

The Voice

of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College

VOL. X

MAY - JUNE, 1961

No 3

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

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Gehe wieder heim . . .

Das war Jesu Befehl an einen Menschen der seine Gnade erlebt hatte. Was sollte er zu Hause? "Sage, wie große Dinge dir Gott getan hat." Dieser Auftrag Jesu wird heute noch im Leben derer wiederholt, denen das Auge für die Wunder der göttlichen Gnade aufgegangen ist. Unter diesen befinden sich auch unsere Absolventen. Sie "gehen wieder heim", und wir hoffen zu Gott, daß ihr Zeugnis von ihrem Gotterleben ein klares sein möchte.

Auf Seite dreiundzwanzig findet Ihr eine Liste unserer Absolventen. Es sind "werdende" Brüder und Schwestern. Niemand würde behaupten wollen — und sie am allerwenigsten — daß sie "fertige" Menschen sind. Sie möchten aber gerne dem Herrn dienen, und da haben wir als Lehrer eine Bitte an unsere Gemeinden. Man möchte sie doch aufnehmen "gleich wie euch Christus aufgenommen hat" (Röm. 15:7). Er nahm uns auf so wie wir waren. Wir versprachen Ihm unsere Treue und wollten Ihm dienen. Da merkten wir wie ungeschickt wir dabei waren. Aber Er hat uns nicht verschmäht.

Das Elternhaus, die Gemeinde, und die Schulen haben nun alle zum Werden unserer Absolventen beigetragen. Für das Gute und Versprechende in ihnen können wir nur Gott danken; für die Mängel müssen wir uns alle verantwortlich machen. Möchte ihr Ausgang aus der Schule und ihr Eingang in die Gemeinden ein gesegneter sein.

Wir laden alle Leser ein an unserer Schlußfeier teilzunehmen um mit uns um Gottes Hilfe zu flehen für den ferneren Weg der Schule.

D. Ewert

PRACTICAL

A Blessed Mother

"Her children shall rise up and call her blessed" (Prov. 31:28).

Since 1914, when President Woodrow Wilson signed the proclamation which urged that the second Sunday in May be observed as Mother's Day, there has been a special annual remembrance and exaltation of mothers in the United States and in nearly one hundred other countries in the western world.

However, the practice of praising and magnifying mothers and motherhood did not begin with that date. When it pleased God to give Adam his helpmeet, Adam broke out in rejoicing when God brought her to him. The observation of the Biblical narrator, that a man will "leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife" (Gen. 2:24), has been proved to be correct a thousand times. Solomon said, "whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord." Parents are indicted for failing to exercise authority and discipline over their children (1 Sam. 3:13); "because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." Furthermore they are enjoined to discipline their children so that they might be kept from bringing shame upon the family. "Discipline your son, and he will give you rest" (Prov. 29:17). "A child left to himself brings shame to his mother" (Prov. 29:15). Through the ages the blessing of motherhood and the honor of worthy mothers has been recognized.

A Noble Career

The woman who chooses to become a wife and a mother has chosen a high calling indeed. In addition to being the wife and companion of man, woman is given the honor of being mother to every human being. She who brings a child into the world has been partner to a miracle and has rendered a greater service to mankind than any professio-

nal man, regardless of how great his skill, could ever render. The Apostle Paul writing to Timothy had this to say, "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully" (1 Tim. 5:14).

Mother and motherhood should always be discussed with becoming reverence and respect. However, mothers should be very cautious indeed to thus discharge their duties that they might be called blessed. John A. Shedd said, "Simply having children does not make a mother." There must be a constant guidance of those children throughout their formative years, and a dedication to this so great a task.

Literature is replete with beautiful passages in appreciation of Mother. Emerson wrote, "Men are what their mothers made them." Wm. Brown wrote, "The sweetest sound to mortal given are heard in mother, home, and heaven." Thackeray said: "Mother is the name for God on the lips and the hearts of little children." An old Jewish proverb says, "God could not be everywhere, so he made mothers." Philip Brooks wrote, "The happiest part of my happy life has been my mother." The most beautiful description of a mother and homemaking is found in Proverbs 31:10-31.

A mother's career is world-wide. William Ross Wallace wrote: "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." No wonder then that people everywhere do her honor by setting aside a day for her. The observance of Mothers' Day is in honor of the greatest career—Motherhood. Girls and young women should be warned to keep themselves pure for the supremely important work of being a wife and a mother.

A Great Responsibility

Tremendous responsibilities attend the supreme career of motherhood. Upon her fall the responsibility of moulding and guiding the lives of her children. Henry Ward Beecher said, "The mother's heart is the child's classroom." Even the hard-hearted Napoleon recognized this principle. He said, "The future destiny of the child is always the work of the mother." Every woman who becomes a mother must accept these grave responsibilities.

One of her great responsibilities is to show love and affection. She stands as a symbol of sympathy, the statue of kindness, the tower of tenderness, the height of honor and the commandment of compassion. Older women are commissioned by Paul to "teach the young women to love their husbands, to love their children" (Tit. 2:4). There is no adequate measure for the extent of a mother's love. Mothers in every generation have been willing to sacrifice everything including health and life for their children. In return for the unparalleled mother-love, every child should strive to honor the name of its mother.

"There is beauty all around
Where there's love at home."

She also has the responsibility of a life of prayer. The secret to success in being a wife and mother is to cultivate prayer fellowship with God. This she needs for the growth of her own spiritual life as well as those entrusted to her. It is during her quiet time each day that she is oriented afresh to the plan of God regarding her calling as wife and mother. It need not be an extended time, only a few minutes with the Lord will strengthen her love and forbearance. She will receive grace for life on the storm-tossed sea of home. Furthermore, she is able to exercise her priestly duties as she intercedes for her husband and children. Augustine said, "If I am thy child, O God, it is because thou didst give me such a praying mother." Someone has penned the following verses in recalling mother's prayers.

Somehow, God always seemed so real,
Somehow, I could not doubt, nor feel
That God was ever far away,
When I would hear my mother pray;
Somehow, when she would kneel in
prayer,
God always seemed to meet her there.

When she would kneel beside my bed;
With her dear hands upon my head,
My little heart would cease to fear
And God would seem to come so near.
Somehow, some way, when Mother
prayed,
I could not, dare not, feel afraid.

Our first prayers were learned at mother's knee. Her smile and her prayers at the family altar left deep spiritual impressions upon our souls.

Another responsibility of a mother is to exercise faith in God, and to transmit this faith to her children. This is the greatest heritage any daughter or son can receive. It is worth more than silver or gold. The well-known words of Abraham Lincoln also express the importance of a mother's faith, "All that I am, or can be, I owe to my angel mother." Paul in his words to Timothy gives us a very striking example of the far-reaching consequences of a mother's faith. "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also" (2 Tim. 1:5). Here a mother's faith had reached the third generation.

A Deserving Reward

"A gracious woman gets honor" (Prov. 11:16). Yes, she will receive honor from her husband and her children as well as from others. They will "rise up and call her blessed" (Prov. 31:28). The commandment "Honor your father and mother," will be fulfilled in the lives of her children. Her influence will have exerted a stabilizing effect on their lives. She will reap the reward of their obedience if she will appeal to their conscience, reason with them,

counseling and chastising if necessary until they relent. "A foolish son is a grief to his father and bitterness to her who bore him" (Prov. 17:25).

Another reward will be the confidence of her children. They will confide in her and entrust their problems to her. They know that mother was genuine. There was no pretending or covering up—this cannot be done at home in the long run. Mother may not consider herself an expert at her task; still, as she cared sacrificially for her own, a deep trust and confidence was born in the

heart of the child. Is it then a wonder that the child will share its deep secrets with mother?

Mother's day must be a remembrance day—a day in which old and young recall the blessings that have come their way through mother. It is a day of rededication to greater love and devotion to our mothers. It is a day when we with one accord rise up and "call her blessed" who has meant so much to our lives and the lives of our children.

H. R. Baerg

Randangelegenheiten im christlichen Leben

Dieser Artikel ist als Antwort auf den zweiten Teil der eingereichten Frage gedacht, deren erster Teil in der vorigen Nummer beachtet wurde. "Wie schaffen wir eine Ethik, die später nicht Konflikte verursacht? Einmal schlossen wir wegen Haarschneiden aus, heute nicht. Dann war Television eine große Frage. Viele Gemeinden haben damit gearbeitet. Heute ist es vielleicht besonders mit dem Färben der Mädchen, den Ohrringen und dergleichen. WENN WIR HEUTE DAMIT ARBEITEN, WERDEN WIR UM ETLICHE JAHRE UNS ERKLÄREN MÜSSEN?"

Wir befassen uns also mit dem letzten Satz.

Der Fragende ist bestimmt ein edler Bruder; denn er sucht nach einer zufriedenstellenden Lösung der Probleme, die Randangelegenheiten mit sich bringen. Möge es gelingen, unter der Leitung des Geistes und in voller Beachtung der biblischen Grundsätze der Frage näher zu treten und der befriedigenden Antwort ein Stückchen weiter auf die Spur zu kommen.

I.

Beim Beantworten der Frage geht es vor allem um die biblische Grundlage. Paulus und Petrus kennen das Problem der Randfälle auch. In 1. Tim. 2, 9-10 und 1. Pet. 3, 3-4 geben sie uns Aufschluß. Die Bezugnahme auf Anlegen von Schmuck und Kleidung geht bei den beiden Aposteln darauf aus, die

Aufmerksamkeit der betreffenden Personen vom äußeren Erscheinen auf die innere Seelengröße zu lenken. Die christliche Frau soll sich nach der Apostel Auffassung so kleiden, daß sie Gott gefalle. Wenn sie sich fertig macht auszugehen, sollen ihre Gedanken darauf gerichtet sein, was Gott gefällt und was Ihn ehrt, nicht auf das, was sie von anderen auszeichnet und die Aufmerksamkeit aller auf sie lenkt.

Wenn man den angeführten Stellen die Deutung geben wollte, es wäre der Frau jeglicher Schmuck versagt, so sei darauf hingewiesen, daß Paulus das zierliche Kleiden empfiehlt. Die Frau soll sich so kleiden, wie es Frauen zukommt, die Gottseligkeit beweisen wollen. Der "verborgene Mensch des Herzens unverrückt mit sanftmütigem Geist" soll in der Kleidung zum Ausdruck kommen. Es wäre bestimmt nicht im Sinn der Apostel zu behaupten, daß eine gleichgültige, geschmacklose Art des Kleidens gottgewollt und dem christlichen Glauben angemessen sei. Es ist ebenso falsch anzunehmen, daß die Apostel in diesen Stellen es dem einzelnen völlig überlassen zu bestimmen, was der christliche Standard sei.

Schon zur Zeit der Apostel war die Tendenz da, sich der Gesellschaft und ihrer jeweiligen Kultur anzupassen. Wo da die Grenze zwischen Angebrachtem, Fraglichem, oder Unerlaubtem liegt, ist oft schwer festzustellen. Diese Grenze wird uns in der Schrift nicht festge-

steckt, sie kann aber an Hand der Schrift gefunden werden. Wiederum geben uns die beiden Apostel Fingerzeige. Paulus beschäftigt sich in Röm. 14 mit Randangelegenheiten. Einige der Glieder fühlen sich berechtigt, sich frei in der Gesellschaft zu bewegen, andere fühlen sich durch ihre Stellungnahme zum Christentum gebunden. Um der Entzweiung zu wehren, ermahnt Paulus beide Gruppen, einander nachsichtig zu behandeln und die Verantwortung füreinander nicht zu vergessen. Die Gemeinde wird aufgefordert, objektiv an der Schrift festzuhalten, auch in Grenzangelegenheiten um das Erkennen des göttlichen Willens zu ringen und die Einigkeit zu bewahren. Petrus ermahnt in 1. Pet. 5, 5-6 die ganze Gemeinde, sich einander zu unterordnen und als Ganzes sich unter die gewaltige Hand Gottes zu demütigen.

Für diese Hinweise — und derer gibt es noch mehr — sind wir dem Herrn dankbar. Sie dürften als Anleitung dienen, für unsere Lage eine Arbeitsbasis zu finden.

II.

Wie lassen sich diese Schriftstellen auf unsere Sachlage beziehen? Paulus stellt den einzelnen, sowohl als auch die Gemeinde unter Verpflichtung.

1. Die Aufgabe des einzelnen in der Gemeinde.

Der Mensch bleibt auch nach seiner Bekehrung in diese Welt und in das wechselhafte Leben gestellt. Er schafft sich seine eigene Kultur, die er aber in fortwährendem Wechsel hält. Lebensart, Mode, Bauart, Nahrung, Arbeitsmethode — alles ändert im Laufe der Zeit. Jede der Erscheinungen ist Ausdrucksform, die des Menschen Wesen offenkundig. Doch in allem Wechsel ist ein Faktor, der dem Christen das Gleichgewicht bewahrt. Er stellt sein ganzes Leben fortwährend unter die göttliche Beurteilung und ist in beständiger Beratung mit dem himmlischen Vater über das, was Ihn gefällt und was den Mitmenschen frommt.

Wie wird aber die göttliche Abschätzung des Lebens offenbar? Nach den obigen Schriftstellen zu urteilen, liegt

die göttliche Antwort auf zwei Linien. Das Gewissen muß bekunden, daß das Verhältnis zu Gott durch die Teilnahme am Neuen nicht gestört wird und man Gott für das Neue danken und Ihn damit ehren kann. Das ist die Linie von oben nach unten, die vertikale. Die zweite ist die horizontale, das Verhältnis zu den Glaubensgeschwistern. Wie das Verhältnis zu Gott, so soll auch das Verhältnis zum einzelnen Mitchristen sowohl als auch zur Gemeinde in Ordnung bleiben. Nur wenn es auf beiden Linien richtig ist, ist alles gut. Daher muß der Gläubige in jedem Grenzfall die Fragen bejahen können: Kann ich in den Neuerscheinungen mitmachen und dabei mich eines reinen, freien Gewissens, eines gegen Gott dankbaren Herzens und des Wohlwollens des Geschwisterkreises erfreuen? Was bezwecke ich mit der Anpassung zum Neuen, sei es Putz, Kleidungsart oder sonst etwas?

Bevor der Christ etwas unternimmt, das in der Gemeinde nicht üblich war, steht er unter der Verpflichtung, sich Rechenschaft darüber abzulegen, wie ihn das Neue im Verhältnis zu seinem Gott und seiner Bruderschaft beeinflussen wird. Wenn er treu ist, wird er das Störende und Anstößige ungetan lassen. Von der Liebe getrieben wird auch der in seinem Gewissen Gebundene nicht richten, sondern die Sache Gott anbefehlen. Beide werden die Wahrheit des Wortes erkennen: "Das Reich Gottes ist nicht Essen und Trinken, sondern Gerechtigkeit, Friede und Freude in dem heiligen Geist. Wer darin Christ dient, der ist Gott gefällig und den Menschen wert" (Röm. 14, 17-18).

Nach Pauli Aussage gewinnt alles dies damit Bedeutung, daß der Christ mit seiner Einstellung zur jeweiligen Kultur seine Stellung zu seiner Gemeinde und zu seinem Gott bekundet. Merken wir: Paulus spricht weder dem zu engen noch dem zu weiten Gewissen das Wort. Beide sind der Unterweisung bedürftig.

2. Die Aufgabe der Gemeinde.

Daher wenden sich die Apostel an die Gemeinde mit der Aufforderung, ihren Teil zur Lösung der Probleme zu tun. Sie hat erzieherisch einzuwirken. Hier bedarf es einer offenen, objektiven, geschwisterlichen Aussprache, bei der je-

der bestrebt ist, den Willen Gottes zu erkennen, statt dem Fleisch Raum zu verschaffen. Wenn das Suchen nach der Wahrheit mit dem Ernst angestrebt wird, gelingt es auch. Daraus ergibt sich dann, daß das zu enge Gewissen von der Gemeinde her zu größerer Toleranz erzogen wird und das Kleine als klein, das Große als groß zu sehen beginnt.

a) Es ist bestimmt nicht leicht, solchen gegenüber gerecht zu werden, die jegliche Neuerscheinung als weltlich und sündhaft stempeln. Sie tragen schwer an der Last, da sie sich durch den Andern in ihrer Gemeinschaft mit Gott stören lassen. Ein neuer Hut bewegt dazu, ihre Freude am Herrn zu verlieren. Die Gemeinde hat ihnen gegenüber eine erzieherische Aufgabe. Wird diese nicht erfüllt, mögen diese Glieder in eine Gesetzlichkeit geraten, die sie zu keinem freudigen Christenleben kommen läßt. Oder sie entwickeln sich zu Nörglern, die Andern beständig Vorschriften machen und sich selbst als Maß aller Dinge ansehen. Paulus nimmt sich die Freiheit, solche zu unterweisen, doch in aller Nachsicht und mit Liebe. Solches Vorgehen wirkt sich auch in der Gemeinde wohltuend aus.

b) Aber auch denen gegenüber hat die Gemeinde Verpflichtungen, die eine breitere Auffassung von der christlichen Freiheit haben. Es ist kaum zu erwarten, daß alle einheitlich denken, und es keine Meinungsverschiedenheit über Randangelegenheiten gäbe. Gerade deshalb ist es notwendig, daß der Gläubige das Neue zur Durchsprache bringt und die Gesinnung der Geschwister erfährt, ehe er sich damit einläßt. Auch hier bedarf es der Überprüfung des Gewissens. Wer mit der Nachfolge ernst macht, wird nicht ohne weiteres sein eigenes Gewissen als letzte Norm hinstellen. Er bemüht sich in seinem Suchen nach der Wahrheit um das Urteil der Glaubensgenossen, sowie um die Unterweisung aus der Schrift. Rasmussen sagt in "Christian Social Ethics" (S. 70) "Der Christ wird nicht privat zuverlässig, ohne sich beständig der Einschränkung und der Umgestaltung zu unterwerfen, die dadurch kommt, daß

er den Ansprüchen anderer gerecht wird und sich Gott in jeder neuen Situation gehorsam unterstellt." (Frei übersetzt.) Die Ansprüche der Gemeinde an das Glied sind mitbestimmend für das Handeln des einzelnen. Zu dieser Rücksicht auf das Gewissen der Gemeinde will der Apostel das einzelne Glied erzogen haben. Ist diese hergestellt, dann ist die Einstellung auf beiden Linien — der vertikalen und der horizontalen — richtig. Dann steht auch alles wohl. Dann herrscht die Liebe zu Gott und zu der Gemeinde, und dann erlaubt man sich nur, was Gott ehrt, die Gemeinde baut und der Verkündigung des Evangeliums fordernd zur Seite steht. Dann werden Einschränkungen nicht als Hemmungen und Verbote angesehen, sondern als Weichenstellungen, die zu nützlicherer, höherer und edlerer Lebensart führen. Dann lernt man das Nützliche, Notwendige und Schöne einer Kultur zu erkennen, auszusondern und in den Dienst der Gemeinde zu stellen, während das Unnütze und Schädliche beiseite liegengelassen wird.

Wie steht es nun mit dem Schminken und dem Tragen von Ohrringen? Beide sind Ausdruck der heutigen Kultur geworden. Es ist den Aposteln hoch anzurechnen, daß sie den Frauen nicht eine eingehende Anordnung über Kleidung gaben, noch der geschmacklosen Tracht religiöse Bedeutung beilegte. Es bleibt den christlichen Schwestern gestattet, sich zur Ehre Gottes und der Gemeinde nett und schön, aber in Scham und Zucht zu kleiden. Gehören die Ohrringe und das Schminken zum "zierlichen Kleide in Zucht und Scham"? Gehören sie zum Schmuck, durch den man Gottseligkeit beweist? Sind sie Anzeichen einer gefährlichen Anpassung an die Welt? oder Andeutung geistlicher Reife und Größe? Wäre es möglich, diese Art des Schmuckes als berechtigt anzusehen? Meines Erachtens ist er Ausdruck der Eitelkeit, die einen gewissen Grad der Verweltlichung angibt; denn er gehört nicht mehr zum zierlichen Kleiden, sondern zum Putz. Und dieser fördert nur die Eitelkeit des Menschen. Die Gemeinde sollte hoffen dürfen, daß in Zukunft — und wir hoffen in nicht zu weit entlegenen — das

Gewissen der geistlich Denkenden, die vorgeben, mit der Nachfolge ernst zu machen, erwacht und diese Art des weltlichen Putzes aus den Gemeinden verschwindet. Wollten wir alle, und besonders die Schwestern die einen Hang zu Schmuck über das Zierliche hinaus haben, den Satz aus Jonas Gebet beherzigen (2, 9): "Die da halten an dem Nichtigen, verlassen die Gnade."

Aber vielleicht bin ich im Irrtum. Da bedarf es der erzieherischen Einwirkung der Gemeinde. Bin ich zu engherzig, dann möchte ich darüber unterwiesen werden, sind es andere, wären sie zu beeinflussen. Die Gemeinde darf nicht schweigen; denn damit macht sie sich erst recht mitschuldig, da der Freiere sich das Schweigen als Zustimmung auslegt, der im Gewissen Gebundene es als Schwäche ansieht. Bezüglich der vorliegenden Randangelegenheiten wäre meines Erachtens offenes Austauschen, schriftgemäßes Beleuchten und erzieherisches Beeinflussen bestimmt Pauli Rat an die Gemeinden von heute. Unterläßt die Gemeinde das Ausüben ihres Einflusses auf den einzelnen, verliert sich bald die Besorgnis um des Gliedes persönliches Verhältnis zu seinem Gott und zur Gemeinde. Damit hört die wahre Gemeinschaft auf. Dann gibt es auch kein einheitliches Zeugnis der Ge-

meinde mehr. Dann sind auch die Gottesdienste in Gefahr, zu Veranstaltungen abzusinken, und die Gemeinde läuft Gefahr, bald nicht mehr Gemeinschaft der Gläubigen zu sein.

Nicht Ausschluß, nicht Trennung ist meines Erachtens der biblische Weg, mit den Problemen der Randfälle fertig zu werden, sondern brüderliches miteinander Reden, bis sich die Geister entweder finden oder ausschalten. Dann wird die Gemeinde von heute von der kommenden Generation nicht vor Gericht gezogen werden.

Wäre wohl etwas wünschenswerter, als daß sich die Besorgnis des lieben Fragestellers auf die Bruderschaft lege, so daß wir uns mit vereinter Kraft untereinander erzieherisch, helfend, liebend, wahrnehmen. Dann würden die Randangelegenheiten wohl kaum noch Probleme in der Gemeinde verursachen. Und die lang ersenhte Erweckung möchte uns von Gottes Gnaden geschenkt werden können. Daher: "Lasset uns untereinander unser selbst wahrnehmen mit Reizen zur Liebe und zu guten Werken und nicht verlassen die Versammlung... sondern einander ermahnen; und das so viel mehr, soviel ihr sehet, daß sich der Tag naht" (Hebr. 10, 24).

C. Wall.

BIBLE TRANSLATION

Why Another New Version

In mid-March of this year The New English Bible, New Testament, came from the Oxford and Cambridge University Presses. The first printing of one million copies lasted only a few hours, and so a reprint was almost immediately called for—a witness to the fact that the Bible still speaks to our modern 20th century. The new version represents 13 years' of work by scholars representing a dozen denominational and independent groups in the British Isles.

This volume is an entirely new translation of the New Testament. There has been no attempt made at revising existing English versions. The translators were appointed by the Churches and Bible Societies of Britain. The director of the New Testament project was the Rev. Dr. C. H. Dodd, famous biblical scholar. Besides the Greek and Hebrew scholars a panel of specialists in English was appointed, the former to assure accuracy of translation, the latter to guard the style—a slavish rendering of

the Greek is often a far cry from current English.

On the whole The New English Bible, New Testament, has been hailed as a great success. We are convinced that no one is so conscious of the weaknesses and limitations of this version as the translators themselves. Throughout the history of Bible translation, the task of the Bible translator has been a rather thankless one. However, those who understand the mission of the Church, and who have a high view of the inspiration of the Scriptures, appreciate every honest effort to give the reading public the living Word of God in a language that speaks to the heart. For this great principle of reading the Bible in the language which best communicates the eternal verities of divine revelation, men have labored, bled and died. Therefore, every effort that is made to make the Scriptures clear and meaningful should be greeted with deep appreciation and respect. This, of course, does not mean that we close our eyes to the weaknesses and limitations which beset every version, but we rejoice in the fact that the Book is still "alive."

Every new version of the Bible raises the question: "Why another version?" For those who ask this question honestly and in good faith we wish to suggest a few answers that may help to answer the question in part. In this article we want to think of three areas in which a partial answer may be found, and we limit ourselves to the New Testament field. One area of study that has called for new versions is that known as Textual Criticism. Also, vocabulary studies by casting new meaning on words have demanded new versions. Then, the changes in the English language makes it imperative that new versions be given to the Bible reading public periodically.

I. Advances in Textual Criticism.

The term "textual criticism" is one of those that has fallen among the thieves. It is a perfectly good term and is used for that science which occupies itself with the very exacting discipline of establishing the best reading

from the manuscripts available. The aim of textual criticism is to lay bare what the authors of the New Testament documents actually wrote. No one should have such a deep appreciation. If we hold to verbal inspiration then we want to know by all means what the actual words are.

The evidence for the best text of the New Testament comes primarily from three sources: First, the great wealth of Manuscripts; Second, the early translations of the New Testament into other languages (e.g. Syriac, Latin, etc.); third, quotations from the New Testament found in the writings of ancient authors.

That there should be discrepancies in Biblical texts at all is a puzzle to some. To this we can only say that God chose to permit His Word to pass through human hands throughout the centuries, and whatever human hands touch bears the stamp of humanity.

The early Christians had no authoritative writings except what we call the Old Testament, which, like other Jews, they held to be a record of divine revelation. Unlike other Jews, however, they were convinced that in Jesus of Nazareth God had spoken decisively, and this put the old Scriptures into a new light. The story of Christ's life, death and glorification was the Gospel, the Good News, that was told and retold in the early Christian Community even before the records of it were put to writing. Meanwhile, Christian evangelists, and in particular Paul, were writing pastoral letters of advice, encouragement, admonition to the little Christian communities which the Gospel brought into being. These writings circulated individually for some time among Christian churches, but as early as the second century attempts were made at collecting them. The story of the formation of the Canon is a chapter for itself.

The ink was hardly dry on the original documents of the New Testament when copies of these living messages were made by pious hands. Occasionally a letter of a word was repeated, or omitted, accidentally, changing the meaning of the word. Through any

number of unconscious lapses in transcribing the original copies a host of minor variant readings were introduced into the New Testament text. "No copyist, however lavish of his care or skilful in his craft, can avoid occasional error in the spelling and ordering of words: no subsequent copyist noticing a consequent nonsense, is likely to resist giving it meaning by correction... The original is left further and further behind..." (**The Riddle of the New Testament**, Hoskyns and Davey).

At first the autographs were copied; then the copies themselves. When peace came to the Church with the reign of Constantine an attempt was made to replace the Scriptures destroyed during the great persecutions. Also, attempts were made to give to the Church a more or less fixed text. A certain Lucian of Antioch at the beginning of the 4th century; had made an attempt to standardize the readings, and his text seems to lie behind the official text that became the authorized version of the Greek church. It is known as the Byzantine text. The effect of this authoritative revision was that manuscripts representing the state of the text before these revisions fell into disuse.

When then the age of printing led to the printing of a Greek New Testament, the text which Erasmus printed at Basel in 1516, was based on 12th century manuscripts. Neither of the two manuscripts which he used had the last few verses of Revelation, and so Erasmus produced them by translating them into Greek from Latin. When this first Greek New Testament was published it gained tremendous prestige. The famous Greek Testament issued by Robert Stephanus from the Royal Press at Paris, in 1550, was based upon it. The great scholar Theodore Beza of Geneva had a number of editions printed which were all based on the text of Stephanus. Then in 1624 and 1633 appeared the edition of the Elzevir brothers of Holland which had the term "Textus Receptus" in its preface, and which became the text from which most of the Bible translations were made until quite modern times. Thus one may almost say that a single

12th century manuscript provided the text upon which most of the English versions in the post-Reformation period were based.

Then it happened that in the providence of God older manuscripts were discovered going back to the 4th and even the 3rd century A.D. Scholars discovered that the wealth of manuscript material fell into different text-traditions and so they began to isolate "families" of texts. Those who have a suspicion that this work was done by caloused theologians need to be reminded that one of the most pious theologians, Johann Bengel, already in the 18th century was active in this type of textual study. The result of such studies was that the Textus Receptus was no longer regarded as authoritative. Although this appeared to some to be an unsettling experience it really amounted to a strengthening of the authenticity of the Scriptures.

The great discoveries in the texts of the New Testament demanded new English versions based on more dependable readings. The Authorized Version of 1611 had been based on the Textus Receptus. For some 250 years the textual base of that great version remained untouched. But in 1881-1885 there appeared the English Revised Version, a project in which most of the major denominations of the British Isles had participated. It may interest us that the men who worked on this vast project did all their labors gratis. The version had a better textual base, but it was not "English" enough to become popular, as the Authorized Version had. An American committee on this side of the Atlantic exchanged readings with the British translators in the hope that this might also become the new American English Bible, but the Americans felt that not sufficient attention had been given to American English and so in 1901 there appeared the American Revised Version. Then, in 1937, the revision of the English Bible got under way once more. Under the chairmanship of L. A. Weigle, in behalf of some 40 major Protestant denominations of American, the Revised Standard Version was produced, printed by Thomas Nel-

son and Sons. And now, another version! Perhaps we can call it the British counterpart to the American RSV. Behind this revision of the English Bible — we could not mention the hundreds of private and corporate English translations — lie years of hard labor in the field of textual criticism.

II. Progress in Vocabulary Studies.

There is another reason why revisions of the English Bible have been called for, and that is the great progress that has been made in the last century in the area of vocabulary studies. Time was when men believed that the New Testament was written originally in a peculiar language, a "Holy Ghost" language. This was due in part to the paucity of literature available from about the same time as the New Testament, written in the same dialect as the New Testament. Through the discovery of the papyri the Greek New Testament no longer stands alone in Greek literature with its "peculiar" Greek. Buried in the sands of Egypt for 2 millennia, rubbish heaps have yielded a very rich harvest of literature in Koine Greek. The papyri have shown that the Greek of the New Testament is the Greek of that period. This "Hellenistic" Greek belonged to the same stream as classical Greek, but it can no longer be judged by the standards of classical Greek. Also, it was recognized that New Testament Greek was written by Hebrew thinkers, and that behind their use of the Greek words lies the Hebrew Old Testament meaning of the words. It is not to Plato that one must go to find the meaning of a Greek word but to the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament). If one wishes to know the meaning of the word *ekklesia* one does not ask necessarily how this word was used in the classical period of Greek literature, but how was it used in the Old Testament.

To illustrate how the papyri and other contemporary inscriptions have illumined the meaning of a Greek word we might look at the word *arrabon* in Eph. 1:14. In classical Greek the word was used in the sense of "earnest-

money"; in Hellenistic Greek in the sense of a "pledge"; in modern Greek it means "betrothal" or "engagement ring." It is possible now to find, in accessible form, illustrations of the contemporary use of almost every word in the New Testament. Consequently, much is now clear that that was formerly obscure. For example, Paul had not heard that some of the Thessalonians were "walking disorderly" (2 Thess. 3:11), but that they were "playing truant", not going to work, for that is what the word *ataktos* means in the papyri.

Fifty years ago the Greek lexicons had not yet taken cognizance of the meanings of many New Testament words which were to be illumined by the literature that has been brought to bear on New Testament vocabulary studies in the last half century. These new insights into the meaning of New Testament words called for a new revision of the English Bible.

III. Changes in English Language.

Language is in a state of flux as long as it is a spoken tongue. Words change meanings with time. The English language too has gone through periods of development and change. The English of the 20th century is in many respects quite different from the English of 1611, when the Authorized Version was published. Luther Weigle in a recent publication lists some 700 words of the King James Version that have a different meaning today. Take a few examples. In 1 Thess. 4:5 Paul assures his sorrowing friends that "we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not **prevent** them which are asleep." How does one "prevent" dead people? The answer is that in the King James Version "prevent" means "to come before." In Mark 6:25 the King James Version tells us that Salome asked for the head of John the Baptist "in a charger." With us a "charger" is that which is used to rejuvenate our dead battery, or perhaps we call a spirited horse a "charger", but in 17th century English that was a large flat dish, a platter. Our word "conversa-

tion" has much more limited meaning today than it had in 1611. When we read that our "conversation" is in heaven (Phil. 3), it may sound very strange in the ears of a modern teen-ager. And would it occur to him that a "husbandman" is a farmer? (James 5:7). Would it not sound very strange if a housewife left a note asking the dairyman to leave her three quarts of "sincere" milk. "Pure" milk might be better understood (1 Pet. 2:2). I always thought it very odd when, years ago, we sang the song "Quit ye like men, be strong." The word "quit" had a somewhat different connotation than it has in 1 Cor. 16:13. What kind of shopping centre would we think of if we were told that one might buy meat at a reasonable price at the

"shambles" (1 Cor. 10:25). For those of us who have been brought up with Biblical terminology such renderings create no problem, but we must not forget that our secular society does not know the language of Scripture, and so the great truths of the Word must come to them in words that they can understand.

Here then are three reasons why another version of the New Testament in English has been prepared, and these reasons are strong enough that every generation will ask for a new version. This is in keeping with what happened at Pentecost. They all heard the Gospel "in his own tongue."

D. Ewert.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Nach Beendigung einer christlichen Hochschule

Vor einiger Zeit wurde mir die Aufgabe über das Thema, "Übergang von der christlichen Hochschule zu weiteren Ausbildung" auf einer Eltern-Lehrerversammlung zu sprechen. Die rege Besprechung der angeregten Gedanken deutete an, daß sich manche Eltern ernstlich mit der Frage der weiteren Ausbildung ihrer Kinder beschäftigen. Viele Eltern haben erkannt, daß ihre Verantwortung weiter geht, als nur dafür Sorge zu tragen, daß ihr Kind nur eine allgemeine christliche Grundlage für den späteren Lebensberuf erhält. (Leider haben wir auch noch manche Väter und Mütter in unsern Kreisen, die keine Aufgabe und Verantwortung auf dieser Linie sehen!) Die weitere Ausbildung nach Beendigung einer christlichen Hochschule — und dieses trifft auch zu auf Absolventen der Staatsschulen — liegt zum größten Teil in den Händen der Eltern. Auf einer Versammlung der "Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges", wo man über Verbesserung der öffentlichen Beziehungen

sprach, wurde darauf hingewiesen, daß mehr als die Hälfte aller Studenten die zu den Bibelschulen und Bibel Colleges kommen, die Entscheidung treffen auf Grund von starker Beeinflussung von seiten der Eltern.

I 2. Kor. 12, 14b gibt Paulus allen Eltern einen sehr beachtenswerten Grundsatz: "Denn es sollen nicht die Kinder den Eltern Schätze sammeln, sondern die Eltern den Kindern." Der Kontext, in dem der Apostel dieses Wort schrieb zeigt klar und unmißverständlich, daß es sich hier um geistliche Werte handelt. Es ist das große Vorrecht, aber auch die ernste Verantwortung der Eltern, ihren Kindern große und bleibende geistliche Schätze mitzugeben — Schätze, die "weder Motten noch Rost fressen", und die von Dieben nicht geraubt werden können (vgl. Matth. 6, 20).

Dieser Aufsatz ist nicht ein Versuch den "gordischen Knoten" dieses Problems mit einem "Schlagwort" oder mit einer bestimmten Vorschrift zu lösen.

Solche "einfachen" Lösungen sind gewöhnlich keine Lösungen. Es ist mein bescheidener Wunsch, solchen Eltern, die mit mir nach einer gottwohlgefälligen Lösung der Frage suchen, einige Gesichtspunkte zur weiteren Orientierung anzudeuten. Ich gehe in meinen Betrachtungen von dem Standpunkt aus, daß es sich um gläubige junge Leute in unsern Kreisen handelt, die eine christliche Hochschule beendet haben. Manche Prinzipien sind jedoch auch anwendbar auf die Absolventen anderer Hochschulen.

I. Gewisse Voraussetzungen

Welche Voraussetzungen dürfen uns leiten als Eltern und Lehrer bei der Beratung unserer jungen Leute, wenn sie von einer christlichen, und wir sollten hinzufügen, einer mennonitischen Hochschule graduieren?

1. **Unberechtigte Voraussetzungen.** — Manche Eltern scheinen die Überzeugung zu haben, daß der Besuch einer christlichen Hochschule ihre Kinder schützen wird vor den Gefahren des Zeitgeistes. Dies ist eine unberechtigte Voraussetzung. Einerlei wie klar der Religionsunterricht und wie positiv die christliche Beeinflussung von Seiten der Lehrer, das jugendliche Herz ist dadurch nicht gewappnet gegen die "freudigen Pfeile" des Boesewichtes. Der gehörnte Siegfried war nur an einer ganz kleinen Stelle verwundbar, und gerade dort traf ihn Hagen's Speer. Eine christliche Hochschulbildung gibt dem jungen Menschen noch keine "geistliche Lebensversicherung." Als Eltern dürfen wir auch nicht vergessen, daß wir uns von unserer persönlichen Verantwortung nicht entbinden können, indem wir unsere Kinder zu solchen Schulen schicken. Christliche Hochschulen können die biblischen Grundsätze stärken, die im Heim eingepflanzt worden sind, aber sie können nicht alles gut machen, was im Heim unterlassen oder sogar verdorben.

Eine andere unberechtigte Voraussetzung ist die, daß Absolventen einer christlichen Hochschule eine genügende geistliche Ausrüstung haben für einen erfolgreichen Kampf des Glaubens und für einen fruchtbaren Dienst in der Ge-

meinde. Kenntnis der Heiligen Schrift, und besonders Erkenntnis der göttlichen Wahrheit, sind nicht ausreichend dafür, und zwar aus ganz sachlichen Gründen. Einmal macht das unreife Alter der Schüler ein tieferes Verständnis des göttlichen Heilsratschlusses nicht gut möglich. Wie sehr der Lehrer auch bemüht sein mag, den ganzen Ratschluß Gottes zu verkündigen, er wird es immer wieder merken, daß die lieben Studenten doch noch nicht "tragen" können. Tieferes Verständnis kommt oft nur mit einer größeren Lebensreife. Zudem muß man nicht vergessen, daß auch in den christlichen Hochschulen nur eine beschränkte Zeit für den Religionsunterricht zur Verfügung gestellt wird. Dieses ist auch nicht anders denkbar, da unsere Schulen auch das volle Programm der Staatsschulen decken müssen. Daß die christlichen Hochschulen keine Bibelschulen sind, und daß die Absolventen eine weitere Ausbildung auf dieser Linie brauchen, wurde vor einigen Jahren von den Vertretern der Hochschulen selber geäußert, und als Folge davon kam eine Empfehlung des Bildungsausschusses der Kanadischen Konferenz vor die Bruderschaft mit folgendem Wortlaut: "Die christliche Hochschulen haben uns gesagt, daß nach gebührender Erwägung ihres Lehrprogramms, sie es erkennen, daß ihre Graduierten weiteres Bibelstudium bedürfen, um sich genügend für den Kampf des Lebens vorzubereiten. Das Bildungskomitee empfiehlt, daß die Konferenz dies durch einen gebührenden Beschluß bekräftigt, und wir diese Notwendigkeit unserer Jugend zu Hause nahe legen" (Konferenzbuch, 1959, S. 94). Diese Empfehlung wurde von der Konferenz angenommen.

Der ungeheure Druck einer materialistischen Kultur erfordert eine Erweiterung und Verstärkung in der Glaubensbefestigung unserer Jugend, wenn sie diesem Druck nicht unterliegen soll.

Was können wir denn erwarten bei den Absolventen einer christlichen Hochschule?

2. **Berechtigte Voraussetzungen.** Einmal erwarten wir, daß sie ein grundlegendes Bibelwissen erhalten haben. Solch ein Wissen ist notwendig als

Grundlage für eine christliche Lebens- und Weltanschauung. Sie mögen nicht fertige Antworten haben auf manche theologischen und philosophischen Fragen; aber wenn sie eine Liebe und Wertschätzung für Gottes Wort haben, wenn sie sich demütig unter die Autorität dieses Wortes stellen, dann haben die Lehrer, meines Erachtens, ihr Ziel vollständig erreicht.

Wir erwarten ferner, daß Absolventen unserer mennonitischen Hochschulen eine Liebe und Loyalität zur eigenen Gemeinschaft gewonnen haben. Eine Wertschätzung der biblischen Grundsätze unserer Bruderschaft ist bedeutungsvoller für unsere jungen Gemeindeglieder als eine Hochachtung vor unserm kulturellen Erbgut. Daß Hochschulen und Bibelschulen in verschiedenem Grade erfolgreich sind in der Erreichung dieses Zieles merken wir an den Absolventen, die zum College kommen für ihre weitere Ausbildung.

Eine andere berechtigte Voraussetzung, nach meinem Dafürhalten ist die, daß unsere jungen Leute ein Interesse erhalten haben für weitere Vorbereitung, für mehr Wortstudium und für einen Dienst im Reiche Gottes. Ein Mann in verantwortlicher Stellung in unserer Bruderschaft teilte mir vor einiger Zeit mit, daß nach seiner Beobachtung auch Absolventen unserer christlichen Hochschulen mehr nach "Verdienstmöglichkeiten" ausschauen als nach "Dienstmöglichkeiten." Andererseits finden wir heute manche Studenten in unsern Bibelschulen und auch im Bibel College, die da bekennen, daß sie in der christlichen Hochschule die Anregung zum weiteren Bibelstudium und zur Vorbereitung für den Dienst in der innern oder äußeren Mission erhalten haben.

Von diesen Voraussetzungen gehen wir nun über zu etlichen Erwägungen in der Beratung unserer jungen Leute nach Beendigung einer christlichen Hochschule.

II. Ernste Erwägungen.

Zwei Erwägungen sollten Eltern und Lehrer nicht aus dem Auge lassen in der Beurteilung dieser Frage.

1. Der Einfluß der weiteren Ausbil-

dung auf das persönliche geistliche Leben. Hier gilt es das Wort Jesu zu beachten: "Was hülfte es dem Menschen, wenn er die ganze Welt gewönne, und nehme an seiner Seele Schaden?" (Markus 8:36). Das geistliche Wohl unserer Kinder sollte in der ganzen Erwägung die Hauptsache sein. Es ist wohl am Platze darauf hinzuweisen, daß abgesehen von den geistlichen Gefahren einer Ausbildung auf einer Universität, manche Absolventen der Hochschule am glücklichsten und am erfolgreichsten sein könnten, wenn sie sofort in eine Berufsarbeit gehen würden. Junge Menschen die eine Ausbildung suchen die über ihre Begabung hinausgeht, machen sich selbst, und oft auch andern, viel Schmerzen. Andere wiederum mögen die intellektuellen Fähigkeiten besitzen für ein Weiterstudium auf der Universität, aber es fehlt an Charakterfestigkeit, und solchen sollte auch der Rat gegeben werden, wenigstens vorläufig eine Berufsarbeit aufzunehmen, bis sie eine größere sittliche Reife und Festigkeit zeigen. Es ist besser ein frommer Handwerker sein, als ein gottloser, "Gelehrter". Manche Eltern haben es später bereut, daß sie in der Ausbildung ihrer Kinder zu sehr "geschoben" haben, und dabei das geistliche Wohl derselben aus dem Auge gelassen. Gerade für solche Studenten, die für ein Studium auf der Universität noch nicht die gewünschte Reife und Festigkeit besitzen, bieten unsere Bibelschulen eine gute Gelegenheit, im geistlichen Leben tiefer gegründet zu werden. Auch das Bibel College hat durch die Jahre manchen solcher Studenten eine biblische Orientierung geben können, obgleich der Hauptzweck der Schule nicht gerade auf dieser Linie liegt, weil die meisten Studenten mit einer gewissen Reife und einem klaren Zielbewußtsein zum College kommen. Die Zeit, die man zum Bibelstudium und zur christlichen Ausbildung verwendet, ist niemals verlorene Zeit. Ein junger Mann, den ich vor Jahren einmal ansprach und den ich einlud wenigstens ein Jahr das College zu besuchen, antwortete mir: Ja, aber dann verliere ich ein ganzes Jahr in meinem Universitätsstudium! Meine Warnung fand nicht Gehör. Ich sagte dem jungen Freund:

Es ist besser ein ganzes Jahr verlieren, als ein ganzes Leben! Soviel ich später erfahren habe, hat der junge Mann Schaden genommen an seiner Seele.

Eine andere wichtige Tatsache sollte bei der Beratung von Absolventen der Hochschule ernstlich erwogen werden.

2. Der Einfluß der weiteren Ausbildung für einen fruchtbaren Dienst. Weitere Ausbildung steht direkt oder indirekt in Beziehung zur Wahl des Berufes. Welches sind die bestimmenden Faktoren bei den Erwägungen in der Entscheidung für eine Lebensarbeit? Bei vielen jungen Menschen sowie bei deren Eltern ist die öffentliche Anerkennung des Berufes von ausschlaggebender Bedeutung. Es muß ein Beruf sein, der eine gewisse "Prestige" hat, und den jungen Mann oder die Jungfrau in den rechten Gesellschaftskreis hinein bringt. Bei den meisten jungen Menschen in unserm materialistischen Zeitalter, jedoch, ist es die finanzielle Bewertung des Berufes, die am schwersten in die Wagschale fällt. Ein englischer Freund teilte mir mit, daß er Leichenbestatter werden wollte. Meines Erachtens ist dieses ein Beruf, der große Möglichkeiten bietet für ein christliches Zeugnis. Das war jedoch nicht die Motivierung bei meinem Freunde. Auf meine Frage, warum er gerade diesen Beruf gewählt habe, gab er zur Antwort: "Because there is a lot of money in it." Werden nicht auch christliche Eltern oft stark von diesem Umstand bestimmt in der Beratung ihrer Kinder? Die obigen Erwägungen dürfen bei Eltern und Lehrern nicht das letzte Wort sprechen! Die Lehre der Heiligen Schrift und die Erfahrungen in unserer Geschichte sollten uns als Warnung dienen vor den Gefahren einer materialistischen Gesinnung.

Bei der weiteren Ausbildung für einen Lebensberuf sollten die **Missionsmöglichkeiten** desselben ernstlich geprüft werden. Es gibt Berufe, wo man kaum Christ sein kann, geschweige noch ein guter Christ mit einem einflußreichen Zeugnis. Viele Berufe, jedoch, bieten ausgezeichnete Gelegenheiten für ein positives Zeugnis durch Wort und Wandel. Dieses schließt auch Berufe im Geschäft und auf der Farm ein, durch

welche man auf vielfache Art und Weise die Sache des Reiches Gottes fördern kann. Um den Beruf wirklich "christlich" zu gestalten, und um denselben als eine Gelegenheit zum fruchtbarsten Dienst recht auszunützen, bedarf es jedoch einer christlichen Ausrüstung. Der Lehrer mit einer biblischen Ausbildung ist besser ausgerüstet für die Anforderungen seines Dienstes, ebenso die Krankenschwester, der Arzt, sowie die Arbeiterin im Buero oder im Geschäft.

Dieses bringt uns zurück zur Notwendigkeit einer weiteren biblischen oder theologischen Ausbildung nach Beendigung der Hochschule. Der Weg der Vorbereitung für einen erfolgreichen Dienst im Reiche Gottes ist selten ein kurzer Weg. Ein Student fragte einmal den Präsidenten von Oberlin College, welches der schnellste Weg sei, sein Studium zu beendigen. Der Präsident antwortete etwa wie folgt: Es hängt ganz davon ab, junger Mann, was sie aus sich machen wollen. Gott braucht nur 6 Monate für die volle Entwicklung einer Kürbis-pflanze: Er braucht jedoch 100 Jahre für eine starke Eiche! Der Weg durch das Bibel College mag die Zeit des Studiums verlängern; wir sind jedoch der tiefen Überzeugung, daß für ein kraftvolles Zeugnis in der heutigen Zeit nicht nur Kandidaten für den Predigt- und Missionsdienst solche Vorbereitung brauchen, sondern auch unsere Brüder und Schwestern, die in den verschiedenen Berufen dem Herrn dienen wollen.

Der Herr helfe uns als Lehrern und Eltern, rechte Wegweiser für unsere Jugend zu sein. Eine richtige und gottwohlgefällige Lösung werden wir nur auf den Knien im Gebetskammerlein finden!

J. A. Töws.

Joe Brown, college-age Christian, lives simultaneously in two environments. One environment is visible. He has grown up in it and has learned, for the most part, the proper responses to things he sees, feels and hears.

The other is invisible. It demands a different kind of response to things seen, felt and heard. To live in it, Joe must develop a sixth sense: a sensitivity to the Spirit of God. S. A. Witmer.

Sunday School Visitation

One could hardly think of a church that does not want to grow. The question is only, how can we come to see it grow? We want it to grow both in spiritual maturity as well as in number. Growth, however, is not without activity within the plant that grows. A church without activity, will not grow. This is not an automatic process that someone from without can do for the church that wants to grow. Many of the churches that have grown, have pointed to a Sunday School visitation program as one of the strongest contributing factors to their growth. First Baptist Church in Chatanooga, Tennessee, has grown within the last decade and a half from a church of fewer than several hundred members to a church of more than ten thousand members. The pastor tells us the growth is not primarily due to the type of preaching or choral production, as valuable as these may be, but through a weekly Sunday School visitation program. These testimonies could be duplicated many times from other churches who have experienced similar growth. In our churches a Sunday School visitation program is entirely new. I am not aware of any church in our circles that carries out a weekly Sunday School visitation program. For years we have promoted pastoral visitation. These visitations have been limited to church members and primarily to those in need and on beds of affliction. In some churches the deacons are beginning to assume a growing responsibility in the visitation program. So many of our churches are of such size that the pastor alone cannot expect to make the rounds. Somebody has to assist, and the deacons are the logical people to step into the gap. But Sunday School visitation is something else. It is a visitation program which does not concern only some members, but it involves the entire congregation as it actively participates in it. It is evident that in such a visitation program the influence of the church reaches beyond the homes of its own membership.

I. To Whom Such a Program Is Directed.

Firstly, to prospective Sunday School students! No church can say, "All of the people that should come to our Sunday School, are in our Sunday School." A Sunday School that sits within its walls, waiting for these people to come, is not fulfilling the Scriptural imperative. In Scripture the initiative for a contact between God and the unbeliever does not rest upon the unbeliever, but upon the Christian. The Lord's command is: "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23). Andrew, who had experienced the Lord, finds his brother Simon Peter who needed the Lord (John 1:40-42). Jesus goes out to find Philip, and Philip finds Nathaniel, etc. The implication of the great commission is the same. The disciples are urged to go into all the world. Christ's promise to Peter to make him "a fisher of men" places the initiative upon the fishermen. These people will never come on their own accord. It is the church's responsibility to go after them. There is no other agency in the church that can do this work as effectively as the Sunday School. Therefore, the need for the Sunday School visitation.

Secondly, the Sunday School visitation is addressed to the absentees. Of these there are two kinds: a) Those who are indifferent. Sunday School attendance is rarely above church membership. In fact, if we take into account the goodly number of children with whom most of our churches have been blessed, then there is a relatively small percentage of our church members who do come regularly to our Sunday School. How shall these be interested and enlisted in an active program of the Sunday School? Public invitations have always gone forth and not brought the desirable results. Sunday School must be sold to the absentees on a personal basis.

b) Those unable to attend. Among

the absentees will not only be those who need to be interested but also those who because of reasons beyond their control are unable to come. Many have been sick for months and never been missed in a church service. In a small Sunday School class those who are absent are bound to be noticed. In the First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, with an attendance of between four and six thousand, there is no group larger than twenty-five students in a class. If one of these does not come, the others are sure to enquire, not because of disciplinary reasons, but simply because of personal interest, as to the reason why such an one is absent. How great a blessing a visit can be to the mother who is at home with a sick child, when a personal greeting is brought to her, and she knows friends in the church are not forgetting her!

A Sunday School teacher had sent his students absentee cards for several months before one of them was returned with the notation that these cards were no longer needed, for the student had passed away. What a call in those days of sickness can do must be experienced. Personal battles and difficulties may also keep one from regular attendance and an understanding visitor can do much to help gain the victory.

So there are these two classes, the prospective Sunday School student, and the absent Sunday School student who calls for a visit from the Sunday School.

II. Why the Sunday School should do the visiting.

The question may arise "Why should the Sunday School do the visitation?" Should not some other agency be employed for this purpose? We want to list several reasons why we believe the Sunday School to be the most appropriate agency of the church to do this work.

Firstly, such a visitation program needs many laborers. Where is there an organization in the church that harnesses as many church members for its program as the Sunday School? Teachers, assistant teachers, secretaries,

treasurers, ushers and various other officers plus the students themselves, constitute a reservoir of potential that can be harnessed in this way. Let us remember that in an army it is not the officers that win the victory in the battle, it's the soldiers. Neither are Christian victories won by officers alone, but by the services of all the people in the ranks. The visitation program must not be the responsibility of certain people in the Sunday School but a program that involves the Sunday School as a whole. Working hours are getting shorter and shorter. Some economists believe that in a few years millions of workers will be on a thirty-hour week. This gives more and more spare time. These spare hours can be filled with a purpose when one relates them to the program of the church through such a visitation effort. Furthermore, our church members have always higher and higher standards of education. We have many professional people, business men, and others with good training, who can do excellent work. Never before has the church had such well-trained membership as we have today. We need to employ them for this promotional aspect of our Sunday School. The scarcity of workers is possibly more due to a lack of enlistment on the part of the church, and specifically guiding them in their activity, rather than a question of availability. Sunday School visitation is not on the professional level. It is a program where face meets face; where laity meets laity, to exhort one another unto love and to good works. It has been said that only ten per cent of the church members are actively involved in the church program. The other ninety per cent need to be enlisted and if the church will offer a basic training it will be amazing how many people will be ready to fill the ranks.

The church which moves too rapidly in the direction of professionalism, as far as church work is concerned, is not going to do justice to its challenge and responsibility.

The second reason why Sunday School visitation is important is because here

the visit is received with less prejudice. When a minister comes, people may have various interpretations of his motive. There is an air of officialdom which hinders communication. But if the average church member makes his appearance, and as a satisfied customer tells his neighbors and friends of the blessings received in the Sunday School, and invites others to come and share these blessings with him, such a visit will be received much more positively. Pastoral visitation has its place in the program of the church, but visitation by members is the key for a strong expansion program, and unless God will give us a vision of this we will not reach and persuade many in our community. If a salesman comes to the door, the customer may be prejudiced, but if a satisfied customer tells of the benefits of a commodity which he has acquired then a new prospect is ready to respond. This agrees with Proverbs 27:19 "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of men to men."

A **third** reason for Sunday School visitation is that it permits the newcomer to be integrated into a small cell. Somebody who is not used to church attendance, coming into the large sanctuary with hundreds of people around him, feels uncomfortable. He builds up resistance for this time, and prefers not to enter again into the strange atmosphere. But take a new neighbor into a small Sunday School class where twenty or twenty-five men or women are sitting, discussing informally the Word of God, the newcomer will pay less attention to the environment and new surroundings, and will sooner be interested in that

which is being discussed — the Word of God. From the small cell he may then be introduced into the larger cell, that is, the church service. A church that has no way of making new people feel at home in smaller groups, will have difficulty integrating them into their large congregation. New comers to our worship services should come through the Sunday School class.

Fourthly, such a Sunday School visitation program will make the follow-up work much easier. If a new-comer has been to the Sunday School class once or twice, a friendly contact outside of church during the week can much easier be established. If some of the students from the class make it a point to go over and to communicate as friends or visit informally, contacts are established which help to keep the stranger coming, and make him feel that he is no longer an outsider, but that he has been taken in and so he enjoys the feeling of belonging.

Finally, another reason why the Sunday School should have a visitation program is because it is the one agency of the church that has the organization to do so. The organization itself we wish to discuss in a later article, and show how it can contribute to an effective Sunday School visitation program. May the above remarks convince us that a Sunday School without a visitation program is not doing justice to its task. Also, let us be assured that there is no other agency of the church that can carry out such a program as effectively as our Sunday School.

J. J. Toews

PREACHING

Illustrating the Sermon (II)

A few years ago (in 1955), Wilbur M. Smith, of Fuller Theological Seminary, made a visit to Great Britain in the course of which he visited some of

the great churches of London. One of these churches was that at Central Hall, Westminster, where W. E. Sangster held forth until his resignation in 1955. (He

died just last year!) In his account of his visit to this particular church (in October, 1955, issue of **The Moody Monthly**), Smith tells us that Dr. Sangster, on that particular Sunday, was preaching on the text, "Dost thou despise the church?" (I Cor. 11:22) and began the sermon with an illustration this time. "He crossed his two arms above his head and started with words something like this: 'In our cities and in many places in this great city of London, where two main thoroughfares cross, we will find on the four respective corners, these four buildings—a pub (in our country it would be the tavern, but here it is bright instead of dingy. The doors are wide open and families gather together, sad to say); the **cinema**; the **big shopping center**; and the **church**. Now, if one were asked to state what those first three buildings stood for, any intelligent person could give the answer at once,' and he threw out the question, repeating it three times, '**What does the church stand for?**' with a strong emphasis on the last two words.

"He then began to develop his theme. The church stands for the very things that they thought they would find on the other three corners, but have never found. First of all the church gives the true meaning of life, and here I remember his phrase, 'The cinema tries to help you to forget the blessed thing for a few hours' (at which everyone laughed). Then, the church gives happiness to life—worldly pleasures ever disappoint, he said, quoting a poem which is new to me:

"The waters of earth have failed,
And I am thirsty still."

"At this point Dr. Sangster delivered a sharp and just criticism, with tremendous force, of a certain class of books in our own country (for he had just returned from America), which are sold by the millions, and he began to give the titles of some of them: **You Must Relax, Men Under Stress, Peace of Mind, Live Longer and Look Younger, How to Stop Worrying and Start Living**, etc., etc.

"And he added this very significant

comment, that these books were not being purchased by despondent men out of work, but by those who ate three or four meals a day, and have an abundance of what money can buy but are not satisfied. Finally, the church can tell men the **only true purpose in life**: to know God, to enjoy God; and to spread the gospel of God. What preaching!"

3. There is a third fact which points up the importance of the apt use of illustrations by the preacher of today: that our present generation is very largely visually-minded and picture-orientated and becoming more so with every passing year. Now, it is obviously true that the common and unlettered people of every age have understood more readily, and responded more eagerly to preaching (or public speaking of any kind) that was suffused with, or supported by illustrative matter of various kinds. As Abraham Lincoln once expressed it, so simply and fitly, several generations ago, "People, take them as they run, are more easily taught and influenced by means of the illustration than by any other means." But what is perhaps not quite so obvious but just as true is the fact that while a gradually increasing proportion of its members are becoming literate and, in varying degrees, even **learned**, our present generation is much less able — certainly much less disposed — by and large, to listen appreciatively to longer messages or sermons that are **weighty** in substance, **logical** in structure and development, and **not** lightened or leavened by generous bits of flashing wit, amusing anecdote or other rhetorical charms of various kinds. The truth of the matter is, as numerous observers of the contemporary scene have noted, that this, while a moderately cultured generation, is at the same time a **casual** and **unreflecting** one dominated more largely by **images** than by ideas, pure and simple.

The distinction made here between image and idea, though not a sharp and absolute one, is real enough for all of us to appreciate. And one of the main reasons for this predominantly image- and picture-conscious temper and dis-

position, as we all know, is modern man's constant exposure to, and involvement in the mass media of communication. This is certainly, as the French sociologist, André Siegfried, called it, "**Page de la publicité**", and every day a "torrential flood of imagery pours from the press and the platform" to affect and influence, in one way or another, the thinking and feeling of many people, and that largely by way of concrete pictures and representations. J. C. Brauer of the Divinity School of Chicago University, in commenting upon this truth and trend, recently remarked that it "has had already and will have increasingly momentous consequences both for our national self-understanding and for our stance before the world," and we may well add here that it has had and certainly will have important consequences for the **preaching of the gospel** to the world as well.

We do not broach the question here of the church's particular responsibility or position, with regard to its evangelistic task, in respect to the individual media of mass communication in use today (See M. Boyd's **Crisis in Communication: A Christian Examination of the Mass Media** for a discussion of this issue), but merely call attention to the opportunity granted to, and indeed the obligation which devolves upon the preacher of today, in view of this third fact, to make more generous and purposeful use of concrete illustration in his endeavor to "light up" (as Sangster once put it) "the solemn grandeur of the message."

B. Some Types of Illustrations for the Sermon:

It is clearly not possible to define so general and hackneyed a term as "illustration" in any hard and fast way, nor, therefore to distinguish various kinds of it in any sharp and final manner. We implied as much already earlier when we differentiated (rather arbitrarily) between illustrations in the "broader sense" (any telling or felicitous use of a word or phrase) and illustrations in the "narrower and more conventional sense" of the word. There

is some justification, therefore, for Dawson C. Bryan's statement, in his discussion of the "varieties of illustrations" (in his **The Art of Illustrating Sermons**), that "illustrations may be pictures flashed out in a **single word**." And the fact of the matter is that where preachers who were otherwise earnest and impassioned, have taken due care in their choice and use of individual words, their preaching has been the richer and stronger for it. **One** notable instance that serves to confirm this assertion is to be seen in the preaching of John Henry Jowett of England who, when he was in the fulness of his strength, was not infrequently termed "the greatest preacher in the English-speaking world." A. Gammie, in his **Preachers I Have Heard**, writes of him thus: "He wrote and re-wrote his sermons until they satisfied his fastidious sense of style. The study of words was one of his hobbies. He told once of how Henry Ward Beecher used to carry a mandful of precious stones — diamonds, rubies, amethysts — in his pocket so that at odd moments he could let the sunshine play upon them and watch the varying lights flash from their facets. 'I do it too,' said Jowett, 'only with words instead of stones.'"

But remembering the above proviso and leaving the illustrative use of **single words** aside, we may, in a **rough and ready** sort of way, classify sermon illustrations under some such designations as the following:

1. **Figures of speech.** The most familiar instances of these are, of course, the **simile** and **metaphor**, and how manifold and inexhaustible indeed are the possibilities here (if one but looks for them) for the evocation by means of them of some image or picture that will enliven the thought and give wings to the message. Here is one rather impressive example from a message by the contemporary preacher, George Buttrick: "The earth is seamed with chasms. It is bitter with grudges, red with blood, and hollow with graves." The preaching of J. H. Jowett, who confessed, "I know the limitations of the human mind, and I know the fertile and helpful ministry of simile and symbol," (if we

may refer to him once again) affords very many instances of the apt use of figures of speech. We here cite two (further) examples selected at random from his very fine book, **The Passion for Souls**: "The ocean of grace flows about the shore of common life, into all its distresses and gaping wants, and it fills every crack and crevice to the full." Again: "We tear about with the aimless, pathetic wanderings of little chicks when the mother-bird is away."

2. **True episodes or narratives.** Here the field again is very broad, and includes areas such as biography, hymnody, political history, social history (with its numerous branches like history of medicine, history of science, history of music, etc.), church (and denominational) history, history of missions and, of course, Biblical history itself. The fact is that the evangelical Christian preacher is really in a fortunate position here, believing as he does that "God is in this world, working through it, expressing Himself in events, passing judgment on its doings, and giving guidance in one generation for all the discerning in the next." Sangster (in his **The Craft of Sermon Illustration**) goes so far as to assert that "there is a duty attaching to the pulpit to interpret God's will to the age, to take broad sweeps, to make wide but pertinent comparisons, and to see things nationally and internationally as well. Historical illustrations are demanded by this duty in preaching, and he is a happy man who can move with confidence in these realms and marshal the facts he needs."

One well-known preacher who certainly excelled in respect to the wide

command and adroit use of illustrations from history and biography in general was the late Clarence E. Macartney (of Pittsburgh), whose book, **Macartney's Illustrations** (compiled by the Abingdon-Cokesbury Press), still stands as one of the few anthologies of sermon illustrations that can be recommended without reservations.

3. **Fables, myths and legends.** There are those who question the propriety and value of using classic fables or myths in sermons on the ground that what is not true in fact can really not be true to life itself and therefore can only mislead and deceive. But it is doubtful whether even a child is often or long deceived by them, and it must be admitted, surely, that the **best** of the classic fables and myths, at any rate have distinct teaching values. Aesop's fables, to refer to the best known collection of fables, are not uniformly successful, it is true, but their general moral level and value is high, and Martin Luther, to mention only one, was not above using them in his own preaching.

The classic myths of Greece and Rome, it cannot be denied, are often marked by elements of immodesty and sensual indulgence, and it is only too easy to mar the tone and weaken the force of a message with certain illustrations from them. But here, as with our use of many other things of the world, the **judicious** choice and **sagacious** and **reverent** use of them, by the preacher, are the factors that spell the difference between success and failure.

(To be continued)

H. Giesbrecht.

YOUR QUESTION

QUESTION — What specifically is the purpose of higher secular education for a dedicated Christian since the "wisdom of this world" is really foolishness according to 1 Cor. 1:20?

ANSWER — This question reflects the basic assumption that secular or academic studies and "world wisdom" as used by Paul are synonymous terms. This was also the premise from which

our early forefathers proceeded when they opposed secular education. This assumption, however is entirely wrong.

Pauls deals with the wisdom (*sophia*) of the world as with the effort of man to give an answer to the dilemma of sin. Since man was unwilling to accept the "wisdom from above," he was forced to rely on the only other source available to him, his reason. This type of wisdom, which is based on reason, is foolishness, for the natural man cannot give of himself a satisfying answer to the needs of the human soul.

Secular education, as we know it today, needs not to be viewed as an attempt to save men. For some the answers of science are a substitute for faith in God. However, the Christian looks to education for other reasons. In his quest for greater effectiveness, the child of God has come to see the benefits of a broadening experience. Since God has commanded that the Christian have dominion over this world, it becomes imperative that he understand the world and the laws by which God governs this world. If he is to witness to man, an understanding of man is necessary. Even communication of the gospel requires a study of languages, and the culture of peoples to whom we intend to bring the gospel.

All study then must be viewed in the light of the purpose which underlies it. If the purpose is that of exploring the world of our Father as a fit response of our faith in Him as Creator, then the study has the blessing of God. If our studies are motivated by a genuine desire to serve God, it certainly cannot be equated with the "wisdom of this world." On the other hand, if studies are to be man's answer to the quest of salvation, he will experience, with Paul, that such answers are foolishness and leave the heart empty.

P. M. Friesen, noted Mennonite Brethren historian, warned the Mennonite Brethren of two dangers. He spoke of an obscurantism with its hatred of learning as constituting a marsh or swamp. It must be avoided. On the other extreme was a shallow rationalism likened to a dry desert which was equally devastating to piety. His pray-

er for the Mennonites was that they might develop under God a "culturally happy, intelligent, personal and socially-competent Christianity." Our aim may be nothing less. The answer is not an empty head, for this only too often leads to fanaticism. We as children of God ought to strive for a dedication of knowledge to the service of faith.

F. C. Peters

QUESTION: As the summer months come nearer, might we not hear something on proper church attire. Do we simply follow the custom of our society in that we shed our clothes on the street and — perhaps to a certain degree — in church. What is proper?

ANSWER: The Word of God teaches us clearly that the principle of modesty is to govern our lives at all times. This ought to be even more the case when we come into God's presence. Perhaps the following words of instruction from a Catholic cleric could be of some help. It is a pity that we should look to Catholics for guidance, but the "common run" of Protestants might profit from the instructions given by Archbishop W. O. Brady, of the St. Paul diocese.

Objecting to "casual" type clothing, the archbishop said: "It should be obvious except possibly to the spiritually blind, that a piece of Kleenex balanced upon the topknot is not a hat. Bermuda shorts are not pants in Minnesota. Sandals showing painted toenails are not shoes. A suntan is not clothing."

The Church, he said, would rather have people thus attired stay home unless they can enter the church vestibule with decorum.

Archbishop Brady said the poor have an instinct in the matter of dress which the "better" people lack. They have a good suit or dress set aside for Sunday when they "can dress up before God and their neighbors."

But the middle class, he said, "have become sloppy in their dress, and there are some who are so thoughtless of God's presence and their own dignity that what was once special for the

boudoir has become good enough for back benches in the parish church.

Calling for a return to the Sunday suit, the archbishop spelled out what he considered proper attire for church.

"For men, it would mean this: pressed trousers, a coat, a clean shirt closed at the throat with a necktie, freshly polished shoes.

"For the women, it means that fashions are for store windows, not for the church. The head should be suitably covered with a hat, the dress such as to attract no attention, sleeves below the elbows, stockings, and shoes that are shoes, not bedroom scuffies.

"For children (and here is where parents can be at their best), it means the beginning of a tradition of dress and action which says: 'we are going into the presence of God to pray, not to play; to worship and to adore One Who loves our souls.' Native good tastes will spell out the rest."

D. Ewert.

We would encourage our readers to write to us and to share their questions and concerns. Perhaps the members of our faculty can help by writing about these. (Ed.)

MUSIC

The Prepared Conductor

The standard of achievement reached by a choir in performance is in direct relationship to the amount of concentrated work that has been put into the rehearsal by both the choir and the conductor. Hence, it is evident that one of the main objectives for the choir practice must be to accomplish in a minimum amount of time a maximum amount of work. In order to realize this objective it is imperative that the conductor spend much time in preparation. Only he who is in complete mastery of his materials has the right to direct others.

Professor Kurt Thomas, in his *Lehrbuch der Chorleitung*, enumerates a number of steps which must be followed by the conductor in his own preparation of a new piece of music. I have frequently been approached by conductors seeking information on this very subject. In my own choral experience I have found Professor Thomas' suggestions very helpful and so I take this opportunity to pass these on to my fellow conductors.

1. Learn to play the score; practise until every wrong note is eliminated.

(If the conductor does not play the piano he should work together with his accompanist). Take special care in your playing to emphasize important words and phrases. Try right from the beginning to envision a choral tone.

2. Learn to sing the individual line. Every mistake, every faulty intonation, every musical or textual irregularity must be mastered. It is well at this point to mark your own mistakes since these are almost certain to come up against when the choir reads the music for the first time. If the difficulties are already marked the conductor can frequently help the respective voice to avoid the same error.

3. Learn to sing one line while the other lines are being played. This is of paramount importance in polyphonic music where one must feel the inter-relationship between voices.

4. Play the score again; in the use of contrapuntal music, call out the respective voices precisely one beat before their reentry. If the tempo of the music is slow, the call will of necessity be broad, if on the other hand the tempo

is fast and rhythmic, the call must be quick and accented. Since the singers on first reading will not be watching the conductor it is advisable, especially in difficult entire, to support the call with a clap. Any extra help given by the conductor will accelerate the learning process.

5. Sing the individual voice and conduct at the same time. In this way you become familiar with the conducting problems of each line.

6. Mark the "conducting line" with red pencil. Here we are dealing with a new concept which is used primarily in contrapuntal or polyphonic music. I can best illustrate this by referring to a familiar example taken from Handel's *Messiah*. The chorus "He Trusted in God" is considered to be contrapuntal in structure, since each voice moves independently of the other voices. The chorus begins with the basses announcing the subject which is then passed on to the tenors, altos and sopranos respectively. It is evident that the conductor cannot conduct all voices concurrently so he concentrates on that particular voice which carries the main subject or perhaps presents the greatest difficulty. Thus the "conducting line" emerges. In the above mentioned chorus the red line begins under the bass line, then moves up through the tenor and alto lines to the soprano line, then back to the alto and so on through the entire chorus. If this line is drawn carefully it will aid the conductor in giving proper entries and support where voices may be insecure.

The "conducting line" is not arbitrarily decided upon but must be a guide through a complex musical structure. Therefore, the line will not always be identical but will change as various conductors face different problems.

8. Play the score again and sing the "conducting line." This implies that the conductor must be able to sing all entries regardless of difficulty or range.

9. Conduct the entire piece, imagining the choir before you. Pay special attention to the direction in which the entries are given. They must correspond with the seating arrangement of the sections in your choir.

Only when a conductor studies his score in the manner suggested above will he realize fully the objectives stated at the outset. Only when these prerequisites are met can a conductor go to a choir practice with an easy conscience. A successful choir practice or an inspiring performance doesn't just happen. It must be preceded by hard work and sustained by prayer.

Victor Martens.

The Choir Tour

During the early morning hours of March 30, a bus loaded with 40 excited passengers left our campus for the much anticipated annual choir tour. Our schedule called for a visit to one church in Saskatchewan, six in Alberta and ten in British Columbia. Travelling together was really a pleasure. The passing panorama of some of Canada's most scenic beauty vied with the numerous fascinating activities on the bus for the traveller's attention. Each day was begun with a time of meditation and prayer, and these were soon followed by a good variety of songs, games, skits and good-natured informal dialectic. Spirits were always high, and all too soon our destination was reached.

The warm welcome we received in the churches will long remain in our memories. The words of greeting from the pastor were invariably re-enforced with a practical demonstration by the food committee, and we can say from experience that good food prepared and served by friendly hands is a sure way to the hearts of hungry travellers.

The services we presented were designed to offer something to everyone in the audience. The choir sang about twelve numbers, with a well-balanced repertoire ranging from great pieces of sacred music to familiar gospel songs and hymns. At each service two students gave a brief testimony, relating how the Lord had directed them to College, and how the various lessons learned here had found application in their own particular life. A short report on the school, and a challenging message

by Rev. J. J. Toews completed the service.

Entering the various homes was a real joy and privilege for us, and we found that the friendliness and warmth of each home was shown in its own peculiar way. We invariably found a common point of interest in the spiritual heritage we shared. As we fellowshipped with the families in their devotions, and discussed various practical problems related to our churches, our schools and our homes, we found a striking similarity in our aims as well as in our difficulties, and we learned many valuable lessons from their experience. We trust these informal periods were mutually rewarding.

Did this tour achieve its intended purpose? We can only surmise. Our prayer is that our constituency did receive some insight into the purpose and working of their College, and its signifi-

icance to our brotherhood. We do admit that the songs and messages were an inspiration and a challenge to our hearts, and we trust they were also this to the hearers. The effects upon the group itself were many. The *esprit de corps* which grew upon us as the tour progressed, impressed us anew with the great potential there is in the united efforts of Christians. The many churches visited awakened in us a renewed appreciation for our brotherhood. Perhaps the danger here at school is that we become too isolated, too independent, and while acquiring much valuable knowledge we lose sight of the actual tasks we are preparing for. Occasionally it is well for us to temper our theories and ideals with a good taste of reality. Our prayer is that this tour may have helped to strengthen the bond between church and school.

John Isaak

Graduating Class of 1961

BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY

DUECK, ABE J.	Coaldale, Alberta	(2 years)
	Coaldale Bible School	
	University of British Columbia	
EPP, DAVID	Chilliwack, B.C.	(3 years)
	Chilliwack Bible School	
	B.C. Teacher's College	
	University of British Columbia	
FROESE, DAVID	Sardis, B.C.	(3 years)
	Yarrow Bible School	
FROESE, JOHN	Newton Siding, Man.	(3 years)
	Winkler Bible School	
HEINRICH, JOHN	Glenbush, Sask.	(2 years)
	Hepburn Bible School	
	University of Manitoba	
ISAAC, JOHN	Springstein, Manitoba	(2 years)
	Winkler Bible School	
	Manitoba Teacher's College	
	University of Manitoba, B.A.	
KLASSEN, PETER	Yarrow, B.C.	(3 years)
	Waterloo University College	
KOOP, PETER	Calgary, Alberta	(4 years)
	Coaldale Bible School	
LOEWEN, DAVID	Yarrow, B.C.	(4 years)

MIERAU, ERIC	Winnipeg, Manitoba Tabor College, B.A.	(3 years)
REIMER, GERHARD	Vauxhall, Alberta Coaldale Bible School	(3 years)
WIEBE, RUDY	Coaldale, Alberta University of Alberta, M.A. University of Tuebingen, Germany	(2 years)

BACHELOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

BLOCK, ERNA	Clearbrook, B.C. Yarrow Bible School B.C. Teacher's College University of British Columbia	(2 years)
BOCK, AGATHA	Marquette, Manitoba Manitoba Teacher's College University of Manitoba	(2 years)
DOERKSEN, BETTY	Clearbrook, B.C. Abbotsford Bible School	(2 years)
EPP, SIEGFRIED	Winnipeg, Manitoba Mission Worker in the Congo	(3 years)
FAST, HELEN	Sardis, B.C. Yarrow Bible School Vancouver General Hospital, R.N.	(3 years)
FRIESEN, DANIEL	Winnipeg, Manitoba Hepburn Bible School	(3 years)
KLASSEN, HELMUT	Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Tabor College, B.A.	(3 years)
LOEWEN, ANNE	Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Ontario Teacher's College	(3 years)
MENDEL, MYRTLE M.	Freeman, South Dakota Tabor College, Bethel College, B.A. University of South Dakota Prairie Bible Institute, Three Hills	(1 year)
PETERS, JOHN A.	Abbotsford, B.C.	(3 years)
STOBBE, LILLIAN M.	Abbotsford, B.C.	(3 years)

GENERAL BIBLE COURSE

WIEBE, NICK	Winnipeg, Manitoba	(3 years)
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SACRED MUSIC COURSE

BAERG, BILL	Coaldale, Alberta Coaldale Bible School	(3 years)
KOOP, PETER	Calgary, Alberta	(4 years)
REMPEL, JOAN	Yarrow, B.C.	(3 years)

God of our Life

God of our life, through all the circling years,
 We trust in Thee;
In all the past, through all our hopes and fears,
 Thy hand we see.
With each new day, when morning lifts the veil,
We own Thy mercies, Lord, which never fail.

God of the past, our times are in Thy hand;
 With us abide.
Lead us by faith to hope's true Promised Land;
 Be Thou our guide.
With Thee to bless, the darkness shines as light,
And faith's fair vision changes into sight.

God of the coming years, through paths unknown
 We follow Thee;
When we are strong, Lord, leave us not alone;
 Our refuge be.
Be Thou for us in life our Daily Bread,
Our heart's true Home when all our years have sped.

Hugh Thomson Kerr, 1871-.