

interesting to know what those farmers said about political affairs while socializing during wheat harvest or after church on a Sunday; but those conversations are lost to us. One could wish that Juhnke had made a greater effort to relate political adjustments of Kansas Mennonites to other aspects of acculturation and to compare this group with Mennonite societies which had been in this country much longer, but to have done so would have violated the author's self imposed limits.

Emerging somewhat from his objective stance Juhnke concludes that "the tragedy of the Mennonites was . . . that they so desperately wanted to be good American citizens and could not fulfill the requirements without violating their consciences or abandoning the tradition of their forebears" (p. 156). But this "Mennonite in America, a pacifist and a citizen," and a 1970 candidate for the United States House of Representatives who espouses "liberal Mennonite Christian values" (p. ix) never states how he proposes to solve the political dilemma of the Mennonites. Like a good historian, he leaves this question unanswered.

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Mennonites in Canada, 1786-1920: The History of a Separate People. By Frank H. Epp. (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1974. Pp. xii, 480. Illustrations, maps, charts, tables, notes, bibliographies, index. \$9.95.)

Frank H. Epp is a well known Canadian Mennonite scholar, author, and leader. In the prologue to this work T. D. Regehr summarizes with genuine insight the objective of the author: to "tell the Canadian Mennonite story accurately, within its European, North American, and Canadian contexts" (p. 17). Rare indeed is the in group author who succeeds in attaining such an objective to the degree to which Epp does.

Modern research has done much to clarify the complex nature of the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation, in particular the many facets of the radical reformation—a series of movements centering especially in Switzerland, central Germany, and the Netherlands. The revolutionary fringe of these movements was soon eliminated by the power of the states involved, and from the main bodies of the peace-

ful Anabaptist movements came the Mennonites (1525), the Hutterites (1528), and the Amish (1693). In North America the struggle to be a separated people led to further fragmentation (Old Order Mennonites, Conservatives, Old Colony, Sommerfelders, etc.). Those who immigrated between the 1680s and the American Revolutionary War (mostly of Swiss origin) constitute the largest body in North America (100,000 baptized members), while those who sojourned for several generations in Russia (mostly of Dutch origin) are known as General Conference Mennonites (60,000 in North America). Their general conference was created in 1860, while the larger body had no general conference until 1898. The Amish and the Hutterites each have a baptized membership of about 25,000. The Mennonite Brethren originated in Russia as a revivalist group and number about 35,000 in North America. The total for all bodies of Mennonites in North America is 210,000 baptized members in the United States and 90,000 in Canada: the unbaptized children would add possibly one fourth to these figures which include all Anabaptist related groups except the Hutterites. No Mennonite author has succeeded as well as Epp in writing with understanding and sympathy of all groups.

The book thoroughly discusses the Russian background of many of the Canadian Mennonites. It also portrays the struggles of the Mennonites as they sought to maintain their faith, way of life, and culture while at the same time adopting much of the modern life style of their new homeland. A small minority have left Canada to settle in Mexico and Paraguay where they can remain German in culture and avoid acculturation through the public schools of Canada. Fortunately for this "separated" people, Canada now has an official multicultural policy and program and encourages bilingualism. But the struggles were intense for the Mennonites, especially during and following World War I.

One of the most attractive features of the book is the beautiful English style of writing. The book gives evidence of wide reading and thorough research combined with sound interpretation. The author writes as a convinced Mennonite, yet as one whose eyes are open to the foibles and occasional shortsightedness of his subjects. The book has many charts, tables, and artist's sketches (rather than photographs). Typography is attractive, and mistakes are rare. The reasonable

price is due to subsidies from the Canada Council and other sources. Photographs of fifty representative leaders, and of an equal number of meetinghouses, would have added to the popular appeal of the book.

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American Classic. By Laurence Lafore. (Iowa City: Iowa State Historical Department/Division of the State Historical Society, 1975. Pp. 96. Illustrations. Clothbound, \$5.95; paperbound, \$3.95.)

Laurence Lafore's *American Classic* is a narrative and photographic tour of houses and buildings in Iowa City, Iowa, which was founded in 1839 as the first capital of the state. Through text and pictures he seeks to demonstrate the value of architecture as a means of learning "about our past, present, and future, about our ancestors, ourselves, and our heirs" (p. 5). Using architecture as a measure of values, attitudes, and beliefs, Lafore traces the progression of styles found in houses and public buildings from the classical simplicity of Plum Grove to the modern Iowa State Bank and Trust Building, a drive in bank that is "an artistic triumph not at all inappropriate to a society where automobiles and interest rates count so heavily" (p. 95). The founders of Iowa City drew their inspiration from classic models; later residents chose others; and in our time, technology and functionalism provide the predominate models. Any street, Lafore concludes, with its mixture of classic, Gothic, Italianate, Victorian, and modern architecture, is "a picture album of the family of man" (p. 95).

A novelist as well as historian, Lafore writes in a sprightly and engaging manner which, when he feels particularly close to a house or architectural style, becomes almost poetic. In discussing trademarks of the Gilded Age, he writes: "Bay windows . . . recurred in profusion, like the petals of an opening flower" (p. 47). Careful selection of words for their descriptive qualities, as when he speaks of buildings as "the genes of a community" (p. 5) is an attractive quality of the work. The author's penchant for just the right word and the creation of the well turned phrase occasionally produces surprising constructions. In describing the