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Author(s): Toews, J. B.

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CHAPTER X

THE TEACHING MINISTRY OF THE MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

John B. Toews

Introduction

The teaching of the Scriptures provided the seedbed for the revival movement in the Mennonite communities of South Russia. This spiritual awakening resulted in the birth of the Mennonite Brethren Fellowship.¹ The 1840's and 1850's witnessed the rise of small groups of people gathering together to be taught from the Scriptures.² The Secession Document³ expresses the conflict the early brethren felt between the teaching of the Scriptures and the life of the church of the Mennonite community. Profession and practice were in contradiction.

The commitment of the leading brethren of the movement to integrate life and doctrine served as the point of reference in the early struggles of the Mennonite Brethren Church. It also served as the final criteria in the "June Reform"⁴ which set the course for the life of the fellowship.

The history of the Mennonite Brethren Church reflects the central concern for understanding the Scriptures and for the importance of the teaching ministry for the life of the church.

I. THE TEACHING MINISTRY AS A CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

In the early years of the Mennonite Brethren Church the teaching ministry was recognized as a corporate responsibility.⁵ The fellowship of the believers appointed those from their midst whom they recognized as possessing the gift of teaching. Their selection by the church made them responsible to the church. This responsibility required a quality of character and life as a prerequisite for the teaching ministry as well as faithfulness in the interpretation of Scriptures.⁶ The corporate responsibility for the teaching ministry found further expression in that official confirmation or ordination of teachers of the Word was not only a concern of the local fellowship but also of the conference.⁷

The brotherhood watched carefully over the spiritual walk of those called to teach.⁸ Ministers and deacons conferences in the Mennonite Brethren Church have historically wrestled with establishing the qualifications for persons in the teaching ministry.⁹

An indication of the corporate responsibility for the teaching ministry within the brotherhood was the provision for an extensive itinerant ministry. Brethren with special gifts in teaching and expounding the Word were assigned to itinerate under the supervision of a conference-appointed body. They were also financed from a conference treasury. The character of this ministry was both instructional, for the believing community, and evangelistic, for the unconverted. "The crucial role of this itinerant ministry for the early Mennonite Brethren Church cannot be over emphasized. It promoted unity of faith and practice and was the most important avenue for church extension."¹¹ The first church in Canada was established in 1888 through the itinerant ministry of Heinrich Voth. It is rather significant to note the close inter-relatedness of *Seelenpflege*—spiritual care for the believers—and the outreach to unsaved people.¹²

The training process for younger and inexperienced teachers of the Word also emerged from a corporate inter-relationship. The younger brethren appointed to the

teaching ministry by the discerning community served together with the men of experience. Some younger men become Timothys to brethren in the itinerant ministry. Their sharing in the Bible teaching and evangelistic outreach included both the pulpit ministry as well as the person to person evangelism. The benefits which have come to my own ministry through prolonged periods of traveling and ministering with such brethren as N.N. Hiebert, A.H. Unruh, and my own father, J.A. Toews, were of profound significance both for my understanding of the Scriptures and for the development of teaching and preaching methods.

II. THE TEACHING MINISTRY AS A PROCESS OF SHARED DISCERNMENT

The house church, known since the days of the Apostolic Church, was from the beginning a vital expression of the Anabaptist movement. In places where the Mennonite movement became institutionalized, as was the case in Prussia, Poland and Russia, the groups meeting in the homes, read the Scriptures, shared their understanding of the Word, prayed, and sought to contextualize the teachings of the Scriptures. The itinerant ministry was also largely a gathering of the scattered believers in the homes for the study of the Word and prayer.¹⁴

Bibelstunde (Bible Study Hour, as the home Bible fellowships were called) focused on a given book of the Bible, usually the New Testament, but occasionally also the Psalms. The men of the group would sit around the table with their open Bibles. They would take turns reading a portion and giving their understanding. Others would add their insight concerning the meaning and application. In cases where the group could not find agreement on the meaning of the Scriptures it would assign some members to consult other resources and continue the discussion at the next meeting until the group found consensus. (The resources which were consulted for additional light were such commentaries as Dächsels *Bibelwerk*, Paul Fabiankes *Praktische Bibelerklärung*, Zellers *Biblisches Woerterbuch*, *Stuttgarter Biblisches Nachschlagewerk*, Buechners

Hankonkordanz, the writings of Menno Simons, and a selection of devotional writings by such men as Otto Stockmeyer, F.B. Meyer, Ernst Modersohn, Ernst Bebbhardt and others.) The women provided the listening audience for these discussions with the liberty to ask an occasional question.¹⁵ The teaching and learning process resulting from these Bible Study Hours cannot be overestimated.

The formal educational program in the Mennonite colonies in Russia provided a different kind of biblical instruction. One hour each school day was devoted to the study of the Bible. This process over a period of six years provided a framework of reference which in itself offered a good foundation for the process of further study. God's relationship to the world, to history, and to man as an individual was the focus of this religious instruction. The level of inquiry into the Scriptures in the schools was more practical than theological.

III. BIBEL-BESPRECHUNGEN (BIBLE CONFERENCES)

The Bible study in the homes was supported at the larger congregational levels by "Bibel-Besprechungen." These Bible Conferences involved sister congregations and guests who would travel long distances to participate.

Church leaders, ministers and teachers of the congregations considered these Bible conferences as an essential avenue for biblical instruction. For each conference—an annual event in every organized church—a book of the Bible or some selected chapters were selected. One of the ministers would present a general introduction to the book. The study that followed assumed the form of a discussion more than a lecture. Teachers, ministers and the people from the pews participated. The process was a verse by verse study. Here and there one of the more gifted teachers would summarize the major truths which emerged from the discussions. Ministers from the congregations would participate in as many Bible conferences of this nature as possible by attending the gatherings in their area and even in distant localities. For many of them, these Bible conferences

became a resource for the teaching and preaching ministry in their respective congregations.

The two levels of Bible Studies, the "Bibelstunde" as a small group process, and "Bibel Besprechung" in the context of the broader congregational setting, must be recognized as a most effective avenue in the teaching ministry of the Mennonite Brethren fellowship.

IV. PREDIGER KURSE (MINISTER'S SEMINARS)

The lay ministry in the Mennonite Brethren church—where the local congregation selected men from their own midst—was not maintained without other specialized training. Beyond the day school, Bible hour, home Bible studies and the annual Bible conferences the brotherhood arranged special training courses for ministers. Teachers for these special instructions were brethren who had acquired advanced training either through systematic self-study or in the context of academic institutions. Selected brethren from Russia would be sent to schools in Germany and Switzerland (Baptist Seminary in Hamburg, St. Crischona training center in Basel). In North America the Baptist Seminary in Rochester became a major training center for selected brethren. Those who through experience and/or academic training were equipped to teach other ministers served as resource people for these Minister's Seminars. In Russia, Jakob Reimer, David Duerksen, Herman Neufeld, Peter Koehn, and J.G. Wiens were some of the brethren conducting the Minister's Seminars.¹⁸ In North America, Heinrich Voth, Abram Schellenberg, Johan Regehr, and Wm. Bestvater were some of the brethren providing instructions for their fellow-ministers.

The teaching ministry during the first half century of Mennonite Brethren history thus was not through a professional ministry or institutional programs, but rather in the context of a brotherhood fellowship based in the *Bibelstuden* (Bible hour), Bible conferences (*Bibel Besprechungen*), and Minister's Seminars.

V. OTHER AGENCIES

The Family.—Mennonite Brethren historically have been a covenant people. Receptions into the church membership required a response of commitment to governing principles of life and ethics as the church understood them. The practice of daily family devotions was part of the covenant commitment. The father, as priest of the household, would lead the family in Bible reading and prayer. Systematic reading through the Bible was encouraged. The actual effectiveness of these family worship hours in some cases is open to question and would vary according to method and the ability of parents to apply the reading to the daily life of the family.¹⁹ The custom, however, was significant as a teaching agency, setting forth the centrality of the Bible for the life of a family as well as the individual. Bible reading did become part of the daily style of many Mennonite Brethren families.

The Sunday School.—Provision was made early in the history of the Brethren for the instruction of children in the Sunday school. In Russia this effort was an adjunct to the regular worship service. Because most children participated in the religious instruction of the village school, the character of this instruction was primarily devotional, with an emphasis on the need for personal conversion and a consistent Christian life. The results of such emphases raised questions about the validity of child conversion.²⁰ The character of the Sunday school in the American setting (1874) and the Canadian setting (1888) was essentially the same. With the adoption of the International Sunday School Lessons as a guide, no provision was made for a systematic study of the historical context of the Scriptures, as was provided by the religious instruction in the day school in Russia. The emphasis remained more devotional, and did not provide a historical frame of reference, essential for the understanding of God's relationship to history and men in general. Some attempt to restore the systematic study of the Bible as given in the school system of the Mennonite Colonies in Russia was made through the Saturday schools with an emphasis on German and Bible. These efforts were

necessary to enable the children and youth to benefit from the teaching and worship program of the church fellowship.

The Canadian and American scene, with people living on farms instead of in villages, made the continued practice of the group Bible studies difficult. The adult Sunday school to an extent became the American replacement for the Bible study hour in Russia. In some localities where people lived in small towns the practice of the Bible study hour continued. In general, however, the mid-week Bible study and prayer services in the church, which do not provide the close fellowship and general participation in the interpretation of the Scriptures, have taken the place of the Bible study hour of the past. The introduction of Sunday school material prepared by publishers who are strongly motivated by marketing possibilities had a phenomenal influence on the instructional character and values of our Sunday schools. The suppliers of the material: Scripture Press, Gospel Light, Cook, and others adapt the biblical material to become acceptable to the widest possible clientele. The principle of accommodation in the interpretation of biblical truth, governed by a marketing appeal, results in an emphasis void of focus in matters of faith and life. In addition to the lack of focus in textual interpretation and application many of our Sunday schools are strongly influenced by the techniques of Child Evangelism, Kid's Bible Clubs, and others. The programs of Boys Brigades and Pioneer Girls, widely followed in many of Mennonite Brethren Churches, with an emphasis on social activities, with brief devotional consideration, does not provide a systematic Bible teaching program.

The "Jugendverein" (Youth Association)—In North America the institution of the Youth Association became a teaching agency. On alternative Sundays the evening service consisted of a program sponsored by the youth of the church. The organizational structure provided a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, treasurer and some members to serve as participants in a program committee. The programs were mostly prepared and presented by youth or family groups. All talents from within the church were engaged—group singing, solos, quartets, duets, string and brass instruments, recitation of poems and dialogues, story

telling and a formal address on an assigned subject by one of the young people. The record of the minutes of these meetings suggest a very broad range of doctrinal, ethical and social issues that were considered in these addresses.

As an example we note the following subject in the program of the Youth Association of a church in California in 1942. In a series on the subject of "Following Jesus," the question was discussed: What does Jesus' command "Follow Me" mean for us today? In our daily walk? In our prayer life? In our response to the command: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel?" Other subjects dealt with by the young people of the same church in 1942 were: What must I do to be saved? How can we know that Christ is truly the Son of God? Three essentials for Christian Growth (I Peter 2:22; II Timothy 2:15; I Thess. 5:12, 18; Luke 10:42-43); The Christian's Hope (I Cor. 15:19-22); The Second Coming of Christ—when and how? The Christian's relationship to war.

All of the subjects enumerated were dealt with by young people. Those who dealt with such subjects in 1942 are today in leadership positions within the brotherhood.²² The youth program did serve as a major factor in generating personal responsibility and the initiation of youth into the life of the church. It was a training process and recruiting base for leadership in the local church and conference. The loss sustained in the gradual discontinuation of this teaching/participation process in the local church during the past 25 years, without any provision to take its place, has serious implication for the future.

Women's Missionary Societies: The Missionary goal of the Anabaptist movement of the 16th century with its renewal in the Pietistic revivals of the 17th and 18th centuries was also part of the new life that came to the Menonite Brethren. The records of local churches²³ indicate the formation of societies beginning in 1886 and continuing thereafter. The character of the weekly or biweekly meetings consisted of devotional programs in Bible study, group prayer meetings for the program of foreign missions, and preparing articles for the annual mission sale.²⁴ The amount of time many mothers gave to Mission Societies established the importance of missions in family life and the

church program. A large part of the Conference mission budget was the result of these mission societies, the annual mission sale and the mission festivals. Testimonies from mission candidates, volunteering for service, have often referred to the work of their mothers in the mission societies as providing the earliest impressions of the obligations of the church for the people who know not the saving gospel of Christ.²⁵ The educational influence of this practical phase of the church program must be recognized historically as a factor in the missionary interest of our churches. The practical example of priority demonstrated by the mothers of the home and the confirmation of the importance of missions in the emphasis of the mission festivals was direction giving for the life of the Mennonite Brethren movement until the 1950's. The effectiveness of the more recent models of women's organizations as an educational and spiritual influence requires a careful evaluation in the context of present interests and priorities in missions.

In the context of the patterns reviewed: the Bible study groups on the local level, the Bible conferences, the Minister's Seminars, the family, the Sunday school, the Youth Association and the missionary societies, the teaching ministry was a corporate process involving shared discernment. Leadership was selected and trained in the community. It was a leadership born within the redeemed community, trained through the process of experiential relationships and confirmed by the Brotherhood on the Conference level. This process provided ministers from a common frame of reference in their personal experience of salvation, an understanding of the Scriptures tempered by group discernment, a lifestyle molded in an integrated spiritual and social function, and a loyalty rooted in a corporate to Christ as the Lord of the church and to the Brotherhood whom they loved and of whom they were a part.

VI. INSTITUTIONS AND THE TRAINING OF MINISTERS

The social and economic openness of the North American cultural scene were threatening for people from

the closed communities of Russia. The youth of the church were exposed to the broader social fabric of the national life, especially through the state operated public schools. The religious instruction, which in Russia was provided in the Mennonite controlled system of education, here needed to be provided by the church. As early as 1884, under the leadership of J.F. Harms, a short term Bible school was provided in Canada, Kansas and transferred to Lehigh, Kansas in 1886.²⁶ John F. Duerksen established a Bible school in Buhler, Kansas in 1888.²⁷ The Corn Bible School, Corn, Oklahoma had its beginning in 1902.²⁸ The Gethsemane Bible School in Fairview, Oklahoma came to life in 1905²⁹ and Tabor College opened in 1908.³⁰ The first Bible school in Canada was established in Herbert, Saskatchewan, by J.F. Harms in 1911. The large migration from Russia to Canada in the years 1924-1930 set the stage for the establishment of additional Bible schools which totalled thirteen by 1936.³¹ The focus of these schools in the initial years was on Bible content, doctrine, ethics and missions in a strong pietistic devotional context. A strong emphasis on the German language was predominant in all these programs. A selected number of "purpose statements" read as follows:

"To teach the Word of God, the German language and Mennonite customs"³³

"Preservation of the German language, Bible instruction and preparing the young people for service."³⁴

"Preservation of the German language, teaching Bible and preparing students for work of missions at home and abroad."³⁵

Tabor College, the first more advanced academic institution in Mennonite Brethren history, stated as its aim: "To prepare workers for home and foreign missions and for work in Sunday school, as part of the church program."³⁶

The Bible schools in Canada, while perpetuating the German language gave strong emphasis to the preparation of young people for the work of the local church and missions. The broad emphasis on the training of workers provided an essential base for the selection of the teachers and ministers

from the ranks of the local congregation. The occasion for the establishment of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg indicated the necessity of more advanced training in the church and its institutions, as well as the need to provide college courses for young people seeking professional training and university education.

The trend towards more general—"secular-professional" education—not only changed Bible institutes into colleges, but also transformed the U.S.A. Bible schools into high schools: Tabor College Academy, Corn Bible Academy, Immanuel Academy, Zoar Academy, etc. In Canada high schools emerged as institutions separate from the Bible schools and thus provided a two-pronged educational effort. (Christian high schools still flourishing are: Eden Christian College, Ontario; Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute, Winnipeg; Mennonite Educational Institute, Clearbrook.)

The process of cultural change—from the village to the city, from the land to professional and industrial occupations—exerted pressure to establish colleges with full academic accreditation equal to the state university program (Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas; Fresno Pacific College, Fresno; Mennonite Brethren College of Arts, Winnipeg, Manitoba).

The spiral for educational demands did not stop here. The forces of cultural change from the model of a rural agriculturally based people to a people moving into the ranks of the professional community of higher education (medicine, commercial ventures, workers in industry and development of various specialized trades) challenged the adequacy of a lay ministry in the spiritual nurture and leadership of the church. (The words "lay ministry" are used in a qualified sense. Theologically and functionally the Mennonite Brethren Fellowship does not recognize the distinction between a lay and a professional ministry.) The efforts of Tabor College, 1943, and of the Bible College in Winnipeg, 1961-62 in adding to the college program a Graduate program in theological studies proved to be only a short term solution. The Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary emerged (U.S.A. 1955-Canada 1975).

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The brief sketch outlining the various dimensions of the teaching ministry in the Mennonite Brethren church provides only a limited context for understanding the implications of teaching in our tradition. A more comprehensive analytical history covering the teaching ministry in the life and work of the Brotherhood is needed.

The teachers and leaders in the earlier history of the Mennonite Brethren Church (1860-1940-approximately) emerged from a relational process within the redeemed community. They shared common experiences of salvation and fellowship. Their understanding of the Scripture was gained in a group discernment process provided through the Small Group Bible Studies (*Bibelstunde*) Bible Conferences (*Bibel Besprechungen*) and Minister's Seminars (*Prediger Kurse*). Their lifestyle was molded in an integrated spiritual and social community. A corporate covenant commitment of faith and life to Christ as Lord and the Scripture as their guide to govern their walk and relationship as individuals and as a community gave a basis for deep loyalty to the fellowship and a brotherhood understanding of the Scriptures.

The influence of the home, with the continual practice of family worship, and the participation of children and youth in the various experiences of the fellowship, had a molding influence in relating members to the church fellowship. The youth meetings, as described under Youth Association, provided stimulation for the discovery of the gifts within the community and the arena for the exercise of gifts in the context of the public meetings of the congregations. The youth developed their understanding of the Christian life not in Youth Department programs, functionally independent of the adult community. "Parents and children of the old and the young must live, work, and share together to be the true family of God," was a slogan frequently repeated.³⁷

The recruitment and training of leadership in the context of an inter-related lifestyle emerged as a natural outgrowth from the character and function of the community.

The major changes in the cultural environment of recent decades dislodged the teaching ministry of the church from

that of an integrated relational life's process to alternative and separate institutional structures. The Bible school, a good provision for the teaching assignment of the church, became an institution for the training of the youth and replaced the teaching process in the context of the relational life of the church.

The need for high school education to meet the occupational and professional demands of the changing culture added to the multidimensional influence in the formation of value judgments. The Christian high schools provided by the Brotherhood for their young people became a bridge to span the distance developing between the world of youth and adults. The church colleges were born under pressure to extend the equipping of the emerging generation, to preserve a Christian world view, and to prepare youth for service in the world and in the church.

The purposes of the various institutions today are partly reflected in the following statements:

"The necessity for Bible schools is: (1) to guard the souls of our youth from the danger of being lost; (2) to equip our youth to stand against the dangers of our age; (3) to preserve our youth for the church to prevent the latter from gradual death."

"The purpose of the Bible schools is recognized to be the following: (1) to meet the inner needs of the young people through Bible instruction; (2) to prepare the youth for a defense against worldliness (birth control is especially mentioned as one of the dangerous phenomena of worldliness)."³⁸

The brotherhood concern expressed in the establishment of our colleges is most clearly reflected from a statement of a conference committee at the time when the General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches assumed responsibility for Tabor College. "It is the general expectation that in the future Bible instruction will be given the first place in Tabor College. It shall serve as a place where our youth can receive the basic biblical instruction and that those who have been in Bible schools before coming to Tabor College shall be able to extend their biblical studies. According to possibilities a program of high school and junior college shall be offered but with the condition

that the Bible school remains the first priority. In consideration of the direction of character and financial provision the Bible school shall be the determining factor of priority.³⁹

While our intentions to retain the stated priority have continued, cultural changes have influenced the character of the teaching ministry. The selection and training of the ministers has shifted from the relational life of the community to institutional agencies. The teaching process in the Church has lost its interrelational character. The leadership teachers and preachers are not born and trained in the bosom of the community. Men are often being trained in institutions other than our own and bring back to us concepts and practices from the broader tradition of American Evangelicalism.⁴⁰ Our theological identity in concept and character has become strongly influenced through this process.⁴¹ The establishment of our own Seminary, another institution, became a necessity to rebuild a unified direction in the understanding of our commitment of faith and mission.⁴² Such understanding is conditioned by a renewed realization that the Mennonite Brotherhood, after the model of the New Testament church, does not provide for the independence of the individual in faith, life and practice as is generally held in the culture of a modern secularized society. The teaching ministry of the Mennonite Brethren church today is seeking to establish the basic interdependent principles characteristic of the New Testament church. The early years of the Mennonite Brethren fellowship, as reviewed in the earlier part of this paper nurtured the basic qualities of such interrelationship. Our contemporary culture of independent individualism places upon us the demand to return to the relational interdependent character of the teaching ministry as seen in the redeemed community of the New Testament.

NOTES

- 1 Peter M. Friesen, *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia* (1789-1910) English translation, 1978, pp. 206-207.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 207.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 230-232.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 436-445.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 437.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 437.
- 7 General Conference Yearbooks (later indicated by abbreviation G.C.Y.) 1933, p. 65; 1954, pp. 6-7, 22.
- 8 P.M. Friesen, *Op. Cit.* pp. 241-242.
- 9 Alberta Conference Minutes, December 1940—paper presented by Jacob Thiessen. Copy in Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno.
- 10 P.M. Friesen, *Op. cit.* pp. 968-974, G.C.Y., 1878-1888; 1889, P. 84; 1889, pp. 89-91.
- 11 J.A. Toews, *A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church*, Board of Christian Literature of General Conference Mennonite Brethren Church, 1975, p. 196.
- 12 P.M. Friesen, *Op cit.*, pp. 968-974.
- 13 *Ibid.*, chapter IX "Unrest and Reform Efforts in the Molotschna Churches," pp. 92-109.
- 14 A.H. Unruh, *Die Geschichte der Mennoniten Brüdergemeinde*, 1955. The General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren, Hillsboro, Kansas, pp. 1947-1950.
- 15 The practice of the "Bibelstunden" was a vital part of my personal experience from early childhood up to the age of 21, the time when I left my native village in South Russia.
- 16 Note content of "Biblische Geschichte" in its historical context and application to each lesson. The sources for the instruction were *Die Biblischen Geschichten des Alten und Neuen Testaments* von Otto Zuck (Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Mauke, 1886, 1911).
- 17 Records of these "Bibelbesprechungen" can be found in the records of the Canadian provincial conferences. The records from the churches in Russia are not available. I personally have been an active participant in these con-

- ferences from the time I was a teenager through many years of my active ministry. See P.M. Friesen, pp. 968ff.
- 18 A.H. Unruh, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-242.
 - 19 Personal experience of my own background from childhood and youth as well as the years of pastoral ministry.
 - 20 A.H. Unruh, *op. cit.*, pp. 240-241.
 - 21 Minutes of the *Jugendvereins* (Youth Association meetings were kept over periods of 30 to 50 years depending on the functional history of the church. Most of such minutes are being preserved in the form of microfilm in the archives of the Centers for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, Winnipeg and Hillsboro.
 - 22 Minutes of the "Jugendverein" of the Shafter Mennonite Brethren Church from 1942. Copies in archives, Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Biblical Seminary, Fresno.
 - 23 Minutes of the churches in Minnesota, North Dakota, Saskatchewan and Manitoba-Study Center, Fresno, California.
 - 24 The church minutes and oral reports by older brethren and sisters give glowing reports of the blessings and benefits of these Festivals and mission sales-Carson and Mountain Lake records. Center of Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, California.
 - 25 This influence is traceable in the written testimonies of mission candidates where they relate the experience and trace the influence which led them to offer their life for missions—confidential records of personal papers of missionaries in Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, California.
 - 26 J.B. Toews—"Influences that have affected educational processes in Mennonite Brethren schools" unpublished essay October 21, 1976. pp. 18-19. Fresno Archives.
 - 27 A.G. Duerksen—Biography of John F. Duerksen—unpublished manuscript—Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, California.
 - 28 Lloyd Chester Penner—The Mennonites on the Washita River—Doctoral dissertation Oklahoma State University 1976, pp. 203-204.

- 29 Pamphlet from Fairview Mennonite Brethren Church 1905—Fresno Archives.
- 30 Tabor College Catalogue 1908—Fresno Archives.
- 31 J.B. Toews—*op. cit.* p. 8.
- 32 Reflection from the printed programs of the Bible schools—collection in center for Mennonite Brethern Studies, Fresno, California.
- 33 Pamphlet released by the Fairview M.B. Church 1905, *ibid.*
- 34 Pamphlet, Herbert Bible School 1911-1913—in Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, California.
- 35 Corn Bible School perspective 1902, *ibid.*
- 36 Tabor College catalogue 1908, *ibid.*
- 37 Strongly underlined by my father on the occasion of his last visit to our home, while I was a pastor in Reedley (1950). The separate youth department and youth meetings were an occasion of concern to him. He felt that eventually these would have negative effects in the all community relationship of the church.
- 38 Minutes of the conference of Bible school teachers August 8-10, 1941, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan—*ibid.*
- 39 Conference Committee report to the churches in 1934—copy in Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, California.
- 40 Paul Toews, ed., *Pilgrims and Strangers*. Essays in Mennonite Brethren History-1977. Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, California. Essay by Clarence Hiebert, "The Development of Mennonite Brethren Churches in North America—Some Reflections, Interpretations and Viewpoints" pp. 11-132.
- 41 Essay by J.B. Toews, "Mennonite Brethren Ideality and Theological Diversity" pp. 133-157.
- 42 A.J. Klassen ed., *The Seminary Story* —1975, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary pp. 17-24. Chapter 2, Focusing the Vision. *The Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary*, by J.B. Toews.