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Editorial

The Mark of a Martyr

The *Martyrs Mirror* is proof that the Bible is true. It is undisputable evidence that the Faith once delivered to the saints is fully functional. It portrays the ultimate consequence of non-resistance and non-conformity to the world.

We are transported into another world as we read the *Martyrs Mirror*. Reverently we say, “He was my brother,” “She was my sister,” “Those were my brethren.”

At times, like Peter, we follow the narrative of the book from “afar off,” fearful of what the next page will hold. We ask ourselves, “How could they do it?” Even as we search for an answer we find ourselves asking a second question, “Would my spirituality today have qualified me as a martyr yesterday?”

When asked to explain the doctrine of non-resistance, our answer tends to be pyramidal: “Well, we believe it is wrong to go to war.” That, we feel, is the base of the pyramid. “And we believe that if someone wants to harm us physically, we shouldn’t resist.” We finish, “We also believe that we shouldn’t take someone to law, or even defend ourselves at law.”

The answers are all good, but we’ve got the pyramid tipped upside down. We haven’t really explained what the base of the pyramid is made up of.

As the prophet Isaiah looked centuries ahead into the New Testament era, he made a strange statement: “And a little child shall lead them.”

People didn’t understand him. When Jesus began His ministry, He was hailed as a liberator. People flocked to Him, wanting to be part of His earthly kingdom. When Jesus gave the requirements for citizenship, His listeners didn’t understand: “Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.”

(Eventually, some centuries later, these words were misconstrued by some as a divine injunction for infant baptism.)

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As we randomly read in the *Martyrs Mirror* (few, if any, read it from cover to cover), we feel like we're in the presence of giants. Their steadfastness and holy purpose reduces us to Lilliputians. Or so we feel.

The martyrs weren't spiritual giants because of their non-resistance. Non-conformity to the world wasn't the secret to their fearlessness. No, non-resistance and non-conformity were not the base of their spiritual pyramids; they were the result of something much more basic.

We return to the words of Jesus: "Except ye *be converted, and become as little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." We must be converted to become as a little child, which in turn makes us non-resistant; but to profess the doctrine of non-resistance does not make us a little child, nor does it convert us.

We go shopping and see a little child screaming and throwing a tantrum because mother isn't buying the toy it wants. We can't help but wonder if children were less spoiled in Jesus' time. If they behaved like now, the analogy seems to be a bit on the weak side.

We have gotten into the habit of quoting only half of the formula. Jesus doesn't say, "Except ye become as little children..." He says, "Except ye *be converted AND* become as little children." It's true that a child doesn't need to be very many days old before we realize that Adam and Eve's names are on the birth certificate as the great-great-great... grandparents. No doubt about it.

But, no one understands better than the Lord the beautiful nature of a child who has been raised in a sanctified home. When we think back on our children, their misbehavior rapidly fades away and we remember all that they did to enrich our lives. As we remember them, we would never dream of doubting Jesus' words.

A hard-working young couple with a child, possibly four or five years old, managed to scrape together enough money to purchase a new truck to replace the old one used in the family trucking business. After picking up the truck at the dealership, the dad drove home on cloud nine and parked in front of the house. Almost immediately his wife and little boy were out to admire the new truck.

After a grand tour in which all the useful features on the new truck were pointed out, the little family went into the house. A little while later a vague banging noise was heard, coming from where the truck was parked. Dad looked out of the window... and turned purple with rage. Little son had left the house undetected and now, with a hammer, was erratically beating the tinwork of the truck.

Screaming, and totally beside himself, the father wrenched the hammer out of his son's little hand and began pounding his fingers.

Seeing what was happening, the mother was along side her husband in an instant, but it was several torturous moments before she managed to bring him back to his senses.

Overwhelmed by what he had just done, he helped his wife and screaming child into the car and rushed to the hospital emergency room. One look was enough for the doctor to order the child taken to surgery.

The inconsolable dad would have given all he owned—including the new truck—to be

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able to exchange places with his little son. The minutes sprawled into hours as the parents waited for their child to come out of surgery.

After what seemed like an eternity to the dad, the doctor came out of surgery. "I'm sorry. We did what we could, but we had to remove all the fingers on your son's injured hand."

In the room, when the child became sufficiently awake to reassemble the events of the last six hours, he looked at his dad who hovered over him like a helicopter about to crash.

"Dad...is that you?"

"Yes, son, it's me..."

Before the anguished dad could ask son's forgiveness for his unforgivable deed, the little boy interrupted...

"Dad, are you still upset at me?"

"No, my dear son, no, never..."

"Dad I'm sorry. I wanted to fix your truck with the hammer...like you fix things with the hammer."

"That's quite all right..."

Now lifting up his short bandaged hand, the son continued...

"Dad, when my fingers grow again, I won't ever bang your truck again with a hammer, okay?"

Good reader, that is what Jesus was talking about when he said we need to become as little children. That is the base of the pyramid of Christian living. When we say we are non-resistant, we assume that means we have a childlike spirit.

Not necessarily so.

We also believe that if our non-resistant stand was suddenly put to the test, from way down somewhere (at the base of the pyramid?) we would find a hidden strength that would enable us to emulate our martyr brethren.

Jesus said, "He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

We take a hydraulic pump to have it repaired. We pay what we feel is a rather steep price, take the pump home and put it back on the machine. It doesn't work. This is bad, since we are strapped for time and don't have another day to lose.

Scenario 1:

We return and tell the mechanic that the pump wasn't fixed right. Snappily he informs us it *was* fixed right and that we probably dropped the pump, which is why it isn't working.

"No, this pump was NOT dropped and I want it fixed on the double."

"Sure, I'll fix it again, but since it left my shop in working order, you need to understand that the guarantee has been voided."

"Mister, if that is the way it is, just give me my pump back. I'll take it to someone who knows what he's doing..." And over our shoulder we leave our parting shot, "You'll never be seeing any of my money again, even if you live to be a hundred years old."

Jesus said, "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

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We feel quite comfortable with this verse, since in our circles people don't go around smiting on either the right or left cheek.

Scenario 2:

"I tried this pump out and there seems to be a problem."

"Look, I tested it before it left the shop and it was working fine. You must have dropped it."

"Well, I don't think I did, but who knows. Do you suppose you could take a look at it and see what the problem is?"

"I can, but I suppose you know that there is no guarantee. If you want me to go ahead with the work, I think I can have it ready today yet."

"Hum...that sounds good; go ahead and fix it. I appreciate your willingness to get it out for me today. That is really going to help me out."

That's turning the other cheek, at least part way. Turning the other cheek—really turning the other cheek—is going back to that same mechanic another day with some work.

Someone says: "That's making a fool of yourself." It is. So is turning the other cheek. Present day non-resistance, all too often, calls for not striking back when struck on the right cheek, but then stalking off. What's the point of having two bruised cheeks?

In the year 1533, a sister named Christina Haring, was apprehended, taken to Kitzbuehl, and there fastened to a chain; she, however, remained steadfast in the faith. But as she was with child, and was soon to be confined, they let her go home until she should be delivered of her child; and though she knew that she would be apprehended again, and might have escaped ten times, or even more, she did not flee, but boldly remained. When she saw the officer coming, she went out to meet him, and asked him what he desired. He said: "I have come to take you away again;" and thus they again took her to the town of Kitzbuehl, where shortly afterwards she was executed with the sword (which is not usually done with a woman), for the faith to which she steadfastly adhered. Her body was afterwards burnt. Matt. 24:13. This courageous, heroic woman or sister in Christ, who forsook her husband, infant, house and home, and all temporal things, strengthened her womanly heart with such valiant manliness, and by the grace of God so armed herself in the faith, that she paid her vow unto the Lord, and joyfully went to meet Christ her bridegroom, with her lamp burning, and her light shining so that many were filled with astonishment. —Martyrs Mirror, p. 441

Even though she had ample opportunity to escape and thus save her life, of her own freewill she returned to prison and lost her life. (Or is it the other way around?) If returning to the same mechanic who we feel wasn't aboveboard with us is making a fool of ourselves, how do we rate this sister?

Again we quote:

There was also a young maiden named Janneken apprehended for her faith, at Antwerp; who, when she appeared before the lords, admitted she had been to some Anabaptist meetings. The Margrave said, "Janneken, if you will renounce, I will show you favor; do according to my will and I will give you your life." She replied: "I appreciate your willingness to give me a chance. If you do, I can assure you I will never make any trouble, even if we don't believe alike."

There was a preacher named Balthazar, who endeavored to make her believe that God was in the sacrament. She replied by saying that not everyone sees all the scriptures the same way and then asked

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that he read the Lord's Prayer. When he finished, she said, "Where it says 'Our Father which art in heaven,' I understand that to mean that Jesus is in heaven; I don't quite understand how he could be present in the sacrament at the same time...but that is just my opinion."

In court she was asked by the bailiff, whether she was rebaptized. She said: "We believe that baptism is a divine order and that all believers should be baptized, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. I guess the difference between the way you believe and we believe is that we feel that those being baptized should be older." The bailiff said: "We have done enough to gain you. If you had suffered yourself to be prevailed upon to recant, you should have done well." She replied, "I appreciate the kindness you have shown me. I hope you can see that I feel I have reasons to believe as I do, just as you also feel you have reasons to believe as you do. It is my desire to live in such a way that I can be saved." Those present, taking council amongst themselves, refrained from sentencing the youth at that point. They said, "Because of your youth and good attitude, we are going to give you another chance. You will be placed in a minimum-security prison and in 30 days you will be called in for a new hearing." Several nights later, Janneken managed to escape from prison and was not recaptured.

We admire Janneken's respect for authority and see how that through her benevolent spirit the Lord was able to set her free.

Or so it seems, until we read what the *Martyrs Mirror* really says on pages 583-584.

There was also a young maiden named Janneken apprehended for her faith at Antwerp; who, when she appeared before the lords, freely confessed her faith. The Margrave said: "Janneken, if you will renounce, I will show you favor; do according to my will, and I will give you your life. But she replied: This life that you would give me, I desire not; for your promises are vain and wavering as a reed, and would only bring me into greater sorrow: cursed is everyone that trusts in man." Jer. 17:5

There was a preacher named Balthazar, who endeavored to make her believe that God was in the sacrament; however, she would not confess it, but said: "You thus disgrace God in your body; but read the Lord's Prayer once." And when he read it, she said: "There you see, you read that He is in heaven, and how dare you say then, that He is in the sacrament?"

In the court she was asked by the bailiff, whether she was rebaptized. She said: "Question me in regard to my faith, and I will freely confess it to you; or are you ashamed of it? I confess one baptism, which must follow faith, and does not pertain to infants, but requires previous amendment of life." The bailiff said: "We have done enough to gain you; if you had suffered yourself to be prevailed upon to recant, you should have done well." She replied: "You have loved my flesh, but not my soul, which you would have gladly devoured; but God will receive it as a child, and make it an heir. And though you are now a bailiff in your glory, you will deplore it in the judgment of God, and wish you had rather been a herdsman in the fear of God" Thereupon she was sentenced to death, and, having commended her spirit into the hands of God, was drowned in a tub, together with another woman, named Noele.

If the second Janneken carries the mark of the martyr, and not the first, where does that leave us?

It can be argued that the first Janneken showed more of a childlike spirit than the second. But Jesus teaches plainly, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." The wisdom of a serpent will always have a sting to it. It mortally offends the enemies of the cross.

It is in the serpent/dove spirit that we find at least part of the secret of the mark of the martyr. They loved their enemies more than their own life, while at the same time

they fearlessly denounced the prince of this world that caused their tormenters to act in such an inhumane way.

We can believe, from the bottom of our hearts, that these brothers and sisters who loved their enemies more than their own life, had an even greater love for their brethren. It's unimaginable that one who lived at odds with his spiritual brethren in his congregation one day, would be a faithful martyr the next. It is all too easy to have the spirit of a serpent with our own family and congregation, and become dove-like when evil should be rebuked. If our businessmen inwardly curse us when we leave their establishment, the name of the heavenly Father does not overshadow the names of Adam and Eve on our spiritual birth certificate.

The mark of a martyr is not like the brand on the leg of a cow, which declares who its owner is, but does not change its nature. No, the mark of a martyr is found at the very bottom of the heart. The apostle Peter calls it "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

That is the true mark of a martyr. Those who carry this inward mark today would be just as faithful, should persecution again arise, as the numberless brethren who through the ages loved their brethren, *and their enemies*, more than their own life. ▲

Mozambique

First Impressions of a Displaced People's Camp

by Natalie Jeffery, RN

You would not believe what I have seen and done in the past 2 weeks. Dr Wallace describes it best: "It's like hell on earth". I'm sure that things can't be much worse anywhere in the world. We have just spent 7 days in Matilde accommodation camp and I am still shocked at what I saw and the conditions we were living in.

There are around 5000 people in just the one camp, the only other NGO there is CARE, who are distributing food, but there's not enough food for everyone. People are living in shacks made out of leaves from the trees; most are practically naked. They are really living off the earth. We were overwhelmed by people at our clinic and we saw some horrific things. I got so worn down by telling people that we didn't have the drug they needed.

We camped out in the derelict hospital, it was pretty bad. Our water came from the Zambezi river, where the whole camp washes, passes urine, defecates, fishes, wash clothes—everything. With such filth, nothing ever felt clean. There were no toilets, but everywhere there were mosquitoes, even during the day.

We were in a never ending routine. Constantly there were people crowding our camp; we felt like animals in a zoo. We had to watch our stuff like hawks. One of our tent covers was stolen, kids would fight over our rubbish during the day and at night

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I would pray in my tent as the packs of dogs ran around me barking, howling and fighting over scraps.

We were only meant to stay for 3 days but the boat didn't turn up, so we spent 2 days frantically trying to find food. We were all hungry, tired and filthy. One day I ate just sugar and coconut made into small cakes.

The boat arrived with food, so we decided to stay; the need was so great. In the midst of all this we had some great times. My island of peace in the day was devotions when we taught our translators some songs and talked about the Lord.

The ride back here took 9 hours. There were four of us in a tiny rubber dinghy going up the river that is full of crocodiles and hippos. The crocodiles are awful; they frequently eat people. We had one guy in the clinic with a crocodile bite. Also mosquitos—mosquitos everywhere.

We left at 6 a.m. and arrived here at 3 p.m. We were sunburned, starving hungry, thirsty and desperate to walk on dry land. There were moments when I prayed like I've never prayed before. On the way to Matilde, the boat we were in nearly capsized. It was terrifying. Since it was quite a large boat, we all had to be ferried off in a rubber dinghy to the shore, where there were a few people.

These people were just wild, living extremely roughly, eating fish, speaking a weird language.

They dropped Fiona and me off first with all the valuables, as the boat was looking like it was going to capsize at any moment. When they left us, Fiona and I were praying hard, as these people crept closer and closer, just staring at us.

We eventually got back in the boat five hours later. By this time it was dark, so we had to spend the night on the river, then made it to Matilde the next day. The people here are so different from those in the south in Gaza (District), it makes the people in the 25th look like millionaires and much more advanced culturally. Our translators keep saying, they never realized quite how bad it would be. I nearly cried with relief when we made it back to Matilde. At last I could eat properly, wash my hair and feel clean and safe.

But even though life is hard, and there is so much I haven't written here, I know that this is where I should be. There are hardly any NGO's here because it is extremely remote and transport along the river is very hard and dangerous, so we really are providing people with a lifeline. Some of these people have been in these camps for 2 months and haven't received anything; we even hear of camps that you can only reach by helicopter and helicopters are very rare here, so people here don't even know the complete extent of this awful situation.

I flew here by helicopter and I have never seen so much water in all my life, You can see the roofs of houses or some houses like little islands with the water lapping around them. I have a severe respect for the Zambezi River. It's been good working with the doctors. Dr. Wallace is a paediatrician, 46 years old, then Bryan, who is a medical student, about 28 years old. I am in charge of the mobile team so co-ordinate the team when we are in the camps. It's hard work; I will be up around 5.30, trying to sort out breakfast or people to get us water. Clinic starts around 7 a.m. till 12 a.m. Then 1 p.m.

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to 5 p. m. The whole day I have people coming to me asking question, local chiefs etc. to talk to. Then after clinic we clean our equipment, write all our statistics (we are also doing a malnutrition survey for the ministry of health), so then it's time to sort out something to eat before securing everything for the night. I'm usually the last into my tent partly because I sleep in the living area with all the stuff. We all get to know each other very well, there is no privacy and any semblance of modesty is difficult. But for me, the bigger the challenge the more I thrive, Christianne from HQ laughed when I said to her that MEDAIR would have to find me some challenging projects, especially after this one!! But I think she took me a bit too seriously as well because she talked to me about North Sudan, which is pretty remote. The doctors think I'm mad; they can't wait to go back even after 3 weeks.

Tomorrow the new doctor and Fabianne (the MEDAIR nurse) arrive, I hope Fabianne can stay the whole time but the doctor is here for 1 month. I think I could get a bit weary of having such a big turnover and having to brief people all the time; also it's a bit lonely. To be honest, at night as the dogs prowl around, I will often think of home and what I will do when I get home, it keeps my mind off the situation we are in.

Next week we move to another camp, we hope to do three camps spending around two days in each, I'm not sure it will go that smoothly; we have learnt our lesson and take enough stuff for one week even if we are going just for one night. Please pray for good health; it worries me a bit. In Matilde about 1 in 3 people have a terrible disease called Elephantitis which is carried by mosquito bites, also TB. Dr Wallace came to Mozambique last year for 3 weeks and when he had tests done back in the USA he was positive for TB. Also about one in four have HIV/Aids. I know that I must be full of worms and parasites; I have a lot of gastro-intestinal symptoms. We pray all the time, especially days we do clinic, that God will protect us from all these diseases that surround us for hours at a time.

I remember when I was 15/16 praying to the Lord, "Lord here I am, use me, I'm up for it; you've made me this way for a purpose, so send me to the places where you need me, anywhere to do anything, I give my life to you, I am completely at your disposal." Now I smile and say, "Yes Lord I meant that prayer, but I never imagined it would be like this!

He must look down and chuckle to see little Natalie going down the Zambezi river full of hippo's and crocodiles, scared stiff to enter into a terrible camp full of hunger and disease. Who would have thought it?

I will never forget the past week, and I couldn't be anywhere else in the world right now. I feel like we have to do as much as we can in the hours of the day, days of the week with the personnel and equipment we have.

I am so looking forward to coming home in June, also to go to the School of Tropical medicine. I just hope and pray it all works out.

"And I ask Him that with both feet planted firmly in love, you'll be able to take in with all the Christians the extravagant dimensions of Christ's love. Reach out experience the breadth! Test its length! Plumb the depths! Rise to the Heights! Live full lives, full in the fullness of God." ▲

Poetry

Two Surprises

A workman plied his clumsy spade
As the sun was going down;
The German King, with a Cavalcade,
On his way to Berlin town,

Reined up his steed at the old man's side.
“My toiling friend,” said he,
“Why not cease work at eventide
When laborer should be free?”

“I do not slave,” the old man said,
“And I am always free!
Though I work from the time I leave my bed
Till I can hardly see.”

“How much,” said the King, “is the grain in a day?”
“Eight groshens,” the man replied.
“And thou canst live on this meager pay?”
“Like a king,” he said with pride.

“Two groshens for me and my wife, good friend,
And two for a debt I owe;
Two groshens to lend and two to spend,
For those who can't labor, you know.”

“Thy debt?” said the King; said the toiler, “Yea,
To my mother with age oppressed,
Who cared for me, toiled for me, many a day
And now hath need of rest.”

“To whom dost lend thy daily store?”
“To my boys—for their schooling; you see,
When I am too feeble to toil any more,
They will care for their mother and me.”

“And thy last two groshens? The monarch said.
“My sisters are old and lame;
I give them two groshens for raiment and bread,
All in the Father's name.”

Tears welled up in the good King's eyes,
"Thou knowest me not," said he;
"As thou hast given me one surprise,
Here is another for thee."

"I am the King; give me thy hand"—
And he heaped it high with gold.
"When more thou needst, I command
That I at once be told."

"For I would bless with rich reward
The man who can proudly say
That eight souls he doth keep and guard
On eight poor groshens a day."

—R. W. MCALPINE

Colonization

The Steps

For even the bravest, a move to a "far country," with a different culture, economy and language is always a big step, big because without a first step a journey is never begun. Yet, when seen in the light of a successful, permanent colonization settlement, it is a very small step. But a step it is, the first step.

The second step embodies the question: Is this where I really want to spend the rest of my days? The only thing that prevents some from returning to their native land is the fact that sale has been made, bridges have burned, and to do so would be expensive and reek of defeat. Thus a sad-faced family decides, We'll give it a try. And then, of course, there are those who from day one know they have found their place.

For most of the early N American settlers, step two held no options. There was no possibility of return. This would have been the case of many of our ancestors coming over from the Old Country.

For those who make the move, but never feel at home in their new surroundings, it is usually a matter of months, or two or three years, before they have sale and purchase return tickets.

Step three involves those who make the move and feel a sense of motivation. They often make a very positive contribution to the move. Even though they accept and adapt to local culture reasonably well, there always remains an umbilical attachment with "home."

The time spent in a "foreign land" for this group is usually one generation, that is, the time it takes for the small children brought with them when moving, and children born after moving, to grow up. As they reach marriageable age, they ask themselves: Is this where we are going to sink down our roots? The answer is an auction sale.

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This brings us to the fourth step. Those who have cleared the first three hurdles, whose children have married—at least part of them—and are on their own. These don't ask: Is this where I want to spend the rest of my days? Is it where I want my children to sink their roots? Time has already answered these questions. This is home.

It should be pointed out that this group hasn't severed all ties with their country of origin. By no means. Nor does it mean they have unreservedly accepted the total culture in their new homeland. But what they don't do is continually make unfavorable comparisons between the two countries.

The movement to Brazil is in its 36th year. A picture is being painted. As we look at those who made it to step two, step three and step four, we find all have made a contribution (usually positive); they are part of the picture.

Today there is a substantial group of brothers and sisters who are firmly into step four. A number have already got naturalization papers (while retaining American citizenship). Another 14 have now begun the naturalization process. I suspect others will follow suit.

What does this mean? It means that should there be a national crisis, these step-four brothers and sisters will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with their Brazilian counterparts.

I remember my uncle Raymond Becker telling, years ago, about a MCC meeting he attended. With tears in his eyes, a missionary reported how during a national crisis in the country in which he was serving, the American Embassy sent an armored car to their home, and with guns blazing, took them to the airport for evacuation. He asked, "Did we do the right thing to leave our national brethren in a time of crisis, and in a way totally contrary to what they had taught?" (Yes, he was told, he did the right thing.)

So long as the national brothers and sisters are confident that in a national crisis their foreign brethren will catch the first plane out, there cannot be a perfect bonding. In a perfect bonding the terms "you Brazilians" and "vocês americanos" will be heard less and less. The word will be: "We"—or rather— "Nós."

The degree of bonding can best be seen when a family returns from N America. There are those who go through a period of depression as they try to readjust to life in Brazil. Others are happy to be home.

Due to man's fabulous ability to misunderstand what he reads, hears and sees, we repeat: To not have totally bonded and to wish oneself back in N America should by no means be construed as an indicator of the person's contribution to the colonization project and mission work in Brazil. Many of those who have moved back to N America have made a solid and lasting contribution to the Mennonite presence here. In fact, for some, it is possible for the time to come in which they can be more useful as ambassadors in N America than as citizens here.

It's amazing how much you can find out about a congregation's financial wellbeing by listening to what people talk about after church. For years we had only two options for making a living on the Colony: to be a good farmer and to be a poor farmer. Thus the weather, variety and price of soybeans and corn, were the politically correct things to talk about.

Farming still is important and farmers continue to scan the clouds and the market

reports. (Thus it shall be until the end of time.) But our range of conversation today is wider. A number of brethren are working with earthmoving. They talk tractors, scrapers, cubic meters of earth and kilometers to the job. We have a number of dairies. They, of course, talk about cows, price of milk, feed and everything that goes with a dairy. A number of brethren are raising broilers for Perdigão. They talk about how many grams their chicks weighed, how many died, the hot and cold weather and when they will be shipping. (One brother raises hogs; he has no one to talk to.) Finally, we have brethren who raise cattle. They discuss the price per arroba (a unit equal to 15 kilos) for buying and selling, auction sales and cattle buyers.

In the Rio Verde (town) congregation, the talk is trucking. A number of brethren make their living with local trucking. Different ones work out, so they discuss why they changed jobs, wages, and all that goes with being a wage earner.

While we certainly don't have the wide range of job and vocational opportunities that are available in N America, we have come a long way here in diversifying. ▲

Readers Contribute

The Tomato Salesman

An unemployed man went to apply for a job with Microsoft as a janitor. The manager there arranges for him to take an aptitude test. After the test, the manager says, "You will be employed as a janitor at minimum wage, \$5.15 an hour. Let me have your e-mail address, so that I can send you a form to complete and tell you where to report for work on your first day."

Taken aback, the man protests that he has neither a computer nor an e-mail address. To this the MS manager replies, "Well, then, that means that you virtually don't exist and can therefore hardly expect to be employed by Microsoft.

Stunned, the man leaves. Not knowing where to turn and having only \$10.00 in his wallet, he buys a 25 lb flat of tomatoes at the supermarket. In less than two hours, he sells all the tomatoes individually at 100% profit. Repeating the process several times more that day, he ends up with almost \$100.00 before going to sleep that night. Thus it dawns on him that he could quite easily make his living selling tomatoes.

Getting up early every day and going to bed late, he multiplies his profits quickly. After a short time he acquires a cart to transport several dozen boxes of tomatoes, only to have to trade it in again so that he can buy a pickup truck to support his expanding business. By the end of the second year, he is the owner of a fleet of pickup trucks and manages a staff of a hundred former unemployed people, all selling tomatoes.

Planning for the future of his wife and children, he decides to buy some life insurance. Consulting with an insurance adviser, he picks an insurance plan to fit his new circumstances. At the end of the telephone conversation, the adviser asks him for his e-mail address in order to send the final documents electronically.

When the man replies that he has no e-mail, the adviser is stunned. “What, you don’t have e-mail? How on earth have you managed to amass such wealth without the Internet, e-mail and e-commerce? Just imagine where you would be now, if you had been connected to the Internet from the very start!”

“Well,” replied the tomato millionaire, “I would be a janitor at Microsoft!”

By definition, a fable must have a moral. This one has four:

1. The Internet, e-mail and e-commerce do not need to rule your life.
2. If you don’t have e-mail, but work hard, you can still become a millionaire.
3. Since you got this story via e-mail, you’re probably closer to becoming a janitor than you are to becoming a millionaire.
4. If you do have a computer and e-mail, you have already been taken to the cleaners by Microsoft.

Have a nice day as you contemplate your newly defined status in life! ▲

An Exercise

For those getting along in years, here is a little secret for building arm and shoulder muscles. You might want to adopt this regimen. Three days a week works well.

Begin by standing straight, with a five-pound potato sack in each hand.

Extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute.

Relax.

After a few weeks, move up to ten-pound potato sacks, and then fifty-pound potato sacks, and eventually try to get to where you can lift a hundred-pound sack in each hand and hold your arms straight out for more than a full minute.

After you feel confident at that level, start putting a couple of potatoes in each of the sacks, but be careful not to overdo it. ▲

This Is Brazil

Political Turbulence

Brazil is in a period of political turbulence. President Lula is the founder of the PT (Partido Trabalhista—Workers’ Party), which, as the name indicates, was to be the workman’s advocate. During most of its history, as a minority party, it severely criticized not only irregularities in other parties, but just about any bill or idea that wasn’t of their authorship.

In a recent scandal that involved some high up officials, a federal congressman, seeing that his own goose was probably cooked, decided he wouldn’t take the rap alone. A lawyer, with a talent for theatrics, he blew the trumpet sparing no one, but the president. Heads began rolling left and right, including that of President Lula’s top aide.

Brazil ¹⁴ News

The congressman's revelations were bombastic, to say the least. The PT was paying congressmen the equivalent of US\$12.400 dollars per month to support their bills. Needless to say, the money for these payoffs did not come from legal sources.

The question everyone is asking is: Did the president know what was going on? If so, why didn't he put a stop to it?

We have said before that President Lula appears to be an upright man. Polls indicate that the majority of the Brazilians consider him to not be directly involved in the corruption.

At this point it is hard to guess how things will turn out, and how many heads will still roll before everything is said and done. The end result should be salutary. The press, especially VEJA and ÉPOCA magazines, will give no quarter in their effort to get down to the very bottom of the scandal.

One thing is sure: If Brazil can bring down the level of corruption that permeates all levels of government, it will become a serious player on the global team. And the strident inequality between the rich and the poor will begin to disappear. ▲

This & That

About the only thing the Monte Alegre Congregation has in common with the Lone Tree Congregation is me; that is where I grew up. But for several Sundays we got another tiny whiff of what it is like to be from Lone Tree; we had weddings two Sundays in a row...

July 17, Richard, son of Doug & Celina Ferrell, married Starla, daughter of Harold & Irene Holdeman. They will be living on the Duane Holdeman home place once they move back to the US. N American visitors were: Kendal, Delbert and Delwynn Loewen; Candace Holdeman.

July 24, Sergei, son of Stanley & Mary Schultz, married Cheyanne, daughter of Carman & Celma Loewen. They will be living in the Frances Schultz house at the Rio Verdinho Congregation. N American visitors were: Ryan & Debra Litwiller and two little girls; Paula Schultz; Kendra Shultz; Weldon & Julie Schultz and three children; Edna, Maxine, Velede and Keleda Loewen; Ray & Bonnie Ratzlaff; Frank Burns; Rayanne Dirks. Sérgio & Katrina Alves, she is Sergei's sister, were out from the Acaraú Mission, where they are stationed. There were also visitors from Tocantins.

July 19, Chester & Elsie Hibner had a little girl: Shellany Dawn.

Ministers Arlo Hibner and Nelson Unruh held a short series of meetings in the Goiânia mission. At first glance this work seems to be stalemated; the numbers remain about the same from year to year. However, if all those who have gotten converted in Goiânia and moved out were still there, it would be a nice-sized congregation.