

Brazil News



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Editorial

Five Brothers

Thus goes the tale:

Many years ago in a remote mountain village there lived five brothers—Abe, Ben, Cal, Dan and Ely. Hard workers and deep thinkers, these five men were markedly different from their fellow peasants, who believed that each generation was destined to be a photocopy of the previous. For the inhabitants of Peehs On—that’s the name of the village—this static mentality was most unfortunate.

Due to their elevation, mountain villages are usually gelid. Winters are especially severe. While Peehs On was no exception to the rule, its villagers (and those in surrounding villages) had to endure an additional hardship. They lacked the raw materials to make suitable winter clothing. The rocky soil was unsuitable for planting cotton, but did produce lush meadows that would have made excellent pasturage for sheep.

Sheep. No one in the village of Peehs On had ever seen a sheep. In fact, most didn’t even know such an animal existed.

Because of their isolated position, there were no roads connecting Peehs On and neighboring villages with civilization. Only narrow trails provided communication between villages. Thus it is understandable that on the rare occasions when a vendor or traveler found his way into the area, there was always a great commotion. His words, his gestures, his clothes, his belongings, were all conversational fodder for some months after.

The five brothers were just as curious as the other villagers. But they were more than curious; they were observant and inquisitive. And what especially caught their attention were the clothes these occasional travelers wore—not so much the pattern or style, but the fact that they obviously offered far greater protection against the cold than their own clothes.

Questions would be asked: “Where do you get these clothes? How are they made?”

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The answer would invariably be: “Oh, these clothes are made from wool...”

“What is wool?”

“It’s what we get from sheep...”

Sheep?! That was a word the villagers had never heard before. Seeing the bewildered look on their faces, the traveler explained, “You know, sheep. We shear them, card the wool, weave it into cloth, which we use for making clothes, coats, covers and many other items.”

The villagers didn’t understand what the traveler was saying, but were too timid to ask questions. Nor were they overly interested. A few months later they had forgotten all about sheep...

That is, all but the five brothers. Often when they would get together to sit around the fire on cold winter evenings, their conversation would drift to sheep. Invariably one of them would ask, “What do you suppose ailed us to not find out more about sheep? Who knows, maybe we could raise sheep here...” This idea became almost an obsession to the five brothers. Somehow they must find out more about sheep.

Then one summer day, several years later, a different kind of traveler came to the village. He called himself a missionary. No one knew what a missionary was either. But during the ten days he lived in their village they saw and heard much of him.

After securing a small room, the missionary began going from house to house, talking with the villagers. He would introduce himself, engage in a bit of small chat, and then state his business: “I come from afar and bring you very good news. Tomorrow morning (which happened to be Sunday) I would like for you to meet under the large oak tree in the center of the village. Then I will tell you all about the good news which I bring.”

The next morning the village was abuzz. When the missionary arrived at the large oak, the entire village was waiting.

“My good friends, my heart is thrilled to see such a fine group gathered in this open chapel...”

The villagers could feel the warmth in the missionary’s words, but had no idea what a chapel was.

“...I see in your eyes a longing—a longing which you yourselves possibly don’t understand. Sometimes when you are all alone, maybe when you are lying in bed and sleep refuses to adjourn your day, thoughts float around that trouble your mind. You ask yourselves, ‘Where am I going?’

“As I was approaching your village, I saw a cemetery on the hillside. Little piles of rocks marked the resting places of your loved ones. As you lower your grandfather, your grandmother, your child, your brother or sister into the grave, you ask yourselves, ‘Is this the end?’

“My good friends, I come with good news: The grave is not the end! For those who prepare themselves in this life, the grave is the beginning of a new life—a life of joy and peace.”

Except for the sound of the wind gently rustling the leaves of the old oak tree, the

silence was absolute. Now raising his hand, the missionary shows his listeners a black book.

“My good friends, I have here a book...”

Book. Another new word. What was a book?

“...This Book was written by the Creator of the sun, the moon and the stars. It was written by the Creator of this world...” Clasp the book to his breast, the missionary announced in a hushed voice, “It was written by the one who created each one of you! It was written by the Creator of life.

“Right now, this very instant, the one who wrote this Book sees you. You can’t see Him, but He sees you. When you are alone during the day, when you can’t go to sleep at night, He is trying to talk to you. He wants to answer the questions you have about what happens after someone is carried to the cemetery on the hill and lowered into the grave.”

The villagers shifted uneasily. The missionary sensed the cemetery was a delicate subject, if not a taboo.

“God, the author of this Book, is a God of life.” Opening the Book, he read, “‘I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’ For this reason He sent His Son Jesus to this world, to offer life. Those who accept His Son no longer fear the cemetery on the hill.

“God loves each one of you. In this book He wrote, ‘My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill...’”

There it was again, that strange word, sheep. The five brothers glanced at each other, and then riveted their eyes on the speaker. This time they wouldn’t repeat their former mistake.

“‘As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.’”

Two more new words: shepherd and flock. What could they mean?

“Jesus, the Son of God, is the good Shepherd; He is the one who cares for the flock, that is, for His sheep. He said, ‘My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.’”

Many more interesting things were said. After the meeting was over, the five brothers lingered until only they and the missionary remained. He immediately recognized in them a superior mentality and believed that they would be his first converts. As he spoke to them, he was puzzled by their insistent questions about sheep: “What does a sheep eat?” “How large is a sheep?” “Do all sheep produce wool?”

The missionary was truthful. “I personally have never seen a sheep. I speak about sheep because the black book, the Bible, says Christians are to be like sheep. But no, I don’t know how many sheep it takes to make a coat, or a cover.”

“Do you know where sheep are raised?” they asked the missionary. “Are sheep raised in our country?”

“I don’t believe so. But then I am a missionary and am more interested in Christians

who act like sheep than in sheep who act like Christians,” he replied, slightly amused at his own unexpected answer. Lamely he finished, “I guess I won’t be of much help on this score.”

That evening the five brothers gathered in the home of the oldest. The inability of the missionary to give them any definite information about sheep had produced a dark gloom. Suddenly one of the brothers had an idea. He slapped his knee and exclaimed, “I’ve got it! We want to learn more about sheep. We want to know if they are the type of animal we want in our village. Who knows, maybe sheep are vicious. Maybe they attack people. About all we know at this point is that Christians are like sheep. So...” and here he triumphantly gazed at his brothers, “...so why don’t we ask the missionary if he knows of any Christians in our country—he said he knows more about Christians than sheep, didn’t he—and maybe we can go study the Christians to find out what sheep are like!”

Early the next morning the five brothers got the missionary out of bed. Yes, he could tell them of different towns and cities where there were flocks of Christians. Yes, he would gladly tell them how to get there.

At first the five brothers had thought they would travel together and visit a flock of Christians, but then the youngest had an idea. “Why don’t we split up and visit *five* different flocks? Then we can come home and compare notes. It will give us a much better idea of what sheep are like.” The idea was vigorously supported by the other four.

In his next report to headquarters, the missionary enthusiastically related the interest shown by the five brothers. “...so great is their fervor to understand the way of the Lord that they have proposed to visit Christian communities and make firsthand observations. I believe they are the foundation for a future church...” What the missionary didn’t know was that the five brothers were more interested in sheep than in Christian living. At least at this junction.

On the fifth day of May the five brothers set out on the narrow trail that led them to cities and towns where there were flocks of Christians. It was agreed that on the first day of September they would all be back in the village to pool the information gathered and decide if it would be worthwhile to find and import sheep to their village.

The five brothers were well known in the village. Their somewhat less than conventional approach to life was common knowledge, and tolerated. But to leave their wives and children for four months to go on a wild-goose chase raised eyebrows. What if they didn’t come back, who would take care of their families? And yet, at least a few grudgingly conceded, maybe something good just might come out of all this...

May went by. June. July. The first half of August. By now the five brothers were the talk of the village. You see, no one had ever been gone so long before.

As the month drew to a close, children (probably sent by their parents) would climb a large rock where they would have an unobstructed view of the narrow path leading to the village. Finally the rock became so crowded that several children fell off.

Towards evening on the 30th of August, a small boy with very sharp eyes cried out, “Someone is coming!” The children who didn’t fit on the rock ran through the streets shouting, “Someone is coming! Someone is coming!”

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Within minutes the entire village was heading toward the large rock. When the “somebody” proved to be a local hunter, everyone grumblingly returned home.

At sunset the sentinels abandoned their rock and headed home. Half an hour later, unnoticed by the villagers, Cal quietly knocked on the front door of his house.

The following afternoon the cry, “Someone is coming!” was heard twice, first as Abe, and then as Ben, came striding down the trail. That night Dan arrived.

September one came and went with no sign of Ely. It had been tacitly agreed by the brothers that they would discuss their findings with no one until all five could share their conclusions.

By September 15 the tension was palpable in the village. The general consensus was that something had happened to Ely, the youngest brother. Some thought he surely must have been devoured by a wild animal. Others thought he must have fallen prey to highwaymen. Yet others believed he had fallen into a deep crevice and perished.

As September came to a close, the four brothers grievously accepted the popular belief that Ely would not return. Thus they gathered in the parlor in Abe’s house, shut the door and prepared to share their findings.

Cal: Abe, you’re the oldest, so you should lead the meeting. Tell us what you have found.

Ben and Dan: A good idea. Go ahead Abe.

Abe: Sheep are enormous animals because of the amount of wool they carry...

Dan: What makes you think so?

Abe: The Christians in the town where I stayed are very, very hard workers. They go to church on Sunday, but the rest of the week all they can think about is work. So if sheep work that hard, they must produce enormous amounts of wool. Personally it wouldn’t take very many sheep to come up with enough wool for everyone living in this village. Okay, Ben, now you tell us your findings.

Ben: Sheep are very cannibalistic animals. In the community where I stayed, I got the impression that the Christians were not like the ones the missionary described. We would go to church on Sunday and they seemed so united as they greeted each other. But then when they would go to each other’s homes for lunch after the service, and during the rest of the week, they would spend their time devouring one another. As I see sheep, they have very large teeth, something like a wolf. I personally wouldn’t want to have anything to do with sheep. We have made out so many years without wool, and I see no reason why we can’t continue.

Abe: If I understand you correctly, you are totally against bringing sheep to our village, is that right.

Ben: That is right.

Abe: Cal, what do you have to tell us?

Cal: Sheep are very nervous, unsettled animals. In the village where I stayed, I watched every move the Christians made. I was totally amazed. You remember the time the missionary said that Christians were like a big family. We have quite a few big families in this village, families that enjoy spending time together. The Christians

in that village seemed to be allergic to spending time together as a family. When they weren't on the job, they constantly had something going on. Some of the activities had nothing to do with their religion, some had just a little, and some were directly related. It seemed they had to be on the go all the time. I don't believe we want to have that kind of sheep around here. If they didn't stay in a group any better than the Christians I learned to know, we would have to have one shepherd for every two or three sheep.

Abe: Do I understand you are against bringing sheep to our village?

Cal: That's right.

Abe: Dan, tell us what you are thinking.

Dan: Sheep are beautiful animals; delicate animals. In the little town where I stayed, appearance was very important. Everyone, especially the girls and ladies, paid a lot of attention to patterns and materials. There was a right and a wrong way to dress, and they made sure they were well dressed. They kept their nails neatly trimmed and their hands smooth and white. Their feet too. This, of course, had a negative effect: They didn't do certain kinds of jobs. This village would soon be famous if we had that kind of sheep...

"Come quick! Come quick!" The voice, that of a child, was urgent. "Oh, come quick!"

All four brothers jumped to their feet and in a moment were out on the street.

"What is it, sonny?"

Before the lad could answer, a number of other wide-eyed children came running down the street, babbling hysterically. Everyone was pointing to where the mountain trail snaked out of the village.

Running up the street, the brothers came to the outskirts of the village where they could see someone slowly walking down the trail, a flock of white animals following him. No one had the nerve to go meet the strange Pied Piper who was bringing his charges to the village, instead of taking them away.

As the strange entourage approached the village, above the din of barking dogs and excited voices, there could be heard an occasional baaaah, baaaah.

Suddenly Dan let out a yell that silenced everyone: "It's Ely and he's bringing a whole flock of sheep with him!"

"It sure is!"

"Well, what do you know!"

"That's Ely alright!"

"Can you believe it, those sheep are following him just as pretty as you please!"

Seeing the assembled villagers, Ely raised his hand in a salute; his face radiated happiness.

Several of the dogs, thinking the strange looking animals might constitute a danger to the village, made a rush toward the herd. Everyone breathlessly watched to see what would happen. It was apparent Ely was speaking with the sheep, which crowded into a small circle, while the shepherd attacked the dogs with his staff.

"Did you see that? They didn't even scatter!"

“They seemed to understand that Ely would protect them!”

“Now that’s different than a bunch of cows.”

As Ely reached the edge of the village he smilingly greeted his wife, his children and his brothers, who received him as one returning from the dead. Next he shook hands with all of the villagers.

It was hard to tell who was the greatest attraction: Ely or the sheep. Comments flew thick and fast:

“Do you suppose they bite?”

“I wonder if they kick?”

“Are they good for eating?”

“Why aren’t they running away?”

“What do you think they eat?”

Since there was no corral in the village and day was now waning, Ely suggested that some branches be cut from nearby pine trees and arranged in a circle, where the sheep could pass the night.

As people saw the flimsy sheepcote, they were astonished. Would the sheep respect such a crude fence? “Yes, of course,” Ely assured the gathered villagers. “Sheep are very gentle animals.”

Ben, who stood close by, tried to reconcile that fact with his image of sheep with large, wolflike teeth.

The brothers apologized to Ely for not having waited on him, but explained that after a month, they were quite sure he was dead. They asked if it would suit for them to resume their meeting in the morning. Ely agreed that the meeting would be beneficial, but that he would have to take the sheep out to pasture. Then, putting his index finger to his forehead, he looked at his brothers with a smile on his face. “How about you boys coming along tomorrow when I take the flock out? We could take a lunch along and spend the day talking while I watch the sheep?”

The idea was endorsed by all and the following morning, shortly after sunup, they were at the corral. And not only they, but most of the village to witness the ritual of a shepherd taking his sheep to pasture.

That day, and for many days after, Ely and his sheep were the talk of the town.

“Did you see that?! He calls those sheep and they follow him. I can’t believe it!”

“Nor I. Those sheep trust Ely as if he were their best friend.”

“He probably is...”

With the sheep grazing in a peaceful meadow, the five brothers sat down in the grass and started putting the pieces of the puzzle in place.

Ely: What do think about these sheep?

Abe: I guess I’m disappointed.

Ely: Why?

Abe: I thought they would be covered with enormous amounts of wool...at least twelve to fifteen inches thick...

Ben: I thought they would be mean looking animals, sort of like wolves.

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Cal: I thought they would be skittish animals, constantly on the move and that you would have to always be running after them all the time.

Dan: I guess I'm sort of disappointed. I thought they would be the most beautiful animals in the world...

Abe: I guess what we thought is sort of beside the point. Really, what we would like is to hear your story, Ely

Ely: I suppose so. I was very fortunate to land up in a little village about the size of ours. The Christians there were just the kind that the missionary talked about over here. They were very kind, not only to each other, but to me, a stranger. They were hard workers, but I always got the impression that there was something more important in their lives than work. It was very common to see them help each other. Sure, they would make mistakes, but I could see it bothered them and they would make things right. Sometimes there were misunderstandings between the brethren and they would get upset at each other. I don't know what would happen, but soon they would be friends again. As I watched these people, I came to the conclusion that if sheep are like these Christians, then I wanted to raise sheep...

Dan: And so...?

Ely: I decided I wanted to raise sheep, but I still had some questions floating around in my head. I decided to talk to the pastor of the congregation and ask him how he got along with his "sheep."

Ben: What did he say?

Ely: I wish you could have been there. When I asked him about his "sheep," he got a look in his eyes, such a loving look, that he didn't have to say a word. Even so, he went on to tell me that being a pastor takes a lot of work, time and patience. "But," he said, "it's worth all the time and effort it takes." I could see he meant it. Now I didn't have any doubts: I wanted to raise sheep.

Cal: But how did you come up with these sheep?

Ely: Hold it! Not so fast. You see, the pastor didn't have any idea what I was getting at. He started telling me actual experiences of his life as a pastor. He told me stories of drunkards who got converted...

Abe: Who got what?

Ely: Converted. The pastor explained to me that getting converted means that Jesus, the Great Shepherd, comes and changes the person's heart. He took me to the house of a man who used to be a highwayman. He would wound, and even kill, his victims and then relieve them of all their money and goods. Sometimes he stole their clothes. Then something happened, or like he himself said, "I met Jesus on the road one day and he changed my life. I was a wolf and He changed me into a sheep."

Cal: Well I'll be! I've never heard anything like that in my whole life.

Ely: When the pastor saw how moved I was by the story of the highwayman, he said something that really shook me up. He said, "Ely, it's not only drunkards and highwaymen who must get converted. We are all born sinners and need to have our lives transformed. Even though we have never killed or robbed or stolen, we still must get converted."

Dan: I don't get it. Why get converted if you don't have anything the matter with you?

Ely: That is exactly what I asked the pastor, in those very words. Do you know what he asked me? He asked what I would do if someone started a false story about me and I said I'd go after the person and set him straight. What would I do if someone tried to break into my house and molest my family? I told him I'd defend them, even if it cost me my life. He asked me what I would do if someone sold me a donkey that turned out to be absolutely worthless. I told him I would demand my money back. Then he said, "You don't have the nature of a sheep. Sheep are defenseless. Sheep are like the Great Shepherd." I said to the pastor, "That's impossible." He said, "For you it's impossible, but if you give your life to the Great Shepherd, you too can be a son of God."

Ben: So you're trying to say we all have the nature of a wolf, is that it?

Ely: Exactly!

Cal: Then we all need to get converted?

Ely: Exactly.

Ben: We're off the subject. Tell us about the sheep.

Ely: Well, by now I was more interested in being a sheep than buying sheep. In fact, that night I had the most terrible dream. I saw myself as a wolf with long, pointed teeth. I saw my wife and my older children as wolves. I saw you brothers as wolves. I saw the whole village as a pack of wolves. I awoke in a cold sweat. For the first time in my life I prayed. I got out of bed, knelt down and asked the Great Shepherd to make me one of His sheep...

Abe: And...

Ely: And He did!

Ben: How do you know?

Ely: Because all of a sudden I could love everyone, even those people I couldn't tolerate before. I could even love those evil men who might someday break into my house. Everything seemed different. Even though it was pitch dark, the room seemed light.

Dan: Maybe you just dreamt all this.

Ely: I didn't. The next morning I got up early and got the pastor out of bed. I told him what had happened during the night. He said, "Brother, you have been converted. You have become a sheep." He got out his black Book and read about the Shepherd and the sheep. He read about the sheepfold. I said, "I'm a sheep, but I don't belong to the sheepfold." "That's true," he said, "but you may." Then he read to me how that those who become sheep need to be baptized...

Cal: Baptized! What does that mean?

Ely: It's like this: First the Great Shepherd calls us to be His sheep. We are sheep, but sort of like orphan sheep. The Shepherd watches over us, but He knows that we will be much safer if we belong to a sheepfold where other sheep and pastors will keep watch over us, so He calls us a second time, now to belong to His sheepfold. If we answer this call and are found to be worthy, a little bit of water is poured on our head,

which symbolizes two things: that we have come out of the world and are entering the sheepfold.

Ben: Were you, ah...baptized?

Ely: Yes, I was, and this brings us to something very, very interesting. After I became a sheep and entered the sheepfold, I felt that my mission was completed, that I could return home and *show* you the nature of sheep. But then, just as I was leaving the village, on the way home, would you believe that I saw a man coming down the road with a flock of sheep. I couldn't believe my eyes. When the shepherd, who walked in front of the sheep, saw my admiration, he came right up to me and asked, "Are you the shepherd without sheep?" I was so taken aback by these strange words that I just stared at the man, so he went on to explain. "I live many miles from here and all my life I have been a pastor. One night I heard a voice tell me that I should take my flock of sheep and begin traveling in a northerly direction until I met a man looking for sheep..." I said, "I truly am the man for whom you are looking." I asked, "Will you sell this flock of sheep?" He said, "I will." I asked the price and it was the exact amount I had in my pocket, so the transaction was made. That is why I got here late, I had to go very slowly with the sheep so that they could graze as we traveled. But here I am, a sheep with sheep. As these sheep will provide us with clothes to warm our bodies, the story I now have to tell will—I hope—bring warmth to many hearts. May there soon be a larger flock of sheep in the village than out in the fields.

Thus ends our tale. ▲

The Tobias Unruh Diary

Deputation Journey (II)

June 20 – We arose early, sang a sang of praise, had our breakfast and took up our inspection tour again. We went into the wide world. When we had driven a stretch we found a lone farmer who had settled all by himself. He was an Englishman and his wife was of German descent. She was very happy to meet German people. She asked us if we were seeking land and told us that the land in that locality was very good and invited us to become their neighbors. And it was true. The country around about looked very good. From here we drove further and reached another stream and stopped for noon. After noon we came to a river. Here we had to unhitch the horses, take them through then pull the wagons through. There was nice green grass along the river. The river was about the size of the Vilna. We continued our journey till towards evening, set up our tents, had our supper, sang several songs, then had prayer together and committed ourselves under God's protection and had a nice rest that night.

June 21 – We arose at six o'clock and after washing and singing a song of praise, we then knelt in prayer and had breakfast. After breakfast we took up our journey again and

got back to Winnipeg. It rained hard in Winnipeg. The land here is good and plentiful, but it is rather hard to establish homes in Manitoba.

June 23 – Seven were interested in a tour west of Winnipeg. Five of us left by boat for Fargo, North Dakota. We got out of the boat at Pembina and were taken out into the country about 18 miles. We saw some very good land and much timber, some trees large enough to make lumber. The timber is mostly oak. The land is still mostly meadow, but what is broke out appears to be very fertile soil. Everything that is planted grows well, including gardens and vegetables. We need not look nor wish for better land. We stayed all night with an Indian farmer. They showed us much hospitality. They gave us a good supper. After supper we sang a hymn and prayed, then went to bed.

June 24 – Arose, found hosts busily engaged getting breakfast ready and we indeed had a very good breakfast. These people tell us many wonderful things how their crops grow. They had planted two bushels of potatoes and without further attention they had dug up 95 bushels. The story was similar in production of other seeds. Should our brethern in faith make up their mind to settle here, it is no question but what they would prosper. We could see that this Indian knew his business. He had his home furnished like we seldom find it in Europe. Carpets on all floors, cupboards, dressers, beds and everything that was necessary in the line of furniture. We did not know what to think of it, a tiller of the soil (farmer) having such a completely furnished home. We left this Indian's place, drove 12 miles further and met with German people. They were very glad to meet us and they took every means possible on their part to show their appreciation of our presence. And we also were very glad that we could meet someone with whom we could freely speak without an Interpreter. It made us feel like we were brethren. A little distance from them was a high hill, he said we could view the country 30 miles around about from the top of the hill. We climbed to the top of it; it was 400 feet high. I looked to the east and my thoughts went home to my loved ones and an ardent desire arose, could I now only look into my home. My heart bled and I could not keep my tears from flowing; but in vain. I had to turn again and look after the things that pertained to my mission. And behold, as I turned around there before me were the many different wild flowers, how they greeted me with their smiling faces and sweet fragrance. I had to marvel and rejoice at the wondrous works of God, how my heart was refreshed. If we make use of the wondrous works of our Heavenly Father, He can comfort us and drive away the gloomy hours and forget many troubles in life, we can be brought nearer to God and walk more in obedience. Our eyes of faith can be opened more by beholding this beautiful handiwork, and the more our eyes are opened, the deeper we can see into His wondrous works, how He has created them.

June 25 – We viewed the land on our return trip at Pembina. There is an abundance of good land which will raise wheat and other products and a man that is willing to work could make ends meet very well in this country. We met a man in Pembina who told us he had raised potatoes weighing 5 1-2 lbs. each, onions with a circumference of 12 inches. May 6, 1872, a man had planted barley and had harvested it July 10. We could hardly believe his report.

June 26 – We left Pembina by boat to return to Fargo. The journey is very good. Our boat does not rock to and fro like it does on the ocean.

June 27 – Several of our party hired a team to drive the rest of the distance to Fargo overland and inspect the country. The banks of the Red River are covered with trees, many of these trees and animals in them are strange to us in Europe. Some trees are wonderful to behold. There are also many different kinds of wild and domestic flowers and roses blooming, all growing together, giving a sweet smelling fragrance. The people in the boat rejoice over it.

June 28 – We arrived at Fargo. We have now viewed land at Pembina and Manitoba. We found good soil at both places.

June 29 – They took us on an inspection tour West. Left Fargo by train about 25 miles. There three rigs were waiting for us. We took a cup of coffee then we went on an inspection tour inland. The rigs carried eats and other provisions like tents. etc. We again saw many wonderful sights. The whole country is adorned with beautiful flowers and roses. In one place counted seven different varieties of roses. When a child walks among these beautiful roses that God has strewn over the universe, it forgets the world with its troubles when it starts picking the beautiful roses. Likewise will a man do if he will in a simple way walk in the garden of God; if he delights in the law of the Lord and doth meditate therein; he will also forget the troubles of this world and say with Paul: “I forget the things which are behind, reaching forth unto the things which are before.” That is the way we poor sinful creatures should journey through the noise-some bustle of this world and wholly commit our walk and deeds into His hands and rely on the mercy of God which is more than any other thing that we may find, for the world tries to swallow our soul and it is often attacked with trials and temptations and must battle under a burden to keep this sinful world from crushing the inward man; but if we through the wisdom of God, before we are completely overtaken, commit ourselves into His hands, search our hearts and lay aside all sins; if we by His grace can see how frail we are and that nothing good is within us; then we can find the way to the cross and sink into the wounds of Jesus; it will crush the heart of stone and melt the eyes in tears; yea, when a man’s eyes are opened, he sees that the flower of the field is adorned much more wonderfully than man who was created after the image of God. Man in his fallen condition is not a sweet smelling savour like the flower of the field; man is now corrupt and his works are vanity, but the fragrance of the flower riseth upward to God although it brings its Creator praise and honor for the way it has been created.

We viewed the land near Fargo and stayed in the open steppes in tents for a whole week, it is a wonderful country in the neighborhood of Fargo. Wheat looked very good, now and then a stream crossed the country, trees were plentiful: the meadows nice and green, and it would be very good for dairy cattle. Most of the land is tillable and produces good nearly everything that is planted. Another great advantage here at Fargo is: the land available is located along the railroad.

Should it be God’s will that we settle here near Fargo, North Dakota along the railroad, we can get the option of 24 miles square for 10 years, 12 miles wide on each side of the railroad. Any land that is not taken up during these ten years falls back to

the railroad. The agreement is: you can file a claim of 80 acres from the government and buy the adjoining 80 from the railroad company. The terms were 7 years at the rate of 7 per cent. It makes a tract of 160 acres for each individual. The terms and arrangements of the land are such that we cannot complain. The Maple river goes right through the district available. Both sides of this river has very productive land. Everyone with whom we come in contact speaks well of this country, the other delegates confirm this likewise.

Back of the Maple river is also much good land available, but the 24 miles square would be more than we would need temporarily, but in the event that others would follow it would be well that an option be taken on the whole plot, then those who would follow would find an abode with those who went first, although it will be very hard for those who settle here first in the open prairies. All lumber to build will have to be purchased. Foot boards are priced at \$16.00 to \$18.00 per 1000 square feet.

When people build a house here in America, they usually make a framework of 2x4 planks, then they box it with 1x12 boards on the outside and inside. The inside is then coated with lime or gip. Sometimes the house is built more expensive to be warmer and it is then only boxed on the outside and the inside is plastered and the plaster coated with gip. This makes a very nice warm house.

Minnesota still has a lot of timber land for sale at \$1.25 per acre. This timber land lies next to the Red River. In the event that our people should settle here near Fargo, it would be possible to ship lumber over the Red River. It is 80 miles by land to this timber land, but by river it is further, the Red River winds back and forth quite a bit. Nevertheless, this lumber could be secured cheaper than buying it direct.

July 7 – An American took Lorenze Tschetter and I together with a German interpreter out in the country. He showed us lots of good land 3 and 4 miles from town. Potatoes and other garden products have a good price. This land lies along the Red River and lumber shipped along the river would be placed close to the homesteads. This layout suits me fine, only thing is not so desirable: here and there we find a homesteader has settled. We could not settle in a compact body like we are in Russia. However, the American who took us out, said these settlers would sell out at a very cheap price. They had settled only the year before. Wheat planted April 30 was already headed. Barley planted May 20 was also headed. Present prices paid for produce are:

Wheat 90c to \$1.35 per bushel. Oats 35 cents to 60c per bushel. Rye \$1.00 per bushel. Potatoes 50 cents per bushel. New Potatoes \$1.00 per bushel. Barley 50 cents per bushel.

Ordinary farm hands received 50 cents to \$2.00 per day. Blacksmiths and Carpenters \$2.50 to \$4.00 per day. Team of horses \$2.00 to \$6.00 per day.

July 9 – We left for Breckenridge, Minnesota. The superintendent, a German, showed us great hospitality. We remained all night in Breckenridge. In the morning the officials of the railroad company took us out on a railroad car into the country, a distance of 40 miles, from there we were taken overland a long ways. The land may be alright, but it was somewhat marshy and had a great many lakes in it. Some of them

were rather large and the land was not suitable to be divided equally like in Dakota. The marshy places were all covered with grass, the upland also had grass on it but it was not so thick. The system like we had in Russia to divide the land in villages would not work out here. I prefer Dakota for settlement.

In the P. M. we viewed land on the other side of Breckenridge. Here the land suited us better but this country has quite a few settlers, this however, did not appeal to us since we desire to settle in a compact colony. From here it is 139 miles to Minneapolis. This city has many factories in which woolen and cotton goods and other textiles are made. There are also tailor shops and woodwork factories. Windows, doors, chairs, beds, etc.. are made in large numbers here. Beds sell for \$2.00 each. Chairs 50 cents each. Doors \$2.00 each.

To be continued

Headlines

Blecaute!

Blecaute, pronounced bleh-*com*-chee, the Portuguese rendition of blackout, is literally the talk of the town in most of Brazil. Because of reduced rainfall during the last four years, reservoirs in some areas are down to 33 percent capacity as the rainy season comes to a close, a disaster in a country in which 97 percent of all power is generated in hydroelectric installations.

Rearview mirror prophets are having their heyday, loudly denouncing the shortsightedness of the president, of congress, and of anyone else caught in the glare of their floodlights (which, unfortunately, aren't subject to power shortages).

The prospects for the next six months are somewhat dark, in the most literal sense, with the possibility of daily blackouts of up to five hours in some areas. In the worst-case scenario, industry and commerce would be especially hard hit, dealing the Brazilian economy a serious blow.

What has brought on this crisis?

As mentioned, 97 percent of all electricity consumed in Brazil comes from hydroelectric installations. This is fabulous—so long as the rainfall is adequate.

Up until 1989, approximately 10 billion dollars were invested annually in dams, turbines and transmission lines. In the last several years this amount has fallen to less than four billion dollars per year.

The government planned to build 49 thermoelectric generating plants, but only nine will come into operation on schedule.

Some areas of Brazil have excess power, but for lack of transmission lines, this electricity can't be shared with needy areas.

On the positive side, all the noise being made in the media, and the fear of blackouts, has reduced overall consumption by 10 percent. This by no means is a solution, but it at least should shorten the blackout periods.

Received by fax...

Southern Medical Terms

Benign – what you be, after you be eight.

Artery – the study of paintings.

Bacteria – back door to cafeteria.

Barium – what doctors do when patients die.

Cesarean section – a neighborhood in Rome.

CATscan – searching for kitty.

Cauterize – made eye contact with her.

Colic – a sheep dog.

Coma – a punctuation mark.

Dilate – to live long.

Fester – quicker than someone else.

Fibula – a small lie.

Hangnail – what you hang your coat on.

Labor pain – getting hurt at work.

Medical staff – a doctor's cane.

Morbid – a higher offer.

Nitrates – cheaper than day rates.

Node – I knew it.

Outpatient – a person who has fainted.

Postoperative – a letter carrier.

Recovery room – a place to do upholstery.

Secretion – something hiding.

Tablet – a small table.

Terminal illness – getting sick at the airport.

Tumor – one plus one more.

Varicose – near by/close by.

Facts About Lincoln and Kennedy

Both were concerned with civil rights.

Lincoln was elected president in 1860; Kennedy in 1960

Both were slain on a Friday, in the presence of their wives.

Both were shot from behind and in the head.

Both were succeeded by Southern Democrats named Johnson, who held seats in the US Senate.

Andrew Johnson was born in 1808; Lyndon B in 1908

John Wilkes Booth was born in 1839; Lee Harvey Oswald in 1939.

Booth and Oswald were Southerners favoring unpopular ideas.

Both presidents lost children through death while in the White House.

President Lincoln's secretary, whose name was Kennedy, advised him not to go to the theater.

Kennedy's secretary, whose name was Lincoln, advised him not to make the trip to Dallas.

John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln in a theater and ran to a warehouse; Lee Harvey

Oswald shot Kennedy from a warehouse and ran to a theater.

Both assassins were killed before they could be brought to trial.

The names of the vice-presidents who assumed after the presidents' death—Andrew Johnson and Lyndon Johnson—both have 13 letters.

This & That

Wes & Kim Schartner from Canada were here for a visit, and then on to the Amazon river for more sightseeing. Several years ago Wes and a friend of his drove to Brazil. He has agreed to write a report of this trip for BN. We're ready anytime you are, Wes.

Wesley, son of Daniel & Linda Holdeman, is putting in time at the Los Angeles V.S. unit. On April 23, the Monte Alegre Cong. had a meeting and decided to build a new social hall. Now we must come up with three plans: 1) a plan for the social hall, 2) a plan on how to raise the money, and 3) a plan on how to love each other through all this. On the 25th we had a joint meeting at the Rio Verdinho church for youth and parents; the subject was marriage.

The Perdigão chicken project is becoming a reality on the Colony. Divino Cândido (a CPA, who presently lives in Goiânia) and his three children have eight barns under construction. Most will be putting in four barns—considered a module—with a capacity of 24,500 birds each. The dirt work for another 20 barns should begin right directly. As of now, it appears there will be at least 44 barns going up on the Colony.

Ray-O-Vac, candle makers and fluorescent bulb manufacturers are doing a landslide business in Brazil. New electrical appliances can be purchased at a real discount.

This issue of BN is reaching you exactly a month late. Blame me, not the publisher. I'm working hard to get back on schedule. Patience...

Facts & Figures

Temperatures

High	34.9°C	95°F
Low	13.5°C	56°F
Av high	32.5°C	91°F
Av low	17.6°C	64°F

Brazil News

Rainfall

88.5 mm — 3.5 inches

Relative Humidity

Hi 85% — Low 48% — Av 68%

Exchange Rate

One US dollar buys 2.23 reals