

THE PLOUGH

THE QUARTERLY
OF THE
BRUDERHOF COMMUNITIES

CONTENTS INCLUDE

STUDIES IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

SALT AND LIGHT

EBERHARD ARNOLD

SOLITUDE AND COMMUNITY

EIVIND BERGGRAV

HOW HUTTERIAN COMMUNITY WAS RESTORED

BICENTENARY OF CARINTHIAN
EMIGRATION TO TRANSYLVANIA

E. C. H. ARNOLD

PARAGUAYAN CAMEOS

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AUDREY WILLIAMS

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
STUDIES IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT	
Salt and Light	<i>Eberhard Arnold</i> 97
THE PATTERN OF LOVE	<i>Philip Britts</i> 101
SOLITUDE AND COMMUNITY	<i>Eivind Berggrav</i> 102
HOW HUTTERIAN COMMUNITY WAS RESTORED	
Bicentenary of Carinthian Emigration to Transylvania	<i>E. C. H. Arnold</i> 106
PARAGUAYAN CAMEOS	
Brothers for a Day	<i>Harry Fossard</i> 117
'Dear Children'	<i>Audrey Williams</i> 120
Where is home?	<i>J.T.C.</i> 121
NEWS OF THE BRUDERHOF COMMUNITIES	122
EDITORIAL COMMENTS	128

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

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THE PLOUGH

The Quarterly of the Bruderhof Communities

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Vol. III No. 4

STUDIES IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

EBERHARD ARNOLD

III. SALT AND LIGHT

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its quality, what can make it salt again? It is good for nothing after that but to be thrown away and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be concealed.

MATTHEW 5, 13-14.

Salt should be salty or it is nothing. The essential thing about salt is its effect; by itself it has no purpose – it is there to savour the whole. He who accepts God's life into his innermost being and, through Jesus, has come to understand the nature of God's future world has taken on the character of salt. Jesus wants the real essence of things, he wants nothing but ultimate reality – true being. So he never demands an attitude which does not correspond to the real inner situation. Christ sees in his friends men who have his spirit, who breathe his life. The powers of the future world are at work in them. The essence of true righteousness, of absolute purity, of unconditional love, are revealed in them. The coming kingdom that will encompass the whole earth will belong to God, and the true character of this kingdom is opposed to all rottenness and decay; it combats death and therefore all insipidity, listlessness, and softness.

Death can be delayed by the use of salt. Every one knows that doctors use salt for this purpose, or to revive and strengthen the power of a human organ. The unrighteousness of the world – sin as such – is the disease from which the soul of mankind is suffering, and it is a sickness which leads to death. The mission of the citizens of the kingdom is to be the salt of the earth and, as such, to stem its unrighteousness, prevent its decay, and hinder its death.

The world must die in order to be born again. But as long as the salt in the world remains salt it opposes evil, acting as the power which one day will renew the earth and all mankind.* If the church-community

* The thought here is an apocalyptic one – that a final revelation of evil will precede the re-birth of the world.

were no longer to act as salt, it would no longer be the church, but would be doomed to fall into the world's decay – to be thrown away as useless. If salt becomes insipid, what can make it salt again? It is fit for nothing but to be trodden underfoot. In its nature salt is something entirely different from the food which it makes palatable. Therefore the 'salt of the earth' should not expect the present age to turn into salt, but the presence of the citizens of Jesus' kingdom is a real and constant warning to the world that without salt it will die. As food is insipid and unpalatable without salt, so is the world without the church-community. And while mankind cannot attempt to act as its own salt, it can recognize in the action of salt the character of death and decay, and how death must be combated. The church-community provides a corrective, and also a goal which mankind tries to approach as nearly as possible. . .

Salt can have such power only as long as it is different from the surrounding mass, as long as it does not itself fall into decay. If it becomes insipid and tasteless, it can only be spat out. Salt is only where God is, where the better righteousness of the future kingdom becomes a present reality, and where the powers of that coming order bring forth an organic life and growth; in other words, salt is only present where the victorious, living energy of God's love is at work. God himself is the creative spirit who overcomes corruption, the living spirit who wakens the dead, whose power of life never flags, who can bring about the new birth of the most degenerate mass, so giving rise to joy instead of disgust.

God's power, welling up from the depths of the heart, purposing to flood the whole of life, is stronger than all that can be accomplished by morality, citizenship, or social conventions, corrupted as they are. Here is the dire courage and virility which will not swim with the stream, or be infected with general corruption. Here is simplicity and brevity of expression, an unvarnished truthfulness, which would have a deadly effect on the one spoken to as well as on the speaker himself if love were not behind it. For this love cannot kill; in fact it avoids and makes a stand against any harm or injury to a neighbour, as much as to itself. Here too is the resolution rather to pluck out the evil eye than have it corrupt the whole body. Here are loyalty and trustworthiness which do not change character, whose word and love stand for ever; and here is freedom from everything outward and non-essential, readiness to sacrifice all possessions and give whatever time is demanded. For this freedom is truly love, love to enemies and opponents as well as to friends and brothers. This better righteousness is freedom from earthly treasure, freedom from the cares and worries of possessions, a childlike joy in light and colour, in God himself and all his gifts.

Only God's life is that salt which counteracts the spirit of the world and is death's mortal enemy. But salt can be nothing other than salt. He

who has the spirit of Jesus acts as salt spontaneously. Whoever tries to be like salt, without being salt from the source, from God, is a fool. Therefore Christ could say only what he clearly saw as a reality; never in the slightest did he demand more than was actually there when he said: 'You are the salt of the earth: you are the light of the world!'

Life which is likened to salt is compared in the second picture to light, and light comes from fire. Without fire you cannot expect or demand light. Dark Neptune cannot turn into a brilliant sun; neither can the cold light of the moon be changed into mid-day warmth. All the same, pitch-black coal can be turned into a fire, radiating heat, and the whole household can gather round it for warmth. But the coal has to be ignited, it has to be burned and reduced to ashes, in order to become light which diffuses heat.

A light on a candlestick consumes itself in order to give light to all who are in the house. It serves the intimate unity of the household because its life consists in dying. If one wanted to spare the candle, one would hinder it from turning into light. But it would be a shame to cover up something so precious and useful. Rob a burning candle of the free air in which the flame radiates and it goes out – it ceases to be light.

Light is characteristic of the people of Jesus – a real brightness and warmth. As the old life is consumed it turns into life-giving strength. Shameful things can only live in the dark; brightness leads to clarity and frankness, to simplicity and purity, to genuineness and truth. Where Jesus' influence makes men into real men, their life becomes genuine and pure. It shines into the darkness of the world around and unmask what is false and untrue – what is trying to hide. But the light which Jesus kindles is not exhausted by just making a situation clear. Cold light has no part in the kingdom of God. Clever recognition, mere insight, systematic clarity of thought and sharpness of differentiation – all these are not the light of which Jesus speaks here. It is of no use just intellectually to try to think for once in God's way, whereas previously we have only thought in our own way. What matters is to live *in* God's heart and *from* God's heart. As with the sun, the brightness of his being is inseparable from life-kindling warmth. His light is the joyous love which forms community and draws men together, the love which flows out of the inner depths of the heart and must find its expression in deeds – always building up, never destroying.

Sunlight brings forth life, which springs up everywhere on the earth and bears fruit. Whoever walks in the daylight can see his way clearly – he belongs to life. (Only the night is dead, because it is dark and cold.) And yet there is a kind of dying even in the life of the sunlight; our life alternates between day and night; the morning comes only after the death of the night; so it is only by dying to ourselves that we can win through to a life of resurrection.

A light cannot radiate brightness and give out warmth without being consumed. The greatest of men was the one to suffer most deeply this process of dying in order to give light. The light of the world has gone forth from the cross of Jesus. Rising out of the grave he sent his followers to the ends of the world, to all peoples. Only the man who experiences the suffering and guilt of the world and his own sin and its forgiveness with the Crucified One is able to serve the world with the light and strength of the Risen One. The light with which we are concerned is that of Christ himself. It comes over us like a fire of judgment to burn up our old rotten life, to lead us, as those crucified with him, into a radiant life of resurrection. For only One can shine as the light of all who come into this world, he who himself was wholly light, who was involved in no untruthfulness or impurity, in no lovelessness or possessiveness. It is nothing but a delusion if we try to push the false light of our own life and thinking into the foreground, that is, if we want to give out light without letting ourselves be consumed in Christ. No man can teach us what that light is. To give ourselves as the sun gives of its fullness to the earth, can never be man's doing, or man's work.

The sun directs our gaze away from itself to the living objects which it illumines, so that when we look at mountains, fields, and woods glowing in the sun we speak of sunlight. The city on the hill stands there gleaming brightly for all who want to see it, but no-one would notice it if it were not lit up by the sun. Whatever the sun shines on becomes full of sunlight. The light and warmth of the sun stimulates life, and this life is organic union of individual living things and beings. Where there is life there is community.

As a light on a candlestick gathers a household around it, so the city on the hill is the shining image of life-community as an organism with economic and administrative unity, with community of work, and a united faith and joy. The turrets of the city on the hill – signs of civic freedom, monuments to the city community, symbols of faith, are visible from afar. Such a city is not built to have an isolated, secluded life for itself, cut off from the rest. Its open gates symbolize for all the out-going joy of open hearts.

Jesus desires nothing done in a corner; he wants nothing secretive. His light is a life-force which surrounds and belongs to every one. It must affect all conditions of life in the same way as the sun shines upon the just and the unjust. God does good to enemy and friend. God is there for all and for everything. The task of his salt and of his light, like the city on the hill, can only be to serve and to be there for all. No single sphere of life should remain unaffected by this salt and light. There is no responsibility in public life, nor in economic and political life, from which the 'city on the hill' may withdraw. Wherever decay

manifests itself salt must counteract it. The light must drive out any evil which is lurking in the dark. The icy breath of hate and coldness of heart cannot take complete possession of the earth as long as the warm light of Christ's love is still present.

But the secret of the action of salt and of the warmth-giving light lies in unmixed sharpness and clarity. The responsibility which God's city on the hill bears for the farthest reaches of this earthly life is quite a different thing from these spheres themselves. The city on the hill may not lose its freedom and the essential character of its common life to any kingdom of this world, to any state or church or political party, or to any other programme of this age. It serves the whole without letting itself be enslaved or emasculated; it makes a stand against all injustice without being unjust, and tries to help all need without succumbing to it. It must remain salt and light for in it lies hidden the seed of the future world order.

THE PATTERN OF LOVE

It is possible to live the selfless life of vital brotherhood
only if one is filled with love.

This love comes from God and is the spirit of Jesus.
It abounds in life and serves all life.

It is not accomplished by a conscious effort or strain on our part;
it does not come through our willing to love;
it cannot be forced.

It is given by God, and is free, spontaneous, joyful.
'Freely ye have received, freely give.'

Our part is to make way for it,
by driving out of our hearts
every evil thought and desire.

But love is not the result of a mere negation of evil.
There must be a response to truth
in whatever way that is revealed to us.

When the heart opens to truth, to beauty, to warmth,
to vitality, to all that is of life,
then love streams in from the source of life.

Such a heart feels its kinship with all life,
with the plants and the birds,
the sunlight and the wind,
above all with its fellowmen;
and feeling this it seeks forever greater unity
with the God of Life.

It finds its perfect pattern in the life of Jesus Christ.

PHILIP BRITTS

SOLITUDE AND COMMUNITY

EIVIND BERGGRAV

The following extracts from *Ensomhet og fellesskap i kristenlivet* (*Solitude and Community in Christian Life*) are published with the author's permission. Bishop Eivind Berggrav led the church's resistance to Hitler in Norway and is well known today in international church circles.

A few years ago a young man at a Norwegian student conference said: 'We have no need of others in order to live a Christian life; I could be just as good a Christian if I was sitting all by myself in the highlands of Hardanger'. He meant by this that a Christian has a direct relationship to God and no one else is of any importance for this fellowship.

This sounds suspiciously correct: nonetheless it is obviously quite mistaken. Without community with brothers no one can be a Christian. There is no such thing as a solitary Christian life. . .

It is of course true that each person must have his own private relationship with God, his quite direct and personal contact with him, a secret chamber into which only God can look. It is not a matter of belonging to God merely through having joined a group of people who on their part belong to God. A second-hand relationship to God is not a divine relationship but a human one. On the other hand it is to be taken for granted that every man, Christian or not, must live in some kind of community. There can be no difference of opinion about this.

This then is the problem: to what extent should our life in God be lived independently of other men, and to what extent is our life in God intrinsically a living together with brothers? Or to formulate it more sharply, in what measure is the God-given element in Christian life dependent on one's relationship to his fellow men? . . .

I represent a point of view which perhaps is not shared by all but which my experience of life supports and which therefore is a matter of deep concern for me to represent: I am going to come out flatly for community. This short booklet is an attack on the isolated one-sided Christian life and a defence of community.

One thing I should like to anticipate: scope should still be granted for our individual peculiarities. We are all different, and our temperaments differ at different times in our lives. There are closed and open types of people, social and unsocial, just as there are closed and open times in our own Christian life. About these differences, to which we shall return later, I would only say: Respect them! But don't let them be our starting point; rather try to find what is fundamental and common to all, what holds true for all times and all types of people. We are seeking the place of community in a sound, normal, Christian life, independent of changing views and inclinations.

Let me emphasize that I do not want to present here the dangerous

angle of this tendency to community. We know of course that community has its dangers in lack of independence, in superficiality, in being too easily influenced, in living at second-hand, and so forth. But I should like to know whether these dangers in community are not more easily removed by the true life in God than are the dangers of solitude. No one can imagine a Christian life which exists only in comradeship with other men. A vigorous Christian cannot escape times when he finds himself outside of human fellowship and has to fight the lonely night battle of a Jacob. *Christian* community carries its control in itself. Consequently it is not so necessary to give warning of the dangers of community.

It is much more necessary to emphasize that the Christian life, precisely as a *life in God*, is a life of community with brothers.

Why does the Christian life have to be a life in community? . . .

The main answer is: because God himself has community with men. What else can be the meaning of the words, 'God so loved the world . . .' – what else than that he has made his life one with the life of men? Or, more directly in the words of the Son of Man before the Last Supper, 'I have *greatly* desired to eat this Passover with you'.

The chief answer to the question about the basis of Christian community does not lie therefore in human abilities but is contained in God himself and in his character.

What gives community its stamp? The fact that together we have found something *divine* and at the same time we are *men* who have come together in this way. But here the lines have not always been clearly drawn. Often too much emphasis has been laid on the human factors.

For this reason it is necessary to get clear as to what Christian community is *not*.

As it does not rest on a human foundation so it does not need to be expressed in mere human proximity. We all know that being physically close to many people can often be accompanied by a great feeling of aloneness. Americans have a good expression for this: 'Cities are places where people crowd together and are lonely'. If being together physically is so little a guarantee of community feeling, one can well understand that this is even more the case for Christian community. Our community does not mean just clinging together in some way or other.

If community is built principally on God and what he gives us it cannot rest on natural sympathy, that is on whether we *like each other* or not. To be sure it is always pleasant to get on well together. But that is not what makes community among Christians. . . .

In community what is important is not what people contribute; community is founded on our common Lord and our common life in him. . . .

It is not only that Christian community allows for differences and *tolerates* differences of opinion – community *needs* these elements precisely in order to become a *Christian* community. It takes the variety of types in cultural relations, in opinions and circumstances, and even in races, into its service. At first there is a difference here, Paul considers – because every one has received his ‘measure of faith’ and his special gifts of grace – but then he carries these differences over into the concept of *members*, and not till this point does he use the picture of the body and its many members to portray *community* in the life of Christians.

Just because the Christian factor which is common to us lies outside ourselves and at the same time is so decisively important for us, can Christian life take in so many variations, bridge over such separateness, and receive such wealth of life, and for that reason it acts as such a spur and stimulus to life. And thus we have come from the question of the character of community to that of its value.

(Among other things) community acts as a *discipline*. By this I mean not only outer discipline but the more important inner discipline, the counterpoise of our reverence for the self. We have so long idolized our individuality that I should like to present the sharp statement: We must *overcome individuality*. Actually a word should be said here about the difference of types and the variation of taste which we pointed out before as justified. They are justified within certain limits. But it is not permissible to pay them too much respect; they should not stand in the way of community. We must each of us – to our own enrichment – give up something of our own in a Christian community. It should be a joy to us that there are others who see or take a thing differently than we do. It does us good to have our personality ground and polished, I might almost say ennobled, by the different obligations entailed in community.

Yet the deepest disciplinary value of community lies in the fact that we are placed in the relationship of serving each other. To be independent, to have to pay no heed to any one, not to have to sacrifice oneself in any way for others – that is the ideal of the [sea captain on his own ship] who finds his happiness in life in being able to ‘spit over the railing on both sides’.* But this is the way of death to happiness in life. Happiness in life consists, particularly in a Christian life, in serving, self-sacrificing commitment to others. Community here means enlargement.

* The reference is to a letter from an Alexander Kielland, written in 1881. Earlier in his essay Berggrav quotes the following passage from this letter as an example of the natural human desire for independence:

‘By my faith, I feel so confident on my good ship that I can spit over the railing on both sides. And do you know why I am so confident? Because I am alone, that’s why.’

It cannot be denied that this enlargement means at the same time increased responsibility. In solitude a man looks down from his vantage point on the mistakes and failings of others, is able to criticize and judge them as things not concerning himself, or further, to look down on the short-comings and sins of the church. To go into a community means also to take on oneself a part of the common guilt. It means to suffer along with others even when I feel I am safely on dry land. Such suffering we usually prefer to avoid. But isn't that to evade life? Christians with dry shoes are dry people. Common guilt is hard, but there is blessing in sharing it and helping to bear it.

It is in the nature of things that the dangers of isolation seem to be of a negative character as contrasted with the values of community. On this account we can pass over them rather quickly, but they are worth mentioning, for they put the whole in the right light.

(a) First is *dodging responsibility*. Isolated Christianity is a dangerous life for a Christian. It is not without reason that the evangelist emphasizes that Peter on the way from Gethsemane to the court of the High Priest 'followed from afar'. Supporting the community means strength; isolation means weakness. The attitude of withdrawal which waits and sees how things will turn out, which does not risk anything or profess anything, easily turns to shirking. For life must be lived with all its dangers if we want to live at all.

(b) A solitary Christian life means *impoverishment*. I do not benefit from that part of life which community holds in store for me. The person who segregates himself may think that he has a wider vision. But actually he is short-sighted. This is true everywhere where people try to resist community. . . . How much have poverty, narrowness of heart, isolation of individuals or groups, to their account in our generation alone.

(c) It is quite clear, then, that an isolated life as a Christian makes people *joyless*. Why are Christians so sour? Because, although God created them for community, they walk alone and cling to what is theirs in peevish isolation. Difficulties pile up for the solitary person; in community they are taken off him.

(d) But the worst thing is the fact that the isolated person becomes an *egotist*. If love of self is the 'real sin', as Luther says, it is bound to be a frightful thing to witness an egotistical Christianity. The warm humble joy which comes from being able to share with others is the gift of community for him who fights in Christ to be free of self.

Community must be *practised*. It means and must mean for us all a sacrifice of egotism, something of a job and a duty. But because here we are dealing with something which God has established, it offers an enrichment and a promise.

HOW HUTTERIAN COMMUNITY WAS RESTORED

BICENTENARY OF CARINTHIAN EMIGRATION TO TRANSYLVANIA

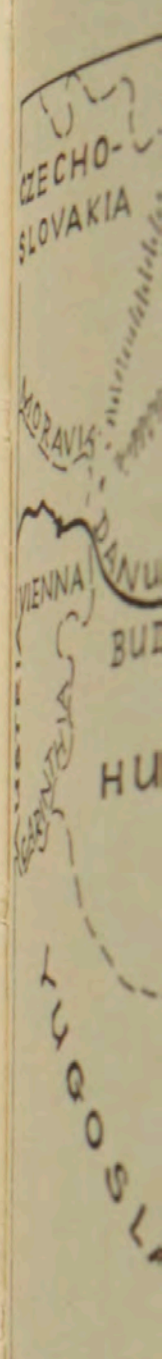
There have been many attempts at community which have flourished for a time and then died out. The Hutterian communities (Hutterites), descended from the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century, have lasted until the present day and continue in Canada and the United States. Twice there has been a lapse from their principle of community of property. How true community was restored by a band of Carinthian peasants emigrating into Transylvania in 1755 is told in this historical study.

I

During the four-hundred-year history of the Hutterian Brothers, community of property was twice given up completely. Both times it was begun again after a lapse of several decades. This is unique in the history of Christian communities.

The first restoration occurred almost two hundred years ago in Transylvania under the stimulus of a small group of Protestant peasants from Carinthia. They had been forced to leave their homes in 1755 because they had held firm to their newly won faith. Shortly after they arrived in Transylvania, they came upon what was left of the one-time Hutterian common household at Alwinz. This little parish of Baptizers still kept some of the Hutterian traditions, but they had given up community of property sixty years earlier. There was probably hardly any one among them whose memory reached back to the time of community life. In spite of this, they gave the Carinthians such a vivid impression of the times when *bruderhof* life flourished and of the spirit that was the source of Hutterian community, that the Carinthians proceeded themselves to found a *bruderhof* on the model of the Moravian households. Just at this time a storm of persecution broke over the Baptizers at Alwinz. The majority of them forsook their faith; only a few went to join the community in the village of Kreuz. When persecution threatened to destroy this new beginning as well, the little group fled over the Carpathian Mountains into Wallachia. From there they left for Russia, where community lasted for about fifty years until inner weakness and disunity brought on its collapse.

During the forty years after this, the Hutterians lived with private property in Russia. But the longing for a life of brotherly community never died out among them. After a number of less determined attempts to re-introduce community had failed, they at last succeeded in joining together in brotherly living with community of goods, although it was in three separate groups. Their descendants, the Smith People, the Darius People, and the Teacher People, are still living today on about a hundred *bruderhofs* in the United States and Canada.



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Vienna 1883, p.



In what follows, I shall tell of the events leading to the founding of the bruderhof at Kreuz in Transylvania, and the struggle the little group had to maintain their new community life over the opposition of their persecutors, from whom they finally escaped by flight. I should also like to place these events in the setting of the whole of Hutterian history and point out their inner meaning for our own times.

II

In describing the origin of the movement an early history book of the Baptizers* shows that their chief concern was to respond to God's call in gathering a united 'holy people' and to pass this call on to others. They sought to set up an order of life drawn from the power of God's spirit, which effects unity among men and establishes justice.

Belonging to the congregation or people of God meant cutting off relations with the established ungodly norms of state, society, and church.

An uncompromising witness like this was sufficient in itself to throw down the gauntlet to the powers that be. But these men went even further, carrying the fight into the enemy's camp through their

* *Die Geschichtsbücher der Wiedertäufer in Österreich-Ungarn*, (The History Books of the Anabaptists in Austria and Hungary), Dr. Joseph von Beck, Vienna 1883, p. 15 ff.

mission task. The messengers of the new brotherly way of life advanced God's claim to govern in opposition to these powers. Fired by enthusiastic readiness for sacrifice, they tried unceasingly to rouse men to free themselves from the snares of evil. The message of the Baptizers was the message of primitive Christianity. 'Remake your life from the foundation. Have faith in God's government. Help to build a new way of life that will carry out Jesus' commandment of love.'

This fighting spirit of gathering and mission made the original Baptizers a popular movement throughout large sections of central Europe. The state and the organized church, Catholic and Protestant, saw how dangerous this non-violent revolution of the spirit was to their own position, founded on injustice and force, and therefore took steps to eliminate the revolutionaries. They met the charge of purely spiritual power with the crude force of bloody persecution. Thousands were ruthlessly imprisoned, expelled from their homes, tortured, and executed.

The original Baptizers movement was not only a movement of community and mission, it was above all a movement of martyrs. It was a movement of suffering and the cross, with and for its master Christ. This especially is what makes it most closely related to primitive Christianity.

III

Very soon three separate branches emerged from among the Baptizers: the Mennonites, the Swiss Brethren, and the Hutterians. The Hutterians, named after the martyr Jakob Huter, embodied the central idea of the Baptizers, the idea of a people called out from other peoples, a people in whom justice dwells. It was they who most consistently practised the new order of life based on love. The inner community of hearts in God, the 'one heart and one soul' of the primitive church, worked its way through all aspects of life and was organically expressed in practical community of work, possessions, and education.

Rejection of judicial, police, and military force, refusal to swear oaths, the requirement of a morally pure life, and the preservation of the purity of the church through discipline – these were fundamental principles which the Hutterian Brothers had in common with the rest of the Baptizers. Other common elements were the baptism of faith as the covenant sign of the New Testament people of God, and the meal of remembrance as a reminder of Christ's death and as an expression of the unity and joy of community life.

In their golden age, toward the end of the sixteenth century, more than ten thousand Hutterians lived in Christian community of goods in Moravia and the adjoining districts of northwestern Hungary. The terrors of the Thirty Years War and the Turkish wars afterward, however, brought extreme distress and suffering to the Hutterian

Brothers. In the year 1622 they were expelled from Moravia through the machinations of Cardinal Dietrichstein. Reduced in numbers and considerably weakened spiritually, they continued communal life in Hungary and Transylvania for about seventy years after this.

In spite of the staunch resistance of the spiritually vigorous elements, of whom Andreas Ehrenpreis is a notable example, the forces forming and preserving community life declined steadily in the second half of the seventeenth century. Finally the collapse could no longer be held off. Community was given up in 1685 in Hungary and about ten years later in Transylvania. To all appearances, the inner power of the spirit was extinguished.

Until the restoration of community through the Carinthian transmigrants, Hutterian church-communities in the real sense ceased to exist. Still, their descendants retained some parts of their spiritual legacy for a considerable time, and stubbornly resisted for a number of decades being made completely Catholic. They continued adult baptism and held the Lord's Supper in the old way. But Johannes Waldner, who wrote the history of the restored church-community in Russia, calls these things 'outward customs and ceremonies', since, in his judgment, the descendants of the Hutterians after the decline were 'fallen and gone astray to such a degree, that they were almost exactly like the world'.*

IV

During the forties and fifties of the eighteenth century a new wave of persecution broke over what was left of the separated descendants of the Hutterians in Hungary. The imperial government in Vienna was determined to purge the lineal lands of the Hapsburgs of every trace of Protestantism and Anabaptism. The government's special agent, the Jesuit priest Delphini, succeeded within a few years in forcing the Hutterian descendants in Hungary to abandon their faith completely.

The terrible methods Delphini applied are described in the *Lesser History Book*:

The commissar came to the brothers in prison and made known to them that he had been given orders to have them stretched out one after the other and beaten, and to do this every day and as long as necessary until they had promised to become Catholics.†

And that is what happened until they had all given in. Only *one* stayed firm to the end, Johannes Mueller from Lewär. He was murdered in prison.

Delphini had carried out his assignment to the full satisfaction of

* *Das Kleine Geschichtsbuch der Hutterischen Brüder* (*The Lesser History Book of the Hutterian Brothers*) ed. Ziegelschmid, 1947, p. 222.

† *ibid.*, p. 237.

his ruler, the Empress Maria Theresa. Now she sent him to Transylvania to catholicize the small remnant of the former Hutterians at Alwinz. He would doubtless have succeeded here as well, if the few loyal believers in Alwinz had not received new courage in their faith through the example of the Carinthians in Kreuz.

V

In the year 1752 a small movement of faith had begun in Carinthia, a stronghold of Catholicism. It turned for spiritual nourishment to the Bible and the writings of Martin Luther and Johann Arndt, the father of pietism. The movement was characterized by an earnest evangelical devotionism with strong accent on the moral standards of the New Testament. It was made up exclusively of simple peasants who kept firmly and courageously to their newly-won realizations in the face of Catholic opposition. All attempts by the government to move them from their faith by force were frustrated by their unyielding resistance. Finally these evangelical peasants were forcibly removed to Transylvania where not only Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox beliefs but also the Augsburg Confession were tolerated. The official records tell of a total of 738 adult persons who were deported from Carinthia to Transylvania in the years 1752 to 1756.

Shortly after their arrival, a few of the 'Carinthian Transmigrants', as they were officially termed, joined with the group of Baptizers of Hutterian ancestry at Alwinz. During the next few years, these peasants' zealous faith and earnest readiness for sacrifice brought the revival of the old Hutterian standards of faith and the restoration of community of goods at the village of Kreuz in the year 1763.

This second Hutterian establishment of community lasted fifty-six years, but it never attained the spiritual and practical significance of the earlier bruderhofs in Moravia. At its best time in Russia it never included more than two hundred and fifty children and adults, who lived in Christian community of goods at only one bruderhof, first in Vishenka and afterward in Radicheva.

Nor was the Carinthians' new beginning ever able to develop the same spiritual power as its predecessors. There are various reasons for this. Most important among them was the fact that the religious life of the original Hutterians during the time of decline underwent a steady drift into subjectivism. In this respect it followed the prevailing historical tendency after the Thirty Years War. The consciousness of standing for an objective truth had disappeared almost completely and been replaced by a devotionism of pietistic tone. This happened all the more readily because community life, as an objective testimony to the world, had already been given up. The chief point at issue was no longer the gathering of a people of God and its mission to the world; it was the

salvation of the individual soul. The kingdom of God and its justice had been displaced by eternal blessedness.

The Carinthians, too, under the influence of Johann Arndt, had religious attitudes strongly coloured by the pietism which held sway over a large segment of Protestantism during the eighteenth century. Religious subjectivism always contains the dangerous seeds of wild exaggeration and fanaticism. It often goes hand in hand with an inclination to moralistic legalism. Both of these eventually lead to disunity and division.

Hence the new beginning at Kreuz was in particular danger from the start. Even in Transylvania and Wallachia, the first signs of religious dissension and factions were already to be seen among the members of the community. In Russia the tendency to pietistic denominationalism was reinforced by geographical isolation and the influence of the pietistic Mennonites and Moravian Brethren. The dangerous tendency to self-sufficient withdrawal *from* the world progressively reduced their awareness of a mission *to* the world. The attempt to reproduce the structure of the Moravian communities on the basis of written traditions tended toward formalism and was further stimulation for literalistic legalism. In Russia the awareness that brotherly life was a fruit of the spirit gradually faded away. An increase in narrowness and rigidity finally caused a split in the Radicheva community and led to its complete dissolution in 1819.

In spite of these deficiencies, the group which began community at Kreuz had caught the vision of what had been a living reality in earlier Anabaptism: the full dedication of all man's strength to the building of a brotherly way of life in the spirit of Christ. This can be seen most clearly in their readiness for sacrifice and their courage under suffering.

That they emigrated three times within a few years is a sign of how earnestly the young movement held to its purposes and how loyally it protected the flame of brotherly life from extinction. The fact that forty years after it had been dissolved the community was restored from within is another indication of the strong inner powers of that period of Hutterian history. Even in the darkest days, a kernel of divine truth remained. Its effect can be felt right down to the present day.

VI

The details of the Carinthian revival of the old Hutterian faith are worthy of being recalled on this 200th anniversary of their historic migration. Upon their arrival in Transylvania the Carinthian peasants had been given lodging in the village of Romos, west of Hermannstadt. A few days later they were called before the Lutheran authorities and required to take an oath of loyalty to the Empress Maria Theresa. This

demand caused them no small astonishment; after all, they had left their homes because the gospel had specifically forbidden the followers of Jesus to take an oath. Mathias Hofer from Aemlach in Carinthia was the first to refuse to comply; he referred to the Sermon on the Mount and the Epistle of James. Others supported his testimony and joined him. Nevertheless, the Lutherans finally succeeded in winning over most of the Carinthians. Those who took the oath were assigned land to settle on, while others got none.

After this first collision, the more radical of the Carinthians found Lutheranism increasingly distasteful. The doctrine and behaviour of the clerics and the church people certainly had little to do with the gospel demands which had made it necessary for them to leave their homes. Was there another and better way of discipleship?

This question was concerning the two Carinthians, Andreas Wurz and Georg Waldner, when they came to look for work in Alwinz in the spring of 1756. Here they found some of the descendants of the Hutterian Brothers and were struck by the fact that they were different from the other villagers. This made them ask what faith these people held. Thus they became acquainted with the history and writings of the Hutterians. The more thoroughly they investigated the faith and ethical demands of the original Hutterian movement, the more they were convinced that this was the true way.

Impressed by what the two men had told them, a number of Carinthians went to talk with the Baptists at Alwinz during the summer. Joseph Kuhr, spiritual leader of the more earnest people at Alwinz, was one of the wealthiest peasants of the village. He took the seekers under his roof. They helped him with his work in the fields and together they sought for the right way. From this time on the radical Carinthians began to separate from the Lutheran church. They went to the Baptizers' meetings and studied the writings of the Moravian period which they found there, especially the *Rechenschaft unserer Religion, Lehr und Glaubens* (*Account of Our Religion, Teaching and Faith*) by Peter Rideman* (1540) and the *Handbüchlein* of 1557. The *Handbüchlein* is a rebuttal of charges made by Lutherans in Worms against the Hutterians and the whole Baptizers' movement, and so was especially meaningful for the Carinthians' dispute with Lutheranism.

When the Hermannstadt government found out what was happening in Alwinz, they bent every effort to make the Carinthians give up their new-found faith. They were forbidden to stay at Alwinz and some of their leading members were imprisoned for a time, among them Andreas Wurz and Mathias Hofer. Finally the whole group was taken from Romos to Gross Poln. Here they were subjected to intensive 'indoctrination' by Lutheran clerics. The Carinthians, however,

*PLOUGH PUBLISHING HOUSE, in German, 1938; in English, 1950.

presented an unbroken front, and in spite of the government's orders, they kept in contact with the people at Alwinz.

The government applied more drastic measures. A number of Carinthians were put under arrest in the penitentiary at Hermannstadt; corporal punishment was used to force them to work, but later they refused to comply in spite of this for reasons of conscience. Among these were Mathias Hofer and some young girls. The rest of the Carinthians who stood with the Baptizers at Alwinz were forcibly separated and divided among six different villages, including the village of Kreuz. The Lutheran clergy tried to intimidate them with threats and cajole them with the promise of lands to settle on, if they would only remain Lutheran. But they preferred to go on working for wages and remain true to their convictions.

After their enforced separation, they attempted to collect at one place as soon as possible, and most of them eventually succeeded in gathering at Kreuz. Under the guidance and with the advice of the Alwinz leaders Joseph Kuhr and Märtel Roth, this group began to model their meetings on the principles of the old Moravian households. One of them, Johannes Kleinsasser, was elected Servant of the Word and confirmed by the Hutterian elders at Alwinz at the beginning of 1763.

The eagerness of the Carinthians soon took them further than the example given by the lives of the Hutterians at Alwinz, who had fallen away from some of their original beliefs and were holding property. The people at Kreuz were convinced that the gospel demanded complete community of work and property, as it once had been in the Hutterian bruderhofs. The Carinthians began the spiritual building of their community that same year, 'in order that the congregation and little meeting at Kreuz might be brought to right order and condition, after the manner of the first apostolic church and the church of God in Moravia, set up through the gifted, enlightened, loyal witness to the truth, Jacob Huter'.

VII

At the same time as the radical Carinthians at Kreuz were introducing community of property in 1763, the Jesuit Delphini arrived in Transylvania. The major part of his work in Hungary was done; now he was determined to catholicize the little Baptizers' group at Alwinz. The conflict lasted four years and ended in the complete disappearance of Baptizer convictions from Transylvania and so from the entire Holy Roman Empire.

From the beginning of Delphini's activities there was little courage or resistance in Alwinz. The faith and inner solidarity of the one-time Hutterians had grown too weak to hold its own against the contracting

ring of his shrewd and ruthless strategy. Most of them recanted before the Jesuit ever needed to apply his most drastic methods. The elder Märtel was one of the first to become Catholic. His desertion broke the core of resistance in the others. Joseph Kuhr refused to give in and was arrested. Only about twenty persons tried to elude Delphini's pressure by escaping repeatedly to Kreuz. They felt too weak to remain firm at home in the midst of the general surrender and betrayal.

The community at Kreuz tried to support this little group as well as they could each time they were taken back to Alwinz against their will. Delphini stopped at nothing to drive them into the Catholic church. He had the strongest resisters thrown into prison. The others, mostly women, young people, and children, were placed under military guard at Alwinz and forced by beatings to go to church until they weakened and renounced their faith.

Three of the prisoners remained unshakably faithful through all the persecution. They were Joseph Kuhr, Johannes Stahl, and Lorenz Tschetter. They were the only ones at Alwinz who could be neither cajoled nor forced into deserting their faith. The rest submitted.

But most of the small group from Alwinz who had previously held with the Kreuz community found that their consciences gave them no rest. At the first opportunity they escaped again to Kreuz. Since they felt the deepest remorse for their unfaithfulness, the community accepted them again, especially as they declared themselves ready to remain firm and endure everything along with the Kreuz people. And they kept to this decision in spite of severe trials later on. In fact, the wretched alternation of forced returns and fresh escapes was repeated several times while they remained in Transylvania.

The two older prisoners, Joseph Kuhr and Johannes Stahl, were finally deported for their stubbornness. The authorities still hoped that the younger man, Lorenz Tschetter, could be made more pliable in prison. He was at last set free and rejoined the community at Kreuz. Elias Wipf, one of the recanters among the Alwinz prisoners, repented of his disloyalty. After his release he was taken into the community again.

And so it happened that a small remnant of the Alwinz group joined the Carinthians at Kreuz shortly before they all left Transylvania. Aside from a few who later came to Russia, the others from Alwinz were lost to the cause of brotherly life.

VIII

Since the Lutherans, for all the pressure they had applied, had not been able to make the Kreuz community yield, they finally gave up the struggle and left the field to the Catholics. As long as Delphini had been concentrating his attention on the Alwinz group, he had left the Carinthians in peace. But now that the majority of the Alwinz people

had turned Catholic and the rest had joined the Kreuz community in spite of every effort to stop them, Delphini concentrated his attack on Kreuz. He had the bruderhof occupied by a hundred soldiers and kept the fugitives from Alwinz under surveillance in the village churchyard. But his brutal attempts to convert the Kreuz people were completely frustrated. So in the end he made a journey to Vienna and returned to Transylvania in the beginning of 1767 with new authorizations from the empress.

Delphini's clever plan for the complete and swift destruction of the new community was soon made known to the brothers at Kreuz. All the adult members were to be thrown into prison and forced to recant. If any one refused to submit, he was to be exiled. The children were to be taken away from their parents for ever and given a Catholic upbringing in the Hermannstadt orphanage. If this plan had been carried out, it would have meant the end of the new Hutterian beginning. The Kreuz people knew this perfectly well. What could they do in this desperate situation?

There seemed to be no possibility of emigrating. The authorities in Hermannstadt would refuse permission, just as they had at the beginning of the persecution in Alwinz. Was there still some way to save the community?

Matters had reached this pitch of urgency when the two exiles Joseph Kuhr and Johannes Stahl suddenly appeared in Kreuz. They had come back secretly to restore connections with Alwinz and Kreuz. In Alwinz they could find no one who would share their convictions. And so they came to Kreuz. When they heard of Delphini's plan they advised immediate flight. During their wanderings in Wallachia they had seen good places in which to settle. Under Turkish administration there was freedom of religion; the little church would not be hindered from living according to its faith. The community decided to risk fleeing over the barren Carpathian Mountains. Almost miraculously, the captives from Alwinz were released at the last minute and could go with them.

After an adventurous and perilous flight, the little group of sixty-seven souls arrived in Wallachia before the winter began and settled in the neighbourhood of Bucharest. They were not to stay long. Under the pressure of the Russo-Turkish war the little community was once again in danger. Then in 1770 the Russian field marshal Romyantsov invited them to settle on his lands in south Russian Vishenka. The brothers decided to accept. From Vishenka various mission journeys were made by Joseph Kuhr, Johannes Stahl, Johannes Waldner and others. Through their efforts about fifty more persons from the former Hutterian communities in upper Hungary and a few from Transylvania came to join the community in Russia.

IX

It is now two hundred years since the Carinthians made their historic journey to Transylvania. In our time the same point is again at issue: community based on unity in the spirit. This is what the Carinthians struggled for and won in Kreuz and then kept faithfully for so many years in spite of persecution, flight, imprisonment, and spiritual perils. Once again there is an urgent need for the mission and enlistment of all who are called to the people of God, not only among the descendants of the old Hutterian communities, but in all nations, groups, and movements of our time.

This requires a spiritual renewal and joyful obedience in fulfilling the commandment to love. Love for God and our fellows is the life-blood of true community. It gives us strength to pass beyond narrow, outmoded forms and traditions and reach the people of our time, a time of highly developed science and engineering with an increasing idolization of man and his achievements, an age in which mankind threatens to destroy itself because it has too much power and not enough love.

The community of unity in the Spirit means a revolution; it is the overturning of all existing conditions; where God rules there is an end of human domination.

But this revolution is possible only if we plant ourselves firmly on the foundation of the truth as Jesus revealed it and as it was put into practice in the original church. Without this foundation the house of community cannot stand. It will collapse under the storm of the powers that rage around it.

The first Baptizer communities, the bruderhofs of the Moravian period, and those of the Carinthian new beginning and later times were all possible only through the outpouring of the creative and unifying spirit of Pentecost, in the same way that this spirit bound the original church at Jerusalem together into *one* body. Community can never be called to life or kept alive through external laws and traditions. To follow the spirit does not mean laws, it means building on the foundations of Jesus. On this foundation a structure can be raised that will be visible from far off and open to all earnest seekers throughout the world.

Trouble, persecution, and struggle will not be spared us if we go the way of love and unity. As he did for the Carinthians, God will also give us the power to be loyal if we must suffer for the sake of his great and holy cause.

Do we hear Jesus' words to Jerusalem as though they were meant for us: How often would I have gathered you beneath my wings as a hen gathers her chicks, but you would not? E. C. H. ARNOLD.

PARAGUAYAN CAMEOS

BROTHERS FOR A DAY

There is a new roof on the hospital at Primavera. New cedar shingles shine through the trees that surround the long, low, white building. But to us who live here and for our neighbours for six miles around it is more than a shelter from rain and storm, it is tangible evidence of something we had delight in doing together.

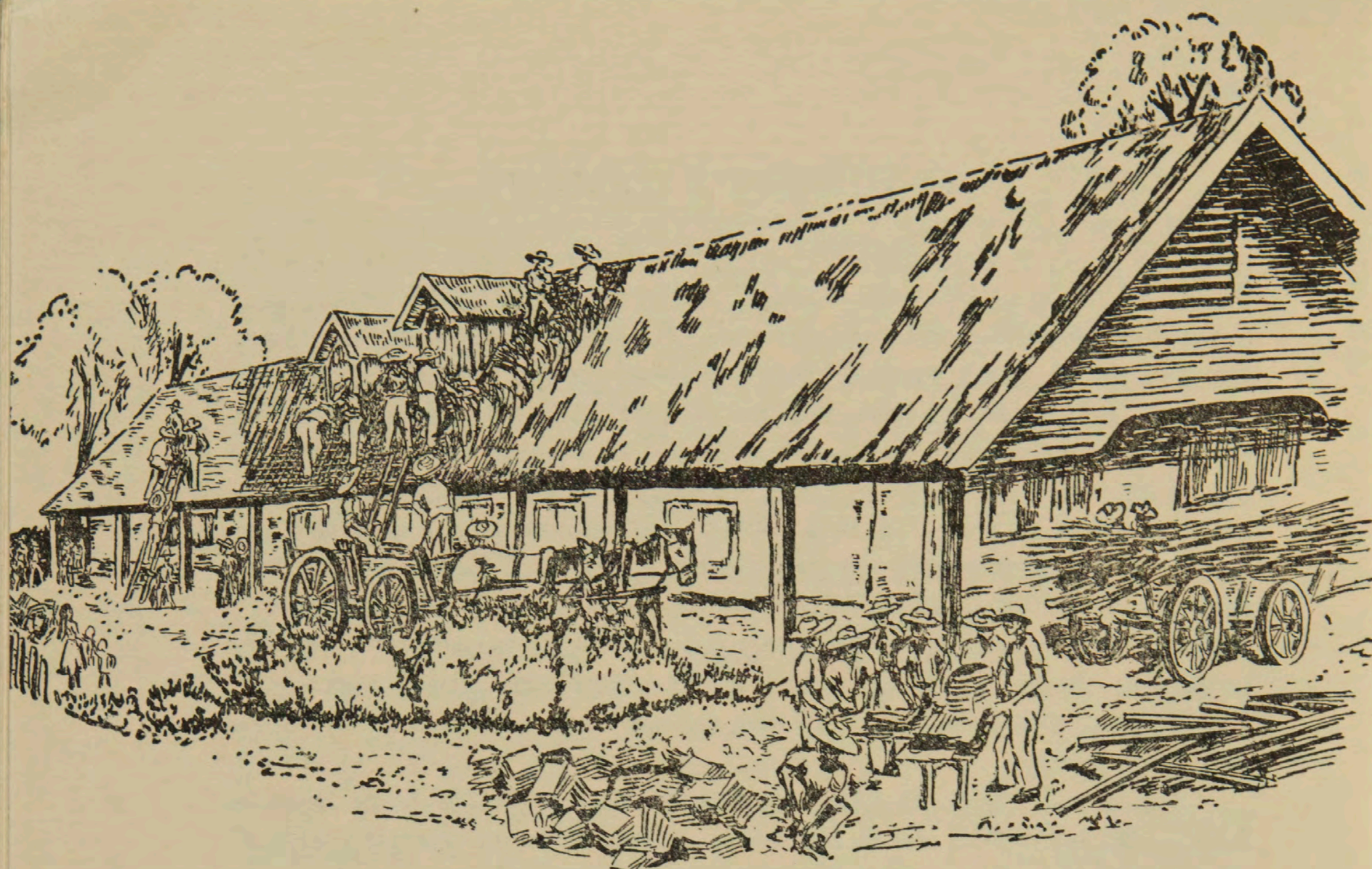
The straw thatch on the high-pitched roof and hanging over the eaves was picturesque, but as a roof it was quite inadequate. The grass that had been cut bundle by bundle from our land five years ago had rotted and water showered through on to the verandah whenever it rained. We decided that this time it had to be wooden shingles. So seventeen thousand shingles and dowels were made in our sawmill. However, to get the old roof off and the new one on was more than we could manage.

It was with joy we heard of twenty young people from Buenos Aires who wanted to come for a week's stay with us. Just the sort of crew to tackle the roofing job enthusiastically! The next day our crackling radio from Asunción reported that only thirteen were coming and some of them were girls; the next day it was two boys and one girl, and then the next day there was none.

Every day Paraguayans come to our gate to see the doctor, to buy mandioca, maté, or meat, and to work in our fields and saw-mill. Roland had an idea that they might enjoy helping us put on the roof. Most of them are very poor: they have a patch of land, a one-room shack, a pot to boil mandioca, a poncho, and possibly a poor horse. Roland visited four villages, speaking in each to a prominent man who promised to get the word around, as well as to lend us a wagon and horses to cart the old thatch away.

The date was fixed and the news was spread by word of mouth. Here we have no telephones, radio, newspapers, or TV – only horses and oxen to travel over rutted dirt roads. One neighbour went from house to house in his village saying that the *barbudos* (bearded ones) wanted a new roof on 'our' hospital and wanted them to give a day's work.

In the cold and rainy week preceding the great day five of us got busy carting shingles, tools, equipment, and even the firewood for roasting an ox. We built work benches for the men who would be putting dowels into the shingles, we tore down fences around the hospital so that wagons could come and go and as many as sixty men could trample around freely. At the last minute Olive, armed with a spade, evacuated the geranium beds that would have been in the centre of things. Then the sun began to shine. We ripped off a section of thatch, put some laths in place, and were ready for what the next day might bring.



At six-thirty some of the brothers were on the job and then a trickle of neighbours began. A wagon drawn by two small Paraguayan horses was carefully guided to just the right place under the eaves to catch the old straw torn from the beams. ('This stuff is brittle and once it gets on the ground no tool yet devised can pick it up.') Five minutes later it was filled just as another one arrived.

At first the neighbours came a few at a time but before long 'Ola, Pablo!', 'Buenos dias', 'Hello!', 'Wie geht's?', 'Mbaeichapa?' and other greetings of genuine goodwill made a continuous chorus. Soon it seemed that a steady stream of men came walking up the path from the gate. Two more wagons came with twenty men. And still they came until there were almost a hundred.

We had jobs at hand for each one of them. It began to look as though two days' work would be done in one. Everywhere there was movement and sound: banging of nails in laths, pounding of wooden dowels into shingles, shouting of wagon drivers, clattering of shingles accidentally dropped on the new roof, and through it all the mingling of Spanish, English, German, and Guarani.

As everything fell into place we felt ourselves caught up in the vigorous swing of the work: Roland directing the various jobs, handing out hammers, saws, nails, and pliers; eight men nailing down the laths; another troop laying the shingles that were relayed in a steady rhythm from wagon to dowel bench, from dowel bench to the men standing below the building, then tossed expertly to another standing on a scaffolding at the edge of the eaves, who threw them to the men laying

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them; then on the other side the merry stripping off of the old thatch into wagons that came and went at regular five-minute intervals.

And a part of the movement was a squad filling tables with platters of newly made sausage, piles of fresh brown bread and pots of hot sweet maté. Wolfgang's trumpeting changed the tempo, whoops and Paraguayan wood-calls filled the air, as men clambered down and helped themselves to a snack. Every one sat on the grass or stood in small groups chatting and here and there men took out their *guampas* and *bombillas** for *terraré* and as it went from one drinker to another the spirit of goodwill rose higher. Old friends of the three doctors were among the crowd and there was joyful hand-shaking and recalling of some illness defeated or some ancient wound made well again. Here and there was an old couple or a woman and child who had not come to work but simply to be a part of the day's activities.

Soon there was a spontaneous motion back to the job. It was ten-thirty and already a third of the two days' work was finished. One end of the roof was actually covered and the clean-up crew was taking over. Two more hours and once again the trumpet sounded and *asado* (barbecue or beef roasted on a spit) was distributed in great hunks on sticks from which the men hacked smaller pieces. Again they squatted on the ground in small circles under the young trees. Bowls of boiled mandioca and jugs of orange juice were near at hand. We sat and talked and ate together for half an hour and then went back to the work.

We were all used to our jobs by then and the tempo of the whole was stepped up. By five-thirty the ridge boards were finished off and one by one the men left off. Everything was done; not everything was perfectly aligned, yet all was watertight.

At six we had a cinema. Some of the women and children came along in the late afternoon in time for it. The film was poor, the machine not first-class, the sound apparatus noisy, but no one minded very much. When it was over several of the brothers brought in the tables and we had supper together finishing off with cake and a Paraguayan drink. As we lingered around the tables, Jeanette played one or two Swiss tunes on her accordion. Then Patricio Valenzuela tuned up his guitar and sang for us. Speeches began. The climax came when Dr. Cyril stood on a table and spoke in Guarani – the native Indian language with familiar vowels, unpronounceable consonants, and strange combinations of syllables. He had worked on it all afternoon but even so he stumbled a bit. Yet he managed to get through to them very well the joy we felt, not only for a hard job well done but for the fellowship we had enjoyed in doing it together. One after another the men stood up with hands outstretched towards him and thunderous applause followed. Juan Dama

* A cow-horn drinking cup and a pipe for drinking. Yerba maté covered with cold water is sucked through the pipe.

Velasquez answered in good Spanish, saying that in their hearts they were glad for this day, not only because they were with us but because for the first time in history four villages had carried out a project together. It was a good feeling to be brothers even for a day. At that there was a great handshaking and '*Buen camino!*' – 'A good road home!'.
HARRY FOSSARD.

'DEAR CHILDREN'

This extract is taken from a letter by a Wheathill school-teacher who transferred to the Primavera school last summer.

It is quite hard for us to realize that Christmas is approaching because the weather and the scenery are so unlike all that we have ever associated with Christmas. No nice frosty mornings, no red and gold leaves whirling in the wind and crackling underfoot, no wet green hedges hung with cobwebs, no pools of morning mist and pale sunshine, no beautiful silent autumn twilight, no dripping muddy lanes, no slush or snow; just shimmering heat, hot north wind, electric storms and unbelievable torrents of rain – but mostly heat, just heat. The lanes and paths are all of sand, and at midday this is almost too hot to walk on with bare feet; the trees are billowing in every shade of green; sunflowers, zinnias, morning-glories, and other brilliant flowers blossom around the houses; the touch of cold water when we can get to it is wonderful.

The mornings are beautiful, like an English summer noon, and there are actually thrushes in the trees around our house, and a little bird like a wren has built its nest under our eaves and we can hear the baby birds chirping. The pampas is like a green lake, and behind it rises the darker green of the forest. But later, all these voices are quiet as the sun grows fiercer, and many flowers which budded and blossomed at sunrise, fade and droop by mid-morning. Now we can hear only the cries and squawks of the huge wicked toucans who fly around robbing the nests of the little birds, and the brilliant crimson parrots: but by midday even these are quiet, and it is so hot that one is glad to lie on a cool white sheet in a room which has been closed against the sun since early morning – and pleasantly do nothing, or sleep. It is too hot to talk, too hot for babies to cry or birds to sing or cattle to low or dogs to bark – only occasionally a donkey, grazing under the trees, will bray a great fed-up 'Hee-haw!' as though he thinks we should all be up and doing. In the afternoons the school children often play in the shade of the school wood, or sometimes go to the *repressa* – a kind of pond meant for an *estancia* watering place and very good for swimming. Then the early evenings are nice and cool again and it is pleasant to wander around talking to people or picking bitter oranges for juice-making.

It is dark before supper at 7 p.m., and suddenly one is conscious of a sound which goes on and on without stopping all through the night

— a concert of cicadas, crickets, humming insects, crying frogs, and so on, which together make a continuous high-pitched note. This is not at all disturbing, in fact one gets so used to it that one doesn't notice it — but it's there all the time. Then the fireflies come out and dance and dart all around, just like flying green sparks, and the moths — oh, how beautiful they are! One evening a huge moth came, attracted by the light of my lantern; it was dark brown with a wing span of six or seven inches: I thought at first it was a small bat. . . There are many smaller and more beautiful ones — one evening I counted twenty-one different varieties fluttering around our electric light. The butterflies also are very beautiful — wonderful colours and shapes.

We haven't seen many snakes yet, and only one poisonous one. Maureen deals with all the snakes and takes their poison to use to treat people who have been bitten by a snake; sometimes very rare ones are found and then these are sent to a research place in Brazil. . .

A week has gone by since I started this letter and now we have just celebrated the first Sunday of Advent and found it a very wonderful experience. Our house is hung with branches of greenery and stars so that in spite of the climate we can feel that Christmas is coming.

AUDREY WILLIAMS.

WHERE is home?

Where willows gather on the crumbling bank
and water rustles in the roots
and swallows skim.

The elm uprushing flings its falling green;
the still pine stands against the west.

Home is not only these.

The pink cloud of the flowering tree
across the 'camp'
far, in the ridge of woods,
struck by the dying sunlight,
the lapacho;
and the river parrots
slowly flying
like herons.

Neither is strange,
not now
when the heart has followed the curve of the world
to find the same welcome.

J.T.C.

NEWS OF THE BRUDERHOF COMMUNITIES

This has been a time of growth in our communities. It means a stretching of all our resources, physical and spiritual, but also a great joy. It is possible here only to summarize developments for which we should like to have had more space.

NORTH AMERICA

The *Woodcrest* community in New York State has sent a Christmas letter to their friends telling the chief events of the year. The community has grown to a total of more than 150 people, and has had to expand its facilities as fast as possible. One large house has been built, five small cottages moved to the property, and the former carriage house remodelled to make the central building of the community – a dining- and meeting-room, kitchen and social room, as well as apartments on the second floor. There have been many live contacts with other communities, with Friends, Church of the Brethren, and Mennonites, and with special conferences. Several short work camps have been held, and guests have come to help in the building up and to experience the life. The Christmas letter lists those who have come and gone between Woodcrest and Primavera, showing how people are used where they are most needed, and how exchanges have taken place between newer and old members wherever special tasks have required it.

With the establishment of a Bruderhof in North America, we looked forward to a closer relationship with the Hutterian communities which exist in the western part of the United States and Canada. This relationship had been initiated in 1930 when Eberhard Arnold visited each of the colonies and brought the Society of Brothers into close fellowship with the Hutterian brothers. This fellowship continued through the years, as the Bruderhof was driven from Germany, and later emigrated to Paraguay. Hutterian brothers were present at the Rhön bruderhof in Germany when Hitler's Gestapo took over the hof and drove the men, women and children off. Even in Paraguay, there were visits between the two groups.

Woodcrest Bruderhof was about eight months old when the first Hutterian brothers visited. Moved by the experience of men and women of the world responding to a life of brotherhood and coming from all parts of the country and from all walks of life to share in this life, the brothers promised to send help for the building up at Woodcrest. Two months later, five young, skilled carpenters arrived from communities in North Dakota and Manitoba. Two were from the Forest River Colony in North Dakota and it was in this colony that a struggle among the Hutterians between those who wanted community based on the spirit of love and those who demanded community based on law and

tradition became focused. The experience at Woodcrest deepened the longing for closer union, and shortly after the carpenters returned, the invitation came for members of the Bruderhof to visit Forest River. This continuing and deepening contact finally resulted in the majority of the members of the Forest River Colony asking to unite with the Society of Brothers. There have been, since that time, exchanges of families between Forest River and our communities at Rifton and in England and Paraguay.

The following are extracts from a letter by a young Hutterian girl at Forest River to girls at Wheathill :

'We feel indeed very close to you, although miles apart. The coming of the Johnson family (from Wheathill) seemed to link us still closer to you in England and Germany. They are a great help to us in every way. Eleanor and I (are) with the kindergarten group, (and) I certainly appreciate her experience with children. We had no kindergarten the first few weeks, . . . but now that the room over the kitchen is fixed up and painted, things are beginning to settle, and the children are getting used to a schedule also. . . . The children have quite a time with the English language. . . . Many things just aren't organized here yet. . . . But we feel so happy and thankful that at last we're on the way to improvement. This way of life is really more wonderful than one could have imagined before. . . .

'Already we have quite a large youth group. . . . Last Sunday was the first day of Advent so we learned a few songs and without telling the grown-ups, we went singing to every door, early in the morning. It was bitterly cold and quite a big snow-storm, but all enjoyed it, even though our fingers and toes were numb with cold. It was a new experience for both young and old. . . . We love the songs you will also be singing now (and) plan to learn many more.

'The love-meal at night celebrating the beginning of Advent was something new for most of us. We decorated the dining-room with ever-green boughs, - and the tables with white table-cloths, green branches, and red candles looked marvellous. I'll never forget that evening! The warm glow of the candles, the beautiful songs, and all that people expressed in thankfulness for being able to be together from so many parts of the world in brotherhood experiencing our first Advent is really something never to be forgotten.'

SOUTH AMERICA

The *Primavera* community wrote in December that the mandioca crop, the staple Paraguayan diet, had almost entirely failed after the drought last year. Waggons were coming by night to our fields and mandioca disappearing, to be sold - we heard - at exorbitant prices in the surrounding villages. To meet the need we began to give more to our workers for their families and offered also to sell to the poor people around, although it meant cutting into our stock for the future. In

addition to the mandioca shortage, wheat was not available for a time, and bread queues were forming in Asunción. Not only was the river so low that it was impossible for most ships to carry wheat from Argentina to Paraguay, but shipments were also held up during economic reorganization following Perón's resignation. (In Asunción the Bruderhof Centre received no allocation of flour for November and only half the usual ration in December.) Later letters tell that the Primavera bakery could provide some biscuits for Christmas, but the food shortage will continue to be felt for the next several months. One encouraging feature is that the Mennonite Central Committee is planning to send help to Paraguay from the United States.

A conference of representatives from all the communities is planned for the early part of the year, to discuss the allocation of personnel and the longer-range programme for our rapidly increasing task, especially as it affects the points where we shall put our emphasis, both geographically and spiritually.

Three families are already scheduled to go from Primavera to Forest River and two couples from Primavera to the Sinntal-Bruderhof in Germany to help in the building up in these two places.

This past year has seen the purchase of a new house in *Asunción*. So far it has not proved possible to give up one of the two houses side by side which had been our previous centre, for the coming and going of large groups has increased rather than diminished. At Asunción 20 of our students and trainees are living in a group running up to nearly 50, counting guests passing through.

In Montevideo, Uruguay, at our little centre of *El Arado* an interesting contact has been growing with a group calling themselves the 'Canuterros'. These young idealists have moved together into a house in the city and are beginning to experience the practical problems of community life. Lately there has been a temporary interchange of members between the communities, and previously each group had helped the other on special work projects. It is hoped that the political changes in Argentina will make travel back and forth across the mouth of the La Plata more possible than has been the case during recent years.

EUROPE

Wheathill has had increasing contacts with people in England and on the Continent. After the international work camp reported in Vol. III, No. 3, came trips to the International Fellowship of Reconciliation Conference at Vaumarcus, Switzerland and on to Geneva, Bern and Zürich, where two members of our community talked with some twenty representatives of international and Swiss organizations, as well as personal friends and friends of the Bruderhof. Two other members attended the Universal Esperanto Congress at Bologna and visited the

Agape Community in Italy. Speaking trips have been made and younger members of the community have attended conferences.

Over the New Year weekend Wheathill Youth had a conference of their own at the old farmhouse of Cleeton Court, with Fred Moorhouse, assistant secretary of the British F.O.R., as guest speaker. He presented a startling picture of what the rapidly increasing gap between population and production is likely to mean for the future, and drove home the contrast between our own relatively comfortable lives and the misery of the world's suffering. Although fewer came to the conference than expected, the group felt that the discussions which followed benefited both the Wheathill Youth, who attended in force, and those who came to us. One result will be increased co-operation with the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Plans are being made for a second conference, this time to include adults, over the Whitsun weekend.

The long-awaited electrification of the Upper Bromdon Farm and of the 'home', workshops, and new school buildings is at last within sight. A power-house has been erected, and current is now being supplied to both farms for lighting and power. All the work of planning and installation has been carried out by electricians within the community, one of whom came from the United States to Wheathill partly with this project in view. Help and technical advice have been sought, and given freely by experts connected with every part of the work. The materialization of this long-dreamed-of development has been made possible by a number of manufacturers who have supplied materials and accessories which were needed.

Six Months at Hohenstein. In Vol. III, No. 2, Winifred Hildel described our renewed start in Germany, in mountainous Bavaria. The bare facts of the summer's experience at Hohenstein are summarized in these extracts from a report by Bram Burger, who was house-father there during most of this period.

'All in all it can be said that it was a good time. . . . Of the over one hundred guests who were there for shorter or longer times, attracted by our common life, most came only during the short vacation period, while through the early summer the numbers averaged between five and ten. In August, however, we often had so many guests that it was impossible to house them all and we had to accommodate some with farmers and in the lodge belonging to the Franconian Alp Club.

'In addition to the household life we had further contact with the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life in Nuremberg and Augsburg, among whom we found a true striving towards life in community. We had also some connection with the Sisters of Mary at Darmstadt, an order of women set up on an interdenominational basis. The little student group of the Nuremberg Academic Volunteer Corps which

spent a weekend with us is clearly trying to break through the traditional forms.

'Most of our guests came from different parts of West Germany, a few from East Germany. The people from abroad, some twenty in number, came principally from Holland, with individuals from Austria, England, and the United States.

'Every morning before breakfast a quiet gathering took place. When the dining-room got too small for our growing circle we took our meals – some twenty or thirty of us – on the roomy landing. After the common meal, work began. In addition to making building improvements for the house, and working in the garden to produce vegetables for our own kitchen, we took work with farmers in the neighbourhood. Apart from this, the women members of the household and our guests had their hands full with the housework and the care of children.

'There was a strong youthful element in the group and much singing and laughter, but there were also serious talks. The Sunday morning gathering usually lasted until shortly before the mid-day meal and several evenings were spent considering the many questions which our common life brought up among our guests.

'We are grateful that about a quarter of those who visited us were earnestly concerned with whether they should go this way with us. With some the decision is already made, while others want first to visit us at Wheathill for a longer period.

'The last big event of the summer was the annual conference of the *Freideutsche Bewegung* (Free German Movement). Years ago, after the first world war, we had much contact with this part of the Youth Movement. About sixty came to the conference and we were able to hear from them about the problems of modern Germany and to share with them our message.'

This same week-end our member Else Ingold passed into eternity. During the last weeks of her life, in spite of increasingly serious illness, she continued to share joyously in the experiences of the Bruderhof's re-establishment in Germany.

In October we found that it would be too difficult to continue at Hohenstein for the winter, and the move was made to Bad Brückenau.

Three Months at the Sinnthal-Bruderhof. Llewelyn Harries writes that Christmas 1955 had a special significance for the circle of twenty-five people gathered at the new Bruderhof Centre at Bad Brückenau in Germany. Some fifteen members and longer-term guests had been joined by ten who had come for the holidays, including four of our girls in training. There was a strong realization that here, nineteen years after the last Christmas celebration at the Rhönbruderhof (which was confiscated by the Nazis a few months later), the season was again



being celebrated by a Bruderhof group in the land where the community had started.

The previous report ends in October at the point where it was found necessary to close the house at Hohenstein for the winter. Just then came an offer of the 'Sinnthahof', Bad Brückenau, a property which was once used as a community school* and later as a guest-house. The small estate consists of a complex of buildings and twenty acres of land.

Some of the buildings are badly in need of repair, and plans for their renovation have been submitted to the local authorities for approval. These were worked out by a Dutch architect whom we were happy to welcome with his wife and three small children in November. It is hoped that reconstruction of the roof of one house and the extension of the upper storey to provide dormitory accommodation will be finished by early autumn. Other rooms have to be adapted for use as workshops, kitchen, and laundry, while day-room space is needed for the smaller children. A considerable section of the buildings is more than 150 years old and requires new floors and other repairs. Three young men have been engaged in preparatory work and more help will be welcomed at a slightly later date.

A garden is being planned, and we intend to begin with poultry-keeping. It is expected that a source of income will be handicrafts, for which there should be a good sale to visitors at the neighbouring spa.

* The school left Hitler Germany and is now located – as the Windsor Mount School – at Lenox, Massachusetts, U.S.A. Interestingly enough, children from this school helped in a work camp at Woodcrest last summer. Ed.

We were greatly encouraged at the response to our start at Hohenstein and we have received similar encouragement from friends all over Germany who welcome the developments at the Sinntal-Bruderhof. We look forward to a year of activity in building, in welcoming guests and co-workers, and in undertaking speaking tours. We were happy that Emmy Arnold, widow of Eberhard Arnold, pioneer of our movement, was able to share in the new beginning on her first visit to Germany since 1937.

As at all our Bruderhof communities, visitors are welcome at the Sinntal-Bruderhof.* We ask our friends to give support to this venture of practical brotherhood which will help to prove that men of all nations can live and work together in peace and harmony.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

The last selection in the series from Eberhard Arnold's writings on the Sermon on the Mount shows his imaginative power and spiritual insight in characterizing the light and salt as qualities both of the individual Christian and of the Christian community.

'Can community be renewed from within?' is answered by E. C. H. Arnold's study of the Hutterian revival in 1755. We believe that this will interest not only students of the Anabaptist movement but many people concerned with true life in community.

We are happy to print selections from a small book by Bishop Berggrav of Norway, *Solitude and Community in Christian Life*, which points up the importance of life in real community from the point of view of a church leader. The son of a pastor, Eivind Berggrav first planned to study as an engineer, later became a folk high school teacher, then pastor, prison chaplain, bishop in the far north where he travelled with reindeer over snow covered wastes, and finally leading bishop of Norway at Oslo. When the Nazis entered the country he soon took a clear stand against the government. The church united against the new menace, and the bishops, with the backing of pastors, teachers, and churches, refused the demands of the German authorities. Berggrav was imprisoned. When he came out, his health impaired, he at once entered on an inquiry designed to insure that the church should not again be brought into a false situation by its alliance with the state.

The climate and background of nature which play such a part in our life in Paraguay are described in a lively letter by Audrey Williams to the school children at Wheathill. How our hospital was re-roofed with the help of our Paraguayan neighbours is a story which might have been called 'The First Paraguayan Workcamp'.

* We ask that those who wish to stay the night let us know beforehand, since accommodation is still very limited.

Sinntal-Bruderhof in Germany

'I am so glad that the bruderhof cause has found a place once again in Germany. May your work continue to grow! How necessary for that spirit which lives in the bruderhof communities to be here!'

'How glad I was to hear that you were now in the southern Rhön area at the Sinntal-Bruderhof. . . . I hope you will remain faithful to your pacifist convictions.'

These, and many other such expressions, have greeted the re-establishment of a bruderhof community in Germany. We too feel that, just at this hour, we should be there to live and speak about a life of brotherhood and peace.

To American and English friends who may be travelling on the Continent this summer the small group in Germany extends a hearty welcome to visit the Sinntal-Bruderhof and, if possible, lend a hand in the work. (This new centre is located at Bad Brückenau about 75 miles north-east of Frankfurt and not far from Fulda).

All beginnings are difficult and it is at such times that help is doubly welcome. If you would like to support this new venture please send your contribution either to 'Woodcrest' in the U.S.A. or 'Wheathill' in England, and mark it 'Sinntal-Bruderhof Account'.

know beforehand,

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The Addresses of the Bruderhof Communities

ENGLAND

Society of Brothers
Bromdon, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

U.S.A.

Society of Brothers
Woodcrest, Rifton, New York State

Forest River Community
Fordville, North Dakota

PARAGUAY

Sociedad de Hermanos
Primavera, Alto Paraguay

Sociedad de Hermanos
Fulgencio R. Moreno 132, Asunción

URUGUAY

Sociedad de Hermanos
Casilla de Correos 1269, Montevideo

GERMANY

Sinntal-Bruderhof
(13a) Bad Brückenau