrens tells me that I am the first Canadian scholar to be given permission to conduct research at the institute. He makes it clear to me that this decision was not made without extensive consultation in the party. A positive decision was made because East Germany is interested in better relations with Canada. Canada appears to be more flexible than the U. S. in its commitment to NATO.

I ask him whether, for the sake of improved relations between our countries, it would be possible for the institute in East Berlin and our university in Manitoba to initiate a small exchange of students or professors. We could possibly support one or two students and professors for a year of study and teaching in Manitoba, and they could do likewise. He tells me quite frankly that a student exchange would be out of the question but it might be worthwhile exploring a professorial exchange (this also did not work out when it was attempted a year later.) He assures me that I am welcome but would like to ask me a few personal questions if I don't mind. I say, "of course not", and he asks, "What do you think about the presence of American troops in Viet Nam?" (This was in 1969).

I reply, "That is a good question and I think we might discover that we have very similar views about it. However, I will discuss it only if you in turn are willing to discuss the presence of Soviet

troops in Czechoslovakia (I didn't mention the Soviet troops in East Germany because the point was sharp enough as it was). He doesn't appear miffed at my suggestion but states matter of factly that he is not prepared to discuss the matter.

He suggests instead that we have coffee in the faculty lounge. The setting is more informal and he continues his questions in a more relaxed way. He is curious to know, he says, why university students in the United States are revolting so much on their campuses. At this point I hesitate in my answer. I had resolved before coming to East Germany that I would never play games with the truth in discussions of this kind. I might not always say everything I would like to say, but I would not say things that didn't reflect my true feelings. I had been assured by party representatives that they appreciated this. One had even gone so far as to say that if I was a socialist they likely wouldn't have given me the special visa to study because "either I would be a half-hearted socialist, which is worse than not being one at all, or I would be a true socialist in which case I had nothing to learn from them." But it is one thing to be told this and another thing to believe that they really mean it, or if they mean it that in a given situation they won't repudiate it. I know, in other words, that an answer which might take us to the heart of his question might easily jeopardize my research and all the work that I have already done. I decide to stick with my initial resolve and I begin: "I suppose there are two reasons why American students are openly revolting: they have some grievances, and they have the freedom to express those grievances." I know now that the iron is hot, and Mr. Behrens reacts immediately to the last

part of my statement. "Are you implying," he says, "that our students may also have grievances but our campuses are quiet because they don't have the freedom to express them?" "Well," I reply, knowing well that we are now skating on very thin ice, "I had coffee the other day in the student cafeteria at Humbolt University and it so happened that I was joined by several students. I asked them casually how things were going and they replied, 'Not very well. Several of our student leaders have been imprisoned because they hung Czechoslovakian flags out of their dormitory windows after the Soviet army marched into Czechoslovakia.'"

The moment of truth has arrived. I know that I have tested Mr. Behrens to the limit and I am already regretting my recklessness. I am, however, completely surprised by his reaction. He looks disturbed for a few moments and then says: "O yes, we Germans know how to handle situations like that. We would have chaos on our hands if we gave such protests free reign. You can't have every Tom, Dick and Harry determining state policy. Our students are allowed to discuss their subject material and many other matters very freely, but there must be a limit in any society to the amount of dissent that is allowed."

I can't quite believe what I am hearing. I read into his initial question an assumption that student revolts in the U.S. were justified because they were undoubtedly the result of oppressive conditions which the students face. But suddenly what I had interpreted to be a left-wing defence of revolution has turned into a right wing defence of law and order. Mr. Behrens goes on to develop the same theme in relation to unions. "It is equally foolish of governments to allow workers to strike. Your society is being ruined by labor strife. Our workers have sometimes attempted to strike but we have put them down, and for their own good. In the long run the only way to solve strikes is to improve the conditions of the workers. In the short run one must suppress them. They do much more harm than good." I don't necessarily disagree with this last observation but I remained surprised at the fact that it is he, a defender of the working class, who is saying it.

This surprising turn in our conversation completely breaks the tension caused by my questions and we spend a few more moments on other questions. He wishes that Canada would withdraw from NATO and become a neutral country like Sweden or Switzerland. I ask him: "How much respect do you really have for those countries? They pretend that they are neutral and above the battles of this world, but in the end they have little influence on the decisions being made for good or evil in this world. Your own country is solidly allied with the Soviet



Guards along The Berlin Wall

continued page 23

The immigrant: part two

There is nothing idyllic about working as a farmhand

This is the second excerpt of Dr. Peters' memoirs of his first years in this country. Soon after his arrival in Canada, in 1928, he went to Manitou. Here he became a farmhand at age 12.

I Become a Farmhand

by Victor Peters

Poets, writers and artists have glorified life in the country, the leisurely walk through the forests, the gently falling snow in winter and the peaceful warmth of the hearth as the blizzard howls outside, the refreshing drink in the shade from a jug of clear cool water. The elements in the form of wind, rain, snow and sun, it would seem, exist only as benevolent agencies to make man healthy and happy. The farm laborer I am sorry to say rarely sees outdoor life in these terms.

When in winter the thermometer for days seemed to be frozen around -30° F you did not have to be told that you were running out of feed for the livestock. You harnessed the horses and went for the neighbour's haystack. Since the neighbour had a few sloughs on his land he had hay to spare, which he sold. Slough-hay is not what a cow or horse would choose except when it is hungry, for it is coarse and tough. It is also very long, as you find out when you load. You plunge the fork into the stack and as you try to lift it half the stack wants to come along. Hauling slough-hay in winter, or in summer for that matter, cannot be placed in the category "fun on the farm".

The cold spell does not break and day after day you see the woodpile grow smaller. In those days wood was the cheapest source of fuel and it was used in the living-room heater as well as in the kitchen stove. On cold days it was almost a fulltime job to carry in the wood, replenish the fires, and carry out the ashes. In the cities many homes used cordwood as it was less expensive than coal. In the country people generally used long, thin, young poplarwood, which had more water than carbon. The land was not cleared of trees as

thoroughly as it is today. Within two miles of Manitou farmers had left acres of poplars which were used to keep the home fires burning. In winter these poplar groves would have about two to three feet of snow, and as you waded in you trampled down the snow to get at the base of the tree.

An experienced woodsman would fell these young trees with two or three strokes on one side and one stroke on the other, depending on which way he wanted the tree to fall. But I was far from an experienced woodsman. After a day's work the area I cut looked as if some beavers had frolicked there. Rarely did the trees fall in the direction I wanted them to fall. At the end of the day the trees were debranched and piled up near a clearing. While working in the snow your clothes became soaking wet. When you stepped out of the sheltering grove the cold winds froze them solid long before you reached the warmth of the barn where horse and heifer waited to be fed.

The following day the chopped-down trees were hauled home. You removed the box from the sleigh, itself a demanding task for one man, placed tall rungs on the sleigh-runners that would keep in the load, harness and hitch the horses and set out to bring home the wood. Usually a neighbour who had a circular buzz-saw would saw it to stove lengths. If he did not have the time or if his machine broke down you sawed the wood by hand. One neighbour of ours, a bachelor, dispensed with this, at least almost. He sawed a tree once, dragged it in and put one end at an angle into the kitchen stove, pushing it further as it was consumed by the fire. He did not mind the smoke too much and had no curtains to be spoiled.

An American poet has written a moving poem about a young boy who lost a hand as it slipped against the buzz-saw, and who died because he lost the will to live. A friend of mine, an orphaned immigrant, had a similar experience except that he fell with his back against the circular saw. It ripped open his back, severing

the ribs from the backbone. As the other two men looked in horror at the gaping gash one of them said, "He is dead." At that the victim who had fallen on his face slowly moved his head and whispered in Low-German, *Nich gauns*" (not quite). He was rushed to a hospital and survived.

The pleasures of the other seasons were only slightly less grueling than those of winter. Stooking sheaves on a remote field on a scorching day without water which was to be delivered some time during the day but did not show up could drive you almost mad. Grain threshing was much better. You worked in gangs. When the machine swallowed the bundles too greedily and the loaded racks were urged on by the threshing-master, some pitcher who wisely kept an outsize green or wet sheaf in reserve would feed it to the machine. Slowly, almost painfully, it would come to a stop. There would be an angry outburst from the machine operator as he crawled into the bowels of the thresher to clear out the excess straw that had strangled it while the rest of us gratefully slowed down at our work. Even the remotest field-pitcher always kept one eye on the machine and when the blower ceased to spit out the straw he relaxed.

Other farm work could be done more leisurely. The 1930's were the years of the grasshoppers. Millions of them would come in clouds, settle on grain fields or pastures, and clean them to the ground. To exterminate them the counties or municipalities provided the farmers with sawdust and arsenic. The farmer had to mix them and spread them on his land, especially along the ridges of the fields. Grasshoppers loved the sweetened sawdust and died by the ton. If the poison was spread in pastures cows were kept out for a while for the bait was deadly. The arsenic-soaked sawdust was broadcast by hand. To avoid poisoning you put on rubber gloves.

Another job I did not mind was putting up or mending fences. Some farmers used pointed or metal poles which they drove in with a sledge-hammer. We put in

cedar poles and used the auger. I recall visiting my uncle at Mather on one occasion when he was putting in fence posts. When his auger struck a rock he began to mutter. He was a respectable German and not given to the outbursts of "Jesus Christ Almighty" so popular among his neighbours, but his muttered sentiments were not unsimilar. I tried to comfort him, "Now if you had money you could hire someone to put in iron poles." He paused, looked at me and said, "If I had money I would not be on this damn farm." My uncle was not a farmer; he had studied in Dresden, and when he came to Canada he brought with him a 20-volume Meyer's *Lexikon*.

I did establish and maintain good relations with the farm horses and livestock. When I stepped into the barn early in the morning there would be an all-around friendly greeting. A year after I had hired out to the farmer he told me that we would slaughter one of the heifers. I had known the animal since birth and when he asked me to get the .22 rifle I was thoroughly revulsed. Except for chickens it was the only farm animal I have ever killed. There were other things I did not like, such as holding the young pigs when the neighbour came to castrate them. The man had the wisdom of the ages; for a disinfectant he used his own saliva. He spit into the wound before the squealing pig was released.

That brings us to farmyard mating. Even on a modern newsstand the reader is unlikely to see as much sex as was concentrated on a farm in those days. The mating process went on almost continuously. If it wasn't dogs, cats, chickens, and turkeys, it was horses, cows and swine. One neighbour had a breeding-boar. Whenever our hogs needed servicing we would load a special crate which had a trap door and transport him to our pig stall. He was not an unwilling passenger and made the rounds of the entire neighbourhood.

Stallions were a rarer commodity. As far as I know there was only one stallion in the whole area around Manitou. The owner, a small man who by appearance eked out a rather meagre income from his occupation, went on a light two-wheel carriage from farmer to farmer servicing their mares. As he drove in his sulky on the country road the horses who were grazing in the pasture sensed the presence of the stallion and followed him along the fence to the barn. I don't remember what the charge was, but I think the farmer was only required to pay if the mare foaled. It was a big, well-fed stallion, and while animals in their natural state have no trouble mating, this powerful and overbred horse after mounting had to be assisted by the stallion-keeper. Later when we ate at the table I kept looking at the man wondering whether he had used soap to wash his hands.

The cows we took to our neighbour who had a fine purebred bull. The neighbour was also an immigrant, with two sons and three daughters. The daughters grew up totally protected from the world around them. They were raised like young middle-class European girls. Since they had no maids they had to cook and wash dishes, but the rest of the time they spent embroidering, playing piano and reading. Though the youngest girl was about my age I suspected she still believed in storks. The farmer for whom I worked had a rather natural view of procreation. At lunch, with wife and three small children at the table, he would turn to me and say, "I think today you should take Bessie to the bull. If it isn't done soon no fence will hold her in." I would then put the halter on the cow and lead her to the neighbour's place.

One day when I made such a trip the whole family was sitting outside as is the custom in Europe, at a table with table cloth and flowers, having coffee. The men and I realized simultaneously that a major catastrophe was about to happen. They got the women into the house just as the bull who had been contentedly grazing near the driveway crashed through the fence. Barely had the housedoor slammed shut when the bull already returned to his own cows who had paid no attention to the excitement. I was reprimanded for not warning them of my coming and sheepishly led the cow back home. Here I only reported that the mission was accomplished.

I never developed much affection for chickens, especially Leghorns. Most people see newly hatched fluffy chicks as life symbols, much like Easter bunnies. But chickens, especially young ones, are vicious. They are killers. A young chick may see a trace of a scratch or a drop of blood on another chick and it will pursue it and peck at it, attract scores of other chicks, and in minutes that innocent little chicken will be picked to death by other equally innocent looking chickens. They love blood and meat. Roosters too can become very aggressive. I have seen a big rooster attack a full-grown bull, mercilessly pecking away at his vulnerable nose and eyes. He did not give up until

the bull squashed him against the barn.

Adult chickens require and are fed meat. Today poultry farmers usually feed them prepared mixes and pellets which contain the required ingredients. We did not have access to commercial feeds. In the summer the poultry got their vitamins and proteins from the manure pile. In winter they received them from turnips and animal carcasses, which supplemented the grain diet. Skinned rabbits were suspended from the ceiling in their frozen state and pecked to the bone by the chickens. Sometimes a newborn calf or an old horse died and was left outside to freeze. Every day you go out with an axe and chop off a quarter or any other part of the carcass and feed it to the poultry flock. When I saw that scene of a horse's head in a bedroom in "Godfather" it appeared less awesome to me because I had been a member of the barnyard mafia.

On the whole I think our chickens had it much better than those raised today on commercial poultry farms. I think they led happier and more exciting lives. Politically I lean towards socialism, but when I see chickens in modern chicken ranches, watered and well-fed, secure from rats and weasels, warm in their small cages, and compare their existence to that of the barnyard hen with head cocked listening to a moving worm and with one eye following the rooster who is chasing another hen, then I prefer to identify the future of mankind with that of the free enterprise chicken who may lack security but gets more satisfaction from life.

Next month: Going to School

Mennonite Witness

A Mennonite college student was sitting in the airport reading his Bible as he waited for his next plane. "Are you a Mennonite?" asked a young black man of him. The student admitted he was, but wondered how the other man had figured it out when his clothes were no different than anyone else's. The young black had put two and two together. Some people who had helped his family during the Mississippi floods read their Bibles also. They were called Mennonites.

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review

For others, travelling the same way

Paul Hiebert, *Doubting Castle*.
Queenston House Publishing Inc., 1976.
120 pp.

by Lloyd Siemens

Like Christian, the central character in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Paul Hiebert has fought the dragons of spiritual anxiety and doubt on his pilgrimage through the Vanity Fair of this "skeptical and scientific and very materialistic age." Although he has successfully passed the gates of *Doubting Castle* and vanquished *Giant Despair*, he has had no clear vision of the *Celestial City*. He has however, glimpsed the suburbs:

The more I learn about other religions
the more I realize that Christianity is

the only realistic religion. It is the only one which faces up to the problem of evil. . . .Christianity looks evil in the face and unreservedly states that it is with us and that it has no business here. It promises that in the mercy of God, evil will be overcome. The ultimate evil it states is death, and this too will be overcome and man will be restored to his life within the living God.

This is a firm and unequivocal testimony of faith, and it is stated with a convincing simplicity that reminds the reader of Bunyan's own prose style. Dr. Hiebert is even more convincing when he places his credo statement within a descriptive context, as in this passage from the final chapter:

The same Jesus who walked with his disciples in the Galilean hills, talking, explaining, calling attention to the grainfields and vineyards, pointing out flowers and sparrows, chatting casually with a strange woman at the community well, visiting friends, tired, hungry, footsore - that Jesus I have finally learned is with us in our own everyday life. But more - the Jesus who was jeered, spat upon, flogged, made to stand before a mob like a clown in a purple robe and thorns, crucified in the presence of his mother, despairing of his God in agony of spirit - that Jesus is also with us. There is no evil indignity and

sorrow in our lives which he cannot share. Let anyone ask himself whether there is any other religion which can, even remotely, offer anything like that. It is personal, meaningful, intelligent.

This from an author who fears that his book may "undermine the faith" of other Christians!

The most personal form of writing is the spiritual autobiography. The hazard to the writer in choosing this form is that he lays himself utterly bare before his readers, so that his mind and sensibilities need to be arresting enough to win and hold the reader's attention. In the first half of the book, especially, Dr. Hiebert succeeds in carrying the reader sympathetically along with him on his journey towards a wider "angle of perception" on the Truth of religion. He succeeds because he places the maturation of his religious thought and feeling in a clearly defined social and biographical context.

In these opening chapters, Dr. Hiebert moves chronologically from his earliest years in a non-Mennonite community - with its Methodist insistence on man's essential sinfulness and the probability of divine retribution through hell-fire - to his encounter with a more serene Mennonite faith relatively "uncluttered with beliefs," through his college days and on to his search for a meaningful vocation.

The theological thrust of this section of the book is that for Dr. Hiebert *Doubting Castle* was inhabited by two giants named "Despair". The first of these was represented to the author in the form of an uncharitable, un-Christian, Methodist fundamentalism, and it was slain for him by his gradually developing awareness of a loving and merciful Personal God. The second giant was the off-spring of a cynical, materialistic age in which the barren literalism of scientific fact was allowed to pass for Truth. This monster retreated when the author was at last able to reconcile the traditional and apparent dualism between matter and spirit.

These imponderables have baffled generations of thinkers, and it is right and proper that intelligent men should seek to make sense of them. However, they could not do so by speaking patronizingly of other intelligent and sensitive men who have been baffled in different ways or whose pilgrimage has not led them to Bunyan's *Celestial City*. Surely a contemporary statement on Christianity should concede more than a passing reference to Christian Humanism and more than a condescending paragraph to Existentialism. And must intellectuals always be "self-appointed" or "so-called"? Such facile dismissals are unworthy of the charity and understanding that the author advocates elsewhere in the book.

Dr. Hiebert is at his best when his
continued page 19

This is for young people who want to write. . .

The MENNONITE MIRROR announces a children's writing contest for children ages 8 to 12 inclusive. They are encouraged to write and submit an article of not more than 300 words on the topic **How I would like to spend my summer vacation**. Three prizes of \$15, \$10, and \$5 will be awarded on the basis of originality, writing style, and readability. Entries should be submitted by February 28th and the winning entries will be published in the April issue of the Mennonite Mirror. Judges will be the Mennonite Mirror editorial committee and their decision will be final. Please complete the entry form below.

[Children of staff members are not eligible for prizes]

Name Age

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School

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The annual meeting of the **Mennonite Historical Society** took place at CMBC campus on December 4, 1976. Among other things a highlight of the Manitoba branch of the society was reported on, namely: the premiere showing of the film *Prairie Pioneers: Mennonites of Manitoba*, produced by Otto Klassen.

The 1977 board executive includes Ted Regehr, Saskatoon, as chairman, Ted Friesen, Altona, as secretary, George Groening, Chilliwack and J. Winfield Fretz, Waterloo.

Mildred Rempel of Rosenort, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John L. Rempel, was crowned Homecoming Queen at Tennessee Temple Schools in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Mildred is a 1971 graduate of the Manitoba School for the Deaf where she received the Best Student and Good Sportsmanship award. She is presently working on a Graduate of Theology degree at the Tennessee Temple Bible School where she received the Lee Robertson award given to the best deaf student. She also received the Silent Singers Club award. Mildred hopes to devote herself to the teaching of deaf children after graduation.

"**Bothwell Cheese**" entered by Gerard Toews of the New Bothwell plant placed 13th in a class of 38 entries at the 1976 World's Natural Championship in Madison, Wisconsin. Placing 17th in the same class was an entry from the Grunthal Medo-Land plant. For first-time entries of 'everyday make' cheese to place this well in a world-wide competition is very respectable indeed, says John Wakelin, head of dairy processing services here.

Steinbach's **Nightengale twins** who as young girls successfully underwent kidney transplant surgery in Boston, a first in Canada, recently appeared on "Front Page Challenge". Now Mrs. Johanna Rempel and Mrs. Lana Blatz, they lead normal lives as wives and mothers.

A University of Winnipeg choir has been organized under the direction of William Baerg of MBBC.

Winkler Bible School Youth Rally takes place February 18 - 20. Guest speaker is Tom Allan, Mansfield, Ohio.

The Mid-Year convention of the **Manitoba M. B. churches** takes place on February 26 at M.B.C.I.

Media Resource Handbook: A new resource to enable congregations in their local media involvement is off the press. The eighty-page loose leaf notebook contains 14 chapters designed to give persons information to create their own press releases, camera-ready copy, posters, brochures, billboards, radio, television or cable TV productions, banners, slides, cassettes, drama, 16mm films, storyboards, and collages. The handbook is priced at \$5 and is available from Mennonite Radio and Television, Box 2, Station F, Winnipeg.

Gerhard Ens, is new editor of Der Bote. Office of the paper will be moved from Saskatoon to Winnipeg.



Ens

Peter Peters (re-elected chairman of MCC (Manitoba) Board) and Arthur Driedger attended the MCC Annual meeting at Metamora, Ill. in January.

Dave Dyck, formerly having served for three years (1966-69) under MCC with his wife Mildred in Zambia, has been appointed director of Personnel and Voluntary Services of MCC (Canada). He replaces Reg Toews who has taken up an associate secretary position at Akron, Pa., Working with Dyck as assistant director on an interim basis is Harry Wall, recently returned from Zambia.

A **Church Music Seminar** with Dr. Charles C. Hirt, University of Southern California (whose department of Church Music is the largest in North America) and sponsored by CMBC and MBBC was held on January 21 - 23 with sessions and concerts on both campuses.

Erik Friesen, formerly Mennonite Mirror editorial committee member and contributing writer, left the CBC here to join the National CBC staff in Toronto. His highly successful morning show, 6 to 10 a.m. is not only a subtle and gentle eye opener, but provides excellent repertory of music profiles and diaries of the top people in music and the arts, rare record-

ings and historical documentaries of musical instruments. He made a fine showing on CBC TV on January 16th playing a principal role in "Someday Soon".

The **Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre** in conjunction with the Deutsche Buehne Winnipeg is staging an "Evening of One Act Plays". The three plays are: *Das Hoerrohr* (The Earhorn) by Karl Bunje; *Remember Caesar* (Erinnere Dich An Caesar) Gordon Daviat; *Ja, Ja, Die Verwandten* (Oh Yes The Relatives) by Hannes Peter Stolp. All three plays are comedies and promise to provide family entertainment. The dates of performance are February 24, 25, and 26 at 8:05 p.m. at the Planetarium Auditorium, with admission at 99 cents. Tickets may be obtained from Mr. S. Isaak (Tel. 489-2446) and from the office of the Deutsche Vereinigung, Winnipeg, located at the corner of Flora and Charles.

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review

Anna's Unique Art

Anna's Art: by E. Reginald Good, 48 pp., Pochauna Publications. P.O. Box 2521, Kitchener, Ontario.

"Anna's Art", a compact volume by E. Reginald Good reproduces for posterity the fraktur art of Anna Weber, a Waterloo County, Ontario, Mennonite artist of 1814-1888. The art itself has its origin in the folk culture of the Rhenish Palatinate, the area surrounding both sides of the upper Rhine in Germany. By the end of the seventeenth century the Lower or Rhenish Palatinate was devastated and many, like Anna's forbears, left for the New World. Mr. Good, thanks to an Old Order Mennonite background similar to Anna's is in a happy position to conduct the painstaking research that goes into the production of such a volume.

As well as describing the actual art type Good shares with the reader his quest for the forty odd pieces of Anna's art in the homes of descendants of people with whom Anna lived. "Old Order" Mennonites inured to antique buffs were more than reluctant to mention the existence of original art pieces. Fortunately Good's reputation for making photo copies of the pictures preceded him. While doing the rounds he also pieces together a history of the artist. Anna, an "old girl" or old maid who did not subscribe to the work ethic of her contemporaries stayed with one family or another until she outwore her welcome. Behind in turn were left samples of fraktur art, the Rhenish Palatinate style of illumination which refers to both lettering and designs executed by hand. Motifs like the Tree of Life with its paired

birds are samples of prehistoric symbols which reappear from time to time in history e.g. (in Ottonian illuminations of early Christian gospels c. 1000).

More recently ready availability of printed materials seemed to hasten the departure of fraktur art. Fortunately for posterity an "unbrilliant" "Nance" or "Anna" was allowed to waste her time with colours. Now, thanks to Mr. Good, others will enjoy the pictures treasured by Anna's families.

- by Hilda Matsuo

review

Mozart's evening

Talking to one of our prominent citizens I mentioned Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre's upcoming production. Eagerly he cut in, "Will Mozart be there?" Clearly the man was making jest with me, for surely he is aware that the coffers of WMT would be too severely strained by bringing in a composer of Mozart's calibre, even supposing he could have agreed.

WMT, digressing from its customary productions of Drama and the spoken word, began the evening by giving us a most enjoyable half hour of song and instrumental music by Mozart. Margot Sim sang the Magnificent Alleluiah. There was a lyric, sensitive quality to the Andante in C as played by flautist Albert Horch, with Bertha Klassen at the piano. Possibly the viola, with its beautifully subtle passages was somewhat overshadowed in Quartett in A Major by the rich and forceful strength of the cello.

As a prelude to Bastien and Bastienne, an opera of Viennese folk humor, its music director, Susan Wieser, added greatly to our understanding and pleasure by acquainting us with the Young Mozart. It is important to realize that the composer of so rich a heritage of music wrote this short opera for amateur theatre at age 12. It opens with

the poignantly lovely voice of Bastienne (Carol Mosiewich) in the background singing I never knew and then strolling with I walk in the fields. Her movements on the stage loosed as she established quick rapport with her audience. Costumes were in character and served to enhance the fine performance by all three young players.

It was a captivating quality of singing which allowed the audience to sit back and relax in sheer enjoyment. Clever lighting intensified Colas' (Chris Enns) so professional execution of the incantation scene as he moved eyes and hands, and his elongated shadow on the wall behind thrilled one and all. The dispute between the lovers was less than exciting. In Shakespearean times male roles were often portrayed by women actors. I enjoy this only when the male to be portrayed is a lad, not yet of marriageable age.

The comely Bastien (Linda Eggerer) in his/her authentic suit of clothes and admirable voice failed to convince me of any masculinity. The opera ended with the musically lovely trio.

- by Mary Enns

review

50 years of singing

"Fifty Years of Singing at First Mennonite Church" might well be called "The Way We Are - Fallible". To have music captured at the time of the fiftieth anniversary of the church is one thing but how much better it could be if the choirs had more rehearsals after a long, hot summer! Perhaps it is just as well that the mixed choir, which never really began to work as a unit until about December, has one number only on the record. Songs by the ladies choir, which sings so faithfully on Sundays are heard more often and the men's groups, formed for the anniversary year only, had to be recorded at this time if ever. The congregational singing is commendable in the sense that the singing doesn't lag behind the music though other favourites might have sounded better.

The copy! Mr. Ernest Enns tried to do justice to everybody's efforts and was more successful in some cases than in others but something happened after it left his hands! Since the jacket did not have to be produced for a deadline the errors seem inexcusable. First Mennonite was fortunate in hiring a competent person to make the recording but some records unfortunately, are poorly manufactured and should be exchanged.

- by Hilda Matsuo



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A tale of kings in Sweden

by Rudy Schulz

The Winnipeg South Monarchs flew to Falun, Sweden, where they won the Kopparpucken tournament, January 1 and 2, 1977. The Monarchs are presently in first place in a six team league, Tier one, Bantam class (14 year olds).

With names like Hull, Kromm, Wilson, and Ploen on the roster it isn't surprising that the Swedes billed them as the Winnipeg Mini-Jets. The Wilson boys, Carey and Geoff, are the twin sons of Jets' physician, Dr. Jerry Wilson. Dick Neufeld

review

The Wizard of Oz

It is hard to get lost in a small school like Westgate Collegiate. A recent performance of the operetta, "The Wizard of Oz" revealed this very clearly. From a senior student body of eighty four, sixty four students were involved. That's participation!

The musical, performed on January 28 and 29 at the R. B. Russel school theatre, was directed and produced by teachers Rudy Friesen and John Harder, with assistance from Ms. Elaine McGinnis, Jake Pankratz and Al Klassen. Credit should go to directors and students alike for a successful and entertaining evening. It was good to escape the rigors of a blustery January evening and "follow the yellow brick road" to the castle of the Wizard of Oz. Brenda Peters was a lively and engaging Dorothy, with fine stage presence. Excellent performances were also turned in by Victor Pankratz, the scarecrow, Carl Krahn, the Tin Woodman and Alf Penner as the Cowardly Lion. All the other cast members and the choruses acquitted themselves well and kept the production moving at a lively pace.

Since the majority of students involved were not yet in Grade XII we can look forward to further fine productions from this talented group.

by Ruth Vogt

is the son of Dick and Helen Neufeld, 837 Oakenwald Avenue. Dick, Sr., who accompanied the team, along with a dozen adults, gave me the details of their excursion to Sweden.

The Monarchs lived up to their advance billing by winning all the games in a convincing fashion. Their only defeat in Sweden was a four to one loss to a team, the Hammarby Club, in Stockholm. The Hammarby team, also in the 14 year old age class, had played together for four years. Dick was impressed with the size of this club and one player in particular, Ove Petterson. This Swedish team will pay a return visit to Winnipeg later this season, if present plans materialize.

The Swedish people were excellent hosts. The adults who accompanied the team were invited to New Year's Eve celebrations which provided some interesting observations of Swedish customs and social practices. The boys, who were billeted in private homes, found the plate-size crackers a source of amusement. These crackers are broken with a sharp judo chop and shared by the family or group at meal time. A peculiar custom on New Year's Day is for the host to pour melted soft lead, using a long handled spoon, into a bucket of water. The state of the solidified lead is then read (as in teacup) by the lady of the house to tell your fortune. A snake formation is a very bad sign.

The Canadians had few language difficulties since English is taught at all levels in the schools, as is French.

The city of Falun, (population 20,000) in the province of Dalarna, lies some 180 miles north-east of Stockholm. Falun's charter dates back to 1642 and its citizens take pride in the coppermine (hence Kopparpucken tournament) which had its origin in the 13th century and was instrumental in making Sweden a great power in the 17th century. King Gustaff Adolf II is supposed to have exclaimed, during a visit to the mine, "What potentate has such a palace as

mine?"

As the demand for copper declined, the economics basis of Falun shifted to forest products and related industries. Another industry is tourism and recreation.

Within walking distance is the Lugnet Sport and Recreation Complex, the largest and most lavish in Sweden. The Sports Hall is a magnificent building with a double floor plan measuring 90 by 45.5 metres (the size of a football field). The Olympic National Ski Stadium, built for winter championships of 1973, lacks nothing in the way of facilities, except snow, which has been sadly lacking in recent years.

The Swedes love outdoor recreation. Even on New Year's Day, hundreds of people were enjoying their winter sports. The Swedes play a game called Bandi, a cross between hockey and field-hockey, played with a curved stick and a round ball. The game develops speed on skates which Winnipeg Jets' fans have learned to appreciate. The Swedish youngsters play the game for fun with less organization involved than in our minor hockey set-up. Heavy body checking and rough play are not encouraged which accounts for some of the difficulties Swedes experience when they play Canadian opponents. Falun, by the way, is the birth place of Winnipeg Jets' Captain, Lars-Eric Sjöberg.

A common sight in Sweden, and in airports on the route to that country, are other hockey teams from Canada and the U. S. A. - either coming or going. The pace is so hectic that the Canadian consul, who greeted the Monarchs on their arrival, was in for a surprise when he was recently assigned to Sweden. One of his most time-consuming duties is to greet Canadian hockey teams and assist them in various ways.

Hockey, it would appear, is playing an important part in bringing together the northern inhabitants of our "global village".



The Winnipeg South Monarchs, front row: Todd Pluchinskie, Todd Jackson, David Kromm, Doug Ploen, Carey Wilson, Blake Hull, Mike Schamber. Back row: Dick Neufeld, Grant Schussler, Geoff Wilson, Sheldon Genthon, Terry Howarth, John Smyth, Mike Cory and Scott Irving.

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Let's make stories a part of history

by Abe Warkentin

Mennonite history is exceptionally exciting and it's unfortunate that more isn't done to cultivate an interest in it. Perhaps our history books are partially at fault. Many people knowledgeable enough to write about it have fallen into the trap of believing that the only good history is dull history and consequently we have all kinds of young people today who rate Mennonite history with basket weaving.

This is not to say, of course, that there isn't a place for scholarly, authoritative works that interpret in a manner that cannot always be highly entertaining. That is understood. But where are all the stories that can truly entertain and also show us the nature of our forefathers as well? Where are the great Mennonite novels?

One of the greatest (if not the greatest) of the Mennonite writers was the late Arnold Dyck. If you read his books today, particularly about the antics of the two Mennonite bush farmers, Koop 'en' Bua, you can learn more about Mennonite characteristics in an hour than listening to an anthropologist for a month.

We need more writing of that kind, not necessarily in exactly that vein, or even humorous, but readable to the average Mennonite who doesn't want to get himself bogged down with 14 pages of footnotes for every paragraph. We need novels, biographies, autobiographies. What do we know today, many of us, about our forefathers in Prussia or the Ukraine? What were their joys, their sufferings? What were their daily lives like? What kinds of homes did they have? What did they eat? What tremendous value an explicit diary of those days would be for us today.

And closer to the present, what do we know about the joys and hardships of those Mennonites who have left Manitoba in the last 50 years for Paraguay, Mexico, Belize or Bolivia? There are hundreds of stories here of unbelievable hardship and suffering. And just as many of courage and faith in God. A few have appeared in print and a few more are coming but most will die

with those who lived them.

* * *

It's not a good policy to switch very rapidly from a serious to a humorous vein but I can't resist relating a true story about a Mennonite farmer in Russia many years ago who had trouble disposing of his surplus cats. You know how it is with these creatures - they don't have any kind of family planning at all and live pretty near forever.

Now this farmer we're talking about didn't like all the traditional ways of doing in cats, probably because they were pretty messy. He was the type who liked others to do the dirty work for him. So he trained his dog to clean up his cats. Once this dog would get hold of a cat he was sic'd on to, he'd have it pulverized in seconds. And he really enjoyed it.

This method worked well for the farmer for years but gradually the cats got smarter and faster (because only the fast ones survived) and the dog got just a bit slower. One day there was a cat the farmer very badly wanted to be rid of but couldn't. Every time he sic'd Fedorowich, or whatever they called dogs in Russia in those days, on the cat, the cat would climb something and get out of the clutches of the dog.

This was driving the dog crazy and the farmer knew that if he wanted to save his dog from ulcers he'd have to do something quick. So he sat down with a ruble's worth of sunflower seeds and started to think. Pretty soon, naturally, he came upon a great plan. He would take the cat into the middle of a large field where there were no trees or fences or anything for the cat to crawl onto, and then release the dog for the kill.

And so, that's what he did. He happily tramped onto the field, complimenting himself all the while on his genius, dumped the cat on the ground and sic'd his hound who was eagerly licking his chops. What followed was almost too fast for words. Quick as a flash when dropped on the ground the cat made for the only height within acres: the top of the farmer's head. From this vantage point the cat hissed and clawed and spat as the dog jumped up to try and do his duty. In desperation, of course, the farmer called off the dog and the cat went home to live out his long natural life.

* * *

Did you hear about the Mennonite who had a fine job on a garbage truck in Winnipeg? It was his custom to hang his jacket on the side of the truck. One day it slipped down and was immediately covered by the incoming deposits. About lunch time they discovered Peter with a long pole fishing around for the missing jacket.

"For goodness sake, Peter," said his boss. "What are you trying to do? You don't want that jacket now."

"I know," came the reply, "but my lunch was in the pocket." mm

Ohm Banchmin

Ohm Banchmin es min Lehra
En fehlgelovda Maun
En eck sie sien Verehara
Drum wiel eck goanuscht kaun

Geleht haft he an Basel
Waut jieda ehne tjant
Woa fehle Millionaere
und fehl Traktatges sen.

Doahan foa he aulene
En tridj kaum he befrieht
en so aus fehle saje
Haft he nich rick gefriet.

He es ehn strenja Lehra
Steit unja Gottes Schutz
He kloppt mi oppe Lewa
doch blos to minem Nutz

Latz naum he mi aum Kroage
Jung, du best doch domm aus Blott
Du letzt mi aul daut Froage
En glewst mie blos aun Gott.

Nu es je He fehl Kleaka
aus eck an min Geschlact
an uck aus aule de Beaka
drom glew eck waut he sagt.

(Dieses Gedicht wurde zum Andenken von Lehrer Benjamin Unruh von seiner "platt deutschen Jungens" zustande gebracht.)

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more about Review

discourses are free of earnest exhortation and enlivened with the stuff of personal experience, or when "the joke" is at the expense of one of his younger and less mature selves. For example, in "Frontier Religion" he describes a Methodist God who "rested on the Sabbath and had outlined strange rules and taboos about eating and drinking certain foods. But he had apparently later changed his mind and permitted people like ourselves to eat almost anything and to drink whatever we liked, provided it was not alcoholic." In his college days the author heard "eloquent and fluent sermons . . . much after the manner of a good Board of Trade pep talk," or he travelled to Buffalo to hear Billy Sunday describe Salome's dance before Herod. He was particularly intrigued to hear that Salome "came in with one leg at a quarter to twelve" and that "she didn't wear enough to flag a handcar". In such passages the author of *Sarah Binks* and *Willows Revisited* winks at himself and his reader.

Earlier in this review I mentioned one "hazard" confronting the spiritual autobiographer. I should add that the great advantage to the autobiographer in expressing himself without the protective cover of a more formal literary convention is that his assertions and generalizations are the fruit of personal experience and therefore invulnerable to objective criticism.

The author of *Doubting Castle*, despairing at the prospect of a totally mechanical and God-less universe, found an intellectually convincing alternative in the scientific writings of Arthur Eddington. Whether the theory of meaningful "action structures" can lead others to a firmer belief in a loving, *Personal* God I do not know - just as I can never know how many Victorians could share in the anti-materialist "conversions" of Carlyle, J. S. Mill or Tennyson.

In his wisdom, Dr. Hiebert reiterates that in *Doubting Castle* he is speaking only for himself, and that he wishes only to share his experience with others "so that they may not find themselves too much alone if they happen to be traveling the same way." mm

Leaving friend

Bill: "My girl friend left me."

Len: "Why didn't you tell her about your rich uncle?"

Bill: "I did. Now she's my aunt."

Dry Story

Mother (while reading): This article is kind of dry.

10 yr. old daughter: Didn't the people drink water?

Big Sister's View

Definition of a thirteen year old by her seventeen year old sister: She gets a little less sensible all the time!

Dorfleben

von Elisabeth Peters

Otboa, Otboa, Roda,
brinj mi en tjlienen Broda.
Otboa, Otboa, bāsta,
brinj mi 'ne tjliene Sasta!

Katja, unsere Nachbarstochter, und ich sagen die Zeilen schon zum dutzendsten Mal her, während wir auf dem Bretterzaun sitzen, mit den Beinen baumeln, und an einem Stueck Makucha knabbern.

Es ist Fruehling in unserem Dorf geworden. Die ersten gruenen Spitzen an den Baeumen brechen aus den schwellenden Knospen, die Aepfel- und Birnbaeume sind mit einem Wust von weissen und rosa Blueten ueberschuetet, die Meisen gruessen leise mit ihrem pfeifenden Ton, und auf den Feldern hinter den Obstahaerten trillert die erste Lerche.

Angeregt von dem Duft und dem Sonnenschein, werden unsere Stimmen immer lauter, indessen wir mit dem Otboareim fortfahren. Fast waeren wir vor Schreck vom Zaun gefallen als ploetzlich eine Stimme dazwischen ruft: "Doma-jons, ji beid!" Katja, die mutiger ist als ich, spaecht vorsichtig umher, und lacht dann vor sich hin.

"Dauts Kloses Fraunz!" sagt sie gelassen. "Etj sach am afints ut de Owesied kome!"

Fraunz wohnt in dem grossen Bauernhaus vor uns, in dem auch Katja wohnt, Nachdem die Wirtschaft von Katjas Eltern abgebrannt und der Vater den Brandwunden erlegen war, fand ihre Mutter mit der sehr kinderreichen (topjibrochten) Familie in der Sommerstube und dem Vorhaus mon Fraunz' Mutter Obdach. In dem dreizimmerigen Nebenhause, auf demselben Hof, wohnte unsere Mutter mit uns sieben Kindern.

"Den Riem mott ji beid goanich sinjen," spricht Fraunz weise aus seiner 14 jaehrigen Erfahrung heraus.

"Woaromm nich?" fragen wir wie aus einem Munde.

"Wiels juni Muttesch Weatfruees sennt, desweajin," kommt prompt die Antwort.

Betroffen schweigen wir. Dass unsere Muetter Witwen sind wissen wir wohl,

aber warum wir deshalb den Herrn Adebar nicht ansingen duerfen verstehn wir noch nicht. Langsam sammeln wir unsere Schlorren auf, die wir neben dem Zaun stehen gelassen hatten - sie sind an den Sohlen schon sehr duenn, da wir waehrend des Winters, trotz strengen Verbots von zu Hause, auf dem Eis "geglitscht" hatten.

"Domm daut wi nich boaft gone tjenne," murmelt Katja. "Freese Saunna haud aul ver eene Veatj en Schwaalm jiseene, oba onse Ma lat mi emma noch nich boaft gone. Se sajt dauts to kolt, wiels daut egol reajent, doabie es daut doch so scheen heet."

"Na Katja, du sie mau stell!" mischt sich Fraunz ein. "Wea haud fegone Weatj de Schnopp daut de Naes rot aus 'ne Eadbea wea, he?"

"Tjemma di!" brummt Katja und dreht ihm eine lange Nase.

Vorsichtshalber laufen wir nun aber doch durch den Vorgarten zur Strasse, immer nach hinten schielend - bei Fraunz ist es immer besser man laesst sich nicht erwischen. Katja hat ein kleines Stoeckchen mitgebracht, das haelt sie nun gegen die Stacketenzaeune an denen wir vorbeilaufen, so dass ein rhythmisches Klappern entsteht.

Bald treffen wir andere Kinder auf dem recht weiten Schulweg: Freunde wie Feinde. Letztere werden unbarmherzig von Katja gedemuertigt indem sie die vielen Spruechlein die sie kennt so passend anwendet, dass die Betroffenen uns entweder rachesuchend verfolgen oder still auf dem Gehsteig sich weiter schleichen.

"Aron', Koken'!" singt sie als wir an Ennsen vorbeikommen, wo der unglueckliche Aron' sich eben an der Pforte sehen laesst.

"Ha, onn doa tjemmt Isaak!" freut sich Katja, und beginnt nun im singenden Ton:

"Isaak, Spriesack, Schlentjafot,
schleit siene Brut em Tjalla dot!"

"Veheiw an doch, Isaak!" ruft Aron' der uns immer noch nicht eingeholt hat, aber wir sind schon laengst an Isaak vorbei.

"Domme Schol!" brummt Katja als wir uns der Schule naehern. Im Fruehling

findet sie das Lernen unertraeglich langweilig. Ich kann ihr nicht ganz beipflichten, da ich eigentlich sehr gerne in die Schule gehe. Nur ist mir jedesmal wenn ich in den grossen Schulhof einbiege etwas beklommen ums Herz. Mit meinen sieben Jahren kann ich mir noch nicht das schwermuetige Gefuehl erklaren das mich beschleicht, und leide darunter. In diesem Gebaeude welches jetzt ganz als Schulhaus benutzt wird, hatte ich mit meinen Eltern gewohnt bis ich fuenf Jahre zaehlte, als ploetzlich durch den Tod meines Vaters alles ein jaehes Ende nahm.

Hier war ich geboren, in der schoenen grossen Lehrerwohnung die unter einem Dach mit einem der drei Schulgebaeude lag. Meine ersten Erinnerungen sind von Sonne umflossen die durch die Spitzengardinen an den grossen Fenstern freien Einlass fand und wunderschoeene kringelige Schattenmuster auf den Fussboden hinzitterte. Ich erinnere mich bloss, dass ich als kleines Kind die Sonne einzufangen versuchte - aber wenn

ich auch noch so fest zugreifen mochte, nie hatte ich Sie in der Hand.

Als ich erst gross genug war um in den benachbarten Bauernhaeusern meine kleine Spielgefaehrten zu besuchen (ich war von jeher fuers "spazieren!") war ich immer etwas verunsichert. Warum hatten wir nicht auch Ruhbaenke und hohe Gastbetten in dem grossen Zimmer, von uns Kinder immer "Saal" genannt? Und warum standen auf unserer Kommode keine Pfauenfedern in farbiger Glasvase, von den bunten Tassen und Tellern die zum "Schoensehen" aufgestellt waren garnicht zu sprechen. Unsere Wohnung war sehr schoen, aber befremdend anders als die geraeumigen Bauerhaeuser.

Ich sehe sie heute noch vor mir, die Raume von Licht durchflossen: das "grossen Zimmer" mit seinem roten Sofa, dem Biedermeiertisch davor, mit dem riesigen Schriebtisch meines Vaters, dessen Oberflaeche zum Schutz mit grueneum Loeschpapier bedeckt war. Darauf stand die gruen-beschirmte Lampe, der "Rundbrenner", den unsere Eltern "leichtsinnig und verschwenderisch" wie manche biedere alte Tante es ganannt hatte, jeden Tag brannten, obwohl das ja sehr viel mehr Kerosin kostete. An der einen Wand hing ein grosser Teppich dessen leuchtende Farben sich in dem venezianischen Spiegel in jener Zeit in einem menonitischem Dorf in der abgelegenen Ukrainischen Steppe zu suchen? frage ich mich heute. Er hing dort in all seiner Herrlichkeit, und als er spaeter vor unserer Ausreise nach Kanada an eine alten Chochol um ein Butterbrot verkauft wurde weinte meine Mutter dem Spiegel eine heimliche Traene nach.

An regnerischen Tagen oder wenn wir ein bischen krank waren, durften wir aus dem grossen Mahogonibuecherschrank einen Band von Meyers Lexikon herausholen um darin zu blaettern oder zu lesen, je nach Vermoegen. Und einmal, als ich die Masern hatte, durfte ich mit dem herrlichen kleinen Puppenservice spielen welches meiner Schwester Njuta gehoerte. Es stammte von meiner Grossmutter, und hatte aus dem Grunde einen Ehrenplatz auf der hochpolierten Etagere, die eigentlich nur fuer die braunen Marmorfiguren von Puschkin und Lermontov, den Lieblingsdichtern meines Vaters, und zwei schlanke geschliffene Vasen berechnet waren. Die

Buesten kamen spaeter auch unter den Hammer, aber die Vasen wurden mit nach Kanada genommen, da sie meiner Mutter als Reiseandenken von ihrem Bruder, Aeltesten Heinrich Funk aus Neu-York, mitgebracht worden waren.

Abends, wenn die geteilten Holzjalousien geschlossen wurden die innen in den tiefen Fensternischen angebracht waren, und unser Vater sich zu unserer fleissig stickenden Mutter aufs Sofa setzte, waehrend die Lampe ihr angenehmes Licht um sich verbreitete, umfing uns Kinder der ganze Zauber unseres gemuetlichen "Daheims". Oft kam Besuch, besonders an sturmischen Herbst - und langen - Winterabenden. Dann griff mein Vater zu Fritz Reuters "Laeuschen on Rimmels" oder "Ut mine Stromtid", und wir kleineren Kinder kuschelten uns maeuschenstill hinter dem Ruecken eines der groesseren, die ja aufbleiben durften. Herrlich war dieses verbotene "Aufschnacken". Es hatte nur den Nachteil, dass man, wenn man ueber Oll Braesig oder Jung-Jochen doch mit der Zeit eingeschlafen war, von der kleinrussischen Magd, die sicher ihre liebe Not mit uns hatte, ausgezogen werden musste.

An Tagen wo die Post eingegangen war durften wir uns die neuesten Kunstbilder ansehen die unser Vater aus Deutschland abonnierte; oder wir warteten auf den Augenblick wo unsere Mutter, die eine richtige Leseratte war, die letzte Nummer von "Mode und Haus" aus der Hand gab und uns in ihrer froehlichen Art die Zeichnungen erklarte. Es wurde ueberhaupt viel bei uns gelesen zumal uns nicht nur die private Bibliothek unseres Vaters zur Verfuegung stand, sondern auch die umfangreiche Schulbuecherei.

Vor unserem Haus lag der grosse Schulgarten, und ganz nah an der Haustuer war der tiefe unheimliche Brunnen, in dessen schwarzem Wasser das aberglaeubische Dienstmaedchen immer duestere Gestalten gesehen haben wollte wenn sie die gefuellten Eimer an dem langen Strick ueber das Brunnenrad heraufzog. Als ich grosser wurde stieg ich manchmal ohne das irgendjemand davon wusste auf einen herangeschleppten Holzklotz und schaute ueber den Rand. Dunkle Gestalten liessen sich zwar nicht blicken, hoechstens war im Herbst ein

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gelbes Blatt hinuntergeschwebt und trieb nun trübe auf der bleiernen Fläche umher.

An der Seite nach der Querstrasse zu war der Schulhof von herrlichen grossen Akazien umfriedet. Im Frühling blühten die schneeweiss, und ihr lieblicher Duft vermischte sich mit dem süsseren Geruch der Linde die vor dem Gebäude längs der Strassenseite stand und Sonntags als Kirche diente.

Unser Dorf war eine Neuansiedlung und gehörte zu dem Ignatjewer Kirchenspiel. Es war grosszügig geplant, mit seinen breiten Strassen und den grossen Bauernhöfen die von Ordnung und Wohlstand zeugten. Herrliche hohe umsäumten an den Strassenseiten die Hofställe, solide gebaute Häuser aus roten Backsteinen, belebt von den grün gestrichenen Fensterläden und mit Dachpfannen oder Schindeln gedeckt, lugten aus den gepflegten Vorgärten heraus.

Unser Nachbarhaus zur linken gehörte dem Schulzen und hatte deshalb das einzige Telefon in ganzen Dorf. Der Schulze war Witwer, und seine Kinder alle längst erwachsen, obwohl damals noch unverheiratet. Kein Wunder, dass ich wenn eben nur möglich, durch die kleine Gartentür schlüpfte um mich von den Nachbarn verwehnen zu lassen. Es gab dort besonders schönes Obst im Garten und ich kam manchmal mit Kirschen geschmückt nach Hause - Onkel Schellenberg hatte sie mir um Gürtel und Ohren gehängt. Nur einmal war unser Freundschaftsverhältnis gefährdet, und zwar an dem grossen Tag als ich ihm freudestrahlend die Geburt eines kleinen Bruders anmeldete. "En Broda?" wunderte er sich. "Waut wesst du mit dem? Dem sull ji em Draentjtroch veseepe!"

Ich achtete nicht auf sein freundliches Schmunzeln, und staunte ihn voller Entsetzen an.

"Na, wann i am dann jrod hole welle, dann hab ji doch woll aul eenen Nome fe am?" fuhr er fort.

"Doch," sagte ich wichtig, "er wird Dietrich heissen, wie unser Papa. Und das bedeutet 'Volkslieblich'," erklärte

ich stolz, denn die Bedeutung des Namens hatte ich einem von mir "aufgeschnackten" Gespräch meiner Eltern entnommen.

"I wol!" sagte Onkel Schellenberg und lacht verschmitzt, "Peiwei! saul he heete."

Entsetzt nahm ich nun Reissaus und lief schleunigst nach Hause um unserer Mutter mein Leid zu klagen. Ich war nicht wenig verwundert als sie lachte, und nur meinte, Onkel Schellenberg spasse nur.

An Sonnabendabenden war das Dorf besonders schön. Dann glänzte alles vor Sauberkeit, denn den ganzen Vormittag war in jedem Hause "jifrecht" worden. Ich beneidete dann die Kinder die wenn sie erst etwas älter waren am Samstag die Messinggewichte und Pendel der schönen Kroegegeruhren putzen mussten. Wir hatten eine Standuhr deren Gehäuse aus braunem Nussholz kunstvoll gefügt war, aber was war schon eine Uhr die nicht geputzt zu werden brauchte?

Am Nachmittag fiel den älteren Kindern die Pflicht zu die frisch geäeteten Gartenwege zu harken, und vor der Haustür zu kehren. Wenn bei uns alles schön sauber gefegt war streute unsere Mutter weissen Sand auf die Gartenstege; wenn's besonders schön werden sollte, mischte sie ihn erst mit Wasser und "kleckerte" schöne Ringe und Schnörkel, darüber wir dann behutsam gingen um sie für den Sonntag zu erhalten.

In allen Kuchen wurden lange Bleche voll Zweibäckchen und Platz oder Obstpiraschki gebacken, und das ganze Dorf war im Frühling und im Sommer in einer Wolke von Wohlgerüchen eingehüllt, die aus dem Duft von frischem Gebäck und Blumen bestand.

Die Bauern kamen wohl etwas früher vom Acker, und "nach Vesper" begaben sich die Dorfeinwohner scharenweise zur Traenke zum Baden. Es gab zwei, eine auf jedem Ende des Dorfes. Ob man sie künstlich hergestellt hatte oder ob sie sich natürlich gebildet hatten, da das Dorf auf einem Hügel lag, weiss ich nicht mehr. Man badete immer ohne Badeanzüge, die Weiblichkeit an einer

Stelle, die Männer in passender Entfernung. Ich glaube, manchmal wurden auch die Pferde gebadet - die badeten aber ohne Ansehen des Geschlechts.

Zum Abendessen am Samstag gab's bei uns Piraschki und Milch, für die Eltern Tee - russischen, schwach gelb, mit einer Zitronenscheibe, aus dem Glase getrunken. Das war weniger Arbeit als die üblichen Bratkartoffeln, denn man war behütet den Sonnabendabend schon etwas feiertäglich zu begehen. Wer nicht zum Baden gekommen war, hatte sich wenigstens "Hals on Ohren" gewaschen, und "Tjeleensindoagsch" angezogen. Bald setzten sich die Nachbarn auf die Haustreppe zusammen um zu plaudern, während die "Jugend" paarweise promenierte.

Bei uns wurde viel gesungen. Es gehörte zu den Gepflogenheiten unseres Vaters gegen Abend die Gitarre zu spielen während die ganze Familie auf den Gartenbänken unter den hohen Pappeln sass und Volkslieder sang. Ich habe nie den Text eines Liedes auf dem Blatt gesehen; auch bin ich mir nicht bewusst sie je erlernt zu haben - sie waren einfach da, uns eingeboren. Meistens gestellten sich nach kurzer Zeit die Nachbarn zu uns. Es wurde gesungen und musiziert, frohlich gelacht oder ernsthaft diskutiert. Ich schlief dann, bis unser jüngster Bruder geboren wurde, auf dem Schooss meiner Mutter ein - sorglos, wohlbehütet.

Nur ganz kurze Zeit genossen wir dieses friedliche Idyll. Die Schrecknisse der Nachkriegszeit, die Revolution, die Räuberüberfälle, das Hungerjahr brachen auch über uns herein. Mein Vater wurde auf einer Reise von einer Bande überfallen und erschossen - der Einzige in unserem Dorf - und unsere mutige Mutter, die damals 36 Jahre zählte, sass wie versteinert da und konnte keine Tränen finden. Nicht einmal den Tag seines Todes konnte genau festgelegt werden, man schloss auf den 30. September oder den 1. Oktober. Die Leiche musste aus dem Russendorf wo der Überfall verübt worden war, nach Hause geholt werden - eine nicht ungefährliche Sache, die aber zwei gewesene Schüler unseres Vaters unternahmen. So weit ich mich erinnern kann hatten sie nach der Zentralschule bei meinem Vater Stunden belegt, und waren sich daraufhin wahrscheinlich nahe gekommen. Sie hatten ein Grab gefunden - ein frommer kleinrussischer Muschik hatte meinen Vater begraben und ein hölzernes Kreuz über ihn aufgestellt.

Im Dorfe wurde unser toter Vater in der Scheune des Predigers aufgebahrt, da es in unseren Dörfern keine Bestattungshäuser gab.

Die Welt war für unser Mutter zusammengebrochen. mm

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our word . . .

The Latest Little Sin Is The Lottery

We seem to be in the midst of a lottery craze. It took our government some time to adopt a technique of raising money that has been popular in Europe for decades, but now that they have discovered the lottery method they are promoting it with a vengeance.

Not so deep within each one of us there evidently lurks a strong desire to make the big killing, to reap much where little has been sown, to realize all of our material dreams through one lucky windfall. The popularity of the lottery is fresh evidence that there is a greedy little monster alive and kicking in our souls.

This in turn means new money in the bank for government agencies, and fresh grist for the preacher's mill. Another dark spot has been detected in our moral tissue and already our surgeons of the soul are sharpening their scalpels. Pulpits and church papers are urging us to have the lottery virus removed immediately, before it spreads and becomes fatal.

Purchasing lottery tickets is for most people a relatively inexpensive form of fun, with risks that pale in comparison to many other risks we take. Let's reserve our righteous indignation for more worthwhile targets.

In its attempt to be relevant and "with it" the church is always in danger of being merely trendy and melodramatic in its identification and denunciation of sin. It is also inclined to waste its best shots on small targets. In the areas of business and housekeeping there is a maxim that "if you take care of the little things the big things will take care of themselves." Unfortunately this little rule does not work quite as well in the moral realm.

Like the person who frantically and irrationally saves the smallest and most meaningless object in escaping from a fire, we are inclined too often to focus our moral gaze on the most obvious but least significant manifestations of human evil. We go after the small sliver in the person's eye, rather than the large beam. There are some obvious reasons for this. The real evil is often buried deep below the surface. To work at it successfully may mean long periods spent underground, where no one can observe our moral surgery. The insignificant symptom, on the other hand, is closer to the surface and by focusing our therapeutic efforts on it we may achieve more dramatic, if short-run, results which can be observed by all. Young couples with marital problems may benefit immensely from the thoughtful, unseen counselling of a dedicated pastor. This is undoubtedly where we ought to focus our healing resources. But it is so much easier to spend our time debating the surface symptoms of marriage breakdown such as divorce. A minister who makes dramatic denunciations of divorce from the pulpit may appear to us to possess greater moral fervour than a minister who offers constructive advice on marriage and quietly ministers to the needs of his people.

Our society is obviously too materialistic. We all need help in fighting this pernicious demon. We are spending far too much of our time and money on better accommodation, more expensive vacations, cars and boats. In most of our Mennonite enterprises there is far too great a gap between the income of the average worker and the owner. There is nothing sinful about profit. It is simply another form of income for those who are willing to take the risk of setting up their own business. The

average worker knows this and doesn't resent it when the profit of the owner is larger than his own pay cheque. But we have allowed class differences to develop within our communities, based on wealth and social position, which we will not be able to justify before the judgment of God.

People in our own communities are under terrific pressure to increase their consumption of material things. It is considered a wise merchandizing technique to have lucky winners run around in a grocery store trying to fill their food basket as high as possible in a given time period. A person who cannot afford a second car feels disadvantaged; salesmen spend countless hours trying to win that free trip to the Bahamas.

But now our brave fishers of men preach about lotteries! Let us leave the sporty little fish for a while and go after the bigger and more dangerous sharks that can be found in all of our backyard pools. Or do we prefer to tackle the little fish precisely because they don't bite back? **R. V.**



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Teachers are product of changes too

Dear Sir:

Here's a criticism (my forte). You should not encourage the already prevalent vice of forgetfulness, procrastination, indifference to obligation, or whatever you wish to call it by offering to forgive the amount owing on past issues.

During the course of the year just past you published several articles on education with a rather strong suggestion that there has been a deterioration in the attitude of pupils to their instructors. Please consider that it is *most* unlikely that the children or parents have changed in isolation.

The teaching profession too as well as the entire educational system is a product of the present state of western civilization. Besides attitudes there is the very serious matter in this country of scholarship. How many teachers do you know who are truly articulate in the English language? Perhaps it should be emphasized that this ability to convey ideas clearly and efficiently is basic in a good teacher. Clear and incisive thinking appears to benefit hugely from the mere expression of those thoughts. As a matter of fact, Dean Broderson once told a class that if you cannot put an idea down on paper so that it makes sense then you should consider the very real probability, that you don't know it. I have heard old timers judge the educational level of their peers on the basis of the excellence or otherwise of their habitual use of the German language. Putting this in a Canadian context, how do we stand? So much for skepticism.

The first thing I do when a new issue of Mennonite Mirror arrives, is turn to the back pages in the hope of finding some low German articles. We desperately need a bit of whimsy and humour to balance our natural posturing piety.

I must close *before* I run out of relevant ideas instead of after. Let me offer my compliments for an interesting paper in the past, best wishes for the future and my subscription fees.

Ron Suderman,
Winkler, Man.

Sirs:

Please renew my subscription. We all enjoy reading your magazine, particularly stories by Al Reimer and most feature articles.

Sincerely,
M. J. Penner,
Winnipeg

Insensitive Education Editorial Annoys Mirror Reader

Dear Sir:

Your editorial in the November issue of the Mennonite Mirror deplored the lack of emphasis being placed on basic skills in our public schools. You also expressed disappointment that teachers through their society were not articulating their position on the "basics versus frills" issue clearly or emphatically enough. I agree with your basic premise that all is not well in education and that someone should do something about it. It is with some of your arguments, however, that I take exception.

First of all I think your heading is inaccurate and misleading - inaccurate because the "Blackboard Jungle" is not a typical Manitoba scenario, past or present, and misleading because that statement "no one can read" is as false as it is sensational. You are insensitive to the fact that the majority of high school students can read, and that capable, conscientious teachers are applying themselves to teaching the basics.

Asking teachers to take a position on the basics in education makes about as much sense as asking business men to take a position on cost accounting. It is, in short, a condescending request. But if you want a statement here it is: There is no question in teachers' minds that the three R's are still basic to all education.

What is taught beyond the basics is a larger and more complex issue. If our educational system limited itself to teaching just the so-called basics it would be accused (as it has been in the past) of being 50 years behind the times. MTS President, Art Reimer, could have added that for some teachers the basics are the course or courses which they are

More about East Germany

Union. Can you really expect Canada to be unallied with the U. S.? We Canadians are always greeted in Europe as 'Innocents Abroad', but innocence itself is no virtue." He reacts very thoughtfully to this, admitting that while he wishes Canada would be neutral he certainly understands why it is not, and it is true that countries like Sweden may scream a lot about justice but their voice isn't taken very seriously.

We part amiably but just as I turn to go he says with a smile, but without any doubt as to his meaning, "I think you ought not to count on participating in that panel discussion on capitalism." Later, in further discussions with the chairman of the institute, this matter is not raised again. Instead, I am invited to have a private meeting with the local "expert" on capitalism who participated in the panel. I discover that he has never been in a capitalist country.

More next month

teaching. Music teachers, home economics teachers, social studies teachers, physical education teachers, and special education teachers, to name a few, would give you a good argument that what they are teaching is basic to educating the whole individual.

You go on to say that parents and school trustees no longer have influence in educational decision making. Perhaps you are not aware that the Core Committee on the Reorganization of the Secondary Schools consisted of representatives from the universities and faculties of education, the community colleges, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, the Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Labour, the Manitoba Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation, the Department of Youth and Education, High School students, and the Manitoba Teachers' Society.

You cite a Queen's University study which found that 2.5 percent of their first-year students could be termed illiterate by the criteria used. Your argument would have been more meaningful had you explained what criteria were used.

The young people in the so-called illiterate group placed the blame for their illiteracy on teachers. You leave the reader with the impression that teachers were solely to blame for this mess. I would like to know how representative these comments were. Could it be possible that these same students were misplacing the blame? Would the majority possibly admit that lack of motivation, television, indulgent parents, domestic unrest, lack of parental control, the permissive society, etc., etc., had something to do with their illiteracy? It is a common complaint of teachers that students throw painstakingly corrected essays into the waste basket as soon as they check the grade which the teacher has awarded.

Although I am in full support of your argument that parents and trustees should play an important role in educational decision making, the tone of your editorial leaves me with the impression that you expect the educational system to work as it used to in the "good old days". But even in the good old days students didn't come equipped with ready-made holes in their heads into which the basics could be poured. Motivation is the key and has always been the key.

R. Schulz,
Winnipeg

Dear Sir:

I am beginning to enjoy your paper more all the time. Have difficulty with the Low German.

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services at the office most convenient for you.
*Remember each member is a partner in the ownership. Each
member is entitled to exercise his/her democratic right of
control. Each member has a vote.*

**Attend your annual meeting and let
your voice be heard.**

Date: February 28, 1977

Time: 7:30 P.M.

Place: First Mennonite Church, Alverstone & Notre Dame

Crosstown Credit Union Limited

171 Donald St.

1250 Portage Ave.

1110 Henderson Hwy.

Serving the Mennonite People of Manitoba