

# the plough

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"THE PLOUGH, Towards the Coming Order" is a quarterly journal edited for the Cotswold Bruderhof by E. C. H. Arnold. With such a group behind it, THE PLOUGH is an instrument for uniting more closely those who are seeking here and now, both in the Bruderhof and outside it, to live by the standards of the Coming Order of justice, love and brotherhood. The Cotswold Bruderhof would be grateful if all who see the truth for which THE PLOUGH stands would do everything in their power to draw the attention of others to it. A leaflet telling of the aim of THE PLOUGH and the life of brotherhood behind it will be sent gladly to all whose names are sent to the Editor as likely to be interested.

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# THE PLOUGH

## Towards the Coming Order

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### The God Mammon

Before I express what I have to say, I should like to allow a witness of old to speak—one who lived almost two thousand years before the birth of Christ, and who expressed strongly that which concerns me to-day. He is the Persian prophet Zoroaster, a man who, in times of old, went among men and gave them a three-fold guide for the way by which they could achieve the true life on earth—namely, Truth, Purity and Work on the land: settlement work in nature. This mind recognized, however, that there is another force in opposition to the mighty force of Truth, Purity and Work, and the community which arises from the union of these three. He recognized that two opposing powers are at work in this world. Outside Jewish prophecy, Zoroaster was the first prophet who strongly expressed this recognition.

He does not see the division between these two powers, tensely opposed to each other, as the distinction between heaven and earth, this life and the next, spirit and matter, man and animal, but as the division between good and evil, between light and darkness, the contrast between gloom and brightness, the difference between day and night, which we experience in our life. We are concerned here with a powerful symbolization of the great fight between the forces of good and evil in this world. Each evening when the sun sets, each night when the moon triumphs over the deep blue darkness of the starry heavens, each morning when the morning star arises and heralds the dawn, each new day which is born of the night, this whole birth and dying of light—especially in the waning moon which eventually becomes only the white-grey ash of the dimly gleaming new moon and yet, which does revive and become once more the radiant full moon—all this shows the mystery of wonderful victory which light achieves over darkness, which good achieves over evil. Two extracts handed down from Zoroaster, which are of great moment in this respect, shall be a guide for us here.

“And here we are, whether lord or servant, united in the desire to perfect ourselves for thee. We will to be thy witnesses, O God, in the midst of all tumult calling out thy clear and holy words: God



creates spirit, spirit brings forth truth, truth brings freedom, freedom brings devoutness. 'I will be with you', saith God. And there ye are, born of selfishness, spirits of evil and prophets thereof, and thou first among them, spirit of hypocritical lies and corresponding deeds, which are known in all parts of the earth. Ye have your power, because ye flatter men and lull them to agreeable inactivity, so that they become tired of all effort for their own good, and reel away from God and duty to him. Call ye this life? Of true life it is the death! Ye rob them of eternity by your exaltation of temporal things. Yet that is Evil's will; it wills destruction. It lurks in a thousand ways—thou only, God, knowest them all."

"The Better and the Evil shall come to an end, and then what was good shall show itself. Even the wisest among us cannot judge. He liveth his life: the others live their's. God alone knoweth the end. Even the holiest hath his sins. Was not that the case with Yima, the son of Vivahvant, whose work was otherwise so blessed? How shall I, then, be free of sin? God alone knoweth what is right."

"I only know that the teachings of such men crush something in my heart, that the desire for good is slowly stifled, and that I cry out for redemption. Therefore I call him a false teacher, who bringeth to shame what for me is deepest, who spoileth for me my earth, who checketh in me the glance towards heaven; who maketh those who are clever merely cunning, who teacheth them only material advantage, and casteth down those who desire more."

"Alas! care they then for material life alone? Yea, they themselves, however, live on the poverty of others, in that they rob men of their wage, and through their actions constantly mislead new people to do the same. Spake not all prophets from hearts wrung like mine? Did not the same wrath blaze in them against the band of those, who by their laws and statutes as by a spell, rob others of this free earth? In such shrewd laws, Cruhna, the king of lies of these my days, now shroudeth himself. With them he, a murderer of true, good life, serveth self-interest alone, making evil impulses still worse. And fattened by this wrong, he revileth, in his lust, the rest of us who wish to offer him resistance. Let him remain as he is; that is punishment enough for him. But let us see to it that he doth not gain ground."

"Behold with me to what end such action must lead and this perception will preserve you. Make the earth *free* again for us, the earth which is now a victim of the frenzied. Priest and noble constrict life, but with Life we shall triumph. For our life is more than meat and drink; it is justice, which filleth heaven and earth. We receive our strength from God himself: who will oppose us? Lord, give me strength in my striving, and forsake me not! Thou knowest that I pray thus, only because I love men."



"Yet see, now ariseth a confused din of voices, a hubbub of sound. On the one hand, some remember faithfulness to thee, and cling to thee, and call to thee; on the other, men forget what thou hast given, and leave thee, and call out treachery. To those, however, who are still wavering, thought goeth without words from the one to the other. But thou, in radiant clarity above all, dost look down and see into every fold of their heart, however fearfully they conceal it! Yea, he seeth in thee, too, thou loudest brawler, for whom the world itself is not great enough to contain the din thou makest over a small misfortune."

"But, alas, Lord, I am in the midst of it and therefore ask thee, 'What meaneth all this now, and what doth the future hold? Is all the good and evil which is done written as in a book for a last settlement?' I ask of thee, 'How is it not forgotten, that evil men have been helped to power, and keep themselves by robbery of men, beasts and land?' I ask of thee, if there really be in good an opportunity for effectiveness, or if in the world it be not so, that only cunning counts? Yea, O my God, doth not one oft attain his goal only through this means?—So that, in the face of the world, I oft would fain cry out, 'Is, in the midst of all this lying, the truth really the better; must I not also join in their roaring?' God, forsake me not; make me strong in this temptation! Give me strength! Down with thee, thou surging thought! At their throats, my sword! For see, is this the way that inner peace descendeth over house and commune, fatherland and world? Doth one, by this mania for outward things, bring healing to the deepest life? Only he who knoweth from what source it came, enricheth himself at eternal streams, and his comfort, alone, is true refreshment."

"Once the sparks flew, but a flame will come again. The Better and the Evil: two pieces of wood that rub against each other—but the fire is good, only good. Step either here or there, be either smoke or flame, be crushed and choked in smoke, or let thyself rise blazing up on high. That is thy position! The choice is thine. But know that thou chooseth not 'twixt God and Evil. If thou hast still to choose, still knowest thou naught of him, for God is higher and deeper; he giveth constantly—in feeling—an intransient world, the truth of certain peace, the peace of his own spirit. Hast thou chosen all that? To one who hath experienced all this within himself, what signify my words? He knoweth and his life is like a prayer. And truly God knoweth what he hath in him."

He who has tried to follow these ancient words will feel what a mighty struggle has come to expression here. There are many people who think that on the one side stand the religious and on the other the materialists, the worldly, those whose mind is directed towards what is external. Certainly this division of humanity has its purpose, but it does not go to the roots of the matter. The great struggle with which we are here



concerned is a struggle going on within the heart of each materialist; it is a struggle going on in the whole of humanity, a struggle in which we cannot say that on one side are the good men and on the other the bad men. Also, it is not true that the religious life is good and the material life evil; for we must trace the religious life to its depths and recognize where it has its source; we must see where the religious life finds its god, where its spirit is, and what it reverences and worships.

For there is an anti-God, whom we can worship as God. We cannot serve God and Mammon, says Jesus, and with him the whole Early Christian Church. The whole age of primitive Christianity was filled with the conviction that there is a god in the world that is not the God of Jesus Christ. Rather is it a god of the religion of the world, in contrast to the life led by Jesus; a god of this æon, in contradiction to the future and to eternity. This god is not a god of Good; it is not the God of love, not a god of fellowship and community, not the God of the future, not the Father of Jesus, not the God who is the coming order of righteousness and justice, but an interim god, a god of the abyss, a spirit of darkness, a demon possessed of terrific power; one that destroys everything, one that brings death, one that embodies the power of Evil. This spirit of opposition to God is not only the source of the superstition that makes soldiers wear an amulet on their breast, in the hope that in the work of murdering they will not themselves be murdered; it is not only responsible for the quite definite spells and formulae with which men exorcise evil spirits, while themselves possessed of these spirits—but this abyss, this demonic power, this Satan, this Evil is present in the most religious place, wearing the mask of goodness.

Thus we read in the writings of the Early Christians that a god of this æon has blinded the mind of those who cannot believe, of those who are perishing; that it has destroyed their eyes, so that they are no longer able to see what really matters, and to understand the message of the future, the message of liberation, the message of the coming unity of man, the message of the coming of God. The spirit of this age is a spirit which is not of God, and yet it is a spirit which wants to pierce to the depths and understand the depths. It is a spirit which brings weakness with it, a spirit whose power means weakening. Jesus once laid his hand upon a woman who suffered from such enervation that her body was bent and her life so weakened that she was fit for nothing. Jesus said of this woman that Satan had bound her and that she must be set free from her fetters. But setting free costs much. It was only through death that Jesus could bring to naught the god who has the power of death. This spirit of darkness is the spirit of weakness, the spirit of death, the spirit of destruction, the spirit of murder. For this reason the writings of the Early Christians say to us that we were dead in our sins, following the way of life of the present age and the prince who has dominion in



our atmosphere, the spirit that effects its activity in the men of disobedience.

It is a mighty spirit, a powerful spirit, with whom we all have contact, and this spirit has definite traits of character. Their root is in avarice, in self-will with its desire to possess, to hold fast, to covet, to draw things to itself and to enjoy. But this ruling power which has the present age in its hand, will be ejected from what is now its own domain: it will be overthrown just where it is mightiest. It is the spirit of fashion, not only of the mode of the moment—it is the spirit of the mode and character of the whole long epoch in time in which we are all placed from the moment of our birth. And this spirit will be vanquished, in that a new time, a coming epoch, will destroy it, as the death of all ages. Jesus has declared war on this spirit—Jesus, as the leader of the coming age; and indeed Zoroaster, the old Persian, and still deeper the prophets of the pre-Christian Jewish age, have foretold this mighty struggle. Even they had the glowing optimism to paint, in all the colours of faith, the radiant future which this victory of Good over Evil signifies.

In this context and in the certainty of this victory, Jesus says, "Ye cannot serve two masters. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon". He called this spirit *Mammon*. We would not be able to understand the words "the god Mammon" without understanding the other terms in which Jesus exposes the character of this spirit. He calls it "the murderer from the beginning", he calls it "the father of lies", and he calls its spirits, "unclean spirits". Mammonism is the nature of this spirit. Murder is its work, lying is its character and impurity its appearance. To moralists these four traits of its character are four quite different and independent things, but for all those who can see deeply, there is ultimately no difference between them. Mammonism is the covetous will with its desire to possess, to hold fast and to enjoy. The unclean and murderous spirit is the covetous will, which by possessions and enjoyment, and for the sake of possessions and enjoyment, wants to destroy other life, considering it an obstacle in the way of its enjoyment, or, on the other hand, considering that in destroying other life possession and enjoyment is won. Thus one becomes a murderer through the same covetous will as controls Mammon.

And lying? This backbonelessness of character, this lack of reliability, this deception of a life divided within itself, is the consequence of this same covetous will. For we can bring nothing into fellowship with the covetous will. But we must live in fellowship because we cannot exist alone; we are dependent on fellowship with others. If we are possessed of the covetous, murderous spirit of Mammonism and of licentious sexual lust, we *must* lie whenever we come into contact with people. We must lie in business for we have to struggle to hide the covetousness of our Mammonism, the selfishness of our efforts and the materiali-



zation of our human relationships; we are forced to make ourselves out to be other than we are, because none of our fellow men would want to give his hand to such an avaricious beast of prey. No one would want to have anything to do with such a hyena: so the dirty wolf has to dress himself in the lamb's clothing of white wool, the cunning hyena has to put on the mask of the innocent sheep; the cunning man has to make himself appear harmless—the trickery of business must be made to appear as innocent as possible. Thus in all great wars of all nations, in all great revolutions of class warfare everywhere, lying must be to the fore, for it is impossible to defend greed and selfishness or to bring them to victory, with the weapons of truth and clarity.

The same is true with regard to the unclean spirits which arise everywhere from the depths of the abyss. Impurity is in its deceitfulness impure. Unfaithfulness in sexual relationship is the deepest and most despicable deceit conceivable: it is murdering the soul through deception and betrayal. Thus it is clear that these apparently different terms—Mammon, lying, murder and impurity—reveal one and the same spirit, one and the same god. If we have perceived this and now look at things as they really are, we must be constantly amazed at the terrific power this god possesses in the world. We shall be more and more deeply shaken by the words with which Jesus calls us to battle, "No man can serve two masters: ye cannot serve God and Mammon". This means much: lay up no treasure for yourselves on earth, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and come and go the way with me. Woe unto you rich, woe unto you that are full. Blessed are ye poor. Seek friends for yourselves through unjust Mammon. Go the new way, the way of fellowship through the spirit. Go into the community of men. Seek the unity which comes from God, which penetrates the soul to reach and transform what is material.

When one hears the word Mammonism, one thinks at first simply of money. And indeed money, tangible money, which one can take in one's hand, is a strong symbol of Mammonism. Mammon is first of all wealth: it means the valuing of money. I spoke previously of money as that which makes the relations of men to each other of a purely materialistic and businesslike character. All men are born in relationship to others. The child is born of his mother and is led into life by his father, his mother, his brothers and sisters. He grows up in school in the company of those of his own age. Growing up, he enters the comradeship of work with his fellow workers. The young man reaches an ever-widening view as to where the duties and obligations of his life lie, as to how he can build up the common life in service, together with other men. Love enters the life of the young man. In the experience of a great joy, of a great happiness, two people become one in the faithfulness of love, and through them the powerful being and coming-into-



being of life continues anew as before. And as is the case in the life of the individual, so also in the life of greater wholes—great nations, great collective classes, great social units—nothing is there for itself alone. No age, no century, no moment even, stands alone, but everything is related to something else, and the more living the relationships, the fuller and richer is the life.

Of course this relationship may be one of opposition, even of battle; but also battle is a living relationship. The honest opponent is often the best friend. We often come closer to each other's heart in frank, open fight, than in indecisive, outward, fleeting, business contact. "Love your enemies" is not only a terrific demand, but at the same time a powerful encompassing of the lives of those nearest to us. After my friends, my enemies are really those who are nearest to me: they are those with whom I must come to terms most often in my thoughts, feelings and actions. Thus my enemies, no less than my friends, are those to whom I have to show the strength of my inner feelings. They cannot be a matter of indifference to me. I must concern myself with them. Since I must do this, I must win the deepest and closest connection with them. The best, and indeed the only possible close connection, however, is that I love them. Only so does the relationship to my enemies become fruitful for my life. Schiller said, "When I hate, I rob myself of something, but when I love, I become richer by the object of my love".

All things are mutually related. All life is an eternal giving and taking, an eternal coming and going, an eternal giving of hands, an eternal working into each other's hands. Thus men are destined to a lasting fellowship of feeling and of work; to a fellowship of feeling and of faith; to a fellowship of knowledge and of activity.

To be continued.

## The Kingdom of God is at Hand

In the present article we will consider the second part of Christ's maiden sermon, "The Kingdom of God is at Hand", a theme which later on was to occupy a most prominent place in his teaching. In some quarters it has been contended that the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are two distinct places.

A careful study of the parables of the Sower, the Mustard Seed and the Leaven, however, does not bear out such a differentiation. True in Matt. 13 the three parables are used to delineate the Kingdom of *Heaven*, but it is equally true that the Apostles Mark and Luke report the same similitudes as relating to the Kingdom of *God*. (The Sower: Mark 4 and Luke 8; the Mustard Seed: Mark 4 and Luke 13; the Leaven: Luke 13).



It is therefore quite obvious that both phrases illustrating, as they do, identical figures, conditions and developments are interchangeable terms and it must then be admitted that both expressions are entirely synonymous.

To obey the ten commandments is to be not far from the Kingdom of God, because the essence of the ten commandments is to love God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and thy neighbour as thyself and therefore they are pointing towards the Kingdom of God.

God's Kingdom is quite different from the kingdoms of the world. Into God's Kingdom the carnally and materialistically minded cannot enter, because they live only for the sake of their bodies and their pockets, making them their only care. That is why they all live separately in a state of selfishness and greed and in continual competition and strife with one another.

In order to enter the Kingdom of God, it is necessary that men should *repent*, that is to change their mode of life and change it so that others may see that they have changed their mode of life. Men should no longer live separately, each for himself, but communally for one another. To this end, men must be born again. They must unlearn what they have learnt and learn the new way of life. To be born again does not mean to be born in the flesh, as a baby is born of its mother, but for this new spirit to be born in the mind.

And being born of the Spirit of love towards God and his neighbour, he is born of God, for God is love, and he is able to see the Kingdom of God. Except a man be born again, he cannot *see* the Kingdom of God.

There is no need to take thought for the morrow in the Kingdom of God, for food and clothing and all things needful are supplied without charge. Look at the lilies in the field! Do they not teach you that the fertility of the earth suffices abundantly for all their needs? Behold the fowls of the air—your heavenly Father feedeth them all! Do they not fly out into the country, dig into the earth, and the earth supplies them with all they need? Christ taught that men should follow his way of life. Cast away your hammer and chisel, as I have done, pool your wrongfully accumulated resources, keep a common purse, come out of the world of Babylon, live in communities of twelve, fifty or a hundred, relying like the lilies of the field and the fowls of the air on the fertility of the land, and I will be present wherever two or three are assembled in my name.

Such is the nature of the Kingdom of God that Christ intended us to set up on earth. There shall be no titles amongst you, he said, except that of brother and sister. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." And again, "How can ye believe, which receive honour



one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only". And after Christ had ascended to heaven, his disciples continued the way of life that Christ had taught them. The believers all kept together and shared all they had with one another. They would sell their possessions and pool the proceeds, and there was but one heart and soul among the multitude of the believers, not one considered anything his personal property; they shared all they had with one another.

How far has Christendom gone astray from Christ!

And the clergy admit it. Writes the Rev. A. W. Gough, M.A. in his book "The Life of Christ",

"The rules which our Lord gave especially for this Ministry of Manifestation are not, of course, to be applied literally to the common Christian life. *If they were literally acted on, the results would probably upset all social order.*"

This is rather letting the cat out of the bag, isn't it?

Now, if by carrying out Christ's teachings, we may be instrumental in setting up a new social order, a new world "wherein dwelleth righteousness" and love towards God and our neighbour in the place of the Babylonian system of commercialism with its inequalities, its greed, its slavery, its exploitation of the many for the benefit, comfort and aggrandizement of a few—the sooner we become true followers of Christ, the better for each one of us and the better for the world.

Not that we should take any active part in overthrowing the present order of things, but by following Christ's footsteps and re-entering the "way of life" revealed by him and practised by the primitive Church, the new world order will be brought into being as a natural result.

"Come and follow me", says Christ. "Stay where you are, lest you upset all social order", says organized religion. It is impossible to serve two masters. We must come out of Babylon, the city of merchandise. "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing. Go ye out of the midst of her, be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord."

"Repent ye", means—change your mode of life. Take up your cross and crucify selfishness and separateness and think communally, doing henceforth all things for the common good of the Christian community. Pool your resources. Make the brotherhood independent of the world of commerce and workshops. That is why Christ selected chiefly fishermen as his first disciples, who would occasionally "cast an hook" to draw freely upon the riches of God's liquid storehouse, the sea.

Recapitulating, then, the Kingdom of God is a state to be entered into on earth. Those who seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness are assured of finding it, for he that seeketh findeth. And those born of the Spirit are enabled to *see* and *enter into* that Divine State. It is primarily interior and *spiritual*. If the Lord did not mean an



attitude of the heart, a state of mind, why should he liken the Kingdom of God to a son who changed his mind and went to do the will of his father? Why should he exhort the people of his day to *repent*, that is to cast off their materialistic outlook upon things and to change their mode of life?

It is important to note from the Kingdom Parables of the Sower, the Mustard Seed and the Leaven that the Kingdom of God began on earth with Christ's ministry, that it is still growing to-day and that it is destined to fill the whole earth.

There is therefore also a visible side to it. Obviously, the Kingdom of God on earth, as it exists at present, is where men and women have complied with the conditions of entry, where they have changed their mode of life, separated from the world, where they are following Christ's footsteps by leading a community life, where they have surrendered everything to the Lord, where they rely upon God alone to supply everything needful out of his great storehouses, the earth and the sea, where Christ's invisible Presence is most pronounced—his dominion most apparent, concentrated, localized and therefore *visible*.

And this Kingdom "shall consume all other kingdoms and it shall stand for ever". It is "the stone cut out without hands that smote the image and became a great mountain and *filled the whole earth*".

FREDERICK VOGT.

## Brotherhood Economics

**T**he highest command of God is love. . . . In the community no one thought to say mine, mine. It is also the brothers'. Who can rightly give his brother spiritual and eternal good if he refuses him earthly good? A community where one is rich and another poor belongs not to Christ.

Eitelhans Langenmantel. † 1529.

All those who truly believe and have wholly given themselves up to Christ have all God's gifts and possessions in common. In the house of the Lord there is no mine, thine, or his.

Ulrich Stadler. † 1540.

As all the saints have community in holy things, so in temporal things the members of Christ's body should reserve nothing for themselves. God has given men nothing for their own. Whoever gathers for himself acts against the divine laws.

Peter Rideman. † 1556.



# PAST AND PRESENT

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## The Present Religious Situation in Sweden

Omitting the so-called heathen period, when Thor and Odin were worshipped, the religious history of Sweden divides itself into three essential periods: Catholicism, which was in power from about 830 to 1521; the Reformation, which began in Sweden about 1520, and was used by Gustav Wasa for his own ends; and the Lutheran church, which arose through the religious awakening of the Reformation, and which from the beginning until now has been a state church. At the end of the sixteenth century, the Catholic church made certain efforts to win back its power from the Protestant church, which met with no success.

Even at the beginning of the history of Protestantism in Sweden, the well-known "Anabaptist" leader, the furrier Melchior Hoffman, tried to preach a more radical Christianity than that of the Lutheran clergy. Hoffman came to Sweden in the year 1526, and became leader of the German church in Stockholm. He married in this country, and believed his position to be secure, for speaking generally Sweden offered wide possibilities for his work as a furrier. But Hoffman led a somewhat stormy life. Gustav Wasa believed that Hoffman's activities would make things unpleasant for him, Gustav Wasa, and thus it came about that Melchior Hoffman had to stop his preaching and leave the country.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, it seemed that the Lutheran church in Sweden was to be tested again. The evangelical revival movement reached this land also, partly through connections which had arisen between several prominent Swedes and Pietists and the Moravian Brethren, and partly through the return of the Karolinger (the fighting men of Charles XII) from prison in Russia. The pietistic revival movement spread powerfully in Sweden, and clergy and others joined in large numbers. During this time congregations began to form as free churches. At this time also the Moravian Church came into being in Sweden, which to-day, however, leads a weak and insignificant existence.

In 1784 a Christian Communist community was formed, but after a year it was forbidden by the government, its property being confiscated and its leader banished from Sweden. Soon afterwards, however, a similar community, generally known as "The Communities of Skevik", was formed by Finnish Pietists of Swedish extraction. Skevik is a large farm in the district of Bo, on the island Värmdö, outside Stockholm, and here they lived for a hundred years with all things in common, until



the community was broken up about the middle of the nineteenth century.

Just at this time the third epoch in the history of Christianity in Sweden began. It is characterized by the great movements of religious revival. The whole country was shaken by these revivals, and now the large religious groups arose which still exist—the Baptist church, the Methodist church, the Swedish Missionary Society and the Salvation Army. The Pentecostal Movement only reached Sweden at the beginning of the twentieth century. The vast majority of the members of the free churches are still members of the state church. The largest of the communities is *Svenska Missionsförbundet*, the Swedish Missionary Society, which has some 120,000 members and perhaps owes its large membership to the fact that one of the most prominent popular leaders in Sweden joined it at its beginning. His name was Paul Peter Waldenström. The Swedish Missionary Society celebrated the centenary of his birth this year. Waldenström concentrated the interest of the Swedish nation upon a few fundamental religious questions, one of which was the question of communion. The people of the free church movement demanded 'free communion'; that is, they wanted to celebrate the Lord's Supper outside the state church. When the ecclesiastical authorities forbade this, they celebrated it without their permission. The other great question was concerned with the atonement. Waldenström questioned the objective doctrine of the atonement, which emphasizes that *God* is reconciled through the sacrificial death of Christ. Waldenström said God did not need to be reconciled, for he had never been angry with men but had always loved them. True, Christ suffered for our sakes, but he did not suffer instead of us. He could not bear the punishment for our sins, because God had already forgiven us these. God does not forgive sins for Christ's sake, but for the sake of his own great love and mercy.

These and similar thoughts agitated men. We who can look at these things from the standpoint of history can hardly grasp how it was possible to oppose this attitude of Waldenström. Now the state church as well as most free churches have recognised Waldenström's view of the atonement.

The Baptists in Sweden now number about 60,000 members. In the course of time they have lost many members, especially through the Pentecostal Movement, and in recent years membership has decreased still more through faction. The Salvation Army has 20,000 and the Pentecostal Movement between 30-40,000 members. All these important organizations have their own youth groups. The Oxford Group Movement has never really found foot in Sweden, though it has individual adherents. In contradiction to this one must say that the Swedish state church has developed a strong and significant religious activity in recent years.



It has very successfully introduced the methods of the free churches into nearly all branches of its activity.

Up till our own days, the religious world was very strongly influenced by politics. Middle class and conservative influence predominated in the congregations, and did all it could to hinder a deeper and more fundamental interest in social affairs. Thus there was previously a really tense situation between the Labour Movement and Christianity in Sweden. Since 1920, however, one senses a strong turn of the tide. In 1924 the Christian Labour members began to form little groups here and there, with the object of uniting Christian and social interests. These groups called themselves Brotherhood Groups, and of these one hundred and twenty-five are still in existence. They are scattered all over the country and are under the leadership of a central group whose spokesman is Pastor Bertil Mogard in Stockholm. One can say that through the work of these Christian Socialist Groups nearly the whole Labour Movement in Sweden has taken up a friendly attitude to Christianity. They have also helped to waken, as never before, interest in economic and social problems within the churches. The Christian Socialists in Sweden also publish a paper, *Broderskap* (Brotherhood), which appears weekly in an edition of nearly 8,000 copies. If I am not mistaken, it is the largest Christian Socialist paper in any country. Thus Christian Socialism is a very essential characteristic of religious Sweden to-day.

Sweden is a strongly pacifist country, and this fact has given religious life here its special stamp. Since 1860 there have been men who have refused to do military service. Also since 1926 it has been permitted by law to refuse military service for conscientious reasons. The result is that there are about 10,000 Christian conscientious objectors in Sweden to-day. Speaking generally, the churches and free church congregations are in many ways passing through a crisis, whose cause is to be sought not only in the decay of culture and civilization, but also in the failure of present-day Christianity.

KARL KILSMO.

### “I was in prison and ye visited me”

These words of Jesus call us again and again to bear in mind the sad lot of prisoners. All know that in these recent years many thousands of men and women have been imprisoned for conscience' sake, and are suffering inconsolable loneliness and uncertainty. All, however, who have passed, or who are still, with a brutal lack of consideration, passing these unfortunates by, will one day have to answer for this before God's judgment seat. No excuse will then be accepted, for there also the words apply, “What ye have done unto one of the least of these my brothers, ye have done it unto me”. Then the torturers



will not be able to hide themselves behind the commands of their former lords, for they also will stand before the judge.

The awful monotony with which this cruelty repeats itself, sometimes makes it appear impossible to alleviate the suffering of the innocent victim or to save him from it. But in spite of everything, we dare not let ourselves be disheartened and discouraged in our search for new possibilities of helping these unhappy souls.

We know how Elizabeth Fry, Hinrich Wichern and Mathilda Wrede took the cause of prisoners to heart in the past; how they visited them, comforted them, and through repeated appeals to the governmental authorities managed to obtain certain mitigations for them.

Not so well known is the work of Friedrich Haas, a German doctor, who, about a hundred years ago, was inspired by the same urge of love to try to alleviate the need and misery of prisoners in Russia, or to secure their freedom.

Friedrich Haas was the son of a chemist in Cologne. After studying Philosophy, Mathematics and Medicine in Jena and Vienna he came in 1802 to Moscow, when twenty-two years of age. He had cured the Russian aristocrat, Rjepnin, of some eye trouble and had been persuaded by him to find the sphere of his activity in Russia. Things went well with him from the beginning. Not only did crowds of poor invalids visit him daily at his house, but at his request all the hospitals and poorhouses in Moscow were opened to him, and everywhere he treated free those suffering from diseases of the eye. He did not even give this up when Czarina Maria Fjedorowna, the widow of Czar Paul, nominated him chief doctor of the Paul Hospital in Moscow. (Haas had won much attention, in that he had successfully combatted an eye disease epidemic in one of the Moscow hospitals).

At that time Haas was one of the most celebrated doctors in Russia. Patients came to see and consult him from all parts of that vast kingdom. Haas became a rich man. He had a house in Moscow and an estate and cloth factory in the neighbourhood. He wore elegant clothes and, as was the mode at that time, drove about in a coach and four.

Haas was forty-seven years old, and looked upon as a serious-minded and highly respected man, when an event took place in his life which gave it a completely new turn. He got to know the men who were sent to penal servitude in Siberia, and the twenty-six years of life left to him, he spent in living for them alone. The magnificent coach and four soon disappeared, the house in the city, the estate, the factory—all were sold, and all the money was used for their benefit. He built them a hospital and workshops, he bought them shirts and books, and he bought back the children who had been kept behind, for the serfs who were sent to penal servitude. When in August 1853, the once esteemed and famous doctor died, he had to be buried at the cost of the police.



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At that time the prisoners from twenty-four provinces were sent once or twice weekly from Moscow to Siberia. Each year at least six thousand of them passed through Moscow. From 1827 until his death in 1853, Haas let no prison transport through without having spoken to each man and ascertained from him what he wanted most, which desire he fulfilled to the best of his ability. Thus, at a modest estimate, two hundred thousand prisoners felt his fatherly care. This, however, by no means satisfied him. At the same time Haas turned with all his might against the inhuman practices and usages to which those condemned to be transported to Siberia were subjected. First he attacked the so-called "Rood of General Diebitsch". This was an iron rod some three quarters of a metre long and an inch thick. Some eight to ten iron rings were attached to it, and in each ring the hand of a prisoner was locked, the key being carried about by the corporal. While dangerous criminals condemned to penal servitude in Siberia had only their feet fettered, those convicted of minor crimes, who were chained to the "rood", were hampered in all their natural movements. They suffered inconceivable pain on the march, and at the halting places they were robbed of the only comfort left to these unfortunates—quiet sleep. With tears in their eyes the "lesser" criminals begged again and again that in pity they might be chained as the serious criminals were. Haas raised a protest against the "Rood of General Diebitsch". He addressed the Home Minister, and succeeded in getting rid of this instrument of torture. Up to the very last day of his life he let no prison transport pass, without freeing, in so far as lay in his power, the prisoners from the "rood" and from the chain that replaced it.

Haas had observed that the hands of the prisoners were very often frost-bitten in the places on which the iron lay. The only means of preventing this seemed to him to be to cover the iron with leather, but this was opposed by his adversaries. Haas, however, did not give in, and in the same year, by royal decree, secured that in the whole of Russia fetters were to be covered with leather in the places where they touched the body. This holds good to-day.

Haas won another complete victory over an evil which only appeared more trivial. In 1825 it had been ordained that all sent to Siberia were to have one side of their heads shaved to make escape difficult and capture easy. Haas now drew up a list of those who were so shaved without having committed any crime. Among them were men who had been legally acquitted but were without the means to return home, and men, the validity of whose passports had elapsed. These all wore the sign of disgrace. This, of course, was highly unjust. For two years Haas gave the authorities no peace. At last, as a result, the national council decided in 1846, that in future only those condemned to penal servitude with hard labour were to have half their heads shaved.



Nor must we leave unmentioned that in 1847 and 1848, Haas handed over 11,000 Rubel, which he had collected from anonymous well-wishers, for the purpose of improving the food given to prisoners.

Haas not only cared for the way in which the prisoners were chained, but had also taken over the care of their general health. Without exaggeration one can say that from now on (1829) until his death, Haas spent half his life in prison. He spoke to each prisoner, asked each if there was anything he wanted or needed and did what he could to fulfil their requests. Those who were sick among their number he retained for two, three or more weeks. Directly before the unhappy men left for Siberia he asked them four questions, "Are you well? Have those among you who can read, received a book? Is there anything I can do for you? Are you satisfied?" Of course, soon people fell upon the "good doctor" from all sides. Conscious that he was morally justified, Haas immediately declared that he was trespassing the narrow limits of prison law. But he did not let himself be discouraged. As he had done before, he continued to see that no prison transport left before he had seen the prisoners; he continued to ask them what they needed, and used all the means at his command to help them. He also managed to convince a number of people of the necessity of listening as friends, to what the exiled convicts had to say. Thus a committee was founded, of which for ten years he was secretary. In his capacity as secretary of the committee, Haas had taken over the responsibility of seeing that no one should be left in prison contrary to the law or imprisoned when innocent; that no questions and investigations necessary for the justification of such a man should be left on one side; further, that all so imprisoned should know of what they were accused; that the term of imprisonment should not be longer than the verdict decided; and that those whom one could legally set free, should really be freed.

From now on the journal of the committee was filled with appeals by Haas for the most varied things needed by the prisoners, for the retrial of innocent convicts and ultimately for attempts at reprieve. From 1829 to 1853 one hundred and forty-two such appeals appeared. This once led to a collision with the famous archbishop, Philaret of Moscow, who was then president of the committee. The doctor's endless appeals annoyed him. "You are always speaking of innocent convicts, Fjedor Petrowitsch" he said to Haas, "but there is no such thing. If a man is punished, that means he is guilty!" The spirited doctor sprang from his seat, "You have only forgotten Christ, your reverence", he cried out. There was a tense silence. No one had ever dared to say such things to the ecclesiastical prince before—and now a foreigner, and a German to boot! Philaret, however, bowed his head, and after some moments of painful silence, rose and said, "No, Fjedor Petrowitsch, when I spoke

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my hasty words, I had not forgotten Christ, Christ had forgotten me!" And he blessed those present and went out. . . .

We cannot enumerate here all the other things Haas did for prisoners. The work of this man shows us what an individual can do against the greatest opposition, when he gives his whole being to the work.

The Christians of the first centuries, who cared for the hungry and oppressed, for the widows and orphans, and the shipwrecked, helped and cared also for the convicts in the mines, those in penal servitude on the islands and for those lying in prisons. So for Christians to-day, too, it must be a matter of conscience to help prisoners wherever an opportunity to do so can be found. Love always finds new ways.

KARL KEIDERLING.

## The Dissolution of the Rhoenbruderhof

From the Diary of the Hutterian Elder, David Hofer.

April 14th: Michael Waldner and I were in Eberhard Arnold's room writing letters, about 10 a.m. Then Hans Meier opened the door and said, "Brothers, prepare yourselves, for I have just some from the hill and saw behind the wood a large number of police. They may come to the Bruderhof, but they cannot do anything to you." Then he closed the door and went to his office to tidy up. And as I, thereupon, went to the window and looked out, I saw the police already hurrying down the hill. I went to the door and down to the second storey of the house and out of the corridor to see what would happen.

There were already twenty-five policemen standing at the door. "Where is Hans Meier?" one shouted at once at me. I answered quite simply, "Doubtless in the house". "Call him out here!" was the next order. As I went to Hans Meier's room he met me and introduced himself quite calmly and fearlessly to the police. Then the chief officer read Hans Meier the order. "I inform you herewith that the Rhoenbruderhof is now dissolved by the state, and must exist no longer. From now on it is to be called "Sparhof" and as you are leader of this Bruderhof, I demand all books and keys from you. I inform you also that within twenty-four hours all must leave the place!"\* Then he went straight to the office with Hans Meier. The other police surrounded the whole Bruderhof, and drove all brothers and sisters, young and old, into the dining-room. There they were guarded by two policemen, and no one

\*The Bruderhof was dissolved on the strength of the law against communistic disturbances (passed 1933), and it was said that "a pacifist and international community was not wanted in Germany". The accusation that the Bruderhof was dissolved for economic reasons is only a pretext, as is proved by the fact that the three executive members had to be set free.



was allowed either out or in. In the meantime the others searched every room, and took whatever they wanted away in their cars. At last they came to our room, where we were still. They ordered us to go to the brothers in the dining-room. We went down quite calmly to the brothers and sisters, and found them perplexed and discouraged. Then we encouraged them and told them not to despair.

Then two officials came to us. One carried a typewriter, the other a bundle of papers. They sat down and called each by name, and each had to answer what he was asked, and then the filled-in paper was signed. The paper, however, was only a proclamation regarding registration for mustering—which paper we ourselves examined carefully before it was signed. In the meantime, we saw through the window how all the rooms were searched, and how they carried all that they wanted to their cars. And as I saw that it was nearly time for our room to be searched, I wanted to go out to go to it. But at the door I was held up and told to return to the room. I told them, "I want to go to my room. We are foreigners, and do not want our things searched and carried off". He said he was not allowed to let anyone out. "If you want to go out, you must first get permission from our chief officer and bring it to me." I asked, "Where is he?" He said, "Up in the office". I went back and applied to the chief officer, who was occupied with Hans Meier, for the liberty to go to my room, which he granted me.

Then I called Michael Waldner and we went together to our room. Before long, searchers came to our room and began to search. We pointed out to them that we were aliens, and yet German aliens, and did not want to have our things searched. They asked us what we wanted with these people here, where we came from, and what had brought us to these people. We told them, "These people are our brothers in the faith, to whom we have sent much help from America to build up this Bruderhof, and are therefore very much interested in what happens here and how things will be with them". We saw at once that our presence was no pleasure to them, and that we were in their way. We asked them to leave us here for a few days. They refused and said that that was no concern of theirs. By now all the brothers and sisters had signed the papers. It was already 3 p.m. when they had finished, and only then were they allowed to have some food. Our food, however, had already been brought to us and we had already eaten. The police, however, stood outside the dining-room and spoke together. Then I went out to them and began to speak to them about this occurrence. I told them that what we had experienced here to-day was quite uncalled for, and that we had not expected such a thing of Germany. I thought they would have treated their citizens and peasants better than we had been forced to see and experience that day. I told them that they were worse than the Americans. Then they at once



asked me, "How?" I told them that we as Germans were called up in the last war to do military service against Germany. We objected and refused to do it, as these, our brothers, had just done. Then we asked our government in U.S.A. to let us have the freedom to leave the country, as we could not obey it in doing military service. We asked to sell all we had and to leave nothing behind us—all which was not refused us by the government; but during wartime, we were allowed to emigrate to Canada, and that under government protection that nothing might happen us. I asked them why they could not treat this community so. Then they said to me, "Why can't you show your obedience to the government like the others, and do as it says?" I told them clearly that we respected the government highly, but that we could not obey what it demanded against our conscience. Then he asked me, "To what extent?" I told them that the Word of God says I must love my neighbour and not kill him, and for this reason we could not follow and obey the government. Then another spoke and said, "Friend, have you not read that our Saviour said, 'I have not come to send peace but the sword', and that he also told his disciples to buy swords? Why do you not believe these passages of the scriptures?" I told him how I understood these passages. Then he said my interpretation was wrong. He said, "If the whole world consisted of angels, like all of you, then there would be no need of war, but you know that men are not all so". "And we also do not want war," they insisted. "We only want to make ourselves strong, because all fear the strong. If we are weak then all walk over us, but if we are strong, they fear us, and for this reason we prepare for war, not because we want to fight."

The others thought the brothers and sisters were taking too long to eat and asked, "Have they a whole ox to wolf up in there that they are taking so long about it?" After the meal they ordered the whole community to assemble outside the door. Michael Waldner and I were also ordered, as though they had a proclamation to read out. I soon saw, however, that they only wanted to take photographs, and left the line saying to Michael Waldner, "Come into the house". To them I said, "We do not need that". Then the order was read that the Bruderhof was now dissolved, and that now no Bruderhof existed in Germany. None of them was to dare to take anything connected with the farm or the property of the community, or household goods, etc., with him, for it would only result in much searching if one of them dared to take any of the household goods, with which order they all left the place.

We, however, the whole community, met for prayer with very troubled and sorrowful hearts. We told God of our need and distress and earnestly prayed him not to leave us in this difficult time and situation, but to give us true understanding and wisdom to act according to his



will and counsel, as his children. Yes, to be our counsellor himself, and to remain our leader and not forsake us.

After the prayer we considered how things stood, and how we could bring it about that the community might remain together. For the godless men wanted to scatter all the brothers and sisters over Germany, by sending them to their relatives. Also we wanted badly to let the community in England and the one in Liechtenstein know what was happening here at the Rhoenbruderhof.

So it was first seen that Arno Martin, the steward of the Almbruderhof in Liechtenstein, who was just about to go there, should be sent to Liechtenstein to tell Hans Zumpe and also the community in England this news, as soon as he was over the German frontier. But how were we to send anyone as the police had robbed us of all our money—over 400 Marks? Thus there was not a cent in the hands of the community, because it had been robbed of everything, including keys and books, and all common rooms were closed and locked. So it was necessary to give the brothers and sisters our travelling money, and we, Hans Meier and I, went with Arno Martin to Schluechtern, arriving there at twelve midnight, and there we saw him off with the sad news which he was to send to the Cotswold Bruderhof and to Liechtenstein.

Hans Meier and I returned with heavy hearts to the community, and found all still up. We then went to rest but slept little.

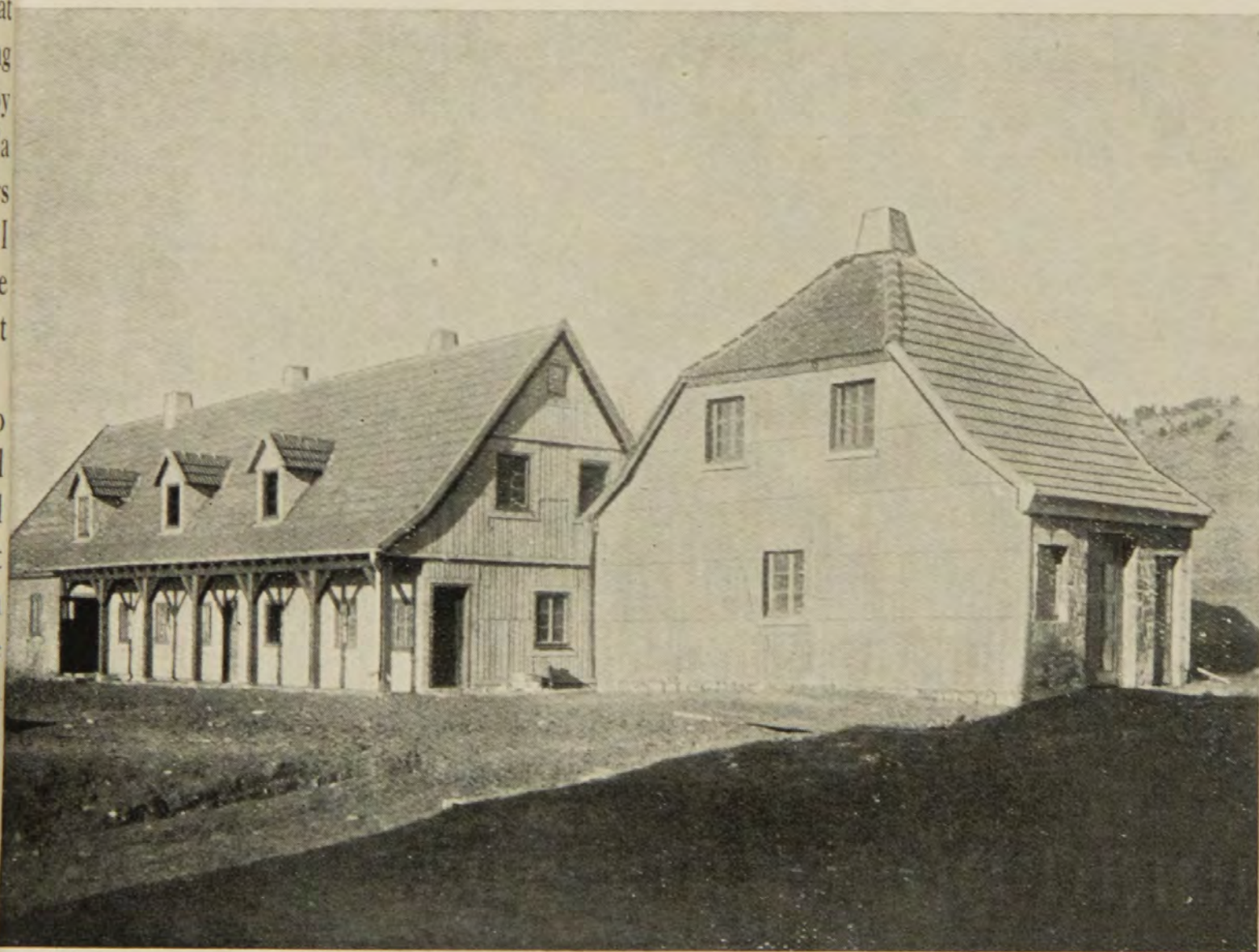
April 15th: Arose once more in health, for which much thanks to God. Had also some breakfast. We were in our rooms for half an hour after eating, when Hans Meier came in, in very great haste, and told us that a gentleman from Fulda was in the yard with his car, demanding that the executive committee go with him to Fulda to settle some trifling matters, that they might then be able to leave. This news was an unhappy surprise for me. I did not believe the word of the gentleman from Fulda at all. I said to Michael Waldner, "Do you believe that these brothers will be back by midday, as he promises?" Michael Waldner said, "I don't know, still he promises it". I said, "We shall see when the time comes". Hans Meier, Hans Boller and Karl Keiderling got ready in great haste and left.

The whole community waited with longing at twelve o'clock, but no brothers came. Two o'clock came, and four o'clock—the brothers did not come. Then Michael Waldner and I went to the wood on the hill where they should arrive. Then we saw a car come, and recognized it at once as the car that took the brothers away. We went to it. A man got out and came to us. I asked, "Where are the brothers?" "They have not come," was the answer.\* Immediately afterwards he ordered me to call the whole community together. "We have a letter to read to you

\*These three brothers were imprisoned for three months on a charge of fraud, which was later withdrawn and they were set free.



# THE RHOENBRUDERHOF



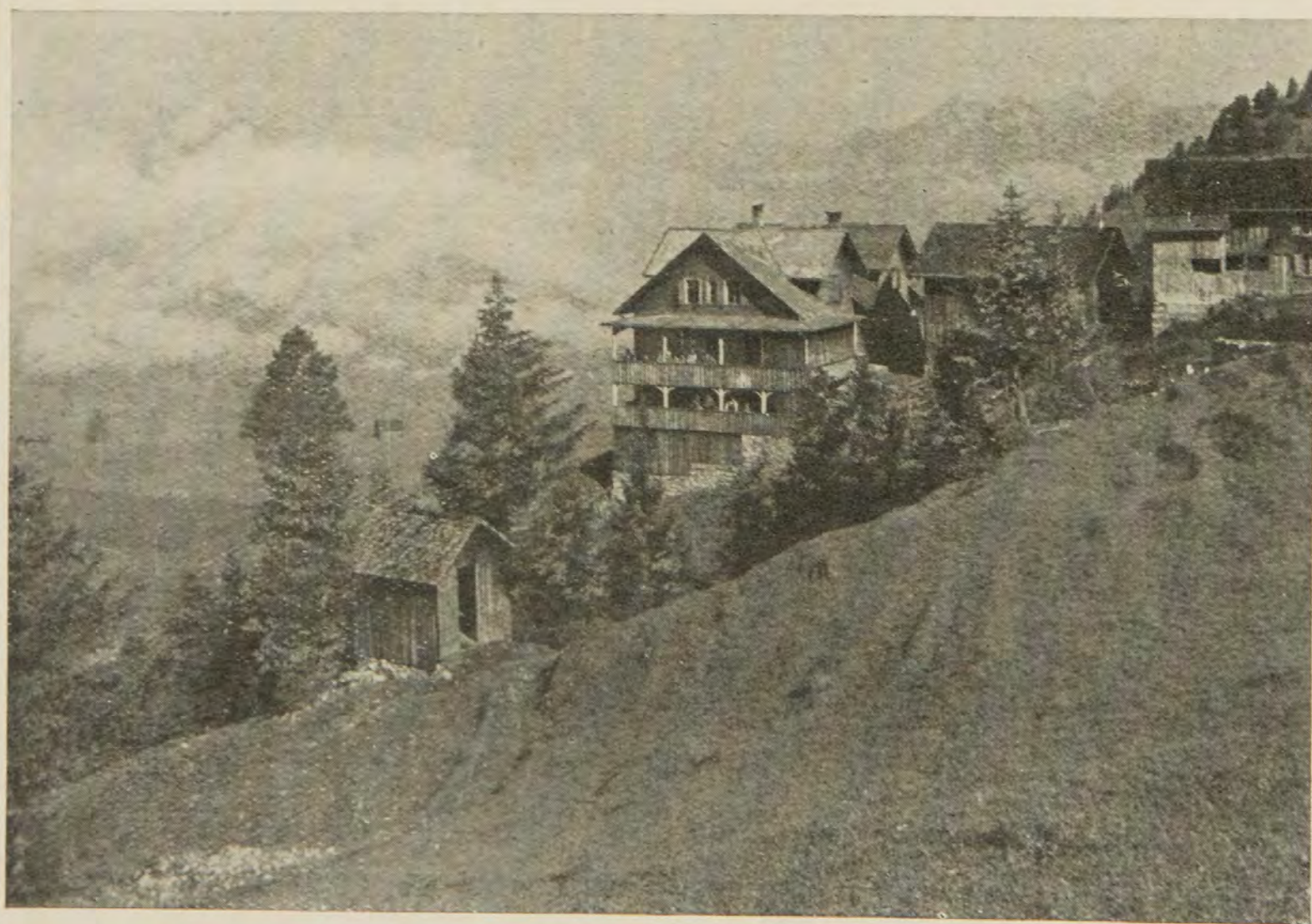
1. View of  
the main  
buildings  
2. Bakery  
and  
dwelling  
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# THE ALMBRUDERHOF



1. View of the Rhine Valley from the Almbuderhof



2. The main building ("Kurhaus")

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Bruderhof



from the brothers." First he read us the command to leave the place within twenty-four hours. Then that the government was willing to let us take our five brothers of military age with us, and that at the request of the three brothers in Fulda, the whole community was to be permitted to leave together. The brothers and sisters were glad that they had given up their previous intention of scattering them to their relatives all over Germany. So they all signed a letter that they would leave the Bruderhof and go to the other communities. As however, several brothers and sisters had no passports, and as we wanted to see the brothers in prison regarding their families, before leaving, I asked the chief officer for a written note permitting me to see the brothers in Fulda, which he gave me. When everything was settled, they departed.

We, however, gathered together for prayer, and comforted ourselves by the word of God. I read Psalm 3 as an admonition to us, thanked God from the heart that he had so changed and directed matters that the community could go to the other communities, prayed ardently to God not to forsake us in this great trouble and sorrow, and to send his guardian angel to watch over and protect us.

After the prayer, preparations were made for the journey. We advised them to get to-day as much food as they could from the pantry, as provision for the journey. For it was *their* store of food, so that they should take what they needed.

Next morning at five o'clock, our six brothers and sisters left for NeuhoF to go to the law office in Fulda regarding passports. I also went with them to see the brothers in prison, and brought them the news that to-day at 6 p.m. the whole community would leave Germany, with their wives and families. The brothers rejoiced greatly that the community was caring so faithfully for their wives and children.

I encouraged the imprisoned brothers as well as I could to be patient—the loving gracious God would not forsake them. It was very hard for all the brothers and sisters to leave the results of the sweat of their brows and depart empty-handed. I took leave of the brothers with a heavy heart and went again to the law office to the other brothers and sisters, to get the passports as quickly as possible and to arrange about the tickets—all of which meant much work for the officials. When all was finished, we returned home. We arrived safely at the Bruderhof at 4 p.m. and found Michael Waldner and all the brothers and sisters busy packing and preparing for the journey. At 5 p.m. we had a little to eat, after which we met again for prayer—for the last time at the Rhoenbruderhof. We prayed fervently to God to keep, watch and protect his Church on this journey which we were about to begin, trusting in his faithful promise not to forsake us, but through his protection and grace to accompany us and bring us in peace to his children in the other communities. All of which our dear God faithfully per-



formed. He has faithfully helped us all, so that we have come in health to the Church again.

As it had rained all day, and especially in the afternoon, we were anxious about the sick children and a sick sister, for we had over a mile to go over the hills to the lorries or trucks and they might catch cold on the way. When the hour arrived, however, and all stood ready to leave, suddenly the sun shone brightly. The rain had ceased and the sun shone down on us. That was to us a wonder and grace of God and we thanked him in our hearts for this loving act.

Now the brothers and sisters began to climb the hill with their sick children and the sick sister, with the little bundles which each had to carry on his back. Michael Waldner carried a child on his back. I carried a large bundle for Hans Meier's wife, who had a few days previously given birth to a child. We were all laden, all had hands and backs full. Thus with heavy hearts and perturbed feelings we climbed the hill. We stopped several times and looked at the beautifully built Bruderhof, the loved home which we had had to leave so suddenly and unexpectedly. Some went to the burial ground to the grave of our beloved Eberhard Arnold and saw it for the last time.

When we arrived at the place, the cars were already there. Then everything was put in and when they were loaded and everyone had got in, they set off to the station. Michael Waldner, Hella Roemer and I were the only ones left at the Rhoenbruderhof. With sad and deeply perturbed hearts we found the place empty. We went early to rest, but uneasiness did not let us get much sleep. Next morning we began to tidy the rooms. But the picture that met us cannot be described. Uneaten food stood on the tables. The bedclothes lay in confusion on the beds. In the kindergarten the playthings and furniture lay as the children had left them. In the laundry the clothes lay unwashed, soaking partly in tubs and partly in the boiler. It was a perfect wilderness, enough to make the heart break and the eyes weep.

Such a thing we had till then neither experienced nor seen. The wilderness was horrible. It seemed as though we had had to come to Europe to experience and learn what it means to be driven from one's house and home. God has protected us in America up till now from such misery, for which we owe him thanks. Although during the war we had to emigrate to Canada, that emigration was not to be compared with this ejection.

This is a short account of how the Rhoenbruderhof in Germany came to an end and was dissolved by the German government.



# FORUM

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## THE WAY TO COMMUNITY?

Like many of your readers (I suppose) I have read with deep interest the anonymous essay on *The Holy Nation* in the last number of THE PLOUGH. In it the foundations of the Christian community are well and truly laid; and yet. . . .

Let my musings develop against a clear background. I wish from the bottom of my heart a more abundant life to the Bruderhof. I am glad to know that it exists: I believe that it is of vital importance for the victory of the Christian spirit that such a work of self-dedication should proceed. It is when it is propounded to me as the one true solution that my perplexities and doubts arise.

The Bruderhof could not exist in Germany, or Italy, or Russia, or in Nationalist Spain, in Turkey or Japan: I doubt whether it could exist in France, or Switzerland. Actually, the Bruderhof exists because the laws of England, at present, allow it to exist. Possibly, within a little while the laws of England will no longer permit the existence of such a community. If and when the obligation to universal military service is introduced into England—what will the Bruderhof do?

I do not want the Bruderhof to be perpending that question. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"—is answer enough to validate the Bruderhof in my eyes. It is of their charter that they should take no thought for the morrow; and it is enough for me that they obey.

But I do not belong to them. I belong to the tribe which looks before and after; and I am also an Englishman born—sensitive for and critical of my country. I am never certain whether I am glad or sorry, as an Englishman, that compulsory military service is not the law in this country. On the whole, I believe I am sorry. Our freedom from this normal obligation of citizenship of a modern society has created in us an illusory sense of personal freedom: which our forefathers may have done something to deserve, but we certainly have not. So long as the obligation to military service is not imposed upon us, so long we lack the actual experience of the realities of the modern world. We are the cockered inhabitants of an exotic enclave in the society of Europe. I hope that we are something besides: I hope that just as, in our atmosphere, seeds of a new life from other lands, like the Bruderhof, can germinate and expand, so in ourselves some native vigour has been accumulating, ready to manifest itself in the stress of authentic trial.

But I do not believe that this vigour, if it exists, would naturally manifest itself in the form of a segregated community. Our problem is different: the demand on us (I suspect) more complex—so complex, indeed, that I can hardly imagine the incontrovertible response to it being made except under conditions of authentic trial.

What is this demand upon us Englishmen? Probably it is incapable of formulation. But I feel that the way to appreciate its uniqueness is by remembering that we are, above all else, a *political* nation; we are the instinctive masters (or children) of compromise. Thirty years ago we should have regarded this as a virtue: we are not so certain to-day. But



the deeply rooted habit is still here. Most of it, I am sure, derives from our long centuries of isolation and security—now at an end; whether any of it comes from racial aptitude is very doubtful. But there, as I say, the habit is—manifest in a hundred subtle forms, more obvious to the penetrating foreign observer, than they are to me.

But one of the many forms that are obvious even to me, is a stubborn reluctance in the English soul to regard the Christian Church as an "ecclesia"—as the community of those who are "called out" of existing society. This reluctance has always made itself felt: it was at work in the native resistance to continental forms of Protestantism in the 16th and 17th centuries. What we wanted was a national catholic Church—a contradiction in terms, perhaps; but one which has not been wholly without vitality. What we, as a nation, did not want was any great emphasis upon "election".

In other words, I think we English will have to be saved as a nation, or not at all; and that, in the context of our history, "the Christian nation" is not naturally conceived as a segregated community. We have still the threads of a catholic tradition which I pray to see gathered up and woven together in a new and richer pattern. The natural centre of the Christian community in England, I believe, is the rural parish church, and its natural leader the parish priest. I admit, that as things are to-day, that sounds more like a dream than a reality. Nevertheless, I believe it is the natural way for us to move. It is potentially universal, in the simple practical sense that, once a real beginning is made in a single country parish, the pattern can be adopted everywhere.

I want to see a quite simple beginning: the establishment in conjunction with the village hall of a little stores where goods made by the villagers in their spare time may be exchanged with one another without the intervention of state-money. The mechanics of the simple system have been expounded and put into practice by J. W. Scott. By it we can build in the rural community the beginnings of a power of resistance to the disintegration produced by the unchecked workings of a capitalist economy. My ideal aim is not to create a community, but to recreate in the remnants of the village community that still remain a sense of community, and a belief that there is a practical way by which the village-community can advance, however modestly, towards an increase, instead of lapsing into a decrease, of reality.

So that for me the primary problem is one of Christian education. I believe that the Church in England could be reinspired by a conviction of a practical mission to be accomplished. That, I know, primarily depends on capturing the imagination of the young men at the universities: for I have been told, on the best authority, that as things are to-day the young men who are by nature most inclined to the Christian priesthood, and best fitted for it, shrink away from it. And until the Christian Church can set before them, with conviction, a vision of a Christian society, and a practical means of working towards it, the communal reinspiration of the Church will remain a dream.

But this is the end to which I would work while strength remains to me. Valuable and significant though I believe the Bruderhof to be, I cannot accept it as a pattern for our endeavour in England. I have learned by first-hand experience that the Christian faith is the only possible basis for any true community, *a fortiori* for a regeneration of



the national society; but I discover in myself a deep and instinctive reluctance towards accepting the idea of the separated and unique community, as the natural means towards this end. It may be, I grant, that in the end it will prove to be the only way; and, of course, I entirely accept the fundamental principles of a Christian society set down in *The Holy Nation*. The question at issue is the natural way towards the goal.

I know, only too well, that our peculiar and privileged conditions in England have created in us Englishmen an unrealistic mentality, which probably nothing but grim experience will purge away: but it appears to me equally true that it is precisely those peculiar and privileged conditions which make it possible for the Bruderhof to exist among us. This is, I think, a necessary realization: if only as a safeguard against a tendency to dogmatic absolutism which I observe, for example, in the reviews of the two books by J. S. Hoyland and Canon Raven in the last number of *THE PLOUGH*. I happen to know both these men: I know that neither of them is lacking in Christian courage: and I feel that it is a little presumptuous to tell them that what is necessary is that "we should turn in loathing from our own selves and our own interpretations of the mind of Christ . . . and follow him on the way of unconditional love". That has no meaning except it is an assertion that the writer knows and has taken "the way of unconditional love". That is a very, very great claim to make.

I do believe that what may be called "the way of unconditional love" was once revealed and manifested to man; it involved leaving houses and lands, and wife and children, it left the Son of Man with nowhere to lay his head. I do not think its consequences of taking that way would be different to-day; at any rate, I feel that they would not be different for me if I had the courage or the faith to take it. I have not. Therefore, I have made up my mind that the only way for me, and for many like me, is the way of conditional love. I think, too, that the Bruderhof represents such a way. I am grateful that it exists. It is of no small moment that a witness should be so singly and plainly borne to one particular way of conditional love; but it is perhaps of no less moment that it should be clearly recognized that it is conditional, and conditioned.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY.

### NO MAN CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS

(A statement prepared for delivery to a well-known church by a young solicitor upon resigning in order to join the Bruderhof.)

Mr.—and Friends of—Church, I am grateful for this opportunity of explaining, or attempting to explain, my action in leaving the legal profession and in resigning from the diaconate and membership of this church.

I feel that I must deal with both aspects, as the decision to join the Bruderhof is a life decision and not merely one which affects Sunday worship; and my life hitherto has consisted mainly of law and this church. Let me deal with these briefly in order. Firstly law.

First of all I want to make it quite clear that I recognize the necessity of the state—that is to a sub-christian people. And the state needs for its continued existence rules which are recognized as binding upon its members. "The sum total of these rules at any given moment in the history of a state may be described as its law". (Hewart, Lord Chief Justice) The real nature of law is more important to each one of us than we usually admit. I constantly meet people who appear to assume that law is the same thing as litigation.



That is not so. The body of rules which we call law is not habitually broken by any of us. A civil action or a criminal prosecution is an unusual incident in the life of any citizen. That is a very significant fact. For seven years now I have been a student of law. It has been my task to trace the histories of two great peoples from a legal standpoint. I have watched Rome struggle upwards from anarchy to order. I have watched our own country do the same. And I say this—law at its worst is better than anarchy. Alike in pagan Rome and in sub-Christian Britain, law is good. It is in this sense that we can even speak of law as being of God. Now it should be clear that the measure of order that was attained in Rome before the break-up of the Empire and the measure of order that exists among us to-day is something we owe, not, in the first place, to any religion, but mainly to law.

Law then is of God. But if we seek the mind of Christ I do not see how we can avoid the conviction that law—human man-made law—does not reveal the very nature, the heart of God. Law is of God, but God is not law. "God", says St. John, "is love". And the relationship which Jesus Christ enjoins upon all his followers is that of absolute, unfailing love. Nor is this demand for the way of love in any way inconsistent with the grand Old Testament conception of Jehovah as a God of justice, for true justice comes only when men seek—not justice—but love. Only on a foundation of love can a relationship of positive, creative justice be built. It is not surprising therefore, to hear Christ in the Sermon on the Mount declare, "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven". (Matt. 5.44)

The followers of Jesus had no doubt at all that he meant this love to be expressed in action. Thus in his first letter St. John wrote, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth". The Early Church believed this and acted upon it. (1. John, 3.18) In the first place they found it impossible for them to participate in war. At this point they refused to co-operate with the state, although they recognized its value in other spheres. And their "civil disobedience" did not end here. The state, as we have noted, depends for its continued existence upon law, and to every law there is annexed what is called a legal sanction—in other words, some definite evil which will befall anyone who breaks the law, who fails to do what the law requires or does what the law forbids him to do. If I steal and am arrested, I shall be sentenced by a court of justice to undergo punishment. The sentence will then be carried out by the executive officers of the state. If I publish a libel against someone, a court will decide what damages I must pay to him, and in default of payment the amount will be levied under process of execution by an executive officer of the state.

Whilst the state, and the law which binds the state, and the legal sanctions which enforce the law, are all quite in accord with the prevailing public ethical standards, they have nothing to do with Christ or Christianity. That Christians must not sue at law, Christ teaches in the words, "If any man will sue thee at law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. Resist not evil". (Matt. 5.40) The Early Church knew that when Christ said that, he meant it. And whenever they forgot it (being human beings after all) Paul lost no time in reminding them. Thus to the Corinthians—"Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust. . . . I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother and that before unbelievers. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" (1 Cor. 6.1-8) This attitude of Paul rings true to me. Does it not to you? Is it not in full accord with all that we know of the love of Christ? I believe so, and believing so have no alternative to obedience. I must take Christ's command that we should love one another as he loved us, seriously.

This means, for me, that I must follow the truly Christian practice of the Early Church and refuse to take part as a solicitor in the administration or enforcement of the law



of this state, trying to maintain at the same time an attitude of loyal co-operation with the state in all things which do not conflict with the mind of Christ. This would mean that I could still actually do many of the tasks which fall to a solicitor's lot to do. For example, there seems to me nothing inherently unchristian in drawing a will, or proving that will in common form, or in forming a limited company, or in doing the hundred and one jobs of a conveyancer.

But it has been my experience that a solicitor who professes to follow Jesus Christ and who therefore cuts out all litigation is in a very difficult and sometimes a false position if he tries to limit this work to the comparatively innocent things I have mentioned, because everyone of them has inherent in it a potential lawsuit, and clients come to him on the assumption that he will carry through the business to the bitter end and stand up for their rights—either actual or imaginary—in the courts.

Such a solicitor is in a difficult and paradoxical position. Difficult though it would be however, I would not seek to escape from it, if it were not for other vital reasons which have, together, constituted a positive call towards the Bruderhof, and, as a necessary corollary, away from the law and away from this church.

To me the truth that is enshrined in the Bruderhof, however imperfectly, is just this: God, our holy heavenly Father, calls us to strive for his kingdom; and if we seek first the Kingdom of God and his justice, then his Holy Spirit—which in Jesus Christ is brought near to us—binds us one to another and to God in complete unity. Middleton Murry has written, "There is no unity without Christ, and without unity there is no Christ". And St. John himself records in the great priestly prayer of Jesus that he prayed that we might all be one as he and the Father were one (John 17.21)—a unity so deep that we cannot comprehend its wonder. The Church is the actual living body of Christ—the temporal expression of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul leaves us in no doubt as to the meaning of this when he writes to the Galatians, describing the fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace—and insisting that these must be found as a reality in the Church.

Is this unity and this love to be found in our organized churches to-day? Or is it true that deep and terrible division exists on fundamental issues like peace and war? Is it true that folk who have more than enough of this world's goods sit side by side with the poor and needy in the same church building? Is it true that men worship together on Sunday who are driven apart on Monday into opposite camps by their participation in the competitive system? Is this love? Is this unity?

I believe that for men to form a church—to be a true part of the holy catholic Church, they are called to be completely together in Christ. Nowhere, of course, does such a perfect church exist, all men being sinners. But the truest expression of this that I have seen and experienced is a body of folk—quite normal, simple people who do not pretend to be better than anyone else, but who live a life of brotherhood and have a common table and a common purse, and pray and worship together and share a common life, open to all who are willing to seek the Kingdom of God with them—a life to which they call folk far and wide by their personal missionary contacts and their published writings. They are waging a ceaseless warfare—not on men, but on selfishness, impurity and ugliness, evil wherever it is found and in whatsoever form it takes. That is the war in which I am summoned to take my part. Until God shows me a better way I am bound—if I would be loyal to Christ—to join forces with those who seem to be waging the hardest and fiercest battle for God.

G. J.

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The Church of Peace of Jesus is in a state of permanent, active, creative general strike against all the injustice and unrighteousness of the surrounding world with its lack of peace. Jesus recognizes no just or justifiable claims of any kind in this breach with all things as they are. He does not allow his Church to carry on a lawsuit against anyone. He does not allow it to sit in judgment on anyone.

From THE PEACE OF GOD by Eberhard Arnold.



## Community Notes and News

COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN will be on sale in October. Conceived primarily as a permanent record of papers read at the Bath and Bow Conferences in 1937, this book of 202 pages, with supplementary contributions and appendices, is probably the first attempt at a general survey of Community in this country. It has special interest as a community-produced publication, printed at the Cotswold Bruderhof Press. Will every reader of THE PLOUGH order a copy and make it widely known?

The price of two shillings will barely cover costs of production even if a great part of the edition is sold. Publication has been possible only through the generosity of two well-known friends of community who have guaranteed in advance a substantial part of the cost. This is a burden which others may wish to share, and goodwill contributions will be gratefully received. Please send orders and/or gifts to J. Theodore Harris, 9, Queensdown Road, London, E. 5. Leaflets for circulating to friends can also be supplied.

A small group of friends with a concern for the "hard core" of unemployment met at Bournville during August to consider practical possibilities of applying widely the technique of production-for-use in this national tragedy. Something of the kind has been done on a large scale in U.S.A. and a small scale experiment has been successfully demonstrated in this country at Salford. Those interested please write Hilda Chapman, "Linby", Queen's Road, Hale, Cheshire.

Extract from letter from Prmysl Pitter of Prague: "I should welcome it (1) that your Community Co-ordinating Service do not confine itself to England but when opportunities arise keep touch also with community groups abroad. (2) that notes and news about Community for which a page of THE PLOUGH has been put at your disposal be also included in its German edition in-so-far as they may interest readers abroad". The past work of Prmysl Pitter towards international Christian Community will be known to many. (*All contacts are welcomed by the Committee with any part of the world.*)

By the same post a letter from Professor Henri Lasserre of the Robert Owen Foundation of Toronto. He will visit the Cotswold Bruderhof and the Community of the Way in Bow on his way home from the Continent.

Dorothy Miller, now on her way to California, will keep touch with us in any community contacts she is able to make while in U.S.A.

Announcement of an autumn Community Conference in London will be circulated shortly. It is hoped at these meetings to review the new developments and plans which have been taking shape this year.

Group talks on Community have been given recently at Altrincham, Flixton, Alton, Edinburgh and Charlton. Invitations have been received from Colchester, Sutton and Hampstead. Cardiff has been propagating Community and Peace at the Eistedfodd.

A series of articles written by people well known in Community has



been appearing recently in PEACE NEWS under the title "Pacifism and Unemployment".

The Cambridge Group inaugurated its Community House in August.

Friends with experience of garden work and household organization are invited to contact a craft group in the Wye Valley which is exploring possibilities of wider community life. Write Margaret Hughes, the Barn House, Brockweir, (near Chepstow), Mon.

Gustav Brdlik of Pantolwen Weavers, Llandyssul, Carms., offers an opportunity to those wishing to develop community life in favourable surroundings, with a weaving plant as a sound production basis. A roomy house is available for rent or purchase.

Requests for contact or information to Hon. Sec., Community Service Committee, "Chancton", Dartnell Park, West Byfleet, Surrey. Stamp, please, for reply.

## Editorial Notes and Comments

In sending out the third issue of THE PLOUGH, Towards the Coming Order, we are glad to announce that this new periodical has met with a very good reception. On September 1st there were five hundred regular subscribers to the English edition and nearly two hundred to the German edition, the latter being mainly Swiss readers. It is hoped that before the end of the first year there will be one thousand subscribers to the English, and five hundred to the German edition. Apart from these figures a great number of individual copies have been sold, so that the first number of THE PLOUGH is now out of print.

THE PLOUGH is unique in that there is no exchange of money between those who print and publish it, all the co-workers being brothers of equal economic standing. Therefore this little publication is in itself a witness for the coming order. We shall be glad if our readers will do their best to increase the circulation of THE PLOUGH by winning new subscribers.

As we wish to devote most of the space available for these notes to the contribution of John Middleton Murry, "The Way to Community?", only a little can be said about the other articles. The three quotations printed on page eighty-two under the heading "Brotherhood Economics" are taken from "The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches" by Troeltsch. Eitelhans Langemantel, Ulrich Stadler and Peter Rideman were among the leading members of the great movement of the sixteenth century which was seeking to establish a new order on the basis of Christ's teaching, and which is still surviving in the Hutterian Communities in America and England. (See also "The Hutterian Communities in Five Centuries", THE PLOUGH, Volume 1, Page 19.)

Our friends will be interested to read the report of David Hofer on the dissolution of the Rhoenbruderhof in Germany last year. Some irresponsible and incorrect reports about this event have been spread by the German Mennonites, apparently under the influence of the



German authorities, who were responsible for this sad step. Nothing can correct these misrepresentations better than this moving account by David Hofer, the Hutterian Elder of the James Valley Bruderhof near Winnipeg, Canada, who together with Michael Waldner from the Bon Homme Bruderhof in South Dakota, U.S.A., visited the Cots-wold Bruderhof, the Rhoenbruderhof and the Almbruderhof in 1937.

We have always regarded John Middleton Murry as one of the most outstanding sponsors of international peace and justice, whose ideas had a strong tendency towards a practical community life, as the establishment of the Adelphi Centre in 1936 clearly shows. At our request he sent us an article for the present issue of THE PLOUGH which is printed on page 95. Perhaps our English readers will be as surprised as we are at the rather narrow nationalistic and "churchy" outlook of his article.

When we invited John Middleton Murry to write an article we did not expect any comments on the Bruderhof itself, as he has never visited the Bruderhof, and without having shared its life one cannot possibly understand its character. Still less can one write about it. What we should have liked was an exposition of his ideas on community as such. We are, however, publishing "The Way to Community?" because we believe it can be stimulating to our readers, especially to those who know the Bruderhof life through first-hand experience. Indeed, we should welcome any comments on J. Middleton Murry's criticism.

His first remarks are somewhat unclear. Does he want to say that a group or a cause is wrong because it is persecuted, and that one must judge the worth or value of a movement by outward success? If J. Middleton Murry were in Germany he would either be in a concentration camp or have to emigrate, unless he modified his principles to suit the Secret State Police.

We must emphasize again what we have often said before, that the Bruderhof as such, and in its outward form, is unimportant. The only thing that matters is that mankind, which is suffering in a most terrible way owing to the selfishness, the greed and the murderous spirits which master the lives of men, should be shown a new way. J. Middleton Murry himself has challenged us in a clear and heart-searching way in his writings to give up everything for the sake of peace and justice. This challenge has been answered, and is being answered, in a simple but thorough way by those who have taken upon themselves a life of voluntary communism and poverty. Why attack people who have the courage to go such a way if, as J. Middleton Murry himself states frankly, he was *not*? Why say that this is a way of "conditional and conditioned" love without having done it himself and knowing what it involves? Is not J. Middleton Murry sponsoring the cause of those who say that it is *impossible* to follow Christ and to do his will? In face of this we must say, most emphatically, that it *is* possible to leave houses and lands, wife and children, yes, that it is the only thing to do if we are prepared to face up to the challenge which J. Middleton Murry himself has put before us. Not the Bruderhof but *Christ* is the way, the only way. That is why we live in community, and the attitude of J. Middleton Murry and those like him should not be to throw negative criticism on a small group which tries hard to follow Christ on his one way, and has had to suffer persecution for it, but to ask himself again the question which



he, sad to say, has answered negatively in his article, "Wilt thou, or wilt thou not?" And indeed it is just as necessary for *him* as it is for *us*, who are trying to live a peaceful and brotherly life of voluntary communism (which J. Middleton Murry himself advocates), to "turn in loathing from our own selves and our own interpretations of the mind of Christ and follow him on the way of *unconditional* love". THE EDITOR.

## Books

COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN: published by the *Community Service Committee*. October, 1938. Price 2s. and 3s. 6d. See page 100.

There is a very widespread realization to-day of the unsatisfactory state of society in which men are living; and in the hearts of many men the longing has arisen that some new and healthier order might be built up. The cause of human need has been seen as the lack of brotherhood, the selfish will, the egotism which drives a man into the competitive struggle with his fellows, to seek for his own advantage and welfare regardless of the want and need of his neighbour. This isolation and concern for self alone has become such a part of daily life, and has taken on such acute forms in these last years, that many people recognize it as the poison which is bringing sure destruction upon our civilization. In view of these facts, all seeking for an alternative and all attempts to provide one are to be welcomed. Particularly the increasingly critical international situation, but also the terrible contrast between rich and poor, between excessive luxury and the misery of the slums and the distressed areas, has made men realize that a new order of brotherhood and co-operation is necessary.

Those of our readers who themselves feel the importance of this, and who have read with interest the article "In England Now", in the first number of THE PLOUGH, and also the "Community Notes and News" column which is a regular feature of our periodical, will no doubt welcome, too, *Community in Britain*, the new publication of the Community Service Committee.

The work of the Community Service Committee is to form a point of contact between all such groups which are striving to build up a new fellowship of co-operation in some practical way. And to this end conferences of all interested people and groups were held at Bath and at Bow during the past year. *Community in Britain* comprises to some extent the reports of the various movements and groups which met at these two conferences, with the addition of useful and interesting information about other similar movements.

The book, which comprises just over 200 pages, is quite a comprehensive survey of the various settlements, camps, groups and schemes in this country, with interesting accounts of similar settlements abroad. The reports are written largely by people who are themselves taking an active part in the work they describe.

The book begins with accounts of colonies living a completely communal life, and under this section there is quite a thorough account of our own community. The fact that two of the communities in this



section no longer exist on the same basis on which they began makes the account no less interesting. It is often said to us that it must be easy to leave the struggle and strife of life to live in the harmony and peace of community. We ourselves have found the opposite to be the case, and some of the difficulties which meet those who set out with high aims can be seen in the stories of communities which have failed.

Various accounts of the work and schemes which are being carried out among the unemployed, both by the Society of Friends and by others who are concerned with this question of the poverty and misery which is in our midst—accounts of the Rhondda Valley, of the Grith Pioneers, and of the Friends' work camps—are also included.

Among the most interesting features are the accounts of small and little-known groups which have come together in an earnest endeavour to share and work in a new relationship of brotherhood. It is a very remarkable fact that the need of our time is awakening so many groups of people in all corners of Britain to the fact of the necessity of a new way of life; and *Community in Britain* does a valuable service in bringing to light, and into one context, all this striving which is going on and which is illustrated by accounts of over forty different groups. A number of articles on community principles and economics are also included, and the various ideas expressed make very interesting reading. We hope that they will soon be realized in practice. Although the book covers a much wider field than that of community as we understand the word, the movements with which it deals are all significant as signs of the longing in men's hearts for co-operation and brotherhood, and their attempt to give that longing a practical expression.      BRUCE SUMNER.

## AN APPEAL

In the midst of the sufferings of these days, the fate of the Jews in Europe is particularly tragic. They are ostracised, insulted and killed simply because they are Jews, or are supposed to be distantly related to Jews. Their situation is now becoming steadily worse as one country after another closes its doors to them.

Although our own livelihood is by no means secured we feel we can do no other than try to help these people whose need is greater than our own. The Friends' Germany Emergency Committee has asked us to give a refuge and work to twenty "non-Aryans" who must leave Vienna, and who need some agricultural experience in order to enable them to go later to the colonies. We are at present engaged in a building which will enable us to offer them the simplest accommodation. Their maintenance will cost us £2.10.- a head per month, and the Friends' Germany Emergency Committee is able to give us 25/- towards this, so that if they remain for four months with us we shall have to find £100. To all of these refugees who come to us we offer all that we have here, and our simple life of brotherhood if they are prepared to surrender themselves to it.

We should be very grateful to any of our friends who would help us to offer this refuge to these, our fellow-men, who find themselves without a country or home.

Donations should be sent to the Treasurer, The Cotswold Bruderhof, Ashton Keynes, Wilts.



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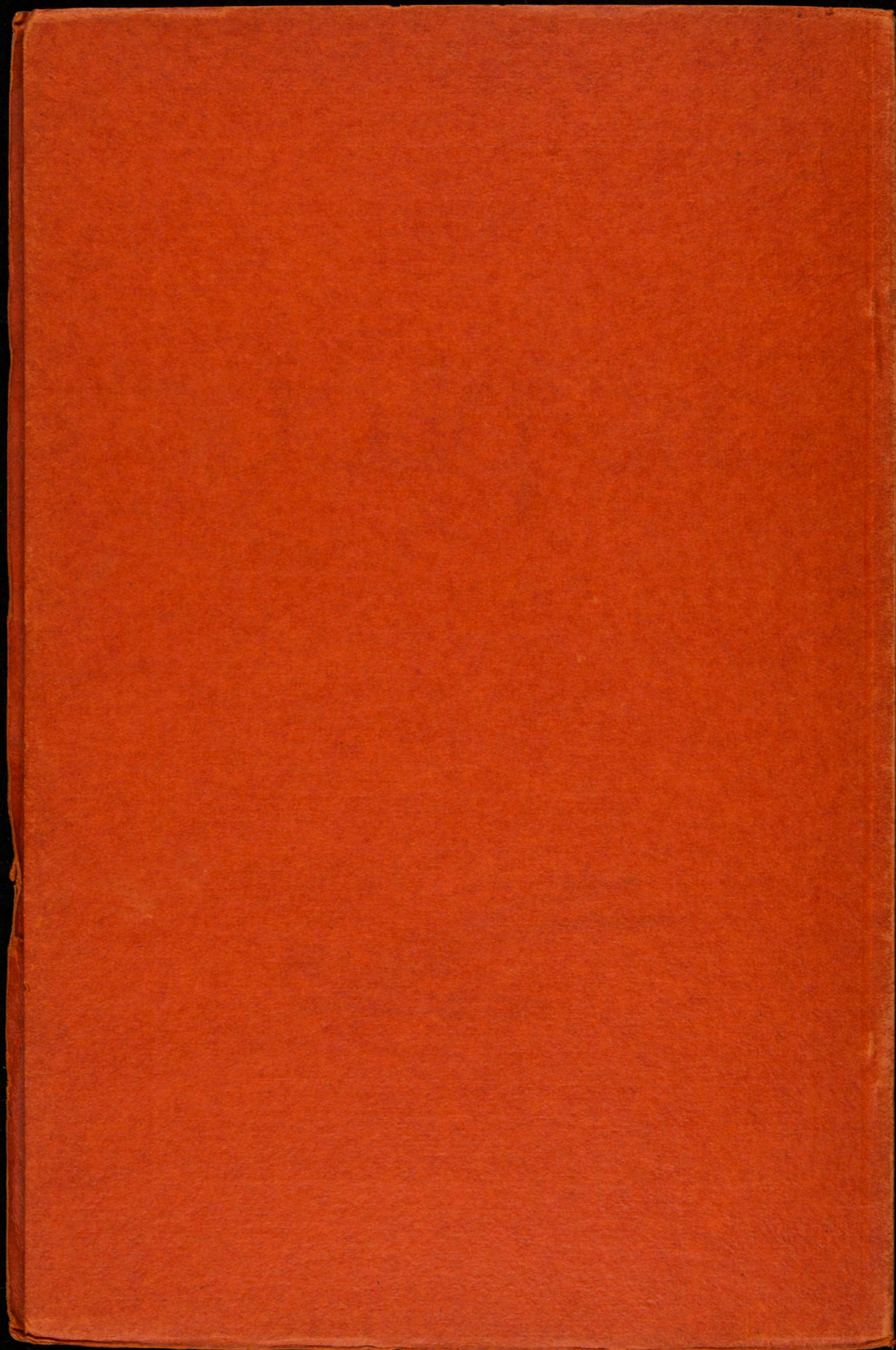
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