

Book Reviews

Clarence Bauman. *On the Meaning of Life. An Anthology of Theological Reflection* (Nappanee, IN: Evangel Press: 1993). Hardcover, 286 pp.

This book, somewhat like that of J.B. Toews (*A Pilgrimage of Faith*), is more than a scholarly study; it is a statement of faith, a testament and a witness. Those who have had the unusual good fortune of personal contact with Clarence Bauman know of his mystical commitment to the teaching of Jesus and his *lifelong exploration of the traditions which have stimulated or stifled Christian discipleship*. In this summing up Bauman recalls talks and articles from his years as a seminary teacher which document his own pilgrimage of faith.

Twenty-six chapters, some popular and some scholarly in style, discuss the great themes: *Life and Death, Prayer, Jesus, Discipleship, Anabaptism, Scripture, the Classics, Theology, Ethics, Economics, Marriage, Communion, Faith, Holiness and Silence*.

This is a book to ponder, an invitation to examine the unexamined life and its purpose. Here is a sample:

What gives life its meaning one can find and lose, but never possess. God's guidance never becomes our own possession. The spirit blows where it will. Only in our most sublime moments do we hear the sound thereof. Only in such moments do we recover a glimpse of something for which to live, something great enough for which to die. Nevertheless, it is out of and toward such moments that we authentically live in the conscious freedom of and spontaneous obedience to our inner calling. (12)

Bauman is concerned to recover the Anabaptist “movement” and to seek the historical or “real” Jesus. The teaching of Jesus, especially the Sermon on the Mount, was rediscovered by the Anabaptists, advocating a “christology from below”:

Jesus died the way he died because he lived the way he lived. He did not live because he died. Therefore the significance of his death and the reasons for it must be sought within the context of his life, not vice versa. (82)

In this unique volume Bauman includes a photograph of the Hermitage which has been a spiritual campground for him over the years, and he concludes his reflections with a series of aphorisms on silence. Here are a few:

Silence precedes time and is independent of time, yet it is the soil in which the seed of time is sown.

Silence constitutes the mystery surrounding every word and sustains the truth within the word. (268)

There is an inexpressible beauty in silence, a radiance which relieves it of its heaviness. (270)

Unless we zealously guard the few remaining fragments of silence within our civilized life from verbal pollution and dissolution, we forfeit the redemptive intention of the word within the world. (272)

Besides being a student of Hans Denck, Clarence Bauman has learned from the Quakers, and he concludes the volume with a series of “Reflections on Silent Worship,” his own and those of others, as well as aphorisms of “eremetical wisdom.” Here his sources include Heschel, Bonhoeffer, Schweitzer and even Goethe. From Hans Denck he cites: *Wiederkehren von allem gezweyten in das einig, das muss durch alles Leben gestudiert werden.*

Victor G. Doerksen
University of Manitoba

Sarah Klassen, *Borderwatch* (Windsor Ont.: Netherlands Press, 1993). Paperback, 93 pp.

This collection begins with poems that describe literal borders—political, ideological boundaries—complete with all the obvious though vivid images like guns, razor wire and armed guards. Yet from the beginning borders are not just visible, concrete structures that are erected to isolate and protect politically

sanctioned thought but are also invisible boundaries such as fear, prejudice and conformity. These invisible, often self-imposed borders are even greater restraints to our freedom, our vision, our potential as human beings than the barricades constructed by tyrannical regimes. Literal border encounters and crossings soon become metaphors for a great variety of everyday private confrontations with these invisible boundaries.

Although such “invisible borders” are intimidating and can delay our self-fulfilment, they need not forever repress or imprison us but can, with the proper attitude, become gateways to hitherto unexplored vistas of the imagination. Seen in this light these truly inhibiting boundaries must be crossed many times until they become portals to true freedom:

Abandon foolish dreams of arrival.
Resign yourself to the absolute
necessity of departure. Dead weight of
cumbersome luggage must be cast off.
When you become translucent, luminous
as morning
you can travel where you will. Then
the horizon’s thin hard edge recedes.
Sky opens. Then
there can be no boundaries. (“Reasons for delay”)

Borders that threaten to confine or restrict us are consistently equated with darkness and winter, never with the beautiful images of the natural world like the sun, the blue sky, the flowers of spring. These beautiful images of nature, the sun especially, are associated with “the pure in heart,” with those who experience the world emotionally rather than rationally. Tyrants and militarists, the ultimate proponents of a border mentality, are emblematic of such negative thinking and are always depicted in grey colourless tones. Klassen cleverly puns on the word “uniform” in the following lines:

Absence of colour at the border
is not neutrality. Nor is it merely dull
camouflage. This blandness
is denial: a uniform state of mind.
Stubborn reluctance ever to say yes
to radiance, the sky’s blue reach,
a reed flute’s fragile melody
free floating in a windowed room.

Such a rigid, border mind-set also contrasts sharply with the more adventurous traveller’s open-mindedness described in the very next stanza of the same poem:

On the way to the border we passed
poppies, blood-red, their petals
radiant. Stems bending
freely to the wind in the unrestrained
widening of green fields. (“Colours at the Border”)

Artists (painters, musicians, poets) are those travellers who transcend such borders with ease and assist others to do the same. The artist's work forever defies any attempts to control the mind even at the very centre of an oppressive, militaristic regime:

You'll find Matisse in Moscow, Renoir
and even Chagall who left Russia in his youth
Colour surrounds you, resonance and light.
Degas' dancers: white and so luminous
you'll swear you can hear music
around you: violin, oboe and the sweet
flute. ("A partial guide to the Pushkin galleries": "Degas' dancers")

Klassen's poems challenge us to confront our own borders realistically but with joy and optimism. For example, coming to terms with the despair of winter becomes a profoundly significant "border" experience:

On the way to work, walking
I'm held under conviction
by the crow's wingbeat
casting its first shadow
on the impure snow

Something in the air
in the compelling wind
urges the frostbound sidewalk
to cast off winter
attitudes, and
open their cold hearts
to the sun

Closed houses are waking up
from unrepentant sleep
and I am almost persuaded
to believe
I can hear the naked trees
clapping their brittle branches,
calling me to dance ("Altar call in March")

The ultimate borders, between earth and heaven, time and eternity, life and death cannot be avoided and can be transcended only through faith. Such a faith does not exclude the traditional faith of the poet's grandmother as described in the poem "Moving On," or her mother's admirable courage in facing her own death, recounted in a series of poems at the end of the collection. Yet the crossing or passing of these ancestors is described not only in the religious idioms so familiar to that generation but also in terms of Klassen's inspiring nature imagery—their final thoughts are of "sunlight" and "green aspens" and "April rain."

Many of these poems obviously grew out of Klassen's personal, literal experiences as a traveller, to the Baltic countries and the former Soviet Union. However, there is an abundance of evidence in these poems that she will

always be a traveller, even when at home where everyday, mundane incidents become exciting confrontations with these ever-present borders.

Borderwatch is Sarah Klassen's third book of poems. Her first two volumes were very well received. *Journey to Yalta* (Turnstone, 1988) was awarded the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award for 1988; *Violence and Mercy* (Netherlandic Press, 1990) was nominated for two awards. With this collection Klassen continues to build on her steadily growing reputation.

Peter Pauls
The University of Winnipeg

Al Reimer, *Mennonite Literary Voices Past and Present* (Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, 1993). Paperback, 75 pp.

When I heard, in the late 70s, that at Conrad Grebel College a course in Mennonite literature was being offered, I was astonished. Was there enough material around, I wondered, to give a substantive content to such a course? My more cynical colleagues at the high school where I taught were not yet persuaded of the viability of Canlit, and now, here was Mennlit!

No one would deny that a substantial body of literary writing by Mennonites existed by 1992, the year Al Reimer delivered the fortieth Menno Simons Lectures at Bethel College. These lectures became the four chapters of *Mennonite Literary Voices Past and Present*, published two years later. Chapters two and three appeared earlier in *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, Vol. 10, 1992, pp. 20-26, and in *Mennonite Life*, March 1992, pp. 20-26 respectively.

Reimer begins his "preliminary appraisal" by sorting out what constitutes Mennonite writing, and concludes that it is "the work of writers who spent at least their formative years in a Mennonite milieu—family and/or community and/or church—regardless of whether they now consider themselves 'Mennonite' in a religious sense, or in a purely ethnic sense, or in both senses or in neither sense."

Although some readers may wish to challenge this definition, its wideness allows the author to include in the company of writers he discusses those he deems strongest and who, in many cases, are moving away (or already have) from Mennonitism.

In the first chapter, "Where is the Voice Coming From," the author traces the Mennonite literary tradition back to the seventeenth century. He points out that early Anabaptist writings, in spite of their authors' purely didactic or devotional intentions and their preference for literal truth, reveal traces of "literacy, imagination and technique almost in spite of themselves." Early

examples are Thielemann van Braght's *Martyr's Mirror* and the work of other 17th-century writers like John Phillip Schabalie (*The Wandering Soul*) and Peter Peters (*The Way to the City of Peace* and *The Mirror of Greed*).

In the early title of *Martyr's Mirror*—"The Bloody Theatre"—Reimer finds the organizing metaphor of this work announced. A cast of innocents takes to the stage and plays out a drama following a script of testimonies and court proceedings. The simple orality is the key to the evocative power of final words and heartfelt letters of farewell or admonition.

Reimer finds more evidence of literary devices: twenty martyr stories told in ballad form were included in the 1583 *Ausbund*; Schabalie and Peters, like their contemporary, John Bunyan, invented characters and dialogue and clothed their didactic intention in allegory.

These literary characteristics, melded with the oral plain style, formed the beginnings of a literary tradition, Reimer states, that Mennonites brought with them to Russia, via the Vistula delta. In the eighteenth century most Mennonite writing was done by historians and theologians, amateur writers who generally painted favourable pictures of Mennonite church and community life. He credits *Plautdietsch* with having helped forge both an ethnic identity and a tendency toward secularization which laid the foundation for future imaginative writing. Before the revolution, there were several attempts at such writing, but it was "The tragic upheaval of war and revolution and the destruction of the Mennonite commonwealth in Russia that shocked the Mennonite literary imagination into life as nothing had done since the age of martyrdom."

Arnold Dyck, a writer of particular interest to Al Reimer, stood foremost among those who brought this new literary vision to Manitoba where it flourished modestly in the decades before World War II. This writing was in German, it was essentially secular and it looked back, nostalgically, to a lost Eden.

In his second chapter, "Where Is/Was the Place?" Reimer names several significant circumstances that made possible the current phenomenon of Mennonite writing, particularly in the Canadian west. The Mennonites who came from Russia in the 1920s brought with them a definite ethnic culture and even a literary tradition (the main bearer of it being Arnold Dyck). Western Canada did not yet have a firmly established cultural and writing tradition, and so writers like Rudy Wiebe, for instance, found themselves in the right place at the right time to help shape the region's literary tradition.

Further, the Russian Mennonites became acculturated relatively quickly. They acquired education and were able to exploit the excitement and tensions of cultural and linguistic changes for their writing purposes.

Reimer celebrates the writing of Canadian Mennonites like Rudy Wiebe, who "started it all," Patrick Friesen who writes with "one foot in, one foot out" of the Mennonite community and Armin Wiebe who combines the English vernacular with Mennonite "Flat German" in his serious-comic novels. He also singles out fiction writer Warren Kliever, an American who chose to set his

stories in southern Manitoba. In their literary explorations, Reimer points out, these male writers find that the garden from which the Mennonites were driven was badly flawed and the father-son relationships marked by an inability to love that led, inevitably, to guilt.

The third chapter, "Where Was/Is the Woman's Voice?" is devoted to Mennonite women writers. Reimer claims that the emerging women literary writers have done more than historical and critical (women) writers to reclaim the public voice and presence that their Anabaptist foremother's enjoyed, at least until the persecutions ended.

The survey moves from Di Brandt's "dramatic and daringly creative" anger at male oppression to Jean Janzen's "gentle hope" for humanity. Women, according to Reimer, are particularly inclined to give voice to their foremothers and to explore their own place in the patriarchal culture. They see themselves as victims of that patriarchy and their writing announces their unwillingness to continue to sacrifice their identity to the Mennonite male. They represent the "rebellious New Eve" who refuses to be invisible.

Further evidence of Reimer's appreciation for women's writing are his frequent references to critics like Maggie Redekop and Hildi Tiessen.

The last chapter asks "To Whom Are the Voices Speaking?" One senses that critics like Reimer listen most closely when the Mennonite writers (according to his definition) choose to write about the Mennonite experience, whether that is in "the lost homeland from which they had been exiled" or in "the alien [land] in which they [find] themselves." given this preference, major works like Rudy Wiebe's *The Temptations of Big Bear* and Lois Braun's short stories, fiction that does not deal so specifically with the Mennonite community, are passed over in the discussion. Of the stories by Sandra Birdsell (it may be presumptuous to claim her as Mennonite, Reimer admits) only those that touch on Mennonite family life are included in the appraisal.

As a reference point for his arguments and exposition, Reimer reminds readers, in the first chapter and again in the last, of an earlier Menno Simons lecturer. In 1976, John L. Ruth called for Mennonite literary writing that would grow out of the centre of the faith community and would "achieve a creative balance between critique and advocacy."

In fact, Reimer argues, the strongest writing has come from the Mennonite as outsider, as prophet and sometimes iconoclast. It has come less from the Swiss Mennonites who are more community minded and inward looking, and more inclined to be guided by Ruth's prescription, than from the Russian Mennonites with their literary tradition, ethnic identity and secular stance that questions the Mennonite ideal.

Such writing, Reimer states, is a necessary corrective to writing that has been driven by nostalgia, that takes a triumphalist view of Mennonite history and that is produced by the insider who sees clearly the evil outside and is blind to the darkness inside. Reimer's plea, in the final chapter is that these dissident voices be listened to by the Mennonite community. While challenging church

publications to include poems and stories by Mennonite writers in their reporting, he warns against any expectation that the writers will “give up their independence and integrity as artists by allowing themselves to be enlisted in the cause of the liberal establishment.”

Mennonite Literary Voices is a welcome addition to Mennonite writing. It shows readers the tradition from which Mennonite writing emerged and the place it occupies in contemporary literary art. Reimer's investigation accomplishes for those of Dutch-Prussian-Russian background what John L. Ruth accomplished for American Swiss-Mennonites in his *Mennonite Identity and Literary Art* (Herald Press, 1978). It is an insightful and provocative interpretation of our literary imagination that will be helpful to both insiders and outsiders, readers and writers.

Reimer writes with characteristic enthusiasm and generosity and a deep love for Mennonite writing, qualities which make it easier for him to praise than to find fault. He brings to this work his own interest, and rich background, in both literature and Mennonite history. Reading these chapters, I found myself wishing I could have been present at the 1991 Menno simons lectures at Bethel College.

Sarah Klassen
Winnipeg, Manitoba

David Bergen, *Sitting Opposite My Brother* (Winnipeg: Turnstone Press, 1993). Softcover, 142 pp., \$14.95.

Add the name of David Bergen—in block letters—to the growing list of Mennonite fiction writers making impressive debuts on the Canadian literary stage. Several of this fine young author's short stories have already been anthologized, but this is his first published collection of short stories. And what an arresting collection these eleven stories make up! Among the many superlative qualities on display here not the least is Bergen's literary sensibility. Very much a sophisticated urban Mennonite sensibility, it has that same ruthless candor, that relentless search for truth, that need to confess without shame even the most repressed sentiments and private impulses, the murkiest depths of human relationships, that is so characteristic of established Mennonite writers like Rudy Wiebe, Di Brandt, Pat Friesen and Audrey Poetker.

Most of the all-male narrators in these stories are young married men running up against the shocking, maddening, bewildering and irreconcilable realities of marriage, fatherhood, and family and kinship ties. They tend to be tense and on-edge, strung to the breaking point by the unknowable otherness of their wives, by their need to nurture children who remain lovable but dark pools of mystery, by their frustrated attempts to cope with fathers whose souls are stuffed with the loveless pith of fundamentalist religion, and by mothers who are not allowed to pour out the healing balm of their love. While they can observe the details of daily living with uncanny accuracy and often show astonishing insight, these male narrators are constantly baffled by the sheer opacity of those closest to them as well as by the ever-elusive fluidity of changing time.

Bergen's urban sensibility is richly defined through the multi-layered ironies he weaves through his stories and by the unexpected but intuitively right juxtapositions he introduces so adroitly. In "Hey" the wife of a math teacher is a dynamite fastball pitcher but also an intellectual who studies religion and casually patronizes her husband instead of making babies for him. The reversal at the end of the story is not only funny but has the ring of truth. "The Fall" is the scariest but also one of the best of these stories. Charles' and Candace's daughter Anne, with her strange, twisted precocity, acts as a nemesis to the couple, driving Candace, full of hatred and guilt for her daughter, away in panicked flight, while Charles, trying to cope with the terrible reality of little Anne, takes off in pursuit of his wife. In the end nothing is really resolved, although a grudging, sullen reconciliation of a sort takes place.

David Bergen's style and techniques are accomplished enough to remind one of such masters of the short story as Alice Munroe and Margaret Atwood. His sentences have a lapidary quality just right for his tensely articulate narrators. In "Where You're From," a subtly complex story, the narrator's brother Timothy, on furlough from missionary duties in Indonesia, is described as "a soft, nervous man who walks on the thin crackly pages of the King James bible without ripping a single sheet." In "The Fall" the narrator's fanatical father "read[s] the paper to glean hard evidence for the second coming." Levels of irony are also abundant in "Cousins" where two Mennonite brothers—Abe and John—refuse to talk to each other because the former was a tail-gunner in World War II while the latter was a C.O. in a logging camp. When Abe is dying John "sends a letter... saying that God's grace knows no bounds and that he, John, is praying for his brother Abe."

These eleven stories lay bare the contemporary Mennonite world with a searing honesty that will make readers squirm with self-recognition and longing for an innocence forever lost. David Bergen has the potential, I submit, of developing into a major Canadian writer.

Al Reimer
University of Winnipeg

Reuben Epp, *The Story of Low German & "Plautdietsch": Tracing a Language Across the Globe* (Hillsboro, Kansas: The Reader's Press, 1993). Paperback, 133 pp., \$12.95.

Every once in a while a book comes along that must be given a strong endorsement simply for having been written. This is such a book. The story of Mennonite Plautdietsch and how it fits into the long and honorable history of Low German is long overdue. Older than English, its linguistic sibling, Low German dominated northern Europe throughout the Middle Ages as the business and diplomatic language of the Hanseatic League, as well as being the spoken (with dialectal regional differences) and written language of multitudes of people stretching from Holland to the Baltic countries. It even developed an impressive body of literature up to about 1500, after which it was gradually displaced by the rising tide of High German pushing northwards from southern Germany. Changing economic conditions and the persuasive influence of Luther's High German Bible were the main reasons for the decline of Low German. Plautdietsch, according to Epp and other scholars, is a Nether Prussian dialect of the Lower Saxon brand of Low German as spoken in the Vistula delta by Netherlandic Mennonites, influenced somewhat by the very similar Low German dialect they had brought with them from the Netherlands.

Motivated by an ardent love for his mother tongue, Reuben Epp has devoted many years not only to the writing of Plautdietsch, but to the study of its origins, development and current status as an inherited language that is neglected more and more by North American Mennonites. Other Mennonite scholars—Quiring, Goerzen, Thiessen—have written degree theses on Plautdietsch, but Epp is the first scholar to attempt the complete history of the dialect in popular form. A retired teacher and educational instructor in B.C. and not formally trained as a linguistic scholar, Epp nevertheless displays the full panoply of a careful researcher who is diligent, strives for objectivity, never claims too much, and always treats the work of other scholars with respect. While perhaps relying a little too often on generalized secondary sources like the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, he develops a clear and informative narrative never before told with such scope and insight. Having said that, I must also add that where many scholarly works nowadays are bloated with over-documentation and long-winded prose, Epp's book is almost too spare and underdeveloped. One often wishes for more exposition, more analysis and illustration.

In addition to telling the linguistic story of Plautdietsch in an orderly, succinct form, Epp brushes in an interesting historical background pertaining to the migration patterns of the early Anabaptist-Mennonites. At times, however, linguistic information and historical facts appear almost word for word in several different sections. Along with the chapter summaries this gives the book a kind of textbook format, which may or may not have been Epp's intention. It would certainly be a valuable aid to the Plautdietsch courses Epp so eloquently calls for in his final chapter.

There is one relatively minor but controversial issue on which Epp, for all his careful scholarship, misses the boat. It involves the alleged pronunciation difference between the orthographic symbols "kj" and "tj," which designate a palatalized sound that is perhaps more characteristic of Mennonite Plautdietsch than any other sound. That this issue is not pronunciational at all but purely a matter of orthographic convention can be verified by any Plautdietsch speaker willing to spend five minutes in front of a mirror trying out the sound in the laboratory of his/her own mouth. An unpalatalized (straight) "t" sound is made with the tip of the tongue against the front teeth; the straight "k" sound is made with a slightly cupped tongue not touching teeth or palate at all. The *only* way to palatalize *either* the "t" or the "k" is to press the tongue against the hard palate just above the front teeth. Thus, the orthographic symbol for that particular palatalized sound can be rendered with equal validity either as "kj" or "tj". The difference simply comes down to which of the two symbols—"kj" or "tj"—the Mennonite speaker "sees" in his/her mind. The point is that all Plautdietsch speakers create the sound in exactly the same way, given the very slight individual differences determined by shape of teeth, tongue, etc. Amazingly, this has become an almost mystical issue that has been given all kinds of linguistic, geographical and cultural explanations. One can only wonder why. Epp's treatment of this issue as pronunciational puts a slight blemish on an otherwise valuable historical and linguistic account of our mother tongue.

In the final chapter of this fine book Epp becomes a persuasive spokesman for our rich heritage of Plautdietsch and why it should be preserved through research, literature and speaking, just as Low German dialects in Germany are being ever more strongly promoted in universities, on radio stations and in writing and speaking. Epp points out that according to recent estimates there are approximately 300,000 speakers of Plautdietsch world-wide among the almost eight million speakers of Low German, most of whom live in northern Germany. He concedes, though, that in North America, the 80,000-100,000 Plautdietsch speakers (the estimate seems rather high) are "too widely scattered" to allow for a unified "pursuit of literary interests." Indeed there is every indication that the number of Plautdietsch speakers will continue to dwindle as English (its sister language) continues to dominate the scene. That battle was lost at least a generation ago in Canada and several generations ago in the U.S.

Nevertheless, lovers of Plautdietsch will share Epp's concern that the very study of the language has been shamefully neglected and that it seems strange that *Mennonite Studies* at the university level would not include courses in it. Epp covers the activities of Plautdietsch writers currently, although it seems a curious oversight on his part that he makes no mention of the *Mennonite Mirror*, which in its twenty-year history did more than any other medium to sponsor and stimulate Plautdietsch writing in Canada. Epp and other prominent Plautdietsch writers like Jack Thiessen, Elisabeth and Victor Peters and Agnes Wall have in recent years written and recorded some of the most artistic

and stimulating Plautdietsch stories and poems since Arnold Dyck.

This is a must book for anyone still interested in our irreplaceable and storied legacy of Plautdietsch and Reuben Epp deserves the highest praise for his dedicated efforts to explore its origins and development and to stimulate interest in a language we surrendered much too readily in our eagerness to join mainstream "English" society. As Epp shows graphically, we have for all intents and purposes repudiated our natural linguistic mother in favour of her rich English sister, and by so doing have sold our linguistic birthright forever.

Al Reimer
The University of Winnipeg

Royden K. Loewen, *Family, Church, and Market. A Mennonite Community in the Old and the New Worlds, 1850-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993). Paperback xiv, 370 pp.

The publication of this book marks a watershed in the writing of Canadian Mennonite history. Building on extensive research in Mennonite and public archives, utilising the rich resources of local community history and genealogical memoirs and integrating these with comparative studies, Loewen has produced a detailed and scholarly work of value to Mennonites, the general reader, and academics interested in social history.

The book is divided into three, chronologically linked parts which trace the movement of the Mennonite *Kleine Gemeinde* and their descendants from their origin and settlements in New Russia to Nebraska and Manitoba. Two thirds of the book deals with the North American experience of the *Kleine Gemeinde* by comparing and contrasting developments in Nebraska and Manitoba up to 1930. Loewen also includes consideration of the communities of the *Kleine Gemeinde* diaspora in Canada and the United States.

The central theme of the book is religious, social and economic adaptation. More specifically Loewen is concerned with the establishment of both domestic and a market economy and the relationship between economic factors and the social relations of production in the reproduction of *Kleine Gemeinde* communities. This involves him in a sophisticated consideration of how entrepreneurship developed among *Kleine Gemeinde* in the emergent industrial economies of Russia and North America, and how members of the communities attempted to maintain established social and religious values more associated with an

agrarian way of life. He covers in detail the impact of commercial markets, increased monetarization and the utilisation of technology and business procedures; in the social world he recreates the intensity of community institutions and kinship ties and places particular emphasis on the role of women in the maintenance of the domestic sphere in contrast to the male confrontation with the external world. Loewen's vivid and detailed account of women's worlds and the changing economy of farming, is matched by his brilliant recreation of the rapid developing, but extremely different, urban environments of Jansen in Nebraska and Steinbach in Manitoba.

Loewen does not take the Russian background for granted and challenges the widely accepted view of the *Kleine Gemeinde* as a backward, narrow, closed community of agrarian peasants. Building on the pioneering research of Delbert Plett and on his own research into the New Russian settlements, he reveals a sophisticated, yet conservative religious group, already well adapted to the emergent market economies of the Russian steppe. It was on this basis that the immigrants to Nebraska and Manitoba attempted to replicate not just their faith and community, but also their interaction with the frontier economies of North America. He also challenges the view, particularly marked in John Warkentin's unpublished 1960 doctoral study of the historical geography of Mennonite settlements of southern Manitoba, that the *Kleine Gemeinde*, as isolated conservatives, were victims of the encroachment of the wider society. Instead Loewen depicts the *Kleine Gemeinde* as early and active participants in the larger economies of Nebraska and Manitoba. The *Kleine Gemeinde* attempted to have the best of both worlds: the benefits of economic change and growth and the security of the continuity of their established religious and social values. Loewen reveals that the Canadian Mennonites proved more successful than the American *Kleine Gemeinde* in this balancing act, although both communities experienced similar conflicts and strains in the process and he hints that in the end the agrarian values were lost. The challenges to religious ideas and practices in the 1880s and after 1900 are skilfully discussed and matched against the changing demands of the local rural and urban environments.

This is a book which thrives on detail. Goosen's hogs, Reimer's visits, Unger's knitting, Friesen's cousins are all there, capturing the intensity of Mennonite social relations. Although highly literate, the oral culture is clearly reflected in his numerous quotations from chatty letters, discursive diaries and other records for which the *Kleine Gemeinde* have become famous. The minutia of everyday existence at times threatened to overwhelm this humble reader from a simpler society, but thankfully most of the detail is relegated to the footnotes. But there is an authentic voice at work here. Loewen is not only of *Kleine Gemeinde* descent, but has also farmed extensively. He is still integrated into extensive kinship networks, he has calculated when to plough and when to sow and he has known the price of grain and hogs. But Loewen is also a meticulous scholar able to disengage himself—almost—from the work of

field, hearth and pulpit.

In his discussion of social history, Loewen's book is a considerable advance on earlier accounts in Mennonite community life and a major contribution to Canadian studies. Even so, a few comments are in order. A clearer presentation of the articulation of domestic and wider kinship relations, particularly the connection between descent and marriage and the reproduction of status across generations might have assisted to focus the interesting discussion of social inequality including access to land, credit and political influence. The emphasis on women is welcome, but the exact nature of relations between genders is neglected and the issue of age is overlooked. Patterns of power and authority, in the domestic sphere, in wider networks of kinship and affinity and within congregations are not discussed in detail. After migration such patterns were reasserted in Mennonite communities in Canada and in the United States, in marked contrast to the "secular" institutions of village and colony developed by officialdom in Russia.

One of the most significant aspects of Loewen's book is his use of the comparative method on a number of levels. There are the "controlled" comparisons based on considerations of the different *Kleine Gemeinde* communities in the old world and the new, in the United States and in Canada. At another level there are less controlled comparisons through the use of sources from agrarian communities in Europe and especially North American ethnic immigrant community studies in rural and urban situations. Finally he utilises literature which proposes specific hypotheses on social relations and social forms. Some of these wider comparisons seem appropriate, others are more problematic.

Reading Loewen's account and contemplating how valuable his comparative strategy is in highlighting issues, the possibility of other, more "controlled" comparisons becomes obvious. What of other Mennonite groups closely related through history and migration and indeed in continued contact with *Kleine Gemeinde*? What of the Chortitz people, neighbours on the East Reserve? What exactly was happening over *jantsied*? Or out in Saskatchewan? What about others in the United States? Jeffrey Longhofer and Jerry Floersch's study of the Alexanderwohl community in Kansas point to interesting comparisons. Finally, what about parallel, yet divergent developments in Russia up to 1914? Len Friesen's important contextualised study of New Russian society with its references to Mennonites suggests fascinating possibilities for future comparative work. But the basis for such comparative analysis will first have to begin with local level studies. Much still remains unresearched and/or unpublished. For the present though we have Loewen's book and it clearly sets a standard, provides a model, presents a challenge, and points the way ahead. As such it is very welcome indeed.

James Urry,
Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Paul Toews, ed., *Mennonites and Baptists. A Continuing Conversation* (Winnipeg/Hillsboro: Kindred Press, 1993). Paperback, 261 pp., \$19.95.

Within the last decade Mennonites and other religious traditions have initiated dialogues or conversations in an attempt to heal old wounds, bring about reconciliation, and to work more closely together. Thus an attempt at dialogue was begun between Canadian Lutherans, Catholics and Mennonites on the occasion of Luther's 500th anniversary of his birth, taking place in Waterloo, Ontario, in 1983. The papers given on that occasion were published in a book, *The Theology of Martin Luther. Five Contemporary Canadian Interpretations*, edited by Egil Grisliis (The Lutheran Council of Canada, 1985). In 1989 Reformed and Mennonite scholars met in Calgary to dialogue with one another. The papers presented there were published in *Baptism, Peace and the State in the Performed and Mennonite Traditions*, edited by Ross T. Bender and Alan P.F. Sell (WLU Press, 1991). The Believers Church Conference held in Winnipeg in 1978 involved mostly Baptists and Mennonites, and in 1992 Mennonites and Baptists met in Amsterdam to discuss issues of mutual interest. That these conversations are long overdue goes without saying.

The book *Mennonites and Baptists. A Continuing Conversation*, includes eleven essays on the historical and theological connections between Mennonites and Baptists. In a valuable introductory chapter, William R. Estep deals with the 17th-century Dutch-Mennonite and English-Baptist connection in Amsterdam. Together with James R. Coggin's recent study, *John Smyth's Congregation. English Separatism, Mennonite Influence and the Elect Nation* (Herald Press, 1991), Estep's piece adds to our knowledge concerning an hitherto less known relationship between the two communities.

Abraham Friesen's essay, "Baptist Interpretations of Anabaptist History," demonstrates the theological similarities between Mennonites and Baptists and concludes that Mennonites, especially Mennonite Brethren, can learn much from the Baptists' appreciation of Anabaptism. Peter J. Klassen, John B. Toews and Albert W. Wardin, Jr. discuss the relationship between Mennonites and Baptists in Poland, Prussia and Russia. For some readers it may come as a pleasant surprise that Polish Baptists interceded for Mennonites to protect them from the Polish military. Also, the early Russian Mennonite Brethren found affirmation and support from German and Russian Baptists when they were persecuted by their own co-religionists.

Wardin, Jr., in dealing with the affinities and dissimilarities between the two traditions laments their eventual separation: "The isolation of the Mennonite Brethren helped to preserve their identity and special privileges, but it was at the cost of significant cooperation in evangelistic and educational work with both German and Russian Baptists with whom they had so much in common" (p.111).

In a significant essay, "Russian Mennonites and Baptists (1930-1990)," Walter Sawatsky shows how difficult times during the Soviet era drew the two

traditions together and how in the end Mennonites were able to survive as a distinct people: "What seems surprising... is the degree to which ethnic identity persisted in spite of... sovietization of the country, and the degree to which identity with the ethnos preserved the faith" (p.129). In his "The Russian Mennonite Brethren and American Baptist Tandem in India (1890-1940)," Peter Penner deals with an important Mennonite Brethren mission phase.

Clarence Hiebert in "Mennonite Brethren-Baptist Relations in the United States" argues convincingly that while Mennonite Brethren have benefited much from their relationship with Baptists, their belief in non-resistance as a way of life helped them to remain Anabaptist-Mennonite. Hiebert concludes: "Mennonite Brethren who are eager to become evangelically mainline, as in the past, may continue to abandon this life-encompassing worldview and become Baptist or members of some other Evangelical group. Meanwhile, some Baptists, more prepared to investigate this long held Mennonite orientation... are drawn to its biblical underpinnings" (p. 176).

Abe Dueck deals with "Baptists and Mennonite Brethren in Canada," and Howard John Loewen in his "August H. Strong: Baptist Theologian for the Mennonite Brethren," demonstrates the hold that this theologian had on John A. Toews in particular and many Mennonite Brethren students in general. The book concludes with "The Mennonite and Baptist Vision," a rather informal essay by James Wm. McClendon, Jr.

While the book deals with the "conversation" between Mennonites and Baptists, the number of authors and the issues dealt with favour the Mennonites, especially the Mennonite Brethren. As far as I can determine, of the twelve authors (including the editor) nine are Mennonites, eight of whom are of Mennonite Brethren background, and only three appear to be of Baptist background. This one-sidedness in the conversation might have been offset by including more Baptist scholars. Also, as is in the nature of such fraternal dialogues, the tendency is to dwell on similarities and affirmations rather than on issues which have kept the traditions apart. There is no doubt, however, that the ecumenical spirit in the different religious traditions needs to be encouraged and fostered as this book does.

The book is relatively free of misprints and typos. I found a few on pages 39, 54, and 64. While the binding is adequate, the books that Kindred Press publishes are generally stiff and hard to the touch and the covers curl up easily.

Harry Loewen
The University of Winnipeg

Die Mennoniten in Paraguay. Vergangenheit, Gegenwart, Zukunft. Studienkonferenz der Mennoniten in Paraguay abgehalten im Instituto Biblico Asuncion vom 1. bis 5. Februar 1993. Edited by Gerhard Ratzlaff.

At an important juncture in South American Mennonite history, when the Mennonite colonists of Paraguay have decided to participate actively in the political life of their country, this study conference is a documentation of the process which has led to this weighty decision. In the Proceedings (188 double-column pages) there is a systematic review of five major areas which make up the basis for the decisions taken: 1) the Mennonite administrative system, 2) the Mennonite economic system, 3) the school system, 4) the Mennonite position on peace, 5) Mennonite missions.

A detailed review of the twenty-one papers which make up these proceedings would require a great deal of space, and so this report will limit itself to remarks indicating the nature and range of the presentations. Each section seeks first of all to examine the biblical perspective on the problem, moving then through the historical record to the present situation. So the first paper in the first section (Hans Pankratz) begins with Romans 13 and ends with the 1966 resolution of the North American Mennonite Brethren, opening the way to participation in government. Peter P. Klassen then, in discussing the "self-administration" of the Mennonites in Russia, problematizes the issue by suggesting that the arrangements worked out in 1789, though obviously beneficial at ground level, called into question the "ideals of the Anabaptist confession." (11) Heinrich Wiens and Heinrich Dyck then discuss the administrative system in Paraguay and its possible future forms. A similar pattern is followed in the subsequent sections.

Peter P. Klassen in a second paper addresses the "Economic System of the Mennonites in Russia" and in particular the problem of the landless and of social justice (42-49). He points to the fact that the original move to Russia was not so much a religious as an economic phenomenon, but that the form of "personal-communal" landholding which developed there proved to be in keeping with the "communal-religious" views of the church, and that this remained a factor during the immigrations to Manitoba and to the Chaco. This closed form could not be maintained in Manitoba and is problematic in Paraguay because it is not anchored in law. The problem of the landless, he continues, could not remain purely economic, but affected the social and religious life of the colonies in Russia, and even the times of great abundance before the First World War were times in which there was a great difference between rich and poor. Klassen concludes: "It is now up to us to see our past realistically and to draw conclusions from it. In doing this Mennonitism itself is the greatest hindrance. A completely normal ethnic group with all its prejudices and errors bears a name which is religiously motivated, a name which at once obliges and exposes, combines and covers up, and yet a name

which is so desirable that no one wishes to give it up.” (48/49, free translation)

Cornelius Sawatzky offers a brief analysis and critique of the Mennonite economic system in Paraguay, at one point commenting: (my paraphrase) “our image in Paraguauy is not a unified one; on the one hand we are seen as hard-working, reliable, wealthy and well-organized, but on the other as separatists... who feel that they are actually too good for this country.” (53) Bernhard Wiebe continues this analysis, showing the dramatic growth of wealth among the Chaco Mennonites and asking how this should be integrated into the larger, national economic framework. Although grounded on cooperation and cooperative economic development, the differences which characterize western capitalism are already very visible, and, viewed from a biblical and brotherhood perspective, problematic.

The coming political reorganisation also has serious consequences for the school system. Victor Wall contributes a long examination of the “basis for a Christian school concept” (60-81), concluding with an impressive list of goals and principles, a document which North American Mennonite educators might study with profit. Abram Funk and Jakob Warkentin add essays on the history and the current problems of Mennonite schools. The future of education in the light of social change is addressed in considerable detail by Jacob Harder, who points to the economic, but also “psychological” factors which have radically affected the Paraguayan situation. Adaptability will be required, he concludes.

Two aspects of the Mennonite witness occupy the rest of the report, the peace question and the matter of missions. After a *Bibelarbeit* on the peace witness by Helmut Siemens, Jakob Warkentin examines the historical peace question with respect to the Prussian Mennonites. In his thoughtful essay Warkentin shows how tenaciously these Mennonites “fought” for privileges which actually did not serve them well, confusing spiritual and material (including political) interests (137). The reinstatement of these old privileges as *general rights* in the new constitution of Germany after World War II is seen as the proper conclusion of the matter. The volume concludes with several essays on missions, in particular “Our Mission in Paraguay” by Jacob Dyck, reviewing the work done both critically and with thanksgiving, as well as “The Future and Principles of Mennonite Missions in Paraguay,” by Rudolf Plett.

There are some very substantial essays here. It is obvious that the political circumstances and coming changes have much to do with this re-thinking of the basic *modus operandi* of the colonies, and it is encouraging to see such clear-headed analysis, both historical and contemporary, in laying the groundwork for decisions to be taken as the independent colonies become municipalities and generally part of the political landscape of Paraguay.

Victor G. Doerksen
University of Manitoba

Bob and Shirley Wagoner, *Community in Paraguay. A Visit to the Bruderhof* (Farmington, PA: Plough Publishing House, 1991). xiii+281 pp. \$13.00 post paid.

This well produced book, with its numerous delightful illustrations by Leslie Holland, and more than ninety photographs, is very good value in financial terms. But it is good value in other ways as well. It is a lively tale of travel, which involves the reader in the excitements and hardships of a challenging outward journey from Texas to Primavera, Paraguay; it is a social document revealing the joys and sorrows of community life; above all, it is an experience-based reflection upon what it is to be the church.

In 1953, dismayed by undue "identification with the world" to which their church (the Church of the Brethren) and others were party, and having met travelling Hutterian brethren, the Wagoners set out to experience community life at first hand. Was it really possible, they wondered, to recapture the radical vision of the early Anabaptists? How far could Christians of the twentieth century both protest against the individualism of much of Western society, whilst preserving and nurturing individuality? These are the running questions of the book.

The Wagoners' answer was learned through arduous, unfamiliar work, by sharing in worship, by experiencing the community's sorrow in bereavement, joy in marriages, and festivities at Christmas. It is that though not overtly (or perhaps sufficiently) doctrinal in expression (the Brethren were reluctant to open up too freely on deeply-felt matters), the life of the Paraguayan Bruderhofs was undeniably Christian in its inspiration and characteristics. They came to see that the community life stood as witnesses to, and to some extent implied a judgement upon, shallower styles of Christian living elsewhere. This comes out in many ways in the book—tellingly, for example, in this comment: "It was... a new experience for me to be trusted and accepted for what I was and not for how I rated alongside others."

From time to time there are hints that older Hutterite communities in North America, themselves more conservative, viewed their Brethren in Paraguay askance; but inter-community differences are not explored in detail. Clearly, however, the Bruderhofs in Paraguay were not designed to encourage Christian escapism. On the contrary, they sent workers to the United States to develop new communities there, and with their pioneering dairy husbandry they set the pace in Paraguay.

An informative chapter on the Anabaptist roots of the Bruderhofs is inserted, in which the Hutterian martyrs and migrations are recalled. We learn that when anti-German feeling in England was at its height during World War II, Paraguay was the only country which would receive the Brethren from that country, and there they remained until 1962. Paradoxically, a remnant in England grew in numbers, and the Wheathill Bruderhof

was born. Shirley Wagoner contributes a lively chapter on the education of children in the community.

We are left in no doubt as to the challenge of living in community, and it is made abundantly clear that the ideal of community involves more than the sharing of goods: it has to do with all that a member is and has. Realism prevails, however: the Brethren are shown as neither pietist nor perfectionist in their attitudes. No slavish restorationists, the Paraguayan Brethren emerge as a well-adjusted group, maintaining traditional ways whilst at the same time devoting the latest technology to the Lord's work. Bob Wagoner need not have worried whether or not they were adequately Christian—and perhaps the worry, and the implication that he was competent to adjudicate in this matter, exemplify a youthful evangelical arrogance which may be faintly worrying to others (how the “sound” can make one tremble!). But he did learn a good deal, and he and his wife have done well to offer us this record of their adventure, which has importance both as an historical document and as a stimulus to our thinking on the nature of Christian fellowship.

For good measure the editors append a chapter in which are recorded the impressions of Milton and Sandy Zimmerman, Quakers from Philadelphia, who were at Primavera in 1955.

Alan P.F. Sell
Aberystwyth, Wales

Bertha Elizabeth Klassen, *“Start Once from the Front.” A History of the Mennonite Community Orchestra* (Winnipeg: Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1993). ix, 130 pp.

As its subtitle states, this book offers the reader a history of the Mennonite Community Orchestra, a Manitoba-based volunteer orchestra. Written to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the orchestra in 1993, the book nevertheless dips back to two pre-1978 beginnings, the first in 1925 and the second in 1943. These beginnings are recorded in the first, second and fourth chapters of the book, while the story of the rebuilding after 1978 is told in the fifth and sixth. Other chapters present profiles of prominent players in the orchestra's early days, recent conductors, orchestra-choir collaborations, featured solo-

ists, original compositions and “graduate recitals and miscellaneous concerts.”

Brief commentary is supplemented by over 160 photographs—replete with captions, often listing all identifiable performers, along with several plates of MCO programs and expense sheets of the mid '40s. Chapter nine includes a chronological listing of solo performances and Chapter eleven student conductors. The book concludes with lists of all pre-1978 and post-1978 orchestral participants and an appendix of “significant dates” in the orchestra’s history. There is an index, but, ruefully, no bibliography.

Author Bertha Klassen, a longtime orchestral performer as well as its librarian and personnel manager, hopes her book will “find acceptance among my many friends.” Personal pronouns in phrases like “many of our Manitoba Mennonite musical leaders” further alert the reader to expect an insider’s perspective presented to a known readership. The author’s recollections of her own experience with the orchestra often enliven the text. At other times these reminiscences set the text teetering dangerously between the genres of communal history and personal memoir.

Critical readers may wish for greater accuracy in, for example, the discussion of *Ziffern* (p. 59), discrepant geographic references (p. 83), or the role of the MCO in the Twelfth (not seventh) Assembly of the Mennonite World Conference (p. 92). Others may cite the need for clearer thesis statements and greater delineation between text and material better suited for footnotes. Readers could rightly call for a more in-depth exploration of the orchestra’s role in perpetuating, nurturing and/or challenging an ethnic music tradition. They could similarly demand a broader historical and geographic contextualization of what is presented as a fairly local phenomenon. Layout and design artists might also argue that the rich photographic content of the book would have benefited from a more sophisticated design principle.

Still, the book contributes to the literature on Mennonite music-making a perspective on instrumental music to complement extant studies by scholars like Wesley Berg, Doreen Helen Klassen, Peter Letkemann and George Wiebe, which focussed on vocal or choral music traditions.

Written in a straightforward manner and presented in a stitched cloth binding, this book will be accessible even to young orchestra participants. Its large, clear type also makes it easily readable for those who remember the earlier beginnings of the orchestra. Despite its shortcomings, the book offers the average reader a valuable memento of a significant phenomenon in the history of Mennonite music-making.

Doreen Helen Klassen
Steinbach Bible College

Johannes Harder, *Aufbruch ohne Ende*. Ed. by Gudrun Harder and Hermann Horn (Wuppertal/Zürich: R. Brockhaus Verlag, 1952). Paperback, 216 pp. DM 29.88, \$25.00 Can.

This reviewer first got to know Johannes Harder in the 1930s when his two novels *In Wologdas weißen Wäldern* and *Das Dorf an der Wolga* found their way from pre-World War II (and pre-Nazi) Germany to the North American Mennonite community. The first of these two novels has been translated with some small changes and additions by Al Reimer, under the title *No Strangers in Exile*. Fifty years later, in the 1980s, this reviewer heard and met the author in person, several times in Canada, and once, briefly, at the Mennonite World Conference at Strasbourg, France. These fifty years spanned the era of the Third Reich, the Second World War and almost four decades of post-war developments and the Cold War, and it is fascinating to read about them in this book as the author experienced them.

Aufbruch ohne Ende is the author's incomplete autobiography. The emphasis certainly should be on "incomplete" and considerably less on "autobiography." Perhaps "reminiscences" rather than "memoirs" would best describe this 215-page paperback. Apparently the entire text was dictated and with the help of only very sparse written notes onto a tape recorder and later edited by the widow of the author, Gudrun Harder, his second wife after the death of Frieda, the mother of his five children. Fortunately the author had a marvelous gift of coherent speaking without manuscript. The reviewer has a taped lecture by him on Dostoevsky, which he presented without a scratch of notes in perfect coherence and sentence structure. Thus the result of this text in edited print is considerably superior to what one might expect from such a haphazard authoring. Unfortunately the author died quite unexpectedly before he could himself approve and authorize the final result. Apparently his intention had been to add two more chapters in which he wanted to delineate his religious and political convictions systematically and in some detail. Thus the book remains essentially a fragment; wisely the editors (Harder's long time friend, Hermann Horn, was Gudrun Harder's assistant) retained this fragmentary character of these "memoirs."

The title is well chosen. The German word *Aufbruch* has a number of meanings and usages. Literally it refers to the breaking up of virgin soil. It can also mean the breaking up of an encampment (a military term) in order to move on. In its figurative sense the word has a revolutionary connotation—the breaking up of an old order so that a new one can be established. In Harder's life all three of the above connotations of *Aufbruch* apply. His grandparents were pioneers on the steppes of the Volga, the last of the Prussian Mennonite immigrants to Russia in the mid-nineteenth century. Thus Harder knew from first-hand accounts what it was like to break the virgin soil of the steppes—the Eurasian equivalent of the North American long grass prairies. To the end of his life he remained a son of the steppes. When his time came to say farewell to

his professional life in Wuppertal he retired to a small rural village to retain some of his early associations with the soil and a rural habitat. I have heard him describe in almost lyrical nuances what it was like to be a little boy in the fragrant long grass steppes of his Volga homeland.

But Harder also knew something about breaking up camp and moving on. During the war the family was forced to move from the Volga settlement to an Orenburg village where his father was interned as a German national. In 1918 the family left Russia for Germany. Harder himself studied in Königsberg and lived in various places in Germany until the outbreak of the war. Early during the Nazi period he sided with the resistance and became a courier and speaker for the Confessing Church. His description of these years sounds almost like an exercise in name dropping: Eberhard Arnold, Hans Asmussen, Karl Barth, Martin Niemöller, and a host of lesser known opponents to the philosophy of the Third Reich.

During the war, after the German attack on the Soviet Union, Harder was drafted for service as a translator and editor. He used all the influence at his disposal to make things easier for the Soviet population under German occupation. The end of the war found him penniless in the Soviet Zone of Germany from whence he joined the trek to the British Zone where he was, almost miraculously, reunited with his family. After briefly toying with the idea of emigrating to Canada he decided to embark on an academic career, teaching Social Sciences in a teacher training institute in Wuppertal.

It seems that the author became more and more radical, both politically and religiously, as he grew older. He joined the SPD, but even the Social Democrats were not radical enough for him. He left the party rather than subject his conscience to party discipline. He and his students staged and joined demonstrations against the remilitarization of West Germany and against the stationing of rockets on German soil. He joined the annual Easter peace marches and frequently was one of the scheduled speakers on these occasions. It was a good idea of the editors to close the volume with one of Harder's Easter peace march addresses.

Accepting the fact that these reminiscences are by their very nature fragmentary, this reviewer still misses a number of things in the memoirs. Very little is said of the author's family; very little, actually nothing is related about his career as an author, novelist and publisher. Judging from his earliest novels, Harder was not a political radical in his youth. What caused him to become one in his later years? Perhaps some light would have been thrown on these questions if he could have had time to complete his planned two closing chapters. As it is, Harder remains in *Aufbruch*—“Aufbruch without end.”

In a curious way the very weakness of the book, its tantalizingly fragmentary character, also becomes its strength: It is an eminently readable book. There is nothing stuffy about it. The author's “ancient mariner” compulsion to tell a story and his masterful ability to do so, remain undiminished in this octogenarian who was never satisfied to “stay put.” There were always new

worlds to be conquered, always wrongs to be righted, always causes to be espoused. Life for him was never a graduation; it was always a commencement, an "Aufbruch ohne Ende."

Gerhard Ens
Winnipeg, Manitoba