

The Voice

of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College

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*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be
ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. — 2 Tim. 2:15.*

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Ein dankbarer Rückblick

Im Rückblick auf die vielen irdischen und geistlichen Segnungen des verflossenen Schuljahres möchten wir mit dem Psalmisten bekennen: „Nicht uns, Herr, nicht uns, sondern deinem Namen gib Ehre um deine Gnade und Wahrheit“ (Psalm 115:1). Wie im Fluge ist auch dieses 14. Arbeitsjahr des Bibel College dahingeeilt. Vielleicht kommt es uns so kurz vor weil es so schön war. Nach dem Zeugnis von Lehrern, und auch der Studenten, die schon einige Jahre im College studiert haben, war es ein besonderes Segensjahr. Der Herr schenkte Lehrern und Studenten Gesundheit und Kraft zur schweren Arbeit. In der großen Collegefamilie hatten wir nicht einen ersten Krankheitsfall zu verzeichnen. In der gemeinsamen Arbeit merkten wir einen Geist der Liebe und Eintracht. Dem Herrn die Ehre!

Am 1. Juni hatten wir einen gesegneten Abschluß des Jahres mit der Graduationsfeier. Zweiundzwanzig Studenten erhielten ihre Zeugnisse nach erfolgreicher Beendigung der verschiedenen Kurse. (Siehe Einzelheiten auf Umschlagseite 3.) Die austretende Klasse dieses Jahres trug einen besonderen Charakter weil 5 der Absolventen einmal aus dem Auslande zu uns gekommen sind, und alle auch in Zukunft mit einem Dienst für den Herrn im Auslande rech-

nen. Br. Takashi Niwa gedenkt im kommenden August zurück nach Japan zu fahren, Br. Max Woerlen möchte in Europa dem Herrn dienen, und die Brüder Erich und Gerhard Giesbrecht sowie auch Geschwister Peter Friesen planen nach einem weiteren Studium zurück nach Paraguay zu gehen. Von den andern Absolventen gehen manche zurück in den Lehrdienst, einige direkt in die innere Missionsarbeit, und noch wieder andere möchten sich weiter vorbereiten. Manche Verwandten und Freunde waren für diese Feier aus der Ferne gekommen. Die Süd-End M. B. Kirche konnte die zahlreichen Besucher von den Lokalgemeinden kaum alle fassen. Durch Lied und Zeugnis, und in besonderer Weise durch die Festansprache von Pred. David Pankratz, Coaldale, Alberta, wurden wir auf's neue daran erinnert, daß die genossenen Vorrechte große Verantwortung auf uns legen.

Nun geht's in die Sommerferien. Für Lehrer, sowohl als auch Studenten, bedeutet dieses eigentlich nicht Ruhe, sondern nur eine Veränderung in der Arbeit. Der Herr segne das Zeugnis der Mitglieder der Collegefamilie in der „Zerstreuung“ während der Sommermonate und gebe uns eine „offene Tür“ für Weiterarbeit im kommenden Herbst.

J. A. Toews.

DENOMINATIONAL

Das Prinzip der Bruderschaft und theologische Ausbildung.

Das Prinzip der Bruderschaft gehört zum Wesen der neutestamentlichen Gemeinde. Unter den Gotteskindern, die zum Leibe Jesu Christi gehören, gibt es keine Klassenunterschiede oder Rangordnungen. Verschiedenheit in Begabung und Berufung bestimmen wohl die Art des Dienstes, aber nicht den Rang des einzelnen Gliedes. Leider verlor die Gemeinde in der nach-apostolischen Zeit dieses bedeutungsvolle Prinzip der Bruderschaft. In der Bischofskirche des vierten Jahrhunderts haben wir schon eine unbiblische Teilung in „Klerus“ und „Laien“. In der Hierarchie des Papsttums ist die Trennung der Gemeinde absolut in „ecclesia docens“ und „ecclesia audiens“, wo die Laien im Klerus die „Kirche“ sehen, zu der sie nur eine indirekte Beziehung haben.

Zu den großen Heilswahrheiten, welche von den Anabaptisten des 16. Jahrhunderts auf Grund ihrer neutestamentlichen Orientierung wieder auf den Leuchter gestellt wurden, gehört auch das Prinzip der Bruderschaft. Sie brachten es in praktischer Weise zum Ausdruck einmal in ihrer Gemeindeverfassung, dann aber auch in ihrem sozialökonomischen Gemeinschaftsleben. Im Laufe der Zeit entwickelte sich jedoch auch innerhalb der Mennonitischen Gemeinden gewisse Tendenzen, die das Prinzip der Bruderschaft gefährdeten. In einigen Ländern, wie zum Beispiel in Holland, war diese Entwicklung enge verbunden mit der Art und Weise der theologischen Ausbildung; in Preußen und Rußland jedoch war es die Machtstellung der Ältesten, die zum Verlust des Prinzips beitrug. Um die Mitte des vorigen Jahrhunderts war in den Mennonitengemeinden Süd-Rußlands wenig zu merken vom Prinzip der Bruderschaft. In diesem Umstand liegt eine der tieferen Ursachen der Entstehung einer neuen Gemeinde im Jahre 1860. Es war das ernste Streben der Gründer der Menno-

niten-Brüdergemeinde, das biblische Prinzip der Bruderschaft voll und ganz zum Ausdruck zu bringen. Leider war die Betonung dieser Wahrheit zuweilen zu stark, und wurde auf Kosten des Prinzips der göttlich-verordneten Autorität des Lehrdienstes gemacht.

Das Prinzip der Bruderschaft kann geschwächt und gefährdet werden von verschiedenen Seiten und aus verschiedenen Gründen. Die Geschichte der christlichen Kirche zeigt, daß man diese Wahrheit verdunkeln und sogar verlieren kann durch die Art und Weise einer höheren theologischen Bildung. Daß wir Brüder und auch Schwestern mit einer gründlichen biblischen Ausbildung, brauchen für den Lehrdienst und Missionsdienst in unsern Tagen, ist uns allen klar. Wenn wir das Prinzip der Bruderschaft jedoch wahren wollen, dann muß der Charakter der theologischen Bildung vom neutestamentlichen Gemeindebegriff aus bestimmt werden. Wir verdanken unsere Eigenart und die gesunde Entwicklung unsers Gemeindelebens zum großen Teil der Eigenart in unserer religiösen Erziehung. Es besteht heute jedoch die Gefahr, daß wir diese Selbständigkeit in der „Philosophie“ unserer theologischen Ausbildung verlieren und ein „System“ annehmen, wie es in andern Denominationen zu finden ist, die nach unserer Erkenntnis nicht einen biblischen Gemeindebegriff haben. Ich möchte auf einige Prinzipien hinweisen, die wir in unserer theologischen Ausbildung beachten sollten für einen gesunden Aufbau der Gemeinde und der Bruderschaft.

1. Theologische Ausbildung sollte in erster Linie für einen allgemeinen Dienst vorbereiten. Das Studium des Wortes Gottes gibt nicht nur eine Vorbereitung für den Predigt- und Lehrdienst, sondern ist „nütze zur Lehre, zur Strafe, zur Besserung, zur Züchtigung in der Gerechtigkeit, daß ein Mensch Gottes sei vollkom-

men, zu allem guten Werk bereit" (2. Tim. 3, 16.17). Es gibt heute zu viel theologische Ausbildung, die nur zu einem guten Werk bereit macht. Der Herr ruft seine Knechte immer erst zu allgemeinen Diensten, ehe Er sie zu einer speziellen Arbeit beruft. Der allgemeine Dienst bildet die Grundlage für den speziellen Dienst. Sogar ein Apostel Paulus diente etwa 9 Jahre nach seiner Bekehrung in Damaskus, Jerusalem, Tarsus, und in Antiochien ehe der Herr ihn und Barnabas für die besondere „Weltmission" berief (Apostelg. 13,1-3). In der apostolischen Gemeinde waren es nicht nur die Apostel, die den Missionsdienst und Evangelisationsdienst ausführten. Durch den Lehrdienst der Apostel waren auch die einzelnen Glieder der Gemeinde vorbereitet worden für einen fruchtbaren Zeugendienst und als die große Verfolgung einsetzte nach dem Tode des Stephanus, da lesen wir von diesen Gläubigen: „Die nun zerstreut waren gingen um und predigten das Wort" (Apostelg. 8,4). Die Verkündigung der Heilsbotschaft in der Urgemeinde war nicht absolut gebunden an einem besonderen Predigerstand (Vergl. auch Apostelg. 2,19-21). Eine Überbetonung der Spezialisierung in der theologischen Ausbildung hat für manche Gemeinschaft schon tragische Folgen gehabt. Die gewöhnlichen Gemeindeglieder werden mehr und mehr passiv und überlassen die Arbeit im Reiche Gottes dem „Spezialisten". Unter solchen Umständen ist es schier unmöglich, das Prinzip der Bruderschaft festzuhalten. Jeder Kenner der Erweckungsbewegungen und der Missionsgeschichte wird zugeben müssen, daß Gott oft an den „Theologen" vorbeigegangen ist in der Wahl seiner Werkzeuge für die Neubelebung seines Werkes.

2. Theologische Ausbildung sollte für verschiedene Dienste vorbereiten. Das Neue Testament stellt uns die Gemeinde dar als den „Leib" Christi. Dieses Bild des Organismus zeigt uns zwei Grundsätze für das Wesen der Gemeinde: einmal die enge organische Verbundenheit der Glieder miteinander, dann aber auch die große Mannigfaltigkeit und Verschiedenheit in der Funktion der Glieder. In Epheser 4,11 weist der Apostel Paulus hin auf diese verschiedenen Dienste

und Diener, die der Herr eingesetzt hat für die Gemeinde: „... dieser ist es auch, der die einen zu Aposteln bestellt hat, andere zu Propheten, andere zu Evangelisten, noch andere zu Hirten und Lehrern, um die Heiligen tüchtig zu machen für die Ausübung des Gemeindegliederdienstes." (Nach Menge) In der Aufzählung der Geistesgaben in 1. Kor. 12 werden noch verschiedene andere Dienste genannt. Alle diese Dienste sind notwendig zum Aufbau der Gemeinde. Für alle diese Dienste bedarf es einer biblischen Ausrüstung und Vorbereitung. Die Ausbildung eines Gliedes nur, sei es der Prediger oder der Pastor, wird zur Verarmung und Verkümmern des Gemeindelebens führen, sowie auch zum Versagen in der Mission der Gemeinde. Ein Glied allein kann nicht den Dienst all der andern Glieder verrichten, und wenn es noch so gut trainiert worden ist. In den Seminaren mancher Kirchengemeinschaften hat man die theologische Ausbildung beschränkt auf die Ausbildung von Predigern und Pastoren. In Nordamerika ließ der Herr die Bibel-institute und Bibel-Colleges entstehen als Reaktion auf diese einseitige Betonung in der theologischen Ausbildung. In letzteren wurde der Dienst für den Herrn in einen breiteren Rahmen gestellt und die Verantwortung für die Rettung der Verlorenen und die Pflege der Bekehrten allen Dienern der Gemeinde aufs Herz gebunden. Für die Wahrung des Prinzips der Bruderschaft und für eine gesunde biblische Entwicklung unserer Gemeinden ist es von größter Bedeutung, daß wir in unserer theologischen Ausbildung für die verschiedenen Zweige des Dienstes eine rechte Vorbereitung geben.

3. Theologische Ausbildung sollte nie die einzige Vorbedingung für speziellen Dienst im Reiche Gottes sein. Ein aufmerksames Studium der Pastoralbriefe zeigt, daß die Forderungen, die an den „Bischof" sowie auch an den „Diener" gestellt werden, fast ausschließlich geistlichen und ethischen Charakters sind. Beredsamkeit, Methodik und Pädagogik werden kaum erwähnt. Ein Kursus in Theologie macht noch keinen Theologen, ein Kursus in Homiletik noch keinen Prediger und ein Kursus in Missionsgeschichte (und wenn er auch noch so um-

fangreich wäre) noch keinen Missionaren. So wertvoll wie diese Ausbildung auf den verschiedenen Gebieten auch ist, sie qualifiziert an und für sich nicht für den Dienst im Reiche Gottes. Sobald, wie man die theologische Ausbildung als einzige Vorbedingung für den Dienst in der Gemeinde annimmt, sinkt der Dienst hinab auf das Niveau einer Profession und verliert seinen tief-geistlichen Charakter. Wir kennen höhere theologische Schulen, wo die Graduation die Tür zur Ordination ist — und zwar für alle Absolventen des Kursus! Geistliche Erfahrung und geistliche Gesinnung kommen nicht in Betracht. Sowie der Lehrer nach Beendigung seines Studiums eine Schule bekommt, so erhält der Absolvent der Theologie eine Gemeinde. Die Berufung für den Dienst durch die Gemeinde fällt dann meistens weg. Es bedarf wohl keiner besonderen Beweisführung um zu zeigen, daß solch eine Praxis das Prinzip der Bruderschaft zerstört. Theologische Ausbildung allein qualifiziert nicht für einen erfolgreichen und fruchtbaren Dienst, so notwendig, ja unentbehrlich dieselbe heute auch ist. Deshalb dürfen

theologische Schulen auch keinen Druck auf die Gemeinden ausüben, daß die Absolventen doch alle eine Anstellung erhalten. Dieses schließt jedoch nicht aus, daß theologische Schulen eine vermittelnde und beratende Funktion zu erfüllen haben in dem Suchen eines entsprechenden Arbeitsfeldes für die Absolventen der Anstalt. Die Berufung zum Dienst, jedoch, ist und bleibt Vorrecht sowie auch Verantwortung der Gemeinde. Zur Wahrung des Prinzips der Bruderschaft ist es von der größten Bedeutung, daß wir festhalten am Prinzip der Berufung der Arbeiter durch die Gemeinde, und in Fällen von gewissen Diensten, durch die ganze Bruderschaft.

Es ist unser ernstes Gebet und Streben, daß wir den Charakter der theologischen Ausbildung in unserm Bibel-College mehr und mehr so gestalten könnten, daß das Prinzip der Bruderschaft gewahrt und gefördert werden möchte. Der Herr segne auch die Arbeit unserer Bibelschulen, die in vergangenen Jahren viel dazu beigetragen haben, dieses Prinzip in unsern Gemeinden zu stärken.
J. A. Toews.

Education Among the Mennonites in Russia

The purpose of this article is to acquaint our youth, and others, with the developments in the field of education among the Mennonites of Russia. This chapter in the history of our people is an interesting one and casts light on the educational efforts of the early Mennonites in America. Several stages in the educational progress of the Mennonites of Russia can be noted.

I. EDUCATION UNDER THE CLERGY

When the Mennonites first settled in Russia, they placed the education of their children into the hands of the clergy. This they could do because the Russian government had granted them local autonomy in civic affairs. That there should be schools was beyond question, even though there was no pressure from the Russian government to do so. When the Mennonites structured the civil government of their colonies, they made provision for schools with local admin-

istration.¹ These schools were to give elementary education, for as yet no thought was given to secondary schools.² Since these schools were under the complete control of the colonies, it was clear that the costs would have to be borne by the brotherhood.³ This immediately posed a serious problem since the colonies were steeped in poverty. I believe that much of the lethargy in matters of education can be attributed to the economic difficulties which the colonies had to cope with.

The spiritual leaders in the early years of the Russian settlements were untrained. The other German colonies of had a clergy well able by training to supervise the task entrusted to them by the Russian government; but when the Mennonite clergy was given the same responsibility, their preparation was entirely inadequate.⁴

The first schools were of the most

primitive kind, both in regard to buildings and to staff. School was usually conducted in the "große Stube" of some well-to-do farmer; later, primitive school buildings were erected.⁵ The choice of a teacher was not regarded as a matter for serious deliberation. It was thought that anyone was good enough for the office of teacher as long as he could "read intelligently and perhaps write legibly, and, if need be, possessed some little knowledge of arithmetic."⁶ Many teachers were actually workmen or artisan who carried on the task of a school teacher as a matter of sideline. P. M. Friesen says: „Lehrer fand man bald: Es durfte auch ein 'quer über die Steppe hergelaufener Wanderbursche', ein Nachbar aus dem Dorfe, ein des Nebenverdienstes bedürftiger Handwerker sein."⁷

Peter Braun writes of these early teachers: "Besides teaching school, the teacher of those days not only managed his farmwork but also practised all sorts of 'freie Künste', not being able to exist solely on the salary which he received for teaching. If a teacher happened to be a joiner, then his planing bench would stand alongside of the long table at which the pupils had to leave some space at the head of the study table; shoe-last and awl or even the 'Hohlgätz' [the name of the curved knife for the hollowing out of wooden spoons] were busily used during school hours. All this was considered at that time in due order."⁸

Braun also reports that it actually happened that for lack of a school master, sometimes an old grandmother would undertake the business of keeping school, and would teach the children in her own way.⁹

The curriculum consisted of the "three R's" with a fourth added—religion. The child spent a few years with the primer and then was promoted to the New Testament.

The schools were not properly graded. Each pupil was taught separately. As soon as the pupil had learned his lesson he would step forward to recite. An explanation of a subject was almost unknown. The exercises were committed to memory and "the student who could repeat most rapidly" was considered to

be the superior student. A multiplication table was repeated in a monotonous fashion as a closing exercise for the day.¹⁰

A school of this period was cleverly described by Johann Cornies in a circular sent to all villages. This Cornies did to awaken the people to the pathetic condition of the school of that day. This pamphlet had a striking effect on the educational consciousness of that day and served to alarm the colonies to the pathetic plight of the schools.¹¹

The primary aim of the whole system was to perpetuate the German language and to indoctrinate the younger generation in the "faith of the fathers." Under such a system it was inevitable that the second generation of these Prussian immigrants should deteriorate both in their general culture, as well as in their spiritual ideals. This, says Smith, is the price which colonies often pay in their pioneering.¹²

II. EDUCATION UNDER THE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

Not until 1820 did the villages undertake to improve their schools. At that time men of vision began to realize that neglect of education would jeopardize the progress of the colonies. The most crying need was for better teachers and to obtain better teachers they needed an institution to train these teachers.¹³

Young people began to volunteer for the teaching profession and these were set on making teaching their sole career. This put an end to the craftsman-teacher combination. Of course, these enthusiastic would-be teachers had attended the primitive schools of the pioneer days and were ill-equipped for the task of a professional teacher. These teachers, though untrained, were given a nominal remuneration.¹⁴

As soon as teaching was regarded as an honorable profession, the need for an institution of higher learning was recognized. Those interested in such a school, probably comparable to our high school, organized a school association in Orloff in 1820. The Orloff School Association was fortunate in receiving the support of Johann Cornies, later one of the most powerful leaders of Mennonite progress. The Association began with

29 members and 58 "benefactors". Funds were gathered and a school building was erected in Orloff. The cost was 176 rubels which had been collected in the churches.¹⁵

Since no teacher for such an advanced school was available in the colonies, the Association called Tobias Voth, a well-trained teacher from Prussia, to be the first teacher. Voth had been a teacher since his 16th birthday and came to Orloff well qualified in training and experience.¹⁶

Voth's first efforts met with opposition. At first the opposition was directed against the Association, but later the school itself was severely criticized.¹⁷ People feared that "much learning" would bring about evil results. This mounting opposition was clearly reflected in the enrollment figures of the early years. During the first years 60 students were enrolled. However, during the winter of 1828-29 the number decreased to 8 or 10 students.

Seemingly the Association was not satisfied with Tobias Voth. Several reasons were officially given, although P. M. Friesen suspects that Voth was too pietistic for the tradition-bound Mennonites.¹⁸ Whether Voth became unpopular with the entire Association can be questioned, since the Association was certainly dominated by Johann Cornies, and Voth had not been able to remain in the good graces of Cornies. Smith writes: "But Voth was ahead of his day. Although Cornies seemed in a general way to be in sympathy with Voth's objectives, yet the latter's piety and deep concern for the things of the spirit rather than those of the world, may have been a bit too idealistic for the more practical minded master farmer from Jushanlee."¹⁹

It remains to be said that the Mennonite Brethren later held Voth in very high esteem. Heinrich Huebert, one of the eighteen and the first elder of the Mennonite Brethren Church, had been a student of Voth. Huebert himself gave Voth much credit for the zeal and idealism of the Mennonite Brethren revival.²⁰

Two official reasons were given for Voth's dismissal in 1829. In the first place, he could not speak the Russian language. After seven years of intensive

school promotion, Cornies felt a particular need for the introduction of the Russian language. This proved to be a step in the right direction, since in later years the control of private education was made somewhat contingent on the introduction of the Russian language.²¹ The second reason which the Association advanced was that Voth was too lenient in discipline. It seems that a man like Cornies was also given to pettiness. One day the patrons of the school failed to bring firewood as agreed upon. When Voth complained to Cornies, the latter replied: „Du mußt männlich Schule halten, besser mit mehr Enthusiasmus, und wenn du besser Schule halten wirst, wird auch Brennzeug sein."²²

(Continued in next issue)

F. C. Peters.

1. Leonhard Froese, „Das pädagogische Kultursystem der mennonitischen Siedlungsgruppe in Russland." (Unpublished Doctor's Dissertation, University of Göttingen, 1949), p.56.

2. *Ibid.*, p.57.

3. Peter Braun, "The Educational System of the Mennonite Colonies in South Russia," trans. by Amy E. Enss, *Mennonite Quarterly Review*. III (July, 1929), p.170.

4. M. S. Harder, "The Origin, Philosophy, and Development of Education among the Mennonites," (Unpublished Doctor's Dissertation, University of Southern California, 1949), pp.128-29.

5. Henry C. Smith, *The Story of the Mennonites*, rev. by Cornelius Krahn (Newton: Mennonite Publication Office, 1950), p.415.

6. Braun, *op. cit.*, p.170.

7. P. M. Friesen, *Die Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland (Halbstadt: Raduga, 1911)*, I, p.629.

8. Braun, *op. cit.*, p.170.

9. *Loc. cit.*

10. *Loc. cit.*

11. Quoted and translated by J. J. Toews, "Cultural Background of the Mennonite Brethren Church" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Toronto, 1951), p.81.

12. Smith, *op. cit.*, p.415.

13. Braun, *op. cit.*, p.171.

BIBLE TRANSLATION

Die Bibelübersetzung von Hermann Menge

„Wir hören sie mit unsern Zungen die großen Taten Gottes reden.“ Das war das Bekenntnis der Zeugen des großen Pfingstwunders. Damit machte Gott seiner Gemeinde auch schon mit ihrer Aufgabe in dieser Welt bekannt — allen Zungen das Wort Gottes zu geben. So ließ er auch schon das Neue Testament in der Weltsprache (Griechisch) schreiben, damit es nicht ein palästinisches Buch bliebe. Auch dauerte es nicht lange, bis Übersetzungen des Neuen Testaments erschienen (das Alte Testament war ja schon lange vor Christo übersetzt worden). Völker sollten in ihrer Sprache Gottes Wort haben.

Mit der Entwicklung der katholischen Kirche, und nach der tausendjährigen Herrschaft der lateinischen Vulgata, brach der Reformationsgeist durch. Diese Neubelebung war verknüpft mit der Wiederentdeckung der Bibel in der Muttersprache. Wir können uns die Reformation in Deutschland ohne Luthers Bibel gar nicht denken.

Auch die Geschichte der Heidenmission ist unzertrennlich mit Bibelübersetzung verbunden. Es war gar nicht von ungefähr daß gerade beim Anbruch des modernen Missionszeitalters (1792), die großen Bibelgesellschaften ins Leben gerufen wurden. Missionarisches Interesse und Bibelübersetzung sind Jochgenossen.

Daß die Bibel übersetzt werden muß,

14. Franz Isaac, Die Molotschnaer Menoniten (Halbstadt: H. J. Braun, 1908), p.275.

15. Froese, op. cit., p.62.

16. Friesen, op. cit., I, pp.569-570.

17. Froese, op. cit., p.63.

18. Friesen, op. cit., I, p.79.

19. Smith, op. cit., p.416.

20. Friesen, op. cit., I, p.78.

21. Braun, op. cit., p.172.

22. Froese, op. cit., p.62.

ist jedem Gläubigen klar. Anders steht es mit der Frage der Revision. Warum immer neue Revisionen, ja sogar neue Übersetzungen in derselben Sprache? Seit 1611 sollen im Englischen allein etwa 500 neue Revisionen und Übersetzungen zu zählen sein. Deutsche Bibelleser werden hier an Namen wie Elberfelder, Weizsäcker, Stage, Wiese, Schlachter, Alberecht, Holtzmann, Menge, Dächsel, Schlatter, Thimme, u.a.m. erinnert. Wozu all diese Mühe und die Unkosten, die damit verbunden sind?

Ein Grund für die Revisionen liegt ja darin daß nach der Reformationszeit so viele guten Handschriften gefunden worden sind—Handschriften, die heute bis ins zweite Jahrhundert reichen. Luthers Bibelübersetzung war ausgezeichnet; leider hatte er aber nicht die besten Handschriften zur Hand. Er fing auch schon gleich mit Revidieren an, sobald er übersetzt hatte. Auch ist durch die Papyrusfunde manch ein neutestamentliches Wort erhellt worden. Zudem ist unsere Sprache recht flüssig und in steter Wandlung und Weiterbildung begriffen. Daher heißen wir jeden Versuch, die Bibel in einer mehr genauen und verständlichen Übersetzung zu bringen, willkommen. Zu dem großen Schatz der deutschen Bibelübersetzungen gehört auch die von Hermann Menge. Weil viele Leser diese Übersetzung benutzen, wird sie die Geschichte dieser Übersetzung interessieren.

I. Menges Jugend und Schulzeit.

Als die Mutter Menges, bei einer Gelegenheit, nach der Veranlagung ihres sechsten, im Jahre 1841 geborenen Kindes, Hermann, gefragt wurde, gab sie zur Antwort: „Hermann is'n guter Junge, aber 'n bueschen dumm ist er.“ Hermann war wegen seiner physischen Schwachheiten ein rechtes Sorgenkind. Doch die Zucht und Gewissenhaftigkeit

die im Menge Hause herrschte, lehrten Hermann treue Pflichterfüllung. Im Jahre 1851 trat Hermann in die Seesener Bürgerschule, in der auch Fremdsprachen unterrichtet wurden, welche aber nicht zu ihrem Recht kamen. Als Hermann dann in Braunschweig in das Gymnasium eintrat war sein Latein und Griechisch sehr schwach. War Hermann wirklich „'n bueschen dumm“? Nein, Mutter hatte sich getäuscht. Bald zeigte er eine erstaunliche Begabung für die Erlernung fremder Sprachen. Im Herbst 1860 bezog Hermann die Universität Göttingen um alte Sprachen und Geschichte zu studieren und bereits im sechsten Semester promovierte er zum Doktor der Philosophie.

II. Menges Lehrtätigkeit.

Das Helmstedter Gymnasium sollte sein erster Arbeitsplatz sein. Diese Schule war das Schreckgespenst junger Lehrer, wegen des dortigen Direktors, von dem böse Gerüchte verbreitet waren. Menge sträubte sich zuerst, gab dann aber nach, und bekam zunächst die Aufgabe den Unterricht im Hebräischen zu übernehmen, und Religionsunterricht zu erteilen. Menge weigerte sich bis aufs Äußerste, hatte er doch nicht Hebräisch gelernt. Die ersten Zornausbrüche des Direktors wurden überstanden, und da mußte diese Festung gestürmt werden: das Hebräische. Menge sagte seinen Schülern einfach, daß er die Sprache nicht kenne, aber er würde sie mit ihnen zusammen erlernen. Auch der Religionsunterricht machte Freude. Doch das Martyrium durch den Direktor nahm kein Ende und somit konnte Hermann glücklicher Weise in 1866 nach dem Gymnasium in Holzminden versetzt werden. Im nächsten Jahr vermählte er sich mit Maria Hoffmeister. Er gewann durch treue Arbeit das Vertrauen der Schüler. Von hier folgte er in 1876 dem ehrenvollen Ruf an das städtische Gymnasium in Sangerhausen, wo er als Professor diente, und später Direktor wurde. In 1894 verlegte er noch einmal seine Arbeitsstelle und trat dann wegen Krankheitsbeschwerden in 1900 in den „Ruhestand“. Er war nun neunundfünfzig Jahre alt und es schien so als habe er seine Lebensarbeit abgeschlossen. Doch sollte seine eigentliche Lebensarbeit jetzt erst anfangen. Bevor Hermann

Menge als Bibelübersetzer bekannt wurde, schätzte man ihn als Verfasser verschiedener Lehr- und Wörterbücher für den Unterricht in Latein und Griechisch. Aber bekannt geworden ist Menge in der ganzen Welt, durch die Herausgabe seiner Bibelübersetzung.

III. Menges Inneres Werden.

Er war durch Erziehung und Studium zu einem ernsten und sittlich gerichteten Mann, wie auch tüchtig gebildeten Mann, herangereift. Jedoch blühte zu seiner Zeit der Rationalismus und machte Menge bezüglich seines Glaubens zu einer Persönlichkeit, die den Charakter der gebildeten Stände jener Zeit an sich trug. Er war laut seines Bekenntnisses ein „christianisiertes Weltkind.“ Seine Lehrer waren zum größten Teil Atheisten gewesen, und aufrichtiger Pietismus war nie in seinen Gesichtskreis getreten. Trotzdem er innerlich dem Wesen des Christentums fremd war, war er doch für die Außenwelt eine Respektperson. Die Gymnasien, denen er vorstand, wurden als christliche Anstalten angesehen. Aber die Bibel war ihm ein verschlossenes Buch, wenn er auch oft nach Sprüchen in derselben suchte. Er hat während seiner Studienjahre nie ein Buch der Bibel im Zusammenhang gelesen, und bis zum sechszehnten Lebensjahr kannte er vom Johannesevangelium kaum mehr als Jesu Gespräch mit Nikodemus. So lebte er in einem höchst bedauernswerten Zustand, denn er hatte von seiner Schuld und der Notwendigkeit der Erlösung keine Vorstellung. Wie Gott nun in ihm die große Umwandlung schuf gehört zu den göttlichen Heilswundern.

Menge saß in seinem Amtszimmer, um eine Morgenandacht fürs Gymnasium vorzubereiten. Da erschreck er förmlich über seine Unbekanntheit mit der Bibel, und er fing an sich aufrichtig zu schämen. Zum erstenmal im Leben machte er sich ans Lesen des griechischen Neuen Testaments. Noch nahmen ihn seine Schul- und Schreibpflichten zu sehr in Anspruch, aber als er 1900 das Schulamt niederlegte (er war nun 60 Jahre alt), seine weltliche Schriftstellerei zum Abschluß gebracht, wandte er sich ausschließlich der Beschäftigung mit der Heiligen Schrift zu. Immer stärker wurde sein Verlangen nach dem

Wort. Mit Feder in der Hand, arbeitete er das Neue Testament im Urtext durch. Ihm wuchs die Lust zum Wort, manche Stücke übersetzte er sechsmal; keine Mühe scheute er. Bald war das Neue Testament fertig; es fand sich auch ein Verleger, und in 1909 erschien das Neue Testament in einem Prachtbande mit 40 Vollbildern. Doch der Absatz war klein, und so war er recht enttäuscht. Jedoch er erklärte es sich so, daß das Buch eben nicht vollständig sei. Unverdrossen machte er sich an die Übersetzung des Alten Testaments. Er wurde ernstlich von Freunden abgeraten, aber eine innere Stimme mahnte ihn, und nun folgten 12 Jahre wo er sich fast Tag und Nacht mit dieser Arbeit beschäftigte. Mit der hebräischen Sprache war er in zuverlässiger Weise vertraut gemacht worden durch seinen langjährigen Unterricht. Im Jahre 1922 packte er das gewaltige Manuskript seines Bibelwerkes zusammen und verschloß es in seinem Schreibtisch. Er hatte keine Hoffnung einen Verleger zu finden. Doch war er nicht bitter über die scheinbar vergebliche Mühe, denn gerade für ihn war diese Arbeit der größte Gewinn gewesen.

Seit der Zeit als er zum Haufen der im Dunkeln tappenden Weltkinder gehört hatte und mit geistiger Blindheit geschlagen war, war in ihm eine gewaltige Veränderung vorgefallen. In seinem Herzen war das Licht aus der Höhe aufgegangen. Das war Lohn genug für die Mühe der vielen Jahre.

IV. Die Menge Bibel.

Das große Manuskript des Alten Testaments sollte nicht im Schreibtisch bleiben. Die Württembergische Bibelanstalt übernahm die Herausgabe, und im Jahre 1926 erschien die Menge Bibel. (Das Neue Testament war ja schon in Druck gesetzt worden.) Im Vorwort sagte Menge, daß er sich immer an Luthers Mahnung, "Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn," gehalten habe. Auch habe er sich überall bemüht, "mit philologischer Genauigkeit, an die ich während meiner langjährigen Amtstätigkeit, so wie infolge meiner schriftstellerischen Arbeiten gewöhnt war, die Übersetzung im engen Anschluß an den biblischen Urtext so treu wie möglich zu gestalten . . ." Sodann war es sein Bemühen, die Schrift

in möglichst gereinigtes Deutsch zu übertragen. Die Einfachheit der geschichtlichen Stücke als auch den mannigfaltigen Stilformen der Psalmen gerecht zu werden ist kein Kinderspiel. Hermann Menge hat's verstanden die hebräischen Propheten Deutsch sprechen zu lehren. Als Hilfe für den Bibelleser brachte er reichlich Überschriften an, die den Sinn des Abschnitts leicht erfaßbar machen sollten. Menge blieb immer offen für Kritik. Vor allen Dingen war es ihm darum zu tun daß der Inhalt des Buches auf die Leser wirken sollte.

Wunder ging es zu, daß Menges Bibel zur Druckgebung kam. In einem Wochenblatt erschien eine scharfe Kritik der „Elberfelder Bibel.“ Menge war empört und schrieb einen nicht gerade freundlichen Brief an Pfarrer Gauger, worin er auch nebenbei bemerkte, daß er auch das Neue Testament übersetzt habe und dieses im Buchhandel zu haben sei. Außerdem habe er auch das Alte Testament übersetzt. Das Manuskript aber liege wohlverwahrt in seinem Schreibtisch, und es würde sich wohl schwer ein Verlieger finden. Jedenfalls aber habe er auf Grund seiner Übersetzungsarbeit mancherlei Erfahrung, und er glaubte sich ein Urteil erlauben zu können. Er bat Pfarrer Gauger seine Angriffe gegen die „Elberfelder Bibel“ zurückzunehmen.

Um zwei Tage kam ein Brief, in welchem Gauger sehr für das Antwortschreiben dankte. Menges Testament kenne er gut, und für das Drucken des Alten Testaments würde er sorgen. Zwei Wochen später wurde zwischen Menge und der Württembergischen Bibelanstalt in Stuttgart ein Vertrag abgeschlossen. Weihnachten 1923 erschien das Neue Testament, und in 1926 erschien die ganze Heilige Schrift. Innerhalb drei und ein halb Jahren waren 70,000 verkauft und bis zum Ende von 1929 war das erste 100,000 erreicht. Für das Werk wurde ihm der Ehrendoktor von der Universität in Münster gegeben, da er „durch seine Verdeutschung der Bibel vielen alten und jungen Menschen unserer Zeit den Weg zum Verständnis der Heiligen Schrift von neuem geebnet hat.“

Als die Menge Bibel zum 85. Geburtstag des treuen Übersetzers erschien, betrachtete dieser sein Werk nicht als ab-

geschlossen. Weitere 13 Jahre widmete er einer gründlichen Überarbeitung der Übersetzung. Wenn das Werk auch ein kirchliches Ereignis ersten Ranges war, und neues Interesse für Bibellesen wachrief, so fehlte es auch nicht an wohlwollender Kritik. Kurz vor seinem Tode übergab D. Menge die letzte Fassung seiner Überarbeitung.

V. Der Übersetzer Menge.

Sein Leben lang saß Menge am Schreibtisch. Er kannte nicht das Meer oder das Gebirge, er verstand nichts von Technik, und von dem vielen, was die Welt weiß. Machte er manchmal mit seiner Frau einen Ausflug so schaute er vor allen Dingen, ob im Hotelzimmer auch ein Tisch stünde. Dort packte er seine Bücher aus und saß von früh morgens bis spät abends wieder bei den Büchern. Mit Recht sagte ihm seine liebe Frau: „Hör einmal, arbeiten kannst du doch auch zu Hause.“ Worauf Menge antwortete: „Ja, da hast du auch recht.“ Und so fuhren sie dann lieber nach Hause. Statt bei seiner sorgfältigen philologischen Forschung Zweifel an Gottes Wort zu bekommen, wurde ihm das Wort immer gewisser und köstlicher, war er doch durch das einfache vorurteilsfreie Lesen der Bibel zum lebendigen Glauben gekommen. Wie eine schwere Last lag ihm morgens beim Erwachen oft stundenlang die große Betrübniß auf, daß in seiner Übersetzung noch so viele Fehler seien. In seiner Überarbeitung hat er fast an jedem Wort, an jedem Vers, gefeilt und poliert. Er bekannte einem seiner gewesenen Schülern: „Wenn ich einen Abschnitt meiner Bibelübersetzung fertiggestellt habe und sehe ihn dann an, dann sage ich mir: Menge, das hast du ganz gut gemacht. Wenn ich ihn dann aber zum zweiten Male durchlese, dann sage ich: Menge, das wimmelt ja von Fehlern, das mußst du doch besser machen.“ Er behauptete, daß er noch fünfzig Jahre an seiner Übersetzung arbeiten könnte. Als ihm manche Ehren zukamen fühlte er tief beschämt, glaubte er doch er sei nur ein Menschlein von ganz bescheidenem Umfange und wünsche sich nicht in seinem hohen Alter ungebührlich geehrt zu sehen.

Sein Tageslauf war fast auf die Mi-

nute geregelt. Sommer und Winter begann er seine Arbeit am Schreibtisch mit dem Glockenschlag ein halb acht Uhr, und endete, mit kurzen Unterbrechungen, erst mit Einbruch der Dämmerung. So kam es dann auch, daß ihm das Augenlicht versagen wollte.

Es war Weihnachten 1938, und seine Kinder waren gekommen, um mit dem achtundneunzigjährigen Vater das Fest zu feiern. Die Mutter war schon vor etwa 10 Jahren heimgegangen, und Menge mußte seinen recht langen Lebensabend allein beschließen. Scherzend hatte er oft gesagt, im Blick auf sein hohes Alter: „Der liebe Gott hat mich vergessen.“ Aber am 9. Januar 1939 nahm Gott seinem Knecht die Feder aus der fleißigen Hand. Doch hatte er tief im Herzen von dem Gott der Offenbarung „das Zeugnis erhalten, er sei ein Gerechter, indem Gott Zeugnis für seine Opfergaben ablegte; und durch ihn redet er auch jetzt noch nach seinem Tode“ (Hebr. 11,4 — Menge).

Diese ausgezeichnete Bibelübersetzung von Hermann Menge sollte ein jeder, der die Bibel auf Deutsch lesen kann, in seiner Hand haben. Wer Menges Übersetzung nicht kennt, ist um so viel ärmer.

In Anlehnung an das Lied „Lobe den Herren . . .“ dichtete Hermann Menge:
Lobe den Herren, der Sünde und Schuld dir vergibt,
der dich trotz deiner Verfehlungen väterlich liebet!
Frieden und Heil werden dir Sünder zuteil,
wenn dich die Buße betrübet.

Lobe den Herren, der seinen Geist willig dir sendet,
der dir das Herz zur Bekehrung und Neugeburt wendet!
Bete und fleh, daß dir die Rettung gescheh',
die mit Beseligung endet!

Lobe den Herren, der einst aus dem Tod dich erwecket,
wenn die Posaune erschallt und das Weltall erschrecket!
Halt dich bereit, rein fürs Gericht sei dein Kleid,
Seele und Leib unbeflecket!

David Ewert.

PRACTICAL

Principles for Love, Courtship and Engagements

"There are three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not. The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a maid" (Prov. 30:18,19).

We are again in the season of the year when girls are overcome with "bride ideas", and when the "fancy of young men turns to love." Many "affairs" and courtships will in these days culminate in the permanent union of marriage. The success, blessing and joy of the marriage bond is determined to a considerable degree by whether or not God's standard has been adopted and followed during the formative period of this love union.

A forgotten truth is that God has much to say in the Bible about moral behaviour. However, we, probably because of false modesty, have neglected to teach these truths to our young people. God still loves a virtuous woman and a chaste young man. We clearly see this from the high premium the Bible places on purity, holiness, and morality. Likewise, God requires that the association of the two sexes be discreet and ideal. So mysterious and beautiful is this fellowship considered before the Lord that he has selected it to typify His fellowship with the Church.

In this day of moral degeneracy and when America is on the skids because we have let down the bars on sex, we need to cry aloud against abuses, license and sex obsession. The movies, lude magazines, radio and television programs, the dance, and the immodest fashions of dress among the women and girls have taken our sense of what is proper and decent from us. And the tragedy of the matter is that even we Christians are becoming so worldly that we do not realize that Hollywood and the commercial world by its billboards, advertisements,

popular music, and entertainment is setting the standard and not the Bible. In this age of moral relativism it is incumbent upon us to proclaim moral absolutes. We must shout from the housetops that morality, integrity, virtue and purity are still God's requirements for his people. The Christian Church must still insist on modesty, inhibition, desire for purity and love for holiness.

Despite the clear and frequent teachings of the Bible on this point many young people are ignorant and illiterate in regard to "chastity", the "separate life" and the "unequal yoke". In this article we are underscoring three principles which should govern the dating, courtship, and subsequent marriage relationship. In the text Solomon lists four things which are beyond understanding or description. It appears from the sequence that the first three processes or procedures lead up to the fourth. They seem to culminate in, or form the basis of the fourth. So in the development of the thought of "the way of a man with a maid," we shall view the first three functions or operations as being a commentary or description of the fourth.

KEEP YOUR ALTITUDE

The first example, the way of an eagle in the air, teaches us that in the relation of a man with a maid, we must keep our altitude. As Christians we cannot degenerate to the level of the world in love-making and in the methods of seeking a help-mate for life. Since the time of the "Enlightenment" liberty, license and lust have often been labelled as "romance" by the world. However, much of what is termed as "romance" by the world is sin to the Christian in the light of Bible teaching. Since the morbid phase of life and all manner of irregularities in sex relations generally begin

early in life, we are compelled to warn our teen-agers and youth of the many pitfalls along the line of the love-life, courtship, marriage and sex. Christian young people are not immune to temptations in this area, so let us warn them not to fall to the level of the world.

We would not think that a ball game would be the proper place to look for a husband or wife. Likewise, there are many other places of the world where Christians should not be looking for a mate. High school and university socials is another place where great care must be taken lest the "unequal yoke" be made. Neither do we believe it appropriate for Christian teen-agers or young people to be walking the sidewalks and then allowing someone to "pick them up", or circulating about town in a car and "picking someone up" who is a total stranger to them or who they know is not a Christian. We must unmistakably and unequivocally warn against such conduct as not being becoming of a Christian. Let us get our directives from the Bible and live above the world.

The very foundations of life, spirituality, health and happiness are rooted in the intricate phenomenon of sex, so we cannot afford to take chances or risks in this area, especially if we do not want an unsaved individual for husband or wife. It is **your** future which is at stake, so remember the Scripture, "can two walk together except they be agreed?" Recent religious surveys show that "couples who have the same religious beliefs have twice as good a chance of a happy marriage as those that don't." It is for the welfare of the young people that adults and parents often counsel against unwise, unscriptural, precocious, and immature choices.

BE SECRETIVE

The second "too wonderful" picture which furnishes a commentary on the way of a man with a maid, illustrates the aspect of secretiveness, reservation, bashfulness, or withdrawn tendencies, "the way of a serpent on a rock." I hasten to explain that I do not mean that young people ought to sneak away and licentiously, on lone roads, take liberties in the dark. On the other hand,

they should not think that the first flicker of love must be given outward expression and is to be unblushingly and shamelessly paraded and advertised. Genuine love will not parade, however, in due time it will demonstrate itself. How nauseating it is to observe youngsters overcome by the first "crush" walking home from grade school arm in arm, or to see a couple of teen-agers driving in a car and, unless one looks closely, it has the appearance that there is only one person in the car. They should probably be reminded that "puppy love" may lead to a "dog's life".

It is an abomination when sin is committed in secret; however, it is so much worse when it is brazenly committed in broad daylight and when it stalks our main streets and ironically labels you as the offender if you dare to reprove or show displeasure. It is amply proven by the many broken marriages that the present emphasis on courting, love, and dating has not resulted in wiser choices, more mature love, and in happier, more permanent marriages.

Deep waters run quietly. Young people who are of the age when they begin to develop a love toward the opposite sex, would do well to allow the seed of love to germinate in the heart and let it develop root and shoot in the secret, then it may gradually come to the surface. At the beginning let the look of love and the glance of affection suffice. Bashfulness and reserve will be a great safeguard; whereas, a bazarre, boisterous, clamorous attitude often results in unbridled liberties. Then, as the young person approaches the age when he has more control of his emotions and his will to do right is developed, there will no doubt be the occasional meeting and finally the engagement and marriage.

The fact that dating and courtship leads to marriage needs to be underscored for young people. If they begin "going steady" when too young they expose themselves to temptations and dangers. As time goes on they will become more relaxed in each other's presence and their love more intimate and the urge for complete physical union becomes stronger and almost irresistible. Too often then, upon agreement of love, they promise that they will marry soon,

or following engagement, enter upon intimate, illicit relations. Bitter and remorseful have been the experiences of such. May we never forget that engagement or promise to marry is not marriage. The Bible amply warns against pre-marital relations and the dangers of an impure life.

A CHARTED COURSE

The third picture which characterizes the wonderful yet mysterious association of a man with a maid is that of a ship in the midst of the sea. Many ships have crossed the ocean, still there is no path. Similarly, many have successfully and happily made the voyage of love, marriage and life, yet there is no beaten path or sure-proof formula which we might suggest to young people dreaming of romance. The Lord leads each one differently from the other.

Occasionally, parents may attempt to project their experience into the life of their child and expect him to do exactly as they did. However, it seems that even the biblical description of Isaac finding a wife was not given as a mold or blue print but rather as an example or pattern; it includes a number of principles which are applicable today. The Bible thus furnishes chart and compass for a safe voyage and a blessed destination. The wreckage of lives who have patterned after Hollywood are everywhere evident as they are strewn along life's highway; let us not accept direction from there and flounder to our own ruin.

A MYSTERY

There is nothing more beautiful than a young man and a young woman wooing each other in tender love. As this bashful, sensitive love matures they learn to understand and treasure each other. This a mystery even as the relationship of Christ to the Church. We cannot expect to be successful if we make unholy, common and vile that which ought to be sweet and pure, noble and lofty.

We must counsel young people to keep their dating and courtship sacred, holy, and in honor, in order that it might indeed blossom out into a "marriage in the Lord." We do not want to mimic the world; God will judge the unclean revellers, promiscuous flirts and lustful, carnal fornicators. They defeat their very purpose, for unhappy homes, broken love, and divided families are the consequences of the ways which they follow.

The way of a man with a maid is of far-reaching significance; it is a relationship that is for life and which influences the shaping of our future destiny. We must always, before marriage and after marriage, keep it a course that is lofty, divine and god-pleasing and we will assure for ourselves and for our families lasting joy, perennial blessing and divine approval. Let us encourage young people to "flee youthful lusts, exercise godly self-control, and possess their vessels in holiness without which no man shall see God."

H. R. Baerg.

THEOLOGICAL

Die Geistestaufe

Bei einer Gelegenheit verglich Johannes der Täufer seine Arbeit mit der des kommenden Heilandes. Dabei brauchte er die Worte, „Ich Taufe euch mit Wasser zur Buße; der aber nach mir kommt . . . der wird euch mit dem Heiligen Geist und mit Feuer taufen“ (Matt. 3: 11). Auch die andern drei Evangeli-

sten brauchen fast dieselben Worte in ihren Berichten (Siehe Markus 1:8, Lukas 3,16, Joh. 1,33). Dieser Umstand zeigt uns wie wichtig diese Tatsache ist.

Kurz vor seinem Abscheiden befahl Jesus seinen Jüngern, daß sie in Jerusalem bleiben sollten, um „auf die Verheißung des Vaters“ zu warten, „denn Jo-

hannes hat mit Wasser getauft, ihr aber sollt mit dem heiligen Geist getauft werden nicht lange nach diesen Tagen“ (Apostelgeschichte 1,5). Aus diesem Zusammenhange und aus dem weiteren Verlauf der Heilsgeschichte merken wir daß Jesus die Geistestaufe auf das Pfingstwunder bezieht. Am Pfingsttage wurden die versammelten Gläubigen mit dem Heiligen Geist getauft.

Von diesem für die Gemeinde so sehr bedeutsamen Ereignis wird leider sehr wenig gesprochen. Die Ursache dafür finden wir zum Teil in den manchen Verirrungen, die sich in Verbindung mit dieser Lehre gezeigt haben. Man fürchtet sich über die Geistestaufe zu sprechen oder sogar nur nachzudenken, weil man nicht verirren möchte, oder auch nur nicht zu einer verkehrten Gruppe gerechnet zu werden. Solche Einstellung ist aber nicht gut. Die Wahrheiten und Tatsachen der Heiligen Schrift sind uns gegeben, daß wir uns damit bekannt machen und daß wir den Segen derselben genießen.

Soll der Gläubige in seinem Leben eine Geistestaufe, wie sie uns in Apostelgeschichte 2 geschildert ist, erfahren? Darauf antworten wir, auf Grund der Heiligen Schrift, nein! auch, ja! Wenn ein Christ dasselbe Erlebnis mit Zeichen und Wunder (Rauschen des Windes, Feuerflammen und Zungenreden) erwartet, so sagen wir bestimmt, nein! Die Zeichen und Wunder spielten eine besondere Rolle bei jener Gelegenheit. Die Jünger mußten von der Tatsache, daß der Geist gekommen war, überführt werden. Dasselbe finden wir im Hause des Kornelius (Apostelgeschichte 10), nur, daß bei dieser Gelegenheit die Zeichen geschahen um die Gläubigen aus Jerusalem zu überführen, daß auch die Heiden den Heiligen Geist empfangen können. Heute brauchen wir diese Zeichen nicht mehr, weil wir wissen, daß der Heilige Geist gekommen ist.

Andrerseits lehrt uns die Schrift, daß die Gläubigen die Geistestaufe empfangen, ja schon empfangen haben, wenn sie wirklich im Glauben stehen. Dieses geschah bei der Wiedergeburt. In seinem Gespräch mit Nikodemus zeigt Jesus, daß die Wiedergeburt eine Arbeit des Heiligen Geistes ist (Joh. 3). In 1. Korinther 12,13 finden wir, daß Pau-

lus denselben Gedanken ausdrückt, „Denn wir sind durch einen Geist alle zu einem Leibe getauft.“ Ähnlich heißt es auch in Galater 3,27: „Denn wieviel eurer auf Christum getauft sind, die haben Christum angezogen.“ Menge über- setzt in diesem Fall, „Denn ihr alle, die ihr in Christus getauft worden seid, habt (damit) Christus angezogen. So auch die Englischen Übersetzungen (Authorized and Revised), „as were baptized into Christ.“ Aus dem ganzen geht klar hervor, daß es sich hier um mehr als um die Wassertaufe handelt. Es handelt sich hier um ein „eins werden“ mit Christus, welches bei der Wiedergeburt geschehen ist. Also sind Gotteskinder schon mit dem Heiligen Geiste getauft.

Dieses erklärt auch den Umstand, warum wir nie in der Schrift aufgefordert werden, um eine Geistestaufe zu beten, wogegen wir aber ermahnt werden, voll Geistes zu werden. Die oben angeführten Verse sprechen von der Taufe als von einer vollendeten Tatsache. Das Zeitwort steht in der Vergangenheit. Und zwar sind die Gotteskinder alle getauft.

Bei der Geistestaufe handelt es sich nicht um eine geistliche Einstellung oder um eine gewisse Reife im christlichen Glauben oder Wandel, sondern um einen Stand. Es gibt leider so etwas, daß Gottes Kinder nicht „voll Geistes“ sind, aber sie haben dennoch die Geistestaufe, das Hineinversenken in Christo, erlebt. Diese merken wir zum Beispiel an der Gemeinde zu Korinth. Sie waren alle zu einem Leibe (in den Leib Christi hinein) getauft worden, aber etliche waren doch noch recht ungeistlich, denn sie gehorchten nicht dem Geiste, der in ihnen war. Dasselbe merken wir auch bei den Galatern. Auch sie waren durch den Geist mit Christus verbunden, standen aber in Gefahr sich vom Evangelium abzuwenden. So auch die Hebräer in dem Hebräerbrief, die da nicht im Glauben gewachsen waren.

Obzwar nur Gotteskinder den Geist empfangen haben, so besteht dennoch die Möglichkeit, daß alle Menschen diesen Segen erfahren können. Der heilige Geist ist eine Gabe Gottes für alle Menschen. Joel 3,1: „ . . . will ich meinen Geist ausgießen über alles Fleisch.“ Die-

sen Gedanken betonten auch die Apostel in ihren Predigten. Sie unterließen es aber nicht zu unterstreichen, daß der Empfang des Geistes mit gewissen Bedingungen verbunden war. Diese sind Buße und Glauben an den Herrn (Apostelgeschichte 2,38; 5,32; 8,20-22; 10,43-45; 15,8-11). Der Empfang des Geistes, also die Taufe des Geistes, ist eine Gabe Gottes für alle, die den Herrn Jesus annehmen.

Wer auf diese Bedingungen eingeht, empfängt die Geistestaufe und damit auch den darauffolgenden Segen. Einmal wird der Mensch dadurch ein Glied an dem Leibe Jesu Christi (1. Kor. 12,13). In Christo Jesu sind nicht mehr Juden noch Heiden, weder Knechte noch Herren, sondern alles gleichberechtigte Glieder. Die Unterschiede, die sich sonst in der Welt bemerkbar machen, fallen hier weg. Es ist nur ein Leib und jedes Glied hat da seinen bestimmten Platz.

Weiter lehrt uns Galater 3,27, daß diejenigen, die in Christum getauft wor-

den sind, Christum angezogen haben. Dadurch ist der Christ eine neue Kreatur geworden. „Das Alte ist vergangen, siehe, es ist alles neu geworden“ (2. Kor. 5,17). Damit ist noch nicht gesagt, daß der Christ fortan nicht mehr sündigt. Es bleibt wie die Schrift lehrt, daß es noch ein tägliches Ablegen und Anziehen gibt. Auf Grund von Kol. 2,12 und Römer 6,4-6 sagen wir, daß der Dienst der Sünde im Leben des Christen ein Ende hat, und daß man in den Dienst Jesu getreten ist. Fortan ist der Heiland der Herr des Lebens.

Abschließend erinnern wir uns noch an Galater 3,28: „denn ihr seid allzumal einer in Christo Jesu.“ In seinem hohenpriesterlichen Gebet bat Jesus: „... auf daß sie alle eins seien, gleichwie du Vater, in mir und ich in dir; daß auch sie in uns eins seien.“ Diese seine Bitte wurde bei der Ausgießung des Heiligen Geistes erfüllt. Nun ist Gott in allen Gläubigen und alle Gläubigen sind in Gott.

V. D. Toews.

Maintaining a Theological Balance

(From Bishop Moule's biography of the Cambridge divine, Charles Simeon.)

"I love the simplicity of the Scriptures; and I wish to receive and inculcate every truth precisely in the way, and to the extent, that it is set forth in the inspired Volume. Were this the habit of all divines, there would soon be an end of most of the controversies that have agitated and divided the Church of Christ. My endeavor is to bring out of Scripture what is there, and not to thrust in what I think might be there. I have a great jealousy on this head; never to speak more or less than I believe to be the mind of the Spirit in the passage I am expounding. I would run after nothing and shun nothing. Perhaps you little thought in what you said against the golden mean, that you would carry me along with you. But I go even far beyond you, for to you I can say in words what these thirty years I have proclaimed in deeds, that the truth is not in the middle, and not in one extreme, but in both extremes."

This last sentence was written to a friend in 1825. He wonders whether the friend will not tremble for his mental soundness. But he explains himself: "Here are two extremes; observing days, eating meats, etc. — Paul, how do you move? In the mean way? No. To one extreme? No. How then? To both extremes in their turn, as occasion requires."

"Here are two other extremes, Calvinism and Arminianism (for you need not to be told how long Calvin and Arminius lived before St. Paul). How do you move in reference to these, Paul? In a golden mean? No. To one extreme? No. How then? To both extremes; today I am a strong Calvinist, tomorrow a strong Arminian.—Well, well, Paul, I see thou art beside thyself; go to Aristotle, and learn the golden mean.

"But I am unfortunate; I formerly read Aristotle, and liked him much; I have since read Paul, and caught somewhat of his strange notions, oscillating (not vacillating) from pole to pole.

Sometimes I am a high Calvinist, at other times a low Arminian, so that if extremes will please you, I am your man; only remember, it is not one extreme that we are to go to, but both extremes."

What is commonly, though not very accurately, called the Calvinistic controversy, was in vigorous movement all through Simeon's youth and early manhood. It had troubled the stream of the great Methodist revival, when the Wesleys and Whitefield took opposite sides, while the Church Evangelicals on the whole were Calvinistic, or let us say Augustinian, whether to an extreme degree, as Toplady, or with more balance and reserve, as Venn, Newton, and Scott. . . . And who that really seeks to throw upon these enigmas the light of Scripture, does not feel that Scripture itself, while assuredly it indicates a system, refuses to elaborate one, or to authorize man to elaborate one by deduction into details? "I am like a man," he (Simeon) used to say, "swimming in the Atlantic, and I have no fear of striking one hand against Europe and the other against America." Under this conviction he shrunk from any but the most cautious deductions, and sought to find common rather than divergent lines. An extract from the preface to his *Horae Homileticae* puts some of his deepest convictions before us with characteristic explicitness:

"The author is disposed to think that the Scripture system is of a broader and more comprehensive character than some very dogmatical theologians are inclined to allow; and that, as wheels in a complicated machine may move in opposite directions and yet subserve one common end, so may truths apparently opposite be perfectly reconcilable with each other and equally subserve the purposes of God in the accomplishment of man's salvation. The author feels it impossible to avow too distinctly that it is an invariable rule with him to endeavour to give to every portion of the Word of God its full and proper force, without considering what scheme it favours, or whose system it is likely to advance. Of this he is sure, that there is not a decided Calvinist or Arminian in the world who equally approves of the whole of Scripture . . . who, if he had been in the

company of St. Paul whilst he was writing his Epistles, would not have recommended him to alter one or other of his expressions.

"But the author would not wish one of them altered; he finds as much satisfaction in one class of passages as in another; and employs the one, he believes, as freely as the other. Where the inspired writers speak in unqualified terms, he thinks himself at liberty to do the same; judging that they needed no instruction from him how to propagate the truth. He is content to sit as a learner at the feet of the holy Apostles, and has no ambition to teach them how they ought to have spoken."

In this connection let me quote Simeon's report of an interview with John Wesley given in this same preface to the *Horae Homileticae*:

"A young minister, about three or four years after he was ordained, had an opportunity of conversing familiarly with the great and venerable leader of the Arminians in this kingdom (John Wesley), and, wishing to improve the occasion he addressed him nearly in the following words: 'Sir, I understand that you are called an Arminian; and I have been sometimes called a Calvinist; and therefore I suppose we are to draw daggers. But before I consent to begin the combat, with your permission I will ask you a few questions.' Permission being very readily and kindly granted, the young minister proceeded to ask: 'Pray, sir, do you feel yourself a depraved creature, so depraved that you would never have thought of turning to God, if God had not first put it into your heart?' 'Yes,' says the veteran, 'I do indeed.' 'And do you utterly despair of recommending yourself to God by anything you can do, and look for salvation solely through the blood and righteousness of Christ?' 'Yes, solely through Christ.' 'But, sir, supposing you were at first saved by Christ, are you not somehow or other to save yourself afterwards by your own works?' 'No, I must be saved by Christ from first to last.' 'Allowing, then, that you were first turned by the grace of God, are you not in some way or other to keep yourself by your own power?' 'No.' 'What then, are you to be upheld every hour and every moment by God, as much

as an infant in its mother's arms?' 'Yes, altogether.' 'And is all your hope in the grace and mercy of God to preserve you unto His heavenly kingdom?' 'Yes, I have no hope but in Him.' 'Then, sir, with your leave I will put up my dagger again; for this is all my Calvinism; this is my election, my justification by

faith, my final perseverance: it is in substance all that I hold, and as I hold it; and therefore, if you please, instead of searching out terms and phrases to be a ground of contention between us, we will cordially unite in those things wherein we agree.'"

—Selected.

MUSIC

On the Choir Tour

Ever since I have been associated with M. B. schools of instruction, I have been directly or indirectly involved in representing the school before the supporting constituency through choir tours. Again this year I had the privilege of participating in this form of public relations (this time as a student member). Perhaps many of my readers are, as I was, faced with the question of the value of such tours. I believe there is a value in such ventures, especially for an institution that is supported by a wider constituency than can directly see what is being done in the school. Perhaps there may also be some negative aspects in this form of public representation. It will be the purpose of this article to examine the value of the M. B. B. C. choir tour for the individual member of the choir, the value for the College, and also its value for the supporting churches.

The views expressed are not the opinion of the College, nor of the A Cappella Choir of the college, but personal opinions. They have been formulated after listening to the choir as a member of the audience on two occasions, after weighing opinions regarding the merits of those appearances in Ontario as expressed by other church members there, and after having been a member of the choir during its 1958 tour.

As I see it, a choir tour has a number of distinct values for the individual mem-

ber of the choir. First of all, in belonging to a select few that sing in the choir, he must realize that others feel he has a talent for singing. In possessing this talent, he is given an opportunity of using it to the honor and glory of God; he will unite with a group to communicate a gospel message through song; he will become conscious of his responsibility to contribute his best to the united effort. In a day when participation in church choir work is becoming less enthusiastic, the experiences of singing in the college a cappella choir should encourage participation in singing ministry in our churches.

There are also personal spiritual benefits to be derived from the experience. During the period of the tour, the choir member is made conscious of his service aspect, and asks himself whether he is a fit vessel. In the more intimate associations with fellow choir members on the bus and in the homes, the individual receives encouragement for a consistent testimony in deed as well as in word. In association with new people, all of whom love the same Lord and worship in the same manner, he receives strength to continue in the things which he has been taught. Indirectly, he develops a sense of church loyalty which can be a stabilizing factor in his future ministry.

To the discerning member, who is about to graduate and enter into the

world of service, new vistas will appear. He will perhaps realize the value of good church music, that he has sung repeatedly on 10 or more successive occasions, but which yields up a new meaning to him each time. He will have learned of the many opportunities of service in the province visited (and if he has visited all provinces the opportunities will be countless). He will have a greater appreciation for the Conference as a whole.

These might be some of the personal benefits to a choir member. But these are perhaps of least significance to the general public. Let us take the next sphere of benefits—that of the college itself. The M. B. Bible College is owned and operated by the Canadian M. B. Conference, and hence the college must meet this conference public. Recently a student questionnaire on public relations revealed that the best advertiser for the school was the individual, the choir ranking further down. It is significant for our present purpose to point out that the manner in which the individual student in the choir represents the college on the tour, plus the total impression given by the choir have definite public relations benefits.

First impressions are said to be the most lasting impressions, we often are told. Whether this is true or only relatively so, the students and faculty members that visit various churches on behalf of the college will leave an important impression on those who will support the institution, and also on the minds of young people who are seeking to prepare for a life of service. If there is a uniform positive impression, the benefit will be obvious in the months and years following. Perhaps the most critical appraisal will be given to the musical product of the school. If the renditions of the choir are heard by outsiders and lauded in their circles, the college will establish a good reputation beyond its conference borders. The same will be true of the message given by the faculty member of the college who accompanies the choir. If the message has intelligent forethought coupled with divine inspiration, it cannot fail to speak well for the cause of Christ primarily, and for the cause of the school secondarily.

As already taken for granted in the above, the choir tour will have value for the supporting conference constituency. The fact that the churches play host to the representation from "their" college develops the sense of ownership that the individual must feel for a conference project. If the church member invites his friends to hear the college program and points out that "our" college choir is singing, that can have far-reaching personal effects in the matter of financial and moral support. In the youthful member, the student, the visit creates a desire to be part of the college family, to share its direct benefits and blessings. To the church choir conductor an enviable musical standard is represented. He realizes what can be done with certain simple songs by a specially trained choir; he becomes acquainted with new repertoire in a most enlightening way. Finally, because the choir tries to visit all the provinces, these tours can act as a unifying factor in the whole conference.

We have examined the positive side of choir tours. Allow me to indicate some negative influences that we should hope to obviate. First, a choir tour should never savor of snobbishness because of a high calibre of musical production, if such is attained. Technical finesse and musical nuance must always remain hidden under the impression of the message of the song. Over-enthusiasm for perfection may lead to a disregard for sincerity in the message and in the musical ministry. The personal identification with the College should never be so supreme that it leads to discrediting of other institutions or forms of service. There is also the danger that people in the supporting constituency will assume the high standards representative of the college as their own, not having personally evaluated them and become convinced of their inherent practical value—in other words it may lead to hypocrisy.

If the choir tour of this year has left the same positive impression on others as it has left on me, and if future tours continue to do so, then they have a function—an important one!

John M. Thiessen.

Hearty Thanks

It was with great anticipation that the choir launched forth on its annual tour of some of our M. B. churches. This year it was our privilege to visit Southern Saskatchewan, Southern Alberta and British Columbia. The Lord gave journeying mercies and also grace and strength for service. Many prayers, expressing our gratitude to the Lord for these experiences, have gone up from the hearts and lips of the members in this group.

On behalf of the members of the group, I want to express our gratitude and thanks to the people of all the constituencies which we visited. Whether these areas were in Saskatchewan, Al-

berta or British Columbia, we experienced a warm reception at all places. Please accept our humble thanks for your kind hospitality and heart-felt friendliness. We cannot repay you but we know that God will, because it was done in His name. Your intercessory prayers were the source of our sustaining strength and blessing.

Our prayer is that some positive spiritual influence may be the result of our fellowship and association with you. Your kind words of appreciation have humbled us, and encouraged us to a greater effort in the Lord's service. Thank you!

Henry Voth.

CHRISTIAN WORKER'S LIBRARY

Some Books on Faith Healing

The last few years have seen a marked resurgence of interest in the subject of faith healing. The question of healing through religious faith is, of course, not a new one. Christians, and religious folk generally, have in the past repeatedly asked the question (or some variant form of it): "May we expect God, today, to miraculously heal sick and infirm folk in response to sincere faith in His goodness and power, and to do so without failure or exception?" Yet for us, in this present generation, it has once again become an important and live issue that must be squarely faced and adequately dealt with.

There are informed Christian leaders who believe that we are on "the threshold of a new era in which the resources of religious faith will be united with the facilities of scientific medicine to minister to the patient as a whole, and thus to restore the health of the sick." (W. H. Boggs) Yet even these leaders, for the

most part, and certainly those of us who continue to maintain a very cautious and critical attitude towards the whole matter of faith healing, believe that faith healing as it has usually been taught and practised has much associated with it that is distinctly unsavory and quite unbiblical. Even at the risk of being rebuked for undue caution, we feel, the church should proceed slowly in this area, and take special pains to subject the teachings of the faith healers to a very sane and searching examination. Otherwise, their excesses and unwarranted claims will undoubtedly alienate and harm more people than will be benefited.

It is in connection with this examination, we submit, that studies on the subject by otherwise pious, sober and discerning Christian scholars can help us. The Scriptures themselves, of course, remain our sole and final authority for this as well as for all other questions

pertaining to the spiritual life of man. Nevertheless, we can be aided in our personal examination of the Scriptures and our application of their relevant truths to this question by also considering carefully and discriminatingly what such scholars have thought and said about it.

It is this conviction, at any rate, which has motivated us to compile and herewith recommend to our readers a brief list of non-technical studies of this subject. The last five of these have appeared within only the last three or four years, while Bingham's and Frost's studies are both quite recent reprints (1952 and 1951, respectively). The others are older works which have not been reprinted recently but have also proven quite illuminating and helpful, in one way or another, for a fuller study of this subject.

Our list is as follows: R. V. Bingham: **The Bible and the Body** (Evangelical Publishers); B. Kühn: **Krankheit und Heilung** (Verlag von Johannes Scheragen); G. G. Dawson: **Healing: Pagan and Christian** (S.P.C.K.); Th. Graebner: **Faith Healing** (Concordia Publishing House); H. W. Frost: **Miraculous Healing** (Fleming Revell); A. C. Gaebelein: **The Healing Question** (Our Hope Publishers); G. Murray: **Matters of Life and Death** (Sidgwick and Jackson); Wm. Orr: **Does God Heal Today?** (Scripture Press); Rendle Short: **The Bible and Modern Medicine** (The Paternoster Press); V. Edmunds, Editor: **Some Thoughts on Faith Healing** (Inter-Varsity Press); A. Schlemmer: **Faith and Medicine** (Tyndale Press) and W. H. Boggs, Jr.: **Faith Healing and the Christian Faith** (John Knox Press).

Of these, we have selected two for rapid review in this and the following issue: (1) Boggs' **Faith Healing and the Christian Faith** and (2) Frost's **Miraculous Healing**.

We begin with Boggs' book. It has received considerable, and generally favourable publicity during the past year or so. Many of our readers, I suppose, will have heard of it at least, and, I trust, will further have wanted to know something more about its contents and central emphases! It is a book for which

we personally foresee an ever-increasing host of curious readers, and in view of this and the fact, too, that it is a work which, together with many good things, also contains some questionable and even distinctly unbiblical things, we feel that we ought to make a few brief yet candid remarks about it.

Part One of the book, "Do the faith healers really heal?", brings before its readers, firstly, a curious array of modern faith-healers, Christian (used loosely) and otherwise, together with some of their claims in respect to faith healing, and the questions which such claims raise in the minds of many not associated with or particularly sympathetic to them. It then focuses directly upon the most pressing of these questions, namely: "In how far may we believe the claims of these modern faith healers?" and proceeds immediately to an appraisal and criticism of these claims. This critical appraisal is made in the light of both (1) sample empirical investigations made of the nature and later abiding results of faith healing services and (2) certain relevant teachings of the Bible, to wit: a) that the test of the genuineness of a religious movement lies in the nature of its permanent fruit and b) that the mere ability to work physical wonders of this sort does not in itself constitute proof of a divine mission or work. The discussion so far, we would insert here, is more or less satisfactory, though not at all profound nor incisive!

Part Two of the book, "Do the faith healers perform miracles?", first considers in some detail the oft-argued question whether all cures wrought under the hands of faith healers as have been established as valid and permanent need necessarily be viewed as entirely or strictly miraculous and **radically different** from all those cures which occur ordinarily when patients seek help from "doctors and drugs", as most faith healers so adamantly maintain, or whether it is not more consistent and more Biblical, after all, to draw no hard and fast line between "natural" and "supernatural" healings but rather to view **all** healings as essentially and truly divine, though realizing, of course, that some of them occur according to familiar pro-

cedures while others occur according to more unusual procedures. And here, we must confess, Boggs' discussion seems somewhat misleading and even unbiblical to us. We heartily concur with him when he herein censures the faith healers' general disparagement of doctors and medical help. We agree with him, also, when he takes them to task for their tendency to distinguish very sharply and even antithetically between "natural" and "supernatural" healing. But when Boggs, at the core of the discussion, gives us his own view and tells us that there is in fact no real distinction at all between God's "natural" and "supernatural" works, and that "medicines, drugs, or herbs are not any less supernatural than prayer or faith," we begin to wonder what he means—and then to question both the logical and Biblical validity of his remarks. At any rate, Boggs' discussion of this distinction, as he views it, reveals at best a rather confused understanding of, and unsympathetic attitude to the evangelical idea and concept of **miracle**.

In the second half of **Part Two** Boggs discusses at some length the healing ministry and miracles of Christ and comes to two clear and striking conclusions: (1) Christ's cures "cannot be described as supernatural cures which are totally unlike other cures with which we are familiar today. They are [rather] dramatic illustrations of the power of **psychic influences** to affect the body under certain circumstances, in complete accord with the psycho-biological principles of healing which have their origins in God's work of creation and divine government." (p. 69)

(2) Christ's primary concern in performing the many "miracles" of healing was not that of awakening or encouraging belief in His deity or in his divine mission, but rather that of revealing His divine compassion for the sick and infirm. As they stand, both conclusions, we may assert without hesitancy or qualification, are simply not Scriptural. And if we hope to refute and counteract the teachings of modern faith healers with "established conclusions" (!) of this misleading sort, we can rest assured that we shall surely fail!

Part Three, entitled "Is it the will of God to heal all the sick?", is concerned with three more specific facets of this larger question. They are: (1) Does all sickness result from the sin of man? (2) May sickness be attributed to the devil? and (3) Does God will perfect health for everyone? This section as such, therefore, concerns the most fundamental problem of the book: the problem of a Christian philosophy of sickness and suffering.

In dealing with the **first** of these questions, Boggs offers what we believe to be the Biblical answer to it, namely, that "human sin cannot be held responsible for all human sickness and suffering", but in the development and expansion of his answer he makes several assertions the full Biblical validity of which we would (personally) seriously question, if not deny outright. Boggs asserts, for example, that "even if the human race had never sinned, men would **not** have continued to live forever in their perishable bodies on this earth" (p.88), and that "it seems to have been the **intention** of the Creator that man should live for a limited span on this earth, suffer bodily decay, grow old and die physically" (p.88). Or, to quote again, "The initial ignorance of the human race was **ordained** by God, and was irremediable until after millenniums of experience and learning" (p.87). Such contentions, surely, cannot be sustained by a fair and comprehensive exegesis of relevant Scripture passages.

In his attempt to deal with the second of these questions, "May sickness be attributed to Satan?", Boggs, though he takes brief account of various views and attitudes, reveals a marked inclination to play down the objective reality or, at any rate, the superhuman personality and power of Satan. He does not definitely commit himself here, but it would seem that he himself actually prefers to regard Satan as a **symbol**, rather, **for all that is contrary to the will of God**—whatever that implies! He chooses to proceed, however, on the assumption of Satan's reality and investigates the effects of such belief in him upon the development of a Christian philosophy of sickness. He comes to the rather am-

biguous and yet obviously unscriptural conclusion that Satan, even for those who believe in his existence, really bears no significant relation to human sickness and suffering! It is in the light of this conclusion that Boggs offers to us, at this point, the counsel that "if man would avoid disease, he must, through the power and grace of God, resist moral temptations, learn to obey God's laws of health, and use the means God has placed on earth to aid the human family in its fight against disease" (p.119). Altogether, this chapter is probably the most unsatisfactory one in the book.

Chapter seven takes up the last of these three questions, "Does God will perfect health for everyone?", and constitutes, we feel, a much more satisfying treatment from the point of view of both Scripture and ordinary common sense.

The section on the "divine meanings of sickness" in this chapter is particularly illuminating and offers several very sane and suggestive insights concerning the lessons that God, oftentimes, would teach man through sickness and suffering.

In **Part Four**, "What should the church do about healing?", the author finally presents an overall Christian philosophy of health and then outlines a positive program in behalf of good health to be sponsored by the Church and used by all Christians—ministers, lay people, and medical personnel. The suggestions offered in connection with the Church's program of health, we may say in conclusion, are, for the most part, both Biblically sound and practical.

(To be continued.)

Herbert Giesbrecht.

MISSIONS

The Curse of Meroz

"Curse Meroz," says the angel of the Lord, "curse bitterly her inhabitants, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty" (Judges 5:23).

Israel was facing the dismal prospect of extinction at the hands of Canaanites. Having failed to carry out the divine decree to exterminate these enemies of God, her sin was finding her out. The hour was dark and gloomy. Jabin, the great Canaanite chief of Hazor, with his able captain Sisera, who commanded 900 war chariots, is about to crush defenceless Israel. In the crucial moment God steps in, and through a weak human instrument, Deborah, rouses Israel to face the onslaughts of the hosts of wickedness. Messengers are dispatched to the scattered tribes of Israel, and an army of 10,000, under the leadership of Barak gathers at Mt. Tabor.

But some of the tribes stand aloof.

Reuben, Dan, and Asher have been summoned, but they do not respond. Along the watercourses of Gilead and Bashan there were flocks to tend. Asher and Dan think of their ships, making their maritime ambition an unworthy excuse. Among the many who failed to respond to the call of Deborah, was the town of Meroz, and in her song of triumph in Judges 5, she hurls a divine imprecation down upon this town. Meroz belonged to those "who came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Just where Meroz was situated is impossible to say with any amount of accuracy. Perhaps Meroz was wiped out in consequence of the curse; but it seems best to place the town in the neighborhood of the Kishon, where the battle was fought, and where Israel conquered. Meroz became guilty of a very heinous crime, that of inactivity in the path of duty. Nestled snugly and smug-

ly in some quiet valley, she heard the sound of battle and the clash of armour; she knew of the issues involved in such a conflict; but she did nothing.

Meroz remained unmoved and complacent because of cowardice. Deborah and Barak had not called the tribes to a religious festival; it was too serious and dangerous a duty. That was no challenge for Meroz; that was reason enough to stay at home. Perhaps her cowardice was veiled in the respectable garb of prudence. Was it not rash nonsense to face an army of steel with an ill-equipped, untrained band? So Meroz did nothing about it. Seeking to save herself she reaped the heathenish anathema. Many hesitate to enter the conflict of the ages because of what it may cost them. They think of the losses, the criticisms, the troubles, that may attend their ministry, and so they do nothing.

Meroz did nothing when God's cause was at stake, because of a false humility. What difference would it make if Meroz rallied around the banner of Barak or not. Let the larger towns band together; Meroz' contribution is at best a paltry one! Like the servant who in his estimation had received so little that it wasn't worth investing, Meroz held aloof because she felt that

she could do so little, that it didn't pay. Cursed is Meroz, "because she came not to the help of the Lord." Those to whom much has been given will be responsible for much, but there is a very real danger for those to whom less has been given. They are in danger of doing nothing.

Meroz sat idly by when others risked their lives for the sake of God's kingdom, because she shirked responsibility. Large is the family of Meroz, and little do they realize the curse that attends their way. Many are willing to make an occasional contribution to the cause of the Lord, but they would not accept the responsibility of some specific task. They are shirkers. Erasmus was a wise man; yet he made a great blunder. He saw the errors of Romanism, and could have stood in the front ranks with the Reformers, in their battle against the system of Rome. We admire his wit, but he held back doubting, wavering, "a friend to the Reformation, but not an apostle of it."

God's call to us is clear. Yet many fail to enter the conflict of the ages. Some are seeking positions, income, ease, perhaps in the name of prudence. But let us not forget, "Cursed is Meroz for he came not to the help of the Lord." D. Ewert, in "The Companion"

ALUMNI SECTION

Thoughts of an Alumnus . . .

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.

"If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy" (Psalm 137:5,6).

Thus by the sad waters of Babylon did the psalmist reveal his most cherished thoughts about his sacred Zion. In his innermost heart Jerusalem occupied the most favoured position. He counted the city of his fathers and of his God of greater value than his only means of personal defence against his

enemies. If Jerusalem were not uppermost in his thoughts he might as well lose his faculty of speech, for what else was there to speak about?

Thus also may an alumnus think of his college. In moments of reflection his thoughts turn back to it with a sense of appreciation. In the heat of the battle he draws upon resources of strength which the Lord gave him there. In his assigned task in the vineyard of the Lord he knows the direct relationship which college training bears to his present work.

The above is, of course, an idealistic picture of an alumnus of the M. B. Bible College. Recently two former students of the College met for the first time in many years. One of them asked the other, "Tell me, how are things at the College in Winnipeg?" To which the other replied, "Don't know. I never pay any attention to it or bother with it." He may not really have had any ill-feeling toward his former school, but the best we could say for him is that he took the College for granted and was disinterested as far as its progress and development are concerned. I believe (the above incident to the contrary) there is really no body of people quite so keenly interested in the College and what goes on there as the alumni group. Ask them about the teachers at the College and I think they could name each one who has ever taught there and all who are on the faculty now. They might even be able to entertain you in a discussion at this point. Ask them to name at least ten missionaries who are graduates of the College and I think they could quickly do it for you. Ask them what place the College occupies in our conference program of education and missions, and what the future development of our College might be, and you will have material for a whole evening of discussion. You might receive some decided views on these and other College matters. All of this is, I believe, a very good sign for the future of the College. It is evidence of a constantly growing and informed support for our school.

When an alumnus thinks of his college he also thinks of other alumni. What a variety we have here—missionaries, farmers, teachers, businessmen, technicians, housewives, Bible school teachers, editors, clerks, pastors, accountants, Bible College teachers, doctors, tradesmen, etc., etc. (Did I miss you in this catalogue of vocations?) They are in foreign lands, in the United States, in many provinces of Canada. Yet despite the separation of distance and difference of occupation there is a spiritual bond of fellowship in the Lord through a common college training and experience. In one College reunion held several years ago the alumni and former

students ranged themselves in a large circle according to the year in which they first came to the College. It was a stirring sight, and symbolical too. It was easy to consider the Lord Himself at the center of such a circle of Christian fellowship. As the blessing of the Lord rests upon the College and a new class of graduates are thrust forth year by year our alumni association constitutes an ever-widening circle of fellowship. May each one of us be found standing in the place of God's appointment, like Gideon's band long ago—"And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled." God wants us, too, to win a great victory for Him.

Finally, an alumnus thinks about himself and his relationship to his alma mater. He may think what the College has meant to him in his life and how that training has helped him in his work for the Lord. Six years of Bible school teaching and four years in a pastoral ministry have given me many occasions for drawing upon that which was given me by godly teachers at College. Out of a sense of gratitude to God and His faithful servants in the College and Conference an alumnus prays for his alma mater. Far from forgetting, he would rather say with Samuel of old, "God forbid that I should sin in ceasing to pray for you." Far from forgetting the College, let our right hand be engaged in working for it and our tongue employed in speaking its worth and merit.

Walter Wiebe,
Hepburn, Sask.

CAMPUS NEWS

As we look back upon this past year at M.B.B.C., we can say with the Psalmist David, "The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad" Ps. 126,3. The Lord has richly blessed us in our studies and in the various activities, especially during the last two months of this school year. The following incidents were some of the highlights:

EXCURSION:— During the Easter holidays, the A Cappella Choir toured the western provinces, visiting most of the M. B. Churches in B.C. and several

others in the prairies en route to the coast. They served the congregations with songs and testimonies, while Dr. Peters brought the messages.

ENTERTAINMENT:— From April 9-11 we were privileged to entertain about forty musically-minded men who were attending the annual Music Conference of the Conductors of Canada. We enjoyed their fellowship, especially in the crowded dining hall. We trust that their workshops and lectures were profitable for their ministry.

We were entertained by visiting quartets on two occasions. The Four Parsons of the Canadian Bible College at Regina, and the Rock of Ages Quartet from Vancouver served us in testimony and song. We enjoyed their hearty singing.

On May 3rd, Miss Wanda Dick displayed her musical talent with a piano recital. It was an outstanding performance.

EXAMPLE:— April 21-26 was Peace Emphasis Week at M. B. B. C. Dr. Peters challenged us with several messages on the soul-shaking issue of non-resistance. He spoke on the Biblical basis of our peace witness, the logic of non-resistance, the example of Christ, and the practical application in peace time.

Rev. Wilbert Loewen of the Manitoba Mennonite Disaster Service told us about their organization and showed how we can demonstrate our love to Christ in a practical way by helping those who are involved in a disaster such as a flood or a tornado.

EXCHANGE:— After visiting C.M.B.C. on February 28, we were happy to welcome the students of the Canadian Mennonite Bible College to our campus on April 18. We enjoyed an evening of fellowship. These exchange visits draw us closer in a common purpose—that of extending the Kingdom of God.

EXPOSITION:— During the past few weeks, aspiring young homiletics students have been attempting expository preaching. Several have displayed their exegetical insight by expounding the Scriptures in class and also in chapel services. May the Lord use their talents to the building up of His Church in the coming years.

EXERCISE:— April 26 was "Clean-Up Day" on our campus. Using muscles,

ladders, soap, brushes, mops, and "tons" of water, we scrubbed the buildings from top to bottom under the able supervision of Max Woerlen, our gratis work chief.

On May 12th, the College family had its annual spring picnic at West Kildonan Park. We spent the afternoon playing games, devouring a tasty lunch, and enjoying a short program.

EVANGELISM:— Many college students and several teachers participated in evangelistic services in local churches in April. Rev. J. A. Toews served in a week of meetings at the Logan M. B. church, and Dr. F. C. Peters held a week-long campaign in Elmwood M. B. church. Some students sang in the choirs, while others helped to canvass the neighborhood and invite people to the services.

ELECTIONS:— On May 9, the student council for the coming school year was elected. We first heard reports of the activities of the various committees during the past year. After the elections the new ten-member council was introduced to the student body. The new executive consists of Harold Jantz, Virgil—President; Harold Ratzlaff, Vancouver—Vice-President; Anne Klassen, Marquette—Secretary - Treasurer. The chairmen of the various committees are as follows: Dave Nikkel, Winnipeg—Home Missions; John Klassen, Vancouver—Foreign Missions; Abe Koop, Vancouver—Literary; Jake Dueck, Coaldale—Music; Sue Epp, Vancouver—Health; Walter Unger, St. Catherines—Recreation; Alfred Friesen, Niagara-on-the-Lake—Yearbook.

EXAMS:— The final examinations of this school year will be written from May 22 to 30. May we all strive to do our best, and then rest upon the leniency of our teachers.

EXIT:— The closing exercises of the '57-'58 college year are as follows: the Baccalaureate service on May 29, the Graduation Banquet on May 30, the Senior Class Program on May 31, and the Graduation Ceremonies on June 1.

We wish our twenty-two Grads God's richest blessing in their future endeavors. "What you have learned and received and heard and seen . . . do . . ." Phil. 4.9. Don't forget your Alma Mater! Au Revoir!

C. Alfred Friesen.

Absolventen des M. B. Bibel College

Bachelor of Theology

George Block, Borden, Sask.
George Braun, New Hazelton, B.C.
Peter Friesen, Paraguay
Erich Giesbrecht, Paraguay
Gerhard Giesbrecht, Paraguay
Rudolf Heidebrecht, Coaldale, Alta.
Jerry Hildebrand, Winkler, Man.
Arthur Kilewer, Elm Creek, Man.
Takashi Niwa, Japan
Henry Regehr, Winnipeg, Man.
Henry Warkentin, Kitchener Ont.
Max Woerlen, Winnipeg, Man.
Nick Willems, Woodrow, Sask.

(in absentia)

Bachelor of Religious Education

Lillie Boese, Elm Creek, Man.
Erica Dyck, Clearbrook, B.C.
Mary Fast, St. Catherines, Ont.
Helen Isaak, Springstein, Man.
Mary Lenzmann, Yarrow, B.C.
Edith Neufeld, Winnipeg, Man.
Lora Sawatzky, Winnipeg, Man.
Roland Sawatzky, Yarrow, B.C.
Harry Loewen, Coaldale, Alta.

(in absentia)

Sacred Music Course

Rudolf Baerg, Coaldale, Alta.
Mary Lenzmann, Yarrow, B.C.

General Bible Course

Mrs. Lora Sawatzky, Yarrow, B.C.

Bringing Our Sheaves With Us

The time for toil is past, and night has come,
The last and saddest of the harvest eves;
Worn out with labor long and wearisome,
Drooping and faint, the reapers hasten home,
Each laden with his sheaves.

Last of the laborers, Thy feet I gain,
Lord of the harvest! and my spirit grieves
That I am burdened, not so much with grain
As with a heaviness of heart and brain.
Master, behold my sheaves!

Few, light, and worthless—yet their trifling weight
Through all my frame a weary aching leaves;
For long I struggled with my hapless fate,
And staid and toiled till it was dark and late—
Yet these are all my sheaves!

Full well I know I have more tares than wheat—
Brambles and flowers, dry stalks, and withered leaves;
Wherefore I blush and weep, as at Thy feet
I kneel down reverently, and repeat,
“Master, behold my sheaves!”

I know these blossoms, clustering heavily
With evening dew upon their folded leaves,
Can claim no value nor utility—
Therefore shall fragrancancy and beauty be
The glory of my sheaves.

So do I gather strength and hope anew;
For well I know thy patient love perceives
Not what I did, but what I strove to do—
And though the full, ripe ears be sadly few
Thou wilt accept my sheaves.

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