

mennonite mirror

volume 11 / number 7
march 1982



Irmgard Bae, Piano Virtuoso.

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your word

Elementary School

As a graduate of a Mennonite High School I would personally recommend the experience of some secondary education in a Mennonite setting. The qualification here, of course, is "some". The purpose of Mennonite high schools is to provide Anabaptist teachings within the context of the greater world view. This world view is essential to prevent Mennonite tunnel vision. How are Mennonite children to build a frame of reference for their own beliefs, while cloistered in a Mennonite setting from kindergarten upwards?

The Mennonites in Russia applied concept in a situation where there was far less outside influence than there is today. Yet, they acknowledged the Russian culture. It is doubtful whether this greater awareness of the culture around them was materially detrimental to their Mennonite faith. If a fear exists regarding the subversion of today's culture into Mennonite values, as seems to be the case here, a closer look at our Mennonite foundations is called for.

As a student currently enrolled in my second course in Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg, I would be the last to deny the merit of the study of our Mennonite heritage. The key to this is objectivity, an objective analysis is impossible in an insular situation such as the new Mennonite Elementary School. It is only through critical insight that one can experience and benefit from the value of an education.

Sincerely,
C.K. Schulz.
Winnipeg

REVIEWER MISSES

(1) It was a pleasure to see in the *MIRROR* (January 1982) a review of the recently-published *Forever summer, Forever Sunday: Peter Gerhard Rempel's Photographs of Mennonites in Russia, 1890-1917*, even if the reviewer caused me to wince at his reference to writing containing images (oh, for specific examples!) that are "a little strained."

That the reviewer did miss a thing or two should, however, be noted. For example, there is his complaint that "what is not explained (in the introduction) is why (Rempel) never resumed his work in this country." A glance at the 4th to the 7th pages of the introduction, or at the last two pages of the introduction,

would provide a number of responses to that fascinating question.

It seems particularly important at this time that we do not obscure what must be taken as one of the broader meanings of work such as Rempel's; that we do not obscure the degree to which Mennonites in that pre-Revolutionary setting insisted on, or at least vigorously explored, the "idyllic" nature of their own experience. Indeed, rather than regard the work as not "in any way" represen-

ting that experience, is it not crucial to see it as representing at least dream—indeed, collective dream—and aspiration and longing? (That the work "provides an insight into the way people looked"—at least in a photographer's studio!—becomes important particularly once we regard appearances as part of this collective urge.)

Photography itself, especially studio photography, came as a technology, and a style, from Western Europe into the Mennonite colonies, and Mennonites embraced it in great numbers, and with enormous pleasure. Books such as *Heritage Remembered* and *In The Fullness of Time* present what Rempel's work in *Forever Summer* is merely heightened and condensed: namely, that after 1840 the new mechanism for pictorial representation could promote and project an individual's, and a culture's, view of what Mennonites would, could, and/or should be.

(2) Could your readers help me again? I am preparing for publication selected work—oils, water colours, and block-prints—by New York artist Woldemar Neufeld (b. 1909). If some of your readers have information about Neufeld's early artistic career in Canada in the late 1920s and in the 1930s, I would be very happy if they would contact me as soon as possible. Thank you kindly.

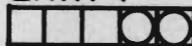
Paul Tiessen.
Kitchener, Ontario

mirror mix-up

TAPLE



LANPT



NIESH



HOUTY



FEWLOR



SPRING'S
COMING ----



The first day of spring is one thing and the first spring day is another.

The difference may seem an



Two winners are being announced this month: — J. Pauls, of Winnipeg, is the winner of the January Mix-up.

— Herb Poetker, Winnipeg, was selected February winner.

Answers to January are: iced, frost, polar, frozen, chilly, bitter, and arctic.

Answers to February are: candy, fancy, sweet, loving, tender, desire, and ninety-nine.

The letters are to be re-arranged and written in the squares to form words. Letters which fall into the squares with circles are to be arranged to complete the answer at the bottom of the puzzle; the drawing to the right provides a clue.

A winner will be drawn at random from among the contest entries and the prize awarded.

Entries must be sent to the Mirror office by March 23, 1982.

Name _____

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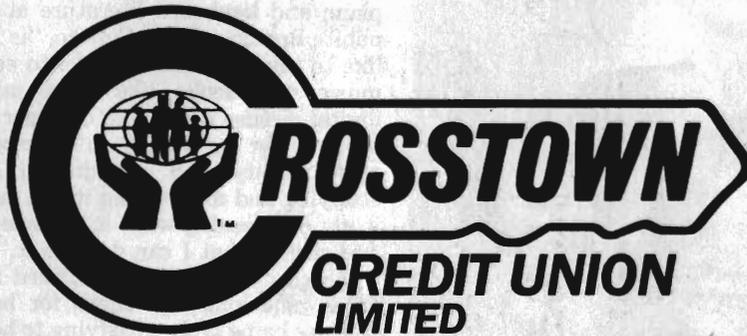
Canada

COMING EVENTS

March 1 - 5. **Ministers and Laymen Conference** at Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg with Grant Osborne and David Schroeder.

April 25: **Festival of Art and Music**, Polo Park mall,

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Attend the annual meeting March 15th, 7:30 P.M.
Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, 86 Westgate, Winnipeg.

mennonite mirror

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Irmgard Baerg:

"I love to see the music . . . come to life under my fingers"

by Mary M. Enns

When Dr. Mary Oyer, lecturer in music and fine arts at Goshen College, Indiana, addressed students and faculty at MBBC she spoke, among other things, of Michaelangelo's sculpting objects out of stone, making them appear to come alive with life and meaning. "That," says Irmgard Baerg, teacher of piano and keyboard literature at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, "is how I like to think of music. I love to see the music that looks like some strange digital picture on a piece of paper come to life under my fingers, to begin to flow with vitality and meaning. I enjoy studying and discovering it and making it my own, seeing what it is made up of and seeing what I can do with it."

Irmgard knows she is fulfilled in the career she long ago chose for herself. Besides being truly satisfying to herself, it is a career that has become a meaningful contribution to the pupils she has taught for some 15 years. And as a performer, she has given pleasure to a great many people.

What provided initial incentive? "I couldn't say it was one person or any one thing but I would say that is where the spiritual reality comes in, the Christian in me. Music is what I do best so it is my whole view of life, my expression of gratitude to God, my offering. The beautiful part is that I can integrate that which I love doing with my every day work, my teaching at the college."

And is a musical background essential for the primary development of a musician? Whereas it may not be a prerequisite it is almost certainly conducive to the evolving and cultivating of musical talent. Irmgard (Irmie) Braun



Irmgard, Bill, Rachel, and Matthew Baerg.

was born in Niverville, Manitoba. "The Mennonite community there was very interested in music making. There was a lot of music in the church. The Koslowskys (and my mother was one) had quite a lot to do with that, I guess. Then too, Wanda Dyck, the pianist was there. Before I began to study with Wanda at age 10 I had studied for a year with the nuns at St. Adolphe. Working with Wanda for eight years was a good experience. She was very disciplined and I worked hard. We lived on the farm, there were no friends around, there weren't too many things to do so I spent a lot of time practicing, acquiring the tools to actually play. My sister Eleanor, also studying piano, and I almost fought for the piano. This sibling rivalry was good. I would get up really early in the morning to practice, which didn't make me too popular with my family. Wanda would appeal to one's pride, saying, as she handed over a sonata, 'I wonder if you can manage to memorize this in a week's time?' So I did. This great drive of assembling, discovering and making it my own is something I have always enjoyed more than performance itself. Certainly I enjoy sharing it with friends, but performances in large auditoriums can be hair-raising and that troubles me sometimes."

Bill and Irmgard Baerg were married in 1962 and spent that first year in Winnipeg, Bill teaching voice at MBBC and Irmie teaching piano privately. Their plans to study in Michigan the following year didn't work out so they chose an alternative. With \$500 in their pockets, and a father back home ready to help out with a loan, they left for Detmold, Germany, for either one or more years, depending upon circumstances. That first year was really rough sledding. In the second year Irmgard received a scholarship from the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* with a *Zuschuss* because Bill was also studying. The three year study there with Renate Kretschmar-Fischer was a rich and rewarding experience with Irmgard's *Reifeprüfung* and a top mark as a reward.

It was during this time, 1965, that their son Matthew was born. Because both parents' schedules were flexible, they alternated their days so that a baby in the home presented no severe problems.

Back home in Winnipeg in 1966 both were hired to teach at MBBC, Bill replacing Victor Martens and Irmie teaching piano. Ben Horch, who was with CBC, now gave her the needed opportunities for recital and chamber music work. The Baerg's daughter Rachel was born in 1969. The fact that they now had two children didn't change



their life a great deal. They had decided that both would study or else both would work. They decided on a two-year study (1971-72) at Peabody conservatory in Baltimore. A Canada Council grant and an assistantship for Bill at the institute supported their studies. Irmie, rather than being concerned with a degree for herself, decided to spend this period of time "polishing". Having studied in Germany with academics she now wanted to work with a true "performer". The two years with Leon Fleischer were good years. After that she felt she needed to work on material on her own. "You accumulate bits and pieces from various pedagogues and in the end you need to assimilate all of it and make it work for you." She continued to do this while Bill was acquiring a doctorate from the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University.

What sort of goal has she set for herself? "I'm satisfied and very grateful as things are now. I'm grateful for opportunities to have cultivated my love of music and to have gotten it to the point where I feel I'm saying what I want to. I have no illusions about being a great performer nationally or internationally. I have no yen for that because it's just not important to me. The whole idea of performance can get to be — well, not that satisfying. My greatest joy comes

from working with the music and sharing it with friends."

Is church involvement and contribution a vital part of her life's program? "Yes, the church in the larger sense. I'm concerned with investing time and interest in young people as they come through our college, giving them an idea of how they can use their talents to express themselves and ultimately that it might become an offering for them to God as well."

Has it been good in their case for both marriage partners to be in concentrated music fields? Is there a danger of threat one to the other? "I think possibly there could be. The fact that we're not actually in the same area of music might have helped to avoid any of that. We hope we've been able to complement one another. Fortunately it's always been in the same kind of harness and the children have grown up with this and some pressures at home and have learned to take responsibility."

Is it a good thing for children when both parents are so involved outside the home? "We like to think its the quality of time we spend together, invest in one another as a family, that counts. It's special when we have an evening of Monopoly. And in recent summers we have all been working together on a cabin. It's a family project on a little island in Clearwater Bay. We carry the wood across on a barge and do all the work ourselves. Matthew and I shingled the roof. It sort of demonstrates what happens at home; we have to work together."

How do the Baergs feel about whether or not their children might choose to go into music as well? "That has to be their own choice. We want to give them the opportunity, the vehicles to express themselves in this area but we want to make sure it's not as a favour to us. Both of them love to make music. Matthew began violin lessons at age seven and is now studying with Arthur Polson. Rachel began to study the cello at age seven and is working with Julie Banton. Every school year we have a family conference to decide if they would like to continue. We let them make the decision and then we help them to stick by that."

Irmgard enjoys expressing herself in singing as much as on the piano. "In Detmold I had a double major, voice and piano, since the former was my first love. I guess for me it was too small an instrument to really have the full expressive range that I can have on the piano. When my voice didn't work as I wanted it to it became frustrating. All the same its been a marvelous combination to have. And I enjoy singing in the church choir."

How does she handle pressures? "One sort of learns to discipline oneself. In the

acquiring of the tools, a very vital part is to learn to relax. I think it has a lot to do with one's makeup. I may come home and go to sleep for half an hour before dinner; it is allowing yourself to unwind. There is another thing: it is a basic dependence on God to sort of take care of you through the various stages. In that lies a security. It helps immeasurably during a performance but also afterwards if things haven't gone as well as you had hoped. And you realize that this too serves some purpose — maybe it was getting to my head."

And can it go to one's head? "Yes, very easily. We're all human. You've worked pretty hard and in the end it's so easy to say, Look what I've done!"

How about a mental block during performance? "Certainly they're there. You try very hard to stave off that sort of thing. As a child one relies a lot on rote and it becomes a well-worn path, your fingers can feel their way around. As you get older it has to be a much more conscious thing."

Does one project ahead during performance? "Oh yes. I try to have both kinds of system to rely on. The tactile sense is a very basic animal instinct. Then there is the going through of a mental process, knowing what the next score is."

Irmgard is fond of concerto playing; the big dimension of sound that you are a part of. "But always behind the joy of it is the tremendous pressure on you, the fear of not remembering it all. And yet there is no way a pianist can perform a concerto with the music in front. You're working with subtleties. In chamber music there don't seem to be so many intricacies; it's not quite as virtuosic as the solo literature. I feel very content playing in chamber music; it feels secure instead of terrifying and you have the music there before you."

Mrs. Baerg teaches 14 students at the college. This is a priority for her — the bringing of young students into the field. Her involvements outside the church choir and the college include her playing with the Winnipeg Chamber Orchestra in an open-ended situation. She is the Winnipeg Symphony keyboard player whenever the occasion requires a piano, harpsichord or celeste. She also free-lances, playing with small chamber music groups.

An outlet? "I love to have guests now and again and then I might bake something really special, like a German torte called *Kalter Hund*. It has lots of good chocolate and other rich stuff. But I also find pleasure in making special things just for the family. They all love Napoleon Torte so I make it and some of the old Mennonite things like *Porzelenchen* and *Vereneki*. This sort of activity provides a wonderful contrast and a good outlet for my daily work.

mm

M.B. CONFERENCE UPHOLDS DISMISSAL OF PRINCIPAL

On Friday, February 26, in the MBCI auditorium, which was filled to capacity, the provincial conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church accepted the action of the MBCI executive committee to relieve Mr. Peter H. Peters of his position as principal.

Mr. Cornelius Martens, chairman of the MBCI executive committee, reported that the decision had been arrived at after "much deliberation and prayer," and was "in the best interest of our school."

Following his report, a number of individual speakers voiced their concerns over this, by now highly controversial, issue. A statement from 16 teachers and staff of the school indicated that they were "distressed and appalled" by the events that had transpired and the methods used in the process of gathering information.

Rev. Frank C. Peters, pastor of the Portage Avenue MB Church, stated that he could not understand why Mr. Peters had not resigned when originally requested to do so, since the principal is subject to the board. The vice-principal pointed out that the principal could not resign with any self-esteem, given the kinds of reasons advanced by the committee.

Mr. Harold Jantz, editor of the Mennonite Brethren Herald, spoke at length of the deep feeling of mistrust within the conference which has resulted from the actions of the board. He had been present at the final arbitration hearing, set up by the Personnel committee of the conference to mediate the dispute between Mr. Peters and the board. He spoke of the way in which surveys have been used inaccurately, and the flimsy and selective use of data to incriminate Mr. Peters. Mr. Jantz spoke of the damage to the witness of the church and also to the sense of brotherhood within the church which has resulted from this action.

When invited by the conference moderator to respond to some of the questions, concerns and requests for information, there was no response from any of the 22 members of the larger board and those of the personnel committee involved in the process, which began on December 21 when Mr. Peters was first asked to resign.

Thus, the basic issues in the whole case were never aired. The final comment of Rev. Frank C. Peters (made after formal discussion of the motion had been concluded) warning of the danger of emphasizing "discipleship without a beginning", appeared to hint at one of the underlying issues. The implication was that the MBCI had not stressed conversion enough. The ease with which people were willing to believe such innuendo was revealed by the applause with which it was received.

Neither the members of the MB constituency, nor the parents, nor the staff, nor the students, have ever been given reasons for the dismissal. The M.B. paper, the Mennonite Brethren Herald, was expressly prohibited from commenting on it.



ORATORIO 82

**SYMPHONY OF
PSALMS**

Igor Stravinsky

**DONA NOBIS
PACEM** (sung in English)

Vaughn Williams

**The Mennonite
Oratorio Choir**
with Orchestra

Conductor: William Baerg

DATE:
March 11, 1982; 8:00 p.m.

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Observed Along the Way

January and February

by Roy Vogt

Jan. 18:

It is a cold January, too cold for our old house. Its innards groan and finally burst. First the water pump in the furnace breaks down. A few water pipes freeze. The heating people soon have things back in shape. Then the boiler in the furnace springs a leak. Again the temperature plummets and the heating people hurry over. Next the wash basin breaks, flooding floor and ceiling. Then the pilot light in the furnace goes out mysteriously. All of this in the space of one week. I begin to wonder whether the good Maker ever intended people to live in places like Winnipeg. Why don't we give it back to the wolves?

Jan. 19:

A noon luncheon meeting with a group of Winnipeg Mennonite ministers to discuss the formation of a mediation service for members of our churches who are in financial difficulty or are involved in conflicts over finances. I am impressed with the fact that 20 business and professional people have volunteered to help with such mediation. The ministers are very encouraging. In the past few months six persons have made use of this service. It is organized by MEDA. Those wanting more information can call 475-3550 and ask for the MEDA Mediation service.

Jan. 24:

Attended the annual meeting of our congregation, the First Mennonite Church. What a large institution this has become: 1,400 members, of whom 100 are over 80 years of age, a \$400,000 annual budget, three full-time ministers plus three lay ministers, three choirs, twenty deacons, etc. Strong concerns, and a rich diversity of opinion mark the meeting. I have friends who are appalled by the sheer size of this congregation. Intimate group decision-making and fellowship are obviously more difficult than in a smaller church.

However, those who like organized youth activities, good choral music and an interesting mixture of old and young people, German and English (and other cultural traditions), are attracted to this church. Or as someone said to me recently, "I am engaged in constant dialogue with others during the week. I want a place where I can be quiet, listen to good music, and hear a good sermon. I don't care if the only fellowship I get is the fellowship I seek." We have often sought and found fellowship in this con-

gregation through small circles of dedicated Christian friends.

Jan. 25:

Enjoyed a luncheon with the Fort Gary Rotarians, as guest of my good friend Arkie Wiens, who showed slides of his recent trip to Egypt and Israel. It was good to rub shoulders with non-Mennonites.

Jan. 26:

A Bible-Study in a home in our area, conducted by one of our ministers. The twenty people present raised some interesting questions about the origins of the Bible, and decided to undertake a series of studies on the origins of our faith.

Jan. 28:

After a day of lecturing, the whole evening was spent on one of the most difficult questions that we must settle in our university department each year: who to promote for good service. Our economics department at the University of Manitoba has 30 full-time professors (who teach 1,800 students in the first year alone). Each year we select a small promotion committee to evaluate promotion applications. This year three colleagues have applied for promotion. Everything they have written is carefully read and evaluated by the whole committee. Evaluations of their teaching abilities are invited from their colleagues and from students. All the books and articles of those applying for a full-professorship are sent to several leading scholars in other universities for their evaluation. This takes several months. Any decision we make must be approved by a higher committee made up of professors from other departments. Many promotion applications are turned down. Firings are extremely rare, but consultations and evaluations are frequent, and searching.

Feb. 4:

Enjoyed a fine dinner-meeting of MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) at the home of George Loewens in Steinbach. We Mennonites work well during or after a good meal. The purpose of the meeting was to plan for the annual MEDA convention, to be held in Winnipeg this coming November. More than 500 delegates from all over North America are expected for that meeting.

Feb. 5:

Received a few angry phone calls

regarding the previous column. How we have come to fear thoughts that are not under our control! Those who have learned to manipulate and muzzle the press are suspicious about the origin and purpose of any thought not subject to their manipulation. If we believe in the freedom of the press only when it is uncritical or when it serves part of a higher strategy (as perceived by us), we don't believe in the freedom of the press at all. As a wise old teacher once said to me, "Silence is seldom golden. Usually it is merely yellow."

Feb. 6:

Spent all Saturday morning (including an early Breakfast) with 90 persons from Bethel Mennonite Church, in their beautiful new Senior Citizen's residence (Bethel Place), discussing Christian attitudes to economic issues. There seems to be a growing interest in this problem among our congregations.

Feb. 10:

A noon meeting with a young Mennonite student who is examining the exercise of "compassion versus efficiency" in one of our Mennonite business enterprises. He was actually invited by a Mennonite businessman to evaluate the fairness of a firing that had occurred in his business. The student has been permitted to question all the persons involved, and will present his findings as a case study at the March meeting of MEDA. I am impressed with the openness of this particular business, and by the work being done by the student.

Feb. 11:

Attended a Liberal fund-raising dinner. Except for the company at the table the evening was extremely boring. I feel sorry for anyone who is expected to defend current economic policy in this country. Lloyd Axworthy obviously didn't have the heart for it.

Feb. 12:

Took a small part in a two-day program at the MBCI, designed to make students more aware of poverty and underdevelopment in the world. It is refreshing to discover such unique experiments in Faith and Life in our private schools!

Feb. 13-14:

Joined four other couples at Hecla Island for a quiet week-end of cross-country skiing. Saturday was particularly beautiful, highlighted by a long, leisurely tour through the pine woods with my special Valentine, and a lone excursion across the bay to the lighthouse. We go to Hecla at least twice a year. In those beautiful dark woods, and under a bright starry sky, the sad little games played back home are reduced to their proper, petty proportions. On skis you don't look back. At Hecla I was reminded that the trail always moves ahead, and there are always new openings. mm

Early Manitoba Sketches IV

Lord Dufferin arrives as a visitor from outside

by Rhinehart Friesen

"I'm so proud of you, Jacob! It shows people realize that you are not an ordinary flatfoot. You deserve this honour they are doing you."

"Na, na, Greta, we must stay humble as becomes proper Mennonites. Besides, it's not as if the Queen had done me some great honour. All that's happened is that at the meeting of the *Schulzenbott* (assembly) today it was decided that I should be one of the members of the welcoming committee."

"Tell me again, who is this important person who is coming to Manitoba and to visit our colony?" Margaretha was obviously more excited than her husband or at least showed it more.

"It is the Governor-General of Canada, who takes the place of the English Queen in this country."

"Like the Czar sometimes sent representatives to our villages to deal with problems that arose?"

"Well, not quite the same." Jacob was not quite sure about the analogy so he explained the difference as he understood it. "The representatives that the Czar sent usually came for a short time to deal with specific problems. His empire was all in one piece so it was not too hard for him to over-see all of it himself. But the British Empire is spread all over the world so it is necessary for the Queen to have permanent representatives in at least some of the larger countries even for every-day affairs. I think they sign her name whenever an important paper needs a signature."

"The Czar's representatives signed whether they were just bureaucrats or his relatives like the archdukes. Is this man related to the Queen?"

"No, I don't think so, but it's an important position because the previous Governor-General was married to one of the Queen's daughters."

"But how important is this man? Why have we never heard of him before? What is his name?" Margaretha was still trying to establish his social standing.

"They call him 'Lord Dufferin'. He must have another name but I don't

know what it is. But then I don't know what Queen Victoria's family name is either. In the Englander's system it seems you are proud of yourself when you are so important that everybody is expected to know who you are even if you never use your proper name like ordinary people."

"Is he rich? Does he own much land?"

"Oh yes, very rich. He has much land in Ireland. They say he beautified his estate by rounding off some hills and making an artificial lake."

"Huh! I think he could have spent his money in more useful ways than that." She seemed pleased to have found something she could find fault with. "When you meet him, just remember that we come from a pretty important family ourselves. Onkel Cornelius Buhr probably had just as much land, and the Czar raised him to the gentry and granted him the right to drive a troika. And Erdman recently had news from our oldest brother Abraham that he's married the heiress of the man whose estates he has been managing; he'll soon drive a troika too. Wait and see."

It wasn't the first time that Margaretha had annoyed Jacob by boasting about her background. "My family may not have been as rich as yours but my father, Miller Friesen, made the best flour in Russia; and my Onkel Abraham, Preacher Friesen, went to St. Petersburg to petition the Czar for better terms for our people." No sooner had he spoken when he realized how unseemly it was for them to boast of their families in this way so he concluded lamely, "When I meet this Lord Dufferin I will try to remember that in spite of his wealth and titles we are all equally humble in the sight of God."

"Both the cow and her new calf are fine but for a short time it was touch and go." As was the custom Peter, Margaretha's brother-in-law, burst in without knocking. "Now tell me what I missed at the meeting of the *Schulzenbott*."

"Jacob has been chosen to welcome the Queen's representative." Ordinarily Margaretha would have asked for de-

tails of the delivery immediately and would probably have hurried out to the barn to see the new-born calf.

"Welcome? Does that mean you will ride out to meet him? If you do, I'll lend you my Sandy, he's the fastest horse in the Colony."

"Ride out, no, — well maybe." Jacob had not started thinking of the details immediately like the more practical Peter. "First the committee will meet and make plans as to how we will receive him."

Peter was impatient to visualize the meeting. "So maybe you will all walk past him and shake his hand?"

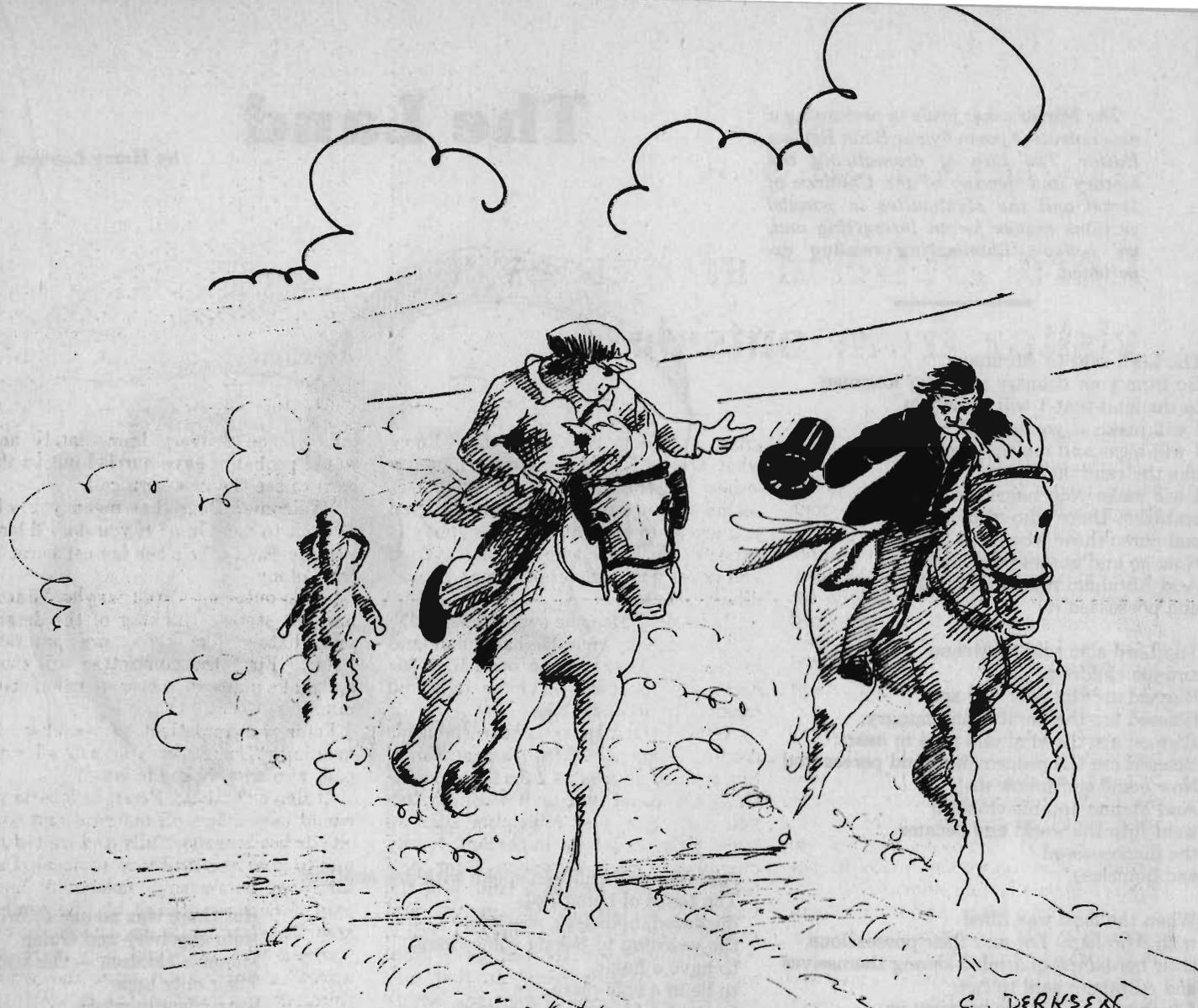
"I don't think so, Peter; in Russia we would have taken off our caps and bowed our heads respectfully and waited for him to give us permission to speak. Certainly we would have shaken his hand only if he first offered his. Remember how the Czar's officers sometimes cut people's ears off when they were annoyed? I don't know what the proper thing is in Canada. That is what the committee will have to find out."

"But at least you will show him that you are glad to see him by saying, 'Good day' to him and asking him to come in —" Peter paused as another difficulty came to mind. "But does he understand German? In English, after you have said, 'Good day', you will have pitifully little to say."

"We talked about language quite a bit at the meeting today. The disadvantages of not being able to speak English really show up at a time like this."

"But Jacob! One of the main reasons we left our good homes in Russia three years ago for this wilderness was because the Czar was pushing us to teach Russian in our schools. Surely you're not suggesting now that we learn the language of this land just because every once in a while we have a visitor who can't speak German! Did we ask him to come? If he wants to talk to us it would be easier for him to learn our language than for all of us to learn his."

"No, Peter, I agree that if we teach our children English they will become worldly and our way of life will disappear. But



if some of our preachers learned the country's language I don't think they would be tempted to follow worldly ways. What about your brother-in-law Erdman Penner? How would he be able to buy goods for his store in Tannenau if he hadn't learned at least a little English?"

"Don't try to make an example of Erdman; you know well enough, Jacob, that the Preachers think he would be a better churchman if he was a farmer like the rest of us."

"Well, let that be." Jacob did not want the conversation to turn into an outright quarrel. "Mr. Hespeler, the government immigration agent, was at the meeting and he offered to interpret for us. He will also come to our committee meeting tomorrow and on Saturday we will all work to make our villages as clean and nice as we can."

At the meeting Mr. Hespeler made many suggestions, as he knew what had been done to welcome the Dufferins elsewhere on their visit. Four men would ride out to meet the official party and lead the visitors along the trail which

entered the Colony in the vicinity of the village of Kronsthal. At the boundary they would pass through an arch constructed of evergreens bearing the inscription "Mennoniten Reserve". The caravan would then proceed through several villages including Chortitz, the home of Aeltester Gerhard Wiebe and the site of the first church the settlers had built. The inhabitants of these villages would be encouraged to beautify their streets in whatever manner they could think of. The site chosen for the reception itself was a ridge at the southeast corner of the hamlet of Eigenhoff because from this slight elevation several neighbouring villages could be seen. Nearby families would be asked to stable the visitors' horses. Another arch made of evergreen branches and bearing the word *Willkommen* would lead to an arbour or shaded platform which the women would be asked to decorate with flowers. On the side where the men would stand they would have tables to display farm produce such as corn, wheat, oats, barley, and flax all of which were rapidly ripening in

the hot August sun. On the women's side similar tables would exhibit vegetables from their gardens, especially things which they had introduced into this new land-like watermelons, sunflowers, and Siberian crabapples. Anybody who wished to welcome their excellencies individually could attach a written message to a bouquet of flowers and hang it on one of the surrounding trees. In these pleasant surroundings *Oberschultze* Jacob Peters, coordinator of all the village *Schultzes* or mayors, would read an official address of welcome while other members of the committee would sit beside him on the platform. Mr. Hespeler would translate the address and also the response which they expected Lord Dufferin to make. Only one rather contentious matter came up at the meeting.

"But Mr. Hespeler," it was one of the clergy who raised the objection, "you know how we feel about flying flags and saluting them. It's too suggestive of worshipping an image of Caesar."

"By no means does it mean that you

Turn to page 14

The Mirror takes pride in presenting a new narrative poem by our Book Review Editor. The idea of dramatizing the history and destiny of the Children of Israel and the Mennonites in parallel sections makes for an interesting and, we believe, illuminating reading experience.

The Land

by Harry Loewen

The Lord said to Abraham:
Go from your country and your kinsmen
to the land that I will show you.
I will make of you a great nation,
I will bless and multiply you
like the sand on the sea,
I will make your name great
and bless those who bless you
and curse those who curse you —
Now go and possess the land!
And Abraham went to Canaan
and possessed it.

The Lord also said to Menno
and his children:
Blessed are the poor and sad;
Blessed are the humble and hungry;
Blessed are the kind and pure in heart;
Blessed are the peacemakers and persecuted —
Now come and follow me!
And Menno and his children
went into the world and became
the dispossessed
and homeless.

When the land was filled
with Abraham, Lot and their possessions,
their herdsmen quarreled among themselves
and Abraham said to Lot:
Let there be no strife between us
for we are kinsmen.
The land is all before you,
separate yourself from me —
take the land to the right
or to the left
and I will take the land that's left.
And Abraham and Lot divided the land
between themselves.

But Menno and his children
(and there were many)
wandered for many days, months, years
and found no place to settle
because others had possessed
the land before them.
They cultivated the soil,
but it did not belong to them.
They drained marshes,
but it was toil for others.
They wrested land from the sea,
but they could not own it.
They blessed,
but others cursed them.
They loved,
but others hated them.
In suffering and death
they found their peace
away from home.



And Menno's children spoke with one another:
The sense of being lost,
displaced, homeless, rootless,
the yearning to belong somewhere,
to have a home,
to be in a safe place,
to want a historical placement
on the earth.
Place is space
where words are spoken,
where vows are exchanged,
where promises are made,
where voices and music are heard.
Place — not the pursuit of space —
we long for.
Humaness cannot be found in space.
Space is detachment,
absence of commitment,
undefined freedom.
Pursuit of space
is flight from history,
yearning for a place
is longing to enter history,
a people and a way,
to enter a place
with your own.

And Lot the city dweller
in the city of evil
was captured by the enemies.
Then Abraham gathered his swordbearers
and pursued the enemies
and routed them
and brought back the stolen goods
and also Lot his kinsman.

But there was no one to bring back
from captivity and Gulag
Menno's children — the staffbearers
Their only hope
were friendly rulers
(and there were not many),
the old Fritz,
Catherine the Great
and God.

After many years in the land
Sarah said to Abraham:
You see I can't have any children —
where is God's promise?
Go and take Hagar to be with you
and give me a child!
And Abraham took Sarah's maid
and gave Sarah a son.
And there was strife and division
in Abraham's family,
and Abraham sent mother and child
into the desert.

But Lot and his two daughters
themselves were not pure.
The daughters offered their father
wine during the night
and themselves —
and he gave them children
who later quarreled and fought
among themselves
for desert land.

Then God tested Abraham and said:
Take your only son Isaac whom you love
and go to the land of Moriah
and sacrifice him there
as a burnt offering —

Abraham did not question the voice
he had heard in the night —
not a single question
about God's promise
and a father's love
for his child.

He rose up in the morning,
laid the load of wood on his son
while he carried the fire
and the knife.

But Isaac asked questions,
questions his father avoided
for divine reasons.

And Abraham would have plunged the knife
into his son's heart
had it not been for another voice
and a ram caught in the thicket.

And the Lord blessed Menno's children
in the land of the Caesars,
and he tested the fathers
who had grown prosperous
and had many sons.
The fathers loved their heirs
more than their other children
who were also baptized
and part of God's covenant.
But the other children had
no land,
no rights,
no voice in the assemblies —
and they asked many questions
and found no answers from their fathers
and they left for another country.

Then the Lord tested again
(more severely this time)
the fathers and their heirs.
Blood flowed,
sacrifices were offered
and mass graves were filled
with Menno's children.
There were no cattle left
to take their place.

Abraham became a mighty prince
among the Canaanites and Hittites.
He bought more land
(some of it for Sarah's burial place),
he was proud and had much gold and silver;
he would not take the land for nothing
but buy it for a price.

And Abraham said to his servant:
Put your hand under my thigh
and swear by the Lord of heaven and earth
that you will not take a wife for my son
from the daughters of Canaan,
but find one from my country
and my kindred.

The servant swore
and travelled many miles
to find Rebecca
for his master's son.

And it came to pass
that Menno's children were much humbled —
They lost their land in one country
and they tried to find it in another.
They had no silver and no gold,
but their hands were callous from much work
and their feet were strong from many journeys.
They were given land where natives had roamed
the prairies in the North and South.
They took possession of the land,
they ploughed and cultivated it,
they made it grow and prosper
and with the land they also prospered
and increased.

Menno's children were grateful to God
for their land, freedom and prosperity.
They did not have to swear,
they did not marry strangers,
in time they moved into the cities,
but kept there also to themselves.
They built concrete houses for themselves
and meetingplaces to worship God,
they celebrated the Lord's Supper
(and their own),
they remembered the Lord's death
(and their own),

but vaguely.
They had always wanted to be
like Abraham's descendants,
to have land and space to live —
and in this they forgot
that he who called them centuries ago
had promised to prepare a place for them
which can't be found on earth.

But those who vaguely remembered,
sang a new song, a dirge:

The trouble, Lord:
You seem to hide your presence,
we see no concrete form
of what you are;
we ought to live by faith,
but faith needs substance—
in stormy nights
we find no guiding star.

Your living presence
turned to real possessions,
your promised blessings
were exchanged for land,
we built our concrete homes
in foreign countries,
and found our pleasure grounds
on coastal sands.

Who will create for us
our vanished symbols?
Who will restore for us
what we have lost?
Who will remind us
of our past and homeland?
The trouble, Lord:
We did not count the cost.

But Menno preached purity,
the ban and shunning:
A man's way with a maid
is not the way of God.
The people of God must be
without spot or wrinkle.
And there was strife in Menno's family
because of purity.
Then Menno's children divided into
Flemish,
Frisians,
Waterlanders,
Amish, OMs and GCs,
Kleine Gemeinde and MBs,
and went their separate ways
still looking for a country
and a home.

And Abraham in search of more land
went to the kingdom of Gerar
where the King's eye fell on Sarah,
Abraham's beautiful wife.
But Abraham lied and said
she was his sister —
And the King took Sarah
and the Lord punished the King,
not Abraham.

And it came to pass
that Heinrich Abrahams journeyed
with Claas Epp the visionary
into a far-away country
to wait for the return of Christ
and a new earth.

In this land the native men
offered to buy Elizabeth,
his pretty young wife.
He did not tell a lie
nor would he sell her.
So Abrahams was shot and stabbed,
but Menno's children
would not kill the killers.
But later (only once)
they killed in self-defence,
when their earthly possessions,
land and families
were threatened by the peasants
on the Russian steppes.

The once beautiful Sarah
laughed and conceived
and bore a son called Laughter.
And Abraham loved Isaac more
than the other children,
born by his many concubines,
for he was the fulfillment
of God's promise.
And he circumcised his son,
blood flowed,
a covenant was made
with God.

More about Dufferin

are worshipping Lord Dufferin's image. To show the flag at a time such as this suggests that you love and respect the Queen and her representative." But Mr. Hespeler was not to be let off quite so easily.

"But are flags not mainly military symbols? We certainly don't want to

suggest to his Excellency that we would follow his flag onto the battlefield."

"In peace-time flags are usually used on festive occasions such as we hope this will be. You are planning to use flowers for decoration. Think of how much additional brightness and color flags would provide. Think of how much pleasure their Excellencies would get from seeing smiling children holding flowers and waving flags. This would be a gesture of courtesy to your visitors and have no military meaning whatever."

And so the next day men, women, and children did essential chores at home, then, in their home village if it was to be visited or at the central reception area, they worked in an atmosphere of excitement and anticipation on the biggest cooperative project they had undertaken since their arrival in Manitoba in 1874. Not only was it the largest in scope, it was the first one that was not directly connected with physical necessity or actual survival, like building bees, pig-killing days, or quilting gatherings that were all common. By evening most of the work was finished so everybody went home tired but happy.

No work could be done on Sunday but Jacob had never before seen such a busy day of rest. There was much visiting back and forth between the villages that were to be visited and especially to Eigenhof. There was much inspecting, criticising, and planning for the placing of the more perishable decorations like flowers, which would be put up on Monday or even the morning of Tuesday, the day of the expected arrival. Things went well and according to plan until Monday, when it rained heavily and after the rain a strong wind added to the damage so that much of what had been done had to be redone in a hurry.

The important day dawned bright and sunny but with a bitterly cold wind; so cold was it that as they started out for the reception area Jacob and Margaretha discussed the risk of frost. After the late start because of the flood in Spring the crops had done unexpectedly well, but they were still vulnerable. A feeling of satisfaction swept over Jacob as he looked around and contemplated what their visitors

would see; comfortable buildings for people and livestock, gardens with abundant flowers and vegetables, good-sized fields of grain, and a promising number of various kinds of animals. He hoped that somebody would emphasize to their Excellencies that all this had been accomplished in just three years and that much more could be expected with each succeeding year.

At the reception area they found that most of the damage caused by the storm had been repaired. There was a great deal of commotion as hundreds of men women and children arrived on foot, with horses, or slow-moving oxen which had to be tethered and fed and watered. Jacob's head was high as he joined the other members of the committee while Margaretha and the children, all in the best clothes she could muster, joined the crowd of women forming to one side of the platform.

When the official party arrived their physical needs had to be looked after. The horses were taken to several nearby

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stables and fed. Lord Dufferin took off his mud-bespattered riding boots. They were all cold and wet and greatly appreciated the hot tea with lemon which was quickly served to them. The waitresses for their part were inordinately pleased when both their Excellencies responded with a German, *Dankeschoen*. But something terrible had happened. It was Johann, one of the young horsemen sent out to meet the caravan, who blurted out the story. "We meant no harm. How could we know who it was? First we saw the four out-riders but it was a Mr. McKay, so fat he hardly had room in his buggy, who was telling them where to go. Then there was a string of buggies, wagons, and carriages, some of which had their curtains up to keep out the wind. We naturally assumed that Lord Dufferin was in one of these. It became boring because the procession was slow as they had to keep avoiding low spots to keep from getting stuck in the mud. So we started fooling around with the four out-riders and when one of them indicated they would like a race we willingly took them on. It wasn't until we got here that we found out that we had beaten the Governor-General himself and splattered him thoroughly with mud into the bargain. Do you think we'll be arrested?"

"In Russia, yes. In Canada, I don't know. But even if you thought they were just valets it would have been more polite to let your guests win. We will try to make everything good again. On behalf of yourselves and the committee we will ask Mr. Hespeler to apologize to his Excellency and assure him that we realize your behaviour was not becoming to a person of such high rank. But here they come. Now it's time to take our place on the platform."

Jacob listened critically while Jacob Peters read the address they had all helped to compose. He approached of "In the name of all the Mennonites who have emigrated from Russia we greet you most humbly", but then it occurred to him that they didn't mean to speak for those who had gone to the United States. Peters then went on to explain that "When the Russian government informed us six years ago that they were about to violate the agreement made with our grand-fathers . . . we were obliged to look for new homes under a govern-

ment which we trusted to keep its promises, allowing us to worship God according to our consciences and exempting us from the duty of carrying arms." Then there was a short account of the migration and the help the government had given them and, in case the implied tendency of governments to break their agreements had been too harsh in the earlier paragraph, they had decided to include the assurance "We are pleased to be able to state that we are satisfied in the highest degree with . . . the manner in which the Government has kept their promises to us." Later on he again emphasized the importance of religion and the bearing of arms: "We are contented and willing to obey the laws of the land, but we cannot reconcile our religious belief with the performance of military duty." After Mr. Hespeler read the translation of this address he presented it to the guest of honour and Jacob could not help hoping that he would notice the beauty of their penmanship; they might be just farmers in his eyes, but their parents had seen to it that they got a proper schooling.

Except for some of the babies everybody listened quietly and respectfully while Lord Dufferin read his response and then followed Mr. Hespeler's translation attentively. Many raised their caps to show their approval when he came to the passage "You have come to a land where you will find the people with whom you associate engaged indeed in a great struggle, and contending with foes whom it requires their best energies to encounter, but those foes are not your fellow men, nor will you be called upon to stain your hands with human blood, a task which is so abhorrent to your religious feelings. The war to which we invite you as recruits and comrades is a war waged against the brute forces of nature; but those forces will welcome our domination, and reward our attack by placing their treasures at our disposal." And Jacob again approved when he heard, "We desire you to share with us on equal terms our constitutional liberties, our municipal privileges, and our domestic freedom." But when Hespeler read the words "We invite you to assist us in choosing members of parliament, in shaping our laws, and in molding our future destinies. There is no right or function which we exercise as

free citizens in which we do not desire that you should participate . . .", Jacob felt vaguely uneasy. He decided to give the matter further thought when he had time. By the time he was again paying attention fully he heard a statement that brought tears to the eyes of many in the audience: "You will find Canada a beneficent and loving mother, and under her fostering care I trust your community is destined to flourish . . . through countless generations."

When he had finished reading, Mr. Hespeler introduced the members of the reception committee to his Excellency, who extended his hand and gave each of them a hearty hand-shake. Jacob was so moved that he hardly noticed the remainder of the program, which consisted of songs and presentations by some of the school children. The committee members were not the only ones to get a hand-shake; after the formal part of the meeting was over the guests mingled with the crowd just like ordinary people and shook many hands and tried to make conversation as well as the language barrier allowed.

During the drive home Jacob was glad that Margaretha's attention was fully taken up by the tired and irritable children. He was not in the mood for conversation. He pondered again what Lord Dufferin had said. As Jacob saw it, the Mennonites had come to Canada to get away from involvement with the government. "Freedom" as he understood it was freedom from government interference. Freedom to live their lives unaffected by the surrounding world, to speak their own language, to teach their children as they saw fit, to worship God as their conscience led them. And to do all these things they had to have maximum freedom to build and operate their own churches, schools, and other institutions. But Lord Dufferin seemed to think he was giving them the ultimate gift when he offered them the chance to vote, to sit in government, to make laws. In other words he was suggesting that they should join Caesar, whereas they only grudgingly agreed to give Caesar, what was due to Caesar.

As Jacob turned into their driveway he wondered: If they won their present struggle for physical survival would they have another one later on for their survival as a people? mm



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TOEWS TAKES OFFICE

The 1982 Mennonite Committee annual meeting in Henderson, Nebraska marked the transition of the executive secretaryship from William T. Snyder to Reginald Toews. Toews is the fourth MCC executive secretary, following Snyder, who served from January 1958 to the present, Orié O. Miller, 1935 to 1958, and Levi Mumaw, 1920 to 1935. Ross Nigh, chairperson of MCC (Canada) and vice chairperson of MCC, led the greetings to Toews, a fellow Canadian. In his response, Toews listed areas in which MCC service will continue in 1980's and new areas of challenge. Four areas in which MCC will continue to focus efforts are food production and world hunger, assistance to refugees, village development and agriculture, and working with the local church in places of service. Toews also identified six areas that present specific challenges in the 80's, noting that "the way in which we address these challenges now, will shape our essential character for decades to come." The first such challenge is the nuclear arms race. Toews said more efforts should be given to constituency interpretation, particularly "shared learning between MCC

and its constituency on how we as North Americans contribute to the problems experienced by the Third World, and how we may share in finding solutions and answers." Other challenges include the nurturing of leadership and specialized personnel, as well as the issues of local leadership, setting priorities among world needs, and justice and peace. Toews also identified the MCC relationship with MCC (Canada) and with the constituent conference as something that will need continuing attention in years ahead.

Toews is formerly of Steinbach, and since 1977 has been associate executive secretary for MCC Administration and Resources. From 1979 to 1981 he was also executive secretary of MCC U.S.

CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE MENNONITE CHURCH

"The Changing Role of Women in the Mennonite Church" was the topic of a presentation and discussion January 21 at the University of Manitoba and January 26 at the University of Winnipeg. The event, organized by Inter Mennonite Campus Ministries, included a presentation by Eleanor Loewen, education consultant for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and a four-member panel discussion. Loewen traced the western view of masculine and feminine roles to the Greek and Judeo/Christian tradition, noting that "Christ, however, shattered those strict concepts of female and male roles. He synthesized the two." She concluded that the Christian must be informed by this synthesis. "In summarizing present discussion regarding equal opportunity for women in using gifts and abilities in the Mennonite Church, we can use the phrase 'in process,'" said Loewen.

Respondent Henry Dueck of the Emmanuel Mission Mennonite Conference, underscored Loewen's position. The other respondents on the panel and the audience, however, were not convinced that real changes are "in process." Some cultural changes are undoubtedly taking place in response to economic changes in society. But, questioned a person from the audience, are they fundamental changes based on ideological reasons, or only cosmetic changes tied to function? Several shortfalls of the Mennonite church became rather apparent in the discussion. The church has not been in the forefront in this discussion of equality and justice, but has "chased after it in order not to lose certain people."

MCC WORKER DEPORTED

An unauthorized look at some airplanes has forced MCC workers Eldon and Ruth Gamble of Calgary to leave Somalia. The couple flew to Nairobi, Kenya, in early January after the Somali government requested Eldon's deportation. They are now awaiting reassignment elsewhere in Africa. The incident leading to the deportation occurred October 21, Somalia's National Revolution Day. Gamble, who has an interest in old planes, went into the military section of the Mogadishu airport to examine some of the aircraft. Airport security personnel discovered him and took him to the counter-espionage division of the National Security Service for questioning. The deportation was first such incident for an MCCer since 1970, when the Jordanian government asked a worker to leave after finding him taking pictures of some military activity.

Gareth Neufeld, German teacher at MBCI has been appointed chairman of the Manitoba Department of Education curriculum committee for senior high German.

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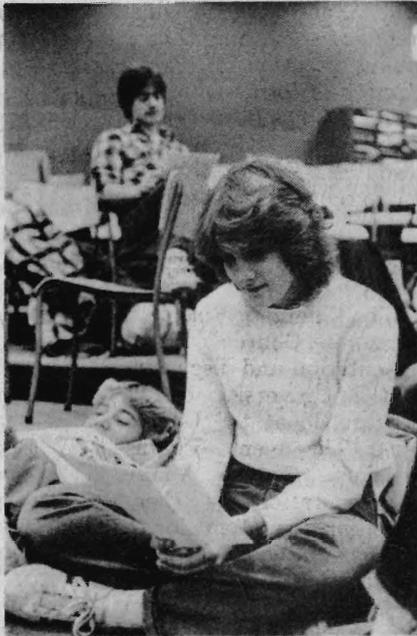
On Sunday, January 24, the North Kildonan Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg ordained Hans Boge and Walter Warkentin to the preaching ministry in their congregation.

Ordained into the ministry recently at the Grace Mennonite Church of Steinbach was John Braun, son of John and Margaret Braun of Leamington, Ontario, Rev. C. Driedger, John's uncle and the pastor of the North Leamington United Mennonite Church, conducted the ordination service. A fellowship "faspa" allowed the congregation to greet John and his wife Velma more informally.

Wally and Shirley Schmidt have joined the Elmwood Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg as associate pastor couple. The Schmidts will be working with youth and young couples. They come from a two-year assignment as houseparents at a group home for delinquent boys at Ausable Springs Ranch, Ontario.

Anna Enns, widow of Frank F. Enns, celebrated her 97th birthday on January 23 in the Altona Personal Care Home. Born Anna Hildebrand in the village of Sommerfeld in 1885, the Ennses lived in the village for much of their married life. She was among the first children born in the West Reserve.

SELFHELP Crafts has passed what its director calls "a significant milestone." It has returned over a million dollars to local artisans in some twenty-one countries through the purchase of their handicraft items during fiscal year 1981. Paul Leatherman, director of the not-for-profit program of MCC, emphasizes that the money returned to producers "goes pretty directly back into rural communities, and is recycled throughout their economies. It doesn't support personnel, or vehicles or administration—it is in their hands." Over 30,000 people around the world receive supplementary income through the program.



THE 24-HR. FAST AT THE MBCI

Hunger . . . Food . . . 3rd world countries — these became not only well-known words but also well-experienced concepts for the MBCI. Geography 300 class,

Many face starvation pangs every day. On Feb. 4-5, the geography class felt a little bit of that hunger with them. But, they did more than just experience an empty feeling in the stomach. The class raised over \$1600 (about 4 times the original goal), a portion of which will go to an orphanage just outside of Calcutta, India. The remainder will go to other projects yet to be decided by the class.

The teacher, Gareth Neufeld, felt that his students, as a way of studying and understanding Less Developed Countries more fully, should get involved in a very direct way. Together, he and the class decided on this project.

The idea of going without food for a day came from the students themselves. Soon a committee was set up to plan the activities of the day. A modest goal of \$10 per person was set for each of the 45 participants. They were then given several weeks to find sponsors. These

sponsors agreed to give a lump sum at the end of the fast if and only the student they sponsored had "survived" the 24 hours without eating. Happily enough every student "made it".

The actual day of the fast started Thursday, at 5 p.m. The participating students were kept in isolation from the rest of the school for those 24 hours. Films relating to the food problem in the world were shown, games were played, a brief devotional focused on Biblical accounts of God meeting the needs of the hungry, and yes, everyone got some sleep. One of the highlights of the day, besides the cupful of orange juice the students received every 5-6 hours, was a trip to the University of Manitoba, where Len Siemens gave a slide presentation on the world's food problems. The students' consensus? Yes, this fast is making a difference to others.

The day ended with the students and teachers involved in the fast, eating a tasty dish of rice and curry covered with fruit and vegetables.

The students went home that day, passing well-stocked grocery stores and well-fed Canadians, a little more aware of themselves in relation to their neighbors in countries much poorer than their own.

Cris Mierau

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Gedichte von Johannes Harder

II

Bauernstolz

Wir sind keine Künstler und keine Poeten,
überhaupt keine Großen in Weltformaten;
unsre Väter pflügten, eggten und säten —
was den andern die Feder, war uns der Spaten.

He da! ihr Mächtigen der Kulturen!
es gäbe euch nicht, wenn wir nicht wären:
erst kam das Brot von unseren Fluren —
euer Geist ist die Frucht aus unseren Ähren.

Was heißt denn "cultura"? Bei den Römern, den alten,
nannte man nichts als Pflanzen Kultur.

Was seither Menschen dichteten, malten —
alle Kunst ist nur dem Pflug auf der Spur.

Na ja, wir gestehen: wir können nicht schreiben.
Ihr hinter den Büchern . . . wir im Wetter der Welt;
mal sehn, was von eurem Kram würde bleiben,
wenn der Bauer nicht mehr die Erde bestellt!

III

Himmelsschlüsselchen

Da kommt ihr wieder als die Frühlingsboten
und hängt zusammen wie ein kleiner Schlüsselbund.
Mein altes Herz seufzt einsam nach der Toten —
euch aber ist doch nicht als Leben kund.

Wie anders seh ich euch als einst in Kindertagen!
Blick ich zur hohen Himmelstür hinauf,
kann ich, ein alter Narr, nicht länger zagen;
mit diesen Schlüsselchen schließt sie der Schöpfer auf.

Denk ich, wie Einer, den man ließ erleichen
und in die kalte Todeswelt verbannt —
als er zurückkam, hinterließ er Zeichen
und gibt uns Himmelsschlüssel in die Hand.

30.3.1981

IV

Am Grabe meiner Mutter

Ein Hügel nur auf armer Heide
ein Kreuz im kalten Wind der Zeit.
Ein starrer Stein im grauen Kleide.
Rings karge Hecke, stumm vor Leid.

Darunter — alles, was wir haben:
ein schlichter Sarg — ein großer Schmerz.
Hier liegt an fremdem Ort begraben
ein unvergessen Mutterherz.

1947

In der Holsteiner Heide

Nach dem Besuch Johannes Harders in Winnipeg im vergangenen Herbst, wird mancher sich nach den Schriften dieses mennonitischen Propheten umgesehen haben, vielleicht vergebens. Außer der allerdings bestens gelungenen Übersetzung seines *Wologda*-Romans und einigen Gedichten und Aufsätzen in der *Mennonitischen Warte* dürften seine übrigen Gedichte, Erzählungen und wissenschaftliche Arbeiten in Manitoba schwer zugänglich sein. Wir erlauben es uns, nachstehende Gedichte Harders mitzuteilen, in der Hoffnung, daß damit die Verbindung, die durch sein Besuch zustande gekommen ist, erhalten und die Botschaft die er uns brachte nicht so leicht vergessen werde. In diesem Sinne glauben wir, daß Johannes Harder den Abdruck dieser teils persönlich empfundener Texte gutheißen wird.

I

Das mit den Vaterländern . . .

Das hab ich noch niemals im Leben beklagt,
Daß mir ein Vaterland gefehlt;
mir genügt mein Vater auch ohne Land.
Doch habe ich andere Leute aufgezählt,
auch wenn sie kein einziges selber gekannt.
Ein Mutterland, das war mir schon eher eigen:
die Steppe in horizontloser Weite.
der Wind wogt über das Reihergras
gleich Mädchenzöpfen wehn Birkenzweige,
Blütenteppich von unendlicher Breite,
grüne Dome von Wäldern — das war noch was!
Nein, wirklich, mich hat sonst gar nichts gefangen:
Kathedralen, Denkmäler, eine steinstarre Stadt
und an jeder Ecke dies Fahnengeflatter . . .
Ich bin durch manche Länder gegangen,
und überall Grenzen und Stacheldraht
und auf beiden Seiten Patriotengeschnatter
Einen Vater haben wir Menschenkinder,
dem das unermeßliche Weltall gehört.
Hat der den ganzen Globus in Händen,
braucht's keine Sucher mehr — alle sind Finder.
Die Erdentyrannen haben alles zerstört —
laßt uns endlich den Streit um die "Länder" beenden!

1980

Documents outline Anabaptist heritage

Anabaptism in Outline. Selected Primary Sources, Edited by Walter Klaassen, Classics of the Radical Reformation series (Kitchener, Ontario and Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1981), 356 pages, Paperback, \$15.00.

Reviewed by Harry Loewen

We have come to expect both scholarship and readability (not that the two are mutually exclusive) from Prof. Walter Klaassen's pen. Klaassen has the enviable gift for expressing and explaining profound historical and theological issues with clarity and an almost deceiving simplicity. This is no doubt one of the reasons why his *Anabaptism: Neither Catholic Nor Protestant* (1974) has enjoyed not only usefulness among students of the Reformation and Anabaptism but also popularity with Sunday School teachers and other church workers. The present volume of Anabaptist documents will also be greeted with enthusiasm among those who are dealing with the sixteenth century in universities, schools and churches.

The numerous documents in this volume are carefully divided into seventeen categories of theology and ethics, including such themes and issues as Christ, the church, the ordinances, government, nonresistance, religious toleration, and eschatology. The editor's introductions to the seventeen sections are brief but helpful summaries of what the Anabaptists believed and practised and they point out where they deviated from the Catholic and Protestant beliefs with regard to the various theological issues. Each section concludes with helpful suggestions for further reading. In a sense this collection provides the source material for Klaassen's earlier *Anabaptism: Neither Catholic Nor Protestant*.

Klaassen is both objective and fair to the various Anabaptist individuals and groups in that he allows them to speak for themselves. Not even such "marginal Anabaptists" as Hut and Rothman, who did not tow the official Anabaptist line (if there ever was one), are excluded. Indeed, this collection continues to revise the earlier view in Mennonite historiography which held that early

Anabaptists were a homogeneous religious group. It has been known for some time now, for example, that not all Anabaptists were absolute pacifists and that not all, including Menno Simons, rejected outright participation in government. The documents in this volume confirm the now generally held view that the diversity in belief and practise among present-day Mennonites goes back to the beginning of the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement.

For some readers it may come as a surprise to find that even in their understanding of the nature and function of the Bible, there was not unanimity among the Anabaptists. In fact, prominent Anabaptist leaders like Ulrich Stadler and Hans Denck, while accepting the Bible as the guide for a Christian's life, did not identify the external book and letter of the Bible with the living Word of God (p. 141). Denck stated: ". . . salvation cannot be tied to the Scriptures, however important and good they may be with respect to it" (p. 142). As Klaassen says: The Anabaptists "were biblical people, but not 'fundamentalists'. They reflected on the function of the Bible but were not 'liberals'" (pp. 141-42).

Some readers will also find it interesting to note that the Anabaptist did not like Martin Luther exclude the Apocrypha from the biblical canon, but quoted from it and regarded it as part of the Old Testament. In this they followed Catholic practice.

Klaassen shows — and the documents in the collection bear this out — that most Anabaptist were not as tolerant toward persons with other religious beliefs as we might have thought. With the possible exception of Denck who allowed for a religiously plural society, including "Turks and heathen and Jews," the "Anabaptists shared in considerable measure in the intolerance of their age" (p. 303). Religious liberty, Klaassen rightly points out, "took its rise in seventeenth-century England and eighteenth-century France, and was transplanted from there to the New World" (p. 290). (On this issue see also my *Luther and the Radicals* (1974), pp. 135-50).

The book includes a list of Anabaptist writers with two or three lines or biographical data for each and a useful Index of Persons. It is well designed and relatively free of missprints.

mm

A Low-German orthography

The MM has published many an item in Plautdietsch over the past ten years, some comical, some wistful and some downright serious. But the besetting sin of Mennonite Platt is the inherent difficulty in finding a suitable (and readable) written form for the vigorous, spoken language. The problem may not be easily solved, but the MM would like to promote a discussion of possible solutions. In this and following numbers we intend to print brief contributions by our experts in the hope of finding a practical way of easing our written communication in this Mennonite Ursprache.

Our series beings with some comments by the well-known Plautdietsch author, Reuben Epp. Your comments and letters are welcome.

Recent articles and publications in the Plautdietsch dialect (in Canada) continue to suggest that our would-be writers of Plautdietsch have not reconciled themselves to a reasonably consistent or suitable method of spelling words in the Mennonite Low German dialect — Plautdietsch.

In some instances it is apparent that the writer is not aware that a generally-accepted (perhaps informal and with variances) orthography already existed for Low German in Prussia, the home of the Plautdietsch dialect. Low German in the Prussian dialects, often referred to as Niederpreussisch (Nether-Prussian), has been extensively written in its numerous forms. These writings are usually in relative conformity to generally-accepted nether-Prussian spelling methods which also agree relatively well with methods used by other Low German authors across the north German lowlands as far west as the borders of (and including parts of) the Dutch Netherlands.

Perhaps our people and writers of Plautdietsch are not aware that more Low German literature is available from sources in Germany than most can afford to buy. I personally own Low German books in various dialects that occupy some seven feet of library shelfspace, and am still working on extending my collection.

Reading these works and comparing them with Canadian works has prompted me to present some extractions from

European Low German and to suggest how they might be transposed into, and spelled, in Plautdietsch without discord with existing orthography.

Following are some sayings extracted from a word-book by Rudolf K. Becker, entitled *So schabberten wir to Hus* (Verlag Gerhard Rautenberg, 295 Leer, Ostfriesland). Readers may note that the dialects quoted are markedly similar to Plautdietsch and that there is relative, although not total, uniformity in spelling. After each Nether-Prussian (npr.) saying, I have suggested how the same saying might reasonably be rendered in Plautdietsch (Plaut.), using and modifying existing orthography to accommodate differences in words and/or pronunciation as they appear in Plautdietsch.

npr. – So schabberten wir to Hus

Plaut. – Soo räd wi t'Hus

npr. – Arbeit öss kein Hoaske – sei rennt nich weg

Plaut. – Oabeit es kjeen Hoskje – et rannt nich waig

npr. – Bequem jesäte on langsam ge-gäte – man glowt nich, wat man vedroage kann

Plaut. – Jemietlich jesäte un langsam je-jäte – maun gileewt nich waut maun vedroage kaun

npr. – Chröst Himmelfahrt de Buur dem Pelz verwahrt – op Jehann titt he em an

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Plaut. – (Too) Kjrist Himmelfoah de Bua däm Pelz vewoah – (too) op Jehaun traickt he ahm aun

npr. – Dicker Drank makt fette Schwien

Plaut. – Dickja Drank moakt fatte Schwien

npr. – E klennet Etwas öss beter als e grotet Garnuscht

Plaut. – Een kjeenet (kjlíenet?) Waut es bāta aus een grootet Goanuscht

npr. – Fuhla, willst e Ei? Jo, wenn't afjescheelt is . . .

Plaut. – Fula, welst 'en Ei? Jo, wann't aufgeschallt es . . .

npr. – Gewest, wo gewest – to Hus öss ömmer am best

Plaut. – Jewasst, wua jewasst – too Hus es emma aum baste or – Jewāse, wua jewāse – t-Hus es emma aum baste

npr. – Hei hafft wat lödde gehört – weet awer nich, enn welk Kōrch

Plaut. – Hee haft waut lude (bimmele) jeheat – weet oba nich, enn woone Kjoakj

npr. – Is e mal recht scheenes Wetter – Kenigsgarten gross Geschetter

Plaut. – Es emol raicht scheenet Wadda – (Em) Kjeenigsgoade grootet Kraweel

npr. – Jedet Hūske heft sien Krūzke

Plaut. – Jed(r)et Huskje haft sien (sin) Kriezke

npr. – Korte Beene make den Wegg lang

Plaut. – Korte Been moake dān (dām) Waig lang

npr. – Lāwer god läwe on dafur e Joahr länger

Plaut. – Leewa goot läwe un doafāa 'en Joah lānja

npr. – Mōt Langholz mottst nich quer foahre

Plaut. – Met Langholt mottst nich de-dwāa foahre

npr. – Nā: Wer nich Angst heft – dem done se ok nuscht

Plaut. – Nā: Wāa nich Angst haft – dām doone se uk nuscht

npr. – Oeck sie besoape – dat vergeiht oawerscht du böst dammlich – dat blöff

Plaut. – Ekj si besope – daut vejeiht oba du best daumlich – daut blift (bliff)

npr. – Pack schleit söck – Pack verdrägt söck

Plaut. – Jepaickj schleit sikj – Jepaickj vedraigt sikj (sich)

npr. – Regenwetter is besser wie gar keins

Plaut. – Rāajenwadda es bāta aus goa kjeent

npr. – Seefahre öss nich Zockerlöcke

Plaut. – Seefoahre es nich Zockaleckje

npr. – Schlape gahne öss woll gedahne – morge wöll wi fröh oppstahne

Plaut. – Scholpe gohne es woll jedone – morje well wi tiedig oppstohne

npr. – Strit ju nich – schlägt ju lewer

Plaut. – Stried't ju nich – schloht ju leewa

npr. – To Hus öss to Hus

Plaut. – Too Hus es too Hus – T'Hus es t'Hus

npr. – Un bōnne steiht de Wihnachtsboom,

un bute liggt de Schnee ach leewe, leewe Winterstied wo bleew de greene Klee

Plaut. – Un benne steiht de Wiehnachtsboom,

un bute liggt (ligt) de Schnee ach leewe, leewe Wintaschtiet (tied),

wua bleef (bleew) de gjreene Kjee

npr. – Von nuscht is nuscht

Plaut. – Von nuscht es nuscht

npr. – Wat nich ös – kann noch ware

Plaut. – Waut nich es – kann noch woare

The following is a Nether-Prussian anecdote selected from a compilation by Gustav Grannas entitled *Volk aus dem Ordenslande Preussen erzählt Sagen, Märchen und Schwänke*, published by N.G. Elwert Verlag, Marburg, Germany.

npr. – **Herr Häwelke, nu goahne wi!**

Een Koopmann, dā heed Häwelke. On wenn sine Oarbeiter am Oawend to Hus goahne wulle, denn mokes de Stoawedäär op on säde: "Herr Häwelke, nu goahne wi!"

On nu hadd de Koopmann e Papagei, dā hadd dat oppjeschnappt. On ok he sääd emmer: "Herr Häwelke, nu goahne wi!"

On an enem Dach, doa hadd de Deenstmarjell dem Papagei jefuttert on vejäte de Buurkedäär totomoake. On de Katz keem, kreech dem Papagei anne Kroage on fossd af met äm.

On ehr de Katz met äm dorche Däär afhaud, schreech de Papagei noch tum letzte Moal: "Herr Häwelke, nu goahne wi!"

Plaut. – **Herr Häwelkje, nu gohne wi!**

Een Koopmaun, dee heet't Häwelkje. Un wann sine Oabeida aum Owend noh Hus gohne wulle, dann muake se de Stowedāa op un säde: "Herr Häwelkje, nu gohne wi!"

Un nu haud de Koopmaun 'en Papajei, un dee haud daut oppjeschnackt, un uk he säd emma: "Herr Häwelkje, nu gohne wi!"

Un aun eenem Dag, doa haud de Deenstmerjall dām Papajei jefoodat un vejäte de Klotjedāa tootomoake. Un de Kaut kjeem (kaum), kjrieig dām Papajei aum Kroage (too fot) un tosd auf met ahm.

Un ea de Kaut met ahm derche Dāa utretzt (uthāweld), schrieg de Papajei noch toom latzte Mol: "Herr Häwelkje, nu gohne wi!"

MM

TWO SIDES

Oh yes, there were two sides
in the dispute—

They fought for principles
for purity of doctrine.
Had he not blasphemed God?
Had he not disregarded laws
and old conventions?
His friends were sinners
tax collectors
prostitutes.
How could they know
he was a man of God?

And he was oh so stubborn.
Why did he not submit to them?
Were they not dignified
and many?
But he opposed them
called them names:
You hypocrites!
You brood of vipers!
You whitewashed tombs
so full of dead men's bones
and filth!
That surely was not Christian.

They were so right
and he was wrong—
and so they hounded
cornered him and
martyred him
to death.

O yes, there were two sides
in the dispute—
but history has joined
his side.

A Lenten Poem
by Harry Loewen

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it is. God will not be contradicted, nor will the Bible be proved untrue. If the scientific creationists want to be true Christians and true scientists, then they must use the methods currently available to examine all aspects of the world and not worry in advance whether the "truth" they discover will contradict the scriptures. Those who use the Bible as a science text to construct a model of how the universe works are guilty of worshipping the Bible and not the Creator behind it. Where the Bible disagrees with what is scientifically demonstrable (for example, that the earth moves around the sun), then the information we can see should be given preference. To do anything less would be an insult to the Creator who gave us eyes to see with, and ears to hear. The Bible will not be shown to be in error, only that its information is incomplete.

The sad thing about the current creationist/evolutionist debate is that it has polarized people and churches — one must either be an evolutionist or a creationist. What is overlooked is that there is ample ground between the two positions for scientific debate and discovery that should lead to truth, without contradicting the idea of a created universe or an evolved one.

Finally, both sides should be humble enough to admit that when "the end of the age" comes and all the information is in, that they may be surprised: the creationists may have to admit that there was more evolution at work than they ever thought, while the evolutionists may have to concede that a Creator's hand was much more at work than they thought.

—Ed Unrau

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CREATIONISM AND EVOLUTION: SOME THOUGHTS ON THE TWO THEORIES

Christians, both Protestant and Catholic, of the 17th century were among the religious groups that opposed Galileo when he pointed out, with evidence observable to anyone who looked, that the sun is the centre of the solar system. This, of course, was contrary to the generally accepted belief that the heavens moved around a central earth. It is reported that church leaders opposed Galileo because they were afraid his findings contradicted the Bible. Galileo's experience is an oft-cited case of the tension that can arise between science and religion.

In the last quarter of the 20th century, when astronomical observations and space travel easily confirm Galileo's concept of the solar system, his conflict with the religious leaders of his day seems quaint.

Yet aspects of this "quaint" conflict are being repeated in our own time between the "scientific" creationists and the evolutionists. The scientific creationists, generally comprised of fundamentalist Christians with a conservative interpretation of the Bible, appear afraid that science may contradict the Bible. The end result of the Galilean controversy was that thoughtful Christians had to concede that the Bible did not have the last word on how the natural world was organized. Those who hold the extreme view of "scientific" creationism, as it arises from a fundamentalist and literal interpretation of scripture, run the risk of looking as silly as those who opposed Galileo.

It is not the purpose of this editorial to describe the position of either side. It is, however, necessary to say that there is merit in both the theory of evolution and the theory of creationism. Both are attempts to explain how the universe, the earth, and living things came to be.

But both are incomplete because there is not enough observable evidence to fill in the gaps. Evolution explains some things, while creationism explains others.

For instance, evolution doesn't satisfactorily explain how the first living cell got its "life." Even if you accept the idea that all life evolved from the first single cell, it is hard to accept the idea that the first living cell was a random event arising out of certain "ideal" circumstances. (If you can believe that random twisting of a Rubik's Cube will eventually restore the original colors to all sides, then you can accept the idea that first life resulted from a random event. On the other hand, we all know that you can "solve" the Rubik's cube in minutes with a series of purposeful moves. Similarly, a creator is necessary to at least initiate the natural processes.)

At the same time as they deny evolution, the scientific creationists benefit from the practical application of the understood aspects of it. Plant and animal breeding are only two very general areas in which scientists "speed up" and control the process of evolution by actively intervening in it.

Evolution and creationism are not mutually exclusive theories on how the world came to be and how it functions; nor are they mutually compatible. One thing that is not appreciated by both sides in the debate is that there are varying viewpoints in each camp. And in so far as the scientific creationists are concerned, we have tended to hear the viewpoint of those in the most conservative camp, a group that is also the least scientific in arguing its case.

There are aspects of this creationist approach that make its proponents as dangerous as serpents in angel's robes. Here are some of them:

1) Evolution is only a theory, say the scientific creationists. This is a truthful, but completely deceptive statement because they want you to believe that a "theory" is "only an educated guess." Any examination of a dictionary definition will show that while the word "theory" does have this meaning, it is only one meaning. What the scientific creationists fail to point out is that a "theory" is also a "reasoned set of propositions derived from and supported by established evidence and intended to serve as an explanation for a group of phenomena." The meanings cited here are only the two that apply directly to the creationist/evolution controversy; there are at least three other meanings of the word and all reinforce the deception that the scientific creationists are perpetrating. Indeed, it is because of their deceptive use of the word "theory" that the scientific creationists betray their lack of scientific integrity. As well, one can ask whether their propositions are derived from and supported by evidence observable in the real world, or only "interpreted" from the pages of the Bible. It was possible before Galileo to interpret a model of the solar system from the Bible, but through the development of appropriate instruments and mathematical techniques it was also possible to demonstrate that the Bible's version was only incomplete, but not wrong.

2) Scientific creationists try to prove that evolution is wrong by pointing out the faults in the theory as it is presently understood, and they do this without offering a scientifically valid alternative. Their argument that "God made it that way" is not science, and will not be accepted by the scientific community; it is merely a way of using God to fill up the gaps. An illustration of this approach to scientific enquiry is this: if a study of human pregnancy were to show medical knowledge of the process to be incorrect, that would not in itself prove that babies are delivered by the stork. Similarly, because the theory of evolution does not explain every aspect of the natural world, does not of itself prove that there is a creator.

3) Creationists demand equal time for their view in public schools. This, on the face of it, appears to be a reasonable request; closer examination reveals the danger. Aside from the fact that fundamentalist Christian schools would not consider giving equal time to evolution (where is their sense of fair play?), the danger lies in the fact that their plea for equal time arises out of their argument that creationism should be taught because there are people who believe in it. Does believing that the earth is flat qualify the concept as a worthy one for a science curriculum? This way of deciding what should be taught has other dangerous implications: if enough people believed in slavery or Apartheid it would then be a reason to include them in social studies curricula. Believing in something doesn't make it right.

4) When creationists demand that creation science be taught, they do not answer what the teaching shall consist of, largely because they assume that it will be the Bible version. But there is a range of a creationist viewpoints: millions of people the world over believe in a divine creator, but not necessarily the creator of the Bible. So whose creator is the one that is chosen for the curriculum? Even if the Bible is used as the basis for a creation science curriculum, which interpretation? Is the fundamentalist creationist prepared to give "equal time" to the competing views, from the literal to the liberal?

5) The scientific creationist view as held by the fundamentalist wing is unscientific because they take the Bible, construct a model of the order of things and then look for facts consistent with their concept. This is absurd. If we have eyes to see with and technology with which to observe, then we should use them to examine God's created universe for what

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