

THE PLOUGH

THE QUARTERLY
OF THE
BRUDERHOF COMMUNITIES

CONTENTS INCLUDE

EBERHARD ARNOLD'S LIFE AND WORK

EMMY ARNOLD

EXCERPTS FROM :

LECTURES, WRITINGS AND LETTERS

EBERHARD ARNOLD

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EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

NEWS OF THE BRUDERHOF COMMUNITIES :

CONFERENCE IN PARAGUAY

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THE PLOUGH is the quarterly journal of the Bruderhof Communities in England and South America, a group of people of fifteen nationalities who live together in full community. Its aim is to unite more closely those who seek to live by the standards of justice, brotherhood and peace.

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THE PLOUGH

The Quarterly of the Bruderhof Communities

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Autumn 1953

EBERHARD ARNOLD'S LIFE AND WORK

EMMY ARNOLD

Eberhard Arnold was born in Königsberg on the 26th of July, 1883. He was the third son of Carl Franklin Arnold, who was a high-school teacher at the time. His mother, Elizabeth Arnold, *née* Voigt, came from an old family of scholars. His paternal grandfather, Franklin Luther Arnold, was a missionary of English and American descent, and pastor of a Presbyterian church in the United States.

Eberhard had a brother and three sisters. When he was five, the family left Königsberg, since his father had been called to Breslau as professor of church history. Eberhard was full of wild ideas and boyish pranks which left him little time for school. Because of all his mischief, he was not always in the good graces of his teachers and his classmates' parents. Even as a child he objected to social inequality and made friends with the very poor and with tramps. He found more warm-heartedness and genuine humanity in them than in middle-class people. Once on vacation he was staying at his uncle's country parsonage. He was strongly impressed by the inward religious warmth of this man, particularly because he took the part of the poor and oppressed, which aroused the hostility of the rich members of his congregation. It was in his uncle's house that he first met a member of the Salvation Army. The brotherly way in which his uncle spoke with this man while Eberhard was there was a powerful impulse to him in the direction of a genuine Christian love, which shows its strength precisely in love of the very poor. So Eberhard, then sixteen years old, experienced a radical inner change. He told his parents and teachers that his life was going to take a completely different direction from then on, but they did not understand him.

In his search for people of kindred spirit, Eberhard made connection with a number of groups that had been stirred by Christ. A group of other students gathered around him, seeking through Bible study to find a deeper realization of the way of Jesus. The Salvation Army had made a great impression on him. He went with these devoted people into the darkest haunts of Breslau in the urge to free men from

drink and filth. He went with one heavy drinker to and from work every morning and evening, because the way went past a bar. Profoundly shocked by the misery of the poor in Breslau's East End, he found the social life of his middle-class parents increasingly hard to endure. Thinking of the misery of the poor, he refused to attend a certain social function because he found it wrong to spend so much money in one evening to entertain the well-to-do, whereupon his father confined him to his room. His parents by no means consented to his new activities, and certainly not to his attitude on the social question.

When Eberhard had finished school, his parents insisted that he study theology, although his own opinion was that he could be of more service to men as a doctor. In Breslau, Halle, and Erlangen, he studied theology, philosophy, and educational method, concluding his years at the university with a doctoral dissertation on *Early Christian and Antichristian Elements in the Development of Friederich Nietzsche*. While he was in Halle he became intimately connected with the German Student Christian Movement, and worked for several years in close co-operation with Ludwig von Gerdtell. Both of them worked in the midst of the revivalist movement which was stirring so many spiritual seekers at the time.

It was during this time, in 1907, that we met. After some profound and earnest talks together about the nature of Christian discipleship, we were engaged, though we had known each other only a few days. From then on, we went our way together. We were married in 1909. During the first years of our marriage, Eberhard was much sought-after as a lecturer. He spoke in various German cities, such as Halle, Leipzig, Berlin, Dresden and Hamburg about the crucial problems of the time. Some of his subjects were, 'Early Christianity in the Present Day', 'Social Distress', 'Freedom for Every Man', 'The Distress and Enslavement of the Masses', 'Present-Day Religious Struggles', 'Jesus as he really was', and 'Nietzsche's Criticism of Christianity'.

It was then that Eberhard's conflict with the state church began, brought on chiefly by the question of baptism. Eberhard saw that the church was on the wrong foundation because of its connections with the state and with property. This realization made a decisive difference to our lives. Eberhard was baptized and left the state church. He consequently could not accept a post in it. Stimulated by the writings of the Swiss religious-socialist pastor Hermann Kutter, he increasingly took the part of the proletariat and all other oppressed classes. His declared attitude to the working class and to the state church resulted in numerous disputes with his parents and with the church authorities.

In 1913 Eberhard contracted a serious illness of the lungs and larynx, and therefore our little family moved to the southern Tyrol, where we were able to rent a cottage near Bozen. This time gave us the

opportunity for thorough meditation which led to deeper clarity. It was then that Eberhard wrote the first chapters of the book *Innenland* and a series of important essays, such as 'Love of God', 'Love of our Brothers', and 'The Power of the Life of Prayer'. He also made a thorough study of Anabaptist history, and figures like Hans Denck, Bathasar Hubmair and Thomas Münzer made a great impression on us during these months. At this time, it became increasingly clear to us that our life had to take a more radical and active direction. From this time onward, my sister Else von Hollander lived with us, and took a very lively share in everything that concerned us. While I was very much taken up with nursing Eberhard and caring for the children, she helped him in his scholarly work as his secretary. She was one of those who began to live in community with us, and after that was of great help to Eberhard until her death in 1932.

The first world war broke out in 1914, while we were in the midst of these inner experiences. Eberhard was drafted into the army and served for several weeks as a driver in the Service Corps in eastern Germany. He was soon discharged because of his poor health. From then on he was constantly preoccupied by the military question, though it took some time for him to arrive at a clear solution.

Then we lived in Halle for a while, until 1915, when Eberhard was called to Berlin as literary director of the *Furche-Verlag* (Furrow Publishing House). Our family stayed in Berlin until 1920. Besides its periodical, *Die Furche*, the publishing house issued a series of books and art-folios for the use of prisoners of war. Eberhard was severely shocked by his frequent visits to hospitals, and he grew increasingly opposed to the war spirit.

After 1919 we found a current of new life coming to us from all sides. At Whitsun that year Eberhard spoke in Marburg to members of the German Student Christian Movement. Jesus' words came alive for the people at this meeting, showing us in the Sermon on the Mount the perfectly clear solution to the problems of war and social injustice.

Erwin Wissman, in reporting on this Whitsun conference in *Die Furche*, wrote: 'The focus of all that was said and thought was Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Eberhard Arnold burned it into our hearts with passionate spirituality, hammered it into our wills with prophetic power and the tremendous mobile force of his whole personality. This was the Sermon on the Mount in the full force of its impact, in its absolute and undiminished relevance, its unconditional absoluteness. Here there was no compromise. Whoever wants to belong to this kingdom, must give himself wholly and go through with it to the last! To be a Christian means to live the life of Christ. We are obligated by a burning challenge: the rousing summons to love, and the ominous, "He that takes the sword shall perish by the sword". The beginnings of a decisive spiritual

revolution depend upon us . . . it is up to us to do the deeds of Jesus in his Spirit, to help men in body, in soul and spirit. This is the only way we Christians can follow today as envoys of the kingdom of God and as the vanguard of the only politics that is possible and necessary—the politics of Christocracy’.

This Marburg conference was the beginning. It was here that we saw the vision of future things. The fruits of this experience became more and more apparent, until out of the vision life itself gradually assumed a new form.

It began with discussions, when we held open house in Berlin. Often as many as eighty or a hundred came, people from the most various groupings of opinion—members of the Youth Movement, workers, students, atheists, evangelicals, anarchists, Quakers. The question burning in us all was: ‘What shall we do?’ The discussion centred around the Sermon on the Mount. Everyone knew that life had to be changed. There had to be action at last! No more words! We want to see action!

This radical attitude led to controversy with the directors of *Die Furche* and the German Student Christian Movement. In various conferences like those in Bad Oeyenhausen and at Saarow, the struggle went on over crucial questions such as: ‘What is the Christian’s attitude to war and revolution?’ ‘Can a Christian be a soldier?’ Eberhard’s answer was an emphatic ‘No’.

A report on these conferences says: ‘Eberhard Arnold was glad to admit the necessity of personal rebirth, but said that the ethic of Jesus should be part of every evangelization. Jesus did recognize the power of the state, but characterized the Kingdom of God as something entirely different. The Christian represents a continual corrective within the state, an arousing of conscience and a strengthening of the will of justice, a leaven, that is, a foreign body in the sense of a higher value. But in so far as the state uses force, the Christian must refuse to co-operate. Hence he cannot be a soldier, executioner, or policeman. It is our duty to testify in word and action that nothing in the words of Jesus may be distorted. The demand is always absolute: “We must obey God rather than men”. We feel we are in the world as a corrective to the norm’.

Now new ways had to be found and taken. We answered the call of the friends of the ‘New Work’, a group of religious socialists, and the summons to the ‘original church’ that reached us from Schlüchtern. First we and some of our friends proposed a Whitsuntide conference in Schlüchtern. About two hundred people, most of them young, came from all parts of Germany with the urge to find an answer to the burning question, ‘What shall we do?’ How can we find true humanity, true freedom, and a genuinely dedicated life? Under the stimulus of a

visit to the Free German Youth settlement, Habertshof, we realized that our way would have to be one of brotherly community life. We regarded private property and possessions as one of the most evil roots of war and all the wrongness of human life.

But where to begin? In the city, or in the country? What is the best way to relieve the misery of the masses? The answer our working-class friends gave was, 'Go into the country'. From the start, it was clear to us that community life would have to be a life of unity in faith, and of community of property and work in voluntary poverty. Particularly the writings of Gustav Landauer turned us in this direction.

In the summer of 1920 we rented three small rooms at the back of an inn in the village of Sannerz, Kreis Schlüchtern. Nobody was thinking of starting a community with a new philosophy of life; we only wanted to put into practice, together with all who wanted to come and help, the things that had become clear to us. At the time we were only seven adults and five children. From the very outset the little group was sought out by many guests who so often arrived unexpectedly that we used to repeat the lines, 'Ten were invited, twenty have come. Pour water in the soup, and bid all welcome'.

We had many discussions with our guests, struggling for clarity about the questions that concerned us and them. These went on far into the night, but often after lively debate a powerful experience of fellowship was granted us.

Some extracts from a talk by Eberhard Arnold, 'The Essence of our Development', give a good idea of what was begun in those days, not by human beings, and not willed in human strength by individuals. It was begun and established by the Spirit, and this is the only reason it has lasted.

'The important thing in the beginning of such a communal life is the inner situation, the inner atmosphere. The first period at Sannerz was surrounded by a flood of spiritual movement. There was a certain direction in the wind that filled the sails of the departing ships and blew them toward a specific destination. It was as though the stream of events had rushed in upon us from outside and was seeking its culmination and crystallization, its vortex of force, in our community life. It was possible for a person to spend a week with us at Sannerz without seeing the point of it all. But whoever really had the vision that saw into the depths and could look deep into men's hearts, inevitably realized that here there was a spiritual mission of the gospel and the church of Jesus Christ, a mission station right in the middle of a Germany, a central Europe that was pagan and yet under the visitation of God. Among all of us, among those who came to us and those who were already there, the Holy Spirit brought about the mutuality of our meeting before the face of God. The rooms in Sannerz and at the Rhönbruderhof

in the early days were filled by a power that did not come from us who lived there, nor from those who came to visit us; it was a power that came from God and visited us. This power was an invisible fluid surrounding us. So we could understand Pentecost as the rushing of the Spirit that surrounded the waiting church community with its visitation. In this wonderful mystery, community came into being, for here no will or word that was merely our own could assert itself, neither the word of a so-called leader nor the word of a so-called opposition. The voice comes out of the cloud, and man is still. But this does not at all mean that only those who confess Christ, who declare that they are converted and reborn Christians, are touched by the cloud. Quite the contrary is the case. We have seen it happen again and again that the hidden Christ is revealed in men who insist they have no faith. Christ visits all men, long before they have found unity with him. We sense that the light of Christ comes to all men who are born into this world'.

In 1922 there were many changes. Many of our friends turned back to the old life. They were disillusioned: they said that people to-day were too individualistic to be able to give themselves up to the extent of being capable of community living. We felt the same incapability in ourselves, but we had heard the challenge of community life so distinctly that, for all our apprehension, we were determined to go through with it. Only seven ventured to begin again; all the rest went away. Objectively, the chief reason for the separation was the issue of faith versus purely economic reasoning. In a talk with some of our guests later on, Eberhard said of this time of crisis and new beginning:

'When the call first came to us, we felt that the Spirit of Jesus Christ had driven us and charged us to live in full community, in communal solidarity, with an open door and a loving heart for all people. It was the word of Jesus Christ, the reality of his life and the fact of his Spirit, that gave us the strength to start firmly and certainly on this way and to keep on though our steps were short and feeble. When we had travelled only a short way on this path, times came upon us that put this power to the test, hostile times of trial, when friends we knew well and whom we had grown to love deeply, suddenly reversed their position and became enemies of the way, because they had turned away from freedom and unity, because they wanted to go back again into ordinary middle-class life, to normal private life and their own pocket book. At that time, the movement was led into bondage again through the middle-class influences of capitalism and its business and professional life.

'But though most of our friends left us, though whole groups had deserted the flag of unity and freedom, though well-meaning friends might earnestly advise us that the way of freedom and unity would lead

us to a lonely and ineffectual end, that could not change anything. With our own children and those we had adopted, we had to push through toward the goal'.

Materially speaking the new beginning was just as hard as the original start two years previously. Full of gratitude and courage, though somewhat hesitant, we set to work. Now we were living in a larger house at Sannerz and the size and tasks of the community were growing slowly. An important part of our work during these years was publishing, together with the education of under-privileged children, who grew up with our own children. The farm and garden work developed gradually.

The place at Sannerz was soon too small and we looked around for something else. In 1926, with very little capital, we bought the Sparhof in the Fulda district, a very poor and worked-out farm. It took some time to complete the move until we were all together again there in 1927 and could proceed to build up our communal life. It was quite different when we had a place that belonged to the community entirely. We wanted everything we did to symbolize the divine and the evolving church. The children's community as an integral part of the whole, the garden and farm, the building, the craftwork and publishing, as well as our work with guests and with the poor, could now be re-established and expanded, as far as we had the ability and strength to do it.

The full responsibility for all practical and spiritual activity was borne by the brotherhood which assigned to various members certain specific aspects of the work. Eberhard's chief task during those years was to stimulate, deepen and clarify the life of this 'socio-educational community of work', as it was called, particularly in thinking through the problems of the various departments of work. Meanwhile the community was constantly growing. Young people came and devoted themselves and all their energies to the cause and the tasks facing the whole community. It was not long before they could take over the responsibility of directing certain branches of the work.

During these years we spent at Sannerz and at the Rhönbruderhof, Eberhard was also giving lectures in various cities in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and took an active part in conferences of the Youth Movement and of pacifist and other groups. His book, *Die Ersten Christen nach dem Tode der Apostel* (The Early Christians after the death of the Apostles), appeared in 1926. It was an attempt to express the power of the Spirit which had animated the early Christian Church and which had played a fundamental part in the beginning of the Bruderhof community. He dedicated the book to his parents, grateful, in spite of the many disagreements and struggles he had had with them, for the influences of his home and for the growing understanding they showed as time went on for the life we had chosen.

Eberhard took a special interest in the care and education of the children, having a profound reverence for them and a realization that adults have much to learn from them. As a teacher, he knew how to arouse a lively interest in the children for the past and present history of mankind and in man's hopes for the future. Both old and young took part in the work on the land, particularly in sowing and harvest time. There was plenty of work to do and the times when the whole household worked together were an important part of the communal experience, for us and for our guests. The day was spent in work and the evening in discussions in which either the whole household or only the brotherhood took part. We went on hikes together and tried to find contact with the neighbouring peasant-farmers. We used to sit under the village lime tree, singing and playing folk-songs. Eberhard would read a story or legend, the peasants brought us something to eat and were drawn into our common experience. Occasionally we gave plays in the neighbouring villages and tried to present a simple message. Or else we took long walks by starlight and gathered in the vaulted cellar of the Steckelsburg, the ancestral castle of Ulrich von Hutten, and sat around a roaring fire while Eberhard told us of Hutten's times: 'It is a delight to be alive, the spirits are awaking! . . .' Then home again in the darkness.

Since the group kept growing we were always busy building, and mostly without enough funds. Eberhard was extremely interested in the planning of the houses. We wanted them to express the spirit that inspired us, with its characteristic simplicity. All took part in determining the way we built. Modesty and simplicity, but bright colours, like God's creation in all its diversity—that was what we wanted in our houses.

Another thing we always laid great stress on was craft-work, especially artistic crafts. The design for every candlestick or bowl that our wood-turning shop intended to make was communally appraised and decided. Eberhard always said that precisely this kind of work, in its simplicity of form, should testify to the way we felt as a community.

We later added a printing-shop to our publishing house. Eberhard emphasized the beauty of the printed page and the neat execution of setting, printing and binding. The producing of each book or article, even of some letters, was a matter that concerned the whole community. During communal work, for instance sorting out the potatoes, manuscripts were discussed and proof sheets read. In this way the members of the community gained a thorough knowledge of the books of our 'Source' series, such as *The Early Christians*, *Francis of Assisi*, *Novalis*, *Zinzendorf* and of other publications like the book *Innenland* which we revised.

In the mornings we met for a silent meeting. Our common meal-times were a symbol for us of the coming kingdom of justice, love and peace. Our food was always simple, often poor, but we ate it from our earthenware bowls in an atmosphere of devotional fellowship in the well-lit dining room with its panelled walls, its green tables covered with red linoleum, and its seven-armed candlestick in the centre.

On summer evenings we often gathered under the big beech tree on the hill overlooking the community. Here, with our guests and those who were working with us, we sought for the true inner liberation of the individual from himself, for true peace and the just society. This often developed into an earnest discussion of the kind of life that rises from the power of the love of Jesus. We repeatedly won through to a genuine experience of fellowship which led many who were there to a commitment of their whole lives.

In our meetings Eberhard strove to give us a vital appreciation of the most important spiritual movements of history. For example, we all studied the rise of Quakerism and the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century, giving special attention to the origins of the Hutterian communities in Moravia. We sensed that the same spirit that had led us together had been at work in this movement. Knowledge of the thousands of martyrs, who had sealed with their deaths the lives they had devoted to following Christ, strengthened our faith, conscious as we were that we had not yet persevered to the end. When we learned that there were still Hutterian Bruderhof communities in America, we contacted them and a lively correspondence followed. We had never had any desire to be a group on our own and had always sought unity with other movements and communities which were led by the Spirit. In 1930 Eberhard went to America and stayed almost a year with the Hutterians, visiting all their communities.

In spite of the fact that the brothers, who had lived in community for four hundred years, had different views about some things, which were then and still are a matter for discussion between us, we decided to join with them, since they were closer to the early Christian church than any other groups known to us at that time.

When Eberhard came back from America, an intensive time of spiritual and numerical growth was given to us. Many new people from Switzerland, England, Sweden and Germany joined us, including some from various groups which were seeking unity just as we were. During this time people from the Werkhof near Zürich and from a community not far from Eisenach came to us. During the years that followed, other similar groups joined us.

We had some sharp disputes in our discussions with the guests in those days, because the spirit of National-Socialism had begun to spread through Germany. When Hitler came to power in 1933 the

progress of our work was stopped and we saw all the more clearly how hostile the spirit of National-Socialism was to ours. The government issued restrictions which made our work in Germany increasingly difficult. In November, 1933, the Bruderhof was taken over by the Gestapo, the S.S. and the police, and our school was closed. We were refused permission to receive guests and our social work and the sale of our books was made practically impossible. During the raid every member, in particular Eberhard, who was in bed with a broken leg, was exhaustively questioned. When the detachment left, they took with them a whole carful of books and papers which they confiscated.

We had been told that a state school with a Nazi teacher would be set up at the Bruderhof. We decided, therefore, to take the school children, about twenty in number, to Switzerland without delay. When the teacher came there were no children to be found. The young people over school age also went to Switzerland.

Eberhard and I went to look for a new place, which we found in the little principality of Liechtenstein next to Switzerland. Here we rented an empty summer hotel at Silum in the Alps at an elevation of nearly five thousand feet. This was a venture in faith since we had no money at all with which to fit out a new community. Help came though, just when we needed it most. In March, 1934 the children and young people reached Liechtenstein by various routes. After several families had also come from the Rhönbruderhof, we founded the Almbruderhof. During the months that followed, Eberhard and I made frequent trips back and forth between the two settlements, each time never knowing if we would return. Those were times of danger when many people were being arrested and thrown into concentration camps.

Germany was arming. In the spring of 1935 we were faced with the difficult question of whether the young men of the community who were eligible for military service should stay in Germany and witness against war and the spirit of militarism, or apply their energies to building up the new community in Liechtenstein. After some profound consideration by the whole brotherhood we saw that our witness is not merely the rejection of war and injustice, but to a much greater extent our life's work is to build for peace. So the young men went to the Almbruderhof which soon had grown to a hundred people, children and adults. The number soon increased by an influx of new members from England. Eberhard had made a trip to Holland and England in the spring of 1935, giving talks, and, incidentally, investigating the possibility of a better location for settlement in England in case the Alm should turn out to be only a temporary home.

Only the Swiss, English and Swedish members, with very few Germans, stayed in Germany after that, and difficulties multiplied. In the midst of this situation, when the community was living in a

state of inorganic separation imposed from without by political conditions, Eberhard had to submit to a surgical operation on the advice of a medical friend. It was hoped that the operation would help his broken leg to heal. After this operation he died quite suddenly in the Elizabeth Hospital in Darmstadt on November 22, 1935. To the last he bore witness to the way and direction which must be demonstrated to the whole world, to-day as then: the brotherly life in peace and justice.

A few days before his death, Eberhard Arnold wrote the following:

'All Bruderhof members must be won for the greatness of our cause. We have still not arrived at a real missionary activity; it is becoming ever more urgent to ask for it.

The most important thing of all is the faith in God's greatness, in the supercosmic significance of Jesus and the future of the universal kingdom of the Spirit. This is the context in which repentance, forgiveness, faith, certainty, personal dedication, and all the rest belong, and nowhere else.

From the standpoint of this greatness, we should always answer movements of the times without being infected by them.

My heart-felt wish for our future is that the Bruderhof communities may never grow narrow and intolerant toward young people but should always help them to find a joyful new beginning of true life.

God and his kingdom are the most significant facts for everything that has significance. God and his will have such great meaning for everything that nothing else, no matter how great its significance, can stand comparison with it, and yet everything else finds its true meaning for the first time in this light. How small is the life of the individual in itself; how small the family life of a man, his wife, and their children; how small is the circle of friends bound to us by personal sympathy; and finally, how small is the whole Sparhof (former name of the Rhoenbruderhof) with all its little people. But how great are God and his kingdom! How great is this historical hour of world crisis, world distress and world catastrophe; how much greater still is God's hour of judgment of the world and the Christ-hour of liberation that is coming! How burning our desire should be to know all these things more and more deeply and to share in them; how fervently we should expect and long for the day itself, the coming day that will bring freedom and unity!

A PERSONAL WORD BY EBERHARD ARNOLD

SPOKEN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY

JULY 26, 1933

On this day I have been especially conscious of my lack of ability and of how unsuited my own nature is to the work I have been given, remembering how God called me when I was only sixteen years old and how I have stood in His way, with the result that so much of what God must have wanted to do by his instruments has not been possible. It remains a miracle that his work of the Church-community and the Holy Spirit is nevertheless revealed and mightily testified to in us feeble human beings—not through our merits, but because we are accepted time and time again through the grace of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sins.

I have had to think of the Shepherd of Hermas, how he describes the building of the great and mighty temple of marble, and how he keeps referring to the many stones that must be thrown away. The attempt is made to fit them into the building, but if they cannot be used, even after their corners are chipped away by stern, sharp strokes of the chisel, then they must be thrown away—as far away as possible. But even the stones that are used must be chiselled very sharply before they fit and can be set into the wall. When we look back on the years that Emmy and I have been seeking, so that the Church-community might be gathered—it is a miracle that we may still take part in it; this is only possible through an infinite power—then we become very serious, thinking of the many people who for years have been intending to seek this way. I have received a list of all the friends who felt they were called to join us or believed in the necessity of entering into the work of our common life. A lot of these stones that seemed for a while to be possibilities have been thrown away again. That is very painful. It troubles and pains me to think of all these stones that have been thrown away and I wish the day might come when one or another of them would be taken up once more to be chiselled.

Another thing concerns me very much: the powerlessness of man, even of the man who has been entrusted with some task. Only God is mighty; we are completely powerless. Even for the work that has been given us, we are wholly without power. We cannot fit even one single stone into the Church-community. We can provide no protection whatsoever for the community when it has been built up. We cannot even devote anything to the cause by our own power. We are completely without power. But I believe that just this is the only reason why God has called us for this service: we know we are powerless. It is very hard to give an account of or tell how it has come about that

all of us, especially we older members of the brotherhood, know we are so completely powerless. It is hard to describe how all our own power is stripped off us, how our own power has been dropped, dismantled, torn down, and put away. What I should wish for our younger brotherhood members too is that this dismantling of their own power might be carried out to its full extent. That is not attained so easily and does not happen through a single heroic decision. It must be done in us by God. This is the root of grace: the dismantling of our own power. Only to the degree that all our own power is dismantled will God go on effecting the results of his Spirit and the construction of his cause through us, in us and among us—not otherwise. If a little power of its own were to rise up among us, the spirit and authority of God would retreat in the same moment and to the corresponding degree. In my estimation that is the single most important insight with regard to the kingdom of God. How it actually happens is hard to say. It is as hard to speak of this as it is to speak of the mystic source of all things. The only thing that can be said is that the Holy Spirit produces effects that are deadly for the old life and that at the same time have a wakening and rousing power for the new life which comes from Christ and his Holy Spirit alone.

Let us use this day to give glory to God. Let us pledge to him that all our own power will remain dismantled, and will keep on being dismantled among us. Let us pledge that the only thing that will count among us will be the power and authority of God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it will never again be we that count, but that God alone will rule and govern in Christ and the Holy Spirit. That means we declare our dependence upon grace. This is the testimony we are required to give. Everything we have is the unmerited gift of God. God can give this unmerited gift only to people in whom their own claims and special rights have been dismantled. And for this reason we acknowledge and ask for the grace that appeared in Jesus Christ and that comes to us in the Holy Spirit.

FROM LECTURES AND WRITINGS OF EBERHARD ARNOLD

THE CHARACTER OF LOVE

The love of God is eternal and imperishable. It is the ultimate and greatest revelation in this world of the world beyond. While desire and vanity, fortune and possessions must pass away because they are worthless for eternity; while even the highest of human gifts, even language, knowledge and prophecy, belong to this time and will pass away with it; love is simply life itself, life in every sense, entire and eternal life. Hence the love that is *Agape*, in contrast to *Eros* which is diseased in itself, bears the traits of him who directly pours it out upon us. It knows no limits in time and space. It breaks off nothing. It is the strength of invincible endurance. It is strong enough for any task because it is persistent faithfulness. It alone can find the right thing for each person in every situation because it is genuine friendliness. For it is free from the passionate excitement of naked *Eros* which applies all the methods of jealousy to get or keep what it supposedly loves. It clothes the energy of our love with God's light of inexpressible purity, which can never be unseemly or ugly and can never injure the modesty or sensibility of the soul. It is the love of God and is therefore free from all conceit, from charlatanry, from all presumption for its own advantage. It seeks and demands nothing for itself because its whole life is in the object of its love. It knows nothing about rights; its nature is to discard and forget the standpoint of rights and to find its happiness in giving. Because vanity and envious desire are beneath it, it can never be made sharp, never become excited, never be irritated to bitterness. Because it sees in the other person his essential nature and what he can become, it does not count the things that are still bad in him. Yet it has nothing to do with wrong. It concentrates itself and its joy wholly on the essential and genuine, on the truth in the soul of the other person. Its vision penetrates the walls of everything that is obstructing the holy destiny of a soul at the present moment. It has the power to be a protection, to endure and ward off all dangers that threaten to smother a man's destiny. This power can stand firm everywhere and endure everything.

July 15, 1921.

THE OLD CREATION AND THE NEW

The creation, overpoweringly mighty to the human eye, is the sublime spectacle in which God comes to meet the little heart of man. The childlike heart of the ancients never confuses God with nature. But the childlike man does not experience the might and greatness of God apart from nature. He cannot disregard the creation when he stands

before the Creator. In the mysterious interconnections of the created worlds, the believing creature senses the might of the Creator who gives greatness, life, coherence and unity to everything created. The man with a sense of awe feels an ultimate mystery in everything that lives. He grows aware that the living creative Spirit must be greater than all created life. Man stands amazed and awed before the tree in the might of its life, before the living, bubbling spring, beneath the life-giving rays of sun and stars, and amid the fertility of the earth and its life. Into a heart shaken and moved by all this there falls the demand that above all this mighty life, the great God of creation must rule in undisputed power.

Innenland, p. 184.

Whoever receives the spirit of the new creation, which hastens on the end of all time, receives the eternal powers of the one God, who formed the first creation in the same spirit. The future strength of God, in its all-transforming expectation of the end, lives as the spirit of strength in the present ageing creation. The new dawn has begun in it already. Everyone must see—a new creation is arising! Its gospel is meant for every creature.

Innenland, p. 383.

This material world is a creation of the Spirit. The cosmos is destined for the unity of spirit and matter. The division that makes the spirit struggle against matter and matter against the spirit is contrary to nature and opposed to the actual character of the creation. For this reason the time must come when the whole of matter stands in the service of God without the poisoning of life, without death the destroyer.

It was Jesus who asserted this ultimate and final affirmation of life in his mission. He proclaimed that heaven and earth must become one. With this proclamation Jesus brings the true divine life down into practical, everyday existence. His concern is with daily and hourly life. His concern is the soul and hence the body as well.

The appointed task of man, since the primeval origin of his life, was considered to be the cultivation and keeping of the garden which had been given to him. But even the believing man of the Old Testament saw—the garden has not been kept; its cultivation has been disturbed by the enemy who has sown weeds in it. The vigorous believer must rise all the higher out of the depth of this disappointment. The garden must be won back for God. God himself will conquer and rule it. But men must be ready to accept this rule of God. The kingdom of God has the same earthly sound, the same earth-colour, as the vanished paradise. Sin, the destroyer, which has kept us from rejoicing fully in the earth, must be overcome. Not man, renewed by God, but the enemy of God must leave the earth.

Jesus und der Zukunftsstaat, 1919.

Let us pray fervently to God that our hearts, so moved now, might always keep finding new stimulation in the good thoughts that are God's, in the greatest facts; that we might think along the greatest lines, not in terms of continents or planets only, but in terms of the greatest stellar expanses; not merely in terms of the cycle of years, but in tens, hundreds and thousands of years; in the dimensions of God's thoughts, in the great curves of God. That should be our prayer, such an earnest one, because the events of recent times have presented us with this special challenge.

Let us not be a petty generation under the impact of great things! Let us grow worthy of the fact that we have been entrusted with a great time and a great vocation.

Advent, 1934.

THE RULE OF THE SPIRIT

'Christ in you' is the secret of life in unity with God for him who is led through love from the death of isolation into the life of community. When God's Spirit dwells in us we are released from a life centred in and around ourselves, and born into a new life centred in and around God.

Freedom is redemption of the spirit, a call summoning a man away from his own lowly and ugly path, to be released and lifted up and away from the unspeakably hard struggle of the heart, the struggle between good and evil, spirit and flesh. We realize immediately that this freedom can never be produced by external measures. It can be brought into being only by the law of the Spirit and only when the Spirit of the Lord rules on the whole earth. Since Jesus came to the earth, since he died on the cross and rose again from the grave, went to the Father and sent us his Spirit—since that time, the kingdom of the Spirit has been present here in the midst of the country of man. We live in the country of man, and we do not want to leave this country of man as long as God would have us here. But at the same time, we know we are citizens of a foreign kingdom, a kingdom of the Spirit, and, in the midst of the country of man, we represent the holy interest of our kingdom, to which we belong in body, soul and spirit.

The beast in us must be governed, and the beast in us fights against the rule of the Spirit. The beast in us is not our final destiny. We can sense that our higher destiny points toward the kingdom of the Spirit and longs for the rule of the Spirit. We must stop and turn our eyes inward so that the inner kingdom can be built. We must recognize the fact that freedom is not the arbitrary whim of the isolated soul. Only love is unity with eternal freedom.

Thoughts must become actions! It is time we realized at last that thoughts are the giants, and actions are their offspring. Fate is decided

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Advent, 1934.

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in the world of our thoughts. In our aspirations and reflections we decide matters of time and eternity. Those that are in the flesh think of things of the flesh, but those who are in the spirit think of the things of the spirit.

As long as our mental life revolves about the axis of our own ego, the magnetic attraction of this ego draws us and holds us so that we cannot be released; as long as we are bound to our own egotism we cannot be freed. Only when the soul can successfully be released from this thinking and brooding about itself is there freedom, freedom of the spirit. 'You have been dearly bought', the Spirit calls to us, 'Do not become the slaves of men'. If I wanted to please men I would not be the servant of Christ. The more we think about ourselves, the more we are committed to others. There is only one way to get free from slavery and that is the liberation from self. Freedom in the spirit means freedom from oneself. This freedom has its life in God, in Christ. The mind of the spirit is freedom, because its reflections are on God.

From lectures on the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, 1918.

PEACE AND JUSTICE

The grave guilt of those who have called themselves Christians is that they have restricted Christianity to the subjective question of the solitary redemption of the individual. That is the grandiose misunderstanding of the historical Jesus.

1921.



There is no reconciliation with God without reconciliation with all men. There is no subjective Christianity in the sense of exclusive attention to one's own little individuality in its isolated relationship to its personal God, because there is no such thing as an isolated individuality, and God does not see a man out of the context of his relationship to other men. To become a Christian, to see God, to share in the kingdom of God therefore means at the same time mercy to all; it means hunger, unquenchable thirst for a justice that includes everyone, for love that serves and for non-violent dedication.

1921.

When Jesus says, 'Love God above all things', and adds that the other saying, 'Love your neighbour as yourself', is equal to it, he expresses the fact that the social element is equal to the religious, and that the religious element, as people call it, is only then genuine if it is active in the social element.

October 18, 1933.

Without justice there is no peace. Unless the earth's land is given back to the poor, justice remains lost on the stolen earth.

Peace belongs to all who do only good, in that they dedicate their all to love, and it belongs to them only.

Innenland, p. 219.

We know that even the discarding of armaments still could not mean a real state of peace in the world. We know that this would not mean the overcoming and abolition of hostility among men on this earth. Peace can mean only one thing: that all hostility is overcome, all hostile feelings stopped, all gaps bridged, all obstacles pushed aside and all restrictions broken down. Where can such hostility be overcome? Where can the struggle of competition and the envious strife of business, and all hatred and envy, be overcome? We testify that these things can be overcome only in Christ.

1917.

When we speak of peace, we mean more than is commonly understood by peace of mind and the inner content and satisfaction of the individual. We certainly do believe that community with Christ also puts a man in unity with himself and within himself, whereas before he had been full of conflict. The will of God reveals itself as unity, down into the tiniest of worlds; but the peace we mean goes further. It is God's will to unity, which, from spiritual unity, brings all relationships, all material things and all actions into the unity of the kingdom of God.

January 13, 1933.

In all areas of personal and public life the Church-community must of necessity radiate the peace-making power of love, the power of Christ who is alive within it.

1921.

Unclean spirits are the really murderous spirits that govern in the air. And if all wars were done away with, pacifists would be forced to realize that the spirit of murder is not done away with so long as the atmosphere in which millions live is filled with impurity. The same thing applies to mammon.

January 8, 1935.

Because Jesus himself radiated in his nature the organic unity of all the characteristics of the coming kingdom, no one can try to tear one of the principles he announced out of its organic framework and set it up as a law in itself. Whoever sets up pacifist work for peace, or

purity of heart, or any single moral or political demand for itself alone, and demands and sets up the new cause from this standpoint, is on the wrong path. To be sure, without purity of heart, without active peace-making, there can be no sharing in the kingdom of God, but if the good tree is not planted the good fruit cannot be gathered. If the change does not extend to all areas, it is a lost cause to try to follow Christ's lead fervently in *one* principle.

1920.

FROM PRIVATE PROPERTY TO COMMUNITY

The poisonous root of private property is disintegration, death and corruption. Private property arises through self-isolation, through the self-seeking of the covetous will. Private property brings a curse with it: there is a lack of relationship of individuals one to another and of the individual with God, who is the root of all life and being. Humanity lies in agony, on the verge of death, and the most obvious sign of its mortal sickness is private property.

Private property is the root of murder, the cause of war and the cut-throat competition of business life. Prostitution and marrying for money, which is no different, feed on it. It is the cause of dishonesty in business and of every kind of lie in human relationships.

'Business is business', men say, but when business is free to form a code of conduct peculiar to itself it means in fact that egotism and private property are framing an independent code. Our entire economy is based on greed, on the profit motive, or the individual's urge to self-preservation and his craving for greater power. Jesus once said: 'If the kingdom of Satan were divided against itself, it would have fallen long ago'. For this reason our highly developed capitalist economy does not fall, because the demonic forces let loose by greed and the profit motive work hand in glove with each other. They all follow the same line. The possessors thus become the possessed—possessed of demons. When one sphere of man's activity is permitted to frame its own laws irrespective of all other aspects of life, it becomes an idol, and man is ruled by demons. Life is rent apart and torn into shreds. That is the curse of our century, and we all fall down and worship such idols, especially where money and economics are concerned. Defending their collective egotism, men say: 'I don't want my property for myself, I want it for my wife and children. I don't in the least want to go to war to protect my own personal property, but I'm going to fight for all'. A man who loves wife and children loves his own flesh. Not only love for one's own family, but preservation of the clan, loyalty of tribesmen or settlers one to another, defence of nation or state, and still more civil war and war for one's own caste or class, is collective egotism.

Let me speak frankly: I oppose nationalism and patriotism; I oppose the class war of the proletariat; I oppose the class rule of the property owners; and in addition I oppose the laws of inheritance. I assert that egotism rears its head wherever there is any question of protecting common interests. I oppose the party system. The whole of our public life has fallen under this curse. Why are there armed forces? Why are there law courts? Why is there a militia? Undoubtedly they exist simply for the sake of property, that isolated thing which has become detached from all the rest, and which is doomed to death. We must break through this atmosphere of impending disaster. We are lost as long as the main factors in life are man's covetous will, his struggle for existence, his selfish claims and his selfish rights and privileges. We have fallen into a state of disintegration; we have fallen from God. This curse that lies over us, this ruined life, has become a commonplace fact that we take for granted. We must wake up and hear the gospel which will free us from the curse of this life without spirit and without God.

Let us look at nature as a relief from these terrifying pictures. What maintains life in us, our natural life? We are kept alive by the sun, by air, by water, by the earth and its resources, by our own power to do strenuous physical and intellectual work and to take advantage of nature's potentialities.

To whom was the sun given? To everyone. It was given to *everyone*. If there is any one thing that men do have in common, it is this gift of sunlight. But there are men who live their life in the shadows. They must be brought out into the sunlight.

The old Hutterians say in their writings, 'If the sun were not hung so high, it would long ago have been claimed by a few people as their private property, to the detriment of the rest who would then see nothing of it at all'. The desire to own property, which takes for itself things which in no way belong to it, would not stop short at the sun. How is it with the air? The air is already in part a commercial proposition. Health resorts demand special charges, and so the air is bought and sold. And what of water? What of waterpower? What of the earth? Is there any reason why the earth should be parcelled out into private hands? Is the earth essentially different from the sun? No. Neither should the earth be private and personal property. The earth belongs to the men who live on it. God intended it for them, but to-day it is held by private individuals.

What is 'private'? What does 'private' mean? A private business, private car, private property, private road? *Privare* means to steal. Stolen property, then. Stolen from whom? From God and mankind, taken away from God's creation! The individual has taken hold of it for himself or has inherited it, which is the same thing, and each one

holds fast to what he has. The fact that property is a curse ought to be plain to people on natural grounds alone, but there have to be prophetic spirits who put the facts quite clearly before men's eyes. God has always sent such prophets to men. Jesus is the friend of man and therefore the enemy of private property. Jesus wants men to have true life. He attacks the urge to self-preservation as part and parcel of egotism. One of Paul's letters tells us that every man should be of the same mind as Jesus. He did not cling to privilege. He gave up everything. He took the lowest place among men. He became not only the poorest but also the lowest of men, for he was classed as a criminal. He kept nothing back for himself. He had no money of his own: his wandering community had a common purse. He said quite plainly: those who obey the urge to self-preservation are lost to life. He who would keep his life shall lose it. He who does not leave all that he has is not in harmony with me. No one who still holds on to property is in harmony with Jesus. Sell all that you have and give it away. Whoever has more than one coat should give it away; and if a man asks one hour of work from you, give two—give your second hour away. The second hour of work is otherwise the source of private property. If all good gifts shall one day belong to the whole, to God and his rule, just as the sun does now and the earth will do in the future, then assuredly your extra hour's work belongs to God and to all people. Do not gather possessions. Let yourself be freed from all rights and privileges.

Even Nietzsche said that Jesus confronts the false life with a real life. What is the true life that we should lead? What is life? A body is alive when all the organs function as a conscious unit, co-operating with each other and enabling the body to do its work. Life is coherent unity in movement. Life is propagated by life, and only a living thing can give birth to new life. But life is inseparable from unity, unity of will, of feeling and of thought, and cannot exist apart from it. The living force within the individual depends on the extent to which humanity is united; and humanity is united only to the extent that it is led and directed by a collective soul, by the spirit of community, through which all support and work for all.

If we want community we must want the spirit of community. For this reason I reject the so-called communist society. My faith rests solely in that society and commune that has faith in the Spirit. The collective soul of community is the Holy Spirit. In this Spirit the Church-community is unanimous and united, is rich in gifts and powers and finds many ways of expressing the life that inspires it. We must remember, however, that just as the unity of the body cannot be maintained without sacrifice so the unity of such a fellowship demands sacrifice if it is to be maintained. If this community could endure without any sacrifice on the part of its members, it would after all be

nothing but the gratification of self-will. Every individual in the community must be prepared to sacrifice himself and all his powers, to dedicate his whole life.

This is true love: that a man lay down his life for his brothers. If we want to set to work in the Church-community, we must have free, ready and open hands. That is the only way to come into the fellowship, the only way to belong to the spirit of the Church-community. If we grasp this mystery, we will understand that this message is the affirmation of life. It is no renunciation for the sake of renunciation, but liberation for the sake of new birth: liberation from illusion to win reality, an uprooting from the non-essential to reach the essential. Fire shall come upon this earth, the fire of holy torches, of beacon fires upon the hills, a network of organic living cells. All shall be united at the communal table, as guests at the wedding feast.

From a lecture in Vienna, 1929.

THE WAY TO UNITY

Usually when people speak of interpersonal relationships they speak in terms of emotions, will and thought. Community is found in an emotional experience, or in exertion of the will toward the same objective, or, finally, in intellectual agreement.

We should like to point out an entirely different way, without meaning to depreciate or despise the three ways mentioned. As long as we are human beings we will have to use all three of them.

We say, there is a completely different way that comprises everything real and essential in the other three, and yet has an entirely different character.

If our dealings with one another in our group are limited to relationships on the horizontal plane, if we seek only the unity that is possible on *our* level, that is if we try to find unity and understanding only directly from man to man—we can spend beautiful and inspiring hours together, there is no question of that. But the experience cannot leave us with anything fundamental because, like the clouds that drift about the earth, we are left suspended. We neither penetrate into the ultimate depth, nor are we really visited out of the ultimate height. The bond between us may not continue to be merely one from man to man. So long as we know each other only in this way we remain suspended: we do not take root and cannot really grow. But if the bond between us arises in the vertical plane, from the height down into the depth, and if we seek the bond in the vertical plane, from the depth up into the height, then the whole thing suddenly becomes different. Then we will see and know, taste and learn how these endeavours of will, these emotional experiences are subjected to the effects of a light

and power that burns everything which cannot endure in the fire of eternal truth, and ignites everything that longs to be flame and light. Prayer and inward openness for true community rises upward like a flame. Our hearts have hands and arms of flame stretched upward to ask that this altar flame of sacrificial fire, this flame of yearning and longing be fulfilled by the lightning from above, by the fire that comes from heaven. The flame of longing from below toward the height joins with the descending lightning of the highest flame, and thus everything that is sooty, smoky and dark in our flame is purified. Because we find our first real fulfilment in the flame from the other world, we can say that it is not enough for us to find intellectual agreement in our opinions, it is not enough to realize that our wills are directed toward the same objective, nor to realize a common, mutual emotional experience in the currents of our feelings. But we sense rather that something else must come over to us to lift us off this purely human level, to fill this human sphere, this human level, with the powers of an entirely different world. Just as the rays of the sun constantly stream on to our earth, as the lightning brings light and fire down from the clouds above, an element must burst into our midst which does not originate from us. It does not come even from our highest thoughts, endeavours and feelings, not even from the holiest part of our being nor from our noblest special traits. It really comes over us and cannot come from us.

Only through the Holy Spirit that comes over us is it possible to create a unit of consciousness that brings about a total agreement of all our thoughts, powers of will and emotional experiences. Just as a person is a unit of consciousness in himself, the descent of this Spirit creates a unit of consciousness between those who receive it. The individual person means no more than a cell which belongs to the whole living organism of this one conscious unit of the Spirit.

March 18, 1932.

THE CHURCH COMMUNITY

The Church-community is a living building. The people in it are the living stones. These living stones have nothing perfect in themselves: they must be hewn and trimmed to fit better and better into the building. Yet the building is perfect. That is in fact the mystery of this building, that its life does not consist of its parts but of the living, all-comprehending Holy Spirit. It is not that the parts which have been collected represent the unity of the building—not the agreement of opinions. Through the fitting together of these stones, spiritually dead by nature, new life is aroused in them, not out of the various parts, but out of the all-comprehending, uniting element, the Holy Spirit.

July 30th, 1933.

Community can be compared with a loaf of bread. Seeds are scattered over many fields and farmlands. Then the harvest-time comes. The grain brought together into the granary is not always from one field alone. Often grain from many fields and farms is baked together in one loaf of bread. In the same way, the Church-community is gathered together from many nations, many different strata of society, from diverse outlooks upon life, and is baked into one loaf.

May, 1934.

Where Christ rules, all political, social and educational problems, all problems involving mankind as a whole are really solved. This realism of the original Christians is something that very few people to-day can comprehend. For this reason the words of Christ must be given body in the Church-community. Because mere words about God's future get no farther than people's ears these days, some action must be taken, something must be created and shaped that no one can simply pass by. This is embodiment and physical reality. The primary element of this mystery is Christ. As Christ was in Mary, so he is in those who have faith and who love. The character of their attitude to life is the character of God's future. Through Christ, the kingdom of the future takes shape now in the Church-community. That is the reason why this Church-community lives in complete peace and justice. This is why it can shed no blood and tolerate no private property. This is why it cannot lie or take oaths. This is why it cannot tolerate the destruction of virginal purity, or of the marriage bond between two people in the community. This is also why it must be free of all conduct designed to magnify man.

August 3, 1934.

The various nations maintain embassies in Paris, Rome, Berlin, and elsewhere. The ground on which the embassy building stands is inviolate. There no one can be subjected to the laws of the state in which the ambassador is living; on the embassy grounds, the only valid law is the law of the country which has despatched the embassy. It is precisely the same with the embassy of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit of his Church-community. The only valid law here is the law of life of the final kingdom. Since the Church-community of Christ has been charged with such a great embassy, its commission includes all men, without exception. It must reach all people. All men must come under the influence of the testimony to the truth that is the final goal of human history, this same unity of Christ which is shown in the embassy of the Church of Christ.

May 31, 1934.

There is no lord in this Church-community but Christ and Christ alone, there is no leader but the one single head, who is Jesus Christ. We are all brothers together. We are all members, and we all serve. We are living cells. What governs in this body through the power of the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ, the son of the living God. The son is the heart of God, and so Jesus Christ brings the most intimate element of the omnipotent God. Where there is real Church-community, he brings to expression the all-inclusive nature of almighty God.

July 30, 1933.

God does not work by only one method, paint in only one colour, play in only one key, nor does he make only one star shine on to the earth. God's mystery is the rich spectrum of colour that is gathered together in the purity of the sun's white light. The symphonic harmony of all the stars is built up on precisely their manifold variety. But all this is gathered together and will be gathered together at the end of time in the unity of the kingdom of God.

May, 1935.

If community ceases to be here for all men, if it is no longer capable of concern for the distress of the whole world, then its life has lost its reason for existing. No man who puts up a real fight for purity, for community in his people, for pacifism, for the revival of the special character of his nation, or for any political ideal or social reform can do so merely from his own motivation.

May, 1935.

The mission of spreading the truth and gathering those who have been aroused is the task which has been given to the Church-community from the very beginning. Groups must be sent out to work in homes and in the streets, to give brotherly help to all in need of food, clothes and housing, to proclaim the coming, eternal society. We believe that through our having been moved and shaken by forces out of the ultimate depths, there must come the inner authority without which our activity is meaningless and ineffective.

1929.

FROM EBERHARD ARNOLD'S LETTERS

You know from the history of the Church of God that there have often been such communities as ours, in the Church of the Brethren, in the Korntal, in the Anabaptist communities and in those founded by Jean de Labadie, in Russia, Palestine and other places. The essential consideration is not the economic form which the community idea has assumed. We are filled with the faith that the living Spirit of Christ is once more pressing toward the formation in our time of numerous small focal points, where there is not only the edifying community of a congregation, but real community of life, of productive work and vocation. It is to be taken for granted that the decisive question is the one of the people who form such a community. Certainly we shall have to endure many hard experiences. And certainly not all who come to us will want to stay permanently. But we are certain that among those members of the Free German Youth Movement who have been gripped by Christ, among working-class people who feel attracted by him, and among those in the German Student Christian Movement and the Treubund whom Christ has set free, we have people in whom love and the community spirit will overcome all disturbing and hindering instincts.

April 27, 1920.

You know that we envisage the structure of our settlement in three work-groups. The first and actually basic cell of the settlement is the agricultural group. The second group is comprised of the skilled trades of masons, carpenters and artisans. The third group consists of people engaged in teaching, writing and publishing, and other intellectual activity. It goes without saying that the trade workers and those in the publishing house and educational work will want to work in the fields, too, as much as possible. In times when everybody is needed we shall lay everything aside and put ourselves completely at the disposal of the farm as extra hands. And *vice-versa*, in slack times for the farm work the whole group can share in the current of our intellectual exchange. Many can be provided with a satisfying activity or a part-time occupation in this field.

June 9, 1920.

A large part of the religious energy that has awakened in great sections of our youth is certainly to be attributed to Christ's working in secret. Therefore I regard this growth and development with joy and thankfulness. But another portion of it shows the work of demonic and pagan forces as well, and we must be on our guard. Hence it is always decisively significant for us to testify to the living Christ openly and courageously—and to live him.

June 4, 1920.

The task and mission of our periodical and our publishing house is to proclaim living renewal, to summon people to the actions of the Spirit of Christ, to spread the mind that was in Jesus in the national and social distress of the present day, to apply Christianity publicly, to testify to God's action in the history of our days. It is not a church question—it is a religious question. What we must do is to get down to the deepest life-forces of Christianity and to demonstrate that they are indispensable in the solution of crucial problems in contemporary culture. With breadth of vision, with energetic daring, our publishing house must steer its course right into the torrent of present-day thought. Its work in fields that are apparently religiously neutral is the very thing which will gain for us those relationships that will open new gates for our greatest tasks in life.

October, 1920.

Take courage! We must no longer see the little things. What is great must possess us so much that it engulfs and changes the small things.

I have courage and joy again for our life, though in the certainty that it will cost a great struggle, but a glorious one. The spirit will be victorious over the flesh. The spirit is stronger. It overpowers me, you, one after the other. This spirit is compassion and independence, flexibility.

Our life will not grow narrower, but broader, not more confined, but boundless; not highly organized, but more fluid; not pedantic, but bolder; not more sober, but enthusiastic; not timid, but more daring; not more human, but more filled by God; not sadder, but happier; not more incapable, but more creative. All this is Jesus and his spirit of freedom. He comes to us. And so let us not be aggrieved by anything that has happened, but forget wherever others have offended us just as our offences need to be forgotten—and let us go into the future radiant with joy. Stay and wait until you are endued with power from on high.

Written from Holland after some had forsaken the way of community life.

July 20, 1922.

How wonderfully the spirit of unity and the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit have come to us again! May the Father, the Son, and the Spirit keep you and us in the unity of the Godhead. May his unchanging life and working lead you and us to steadiness and constancy, so that we remain in him because he remains in us! How joyful and grateful we are for the wonderful leading and guidance of the Spirit in these past weeks! Now, through us, few and insignificant

though we are, God holds two places for his testimony in active and factual proof of his mission. We have suffered defeats in the closing of the school, the discontinuing of the orphans' home, the closing of the community to guests, as well as our seriously threatened economy. But in spite of the loss of the children we loved so much, in spite of unsettled economic questions, these defeats are now not only made good, but as far as we can see will be left far behind us after a few months through a new spreading of the holy cause. It is of course true that we must be ready for more intense struggles. Our new beginning in Liechtenstein, involving the necessity of seeking help for our very existence, will have its inevitable consequences. Some effect must come from the fact that growing circles in England, Holland, America, Austria and Switzerland are becoming aware of the significance of true Church-community life. Men proposed to cut us off so that we should have practically no influence on the world around us, but through these events God has disposed that the wider world takes more notice than ever before of what is happening among us through God, and will go on happening. It looks as though we are about to enter a period when the community will increase so much as to make all previous periods of growth small by comparison. More than this, a development of even greater significance for the history of our brotherhood seems to be commencing, when the possibility and reality of true community life will find in many countries much more of the strong attention it deserves. It has been shown once again that it is not our care and anxiety, however loyally intended, that can provide the basis and continuance of our life, but only faith. This means, of course, that we must be all the more faithful in our stewardship and remain faithful stewards at all times.

After the founding of the Almbruderhof. Easter, 1934.

LETTERS FROM FRIENDS

RECOLLECTIONS OF EBERHARD ARNOLD

It has been said of Hudson Taylor, the great missionary of the China Inland Mission, that as a child he was a 'sensitive little boy' with a loving heart. The same applies to Eberhard Arnold's childhood. Our father called him fondly his 'David', David being described in the bible as being 'ruddy, a lad with fine eyes, and a handsome appearance'. We other four were all blond and blue-eyed. It was his big shining eyes that captivated his mother. He was an extremely courageous little fellow, staunch in enduring pain, with a great sense of humour and a happy enterprising spirit in our games outside in the garden or in the house in winter-time. Of course, I cannot say what was going on in the depths of his heart during these years of childhood. In our house, in which a strong and living fear of God ruled, it was just not the custom to speak of one's religious life. I cannot recall that our parents ever gave us religious exhortations, and yet even in childhood the sense of being responsible to God for all our actions was deeply implanted in us. This we owe to the example of our father, whose whole being was actively infused by a profound fear of God and a holy reverence for the bible as God's revelation.

But did not the very fact that God and his word were taken so seriously lead inevitably to much unsatisfied longing?

Pre-confirmation lessons and confirmation brought Eberhard nothing that could still the hunger of his spirit. But he had not long to wait until God met him in a way that surpassed all expectations. This was around the turn of the century. Germany was visited by God in a revival movement that brought streams of new life. Eberhard, who was just sixteen, spent his summer vacation in the country parsonage of his uncle, Ernst Ferdinand Klein. Here, through the personality of his uncle and through some members of his congregation, who were Brandenburg peasants, he became acquainted with something quite new—a joyful victorious Christianity which had its roots in the certainty of the forgiveness of sins and of acceptance by God, a peace which remained inviolate through external suffering and struggle because it was simply a gift from above, and a joy in service of him who had given his holy, pure, divine life for a mankind that had fallen into guilt and had constantly followed the wrong path.

Now came the great revolution in Eberhard's life. He had already recognized the sinfulness of his heart, which was no better than that of his comrades. Coming back to Breslau after his vacation he arrived at a total and conscious dedication to his beloved Lord Christ in the service which he was given there in the Y.M.C.A. and later in the community. His whole life was immediately changed into a joyful service for him.

He told his teachers and classmates quite candidly about his conversion and ardently tried to win them for his Master. There was no one who was 'safe' from him, whom he would not have confronted with the decision for Jesus. He struggled, alone and with other followers of Jesus, for souls that had still found no peace. Many years later, when the two of us met at a conference of the Student Christian Movement, he as secretary, I as student, he told me of the holy imperative which drove him from within to testify for Christ. That his whole heart was filled with the inner fire to serve in the love of Christ was already apparent, although not yet fully in his attitude toward possessions. With great loyalty to the will of God as he had recognized it, he bore all the difficulties and troubles that grew up in his way. Even in those days he never forgot the meekness and readiness to suffer which Christ demands in the Sermon on the Mount. From the very beginning of his discipleship his driving motive was to take all of Jesus' demands totally and seriously, and truly to continue the life of the first Church as described in the Acts of the Apostles.

HANNAH ARNOLD.

My memories of Eberhard Arnold probably go back further than those of most people now alive. Our fathers were acquainted, and we knew each other as schoolboys in Breslau during the eighteen-nineties. I met Eberhard Arnold again as a university student in Breslau in the winter of 1903-1904 and once more in Halle in 1905-1906. If my memory is correct, it was in the summer term of 1906 that Eberhard Arnold took over the leadership of the Halle group of the German Student Christian Movement. In this period, as a student of Ludwig von Gerdtell, Eberhard Arnold was firmly settled in his conversion piety, even aggressive toward the other students. But at the time of the First World War he gained increasing understanding for social problems. So it was that at the end of the war I felt he had an extremely close kinship to the Social Work-Community which I had founded in 1911. Eberhard Arnold visited me frequently in the East End of Berlin and in an executive committee meeting of the German Student Christian Movement I nominated him as editor of *Die Furche* (The Furrow), which Dr Neidermayer and I had edited up to that time. Soon afterwards, Eberhard Arnold determined to found a community at Sannerz near Schlüchtern similar to our Social Work-Community. The basis of this community settlement had the full sympathy of the friends of the Social Work-Community. From then on his work developed further in the direction of the Bruderhof communities. After this, although I met him many times and kept up relationships with him in Liechtenstein during the years of my exile in Switzerland, in later years I saw very little of him. But we kept up a friendly correspondence till

the last. I shared in his concerns and sensed profound joy in the fact that the Bruderhof cause was led through all troubles to a good goal. I can still see the worthy figure of my friend before me.

F. SIEGMUND-SCHULTZE.

When I was elected to the executive committee of the German Student Christian Movement in 1917, while ex-Chancellor Georg Michaelis was president of the organisation, I met Dr. Eberhard Arnold, then one of the S.C.M. secretaries, and worked in close contact with him especially in the literary field in the *Furche-Verlag*. It was he who started this publishing house which developed with great rapidity in connection with the prisoner-of-war service of the German Student Christian Movement. Even then he was the focus of lively discussion because he brought out publications in a much more modern form than that of similar Christian literature in Germany up to that time. Discussions became more vigorous and profound in the years after the First World War, with the appearance, among student groups and in the whole Youth Movement, of political currents tending to a strong separation to the right and to the left. The position, which he shared with some others in those days, led to an internal crisis in the German S.C.M. at the student conference in Oeynhausen in 1920. In the discussions, Eberhard Arnold took one side and Dr. Berg, the evangelist of later years, the other, with Herman Schafft mediating skilfully between them. It must have been shortly after this that Eberhard Arnold left the staff of the German Student Christian Movement to devote himself entirely to the work in Sannerz and at the Bruderhof communities, in the course of which he found connections with the Hutterian Brothers in Canada. From that time on, I met him less often. But I remember vividly our last talk together during an excursion in Wilhelmshoehe; my memory retains the indelible image of a man in whom the flame of primitive Christianity burned, who sought in kindly humility and profound inwardness a way that cut across the most varied Christian directions.

D. ERICH STANGE.

I first met Eberhard Arnold at the Christian student conference at Oeynhausen immediately after the First World War. The waves of excited debate were dashing high. Young ex-soldiers from Marburg spoke passionately against war and the capitalist state.

'We want to live. We have seen organised evil in action. We want to be the salt of the earth and let the ethics of Jesus flow undistorted into this confused age. Hence—no force, no killing, no taking of oaths,

no serving as judge or policeman—but an embassy of Jesus to the sinful world'. Radical ethic arises from experience of the grace of the cross.

I took part in this conference more as a spectator until, through no intention of mine, I was drawn into the debate, which finally became an exchange between Eberhard Arnold and me.

I refused to accept the condemnation of the state and the social order as 'organised evil', and designated these structures as the result of the struggle between the invisible kingdom of God and the equally invisible realm of evil. I maintained that the task of the Christian in this world of conflict between the two realms, was to struggle to give a more Christian form to existing institutions. But, I said, an immediate realisation would not be possible for people active in politics.

At that time Arnold also did not advocate the absolute practice of the Sermon on the Mount in the literal, casuistic sense. The words of the Sermon on the Mount, he said, were to be understood as interpretations of the fundamental laws of the kingdom of God and of the furthering of a life in the holy love of God. But Eberhard Arnold held to the position that certain concrete acts were impossible for him because they were obvious symptoms of sin. At this point the demands listed above came up again one by one.

Even then it became apparent that Eberhard Arnold was not trying to make a religious or ethical judgment of Christians whose professions lie in political or governmental life—for instance, chief of police. Rather he believed that his particular role was to point, through protest at these specific points, to the kingdom of God for which we wait. The discussion in Oeynhausen, which was later continued in Saarow, Berlin, where Professor Heim entered into it, became rather complicated and cannot possibly be recounted here in brief. As long ago as that, the fundamental difference embodied in the different courses taken by the *Habertshof* and *Sannerz* was already clearly apparent.

These are two approaches to Christian existence which grant each other due recognition and which are distinct in their relationship to the state and to society. Both approaches refuse to follow Spengler or Naumann and let the antithesis of the kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world continue to coexist unrelated. We cannot change the world as it is directly into the body of Christ. Nowhere, not even in settlements of regenerated people, does the kingdom of God already exist; and these settlements of such people can go on living undisturbed only because the power of the state protects them by force, police and law from destructive onslaughts. Still, the experiment of a life like that developed by Eberhard Arnold or the Quakers is significant as a reference to something beyond itself. The 'symbolic man', as we termed

him in later discussions between the *Habertshof* and *Sannerz*, is significant because he points out the temporary nature of the existing social and political system. Hence his rejection of oaths, of military service, and so on. The 'political man' on the other hand enters into the existing fabric of life, into the existing system of state and society, and tries to struggle and conduct himself within this system from the standpoint of the Spirit of Christ. In most cases perhaps this means a choice between two evils. But in no sense does it mean giving up the inward focus of endeavour towards the perfection of the kingdom of God.

Each mode of Christian existence—such was the final understanding we reached—recognises the other and each is aware of its particular danger. The political man is in danger of growing weary in his struggle to transform the world and of acting from tactical expediency rather than conscience. The symbolic man is in danger of a legal and pharisaical misunderstanding of his own distinctiveness as the uncompromising Christian existence, and of regarding the political man as a second-rate Christian. Each should realise that the other is a member of the Church, engaged in the same struggle, and stay clear of the danger of considering politically active Christians as dishonest compromisers, or accusing symbolic men of pharisaism.

Space does not permit the further illustration of this fundamental difference, say in the development of the respective legal shapes of the *Habertshof* and *Sannerz*, the former leading to a mutual-benefit co-operative, the latter to the 'Bruderhof'. But we ought to be ready to continue the discussion at any time if either feels it to be necessary or likely to be fruitful.

H. SCHAFFT.

A decisive prelude to Eberhard Arnold's activity as publisher and writer was undoubtedly those years of his life which saw him acting as secretary of the German Student Christian Movement, and after 1916 as literary business manager of the *Furche-Verlag* which was founded in Berlin in that year. This was the work in which I, as sales manager and one of the founders of this publishing house, first met Eberhard. It is with especial pleasure that I recall those years in which he helped to lay the foundations of the *Furche-Verlag*, which later developed into such a large concern, and I am grateful for everything that Eberhard Arnold was to me at that time.

The first years of the work of this publishing house were still under the sign of the First World War, and hence did not allow the true aspect of this new venture to be recognised. There was a change in the year and a half which remained for our work together after the war. Apart from his activities as chief editor of the monthly, *Die Furche* (The Furrow), in which his sister-in-law, Else von Hollander, was a

loyal and valuable helper, and apart from all the lectures he gave in Berlin and on journeys, he also took an active part in shaping the new publishing house. Many of the approximately three hundred publications, which appeared under the imprint of the *Furche-Verlag* up to the time he left, owe their origin to his initiative, and their execution to his help. His direction seemed to give the authors wings. There are too many titles to recount them here. A circle of authors which was mentally alert and often very radical, especially in the post-war years, gathered around the new publishing work at that time. It was only later, when he was able to take up his own way unhindered in the work of the Bruderhof communities, that the thing he had conceived as the actual goal of his writing and publishing became reality.

My work and friendship with Eberhard Arnold will remain with me as a spiritual possession, not to be lost as long as I live.

Berlin-Spandau.

HEINRICH RENNEBACH, Director of the *Furche-Verlag*.

In the years 1919 and 1920, after the collapse of Germany, the Youth Movement, with its ideals of self-determination, individual responsibility and inner truthfulness, was the gathering point for many young people. They were those who believed in a renewal from within, and they came from every kind of political and religious persuasion. Among them was Eberhard Arnold, who appeared in my life for the first time when, early in 1920, he called members of the Movement to a meeting on the Inselsberg in Thuringen, with the purpose of making Christian sources fruitful for this movement of renewal. He succeeded in gathering a group of friends with the desire to go deeper than the *Wandervogel*, who restricted themselves to the area of culture. This group consolidated under the name *Neuwerk*. We had celebrated Whitsun many times in the course of our lives. But that we should ever celebrate it with such ardour as we did during the Whitsuntide conference of the *Schluechterner* (as the *Neuwerk* group was called from the name of the place where it met)—that was something we would never have believed possible. We realised that our Christianity was nothing compared with that of the primitive Church.

What we all felt, Eberhard Arnold put into practice, giving up his secure position in Berlin to create a focal point of brotherly life with communal property at the little farm at Sannerz. In his work among students, he had seen how many people did not find the way to the Church. His settlement, where he went with his wife and five children, was to be 'an ever open door' for the many people who were seeking a spiritual home at that time.

I found out just how different the people were who made their way there. For most of them, it was only a station on the way to somewhere else. Yet even these 'guests' had the opportunity to know what

powers of love and discipline radiate from a community whose members are totally dedicated to Christ as the centre of their lives, and who devote themselves to each other and to all people. Eberhard Arnold did not think that all the *Neuwerk* people necessarily had to follow him in giving up property and middle-class existence, but he was convinced that his vocation in our materialistic world was, with others, to give an example of such a communal life on the pattern of the early Christians.

In spite of the high ideals of the Youth Movement there was a great deal of moral confusion in it in those days. For instance, a section of opinion idealising the inner bond of two people in love thought it right to dispense with all external bonds of marriage ceremony. On one occasion, a young man sat beside me when I was at Sannerz. I sensed his depression and asked Eberhard Arnold what was the matter with him. Eberhard told me he had had to give him a talking to for holding such views, and added, 'Where should we end up in Sannerz if we didn't take our guidance from the Holy Scripture?' Afterwards, I read this young man's entry in the guest book:

'I came as happy Johnny
and left as sorry John'.

I hope he thought it over!

Another time we were waited on at table by 'Karlchen', an elderly man. He wore a white apron with a cook's cap on his head—a curiously refined service considering that the food was only stew in a bowl dished out with a tin spoon. Eberhard whispered to me, 'Karlchen is a very willing and adroit "gentleman of the road" who always comes to us in the winter. The white uniform has helped him to get rid of the dirt of his vagrant life'. Karlchen was also the one who always urged the guests to leave punctually when they had decided to go—otherwise a weak point at Sannerz.

What happened with another wanderer, who arrived one Sunday afternoon in a very decrepit condition, showed us how each one who came was received and fitted into the community life according to his gifts. After supper Eberhard Arnold began, 'We have a court singer from Berlin with us tonight, and have the privilege of hearing him'. Before our astonished eyes the tramp stood up, washed and combed and wearing a new shirt, told us some of his experiences and sang and sang for almost two hours. Nobody would have left or dared to interrupt him, Eberhard least of all. A homeless man felt he was at home.

At a conference we asked Eberhard Arnold how he could be so tolerant toward all the various opinions, persuasions and religions, considering his radical affirmation of the Sermon on the Mount and the teachings of Jesus. What he answered has stayed with me for life and helped me many times.

He said: 'You have only to go back far enough. In the ultimate depths, everything good and true that men have ever known, thought or lived, comes from the one source of light. Our vocation is to make the way free for it'.

Stuttgart.

HEIDI DENZEL.

Eberhard Arnold came into my district administration office in Fulda one day and told me of the wish of himself and some of his friends from the Sannerz settlement to acquire a neglected farm in the Rhoen near Fulda. In answer to my inquiry he gave me some information about the *Neuwerk* movement. He said there had been a separation because of a fundamental difference of opinion—the others refused to recognise miracles as a basis of economic existence. That made me listen with lively interest and sympathy. I wanted to help him. It was not possible to obtain a loan from the savings bank immediately. But when he came again he told me he had received from a friend the sum needed for the purchase. Through a mortgage the district savings bank then provided the necessary means for developing the place.

The Rhoen Bruderhof grew and flourished through the diligent work of its members. There were hard times, of course. Eberhard Arnold's trust in God was never disappointed.

I have often admired the consistency of the Bruderhof people's Christian attitude to life. On one occasion, two of them—one of whom was a giant with the strength of a bear—were coming through the woods with the week's wages for their workers, when they were set upon by masked figures. Remembering Jesus' teaching, they did not defend themselves, but let themselves be robbed.

Anyone could find refuge at the Bruderhof. Often shady characters came from the big cities. The constables had a hard time establishing at least some kind of registration with the local police station. No one was turned away. When the provincial governor from Cassel had come for a visit and was leaving, Eberhard Arnold said to him, 'You were here to-day as a government official. I hope you will come again soon—as a brother'.

Even though the Bruderhof was rather like a foreign body in the ten-century-old religious unity of Catholic Fulda, nevertheless, in the deepest sense, there was a close relationship with the Christian spirit which Eberhard Arnold embodied, as there is everywhere where people try to be true Christians.

The National-Socialist revolution destroyed Eberhard Arnold's work at the Rhoen Bruderhof. But it goes on growing in other places,

to the joy and blessing of many. Eberhard Arnold's unreserved trust in God and his faith in the miracle of divine goodness has led to victory, even in the hardest times and over the stoniest roads.

Schloss Neuenbuerg.

HEINRICH BARON VON GAGERN,
District Administrator, retired.

The picture of Eberhard Arnold remains in my memory as that of few other men. I can imagine his face before me as if I had seen him for the last time only yesterday. There must have been something extraordinary about him for I have known many thousands of people during my lifetime. This monastic, retiring man, with his family on their lonely island, had become a dear friend to strict Catholics. This was not only because of his great love for the Youth Movement, where he found frankness, honesty and genuineness, it was also the make-up of his character, his deep faith in the substance of the Christian revelation as he saw it, his absolute radicalism in the very best sense of the word. One might tend to despise a man who would not take up the sword to bring about order in the world, but with Eberhard Arnold it was his Franciscan attitude which urged him to take this stand; his followers took the consequences upon themselves at the time when Hitler reintroduced conscription. It was the legacy which Eberhard Arnold left behind, living in their hearts. He also left it to me, the Catholic, and pointed out certain things which always, or almost always, came short or were overlooked by those representatives of the church whom I had met up to that time. He counted me as one of his own, and I reckoned him as one of mine, as belonging to the church that I love, the church that knows no boundaries, where he really belongs, even if legally he has no right there.

NIKOLAUS EHLEN

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FORUM

Extracts from Letters received

Thank you for sending the Summer number of THE PLOUGH. Both numbers of THE PLOUGH are full of interest to us, and also most encouraging; and it is cheering to know that you are making real progress in the spreading of your way of life in different countries. There is no doubt whatever of the need for more and more Bruderhoefe in all directions; you are in the front and direct line of progress towards a truer and better way of life for all humanity—part of the larger 'Pilgrim's Progress' with all its complexities and vicissitudes that has come about in our time where the pilgrim is no longer just one individual or another but the whole human race. We are in the first period of the collapse of the old and discredited rule of Mammon, the evil giant that will still take many generations of men to lay prostrate in the dust, so involved in his will are even the institutions working for righteousness, in spite of the desire we all have for a kingdom ruled by love. We can say little more at present, amidst the welter of conflicting ideologies and the downfall of the barbarism of greed which we have mis-named civilisation, than Smuts said, that 'humanity is on the march'. Everywhere there are a growing number, though so small in the aggregate, of individuals and small groups (growing larger and proliferating) pitching their frail tents anew, forming 'cells of good living'. Many failures there are bound to be, so flimsy are the basic mental and physical structures, but the urge of the spirit is there. So it is natural in the present state of general disintegration that the primary question for sensitive individuals is the very personal one—what ought *I* to do, where shall *I* go, or with what group of true seekers ought *I*, or can *I*, ally myself? How can *I* share in their experiences and their prospectings for a more Christian way of life, beset as it is bound to be with errors and mis-directions, which at times cloud over the light of the deeper spiritual insight which God is directing in re-awakening souls at this crucial time?

I found your 'Impressions of the Friends' World Conference at Oxford' very fair and truthful in its critical aspects up to this point, namely, that it is assuming the Society has arrived at a more static condition than is actually the case. It is very much in a state of flux and active fermentation, and hopefully so. . . . When Elton Trueblood urged that what we need is a 'baptism'—one might say perhaps a 're-baptism'—*there* is the crux of all our limitations as individuals, and the queer conglomeration of individuals which most societies, communities and churches are. But isn't that so with us *all*—even with you? Your 'Impressions' touch upon some very real weaknesses and

tendencies in the Society of Friends, and your last challenging paragraph states the position we need to face, and it is felt by many of the younger members with a healthy show of impatience at times at the lumbering gait of the three centuries-old vessel, and many of us older folk are with them. But how we, as with all other bodies, suffer from the paralysing effects of 'institutionalism', the tendency to condition every individual into a copy of a pre-conceived model! You will not escape from this tendency altogether, and will need to be perpetually awake so as not to become too 'cabined and confined'. You are face to face with this actual problem of living in Christian community, and what forms or shapes it ought to or may take. I find Marjorie Hindley's reply to Bill and Gloria Gnatz, very acceptable in spirit—and yet I feel that she herself has not considered fully enough 'what the Church really is'—I doubt whether any of us have!

I would like to see a kind of 'Ecumenical movement' between the Quakers, yourselves, the Mennonites, the Jesus Homes in China and others—I hope young Quakers will start Quaker Bruderhofe and share and exchange experiences and findings with you and others and so on. Cirencester. P.B.

I am writing this to thank you all once again for your hospitality, and still more for the patience and clarity of your explanations of your way of living. I owe a great debt to every single member, as it is the corporate witness, as well as the personal discussions, which have led me to reconsider many of my previously conceived ideas.

I strongly believe that one of the most valuable aspects of your life at Wheathill is the great challenge that it presents to those of us who feel that we ourselves cannot join. It is always difficult to maintain true Christian standards in the world as it is at the moment, and one is always apt to feel that perhaps this or that standard might be allowed to slide just occasionally: the knowledge that the full Christian life can be, and is being lived by a group of people not fifty miles away, is a challenge which can never be forgotten or laid aside.

Since I found that William Morris' economics did not make sense several years ago, I have never really felt that I knew in what direction society ought to go, or quite where my socialist ideas would lead. Your community has given me the answer, although I do not yet know how it is to be translated to a national and international level. That perhaps is a question that will settle itself as the spirit of love grows amongst us. But I feel that the chief difference between us, and I say this with all due humility as your sacrifices and efforts are much greater than mine, is that I believe that by taking part in politics we can go part at least of the way towards establishing the kingdom of heaven upon earth. By this I mean consciously trying to direct our national affairs with this

specifically Christian end in view. . . . It is the challenge of the Bruderhof that some of us have to do this work of reconciliation whilst trying at the same time to lead as full a Christian life as you do.

Malvern Wells.

A.W.

Thank you very much for your kind letter. We received the wonderful pictures, etc., done by the children of the Bruderhof. In fact, on the day previous to the arrival of your letter, I was demonstrating some of them at an anniversary of a Sunday-school in this neighbourhood, telling something about your life and work as a community at Wheathill. . . . I am sending separately by ordinary post a copy of a circular letter containing impressions of my tour, along with a statement on our Ashram and a report of the Balagram, our Boys' Village.

I shared your letter with the rest of the brethren here. We are all happy to know of the development and growth of your community in Britain and America. It is a joy to know that another branch of the Bruderhof is taking shape in North America. Please give me details about the same—its location, the number of people in it, etc. I am glad you are going ahead with the building construction at Wheathill, and that you will soon be moving in to the new dining hall.

It was interesting to hear of your reviving THE PLOUGH when we ourselves are publishing the first issue of the ARUNODAYAM after it had to be suspended for about 6 years as a result of the high-handed measures taken against it by the autocratic regime which prevailed here in this state during that time. Of course, our paper will be mainly in Malayalam though there will be some English articles also. There is need for a common paper to be a 'voice' of our communities all over the world. Perhaps THE PLOUGH will be able to serve that need.

S. India.

K. K. CHANDY.

Thank you kindly for the literature about your Society, and for your brotherly letter.

We have, of course, long been aware of the existence of the Hutterian Brethren, and to a certain extent acquainted with some of their outlooks. Many of our people, individually, and recently even an official group, have paid visits to a Hutterian Community in our neighbouring province of Alberta. All were favourably impressed with the simplicity, sincerity and friendliness of their communes.

However, we were very pleased to be able to learn more details about you in the material sent, as also in THE PLOUGH, *Ten Years of Community Living* and Eberhard Arnold's booklets.

The article on the Paraguayan Community, 'Community in the wilderness', by Grace Rhoads, appearing in *Fellowship*, we had translated into Russian and reprinted in our weekly publication, *Iskra*

(circulation about 800, mostly among our own people). The article in THE PLOUGH, 'Men and Brothers, what shall we do?', by Philip Britts, was also translated and printed in last week's issue of *Iskra*.

As regards information about us, we really haven't much to say. Our fundamental ideals and principles are still much the same as when they were formulated in our last spiritual upheaval in Russia at the end of the last century. . . . The unsettled state of affairs at present, with neither an individual mode of life nor a full communal form, is unsatisfactory to most, and a spiritual revival and material reorganisation is near due, and most of us believe will surely come about in the very near future. The torch of truth handed down to us by our noble forefathers is still far too strong within us to be extinguished by adverse circumstances—and the chaotic state of the world's affairs clearly points to us that the worldly way is not God's intended way of life, so we shall keep on striving to bring Christ's teachings into our everyday actions, come what may.

We most sincerely welcome contact with all similarly inclined Christian brethren, so always feel free to write.

Canada.

UNION OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNITIES OF CHRIST
(DOUKHOBORS).

NEWS OF THE BRUDERHOF COMMUNITIES

CONFERENCE IN PARAGUAY

The Bruderhof radio transmitter in Asuncion announces, 'Attention Primavera! Attention Primavera! There's a plane leaving Asuncion at nine-thirty with guests from North America. Arrives in Primavera at ten past ten'.

The receiver at the Isla Margarita Bruderhof, which happens to be in working order today, picks up the message and confirms it.

The bell rings in the telephone exchange at the Loma Hoby Bruderhof. 'Hello, Loma. This is Isla. Morning, how's everything?' 'Oh, all right'. 'Is your landing strip in good shape?' 'It's a bit soft on account of the rain, but it can be landed on all right'. 'Well, there's a plane due from Asuncion at ten past ten'. 'O.K.! Everything will be arranged'.

Things start to move in Loma Hoby. The landing strip is half an hour's walk from the buildings in the middle of a large piece of grazing land. Young riders are saddling their horses. Drivers are hitching up their wagons. Firewood is collected and loaded up. The school children, whose information service usually brings them the news before the grown-ups know it, are already begging their teachers to go down to the landing-strip with them. 'There hasn't been a plane for a long time. We'll work twice as hard afterwards!' What teacher could resist such a storm of entreaty? Groups of children, shouting gleefully, pour out of the school buildings and off to the landing-field. Their attempt to convince their teachers of the great significance of to-day's events has succeeded, which is not always the case. A considerable crowd gathers outside on the broad pampas. Riders drive the half-wild cattle into the nearby woods to avoid any disturbance of the landing; at times the cattle obey an impulse to rush across the field at the very moment when the plane is flying over it, a few feet off the ground. Attracted by the skilful riding of the cowboys, a man of almost forty years with a dignified beard, tries his luck in the saddle. His one-man round-up ends with a somersault to the amusement of all present! Unhurt by the fall he stands up and mounts his faithful horse which has been waiting for him. The faint hum of the engine indicates the approach of the plane. It comes into sight over the wooded horizon. The two fires at either end of the strip send up plumes of white smoke to show the pilot where to land. After circling over the three Bruderhof communities the plane comes in to a good landing. We greet the new arrivals warmly, get on to our wagons and drive off to the houses, where everyone is gathered to sing songs of welcome for our friends.

Things like this happened frequently during June and July. A long rainy period made the roads too muddy for our lorry to get down to the

little Paraguayan river-port of Rosario, so that we had to rely a great deal on air transport. Nineteen people arrived from the United States. An American nurse, homeward bound from a conference in Rio de Janeiro, stopped at Primavera for a short visit. An old friend from Brazil appeared and stayed for several days, and a college student came from Uruguay to work with us for six months. At the same time, members we had sent out from Primavera arrived from three directions—from the United States, England and Uruguay.

On a small scale our modest little flying field has become a meeting place for people from many countries. Several years ago we felt how cut off from the world Primavera was. Through the activities of the members we have sent out to various countries and through the arrival of new friends, our backwoods-solitude is now a thing of the past. This fact is very much in evidence in our daily lives and thinking, which revolve around the work and happenings in the United States, Europe and South America. There is hardly a week in which we do not make important decisions in connection with the work of our members in these areas of the world. And at times there are little experiences that highlight the loneliness of the big cities. Some days ago two Americans met in Primavera for the first time and discovered to their great astonishment that they had lived and worked only a few houses apart in New York City.

For us at the Bruderhof the arrival of friends and members is always an encouragement and enrichment. It is not just that we have something to offer to our friends. They give us more than they perhaps realise. Their presence broadens our point of view and gives our children and young people a vivid awareness that there are people in all parts of the world who are seriously struggling for a new meaning for their lives. They bring the problems and conflicts of modern man into our midst and stimulate us to seek the solution to them.

There is another respect in which the arrival of friends and members encourages us. To us at the Bruderhof, struggling with the minor cares of everyday life, the progress of building three community villages seems unspeakably slow. People who have just come are always amazed at how much has been accomplished in twelve years. In Loma Hoby, the well-equipped hospital and the facts and figures of its work are impressive. Besides the Primavera communities of 650, it treats thousands of out-patients and carries out several hundred operations a year. A laboratory and X-ray apparatus facilitate expert diagnosis. Of course the whole hospital is run at a financial loss, since the Paraguayan people are too poor to pay anything but small fees, and many not even that.

In Isla Margarita, the lay-out of the sawmill, carpentry shop, turning shop and brickyard, as well as the children's workshop, is often admired.

Ibaté, newest of the three villages, is distinguished by its well laid out farm and garden, the grass lawns among the houses, the bakery for all three villages, and the library comprising about fifteen thousand volumes.

Returning members are amazed at the changes that have taken place in the space of one year. In Loma Hoby they find a new dwelling-house with cosy fires in their open fireplaces. The hospital has been expanded by the addition of four rooms and a small isolation house. The roof of the new five-room maternity house is just being shingled. From the high ground where the hospital stands they can see the flat expanse of a large grazing range for hundreds of cattle, recently enclosed by a five-mile fence.

After half an hour's walk along the lonely footpath through the woods they come to Ibaté. As soon as they arrive, they notice that two new houses have been built. The dining room is being enlarged since it is now too small for the 165 people at Ibaté. In the workshop with its new annex, the wood-gas engine which was not there when they left a year ago is in operation, as is an iron charcoal oven to provide it with fuel. One other advance made here during the last year has been the erection of a chicken-hatchery which is enabling us to increase the number of poultry and egg-production.

Small but strong wagon horses bring them to Isla Margarita in half an hour, past the new milking stall where twenty cows can be milked at a time. They get out near the recently built garage and walk into the community village, greeted joyfully on all sides. There is a new house built on a large open space with a wonderful view of the far-stretching grass ranges and the lines of forest beyond. Some distance away the walls of the new dining room are rising and farther off is another new two-family house. The last rays of the sun flood the landscape with marvellous colour. The twilight is short. The beauty of nature is disclosed in new power to the returning travellers. The moon shines over the dark forest, the mist rises from the broad grass-land and the southern stars shine down. Happy children's voices singing an evening song assure the travellers that they are home again.

On the evening of July 12th, the wagons rolled from Ibaté and Loma Hoby toward Isla Margarita. We gathered in the flower-bedecked dining room to celebrate with all those who had just arrived. Words cannot convey the joy and power of the community spirit that fills evenings like these. This atmosphere can only be experienced at first hand.

Hans Zumpe recounted his experiences in *Germany* and at the *Wheathill Bruderhof*, something of which was told in the last issue of

THE PLOUGH. We too could sense through his words something of the powerful Whitsuntide experience which went through all who were at Wheathill and made a number of guests decide to commit their lives to the way of brotherly community. Many friends in Germany have strongly urged us to begin our work there again, and this has reinforced our wish to start a small settlement on the European continent in the coming years. At the same time we have felt and still feel how meagre are our resources. We simply have not enough people to carry out adequately all the work that faces us. In the coming years a great deal will depend on whether fifty or a hundred people come and give themselves completely to the work of building up the community life at home so that others of us can be freed to start new cells.

Heinrich and Annemarie Arnold told us of their work in the *United States of America*. Their experiences, as well as the presence of our American friends, made us realise clearly that the community idea is moving the hearts of many people. The newly formed community groups there are further evidence of this. We are already in close contact with some of them. Francis Hall, representing Kingwood community, voiced his group's desire to find a closer relationship with us. Thomas and Florence Potts stressed the necessity of a settlement in the United States, since many people cannot finance the long trip to Paraguay, and still ought to be offered a chance to experience community in practice. Hector Black, who for some time had been working in the poorest quarters of New Haven, Connecticut, was greatly moved by his experience in Primavera and declared that his deepest convictions left him no alternative but to stay with us. He had not been able to show people in the slums a new way of life, and now hopes that together we can do some work in these areas.

Balthasar Trümpi gave a picture of our new beginning in *Uruguay*. Here we should like to tell about it in some detail. From the centre of Montevideo the place can be reached in half an hour by automobile travelling over good concrete roads. The buildings lie on slightly elevated land at the end of a drive running off the Camino Oswaldo Rodriguez. The drive is lined on one side by olive trees. The oblong-shaped piece of land comprises about twenty acres, bounded on the two longer sides by roads. The fields slope gently down towards the two ends of the holding. One of the shorter ends is formed by a small stream surrounded by a grove of poplars, the other by a hedge ending in a group of eucalyptus trees.

The buildings are grouped together under shade trees. Two houses, one with a large side veranda, form an 'L' with a comfortable friendly look about it. Across from this is a large shed housing a garage and a workshop, with one or two rooms which could, if necessary, be used as living quarters. A little farther off is a farm tool-shed.

Toward the end of 1952 our members in Uruguay were able to move into the newly bought place. These recent months have been complicated by the fact that they have had to work two holdings at once until the lease on Carrasco had run out. The new place demanded a good deal of work, since the previous owner had neglected the permanent crops through shortage of labour. Thirteen tons of grapes had to be harvested in March and April, the many fruit trees had to be treated against insect pests, vegetable garden land had to be prepared if the planting was to be done in time. Besides that, the crops harvested at Carrasco had to be sold without delay. The poultry was moved to the new place. The houses needed certain improvements too. There were many more people living in them now than the single family they had accommodated before. The little group was thankful that a Spanish carpenter came to live with them for half a year and brought all his tools with him. With his help, a large attic was converted into living quarters. His workshop produced a whole series of things for household use: tables, chairs, benches, shelves, etc. The veranda became a closed dining room with large windows where the whole household can gather for meals or meetings.

There are twenty-one people living at the new place now: eight adults, six boys and girls in their teens, five children and two guests. The main income of the group derives from poultry, egg-production and the cultivation of grapes, fruit and vegetables. The products are sold directly to the consumer either at the Montevideo street market or to our round of customers. A deep well is now being bored to insure a supply of water for drinking and for irrigating the vegetable land during the long dry period in summer. Two members have taken salaried jobs in the city to help the group over the beginning stages.

The young people are in training in the city. Two boys work in machine shops, another is learning carpentry, one girl is taking a course in baby welfare and another is having a general nurses' training at the British Hospital.

We had very much hoped that our community beginning in Uruguay would bring us into closer association with interested people in Montevideo and in Buenos Aires, which is less than an hour away by air. Unfortunately our hopes for Buenos Aires have not been realised because political tension between Uruguay and Argentina makes travel back and forth practically impossible. As soon as the situation improves, we expect visits from our Argentine friends. We are looking forward to that time. In Uruguay we have found contact with quite a number of people. Hardly a Sunday goes by without ten or twenty of our friends appearing and staying until the evening. Soon a lively discussion on the meaning and purpose of life is in full swing, with all the vivaciousness of the South American temperament. We are also

invited to give talks which bring us into contact with wider circles. A serious seeking is to be found, especially among students, some of whom are attempting the first steps toward a more communal life.

The Uruguay group feels very definitely that it is not capable of meeting all the demands upon it, and is asking the Primavera communities to send reinforcements.

Many other things said on this evening moved us, making clear the immediate tasks that lie ahead. At the same time we realised how inadequate is our human strength. The songs we sang together at the end spoke powerfully of the working of the spirit that blows where it will. It was long past midnight when the loaded wagons rolled home through the bright moonlight.

This welcoming celebration was the beginning of the conference about the next steps to be taken in our various fields of work. We sat together on several evenings after that and tried to recognise the indications God was giving us. We agreed unanimously to found a new settlement in North America. In a few weeks Hans Hermann Arnold and his wife, Gertrud, with Gerd Wegner, should leave for the United States where they would try to find the best ways and means of starting a settlement. We thought of a small piece of land, say two to five acres, with adequate buildings, not far from some city in the eastern United States. As soon as a beginning had been made we should send other members along. We warmly invite all our American friends who feel a serious urge to try community life, to come and work with us, but we should like to ask those who want to join in the work to let us know soon, so that we have an approximate idea how many to count on for the beginning. We should be grateful to anyone who can tell us where a suitable place might be found. George and Gertrude Vigar should leave at the same time to travel in California. Letters can be addressed to any of our people in the United States at this address:—
c/o Clements, 29 Lafayette Avenue, Haddonfield, New Jersey.

Hans and Emi-Margret Zumpe have left with their family to stay in England for several years. It will be their particular concern to strengthen relationships with German friends. We hope that frequent visits to the Continent by members from Wheathill, conferences in Europe or England, distribution of our periodical and the expansion of our publishing work, and above all the arrival of new friends at Wheathill will soon make it possible for us to start a small settlement in Germany as well.

We are planning to enlarge the Uruguay group to forty or fifty people. As soon as we can provide the necessary accommodation we shall send down two large families. We hope to buy another house and the acre of land on which it stands, as this projects into our present

land and is surrounded by it on three sides. Roger Allain and Winifred Dyroff, whose husband is already in Uruguay, will leave Primavera to join the group down there.

And how are we going to keep things running in Primavera? That is what many of us are asking ourselves. We are fully aware that all these steps can only be ventured in faith, just as our whole community life is and always will be a venture in faith. Faith brings about the practical realisation of things unseen. Its sole and ultimate authority is God, the living God whose hand reaches down into human life. If we considered only our economic situation and the work to be done in Primavera, we should not dare to undertake any of these things. But we have at heart the words: Strive first for the kingdom of God, and everything else will be given to you.

Nothing concerns us more than to carry the witness of a brotherly life into various countries, in the hope that communities will be formed in as many places as possible, so that the old yet always new way of the original Christian Church may become increasingly a beacon-light into the future of man.

As our conference was drawing to a close, death carried off from among us, a little five-year-old girl, Maria Chatterton. She had been suffering from a kidney ailment for years. Many times death had seemed very close and the doctors could not help her more. But each time the powers of life were victorious. Finally her condition seemed to be improving, she could walk about again, and everyone was glad about her progress. Yet in only a few hours death brought an end to this little life. In spite of her long illness and the worries connected with it she was a ray of sunshine for her parents and for all who cared for her because of the great joy and content which radiated from her nature. Together with her parents, we are filled by the certainty that this little soul has returned to the eternal source whence it came.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

The current issue of *THE PLOUGH* seeks to represent the life and witness of Eberhard Arnold, whose seventieth birthday would have been on the 26th July of this year. We have tried within the limited space of this single number not only to tell his life story but to let him speak to us himself.

Emmy Arnold, *née* von Hollander, Eberhard's widow, who is living at the Bruderhof communities in Paraguay, gives an account of his life, which at the same time contains a short history of the first fifteen years of community living. The personal word of Eberhard that follows speaks for itself. Under the heading, 'From Lectures and Writings', we publish excerpts from his lectures, essays and books. Most of these appear for the first time. Both the quotations in Emmy Arnold's article and these excerpts had to be cut down in length, as the editors wanted to give a many-sided insight into Eberhard Arnold's thinking and the message entrusted to him. In later editions of *THE PLOUGH* we hope to publish further selections from his writings on the philosophical and ethical problems of our age, also on subjects such as love, marriage, family life and education. Both the extracts from Eberhard's own letters, and the letters recently received from friends, convey glimpses of the growth, activities and struggles of the circle with which Eberhard had identified himself from 1920 onwards. The voice of one of his opponents of the *Neuwerk* period is of particular interest, especially as Hermann Schafft invites further discussion. The position of Christians in the world and their attitude to worldly authority still remains an acute problem. The radical claims of the Sermon on the Mount are as much a challenge to us to-day as then.

The bibliography deals with the most important works published by Eberhard and written about him, and also some of his unpublished manuscripts.

Included in the *Forum* are two letters from members of the Society of Friends. At the time of his visit to the Bruderhof the second writer, A.W., was working as a hospital orderly in connection with the F.A.U. International Service. A further letter is from the Doukhobors whose community principles are generally unknown. The acts of defiance of a small minority of extremists provide the Doukhobor name with a notoriety that travels farther than the knowledge of the peaceful life of the main body.

'News of the Bruderhof Communities' tries to give an insight into the experiences of the members and their tasks in North and South America and Europe.

THE PEACE OF GOD

Jesus proclaims peace to all who are far off and to all who are near. His peace is part of the armour of his mission, for one must be well-shod for long journeying, in order to be equipped to carry the message of his truth to all countries. The message of peace is a fighting mission to conquer all lands with the weapons of the spirit, subjecting them to God's lordship. Only in this task does the king and commander of peace accompany us. As his peace was established in the decisive battle of Jesus' self-sacrificing soul, so we, also, should be prepared to lay down our lives in the struggle for peace. He who is not ready to fall in the fight for truth, cannot live for peace.

The man who wants to talk exclusively about the peace of his own soul, who knows no more of peace than a desire to share his emotional experiences with this and that individual; the man who cannot stand for the whole peace of God's ultimate kingdom, remains in the grip of folly—dragged down into the bog of individualism and isolation. The same holds true for the opposite error made by the friend of peace, who speaks of world peace apart from peace with God and apart from the social justice of full community; who wants 'pacifism' without the struggle against the spirits of conflict, without hostility to the covetous nature of mammon, without opposition to the lie of social insincerity and without spiritual warfare against the faithlessness of impurity. Life in both these false ways means discord, whose source is folly—the blunting of oneself to truth.

This extract is taken from *The Peace of God*, by Eberhard Arnold.

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