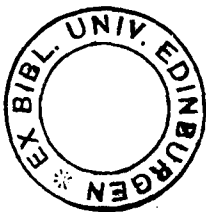


THE DUNKERS: THEIR ORIGINS, MIGRATIONS, DOCTRINES,
AND DEVELOPMENT

by

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FOREWORD

This thesis is an abbreviated historical study of that denomination of Christians known in early history in Germany, sometimes as Pietists, because most of them had originally been Pietists; often as Anabaptists, because they denied the validity of infant baptism; or, again as Dompelaers because their mode of baptism was immersion. Today they are popularly known as Dunkers, but among themselves as Brethren.

The presentation here is not in any sense of the word a comprehensive study. The purpose has been to present a concise history of this denomination, rich in historical interest, but neglected by historians and critics. Practically every book, essay or monograph concerning the Dunkers heretofore, has been produced from within their own ranks. While this thesis does not pretend to be the only study by a member of another denomination, it is certainly one of a very few.

The writer believes that the Dunkers have never been properly related to their Pietist and Anabaptist origins. Emphasis by their own people has been upon the distinctive origin of the sect as flowing from the life of its founder, Alexander Mack, and a fresh study of New Testament religion. One purpose is to show the proper relation between this sect and its antecedents in theology, religious practices and personalities. It is for this reason that more emphasis has been given to the European background than to the later history of the church, which has been more carefully recorded and thus is much better understood. Likewise for this reason a somewhat

detailed study is made of the activities and beliefs of such men as Spener, Francke and Simons.

The use of numerous quotations, some of which are quite lengthy, has been occasioned by a desire to present the historical record at first hand. This seems of prime importance in dealing with a sect concerning whose origins and progress, many misconceptions are held, and so little of the body of historical facts is known. On the other hand in dealing with the well known movements of Pietism and the Anabaptists, which have not been the express objects of this re-search, but which provide the background, fewer quotations and references are indicated.

Because of its unique place as a religious sect; its contributions to the religious history of America; and its many unstudied historical phases, this re-search has seemed to the writer to be of real value.

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Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.

March, 1941.

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CHAPTER I

INFLUENCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE IN THE LATE SEVENTEENTH AND EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY WHICH GAVE RISE TO THE DUNKER SECT

The Dunker sect, which had its origin in the early eighteenth century, must properly be considered the outgrowth of certain movements and conditions which prevailed in the latter half of the preceding century. An understanding of the religious situation in central Europe, particularly in Germany during that period will reveal the background from which the sect came.

The Protestant Reformation was in many ways as much political as religious, in that it represented a break not only with historical ecclesiastical institutions but with the existing order of life. Dissatisfaction was wide-spread and was daily coming to more active expression. There was discontent and uncertainty alike in the spheres of moral, religious, social, economic and political life. A growing conviction was taking root that a radical change in traditional customs and institutions was needed to meet the new age.

The Church stood out in this period as the dominant institution in Europe and as the most influential factor in its life. Whether justly or not therefore, every measure of reform brought forward concerned itself in some part with the ecclesiastical establishment. Prior to Luther, however, the criticisms of the existing system dealt mostly only with superficial details and

were not far-reaching. Chief targets of these attacks were improper ecclesiastical administration, financial exactions on the part of ecclesiastical authorities, ignorance, immorality and venality on the part of the clergy. The basic principles upon which the mediaeval system rested were not often made the object of criticism or of question. Criticism confined itself either to the over emphasis upon barren theology for practical religion or the displacement of actual piety by cold formality and externalism.*

Luther, however, set the stage for a complete break with Roman Catholicism in his basically different conceptions of salvation, the church, grace, faith and other fundamental doctrines. Thus under his leadership the deeprooted feelings of unrest which were stirring the people were given new impulse and the great period of conflict was launched by open discord between two groups. The discontented people were ready to follow at once the lead of a pious religious leader in the hope that their lot might be bettered.

The struggle which was let loose by the launching of the Lutheran opposition was far reaching. It extended throughout most of Western Europe. It occupied most of the sixteenth century and continued into the seventeenth, culminating in part in the Thirty Years War which was a catastrophic event for Germany. During this war the population of Germany was reduced

*e. g. Luther's comment about his predecessors in his 'Table Talk' -- Works, Vol. IX. p. 246, 252; Vol. IXii p. 118, 124.

from sixteen millions to six millions and the country was overrun with famine and pestilence. Particularly did the war have a devastating influence upon the moral and religious life of the people. This factor had a great effect upon what followed.

The Thirty Years War was brought to a close in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia, whose ¹⁶⁴⁸ treaty tolerated the three churches, Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed; but gave no recognition to other sects at that time. Following the war a reaction against religion took possession of the people. This was an almost inevitable consequence of the association in their minds between religion and war. The general attitude was one of indifference, and in many cases aversion to religion as such, since it was capable of bringing about much turmoil and unrest instead of peace. Others did not blame religion for the unrest, but criticized the state churches, and gave place in their thinking to deep-rooted convictions against war and against a resort to force in dealings one with the other.

The situation which developed placed the churches on the defensive. The three state churches, Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed were on watch against each other and all three became leagued together against other sects, as yet unrecognized as having the right to exist.

This defensive attitude of the churches was now furthered by the growth of Protestant Scholasticism. A common conviction among Protestant theologians was that an outstanding result of the Reformation was the purification of Christian doctrine. Since the true Catholic faith had been distorted, it was now the

business of the Protestant theologian to restore again the true faith and purge it of error. In the early days of the Reformation a great deal of practical work was done in laying the foundations of Protestantism. This required the attention of the church, and hindered the progress of strictly theological investigations. Following the period when the Protestant state churches of Germany were firmly established, the task of systematizing the new theology and of conserving its highest values freed of error, was taken up with a real vigor after the pattern of the old scholasticism.

Melanchthon was chiefly responsible for laying the foundations of Protestant Scholasticism. He held to the idea of the church as a school for teaching sound doctrine: he maintained that reason and revelation were the two main sources of knowledge concerning religious truth. He labored diligently in the field of dogmatic theology. Many of his ideas were in contrast to those of Luther. Under the "Phillipist" influence, the Lutheran faith which embodies a new personal relationship between God and the believing soul, soon tended to shade off into a belief described by Melanchthon as "an assent by which you accept all articles of the faith." Thus the new Protestant Scholasticism was born.

The basic theological tenets of the new movement opened the door for schism within the ranks of the Lutheran church. Surely, if the church was to restore sound doctrine it must seek the very roots of true faith. This was not an easy task. With Luther and Melanchthon being somewhat separated regarding the cardinal

doctrines, it was but natural that the later theologians should also experience difficulty in arriving at a common basis of belief. Even before the death of Luther evidence of discord became apparent. While the disagreements were often of little practical consequence, they contained elements of violent theological controversy, which could not be disregarded.

Melanchthon's reluctant consent to the Leipzig Interim in 1548 in which he yielded far more to the Catholics than most Lutherans thought he had a right to concede, brought widespread hatred against him, resulting in the establishment of two parties: the Phillipists, Melanchthon's own group; and the self-styled ^{GNE SIO-} genuine Lutherans, his opponents. This controversy was indicative of the difficulties ahead for those Protestant theologians who were to restate the true faith of the church and at the same time fortify their own position theologically. A series of controversies between the two groups was inevitable. The synergistic ideas of Melanchthon were set over against the Lutheran doctrine of the bondage of the will and unconditional predestination. The Crypto-Calvinistic view concerning the nature of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper became a source of difficulty. The Antinomian theory concerning the place of the law; the ^Mmajoristic, concerning the relation of good works to salvation; and the Osiandrian, concerning the nature of justification, likewise loomed up as important points of departure in theology.

The strife was brought to a climax and partial termination in 1580 with the publication of the last great Lutheran Creed--

the Formula of Concord, published along with the three ancient creeds, (the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian,) and with the Augsburg Confession; Melanchthon's Apology for the Confession; the Smalcald Articles; and Luther's two catechisms, all under the title of The Book of Concord.* This work was widely adopted by the Lutheran Church as its official doctrinal standard and was a help in setting a stamp of general acceptance upon the theology of the Lutheran denomination. Henceforth the lines of orthodox theologians were fairly well fixed and scholasticism developed in the church in rapid sequences.

The situation in the Reformed church was fundamentally the same. All of the conditions for the development of the scholastic spirit and method were present with them as in Lutheranism. It was not long before they became deeply rooted. Calvin was aligned with Melanchthon in placing emphasis upon sound doctrine, and in proclaiming reason and revelation as true sources of religious knowledge and truth. His Institutes gave the Reformed church a system of dogmatics unexcelled in the history of Lutheranism. This^e emphasis upon the sovereign will of God became an effective central principle in dogmatic theology and from the beginning, adherents to his beliefs soon began to defend them as their own rallying ground.

In Calvinism no less than in Lutheranism, the opposing views helped to mold the lines along which the doctrinal system took its

*The text of The Book of Concord will be found in Muller's Die Symbolischen Bucher der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche; an English Translation will be found in Jacob's Book of Concord.

form. The controversy with Arminius* and Episcopius brought about the concise statement of Calvinism formulated by the Synod of Dort, wherein the so called five points of Calvinism were set forth.** The extreme Calvinism of the Synod of Dort became the accepted theology in Holland, France, Switzerland and Scotland and held its ground for many generations.

Other controversies such as those with Hugo Grotius and with Moses Amyrant in which Calvinism was involved dealt specifically with the sphere of logic rather than of life. Hence they were kindred with the whole spirit of the scholastic trend.

These kindred movements within the Lutheran and Reformed churches respectively, created in each a closed theological system. The Lutheran Formula of Concord and the Calvinistic Synod of Dort followed by the Westminster Confession of 1645, and the Formula Consensus of 1675, became the criteria of truth for the two groups. Acceptance of doctrines was regarded as necessary to salvation inasmuch as doctrine delineated the inner meaning of the revealed Word of God. To depart from these standards was unthinkable. The duty of the church and its theologians was to move within these fixed boundaries and to systematize and defend the truth already fully delivered to mankind and therefore unalterable. In scholasticism the importance of doctrine stemmed from a logical reason supporting the place of doctrine in the system itself rather than because of any inherent practical relationship which the doctrine may have had in practical living. Truth originated not in established

* For an English translation of Arminius' writings see Works by Nichols, 1825 in 3 vols.

**See Schaff's Creeds of Christendom, vol. iii p. 550 sq.

practices of moral and religious experience, but through logical deductions from a system of thought already accepted (as such.) The test of any doctrine was that of its consistency or inconsistency with this system as a whole.

Thus in the early seventeenth century, scholasticism and formal orthodoxy came into a position of strong influence within the Protestant church. Opposition to these movements was inevitable, but even so they held sway until about 1695. The general effect of the theological emphasis was to depress the moral and religious tone of the people. With religious leaders giving attention mainly to theological controversy, attention was focused on questions of logic rather than on spirituality and fostering the Christian life. Laymen in particular had shallow views of Christian living. They were expected to accept dogmas passively, to listen to them being expounded from the pulpit, and to partake of the sacraments. Otherwise they had but little part in church affairs. A decline in piety and Christian experience was the inevitable result.

The Pietist Background for the Dunker Sect.

A new movement in the interest of a re-awakened church, destined to rekindle a new spirit in its life, to counteract the devastating effects of the Thirty Years War and to make amends for the loss of religious life under scholasticism, originated with the German Pietists, forerunners of the Dunker church. Tendencies toward Pietism were found in the Lutheran and Reformed communions before the end of the sixteenth century. Their largest development occurred in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Pietism was foreshadowed in the early writings of such men as John Gerhard, Heinrich Muller, Valentine Andrea, Grossgebauer, John Arndt, Tarnovius Quistorp and others who were the spiritual forbears of Philip Jacob Spener, "Father of Pietism."

Spener was born on January 13, 1635 at Rappoltsweiler in Alsace. The religious influences surrounding him in his boyhood, were notably excellent. He read the works of the English Puritan writers, Richard Baxter and Daniel Dyke. His most profound impressions were derived from the writings of the German mystic, John Arndt, whose Vom Wahren Christentum was perhaps the best known devotional work of that day in Germany.

Many of Spener's student days were spent in Strassburg where he observed church discipline and accepted catechetical instruction far beyond that which customary Lutheran practice prescribed. While visiting in Geneva, Switzerland, he came in touch with Jean de Labadie who influenced him strongly toward mysticism.

Later he returned to Strassburg. In 1666 he was called to Frankfort-on-Main where his religious outlook underwent a complete change. Frankfort was a prosperous commercial city. Its atmosphere was in complete contrast to that of Strassburg. Spener was aroused by the low level of religion and morality in the city. He undertook to improve it by endeavoring to make his preaching more practical; by laying

great emphasis upon "active Christianity" rather than doctrinal assent; and by engaging in many pastoral labors. In this respect he was somewhat hindered in his efforts to gain acceptance of church discipline, because authority was lodged with the city government. Nevertheless, by such means as were available to him he aided in greatly improving the situation.

An innovation occurred in 1670 when Spener gathered a group of likeminded people into his own home for Bible reading, prayer and discussion in the hope of deepening their individual spiritual lives. The meetings were destined to form the pattern of the Pietist movement. The people assembled twice each week. Meetings were given the name collegia pietatis. They were guided by Spener "in restrained forum of address and reply without the interposition of clerical umpireship" **

In the meantime Spener continued his preaching whose main characteristic was its strong eschatological emphasis. He believed that the last times were at hand, and that the return of Christ to establish the Messianic Kingdom would take place in the near future. ** A note of urgency and of hope appeared in his messages. He believed the church had been spared through the Thirty Years War because it had a task to

* Dorner - History of Protestant Theology Particularly in Germany, published by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1871 p. 203, vol ii.

**CF. especially his Behauptung der Hoffnung Künftiger besserer Zeiten.

perform - a destiny to fulfill. The Church's great world-wide work was to press forward with its missionary labors for the conversion of Gentiles and Jews. The church was given new life, while Spener's work and somewhat feverish enthusiasm fostered a zeal not unlike that which marked the primitive days of the Christian Church.

The good results attained and the sense of Spener's own gradual spiritual development gave him courage to give public expression to his views in the volume, the Pia Desideria or "Earnest Desires for a Reform of the True Evangelical Church,"* first published as a preface to an edition of John Arndt's sermons. Later it was published separately. Spener at once sprang into prominence. His book received wide-spread attention from many who were soon being influenced by Spener's ideas. The first part of the book dealt with the evils of the day such as governmental interference, religious indifference, the bad example in the lives of the clergy, absorption in scholastic theology, selfseeking of the laity, and the wide prevalence of immorality.

The second part set forth certain measures of reform constituting the pietistic program, which was based upon the advocacy of six fundamental points: First, careful study of the Scriptures by all classes of Christians. Spener advocated the assembling together of small groups for Bible reading and spiritual edification such as met with him at Frankfort. He

* Published at Frankfort in 1675.

hoped that small centres of religious life would leaven the whole church. They became quite common among the Pietists, and were known as collegia pietatis. Secondly, the Christian priesthood being universal, the laity should share in the spiritual government of the church, and in the duty of mutual instruction, inspiration and reproof. Thirdly, the nature of Christianity is such that intellectual assent to its principles must be supplemented by practice of its faith as an indispensable symbol of religious life. Fourthly, the evils of religious controversy must be banished, unbelievers and heretics must be dealt with in a spirit of understanding and love. Fifthly, the importance of piety as well as of learning must be comprehended in the training of theological students. It is incumbent upon teachers of theology that they train their students in practical religion as well as in the science of religion. Finally, Spener insisted upon a change in the type of preaching, through which true Christianity should be implanted within the soul of man. Emphasis must be placed here rather than on the homiletic art as such.

"Since our entire Christianity consists in the inner or new man, and its soul is faith, and the effects of faith are the fruits of life, I regard it as of the greatest importance that sermons should be directed wholly to this end. On the one hand they should exhibit God's rich benefits, as they affect the inner man, in such a way that faith is advanced and the inner man forwarded in it. On the other hand they should not merely incite to external acts of virtue and restrain from external acts of vice, as the moral philosophy of the heathen does, but should lay the foundation in the heart. They should show that all is pure hypocrisy, which does not come from the heart, and so accustom the people to cultivate love to God and their neighbors and to act from it as a motive" *

* Pia Desideria P. 101, Leipzig edition of 1841

Spener's book represented in large part an outline of Pietist practices. It foreshadowed the main points to be emphasized by the group, and in almost every instance, finally embraced by the Dunkers. They included Biblical study for devotional and practical purposes. They emphasized scholastic and polemic theology. They stressed feeling and will as greater than intellect. They sought to build a love for devotional literature, especially of a mystical type. They insisted upon the necessity of personal faith and growth in Christian perfection: the recognition of a true kernel within the church - an ecclesiola in ecclesia made up of the truly regenerate; and a new independence of the laity in the formation of the collegia pietatis, in which religious life should find expression apart from the church and its organized ministrations. This last point is of unusual importance. It was not that the clergy remained apart from and had no share in the movement, but that the idea of the priesthood of all believers lay at the heart of the church and should be given expression through new religious activities of believers.

Spener's beliefs and practices aroused wide-spread opposition in many quarters. Actually he was an orthodox Lutheran and hence made no attack upon the doctrines of that church. Nevertheless, his attitude towards the theology of his day differed widely from that of most clergymen. His spirit and his ideals were totally unlike those of contemporary Lutheranism. The stress he placed on personal piety and a

religion of the "heart," was set over against "pure doctrine." In addition to this, Spener had a strong feeling that the theologians of his day were interested in less important rather than in the more important doctrines. He attempted to bring into prominence teachings having had to do with personal religious life, particularly with the soul's salvation. As a natural consequence, he established lines of demarcation between essential and non-essential elements in the traditional faith and he treated many major doctrines of the church as being of only minor import.

The conflict between Spener's views and the orthodox Lutheran view became most vital regarding the doctrines of sanctification and justification. Spener held that one reason for the prevailing low moral tone of the church was a misunderstanding of the true nature of saving faith. This led to an unfortunate discrimination between justification and sanctification, and prompted Spener to uphold the doctrine of regeneration and the transformation of character through a vital union with Christ. Only where the life is actually changed and the spirit and motive of Christ are in control of one's conduct, have we any right to think that we have been born again or to be counted among the saved. Spener had a strong conviction that God's plan of salvation was not something to be received by men by following certain clearly defined procedures. He regarded God's pardon of our sins and any justification of them primarily as a means to a moral and righteous life. He would have assented to the

belief held by the Westminster divines that "Truth is in order to goodness." Emphasizing faith as the pre-requisite of salvation in true Lutheran fashion, he nevertheless held that justification means nothing without regeneration and sanctification. The Pietists felt that ethics could not be divorced from true salvation. Regeneration itself must be supported by high moral conduct, both before and after forgiveness of sins. The new personality then works out its own sanctification.

The difference between Luther and Spener appears in their major controlling interests. With Luther this was religion, with Spener morality. With Spener a man's relation to God was not nearly so important as his character and conduct. Luther strove for victory over the world, whereas Spener was tempted to withdraw from it and escape. Piety was manifested in devotion to spiritual and supernal things, and in a transfer of affection and interest from this world to the world of the spirit. Spener was in agreement with Luther that salvation is a present reality, * but it is not so much peace with God and the consciousness of divine sonship as holiness of life wrought by the indwelling of the Spirit. In this respect Spener insisted upon the possibility and importance of Christian perfection, by which he meant not a strict legal sinlessness, but the constant seeking of a man's heart after holiness. The regenerate were to be satisfied with nothing less than their constant progress in this direction.

* For Luther's position on this matter see Protestant Thought Before Kant by McGiffert - P. 331.

While the majority of Pietists stayed within the Lutheran communion, it was inevitable that some should not do so. The fact of Spener's own difference of opinion with the orthodox view, as noted above, was all that was needed to open the door for those who had a mind toward separation. This actually happened at Frankfort while Spener was still resident there. In spite of all he could do, certain of his followers insisted upon leaving the church. So strongly was his feeling against them that he attacked them openly.*

Thereupon trouble started for Spener and it was not long until he met difficulty with the municipal council. In 1686 he accepted a call to Dresden in the capacity of court preacher.

Upon assuming his new duties he was faced with controversy over religious questions. When he rebuked the aristocracy on the issues of practical morality, they opposed him bitterly. The clergy regarded him as an outsider. He criticised the training of the theological students at the universities of Leipzig and Wittenberg and thereby alienated himself from the professors of both institutions.

He persisted in the face of opposition, and doubtless was much relieved by a call to Berlin in 1691 from the Elector of Brandenburg, Frederick III, who later became

*In his Der Klagen über das verderbene Christentum Missbrauch und rechter Gebrauch (Frankfort 1685)

king I of Prussia. While Spener never succeeded in winning his new sovereign for Pietism, Frederick sought a compromise between the Lutheran and the Reformed faiths. Spener reached his greatest heights at Berlin where his strongest influence as a religious leader was developed. The University of Halle founded under Frederick became a stronghold for Pietism and so continued for many years, Halle being the most influential University in northern Germany.

Spener's latter years were fairly free from controversy. Despairing of converting his opponents to his views, he concentrated upon helping to establish Pietism more firmly. He despaired because of excesses into which many of his followers had drifted, but even so, he maintained high hopes for Pietism. Among the most significant events of his closing years was the dedication of his godson Zinzendorf to the cause of advancing the Kingdom of God. Following an illness, Spener died on February the fifth 1705.

In spite of many shortcomings, Pietism was in fact a real advance over the Protestantism of its day. It was one of the forces conducive to the modern age of the religious life of Germany. Pietism preceded rationalism, a movement which was eventually to supersede it in influence. It prepared the way for weakening the hold upon believers of the creeds and sacraments of the church. In its historical setting, Pietism may be regarded as one of the most influential and far-reaching movements ever experienced in the Evangelical church of Germany.

Looking at the background of the Dunkers for instance, one may observe how Pietism filtered into the lives of the most humble people. Due to the Pietists' earnest study of Scripture, Alexander Mack was led directly to organize the Pietist sect.

In this Pietist movement we have most of the elements of the Dunker sect. Each of its founders, embraced Pietism before accepting with the others, the new religion. Among the beliefs of the first Dunkers the following ideas came directly from Pietism: - The necessity for vitalizing Christian piety; the breaking of scholasticism's control; the recognition of religious experience as the chief basis of theology; the emphasis of the will instead of the intellect in religion; the importance of Biblical study as the basis for the devotional life; and emphasis upon individualism as opposed directly to ecclesiasticism, sacramentarianism and sacerdotalism.

The Anabaptist Background for the Dunker Sect

Pietism, however, was not the only influence which gave rise to the Dunkers. The roots of this sect are also to be traced in another movement of almost equal importance with that just discussed. This second influence came from the Anabaptists. The Dunker sect was in reality at its beginning a peculiar and distinctive amalgamation of the Pietist and Anabaptist beliefs and practices. Between the latter group and the Dunkers there is a strong and vital connection. On the surface this appears in the name widely used by the sect at the beginning - The German Baptist Brethren, - the term Brethren of course, having been used almost indiscriminately by those who followed Anabaptist

tendencies from the early sixteenth century.

When one looks at the wide classification of Christian groups emanating from the Reformation period^{*} he finds that the Dunkers should rightly be placed with the Anabaptists. While the immediate impulse for the establishment of the sect came largely from Pietism, the influence of Anabaptism was scarcely less prominent in the early stages of the movement, and in the later was ultimately the mold into which the group finally fashioned itself.

The term Anabaptists is confusing in that it calls to mind many different sects and beliefs, and was a term used in varied ways by historians. One recalls the extravagant practices of the Zwickau prophets and a host of historical events of much finer caliber such for instance as the pious work of Menno Simons. In the following pages, Anabaptist groups and ideas influential in the early history of the Dunkers, are specially considered.

Of course the beginnings of the Anabaptist movement lie buried in the centuries before the Reformation. They are identified with feudalism, social unrest, and oppression of the lower classes by the clergy as well as by the upper classes. Hence when the Reformation broke, it was a kind of signal for many of these peoples to rise up and to make known their demands. They have been called the "revolutionaries"^{**} of the Reformation.

* Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist and Anti-Trinitarian.

**T. M. Lindsay - History of the Reformation, Vol. II, p. 432.

In a sense they were the extremists of a wide-spread evolution, - social, political and religious.

On the other hand the extravagances of the Anabaptist movement must not prejudice us against that which was good and just at its heart. Many of its exponents were quiet, earnest and God-fearing folk who accepted the essentials of the church creeds but were strongly anti-clerical, probably because of social considerations.

While there were differences in their beliefs, we find a fairly general rejection among them of infant baptism. In spite of the fact that it was practiced by Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed churches alike, they declared that this sacrament held no regenerative efficacy. They opposed church festivals and scoffed at clerical garb worn during ceremonies as being extravagant, holding that it was more Christ-like to clothe the poor than to clothe the priest in costly vestments. They met in one another's houses for informal worship, Bible reading and discussion.

A story of the origin of the Anabaptists presents a striking parallel to that of the Dunkers. An assembly of representative Anabaptists met in June 1524 in the home of Balthazar Hubmaier.* So also, a group met later on at the home of Alexander

*Vedder - Bathazar Hubmaier (New York 1905) - The incident which concerns Hubmaier is not pointed to as the origin of the Anabaptists. In this period, however, the group assumed a more definite form. Hubmaier with Hans Denk were the outstanding leaders in this period.

Mack, founder of the Dunkers. Both groups had the same express purpose, namely, to study the Bible carefully and to seek direction for Christian living as contained in the New Testament. Then came the decision to separate from the papal church and the renunciation of many commonly accepted beliefs.

The group under Hubmaier drew up a Directory for Christian Living and issued a statement of principles in which they believed, similar in many respects to the system of belief of the ^{Bohemian Brethren} Moravians, a group also closely related to the Dunkers. The Anabaptists held to the belief that Baptism was efficacious only (in cases) where there was a mature faith. Baptism was regarded as a token of conversion and should be accompanied by a firm determination to give one's self to God. While it is true that in the beginning, the Anabaptists administered Baptism by sprinkling, they soon accepted immersion as the only true method of baptism.

They were deeply persuaded that adult Baptism was the only true Baptism. Many instances of their fidelity to this belief are ^{ON RECORD} discoverable; one in particular being strangely reminiscent of what happened to the founders of the Dunker sect. It occurred in Zurich where the Council under the influence of Zwingli had issued a decree that all children should be baptised and that all who refused this sacrament for their children were to be arrested. Here the Anabaptists met and chose one Conrad Grebel to baptise their leader, who in turn baptised all the others.* How closely this parallels what

* The incident is told in Lindsay Vol. 11, p. 447. History of the Reformation.

happened as Schwarzenau many years later will be noted in recounting that incident.*

The story of how these same Anabaptists were persecuted for their stand regarding Baptism - a persecution that even went so far as death - brings to mind the same fate that awaited many of the Dunkers one hundred and fifty years later.

A further characteristic of the Dunkers which seems rooted in the Anabaptists' background is their adherence to the teaching of passive resistance. Nearly all of the Brethren opposed force in one way or another. The record of how they held to this belief through many trials is truly remarkable. Bible study led them to a belief that it was wrong to meet force with force; and that it was Christian to endure any persecution which might be meted out to them. This belief was manifested in many different ways by different groups of believers. Some carried it to the extreme of holding that one who was a Christian should not be allowed to be either a public officer or a soldier.** This viewpoint is exemplified today in the United States by the Amish and the Mennonites who not only refuse to hold public office, but do not vote in a public election.

In their acceptance of this doctrine, common among Anabaptists, the Dunkers were no doubt greatly influenced by the aftermath of the Thirty Years War which had destroyed all inclination for war-like pursuits. A great many devotees of all

* See Page 72.

**e. g. Hans Denk.

creeds came to this conclusion which was ^{PROMINENT} accentuated in the creed of the Anabaptists at this particular time.

Another important idea of the Dunkers which one finds rooted in the Anabaptist group is that of opposition to a state church. In this they were of one mind among themselves in opposition to Roman Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists, - all of whom championed a state church. They insisted that one who made no personal confession of faith, could not be a member of a church. They maintained that the church should be entirely free from state control and that the church members should decide what was to be believed, as they interpreted the Scriptures. Also, that decisions respecting such matters should be determined by a majority opinion.

The conception current in state churches that an infant-child of believers was also a member of the church was not in accord with their view of the church as a body of believing Christians. They rejected infant Baptism. They also believed that the church should have the right to discipline its own members and be free in this regard from civil interference. They went one step further, anticipating later developments, when they maintained that a church which refuses state control should likewise refuse state support. Hence they advocated voluntary support of all church enterprise.

They went beyond the state churches in advocating tolerance among all religious groups. In this regard they were much to be admired. They had no desire to persecute those who disagreed with them. Other Protestant churches in general

fell into error in this respect. They had not learned a sufficient lesson from the shortcomings of Rome. Even after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, tolerance was exercised only with respect to recognized state churches.

In saying that the Anabaptists did not desire to persecute those who believed differently from themselves, however, one should not get the impression that they had achieved anything like the modern concept of religious freedom and toleration. The fact is that they were bigoted in their beliefs. They refused to associate with those who did not believe as they did. This was in harmony with their belief in the Kingdom of God on earth. Believers should not associate with non-believers. Many held that it was less sinful for a woman to co-habit with a believer than with her husband if he were a non-believer. This same tenet was carried over into the Dunker faith at a later time when many of the Brethren were excommunicated for having married outside the ranks of the faithful.

So great was the influence of the Anabaptist sects upon the Dunkers that one can even trace a strong relationship between the extravagances of the two groups. Compare what went on at Munster under Jan Matthys, with events at Ephrata, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania under Conrad Beissel some two hundred years later. Both groups tried out the experiment of Communism. Both broke with accepted social standards for something more unique. At Munster, it was polygamy; at

Ephrata, asceticism. Both experiments were regarded scornfully by the better and saner elements of the bodies which they represented. Both were short lived.

Bockelson at Munster in instituting polygamy seems to have arrived at his ideas through literal interpretations of the Old Testament, such as Be fruitful, and replenish the earth. He brought forth the examples of the patriarchs in the Old Testament. At Ephrata, Beissel similarly search^{ed} the Old Testament for his ideas. He interpreted them literally and instituted the Christian Sabbath or Seventh Day observance in place of the usual Christian Lord's Day.

The mystical element in The Dunker faith can be traced partially to the Anabaptist movement. The Brethren were all strong individualists and had a bent for freedom of belief that kept them from tying themselves to any specific body of doctrine. They did not want to be bound by the restrictions of dogmas but went directly to the Bible and sought there the guidance which they needed for daily living. Each individual or group of individuals was given freedom in the approach to the Scriptures. The Church universal may point to their efforts here as having brought conviction regarding certain ideas inherent in Scripture but not practiced^s generally by the established churches.

Contemporary historians seem to indicate that the main desire of the Anabaptists was to live again the type of life practiced by New Testament Christians and to adopt their

social practices, beliefs and ideals. This type of life was attractive to many. The sincerity and piety of the Brethren was most effective, and many were won to their fold. One of the best descriptions of this people is given in the Chronicle of Sebastian Franck written in the sixteenth century.

"For they taught nothing but love, faith and crucifixion of the flesh, manifesting patience and humility under many sufferings, breaking bread with one another in sign of unity and love, helping one another with true helpfulness, lending, borrowing, giving, learning to have all things in common calling each other 'brother' ". *

The particular branch of the Anabaptists most closely related to the Dunkers, is the Mennonites. It was the pattern of life together with the system of beliefs which originated with the Mennonites that found kindred expression among the Dunkers. Similarity between the groups has often caused them to be mistaken one for the other. This was true in ^{the} early history of the Church as well as in modern times in the United States. Even so great an authority as Dr. Benjamin Rush regards the Dunkers as being a branch of the Mennonites.** This is a grave error. While many tenets are held in common by the two groups, the differences which separate them are strongly marked and each sect has maintained its identity until this day. As for the origins

* Sebastian Franck, Chronica Zeitbuch und Geschichtsbibel (Augsburg 1565) Part III, f. 164.

* Manners of the Pennsylvania Dutch - Rush.

of the two groups, it should be remembered that they were separated by a period of two centuries.

The Mennonite is that branch of the Anabaptists founded by Menno Simons. It represents the better side of the movement and is at the other extreme from the Munsterites. Menno Simons, who had been a Catholic priest, was born in Friesland, Circa 1492. Study of the Scriptures led him to think for himself. He became dissatisfied with the condition of the Romish church. He came to the conclusion that infant Baptism was wrong. Under the persuasion of sympathizers he was persuaded to quit the priesthood. He organized small groups of people into churches or congregations of those who shared his views. Many of his followers were refugees from other parts of Central Europe.

He carried on this work in North Germany, in Holland and elsewhere. Rosenberger has said of him

"He was not so much a founder of a new church or sect as he was a gatherer-together and unifier of persons whom he found here and there believing as he did."*

The real task of Menno Simons together with Dirk Phillips, Adam Pastor and others of their contemporaries, seems to have been to bring order out of chaos in the Anabaptist ranks. Although Menno saw the truths which the movement brought to light, he was also quick to find the error in the tenets of such extremists as the Munsterites. He condemned those errors openly. He felt that his real task was to maintain the true church of Christ. He continually warned his follow-

*The Pennsylvania Germans - Rosenberger, p. 87.

ers not to establish any new sect, but to turn back to the ways of the Apostolic church. Hence they differed from other groups in that they sought not to reform the church but to re-establish the ancient and Apostolic church of the early Christians which had been obscured by medieval secularisms and liturgical trappings.

The Mennonite movement grew very rapidly and in spite of persecution from Roman Catholic and Reformed groups alike, the piety of the elders and the zeal of the Brethren won for them many ardent followers.

The distinctive beliefs of the Mennonite group may be classed under seven heads.*

First, Baptism, to be administered to all who were taught repentance and a change of life, and who believed in the forgiveness of their sins through the Lord Jesus. This of course excluded all infants. Second, the ban or excommunication, the provision for expelling from the fold those who had taken the vows of the church and had fallen away from the Christian life. Third, the Breaking of Bread, stated as follows:

"All who wish to break 'one bread' in remembrance of the broken body of Christ, and drink of 'one cup' in remembrance of His shed blood, shall be united by Baptism into one body which is the congregation of God and of which Christ is the head."

Fourth, Separation from the World. Interpreting 11 Cor.

*As found in confession drawn up at Schleithem, near Schaffhausen in 1527.

6: 17, 18 in a literal sense ('We shall come out from among them and be separate'), they held that the follower of Christ must detach himself from all evil and wickedness which Satan has placed in the world. This admonition required them to be apart from all papistic works and services, drinking and gaming houses, and other like things. Fifth, the character of the minister and the relation of the group to the minister. He is to be of "good report", and preach, exhort and help all members in their spiritual life^F. The congregation is to aid him when necessary and when he leaves the group another shall take his place immediately. Sixth, the Christians' attitude toward the state, which forbade the use of the sword as anti-Christian. Hence no Mennonite was at liberty to use force in dealing with his fellowmen. Nor was he allowed to have part in civil government, because their belief was that God's Kingdom should be the sole concern of the faithful. These people neither asked for protection from the state nor did they support the state in this. Seventh, regarding oaths. They interpreted Christ's admonition against oaths as pertinent in every situation and refused then as they refuse today to take an oath of any kind.

Comparison of the above confession with the creeds of the Dunkers, reveals striking similarities. Strong influence was wielded by the Mennonites upon the first Dunkers. The simplicity of the former's beliefs, harmonizes in many respects with those which the Dunkers held regarding the Apostolic church.

Attention should also be called to other distinctive Mennonite beliefs. They held it wrong to marry outside their own fold. They interpreted literally the Biblical exhortation regarding the kiss of peace and the washing of feet. They wore simple garb and abstained from any worldly form of show or vanity. In many of these tenets also, they were emulated by the Dunkers.

In Schwarzenau, Grefeld and Marienborn where the early Dunker church took root, arose an influence from the Mennonites, many of whom had found their way into those communities in the early eighteenth century. In point of fact there were several scattered communities of Anabaptists, many of whom were Mennonites, not far from the Dunker centers. There can be no doubt that many of the first members of the Dunkers were itinerants from among the Anabaptists who found kinship in the beliefs and fellowship of the Dunkers.*

Pietism and Anabaptism, particularly the Mennonite wing of the Anabaptist movement were the two religious movements behind the Dunker sect. Comparison of the two reveals certain points of similarity,** while in other respects they were quite different. All in all, after allowances are made for the distinctive contributions of a few of the immediate founders of the sect, it appears that most of the elements of the Dunker faith are found in one,

* This fact will be established in Chapter III.

** Lindsay compares the early Anabaptists with the German Pietists. vide - A History of the Reformation Vol. 11 p. 434.

or other of these two systems of religious thought.

CHAPTER II

THE MEN WHOSE LIVES AND IDEAS INFLUENCED THE MOVEMENT
AND A BRIEF EXPOSITION OF THEIR THEOLOGY

In addition to Philip Jacob Spener the "Father of Pietism" there are several other personalities in the background of the Dunker movement. No one of them is connectly^{ed} directly with this sect, but each had a share in blazing the trail for the rise of the movement. Some of these men have been referred to by a member of the Dunker Church as the "Pathfinders".* Thus just as the Reformation had its "Morning Stars" in such personalities as Wycliffe, Erasmus and Huss, so the Dunker Church had her own forerunners in Spener, Simons and many others. A knowledge of the lives and teachings of these men is essential to a proper understanding of the sect.

MENNO SIMONS

All but one of those from whom the ideas of Alexander Mack are to be traced are in the Pietist tradition. The exception is Menno Simons. While a vast time interval separates him from the others, with Simons is to be found the beginning of many of the religious conceptions which were finally embraced by the Dunkers. A much better understanding and appreciation of the sect will result from ^{THE} study of Simons' life and

* Abraham Cassell - See the letters of Abraham Cassell in the library of Juniata College.

and beliefs. He is the outstanding personality from among the Anabaptist leaders who may be linked with the Dunkers. Simons was one in spirit with the Dunkers. His ideas became theirs in later years.

The early years of Menno Simons' life ^{are} were clouded in obscurity. Only the approximate time of his birth is known, namely, about 1492. He was the son of a farmer at Witmarsum, a small town half way between Bokward and Harlingen. He was reared a Roman Catholic and was trained to enter the priesthood. He was ordained a priest either in 1515 or 1516, and was appointed vicar or associate pastor at Pingjum. Even thus early, he held grave doubts regarding transubstantiation, but tried to ward off his doubts by telling himself that they were the work of the devil. His own description of this period is very interesting. He writes of it in the following way:

"Two other persons also officiated in the same station. The one was my pastor and was well learned in part; the other succeeded me; both had read the Scriptures partially, but I had not touched them during my life, for I feared that if I should read them they would mislead me. Behold, such a stupid preacher was I for nearly two years. In the first year thereafter the thought occurred to me, as often as I handled the bread and wine in the Mass, that they were not the flesh and blood of the Lord. I thought that it was the suggestion of the devil in order that he might lead me away from faith. I confessed it often, sighed and prayed, yet I was unable to free myself from the thought. At length I resolved that I would examine the New Testament actively. I had not proceeded far therein ere I discovered that we had been deceived. My conscience, which was troubled on account of the Sacramental bread, afore mentioned, was soon greatly relieved, without any human aid or advice, though I was encouraged by Luther in the belief that human authority cannot bind to eternal death."*

*Langewalter, p. 87 - 88. - Christ's Headship of the Church according to Anabaptist Leaders.

Menno began to read the Scriptures carefully each day and became known as an "Evangelical" preacher. In 1531 he removed to Witmarsum, where an event transpired which thoroughly shook him. A very devout Christian name Sicke Snyder was beheaded by officials of the Roman church because he had been rebaptized. Menno Simons had never heard of a second baptism and the episode aroused his curiosity so that he made a thorough study of baptism. He compared the teachings of the New Testament with those of his Roman Catholic priest and of Luther, Butzer and Bullinger. He concluded that infant baptism was unwarranted. However, he was not yet prepared to break with the traditional beliefs of the church. His preaching was nevertheless so tinged with his leanings toward Evangelicalism, that many are said to have left the church because of his teachings. Meanwhile he remained in the priesthood.

Shortly thereafter the first groups of Anabaptists settled at Witmarsum. Among whom were a group of Munsterites. These fanatics soon stirred up trouble. A riot took place in 1534 and the Munsterites were driven out. About three hundred men of this group with their wives and children, intrenched themselves in the Oude Klooster near Witmarsum. They were attacked by the authorities and many were put to death, while others were imprisoned. Among those killed during the riot was Menno Simons' own brother, Peter.

This likewise had a grave effect upon Menno who had been reflecting upon his own sin. His own reaction to the disturbing events with the Munsterites, is described in the following words:

"After this had transpired, the blood of the slain, although it was shed in error, grieved me so sorely that I could not endure it. I could find no rest in my soul. I reflected upon my carnal sinful life, my hypocritical doctrine and idolatry, in which I appeared daily under the appearance of Godliness. I saw that these zealous children willingly gave their lives and their estates, though they were in error, for their doctrine and faith and I was one of those who had discovered some of their (Munsterites) adominations, and yet, I myself remained satisfied with my unrestrained life and my known defilements. I wished only to live comfortably and without the cross of Christ. Thus reflecting upon these things my soul was grieved that I could no longer endure it. I thought to myself - I, miserable man, what shall I do? If I continue in this way and live not agreeably to the Word of the Lord, according to the knowledge of truth which I have obtained; if I do not rebuke to the best of my ability the hypocrisy, the impenitent, carnal life, the perverted baptism, the Lord's Supper and false worship of God, which the learned teach; if I through bodily fear, do not show them the true foundation of truth, neither use all my powers to direct the wandering flock, who would gladly do their duty if they knew it, to the true pastures of Christ - Oh, how shall their shed blood, though shed in error, rise against me at the judgment of the Almighty and pronounce sentence against my poor miserable soul."*

As he revolved these thoughts in his mind, one can imagine the effect upon him when a group of six or eight young men of high character came to him with an appeal that he become their leader. They based their plea upon the need for spiritual guidance. After much soul searching Menno accepted the call. He resigned his office as a Priest January 12, 1536.

The young men had come to Menno at the direction of a group of Anabaptists known as the Obbenites, the moderates of the Anabaptist movement. It happened that delegates from the Anabaptist congregation had been meeting at Bockholt in Westphalia to discuss their beliefs and practices. They agreed on infant baptism, the Lord's Supper and the incarnation of

* Langenwalter p. 89 -90.

Christ; but the group was divided on the question of marriage and the Kingdom of Heaven. The Munsterites defended polygamy and were chiliastic in their conceptions, while the Obbenites condemned polygamy and had only mildly apocalyptic views. In an effort to strengthen their group, the Obbenites sent a delegation to Menno to ask him to be their "elder". When he consented, they had in him a strong and able leader. Being very earnest and pious himself, he gave proper direction to a trend fraught with danger. He curtailed all attempts at fanaticism and maintained the highest moral standards among his adherents.

From 1537 to 1541 Simons lived at Groningen, but in an effort to escape persecution or death, he removed first to Amsterdam and later to various places in North Holland. He settled in East Friesland at Emden in 1543, where he had been invited by John a' Lasco to hold a public disputation on Anabaptism.

He was driven from Emden when Charles V ruled that all Anabaptists must be banished from Friesland. He settled for a time near Cologne, and finally came to Oldeslohe in 1546. He established a printing press with the help of the brethren, but most of his time was given over to itinerating from one congregation of Anabaptists to another.

He died January 13, 1559 at Waestenfelde, which was destroyed in the Thirty Years War. Simons' final resting place is unknown and unmarked. A memorial was erected to his memory at Witmarsum bearing this motto: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 3: 11.)

Many misconceptions regarding Menno Simons' ideas have found their way into church history. This is due to the fact that he wrote in "Oostersch" a Low-German dialect, from which his works were translated into Dutch by an incompetent linguist. Gross misrepresentation resulted. The book in which his views are expounded is Fondamentboek, published in 1539. His Klare beantwoording he over eene Schrift van Gellius Faber is a complete apology for his position.

While Menno was not blest with a particularly fertile mind, he was known as a good organizer. When he took hold of the conservative wing of the Anabaptist movement, it progressed so well that it adopted his name.

Menno Simons' theological position may be defined as having sprung almost wholly from the Brethren who "elected" him to the post of leader. As has been noted, he was not an original thinker, but he was a careful analyst of the facts which came before him for consideration. He accepted the tenets of the Anabaptist group with only one or two exceptions.* He held extreme views concerning the "ban", which views arose from his close association with Leonert Bouvens, a radical in this respect. He also had peculiar views of the incarnation,** garnered from Melchior Hoffman at a time when Menno was not

* See Chapter I

** See "The Complete Works of Menno Simons" pub. Elkhart, Ind. 1871. "The whole Christ God and man, man and God is God's son and is of heaven." (Sec. ii. 151.)

thoroughly conversant with Scripture. He believed that Jesus had merely passed through Mary without having taken upon himself any of her properties. * He seems to have felt that in admitting the transmission of any human qualities from Mary there was danger of opening the ground for argument that Jesus had partaken of sin.** The Roman Catholic background had probably influenced him to take this extreme position.

Menno has been criticized for not believing in the Divinity of Christ, but there appears little basis for this and strong ground for the opposite opinion.*** He admits that he had difficulty in bringing himself to this conception of the Obbenites,**** but finally persuaded himself that it was Scriptural.

For Menno the Scriptures were the only rule for faith and life. He used them as his Standard in all things and was exact in his Scriptural interpretations. He repudiated entirely extra Biblical authorities such as patristic writings and papal pronouncements. Concerning the relation of Old and New Testaments, his view is quite modern. He held that the Old Testament was given for pre-messianic times and must always be in-

*"Of Mary's body he partook not otherwise than as a seed of grain partakes of the field in which it is planted." (Sec.ii. 337 Ibid.)

** Concerning Christ's humanity Menno said: - "Had he been of the impure, sinful flesh of Adam, he would be guilty also, through the eternal justice of God, of judgment in death. And if he himself owed a debt, how could he pay ours?"

*** "The Complete Works of Menno Simons" (Sec. 2-159 and 158).

**** Ibid Sec. ii 330.

terpreted in the light of the New Testament. In seeking guidance for worship, practice and life, he held to the New Testament as the only authority, differing from Luther and Calvin on this point. Thus we shall see that he derived his conceptions of the relation of church and state, war, oaths and capital punishment, - all of these from the New Testament.

One of the most significant and interesting things about Menno's writings is that one looks in vain among them for teachings regarding the inner light. Even though surrounded by a group of mystics, he seems to have been only mildly influenced by their beliefs.

His teachings concerning sin are significant because they form the basis for his entire approach to morality. He confirmed the belief in original sin but held that all children were saved from its penalties by the sacrifice of Christ. Men who refuse Christ's freely offered salvation must face condemnation. Man is justified by faith but the sacraments were not interpreted by him as ^a means of grace but as memorials. "We do not seek our salvation in works, words or sacraments, as do the theologians, although they ascribe this to us, but we seek it alone in Jesus Christ, and through no other means in Heaven or Earth. In this only means we comfort ourselves and in no other.*" In many places, Menno reiterates that "Christ is the only means of grace." He rejects Luther's position^s of baptismal regeneration and forgiveness of sin

* Ibid - Sec. II, p. 167

through the Lord's Supper, as idolatry and blasphemy.

Like Spener, Simons held that the only true faith is that which finds its consummation in a holy life. "For this can never fail, where there is true Christian faith, there is also dying to sin, a new creature, true repentance, a sincere regenerated, unblamable Christian."*

Menno's teachings concerning the church which strongly influenced the Dunkers had a tendency, in common with most Anabaptist beliefs on this point, to deny the distinction between the church visible and invisible.** His definition of the church is "The Assembly of those who hear, believe, accept, and rightly fulfill the Scriptural teachings". He believed that the church should not tolerate false doctrine, nor engage in establishing a congregational polity. He urged the propagation of the missionary work of the church; and maintained that it was the task of the church to care for the poor and the destitute. He advocated strong church discipline, his position being as follows: "In short, as a vineyard without a fence or enclosure, or a city without walls or gates, so is a church without discipline and the excommunication." He held to the complete severance of relations with those upon whom the ban had been ^{pronounced} exercised. On this point he was criticized by the Swiss Brethren who were disposed towards greater leniency.

* Ibid. Sec. i, 118.

**For a comparison of Anabaptist and other Protestant views on this subject, see McGiffert - Protestant Thought Before Kant P. 101.

Important tenets of his that were taken up by the Dunkers had to do with the swearing of oaths. He held that they were forbidden of Christ. Likewise he opposed the use of force, as in war. He condemned capital punishment. He stood for temperance in all things of a moral signification. He felt that church members should be disciplined for all unworthy actions. He believed in the near coming of Christ not for the beginning of the millenium but ^{FOR} because of the judgment.

It may be said of Menno that while he had many peculiar beliefs, he did not urge his shibboleths upon others and many of his views seem to have gone with him to the grave.

His belief concerning Baptism was very positive. He regarded this sacrament as a sign and witness of an inner renewing through faith. Inasmuch as this depends upon the will of the believer, no one who has not reached years of discretion, is ready for Baptism.

Menno set a pattern for conduct and for a type of worship and belief in Northern Germany in particular, which left its impress upon that entire region. It was his ideas which appealed to the early Dunkers as setting forth the ideal religion. How closely Menno Simons and the Dunkers were allied in spirit and in practice will appear in a subsequent discussion.

AUGUST HERMANN FRANCKE

The remaining "pathfinders" are all associated with the Pietist tradition. A name almost always associated with Spener is that of August Hermann Francke. Together they share the

honor of being recognized as the founders of Pietism. While Spener was without doubt the stronger personality of the two and the dominant leader while he lived, Francke in his own way influenced the rising tide of Pietism in no small measure. His writings and work for missions and orphans made a deep impression upon all who came to know him; and through his work with Breithaupt and Anton of the theological faculty at Halle, his teachings were extensively accepted throughout Germany.

Francke was born at Lubeck on March 12, 1663. He attained the age of sixty-five years, dying at his beloved Halle. His father died when Francke was quite young, the family having previously moved to Gotha. The influences of the father's home had been strongly religious and Francke was led to study theology. He was educated partly by private tutors and partly at the gymnasium at Gotha, passing his final examination at Gotha in 1679. After studying for a time at Erfurt he went to Kiel where he came under the guiding influence of Christian Kortholt, an eminent theologian. Francke caught a vision of a more perfect Christianity for which he earnestly began to seek. He exercised a staunch self discipline all through this period of preparation completed at Leipsic in 1685 on receiving his Master of Arts degree.

While at Leipsic he became thoroughly imbued with zeal for the study of Scripture. He helped to found the Collegium Philobiblicum to which Spener was attracted later. The study groups he had inaugurated, became very popular. The real spirit of searching the Scriptures for Christian truth made itself felt strongly in the life of Francke. His interest in the

Bible and pursuit of Biblical study continued thenceforth. On going to Lüneburg in 1687 he experienced the conversion which changed his entire life. In 1688 he went to Hamburg to study under Johann Winkler, a great friend of Spener's. Returning to Leipsic in the same year, he stopped at Dresden to visit Spener. They became true friends and so continued until Spener's death. There can be no doubt that Spener's influence upon Francke was indeed strong. Their correspondence reveals the bonds of union between them both in theology and in spirit.

Francke's broadening and deepening experiences in these last few years caused him to become a changed man by the time he returned to Leipsic. His lectures, chiefly exegetical, were very popular with the students and the people. His auditorium was scarcely large enough to accommodate the crowds that came to hear him. His personal life with the students was delightful. His sermons were preached with power. He seems to have made people restless to live a better Christian life and more devoted to Christ's cause.

It was natural that jealousy of Francke's influence should have arisen amongst his colleagues. He fell into the error of abhorring science and philosophy, thus bringing about an unnecessary conflict particularly with the philosopher J. B. Carpzov. The Collegia Biblica were brought to an end and an investigation of Francke was begun, resulting, in his being limited to lectures of a mild (philosophical) type.

Thereupon Francke gladly accepted a call to Erfurt in 1690. He was equally successful here in carrying on his Pietistic program. Students from Leipsic and Jena followed him to Erfurt. Opposition again made itself effective, and he was dismissed from office in 1691. About this time Spener invited him to come to Berlin where Spener helped him to obtain a pastoral charge at Glaucha in addition to which, he occupied the chair of Greek and Oriental languages at the University of Halle. Here less friction was experienced, since Spener and others who shared Francke's views, had prepared the ground for him at the university. His influence expanded in his two-fold capacity as preacher and teacher; his pleasing manner as head of the parish; his kindly interest in helping people to deeper spiritual living; and his powerful preaching, all these had deep reverberations among all his people. He preached out of the rich experiences of his life and led his people in the study of the Bible so that they felt new life and joy in living. He dealt with soul searching themes and presented them in a most earnest way to hearers who were hungering for the truth.

Colleagues of Francke on the faculty at Halle were Paul Anton and J. B. Breithaupt. All three men were Pietists and through their combined efforts the faith spread at the university and in the town. They emphasized by their lives and in their teachings/ Biblical study; careful execution of clerical duties; Godly conduct; and salvation free from the externalisms of the orthodox teaching.

The real heart of Pietism was of course not in theological

classrooms. It was found in church parishes where "Active Christianity" took root among the people. Francke's greatest influence was in this direction. His activities on behalf of the people of his parish were stupendous in their extent and vital influence. He was the pedagogue of both young and old. He visited consistently among his people. He preached homely yet powerful and inspiring sermons and provided for them the example of a Godly life. His work for young people led him to establish an orphanage in his own home. This soon grew to unwieldy proportions and became the beginning of a series of institutions founded by Francke, which grew almost miraculously.

He instituted an organization in some degree similar to the "Boys' Town"* of Midwestern America, a school for boys living out of town who needed help badly. This was called a Pedagogium. The teaching staff was composed mostly of poor students who received free room and board.

In addition to his orphan asylum, and his boys' school, Francke founded a Latin school to prepare boys for academic studies. All of these projects had a spontaneous growth. Francke had a bent for organization and exercised great faith in launching new institutional enterprises. Funds for the maintenance of the work came in steadily, and those who came to know Francke's earnest and Godly spirit, gave material support as the circumstances required. When he died, more than

* Boys' Town is an institution originated by a Roman Catholic Priest, Father Flannigan for migrant boys who have no decent home. It is a self-sustaining institution.

two thousand students were enrolled in his institutions.

Francke's "practical Christianity" manifested itself not alone as above mentioned, but through it he became interested in the spread of Christianity to foreign lands. He had a deeprooted interest in foreign missions and did much to further the missionary impulse. He personally inspired many young men to give their lives fully to missionary work. His school became a recruiting station for missionaries to India. It was Francke who inspired Muhlenburg, the American Lutheran patriarch to come to America and take up his work. His universal interest in Christian missions gave him an interest even in the exiled Swedes of Siberia. T. Forster, in his biography of Francke* cites these schools as sharing with the Moravians, the honor of having given the first impulse to the modern foreign missionary movement in Germany.

Not the least of the potent influences exerted by Francke was in the field of Christian education. He had strong convictions that education which failed to lead men to a knowledge of God was ultimately fruitless. Therefore his educational system had the distinctive purpose of leading young people to a saving knowledge of God in Christ. This influence carried over into the Dunker faith. It became a fundamental tenet with them, that education must be Christian if it is to be worthwhile.

Francke had a far less mature mind as a theologian, than had Spener. He did not seek to co-ordinate his own views with

* T. Forster - August Hermann Francke, Ein Ebenbild Halle 1898.

any general theological system and therefore failed to attain to much breadth of theological understanding. Nor did he realize that even his own religious experience should be dealt with on a personal basis. Instead he used it as the norm and taught that all Christians should experience conversion just as he had. He was so absorbed with his own beliefs that he failed to relate them to any theological system or to the thinking of others in the Pietist groups. Altogether this spelled failure for his program, so far as its ultimate continuance was concerned. That his "practical Christianity" was nevertheless a vital force in his own day and generation is clearly evidenced in the history of the Dunker as well as other sects.

JEREMIAS FELBINGER AND GOTTFRIED ARNOLD

In addition to such men as Spener, Francke, Simons, whose lives and beliefs were all influential in forming the background of the Dunker church, there must be added two others. They are Jeremias Felbinger and Gottfried Arnold. Both were more extreme in their views than the others, and for this reason we find their influence strongest in the more extreme wings of the Dunkers.

Jeremias Felbinger was born in Silesia at Brieg in 1616. He was much older than Arnold whom he influenced a great deal by his interpretation of Scripture. He was Superintendent of Schools at Coszlin in Pomerania. He was a noted scholar, particularly as a linguist. During much of his life he was very poor and had to earn a livelihood in diverse ways. Thus

at one time he was employed at Amsterdam as a proof reader. In 1660 he translated the New Testament literally into German. He had a command of several languages including Dutch, Latin, Greek, German and Hebrew. He wrote and translated in all of them.

Of particular significance in his relation to the Dunker group was his "Christian handbook" or Christliches Hand Buchlein.* A list of the chapters of this book shows how significant the work was for Alexander Mack and others who read it. It deals with man's Apostasy and Reconciliation; the Admission of Immature Children into the Visible Church; of Holy Baptism; of Church Discipline; of Feet Washing as an Ordinance of the Church; of the Holy Supper, and of the Problem of the Oath: All of these subjects were prominent in the early discussions and practices of the Dunkers and the fact that Felbinger's ideas were adopted "en masse" in some instances, shows the clear course by which his thinking found its way into the Dunker faith.

His belief as expressed in his book is that children are not saved by Baptism but by the death of Christ: - that Baptism in the New Testament was by immersion and that the Holy Scriptures command the practice of feet washing. He argues against taking an oath and in general held to the fundamental beliefs of the Dunkers.

Gottfried Arnold was a reactionary. He was a Lutheran clergyman and was born September 5, 1666 at Annaberg, in Saxony, where his father was schoolmaster. In 1682 he attended school

* An edition of this work was published by Sower in Baltimore 1799.

at the gymnasium in Gera. Later he enrolled in the University of Wittenberg. He studied theology and history. Coming to know Spener, he was influenced to accept a tutorship at Quedlinburg.

His first work was Die Erste Liebe zu Christo which appeared in 1696. It went through five editions and won a wide reputation for the author. Its publication no doubt secured for Arnold a call to Giessen as professor of Church History. He did not care for his work here, however. In the following year he resigned and returned to Quedlinburg. In 1699 he published his largest work Unparteiische Kirchen und Ketzler-Historie, in which he indicates a strong tendency toward the beliefs of various radical sects and away from orthodoxy. Arnold gives the impression in this book that his sympathies are with dissenters rather than with those of orthodox faith. He did his best to encourage others to take a stand for their beliefs, even though contrary to the orthodox position. Arnold was a mystic. He felt that the direct summons of the Holy Spirit to men who were called, such as Spener and Hochmann, was of equal importance with the voice of the church. Such men as Alexander Mack and his followers took much encouragement from Arnold's writings, whose position was stated by Hochmann* and adopted by Mack with respect to trine immersion, aversion to oaths, Baptism of the mature only, the washing of feet, the salutation, anointing and pacifism.

* See Hochmann's Confession of Faith quoted in this chapter. pp. 64 ff.

Arnold drew arguments for his interpretations from Church History, his major field.* Mack was impressed and quotes him on such subjects as infant Baptism,** which Arnold discusses in "A genuine Portraiture of the Primitive Christians." Here the author holds that infant Baptism was unknown until after the second century of the Christian era. Another instance which Mack quotes to the peculiarity of Arnold's mind has to do with the laying of the ban against such as eat blood.***

All in all Arnold's influence was significant in the career of Mack who represented the conservative wing of the New Church as well as of Conrad Beissel who may be regarded as representative of the "left wing." While Mack claimed to get from the Bible all of his views in support of the Christian life and practice, he either consciously or unconsciously accepted many of Arnold's interpretations.

It was Arnold's Sophia or the Mysteries of Divine Worship published in 1700 which gave the impetus to Conrad Beissel and that segment of the Dunker sect that inclined toward extreme mysticism. Arnold's mystical writings were widely accepted especially by the Ephrata group of Dunkers.

* After two pastorates at Werben and Berleberg, he was made court historian to Frederick I, founder of Halle University.

** See Alexander Mack - A Plain View of the Rites and Ordinances of the House of God, page 18 - edition 1888.

*** Ibid page 54.

ERNEST CHRISTOPHER HOCHMANN

Ernest Christopher Hochmann was by far the most influential of the Pietists so far as the Dunker sect is concerned. He provided the specific link between the school of thought of Spener, Francke and Alexander Mack. Hochmann had in Mack a true disciple. They were close friends for many years. Hochmann was the pioneer in new thoughts and ideas - a maker of creeds, the dissenter; Mack was a pioneer in action, who carried into practice ideas which found their origin in the mind of Hochmann. Mack and the Dunker sect cannot be explained without Hochmann. Hochmann in turn was a strange product of the mystical extreme of Pietism sponsored by Spener, Francke, Arnold and Felbinger. It was in no small measure the unique ideas of Hochmann which became the background for the Dunker church and which made the sect distinct from any which had existed up to this time. Apparently his was the original mind of the group. While the history of theology has given him a very small place,* his creed and his work have been widely recognized.

Ernest Christopher Hochmann von Hohenau was born circa 1670. His father was a customs officer of Sachsen, Lauenberg, of noble family. Later the family settled at Nurnberg. Ernest's older brother Heinrich (born 1661) was a dominating personality. He was the representative of Lauenberg, his native city as a deputy at the imperial court. He was also Imperial Councillor and Gothic Privy-Councillor and an advisor to Leopold I, who had great confidence in him.



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Having so influential a family, Hochmann was urged to become Attorney of Nurnberg in the year 1698. He declined the place on the ground that his allegiance was given to a higher Master, - Jesus Christ, the King of Kings. This wilful and rather unusual attitude irritated his brother who thereupon cast him adrift as a "fanatic."

Hochmann's religious background was Lutheran, altho his mother was Roman Catholic. At an early age he went to the University of Halle to study law under Thomasius who had come to the university with Francke from Leipsic. Under Francke's influence Hochmann experienced conversion. He was soon expelled from the University because of his unrestrained zeal as a critic of the state churches. He then became a confirmed separatist aggressor following his dismissal at Halle.*

Later he travelled from one section of the country to another and finally became associated with Gottfried Arnold at Giessen. This was in the year 1697. He also came under the influence of John Conrad Dippel, who like Arnold was a dissenter from Lutheran tenets. In these men Hochmann found kindred spirits because of their sympathy with ideas that began to fuse

* A rather strange incident seems to have caused a turning point in his life. He was hunting one day and broke through a hedge so that his sword came in contact with a branch of the hedge which formed a cross with his sword. Hochmann interpreted this as an omen confirming his scruples about hunting. He threw away his sword and belt saying, "Now henceforth never again! I renounce all wordly pleasures; and I surrender wholly and decisively to God and Jesus Christ, firmly resolved to risk life and body, good and blood for Christ's sake. I shall fear neither fire nor sword, neither gallows nor wheel for Christ's sake." (M. Goebel Christlichen Leben, Vol. II) P. 811

in his mind. Contact with these men aided Hochmann in his hostility* to all creed centered churches.

From Giessen Hochmann went to Frankfurt. His enthusiasm for the work of the Kingdom increased until his ideals took complete possession of him. He issued an exhortation in an open letter to the Jews,** urging them to accept Christ as Lord and he converted because of the apparent nearness of Christ's 'second coming'. He spoke in the synagogues and so moved many of those present that they fell to weeping and moaning while others were converted under his influence. However, the task he had set for himself, was a most difficult one that could not be accomplished within a short time.***

Hochmann's life centered around different crusades to which he gave his efforts. His crusade to convert the Jews was followed by a course of action inspired by Arnold Dippel, namely, that of disrupting the established church through adverse criticism. Blinded by mysticism, he saw no real purpose the church could serve in clinging to correct doctrine. He

* This was the core of the teaching of Arnold and Dippel.

** Conversion of the Jews was one of the main ideals of Spener.

*** His earnestness made a powerful impression of the Jews. Dr. Brumbaugh tells of a Jew who heard Hochmann at Frankfurt. Years later he met Hochmann at Prague. The Jew requested a favor. When Hochmann consented the Jew gave him a bag of gold. Hochmann in turn requested a favor of the Jew. The Jew assented. Hochmann returned the money saying, "Give it generously and to the glory of God to the poor and wretched of your own people" - Brumbaugh p - 19.

urged his followers to live apart from the church entirely and be united. The church had come to connote little else than Babel and Hochmann continually harangued against it. On one occasion he wrote as follows:

"Do not blame me, beloved Brethren and Sisters, that I with such great and loving zeal wish to draw you away from human organizations, and instead urge you to go to Almighty God himself. I am certain that you will not find any peace for your soul until you shall have both outwardly and inwardly done with Babel, and surrender yourselves to Jesus. Therefore give yourselves up entirely to Jesus, my King, and you will learn in deed and in truth that he is your all-sufficient Redeemer.*"

Hochmann was driven from place to place and became a wanderer (1698). From Frankfurt he went to Hesse-Cassel. The next year to Wittgenstein. He lived as an ascetic, renouncing all earthly interests and fasting after the manner of Jesus.??

His example and personal contacts with the Count and Countess von Wittgenstein had a wholesome effect upon them which was evidence in the fact that they displayed a genuine religious fervor. Particularly, the ^{WIDOWED} Countess ~~Widow~~, Hedwig Sophia von Berleberg, became a convert and devotee, thus causing the (^{HER} Countess ~~Widow's~~) brother, Count Rudolph zur Lippe-Brache to strike in anger at Hochmann by having him beaten and cast into prison where he suffered greatly. ** He was soon released but because of persecution he was compelled to quit the country.

Persecution did not crush Hochmann's zeal in the least.

* Brumbaugh - History of the Brethren, p. 20.

** It is related that Hochmann was forced to run for hours ahead of a horse whose rider kept lashing him whenever he slowed down.

He travelled in the northern and western part of Germany preaching in the interests of his cause. Others worked with him, including Alexander Mack, Count zur Lippe-Biesterfeld and Christian Erb. Wherever the opportunity presented itself, these men sang and preached and exhorted their hearers to live a holier and more Christ-like life. Naturally they criticized the state churches. For this, persecution and many imprisonments were meted out, particularly to Hochmann and of course to those who were associated with him.

On an occasion when Hochmann was seated by a roadside, a rich man with his valet came by. Hochmann admonished the man and exhorted him to repent. In anger the traveler ordered his servant to beat Hochmann. After the punishment had been administered, Hochmann thanked the servant who was so deeply moved and chagrined that he humbly begged the forgiveness of his victim.

Hochmann is said to have been a powerful preacher and to have convinced profoundly those who heard him. He won many ardent followers and friends. One such friend was Johann Conrad Dippel who defended Hochmann against his persecutors in a letter, citing the noble family background of Hochmann and pointing to his piety and zeal ^{as} in evidence of his true Christian spirit.* Unfortunately Dippel was regarded as a heretic and unfriendly agitator and his defense of Hochmann served only to kindle the flames of wrath against his friend.

Finally Hochmann retired from active work and built a

* This letter is given in full in Goebel's - Christliches Lebens Vol. II

little house in the lovely vale of "peace" near Schwarzenau where he lived in comparative quiet. His house was a mere hut with only a kitchen and a sleeping room. After retirement, he no longer visited the groups of his sympathizers ^{but they} ~~who~~ frequently came to him for advice and help. He was very closely associated with Alexander Mack and a little group of refugees who gathered about him at Schwarzenau. He and Mack had been closely associated. Regarding their religious views, they ordinarily were of one mind. They differed concerning the means by which reform was to be achieved. Despite all his harsh criticism of the established church, Hochmann still held that reform should be accomplished within the church. Mack being more impulsive and less patient longed to organize a congregation which should be the "ideal" church where God's will might hold sway, and where the ordinances of God's house might be observed!

On this point, Hochmann and Mack finally separated, causing much regret and pain in the hearts of both. Hochmann maintained his position of aloofness whereas Mack launched a new church using the Bible as his rule and guide. The separation was a great blow to Hochmann who deeply cherished the companionship of Mack but who was now forced into isolation through a difference of opinion. His last years were lonely and sorrowful. There is no evidence that he ever joined the church established by his friend Alexander Mack.*

* Alexander Mack, junior, reports, that Hochmann did join his father's church but local tradition denies this. Mack placed Hochmann's name on a list of European members made up from memory years after Hochmann's death.

That Hochmann continued to have fellowship with his former companions, there can be no doubt. For the most part he was in complete agreement with their beliefs, but the new situation at Schwarzenau made him feel that many of his most ardent followers were now gone. Many friends from other towns came to visit him during his old age and to tell of Hochmann's implicit faith in his Lord even until the very last. Gerhard Tersteegen who had been converted by a follower of Hochmann, was one who came to see him, but was too late as Hochmann had died before he arrived. Tersteegen upon arriving at the grave in 1736 was grieved at seeing no marker on the grave, and begged the dowager Countess to provide one as a memorial. To this she gave her consent, on condition that Tersteegen would write the inscription. He wrote the following words:

"How high is now the man, who here was like a child,
Sincere and full of love, yet also full of faith,
Of Zion's Kingdom's fame he spoke and for it suffered,
His spirit rose to it and here decays the hut."

Hochmann is related to the Dunkers chiefly through his confession of faith which formed a basis for the beliefs of Alexander Mack. Mack in consequence, formulated many church ordinances and general practices for use in his new denomination. Hochmann wrote his confession of faith while he was a prisoner in Detmold Castle, being held there by Count zur Lippe-Detmold in the year 1702. The Count refused to free his prisoner until he had written his confession of faith. In so doing, Hochmann never realized that this document would lay the foundation for a new denomination. It not only embodies Hochmann's theol-

ogy, but is the nearest approach to the original beliefs of the Dunkers who outwardly abhorred creeds. It is here given in full:*

"After it had been announced to me last night that His Excellency had acceded to my dismissal, he respectfully requested, if I would beforehand make a short confession of my belief, I have herewith given a short outline of this as follows:

1. I believe an eternal, sole almighty, omnipresent God, as he has revealed himself in the Old Testament as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but in the New Book as the Father, Son and Ghost (Matthew 28, v. 19) and I do not consider it necessary in my soul to dispute or criticise much about it: But I consider it better to submit one's self humbly to this eternal Godly being in the Father, Son and Ghost and to experience his inner working, just as the Father reveals the Son inwardly and the Son again the Father, and this by the powerful working of the Holy Ghost, without which nothing can be known in Godly things and this too is alone the eternal life, that one should rightly acknowledge this one God, as Christ speaks (John 17:3) and that I may explain myself in few words about this: I profess with mouth and heart the well known Ausselic Creed, Credo in Deum, etc. ?

2. Concerning baptism, I believe that Christ instituted it only for the grown up and not for the little children, because one cannot find an iota of an express command about it in the whole holy Scripture; for arguments and good opinions cannot be sufficient (hung together) on these points, but there must be express commands, expressed by God or Christ, as there is an express command about the circumcision of the Israelite children.

3. Concerning the Lord's Supper, I believe that it is instituted for the chosen disciples of Christ, who by the renunciation of all wordly things, follow Christ Jesus in deed and truth; and that the covenant of God will be much reviled and His anger inflamed over the whole community, if the Godless children of the world are admitted to the love feast, as, unfortunately! is done at the present time.

* As translated in Brumbaugh, History of the Brethren P. 83 f.

4. Concerning perfection (the full coming of the Spirit), I believe that although I have been conceived and born in sinful seed, yet that I may be sanctified through Jesus Christ, not only justly but perfectly, so that no more sin may remain in me, when I shall have come to complete manhood in Christ. But I do not yet boast of having attained perfection, but I acknowledge with Paul that I am striving to attain it with all earnestness and zeal and am consecrating myself to God and the Lamb to his complete service; but that it is possible for one to become perfect is to be proved from the Holy Scripture on all pages: but this time I will cite one very clear proverb (Heb. 7:25), in the version of Piscator. He can therefore also make those perfectly blessed, who come to God through him, who is ever living to intercede for them. It is surely not enough, that a great redemption should be done for me through Christ, but this redemption from sin, death, devil and hell must be erected within the soul by the Son of the living God and by his loving and faithful mediatorship, so that not only that which is prophetic, high-priestly, but also that which is kingly must distinguish itself in the soul even to the attainment of the perfect likeness of God and Christ and thus take a spiritual form within us, and if this does not take place actively in the soul through Christ in lifetime one cannot attain to the contemplation of God, for without this sanctification no one will see God; for whoever hopes to see God must purify himself, as he too is pure (1 John 3:3).

5. Concerning the sacrament of the Holy Ghost I believe that Christ alone, who is the head of the church, can appoint teachers and preachers and give them the qualification for it. And no being but only Christ, risen above all heavens and fulfilling everything, has appointed some apostles, some however prophets, some evangelists, some pastors (Flock-keepers) and teachers, so that the saints may be fitted for the work of the ministry. Ephesians 4: 10,11, Acts 20: 28 state expressly that the Holy Ghost (N.B. and not man) had made them bishops to pasture the congregation of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.

6. Concerning high power, I believe that it is a divine ordinance, to which I willingly submit in all civil matters according to the teachings of Paul (Romans 13: 1-7). On the other hand, however, with all true evangelical (believers) I accord no power to those who struggle against God's Word and my conscience or the freedom of Christ: for it is said: We ought to obey God, etc. (Acts 5:29), and if anything should be charged against God and my conscience I should rather suffer unjust force than act contrary to this and I pray that God may not put it to the account of those magistrates, but may convert them; but I further declare that in reference to the

essentia Magistratus Politici (Essential political powers) that it is not a Christ: for the Turk at Constantinople and the pope at Rome are also the true magistrates in the realm of nature, but they are not Christians for this reason; for where a magistracy shall receive the venerable predicate Christian from me, I must feel in it that it has the Spirit of Christ, or else I say with Saint Paul (Romans 8:8), Whoever has not the spirit of Christ is not his and therefore not a Christian power; but I consider and regard them as heathen powers, who however will soon have reached their time, for I have been infallibly convinced from God's Word that the glorious Christ sitting at the Father's right hand will soon break in and will thrust all the heathen powers from their seat and according to the prophecy of Holy Mary will raise the lowly, for the sceptre of Christ will destroy and break to pieces all other animal kingdoms (Dan. 2:44). Indeed the Lamb will conquer the beast and its horns, as is stated distinctly (Apoc. 17:14). These will quarrel with the Lamb and the Lamb will conquer them; for it is the Lord of all Lords and the King of all kings and with it the called and chosen and the believers; and now because the Kingdom of Christ is so near at hand, I confess that I as a spiritual statistician have learned from God's Word to reflect more upon the rising sun of justice than upon the high powers of the world soon to depart; for that will last into the eternity of eternities, but these will soon have reached their limit (periodum), by the great impending judgments of God.

7. Finally, as concerns the restoration (redemption) of damned men I do not see how this is the place to carry it out, since it demands a circumstantial deduction, if it is to be understood distinctly and clearly; I will only add briefly that as in Adam all men have fallen, so also must all men be born again, through the other Adam, Jesus Christ; if this were not so, it would necessarily follow that Christ were not powerful enough to restore the human race which was lost through Adam and in this connection the chapter of the Epistle to the Romans can be read and from this may be seen how the restoration in the mediatorship of Christ has been much stronger and more mighty than the fall of sin in Adam. 1 Cor. 15:22 is stated explicitly: For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But, as has been mentioned, this matter can not possibly be carried out in accordance with its dignity, but it demands a word-of-mouth deliverance, if all the objections and doubts occurring herewith are to be explained from the Word of God.

And since these are the most important points, which at the present day are questions of controversy, I wished to draw them up in short form herewith and have to hand them over to a high authority of the country with the added hearty wish that God the Almighty may light them up with his light; and since I might have no opportunity to appear before the high

authorities of this land: I therefore herewith give my due, humble thanks to God the Almighty and then to my most gracious master for everything good that I have enjoyed during my stay here. May God who is rich in mercy reward everything good done me, in time and eternity; and may he soon allow the earnest pleadings and prayers for the master of this house, for his wife, and the whole house to be fulfilled, so that every curse may be turned and so that on the other hand the spiritual blessings of God may be revealed therein. And although I may not be present any more in this land or house, henceforth, I shall not leave off continuing my heartfelt prayers to God the Father of the spirits of all flesh for the soul of the most loved Frederick Adolph, and as long as I live I remain the most humble intercessor for the whole house of the Count."

E.C;H.v.H.

In Castle Detmold,
in the month of November, 1702.

The above may be quite accurately transcribed from Braunbach's translation, but it is quite evident that it is a pretty bad translation. There are points where one would need to know the original to understand the translation.

CHAPTER III

IMMEDIATE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH GAVE RISE TO THE FOUNDING OF THE
CHURCH AND THE MEN WHO FOUNDED IT

The scene of the founding of the Dunker sect is laid in the Province of Wittgenstein in Germany where, in the early part of the eighteenth century, under the rule of Count Heinrich von Wittgenstein, religions of all types were tolerated. Many families from various parts of Switzerland and Germany had sought refuge in the province from persecution and intolerance. The mild and humane Count Heinrich was sympathetic with all of these people and afforded them the privilege of living on his lands so long as they did not prove troublesome.

It was such a group of religious refugees, who, having found their way to the little village of Schwarzenau, planted the seeds which were to take root and blossom into a fully grown church. They were eight in number. Their leader was Alexander Mack. He had been a wealthy miller at Schriesheim an der Bergstrasse. The names of the others are in question but the list given by Mack* himself is as follows:

Alexander Mack and his wife Anna Margareta from Schriesheim near Heidelberg, Joanna Noethiger or Bony, and Andrew Bony from Basel, Switzerland; George Grebi and Lucas Vetter from Hesse-Cassel; and John Kipping and Joanna Kipping from Bareit in Wurtemberg.

The list given in the Chronicon Ephratense** is somewhat

* A Plain view of the Rites and Ordiances of the House of God p. 9.

** Chronicon Ephratense, p. 2.

different, as follows:

Alexander Mack and his housekeeper, a widow Noethiger, Andreas Bone, John George Hoeining, Luke Vetter, Kiffinger, and an unnamed person.

In addition to these two lists, others given in various secondary sources*, are also different. It is logical to accept Mack's own list as being accurate since his volume was written by an eye witness.

In view of this book not having been written until a much later date, some allowance for error must be made. Each one of the names given in Mack's list is cited in Brumbaugh's partial list** of those who joined the church in Germany. Each person can likewise be accounted for in subsequent events.

Every one of the eight men and women had been members of some Protestant church prior to 1708. Mack had been a member of the Reformed church as had Vetter, Bony and Grebi. Kipping had been a Lutheran. All experienced difficulty in adjusting themselves to the empty formalisms of their respective churches. When they pursued other beliefs and practices, they found themselves outlawed from the church. They sought for reality in what seemed a confused religious world and had come in contact with people having divergent opinions and beliefs. They had felt the strong influence of Pietism and had found it a haven from the severity of the orthodox church. They had been befriended by Mennonites who attracted them by their piety and zeal. Yet these men as a group felt that they had not experienced true Christianity which was their main objective.

* Genealogy of Urner Family, p. 8, Materials towards a History of the American Baptists, pub. 1770 vol. 1. Part IV; Hochmann von Hochenau by Renfewitz.

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** A. Mack - "A plain view of the Rites and Ordinances of the House of God."

The evolution that took place in the minds of these men is described in a document published by A. Mack's son in 1774* at Germantown. This account is as follows:

"It pleased God in the beginning of the last century, (seventeenth), to cause His saving grace to be experienced, and the voice of His mercy to be heard by many, awakening them to repentance and arousing them from the sleep of sin and death to seek salvation in Christ their Saviour. They felt the general departure from the general principles of Christianity, and were devoutly inclined to bear testimony to the truth, in word and practise. Accordingly private meetings were established for the edification and building up of the newly-awakened souls. The laudable undertaking was, however, soon vigorously opposed by jealous and embittered ecclesiastics. These influenced the civil powers, and instituted a series of persecutions in Switzerland, Wirtenberg, in Palatinate, at Hesse-Cassel, and at other places where the faithful were cast out as exiles. But the Lord provided a place of refuge for them in Wittgenstein, under the protection of a prince, eminent for his moderation. Here the awakening power of God had previously found its way to the hearts of some honorable ladies of the court. At a place called Schwarzenau, in the vicinity of Berlenburg, liberty of conscience had been graciously afforded to the refugees. Wittgenstein, though a rough and barren country, became a place of refuge to the awakened, and also of considerable reputation, in the course of a few years, for the exiles, who now generally resorted to Schwarzenau.

Of the number who collected here there were those of different opinions, habits, and manners. They were all denominated Pietists, but they considered each other as brethren. They soon met with trouble among themselves. They found it difficult in their unorganized state to put into practice the salutary counsel of our Lord, 'If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone,' there being no church to report to. At this point some returned to the religion from whence they had come. They could not endure the discipline of the cross. Others fostered a spirit of liberalism more to be dreaded in its consequences than their former depravity. There were some, however, who,

* History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe, America. Chap. V, p. 47 - Holsinger

notwithstanding this state of perturbation, were sincerely desirous of finding the footsteps of the primitive Christianity and following the example of the Saviour, being fully convinced of the necessity of faith and obedience in order to obtain salvation. Their solicitude paved the way to the discovery of the importance of the ordinance of water baptism, which they regarded as the door to the church toward which they had such a longing desire. The subject of baptism among the Pietists was variously understood, which was greatly deplored by all lovers of the truth."

It is significant to note in the above that by their own testimony these men had become identified with the Pietist movement. Not finding in this position or in any other that which satisfied them, they jointly studied the Scriptures to see what guidance they might find for their future lives. Before doing this they entered into a solemn covenant among themselves to be literally obedient to any command of Christ which they should find in their study. In this covenant they pledged themselves "to labor together in the unity of the faith as a church."

In this portrayal we see the **break** with Pietism and with the concept of ecclesiolae in ecclesia. They turned aside from the hope of restoring the church to purity and from any thought of reforming it. They did not start with the Lutheran or Reformed viewpoint of a "pure theology", as opposed to an "adulterated theology." Their object was to reincarnate the apostolic church in its ancient purity and simplicity. They wanted to live again in the atmosphere of primitive Christianity.

Their study of early Christian tradition led them to the view that in the first and second centuries, those who accepted the faith were received by baptism of water and three fold

immersion.* Turning to the New Testament, they were convinced that this was the correct practice. Henceforth, they observed baptism in this same manner.

When the question arose as to the method, Mack, who had traveled extensively among the Anabaptists in Germany, made clear to the group that immersion was their generally accepted practice, altho some used sprinkling. The latter groups maintained that if all else connected with the ceremony was in order, sprinkling was right and proper.

Not content with any other form than immersion, they requested Mack their leader, to baptize them. Mack insisted that having not been truly baptized himself, he was not eligible to perform the rite as a minister. The group then resorted to fasting and prayer for divine direction. All were of one mind in their desire to do the Lord's will. Mack records the fact that they took comfort in the words of the Saviour"where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Finally it was decided that through casting lots by solemn prayer and fasting, they should submit to the Lord the question concerning the one who should baptize Mack. The choice was of course limited to the four men associated with Mack. They had agreed among themselves not to divulge the name of the one who should be chosen as baptizer.

Arrangements having been made, the eight arose early in the morning and journeyed to the banks of the river Eider. Here the person upon whom the lot had fallen, baptized Mack.

* It is not known what sources they used to evolve this view.

In turn Mack baptized the others, starting with him by whom he had been baptized.

When they returned to their homes, they changed their garments. Being filled with great joy they gave thanks to God. By some strange manifestation, the Scriptural words, "Be fruitful and multiply" were impressed upon their minds and they became very zealous that others should be added to their number. The year was 1708. No record is given of the day of the month. We are told that "After this Baptism the said persons were more and more powerfully strengthened in their obedience to the faith they had adopted, and were enabled to testify publicly in their meetings to the truth; and the Lord granted them his special grace so that still more became obedient to the faith."*

The early name of Dunkers or Dompelaers** probably grew out of the method used in baptizing - namely trine immersion with a forward action. This was a distinctive observance and hence it was very natural for them to be known by this term. They had purposely kept secret the name of the first baptizer for fear their adherents should be called after his name,*** but they could not avoid the use of the terminology given them after the manner that the name Methodist was given to the followers of John Wesley.

In this simple fashion there came into being a new Protest-

* Brumbaugh - A History of the Brethren, p. 40

** See appendix 1 for further explanation of these names.

*** Having in mind Paul's warning in I Corinthians, 1; 12,13.

ant denomination, whose career in Europe was to be tragic and short lived, but whose growth and influence in America was destined to become of large significance. The spread of the Dunker faith was amazing. Within a very few years (1715), strong congregations were founded at Schwarzenau and ~~another~~ ~~at~~ Marienborn. The faith spread throughout the Palatinate, also.

ALEXANDER MACK

Important movements in history can as a rule, be traced best in the lives of their leaders. So it is with the Dunker movement. Its beginnings are disclosed principally by the life of Alexander Mack, its founder.

Alexander Mack was born at Schriesheim an der Bergstrasse in 1679. His parents were pious folk of the Presbyterian (Reformed) faith. Mack was bred in the Calvinist doctrines. He became a land owner and also owned mills and vineyards. In early life, he exhibited a deep religious character. He inquired diligently into many observances of the church that his parents had never questioned.

He soon became dissatisfied with the state church of which he was a member. Their type of worship and indeed the life and work of the church, meant nothing to him. He became a separatist and sought the companionship of the Pietists whose religious practices were more appealing.

In 1700 he married Anna Margaretha Klingen, also a native of Schriesheim, ^{and of the same age} of Mack's age. They had three sons and two

daughters, Alexander, John Valentine, Johannes, Christina and Anna Maria. The family accompanied Mack in his migrations in Europe and to America. The careers of some of Mack's children are interesting indeed. Brumbaugh states that both of the daughters died in infancy. He does not list either daughter with the others who crossed the Atlantic. There is some evidence^{HOWEVER} that Anna Maria, took the vow of celibacy and entered the sister's convent at Ephrata.*

Ephrata seems to have had a peculiar attraction for Mack's children as well as for a great many Dunkers. Two of the boys were in residence at Ephrata for some time. Valentine died there in 1755. He had married Maria Hildebrand.** They had a daughter known at Ephrata as Sister Constantia, who died unmarried at any early age.

Valentine Mack wrote a volume entitled "Christian Day Guide", (Tageweiser) concerning the seven days of the human tree. By a mystical chronology it shows how near is the end of the six days of strife and hardship and the beginning of the seventh day and great Sabbath of the people of God. The chronology was not figured out by the rotations of the heavenly bodies, but out of the "rotations of the divine mystery and paradisaical" heaven by which in God's household since the beginning of the world, the mystery of eternity is revealed to mankind so that time changes into eternity, and makes out

* See Holsinger, p. 359.

** Known at Ephrata as Sister Abigail.

of the seven periods of the human world, seven eternities.
Given to light by Johan Valentine Mack, 1753."

This volume is unknown today but seems to have been widely read at the Ephrata community. According to Brumbaugh*, it treats of the creation of angels; the fall of Lucifer; the creation of the world; the creation of Adam and Eve; their fall, and re-establishment after the fall of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ. In a study of the chronology, based upon Daniel 8: 13,14, Mack predicts the end of the reign of Antichrist in 1777, after which the gospel is once again to be preached in a powerful way to all nations, and the earth will become filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

The book was written in the year of the author's death. It reveals that ^{the son of} Alexander Mack's son, Valentine, was the exact type of religious personality against which Mack had fought while in America - namely, the fanciful mystic. It was not until after his father's death that Valentine Mack and his wife took up their abode at Ephrata.

Alexander Mack, Jr., was also enamoured of the life at Ephrata and lived there for some time. Later he put aside this episode in his life and was accepted in good faith by his brethren at Germantown where he became bishop.**

There is only meager information concerning Johannes Mack, the third son. He is reported to have married*** into the Schneider family and to have lived in the "Antitum" region of

* History of German Baptist Brethren, pp. 96, 97.

** See Chapter V.

*** Holsinger, p. 359.

the Cumberland valley. Apparently he was not gifted as were his two brothers.

Shortly after the (^{FATHER} senior Mack) became a separatist, he was persecuted for his faith. He found it necessary to seek refuge in Wittgenstein under Count Heinrich, sometime prior to 1708. Then it was that the baptism took place. At Schwarzenau he came to know Hochmann and as already noted, traveled with him on various preaching tours about the Rhine country. Mack took an active part in these missions and frequently spoke to the smaller groups of persecuted people, who like himself had been driven from their homes. He longed for a time when they might all find religious peace and rest.

While on the tours, Hochmann and Mack had many discussions with each other. Hochmann had by this time advanced further in his thinking than Mack and their deliberations aided Mack in crystallizing his own ideas. Moreover, their experiences and observations helped to influence them. They visited many Anabaptist congregations and learned the doctrines and beliefs of these people.

In addition, Mack read many theological books, and weighed them in the light of Biblical teachings. Knowing about the history of the church from ancient times, he could not reconcile himself to the diversity in practice between the Apostolic church and the State churches of his day. Writers who chiefly influenced him were Gottfried Arnold and Jeremias Felbinger.

Gillin says that Arnold "did more than any other one to develop and apply the doctrine then held, at least in theory,

by all theologians of the Protestant churches, that true Christianity is Bible Christianity, and the early church is its best interpreter."*

It was Arnold who turned Mack's thinking back in this direction. In fact, Arnold's influence was responsible for Mack's decision to establish a new church. Arnold did all he could to encourage separatist groups. In Mack he struck a responsive chord. On the other hand Arnold was a strong mystic, - a view in which Mack did not share.** A strange characteristic of the Dunker sect consists in the fact that although it produced many mystics and although mysticism was tied in with its later theology, the dominant minds among the founders of the sect, were not mystics. Had they been, the whole group would probably have traveled the same road that the Ephrata wing traveled, because the excesses of Ephrata were purely the outworking of Mysticism.

Mack and Becker and Naas, along with others of the Dunker leaders, resisted the tendency to mysticism. They were influenced principally by Biblical teachings, due in all probability, to Mack's Calvinist background.

In summary, the influences to which Mack was subjected prior to his launching upon his own course, may be cited as follows:

* Gillin - "The Dunkers - A sociological Interpretation".P. 58.

** The reason may be in part that Mack was better acquainted with Arnold's historical works than his theological writings.

1. His background, training and experience in the
orthodox church.
REFORMED
2. His experience as a Pietist.
3. The opinions and ideals of Hochmann.
4. The writings of Spener, Francke, Felbinger,
and Arnold.
5. His experiences with various groups of the
Anabaptists.

In order to understand Mack and his distinctive contributions to Christian theology, all of these influences must be examined and remembered ^{ASSESSED} relative to his career.

It should be recognized that his background was with the orthodox church rather than the Anabaptists. This was true also of the majority of the first leaders in the Dunker faith. The Dunkers are by no means to be regarded as a mere off-shoot of the Anabaptists. Mack himself was a separatist before he came in contact with the Anabaptists. In his own home church at Schreishheim, his "new thought" had its beginning. Mack was first of all a product of his generation in that he saw the lack of spirituality in the formal Christianity of his day. By nature and temperament, he felt the impulse to give expression to his religious faith - opportunity to do so was not afforded him in the church in which he was reared.

Mack, however, understood the orthodox position and by virtue of this fact he was able to prevent the movement he launched from falling into the fanaticism of the Ephrata community. Always was there something within him that turned away from the promptings of pure mysticism. Save for his coming to America when he did, the entire church might have degenerated

into a Beisselian movement. Mack's knowledge of the historical church persuaded him of the errors in Beissel's position which he fought to the end.

The next important influence in Mack's life was Pietism. The early leaders of the Dunker church cannot be explained ^{APART FROM} outside of Pietism. Mack first turned to Pietism because it was the religious vogue of the time. It has already been noted that the opening years of the 18th century form the aggressive period of Pietism.* Little groups of Pietists gathered in many places in Northern and Central Germany, as for instance, Schwarzenau. That the majority at Schwarzenau were Pietists is clearly seen in the following testimonies taken from the opening of the Chronicon Ephratense**

"It is still fresh in the memory of all, that with the beginning of the present century, important changes in the realm of the church took place in many lands, especially Germany. A great many people, of all ranks, separated themselves from the common forms of worship and were in general called Pietists. But as only the three known church parties were included in the religious peace, the Pietists everywhere began to be proceeded against with much severity. On this account many of them went back again into the pale of the church, and were therefore denominated church Pietists. The rest for the most part, went back to the districts of Marienborn, Schwarzenau, Schlechtenboden, etc., whose rulers had themselves been awakened, and so took up the refugees, and granted them liberty of conscience.

Among the Pietists gathered together in that region, two congregations were soon formed, whose principles were radically different and contrary, namely, the community of True Inspiration and the Baptists of Schwarzenau."

* Chapter 1.

** Chronicon Ephratense, "A History of the Community of Seventh Day at Ephrata, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania - published at Lancaster, Pa. p. 1.

Further evidence of the Pietist influence upon Mack is seen in his own description of the practice of meeting together in friendly informal groups to discuss their faith and to exchange religious views. This free intercourse was not common among other groups at the time. It was confined wholly to the Pietists themselves, who urged it as expedient for the Christian life.

Again, it was partially through making Pietist methods effective that Mack and his companions arrived at their own important decisions. In studying the Scriptures and revolving the teachings of Scripture in their minds, they finally determined to institute the particular tenets of the Dunker faith.

Had it not been for the Pietist influence, it is doubtful if Mack would ever have arrived where he did. Spener and Francke, although not the strongest influences in Mack's life, nevertheless were the bridge over which he arrived at his conclusions. Mack and his sect may be called the "inevitable end" of Pietism. Spener and Francke, through Hochmann and Boehme, opened the door to another type of Christianity through which Mack and his followers entered without stopping at the threshold as other Pietists did. It was the "Active Christianity" of Spener that distinguished the Dunkers from the Anabaptists at the beginning. From this period forth, the Spener influence was dominant and made itself felt throughout the early history of the Dunker movement.

The next vital influence on Mack's life in this period

was Hochmann. It is maintained that Hochmann was, in fact, the strongest influence upon Mack as the founder of Dunker sect.* A comparison of their creeds leaves this open to question, but, be that as it may, one can discover the ideas of Hochmann in much of Mack's work.

The real difference between their views is that Hochmann was unwilling to go much further than the Pietist position, whereas Mack was not restrained by the ecclesiola in ecclesia doctrine. Another great difference is found in the fact that Hochmann was a mystic and Mack an empiricist.

When Mack broached the subject of the new church to Hochmann, the latter firmly refused to entertain such an idea. He would not abandon his hope of reform with in the church and held tenaciously to this standard to the end of his life. For this he is to be admired. Even though he had more than his share of persecution from the church, he would not disavow her entirely as Mack was destined to do.

The difference between the two appears in their disagreement over baptism. Both shared the view that baptism was for adults. Beyond this point Hochmann would not go. He was content with pouring or sprinkling as the correct mode of Baptism. Mack favored trine immersion and vigorously tried to persuade his friend to assume a like position. Hochmann wrote,

"Such baptism (trine immersion) I would surely observe if God would awaken some of his witnesses in favor of it, and if such souls out of the grace of God also were willing to suffer and to risk all for the sake of it and yet remain faithful to Christ;

* This position is taken by Brumbaugh and Renfewitz.

for such things nowadays are followed by nothing but crosses and tribulations, as anti-christ will rage yet fiercely against the members of Christ, and hence one must well count the cost beforehand, if one wants to be able to follow willingly the Lord Jesus in all things. Without this true following of Christ the water-baptism, even if performed on adults after the example of the primitive Christians would avail little or nothing.*

Mack could not be satisfied with this view, nor with the position Hochmann maintained through the years of persecution. When he made up his mind to organize his new church, he declared for trine immersion, thus instituting an entirely new form of **Baptism**.

The particular factor in Hochmann's thinking which kept him from Mack's position is worthy of note. He felt that this unusual form of Baptism might possibly take a like place in the new church that questions of doctrine had assumed in the orthodox church. Brumbaugh says of him,

"He ... feared that an acknowledgement of them (Baptism and Lord's Supper) as necessary to a religious life would lead to the show and formalism he so much detested. Formal religion had so persecuted the pious old one that he even hesitated to re-establish apostolic methods."**

It seems clear that on this point Hochmann's thinking was more profound than Mack's. Hochmann had realized that the church of his day was inadequate. He lived its errors over again and again in his thoughts while in prison. He intended not to leap from one fire into another.

* Goebel's "Christliches Leben" Vol. III

** History of German Baptist Brethern - Brumbaugh, p. 74 - The phrase "reestablish apostolic methods" is an assumption on Brumbaugh's part which it would be hard to prove. We do not wish to accept it in the same way in which he has stated it here.

Seeing these issues less clearly, Mack plunged ahead. In a sense he actually made the mistake which Hochmann feared would be made. He put rites in the place of doctrine and they became the Shibboleths of the Dunker church. It was not that he had failed to recognize that real piety was the important phase of a living religion rather than formalism. Indeed, he instituted piety as a most vital part in his whole system. But he felt that the true Christian life was inseparably linked with certain "Rites and Ordinances" that came down from apostolic times and were the sine qua non of the true church. Hence he says,

"So we believe that if a person lives holy and irreproachably, his life being actuated through faith in Christ such faith will work obedience to baptism. It would not be nearly so severe a trial as that of Abraham's offering up his son. If, however, a person is still disposed to dispute with God, by saying 'what good can water do me?' his holy life and pretended piety is nothing but self righteousness, which he seeks to establish as did the Jews, of which St. Paul writes in Romans 10. And to such righteousness there is no salvation promised. Christ is the end of the law, and whoso believeth on Him is justified; and faith in Christ worketh obedience to His commandments."*

Hochmann would probably never have given in on this point. He felt it too strongly. Mack, however, was not to be restrained and during Hochmann's absence** from Schwarzenau, the Dunker church was instituted. On this issue the two friends parted - Mack to carve out his career in a foreign land; Hochmann to spend his last days in poverty and sorrow.

* Holsinger - p. 58.

** He was in Prison at Nuremberg.

Brumbaugh states that Hochmann in all probability gave in to Mack and was baptized by him, in view of the fact that Alexander Mack, Jr., lists Hochmann's name among those of the brethren whom he knew and who had died before him. Since the list was written long afterwards, it may be that Hochmann was listed merely as a "Brother." At all events, it is certain that Hochmann held little malice towards any of the members of the new fold. Goebel reveals that he "upheld the bond of brotherly love" with all of the Brethren. There is record of his having preached to a congregation at Switzerland while Mack was present. Mack resented Hochmann's remarks and arose impulsively to express his disapproval of them, calling Hochmann an "Irregeist." Hochmann held his peace during Mack's tirade. At the end of the service, he embraced Mack and remarked to him in jovial spirit, "When thou, dear Brother, sometime art in heaven and seest me arrive there also, then thou wilt feel glad and say, 'See! there cometh also our dear Brother Hochmann.' "*

This incident throws light upon the character of both men. It illustrates the kindly tolerance of Hochmann, whose long years in prison and whose sufferings had made him slow to criticize those who disagreed with him. On the other hand, the impulsive and intolerant Mack, whose struggle for liberty of conscience blinded him to the palpable fact that another's point of view might be equally valid and equally important with his own, was deeply in earnest about standing forth for

* The incident is recorded in Brumbaugh, page 74.

the whole truth as he saw it. The German Baptist Brethren (Dunkers) will probably always rejoice in Mack's stand, while the Orthodox church will regret that Hochmann's Pietism did not prevail over the tendency towards disunity.

A review of Mack's beliefs will disclose many of them as having been derived from Hochmann. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that Mack absorbed Hochmann's beliefs in toto. In the case of perfectionism and the final redemption of the damned he went far beyond his tutor. However, the creed of Hochmann forms the nucleus out of which Mack's beliefs were formulated and the spirit of Hochmann created the atmosphere whereby Mack was stimulated and guided in organizing his unique band of believers.

Concerning the influence of Spener, Francke, Arnold and Felbinger on Mack, little more is to be said. That he read the works of all of them is clearly indicated in his own writings and by the perpetuation of their names in the traditions of the early church. As for this, Abraham Cassel, the first unofficial historian of the Dunker church, continuously refers to the four, as "Pietistic Pathfinders."*

The cottage meetings of the Dunkers are definitely traceable to the Pietist tradition of Spener and Francke. Their influence is seen in the practical methods that Mack advocated. Likewise Arnold's influence upon Hochmann, Beissel and Mack, was potent indeed. Arnold was for Mack an authoritative historical source of early Christian tradition. Nearly all of Mack's

* See letters of Abraham Cassel in Library of Juniata College-Huntingdon, Pa.

distinctive beliefs are found in the writings of either Arnold or Felbinger.

The Anabaptist influence upon Mack is given last place, because in the beginning it was one of only minor significance. Mack arrived at his beliefs from other sources. Of course, he found some of them supported by the practices of Anabaptists from whom the Dunkers appropriated certain tenets.* That Mack felt that he was establishing another apostolic church, based upon the traditions and practices of the Pietist sect, cannot be controverted. The Dunkers have always turned back to the apostolic period as the period of their origin. Thus Robert Proud,** writing in the latter part of the 18th century says

"As to their origin they allow of no other, than that which was made by Jesus himself, when he was baptized by John in Jordan. They have a great esteem for the New Testament, valuing it higher than other books; and when they are asked about their articles of faith, they say they know of no others but what are contained in this book; and therefore can give none."

It is observed that Dunker references to the origin of the church, do not mention the Anabaptist influence at all*** even though it cannot be disregarded. There is too much sim-

* It must be taken into account that both Arnold and Felbinger were influenced by contacts with Anabaptists and defended their positions in their writings. But Mack received them this way second hand. In this way we are able to see how Menno Simons was the real influence behind this Anabaptist tradition which finally came to the Dunkers.

** History of Pennsylvania - by Robert Proud. Published by Zachariah Poulson, Jr., Philadelphia, Pa. 1798- Vol II, P. IV - P. 345. (The section quoted was written between 1776 and 1780).

*** This is true of Gillin, Holsinger, Brumbaugh and many other of their writers.

ilarity between the two groups to permit the inference that Mack arrived at each of his own conclusions independently. Many Anabaptist practices and beliefs undoubtedly influenced Alexander Mack in his earlier years. This is the more apparent when one recalls that the Mennonites, a branch of Anabaptist faith, antedated the Dunkers by over a century and a half.

These were the chief influences actuating Mack prior to establishing his new church. In one or other of them nearly all of his beliefs can be traced. It should be remembered that the group that finally evolved under the leadership of Mack was distinctive in many respects. Mack was ~~possessed of a genius~~ ^{not} for original thinking that may be disregarded. As Gillin has said,

"In the conflict of ideals, therefore, which presented themselves to Mack there arose in his mind the ideal of a Christian society that was different from that of the orthodox church, on the one hand, and on the other hand, from the ideal of the church as a mystical, unorganized fellowship based on the recognition of certain Pietistic teachings concerning conduct held by Hochmann and his friends. This ideal was that of a society based upon the New Testament interpreted in the light of the history of the primitive church, as its organic and statute law, with a definite organization."*

This in brief is Mack's original starting point. He took no creed other than the New Testament. The Dunker church has always been a non-credal church. His beliefs are developed in his volume "A Plain View of the Rites and Ordinances of the House of God" and in his answers to Grubers "Thirty Nine Questions", published in Schwarzenau in 1713. Some of his

* Gillin - p. 59.

doctrines were changed after his first volume was published but it reveals his chief tenets at the time the church was founded.

These two brief works which in the original and in almost every later edition have been published together comprise the most important source of materials for a basic understanding of the original Dunkers. Several German editions of the books were published following the original Schwarzenau edition. English editions began to appear early in the Nineteenth Century.* In 1867 the German and English texts were printed side by side in the "Brethren's Encyclopedia." The English text as given here is not the best translation, however. The best English translation is to found incorporated in Holsingers "History of the Tunkers" which was published in 1901.

The correct title of the book on the "Thirty Nine Questions" was as follows: "Eberhard Ludwig Grubers' Enquiries Proposed in the form of questions to the congregation of the New Baptists, Particularly to that of Wittgenstein with Plain Answers Adapted to their import, by One of Their Members." Most of these questions had to do with Baptisim and the views of Mack are here set forth in great detail.

The correct title of the second work is "A Short And

* E. G. - The edition of 1810 published by John Binn in Philadelphia. - This edition was started to be published in 1809. When about one fifth of the copy was printed, the press was "stopped by a friend." Fragments of this partial edition with a note by the English translator, Henry Slingluff, explaining why it was never finished are to be found in the library of Juniata College. This is a unique possession. (Library Catalogue Number-(093-PB 51809)

Plain View of the Outward, Yet Sacred Rights and Ordinances of the House of God, as commanded to be observed by the true Steward, Jesus Christ, and deposited in his last will and testament, arranged in a conversation between a Father and Son." Thus this work is also arranged as a series of questions and answers. The subjects dealt with in the order listed are:- Baptism, the Lord's Supper, excommunication, Variance, taking oaths, self examination, love faith, the external and internal word, of things strangled and of blood, matrimony, adultery, excommunication (as it is related to marriage), outward worship, excuses of unbelievers, reward of the faithful, everlasting torment.*

In the early history of the church these writings of Macks' served as guide posts in the determination of proper standards of belief and practice within the Dunker Communion. The first leaders of the church were familiar with them. They were never accepted as credal statements, however, since the Dunkers have always been reluctant to accept any written work in the capacity of creed.** With the decline in scholarship within the ranks of the church, a great many of the earlier writings of the sect, Mack's included, fell into disuse and were not so familiar to the people. Nevertheless Macks' ideas still penetrated the rank and file of the movement with much force.

* The terms used here are Mack's own.

** See Chapter VI for discussion of this point.

Among the modern leaders of the Dunker Church Mack's books do not exert a particularly strong influence. This is evidenced in the fact that no good and accepted modern edition of them has been published. The most recent and best translation of the books, referred to above,* is the work of Holsinger who split away from the Mother Church. In the "Bicentennial Addresses of the Church of the Brethren" which were published in 1908, Mack's books are not even mentioned. Similarly very few references to them are to be found anywhere in modern literature.

The reason for this is probably to be found in the fact that the modern Dunker church has grown away from its simple beginnings. Mack's Works are relegated to the realm of the obsolete, and while there is still an adherence to some of the fundamental principles of these writings, in many instances there is a wide departure. The sect today has witnessed a gradual conformity to the practices and beliefs of the major Protestant denominations in America and with this evolution interest in the writings and genius of the founder of the sect has been on the decline.

According to the confession of Hochmann, he was himself in full accord with the main doctrines of the Christian church. He affirms this in the first point of the confession.** The

* H. R. Holsinger - "History of the Junkers" - Holsinger was regarded as a separatist by the main branch of the church and hence it is strange that his edition of Mack's Works which is the only edition readily available should be allowed to stand in this position.

** See Chapter II. p. 64.

same may also be said of Alexander Mack, who never strayed very far from orthodox teaching, although he added certain distinctive teachings of his own derived from the New Testament and the apostolic age. His Christology was scarcely heterodox except as the Christology of any of the early Baptists was heterodox in making Christ's sacrifice contingent somewhat upon water Baptism. In the main, the only fault Mack found with contemporary theology was that it did not go far enough in interpreting the true church and the sacraments.

The content of Mack's teaching as presented in his two books discussed above is given in summary form below.

BAPTISM

The first article in Mack's faith has to do with Baptism. He has written more at length on this subject than on any other. This is explained by the fact that he encountered much more criticism of his doctrine of baptism than of any other. The majority of the questions put to him by the orthodox Minister Gruber, to which he replied in his "Thirty Nine Questions" related to Baptism.

Mack believed in trine immersion by dipping forward. He held that it was for believers only, thereby excluding infants. His own sons were baptized in their seventeenth year, the age at which Mack apparently felt admission to full communion in the church should be granted. He refers frequently to Scripture and the writings of church historians and theologians, in support of his position.

Mack believed that Baptism was the express command of God and was not to be disregarded. Jesus set the example for all believers and his will is quite clear. Mack said that:

"The Son of God was so well acquainted with the will of His Father that He said to John, 'Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.' It was the intention of Christ to order and institute a water bath for His church to answer as an initiating seal, and an external mark, for all those who should believe in Him. He in the first place fulfilled His Father's will. The baptism of John was commanded by God, and thus made a beginning of baptism. This was not necessary for repentance, but alone for such who had already repented and believed in Jesus, and upon this faith and confession were baptized 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,' The moment the Lord Jesus was baptized and arose from the water, a voice was heard from Heaven, which said, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,' and the Holy Ghost, like a dove alighted upon Him. Thus has the beginning of baptism by water in the New Testament a very powerful author, namely, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, in whose three most exalted names Jesus commanded baptism to be administered."*

Having dealt with the command concerning baptism Mack addresses himself to the question of who are to be baptized. He answers,

"Christ commanded to baptize faithful believers only and not children. Jesus laid His hands upon children and blessed them; but with regard to the subject of baptism of infants the Scriptures are silent.** Children are saved through the merits of Jesus Christ."

When he was reminded that the early Christians baptized children, Mack cites Gottfried Arnold that this was not true until the end of the second century. He says,

* Mack - "A Plain view of the Rites and Ordinances of the House of God" printed in Holsinger's "History of the Dunkers" - page 75.

** Ibid, p. 76

"In the beginning this (infant baptism) was done at pleasure by every one who was disposed to do so. It was afterwards performed only on Easter days. And it was enacted into law by a certain pope, that no child should be suffered to die without baptism and by a long established custom it got into such reputation that many now believe it to have been commanded by Christ Himself."*

In Mack's view Baptism was the rite which accompanied a man's true confession of the Lord Jesus. If a person really believed in Jesus he could not refuse Baptism because it was the command of God and those who love God keep his commands (John 14: 23,24). It is not the water which saves but the power of the word.

"The faithful believe that the obedience towards the commandment of baptism purifies and saves them from everlasting punishment, provided that after this ablution they do not again wallow in the mire by transgressing and sinning against the word; for God looks upon obedience as binding the faithful to follow the word by which alone they obtain everlasting life."**

Again,

"A person is not saved because of faith in Christ through whom everlasting life is promised. Why should a believer not be willing to obey Him on whom he believes? Since it is the will of Christ that believers should be baptized, it should also be the will of him who believes; and if that be his will and desire to do the will of Christ, then he is saved, even if he should not be able to receive baptism on account of unavoidable circumstances."***

Here appears Mack's chief quarrel with Lutheran and Calvinist theology. He could not bring himself to accept

* Ibid, p. 77.

** Ibid, p. 77.

*** Answer to Gruber's 12th question.

the full doctrine of Justification by Faith. He reiterated his belief that "faith without works is dead." This is easily explained as one reflects upon Mack's experience with the orthodox church. He must have heard over and over again in the pulpits of the land that "Man is justified by faith alone." This could not be reconciled with the emptiness of the religious lives of so many believers. Hence he was driven to the opposite position. He was never a deep theological thinker, but he reasoned rather clearly and was above all else an empiricist. One must understand this to explain his place in the thinking of his time.

Mack's rejection of infant Baptism is explained on the same ground. He reasoned that much falsity in contemporary Christian living resulted from the ineffectual Baptism of the orthodox church. He found Scriptural and historical backing for assuming that their error was due in part to this.

Explanation of Mack's insistence upon his peculiar mode of Baptism, is rather difficult. He based immersion chiefly on Jeremias Felbinger's translation. He says,

"Baptism, according to the Greek text is said to signify immersion, as translated by Jeremias Felbinger. But since sprinkling became a custom and the learned for the sake of delicacy were afraid of the effects of water, they allowed the Greek word also to signify sprinkling, pouring or aspersion. Still they confess its true significance to be immersion."*

Dipping or "dunking" forward is not so easy. He did not get it from the Anabaptists since their mode of Baptism was entirely different.** Nor is there any record that Hochmann

* Holsinger, p. 81, From the reproduction of Mack's book.

** They generally used a backward action with single immersion.

advocated any new method of Baptism aside from adult Baptism. As for Mack himself, he mentions trine immersion but once. He refers to Tertullian's* description of a Baptism, yet he would not have inferred from the writings of Tertullian that a new form of Baptism was being fostered. It appears therefore that Mack derived his interpretation from Scripture and from incidents concerning trine immersion mentioned in Arnold's church history.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Mack appropriated Hochmann's ideas of the Lord's Supper. He believed in a "closed communion" in which "no others (were) to be admitted to the Lord's Supper but such as are the true followers of Jesus, who keep his commandments, and bear His cross." He followed the observance in keeping literally with Scripture. He advocated the celebration of the sacrament as a supper and not as a breakfast or dinner, and added the washing of feet as a necessary injunction of the Lord prior to partaking of the sacrament. He writes,

"Where they (early Christians) were breaking the bread of the communion, and drinking the cup, they spoke of the sufferings of Christ, praised His great love towards them, and exhorted each other to be firm in their sufferings, to follow and be faithful to their Lord and Master in all His commandments, strongly to resist all sin, fervently to love each

* Holsinger, P. 82 - (Tertullian gives here a description of a Baptism where the "Baptized are plunged under water three times.")

other and live together in peace and unity; and this alone can be called the Lord's Supper."*

Mack was quite intolerant regarding the sacrament. He held that unless it was practiced in the prescribed manner, it was not the Lord's Supper at all, but "a substitute dictated and confirmed by the false doctrine of the learned."

CONCERNING EXCOMMUNICATION

In view of Mack's intolerance of the beliefs of others, it is natural that excommunication should have found a place in his system. He believed that there must be a definite separation between the Christian believer and the sinner, and that when sinners became too closely involved with believers they must be weeded out. The presence in the orthodox church of the insincere Christian whose life made the Christian religion a mockery, prompted Mack to sever relations with his own earlier church. In common with Spener and Francke, he could not tolerate such a condition. Hence, he made provision for such persons to be excluded from the fellowship of the Dunkers.

"Persons ⁶quilty of even one work of the flesh (as Paul writes Gal. 5:3), and refusing repentance after suitable admonition, are not only to be excluded from the Lord's Supper, but from the Kingdom of God, and consequently from the church of the Lord, for as they are excluded from the Kingdom of God by their sins, they cannot expect to belong to the Church of God!"**

* Ibid - p. 84

** Ibid - p. 85.

And again,

"The children of God have learned of their heavenly Father, to distinguish between, and separate the clean and unclean, light and darkness, His people and the Brethren."*

In support of this view, Mack carefully marshalls to his cause every obtainable Scriptural reference in both the Old and New Testament. His final argument on the subject sounds forth as a trumpet blast. It reads,

"So now let us observe how this (excommunication or severing of the wicked from the just) must in a spiritual manner be attended to by the Church of God, in the New Testament, so that the church may not be prevailed upon by the gates of hell, that is by sinful actions. Every member of the Lord's body knows that he is 'buried with Him by baptism into death' (Rom. 6:4), and 'should walk in newness of life.' He is called upon at his baptism to renounce all sin, the devil, and his own corrupt will, and to follow the Lord Jesus until death, and in His commandments. The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like Gal. 5:19-21. To all such the kingdom of God is utterly denied by the Holy Ghost, that is, if any one of these evil practices rules or reigns over them. Thus, if in the Lord's body a member be guilty of such, and the church have knowledge of it, he must be excommunicated, according to I Cor. 5:13, until he shall be purified by true repentance, that the whole body thereby may not become unclean."**

In the light of this interpretation, it was consistent with Mack's beliefs, that eventually his people should have separated themselves from the world, both in thought and in their manner of dress.

* Ibid - p. 86

** Ibid - p. 89

Mack carried his principles a step further than Spener, who although tempted to forsake the world and establish Christian communities apart from it, did not yield. On the other hand, Mack did follow the extremists of the later Pietism.

The influence of Menno Simons is manifest at this point. - Mack is attracted by the lack of distinction between the church visible and invisible which was a view adhered to by Mennonites. The precedent for the establishment of the ban is with the Mennonites and not with the Pietists. But here is seen clearly the fusion of the ideas of both groups. In Mack's mind the Mennonite plan of excommunication was the logical end to which the Pietist position led. The Pietists aroused his conscience and the Mennonites had a feasible system which he was led to adopt.

In pursuing Mack's views with regard to excommunication, a step further, the question naturally arises, was he a perfectionist? In the fourth point of his confession, Hochmann leaves no doubt of his perfectionism. But Mack does not commit himself so definitely as Hochmann. He deals at some length with the problem of "who is qualified to conduct the excommunication," developing the thought that by virtue of their call, and their willingness to follow the Lord, the faithful of the congregation are called upon to take active part in excommunicating and withdrawing from their most beloved brethren for transgression. Yet he allows for the sins of those who are the faithful saying "Faithful members may err and sin through weakness, but they never do so intentionally, and are very

sorry for the act."*

He assumes that there shall be many faults on the part of the righteous whose duty it is to correct each other and to repent when found in a fault. He remarks that the true Christian is easy to reprove and quick to repent. He continues,

"Such pardoned believers are in daily warfare against sin; and between them and the serpent there is a continual enmity. They feel its bruises but its dominion is destroyed. Therefore, the faithful, as long as they live in the state of humility, are called the church militant; but they shall overcome 'by the blood of the Lamb.' " (Rev. 12:11)**

One cannot describe this as perfectionism, at least not of the bold assertive type voiced by Hochmann. It may indeed be argued that perfectionism is to be implied from Mack's theology, but it can not be shown clearly that he accepted it in toto. There is something stimulating about Mack's attitude towards excommunication. He appears as an honest man struggling to right a great wrong and achieve righteousness in an evil world; yet making allowances for some fault in those who would judge others, and advocating genuine humility always. Mack and his followers were humble in all of their dealings. When they were harsh, their severity grew out of their righteous indignation and their zeal that the Kingdom should be set in order.

In his zeal, Mack was often quite critical of others. Yet he savored not of the nature of the self-righteous Pharisee, but rather of the stern but kindly prophet seeking to win his adversaries over to his own viewpoint. At the same time he does not disguise his conviction that his adversaries are in error

* Ibid - p. 91.

** Ibid - p. 92-3.

and must pay the penalty in course of time. His book "A Plain View of the Rites and Ordinances of the Church of God," is in assense, an evangelical treatise. It was written in part to win Pietists to the Dunker faith and in part to explain that faith. Many of the Pietists who had settled in Schwarzenau were undecided as to their future course. Having separated from the orthodox church they were now without any church ties. Mack declared that in such a position they were beyond the pale: that the "liberty" of these individuals is a "false" liberty not to be indulged in by the true Christian.

He rebukes them for living in a condition where there is "no true union between Christ and His church." He compares them with those who live unmarried and yet criticize family life. He warns them against the pursuit of false gods and against their false freedom. He says of them,

"They want unlimited freedom of mind and spirit, and such, indeed, they do possess for they are out of the Church of God, out of His kingdom, where there is no restraint. But in the Church of God there is order, for God is a God of order, peace, and love. All have one mind and one will, and that is the will of God. The angels of heaven are governed by the will of God, and when they entertained any other will they were speedily 'cast down to hell, and delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.' "*"

SCRIPTURE AND INSPIRATION

Mack's view of Holy Scripture is entirely consistent. Scripture is the Word of God to man, and is given to be

* Ibid, p.

obeyed in every detail. The New Testament was Mack's creed. He would confess no other. The Holy Spirit working in the hearts and lives of men will direct believers in the same paths as those traversed by Peter and James and John, as portrayed in Scripture. Unless a man's life is lived in accordance with the teachings of the Word, his life is a lie.

This attitude towards Scripture, instilled in Mack partly by his Calvinist training, saved him from mysticism. He did not claim any special revelations for himself and was always skeptical of such claims by others. Every experience and every idea had to be corroborated by Scriptural teaching. Otherwise it was not of the Spirit. No small part of Mack's success as a leader, was due to the tenacity with which he clung to ^{the} Word of God as the basis of truth.

In the midst of a weird congeries of religious Nomads, he was successful in molding a faithful group which even though beset by fanatics and persecutors, nevertheless overcame their adversaries and in the end became a true church. It is extremely doubtful that this could have come to pass had it not been that Mack laid the foundation of consistent Scriptural adherence for his followers. Although he erred in details, his was the error of misinterpretation, not of fanaticism. Not always was it easy for him to keep his feet on solid ground when beset by many divergent forms of teaching and by more or less crotchety personalities such as Arnold, Dippel, Hochmann, Koch and Beissel. In this connection Mack writes,

"This (religious confusion) I have experienced in many, who said they were a free people under no compul-

sion to obey the letter of the New Testament, because the law of God was written in their hearts. But I have seen such, where of not two were of one mind. For as many as possessed this high disposition so many different opinions had they among them. To me, indeed, this appeared to be a very curious spirit, writing so many different laws in the different hearts of men. Even in the days of the prophet Jeremiah, God complained that the Israelites were corrupted by false prophets, forsook His laws and altars. (Jer. 11:13). The same is the case with people in our times, who boast of great liberty without obeying the Scripture, the divine counsels and commandments."*

In statements such as this, one observes that Mack was a worthy leader having a truly devout spirit. Thereby he freed himself from influences which otherwise would have destroyed him and his movement. His spirituality was a saving grace that enabled him to recognize that

"Both true and false laws may be written in the hearts of men, the false by the spirit of error, in the hearts of the unbelieving; and the true by the Holy Spirit of truth, in the children of the new covenant, or the true believers, perfectly corresponding with what Christ and His apostles commanded and recorded in the Scriptures."**

With regard to the value of Scripture reading for guidance, Mack held that the good to be derived, was contingent upon the faith of the believer; that the message might be lost and false doctrines inferred if true faith were not exercised.

"Thus, a believer whose internal ears are opened, if he read the Holy Scriptures, hears what Jesus enjoins in His doctrine.....and by his internal hearing is excited to true obedience externally.....But where faith is wanting it is an easy matter for a man to

* Ibid - p. 105

** Ibid - p. 105.

hear and read the base word, and say, 'It is a dead letter which I cannot obey, because I am not internally convinced of what is externally written.'*

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Mack's writings are more concerned with establishing his position than with exhortations about the Christian life, although he incorporates many of his beliefs regarding the ideal Christian life. He advocated separation from all worldliness and a constant alertness in keeping undesirables without the fold. It is true that in many idealistic movements, asceticism has ultimately gained the upper hand.** The desire to be separated from worldliness leads eventually to giving up the desires of the flesh as an objective in one's habits of life. This error soon crept into the Dunker church and in combination with mysticism became the chief threat to the unity of the body. Mack kept himself free from entanglement in this regard altho he might easily have succumbed to the influence of Hochmann who held that marriage was a less holy state than celibacy.*** Traces of this influence appear in Mack's writings:

"For if a single state be conducted in the purity of the Spirit, and flesh, in the true faith of Jesus, and kept in true humility, it may be considered as an higher grade of perfection, and a nearer resemblance of the image of Jesus."****

He declares however, that marriage is the natural state for men to abide in and draws an analogy between marriage and

* Ibid - pps. 103-4

** See the rise of asceticism in Roman Catholic Church.

*** Hochmann defined five different kinds of marriage - See Gillin "The Dunkers, pps. 38-9.

**** Holsinger - p. 107.

Christ's relation to His church. This was undoubtedly his position and it is to be assumed that he regretted having left open any door for asceticism to enter the church and cause conflict, as in the early history of the Dunkers.

ESCHATOLOGY

The eschatology of Mack is extremely simple and yet it maintains a significant relationship to his whole theology. He does not despair of the Kingdom in this world, but he omits any elaborate chiliastic conceptions portending the end of an age and making it effective. The structure of his theology is built upon developing a church here which shall be like the Kingdom of God. The life of Glory is not necessarily to be postponed altogether for the next world. It can be realized here in part, but the riches and glories of the future life in Christ are "of such magnitude as to be inexpressible by any human tongue." The reward of the faithful is mentioned almost entirely in Biblical language. His word pictures are simple to the point of childishness, but he is not fanciful as were some of his contemporaries.

"They (the faithful) will shout, and sing, and rejoice, and the Lamb will lead them unto living fountains of water, and feed them with fruit of immortality. It will heighten their joy still more when they shall behold Jesus in His great glory and majesty, with millions of His saints and angels surrounding His throne, and with loud voice and great joy they shall sing everlasting hallelujah until heaven and earth will echo the song of the redeemed unto the Lamb that was slain, ascribing, 'blessing, and honor, and glory, and power,' forever and forever."*

* Ibid - p. 103.

Mack describes (at length) ^{IN GREATER DETAIL} the everlasting torment of the wicked (rather) than the scenes of glory for the faithful. He was moved more to dissuade the sinner than to lure the righteous with visions of great reward. In keeping with the plane of thought upon which Mack moved, his conception of Heaven and Hell seems to be for the most part of physical significance. He employs every New Testament figure of speech he can find and pictures vividly the physical torment of the damned. He is fearful lest his careless friends may be carried away by false visions and he zealously warns them of the fate of all unbelievers. Nor does he allow them to find comfort in Hochmann's doctrine of the restoration of the damned, which Mack accepts with grave reservations.

"But that it (the punishment) is to be without any termination the Word does not teach, which, however, is no consolation to the believer, and not worthy of much inquiry or investigation, for the wicked will have lost so much of the heavenly enjoyment that even if there should be a final termination of their punishment, after a long eternity they could never enjoy that which the faithful will inherit through obedience to Christ."*

Again,

"The gospel which teaches how to escape the wrath of God, is much safer and better than the gospel which teaches that external punishment will finally cease, which though a truth, is however not at all the proper gospel to be preached to the ungodly."**

That Mack gives comparatively little place to eschatology is significant. Many oppressed peoples have given almost their entire thought to apocalyptic visions which act as a balm for the hurt of earthly sufferings. The ever-practical Mack, how-

* Ibid - p. 114.

** Ibid - p. 115.

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* Ibid - p. 114.

** Ibid - p. 115.

ever, is far less a visionary dreamer than a man of action. He sets out to realize God's kingdom in this world so far as possible. He is not to be thought of as throwing the bait of unreal dreams before his people as did Beissel. Always is he more a king than a prophet or priest. He stood on firm ground.

MACK'S LATER TRAVELS AND CAREER

Soon after the baptisms took place in 1708, the Dunker church made rapid progress. Many people gathered at Schwarzenau, who could readily have continued with the orthodox churches, were willing to follow Mack because of his earnestness and his pious demeanor, and because the Dunkers represented a living church. Many were not willing to remain merely liberal Pietists, but like Mack felt that for real Christians, a church organization and an assemblage of the adherents, were essentials.

Mack as leader of the group, became the pastor and guiding spirit of the congregation. Soon branches of the congregation sprang up in nearby sections and eventually an independent group was organized at Crefeld.

Persecution forced the congregations to flee to other regions in Europe and then to America. Mack deferred coming to the western continent until 1729, many of his people having preceded him. When he arrived he found the work established in some measure. He settled with his family at Germantown in Pennsylvania. With Peter Becker, he served the congregation

there faithfully until his death in 1735.

Although his ministry in America was brief, it was very helpful to the whole church. He aided the brethren in keeping their balance against threats of disunion and discord on account of the Ephrata incident. Mack fought against the Ephrata movement to the full extent of his influence, even though he was to be disappointed in the outcome of the contest. Nevertheless he used every effort to hold the church true to its original ideals. He lived a valiant and courageous life, having (partially) witnessed his work come to PARTIAL fruition on two continents.

This, then, is the picture of the man whose life and teachings are the key to an understanding of the Dunker church. He was not patterned at all after Joseph Smith, Mary Baker, G. Eddy or Jan Mathys. He was above all a humble, sincere and practical seeker after the truth, who has always commanded the respect and admiration of his critics. His major influence consists in the fact that he gave orthodox Christianity a greatly needed spiritual impetus in a day characterized by despair and the lack of practically all concern for pious Christian living. His parting exhortation to the men and women of this day, interprets his ruling motive:

"....let this be your greatest concern; that all your desires, and your highest aspirations, and your sighs and groanings, may be that you may be enabled to love the Lord God, who made you, and Jesus Christ, who redeemed you with His own precious blood, with

all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, over everything in the world, whether it be beauty or wealth or whatsoever you may see or hear or think of. And in this love to fear and serve God in childlike simplicity of heart, meditate upon His commandments day and night, and keep them with a pure heart."*

OTHER LEADERS IN GERMANY

The historical career of the Dunkers on the continent of Europe was very brief. The twenty odd years of its existence in Germany and Holland limited the development of its leadership on the continent. Certain of these persons gradually began to take their places along with Mack in guiding the destinies of the young church. Many were destined to adhere to the mystical wing of the church. Others laid hold of Mack's essential genius and became thoroughly imbued with the ideals he proclaimed.

Information concerning many of these early leaders is indeed meager, because the young church kept no records. In studying the lives of the earliest leaders of the Dunker sect, this lack is a genuine handicap which cannot be fully overcome.

JOHN NAAS

Next in order with Alexander Mack, the name of John Naas takes a place of importance. He accepted leadership as elder of the second largest congregation established at Marienborn. After this church was severely persecuted, he migrated to

* Ibid - p. 116.

Crefeld.

Naas was born in Westphalia at Norten about 1670. He was twice married. His first wife died in Germany. They had one child, a daughter, who was married to a member of the church at Crefeld. The second wife accompanied him to America in 1733. Their daughter Elizabeth came with them, their son Jacob Wilhelm remaining in Germany until 1735.

Of the early life of Naas little is known. He identified himself with the group at Marienborn soon after its inception and was ordained elder or bishop when the group moved to Crefeld. Here he was recognized as a staunch leader and a great preacher. He soon won the hearts of his people and is referred to as "the incomparable teacher."*

Naas was a man of stately bearing. He stood head and shoulders above most of his fellows and carried himself with grace and ease. So outstanding a figure was he that he ^{was} accosted one day by a recruiting officer of the King of Prussia** who demanded that he serve as one of the King's own body guards. Naas remonstrated, but the officer insisted that he enlist. Upon indicating a staunch refusal, he was tortured unmercifully by being suspended for some time by a cord attached to his great toe and thumb. However, nothing would induce him to give in. Finally, the officers, fearful lest they should kill him, dragged him into the presence of the king. They told the king of their efforts to enlist Naas and of his stub-

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 247.

** Crefeld was then under the control of the King of Prussia.

born refusal even under torture. The king eyed Naas with careful scrutiny and then said, "Why, yes! We would much like to have him. Tell me why you refuse to enlist."

"Because, I cannot," answered Naas, "as I have long ago enlisted in the noblest and best army; and I cannot become a traitor to my King."

"And who is your Captain?" asked the king.

"My Captain," answered he, "is the great Prince Immanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ! I have espoused his cause and cannot and will not forsake him."

"Neither will I then ask you to do so," answered the noble ruler who handed him a gold doin as a reward for his fidelity and released him.*

An interesting story is told of a baptism Naas performed, which gives an insight into his character. He was on a preaching tour along the Rhine. Arriving at a little village near Mannheim, he there preached so forcefully that a woman who heard him, who had been an invalid for some time, decided she should be baptized. Her friends strongly urged her not to pursue so foolish a course, thinking she might die in the hands of the baptizer. Naas however, asked her if she had faith that this work might yet be performed on her sick body. When she replied that she had, he said, "I also believe it, so let it be undertaken with thee.** Whereupon her friends

* This incident is given in Brumbaugh - History of the Brethren, p. 104 ff.

** The incident is recorded in an "Apology" written Alexander Mack, Jr. and published in 1788.

helped her to the Rhine altho she suffered greatly. Naas baptized her using the trine immersion and followed this with the laying on of hands. The story is that she was healed and in a spirit of great rejoicing returned to her home with the others, where she ministered unto them.

The leadership of Naas was well received at Crefeld but he soon was defeated by an unfortunate circumstance ^{through} in which he and Christian Libe, who ministered with him, became alienated* and the congregation disrupted. After this break occurred, Naas betook himself to Switzerland where for several years he continued in comparative retirement.

He is next heard of in 1733 when Alexander Mack wrote urging him to come to America. Mack had always held Naas in high esteem and also had great confidence in his ability as a leader and in his sound common sense. He insisted that Naas should forget the deplorable schism at Crefeld and take up life anew among his friends in America, where much work was to be done and where there was great need of leaders.

Naas accepted this call. With his wife and daughter he sailed from Rotterdam aboard the "Pennsylvania Merchant" and arrived at Philadelphia in September 1733. Naas describes this most interesting and unique voyage in a letter which has recently come to light.**

On landing in Philadelphia, the Naas family were met by many of their former friends and acquaintances including Alexander Mack. There was great rejoicing over this reunion

* See Chapter IV. pps. 125 FF.

** By Dr. Oswald Seidensticker of University of Pennsylvania- See Chapter IV - A part of this letter appears in the succeeding chapter.

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The leadership of Naas was well received at Crefeld but he soon was defeated by an unfortunate circumstance ^{through} in which he and Christian Libe, who ministered with him, became alienated* and the congregation disrupted. After this break occurred, Naas betook himself to Switzerland where for several years he continued in comparative retirement.

He is next heard of in 1733 when Alexander Mack wrote urging him to come to America. Mack had always held Naas in high esteem and also had great confidence in his ability as a leader and in his sound common sense. He insisted that Naas should forget the deplorable schism at Crefeld and take up life anew among his friends in America, where much work was to be done and where there was great need of leaders.

Naas accepted this call. With his wife and daughter he sailed from Rotterdam aboard the "Pennsylvania Merchant" and arrived at Philadelphia in September 1733. Naas describes this most interesting and unique voyage in a letter which has recently come to light.**

On landing in Philadelphia, the Naas family were met by many of their former friends and acquaintances including Alexander Mack. There was great rejoicing over this reunion

* See Chapter IV. pps. 125 FF.

** By Dr. Oswald Seidensticker of University of Pennsylvania- See Chapter IV - A part of this letter appears in the succeeding chapter.

and Naas discovered that the Crefeld incident had been forgotten. Naas set out with four families for Amwell, New Jersey and located there, serving the Amwell church as elder until his death, May 12, 1741. The congregation grew under his wise leadership.

It is recorded that Naas visited the Ephrata settlement shortly after he came to America, probably to bring about a reconciliation of the two groups. This attempt was fruitless as all others were. Naas and his associates were kindly received and the reference to Naas is in these words: "among the visitors (from Germantown) was an old and venerable preacher, who had but recently come from Germany; his name was Naas."*

Naas was deeply impressed with what he saw at Ephrata, as indeed were most of the Dunkers. He was attracted by the quiet simplicity of their life. Apparently he met Beissel not long after this visit,** regarded him highly altho there is no record that he accepted any of Beissel's teachings. That there was an intimate relationship between the two seems to be confirmed by a letter Beissel wrote concerning Mrs. Naas after her husband's death. In writing to a friend at Amwell he says, "Should I not also remember the beloved aged Sister Naas, who is still written in my holy book of remembrance? Oh! how glad I would be could I once more behold her face."***

* Chronicon Ephratense - pps. 91-92.

** Beissel was not present when he visited Ephrata.

*** This quotation is from a manuscript Letter book of Conrad Beissel - pps. 67-68. It is in the library at Juniata College.

The folk from Ephrata visited Naas at Amwell along with other small congregations. George Adam Martin gives us the record of one such visit and says of Naas, "I was much edified by his conversation, and pleased and surprised at his great sound mind, and the gifts which God had bestowed upon him.*

Naas was one of the earlier Dunker hymn writers, even though he wrote only a few. Two hymns of better character are found in Samuel Saur's publication "The Little Harp" - published in 1795. In some degree they interpret his religious ideas. In one he derides the sins of men's thoughts and heralds their approaching doom in "eternal hell-fire." After painting a picture of the damned, he portrays the virtues which will assure God's pleasure. Among these are humility, true love and self control. God's favor also falls upon those who suffer poverty and who are unable to avoid persecution as the elect. Salvation by works, as found in Mack's teachings, is again voiced in Naas' words,

"Dost thou wish to be saved? Then live rightly on the earth; keep thyself in the small company; then after this short life, God will give thee an eternal one, - will take thee up into His Kingdom."

In the second hymn Naas exalts meekness and humility as taught by Christ, and adores the one true Saviour. It is given here in part:-

"Saviour of my soul
Grant that I may choose Thee and Thy cross
In this life,
That I may surrender myself wholly to Thee.
Grant that I choose this,
Saviour of my Soul.

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 249.

Then is my soul led to the light;
Thy whole blessed life went through many tribulations,
Through the way of sorrows;
Through this shall I also come
To the true light.

Reach me Thy hand
I am not able to follow Thee rightly, oh Jesus,
Without the balm of Thy soul,
Therefore reach Thy hand
To him who cannot stand.

Alas, I am ashamed of myself
When I consider Thee, how Thou hast suffered for me,
And hast overcome the world
The devil, and death
I am ashamed when I consider Thee.

Because I am often indifferent
As a wild animal in the forest, I run in the
 throngs of the world.
I have not turned my course towards Heaven.
This makes me afraid
As often as I think there on.

Oh Jesus, call out of their strange bondage
Many souls which honor Thee.
Oh Lord, if Thou wouldst convert them,
That they may yet
Come out of their strange bondage.

Oh Lord, Thou alone has the power.
Vindicate Thy Glory.
Dearest King, Jesus Christ,
It has, indeed, cost Thee thy blood.
Alas! Therefore vindicate thy honor!
Oh Lord, Thou alone has the power."*

* This hymn with one other, (a fragment of which is quoted on page 108) - was published in The Little Harp second edition, at Baltimore by Samuel Saur in 1797. Copy in Juniata College Library, Huntingdon, Pa.

In this strange hymn can be seen the fervent religious spirit of the man who like Alexander Mack, served his church on two continents. One feels that essential motive of Mack, which unlike Beissel, elevated humility to its rightful place among the Christian virtues.

Perhaps the key to an understanding of Naas' attitude towards Ephrata is in the last stanza but one, where prayer is offered for "many souls which honor Thee" but which are in a "strange bondage." This cannot refer merely to worldly men for he deals with them in different fashion in his first hymn.* Nor can the term "which honor Thee" apply to unbelievers. Surely this refers to the colony at Ephrata, - whose lives had attracted Naas, but who seemed bound by some unnatural force, to something other than true worship of Christ.

Naas represented the more stable element in the Dunker sect. The real church was to flourish in the tradition of the spiritual children of Mack and himself rather than those of Beissel. How nearly the entire movement came to joining hands with the Ephrata mystic, the early history of the church in America will disclose.

CHRISTIAN LIBE

Christian Libe, who shared with John Naas the eldership of the Crefeld congregation was a greatly talented preacher and leader. His fame as an evangelist was known throughout

* Stanze 10 of this hymn reads:

Those who possess these strange goods (Worldly possessions)
Shall suffer grievously on account of them Eternally
in hell fire
Although many know this,
And their wicked consciences condemn them,
Yet they do not leave off from them.

the Rhine district. This reputation motivated a group of American Dunkers to gather at Germantown to hear him preach and culminated in founding the first Dunker church in America.* Libe's zeal and gifts were used without discretion and his leadership of the church in Germany brought only trouble.

Libe was originally a member of the Reformed church at Epstein.** He united early with the Dunkers who quickly recognized his talent as a preacher. He was called to be an elder in the Marienborn district where Abraham Duboy was his assistant. When the majority of the members of this congregation were forced to flee to Crefeld, Libe became an itinerant evangelist ministering to the persecuted in Germany and Switzerland. He became widely known along the Rhine and elsewhere.

His journeys finally took him to Basle, Switzerland where he made bold to preach the Gospel. He was arrested and commanded to renounce his doctrines. Refusing to do this, he was forced to become a galley slave, and served for **two** years. On being ransomed, he came to Crefeld. He was doubtless looked upon as one who had won the Lord's favor through great persecution. He became an elder with John Naas and together they tried to give directions to the heterogeneous group assembled at Crefeld.

Libe was not the type who could understand the ideas of other men and see the validity of their point of view. He

* See Chapter V.

** This statement cannot definitely be proved, but it is in all likelihood true. Epstein was a Reformed church center and Libe, if not a member would undoubtedly have been under its influence early in life.

was bigoted and intolerant. He rejected the counsel of Naas and took action wherever a question seemed to him to be urgent. The Hacker case* provided the cause of a final breach^a between the two. Naas counseled tolerance, but Libe, with four others, excommunicated this young man. After Libe had managed to win the support of the congregation Naas took his leave. When it became apparent that Libe was not the leader the church people had supposed, they evidently were very regretful. Libe's zeal in the work languished, and the congregation faced with new persecutions and migrations, rapidly faded out.

Libe gave up the work to become a wine merchant and then married outside the congregation. It was this "sin" for which poor Hacker, who later died of remorse, had been excommunicated. Thus the career of the most eloquent preacher of the early Dunker church, came to a disastrous end.

ABRAHAM DUBOY

Abraham Duboy, Libe's assistant in the Marienborn district, came with Libe from Epstein. He was born in 1679 and was reared in the Reformed faith. He joined the Marienborn church in 1712 and because of his ability, was soon advanced to the ministry. When the persecution broke out in 1715 he came to Schwarzenau as assistant to Alexander Mack.

* See Chapter IV.

Being greatly attracted to Mack he proposed to accompany him to America but was prevented in doing so for three years. He arrived in Oct. 17, 1732.* After living for awhile in Montgomery county, Pennsylvania, he was called to the Great Swamp congregation in Bucks county in 1738. He was an elder here for ten years. He died March 21, 1748.

Duboy was a bachelor. He was very earnest in his work and like many others of his colleagues, was given to experiencing visions and premonitions. A most remarkable example is the vision he had of his own death. On the day he died he informed the family in the morning that the day of his departure had come. He dressed himself in the shroud he had prepared for his burial and requested the family to join with him in singing a hymn.** After the hymn, he offered prayer, then reclining on a couch, he passed away.

In addition to the foregoing persons, many others had a part in the early activities of the Dunker church in Germany. Among them was John Jacob Price who traveled with Naas as a missionary and who came to America with Peter Becker in 1719. His family were all loyal members of the brethren. John Henry Traut is another who was associated with Peter Becker at Germantown and who stood second to Becker as a guiding factor in establishing the first American congregation. Others are George B. Gantz, Jeremiah Traut, Baker Traut, and

* Pennsylvania Archives Second series, Harrisburg, Pa. - Vol. XVII - p. 72.

** John Arndt's "Nun fahr' ich in mit Freuden, ins rechte Vaterland," etc.

Heinrich Holsapple.

Our concluding paragraphs deal with those who started as leaders of the church but became distracted by the movement at Ephrata and completed their days in the environment of the Cloisters. Three important men who had their roots in Germany, are outstanding here. They are Stephen Koch, John Henry Kalckglasser and John Hildebrand. They will be discussed briefly as exponents of the mystical elements which retarded the growth of the church in America.

STEPHEN KOCH

Stephen Koch was an outstanding example of the mystical type. His record as a zealous preacher at Crefeld was not surpassed by any of the brethren. He was not an ordained elder but was widely known as an evangelist. On coming to America, a change came into his life.

He began as a member of the first group at Germantown in 1723 but was soon persuaded to come to Ephrata. When a number of the Germantown congregation made a friendly visit* to Conestoga where Beissel presided, Koch and Henry Traut started with them to visit Jacob Stuntz. Stuntz had crossed the Atlantic with Beissel, and had paid the latter's passage. He and Beissel had become alienated because Stuntz had married a relative. Beissel then had Stuntz placed under a ban.

With a view to restoring Stuntz to full communion with the church, Koch and Traut went to visit him. Their mission

* August 1726.

met with success but they incurred the sore displeasure of Beissel who maintained that he alone could restore Stuntz. Shortly thereafter the Conestoga congregation divided, with Beissel forming the Seventh Day Society.

Koch then began to live a life of solitude. Listening to the ideas of the Pietists on the Wissahickon*, he removed to Ephrata, March 27, 1739, where he spent the remainder of his life. He died July 7, 1763.

A very interesting document of this period is the Geistliche Fama published by Johann Lobach in 1736. This volume records one of the visions Stephen Koch is said to have had as told by Koch to the author Lobach. It was reprinted in 1748 by Christopher Saur** - part of it is quoted here. It is particularly significant as a model for the type of vision experienced by this group of mystics. Koch was quite influential over the membership of the early church, and persuaded many of them to go to Ephrata.

STEPHEN KOCH'S VISION***

"Saturday, December 9, 1732. When I awoke early in the morning before daylight, I was much depressed in mind as I considered the uncertainty of this miserable life, and how it is surrounded with so much unrest..... These thoughts moved me to deep sighs and longing for eternal rest and happiness. During this meditation and yearning for rest, I was transported out of myself, and it appeared to me that I found myself on a journey to someone, to whom I would have to come that same day. On the way I strayed and lost myself. While I was yet looking about me, there came up to me a beautiful man, the

* Known as Kelpianites - for account of this sect see Sachse "Pietists of Colonial Pennsylvania."

** "Several old and newer stories of apparitions of spirits, and something of the state of the soul after Death" - 2nd Enlarged edition - Printed by Christopher Saur, 1744.

*** As given in pps. 24-31 of Saur's volume.

like of whom I had never seen in this world. When he came near me he inquired how I had come there. I said: I was to have visited a sick man and lost my way. Then he was very friendly to me and said if I would go with him he would take me to a more beautiful place than I had ever seen before. I said: yes, I would come with him. Then I suddenly came to myself again. Oh God! Who is that? or where will it go to? But I composed myself again, and showed my willingness to go along.....?

Then it seemed as if in a gentle breeze we were wafted through space. And he brought me to the brink of a beautiful stream of water, which was so wide that I could not see across it and the scenery about it was uncommonly fair and lovely and I felt so well that all the days of my life I have never experienced anything like it. When I was wonderingly gazing at this beautiful large river he asked me what sort of water that was. I said I knew it not. He told me the name of it, but the name sounded strange to me and I could not remember it. At last he asked me if I wanted to go across. I answered: Yes. Then he took hold of me as before and carried me across swiftly."

Koch seems to have remained in this ecstatic frame of mind for many years thereafter. He began to wonder if his conversion were real and was greatly troubled about his spiritual life. Finally he had another vision which gave him peace and he recorded his impression that "it seemed as if all my transgressions were pardoned and sealed, and day and night there was nothing else in my heart but joy, love and praise to God."

On recounting his experiences to others, they in turn became aroused to unusual zeal. The result was that there was great unrest in the Germantown congregation. Koch had a vision one night of a beautiful virgin who preached to him concerning sanctification. She praised the life of virginity. This dictum he gave to others so that a rising

tide of enthusiasm which started the movement (of) Ephrata soon came about. The influence of Peter Becker could not stem the tide and on March 27, 1739 an exodus took place.

Koch's experience was typical of the unrest which took possession of some of the Germans who had come to America. It is a tribute to the strength of the Dunker church that it was able to survive the heavy losses caused by those of the mystical persuasion.

JOHN HENRY KALCKGLASSER

One of the men influenced by Koch's vision was John Henry Kalckglasser. Originally he was an aide to Alexander Mack at Schwarzenau. He came to Germantown with Mack in 1729. Although not a great preacher Kalckglasser was respected for his quiet ministry amongst the people. He always inclined to retirement.

On arriving at Germantown he purchased a farm and took up this work along with the other Dunkers. When Mack died, Kalckglasser was the oldest minister in the congregation. He became infatuated with the visions of Koch and since he was highly regarded, it was difficult for many of his people to cling to their former allegiances.

As Koch related his vision he greatly moved Kalckglasser who said,

"O, I know your condition very well, for I was in the same state a long while; for through the various occurrences one meets therein, I fell away from it again. Now I will learn anew to walk before God."*

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 100.

Koch's ascetic Views usually appealed to those who heard him. As for Kalckglasser, he began to feel that he was living in a sinful state as a married man. This view was soon reflected in his discourses at Germantown. Altho his friends remonstrated with him they did so in vain. He was so thoroughly under the spell of the mystic influence of Koch that he went with him to Ephrata in 1739. Kalckglasser was joyfully received. He became known as Brother Joel and his original baptism was considered valid for admission to the Ephrata colony.

JOHN HILDEBRAND

The third early leader of the church who fell under the mystic influence of Koch and Ephrata, was John Hildebrand. Like Koch he was well educated and had suffered for his faith in Europe. He migrated with Peter Becker in 1719 and was present with Becker at the first love feast held in America. His life at Germantown was quiet and peaceful, but for some unknown reason he was not given a place in the ministry of this church.

Hildebrand's daughter was among the first to go to Ephrata as a virgin Sister. Later she returned to marry Valentine Mack. In 1739 she and her husband went to Ephrata accompanied by John Hildebrand. All three had learned of Koch's visions and were thus persuaded to enter the cloisters.

Hildebrand was never a ardent Beisselian. On more than one occasion he had trouble with the leader. Having been

chosen as a preacher by a group which split off from the original Ephrata movement, he returned to Ephrata to urge a petition to stop further use of the term "Father" Beissel. In this he was defeated when Beissel presented an appeal to the community.

Hildebrand's mysticism was derived from the writings of Jacob Boehme. He was not such an extremist as Beissel, but indulged similar ideas concerning ascetism. He was a delegate to the famous Zinzendorf synods on several occasions, but being bitter against the Moravians,* he was an occasion of disunity in these deliberations. His life at Ephrata was unhappy because of many conflicts in which he became engaged. He died in 1765, a lonely and discontented old man.

* Hildebrand wrote a tract against the Moravians in which he attempted to prove that the married state originated in the fall of man.

CHAPTER IV

PERSECUTIONS AND MIGRATIONS OF THE EARLY CHURCH

The destiny of the small Dunker church and sect was not to be carved out finally in the land of its birth, but through migration to a new country, - America. One can scarcely realize that the church was to be transplanted in far away shores, not in part but as a whole, until today the Dunkers are not known in Europe, save in a few regions of Scandinavian countries where their mission work has long been sustained. The way in which the church came to be moved from continental Europe to America, together with some of the signal events in this notable development, provide the subject of this chapter.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century Germany was far from being a united kingdom or empire. Composed of small political divisions hopelessly disunited under the Holy Roman Empire, those who lived in different sections of the country had no social uniformity and hence were without any recognizable lines of natural cleavage whatever. In this respect, these peoples had not been fused into national unity, as had been the case in England and in other lands. The task of each ruler was to co-ordinate as best he could, different elements in the population resident in his province. With this objective in mind, coercive methods were the rule in approximating uniformity in religion and politics. The con-

Even today one can observe strong characteristics distinctive of the Bavarian, the Prussian, The Rhineland, etc.

cept "cujus regio ejus religio" typifies the prevailing attitude among the ruling classes who believed that unity was much more to be desired than any so-called liberty of conscience. It was in part due to this coercion that so many sectarian movements came into being. The ruling classes in fact, fomented deep-seated reaction in the lower classes against their policies. An expanding consciousness of the lawful rights of the citizenry was the inevitable result.

This attitude was ^{EXEMPLIFIED} typified particularly by events in the lower Rhineland. The populace was made up of many races who knew nothing of racial cohesion and hence had little if any social purpose in common. Hence, among these peoples, this new denomination grew and flourished for the brief period of its history in continental Europe.

Among those states where coercion was used in religion, attention is directed to Prussia, the Netherlands, and Wittgenstein as three notable exceptions. With them, freedom of religious organization and liberty of religious conscience was the order of the day. It was in these provinces that the Dunkers thrived as a denomination. Their growth can be explained only by the fact that many who were seeking liberty of conscience were closely associated with each other within these regions.

The religious faith of the Dunkers flourished for a time in four main centers, - Schwarzenau, Crefeld, Marienborn and Epstein. Also, there were probably a few scattered members

in the Palatinate and Switzerland,* These areas represented in fact the widest reaches of the distinctive Dunker movement in Europe.

We have observed that the first field of activity for the church was at Wittgenstein. Mack and his followers found fertile ground for disseminating their doctrine amongst the refugees who gathered there. When most of those who could be interested were won to the new faith, recent converts began to seek others in various different sections of the country. It was but natural for Mack to send missionaries to those folks whom he had found to be friendly while on his trip with Hochmann. Mingling with many such, the Dunkers saw their efforts crowned with success. They accepted literally the words of the Bible "Be ye fruitful and multiply." Within a few years they had organized two flourishing congregations - one at Schwarzenau and one at Marienborn to which are to be added many converts in the Palatinate and in Switzerland.

On the other hand, while many friends and converts were added to their group, the new church made many enemies. Their strange doctrines were considered harmful by a great many adherents of the state churches who soon began to persecute the new church and ~~who~~ caused the migration of many converts from these various localities, particularly from the Palatinate and Switzerland. Some came to Schwarzenau while others went to Marienborn and Epstein.

* See Mack's book - A Plain View of the Rites and Ordinances of the House of God - p. XI.

The origin of the Schwarzenau congregation has already been referred to. Throughout its entire history, it was recognized as the most stable of all the Dunker congregations, due probably to the more homogeneous character of the local people and to the leadership of Alexander Mack. Of the subsequent history of this congregation little is known until 1713. There can be little doubt that many of the persecuted people who fled to Schwarzenau became identified with the Dunkers. Goebel refers to this in saying that,

"At Schwarzenau there were once three hundred families gathered, and in Berleberg (especially in Homrighausen) there were about as many families. Many of these had allowed themselves to be baptized in the Eder by immersion in 1709."*

So far as is known, the Dunkers were then the only immersionists in this region, so that evidently this refers to them.

We find evidence that both communism and the celibate life for the ministry, were instituted in part at Schwarzenau prior to 1713.** Communism resulted from the fact that many of the converts were refugees who knew only penury and want and who had to be cared for by the church. The Dunkers were anxious to live after the manner of the early Christians and felt that to share their goods in common was the best way to provide for the refugees who had come into their midst. Hence, the Chronicon Ephratense records that "Alexander Mack" a wealthy miller devoted all his earthly possessions to the common good, and thereby became so poor that at last he had

* Goebel - "Geschichte D. Christlichen Lebens 2:774.

** See Gillin - "The Dunkers" - p. 68.

not bread enough to last from one day to the next.* When the economic life of the people improved, no longer was there any need to share their property in common and the new social institution known as communism disappeared from among them.

While there is no evidence that celibacy became an accepted practice in the Schwarzenau congregation, it appears certain that celibacy was advocated by a few of the more fanatical members. Mack admits that this agitation gave them considerable trouble.**

The first real difficulty was experienced from outside the congregation because of attacks by champions of the orthodox church who viewed with suspicion the new movement advocating the celibacy of the ministry. One of the foremost antagonists was Ludwig Gruber who attempted to undermine the new church with several carefully prepared questions addressed to its leaders. Mack answered the questions and strongly defended his position. The questions together with Mack's answers were published by the church in a tract in 1713, under the title "A Plain View of the Rites and Ordinances of the House of God, Arranged in the form of a conversation between a Father and Son." This was the first written work in which the beliefs and practices of the church were set forth at some length.

Covering the period from 1713 to 1720, only meager records of the activities of the congregation are obtainable. Religious freedom was apparently enjoyed under Count Hein-

* Page 1. Chronicon Ephratense.

** A Plain View of the Rites and Ordinances of the House of God
p. 87.

rich, but the good Count died in 1719, whereupon persecution broke out against the Dunker church. In 1720 the congregation fled to Westervain in West Friesland where they were permitted to live in peace for about nine years. Encouraging letters received from Pennsylvania across the seas, induced the congregation to embark for the New World in 1729. Sailing from Rotterdam July 7, on the ship Allen, James Craigie, Master, they arrived at Philadelphia September 15. This group comprised about thirty families under the leadership of Alexander Mack, who also was accompanied by his wife and their three sons. They were welcomed warmly by Peter Becker and other members of the Germantown congregation who were delighted to have so many additions to their small church.

Reverting to continental Europe, the congregations at Marienborn and Epstein were short lived. No record of the early history of either is obtainable. It is known that their members had been converted through the preaching of Mack and certain missionaries from the congregation at Schwarzenau.

At Marienborn, John Naas was the elder in charge. The congregation had just been organized when persecution broke out against it, causing migration of the whole membership to Crefeld and Schwarzenau.

STILL Less (yet) is known of the congregation at Epstein, where Christian Libe was the Elder and Abraham DuBoy, assistant. It is recorded that Libe went to Crefeld; DuBoy, to Schwarzenau.

zenau. What may have been the later history of others of the Epstein congregation is unknown, but they evidently joined with others of their faith at either of the two places mentioned.

The congregations at Marienborn and Epstein were established soon after that of Schwarzenau. When they were dissolved prior to 1715, only two groups of Dunkers were to be found in settled areas--one at Schwarzenau and the other at Crefeld. The most significant events in Dunker history transpired at Crefeld, in that the larger destiny of the new denomination was to emerge through this congregation, even though Mack and his sons were never connected with this local congregation in Europe.

THE CREFELD CONGREGATION

Crefeld (or Krefeld as it is more often spelled today) was a thriving industrial community in the south-western corner of Prussia, located close to the Netherlands. A great deal of traffic moved between these localities. The King of Prussia and the ruler of the Netherlands both tolerated religious sects of all kinds in their respective domains, which became havens for refugees from other provinces.

Crefeld was early chosen by the Dunkers not only because of religious toleration but also because of favorable economic conditions. It was not difficult to ~~earn~~ earn a livelihood, due to the fertility of the soil. Moreover, many Mennonites were resident there, - folks who had come to this section chiefly from

Switzerland where they were sorely persecuted. The similarity between this sect and the Dunkers became a bond of mutual attraction for them. At Crefeld the two sects had much in common. Naturally, the Dunkers felt more comfortable in taking up their abode with those who observed similar forms of religious practise.

The membership at Crefeld was a heterogeneous group. A few from Schwarzenau who had been engaged in missionary work finally located there. The majority of the members at Marienborn went to Crefeld after they met with persecution. Also many from Epstein, Switzerland and the Palatinate, gathered in this single center. Many different groups constituted the Crefeld congregation, causing difficulty in the form of church organization and finally causing conflict.

The origin of the congregation dated from 1715 when refugees from Marienborn and Epstein came in large numbers. At first John Naas of the Marienborn group became the senior elder and Christian Libe of the Epstein group, the second in authority. Other leaders included Peter Becker, who although not an ordained elder in Europe was a very influential member; John Henry Kalckglasser of Frankenthal; John Henry Traut; Henrich Holzapple; and Stephen Koch. Their vastly divergent antecedents and personalities gave rise to conflict among them, which sadly marred the life of the Crefeld congregation. The story is simple and tragic indeed.

A Young Dunker preacher named Hacker fell in love with a Mennonite girl who had not united with the Dunker communion.

Her father continued as a preacher in the Dunker church, receiving eight hundred gulden a year. The father was very fond of young Hacker and officiated at the ceremony uniting him and his daughter in marriage.

Hacker was a scholarly youth of great promise as a preacher and zealous prophet for the Dunker church. Many of his colleagues, perhaps not so talented as he, were very jealous of him. Hacker made his plans to marry the young Mennonite girl and after their marriage, his brethren used the incident to make trouble for him. Five of them, unmarried, determined to place Hacker under the ban of excommunication. Their reason for this is unknown. It may ^{d. p. 112} have been either that Hacker married outside the Dunker church or because of Paul's exhortation in I Corinthians 7, in which Paul discourages ministers from marrying. The latter seems the more likely, since all who were instrumental in putting the ban in force, were themselves unmarried. However, the real reason cannot be determined with certainty. Envy and jealousy were apparently the cause of the action and they found their outworking in tumult in opposition to Hacker. It was Christian Libe* who led the movement.

John Naas the senior elder and Peter Becker, Hacker's closest friend were opposed to the latter being excommunicated. However, they did advocate his suspension from the communion table. This was the majority opinion but the five were adamant and maintained that the ban was in full force and effect. This was a very serious situation. Being under the ban meant that no member of the church, even a close relative, might have any relationships with the person banned, such for instance as to

* Libe finally married outside the congregation himself and same to a sad end. See p. 112.

Her father continued as a preacher in the Dunker church, receiving eight hundred gulden a year. The father was very fond of young Hacker and officiated at the ceremony uniting him and his daughter in marriage.

Hacker was a scholarly youth of great promise as a preacher and zealous prophet for the Dunker church. Many of his colleagues, perhaps not so talented as he, were very jealous of him. Hacker made his plans to marry the young Mennonite girl and after their marriage, his brethren used the incident to make trouble for him. Five of them, unmarried, determined to place Hacker under the ban of excommunication. Their reason for this is unknown. It may ^{ch. p. 112} have been either that Hacker married outside the Dunker church or because of Paul's exhortation in I Corinthians 7, in which Paul discourages ministers from marrying. The latter seems the more likely, since all who were instrumental in putting the ban in force, were themselves unmarried. However, the real reason cannot be determined with certainty. Envy and jealousy were apparently the cause of the action and they found their outworking in tumult in opposition to Hacker. It was Christian Libe* who led the movement.

John Naas the senior elder and Peter Becker, Hacker's closest friend were opposed to the latter being excommunicated. However, they did advocate his suspension from the communion table. This was the majority opinion but the five were adamant and maintained that the ban was in full force and effect. This was a very serious situation. Being under the ban meant that no member of the church, even a close relative, might have any relationships with the person banned, such for instance as to

* Libe finally married outside the congregation himself and came to a sad end. See p. 112.

be seated at the same table or engage in conversation with him.*

Of course there were no means at hand for adjusting the situation amicably. A rift resulted. The question at issue should have been regarded more as a test case with respect to the unity of the congregation than as an occasion for disruption. So many types of personalities characterized the group as a whole, that it was difficult for them to view the issue in the same light. From the very first, some tended to be mystical and austere. Others, more tolerant and liberal, were less sincere and earnest. Had it not been the question as affecting Hacker, some other question would surely have arisen to set the two groups at odds. Their assimilation never became really complete nor was it ever to be so. As it happened, poor Hacker was the victim of a circumstance too overwhelming for him. He became imbued with the feeling that he was the cause of all the trouble that had arisen. Brooding over this, he became mentally ill and soon died.

The future leader of the conservative group, Peter Becker, remained steadfast to the very last in his friendship for Hacker, and was with the young minister at his death. This unfortunate episode left in Becker's soul a deep scar which he was to carry with him all through life. There can be little doubt however, that this whole experience served to prepare him for handling the precarious situation which came about in the life of the

* See Mack's book - "A Plain View of the Rites and Ordinances of the House of God" - P. 59 F.

young church in America some years later.*

From this time forth, the congregation at Crefeld knew no peace. The chasm between the divergent groups was too wide to be bridged. There was no healing for old wounds. Peter Becker finally took a group with him with Pennsylvania as their destination, - the first migration of Dunkers to America. The number of souls who accompanied Becker is not known but Morgan Edwards** states that they numbered about twenty.*** A report in the Acts Synod General, 1719, 21 and 44, indicates that the real leaders of the congregation came with Becker. It states that,

"The preachers of the Menroclass have received the confession of faith of the so called Dompelaers staying at Greyfelt, and have sent their remonstrat-
ion to his gracious Majesty the King of Prussia.
However, these Fratres Menrsanae Synodi report with /d
pleasure that these Dompelaers, who have been so
injurious to our church, have taken themselves away
by water and are said to have sailed to Pennsylvania"****

Actually the European history of the Dunker congregation closed with the exodus of Becker and his group. Some of course remained, however, and over these John Naas and Christian Libe continued to preside. They soon fell to quarreling with each other and finally Naas dubbing Libe a "pill monger", went into retirement until Naas himself came to America some years later.

* See Chapter V.

** Morgan Edwards - "Materials towards a History of the Baptists." Pub. 1770.

*** Brumbaugh on the basis of a figure quoted in Goebel thinks there may have been 40 families. This seems entirely too high however as that number would have comprised almost the whole of the Crefeld congregation.

**** Quoted from Brumbaugh - History of the Brethren p. 51

Libe having been left in charge of the congregation, was obviously not the type of leader who could command general respect. The people soon tired of his leadership and would no longer be held subject to it. George Martin in the Chronicon Ephratense* reported that, "The Brether who were prisoners withdrew; the whole congregation was given up, and everything went to ruin."

Libe finally became a wine merchant. Contrary to his professed adherence to religious integrity, he married our- side the congregation and came to a pitiful end.

9-1-112

The fate of the others at Crefeld is a source of mere conjecture. Some doubtless followed Becker to America. Others joined with Mack in West Friesland. Still others became assimilated with the Mennonites or other allied groups in adjacent regions. In view of the success of the church in America and the disintegration of the Crefeld group in Europe, it is clear that all that was vital had taken its departure with Becker.

When the Becker group left for America they probably had little thought of becoming pioneers in founding a new denomination on foreign shores, nor could they have known that all that remained of the Dunkers would sooner or later follow them in their pilgrimage to a new land. This, however, was destined to be their future. Not long after 1719 another great migration took place, then another and another, until all were in America.

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 248.

THE EMIGRATION TO AMERICA

As already noted, the Crefeld congregation was to be the means through which the denominational life of the Dunkers was to be molded. Crefeld, unlike the village of Schwarzenau, was not isolated but was a prominent manufacturing town located comparatively near the sea. As a center for the linen trade, Crefeld was open to influences from Holland, England and elsewhere. With regard to schemes of colonization, these influences were both definite and strong. In fact, these influences determined the future history of the church.

Persecution in other sections had been largely responsible for the decision that brought the Dunkers to Crefeld. Now other considerations persuaded them to migrate to America. The disunity of the German States brought grave uncertainty and an environment lacking in real freedom among the people. Many of the German rulers themselves were subject to higher powers, to oppression by kings or by foreign rulers. They in turn subjected the laboring classes and peasants to oppressive taxes in order to meet the costs of government.

During the Huguenot persecutions, many had sought refuge in America. Their example was fresh in the minds of the people living along the Rhine. As early as 1683 the Mennonites began settling near Germantown in Pennsylvania, following a preaching tour by William Penn in the year 1677, when he made many contacts with the Rhineland people. In 1682 Penn gave 5000 acres of Pennsylvania land to Jacob Tellner of Crefeld, who organized the Frankfort Land Company for the purpose of colonization.

Also in 1683 Penn sold 1000 acres each to three Crefeld men, namely Remke, Arets, and Van Bebber, who were likewise anxious to colonize. In that year a group of thirteen persons, of whom at least eleven were from Crefeld, sailed for Pennsylvania and founded Germantown.* Most of them were Mennonites with whom the Dunkers had much in common in later years. Letters from America telling about the opportunities available in the new land and the spirit of freedom that characterized the people here in contrast with the fatherland, prompted both Mennonites and Dunkers in Crefeld to leave. Moreover, the two colonization companies were doing all in their power to advertise the new land and persuade interested persons to embark for America. William Penn himself used his influence in the hope of having thrifty German farmers as a class, to establish their future homes in the new world.

Hence appear the factors at work in Crefeld whereby the later history of the church was largely determined. The land companies and the Mennonites gave an added impulse and direction to Becker in his longings to be free from the discord and strife that pervaded the scene at Crefeld. In fact there was every incentive for him to turn to a new environment in which he could enjoy freedom of worship and liberty of conscience.

So soon as Becker and his party had made their new start in America, their messages to their Dunker friends in Europe became a strong factor in inducing more of them to come to America. Their reports made much of the improved economic

* See Gillin - History of the Dunkers - p. 85.

conditions, and the liberty which all might enjoy in the new world.

Not until after ten years had passed, however, did the second great migration take place. It was this group that came with Alexander Mack in 1729. They represented the majority of those who were originally at Schwarzenau and who during the last nine years had resided at Westervain in West Friesland.

All through the period of strife in Europe, Alexander Mack had striven to keep peace and preserve the unity of his people. Now when a new chapter was being written in the history of the denomination, he wished to have his best leaders participating actively in the progress of the church. With this in mind he wrote John Naas urging him to follow those who had already come to America. Naas was reluctant to do this because of the trouble he had experienced at Crefeld. Nevertheless, Mack's counsel finally prevailed. Having determined that it was futile for him to stem the tide of many unpleasant incidents, Naas finally embarked and arrived in Philadelphia in September, 1733.

Modern research has brought to light a letter* written by Naas from Germantown to his son in Switzerland. Part of this unique letter is quoted here because of its significance with regard to the Dunkers' experiences at sea and because it demonstrates the quality of Christian faith possessed by one of their leaders. The letter is dated:

Germantown, the 17th of October, 1733.

Heartily Beloved Son, Jacob Wilhelm Naas,

* Dr. Oswald Siedensticker of the University of Pennsylvania unearthed this letter in Germany. This letter was secured by Dr. M.G. Brumbaugh and is with his effects in the Juniata College Library. The letter as given here is in simple translation.

" I greet thee and thy dear wife Margareta, together with her dear children, very heartily....The eternal and almighty God give you all much light of grace and faith so that you may not only choose the good in time of grace, but may you also win the true and active faith, in true sanctification and childlike obedience in Christ Jesus. Would that the great God through Jesus Christ might work this within us and in all who love his appearance. Amen, yes; Amen.

" As I have been requested by some to describe our journey, I have not been able to refuse it entirely, therefore I will do it in as short a way as possible...

" The 24th of June we went from Rotterdam to within half an hour's distance from Dort, where we lay still, the wind being contrary. On July 3rd we started and the ship was drawn by men several times on the river Maas, as far as the neighborhood of Helvoetsluys. There the wind became favorable so that we sailed into the sea on July 5th, near Helvoetsluys. Then the seasickness began among the people, that is dizziness and vomiting. The greatest number after having vomited could begin to eat again."

" On the 13th of July, early in the morning, we arrived in the port of Plymouth, which port lies in the midst of rocks. We had to lie in the middle of the harbor until the ship was released by the custom officers and provisioned.

" On July 21st we sailed into the big ocean and on our left we lost the land France and Spain. The 24th we also lost it on the right, namely England. The 25th a little child died. It came upon the ship very sick; the next day about 8 o'clock it was buried in the sea. When the body fell from the plank into the water I saw with great astonishment that a large number of big fish appeared and darted quickly away in front of the ship, as if they wished to flee from the corpse.

" For ten days we had steadily a good breeze, so that we sailed a long way on the big ocean.

" The 28th of July, before daylight, a French man-of-war by the name of Elizabeth, came near us. This Captain examined our Captain in French. After having made themselves known to each other, they wished one another a happy trip and each went on his course.

" After this day we had very changeable weather so that in three weeks we made only sixty hours (about

180 miles), which in very good wind we could have done in one day.

"On August 26th, about 5 o'clock we passed by a mast standing fast, the point of which showed a half yard above water, quite immovable and with ends of rope still on it. By good fortune our ship passed it at about a rod's distance. The Captain had just been drinking tea. Many people were very much frightened by this sight, because it was impossible for this mast to be standing on the bottom and yet it was immovable.

"On September the 11th again a little child died, without anybody having noticed it until it was nearly stiff, and the 12th it was buried at sea.

"The 13th a young woman, who had always been in poor health, died in childbirth and was buried at sea on the 14th, having three children, two of them before and now the third the one just born, so that the husband has no one left now.

"On the 16th in the morning about four o'clock a woman fifty years of age died; she had not been well during the entire trip and always repented having left her native place. She was buried at sea the same day.

"And since the trip, owing to the many changes of wind, had lasted somewhat long and the greater number of people had all consumed their provisions and their conception (imagination or expectation) was always set upon six weeks from land to land, they had gone on eating and drinking hard, from morning until late at night. Then at last they found it a great hardship to live on the ship's fare alone; thus the greater number so entirely lost courage that they never expected to get on land again.

"On the 18th a ship from Rhode Island came up to us. It had a cargo of sheep and other things, in order to sail to the West Indies. Our Captain spoke through a speaking tube and after they had made their arrangements they reefed their sails on both the ships, since there was but little running anyhow and our Captain had a boat lowered into the water and rowed with four seamen to their ship. When they had drunk the welcome together, he returned and brought with him half a bag of apples, a goose, a duck, and two chickens and distrib-

uted the beautiful apples at once among the people. That caused great rejoicing to get such beautiful American apples on the high sea, and those which were still left over he threw among the people to grapple for them, and they fell in heaps over one another for the beautiful apples.

"On the 20th again a young married woman died and was buried at sea the same night, and on this evening again came a large number of countless big fish from the north which one could see from high above the water and which did just like the former, that one could not see one on the other side of the ship. Thereupon we had a very heavy fall of rain that some people caught half kegs of water, only from the sails and from the Captain's cabin. This was followed by a powerful wind-storm from the northwest. The sea rose up so high, that when one looked upon it, it was just as if one were sailing among high mountains all covered with snow; and one mountainwave rose over the other and over the ship so that the Captain and First Mate and the cook were struck by a wave that they kept not a dry thread on them; and so much water poured into the ship that many people's beds, which were near to the holes were quite filled with water. The holes were hastily boarded up, the rudder bound fast, and the ship was, with a very lowly reefed sail set sideways to the wind, so that it should not roll so hard on both sides. The storm lasted the entire night with great violence, so that without any fear one could see that it was not alone the seaworthiness of the ship that it could weather such powerful blows, but that it was preserved in the Almighty hand of the Lord, in order to make known to man his might.

"To Him be above all and for all glory, Amen.

"Not a human being remained on deck, but one sailor who was tied fast in order to watch by the rudder; all the rest, the Captain, the mates, the seamen crawled into their beds in their wet clothes, and the ship lay sideways to the wind always on its side so that it drew water all the time, which however, poured out again. At midnight the waves struck so hard against the portholes aft, that two boards sprang away from the windows where part of the people lay in sleep and slumber, and the water rushed in through the window as big as it was, and straight into the beds, which caused a great terror to those who lay near the window. The water took away a board together with the rope; we all sprang up because the friends who lay near the window had not tied the board fast enough and the misfortune might have become a very great one. We took a wool

bag, which was handy, and stopped the window up and the other one with the board, that was made fast again.

"The 23rd at nine o'clock another sounding was made and at 55 rods ground was struck, at eleven o'clock at 35 rods; shortly after 20 rods; and yet we did not see any land but were nearing the river (Delware). Then the people became very joyful on account of the good breeze and the ground being found. But the Captain did not trust himself to reach the river by daylight; ^{before?} since one could not see any land even, at four o'clock in good wind he reefed the sails, and had the rudder tied fast, because there were many sandbanks in front ^{of} and inside of the river.

"On the 27th we passed New Castle with little breeze and in a very dense fog. This town lies forty miles distant from Philadelphia. Since we had very little wind we had to sail mostly with the tide or with the current of the water, therefore we sailed during the 28th, and on the afternoon of the 29th we arrived safely in Philadelphia.

"We were met by brethren and sisters in small boats who brought us fine bread, apples, and other refreshments of the body, for which we gave thanks to the Highest publicly on the ship near the city, with singing and ringing shouts of delight. With many tears, we praised and glorified the Lord for having preserved us in his Father's hand, and having carried us on the wings of the eagle so that we all could meet again in love on this side of Eternity. See, dear children, brethren and friends, this is in short the description of our journey across the very big sea.

"If I were to relate everything how things went with the people on the ship, there could be much more to write and it grieves my heart, when I remember that I so often told them when on the ship, I did not think that with all the unclean spirits of Hell there could be worse going on with cursing, swearing, blaspheming and beating, with overeating and drinking, quarreling day and night, during storm and weather, that the Captain had often said he had taken many people over to this country already but had in all his days never yet seen anything like this.

" He thought they must have been possessed by the demons. Therefore they made such a good picture of Hell,

although to us they were all very kind, friendly and helpful and they held us all in great fear. The Captain often threatened he would order some of them to be bound to the mast and to be whipped by his sailors from head to foot, still they remained bad.

"Now I will report some more experiences in regard to the great danger and hardships of the journey to Pennsylvania.

"The danger of this journey is this; if God should be against one and were willing to work his revenge and justice against us, no one, could escape from him, as little as on land. Another danger would be if one went in an old bad ship upon the big sea, or with a ship master who was a tyrant or ignorant of sailing. But, if the Lord is not against us, which must first be settled, and one has a good ship and good sailors then the danger is not half so great as one imagines it. The Lord sustains Earth and Sea, and one in and on the other, therefore also the vessels upon the sea and those who have gone up on high or down into the deep, and the eternal Jehovah has rescued them, they all shall come to him and shall praise the name of the Lord who does great wonders to the children of men.

"The hardships, however, of this journey consist of many kinds and things; but for myself I have not to say of many, on the contrary of but few hardships on this trip; but others have seen and experienced a great deal, especially firstly when people start on this trip who are not obliged to enter upon so great a journey.

"Secondly, when people start this enterprise without any reason, and sufficient deliberation and for the sake of material purposes.

"Thirdly, when people break up to move, and especially married people when they are not fully agreeing with one another to begin such a long journey.

"These three things are the main reasons for all difficulties on this long journey, for I can say with full truth that on six or seven ocean vessels I have heard of few people who did not repent their journey, although according to the declaration of the greatest number only extreme necessity had driven them to it. Although there were a good number of educated people among them, yet it was with them too, on account of the sad decline in their business affairs by the hard oppression of government, that caused them to leave or to become poor, and as poor people they could no longer help themselves

from getting into debt and becoming beggars. Nevertheless they so much regretted having started on this journey that some became sick of it and were so furious that often they did not know what they were doing. Neighbors accused one another. Husband, wife, children fought bitterly. Instead of helping one another, they only added to the burden of each and made it every hour more unendurable, seeing that such people are obliged to be pent up together for thirteen, fourteen or fifteen weeks, what an amount of trouble must follow with such natures. Then one can never do what one wants on a ship. Then there are some who will consume all the food they have taken with them while the ship's fare is still good; this they will throw into the water. But later on when the ship's fare has long been lying in the salt, the water grows foul smelling, so that rice, barley, peas and such can no longer be boiled soft in it, then the people have devoured and drunk everything they had and then necessity compels them to begin with the poorer stuff and they will find that very hard; and because the people live so closely together some will begin to steal whatever they can get, especially things to eat and drink. Then there are such quantities of lice on the people, that many persons are compelled to louse for a whole day at the time, and if one does not do this very frequently they might devour one. This was a very great hardship for all the people and for me as well.

As louse?

"Now that we have safely arrived in this land and have been met by all our people in great love and friendship all the rest has been forgotten in a moment (so to speak), for the sake of the great joy that we had in one another. This hardship has lasted about nineteen weeks; then it was over, wherefore be all the glory to the Highest; Amen, yea; Amen.

"For it does not rue us to have come here, and I wish with all my heart that you and your children could be with us; however, it cannot be and I must not urge you as the journey is so troublesome for people who are not able to patiently submit to everything, but often in the best there are restless minds, but if I could with the good will of God do for your children all, I assure you that I would not hesitate to take the trip once more upon me for your sake; not because one gets one's living in this land, in idleness! Oh! no; this country requires diligent people, in whatever trade they may be - but then they can make a good living. There are however, many people here, who are not particularly successful; as it seems that if some people were in Paradise it would go badly with them. Some are to be blamed for it them-

selves; for when they come to this country and see the beautiful plantations; the number of the fine cattle; and abundance in everything; and, knowing that they only just have come here too, then they want to have it like that at once and will not listen to any advice but take large tracts of land with debts, borrow cattle and so forth. These must toil miserably until they get independent. Well, what shall I say, so it is in the world, where always one is better off than the other. If a person wants to be contented here with food and shelter, he can under the blessing of God and with diligent hands get plenty of it. Our people are all well off; but some have more abundance than others, yet nobody is in want. What I heard concerning the people who do not have the money for the passage, surprised me greatly, how it goes with the young strong people and artisans, how quickly all were gone, bricklayers, carpenters, and whatever trade they might have. Also old people who have grown people and who understand nothing but farm labor, there the child takes two "Freights" (fare for two) upon itself, its own and that of the father or of the mother for four years, and during that time it has all the clothing that is needed and in the end an entirely new outfit from head to foot, a horse with a cow with a calf. Small children often pay one freight and a half until they are twenty one years old. The people are obliged to have them taught writing and reading and in the end to give them new clothes and present them with a horse or a cow.

"There are few houses to be found in city or country where the people are at all well off, that do not have one or two such children in them. The matter is made legal at the city hall with great earnestness. There parents and children often will be separated 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 hours (in distance) and for many young people it is very good that they cannot pay their own freight. These will sooner be provided for than those who have paid theirs and they can have their bread with others and soon learn the ways of the country.

"I will make an end of this and wish patience to whom soever reads this. God be with you all, Amen.

Johannes Naas

"N.B. Now beloved children what more shall I write? It might perhaps arrange itself that you should come over here, then the writing would have an end, but if you do not come I shall some other time know more to write. Therefore, I will close for this time and commend you all with your dear children to the infinite love of God,

who may lead and guide you himself that you do not enter upon the path of the sinners and do not sit where the scoffers sit, for that would not be good for you.

"The acquaintances, Brother Settlers, outside of Gundrich, are in eternity; the others send hearty greetings: Brother Becker, Brothers Gantz, Gomerey, Ritter, Paul, send, with Brother the old and the Young Zieglers, and his people, all send greetings and many other brethren and sisters who do not know you - all greet very heartily those who fear the Lord at Creyfelt.

Your in-love-faithfully-united father

John Naas"

There should have been a note on 'freight'

CHAPTER V

FACTS CENTERED AROUND THE EARLY AND LATER HISTORY IN AMERICA

Although the founders of the church did not realize it, America was to be for them the solvent for many of their religious heartaches and problems. America was destined to afford them an opportunity to work out the system of their unique religious beliefs. In contrast to the obstacles which confronted them in Europe, they found here a hearty acceptance of those outward evidences of the inner zeal and piety respecting the teachings of the New Testament.

There was little incentive for the first group of settlers near Philadelphia in 1719, to go about establishing branches of the church. First of all it was necessary for them to provide a livelihood for themselves. Opportunities appeared in varied types and localities. The people soon became scattered. Of course some remained in Philadelphia. Others removed greater or less distances to Germantown, Oley, Skippack and Conestoga. The development of the church was retarded accordingly.

A further restrictive factor was found as a reflex of the differences which had split the congregation at Crefeld, some of which were carried along by the early settlers in America and not easily forgotten. Moreover, the ocean voyage itself brought adverse influences to bear upon the people themselves. John Naas' experiences were indicative of the hardship in sea travel at that time, especially because they brought much strife and discord between passengers herded together on a vessel for

such a long time. Although, there were passengers who maintained their piety under this stress, many others were less fortunate.* As a group there was little heart among them for cultivating Christian fellowship. Hence there appears to have been no special effort put forth to unite the people during the first three years following their earliest immigration.

THE FIRST IMPORTANT LEADER OF THE NEW CHURCH

Just as the name of Alexander Mack stands out in the early history of the church in Germany, so the name of Peter Becker, is of primary importance in the colonial history of the Dunkers in America. It was Becker's deep religious spirit and his incredible zeal that gave impetus to the movement in those pioneer days of a great nation. It is said of Becker,

"He was perhaps the most gifted singer and the most eloquent man in prayer in the colonial church. He was not an effective speaker, but he was of sound judgment, great moderation, and sufficient tact to manage successfully the weighty burdens laid upon him."**

Peter Becker became the pioneer leader of the Dunkers in America. He started the movement to establish the church in Pennsylvania. He settled near Germantown on a twenty acre farm and lived there for twenty-seven years. A weaver by trade,

* Letters such as that written by Gottlieb Mittelberger in 1754 indicate how great divisions rose among all the people, even among families- See Gottlieb Mittelberger's "Reise nach Pennsylvanien im Jahr 1750, und Ruckreise nach Deutschland im Jahr 1754, Stuttgart, 1756."

** Brumbaugh History of the Brethren - p. 208.

he soon took up this occupation. Noting the inattention of his brethren to religion, he decided to bring a new influence to bear upon them. He had taken Conrad Beissel, a refugee from Germany, as an apprentice. That Beissel and Becker should have been thrown together in this relationship was to have great significance for the Dunker church of the future. Beissel was enthusiastic and filled with spiritual zeal. He kindled to a high pitch the emotions of Becker and his neighbors, John Gomery, George Gantz, and Henry Traut. For hours at a time they sat together discussing religious problems and holding seasons of worship.

These informal meetings provided the motive in the hearts of Becker and his friends for making the effort to reunite the brethren of the Dunker church who had come ^{from} ~~to~~ Crefeld. Beissel encouraged this move and plans were soon formulated to this end. The plan was for Becker to take two of the other men - Gomery and Gantz, and make a personal visitation to the homes of all of the brethren who could be located.

When the final arrangements were made, all were agreed that the plan was very wise. Thus in the fall of 1722, Becker with Gomery and Gantz began visiting the sections of Oley, Falckner's Swamp, Skippack and others. At each place visited they proclaimed their errand in the interests of peace and unity and in the spirit of love and reconciliation. They urged each family to forget and forgive past difficulties and to respond to the call that should soon bring them together for worship. The leaders making this visitation felt that if the group could

be gathered together for the first time, the inspiration derived from such a meeting would cause the desire for unity and common worship to live again in their church. As they met the men and women at their homes, the visitors were not only welcomed heartily but were encouraged in their plans. Prayer and worship were made a part of the program in each place where their mission was explained.

The visitations were highly successful and led to group worship in nearly all of the localities visited. Becker and his friends were so encouraged that they decided to attempt to unite their own neighbors in closer unity and to conduct group worship. This plan was taken up immediately upon their return home. Worship was held first at Becker's and then at Gomery's until the severe winter weather interfered with public gatherings. During the next spring, meetings were resumed at Becker's house since it was the most central location for assembling. The services consisting of hymn singing, Scripture reading and preaching, were the first to be held in the newly settled community after the arrival from Europe.

A NEW CHURCH IS FOUNDED IN AMERICA

Strangely enough, due to an idle rumor, the movement began which finally resulted in the foundation of the church in America. This rumor had to do with Christian Libe, the romantic figure from Europe who was reported to have suffered greatly for the faith and who was renowned as the greatest preacher of the Baptist sect. Libe was known to have been a galley slave

for some time. It was now reported that he would soon land in Philadelphia. The report excited many of the Dunkers in that entire area. Especially was this the case with a group from along the Schuylkill, who set out to meet him. The story turned out to be pure fiction, but indirectly it was the means of bringing the two scattered sections of the Dunkers together.

The group at Germantown sensing the eagerness of the visitors for the religion which they had all known in Europe, invited the Schuylkill folk to worship with them at Peter Becker's home. Having consented to do this, they were finally prevailed upon to remain in Germantown for several days during which they worshipped with Becker and his colleagues enjoying the renewal of old associations and the privilege of sharing again the religious life of their friends. One source of mutual interest to both groups, was the news of an awakening in Germany among many of their relatives and former associates.* This word served as a stimulus to all for renewing their spiritual lives. The group from Schuylkill were so delighted with their visit that it was repeated shortly thereafter. Whereupon they received the promise of ministerial help from Becker and others at Germantown. Later several who had not been associated with the Dunker church in Europe asked to be baptized and accepted into the faith. The Germantown folk experienced some consternation over this since thus far they had not thought of themselves as a properly organized congregation. Assuming themselves to be a branch of the Grefeld church they had not dared to presume to

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 22

administer the sacraments or exercise the full privileges of church membership. Moreover their outward organization had also been retarded by the dissension in their midst, which had only recently begun to heal.

Faced with the firm request of the new converts, and after much thoughtful discussion, the petition of the candidates was granted. Peter Becker was chosen to administer the baptism. The new candidates* were led to the Wissahickon Creek near Germantown and were immersed in the trine fashion, thus marking the first Dunker baptism in America, on Christmas Day, 1723.

That evening** a love feast was held in the home of John Gomorry, the first event of its kind in the neighborhood. It created a stir among the people. Twenty three persons*** were present at this organization meeting of the first Dunker church in America. At the love feast they all gathered around long tables and sang a hymn. After this the women on one side and the men on the other, rose and washed one another's feet. Then followed the eating of the Lord's Supper, the kiss of charity with the right hand of fellowship. Finally after receiving communion, they sang a hymn.****

* Martin Urner and wife, Henry Landis and wife, Frederich Lang and John Mayle.

** Chronicon Ephratense states "the evening following" but it is apparent that the same evening is meant.

*** Those present in addition to the newly baptized were: Peter Becker, Henry Traut, Henry Holsapple, John Gomorry, Jeremiah Traut, Stephen Koch, John Hildebrand, Daniel Ritter, George Gantz, Jacob Koch, John Price, John Kempfer, Joanna Gantz, Magdalene Traut, Anna Gomorry, Maria Hildebrand (The list is given in the Chronicon Ephratense).

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The congregation had now been organized. Meetings were held through the following winter until interfered with by severe weather. When the services were resumed in the spring, a great awakening came to all of the people of the district. Particularly noticeable was the interest among the young people, many of whom were led to be baptized of their own free will.

The brethren were encouraged during the autumn of the year 1724, to make a visitation to all of the people of this countryside. They began this new mission on October 23, 1724.

The first home to be visited was that of John Jacob Price on Indian Creek. Thence they proceeded to Falckmer's Swamp and held services in the home of brother Albertus, thence to Oley and Coventry on the Schuylkill where on November 8th, a love feast was held in the home of Martin Urner. Two more were baptized, namely, Peter Heffly and Owen Longacre. Coventry was to have been the final destination in this missionary tour, but upon arriving there, the visitors were informed of an awakening at Conestoga. They then decided to go on to this point. Since some were on horseback and some on foot, the party broke up for the journey and stayed at different places en route. They came together at the home of Rudolph Nagele, a Mennonite. Next evening they stayed with Conrad Beissel and Michael Wohlfahrt who as hermits, lived near Conestoga.

Finally arriving at the home of Henry Hohn, the missionary team conducted services. The spirit of revival was manifest among the group. The message of the brethren from Germantown

concerned baptism and its divine purpose for fallen man. Five people applied for baptism: Henry Hohn and his wife, John Mayer and his wife, and Joseph Shaffer. They were promptly immersed by Peter Becker in the Pequa creek. During the baptismal ceremony, Veronica Frederick was so impressed that she too made the decision to be baptized.

Conrad Beissel, who had come along with the brethren to witness the services and the baptisms, was also moved by the impressiveness of the rites as they were administered. Although he was prompted to be baptized he was faced with something of a dilemma because spiritually he considered himself to be superior to those who were administering the sacrament. This arose by virtue of what he conceived to be special revelations which had been vouchsafed to him.* Suddenly the thought occurred to him that Jesus had been baptized by one much his inferior, John the Baptist. With this in mind, he accepted along with the others the baptism administered by Peter Becker. After this manner, Beissel, a strange religious genius and fanatic, was initiated into the rites of the Dunker sect. An odd tale was destined to be woven about the life of this man ere many days had passed.

The baptismal ceremony completed, the group retired to Hohn's home for religious discussions continuing throughout

* The Chronicon Ephratense says concerning him, "At the same time the call of these people was not deemed important enough for him, for he had been the recipient of a weighty testimony from God, and feared that, if he associated with them, he might lose all the good he reached through so much pain." - p.25.

the remainder of the day. A love feast was celebrated in the evening. On the following Sunday, another meeting was held, in which arose a foreshadowing of the trouble experienced by this congregation some time later. Dissension among the men and women started when Becker and others were criticised for their actions and attitude while residing in Germany. These events were not accounted particularly significant when first suggested, and after a few more baptisms, Becker and his companions returned to Germantown, happy in the favorable results of their missionary enterprise.

Before leaving the newly formed congregation at Conestoga, Becker advised the members to choose a leader of their own since the distance from Germantown was too great for them to be dependent upon the ministry of the mother congregation. The group thereupon chose Reissel as their leader. Becker must have regretted this choice as it proved to be unwise but he is reported to have addressed them on taking leave as follows:

"You can now arrange your affairs among yourselves to the best of your ability; the better you do it, the better we will be pleased, since you constitute together a congregation. You are in no way to be bound to us, as we are too great a distance from you. We therefore advise you to arrange your affairs among yourselves, according to your daily circumstances. Neither do we recognize any pope who would rule over you, but we commend you to the grace of God, which must accomplish everything, etc."*

PROGRESS OF THE MOTHER CONGREGATION

The result of the early missionary tour on the part of

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 26.

Becker and his companions was that of laying the foundation for several new churches, - namely at Falckner's Swamp, Oley, Schuylkill (Coventry) and Conestoga. The mother congregation at Germantown was naturally the leading group of this early period. The story of her progress is to be regarded, as essentially the story of the church, as such.

In the period from 1722 to 1732 meetings were held in the homes of the members, principally at Peter Becker's, John Gomorry's, Gantz's, Traut's or Kalckglasser's. There was a strong group of leaders under whose guidance and counsel the congregation became firmly established.

In the year 1729 Alexander Mack and his group of refugees, comprising about thirty families, having landed at Philadelphia, joined themselves to this congregation. It was heartening indeed for the immigrants to find their brethren so happily settled in the new land; also for the people at Germantown to have their numbers added to so substantially.

With this increase, the brethren were handicapped by not having a place large enough to accommodate their meetings. Accordingly in 1732, Christopher Saur (or Sower), famed character of colonial history (of whom we shall hear later) erected a house large enough to enable the group to assemble. He arranged the second story of his house in such a way that the partitions between the rooms could be lifted and a large space made available. Here the mother congregation worshipped until 1760 when the second Christopher Saur became an elder.

From 1760 until 1770 the congregation worshipped in a house

that had belonged to an old man named Pettikoffer the beggar after whom that section of Germantown in which it was located, was named, namely, Beggarstown. After Pettikoffer's removal to Ephrata the house and grounds came into the possession of Christopher Saur, Alexander Mack, Peter Leibert and George Schreiber as trustees of the church. In 1770 a new stone meeting house was erected on this plot. It was about 32 feet square and had a unique attic reached by an outside stairway. The attic was used for storing the materials necessary for the love feast.

During the Revolutionary War all of the property of Christopher Saur was confiscated.* The church building narrowly escaped because Saur's name headed the list of trustees and also because printed sheets of the Bible had been stored in the loft. When the other trustees presented their claims, however, and established the fact that the property belonged to the congregation and not to Saur, it was given back to them.

When the new church was occupied in 1770 the old Pettikoffer house became a home for the aged and the poor, who were sheltered and clothed at the expense of the congregation.

FIRST IMPORTANT SCHISM IN THE CHURCH

The most significant event in the life of the new church was the schism in connection with the so-called "Ephrata movement," which played so large a part in the early colonial his-

* Saur had conducted a campaign against war through his press at Germantown. When the war broke out his establishment was confiscated with all his property.

ory of the church and which classes as one of the most interesting ecclesiastical events in North America. When one realizes that out of this movement came: the earliest church school in America; some of the first printing; rare contributions to art and music, it is then that the full significance of events at Ephrata will be appreciated.

The spirit of Ephrata was the outgrowth of the leadership of Conrad Beissel who was a religious genius as well as an artist. A notable day it was in the history of the Dunker church when Beissel came to live with Peter Becker as an apprentice in 1720. Beissel's close contacts with the first Dunker leaders, effected a union which was neither thoroughly congenial nor conducive to harmony. Becker must have had many regrets later on for having sheltered the man who was destined to cause so much unrest in the struggling church in America.

Beissel was a very colorful figure. His career is made up of the unusual. Born in the Palatinate in the town of Eberbach on the Neckar in 1690, he was given the name of John Conrad Beissel. His father, by occupation a baker, was an habitual drunkard, who died at an early age leaving his family in poverty. Conrad, born two months after the death of his father, was reared by his godly mother until the age of eight when the mother died. He was then cared for by his brothers and sisters. In early life he was a lad of promise, because of his studious habits. His eldest brother is reported to have once said to him, "your much studying will make a fool of you yet."*

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 3

Upon reaching the required age he apprenticed himself to a baker who was also a violinist. This man taught Beissel music, - an art in which he was destined to achieve a rather unique fame. He also learned to play the violin and became so adept, that he was soon in demand to play for weddings and at dancing parties.

In 1715 Beissel had his first vital religious experience at the age of twenty-five. He maintained that his conversion came directly from God and without the aid of any human instrumentality. His early religious experience he described as a "Spirit of penitence." During the period of his special religious experience, he became acquainted with George Stiefel, but unfortunately no record of their relationship is extant.

Beissel became a journeyman baker. He traveled first to Strassburg and later to Mannheim where he was employed by one Kantebecker, whose wife, being of a disagreeable temperament, caused Beissel much grief. Beissel denounced her as a Jezebel and took his leave of Mannheim.

His next stopping place was Heidelberg where he became acquainted with the Pietists. He was employed by a man named Prior for whose family he learned to have great affection. Here he met two outstanding preachers who influenced him greatly, Mieg and Kirchmayer. A learned scholar, Haller, also became his friend and helper. Haller brought Beissel into touch with the Pietists who held to their faith secretly and met in the seclusion of the forest. Beissel often met with them and was greatly inspired by their lives and teachings.

In the art of baking Beissel excelled just as in so many other lines. His abilities brought him much fame and incidentally, business to his master, Prior. Also, they brought upon him the envy of other bakers in the city. In the thought of having him dismissed, his rivals declared him to be a Pietist. Even though Prior offered to pay his ransom after Beissel had been cast into prison, the proffer was declined and Beissel banished. He left Heidelberg never to return. Before his departure he returned to his family at Eberbach in order to bid them a final farewell.

The influence on Beissel of the life at Heidelberg among the Pietists, was felt by him throughout the remainder of his life. In later years he refers directly to this influence in a letter written to his former master Prior in 1755.

"God greet you as my master that was, thirty-eight years ago.....I have many a time pondered over those times, and it went every time much to my heart, especially as you also had taken much great pains for me before the city council. May the Lord be your reward and requiter upon the day of blessed eternity.....What sorrowful times I have had since cannot be written....I yet must bless you and all your household, as I recognize it as the house of my spiritual mother, for in those days I still sat on the lap, and did not know what it costs to stand and to walk on one's own feet.

"In regard to my present condition, I have to report that what I have been seeking during long years and with so many pains and tears, has come to me. I am waiting with longing for the consummation of the tribulations of the whole Church of God.

"I greet you a thousand times, together with your beloved daughter, whichever it was that sent me greetings. I shall not forget you as long as I yet shall live on this earth.

Conrad Beissel

"A stranger and pilgrim in this world, Vale!"

* Manuscript letter book of Beissel, p. 90 - original in the library of Juniata College.

Beissel was forced to flee by night from his Eberbach surroundings, in order to escape arrest and persecution. He then identified himself with a baker named Schatz, an Inspirationist, and thereupon, met the renowned John F. Rock. The Inspirationists each lived for himself, and regulated their conduct according to their individual inclinations. Later, Beissel described the mental attitude of the Inspirationists as one characterized by even greater confusion than that of the Babylon (church) from which they had separated. Even so, Beissel was influenced religiously by this group.

It was at this stage of experience that Beissel came in contact with some of the Dunkers at Marienborn and Schwarzenau. And it must be recognized that the Inspirationists at Marienborn had a greater attraction for him than the Dunkers. Doubtless, this was due to the stronger mystical tendencies of the former group. Accordingly Beissel became discontented. He was seeking for a religious anchorage which he had been unable to find. Under the promptings of restlessness, he was persuaded by two companions, Stiefel and Stuntz, to embark with them for America. Having no money of his own, his passage was paid by Stuntz who advanced the money as a loan. Also on the voyage were Henry von Bebern and Simon Koenig. Landing at Boston in 1720, they came to Germantown probably because most of their friends had already settled there.

Beissel soon came to know Becker and apprenticed himself to him to learn the trade of weaver. The importance of this relationship cannot be over emphasized. While it resulted

unhappily for the infant church because of Beissel's disruptive influence, it was nevertheless his enthusiastic spirit that prompted the leaders to make their first visitation. The facts are in themselves almost unbelievably paradoxical.*

A second influence upon Beissel in his early days in America came from the so-called Kelpianites, a Pietist group along the Wissahickon.** They strengthened the tendency towards the hermitical life which for some time had attracted Beissel on account of his readings in Boehme, Arnold and Peterson*** Thus when his year of apprenticeship with Peter Becker was finished he and his companion Stuntz went into the region of the Conestoga where they set up solitary residence at a place known as Mill Creek, Lancaster County. They were soon joined

* On page 15 of the Chronicon Ephratense we have it reported that the Dunkers shared with Beissel the fact of their disunity since arriving in America. " 'See dear friend,' they said, 'thus it has happened to us; we have become strangers one to the other, and nearly all love and faithfulness have been lost among us.' In reply to this he (Beissel) impressively exhorted them not to tarry any longer in so dangerous, loveless unregenerate condition, but to reunite themselves in love to one another, and to drop all contrariness. And then they should make the attempt and see whether they could not call together a meeting; if any good is effected, something will be gained; if not wait awhile longer. This advice was not wholly spoken to the wind, for it is clear from it that he had a hand in the awakening which soon after followed in and about Germantown; for it was through these edifying speeches that these good people were again aroused from their sleepiness."

** See J. S. Sachse's "Pietists of Colonial Pennsylvania" for an account of the Kelpianites.

*** See Gillin "The Dunkers" - page 114.

by the two other companions of their voyage - Stiefel and von Bebern. The four lived for a time at Mill Creek in daily meditation and prayer. Needless to say they occasioned much criticism and aroused much anxiety among the neighboring people.

This solitary community did not last long. Beissel's companions soon became restless in this type of life. Stiefel was the first to take his leave. He joined the Moravians. Von Bebern was the next to go. He was shipwrecked and in his travellings froze both hands and both feet. He was cared for during his latter days in America by Christopher Witt, the last of the Kelpianites.

Stuntz in due time made his departure also, selling their dwelling in order to recoup the money he advanced to Beissel for his passage to America. Thus Beissel left alone for a time, was faced with the necessity of building a new house at a place known as Swede's Spring. Michael Wohlfart, a Pietist from Memel on the Baltic Sea, joined him in his new abode in 1724.

All the groups with whom Beissel came into touch seem to have influenced him in some degree. His first wilderness excursion was no exception. While living at Swede's Spring with his three friends, he and von Bebern made a trip into Maryland to visit a Lbadist colony. Beissel there found support for his leaning towards celibacy and the ascetic life. Since the people of the colony had lived for a time under a successful communal regime, Beissel was apparently influenced in part by

them to establish communism at Ephrata and also in his first Dunker congregation.

Attempts have been made to trace the Sabbatarian influence to about this period in his life.* Whether association with others who believed in Sabbath observance was directly responsible for his acceptance of this standard, cannot be definitely ascertained. The fact remains, however, that Beissel always had a strong legalistic tendency in his interpretations of Scripture and it can safely be said that if he had found others who observed the Jewish Sabbath, he would respond at once to the idea.

While living with Michael Wohlfart in 1724 Beissel was visited by Becker's party and baptized by them on their first missionary tour. As already observed, Beissel had become the leader of a new congregation here at Conestoga. The choice did not prove a wise one, however, inasmuch as Beissel, while holding certain views in common with the Dunkers and being impressed with their piety, was far removed from them in many of his tenets. In fact, he was widely separated from all other groups, as far as a final analysis of his views is concerned. One sees in Beissel in strange mixture, German Pietism; the Mysticism of Boehme and Arnold; the unique views of the Inspirationists of which John Rock was the chief exponent; some trace of the Kelpianite influence; the communism of Alexander Mack and the Labadists; and a strong legalistic interpretation

* Gillin says that he came in contact with English Sabbatarians in this period, while Brumbaugh traces this belief in Beissel's system to the Keithian controversy of the Quaker Society. See Brumbaugh, "History of the Brethren," - p.443.

of the Scriptures and of life. There is indeed no character in American church history who has played so unique a part as that of Conrad Beissel in the early Dunker church.

Not long after the visit to Conestoga, the Germantown Dunkers received word of Beissel's strange teachings regarding the Sabbath. Their instant fears for the new congregation proved well founded. Beissel soon began to expound his views of Sabbath observance, his preference for celibacy and his belief that certain foods should be shunned. He had a strange hypnotic power over men and women and he was beginning to make use of it with the congregation and in the community.*

Beissel was not disturbed in his influence over the new congregation for some time, chiefly because of their distance from Germantown. He became very active in the first three years of his leadership at Conestoga and at other places, where his preaching to the Dunkers rallied them in support of his beliefs. Many were converted under his ministry and added to the group, at Falckner's Swamp and in the Schuylkill region.

Until the end of a three year period, there was no actual division between the two groups. Then the Germantown church decided upon a second visitation because of their distrust of what was being done at Conestoga. The men who made this journey caused an open rupture. It came about because Jacob Stuntz had married a near kinswoman. Beissel had placed him under the ban. Henry Traut and Stephen Koch, two members of the deputation from Germantown visited Stuntz on their way to Conestoga. They

* There were many reports abroad concerning Beissel to the effect that he was a seducer and destroyer of wedlock-
Chronicon Ephratense - p.36.

released Stuntz from the ban although, as it later developed, he was scarcely in his right mind. They came with Stuntz to a meeting at Henry Hohn's at Conestoga. On seeing what had happened Beissel was furious and had Traut and Koch disciplined. The others from Germantown sided with their colleagues. The consequent open breach was not healed at the time the deputation left to return home.

Another incident which added fuel to the growing flames of the misunderstanding occurred because of the fact that after/^{the}Conestoga leaders had had some success in winning new members at the Falckner's Swamp congregation, the Germantown group attempted to influence these converts against Beissel and his teachings. These disruptions, in addition to Beissel's small book published in 1728 in defense of the seventh day as the Sabbath, provided the basis for an almost complete break, which came finally when Beissel and all his followers were rebaptized.

The baptismal event took place in December 1728. Beissel was experiencing some dissension within his congregation and blamed it upon the subversive influences from Germantown. Upon this reasoning he determined "to give these people their baptism back again,"* a final step in separating the two groups which were never again to be united.

Several attempts were made to bring about peace and unity. When Alexander Mack arrived in the next year the first word he had was about the "Beisselainers." Naturally the story was greatly distorted and exaggerated by the prejudice of the

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 48.

Germantown leaders. Nevertheless in the year following his arrival he journeyed to Conestoga to negotiate if possible some peace and unity between the two groups. By this time Beissel was in no mood to compromise and the attempt ended in complete failure. Later on Beissel wished to effect a reconciliation but the Germantown group demanded an investigation of the affairs of the Conestoga congregation. Beissel would of course not consent to this and the division became permanent.

The causes of division were deeprooted in the underlying beliefs and personalities of the leaders of the factions represented. Beissel was by nature mystical. While he undoubtedly had great ability, his self-esteem was such that he could not lay his mind alongside of others to work or think in harmony with them. The authors of the "Chronicon Ephratense" are correct when they say,

"Those who know how the affair stood between the two congregations, know also that a close union between them was impossible; for they were born of diverse causes."

This is the true explanation of the schism. The leaders had been born under diverse conditions in Europe and this was reflected in their conduct and theology in America. Beissel was strongly influenced by Böehme and Arnold. Mack was influenced only by Arnold's historical writings. Hochmann had influenced both to a degree. Mack did not adhere to Hochmann's mysticism but did accept his piety.

Beissel had not been a Dunker in Europe but had been more attracted to the Inspirationists. His training in the principles

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 39.

of the Dunker faith as evolved by Mack and Becker was very meager. In leading the Dunker church at Conestoga he was really working in a religious laboratory to fashion his own theological concepts which he hoped to bring to full consummation. He had not had the evil experience with communism and celibacy which Mack had had in Germany. His natural inclination to mysticism led him to great excesses.

Mack on the other hand was always wary of mysticism. Experience had taught him that proper Christian marriage was much more to be desired than celibacy. He was not given to legalism as Beissel but was much more a true Pietist.

The division brought to a head certain tenets which had struggled for expression in both groups. Several in Beissel's group who were less mystical now sided openly with the Germantown leaders. On the other hand, many of the latter group attracted by mysticism, now set their thoughts in the direction of the appeal of the Conestoga congregation in this respect. The demarcation between the two tendencies, it must be admitted, had been present at Schwarzenau. The Dunkers became less mystical and leaned more heavily upon Scripture. The "Beisselainers," freed from the restraining influences of the Dunkers, gave full expression to the quest for guidance by the spirit, particularly as revealed in Beissel.

Left to go his own way after the rupture with the other members of the church, Beissel launched upon his real career and began to give full expression to his religious life which had been struggling for orientation for many years. He declared

openly his opposition to marriage and published his Ehebuchlein in which he pictured marriage as the "penitentiary of carnal man."* Many in his congregation did not agree with this conclusion. Beissel, however, was adamant; and from this point he began to recognize three classes of members of his spiritual household: the Household members who were the married folk; the Solitary brethren who lived unmarried; and the Spiritual Virgins, who resolved to lead a pure virgin life and who from time to time fled to Beissel for guidance. He showed marked favor for the celibates in many ways.

Finally in 1732 for an unknown reason Beissel, calling the elders of the congregation together, left the church in their hands as he departed for a remote spot in the wilderness known now as Ephrata. Here he lived once again the life of a hermit in a small hut which had been erected by Emanuel Eckertlin on the banks of the Cocalico Creek.

THE EPHRATA SETTLEMENT

The congregation which Beissel left had naturally leaned heavily upon his leadership. After he had gone, the factions in the group quarreled so frequently with each other that the services were referred to as "court meetings."** Eventually Beissel found an opportunity to call the leaders to him at his home in order to counsel with them. They urged him to return as their leader. He declined. Instead, the members of the congregation began to move to Ephrata. Late in the same year

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 58.

** Chronicon Ephratense - p. 65.

in which Beissel had removed to Ephrata, he was joined by Jacob Gast, Samuel Eckerlin and Martin Brewer. Then came two of the so called Spiritual Virgins, Anna and Marie Eicher, who had been among the first to come under Beissel's power at Conestoga. Naturally scandal grew from knowledge of the fact that women were now being harbored in the new settlement. To quiet this criticism it was decided to erect a new house for the women on the other side of the creek. In May 1733 the Eicher sisters moved into their new home where they remained until the famous Sister's Convent was erected.

This is the story of the beginning of the Ephrata cloisters, which properly dates from 1732, when many people attracted either by this type of life or the prospect of relief from the discouragement and disappointment of the world, turned to this monastic institution. All types of religious malcontents, fanatics and psychopaths made the Ephrata group unique in America and perhaps in western Christendom.

Of course, not all who came were fanatics and "discontents." Beissel's visit to Tuplehocken on one of his trips designed to enlist new converts is clearly in evidence of this. At Tuplehocken was a union congregation composed of Lutherans and Reformed communicants. An "awakening" was experienced chiefly through the efforts of Beissel. So impressed were the people of the congregation that the pastor, Peter Miller and an elder Conrad Weiser, accompanied Beissel to Ephrata. Miller* was one

* Peter Miller was a native of Oberant Lantern, Germany. He was a graduate of Heidelberg University and a profound scholar of the classics and an excellent linguist. "He is a learned man, understands the Oriental languages, speaks Latin, discusses theological controversies as well as other sciences." Acrelius "History of New Sweden" - 374

of the most learned men in America at that time and Conrad Weiser has been described as "in many respects the most remarkable German in Colonial America."* The two men were baptized at a service in May 1735. Weiser was a traveler who was frequently away from the settlement. He did not prove to be very helpful. On the other hand, Miller proved to be a true and devoted follower until the end. He is credited as being one of the writers of the famous "Chronicon" and became the leader of the whole movement after Beissel's death. His grave is to be seen today in the Ephrata burial ground.

Under the leadership of the eccentric Beissel the Ephrata community grew in a unique manner. As more members came to live at the center it was necessary to expand the buildings. Thus in 1740 a house for the solitary brethren known as "Bethania" was built. In 1744 a new structure known as the "Hebron" was raised alongside of the "Saal" or house of worship. The "Hebron" was for the sisters. These buildings reflect mediaeval German architecture and were extremely well constructed. They were landmarks in the history of early American architecture.** Some of the buildings including the "Saal" and the Sister's house are standing today and are visited by historians and many others.

The strange religious life of these people can be felt in the very type of the buildings. Passageways between rooms and halls are very narrow as a reminder of the narrow ways that lead into the Kingdom. The Doorways are all so low that one

* Weiser was the father-in-law of the Rev. Henry M. Muhlenberg and grandfather of General Muhlenberg of the Revolution, and his brother the first speaker of the Congress of the United State
**See Kimball and Edgell "A History of Architecture" for references to these structures.

of the most learned men in America at that time and Conrad Weiser has been described as "in many respects the most remarkable German in Colonial America."* The two men were baptized at a service in May 1735. Weiser was a traveler who was frequently away from the settlement. He did not prove to be very helpful. On the other hand, Miller proved to be a true and devoted follower until the end. He is credited as being one of the writers of the famous "Chronicon" and became the leader of the whole movement after Beissel's death. His grave is to be seen today in the Ephrata burial ground.

Under the leadership of the eccentric Beissel the Ephrata community grew in a unique manner. As more members came to live at the center it was necessary to expand the buildings. Thus in 1740 a house for the solitary brethren known as "Bethania" was built. In 1744 a new structure known as the "Hebron" was raised alongside of the "Saal" or house of worship. The "Hebron" was for the sisters. These buildings reflect mediaeval German architecture and were extremely well constructed. They were landmarks in the history of early American architecture.** Some of the buildings including the "Saal" and the Sister's house are standing today and are visited by historians and many others.

The strange religious life of these people can be felt in the very type of the buildings. Passageways between rooms and halls are very narrow as a reminder of the narrow ways that lead into the Kingdom. The Doorways are all so low that one

* Weiser was the father-in-law of the Rev. Henry M. Muhlenberg and grandfather of General Muhlenberg of the Revolution, and his brother the first speaker of the Congress of the United States
**See Kimball and Edgell "A History of Architecture" for references to these structures.

VIEWS OF THE FAMOUS EPHRATA CLOISTERS



GRAVES OF PETER MILLER AND
CONRAD BEISSEL

must stoop to enter. This was to teach humility. Furnishings throughout were extremely simple. Each room or "cell" had a small window, a narrow board for a bed and a wooden block for a pillow. All appointments were in keeping with the strictest sort of an ascetic life.

A most rigorous discipline was maintained at the community. For years every member arose at midnight for a four hour watch during which time devotions were held, usually by the Superintendent, (Beissel.) Four o'clock was the hour when the labor for the day began, and as a result most of the night was spent in wakefulness.

The members of the Ephrata group were all very industrious and under Beissel's direction engaged in various occupations. The sisters spent their time in ornamental writing, paper making, hymn writing, weaving, spinning, basket making and many other occupations. The men engaged in farming, printing, paper making, book-binding and other things. The Society had its own saw mill, grist mill, paper mill and one of the earliest and best printing presses in America. Publications which came from this press comprise a truly magnificent collection. The Blutige Schau-Platz, the Mennonites' Martyr book, was published here in 1748. This work has been cited as the finest example of book-making in colonial America.* Theological volumes and many hymn books were published as well as the famous "Chronicon Ephratense" which is a record book of the Ephrata movement.**

The Society owned all things in common. While at times

* See Brumbaugh "History of the Brethren"-p. 459, also Appendix 11

** This volume is one of the best primary sources for Colonial religious history which is available

there were opportunities to lay aside good profits from the productions of the mills, all common monies above those needed for necessities were distributed for charity. The communal system characterized the life of the Society from its very beginning and was maintained until its end.

In the "Saal" or worship hall the entire community assembled regularly for worship. This building was not large and would easily be filled by two hundred people. The sisters sat in the gallery where they could neither see nor be seen by the men on the main floor. The Superintendent sat on a large raised platform in the front of the hall and gave his exhortations from a small pulpit in the front. His preaching and entire demeanour were such as to cast an emotional spell over his hearers. In his ability to do this he was unequaled among man of his age. The whole Ephrata movement is explicable only in the light of his unique personality.

Not the least of Beissel's accomplishments was in the field of music. As in everything else so in music his genius was distinctive beyond description. He taught music to many of the sisters and brothers and enabled them to learn composition. His own compositions, some of which introduced seven part harmony were outstanding. As rendered by choirs which he trained, they prompted hearers from Europe and America to describe them as "heavenly melodies," like nothing ever heard by the human

ear before.* Some of Beissel's music is still used** today, although its peculiar character makes it difficult to interpret and appreciate. His most outstanding musical publication was Paradisiches Wunder-spiel which contained 441 of his hymns.

During the Revolutionary War the Ephrata settlement was used as a hospital for many soldiers who were cared for by the men and women of the society. A monument has been erected on the hill near the cloisters where the bodies of soldiers were buried. Also, when Howe held Philadelphia, the Continental money was printed at the Ephrata press. The tradition, well substantiated, is still repeated by the guides at the Settlement that Peter Miller, perhaps the best linguist in the colonies, had translated the Declaration of Independence into seven European languages.

* The following interesting incident is told by Joseph Belcher, "Religious Denominations in the United States," which shows the musical reputation of the Society -

"Their singing so charmed the commissioners who were sent to visit the society by the English Government, after the French War, that they requested a copy to be sent to the royal family in England, which was cheerfully complied with, and which, I understand is still preserved in the British Museum. About twelve months afterwards a box was received about three or four feet long and two or two and a half wide, containing a present in return. What the present was is not now known, none having seen it but Friedsam (Beissel and Jabez, who was then prior, and into whose care it was consigned. It was buried secretly by him, with the advice of Beissel. It is supposed, from a hint given by Jabez, that it was images of the king and queen in full costume, or images of the Saviour on the cross, and the Virgin Mary, supposing as many in this country have erroneously thought that the people of Ephrata possess many of the Catholic principles and feelings."

** Used in the repertoire of Juniata College Choir, Huntingdon Penna.

Beissel was in many ways a tyrant in his rule of the society. Those who did not agree with him were promptly banished and all came to understand that his word was law. After he severed his relations with the Dunkers, he was unrestrained in his ambitions and proceeded to inaugurate new practices. He introduced monastic customs including the tonsure and garb of the Capuchin monks, and entertained peculiar ideas of Biblical symbolism and interpretation. The result was a wide departure from simple Gospel tenets characteristic of the sect from which he had branched out.

While in residence at the settlement Beissel lived in a house by himself, midway between the two largest buildings. As was the custom for all residents, he too was given a symbolic name used when references were made to him in the records of the Society. At the time of his death the following words were written in the Register:

"Vatter Friedsam did, in the presence of his spiritual children, as he his farewell made quite gently and quietly, in the Lord fall asleep in the year 1768, the 6th July. His age was seventy-seven years, four months, and six days, in the eighth hour of the day after noon. What his doings and occupation of the spirit, and how much he suffered and labored for the Lord's sake, the time of his life, by day and night, he who his writings diligently reads and searches can find in what kind of labor his life passed in the fifty-two years."*

Peter Miller who succeeded Beissel preached the latter's funeral sermon. More than six hundred people attended the

* See Chapter 33, Chronicon Ephratense, for a full account of Beissel's illness and death.

services. There is no doubt of Miller's great ability as a scholar* but his leadership did not find such a response as Beissel's. With the "Superintendent", departed the original spirit and attractiveness of the Ephrata Settlement. Beginning with his death the Society gradually began to decline and dwindle away.

As early as the year 1748 an interesting experiment in Christian Education was carried on at Ephrata under the direction of Ludwig Hoecker. It anticipated the Sunday School movement and antedated Robert Raikes' program by at least thirty years. Hoecker, who had formerly been a member of the Dunker congregation at Germantown brought a large group of young people together each Sunday afternoon for instruction. As the project grew, a building called "Succoth" was constructed for this work. After a period of successful promotion the idea was finally dropped. The fact of its existence for even a short time was unique and it must be added to that already conspicuous list of pioneer enterprises at Ephrata.

Beissel's rule was marred by only one internal disruption, centering around the Eckerlin family, that had come from Strassburg in Germany and had been under the influence of Mack at Schwarzenau. Upon arriving in America, the four brothers in the family group were led to Ephrata through the efforts of Michael Wohlfart. Gabriel Eckerlin became the first prior of the monastery and was succeeded by his brother Israel. Israel

* Miller was chosen as a member of the American Philosophical Society in April 8, 1768.

was very successful in the business enterprises of the Society. Under his leadership, most of the Textile mills were established and put on a firm footing. His ability won for him the respect of the members of the Society and the jealousy of Beissel. A feud between the two culminated in a decision on Beissel's part to resign as Superintendent. Israel Eckerlin was his successor and continued as superintendent for a time. Peter Miller and Israel Eckerlin's brother Samuel were still on Beissel's side, however, and soon the old leader was back at his post and Israel Eckerlin was on his way to the west.

Had the Eckerlins continued in leadership, the community might have grown into an industrial center because Israel Eckerlin was a genius in this line of work. The return of Beissel to his former place of leadership, however, spelled the failure of industrial progress and the community was doomed to ultimate extinction by the very nature of its mode of life. Thus in the nineteenth century the Society was only a shadow of its former self. The old buildings still stand, principally as a reminder of the most unique experiment in early American church history.

GROWTH AND PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA

The Ephrata incident, bearing vitally as it does upon the history of the infant church in America, is not to be taken as a pattern of either the true life or the fate of the Dunkers in colonial America. The course of the main body of the church, which was to flower into a sturdy denomination, ran in a much more natural way. Its history shows it to have been^a steadily progressing group.

It has been observed that many families settled in places nearby Germantown. As the land in Eastern Pennsylvania rose in price they began to migrate to the south and west where land was much cheaper. The Dunkers in most cases followed the Scotch-Irish in their trek westward. In outlining the record of their progress, a natural division is found between 1724, the date of setting up the first congregation, and 1770.*

The Germantown congregation continued to be the most influential of all in the early years of the church's history. It was nevertheless surpassed by the Coventry congregation, in the matter of missionary zeal and emigration. As the second congregation organized in America, Coventry was well managed by Martin Urner, a man of genius. Altho it was close to the scene of controversy at Conestoga, the congregation was never swept away by Beissel's doctrines but maintained a healthy religious life and poured a steady stream of emigrants into the western and central regions of Pennsylvania and into Maryland and Virginia.

The third congregation established was the ill fated Conestoga church, whose history is not all grievous. Those who did not follow Beissel to Ephrata remained steadfast in their relationship to the Germantown congregation and soon began to grow in spite of several emigrations to the Beisselian community. Twenty-seven remained at Conestoga after Beissel's departure. Peter Becker was the minister. He offset the Beisselian influence and continued with his people until 1734

* This was the date when Morgan Edwards published his "Materials towards a History of the Baptists in America." It was also the dawn of the Revolutionary war.

when Michael Frantz was put in charge. According to Morgan Edwards this congregation was larger than either Germantown or Coventry in 1770. Fifty-three families, comprising 86 persons, were affiliated with the church.

There is evidence* that as early as 1722 scattered members of the Dunker group were at three other places, (Oley, Skippack and Falckner's Swamp) along the road from Germantown to Conestoga. These congregations were late in being started. In 1770 the congregation at Oley had but 20 members, many of whom fell prey to the Ephrata influence.

There is record of two new congregations being organized in 1733, one in New Jersey at Amwell and the other at Great Swamp. The Amwell congregation is listed by Morgan Edwards as the only congregation in New Jersey as late as 1790. John Naas with a group which he took with him, formed the nucleus of this congregation which flourished under Naas' strong leadership. The other congregation at Great Swamp was ministered to by Becker, Naas and Urner until 1738 when Abraham Duboy became the resident minister.

The White Oak congregation, near Lititz, was organized in 1736. A number of German families in this district, with the Conestoga congregation, shared the ministry of Michael Frantz. In 1770 this congregation numbered 65 members.

In addition to those already mentioned there is record of the following congregations organized prior to 1770: In 1738

* Chronicon Ephratense - p. 24.

the Little Conewage in York county, Hanover township; In 1741 the Conewage congregation 14 miles from York; in 1748 the Northkill congregation which drew it's membership from Tuplehocken and Bern townships in Berks County; in 1756 the Great Swatara congregation was organized although some of the members were baptized there earlier than this date;* in 1758 the Bermudian congregation in York county was organized; in 1758 the Codorus church in York county.

As early as 1760, some members were to be found in the Carolinas. Daniel Letterman and Caspar Rowland migrated there from Germantown, Pennsylvania, but there is no record of a congregation having been formed.

The first congregation west of the Alleghenies, established in Somerset county in 1762, was known as the Stony Creek church. Little Swatara was formally organized in 1770 although there was record of Dunker church life there as early as 1745. Thus including this congregation, there were 15 congregations of Dunkers in Pennsylvania in 1770** having a total membership of 623. Beissel's group at Ephrata at that time numbered 135 and the congregation at Amwell, New Jersey had 46 members. It is stated by Morgan Edwards that in 1790 there were 7 churches in Maryland and 10 in the more southern states.***

* Brumbaugh, "History of the Brethren," p. 319

** "Materials towards a History of the Baptists in America," Vol. on Pennsylvania - Morgan Edwards.

*** For this information concerning the state of the church in America we are indebted to Morgan Edwards and Brumbaugh as well as Gillin. See complete references in the bibliography.

A study of the comparative membership figures of the congregations in eastern Pennsylvania in this early period, reveals that although there was a constant growth in new members, the size of many of the congregations diminished through emigration to the west and south. The Germantown church in 1770 had only fifty members. The Conestoga congregation which had received into membership by 1770 a total of three hundred and ninety-five members, had but eighty six members remaining at that time.

GREAT PERIOD OF EXPANSION - 1770-1865

With the outbreak of the Revolutionary War and the disturbances necessarily attendant upon that event, there was a serious gap in the expansion of the Dunker church. When the war was over and the Indians were subdued in the Northwest territory, a steady westward migration set in. The Dunker movement, only a phase of the general trend westward, was stimulated by the allurements of cheap lands easily obtained. Many Dunkers traveled over the Pennsylvania mountains via Pittsburgh into the plains of Ohio. Many others from Maryland and Virginia also pushed westward at the same time.

Another stream of Dunkers crossed from the Carolinas where they had become firmly established. They made their way into Tennessee and Kentucky, finally reaching Indiana and Illinois. The settlers in Ohio also spread further westward into Indiana and Illinois and thence on through Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas, to the Pacific slope.

As early as 1799, settlers from Virginia came over into several counties of Tennessee, but their numbers were small until supplemented in 1833 by a new emigration from the same state. Thereafter, a steady stream of Dunkers kept pouring westward from Virginia and the Carolinas into Tennessee and Kentucky.

The first Dunkers came to Missouri in 1795 from North Carolina and Pennsylvania. In 1824, fifty communicants in one county of Missouri were closely connected with a Dunker settlement some forty miles away in Illinois.

The turn of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of the great migration into Ohio. The dates of the settlement of the western states follow in chronological order and in natural progression. In 1824, Dunker settlers entered Illinois; in 1840 they pushed into Iowa; in 1852 some few went to Oregon; and 1856, members of the Dunkers are recorded in California, whither they had come from Illinois.*

This is of course an incomplete picture. At the same time it affords a bird's eye view of the settlements of Dunkers in almost one hundred years of their history which spans the two great American wars. The states mentioned are those where the greatest population of Dunkers is to be found today. In 1890 when the first census of the Dunkers was taken by Howard Miller, it revealed that Pennsylvania had the greatest number of communicants. Indiana, Ohio, Virginia, Illinois, Kansas and Iowa follow in order.

* Holsinger, "History of the Tunkers" - pages 185, 812.

The westward migration discloses that the Dunkers moved where cheaper land was to be found and that they traveled the way of least resistance according to the natural water courses and other geographical advantages. They settled for the most part where some of their own people or others of the so called "plain people"* had already located. Another factor which determined the course of their migration was that in almost every case they sought fertile soil for farming. They were almost exclusively an agricultural people. The adaptability of any region to agriculture had a decisive influence upon the direction of their migration.

THE ANNUAL MEETING

The conduct of the church after the first period when there was but little organization to speak of, lodged mainly in the Annual Meeting. In Europe the church had no official assembly to which all of the congregations sent representatives. Contacts were made by frequent visits of the leaders to the congregations and by correspondence. This method was also pursued in the early history of the church in America. Peter Becker, Alexander Mack and others visited individual congregations in promoting the common welfare, the unity and the consistent development of the denomination as a whole. As the church grew this method proved inadequate because the congregations were spread over too wide a territory. The Annual Meeting soon developed and it has served from the beginning as a clearing house for all church problems of policy and organ-

* A term used in America referring to Mennonites, Amish, Dunkers, etc.

ization.

Even so, the Annual Meeting was not evolved in any natural and logical course of events but as a protection against the snare set for them as they thought, by the Synods of Count Zinzendorf.

Zinzendorf had come to Pennsylvania to quiet the strife between the various German sects and to establish the true "Church of God in the Spirit." From the first, he met with strong opposition. Many of the church people were quite incredulous concerning his high purposes. However, Henrich Antes, John Bechtel, Adam Gruber and others thought the time had come to lessen the evident malice, envy and evil speaking which at the time pervaded the various German groups. They met with Zinzendorf on several occasions at Germantown and discussed measures which might be availed of in helping the situation. As a result an invitation was issued to all of the groups to meet in general synod at Germantown Jan. 12, 1742. Thus began Zinzendorf's famous synods of 1742 numbering seven in all.

Representatives came from all of the major bodies directly at interest: Dunkers, Lutherans, German Reformed, Mennonites, Schwenkfelders, Separatists, Seventh Day Baptists from Ephrata, Hermits, and Moravians. The immediate purpose of course was to foster a more tolerant and friendly spirit among all these denominations, but apparently Zinzendorf wished to carry the synod beyond this and have it the instrument whereby a degree of Christian unity might be established. In this connection, he wrote:

"I was neither the author nor advisor of these Synods which were called by Pennsylvanians who had become tired of their own ways. What the object of these meetings may have been, I am not able to determine. I should almost think that every Deputy had his own instructions. I wished to make use of this opportunity to place on the throne the Lamb of God, as the real Creator, Preserver, Redeemer and Sanctifier of the whole world, and at the same time to introduce in theoria et praxi the catholicity of His Passion as a universal theology for the Pennsylvania Germans."*

The Dunkers manifested a real interest in these Synods.

The delegation from their group was composed of some of their ablest men. Five of the twenty-five leaders in the discussions were Dunkers. Three others had formerly been of their membership but were now at Ephrata.

The form of conducting the synods was very closely related to that of the Annual Meeting of the Dunkers which probably would not have developed for a considerable time had it not been for the synods. The similarity between the two assemblies appears in the following writing by George Adam Martin:

"Count Zinzendorf and many of his Brethren came into the country and occasioned a great stir, especially by his conferences. And because all denominations were invited to them, I too was deputed by my Superintendent to attend them. When I arrived at the conference, which was held at Oley, I found there some of our Baptists (Dunkers), Seventh Day men, Mennonites and Separatists.

"The count himself was president, and for three days I heard queer and wonderful things there. After my return home I went to my Superintendent and said that I looked upon the Count's conferences as snares, for the purpose of bringing simple minded and inexperienced converts back to infant baptism and church going, and of erecting the old Babel again. We consulted with each other what to do, and agreed to get ahead of the danger, as some Baptists had already been

* Brumbaugh, "History of the Brethren" - p. 475 f.

smitten with this vain doctrine, and to hold a yearly conference, or as we called it a Great Assembly, and fixed at once the time and place. This is the beginning and foundation of the Great Assemblies of the Baptists."*

The Annual Meeting was known at first as the "Big Meeting." It gradually became the governing organization of the Dunker church in all questions of doctrine and practice. Before 1778 the assembly meetings did not meet every year. Exact minutes were not kept. The purpose at first was to meet only for conference and devotion. A Love Feast was held and the settlement of difficulties within congregations was more or less incidental and secondary. The first meetings did not concern themselves with legislation intended to bind all of the congregations. The group first met in an advisory capacity. Many times no difficulties were presented for settlement and the time was devoted entirely to exhortation and prayer.

Minutes covering the period until 1778 are not extant. From 1778 until 1830 the minutes are incomplete. The tendency of the church not to keep records in those early days contributed to their laxity in this regard. Accurate records were kept starting in 1830 and have been kept and preserved ever since.

Not until 1882 was the constitution of the Dunker church developed to the point of giving mandatory power to the decisions of the Annual Meeting. From this time, its decisions were binding for all their congregations.

In 1859 the first committee was dispatched by the Annual Meeting to settle a dispute within one of the local churches.

* Chronicon Ephratense, p. 245.

The first Standing Committee, of which there is record, - now the executive committee of the assembly- was appointed in 1785. The Standing Committee is evidently an outgrowth of the original practice established in the Zinzendorf Synods, of having a committee to draw up the agenda. The purpose was to keep irrelevant issues from blocking the progress of the conference. This method of getting issues before the conference continues to the present time.

The Standing Committee is the center of the whole organization. At first its members were elected by the local congregation where the Annual Meeting was held, from among the delegates assembled. In 1868 this practice was changed so that each state district elected a member to serve on the Committee. In 1897 it was ordered that no person could serve for two years in succession ^N of the Standing Committee.

The functions of the Standing Committee which meets several days ahead of the general gathering are mainly three in number: to make nominations for all vacancies occurring in the church offices during the year (these must be confirmed by the General Conference); to hear any appeals from dissatisfied members or churches (the committee may delegate committees to visit and investigate such cases); and to consider queries sent from State districts to the Annual Meeting. Should no answer be found to the query, the committee ponders over it and recommends an answer to the Conference. Approval by the Conference makes the answer binding.

Delegates to the Annual Meeting were originally sent by

congregations and State Districts. At first everyone present had a right to vote. As the numbers of persons in attendance grew, this practice had to be abandoned. In 1882 the voting power was confined to members of the Standing Committee and to the delegates from local congregations. Each congregation was allowed one delegate. Where the membership was above two hundred a second delegate was authorized. Qualifications of delegates are that they must not wear gold as ornaments and must not use, buy or sell or raise tobacco. They must be recommended by the local church for their spiritual life and faithfulness.

DEVELOPMENT OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION

The Dunker church in America developed externally along three special lines, the local congregation, the District Meeting and the Annual Meeting. The growth of the local congregation manifested itself chiefly through changes with regard to the ministry. Inheriting a selfgoverning church according to the Baptist conception which had existed among them in Germany, the preachers were chosen at first from their own church membership. Gradually, three degrees evolved within the regular ministry and the diaconate.* Only the third degree minister, the elder, was ordained by the laying on of hands. All officers were chosen by the church and were subject to removal by the local congregation.**

* These degrees of the ministry will be dealt with in the next Chapter.

** Classified Minutes of the Annual Meeting (1778-1885) - published by Brethren Publishing Co. 1886, p. 95-112.

Gradually the relation of the ministers to their own and neighboring congregations, was outlined and defined. In 1822 it was decided that no elder should proceed upon any course of action without first consulting the church. In order to prevent the danger of a hierarchy developing, it was decided in 1849 that if an elder commit a sin he must confess to the congregation just as would any other member. The church was to be supreme.

From 1849 there was a steady growth in the development of centering authority with the Annual Meeting rather than with the local congregation. In this respect the denomination differed from Baptist groups, most of whom continued to operate on the basis of the purely congregational form of government.

In 1863 the ruling was adopted that where doubt existed regarding the authority of a local elder to settle a dispute in a neighboring congregation concerning a question of adherence to traditional practices, the decision was to be rendered by a "group of elders in adjoining parishes."*

Thus the local congregation experienced an unconscious growth leading to a complex differentiation among the degrees of the ministry and several ruled^s regarding the authority of the clergy. That which had been begun in utter simplicity of form, soon became more involved than the ministry of the older Reformed church ~~ministry~~.

When local congregations grew large enough they divided into districts. In 1843,** each division was constituted a

* Classified Minutes, p. 115, 116.

** Classified Minutes, p. 90.

separate church, even though one bishop might oversee them all. Only the members in a respective district had the right to vote for elders and deacons for the district. This was but one of a number of steps taken to define the relationship between the congregations themselves.

In 1857 it was ruled that no congregation had the right to interfere with the rights of another by restoring

"A member to his place in the church, when he had been excluded by another branch of the church, without the concurrence of the church which had excluded him."*

In 1881 and 1882 as a result of schism within the church, it was decided that a minority group within a congregation may act with full authority to carry out the decisions of the Annual Meeting "as the Annual Meeting is of higher authority than any one church."**

Between the years 1788 and 1885 a complete theory of the relationship between the individual member and the church was evolved and defined. The first stage in the process of development grew out of the necessity of requiring letters of transfer in order to protect congregations from immoral pretenders. Rules for granting letters became more strict as migration gave rise to a greater number of requests. Annual Meeting set up standards in this department of church polity, known as "the order."

In 1842 Annual Meeting decided that local congregations might exercise the privilege of adopting resolutions which, if found to be based upon the Gospel, were to be binding upon all

* Classified Minutes - p.55

** Classified Minutes - p. 57-60

members. Annual Meeting, however, must decide in cases where disputes arise. This privilege was revoked in 1850 by a ruling that

"No district or church has any right to make changes in anything whatsoever, contrary to ancient order, without proper investigation before, and the general consent of Annual Meeting."

The final act determining the policy of the church was passed in 1863 when it was decided that a local congregation cannot

"Be congregational, or act independent from from the churches of our Fraternity, and still be in full union with the church"....."According to the Gospel and the order of the Brethren."*

Growth of the church necessitated dividing it into groups to relieve the work of the Annual meeting. In 1856 it was proposed

"To form districts of five, six or more, adjoining churches, for the purpose of meeting jointly at least once a year, settling difficulties, and thus lessening the business of our 'Yearly meeting.' "

This was passed by the Annual Meeting. Not until 1866 was the system known as District Meeting completed by the church organization. It was then recommended that each state form itself into convenient District Meetings. The plan of organization was minutely described.**

This changed the form of church government considerably because the requirement was that most questions should be passed upon by the District meeting before being presented to the Annual Meeting. The addition of the District Meeting was of course very helpful in the dispatch of business.

* Classified Minutes, p. 54,55.

** Classified Minutes, p.50

Emergence of the Annual Meeting as the authoritative body of the church was perhaps the most significant event in the first hundred years of its growth after being established in America. The meeting soon proved indispensable. Without it, the many congregations of the church would likely have drifted into various forms of practice and belief. Through the Annual Meeting, however, the true doctrines, beliefs and practices of the church, which otherwise would have become extremely vague, were defined and established.

The authority of the Annual Meeting may be observed as having grown steadily, as recorded in the minutes of the church. As early as 1805 one minute is as follows:

"Further, it has been considered, that when there is made a conclusion at the big Yearly Meeting, and there are members who would not heed, nor conduct themselves accordingly, it has been concluded unitedly, that when such persons cannot convince the church by evidence from Holy Scripture, and would or did rise up against said church conclusion, would not hear or obey it all, in such case we could not well do otherwise, but after sufficient and friendly admonition, set them back from the breaking of bread until they learn to do better and become obedient."*

In 1848 an important decision was reached in that rulings of Annual Meeting need not be referred back to the local congregations for final approval, but were binding upon them after being made by the larger body. To allay any ill feelings further decision was reached in 1850 whereby any member who had the consent of his congregation was permitted to reintroduce any question for a second consideration.

A further step was taken in 1858 with regard to an indi-

* Classified Minutes - p. 28.

vidual who held the decisions of the Meetings in disrespect. Such person was to be admonished. If he continued to disobey he "should be dealt with according to Matt. 18.*" Yet another step was taken in 1860 when an answer was given to the question

"Is it then, consistent with our profession (namely, that the New Testament was their only rule of faith and practice), to make strict observance of the Minutes of the Annual Council a test of fellowship?"

The answer was,

"The decisions of the Annual Meeting are obligatory until such decisions shall be repealed by the same authority."**

At the same time, an answer inconsistent with this stand, was handed down in 1865, on the question

"Does the Annual Council make laws, or give advice only, in cases where it has no direct Gospel on the subject?"

The reply was,

"It gives advice only."

The struggle to deal with those who resisted the authority of the Annual Meeting was finally won by a gradual tightening of disciplinary measures against those who spoke disrespectfully of the Council. The final step was then taken in 1882 when the Annual Meeting granted a petition from a District Meeting

"That thereafter all queries sent to Annual Meeting for decision, shall in all cases be decided according to the Scriptures, where there is anything direct (Thus saith the Lord') applying to the question. And all questions to which there is no direct expressed Scripture applying, shall be decided according to the spirit and meaning of the Scripture. And that decision shall be mandatory to all churches having such cases as the decision covers. And all who shall not so heed and observe it, shall be held as not hearing

* Ibid p. 31

** Classified Minutes - p. 30.

the church, and shall be dealt with accordingly."*

The next year, this decision was interpreted by another which stated that the above law did not mean that the Annual Meeting could not give advice when it so desired, and that when it so rendered advice, it was to be designated as such. In this form, authority was delegated to the Annual Meeting. It was a gradual development but it became effective finally in the years between 1865 and 1882, - a period of social development in which the growth and expansion of the new republic was also forging ahead rapidly. The new church grew up with the new democracy. It took shape and molded its ideas along with the country's growth. Here was freedom for the development of this type of institutional life, which could not have been found elsewhere.

UNITY AND DISUNITY

The process of centralizing Dunker activities and authority in the Annual Meeting was a logical course for achieving unity and homogeneity throughout the fellowship of the church. From the beginning, those who comprised the membership were conscious of lines of separation between themselves and other ecclesiastical groups. They were attempting to wage a battle against "conforming to the world" and many of their observances such for instance as wearing plain clothes, were designed to prevent them from becoming victims of the world's vanity. While they felt some degree of kinship with other "plain people",

* Ibid - p. 31.

the Dunkers still felt distinct differences between themselves and the Mennonites. There was very little fraternizing.

The lack of any clearly defined doctrinal standards and rules of church polity, Christian life and worship, put them at a great disadvantage in establishing unity among themselves. Out of a desire for unity, the Dunker church was led away from the purely congregational type of church government to the form they finally accepted. It was soon found that if they were to maintain their distinctive beliefs and practices, they must have a central body to determine right and wrong observances. The annual Meeting thus became their effective instrument "rightly dividing the Word of truth."

The achievement of homogeneity was destined to be bought at the price of disunity. It was not reasonable that all people of their faith living in so many different sections of the country and under such a varied environment, would view the functions and purposes of the church in precisely the same light. Diverse opinions soon arose amongst them, resulting in schisms. In the period beginning about 1850 - although of course the roots are farther back than this - three schools of believers are found among the Dunkers. In the following thirty years, when Annual Meeting was in course of being formulated, the three schools grew further apart in thought and practice. The schisms came in the years 1879-1882.

The character of the three groups respectively, may be summed up in the terms Ultra-conservatives, Conservatives and Liberals. The first, became known as the Old Order Brethren; the

second as the Mother Church; and the third as the Progressives. One group was disturbed concerning innovations that were making their appearance; while another was restless over the seeming slow progress of the methods and work of the church.

The first group to leave the church was the Old Order Brethren. For years they felt anxious because the church was in some respects conforming to the world. They presented their first petition to the Annual Meeting held in 1869, the overture centering around three correctives favored by the petitioners.

They objected to the method in which members for the Standing Committee were chosen, (i.e. from different States) and held that six or eight of the older members of the church should be chosen "from the elders present at the place of the Annual Meeting." They objected also to the growing practice of the Annual Meeting in sending committees to settle disputes in local congregations, and favored the old system whereby the local church, with the help of neighboring congregations, settled these questions. They maintained that the Annual Meeting should confine its deliberations to questions of ordinance and doctrine. The third grievance arose in criticism of church periodicals which had begun to make their appearance. It was urged that nothing be printed in the papers

"That disputes the practice of the precepts and ordinances of the Gospel as handed down to us from Christ and the apostles, through and by the forefathers of the church."*

With this petition the hint was given that unless its demands were met a separation could not be long forestalled.

* Classified Minutes - p. 78

After the objections were published, supplementary items were added assailing the practice of protracted meetings. It was claimed that they worked "Upon the passions of people, without giving them sufficient time to reflect and consider the cost." Sabbath Schools, prayer meetings, social meetings and Bible classes were likewise found objectionable because they were the natural starting points for the entrance of fashionable dressing and pride into the life of church.

The Annual Meeting of 1869 treated the petition and its supplement with great discretion. Yet they did not abolish the church practices to which objections had been raised. They replied that where objectionable features in these innovations were found, they would be eliminated. While this did not satisfy the petitioners, it held off division for ten years.

Meanwhile the identical practices to which the Old Order Brethren objected more and more pervaded the churches. Sunday schools, academies, protracted meeting, social meetings and the single mode of feetwashing were becoming increasingly common. As for feetwashing, there was serious dispute which caused one of the Progressives to say,

"It is remarkable that an intelligent body of such devoted people should suffer themselves to become alienated from each other in regard to the manner of observing an ordinance which was instituted for the special purpose of uniting them more closely, by inculcating the spirit of self-abnegation and humility."*

Finally when the Ultra-conservatives could no longer countenance these practices they gathered together in southern Ohio in Miami valley to frame the famed Miami Valley Petition, pre-

* H. R. Holsinger as quoted in Winger "History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren." p. 103-104.

sented to the Annual Meeting in 1860, but without the endorsement of the District Meeting.

The Standing Committee realizing the gravity of the situation, determined to take proper stand and made the following answer in an important historical document:

"Whereas Our beloved Fraternity has been considerably disturbed by brethren holding extreme views, some being disposed to enforce more rigorously the order of the church in regard to nonconformity to the world, and the principle of nonconformity to the world in giving form to our costume, than has commonly been done by our ancient brethren; while some, on the other extreme, would abandon the principle of nonconformity so far as that principle has anything to do with giving form to our costume; and

"Whereas, The principle of nonconformity in giving form to our costume, as well as in everything else, has been a peculiar characteristic of our Fraternity, and is so stated in our written history, and has had its influence with our non-swearing and non-combattant and our general principles, identifying our Fraternity with the primitive and apostolic church in preserving us from the extravagant expenditures which both the religious and the secular world have fallen into, and obtaining for us as a body the character of simplicity, honesty, purity, and uprightness in the world; and

"Whereas, It is thought by many, and even so declared, that as a body we are opposed to all improvements and progress; and

Whereas, Contention and strife in the church are great obstacles in the way of both its holiness and its usefulness; therefore

Resolved, First, that we will labor in the spirit of the Gospel, and in brotherly love to maintain the principles of nonconformity in giving form to our costume, and in every way that the recognized peculiarities of our Fraternity require.

Resolved, Secondly, that while we declare ourselves conservative in maintaining unchanged what may justly be considered the principles and peculiarities

of our Fraternity, we also believe in the propriety and necessity of so adapting our labor and our principles to the religious wants of the world as will render our labor and principles most efficient in promoting the reformation of the world, the edification of the church and the glory of God. Hence, while we are conservative, we are also progressive.

Resolved, Thirdly, that brethren teaching through the press or ministry, or in any other way, sentiments conflicting with the recognized principles and peculiarities of our Fraternity, shall be considered offenders and be dealt with as such. And to specify more particularly the subjects named in the petition we offer the following as an answer:

1. Inasmuch as there exists a widespread fear among us that the Brethren's high schools are likely to operate against the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ, as also likely to cultivate the desire for an exclusive educated ministry; to guard, therefore, these schools from producing these effects, we think the principals of these schools should meet and adopt rules that will prevent such tendency, and said rules to be in harmony with the principles of Annual Meeting.

2. Sabbath - schools when held in the spirit of the Gospel, may be made a means of bringing up our children in the 'nurture and admonition of the Lord'. But should have no picnics and celebrations or any vain things of the popular Sabbath-schools of the day as connected with them.

3. All meetings for worship should be held as our stated or regular meetings are held, and we be cautious not to use such means as are calculated to get people into the church without a gospel conversion - such as overpersuasion or excitement - but use the gospel means to get them to turn away from sin.

4. In regard to a paid ministry, we believe that it is not right for brethren to go and labor for the churches in the hope of receiving money for services, nor the offer of money as an inducement for brethren to preach; but to poor ministers who are faithful, both in the doctrine and practice of the church, we would encourage giving toward their necessity; as also defraying the expenses of traveling in attending to church interests.

5. Inasmuch as our old fathers have always ad-

mitted the validity of the two modes of foot-washing, and as much as we desire a more perfect union in this matter, we cannot condemn either mode as being invalid. And inasmuch as former decisions have failed to settle this question to the satisfaction of all, we advise more forbearance and liberty to the conscience of our brethren in this matter, because both have been practiced among us, and the best way to stop the agitation of this question is to allow the same liberty of conscience for all brethren that we ask for ourselves. But this shall not be construed to annul the present decision and advice of Annual Meeting."*

Naturally, the foregoing decisions were far from satisfactory to the Miami Valley group. After another attempt to have their own point of view recognized at the Annual Meeting in 1881, they decided to separate entirely from the church. Meeting together in August 1881 to draw up their grievances, they set forth their principles and determined upon their future course. In the meantime many of their persuasion were expelled from their own congregations and this action was upheld by Annual Meeting in 1882.

In a book called The Brethren's Reasons** the expelled group set forth the considerations in drawing apart from the church and establishing their own sect. In the year following the schism the new denomination met to adopt the name "Old German Baptist Brethren." It has remained the most conservative branch of the church and in recent decades has receded in membership and in influence.

* Minutes of Annual Meeting 1880 (Classified Minutes - p 339 FF.)

** See Bibliography

THE PROGRESSIVES

The direction in which the dominant element in the Dunker church was traveling is indicated by the Progressive branch of the church, rather than by those reactionaries known as the Old Order Brethren. The dominant movement was inaugurated near the middle of the nineteenth century. It centers chiefly around H. R. Holsinger who began (1851) publication of the religious journal "Gospel Visitor" the first periodical of the church since the days of Christopher Saur.* Holsinger himself says,

"With the appearance of Visitor was ushered in the progressive era in the Dunker church. It was so prophesied by its opposers, and we do them the honor of stating that they were true prophets in this case."**

For a time Holsinger served as an assistant on the staff of the Visitor, but eventually it proved too conservative for him. Resigning his post, he began to publish the Christian Family Companion in 1864.

Holsinger believed that many of the traditions of the church were of little worth. He also thought the church should be more aggressive in its program. He advocated an educated ministry, condemning the practise of putting so much power into the hands of uneducated elders who were unfitted for their duties. He had little or no regard for controversies over dress and ritual but urged the church to become alive to the more significant religious issues with which she was faced.

In the Christian Family Companion, Holsinger conducted an open forum. He invited all to write expressing opinions con-

* See references to Christopher Saur's Press in Chapter VII.

** Holsinger "History of the Dunkers" - p. 470

cerning the policies of the church. He strongly advocated that reformation of the church be inaugurated. He urged this continually in his editorials. Most of the ideas which Holsinger championed have long since been accepted by Annual Meeting. At the time, however, the church was not ready for them and Holsinger was severely criticized for his stand. Much bitter feeling was engendered among the two schools of thought.

The first outward incident of actual friction occurred in 1867 during a conference in which Holsinger advocated that deacons be ordained by the laying on of hands. Since the laying on of hands was not the practise of the church, Holsinger was rebuked for advocating its adoption. He was very outspoken both at church meetings and in his paper and was in constant warfare with the church. Finally he tired of the dissension and sold his paper to Elder Quinter who was then editing the Gospel Visitor. Quinter combined the two papers in 1873 and put an end to the rostrum instituted by His predecessor.

In 1878 Holsinger resumed the publishing business, in partnership with J. W. Beer of Berlin, Pa. Together they published the Progressive Christian with "the avowed purpose of championing progressive measures and reforms." This paper was the medium whereby Holsinger came into open conflict with Annual Meeting. He was finally expelled from the church. After a precarious start the Progressive Christian changed hands two or three times and finally came into possession of Holsinger as sole owner.

The courageous, undiplomatic editor wrote his way into

one controversy after another. When several groups felt certain they had their hands at last upon schismatic articles, they petitioned Annual Meeting through no less than five different District Meetings in 1881.

After a stormy session at the Annual Meeting, a committee was appointed to wait upon Holsinger in the Berlin church. They met there on August 9, 1881. The procedure for trying the case was objected to both by Holsinger, who was now a bishop, and by the Berlin congregation. The committee, however, was adamant. They refused to accept the changes in method advocated by Holsinger and expelled him from the brotherhood of the Dunkers.

The Annual Meeting of 1882 was anticipated with much anxiety because everyone was anxious to know if the committee's decision concerning Holsinger would be sustained. In the intervening period the controversy raged. Many felt that the committee had overstepped its bounds and that Holsinger should be given another chance. Others felt that there was no point in attempting to reconcile the "rebel" and that he had better be done away with now.

When the Meeting convened several heated discussions took place. Finally a motion to sustain the committee's report was approved. This occasioned a break on the part of Holsinger and his friends. They met at a little school house about a mile distant from the church and first made an overture to the Annual Meeting to reconsider. When this was refused they decided to withdraw entirely and the second split within nine months was effected. A series of resolutions was

adopted and a convention called to be held at Ashland, Ohio, June 29, 1882. Delegates were present from many states. A declaration of principles was adopted. The abuses and errors of the mother church were recounted. Their own efforts to reform the church were given consideration and a resolution adopted asserting that they had not seceded, but were the true conservators of the Brethren church that had been organized in Germany in 1708.

The new wing now began its career as a separate church. In 1883 the name "The Brethren Church" was adopted as official. At first Annual Meetings were held only when deemed necessary. Since 1892 they have been held annually.

The story of these schisms and other trials which the Dunker church passed through is the story of her socialization, her unification and her liberalization. From a nondescript group of German refugees who came to these shores two hundred years ago, she has developed into a flourishing denomination with a clearly determined policy and a healthy spiritual life. Even two such tragic schisms as those just described have not seriously affected the growth and position of the main stem of the church. It is a great tribute to her people that she sustained schism and liberalization to issue as a strong branch of the Protestant faith in America.

CHAPTER VI

THE DOCTRINES, BELIEFS AND POLITY OF THE CHURCH

AND

THE GENERAL PRACTICES

The Dunker church, the main branch of which is now officially known as the Church of the Brethren, is a denomination without a creed. To this day they have no written document embodying their church faith. The founders of the sect, chiefly Alexander Mack, held creeds in disfavor from the very beginning of their religious experience. Creeds were for them symbols of persecution, dogma, and distress. The creeds they knew were to be rejected to the uttermost because of their fruits. It is not strange, therefore, that in opening the way to a new faith Mack avoided writing any specific creed. The character of the established churches of his day - the Catholic, the Reformed and the Lutheran - furnished Mack with ample reason for not wanting a creed for the newly established sect.

Mack's own views are expressed in his published works - which views are an outgrowth of the earlier Confession of Faith written by Hochmann - have been considered already.* Both documents are today the chief sources whereby the principles upon which the new church was founded, may be understood. They are not to be thought of as creeds even though they do give expression to the original precepts of the early faith of the Brethren.

* See Chapter III.

Mack adhered to a truly Biblical Christianity as the guiding principle, borrowed from the Pietists and the Mennonites. In keeping with this, he held the Bible to be his creed and always sought to formulate his concepts by means of Biblical teaching or interpretation. This point carried along through the entire history of the church. The historian Proud says:

"As to their origin they allow of no other, than that which was made by Jesus himself, when he was baptized by John in Jordan. They have a great esteem for the New Testament, valuing it higher than the other books; and when they are asked about the articles of their faith, they say they know of no others but what are contained in this book; and therefore can give none."*

Continued efforts have been made especially in recent years to have Annual Meeting authorize an official printed statement of their views. The church has been reluctant to do this in view of the traditional policy and has refrained from committing itself. It has at times found refuge in the flattering appraisal of Benjamin Franklin in re-asserting their position. Franklin once suggested to Michael Wohlfart** that it might be well "to publish the articles of their belief and the rules of their discipline." Whhlfart replied that this had already been proposed among them but not agreed to, for the following reasons:

"When we were first drawn together as a society, it had pleased God to enlighten our minds so far as to see that some doctrines, which were esteemed truths were errors, and that others which we had esteemed errors were real truths. From time to time he has been pleased to afford us further light, and our principles have been improving and

* History of Pennsylvania by Robert Proud, Vol. 11, Pt. IV, p. 345.

** Wohlfart was at the time associated with Beissel.

our errors dimishing. Now we are not sure we have arrived at the end of this progression and at the perfection of spiritual or theological knowledge, and we fear that if we should once print our confession of faith, we should feel ourselves, as if bound and confined by it, and perhaps be unwilling to receive further improvement, and our successors still more so as concerning what their elders and founders had done to be something sacred-never to be departed from."

To this Franklin replied:

"This modesty in a sect is perhaps a single instance in the history of mankind. Every other sect, supposing itself in possession of all truth and that those who differ are so far in the wrong, like a man traveling in foggy weather, those at some distance before him on the road he sees wrapped up in fog, as well as those behind him, and also the people in the fields on each side, but near him all appears clear, though in truth he is as much in the fog as any of them."*

It is doubtful if Franklin's estimate was quite accurate, but it is certain that historically there has been a great deal of theological "fog" in writing creeds. The Dunker church is rightfully to be catalogued as non-creedal.

In its early history, it both lost and gained by its non-creedal position. Their real emphasis was upon true piety as exemplified by the New Testament way of life. They were not hindered by theological dogmas and hence avoided the errors and difficulties which beset the established churches. At the same time they were free to assimilate truths from other groups with whom they came in contact; and this has been true of the group from the earliest days of their history until

* Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, quoted in Brumbaugh's "History of the Brethren" p. 527

the present time.

On the other hand the church has lost much by reason of its lack of authority. In the early history especially, many were carried away by the heretical teachings of such men as Beissel. It was comparatively easy for Beissel and others to proclaim their teaching and present it so attractively as to lure many to their way of thinking. By the same token it was difficult for the mother church to restrain such influence because it was without any central authoritative governing body or accepted standard of religious truth.

Nevertheless, several factors combined to assist the Dunkers in preserving in large part, the original tenets. The main factor consisted in the rural life of the people whereby they were comparatively isolated from other sects and religious ideas. Rural life in itself aided the tendency toward conservatism, thus helping to preserve the traditions. Also the ethnic background of the people themselves accounts in part for their tendency towards consistency in religious observances without much variation. Tradition has been a mighty fortress for them. Great emphasis has long been placed by them no less than by others, on the "faith of our fathers."

That the church today has a definite creed, even though it is not so admitted, is quite apparent. Steps taken in the direction of a more clearly defined statement of faith can be traced all through the development of the Annual Meeting, whose pronouncements represent trends in the beliefs to which the church adheres. Dr. Frederick Dove has recently admitted that

"Significant developments have occurred from time to time toward authoritative statement of the doctrines of the church and the interpretation of them, without the church actually committing itself officially to the approval of such" *

It may be observed in this connection that a petition came before the Annual Conference in 1913 asking that steps be taken

"To supply what has been thought by many to be a real need of the church, - a small book for converts, the object being to instruct and indoctrinate these converts in the principles and practise of true religion..." **

The petition was approved and 1916 one of the Boards of the church having been instructed accordingly, brought in the recommendation that the book when published contain the following three sections:

1. Fundamental Doctrine of the Christian Church.

Under this heading should be treated such subjects as, The Triune Godhead, The Bible the Word of God, God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Holy Spirit, Sin, the Atonement, The Church, Faith, Repentance, Baptism, Regeneration or the New Birth, Conversion, Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, The Second Coming of Christ, Resurrection, Judgment and Heaven.

2. Church Ordinances and Distinctive Practices of The Church of the Brethren.

Under this heading should be treated such subjects as, The New Testament, Our Rule of Faith and Practise, Trine Immersion, Feet Washing, The Lord's Supper, The Eucharist or Communion, The Salutation or Holy Kiss, the Anointing, The Prayer Veil, The Simple Life, Christian Adornment, and a chapter on the points of Instruction to Applicants.

3. The Christian Life in Service.

Under this heading should be treated such subjects as

* Cultural Changes in the Church of the Brethren by Frederick Denton Dove - p. 135.

** Minutes of Annual Meeting 1912. p. 4.

Significance of Christian Service, The Surrendered Life, Self-Denial, The Higher Life, Christian Growth, Prayer, Bible Reading and Study, Fasting, Assurance, Guidance, Humility, Witness-Bearing, Christian Giving, Loyalty, Temperance, Peace, Proper Associates and Amusements.*"

The third major point in the recommendation of the Board was especially significant. It contained the statement that "The Conference shall encourage but not formally approve the book, lest it might in time be accepted as a creed."

The book was finally written and published by the Brethren Publishing House in 1919 under the title. "Studies in Doctrine and Devotion." It was explained that the book was issued to serve as a textbook and not as a creed.

In 1922 in answer to two queries the Annual Conference again made clear its position regarding doctrine. The first query was as to whether or not a tract "The Social Message of Christianity" published by the General Educational Board, was a statement of the position of the church.

The answer was

"This tract has not been authorized, nor is it endorsed by the Church of the Brethren."**

The second query was:

"Has any church board or committee the right to publish any doctrinal position of the church, when the church has not put herself on record on the doctrine involved?"

The answer was

"No".***

The same year a query came to the Conference asking for an endorsement of "the statement of doctrine made in the Brethren's Card," which contained an outline of doctrines

* Minutes of Annual Meeting 1916 - p. 34 f.

** Minutes of Annual Conference, 1922 - p. 154.

***Ibid - p. 8.

Significance of Christian Service, The Surrendered Life, Self-Denial, The Higher Life, Christian Growth, Prayer, Bible Reading and Study, Fasting, Assurance, Guidance, Humility, Witness-Bearing, Christian Giving, Loyalty, Temperance, Peace, Proper Associates and Amusements.*"

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* Minutes of Annual Meeting 1916 - p. 34 f.

** Minutes of Annual Conference, 1922 - p. 154.

***Ibid - p. 8.

of the church with accompanying scriptural references. After careful consideration by a committee the card as finally approved reads as follows:

THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN FORMERLY CALLED DUNKERS

1. This body of Christians originated early in the eighteenth century, the church being a natural out-growth of the Pietistic movement following the Reformation.

2. Firmly accepts and teaches the fundamental evangelical doctrines of the inspiration of the Bible, the personality of the Holy Spirit, the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, the sin-pardoning value of his atonement, his resurrection from the tomb, ascension and personal visible return, and the resurrection, both of the just and unjust (John 5: 28,29; 1 Thess. 4: 13-18).

3. Observes the following New Testament rites: Baptism of penitent believers by trine immersion for the remission of sins (Matt. 28: 19; Acts 2: 38); feet washing (John 13: 1-20; 1 Tim. 5: 10); love feast (Luke 22; 20; John 13:4; 1 Cor. 11: 17-34; Jude 12); communion (Matt 26: 26-30); the Christian salutation (Rom. 16: 16; Acts 20: 37); the proper appearance in worship (1 Cor. 11: 2-16); the anointing for healing in the name of the Lord (James 5: 13-18; Mark 6: 13); laying on of hands (Acts 8: 18; 19: 6; 1 Tim. 4: 14). These rites are representative of spiritual facts which obtain in the lives of true believers, and as such are essential factors in the development of the Christian Life.

4. Emphasizes daily devotion for the individual, and family worship for the home (Eph. 6: 18-20; Philpp. 4: 8,9) stewardship of time, talents and money (Matt. 25: 14-30); taking care of the fatherless, widows, poor, sick and aged (Acts 6: 1-7).

5. Opposes on scriptural grounds: war and the taking of human life (Matt. 5: 21-26; 43,44; Rom. 12: 19-21; Isa. 53: 7-12); violence in personal and industrial controversy (Matt. 7: 12; Rom. 13: 8-10); intemperance in all things (Titus 2: 2; Gal. 5: 19-26; Eph. 5: 18); going to law, especially against our Christian brethren (1 Cor. 6: 1-9); divorce and remarriage except for the one scriptural reason (Matt. 19:9); every form of oath (Matt. 5: 33-37; James 5: 12); membership in secret, oathbound societies (2 Cor. 6: 14-18); games of chance and sinful amusements 1 Thess. 5: 22; 1 Peter 2: 11; Rom. 12: 17) extravagant

and immodest dress (1 Tim. 2: 8-10; 1 Peter 3: 1-6).

6. Labors earnestly, in harmony with the Grest Commission, for the evangelization of the world, for the conversion of men to Jesus Christ; and for the realization of the life of Jesus Christ in every believer (Matt. 28: 18-20; Mark 16: 15, 16; 2 Cor. 3: 18).

7. Maintains the New Testament as its only creed, in harmony with which the above brief doctrinal statement is made.*

Traditionally, the policy has been to avoid all formal committment to, or endorsement of any statement of doctrine that might become binding upon the church as its "creed". There has of course been a tendency to provide for doctrinal instruction through agencies of the church, having no well-defined limitations upon the field of such instruction. Major emphasis it may be said, is given to the necessity of basing all such teachings on the Bible.

DOCTRINES

Viewed objectively, it appears that the Dunkers along with the other sects in America, have appropriated the primary theological beliefs that characterize nearly all the evangelical denominations. They are distinctive from other denominations not by reason of any basic or fundamental differences, but because they believe certain tenets in addition to generally accepted Protestant beliefs. Elements in Alexander Mack's original statements which were difficult to reconcile with the

* The Brethren's Card is published in "Cultural Changes in the Church of the Brethren - Dove pp. 137-8.

orthodox position, have gradually disappeared from Dunker
theology until today, in the words of Dr. Dove,

"It can be safely assumed from the various expressions of faith among the Brethren, including the several proposed statements of doctrines by prominent men of the church, that the Church of the Brethren adheres to all the fundamental doctrines of Christianity as professed by the Protestant churches generally."*

In support of this same acknowledgement one of the most influential leaders** of the church speaking at the bi-centennial celebration, reviewed the cardinal Protestant doctrines and then remarked,

"- on all these great and precious doctrines, I say, the Protestant world is practically united. They are the great doctrines believed and taught by them all, and the Church of the Brethren would be understood as believing and teaching them with all her heart. For them she contends as of fundamental importance. She is settled in the conviction that whatever else may be held in ever so good faith, it must be in vain if the foregoing doctrines, as fundamental doctrines, are not most heartily believed and accepted. On this point the church of the Brethren is fully established."***
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Within the last decade Dr. Frederick Dove of Bridgewater College has rendered a signal service by preparing a brief statement of the "Doctrinal beliefs concerning the general Christian doctrines of the Brethren." While the statement has no more of

* "Cultural Changes in the Church of the Brethren" by Dove
p. 139.

** H. C. early.

*** Two centuries of the Church of the Brethren, Bicentennial
Addresses - p. 134.

**** Abundant evidence can be supplied to substantiate this position which need scarcely be argued as it has been the common fate of the majority of the non-creedal churches in the United States and elsewhere that they have gradually fallen into the habit of allowing the creedal churches to give expression to their beliefs for them. Thus at the World Church Conference at Luzerne Switzerland in 1927, the non-creedal churches found themselves turning automatically to the creedal churches for some kind of a formulation of what they believed.

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** H. C. early.

*** Two centuries of the Church of the Brethren, Bicentennial Addresses - p. 134.

**** Abundant evidence can be supplied to substantiate this position which need scarcely be argued as it has been the common fate of the majority of the non-creedal churches in the United States and elsewhere that they have gradually fallen into the habit of allowing the creedal churches to give expression to their beliefs for them. Thus at the World Church Conference at Luzerne Switzerland in 1927, the non-creedal churches found themselves turning automatically to the creedal churches for some kind of a formulation of what they believed.

an official status than others, it has been accepted generally throughout the church and distributed widely among its ministers. It is quoted here as expounding the most concise summary of Dunker doctrines obtainable.

DOCTRINE OF GOD

God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe; the all-powerful, ever-present, and all-wise Being who reveals Himself to man as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, these three constituting the Divine Trinity. This God is a God of love, whose goodness and mercy extend to all mankind. He is invisible to mortal man, but personal and accesible to all who seek communion with Him.

DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

God sent His Son to dwell in human flesh and reveal Himself, His will and His goodness to mankind. He is co-equal with God as a personal Being and a member of the Holy Trinity. In Christ men find their perfect model of righteousness and thru Him man has access to the Father. The Son of God becoming Son of man established the intimate relationship with God as Father of all Christian believers, since Christ is their Elder Brother. Christ brought reconciliation with God, for the sins of all men, with the sacrifice of his own life. He is thus the Savior of men.

DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is a personal member of the Trinity, and bears the attributes of God. It is the Spirit of God which works among men convicting them of their sins, and guiding thots, feelings, and wills of the Christian believers into fuller realization of godliness. The presence of the Holy Spirit is conditioned upon man's willingness to receive it as his companion, comforter and guide.

DOCTRINE OF THE BIBLE

The Bible is the inspired Word of God, and the all-sufficient source of knowledge concerning Him. The New Testament is accepted as the only true and infallible guide for the Christian, and the ordinances and practices of the church are ordered after its teachings.

DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

The Church is the organized body of Christian believers, established by Christ for the promotion of God's kingdom, and the Christianity of the world. It is the "body of Christ" and each Christian is a member of that body. In its general sense it includes all members of all churches. In its local sense it signifies a congregation of believers organized to promote the interests of God's kingdom.

DOCTRINE OF MAN

God created man in His own spiritual image and gave him power to choose his own ways of life. He offered man the choicest fruits of His kingdom, but thru his disobedience to the divine Will of God, man brought on himself the condemnation of sin. He is now the special object of God's mercy and love, and thru repentance and regeneration may be restored to God's spiritual kingdom.

DOCTRINE OF SIN

By his human nature man is subject to the violation of the perfect will of God, and transgression of his laws or principles of life is sin. Sin is the universal experience of mankind. Participation in sinful behavior either by thought or conduct leads to spiritual condemnation and self-destruction. God loves the sinner, but hates his sin, and seeks his redemption by revelation of the perfect sinless life thru Christ.

DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

The only release from the condemnation for sin is by reconciliation with God, and spiritual regeneration thru His forgiveness. Man cannot save himself. Salvation is the gift of God to those who believe and seek harmony with Him. Man's part in salvation is to put his whole self in proper relation to goodness and reject sin, so that all sins be forgiven him and the God of love will restore him to fellowship in His kingdom.

DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY

Human life is immortal, and the condition of eternal existence is determined by the kind of life an individual lives here on earth. Those who seek to do the will of God and are His faithful servants shall receive His promise fulfilled in eternal reward of blessedness in His kingdom with Him and all the redeemed of earth. Heaven is the spiritual home for all thus favored of God.

Those whose earthly existence does not conform to the will of God, and whose lives hinder the progress of the Church which is the embodiment of His kingdom on earth, shall suffer eternally their own ruin and destruction. It is a state of eternal separation from God, which separation means eternal unhappiness known as hell.

From the foregoing testimonies and the statement of belief it becomes clear that the Dunkers in these days do not differ perceptibly from most of the Protestant denominations. The distinctiveness of this people does not rest so much on doctrine itself as on the methods of expressing it. Their chief religious peculiarities are found in their ordinances and ritual.

ORDINANCES AND RITUAL

One fails to discover in Dunker history, deep-rooted differences or conflicts upon great fundamental truths of the Christian religion. They have been accepted in most cases, with but little doubt or question. Mack's aversion to the formalism of creeds carried well on into the later history of the church as if to save it from doctrinal disputes which have been a thorn in the side of so many denominations.

Granting that Mack freed his followers from one troublous fate, he guided them unwittingly into another, namely, determining the correct way of performing their own religious rites. Out of this uncertainty have come nearly all their schisms and the majority of their religious differences. Placing the emphasis on the externals of religion brought the externals into focus. Instead of entering upon theological debate concerning theories of the atonement and other doctrines, the Dunker gave his attention to the proper methods of feet washing, correct

wearing apparel and other like subjects.

Their consistent ideal has been to appropriate only those ceremonial performances which are distinctly taught in the New Testament and to observe them as nearly in adherence to the Biblical method as possible. This has caused them much trouble throughout their history.

BAPTISM

The distinctive observance of the Dunkers - the practice from which their name is derived - was their mode of baptism. Mack was an Anabaptist. Seeking to be letter perfect in his ritual, he outdid his fellow religionists by instituting Baptism face forward, - dipping in the trine fashion.

As has been said, this form was used by Mack in baptizing the first seven believers. Those who adhered to this practice came to be known as "Dunkers." Mack contended that the rite should be administered in an open stream of running water because Christ was baptized in the Jordan. All early converts were dipped three times in this fashion. The forward action of the Immersion is designed to symbolize progressive cleansing. Triple immersion is of course based on the scripture

"Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."*

The Dunkers believe that prerequisite^s to baptism are faith and repentance. They have a distinct aversion to emotional experiences in conversion but have held to the conception of rebirth with baptism. Traditionally when one wanted to unite with

* Matt. 28: 19.

the church, his desire was made known to a church member. His name was then presented before the congregation who were admonished to make known any reasons why said person should not be received.* If none appeared the person was called and informed of the desire of the church that he be received. Preparations were then made for the baptism in some nearby stream.

When all were assembled, the candidate was asked if he were familiar with the position of the church with regard to non-conformity to the world in dress, non-swearing, and non-resistance and if he were of their mind on these points. An affirmative answer being given, the minister and the candidate would kneel in water up to their arm pits. Three questions were then put which were as follows:

"Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that He brought from Heaven the saving gospel?" "I do

"Do you willingly renounce Satan, with all his pernicious ways, together with the sinful pleasures of this world?" - "I do."

"Do you covenant with God, through Christ, to be faithful unto death?" - "I do."

"According to the promises which you have made before God and the world, you are baptized for the remission of sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

As the name of each member of the Trinity was repeated, the candidate was immersed, face forward, until the entire body was covered over, then immediately drawn back. When the candidate returned to the banks of the stream, he was met by the officials of the church and greeted into its fellowship.

* Revised Minutes of Annual Meeting, 1922 - p. 134.

Since 1914, by action of Annual Meeting, the questions may be asked the candidate when he is examined and instructed, prior to baptism.

The form of baptism has not been changed at any time. Recently baptistries have been built in the churches and the baptisms performed there. In 1902 at the request of certain city churches, Annual Meeting approved the use of "Pools in the churches."

This is of course a wide departure from the principles of Alexander Mack, indicative of an infusion of culture from other denominations. Inasmuch as baptism has been the formal condition of admittance to the Brethren church, in only a few instances recently have others who had been immersed previously, been received into their fellowship.

With only slight difference of opinion regarding this initiatory rite, the church has held to its form of baptism during all of her history. They are still "Dunkers" indeed.

A recent development within the sect has been that of the ceremony of consecrating infants at church services. Impressed by the custom of infant baptism used in other churches, their congregations felt the need for a similar observance in the Church of the Brethren. In 1931 the Annual Conference approved such services which are now held frequently in the more progressive congregations in urban areas.

THE LOVE FEAST

Unique among the "plain people" of America is the observance of the love feast.* From the beginning of their history

* The Moravians and some few other denominations also observe the love feast.

the denomination has celebrated the events which took place in the upper room in Jerusalem, having great regard for their literal re-enactment. Three major ordinances are observed on these occasions: the love feast or Lord's Supper, the washing of feet and the ^{COMMUNION} sacraments. v. p 219

The occasion of the love feast and communion service in rural communities, was formerly an event of great significance for Dunkers and for their neighbors. The latter would gather from far and near to witness the proceedings. While not permitted to take part, many non-members entered the sanctuary where the ordinances were observed.*

The ceremonies then occupied the larger part of two days. Worshippers would gather early on a Saturday morning and remain until late Sunday. The love feast and communion was observed Saturday evening. A large worship service would be held Sunday morning when an outstanding preacher would deliver a homily.

The love feast or Lord's Supper as it is called in the Annual Minutes, was originally an entire meal consisting of lamb or beef with bread, "Composing a sop imitating the supper instituted by our Lord and celebrated with the disciples." In addition to the meat, a broth or soup was also used and together these articles of food composed the meal. The meal was

* Dove says of these meetings, "In certain communities these meetings often became occasions of mischief making for groups of community ruffians and busybodies, so that those who came to worship were disturbed by pranks and boisterous carousing. It was not an uncommon sight to see the Brethren carrying lap robes, buggy whips, lanterns and all loose objects which they brought with them, into the church house, for safe keeping." Dove - "Cultural Changes in the Church of the Brethren" -p 147.

served at evening in the church on long tables covered with white cloths.

Naturally the modern church has done much to change this celebration. It is usually held on a weekday afternoon or evening and continues from one to two hours. In city churches it is often held on Sundays, to enable workers to commune without interfering with their every day duties. Whereas formerly the deacons and their wives used to gather at the church the day before to prepare for the meal, the meal is now reduced to cheese and crackers. In some places the traditional meal of beef and beef broth is still prepared. Nevertheless, where the people cling to this original practice, the food is placed on tables in small bowls at convenient intervals and the people eat the supper from the common bowls.

The meal continues to hold an important place in the life of the church. Its function is well expressed by Kurtz* when he remarks,

"This common meal, eaten together by the believers, is the bread and water covenant which always symbolizes brotherhood and peace. All differences are forgiven and a pledge of peace and mutual fellowship is made, surely nothing is more fundamental in Christianity than brotherhood and peace which are symbolized in this agape or love-feast."

FEET WASHING

Few practises have given the Dunkers so much ground for disagreement as that of footwashing. Page after page of argumentative material has been written in defense of one or another

* Fundamental Doctrines of Faith, D. W. Kurtz. p. 82.

mode of performing the rite. Hence it has been the focal point of a number of small schisms.

Scriptural basis for the practice of footwashing is found in John 13: 4,5, which reads,

"He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded;"

and also what is interpreted as the command of Jesus in the fourteenth verse of this chapter,

"If I, then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet; ye ought also to wash one another's feet."

Dunkers carry out the original ceremony with as little change as possible. Difference of opinion has arisen because of uncertainty over the use of the single or double mode. The single mode refers to one person both washing and wiping his brother's feet and then taking his seat. The one thus served, then takes up the task until all have been waited upon. The double mode refers to one person washing the feet of several persons, followed by another who wipes the feet with a towel.

After years of controversy on the subject the Annual Conference finally approved the single mode as "the best method of observing the teaching of our Lord."*

Led by the officiating minister, the men and women engage in this service with the opposite sexes seated at different tables. Girded with a towel and having a basin of water, each person stoops before his brother or sister and washes that person's feet and wipes them with a towel.

* Revised Minutes of Annual Meeting - 1922, p. 138.

Feetwashing is usually performed prior to observing the Lord's Supper, or love feast altho there has been some controversy as to whether the supper should be on the table during the feetwashing. The general practice has been to put on the supper after the feetwashing is over. In certain city churches today the custom has been changed to allow the communicants to pass by pairs from the table to adjoining rooms where they participate in the ceremony of feetwashing and then return to the tables. All participate in the holy meal together, in token of their Christian fellowship. It was formerly the custom to deny the privilege of the Lord's Supper to any brother or sister who failed to abide by all the church's decisions and practices. More recently, by a ruling of the Annual conference in 1923, an effort was made to exclude all considerations of a personal nature from any connection with the love feast.

The Dunkers have always practiced a closed communion - believing that only those who are of "one faith and one baptism" can have the union, harmony and oneness necessary to keep the ordinance and to commune together. Therefore only members of their own denomination are expected to participate and their members are exhorted not to commune with other churches.

THE COMMUNION SERVICE

After the Lord's Supper the sacraments of the bread and the wine are administered to each communicant. A clear distinction is thus made between the supper and the sacraments.

H. C. Early* says,

"The supper points forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb and the bread and wine commemorate the death of Jesus."

The transition from the Lord's Supper to the sacrament was usually made by a reading of Scripture, at other times, by exhortation by one of the ministers. Formerly also the salutation or kiss was then given and exchanged. The elder in charge would kiss the one nearest to him who would in turn kiss his neighbor until the kiss had gone around the entire congregation and had come back to the elder.

The following remarks were then made by the elder in charge:

"The apostle Paul says, 'I have received of the Lord that which also I deliver unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He brake it.' So, in like manner, we will also return thanks for this bread."

Then all arose while thanks were given for and a blessing asked upon the bread. After all were seated again the elder would repeat the words

"The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"**

While repeating these last words the elder would break a piece from the bread and pass the remaining larger piece on to the one next to him who would follow the same procedure, until all had been served. When every person had been served, the bread would be eaten by all at the same time.

Formerly the elder in charge was required to serve each

* H. C. Early in "Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren" p. 145.

** 1. Cor. 10: 16.

woman individually, because the church did not grant the right to "sisters" to "break the bread." This has become obsolete and both sexes now participate in like manner.

All present having partaken of the bread, the elder repeats,

"After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, from which we conclude that as He had also given thanks for the bread, He did also for the cup. Let us rise and give thanks for the cup."

After the congregation would be seated again the elder would pass the cup to the second man and so on around the group, but serving each woman as in the case of the bread. During the passing of the cup hymns were often sung but silence prevailed during the passing of the bread. The service concluded with singing a hymn and dismissing the congregation.

The above practice, appropriate for the nineteenth century, has been changed appreciably in recent times. With the advent of the individual cup in other denominations, it was soon taken up by the Dunkers and made a part of their procedure. At the same time the custom of having the bread broken into pieces before serving, came into usage. The result is that except where the old practices have been continued, administering the bread and wine in the Dunker churches differs but little from the practice in most of the protestant sects.

THE HOLY KISS

Until recent years it was customary among the Brethren to salute each other with the "holy kiss" as a symbol of love. The practice is still observed among some of the senior elders of

conservative congregations. Also it is observed by many women of the church. So important was this symbol of fellowship in the earlier days that, when an elder refused to kiss a brother, it bespoke his excommunication from the Brotherhood.*

Formerly it was a part of the love feast ceremony to pass the "Right hand of fellowship" with the holy kiss, at a certain stage in the services. This practice has been optional with the churches since 1913 and has now practically disappeared. It is still observed rather generally, between men and men, and between women and women, that is, between the one serving and the one being served - after the rite of footwashing.

ANOINTING THE SICK

Guided by a literal interpretation of James 5: 14,15, the Dunkers have always observed the rite of anointing the sick. The exhortation in these verses is as follows:

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

The Dunkers believe that it is the privilege of those who are sick to call upon the elders to perform this rite. In the absence of elders, ministers may perform it. In this service, James 5: 13-20 is read by one of the elders or ministers. Fervent prayer is offered, especially petitions for the recovery of the sick. The afflicted one is then raised to a sitting

* Brumbaugh, History of the Brethren p. 235.

posture. One minister pours oil into the hand of the other who applies the oil three times to the head of the sick person, saying

"Thou art anointed in the name of the Lord, unto the strengthening of thy faith, unto the comforting of thy conscience, and unto the full measure of the remission of thy sins."

Both ministers then place their hands upon the head of the sick and offer fervent prayers on their behalf.

There has always been confusion regarding the true meaning of anointing in the Dunker church. In 1912 the Annual Conference clarified the issue by making it plain that the rite was only for believers of their fold. Other problems relating to its true purpose are still being debated. Some have argued that it is for physical healing only, while others think of its benefits as primarily spiritual. A few have even thought of it as extreme unction* but this idea has been almost entirely abandoned.

The view expressed by elder J. H. Moore ** is representative of the best interpretations. He says,

"The purpose of the anointing is two fold: first, the restoration to health, and as a second consideration it is promised that if the sick person 'have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.' We read that the prayer of faith shall save the sick - that he is to be raised up from sickness. When called to the bedside of the sick, devout elders pray over them, and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. This they do, feeling that the God who knows all things will do for the sick that which is for their good. They pray for healing, anoint for healing, and yet, with implicit confidence, trust the Lord to fulfill his promise in his own good way.

* Thus H. C. Early in - Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren, - says "...it may have a secondary meaning, or purpose, as a last preparation for death. Jesus said of Mary's anointing him: 'She hath anointed my body aforehand for the burying.' Mark 14: 8. Why should not this be true in the case of men?" - p. 147

** J. H. Moore - New Testament Doctrines, pp. 153-154.

"There is another promise, and that is an important one. If the sick have committed sins, they shall be forgiven. This does not mean forgiveness where there has been a life of sin, or where there has been wilful of premeditated sinning. It means the sins growing out of the human weakness of saints whose faces are set Zionward. The supposition is that those whose ~~sails~~ for the anointing have done what they could to make wrong right, and that ~~they~~ have been striving to live right in the sight of God. And yet it is said of such, 'If they have committed sins.' A strong emphasis should be placed on if, for it is not presumed that men and women can go on sinning for years, and then, near the end of life, have all their sins removed, because of the anointing service."

The rite thus exists as one unique with the Dunkers. There is still much that is vague concerning its true function. This is admitted by one of their most scholarly preachers, who says,

"The Brethren as a body seem never to have been clear concerning the design of the anointing."*

THE SIMPLE LIFE

A doctrine which has traditionally maintained the central place in Dunker thought is that of "the simple life." Efforts of the Brethren to maintain simplicity in all phases of life, in contrast to vainglorious and distasteful display commonly indulged in, has been a prime characteristic in marking them socially as a "peculiar people." The doctrine of simplicity has prompted simple honesty and rugged integrity in business; plainness and lack of pretence in dress; and sober restraint in seeking advanced social position.

The doctrine of the ~~simple~~ life has been stated with great clarity by Early who remarks,

"Simplicity of life and honesty of purpose are jeal-

* Clyde Horst - "Government in the Church of the Brethren" -p 61.

ously maintained. It is held that outward show with its attendant lusts and ~~extravagances~~ is incompatible with the Spirit of Jesus. In opposition to parading the empty, carnal life of the worldly throng whose only aim is to make a 'fair show' before men, the strongest plea is made to live the simple life exemplified by Jesus and taught by the apostles. All questionable methods in business are unsparingly condemned. Effort to secure wealth for the purpose of hoarding it is held to be sinful. On the other hand, it is held that the acquisition of means to provide legitimate comforts and to further the kingdom of God in the world is every man's duty."*

So seriously was the matter of worldliness fought against during the last century that it was considered wrong for any brother to have his picture taken or to take photographs. In the minutes of 1858, the question is asked:

"Is it right for a brother to go about taking likenesses with a Daguerrean apparatus? (Answer) Considered that it is not right. Rom. 1: 23; Deut. 27: 15."

The doctrine of the simple life came into the Dunker church chiefly by the influence of Quakers and Mennonites. The latter group cling to it with much more tenacity today than do the Dunkers.** In the nineteenth century, however, there was a general acceptance among most of the "plain people" of those principles outlined above. A vivid illustration of the applied philosophy of the plain life, is seen in the deliberation of the Annual Meeting in 1846 when the following instruction was made clear:

"It is thought highly necessary that the Yearly Meeting instruct and urge it upon all the overseers of the churches to see especially to that matter, and protest strongly against all manner of super-

* H. C. Early - Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren -p. 141

**Champion of the liberal doctrine of the simple life are the Amish people who wear a distinctive dress with beards, drive only in carriages of a peculiar type and adorn their houses with only the bare necessities.

fluity and vanity, such as building fine houses, and having paintings, carpetings, and costly furniture, etc., together with the adorning of the body too much after the fashion of the world. We believe that we should deny ourselves, and abstain from these things, especially the laborers in the Word, who are called to be ensamples of the flock."

This affords an insight into the practise of the church with regard to the simple life, continuing until the close of the last century. The Dunkers still profess the doctrine of the plain and unpretentious life, but the impact of twentieth century culture, has unquestionably tended toward leveling out the modes of life which distinguish one religious group from another, or any from all. Their belief in the gospel of simple living although fundamental, is actually in competition in the present day social order with all of its complexities.

DRESS

The matter of uniform dress among the Dunkers has related itself to the doctrine of the simple life in America. Early says,

"As a means to the end of maintaining the principle of plainness in the church body, a form of dress, known as 'The Order,' is taught. It is based on the presumption that it is helpful in maintaining the principle in practical form."*

For years their distinctive dress was undoubtedly the visible evidence of their belief in the doctrine of the simple life. Their dress became the distinctive mark of their

* H. C. Early - Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren - p. 148.

religious affiliation and of their separation from the world of other men.

During the earliest history of the church the problem of dress was obviously not a factor. These people were persecuted wherever they turned and it was certainly to their advantage not to make themselves conspicuous by distinctive marks of dress. Oftentimes their safety depended upon their freedom from being detected by any sign.

However it is probable that their members dressed in simple style because of their aversion to the worldliness of the European ruling classes no less than from sheer necessity. It is most likely that their uniform dress was copied after the Mennonites and Quakers with whom they first came in contact in Pennsylvania. The Quaker hat and bonnet was the outward symbol of a non-resisting people. Those who sided with the Quakers in opposing force adopted the plain garb. Among the Dunkers it was sanctioned as being in harmony with Scriptural teaching.

With the adoption of the notorious hoop skirt by the women of Philadelphia prior to the Revolutionary War, there was a decided reaction among all of the plain people and a determination not to accept this extreme style. Those who opposed such stylish innovations were led to establish an even more simple fashion than otherwise and this was achieved by their uniform dress for which they became known as being distinctive. The dress eventually prescribed did not come to its present state until the middle of the previous century

when final orders were issued describing uniform dress for preachers and officers of the church. When principles of non-resistance became more and more pronounced among the plain people prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, their simple garb became much more common, and the Dunkers prided themselves on having this mark of separation between themselves and those in public life.

The prescribed style of clothes for men included the straight-brim hat, with coats and vests buttoned or hooked all the way up to the neck. The coat collars were straight, with no lapels. Neckties were abolished as a worldly luxury. Trousers were likewise constructed on an unusual pattern.

The women wore bonnets which evolved into a small conservative black hat. It was the custom for women to wear a small white "cap" under their bonnets, as a "veil" or "prayer covering". The "cap" was made of thin lacy white material and was worn during all worship services. Capes were also used by the women of the church. Dresses were of the plainest pattern. No ruffles or decorative touches of any kind could be added. Trimmings were quite out of the question. All jewelry and gold were a "Signal to Satan."

In short, the distinctive Dunker dress grew out of their adverse reaction to prevailing modes of social life and thus it became a fixed culture among them. Beginning about 1850 many references to the "dress question" are found recorded in the minutes of Annual Meeting. In nearly every instance the deliberations of the Conference give evidence of its favor for

placing full emphasis on the requirements of plain dress. Their principles in this respect were restated by the Conference in 1911 in the following form:

1. That the brethren wear plain clothing. That the coat with standing collar be worn especially by ministers and deacons.
2. That the brethren wear their hair and beard in a plain and sanitary manner. That the mustache alone is forbidden.
3. That the sisters attire themselves in plainly made garments, free from ornaments and unnecessary appendages. That plain bonnets and hoods be the head-dress, and the hair be worn in a becoming Christian manner.
4. That the veil be worn in time of prayer and prophesying (1 Cor. 11: 1-16, R.V.). The plain cap is regarded as meeting the requirements of scriptural teaching on the subject.
5. That gold for ornament and jewelry of all kinds, shall not be worn.
6. That no brother be installed into office as minister or deacon who will not pledge himself to observe and teach the order of dress.
7. That no brother or sister serve as delegate to District or Annual Meeting, nor be appointed on committees to enforce discipline, who does not observe the order of dress.
8. That it be the duty of the official body of the church to teach faithfully and intelligently the simple, Christian life in dress; and bishops, who are the shepherds of the churches, are required to teach and to see that the simple life in general is taught and observed in their respective charges.*

In 1914 a "Dress Reform Committee" was appointed "to maintain an aggressive campaign of education of the subject of dress."** This committee, however, did little towards inaugurating a special program. In due time the whole "dress

* Annual Minutes 1911- Bound as a supplement to the Minutes.

** Revised Minutes, 1922 p. 214.

question" took care of itself under the inevitable influence of widespread social and cultural changes.

Speaking generally, there is no difference between the present habits of dress among the Brethren and those of other people. With the exception of a few of the older and more conservative members, the Dunkers may not now be distinguished by their dress. In fact a reaction has set in against the earlier customs of dress. Some of their young people are copying the extreme metropolitan fashions. The dominant attitude at this time is voiced by Dr. Horst in saying,

"It is a tragedy that 'the order' ever came into our church, for to its enforcement must be attributed in the main the unfortunate division of 1882, as well as the loss of so many Brethren's children, and others who might have been with us."*

Undoubtedly the reaction in recent years among the younger people of the church is mainly responsible for the changed attitude towards dress. Social life was made extremely embarrassing for those who felt it their duty to wear the Brethren uniform. They were made conspicuous and miserable when in company with their friends who did not observe the custom. When the tide finally set in, plain dress disappeared rapidly indeed until only a few "vestigial remains," are found today in the Dunker churches.

NON-RESISTANCE

From the account of Alexander Mack's beliefs** it is clear that the Brethren have always been pacifists. Their

* Horst - Government in the Church of the Brethren -p. 114.

** See Chapter 111.

belief in the literal text of the teachings of Jesus prompted followers of Mack to declare that it is wrong to bear arms even in self defense and to oppose participation, on their part, in any kind of warfare. One may readily understand the reasons for their stern opposition to the use of force, in view of their own background of severe oppression and fearful persecution in Germany. On arriving here, the Dunkers found their convictions regarding non-resistance stimulated and confirmed through their contacts with Quakers and Mennonites.

Like-wise through the press of Christopher Saur at Germantown, the cause for peace was promoted with great zeal in the early years of American history. Saur's philosophy argued for peace at any price and his staunch advocacy of this principle caused ~~Christopher Saur himself~~ to suffer persecution during the Revolutionary War. Many of his brethren were similarly persecuted.

The early Dunker church dealt severely with those who stood ready to defend themselves or who took up arms. The unique case of one Jacob Neff is in point.* Neff had a mill near what is now Roaring Spring, Pennsylvania. One day while alone at the mill he was attacked by two Indians. He defended himself with his rifle and killed both of them. Returning to the mill later with a group of neighbors he found it burned to the ground. This had been done by his friends as a rebuke to him for defending himself through the use of force. Neff was suspended from the church. After he had rebuilt the mill, his former friends refused to deal with him, since they felt that his act had made him unworthy of membership in their sect.

* History of the Church of the Brethren in the Middle District of Pennsylvania, pp. 414-419.

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At the close of the Revolutionary War all citizens of Pennsylvania were required to take the oath of allegiance to the new state. The Dunkers consistently refused to accede to this obligation, inasmuch as it was a part of their belief that one should "swear not at all." Naturally this brought much trouble upon them causing many to migrate westward.

The policy of non-resistance has been adhered to continuously by certain sects from Colonial days down to the present time. During the Civil War no Dunkers were to be found on either side of the battle line, although many were persecuted within the ranks of both sides.

Prior to the World War the church again stated clearly its opposition to armed warfare and forbade its members to participate as combatants. The admonition was regarded in most instances but instances are related where Dunker ministers bore arms in this great world conflict. While the church still holds to its original position of non-resistance, there is not so much popular support for it as formerly. On the other hand this traditional doctrine has given the church strong points of contact with other Protestant denominations in America, who in recent years have emphasized pacifism and a constructive program of efforts on behalf of peace. This former chief factor in the cultural seclusion of the Dunkers, has now become a bond of common interest between them and other Christian households.

The loyalty of the Church to the government, however, has never been questioned. In recognition of this, the United

States Government permitted exemptions for many Dunkers in the last war and provided non-combatant service for those who were willing to help in this capacity. The church did not forbid participation in non-combatant service and in 1918 the Annual Conference adopted the following general resolution:

"We appreciate the generous purpose of our government in providing non-combatant service for our Brethren called to the colors, and pray that the President and his advisers may be divinely guided through these crises into the paths of righteousness. We renew our pledge of loyalty and urge our people to a liberal financial support of those organizations that are engaged in furthering the moral and religious welfare of the men in camp and in service, the alleviation of suffering, and the reconstruction of devastated lands. We urge our membership to produce and conserve useful products, but not to hoard and enrich themselves in these days of extravagance and suffering."*

SECRET SOCIETIES

Traditionally the Dunker church has opposed membership in secret societies. For many years such membership meant exclusion from membership in the church. Opposition was based both on the elaborate rituals and ceremonies of fraternal organizations and on taking an oath with a pledge of secrecy, whereas the church maintained that this is not becoming for members of the Christian church.

A decline in the importance of secret societies in America, together with a cultural awakening, has changed the restrictions in this respect. Although the position of the church has never been reversed by action of the Conference, members of the

* Minutes of Annual Meeting 1918. pp. 156 f.

church do feel free to join secret societies without subjecting themselves to excommunication or even criticism.

POLITY

In addition to the observations in the previous chapter concerning church government, something further may be said regarding Dunker church polity. No clearly defined type of polity is followed. As Parker remarks,

"It is neither monarchical, episcopal, presbyterian, nor congregational, as such. It may be called an Ecclesiastical Democracy - a government of the people, for the people and by the people."*

The term "Ecclesiastical Democracy" is rather vague and aids but little in an appraisal of their form of government. Analysis reveals it as being partially congregational and partially presbyterian. Parker confirms this in his description of Dunker church practices, in saying,

1. "It is democratic in the sense that the highest authority is vested in the membership.
2. It is republican in the sense that the church chooses representatives to execute her will.
3. It is congregational in local matters, but general in all questions of doctrine and matters of a general character."**

The whole governmental structure of the present Church of the Brethren rests on the legislative organization which has developed. The local churches serve as pillars supporting the superstructure of the general church body. In turn they are controlled and fashioned by the national organization. The historical process by which this organization evolved has been cited elsewhere.

* Two centuries of the Church of the Brethren - p. 161.
* Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren - p. 161.

Regular or quarterly meetings are held as a rule in the local church and are known as council meetings. Any question pertaining to the interests of the local church or the church at large may be brought up for discussion. Meetings are usually presided over by the elder in charge. In his absence a minister may preside. A clerk keeps record of council meetings. A treasurer, elected annually by the church, is responsible for the finances of the local congregation. Council meetings are open forums. They are very democratic in their procedure.

The congregation receives and dismisses members. It provides the environment for the church work. It calls men into the ministry, elects deacons and chooses leaders for the Sunday school work. The congregation may discipline and even expel members from the church, although the way is always left open for the defendant to appeal to the District or Annual Meeting.

The official body of each congregation consists of all the ordained elders, ministers and deacons, who together exercise much the same position in planning the church's program that a "kirk session" does. In theory the local church government is democratic and in most instances this practice is adhered to. The local body at all times works in harmony with the general principles and practices of the church; otherwise it may be disciplined or even discharged by the District or Annual Meeting.

Official District or Annual Meetings are republican in form

and are comprised of representatives elected by the local churches. The District Meeting is often attended by huge numbers from local churches but only the official delegates are entitled to vote. This is true also of the Annual Meeting or Conference as it is now designated.

The Annual Conference is the highest authority in the Church of the Brethren. Its decisions are final. No individual or congregation may alter or revoke the decisions of the Conference without its approval. Many churches of course, do not abide by its decisions but in general, they are accepted.

Dunker church polity is thus of two types. Several of their leaders refer to their polity as "New Testament Church Polity."* This term would scarcely be admitted, however, by those Biblical scholars who are able to find Scriptural authority for many other types of church polity.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

In common with other denominations, the Dunkers have found it necessary to establish administrative boards to carry on effectively the organized work of their church. In this respect the church has developed along purely conventional lines, having at present customary mission and educational boards with divers councils and other agencies to promote the program.

THE MINISTRY

Custom in the church of the Brethren prescribes that men

* E. g. I. D. Parker in Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren, p. 159 f.

are "called" to the ministry through the voice of the congregation. In keeping with a profession of the simple life, it has been thought vain and unbecoming for a man to seek this place for himself. The accepted rule is to wait until an expression is made by the people before any young man is ordained for the ministry. The "call" of the church, has been accepted as the "call of God" since the church is the temporal order of the kingdom of God and the medium through which - the Holy Spirit works to accomplish His will. To refuse the call subjects the person to being stigmatized as unwilling to carry on the Master's service.

With this responsibility thrust upon the local congregation, much care and thought is given in its performance. Upon a church deciding that young men are needed for the ministry, a time is set at the regular council meeting for announcing that one or more ministers are to be chosen. Traditionally when the gathering assembled perhaps with visiting elders present, each member of the congregation was called apart so that the elders might receive from him an expression concerning his own choice or choices. Names were not suggested publicly and each member was urged to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in making his selection. The person receiving a majority or sometimes just a plurality, was considered "called" to the ministry. After some time elapsed, the young man would indicate whether or not he wished to "accept the call." If so, he was then installed.

The practice has been changed to a certain extent in re-

cent years. When young men become interested in entering the ministry they no longer hesitate to make their desires known to the leaders of the church in order that they should not be considered ostentatious. Whereas under the earlier practice, they waited for the church to call them before making any serious effort to prepare for the work, the young men having good promise of success in the ministry are now encouraged by Sunday School teachers, ministers and elders to enter college and prepare themselves directly for their chosen work. The change in procedure is witnessed in the following minute recording the action of the Annual Conference in 1917:

"A young man who feels the call of the ministry, but who has not been chosen, may speak freely to his elder or one of the ministers on the subject, also the Ministerial Board herein provided, and after special prayer with him and an examination of his faith, the elder may submit the matter to the church for consideration, may set him apart as a minister by the common charge, if two thirds of the members in council favor it. This action shall be considered as an election."*

The long established custom of hearing the voice of each member concerning his personal choice for nominations, had now given place to the practice of balloting on paper. When a young man is chosen for the ministry and accepts, he is installed at an appointed time and place. No stringent examination is held respecting his knowledge of theology and his beliefs. Only a simple ceremony is held in which ~~there is~~ a recommittal of faith to the principles of the church and a fidelity of purpose is affirmed. Many young men in the Dunker ministry

* Minutes of the Annual Meeting, 1917 - p. 5.

today have received some higher education. A few have had seminary training. Obviously this is a departure from the earlier practice in which it was considered wrong to accept money for preaching or to pursue an education, and as the result of which, ministers were faced with the necessity of supporting themselves by other means, meanwhile receiving only such education as they absorbed from reading and having a part in church conferences.

Many city churches now have full time ministers who are well educated. Increasing pressure is being brought to bear on the part of the younger members of the church, to extend the educational qualifications throughout the entire church.

DEGREES OF THE MINISTRY

In the early days, a young man who appeared to be a promising leader, was ordained to preach. If success attended his efforts and he was deemed qualified, he was advanced to the eldership by vote of the congregation. (Dunkers use the terms elder and bishop synonymously.) Thus a minister was first an "exhorter", then an elder. By a gradual process- three rather clearly defined stages or degrees developed with respect to the ministry. They are known as the first and second degrees and the eldership. The duties and limitations of each degree are defined in the Minutes of Annual Meeting of 1874:

1. "When elected to the first degree, a minister was authorized to preach and exhort as an assistant to the elders and older ministers, conduct meetings in case the older ministers are absent, and announce regular appointments.

2. When advanced to the second degree a minister was authorized to appoint meetings for preaching, administer baptism, perform the rite of marriage, and to serve communion when the elder was absent.

3. In the last degree - that of elder - he had the authority to install officers into the church, preside at council meetings and conduct communion services. The elder was the highest officer in each local church and if there were several, one was selected as presiding elder."*

A change was made in 1917 marking something of a reversion to the original practice. The newly outlined duties are:

"1. There shall be two degrees in the ministry, to be known as ministers and elders. All ministers who at the time of the adoption of this report, are serving in the first and second degree, shall be designated as ministers.

2. The duties of the minister are to preach the word, to administer baptism, to serve the communion in the absence of an elder or at his request; to solemnize marriage - in brief, to assist the elder faithfully in the general work of the ministry (Eph. 4: 11, 12; 2 Tim. 4: 1-5).

3. The duties of the elder, in addition to the foregoing duties of the minister, are to feed the flock, to preside over council meetings, especially when official members are on trial, to anoint the sick, to have the oversight and general management of the church; training the young ministers in his charge and apportioning the work among them according to their experience and ability; in brief to be a faithful shepherd to the flock, guarding their souls as one who must give an account, and be willing to serve in any capacity authorized by the church (Acts 20: 28; 1 Tim. 5: 17; Titus 1: 5; James 5: 14).

4. When the minister proves himself faithful and efficient in his office, he shall be ordained elder; and, when ordained, he shall pledge himself to live and labor in harmony with the accepted standards

* Minutes of 1874 Art. 8.

of the church in faith, doctrine and practice
(1 Tim. 5: 22; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5: 3)."*

In 1922 a further change was made whereby young men who have been called to preach, are licensed until "such time as the church and the District Ministerial Board shall decide to install them into the ministry." Thus at present, there are still three regular degrees of the ministry, namely: (1) licentiate; (2) minister; and (3) elder. The most recent change was made in the interest of a more carefully selected ministry, by means of a trial period of service. This method of licensure enables the church to withhold those who give no sufficient indication of advancement in the ministry from their full qualifications for leadership.

The significant point with regard to licensure is that since 1922 women who "are properly qualified" may be licensed by the church to preach. Their licenses may be renewed from year to year and whenever in the opinion of the Ministerial Board, their work and interests prove to be entirely adequate, their licenses may be made permanent. Women, however, are barred from the further degrees of the Ministry.

* Revised Minutes of Annual Meeting (1922) - p. 62

CHAPTER VII

AN APPRAISAL OF THE WORK AND INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH

The preceding chapters record the more significant transitions in the history of the Dunker church. From humble beginnings, growing out of the Pietist and Anabaptist groups in Germany, as a reaction against the staid formalisms of national churches, the Dunkers weathered an era of persecution and of theological and political strife, to evolve in a new continent as a virile liberalized religious denomination. Having a pattern of culture peculiar to themselves, they were able to make necessary re-adjustments to the environment of a new growing country, take their place in its religious life and make a lasting contribution to its well being. In bringing to a close the study of this interesting sect, some observations and conclusions with regard to the denomination as a whole are worthy of note.

Keeping in mind the basic facts relative to the origins of the Dunker church in America, the present size and strength of the denomination compare favorably with other major religious groups. Although continuing as one of the smaller sects, it must be remembered as having had only a restricted constituency in Europe from which to draw, in contrast to most of the other denominations. Therefore their present communicant membership is a real achievement in growth and progress numerically.* In the

* The Church of the Brethren lists 1,021 churches and 173,783 communicants in 1939.

light of the distinctive Dunker tenets, their record establishes a truly amazing advance.

THE DUNKER CHURCH AND EDUCATION

In respect to education, the history of the church and its contributions to American cultural life are filled with paradoxes. At the beginning the church numbered among her adherents, some of the most ardent advocates of higher learning. Educational institutions were promoted in this early period and a high type of culture pursued. Later the church swung to the opposite extreme and placed itself on record as opposed to all forms of higher education. Reaction eventually set in with a new ardor for intellectual progress. This attitude characterizes the church of today.

Associated with the early history of the church were some of the best educated men in Europe. The mere mention of names such as Spener, Francke, Arnold and Felbinger reminds us of their mental stature. Little is known of the education of Alexander Mack. The fact that he came from a wealthy family, that his writings establish his familiarity with the literature of his day, and that he was able to write in fairly clear German (evidence in his book, "A Plain View of the Rites and Ordinances") show clearly that he had good educational background.

In addition to these men, almost all of the early leaders of the sect were leaders in education. John Naas and Peter Becker were both men of learning. George Adam Martin was an author and scholar in Latin and German: Michael Prantz was

a composer of hymns and a writer. John Hildebrand was one of the best educated men of his time in America. Peter Miller, Martin Urner, Michael Eckerlin, John Price and many others, were well educated.

Evidence of the intellectual interest among Dunker people in Colonial times is furnished by their pioneering in the field of printing. Two of the earliest printing presses in America were set up by Dunkers. One of these was operated at Ephrata where the Beisselian community brought forth some of the finest works of the printing art produced in early America. The other was the famous press of Christopher Saur at Germantown. Saur has the distinction of having introduced German printing to America. His German Bible published in 1743 antedated the first English Bible by about forty years. In addition to this monumental work he published the Davidische Psalterspiel and many other hymn books, widely used among the German people of colonial America.

Christopher Saur, the younger, was also a power among the educated people in America. He was a prolific writer on social and religious subjects. His writings probably did more to mold social and religious attitudes among the German-speaking people of his day, than any other single influence. He wrote many articles denouncing slavery, the use of intoxicants, vain fashions and the use of force. In 1754 he wrote a book on "Christian Education" in which he proclaimed the convictions in which he profoundly believed. He was one of the founders of the famous Germantown Academy and a member of the board of trustees for a number of years. Of Christopher Saur it has been said,

"Among pioneer Americans no man stands out more prominently as an active champion of a broad and liberal education than the second Christopher Sower."*

Hence it is clear that many of the early Dunkers were strongly in favor of liberal education.

Contemporary with the establishment of the Saur press, Christian education classes were instituted at Germantown by Ludwig Hoecker. This type of Sunday School, which antedated the Robert Raikes movement in England, was not destined to grow as did the Sunday School movement abroad. Nevertheless, it establishes the fact that sentiment favoring Christian education prevailed among many of the early Dunker settlers.

In addition to the Hoecker movement, which was short lived, efforts were made by certain Dunkers to establish private schools. These were not maintained for any length of time, because the church soon lost its zeal for education.

Destruction of the Saur press during the Revolutionary War, was disastrous for the progress of education amongst German-speaking people in the colonies. The whole educational spirit of the Dunkers was dissipated and vanished. Persecutions because of their failure to take the oath of allegiance required by colonial Pennsylvania, caused many to migrate to places where it was impossible for them to continue any organized educational efforts. Their people were scattered throughout the then unsettled western sections of colonial territory. They purposely avoided contacts with larger centers of population as well as

* Sharp, Educational History of the Brethren - p. 37.

with those of other faiths. Their settlements developed here and there in isolation from each other and apart from cultural centers. The reaction against education and against the forms of culture it produced, was strengthened by contacts the Dunkers had here and there with the Amish and Mennonites who likewise were opposed to higher education.

Had not this tragedy overtaken the Dunker sect, the relative influence of the denomination might have been multiplied tenfold. The sturdy life of their people, coupled with their unique spiritual vigor, continually gave promise of a brilliant future. Undoubtedly this larger attainment was minimized and retarded by the lack of cultural leadership. Thus the denomination lost its former place in fostering educational activities.

In addition to the isolation of Dunkers from centers where education flourished, another factor must be taken into account in accounting for the educational decline within the Dunker church. The strong tendency in the Pietist movement to stress spiritual living as against the intellectual life, caused a weakening of ecclesiasticism and scholasticism and a corresponding accentuation of the virtues of practical Christian living. However, Spener and Francke never failed to appreciate the great value of education even though many of their followers broke away from the educational traditions of the churches established in Germany.

The extremists set a pattern for the Dunkers. While sharing in the intellectual inheritance of the best Protestant learning

of the times, the Dunkers were not aware of the importance of linking sound learning with true spirituality. Thus in their zeal to avoid the pitfalls of over-emphasis upon learning, they went to the extreme of making no provision for continuing an educated leadership within the church.

This error was regarded with deep concern by Spener who observed the direction in which some of the leaders of the Pietist household were moving. All effort to prevent this, on-coming disaster, was of no avail, however. In the process of losing some of the early leaders through migration and death, certain changes came about as the second generation of leaders began to appear.

The latter were chosen wisely insofar as the basis of true spiritual living was concerned, but they differed from the men of Mack's period in their lack of educational training and intellectual background within the established church. The sole requirement for advancement to the eldership was the degree of piety attained. The shortsightedness of this procedure lay in failure to grasp the fundamental place of true learning and sound doctrine in the life of the church, - an almost fatal error. As a result, ignorant and superstitious churchmen came into such positions of power and influence that for almost a century the church carried forward the tradition against book learning.

What little education there was in colonial America, particularly in the rural and more isolated regions, was due to the efforts of the clergy of the older Protestant denominations.

chiefly Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, Anglicans and Congregationalists. In this early period the manse was in many instances the only source from which the people could obtain instruction. The insistence of the Presbyterian Church and some others upon an educated clergy, gave assurance that the incumbents of their pastorates, would also be qualified as teachers. Most of the old academies which sprung up in the colonial period were started as manse schools. Similarly, many of the first universities* were started as training schools for the clergy of these denominations.

In these traditions, the Dunkers did not share. Their original distrust of established churches made them fear all contact with other religious people. When educated leaders were no longer to be found within their own ranks, they inevitably followed their only available remaining leaders, who were in most cases uneducated men.

The backbone of this anti-educational and anti-cultural attitude, to which the church adhered for about a century following the Revolutionary War, was broken by the spread of the public school system in America. By reason of this movement and the fact that the Dunkers were thrown continually alongside of others who sought education freely, the Church began

* e. g. Harvard, Yale, Princeton. In the right wall of the Johnson Gate at Harvard the following inscription is carved. "After God had carried us safe to New England, and wee had builded our houses provided necessaries for our livelihood, rear'd convenient places for Gods worship and settled the Civill government; one of the next things we longed for, and looked after was to advance Learning and perpetrate it to Posterity; dreading to leave an illiterate Ministry to the Churches, when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust."

slowly to revert to its former position as an advocate of Christian Education.

Historically this change dates from about 1850 when a group of leaders became interested in higher education. In 1852 the first school was founded at Buffalo Mills, Pennsylvania. Others followed in rapid succession, continuing until about 1910. Many such schools inaugurated by members of the church, have been discontinued. Others have maintained a steady growth. At the present time the church conducts ten educational institutions including seven standard liberal arts colleges.* Since 1905, the church has also had a theological seminary in Chicago, known as Bethany Biblical Seminary.**

The several dates of the founding of these institutions of learning reveal an expanding consciousness among the church membership for more highly trained leaders, particularly in the ministry. The effort on behalf of an educated ministry caused a growing sentiment for a paid, full-time ministry. Although progress in these objectives has been most admirable, the fact is that in the main they have not yet been achieved. Dove estimates that less than ten per cent of Dunker ministers are seminary trained,*** while the church still has less than three

* Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pa., Mt. Morris College, Mt. Morris Ill., Bridgewater College, Bridgewater, Va., McPherson College, McPherson, Kansas, La Verne College, La Verne, California, Manchester College, North Manchester, Indiana, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pa.

** Does not require college training for entrance.

***Dove, Cultural Changes in the Church of the Brethren - p. 200 Many of these have received their education in schools of other denominations.

hundred full time pastors. However, the pattern has been set for the future. The trend toward highly trained ministers who also are full-time workers, is now definitely established in the Church of the Brethren.

A significant phase of the Dunker view concerning education - particularly in these days - is the recognition of the importance of Christian education. This is in striking contrast to the general trend in America, where education has become extremely secularized and where historic American culture seems quite abandoned. The use of the words "secularization of education" in this sense involves an "organization of education apart from God."* This unmistakable trend in education is evidenced in a statement by ^{Dr.} Roscoe Pound, dean of the faculty of law in Harvard, who asserts that "organized education has taken the place in our society which was formerly held by organized religion," Expanding this statement to throw light upon a regrettable situation, Dr. Harold McAfee Robinson has said that "

"The institutions of education and not the institutions of religion are now the centers around which our cultural life revolves. In the old days the captains went forth to war, they erected great cathedrals to the glory of God, and those cathedrals were the outward symbols of the communal life. In these days the captains go forth to industrial war, and when they return with spoils beyond the dreams of medieval avarice, they erect great institutions of learning, dedicated to the advancement of human culture, and those institutions of learning are the symbols of our current communal life.**

* This is a phrase coined by Dr. John C. Bennett.

** Dr. Harold McAfee Robinson in "Mr. Valiant for Truth" page 82.

Thus secularization of education is a partial outcome of the separation of church and state, - a principle embodied in the founding of the American republic. The Dunker Church through its Anabaptist traditions has always been an ardent advocate of the separation of Church and State. The answer of the Dunker Church to the secularization of education in America has not been to decry the doctrine of the separation of Church and State. They would be among the last of our people to do so. Their answer has been adherence to teaching the Christian religion. Having thrown off the lethargy which once characterized their attitude towards education as such, and having determined to promote education, they became zealous that it should be distinctively Christian education.

This harks back to the ideas of Franke, who firmly believed that education that did not train for Christian living was bad education. This fundamental tenet of the Dunker Church is now reflected in all their educational institutions, which stand out in sharp contrast to the more highly endowed state universities in America and the more fashionable schools of larger and wealthier denominations.

The importance of this stand for Christian education is not fully appreciated in America where the myth of the self-sufficiency of secular education is now being dethroned. Some time must elapse before a full realization of the importance of truly Christian education dawns upon a people trained to think along intellectual lines only. When this happens, the Dunker church, must be accredited as one of a few that consistently

held aloft the torch of truth in a period of misinformation and self-sufficiency.

The Dunker Church in Relation to Society

An important conclusion drawn from a cursory view of the history of the Dunker church is that in a return to Christian Education, emphasis has shifted from adherence to a narrow group of religious patterns, to a worthy participation in current social and cultural problems. This change is regarded by those within the ranks and by critics of the church as well, as having been decidedly for the better.

Although full recognition is given to the commendable shift in educational emphasis, it is apparent that until the last twenty-five years of her history - excluding of course the earliest period - the Dunker church has produced no great national religious leaders, no great literary men, no great statesman, and no great philosophers or poets. This of itself is a commentary upon the course pursued by the church educationally. In the two latest generations, a definite change has taken place in this respect, exemplified in the life and work of D. L. Miller, author and traveler, and of Martin G. Brumbaugh, noted educator and former governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Men such as these mark the quality of leadership which the church may be counted upon to continue to produce with a continuance of her present educational standards.

That noted men should have appeared in the Dunker sect at the time they began to fuse their own culture with the culture of others, is important. They have been rural folk and in some

respects hindered in their progress in learning. In our day, rural residence is no longer a barrier. Modern transportation facilities have enabled all who desire culture and education to obtain these advantages through combined public schools. Dissemination of culture and education is more intensive, more rapid and more sure than it has ever been. In fact, the greater diffusion of ideals in our customs and modes of living, is inevitable under modern conditions even though the process is almost imperceptible. The change in religious modes is but one element in a larger evolution within the whole social order. The experience of the Dunkers teaches that in order for any denomination to be of vital import in shaping the trend of civilization, it must draw freely from prevailing currents of culture which embody the common experiences of mankind.

The whole world faces the impetus of the progressive synthesis of world-wide culture. This does not mean that we shall see the end of denominations and of group patterns in thought and culture. The present virility of Dunker groups which have bridged the gap of inevitable social change, refutes such an idea as this. Religious groups will continue to retain their identity and develop their own religious and cultural patterns, but it is only those ideas that are rooted in fundamental truth and those patterns of life that foster mutually helpful social adaptations that have a fair chance of survival. As they prove themselves true and useful, they are destined to become a part of the universal religion and culture. In a world where isolation for individuals and for groups has become

increasingly difficult, highly adaptive and useful traits in culture soon become common property and usually provide a foundation on which future patterns of life are built.

The rapid rise of cultural forms in the Dunker sect indicates clearly that narrow forms are incompatible with a progressive denominationalism. Churches destined to make real contributions to world civilization or even to national civilization, must prepare to influence major social trends. Just as society depends upon science and education for correct appraisals of the material and the secular, so it depends upon the church for a proper evaluation of moral and spiritual forces. This places a definite responsibility upon all religious groups for the validity and utility of their principles and their practices insofar as worthwhile contributions to social advancement are concerned. It means also that a church will lose its power and influence if it allows itself to be absorbed in maintaining legalistic inheritances at the expense of serving objectives that are vital and uplifting. Thus the fate of Ephrata and the Old Order Brethren (conservative wing) was sealed when they insisted upon living unto themselves in disregard of the social environment of which they were a part. Failure to make lasting and worthwhile contributions to their environment, deprived them of the right to exist. Gradually they succumbed in consequence of disobedience to inherent social law.

By their willingness to make suitable adjustments to new conditions and intellectual progress, the main stem of the Dunker sect survived despite the rapidly changing social order. To-day

it serves the religious needs of her people and the spiritual life of the community more effectively than ever before. Thus, many of the original customs and beliefs have been either eliminated or modified. Many others have stood the test of time.

The Decline of the Doctrine of Separation and Its Effect.

The evident recent tendency to nullify the tenet of "separation", will be regretted by all who see in the historic Dunker church, a model group of Christians determined to fulfill the ideals of Christianity in a sinful world, so far as this is possible. In concentrating upon the former goal they have constantly reminded other Christians of the hope of perfection, a principle which Reinhold Niebuhr has said "must never be lost sight of by the whole group of Christians." When this conception broke down within the Dunker church, all thought of building an "ideal community" had to be given up.

In other words the Dunkers are following other Christians who while admitting that the law of life is the law of love, nevertheless recognize that men do break this law and are therefore resigned to the inevitable necessity of breaking this law themselves. Hence they experience the denial of the principle of a perfect Christian society.

The history of the Dunker sect is the romantic story of a whole-hearted attempt on their part to establish the Kingdom of God within their own confines. Theirs has been a noble struggle to achieve this ideal and it must be recognized that in disavowing the doctrine of separation from the world, the Dunkers sacrifice

a principle that lay at the very heart of their denomination as originally conceived.

The principle was inherited from Pietists and Anabaptists. It will be recalled that the Pietists influenced by Spener wished to withdraw and escape from the world, and that the Anabaptists held that the Kingdom of God on earth must be "walled in" from the rest of society. The conception of the collegia pietatis in Pietism and of the "ban" with the Anabaptists, were of the same pattern in this respect. Alexander Mack embraced both ideas and set the stage within the Dunker church for a "separate community of Christians." Except for this doctrine the church could never have developed historically as it did. To the outside observer, this idea of a "separate community" was ascribed to a certain smugness which the "more tolerant" Christian deemed despicable. To the Dunkers it was an instrument for preserving the true Christian life. They felt that unless there were some noticeable differences between the Christian and the non-Christian, faith in fact had no meaning; - that pious conduct was the major criterion for all who are truly regenerate; and, that the pious could not risk mingling with worldly temptations and worldly people. Between the two there was "a great gulf fixed." The Dunkers were zealous that it should so remain.

In the final analysis, this principle has distinguished the Dunkers from other denominations. It is this principle upon which trine immersion is based, making of it a distinctive rite symbolic of initiation into a distinctive sect. There is no substitute. It is not that baptism by immersion distinguishes

Dunkers from other sects. It is well known that other denominations observe baptism by immersion as a pre-requisite for church membership. In the main they are much the same as the other groups of Protestants. However, it is not their method of baptism so much as their concept of "a separate community" that marks the Dunkers as being essentially different from other Protestants. Therefore one may safely say that when they shall finally abandon the idea of their separation from other believers, they shall have paved the way for brotherhood with other Christian denominations whose combined influence will largely determine the future course of the church at large.

Whether for the broadest welfare of mankind or not, the Dunkers have progressed under the idea that the Kingdom of God is to be established by withdrawal from the world and that eventually their group will leaven the whole. In contrast, other Protestant denominations have denied the principle of "separation" and have been striving to build a more Christian society in all the world, and thus mold the forces of life according to the Christian pattern.

An Appraisal of the Fundamental Dunker Position

In taking full account of the Dunker church in its fundamental position relative to other sects of Christendom, what may be said of the adequacy of its position when one regards the Christian Church as a whole?

Notwithstanding the creditable history of the Dunker Church, we may be pardoned in thinking that their viewpoint

is no longer suited - if indeed it ever was - to the conditions of life. The Dunkers had actually ceased to exist actively in Europe and would probably have been wiped out had it not been for taking refuge in America. Even here, it was made safe chiefly by others who took the initiative in establishing and maintaining freedom of enterprise, freedom of speech and religious tolerance under the new forms of government. Until recent times, but little leadership and less zeal have ever been contributed by the members of this denomination by way of preserving these very institutions.*

Again, the history of the denomination demonstrates that in the struggle to remain separate from the world and become a perfect Christian society, they fought a losing battle. The slow yet steady process by which the Dunkers have conformed to the general pattern of Protestantism in America established this claim beyond doubt. This may be regarded as having been inevitable from the start and leads to the conclusion that although the Dunkers placed an interpretation upon the Christian Gospel that was admirable in many respects it was nevertheless inadequate as a way of life in a mobile nation. The Christian world would be much impoverished by the disappearance of those who hold such high ideals of Christian perfection as the Dunkers. Yet the total view of history would be that the Dunker theology is not adequate for the church as a dynamic force in the world.

* In this connection M. G. Brumbaugh is reliably reported to have said that the fact that his people (the Dunkers) were surrounded on all sides by the belligerent Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who served as a wall against the Indians, made it much easier for the Dunkers to exercise the principles of their religion. (This statement is nowhere in writing, but it points to a great truth.)

The doctrine of non-resistance, pursued by the church from its beginnings, is a case in point. The zeal accorded the non-resistance ideal by the Dunkers is commendable enough. Together with the Quakers, the Mennonites and others, they long proclaimed the virtues of peace before the peoples of the world. Their refusal to participate in warfare has been a constant reminder that war is incompatible with the Christian ethic. Even so, it must be remembered that the only domain where non-resistance sects have survived, has been within democratic nations where freedom of religion has been preserved for them and on their own behalf, by the respective governments. One can readily imagine circumstances under which non-resistance sects would be persecuted and wiped out, just as they were driven from the continent of Europe and ceased to exist there.

The point of greatest inadequacy in the tenets of the Dunkers is in their failure to recognize that ultimately peace must be based upon a redeemed society. Unless the church engages in the warfare against evil, and is fearless in her zeal for extending the Kingdom to every shore, conditions will sooner or later make it impossible for the church to survive. The foundations of peace must be laid in a longtime program having a far vision that all evil is the enemy of the Kingdom and must be overcome at its source. Thus the true "pacifist" is not the non-resister but is the person who uses all of his influence to build everywhere the foundations of righteousness, without which the world will know no peace.

The ultimate ineffectiveness of the Dunker policy is

illustrated in the isolationist position of the United States after the first World War. The concept of separation advocated and practiced by the Dunkers, is similar to American "isolationism". The United States pursued a "hands off" policy in world affairs, thinking this would best serve the interests of world peace. The dominant idea was that we should keep our own house in order, and let the rest of the world pursue folly, since it was not our affair.

In the light of the present war, the short-sightedness of this doctrine has become all too evident. Now it is realized that war anywhere in this interdependent world threatens peace in the United States; and the impression is rapidly growing that the best way to preserve the world's peace is to be engaged actively in preventing war.

The lesson is that evil will not let us alone. We cannot build walls high enough to keep out the aggressor. We cannot separate ourselves from the influence of evil. Thus any doctrine whatsoever, which proceeds on the theory of separateness, is inadequate as a basis for a universal religion.

We shall of course not lose sight of the contributions made by the Dunkers to Christianity at home and abroad. We shall remember their essential and enduring influence. It is true, their peculiarities at times hindered progress and served as barriers to spiritual growth, but they originated and perpetuated valid precepts and essential customs, which must be cherished always.

A notably strong influence for good in the Dunker sect, is

their unwavering emphasis upon the Bible as their only creed. They have leaned heavily at times upon creedal churches for the preservation of fundamental Christian doctrines. In formulating their own beliefs they borrowed often from other churches. But they have maintained an enviable wholesomeness and integrity in having placed full reliance upon the authority of the Scriptures. Although the logical mind of a well-trained theologian would regard this as an almost untenable position in the light of facts of modern Biblical re-search, this reliance upon the Scriptures marks the place where stood the early Christians. As in non-resistance, the Dunker attitude towards Scripture shows the inadequacy of unyielding adherence to dogmatic religious doctrine. Even though the Dunkers borrowed heavily from the creedal churches, they brought fresh interpretation to bear upon the teaching of the Word of God, through their own liberty of thought.

Another estimable characteristic, is the splendid spirit of true democratic Christianity which has pervaded the group from the beginning. In challenging the whole congregation to active roles in Christian life and work, they have set a pattern for true Protestantism. Probably no other denomination gives as much opportunity for participating in the government and work of the church, as the Dunker church. Their traditional policy of making but slight distinction between clergy and laity, caused the duty maintaining the church program to rest directly upon the shoulders of all church members. The latter have been equal to the demands, and the church is therefore regarded as a church

"of the people". Deprived of leaders in that they have had few well-trained pastors in full-time service, they have progressed on the realization of the call for "every man's leadership."

The genius of the Dunker people is in their simple and pious manner of living, - their zeal in giving first place to spiritual life. If they are to be regarded adversely because of intellectual and educational sluggishness, their absorption in the objective of a higher devotional life has been and is the great redeeming factor. The Dunkers are the product of Pietism, whose most noble exponents sought to establish "Active Christianity" and simple Christian living as the center of man's desire.

The Dunkers have produced only a few outstanding civic or religious leaders of repute. On the other hand their church is characterized by a great middle-class of substantial, industrious, economical, peaceful, moral and religious citizens, above their fellows in adherence to the common virtues. They built in a new land many worthy God-fearing communities whose people have been scrupulously honest, and exceedingly hospitable, - splendid exemplars of upright, self-reliant manhood and womanhood.

No more excellent group of settlers came to the United States than the Pennsylvania Germans. The Dunkers are one of the best of their species, No one with an understanding of these people would willingly discount the pious influence of thousands of them in molding forces that have been dominant in the life of the American nation. Regarded as a "peculiar" people by the so-called "fashionable" denominations, they nevertheless maintained within their own communion a moral and religious code not

achieved by many another denomination.

The reason for their success in this regard is to be found in their continued emphasis upon pious spiritual living, - the goal for which they consciously strove. Nothing was allowed to stand in the way of this achievement. Doctrine, liturgy, educational training as emphasized by other groups, - all these were set aside in the pursuit of a higher ideal. Their distinctive customs and manner of dress were symbols of their desire to preserve their own way of living the spiritual life and excluding the world and all worldly influences.

Regarded as the off-spring of the Anabaptists in certain of their rites and forms, it must be remembered that in a devotional sense, the Dunkers are the direct offspring of the Pietists. They carried many of the concepts of Spener, Francke and the Pietist school to absurd extremes, but they grasped the fundamental idea of the church as a place where the simple Christian life is fostered and where an opportunity is given for Christian faith to take root.

In the first chapter of our study, it appeared that the reforms suggested by Spener were grouped around three subjects, namely, theology, the church and morals. The Dunkers attempted to realize measurably all three of these ideals. They wished to replace theological training with spiritual training; they regarded man's religious experience as of greater importance than his theological understanding; they conceived of the church as a "living church" of active believers with full participation of all lay members; and, insisting that religious living should

issue in morality, they left no stone unturned in the effort to achieve this end.

It will also be observed that in seeking inspiration and guidance from the Scriptures rather than by means of theological forms, the Dunkers followed closely Spener and Francke. They also observed informal worship after the Pietist manner and strove to build into their lives the essential Spirit of Christianity. Their church history attests the fact that great rewards follow when devotional ideals are really put into practice. Their high moral excellence and strong religious conviction are paralleled in but few recorded instances.

The rapid transitions in the Dunker church, now taking place under the stress of modern civilization, are of great significance. In metropolitan communities, the Dunkers place no more emphasis upon the Pietist tradition than do other denominations. Should this process of liberalization come to pervade the entire denomination, there can be no question that Christianity in America and throughout the world, will have sustained a very serious loss. It is hoped that the future will bring a resurgence of the Dunker tradition in some kindred spiritual form, which shall prove worthy of being perpetuated for Christian believers of all denominations.

The great task today is to teach that the simple and pious life, rich in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, is the only life compatible with true Christianity. In preserving this truth above all others, and exemplifying it before the world, the Dunkers and their fellow believers, have made a great contribution and are deserving of the praise of all Christendom.

APPENDIX I

The confusion regarding the entire background of this sect is well illustrated in the traditional and current misconceptions regarding their name. There is probably no religious sect to which so many designations have been attached as the one under consideration.

They have been variously known as Dompelaers, Anabaptists, Pietists, Taufers, Tunkers, Tunkards, Dunkers, Dunkards, Dippers. In addition to these terms they have sometimes been referred to as Schwarzenau or Wittgenstein Baptists with reference to the place of their origin.

Among themselves they have usually been designated as Brethren and they have thought of themselves from the first as a religious "fraternity." Because they opposed infant baptism as one of their fundamental tenets, they were sometimes called Anabaptists. Association with the Pietists of Germany explains why this term should be applied to them. Because of their peculiar mode of baptism by trine immersion, they were called Taufers from the German word "taufen" meaning to baptize; or Dompelaers, meaning dippers; or Tunkers, derived from the old German word "tunken" meaning to dip. Tunkers has been softened or Anglicized to Dunkers, the name that is most commonly applied to the members of this sect. This is the term which is used in this dissertation, both because it has become, through the usage of the best writers, the most proper term and because in its connotation it brings to mind the

whole class of people belonging to this sect rather than any one branch. -

The name Dunkers has become vulgarized in America, by those who referred in disparaging terms to these people as Dunkards. This name has received quite wide spread usage but is abhorred by all who are in the least familiar with the history of the sect. It is not unusual, however, to hear the term used when reference is made to them.

The first official name chosen by these people was German Baptist Brethren. This name was changed in 1908 to the present designation the Church of the Brethren. This is the proper name for the main branch of the church. Confusion still results in terminology, nevertheless, because the progressive wing of the church, uses the official name "The Brethren Church", while the conservatives organized under the name "Old German Baptist Brethren."

APPENDIX II

In evidence of the value of the work produced by the Ephrata press the following recent appraisal is cited from the April (1940) copy of the "Public Education Bulletin" published by the Department of Public Instruction, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

"Today we have a special interest in the printing done at the Ephrata Cloister. There is no documentary evidence as to the date on which a press was set up at Ephrata, but the earliest known book issued there was in 1745. The Cloister was equipped with its own paper mill, ink, and bindery, and the monks issued some of the most unique Pennsylvania imprints that have value for the poet, the musician, the theologian, the historian, and the book collector. One of the most famous among them is a translation of Braght's "Martyrer Spiegel" which was written originally in the Dutch language. For a number of years the Mennonites in Pennsylvania had longed for a translation of this early account of the experiences of the Mennonite Martyrs. Fifteen of the Brethren spent three years in translating the work into high German, compiling and printing in 1748 what is now considered one of the most remarkable books issued by a colonial press. Large sales were made, but during the Revolutionary War several hundred stored copies were confiscated to be used in making bullets."

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