

Mennonite Weekly 5  
Review

Thursday, December 10, 1953

## HERE AND THERE

Hutterites at Primavera, Alto Paraguay, have decided to start a small Bruderhof Community in the United States. Hans-Hermann Arnold and Gertrud Arnold have been sent to examine settlement possibilities in California and other U. S. areas. Founder of the modern Bruderhof Community in 1920 was Eberhard Arnold, of Germany, who died in 1935.

## South America

Sociedad de Hermanos  
Primavera, Alto Paraguay  
Paraguay  
July 25.

Dear Dorothy,

I have spoken about the Catholic Worker during my visits to the three villages here and each time have resolved to write to you, and now that I'm laid up for a few days with an infected foot, I have the chance.

It certainly is true that the "Worker" is the most appreciated of all the literature that comes here; people were very interested in what I had to say. I have never been in a group that seems to understand and live the ideas that the Catholic Worker represents as they do here. They have an open door to anyone who wants to come here and live with them and during the 31 years the Community has been in existence, this faith has been tested by severe poverty many times.

Poverty is very much a part of life here, partly because the "open door" brings in people unable to produce, to work, and also because they feel a strong urge to strain their resources to the limit that brothers may be sent forth to bring the news of this way of life to others and to bring the Community in contact with the outside world. The food is very simple, mainly starches with a fair amount of meat since it is the cheapest form of protein here. Houses are made of wood frame with clay walls and floor and thatched roof. They are simple and very beautiful.

You would also be interested in the sort of anarchism that prevails here. Not quite the same as at the Worker but there is a great openness to the "Spirit" which means that each occasion is treated as separate and there is no precedent or code of laws for dealing with trouble or various aspects of life. There are very few forms. The length of time in the novitiate depends upon the inner development of the novice and his reaching clarity on various things which the Community feel important: that he is called of God to this life of brotherhood and Community, that he is willing to accept and give brotherly admonition (there is no criticism of a person behind his back). It may be six weeks or over a year but the decision is mainly that of the novice combined with the observation and counsel of the community.

The Love which binds the members of the Brotherhood together is not a sentimental love but a strong and profound union of men in Christ. There is a very real understanding that it is only by God's grace that they are able to continue in this way. And this Love has united people of all kinds from former tramps and alcoholics to intellectuals, ministers, socialites, businessmen, people with mental troubles, farmers and working men. It is a beautiful thing to live in such a unity.

Love,

HECTOR BLACK.