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Dr. Cyril Davies has a little joke with one of his at the Primavera Hospital situated in the middle of Paraguay

HOSPITAL HEROES SEEK AID

IN THE HEART OF PARAGUAY, situated in an undeveloped area about a 100 miles north-east of Asuncion, exists a brotherhood which is trying to meet the needs of a very poor and backward population of 30,000 Paraguayans.

Mr Harry Magee of this brotherhood known as the Society of Brothers, a group of 1,200 people of many nationalities, with branches in many countries, told The Herald a graphic story of heroism and of faith, of how about 600 people of at least seventeen different nationalities living together as brothers had established the Primavera Hospital and is giving medical treatment to thousands of poverty-stricken, treating illnesses and diseases ranging from hookworm, tuberculosis, leishmaniasis, leprosy and post-natal tetanus infection.

"The Primavera Hospital has grown out of the need in Paraguay for an effective medical service in an area where the impoverished population struggles against disease and injury," said Mr. Magee.

It was during the early years of the second world war that a group of 350 people, many of them refugees from Nazi persecution, emigrated from the Cotswold Bruderhof in England to the central part of South America to continue their community life.

On a cattle ranch at Primavera the beginning was made; the first building was put up after the materials had been cut from the forest. Three doctors who had joined the Bruderhof only shortly before departure from England, began their medical work in one end of the building.

Unaccustomed to the primitive and sub-tropical conditions, many of the community members fell ill in the first few weeks. But as word about the doctors spread from one village to another, the Paraguayan patients soon began to come from the surrounding country.

The Primavera Hospital

had begun its work. Although the hospital is now equipped with thirty-five beds, an operating theatre, X-ray room, laboratory, maternity block and isolation house, as well as kitchen and laundry, the demand for medical service is greater than the facilities and the personnel can cope with.

The three doctors are Cyril Davies M. B. (Cardiff); Ruthland M. B. (London) and Margaret Stern M. R. C. S. (London). This little band are finding the going hard like

Schweitzer's hospital in Lambarene, they begin to feel the need of all those who can help. Their practical needs are many: sheets, runner sheets, mosquito netting, specific surgical instruments, drugs and the replacement of worn-out and obsolete material and equipment.

That is the story of this band of heroic pioneers, doing God's work. Among them are English, French, Germans, Russians, Americans, Swiss, Swedes, Spaniards, Chinese and an Irishman.

Buildings and equipment at Primavera are still inadequate, and the annual budget is meager.

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Photos by Colin Sharp, Montevideo, Uruguay