

Foreword

The response from readers to the 1983 issue of *Journal of Mennonite Studies* has been most encouraging. Individual and institutional subscribers in Canada, the United States and Europe have indicated that there is a need for a Mennonite scholarly journal with a focus on historical, literary and cultural aspects of Anabaptist-Mennonite studies. Our intention is to continue with one substantial issue per year until there is reason for additional numbers. As of now there are close to 400 paid subscribers, which for an academic journal is a very good beginning indeed.

With regard to articles and other items for the *Journal*, the response from contributors has also been gratifying. Several articles have already been submitted for consideration for the next issue and other material and book reviews have been promised. We continue to invite persons to submit articles, reviews and original creative literature dealing with Anabaptist-Mennonite issues.

The present issue opens with a poem by David Waltner-Toews, in which he expresses sentiments and images relating to Winnipeg. The other poem in this issue is by Johannes Harder, a well-known novelist and Mennonite elder living in Germany.

Historian Harvey L. Dyck in his article "Russian Servitor and Mennonite Hero," deals with the positive and negative images of the Russian-Mennonite "enlightened despot" Johann Cornies. Professor Dyck is also the translator and editor of "Agronomist Gavel's Biography of Johann Cornies (1789-1848)," an obituary which first appeared in a Supplement to the *Unterhaltungsblatt* published in Russia in October, 1848.

In November, 1983, a symposium was held at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Winnipeg, on the relations between the General Conference Mennonites and the Mennonite Brethren in Canada. John B. Toews' essay, "Brethren and Old Church Relations in Pre-World War I Russia," and Harry Loewen's article, "The Mennonite Writer as Witness and Critic," were papers given at this symposium. The papers were only slightly revised for publication in this issue.

Henry Paetkau, a graduate student at the University of Western Ontario and pastor of the Harrow United Mennonite Church, Harrow, Ontario, takes another critical look at the Russian Mennonite immigrants of the 1920s. Sociologist Calvin Redekop argues in "The Mennonite Identity Crisis" that Mennonites were profoundly influenced by many

traditions, including, among others, Anabaptism, Pietism, Nationalism, and Fundamentalism.

In his article "Derche Bloom Råde," Al Reimer investigates the comic irony in Arnold Dyck's works, suggesting that at least part of Dyck's irony had its creative beginning in the Mennonite forestry services in Russia. And Victor Doerksen, like John L. Ruth before him, is in search of a "Mennonite Imagination," arguing that the Mennonite literary artist can help us "to interpret the self-understanding of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition."

In the article "The Radical Reformation Revisited," Abraham Friesen argues among other things that the Swiss Brethren and the peaceful Anabaptists were less influenced by such radical reformers as Muentzer and Carlstadt than by Ulrich Zwingli, the Swiss Reformer. The lengthy essay was originally three papers given at the University of Winnipeg in October, 1983, as part of the guest lecture series sponsored by the Chair in Mennonite Studies.

This issue concludes with two book reviews by Waldemar Janzen and Dennis Martin.

As editor I wish to express my thanks to the Editorial Committee for its active support and advice in preparing this issue. It is a pleasure to work with this group of colleagues. As Editorial Committee we are most grateful to the many subscribers who have also made financial donations to the *Journal*. A special thanks goes to John Schroeder and Assiniboine Travel Service Ltd., Winnipeg, for generous financial support toward publication costs of this issue of the *Journal*.

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