

mennonite mirror

volume 7/number 5/february 1978



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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.

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ABOUT THE COVER

Are your doors of perception frosted over? (It was a cold month, again.) Need a little something to rekindle your flickering fancy, fading frivolity, simmering song? If so, the focus you frosty focals on this thought-provoking metaphor and remember - winter is a state of mind and only beauty surrounds you: even in Manitoba

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mennonite mirror

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Snowflakes that went awry

By Mary Francis

There were five of them: Marija, Katja Kuhn, Anna Krause, Neta Odenbough and Greta Loewen. They were the girls of the fifth grade in the village school. That year they were to put on a New Year's concert. Oh! The flurry and the fluster, the planning and preparation seemed endless. And here they are in their white and frilly costumes made of their mothers' old tulle curtains. Well, snowflakes are dainty, no one needs to tell them that!

The one and only decorated evergreen tree the villagers would see that year, was standing rather forlorn in the middle of the stage of the community hall. The girls had decorated the tree quite prettily with paper chains and little dried-up apples and nuts that they had gilded, and they had put puffs of cotton-batting here and there on the branches for snow. The tree was not exactly what you would call beautiful, for one thing it had very few branches, this made it look depleted somehow, for the Ukraine is simply not known for growing fir trees or evergreens at all. And, as the girls had only a bucket which they filled with earth to stand the tree up in, it would not stand up straight. Well, they banged nails into the wall and with long strings tied the tottering tree up somewhat.

The big evening of entertainment for the whole village is at hand. The activity and excitement reaches a crescendo behind the curtain and in the hall. The show is to go on any minute now. An old gramophone has been set up in one corner of the stage. Peter Penner will wind it up for them, and two other boys of their class will pull back the curtains.

There are the girls, all five of them, in white splendor, in a circle around the evergreen, poised to start as soon as the music begins. Two other boys have been instructed to throw confetti which the girls have prepared by cutting white paper very fine, at them from the wings. This is to symbolize falling snow. The old gramophone is creaking, as Peter is winding it up tightly, then he lets go. Ohhh! The gibberish that comes out of the gramophone's big horn. It sounds not so much as a song about snowflakes gently falling down, but more like a snowstorm coming up. The audience roars with laughter. The girls look

anguished; Peter wound it up too much! But the big oaf just lifts his shoulders in resignation, as the girls glare at him, and lets the thing run its course. Sure enough, after a while the tempo slows, and the girls start cavorting around and circling the tree, just as they imagine young snowflakes would. In the end they are supposed to settle to the ground gracefully. But the gramophone has had enough and slows down by degrees, making sounds that are music in slow motion—wobbly

and howling. Then with a last screech of the needle, it stops. The audience is howling too. The girls are literally floored, and, instead of dancing off the stage gracefully, the way they had intended to, they are waving and shouting at the boys, who have joined the audience in laughter and general pandemonium:

"Fast! Pull the curtains, you idiots!"

Well, so much for the artistic presentation of the village ballet company. Now the reciting of poems. . . .mm



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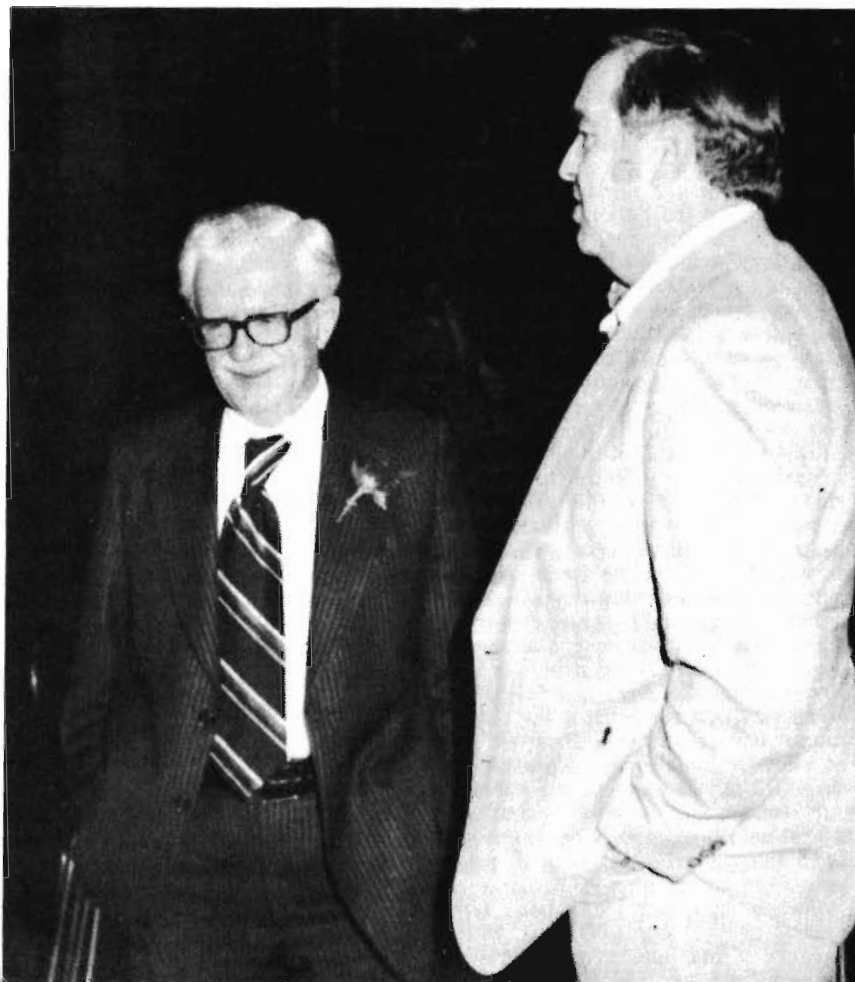
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A hard-nosed, no-nonsense bleeding heart

By Ruth Vogt

Close to 200 people were present at a party held for David Rempel on the occasion of his recent retirement as district director of the National Parole Service. The attendance of fellow workers from Toronto, Thunder Bay, Regina, Saskatoon, Churchill, Thompson, Brandon and Edmonton and a guest speaker from Ottawa, was an eloquent testimony to the respect and affection which David had inspired in them over the years. Perhaps this is because he is a man who takes life and people seriously, but is also blessed with a great sense of humour. In a recent talk to the Winnipeg Rotary Club he was introduced as a "hard nosed, no-nonsense bleeding heart"—an apt description of a man who cares, but does not let his sympathy for people interfere with basic sound judgment.

Both of these characteristics are needed in the field of corrections, in which David has been involved since 1950. He had begun his working life as a school teacher in Saskatchewan in 1930, and dealing with difficult boys in his position as school principal prompted him to look into the field of juvenile work. A visit to Tommy Douglas, then CCF premier of Saskatchewan, together with a friend who was a United Church minister, was a deciding factor. Both David and his friend decided to enter the field of social work, and David enrolled in, and graduated from, the University of Toronto with BA and BSW (Bachelor of Social Work) degrees. He worked in the field of corrections in Saskatchewan from 1950 to 1957, first as a probation officer. He was impressed by the Saskatchewan system of dealing with juvenile offend-



David Rempel with Al Chartrand

ers at that time. Rather than charging each alleged delinquent in court, the authorities first talked to the families, and if they acknowledged the problem and promised to work to remedy the situation, the case was not brought to court. Only 10 per cent of cases came to court and the rate of repetition was very low.

In 1957 David was appointed regional representative of remission services for Saskatchewan, Manitoba and north-west Ontario. His job, as an employee of the Department of Justice, was to interview parole applicants and to supervise them when they were released from prison. Recognizing the need for supportive communities for the parolees, he worked closely with the United Church to found several half-way houses for former inmates. Asked why he, a member of First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, had not approached the Mennonite community, he replied that the Mennonites at the time were not ready for such involvement, whereas the United Church was actively involved in this type of work. Since then, the Mennonite Central Committee has established Grosvenor Place, a hostel for probationers and Rev. Clarence Epp has started his Open Circle program, in which volunteers make contact with people in prison, particularly those who have no close ties, comforting them during their term, and providing assistance, if necessary, when they leave. There are presently many Mennonite social workers involved in some form of corrections work, and Rev. C.N. Friesen is well-known for his chaplaincy work at Headingley jail and Stoney Mountain penitentiary.

Other supportive organizations which help former inmates to re-adjust to society are the Salvation Army and the John Howard Society. David has recently been involved in the establishment of the Native Clan Organization, a group which runs a half-way house for native people, who generally feel more at home in their own social milieu. Perhaps the most moving presentation at the retirement party for David was the tribute paid to him by Al Chartrand, head of the Native Clan Organization. He warmly thanked David for his help to the group, and presented him with a magnificent example of native art—a deerskin, stretched on a wooden frame, painted with designs depicting the life of the native people. David is much concerned about the problems of the native people, who constitute approximately 10 per cent of Canada's population, but about 40 to 50 per cent of the population of our prisons. He does feel that as they become more sophisticated, they will adjust more to the norms of our society, and he is convinced that within another generation there will be a drop in the number of native peoples in our prisons.

Society in general has been fairly critical of the parole system, mainly because of fear and adverse publicity concerning some prisoners who have been released and then committed

violent crimes. The philosophy behind the system is to give the prisoners some incentive to change their attitudes, and also to provide some support and control when they do leave prison. Most prisoners do not need the 10 years, or whatever the sentence happens to be, in order to change. Generally, those who do end up in prison are people who are socially inadequate, have no meaningful commitments or stake in the community. Jail is an abnormal social setting, in which people are likely to unlearn any social skills they might have when they enter. It is to their advantage to be released and to learn to cope with society, with the help of the parole officer. Prisoners are released on parole only after careful evaluation, and if they appear to show a definite change in attitude. The prisoner's plans for his return to the community are considered, and if they are not supportive parole is not granted. The nature of the original offence is a factor; if it concerns some deviation from normal behavior, e.g., a sexual offence, or violence, then psychiatric advice, and promise of later support, is sought before any decisions are made. Only about 10 per cent of prisoners are granted parole on the first eligibility date, and roughly 30 per cent to 40 per cent eventually get parole. All parolees are under the supervision of a parole officer, who acts as friend, counsellor and advisor during the time of re-entry into society. Success or failure often depends on the social relationships of the parolee. David cites an example of one parolee who on his release had to care for his widowed mother. Following her death he took up with a fatherless family and looked after them faithfully; when a younger man came on the scene and took over the family, he no longer felt useful, and returned to his life of crime.

Questioned about the role of prisons in society, David comments that they are necessary, basically for the protection of people. He does feel, however, that they are over-used, and that we should be far more selective in deciding who should be there. What is the point of sending some one to jail for stealing, for example, \$200? The cost is so much greater than the original offence. He believes it would be far more effective to require the offender to make restitution to the victim. David is realistic

in acknowledging that crime is here to stay, and that the aim of the corrections officer is not so much to cure crime as to help the individual who wants to change. Lest we become self-righteous in our attitude, he points out that the difference between most of us, and those who end up in jail, is that most of us have strong community ties—family, church etc., which prevent us from committing crimes. The difference is not that we are morally superior—we are just more afraid of the consequence of getting caught. Mennonites in general tend to be quite judgmental concerning those who break the law—the more fundamentalist they are in their faith, the more judgmental they tend to be. While there are islands of concerned people in the Mennonite churches, Mennonites tend to look down on this element of society. In our search to become good people have we, like the Pharisees, lost the quality of compassion?

After 20 years in the field of corrections, does David feel that human nature can change? The Mennonite teaching is that change is possible through the intervention of the Holy Spirit. David has seen little evidence that any person does change in any basic way, but he has seen that certain tendencies can be channelled into more socially acceptable patterns.

David will not be idle in his retirement. He is a member of the citizen's advisory committee on paroles; is on the board of directors of the Native Clan Organization, Concordia Hospital and Autumn House. For four years he has been attending night classes to improve his skills at wood-working, and he plans to spend time in his well-equipped shop in the basement of his home, enjoying his hobby of furniture-making. He and his wife Martha (nee Enns) are enjoying a more leisurely schedule, and when the weather turns warm they plan to do some camping, primarily in Manitoba, in the trailer which is waiting patiently in their yard for the arrival of Spring. **mm**

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The Dutch connection explains Springstein's origins

By J. P. Dyck

Before the British dislodged them in 1674, New York was in the hands of the Dutch and was called Nieuw Amsterdam. In Queens, one of the five divisions of the present city of New York, Jasper J. Springsteen received a grant of land from the Dutch king. Some of the property remained in the hands of the family for seven generations and the remaining four acres of the original estate were sold in 1945 for \$1,000,000., then a tremendous sum of money.

Some of the Springsteens settled in

Kent County, Ontario, after the War of 1812-14. Here for an unknown reason the spelling of the name was changed to Springstein from the former Springsteen. Bad writing might have been responsible for this change, according to Mrs. Curiston, the daughter of the Springstein that gave our town its name. In 1882 Alonzo Springstein came west, with his wife, a son and a daughter, later a parent of the former Manitoba premier Douglas Campbell they took up land first at Carberry and then at Portage la Prairie. In 1898 Alonzo Springstein acquired 1,950 acres of virgin prairie

land at from \$1.50 to \$5 an acre. He broke up 1,350 acres in three years with eight two-horse wooden beam walking plows and grew fine crops of mostly wheat and some oats and barley. Unfortunately his work was cut short by his death of cancer in 1902, when he was only 56 years old. In the meantime he had persuaded the CPR to open a siding near his farm. He had also a post office established both these under his name.

The land with some added acreage now passed from hand to hand. For 13 years the F.A. Bean Co., a subsidiary of Midwest Properties Inc. of Minneapolis, Minnesota owned the land. From their representative in Winnipeg, Mr. J. Frank Frazer 10 Mennonite families, recently from Russia, bought close to 3,000 acres for the sum of about \$180,000, in the fall of 1924. Conditions were "Mennonite terms" with no down payment fully equipped, one good size house for nine families at that time, all expenses and taxes to be paid by the purchasers out of the half crop remaining to them after the company took the other half. A good beginning but exceedingly tough going for many years, especially during the dirty thirties. No wonder that there was a heavy turn-over of settlers for some years. Discouraged families left, but were speedily replaced by others. Eventually 10 separate farms were established after several years of jointly working, doing all farm work. Mr. John Martens, a man of vision, was the leader of the group from the beginning. He must have been a remarkable optimist, for under his guidance a school and a church were established. He also planted a shelter belt as well as trees along the future street of the village he envisioned.

It must be noted that a good part of



Springstein's first school.

the area was low-lying and even swampy. The soil was a heavy loam and difficult to till. The inhabitants of the neighbouring towns and farms sneered at these "green" Canadians, who tried to do the impossible. One old-timer confided to me years later how he had paddled a canoe one spring from Headingley to Starbuck, a distance of about 15 miles. Farmers from surrounding areas had been haying on this land many years. But the impossible became possible by the thrift, hard work and dogged perseverance of the Springstein pioneers. Drainage ditches were put in, roads were thrown up with ditches on both sides. It took, however, all of 25 years till all-weather roads became a reality.

Envy brought on by the success of the Springsteiners took place of the former disdain. The municipal councils were not overly friendly and for a considerable time withheld improvements made elsewhere. This, of course, has all changed by now. Although the Springstein settlement, much larger than the original 10 farms, has never had a representative in any of the two municipalities in which it is located, now enjoys all the attention given to other areas. The farms have grown larger. Most of the farmers have become well to do. No more do they keep stock or other mixed farm undertakings. I don't think there is a single cow in the area, though there are several poultry operations and maybe one or two hog breeders. The few horses are brought in by city people that have moved in and they are certainly not used for farm work. Springstein has become more or less solidly straight grain farming territory.

The town of Springstein has also undergone a remarkable change. To begin with it was a single farm yard, on which the original buyers of the place lived before houses and barns were erected on individual farms. One, then another family established a home right here in the hamlet and worked the land from this base. In 1949 Mr. Abe Harder opened a grocery store and took over the post office from another person. He still operates this double business.

By and by more houses were constructed in Springstein, so that at the present time there are 34 homes, with about 120 inhabitants. Ten years ago there were about two dozen families with 160 members. The town's makeup has also taken a sharp change. At first it was a homogeneous Mennonite town, at present all but 14 families are not Mennonite and those that do belong to one of four branches of Mennonites. Springstein can boast to be a youthful town. Only three retired couples live here. The majority are younger families with jobs in Winnipeg, in a number of



Alonzo Springstein

cases both husband and wife working and even one or more grown children. Unfortunately the present generation doesn't seem to be tied down to one place of residence as was the case in former years. It is not surprising to see a "For Sale" sign on a house that was newly occupied the summer before: snow shoveling and having water hauled to the cistern from the city is not to everybody's taste.

There are, however, distinct advantages of living a distance of only 12 miles from the outskirts of the city and 22 miles to the centre of it. Taxes are lower, though not as low as they used to be or as one would like to have them. It is a quiet town with only a few snow machines on the street in winter and some motorcycles in summer beside the cars of the local people. A few trains still go through on weekdays, very seldom on a Sunday. Springstein also boasts a recreation park with a fenced-in dugout and a young hedge on two sides of the park.

Two very important institutions are a three-room public school and the General Conference Mennonite Church. Only six grades are being taught in the two open classrooms at the present time. Formerly eight grades were taught in these rooms and the high school including Grade 11 in the third room. The junior high children are bused now to Starbuck, seven miles away and the high school students to Sanford somewhat more distant.

The centre of the Mennonite community of Springstein and surrounding area is our church. Services were organized right at the beginning in 1924. In 1938 the congregation, consisting of 36 members, built a fine

church, really grand for that period of time. The MB constituents of the place put up another church at the same time a mile away, but closed it in 1962. The chief sponsor of the GC church and the person responsible for its coming into existence and later growth was Elder William H. Enns.

Rev. Enns settled here soon after the founding of this settlement and lived on his farm a mile away from town and church. It was his determined and energetic leadership that gave the congregation its character. He also represented the church on numerous committees in the Manitoba and Canadian Conferences as well of the MCI and the CMBC. He remained active nearly to his death in 1974. Since his passing Rev. G.I. Peters completed his four year term as leading minister. After him Rev. Henry Neufeld served us for two years and Rev. Bruno Epp for three years. At the present time Rev. Ernest Wiebe, formerly of the Mennonite Conference office, is our leading minister, while Victor Epp serves as moderator and lay minister of the congregation. Two other members of our church, Rev. H. Neufeld and Rev. Terry Burkhalter are also doing some preaching which is appreciated very much.

I would not necessarily insist upon the idea that we deserve it, but have to admit that God has been very gracious unto us and has supplied us always with the needed leadership in the church, in the Sunday School, in the choir work, etc. At present our membership list contains about 165 names, down from over 200 some years ago. Retiring couples move to Winnipeg or Steinbach. Young people go to places where they find employment. Still Springstein town and Springstein Church have found a place on the map of Manitoba and without question a permanent one. mm

TAKE YOUR TIME

A man and his wife were enjoying a before-dinner cocktail when their phone rang. The wife answered and a man's voice, loud enough to be heard in the room, said: "Honey, I won't be home for a while. I'm still at the office."

Before the wife could tell her caller he had the wrong number, her husband grabbed the phone and answered: "That's all right, buddy. Take your time." Then he hung up.

Discipline may not be popular, but it belongs in church

I desire, according to my humble talents, to teach a Gospel that builds up, and not one that breaks down; one that gives off a pleasant odor, and not a stench, and I do not intend to trouble the work of God with something for which I have no certain Scriptural grounds. I can neither teach nor live by the faith of others. I must live by my own faith as the Spirit of the Lord has taught me through His Word.

Excerpt from a letter to the church at Emden, 1556. Taken from The Complete Writings of Menno Simons.

By Egon Enns

It seems as if church discipline is not a popular theme today. Sin has become difficult to define. Yet if we want to take God's word seriously we must take sin seriously. To deal with sin, we must take Christ and our Christian life seriously. When we do that, we soon realize that there is no Christian living without discipline.

Menno Simons, in his letter to the church at Emden, was concerned. Excommunication was being practised in their church discipline, but it was being done by the letter of the law in judgment rather than in redemptive love to bring about repentance, forgiveness and restoration. Menno had a sincere concern and a deep insight of the meaning of God's redemptive love, and the Christian's responsibility to pass on that forgiving love on God's terms. He was — teaching a Gospel that builds up, gives a pleasant odor — teaching on scriptural grounds only — teaching from a personal faith based on a personal understanding of scripture, under the Spirit's guidance.

Menno came through strongly on the importance of personal faith, salvation in Jesus Christ through personal experience, and that each Christian must live a holy, pure and dedicated life. Only then could discipline take place.

The process of excommunicating,

must be on scriptural grounds, and it must be redemptive, to build up. It seems Menno could not emphasize these two points enough. This seems to be in line with Paul's admonishment to the Corinthians when we read in 1 Corinthians 5 that the man who was living with his father's wife was to be turned over to Satan (v.5). Sin needed to be dealt with and not ignored. In Paul's second letter (2 Cor. 2) he warns against over-punishment, that they needed to reaffirm their love to the transgressor so that he shouldn't be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. Menno's love for the people of his church was similar to Paul's love for his. What does this mean today? Even today we have people (and churches) who have become lax and are not able to discern right from wrong. (1 Cor. 5 & 6)

To be able to discipline we need to identify sin. This is done in various ways. It may be long hair, short skirts, wearing ear rings, watching a TV or listening to a radio, or driving a car with some chrome on it. What is Scriptural? What do we do with gossip? Bad business deals? Padded bills? False reports? Lack of discipline??

To identify sin we need a common yardstick. Maybe that is why we have different denominations, with different yardsticks or guidelines. Have we noticed how a person speaking against a certain group's form of discipline is unable to conform himself, while the one who submits has no problems with it. Maybe we need to be more careful how we judge another group of people with a different standard from ours. For example, there may be a good reason for one church to excommunicate a member for having rubber tires on his tractor, or for having electricity in his home. The article "The Holdeman Revival: is it reform, or a witch hunt?" in Oct/77 *Mennonite Mirror* shows another group dealing with discipline.

Menno's concern was that sin was scripturally identified, and that the sin was clearly dealt with in a constructive, redemptive manner. That is the key to proper discipline.

John Howard Yoder in *Concern* (Feb/67) in his article "Binding and Loosing" based on Matthew 18:15-20 speaks to the same issue. From this scripture passage he shows how discipline is first a private, individual matter. This allows for confidentiality and avoids "gossip and defamation", which is also unscriptural. How often do we see some juicy gossip get going when a brother or sister has fallen, and this can go so far until it is next to impossible for any restitution to take place. Keeping it personal helps keep the process of reconciliation closer to the local situation, without cluttering the issue with a lot of rules and regulations which don't apply. Dealing personally, may expose other aspects of the situation not realized before, and aid in coming to a better solution. This can reveal where blanket judgments are not always valid, and gives opportunity to then update some of the rules and regulations that have previously been set up.

The article also shows how Jesus in this passage clearly defines the responsibility of discipline as belonging to every individual member of the church who is aware of the offence. First, one individual in private must go to the person having committed an offence, then, if this is not successful, he is to go with one or two witnesses, still in private and confidence. If this also fails, only then is it brought to the church. It is brought to the church, not just to a pastor or a deacon. There is danger in buying a pastor's services and then passing the responsibility of individual members upon him. This can hinder both the pastor's work and the process of restitution. (It must be noted that the pastor and deacon are part of the church and thus not excluded from the process, depending on how the church organization is set up.) It is brought to the church, not to the state law. Sin is to be dealt with by the Christian and the church, not the state. Too often the church is passing the buck and expecting the state to handle the church's shortcoming, and to make matters worse,

criticizes the state for not doing a good job.

Menno emphasized going to scripture, and defining transgressions and the method of dealing with them on Scriptural grounds.

John Howard Yoder is basing his presentation on scripture, and we would do well to look at scripture seriously. The church, composed of individual members, is falling into the same temptation Eve did so long ago — "did God say" and then changing the meaning of God's Word. Cain is another example. His relationship with God was not right and his offering was not accepted, while his brother's was. God warned Cain that if he did not do well, sin was at his door, but he was to overcome sin. Rather, Cain blamed his brother and killed him, adding to his sin rather than correcting his own relationship with God.

Menno strongly emphasizes that we need to be in the right relationship with God, have our own house in order, come with the right attitude based on scripture, and only then can we deal redemptively in disciplining a brother. "Take heed that while you shun them as diseased, foul, and unprofitable members unfit for the body of Christ, you yourselves may be found to be sound, fit and profitable members in Jesus Christ. . . . Take heed lest you judge others of what you yourselves are guilty."

Another quote from Menno; "Wherefore brethern, understand correctly, no one is excommunicated or expelled by us from the communion of the brethern but those who have already separated and expelled themselves from Christ's communion either by false doctrine or by improper conduct. For we do not want to expel any, but rather to receive; not to amputate, but rather to heal; not to discard, but rather to win back; not to grieve, but rather to comfort; not to condemn, but rather to save. For this is the true nature of a Christian brother. Whoever turns from evil, whether it be false doctrine or vain life, and conforms to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, unto which he was baptized, such a one shall not

and may not be expelled or excommunicated by the brethern forever."

Jesus in Matthew 18 brings the responsibility of discipline and excommunication close to home. Discipline is to be practised by every individual Christian, by me, and it is to be practised in a redemptive and not judgmental manner. If we don't listen to the Scripture, or try to give all kinds of other interpretations, we are only fooling ourselves and will one day face judgment upon ourselves. "How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation." Heb. 2:3. I see discipline as part of the process of salvation.

mm

Egon Enns is pastor of the Homewood Mennonite Church.

This article sponsored by friends of the Mirror.

FRESH LINKAGE

upon
severing the connecting ties
to the Maker
and to one another
I saw him
also torn from the earth
which yielded him

I prayed
for the Link
to rejoin him
making whole
his fragmented self
and to reconnect the fragments
for new oneness
with the earth
and with its people

By Menno Wiebe

living

I was a
Country Boy
Hacking out weeds with a hoe
Its handle worn smooth by
years of sweaty hands
Sinking into Nature's shoes
Soft wet smelling earth
Turned to face the sun
By an unfeeling shear
Stubble hidden under the
black and bumpy blanket
Waiting all summer for her
golden hair to grow
Heat that led you to artesian water
Rising waves of heat provide
illusion, Kildeers crying out
Farewell to thunder, lead
you from their young with
fine deception.

Barefoot, curious, looking long
and hard at little things
Chokecherry stains on shirt and teeth
Trousers frayed and patched.
Dirty feet. Flying through the mow
Swinging swiftly on the hemp
Propping deep into the fresh cut
hay below,
Still bleeding with the
smell of life, seeping from
its fading wounded glade

Spacious barn my cathedral
of quietness, for tears and refuge,
For screams and shrieking laughter
Alone with life, my rec room

No plastic, no exhaust, no deadline
but my stomach,
No marked off parking stall
No rock music, no news
No telephone, no T.V.
No tense exhaustion, no crowds.

It's been a long time
since i listened to my heart beat
Except for an insurance medical
I'm a city boy now.

By Clint Toews



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Visitor kindles interest in Anabaptist heritage

By Irene Friesen Petkau

People in Manitoba and Saskatchewan will long remember Jan Gleysteen for the twinkle in his eye, and for the sense of humour with which he presented their story. He captivated audiences with stories, both tragic and comical, from our Anabaptist past.

Jan Gleysteen, who is historian/photographer/artist/editor, at Mennonite Publishing House in Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, presented his accounts of Mennonite history with slides collected on his many trips to Europe with Tourmagination.

Mr. Gleysteen visited as many as 30 congregations and institutions in his recent tour of these two prairie provinces. Along the way he had opportunity to meet with small groups in homes and over sack lunches, at camp-retreats and in classrooms. Lawrence Klippenstein, archivist for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, estimated that 2,000 people came in contact with Gleysteen during his two-week itinerary which was planned and coordinated by Mr. Klippenstein and Terry Burkhalter, camp coordinator for the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.

One of Mr. Gleysteen's goals for this tour was to stimulate discussion on how Anabaptist history and theology translate into faithfulness for our times. Many persons, particularly in the 40 to 50 age bracket, told Mr. Gleysteen that this was the first time they had heard their faith story. "Spiritual aspects of Anabaptism seem unknown to certain age brackets. Many are bothered by the name 'Mennonite' because they don't know what it is—and no one is telling them either," Mr. Gleysteen commented.

Abe Rempel, pastor of the North Kildonan Mennonite Church, expressed appreciation for Mr. Gleysteen's gifted story-telling: "He told our history in a kind of story so that people who are turned off by history could still be with the story as it was told. The most significant thing for me was that his story of our people also included something of the faith, especially the emphasis upon discipleship."

Participants at a week-end retreat at Camp Assiniboia developed a new awareness of "the faith of our fathers" through his vibrant personality and his unique slide presentations. David and Anne Winters, participants in the weekend retreat, commented: "Mr. Gleysteen's focus in the study of Mennonitism is the way of life, and the body of belief which gives meaning and purpose to that way of life."

In his address to more than 500 Manitoba Sunday School teachers in their annual conference at Winkler Mr. Gleysteen said that Christian education must emphasize discipleship and community as well as individual conversion experiences. He stressed the need to say to our children, "We are walking with Jesus. Come walk with us." Mr. Gleysteen criticized the "packaged merchandizing" of Christianity today and asked, "Are we still building on the one foundation, or are we living in a religious Disneyland?"

The theme of Faith and Lifestyle was a recurring one in Mr. Gleysteen's presentations. He emphasized that Mennonites concern themselves "not only with saying the right words, but with showing it to other people in actions".

Mr. Gleysteen readily admitted that the Mennonite church did not have all the answers. Many people are leaving the church because they have lost the

vision. "People become disillusioned with their history when they can't integrate it with their faith, and at this point they begin to look to other histories for theological meaning," Mr. Gleysteen said.

Mr. Gleysteen was disturbed by the size of the Mennonite congregations in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. "How can you give and receive counsel in a large church of 800?" he asked, questioning whether any of the 30 Winnipeg Mennonite churches were dynamic enough to offer a vital church fellowship as an option to the people who "escape" to the city. Mr. Gleysteen sympathized with a group of Mennonite "radicals" in Winnipeg who said that church structures were outdated. He pointed to the house church model and the meeting house model of Pennsylvania Mennonites as alternatives to the large impersonal churches he saw in urban and rural centres in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Gleysteen was surprised to find a dearth of Mennonite groups involved in radical lifestyles. He commented on the fact that there was no Reba Place and no Koinonia Farm providing an alternative to the dominant lifestyle of "becoming and remaining established". Mr. Gleysteen defended the radical faith of the Anabaptists which motivated them to dress simply, to eat simply, and to practise mutual aid (without creating an insurance company!). He defended the eschatological urgency which motivated them to testify to the power of the Lord in spite of the political and religious pressures of their day.

"The questions which Mennonites in Winnipeg must raise are 'What is church? What is meaningful church membership? Do we need big castles where people can go to get preached at?' Mr. Gleysteen's questions implied that Mennonites should redirect their energies to discovering the voluntary, visible church just as their 16th century brothers and sisters struggled for meaningful church membership.

Jan Gleysteen will be remembered by Mennonites in Manitoba and Saskatchewan for sparking new interest in history. He will be remembered for daring to challenge the dominant life style. This simple but colorful man stimulated new thoughts in many minds. mm

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Words for a winter's night

This page and the following four pages contain reviews and commentary on a number of recently published books. Some of the selections are of direct interest because of their Mennonite content and/or authorship, while others are of concern because their content touches all of us. Because the reviews were all submitted within the past month or so, it was decided to publish them all at once as part of a "mid-winter reading special."

A plea for new initiatives

MENNONITE PEOPLEHOOD, A Plea for New Initiatives, by Frank H. Epp, Conrad Press, \$4.50 paper, ISBN 0-9690458-4-0, 120 pp.

By Betty Dyck

This is basically a book to be used by church leaders. Each of the 12 chapters is followed by questions to provoke discussion. The premise deals with the various facets of a Christian's identity and task—is it possible to save the Mennonite heritage or must they become assimilated in the multi-cultural milieu? Epp wants American and Canadian Mennonites in particular, to explore new initiatives and prepare for the 10th Mennonite World Conference in Kansas in 1978.

Peoplehood, states Epp, means belonging and is necessary for the sake of service and mission since the church expresses itself through its institutions. He elaborates on the foundations of peoplehood and the threats to it. He voices genuine concern that the church's service to people is ultimately being threatened and even cancelled out by "the exploiting and domineering alliances" of governments. His is a voice crying in the wilderness, but he begins with an academic approach and language unfamiliar to the layman. Fortunately, he falls into a readable litany and delivers a timely comment on contemporary "community".

The biblical overtones, complete with

quoted scriptures, will undoubtedly have a tendency to limit the readership of this book to church groups. This is unfortunate, because Frank Epp has some important insights to share with all people. He illustrates how humans crave a community that gives them identity, security and continuity; and how they find it outside the church in other organizations if they fail to find it within. He echoes Prime Minister Trudeau's frequent comments on our high expectations, and says that people must alter their views of what is helping and what is hurting the world. He discusses mobility and how the constant shuttling of families from city to city destroys any real sense of community. He warns against being hoodwinked into a false community, illustrating this with a 20th century substitution by an alert company, Airstream, who stages periodic pilgrimages to specific vacation spots for thousands of campers. Even churches are applying organizational know-how and public relations finesse in order to hold their flock together.

Epp reiterates that he asks not that people give up their citizenship in order to regain their Mennonite peoplehood. He cites the Apostle Paul who loudly acclaimed he was a Roman citizen and yet a Christian. Christians in younger nations as well as those in North America have a loyalty to uphold and a heritage to exalt. People need to identify with their own society and feel responsible for it. Look around, Epp says, "Every land is beautiful enough in parts to be known as God's country."

Epp ends on a positive note with suggestions as to how to solve the problems of Mennonite peoplehood. Most of his ideas can be applied to any minority group, and if his book had been written in a contemporary style it might well have become another "comfortable pew".

This review has appeared previously in Quill & Quire.

Novel probes Mennonite Russian experience

THE WANDERERS: The Saga of Three Women who Survived. By Ingrid Rimland. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977), 323 pp. \$8.95.

A review by Al Reimer

Mennonite historians, both amateur and professional, have written at length about the tragic period in Russian Mennonite history which began with the Revolution in 1917. Fictional treatment has lagged behind, even though the subject is as dramatic and profound as any a novelist could find. There were some early attempts in German. Emigre writers who had escaped the Russian holocaust—Gerhard G. Toews, Peter J. Klassen and Peter G. Epp, to name a few—tried to capture their experience in fiction, but the results were all too often uneven and crudely amateurish. Rudy Wiebe's powerful *The Blue Mountains of China* (1970) was the first major work in English to dramatize the epic story of Mennonites who experienced the nightmare of revolution and dispersal which forced them to flee to countries like Canada and Paraguay.

Ingrid Rimland's *The Wanderers* is a welcome addition to the field. Beginning in the Molochnaja in 1913 and ending in Paraguay in 1957, the novel covers some of the same ground as Wiebe's novel. Inevitably, the two novels invite comparison. Not surprisingly, in this reviewer's opinion, the

comparison is in Wiebe's favor. Rudy Wiebe, after all, is an established professional writer with a thorough knowledge of his craft. Ms. Rimland is an impressive at times brilliant stylist, but her lack of experience in the novel form shows.

The most astonishing fact about this novel is that it ever got written at all—at least in English. Ingrid Rimland barely survived the Second World War as a child in Russia and Germany. And given the fact that she did not learn English until she was in her late twenties, one can only marvel at her skill with a language she has known for only a little over a decade. Here is her lyrical description of a young Mennonite farmer in Russia walking through his grain fields:

Now he relished the odor of earth, imagining the marvel of light green tips that would once again sprout undisturbed, imaging the golden haze when the pollen would lie in waves over the ripening fields, thinking of the rich rewards of harvest time. He could close his eyes and imagine Katya at the edge of the field, taking a handful of grain to test its ripeness between her fingertips. She always knew when it was time to harvest. She needed no calendar except her sense of sight and touch and smell.

The Wanderers portrays the lives of three Mennonite women who manage to survive the Revolution, the Stalin era, the Second World War and who finally, after incredible hardships, settle down in the serene isolation of the Paraguayan Chaco. After her menfolk had all been slain or exiled, Katya Klassen, daughter of an elder, was forced by default to become the matriarch whose will to survive and determination to live by Mennonite traditions shape not only her own destiny but those of her daughter Sara and granddaughter Karin.

During the height of the terrorist

period, the bandit leader Nestor Razin (Makhno in all but name) kills Katya's father and savagely rapes her. As a result, Katya bears an illegitimate child, Sara. Beautiful but weak, Sara later learns to survive by offering her body as payment for protection and security—first during the Nazi occupation, later in Germany under Russian domination, and finally in the Chaco when she marries a much older Mennonite from Russia whom she had always despised.

Karin, Sara's daughter by an ill-fated early marriage in Russia, grows up discontented and rebellious in the Chaco. A budding intellectual and artist, she struggles to free herself from the stifling, narrow traditionalism of her "Ohma" Katya and "Ohm" Jasch, the bigoted elder of the colony who had once been a misfit and barely tolerated hanger-on in Russia. In the last part of the novel, Karin suddenly seems to emerge as the real heroine who stands up at last to her domineering grandmother. In a novel whose main theme up to this point seems to be endurance, acceptance and submission to God's will, this belated theme of personal freedom seems oddly gratuitous and incongruous.

Much as I admire the writing in it, this is a flawed novel. The major flaws are technical: an inability to develop consistently rounded and convincing major characters; a lack of control in the all-important handling of tone; and uncertainty and lack of tension in the narrative point of view. Let me illustrate.

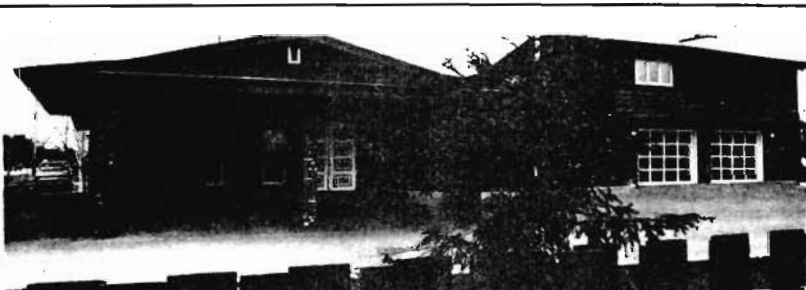
The novel consists of three main parts, each of which focuses on one of the three central characters Katya, Sara and Karin. Such a structure demands that each of the three be strongly delineated throughout and that each be given her own distinctive narrative voice in the part which she dominates. Such is not the case in this

novel. Unfortunately, all three characterizations are pallid and inconsistent. They remain two-dimensional stereotypes for the most part and they never really develop their own individual narrative voices. As head of the family, Katya is dominant throughout, yet as a character she remains strangely amorphous, undefined, contradictory, and does not come fully alive until the closing pages. She is a zealous defender of Mennonite ways and values and yet she is so blindly pro-German that she accepts the most brutal aspects of militarism without demur or question. She is horrified when her granddaughter falls in love with a Paraguayan dandy, yet earlier she had calmly accepted her daughter's pregnancy by a Nazi soldier.

Sara is too bland and accommodating a character to make any impression on the reader at all. Karin, however, is another matter. She has a streak of her illicit grandfather's anarchistic nature. But Karin's struggle for intellectual and cultural liberty is too naively motivated. On the day of her wedding she realizes that she has been "cheated" by life. So, she runs off into the sunset with her swaggering macho boy friend Carlitos. But she can't stay away. After her Ohma Katya's sudden death she returns—but to what? Certainly not to her own people. Presumably, she is now free to forge her own destiny, but exactly what her "own purposeful, intelligent ambition" consists of is not made clear.

The author obviously favors highly dramatic scenes and violent confrontations. Some of these work superbly; others degenerate into wild melodrama as, for example, the scene where the monster Razin hacks off Katya's father's head, and after raping the girl in front of her mother kicks the father's head across the room like a football. On the very next page Katya is telling her fiancé that she is sure that she is "going to have Nestor's child". The whole scene is so luridly presented that what should arouse horror only creates embarrassment.

A novelist must maintain some kind of distance between himself and his material. He must remain above his characters in a recognizable sense and not allow their prejudices, views and feelings to become confused with his own. One wonders repeatedly while reading this novel whether the point of view is that of the character or that of the author—or both. The constantly expressed racial and ethnic prejudices, made me feel uncomfortable. Russians are almost always portrayed as coarse, brutal and inferior. Germans are beautiful, sensitive and self-sacrificing. Katya refers to the "knightly German soldiers" who fight valiantly against "the creeping slit-eyed danger from



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the East". Mennonites generally are depicted as smug, self-righteous materialists. The unfocused tone and vague point of view often make it difficult to accept these prejudiced views as part of the dramatic framework.

Nevertheless, *The Wanderers* is very much worth reading. It lacks the power and intensity of Wiebe's *Blue Mountains*, but it is written in a more readable style. In spite of its shortcomings, it is a highly promising first novel. Ms. Rimland has a rare writing gift and one must honor her for telling her story with so much verve and candor. When she has mastered the craft to go along with her vivid style and sharp perceptions, she will be a formidable novelist. **mm**

The above is abridged from the Mennonite Reporter.

More memories in yet another version

MENNONITE MEMORIES: *Settling in Western Canada. Edited by Lawrence Klippenstein and Julius G. Toews. Centennial Publications, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. 1977. Hard cover. 350 pp. Includes photos, maps and charts. 15.*

A review by Peter Zacharias

In the midst of the Manitoba Mennonite centennial celebrations of 1974, two enterprising historians, Julius G. Toews and Lawrence Klippenstein, edited a book entitled *Manitoba Mennonite Memories*. By the end of that year the book was practically sold out.

In 1977, spurred on by the success of that venture, the authors have completed a second, enlarged edition bearing the name *Mennonite Memories: Settling in Western Canada*. It is by no means a simple re-run of the earlier book. New articles have been added; some items have been deleted; the color and the human interest that characterized the older volume have been retained; the work in its entirety has been enhanced by the revision.

Broader in scope than the first edition, the new work includes articles on pioneering in Saskatchewan and Alberta as well as in Manitoba. Its technical quality is vastly superior to

that of the first. The broad layout is not only aesthetically pleasing, but endows the pages with the mark of uncrowdedness, of unhurriedness, of confidence in setting apart significant detail. This is in harmony with the memory theme. Additional photographs, maps and sketches are used to good advantage.

How does one capture the atmosphere of the pioneer era? The authors have created a recording of voices from the past. As the title suggests, the book is a virtual mosaic of memories—pleasant memories flowing forth in harmonious chords and occasionally unpleasant memories bursting in upon a complacent serenity. The fact that accounts are not always flattering to the Mennonite community, e.g. the articles on Mennonite relations with the Indians or Peter T. Wiebe's reminiscences on his boyhood experiences in the private school make the book all the more believable. Congratulations to the editors on a choice of selections that does not permit a mere collection of platitudes. The work is a vibrant sharing of the experience of a century of Mennonite settlement in the West.

A word of special recognition is due to the compiler Julius G. Toews, who has lived and taught among prairie Mennonites and who is doing his people a great service by continuing to write in his retirement years. As Gerhard Ens so aptly says of Toews in the foreword: "In his own inimitable, highly articulate and readable style he reminisces about our good points and our weaker sides. He does so gently and lovingly, because he is one of us." **mm**

Caught between two worlds

Williams, David, *THE BURNING WOOD: Toronto, Anansi Press, 1975. 204 pp. Hardcover — \$10.00. Softcover — \$3.95.*

A review by Edgar Schmidt

In his first novel, David Williams involves the reader in the life of one Joshua Cardiff from his childhood through adolescence. Joshua Cardiff faces the task common to adolescents, the delineation of identity. Family, peers, sexuality, religion, and *Lebensziel* all play a part. Joshua's life is complicated by his baldness and by the lure and forbiddenness of an Indian reserve nearby. Joshua's baldness sets him apart within his family and community. His borderline status in the white world links Joshua to his great-grandfather, Bran, whose life is often held before Joshua as a bad example, a life ruined by too close association with the "heathen" reserve. Young Joshua is befriended by and befriends two men from the reserve who work for his father; and through them, he becomes familiar with the reserve and its people. He finds himself between the white and Indian communities, Fundamental Christianity and Cree religion, historical and mythical world-views. Those tensions are at the heart of this novel.

The novel is rich in imagery, much of it subtle and easily overlooked. Often the images are built chain-like, link by link. As an example, note the "fish" imagery in the following passage.

The minister's eyes were cold and blunt. His jowls trembled a little before he spoke. "Where have you boys been?" he said at last.

"Fishin'," Thomas said brightly. "You should of bin dere. We caught two pick—"

"Joshua Cardiff," the minister said sternly, "I expected you to be a blessing instead of a burden. I expected you to be a good example, not a bad one. Instead, you take this Indian boy who can't possibly know better and you go running off for the day." For a moment his eyes searched Joshua's face. Then his expression softened. "Are you trying

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to run away from the Lord, boy? Is that it? Is He calling you like He did Jonah?"

"No, He isn't," Joshua said. He felt extremely uncomfortable.

"Then it's outright wickedness," Reverend Haagshed said. "By their fruits ye shall know them. What have you got to say for yourself, boy?" The preacher has his head tilted back; his eyes looked for a moment into the eyes beneath him.

Joshua looked away, his now-swimming vision sliding up and out with a desperate wriggle. "Nothin'," he said.

Biblical stories are important in the novel. They are used as myths to undergird and over-arch the story of Joshua Cardiff. For someone who is at all familiar with the Bible, reading the novel is like a trip through a landscape where familiar scenes frequently appear but are transformed by their new contexts and bear new meanings.

The Northern Saskatchewan setting, the theme of intercultural conflict, and the style of the novel remind me of some of Rudy Wiebe's writing. Wiebe and Williams have many similarities in their personal histories. Both grew up in Northern Saskatchewan; both had strongly religious families and studied theology; and both have an interest in the story of the Plains Cree who settled in Northern Saskatchewan. That their writings have some significant similarities should not surprise us.

Christianity appears in this novel mostly as an aggressive (even belligerent), opinionated version of Fundamentalism. It is hardly surprising that Joshua, despite some real struggles, rejects that faith. I found myself wishing that a gentler Christianity with a simple piety, a love for the earth, and a respect for persons had been present for Joshua to wrestle with as well. Nevertheless, most [Mennonites] are well-enough acquainted with such Fundamentalism to be able to appreciate the conflicts and the humour in the novel.

The language in some of the dialogue is vulgar. Those who are offended by such language may prefer not to read this novel.

I do recommend it, however, to those who enjoy a poetic, intense, humorous, and moving novel. I did not find myself in whole-hearted support of the world-view developed in the novel, but I did find reading and re-reading it a most enjoyable experience. **mm**

Development for adults: known crises

PASSAGES — Predictable Crises of Adult Life by Gail Sheehy. E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc.

Reviewed by Hilda Matsuo

A crack junior executive in her twenties says: "I realized that I had not grown up—when clients would deal with me as an equal, I'd think, 'I got away with it,' but the feeling wasn't one of joy. It was terror that eventually they would find out I was just a child.—The other half of the time, I would have tremendous confidence and arrogance about who I was—a hot shot—I was like two people." The vivacious 24 year old is one of Gail Sheehy's studies in 'Passages', a book dealing with human development in the middle years of life, namely 18 to 55.

Even if one can't recognize the 24 year old's dilemma as being universal to the young, here is a readable, absorbing message for those who wonder how the human journey continues after the child psychologists leave off. Psychologists, Sheehy feels, have spoken most often to the problems of adult life and veered from the topic of normal change. Sheehy experienced an initial reluctance to go beyond an accepted concept that the child's personality is more or less formed by the age of five. To oversimplify, on thinking about it, the five-year old would be none other than the man who at forty suddenly breaks away from that was previously held dear. Hardly, said Sheehy, who began to see the man's solution as an individual reaction to a pattern of development or 'passage'. Whether or not the man's period of re-assessment becomes a 'passage' or crisis depends on his ability to cope with ambivalent feelings about his world. One can quarrel with the author's implied solution to problems. She cites her own case and others, wherein a 'passage' or crisis encountered within the framework of marriage is 'solved' by dissolving the union.

The author's studies of adult development are drawn from the ranks of an educated middle class. Sheehy's reasons for doing so are given. She feels that members of that class have

the greatest number of options in terms of choosing a life style. Reasons for choosing the middle class are influenced by the fact that those born to riches and power, though enjoying more stability, have more traditions to block their mobility, an essential for anyone seeking alternatives on encountering a 'passage' in the middle years of life. The working class, Sheehy says is deprived of educational and economic advantages and so lacks mobility, but it does enjoy, more often, the advantages of being able to call on family in times of stress. Though there is the problem that Sheehy's middle class is far from ordinary, common humanity will enable the reader to recognize himself and others in the book.

'Passages' greatest impact on the reader comes at the beginning of the book but a good journalistic style sustains the reader.

Since the concept of a book on adult development is rather new, there is some danger that a superficial reader may identify with a given situation, and say, that's me. **mm**

A spiritual look at becoming woman

BECOMING WOMAN: by Penelope Washbourn, 174 pp. New York, Harper & Row (published simultaneously in Canada by Fitzhenry and Whiteside Ltd., Toronto) \$9.85.

By Betty Dyck

This welcome book comes out at a time when many women are seriously questioning their selfhood. Fewer children in families, wider educational opportunities and longer life expectancies all add to this new outlook of searching for an identity apart from marriage.

Of late, there has been much emphasis on transitions in life, or life-crises as the author refers to them. Probing deeper than Michele Landsberg's article in the June *Chatelaine* "How Women Should Plan Their Lives," Washbourn is primarily concerned with the spiritual connections of the cycles. A faculty member in the department of Religion at the University of Manitoba and Co-ordinator of Women's Studies, she parallels the

life-crises to "rites of passage" in other cultures where they were celebrated by religious rituals. With the diminution of such ceremonies today, woman has lost her sense of importance once accorded to the phases from menstruation through to menopause.

In lamenting the lack of celebration to mark important passages, Harvey Cox in *Feast of Fools* comments that in our world of constant change, "festival and fantasy are indispensable for survival." He also maintains that the loss of our capacity for celebrating has a profound religious significance. Washbourn believes that becoming a woman is a spiritual occurrence and should be recognized as such in our society because, "even in primitive society the quest for personal wholeness is linked with an understanding of the ongoing procreative life process."

Procreation is not, according to Washbourn, all there is to being a woman. Her book provides a new insight into being a woman today, and will reinforce buried beliefs harboured by many middle-aged women that they do indeed have a personal identity other than wife/mother. The principal argument is that the ongoing life-crises for women are religious experiences involving both graceful and demonic (creative versus destructive) responses — the choice being the individual's. The word "trust" is encountered so

many times that you cannot disregard it. The emphasis is on self-trust: "It is harder for a woman in our culture to trust her freedom to actualize her powers and risk herself."

Nowhere does Washbourn promote promiscuity or infidelity. She shares revealing personal glimpses of her own life which are backed up by the psychological, religious and theoretical text. It is a refreshingly, candid look at becoming woman. She illustrates how TV and other media stress the importance of the "Beautiful people syndrome" and the importance of love. Mothers and daughters will achingly identify with the author's view that girls define themselves in terms of sexual attractiveness to boys, unable to trust the other elements of their personhood — physical, intellectual and creative.

The subject of sex is treated throughout with refinement, minus any accompanying sense of guilt or embarrassment. Washbourn explores the unhappy world of the never-married or the once-married, showing how our culture is unfriendly toward the single woman and considers her a threat to the established order.

Most of the book is written in retrospect, with the author drawing on personal experience. Her forward look at menopause, old age and death, though theoretical, maintains the

thread of the importance of trust and self-acceptance interwoven with religious overtones. Washbourn writes in a readable style only occasionally slipping into unfamiliar psychological terms, allowing the layman to follow through without difficulty. The title *Becoming Woman* may deter men from reading the book — which is too bad. Women's personal feelings expressed by Washbourn are sometimes difficult to discuss with a husband. Many women hesitate to leave themselves open to the risk necessary in revealing their inner self. The book could pave the way.

Few women will fail to identify with one or more of the author's personal experiences. *Becoming Woman* is a door opened for a new generation of women who will be able to live a full life, conscious of their life-crises and meeting them on a better basis of understanding. Footnoted and indexed, the book should provide excellent resource material for study, but it stands on its own as a book that all women should read — young brides, mothers-to-be, middle-aged women, widows and grandmothers. According to Washbourn it is never too late to begin experiencing life as a graceful, creative process and enjoying being woman right up to the end. **mm**

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Winterliche Reise

Von U. Woelcke

"In Winnipeg leichter Schneefall; am Nachmittag klar und sonnig mit Hoechsttemperaturen um 10 Grad Fahrenheit; leichte sued-oestliche Winde bis zu 20 Meilen die Stunde."

"Koennte nicht besser sein!" Ich stelle das Radio ab, und trinke den letzten Schluck Kaffee im Stehen, schon von der Unruhe gepackt, die ich immer verspueere wenn es zu einer unmenschlichen Stunde wie 5:00 Uhr morgens auf eine lange Reise geht.

Waehrend der Wagen schon laeuft, wird noch das letzte Geschirr abgewaschen und einge-raeumt, die Kinder sammeln ihr Lesematerial fuer die Fahrt zusammen, und dann ist's soweit. Wir ziehen die Haustuer hinter uns zu, die Garage wird abgeschlossen, vier Wagentuere klap-pen und langsam setzt sich der schwere Wagen in Bewegung. Leichter Schnee verwischt lautlos und sanft die zurueckbleibende Wagenspur.

Die Scheinwerfer stechen in den dunklen Morgen und akzentuieren die fallenden Flocken als wir die 1350 Meilen lange Strecke nach Niagara-on-the-Lake in Angriff nehmen. Nachdem wir einige Meilen den "Hwy #1" nach Osten gefahren sind, drehen wir auf #12 nach Suedosten Richtung Steinbach ab, Middlebro und U.S. Grenze.

Der Schnee laesst nicht nach — im Gegenteil, es schneit jetzt dicke Flocken und ein leichter Wind traegt dazu bei, dass sie wie von Magneten angezogen zu Millionen gegen die Scheinwerfer hasten. Jeder Autofahrer in Mani-

toba kennt die beinah hypnotische Wirkung, die dadurch ausgeuebt wird. Nicht gerade sehr froh ueber die Wetterlage, stelle ich hin und wieder das Radio an, als ob die freundliche Stimme des Ansagers das Wetter aendern koennte. Jedoch kein Glueck. Im Gegenteil, ich fange an, mich ueber die Wettervorhersage zu aergern: "... leichter Schnee, der um die Mittagszeit enden wird; klar und sonnig am Nachmittag."

"Esel," denke ich, "du solltest hier auf der Landstrasse sitzen und die den 'leichten' Schnee in's Gesicht blasen lassen." Mit dem Anbruch eines grauen Tages nae-hern wir uns der U.S. Grenze mit der kindlichen Hoffnung, dass wir das schlechte Wetter in Kanada lassen werden. Leider hatte der Wetterman keine Sympathy mit uns, und der brummige Zoll-beamte, der nicht mal wissen wollte wo wir geboren waren, knurrte: "Schnee," zur Antwort auf meine Frage nach den Wetter-aussichten.

Ein wenig bedrueckt setzen wir unsere Reise fort. Das langsam zunehmende Tageslicht macht das Fahren leichter und wir bringen so etliche Meilen hinter uns. In International Falls fahren wir bei einer Tankstelle an, wechseln einen Scheibenwischer aus, fuellen Benzin auf und weiter geht's in den grauen, schnees schweren Tag. Von der Landschaft ist nicht viel zu sehen. Man ahnt mehr als das man sieht: sei es die verschwommene Silhouette einer Farm, die unklaren Umrisse von Huegeln, Bueschen und Baeumen; und immer das seltsame Gefuehl keinen Entfernungsstab zu haben. Die weissgraue Einheit von

Himmel und Erde erlaubt keinen Horizont.

Immerhin ermoeeglicht uns das truebe Tageslicht eine Geschwindigkeit von 50 m.p.h. beizubehalten aber je mehr wir uns der Stadt Duluth naehern, desto schwieriger wird das Fahren. Zu dem staendigen Schneefall und der schlechten Sicht gesellen sich die schweren Lastkraftwagen. Wenn immer uns so ein Brummer begegnet, sind wir fuer bange Sekunden von einem weissen Schneewirbel umgeben, der uns jegliche Sicht raubt. Wir halten dann den Atem an und hoffen, dass kein uebereiliges Auto gerade in dem Augenblick versucht den Laster zu ueberholen. So quaelen wir uns dahin und merken kaum, dass der truebe Tag zum Abend geworden ist.

Hundemuede erreichen wir Duluth und empfinden die Fahrt durch die erleuchtete Stadt als Erholung. Die hellerleuchteten Strassen und Fenster lassen die Illusion aufkommen, dass das Wetter gar nicht so schlimm ist, und dass wir noch einige Meilen schaffen koennen. Jedoch, sobald wir wieder auf der freien Strecke sind, allein von Dunkelheit und Schnee umgeben, wissen wir was zu tun: in Wentworth, kurz hinter Duluth fahren wir an dem einladenden Neonzeichen eines netten Motels nicht vorbei. Nach einem guten Abendbrot und einem heissen Bad sinke ich mit einem unbeschreiblichen Wohlgefuehl in's Bett, und schon halb im Schlaf tanzen mir die Schneeflocken noch immer vor den Augen.

Am naechsten Morgen geht's

gestaerkt und mit frischem Mut wieder auf die Reise. Die Wolken haengen immer noch sehr niedrig, der Tag ist grau und bei Ironwood wird das Schneetreiben so schlimm, dass wir kaum noch 20 Meter Sicht haben. Unsere anfaenglich optimistische Stimmung flaut sehr ab, aber immerhin kommen wir gut ueber die Mackinaw Bruecke auf den grossen "Highway 75", dessen geteilte Fahrbahn eine weniger anstrengehende Reise verspricht. Auch sind wir endlich aus dem Schneetreiben draussen. Statt dessen regnet es ganz leicht, und langsam huet uns die Dunkelheit zum zweiten

Wir fahren nun mit gutem Tempo Richtung Sueden und hoffen, noch an diesem Abend Flint zu erreichen. Auf einmal sehen wir rote Warnungslichter in einiger Entfernung vor uns; ich versuche die Geschwindigkeit zu verringern, doch der Wagen reagiert ueberhaupt nicht. Glatteis! Die Temperatur war gefallen, und ohne dass wir etwas gemerkt haben, hat sich die Fahrbahn in eine eisige Flaechе verwandelt. Ich lasse den "Dodge" langsam ausrollen und mit sehr verringerter Geschwindigkeit, aber mit erhoehtem Herzklopfen naehern wir uns den roten Lichtern, die einer Ambulanz und einem Polizei-Streifenwagen angehören. Dann sehen wir auch schon den zertruemmerten Kombiwagen (stationwagon) halb im Graben und ein demoliertes Kompaktauto umgekippt auf dem 'highway'. Tote? Verletzte? Wir werden's wohl nie erfahren, und das Bewusstsein einer ernstesten Gefahr entgangen zu sein macht uns alle sehr still. Mit sehr reduzierter Geschwindigkeit und einem flauen Gefuehl im Magen fahren wir bald danach in die Stadt Flint herein.

Dritter Tag: Die Temperatur ist auf -15 F. gesunken. Ein klarer, kalter Morgen. Noch ungefaehr 300 Meilen und dann haben wir's geschafft. Es wird auch Zeit — wir werden alle sattelmuede. Ich verlasse unser Motelzimmer etwas frueher, um den Wagen anzuwaermen. Halbverschlafen und froestelnd kratze ich das Eis von den Scheiben waehrend der Motor laeuft. Es dauert aber auch lange bis die

Scheiben von innen enteisen — habe ich denn die Temp. nicht eingestellt? Eingestellt schon, aber die Heizung bleibt eiskalt und eine Lache Wasser bildet sich unter dem Kuehler.ü Fuenf Stunden und eine Wasserpumpe spaeter machen wir uns endlich auf den Weg. Misstrauisch schaue ich in den blauen Himmel und auf die knochentrockene Strasse — ist es moeglich?

Es ist schon dunkel als wir bei unseren Verwandten auf die Auffahrt rollen. "Hallo" hier, "guten Abend" da, erleichtert und erfreut begruessen wir uns und schleppen das Gepaeck in's Haus. Jeder hilft emsig mit; ich reiche meinem Schwager die grosse Thermosflasche — er greift daneben. . . .

Nun, ja, die Reise musste eben zu einem passenden Ende kommen. mm

Lehra Rampel en Kondratjewka.

Von J. Neufeld

Aus eck aune 1899. en Kondratjewka aunft no School to gohne, donn weea wie daut Joa, aus Aunfaenja, fief Junges on twee Mijalles.

Lehra Dossen, eck kaun mie von am aull mau seea weinigen denke, eagentlich mau bloz, daut hee nich lang oba sovehlmeea breet weea. Ons niey Schoolfistasch kunn dee Lehra goanich soracht jifaule. Dee wiszt ji nuscht! Dee haud sovehl to froage: Wo wie heete, wems Tjinja wie weare, wovehl Joa wie aul olt weare?? Daut muszt wie am aulles eascht saje, vonselfst wiszt hee daut aulles nich. Enn doabie weea hee doch de Lehra!

Wie haude ji bat doato von onse Elre on Geschwista bloz jiheat on jileat plautdietsch to rede. On von Sanja, daut ukrainsche Tjinjamaetji, on Iwan, dem Staulknacht, 'n poa Weeda chocholsch opjischnackt. Nu wull wie oba enne School bloz richtig Hochdeutsch oda richtig Rusch rede. Na fe ons Aunfaenja heet daut doch soveht, aus wan maun hia, en Kanada sajt: "shut-up!" Ne, daut jing ons daut easchte Joa enne School goanich scheen. Oba bie dee Schoolpruefung em Fahrjoa, kaum wie aulla derch on talde dann nu toom tweeden Schooljoa.

Aus wie donl em Hoawst, aus daut Tiet weea wada no School jinge, weea Lehra Dossen nich meea doa. Lehra Rampel weea nu ons Lehra. Peta Rampel. De weea uck aul nich gaunz jing, he weea aul en eenem aundren

Darp Lehra jiwast. He weea een seea goda Lehra, on wan eck on vielleicht noch wea von ons Schlingels doamol's nich daut needje metjikreaeja habe, waut wie woll habe sulle, dann es doa jiedenfauls nich dee Lehra draun schuld. Schriewe on lese on reake ne muszt wie leare, on vehl scheene Spruecha on Gedichta muszt wie utwendig weete. Uck kunn hee ons sovehl soone scheene Geschichte vetalle. Aulle Morje deed he met ons een Leed ut dem Choralboack sinje, on bede, eea dee Unjarecht aunft. Jo opp sinje hilt hee seea. Daut sinje met ons Schooltjinja aulleen befriedigt am nich.

Hee saummeld dee Junges on Maetjes em Darp, dee aul nich no Scholl jinge uck welche jungbefriede Frues on Manna, brocht den daut Zifrensystem bie, leead an meeastemmig singe on eewd met an veschiedne Leeda en. Kondratjewka haud noch keene Tjoatj, on dee Gottesdeenste worde enne School aufjhole. Lehra Rampel siene Meeyj, om den Gesang, fung sich seea bold aun opp den Gemeindegang bie dee Sinndachmogen-aundachte uttowirke: Dee tweede on drede Stemm weea to heere, uck dee Bausz drung kraftig derch. So daut dee Gesang aul vehl scheena on nich meea so eentoenig klung.

Onse School weea fe dee vehle Tjinja aul to kien, on maun weea jidwunge eene niey, ne jratre tu buy. Na jo, School buy! Oba ne Tjoatj fehlde ji ons uck.

Eck jleew daut weea aune 1902, donn wort een racht grotet Schoolhus met ne Wohnung fe ne Lehrafamilie jibut. On wiels dee grota Schoolrum uck aus Tjoatj deene sull, weea aun dee feaschte Engewaund dweaewa ne Empore fe dee Predjasch on Feasaenja, uck dee Kaunzel enjibut.

Aus daut aulles foadig weea, mook Lehra Rampel den Veaschlag, een Fuszharmonium (Orgel) to keepe, on Hee weea bereit, dee bie dee Aundachte to spaehle.

Aus Onkel Jihaun Loewen, dee Veasaenja, daut heead, saed hee: "Wan jie welle enne Tjoatj no Zole sinji (das Ziffrensystem), on oppi Harmeni spaehle (die Orgel), dann sie eck nich meea Veasaenja", on jing no Hus.

Oba siene Junges (eck jleew hee haud veea oda fief Sehns) dee haude sich von Aunftang aun, seea aktiv on begeistert, aun Lehra Rampel seinem Gesangunjarecht bedeelegt, on maunchalei jileeat. On so kunne dee nu den Voda, aus Veasaenja, goot vetrede, on deede daut uck seea jeern.

Dee Orgel word gekoft, Lehra Rampel deed spaele, Loewens Peta deed veasinge, Loewens Diedrich dirigead den Choa, on Onkel Jihaun Loewen weea, aus puenkelja Tjotjigaenja, een stella, ruhja Tohorcha. Oba Veasaenja weea hee nich meea. mm

Memories of Footloose Days in Europe

By Charlotte Enns

Some of my warmest memories are connected with a three week trip to Germany in the company of 21 Westgate students and two teachers. Thanks to the efforts and support of the community and those of the Messers Bachmeyer and Barmer, our trip became a reality.

Once overseas, we roamed the streets of London before catching a train for the port of Harwich. After a night aboard ship another train took us to Amsterdam. While the drivers picked up our vans we snacked on raw herring! To be brief, we ended up in Neustadt in Germany's southwest, thirsty and exhausted, quite ready for five days of hospitality in homes of the Mennonitische Brudergemeinde.

Seven of us were guests of the Familie Lichti. Lichti's 1,200 year old farm has been owned by Mennonites since 1838 when Kurfuerst, Johann Wilhelm, granted Mennonites there, freedom and religious acceptance. During the day we took trips to Heidelberg, the Black Forest and Bienenburg Bible School in Switzerland. At Bienenburg we studied some aspects of early anabaptist struggles. After a Sunday with Mr. Bachmeyer's home congregation we moved up the Rhine to Neu-



wied. Here too we were billeted with Mennonite families and were welcomed by the youth group. During our three day stay we spent evenings and mornings with the families, desperately trying to sound as if the language was no obstacle. Desperate it must have sounded at times—but we learned.

We continued down the Rhine, stopping in Koeln just long enough to get a look at the Cathedral, and then entered the industrial heartland of Germany, the Ruhr valley. Interestingly enough, even here, a quiet park is never far from a busy mall or crowded sports stadium. We didn't pass without notice however, for it was here that our group made the newspaper, the *Westdeutsche Allgemeine*.

The following days were wonderfully relaxing, for they were spent at Edersee with nothing more to do than swim, sun and row. Some people managed however, to disturb the peace when they tried to jog before the youth hostel doors opened. Try telling a German youth warden that!

We also were guests of the town fathers of mediaeval Bad Salzungen, where the elder Barmer's live. A two-day stay in a hostel, visits to concerts, mineral baths and parks, were all arranged! The press again recorded our stay while the city fathers

set up a special session in council.

Enroute again, this time to Espelkamp, we stopped to enjoy the lower reaches of a sanctuary for eagles. Espelkamp is a Mennonite community south of Odenburg, which was literally built on the ruins of a Nazi ammunition factory, well-hidden in the forest. A slideshow presented to us after a combined service at which we sang our usual, *Joy is Like the Rain*, etc., showed the transformation of this community to its present state. The transformation was wrought through the industry of Russian Mennonites under the leadership of Rev. Herschler. Evenings as usual were spent at chatting and by now even our slow learners (at German) were participating.

Up to north Holland now, we went, to visit the first Mennonite church and the Menno Simons memorial in Witmarsum. In some hysterious way it seemed possible for us to relate to this place.

To sum up, each of us could relate different experiences, but some things were shared by everyone. On discussion we discovered that we identified more closely with the Russian Mennonites than with the Mennonites who had always lived in Germany. Besides the value of seeing the Mennonite way of life in several different settings, we learned things about a culture other than ours. It wasn't long before we realized that there were certain things one didn't accept in the German culture. For instance, you never stand a German housewife up for dinner. It all started when one of the vans was delayed and consequently took a wrong turn off the Autobahn. Time passed, and long after nightfall only, did those in the van reach their respective places. Those who arrived on time weren't that lucky either, for it was they who experienced the tension-fraught moments of the situation. It was they too who mollified the housewife by eating heartily enough to make up for absent appetites.

During the course of the trip we visited a winery in Alzey, a small town along the Rhein. We became familiar with the fine art of wine-tasting but realized too late that you needn't finish all sixteen glasses. The rides at the town fair were a lot more fun though!

The value of our experiences go beyond the concept of what we gained in exposure to different cultures. Our group fellowship was rewarding. Feelings of course at times ran high, but generally speaking we became a unified and happy group. We traveled not only into our past but discovered also resources within ourselves. mm

Charlotte Enns is a grade 12 student at Westgate Collegiate.

do you know / weetst uck waut

A.A. Kroeker and Sons of Winkler planted eight acres of artichokes at the Kroeker farm in cooperation with the Agriculture Canada research station in nearby Morden. While most of the acreage was devoted to various tests to determine how to best grow the crop under Manitoba conditions, there were still several rows available for testing the consumer market. Jerusalem Artichokes are being tried in Manitoba primarily for marketing to the food processing industry, where its super-sweet fructose syrup is in good demand. In seeming contradiction, the raw product is exceptionally sugar-free since fructose is not released in normal digestion.

William Martens, Winnipeg businessman and his sons Cornelius, Peter, William and Armin have bequeathed the sum of \$50,000 to the MB Biblical Seminary, Fresno, California in memory of their father and grandfather Cornelius J. Martens. The latter died in 1974 at the age of 98 after a lifetime spent in preaching the Gospel in Russia, Canada, the U.S.A. and different parts of Europe. The interest from

this endowment is to provide scholarships for Canadian students at the seminary.

Rev. Martin Durksen of the radio program *Familien Andacht* and his wife Kaethe left January 2 on a two month lecture tour of Europe, as part of a six-month sabbatical from his work.

Willard and Betty Thiessen and their staff at *It's a New Day* on CKND TV held an open house on January 21 and 22 in order to welcome and acquaint the public with their work.

Rev. Henry Voth, pastor of the Portage Avenue MB church, on leave of absence, left with his wife Erica on January 1 to study for a term at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California in the continuing education program.

Dr. Frank Epp, president of Conrad Grebel College Waterloo, Ontario, has announced his intention to seek the Liberal nomination in the new federal riding of Waterloo in the next election. Epp decided to become actively involved in politics last spring because of the two issues—national unity and the economy. Until June 1977 he was a member of the NDP but chose the Liberal Party because he felt that party was best equipped to deal with these particular issues.

Allan Wiebe, social studies consultant for the department of co-operative development, was recently appointed director, representing Manitoba, in the Canadian Association for Social Studies, Toronto. One responsibility will be to organize the national conference in Winnipeg in 1980.

Beginning with the Fall Semester 1978 **Winkler Bible Institute** will be operating with a three-year, instead of its present two-year, program. This will enable the student to complete his basic Bible education in one school without the necessity of transferring to another institution. H.R. Baerg, president of WBI is to be the featured speaker at the 60th anniversary conference of the India MB church on March 16-19, 1978. This will be Baerg's fourth visit to India.

Winnipeg Bible College, Otterburne, held its second bi-annual Conference on January 7. Theme: "The Christian in Public Education." Guest speaker was Prof. Angus Gunn, of UBC. Workshop and banquet speaker was Dr. Leroy Ford, Texas.

MBBC students presented William Gibson's *Miracle Worker* on January 11, 12 and 13. The music department of MBBC invites singers to participate

in the Monday evening rehearsals for a March 17 performance of Handel's *Israel in Egypt*.

Paul Lederach, author of half a dozen books on Christian living and Church education, and executive director of the Foundation Series was the featured lecturer on January 20-28 at MBBC. His theme was: Christian Education in a Believer's Church. Speakers at the Institute for Ministers and Laymen March 6-10 will be Dr. Paul Miller, professor of counselling and practical theology at associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, Dr. John Regehr and Dr. James Pankratz, both MBBC staff members.

MCC (Canada) native concerns director **Menno Wiebe** announces that they are building up a model library of selected materials as a resource to churches, schools and individuals who want to read good native literature. They must be either by native people themselves, or by people who show understanding for native cultures. Most books are donations from publishers. Well known Canadian author, Rudy Wiebe adds his latest novel *Scorched Earth People*, a story about 19th century Metis leader Louis Riel, to the native concerns library.

Harold Koslowsky, Winnipeg, begins a new term of service with MCC as assistant secretary of personnel serv-

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ices. He was recently involved in a 30-month assignment as director of a Youth Centre and head master of a refugee school in Swaziland. Koslowsky is a graduate of MBBC and U of W. He and his wife Martha and their two children will be living in Akron, Pa.

The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada held its annual meeting in Winnipeg last December. Official representatives of Mennonite societies from four provinces were present and observers from a fifth province were in attendance. Chairman Ted Regehr led discussions which focussed on reports from provincial historical societies. In Manitoba a newly organized cultural committee received a grant which will be used for a small construction job of a general nature at the Mennonite Museum and the cataloging of Mennonite photo collections in the province.

Frank H. Epp informed the group in a progress report that Vol II of *Mennonites in Canada* is well underway. Further, Lyle Friesen, a masters degree graduate from the University of Waterloo was appointed full-time research assistant. It was also noted that the *Mennonite Historian* might become a vehicle for Society news and a purchase of a page for its December issue was authorized. A proposal that

the Society cooperate with MCC (Canada) in production of a brochure about Mennonites in Canada was made.

Christian Public School Teachers who met at the second bi-annual conference for the **Christian in Public Education** at the Winnipeg Bible College in Otterburne found the meeting successful and chalked up a record attendance of some 200 people from the prairie provinces, Ontario and some northern states. Keynote speakers for the conference were Dr. Angus Gunn, professor of education at UBC and Dr. Leroy Ford, professor of programmed education, Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in the early part of 1980.

Dr. Waldemar Janzen is to be ordained at First Mennonite Church on March 12. Officiating at the ordination service at 2:30 p.m. will be Rev. John Neufeld. Dr. Henry Poettcker will be speaking.

A small group, students and faculty advisor Phil Bender, from **Elim Bible Institute** left for Koinonia, Georgia to pitch into an off-campus study-work session. Offered back home is a native ministries course co-ordinated by Victor Kliever, which gives an introduction to the history of the Canadian Indians, Metis and Inuit (Eskimos) as well as their conflicts with white urban society. The responsibility and responses of the Christian church are examined in particular. Resource people include Menno Wiebe of MCC Canada, Malcolm and Esther Wenger and Native Ministries of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Cornie Loewen, Steinbach, president of Loewen Millwork, a business with branches in Kitchener, Edmonton and Saskatoon has been appointed to the board of directors of the Manitoba Development Corporation. Loewen, who also serves on the board of Golden West Broadcasting and the Lumberman's Insurance Company, takes the place of Murdoch Mackay who resigned. Other board members are S.J. Parsons as chairman, Maurice J. Arpin, Norman L. Coghlan, Harry Fenster, Charles C. Hunt, Peter Lazarenko, W. Steward Martin, Roy D. Minish, Andrew O. Schwartz, Allan Shnier and Morris Taillieu.

Justina Baerg of the Global Gift Shop, MCC (Manitoba) on 1483 Pembina Hwy. said the shop will now be open for business six days a week, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturdays. Excellent quality merchandise is available from countries like India, Haiti, Jordan, Bangladesch, Israel, Phillipines, Columbia, Taiwan as well as the Canadian native crafts including mocassins, mittens, and wild

rice. The point behind this particular area of MCC service is to help the underprivileged to help themselves. We can help them by buying their hand crafted articles.

Dr. Jack Thiessen's Low-German Dictionary, at \$19.95, is now available from the author, c/o German Dept., University of Winnipeg.

Louise Pauls, daughter of John and Mary Pauls, 247 Cordova St., was one of two winners of the Junior Music Club of Winnipeg Concerto Workshop, held Jan. 21 in Eaton's Assembly Hall. Louise, a University of Brandon student violinist, played the Khatchaturian Violin Concerto.

DATES

Feb. 24-25: Manitoba Conference of Mennonites sessions at Sargent Mennonite.

Mar. 17: Mennonite Oratorio Choir, Handel's "Israel in Egypt" Concert Hall.

Apr. 8: Evening Musical Concert at Winkler Bergthaler church with 160 participants from Rosthern Junior College, Swift Current Bible Inst., Westgate, M.C.I. and Elim.

May 28: Mennonite Art Festival, Polo Park.

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REPRINT PLANNED

Dear Sir:

I am writing to express my appreciation for your editorial in the January issue of the *Mirror*, Roy. Your treatment of the church's response to divorce was timely and helpful. Thanks for your discerning and thoughtful juxtaposing of love and sentimentality.

I am planning to reprint the article in our congregational newsletter, *The Grapevine*.

Sincerely,

Larry Kehler, pastor

Charleswood Mennonite Church

ETHICAL DILEMMA UNSOLVED

Dear Sir:

Your "word" about "The Response of the Church to Divorce" (January, 1978, page 26), is a necessary corrective reminder for all concerned.

It does, however, not solve the ethical and psychological dilemmas, that Christian people experience in such situations.

Once you admit, as you do in your second last paragraph, that divorce is sometimes appropriate (even among Christians); then you put a fantastic responsibility into the hands of those people involved. It is usually precisely when troubles seem strongest, that the individuals involved become almost powerless. They feel caught, worn out and trapped. Often, they would do anything the Church might suggest, if we could only help them to do it. That is the psychological dilemma. At that point, we as congregations need to learn much more about being a spiritual family.

But, there is also the ethical dilemma. If you open the door on some "Christian" divorces, then where do you draw a line? Your suggestion of "responsible love" can be a great help. However, in the Mennonite tradition, we have often been caught suggesting an "absolute" position about war (i.e. that it is never right for human beings to kill other human beings); but we leave a "crack in the door" when it comes to divorce, remarriage, abortion etc.

How do we expect persons, caught in the "boiler" (it is not always an angry process) of marriage breakdown, to be capable of carefully weighing the pros and cons of God's will? Somehow, that's often not possible. Maybe, again,

the congregation as God intends us to function, could help in this process.

I sense that your comments are moving in the right direction. How about pushing the whole ethical decision-making process even farther? God knows, we desperately need help on this in our congregations.

What else needs to be said? For openers, I believe that we must deal seriously with God's Word, "What God has joined together, let no person put asunder". Somehow, divorce has to do with sin. Where the greater sin lies, now in the divorce or years ago in a lack of serious marriage preparation or even farther ago in our parental and congregational failure to demonstrate the beautiful and spiritual and problematic dimensions of familial relationships; that is an issue we must also face squarely.

Thank-you for starting the discussion.

Bernie Wiebe

Winnipeg

THE VILLAGE IDIOT

Ivan was stooped and thin, his left arm dangled loosely down and his fingers and hand looked dried up and useless. With his stiff and crippled right hand he could do things in a fashion. He would splash his face with water now and then which passed for washing it, his face was red and sparsely covered with stubble at all times, as if someone had shaved him with a dull razor sometime ago, or maybe he himself was pulling at his beard and had haply pulled it out here and there. The remaining hair he would chop with the scissors. Anyway, the old-fashioned straight razor was much too dangerous a tool in the hand of Ivan the village fool.

He could be seen stumbling along the street at any time of day or night, and Marija feared and avoided him, although he did no one any harm. His knees were wobbly too (he was probably suffering from Multiple Sclerosis, but no one had even heard that word, not to mention knew of anyone who could possibly help), but that did not seem to keep Ivan at home at all. He was seen running around at every occasion that came along, stopping only long enough to speak to whoever was at hand. No one could possibly understand what he was saying and no one cared, but all exchanged friendly greetings with him, for that was all he had in this world. He smiled in a wide-mouthed grin, nodding and muttering to himself as he walked on. He was a sight to see, alright, but no one cared. **By Mary Francis**

APPRECIATED PAPER

Dear Sir:

Your M.M. is appreciated here and by the people I send it to in north Saskatchewan.

J. Reimer,

Winnipeg

DIVORCE ARTICLE FINDS FAVOR

Dear Sir:

I find your paper quite frustrating. Just about the time I decide to drop the *Mennonite Mirror* you come along with a timely and courageous editorial like the January "Response of the Church to Divorce". Now I have no choice but to keep on getting your paper. For any paper which even one out of three issues jogs one along like that is worth keeping.

Your editorial caused me to reflect a good deal and for this I am grateful. Your main point is timely and valid. We must care enough for each other to be honest. We cannot allow a myriad

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of excuses and rationalisations to minimize the importance of covenant-keeping. And we must learn to relate to each other in such a way that we not only listen to what is said but also to what is done.

One question occurred to me: Is it really fair to say that "Modern psychology regards most people as victims of their fate."? Some psychologists surely do, but I would argue that many people get out of their marriages in part because they have been freed from the "fate" of a bad marriage (as they see it) and often psychologists have been major factors in this "liberation". So you yourself seem to assume throughout your editorial.

A more serious question, however, regarding your friend who wants you to kick him where it hurts. For you went on, "That is the kind of friend the church ought often to be to those who feel they cannot be faithful to their partner. . . ." For one thing, how can I ever know what my friend is doing which might "jeopardise his marriage"? Whether I play too much golf or too little, take too many speaking assignments, or too few, all of these matters surely cannot be judged from the outside. Above all what I do or refuse to do in the kitchen or my bedroom are not matters which I care to discuss. And yet I know that the solidity of my marriage is forged there as well. Surely there are better ways than "kicking" to get people to change. Let us advocate honesty and compassion. Caring enough to confront and to rebuke in the spirit of Jesus is surely better than urging us as church members to keep our kicking muscles in shape. Sentimentality and love are not to be confused. But we too often have neither. Like the couple in *Fiddler on the Roof* we do have couples who in twenty-five years have never bothered to answer the question: "Do you love me?" What is clear is that many marriages cannot survive today without love. In the past they did. The question is whether the church can deepen its own understanding of love enough so that people find in it a community which helps them to live with integrity. I believe it can and find affirmation of that in your editorial as well.

Sincerely yours,
William Klassen,
Winnipeg

REVIVAL AS COVERUP

Dear Sir:

It is with concern that I have read the different reports on the Holdeman church. I do not subscribe to your paper, but I got them through friends.

Kindly let me make a few comments on the same, not that I'm so well acquainted with it all, but all Bible students know how, in general, we depraved humans react to the different situations.

Human nature is such that it does not want to admit guilt, we notice this right in the beginning with Adam and Eve; always pointing to someone else. Much has been written on this subject. Recently the former president Nixon tried to create an "energy crisis", and succeeded to the extent that people actually waited for hours at service stations for gas; all the while storage tanks were filled to the brim. So it was no gas shortage, it was Nixon covering his guilt, or trying to.

In the Holdeman church today there is no revival, there is no reform, neither did they receive any new light. It is the leadership, making a desperate effort to cover their mistakes, employing the help of both God and Satan to erase their sins, which they themselves very well know about, but refuse to admit and confess, and will rather

destroy the laity than repent of their sins.

In Matthew chapter 23 we find how Jesus dealt with the leaders in His day, this would seem to be a case of history repeating itself.

But God will keep His people, He does not need our counsel, He does not need anyone of us, but He takes a great interest in us; but we sure need Him.

To those who want to stay with God, who are perhaps outside the church, but "in" with God; to you I want to say, do as they did in the days of Malachi, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another", Malachi 3:16. Keep yourselves in the love of God, Keep a close fellowship one with another, and keep your souls in calmness and in patience. Be sure to be a true witness for the truth, for the truth shall make us free and the truth has never yet been overthrown. And the Almighty God will keep you, and bless you in this life already, and in the end grant you life eternal.

Sincerely,

F. Wiebe

Toronto

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THE R.C.M.P. — DOES IT MATTER HOW THEY GET THEIR MAN?

"I wish the press would leave the RCMP alone. Why is everyone sniping at our world-renowned police force? After all, the RCMP is the law, and we should respect the law."

That is part of a conversation heard in a Mennonite home recently. That same day, in a terse front-page article the Winnipeg Free Press reported the following: "The RCMP security service in Montreal issued a fake terrorist communique in 1971 urging violence, rejecting the Parti Quebecois as a vehicle for Quebec independence and denouncing Pierre Vallieres as a 'revolutionary who failed.'"

We Mennonites have learned to respect law and order, and for good reason. Nothing quite so terrible has happened to our people as the Russian terror which, in the absence of law and order, saw thousands of innocent persons slaughtered at the hands of anarchist bandits. The recent translation of *The Russian Dance of Death* by Al Reimer should be read by our younger generation to remind them of this fact.

But we have suffered not only in the absence of law, or in the absence of an

organized police force. Many more thousands were killed in Russia at the hands of official secret police officers in the 1930's, at a time when the state was fully in control. Also, our Mennonite people living in Germany experienced the protection of a state which used its police force to exterminate hundreds of thousands of Jews whose only crime was their race.

We should know from our history that people can suffer both when the law is absent and when it is present.

Police forces are not the law, and they are certainly not above the law. Those human beings who become police officers are just as prone to abuse their position of power as anyone else in our society. Therefore, society can never afford to put such forces above public scrutiny. The RCMP deserves as much respect as any other institution in our society—but no more. We have good reason to be proud of the tradition of the RCMP. It may, in fact, be one of the finest police forces in the world. But it is not the law and it is not above the law. When it abuses its power, as it has done several times in the past decade, it should be no more

free from censure than any other body. Indeed, as a prime enforcer of law we should expect it to observe that law much more rigorously than the average citizen.

Our laws have given our police forces many more rights than are possessed by citizens at large. Under clearly defined conditions RCMP personnel are allowed to speed, to trespass on other people's property, and to do many other things that we are not permitted to do. No one quarrels with such unusual rights. However, those rights are to be exercised within limits defined in law, and when the RCMP oversteps those legal limits it should be no more immune from criticism and even prosecution than any citizen of this country who breaks the law. The RCMP has no licence to lie, to use brutal tactics, or to harass people needlessly. Let us show proper respect for the law and for the RCMP. But it is precisely our respect for the law which should make us angry when that law is flaunted by the RCMP. A police force that begins to act outside the law is ultimately one of the gravest threats to law and order in any society. R.V.

THE MENNONITES AND QUEBEC:

It is astounding what one hears in the Mennonite community these days about the people of Quebec. "Let them go, they are just trouble makers anyway," "and I'm tired of having French rammed down our throats. They won't be satisfied until they have us all speaking French and the capital of the country has been moved to Quebec City."

Those are a few of the milder things that we have heard. The subject of French Canada seems to bring out a hostility in our people which is disturbing. Prejudice is usually based on at least a partial truth, without which it might die very quickly. There is something frantic, arrogant and impatient, about the French-Canadian confrontation with the rest of Canada. Tourists who come back from Quebec report with amazing frequency that their failure to speak French was greeted with extreme intolerance. The federal government program to teach French to civil servants has been an expensive and often wasteful exercise. French-Canadian members of the federal cabinet are clearly hostile to a multicultural policy which would see other minority groups receiving more aid and recognition from the government. All of this, and more, is true. But if they have their

faults, so do we. We are sure that when God looks down in tolerance upon our struggling Canadian nation He has no reason to reserve a special place in heaven for Canadians west of Quebec, and a special place in you-know-where for Quebecers. We are, all of us, very mortal people with petty needs and prejudices, too impatient and intolerant of others.

We see little or no evidence that anyone is trying to ram the French language down our throat. On the other hand, we should welcome increased opportunities to learn and use the French language. What kind of a petty and fearful mind is it that is threatened by bi-lingual labels? The Mennonites have suffered together with the French-Canadians from those in our society who would like to create a homogeneous, unilingual culture.

What pettiness and insecurity lurks behind our prejudice and animosity? Behind the divine curtain Someone is laughing. He may be laughing at us!

RV

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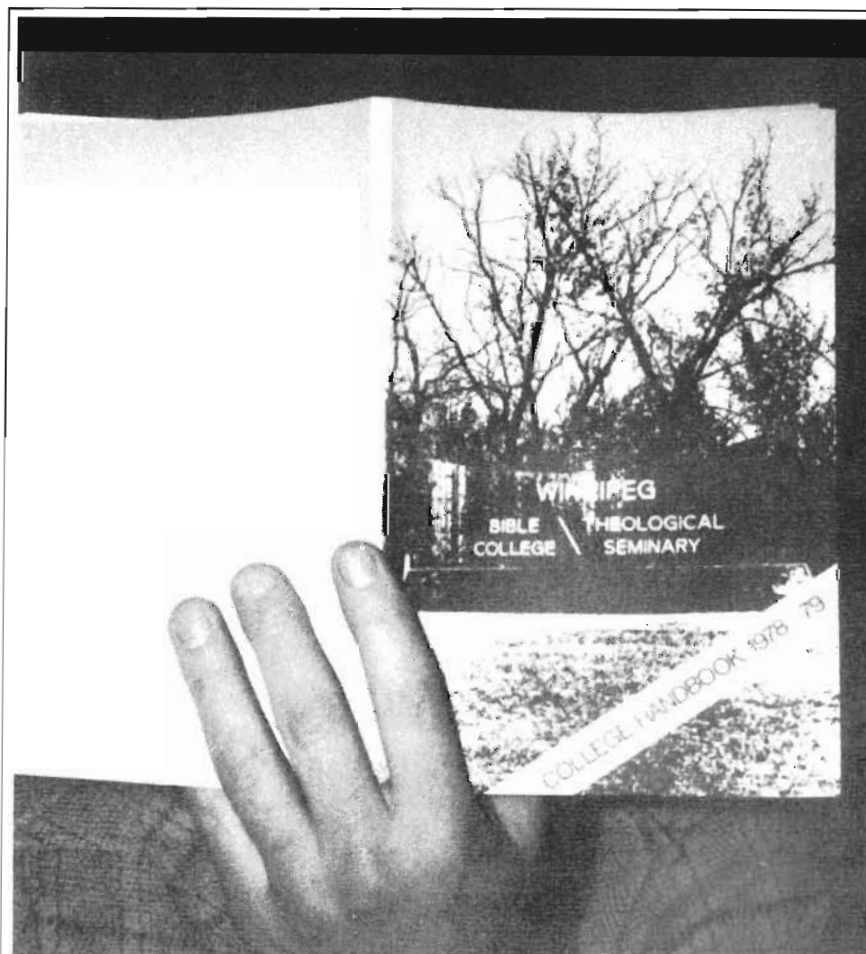
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