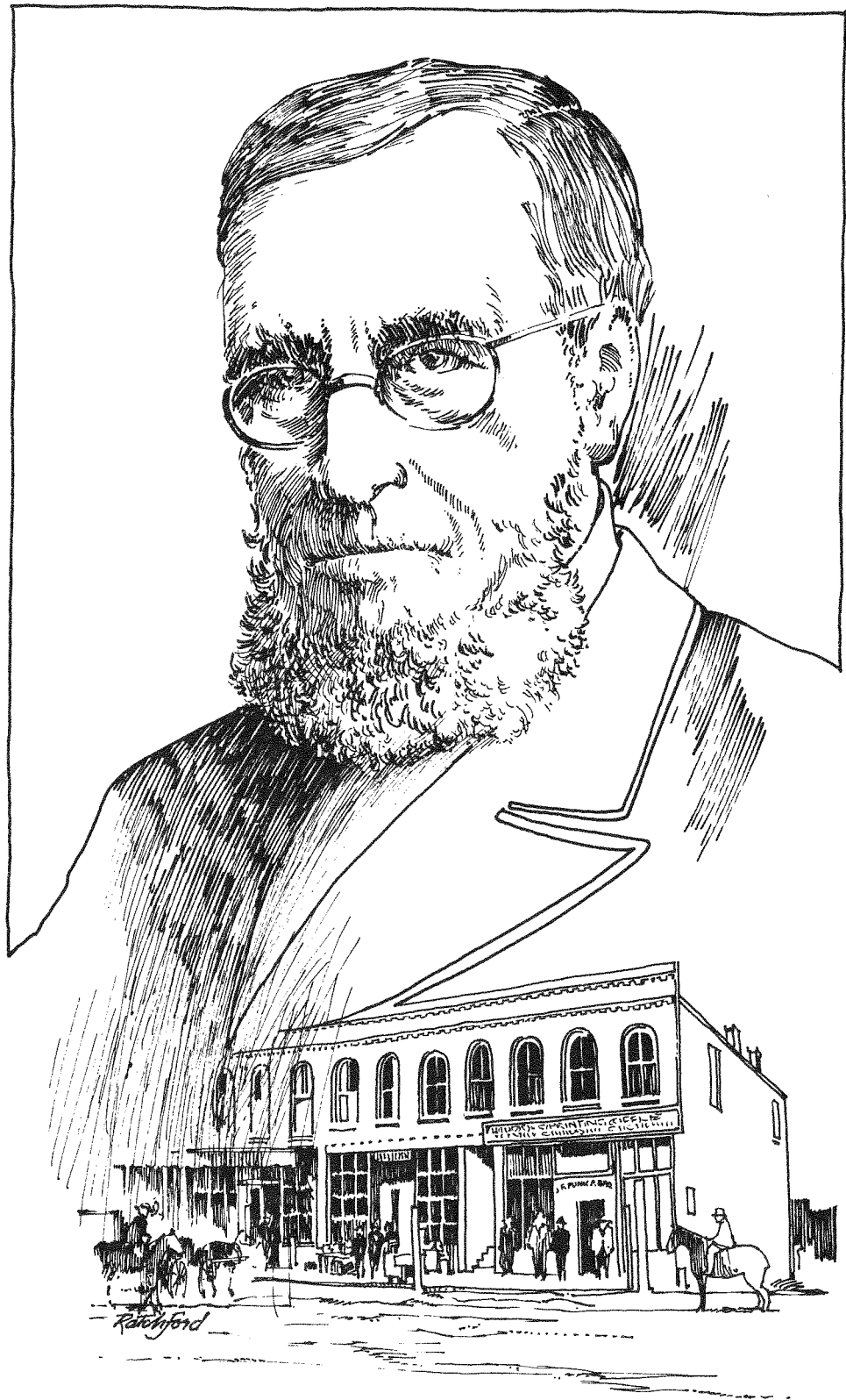


Provenance

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Publishing the Awakening

10. *An Awakening at the Centre*

He [John F. Funk] guided the church in gradual changes down the middle of the road, and is more responsible than any other one man [teamed with J. S. Coffman] for the general character of the Mennonite Church . . . between tradition on the one hand and undirected progress on the other — H. S. BENDER.¹

AS THE nineteenth century drew to a close, Mennonites in Canada were continuing to move in several directions in search of their future. For some the norm remained withdrawal and separation, either within established settlements such as Ontario, or on new frontiers such as the Northwest Territories. Others, perhaps the majority, were convinced that Mennonitism in Canada could be saved only through new movements, through spiritual awakenings and aggressive institutional advances. Such events had previously taken place in other denominations and were beginning among the new Mennonites. For them the desired destiny seemed to lie along a path which North American Protestantism as a whole had trod for some time.

The intention, of course, was not to melt into Protestantism or other denominations. It is true that adjustments to American Protestant styles were made in order to enter into evangelistic and missionary competition on the denominational pattern. However, these adjustments were not made to dissolve the Mennonite

way, but to save it. It was believed this could be done if the institution was made palatable for those individuals who had already left, were about to leave, or were tempted to leave. Around the middle of the nineteenth century the Mennonite church as a whole ceased to prosper, and there began a period of conflict and decline which resulted in the loss of many members. This decrease in membership was due to schisms and transfers to other denominations, to the extent that the continuity of the church was threatened:

The loss was so great that by the end of the nineteenth century the membership of the [Old] Mennonite Church was almost cut in half . . . if the conditions which caused this great decline had been allowed to continue, disaster would have come to the church.²

Although estimates vary, there was without a doubt a substantial numerical decline during this period.³ They numbered in the hundreds or, as some believed, in the thousands. In Ontario this loss was especially felt in the smaller and scattered settlements and where Mennonites had been on the fringe of the church from the beginning. While no exact statistics have been determined, the experiences of two of the larger family groups, who came to inhabit over half of the Mennonite land in Markham Township, are probably typical. They lost about half of their children in the first generation and the percentage rose in the second and third generations (see Table I).⁴

TABLE 1

NINETEENTH-CENTURY LOSS OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE CHURCH
Illustrated by Two Family Groups in Markham Township

GENERATION	FAMILY GROUP A	FAMILY GROUP B
First	0 per cent	0 per cent
Second	50 " "	45 " "
Third	62 " "	58 " "
Fourth	71 " "	60 " "

The direction necessary to avoid disaster had already been indicated by the "awakenings" or revivalistic movements which

had stirred North American religion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One by-product of these awakenings had been the growth of voluntary societies to promote evangelical causes of all sorts — Sunday school unions, Bible and tract distribution societies and a wide range of missionary organizations. Another result was the phenomenal growth of the revivalistic denominations, and the subsequent escalation of denominational organization and programs.⁵

The Mennonites were affected only marginally by the earliest of these awakenings, such as the eighteenth-century emergence of the River Brethren. The larger influence, however, was simply a question of the time required to breach the barriers which habitual separation and withdrawal had erected. Such penetration happened in the mid-1800s and resulted in the emergence of the new Mennonite movements, already identified (see Chapter 6).

At the end of the nineteenth century, the waves set in motion by the various Protestant awakenings and by the activities of the new Mennonites finally and forcefully reached the Mennonite centre. There stood the old Mennonites, the largest Mennonite groups, whose individual congregations and district conferences were not organized into a regular denomination until 1898. As they changed, the fringes were affected and the whole of the North American Mennonite movement was caught up either in accepting change or in resisting it, or both.

The developments among Mennonites in Ontario and Manitoba were strongly influenced by the course of events in the United States, and so that story cannot be overlooked. Indeed, most of the Mennonite organizations or relationships being established or re-established in the latter part of the nineteenth century were continental rather than national in nature. That is, more happened north-south across the border than east-west between Ontario and Manitoba. And thus it would be for years to come. For these reasons the American dimensions of the great awakening must be remembered so that the Canadian story can be better understood.

For those Mennonites ready for an awakening and for change, the preservation and propagation of Mennonitism depended on the adoption of evangelical Protestant models, the vigorous use of the Sunday school, and the promotion of rural, urban, and foreign missions. They also called for a more organized approach to the works of charity both within and without the brotherhood, church publications and colleges, cooperation with voluntary

societies of all sorts, and tighter organization of conference offices to go with other programs. Above all, they demanded "protracted meetings" after the style of Charles Finney (1792-1875) and Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899), which made "the pietistic, evangelistic, low-church current of revival" normative in all of North American church life.⁶

In Canada, to be sure, the revivalism of an earlier day had lost some of its momentum, partly because it did not have the rapidly expanding population to work with, partly because the larger denominations had consolidated their programs well. Mennonites, however, remained very much under American influence through their kindred in the States. They were also affected by those sectarian Canadian revivalists who, in the absence of other eager audiences, quickly turned to the ripe fields of malcontent among such groups as the Mennonites.⁷

The new Mennonite movements, such as the Mennonite Brethren in Christ and the General Conference Mennonite Church were, of course, at the forefront of adjusting to Protestantism and of robbing the old Mennonites, though at different levels and in different ways. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ were turned firmly toward an emotional revivalism, climactic conversion, individualistic piety, and strong institutional identity as an expression of the Christian life. The General Conference Mennonites, no less interested in renewal, were, however, more liberally oriented and socially informed. They tended to require a more intellectual examination and presentation of Christian truth. On the other hand, the Conference contained such a great variety within its autonomous ranks that its congregations could not easily be classified.

Both groups of new Mennonites were strong on organization, on uniting widely dispersed congregations in general conferences. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ believed that the missionary cause required a strong superintendency, giving directions from the top. The General Conference Mennonites, on the other hand, undertook nothing which the delegates of the largely independent congregations, meeting in triennial session, had not approved and financially supported. Decisions of General Conference were binding only to those congregations which accepted them and only to the extent that they chose to support them.

The old Mennonite churches were torn in both directions. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ were their most formidable threat in Ontario. By 1897 they had organized seven districts in both

Canada and the United States. They had 79 churches and 176 preaching appointments, a church membership of 3,818 and a Sunday school attendance exceeding 3,000.⁸ With the tripling of its membership in the first 25 years, the denomination was threatening to surpass the old Mennonites, both in number of congregations and in members.

Several inherent attractions of the new group greatly aided the successful outreach of its leaders. Not only were the Mennonite Brethren in Christ eliminating the organizational weakness common to all Mennonites through efficient district superintendents, but they were also minimizing the peculiar customs which to open-minded Mennonites had become socially embarrassing. Some of the church's strongest lay leaders, such as Jacob Y. Shantz, were drawn into the movement, partly because of its cultural relationship with the larger community. The Wesleyan-type holiness which was being preached had more to do with correct formulation of doctrine, pious feeling, and spiritual satisfaction, than with nonconformity and nonresistance. The latter were normative for the old Mennonites, though, to be sure, their minimization among the Mennonite Brethren in Christ did not result in their being immediately discarded.

The need among the Mennonite Brethren in Christ for a superior spirituality caused five ministers, including Solomon Eby, and some 80 members to withdraw and form Pentecostal churches at Markham, Vineland, and Kitchener. Those remaining were also convinced that their righteousness exceeded that of other groups. In the words of their historian, "the denomination represented, perhaps not perfection, but surely the best of everything. It had the best givers anywhere. Its foreign missionary effort was second to none. No other church preached a better gospel. Its ministers were among the best to be found, and it represented a work which no other denomination could do."⁹ The denominational ego and spiritual arrogance thus expressed was a characteristic by-product of the awakening. But for timid Mennonite people such expressions of self-confidence helped to wash away an apologetic gospel and inferiority feelings, which generations of persecution, isolation and nonconformity had written deep into their souls. To join the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, therefore, or to imitate them, meant the discovery of an identity which was socially more respectable and personally much more satisfying than the old separatist style.

The General Conference, which was similarly expanding its

institutional life and thereby also becoming a convincing denomination, served a similar identity role. Begun in an unpretentious way, the General Conference was becoming a "mighty movement . . . constantly increasing in power and beneficent usefulness."¹⁰ It influenced other Mennonites primarily in the United States, although Canadian delegates from several communities were registered at the triennial assemblies of General Conference until 1893 (see Table 2).¹¹

TABLE 2

CANADIAN REPRESENTATION AT GENERAL CONFERENCE MEETINGS

CONGREGATION	YEARS REPRESENTED
The Twenty	1863, 1866
Waterloo	1861, 1863, 1866, 1872
Stevensville	1884, 1887, 1890, 1893

By the end of the century, the General Conference embraced 61 congregations and 8,789 members. As shown in Table 3,¹² the General Conference had become a veritable melting pot of North American Mennonites and represented an attraction for that reason alone. While the Mennonite Brethren in Christ gave their best energies to reach beyond the Mennonite borders, the General Conference was preoccupied with advancing those borders sufficiently to embrace all those in danger of drifting away because of geographic isolation, cultural differences, and congregational practices, or doctrinal variance.

Both were being rewarded with success, the Mennonite Brethren in Christ by winning converts and the General Conference by winning whole congregations. Not only did this Conference gather up dissenters from the old Mennonites in the old settlements and on the western frontier, but it successfully incorporated in its membership most of the congregations arising from immigration in the latter half of the nineteenth century from Switzerland, Prussia, North and South Germany, Holland, France, and Russia. Indeed, in South Dakota it attracted a congregational unit of dissenting Hutterites.

Theoretically, for missionary purposes the General Conference included in its plan of expansion all the congregations of North America. Its union resolutions called for "the hand of fellowship

TABLE 3

ORIGINS OF 61 GENERAL CONFERENCE CONGREGATIONS ATTENDING
THE 1896 SESSION

EUROPEAN ORIGIN	CONGREGATIONS	LOCATIONS OF CONGREGATIONS	MEMBERSHIP
Switzerland	11	Ohio — 2, Indiana — 1, Iowa — 2, Missouri — 1, Kansas — 2, Oklahoma — 1, Oregon — 1, Washington — 1	2,173
South Germany	9	New York — 2, Ohio — 1, Illinois — 1, Iowa — 2, Kansas — 3	1,046
Germany	1	Ontario — 1	25
France	1	Ohio — 1	83
Russia	12	Minnesota — 2, South Dakota — 2, Kansas — 6, Oklahoma — 2	2,024
Prussia	4	Nebraska — 2, Kansas — 2	764
Holland and South Germany	16	Pennsylvania — 15, Ohio — 1	1,819
Russia and South Germany	2	Kansas — 2	362
Russia and Prussia	5	Kansas — 5	493
Total	61		8,789

regardless of minor differences." It overlooked, therefore, all local congregational rules and distinctions as long as they did not conflict with principal doctrines of the faith. It refused to recognize the validity of congregational heresy verdicts and excommunications, unless error could "be established on unequivocal Scripture evidence."¹³ It also opposed interference in voluntary transfers from one congregation to another, if these were done only for reasons of dissent against local congregational customs or ordinances.

This assembling of isolated congregations, soon to be extended with the help of "home missionaries" to the Canadian prairies, did not prevent the General Conference from reaching out, but it chose to do so at a somewhat greater distance from home. The readiness of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ to erase Mennonite

ethnicity and submerge Mennonite theological identity allowed them a freedom in neighbourhood evangelism which the General Conference did not possess. It is also true, of course, that the General Conference left the neighbourhoods entirely to the congregations.

What the General Conference set out to do was to unite the energies of the congregations for collective action in those regions where congregations could not and should not act alone, and where they would not impinge upon others. Thus, they opened in 1881 a mission station among the Arapahoe Indians in Oklahoma, after thoroughly examining locations in Alaska. At the same time explorations were made about overseas work in cooperation with the Amsterdam Missionary Society. In the end it was decided to work alone, and India was chosen as a mission field.

The influence on the old Mennonites of the General Conference was further enhanced by the coming of the Mennonites from Russia. The majority of immigrant congregations established in the United States in the 1870s had joined the General Conference, and those who did not join formed their own conferences (see Table 4).¹⁴ The Mennonite Brethren in America began with 200 families and the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren with 20 families. A third conference, not institutionally imported from Russia, resulted from early separations of immigrant congregations at Mountain Lake in Minnesota and Henderson in Nebraska. Popularly known as Bruderthaler, after the Mountain Lake congregation, the "Nebraska-Minnesota Conference" went through several name changes and finally became known as the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren. The group very much resembled the Mennonite Brethren in its emphasis except in the form of baptism. The Bruderthaler practised pouring at first and later allowed immersion as an option.¹⁵

Viewing all of these conference developments and sometimes wooing the Russian groups was John F. Funk, the Mennonite publisher at Elkhart, Indiana. His virtually identical German and English monthly papers had since 1864 been promoting reform among the old Mennonites through Sunday schools, evangelistic meetings, and missionary projects. He had also been promoting a general conference union of all those old Mennonite district conferences, a dozen or more, which in varying degrees of strength tied together the congregations of a given region. His 1864 invitation to this effect read:

TABLE 4

SUMMARY OF MINORITY GROUP CONFERENCES
AMONG THE RUSSIAN MENNONITES

NAME OF CONFERENCE	DATE OF FOUNDING	CONGRE- GATIONS	LOCATION	MEMBERSHIP
Mennonite Brethren	1879	18*	Kansas Nebraska Minnesota South Dakota	1,266*
Zimmer Mennonite Brethren	1880	2	Kansas Nebraska	?
Evangelical Mennonite Brethren†	1889	2	Minnesota Nebraska	?

1888 statistics.

First known as Conference of United Mennonite Brethren in North America and then as Defenseless Mennonite Brethren in Christ. Present name adopted in 1937. Popular name from the beginning was Bruderthaler after the name of the founding Mountain Lake congregation.

Whereas slight differences exist among the Mennonite brotherhood in different parts of the United States and Canada, both in their views and practices, it would be well to hold a general conference and invite the brethren from all parts of the country, from the east and the west, from the north and the south, that they might meet together and in free interchange of views and opinions become more united and more of one mind.¹⁶

In most, if not all, instances, the district conferences consisted of periodic meetings of bishops, ministers and deacons. The general conference meeting of the old Mennonite bishops, ministers and deacons, so much desired by Funk, was not easily accomplished. A quarter-century passed before Funk began his earnest campaign to form a general conference. Even then it was not finally accomplished until 1898. Furthermore, at least half of the 16 North American district conferences with a total membership of 25,989 were not fully represented until 1915¹⁷ (see Table 5).¹⁸

TABLE 5

DISTRICT CONFERENCES OF OLD MENNONITE CHURCHES

NAME	NO. OF CONGRE- GATIONS OR PLACES OF WORSHIP*	MEM- BERS	YEAR FOUNDED
Franconia (Pennsylvania)	21	3,057	c. 1745
Lancaster (Pennsylvania)	76	6,793	c. 1755
Washington County Maryland and Franklin County Pennsylvania	10	632	c. 1835
Virginia	26	1,113	c. 1835
Southwestern Pennsylvania	19	1,057	1876
Eastern Amish Mennonite	19	3,006	1893
Ohio	22	1,114	1834
Swiss Congregations	2	425	—
Indiana	16	1,187	1854
Indiana Amish Mennonite	9	995	1888
Illinois	6	348	1872
Iowa-Missouri	12	434	1873
Western Amish Mennonite	30	2,949	1890
Kansas-Nebraska	16	690	1876
Nebraska and Minnesota (German)	5	156	1889
Ontario	33	1,407	1820
Amish Mennonite (Conservative)	8	626	—
Total		25,989	

* Congregations sometimes embraced more than one place of worship, in which case the latter number is used.

This union might not have happened even at that late date if an inner reorientation had not been achieved in most of the old Mennonite congregations. This adjustment to new ideas happened through the Sunday school and the evangelistic meetings, and their by-products, which Funk promoted so vigorously through his monthly periodicals. His papers were supplemented by a

book-publishing program unequalled anywhere in the Mennonite world. In 44 years he published a total of 118 titles, almost equally divided between the English and German languages. Eighty-seven of the titles were original projects and 24 were republished titles from Anabaptist-Mennonite sources and included such mammoth projects as the complete writings of Menno Simons.¹⁹ Funk related his own vision to his experiences in Chicago with Evangelist D. L. Moody, and he offered "a vote of thanks for the influences that he has brought to bear upon the interest of the Mennonite Church."²⁰ Yet, as indicated in his publications, he was not about to sell out to a militant American revivalism. From his first two volumes on pacifism published during the Civil War²¹ to his reprints of Pieter Jansz Twisck countering millennial speculations,²² Funk sought a conservative path to rejuvenation by means of a strong sensitivity to the Mennonite heritage.

If the criterion of his publication effort be volume alone, Funk's major contribution was in printed material for Sunday schools. By 1892 his six presses were producing about 40,000 copies of the Sunday school materials. Additionally, he published six periodicals with a circulation of 3,000, and 15,000 copies of the annual family almanac.²³

Among old Mennonites the Sunday school idea gained its earliest and greatest strength in Ontario where, as previously indicated, classes were conducted Sunday afternoons as early as 1841. Progress, however, was slow for half a century due to the solid resistance of the most conservative brethren. Indeed, the Sunday school might have died out altogether after the new Mennonites took most of the progressive-minded people with them, had it not been for the fact that the Sunday school was a way of keeping German-language instruction alive since the public school system had abolished the German *Fibel*. As Historian Harold S. Bender has written:

Strange as it may seem to us today, one of the chief reasons for the organization of the Sunday schools among the Mennonites was that the German language might be preserved among the rising generation. In the period from 1840 to 1890 the Mennonite church was in the midst of a serious struggle to maintain the German and avoid anglicization. It was a struggle which was hard fought and which contributed to the series of old order Mennonite schisms which developed in Indiana, Ohio, Ontario,

Pennsylvania, and Virginia from 1872 to 1901. More than one congregation held onto the German language too long in a vain struggle with the English, and either died altogether or lost heavily of its young people.²⁴

With the growth of the Sunday school movement in the local congregations came the call for Sunday school conferences to discuss common problems and questions. The first such gathering to be held among the old Mennonites of North America was approved by the semi-annual meeting of Waterloo County clergy in April of 1890 and then held a month later. Soon these conferences were an annual event which, among other things, took statistical note of the progress made. In five years, from 1893 to 1897, Ontario Sunday school enrolment increased from 961 to 2,201.²⁵

The addition of Sunday school to the old Mennonite church was an event of revolutionary significance, for it involved the non-ordained people in the work of the church. Noting its great potential, and perhaps fearing it, the bishops and ministers soon insisted that the annual Sunday school conference be held in conjunction with church conference, lest the forces of the church be divided.²⁶ But the influence of the Sunday school could not be checked. Its contribution to the church was obvious. It helped to hold the young people's interest, increased Bible knowledge, elevated spiritual life, raised moral concerns, especially temperance, created lay-leadership, promoted the missionary movement, and generally enriched church activity and expression.²⁷

The Sunday school movement had a powerful ally in the evangelists.²⁸ Of particular assistance was John S. Coffman, whom John F. Funk had brought to Elkhart from Virginia in 1879 to assist in editorial work.²⁹ Coffman soon busied himself not only with the *Herald of Truth* but also with the Sunday school materials and with evangelistic work. The result was the formation in 1883 of a Mennonite Evangelism Committee, which within two decades became the mission board of the old Mennonites. The Committee raised funds and sent out evangelists, chief of whom were Coffman and Funk. By 1890 the Committee claimed credit for converting 421 of the 631 members received into the old Mennonite church in that year alone. In 1891 the evangelists were credited with converting 617 of 785 baptismal candidates.³⁰

These results did not go unnoticed in Ontario, where evangelistic meetings had been conducted in homes as early as 1885 and where the semi-annual Berlin conference of 1890 noted that "fully

200 young people were standing outside of the church, who should, by some means, be gathered in."³¹ Coffman and Funk had already made an appearance in the Waterloo Church earlier that year, and that meeting, as well as reports from the States, commended them highly. The *Kitchener Daily News* reported the event:

The old Mennonites had a great meeting last evening in the church at the west end of town. The occasion which brought such an immense crowd together was the farewell meeting of visiting brethren Coffman and Funk. Both these gentlemen preached in the English language and gave the most honest advice imaginable to their hearers. Their addresses were earnest and pathetic exhortations to all to come to the Saviour and to follow him the rest of their lives. Anyone who remembers the meeting of this time-honoured church 30 or 40 years ago can hardly believe his eyes or ears at the remarkable change which has taken place in the spirit and style of the services. The meeting would remind one forceably of the old-fashioned Methodist meeting of many years ago when exhortation still had a prominent place in the proceeding of those gatherings.³²

Coffman came back to Canada in January 1892, and, after his preaching for several weeks in Waterloo, Lincoln and Haldimand counties, 171 persons were baptized and enrolled in the respective churches. With a note of caution from the bishops not to overdo it, Coffman was invited back the following year and this time 146 persons were baptized, most of them in Waterloo County, but some at the Twenty and Markham.³³ The results were soon felt throughout the church. In the words of Burkholder:

In these two years of evangelistic effort, more than 300 persons were added to the fold and a new era of prosperity for the church in Ontario was begun. From the number converted at this time there have been called four bishops, seven ministers, and five deacons to serve in the Mennonite church, chiefly in Canada.³⁴

The Coffman revivals set the pace for the Canadian churches during the next several decades. When he was not available, other evangelists, such as A. D. Wenger from Pennsylvania, were brought in. In a series of meetings at 14 different places in 1904-5

Wenger gained 385 converts.³⁵ The fruits of the revivals had an immediate invigorating effect on the Sunday school movement, which had prepared the ground for the revivals. It also rejuvenated the young people's Bible movement, which had first emerged in Ontario in 1877. The revivals also led directly to the congregational Bible conferences which were first held in the Weber Church at Strasburg, Ontario, in 1899; to the founding of the Ontario Mennonite Bible School at Berlin in 1907;³⁶ and in 1907 to the opening of the Danforth city mission in Toronto.³⁷ Among the leaders participating in all of these developments was Samuel F. Coffman, the evangelist's son who had immigrated into Canada in order to become the minister of Vineland. Though a leader of a different style, the younger Coffman's role in Canadian Mennonite life would soon surpass that of his father.

This "progress" of the Ontario Mennonites did not mean that all the old traditions were suddenly forgotten. On the contrary, to satisfy the conservative and cautious elements, and partly themselves, the clergy passed resolutions in annual conference which ensured the retention of certain customs. Indeed, the steps toward becoming simply another American denomination were sharply curtailed with a new emphasis that moved beyond simplicity in dress to carefully defined uniformity.³⁸ In parallel decisions, musical instruments were banned.³⁹ Expensive tombstones and the wearing of badges by pallbearers were disapproved of at funerals.⁴⁰ Membership in secret organizations, such as Patrons of Industry, and in labour unions was forbidden,⁴¹ and moustaches were prohibited.⁴² Nonpayment of debts meant the forfeiture of church membership.⁴³ Photography or "having their likeness taken" was forbidden and attendance at the world exhibition in Chicago was discouraged,⁴⁴ as was the use of large pictures in Sunday schools.⁴⁵ The practice of a head-dress for women was affirmed.⁴⁶ Flower-girls at weddings and flowers at funerals were advised against.⁴⁷

On the other hand, the Conference recognized two official languages, German and English,⁴⁸ two years after the first Calendar of Appointments had been issued in English. It allowed the various congregations to select their own Sunday school literature,⁴⁹ and the districts to decide whether or not fermented or unfermented wine was to be used at communion.⁵⁰ Bishops permitted themselves to officiate at weddings of non-church members.⁵¹ A committee was elected to receive volunteer applicants for foreign mission work and one or more annual collec-

tions for such work were authorized.⁵² The missionary movement, a major by-product of the awakening, was thus officially launched in Ontario.

As the Conference permitted change in some areas, but not in others, certain conflicts and tensions affected the churches, and were intensified in the years to come, when the evangelists themselves became defenders of the status quo in general. John S. Coffman, however, was not one of them. His mind was set on what to him were much bigger questions. He ended up not only promoting liberal education for the church, but also a peace witness in the realm of international politics. In 1896, on the occasion of the opening of the Elkhart Institute, the forerunner of Goshen College, he echoed the larger American social reform and peace movements:

The occasional World Peace Congresses, in recent years, where representatives of all the civilized nations are pleading for the "beating of swords into plowshares," for the settling of all disputes between nations by arbitration, for the reign of universal peace, are but an enlarging of the cloud of witnesses which has been hanging as a "man's hand" in the religious sky for centuries. May it soon break upon the nations with such a deluge of love that will cause even bleeding Armenia to look up with joy and say "Behold, at last the Prince of Peace reigneth."⁵³

Coffman himself was not the founder of the Institute. That credit belongs to H. A. Mumau, another of the men whom Funk had attracted to Elkhart. Still another was G. L. Bender, who pioneered in missionary work in the old Mennonite church. Funk also brought to Elkhart Menno Simons Steiner, another young visionary equal in stature to Coffman. Before his death in 1911 at the age of 45, Steiner had already founded the first old Mennonite city mission in Chicago and served as the first president of the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities.

Steiner joined Coffman not only in pressing for personal conversions but also in perceiving social implications of the Gospel. In the cities, he said, young women are driven to prostitution because the wages paid by heartless employers "will not keep body and soul together."⁵⁴ Steiner urged his readers to "frankly admit the power of sin, and unhesitatingly encourage every good work."⁵⁵ Having read the writings of Social Gospel advocates George Herron and Washington Gladden with some enthusiasm, he spoke of the black man as

a free slave [who] knows no way of ever being emancipated . . . many colored people know not virtue . . . they are strangers to it. If they were better housed, clothed, fed, and educated, they would in one or two generations rise to the moral standards of the whites.⁵⁶

With the passage of Coffman and Steiner from centre stage and with controversy surrounding the aging Bishop Funk, which resulted in his retirement at the age of 67,⁵⁷ leadership passed to Daniel Kauffman, one of Coffman's 1890 converts. Ordained a minister in 1892 and bishop in 1896, his gifts as speaker, teacher, writer and leader soon made him "the outstanding leader of the old Mennonite Church and for over 40 years he made an impact on the church not even approached by any other person."⁵⁸ At the age of 33 he became the first moderator of the old Mennonite General Conference in 1898. In 1908 he became editor of the *Gospel Herald*, a periodical which continued Funk's *Herald of Truth*, and which became the official organ of the new conference. The new generation of leadership, symbolized by Kauffman, reintroduced a conservatism which muted the progressiveness introduced by Funk, Coffman and Steiner. It was a conservatism that became allied with theological fundamentalism in its battle against the theological modernism which raged in early twentieth-century America.⁵⁹

Yet social responsibility had been permanently reawakened. When famine struck in India in 1899, the old Mennonites, the General Conference Mennonites, and the Mennonite Brethren sent relief workers who in turn became missionaries to that country (see Table 6).⁶⁰ Other areas of activity were similarly stimulated. They founded their colleges almost all at the same time (see Table 7),⁶¹ and they established their own denominational periodicals, often with a similar content and format (see Table 8).⁶²

The various Mennonite denominations believed themselves to represent differences significant enough to validate their independent organizations and institutions. But the similarities in style and emphasis were many. All promoted the Sunday school, evangelistic meetings, the youth movement and Bible conferences. They even duplicated one another, quite unknowingly perhaps, in the choice of church names. Zion and Eben-Ezer, for instance, were used by five and six groups respectively (see Table 9).⁶³

TABLE 6

SOME BEGINNINGS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
AMONG NORTH AMERICAN MENNONITES

DATE	PLACE	SPONSORING GROUP
1898	Armenia	Mennonite Brethren in Christ
1899	India	(Old) Mennonite Church
1899	India	Mennonite Brethren Church
1900	India	General Conference Mennonite Church
1901	China	Krimmer Mennonite Brethren Church
1901	Nigeria	Mennonite Brethren in Christ
1911	Congo	Congo Inland Mission*
1917	Argentina	(Old) Mennonite Church

* Started by Defenseless Mennonites (Evangelical Mennonite Brethren) and Central Conference Mennonites (GC).

TABLE 7

COLLEGES FOUNDED BY NORTH AMERICAN MENNONITES AROUND 1900

DATE	NAME	PLACE	AFFILIATION*	ANTECEDENTS OR ORIGINAL IDENTITY
1893	Bethel College	Newton, Kansas	GC	Forerunners were Wadsworth (1868), Halstead (1883) Seminaries.
1900	Bluffton College	Bluffton, Ohio	GC	Known as Central Mennonite College from 1900 to 1913.
1903	Goshen College	Goshen, Indiana	OM	Forerunner was Elkhart Institute in 1894.
1903	Freeman Junior College	Freeman, South Dakota	GC	Known at first as South Dakota Mennonite College.
1908	Tabor College	Hillsboro, Kansas	MB	The Mennonite Brethren supported McPherson College of the Church of the Brethren, 1898-1905.
1909	Messiah College	Grantham, Pennsylvania	BC	First known as Messiah Bible School and Missionary Training Home.
1909	Hesston College	Hesston, Kansas	OM	Known first as Western Mennonite School, then as Hesston Academy and Bible School.
1917	Eastern Mennonite College	Harrisonburg, Virginia	OM	Known as Eastern Mennonite School until 1947.

* GC—General Conference Mennonite Church; OM—(Old) Mennonite Church; MB—Mennonite Brethren Church; BC—Brethren in Christ Church.

TABLE 8

PERIODICALS ESTABLISHED BY MENNONITES AROUND 1900

DATE	NAME	LANG- UAGE*	PLACE	AFFILIA- TION†	HISTORY
1878	Gospel Banner	E	Goshen, Indiana (1878-1885), Kitchener, Ont. (after 1885-1909), Elkhart, Indiana (1809-)	MBC	Preceded by Gospel Messenger, a private venture, in 1877.
1882	Christlicher Bundesbote	G	Newton, Kansas	GC	Founded as Religoeser Botschafter, later Christliches Volksblatt, by J. H. Oberholtzer in 1852 and merged with others in 1882.
1884	Zionsbote	G	Hillsboro, Kansas	MB	Founded by Conference.
1893	The Mennonite	E	Quakertown, Pennsylvania	GC	Founded in 1883 in Eastern District from where it moved to Newton, Kansas, in 1902.

1897	Heilsbote	G	Flanagan, Illinois	EMC	Founded by Conference.
1891	Botschafter der Wahrheit	G	Steinbach, Manitoba	CGCM	Founded by John Holdeman.
1903	Messenger of Truth	E	Kansas	CGCM	Founded by Conference.
1908	Gospel Herald	E	Scottdale, Pennsylvania	OM	A merger of Gospel Witness (1905) and Herald of Truth (1864).
1910	Evangelizations- bote	G	Mountain Lake, Minnesota	EMB	Founded by Conference.
1913	Zion's Call	E	Flanagan, Illinois	EMC	Founded by Conference.
1915	Der Wahrheits- freund	G	Chicago, Illinois	KMB	Founded by city missionaries.

* E — English; G — German.

† MBC — Mennonite Brethren in Christ; GC — General Conference Mennonite Church; MB — Mennonite Brethren; EMC — Evangelical Mennonite Church (see next chapter); CGCM — Church of God in Christ Mennonite (Holdeman); OM — (Old) Mennonite Church; EMB — Evangelical Mennonite Brethren; KMB Krimmer Mennonite Brethren.

TABLE 9

USE OF CONGREGATIONAL NAMES SUCH AS "ZION" AND "EBEN-EZER"

PLACE	CONFERENCE	DATE OF FOUNDING
	<i>A. Zion</i>	
Hubbard, Oregon	Amish Mennonite	1883
Goodland, Indiana	General Conference	1895
Dinuba, California	Krimmer Mennonite Brethren	1911
Vestaburg, Michigan	(Old) Mennonite	1914
McPherson, Kansas	Holdeman	c. 1920
	<i>B. Eben-Ezer</i>	
Henderson, Nebraska	Evangelical Mennonite Brethren	1882
Stayner, Ontario	Mennonite Brethren in Christ	c. 1900
Dalmeny, Saskatchewan	Mennonite Brethren	1902
Gotebo, Oklahoma	General Conference	1903
Halifax County, Virginia	(Old) Mennonite	1904
Doland, South Dakota	Krimmer Mennonite Brethren	1919

The parallel developments can, of course, be explained by the common heritage, by the common appeal to the Bible as authority, and the common influence from the American religious environment. The mission, the periodicals, and, indeed, most of the emerging institutions in the Mennonite world were now part of the common denominational pattern. Perhaps more than anything else in the Mennonite world the colleges were "a product of the North American environment" and an indicator of the extent to which Protestant models in education as well as in evangelism were becoming normative for the Mennonites.

The years of emergence for the Mennonite colleges followed closely a boom in college building generally. About one-fourth of the nearly 500 colleges in the United States by 1900 were founded, most of them by churches, in the last two decades of the century.⁶⁴ The Mennonites in Canada were not without educational visions of their own. For the foreseeable future, educational, literary, and missionary leadership in Ontario and Manitoba would come from the United States, as would also the resistance to all of these endeavours.

FOOTNOTES

1. H. S. Bender, "Funk, John Fretz," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, II, p. 422.
2. William W. Dean, "John F. Funk and the Mennonite Awakening" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1965), pp. 42-3. See also: L. J. Heatwole, "The Mennonite Church — Her Past and Present Conditions Compared," *Mennonite Year-Book and Directory*, 1907, p. 14; J. S. Hartzler and Daniel Kauffman, *Mennonite Church History* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Book and Tract Society, 1905), p. 371.
3. Dean, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
4. Grove compared the date in the Christian Reesor (1747-1806) and Henry Wideman (1757-1810) genealogies (see Family History Bibliographies) with church records. A much more extensive study, but covering a later period, is reported by John A. Hostetler, *The Sociology of Mennonite Evangelism* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1954), p. 287.
5. Sidney S. Mead, "Denominationalism," in *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).
6. See Bernard A. Weisberger, *They Gathered at the River* (Boston, 1958).
7. The story of revivalism in Canada before the twentieth century is best reported by S. D. Clark in his study *Church and Sect in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948).
8. Everek Richard Storms, *History of the United Missionary Church* (Elkhart, Ind.: Bethel Publishing Company, 1958), p. 281.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 260: "Today members of the United Missionary Church are among the best givers to be found anywhere . . . missionary effort . . . is second to none. Here at home the work of the Church is under the leadership of some 250 ministers, who are among the best to be found anywhere."
10. H. P. Krehbiel, *The History of the General Conference of the Mennonites of North America* (Berne, Ind.: Mennonite Book Concern, 1898), Vol. I, p. 30.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 397ff.
12. The one Ontario congregation was not represented at the 1896 session but it was counted. Krehbiel gives the European origin as North Germany, but the reason for this is not clear, inasmuch as Ontario Mennonites were mainly Swiss Mennonite and South German in origin. The parents of Jacob Krehbiel, the usual delegate, came from the Weierhof.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
14. J. H. Lohrenz, "Mennonite Brethren Church," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, III, pp. 595-602; H. S. Bender, "Krimmer Mennonite

- Brethren," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, III, pp. 242-45; H. F. Epp, "Evangelical Mennonite Brethren," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, II, pp. 262-64; E. E. Rupp, "Evangelical Mennonite Church," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, II, pp. 264-66.
15. H. F. Epp, "Evangelical Mennonite Brethren," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, II, pp. 262-64.
 16. J. S. Hartzler, "John F. Funk," *Gospel Herald* (October 24, 1929), pp. 32-49.
 17. Dean, *op. cit.*, p. 238ff.
 18. *Mennonite Year-Book and Directory*, 1905, Goshen College, Goshen, Ind., pp. 32-49.
 19. John A. Hostetler, *God Uses Ink* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1958), pp. 53-4.
 20. Dean, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
 21. J. M. Brenneman, *Christianity and War*, and John F. Funk, *Warfare, Its Evils, Our Duty, Addressed to the Mennonite Churches Throughout the United States, and all Others who Sincerely Seek and Love the Truth* (Markham, Ont.: printed at Economist Office, 1863).
 22. Robert Friedmann, *Mennonite Piety Through the Centuries* (Goshen, Ind.: Mennonite Historical Society, 1949), pp. 262, 263.
 23. Dean, *op. cit.*, p. 238ff.
 24. H. S. Bender, "New Life Through the Sunday School," in J. C. Wenger, *The Mennonite Church in America* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1966), p. 167.
 25. L. J. Burkholder, *A Brief History of the Mennonites in Ontario* (Markham, Ont.: Mennonite Conference of Ontario, 1935), pp. 157-61.
 26. *Ibid.*
 27. H. S. Bender, "New Life Through the Sunday School," *op. cit.*, pp. 174-81.
 28. Daniel Kauffman, "48 Years in the Mennonite Church: The Rise of Evangelism," *Gospel Herald*, XXXI, 16 (July 21, 1938), p. 1ff. (This was a series of articles ending on September 29, 1938.)
 29. Barbara F. Coffman, "John S. Coffman," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, I, pp. 633-34; and her *His Name was John* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1964); and M. S. Steiner, *John S. Coffman: Mennonite Evangelist* (Spring Grove, Pa.: Mennonite Book & Tract Society, 1904).
 30. Dean, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
 31. Burkholder, *op. cit.*, p. 162ff.
 32. "Great Meeting," *Kitchener Daily News*, Berlin, Ont. (June 10, 1890).
 33. Burkholder, *op. cit.*, p. 163.
 34. *Ibid.*
 35. *Ibid.*, p. 164.
 36. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-67.

37. John H. Hess, "Toronto," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, IV, p. 739.
38. Melvin Gingerich, *Mennonite Attire Throughout Four Centuries* (Breinigsville, Pa.: The Pennsylvania German Society, 1970), pp. 34-5.
39. Semi-Annual Conference Resolutions, Berlin, Ont., April 16, 1886 (CGC).
40. Annual Conference Resolutions, May 19-20, 1892, also 1901.
41. Annual Conference Resolutions, 1895-1898.
42. *Ibid.*
43. Annual Conference Resolutions, May 25-26, 1893.
44. Semi-Annual Conference Resolutions, April 13-14, 1893.
45. *Ibid.*, April 11, 1895.
46. Annual Conference Resolutions, May 23-24, 1901.
47. Semi-Annual Conference Resolutions, April 7, 1904.
48. *Ibid.*, September 8, 1892.
49. Annual Conference Minutes, May 25-26, 1893.
50. *Ibid.*, May 30-31, 1895.
51. *A Manual of Conference Resolutions* (Berlin, 1904), Resolution of 1897, p. 10.
52. *Ibid.*, 1900 and 1904, p. 7.
53. John H. Yoder, "Evangelism and Latin American Politics: A Document," *Gospel Herald*, LXI (January 2, 1973), pp. 4-5.
54. M. S. Steiner, *Pitfalls and Safeguards* (Elkhart, Ind.: 1899), p. 23.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 211. On giving Steiner his rightful place as a leader in the "Mennonite Awakening," see G. F. Hershberger, "The Founding of the Mennonite Central Committee" (unpublished manuscript, n.d., AMC).
56. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-2.
57. H. S. Bender, "John F. Funk," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, II, p. 423.
58. Paul Erb, "Daniel Kauffman," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, III, pp. 156-57.
59. Rodney Sawatzky, "The Influence of Fundamentalism on Mennonite Nonresistance, 1908-1944" (M.A. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1973).
60. S. F. Pannabeck, "Foreign Mennonite Missions," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, III, pp. 712-17.
61. Most of the data gleaned from Melvin Gingerich, "Colleges," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, I, pp. 636-39, and *Mennonite Encyclopedia* articles on individual institutions: P. J. Wedel, "Bethel College," I, pp. 304-8; C. H. Smith, "Bluffton College," I, pp. 368-70; J. S. Umble, "Goshen College," II, pp. 546-48; J. D. Unruh, "Freeman Junior College," II, pp. 389-90; W. J. Prieb, "Tabor College," IV, pp. 679-80; H. S. Bender, "Messiah College," III, p. 658; M. Miller, "Hesston College," II, pp. 729-30; H. A. Brunk, "Eastern Mennonite College," II, p. 134.
62. See following articles in *Mennonite Encyclopedia*: J. T. Wiebe,

- "Botschaft der Wahrheit," I, p. 396; Cornelius Krahn, "Christlicher Bundesbote," pp. 584-85; Nelson P. Springer, "Der Wahrheitsfreund," IV, p. 870; H. F. Epp, "Evangelizationsbote," II, p. 268; J. A. Huffman, "Gospel Banner," II, p. 550; Paul Erb, "Gospel Herald," II, p. 550; H. S. Bender, "Gospel Tidings," II, p. 550; H. S. Bender, "Gospel Witness," II, p. 551; E. E. Zimmerman, "Heilsbote," II, p. 693; P. G. Hiebert, "Messenger of Truth," III, pp. 657-58; J. N. Smucker and Maynard Shelly, "The Mennonite," III, pp. 587-88; P. H. Berg, "Zionsbote," IV, p. 1033-34.
63. See Zion and Eben-Ezer articles in *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, IV, pp. 1031-33; and II, pp. 135-36, respectively.
64. Melvin Gingerich, "Colleges," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, I, pp. 636-39.

