

Brazil News



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Editorial

Experience

A young man decides to become a pilot. He enrolls in a school of aviation. After getting ground school out of the way, he begins going up with his instructor. Finally comes the big day when he goes up solo. He receives his license and is now a pilot.

This new pilot may show extraordinary talent and great enthusiasm. He may have learned his lessons so well that he already appears to be a better pilot than many who have been on the job for years. But he lacks experience.

He knows how to use his instruments. But what will he do if his instrument panel suddenly goes blank on him while flying above a cloud formation?

Yes, he may have even studied about this type of a situation and know what the book recommends. But will he have the nerves of steel to carry out what he knows needs to be done? Or will he panic?

It's one thing to sit in a classroom and have the instructor say, "Class, you're flying above a heavy cloud formation at 10 thousand feet and your instrument panel has just gone blank on you. Now what?"

For the next 30 minutes there is an animated discussion on what would be the proper thing to do. But to have it happen while sitting in the cockpit of a plane, with one's life at stake, is different from having it happen when comfortably seated in a padded classroom chair, where everyone can laugh when someone suggests a solution that results in a crash.

We appreciate experience in others. We feel safer flying with an experienced pilot. We look for an experienced doctor to take care of our more serious medical problems. We like to take our car to an experienced mechanic when it needs repairs. The reason we place a premium on experience is that through experience we have found that inexperience can be very costly.

Recently in São Paulo, Dr. Silvano Raia did a liver transplant on a 75 year old patient.

Complications soon set in. On the sixth day after the surgery, while undergoing kidney dialysis, the nurse in charge through an act of carelessness, permitted air to enter the patient's bloodstream.

When the doctor on duty, a young man of 29, was summoned, he did his best, but was unable to save the patient.

Because the patient was a well known professor, his case was given considerable publicity. Dr. Raia made the following statement about the young doctor who was on duty when the patient died: "He [the doctor] dealt with a situation that was greater than his experience. When this happens, the results are disastrous."

The young doctor had an excellent reputation. He did his best. Doubtlessly he acquired important experience during his three or four years of practice, but it wasn't enough. The patient died.

On the other end of the spectrum we have Dwight D. Eisenhower. In his book, *At Ease*, he tells the story of his military career, beginning at West Point, up to World War I, then World War II, where he was the Supreme Commander of Allied forces, and then the Pentagon, where he became the Chief of Staff of the US Army. Finally he tells of his presidency.

There were many frustrations in Eisenhower's career. He rose through the ranks slowly. Because of his organizational ability, his superiors felt he could be more useful at home than in Europe during WW I, a severe blow to this young officer. And yet, as he was transferred from one post to another, he made the best of each situation, acquiring first hand experience in the overall operation of the US Army. This included stints with famous generals who had a lasting influence on his life.

When WW II began, Eisenhower was still a relatively obscure officer. However, when the issue of a Supreme Commander came up, someone who would be in charge of all Allied troops for the invasion of Europe through Normandy, known as Operation Overlord, one of the generals simply asked, "Why not put it under Eisenhower?" There and then the decision was made. Eisenhower would command Overlord.

Why? Not because of exceptional brilliance, but because of extraordinary dedication and the vast experience acquired in thirty some years of army life. When given the colossal responsibility of invading Europe and wrenching it from the hands of a satanic dictator, he was up to the task. He was a man of experience.

In today's extremely competitive business world, young men and women who dream of rising through the ranks, don't have a day to waste. With their college degree in one hand and limitless zeal to work in the other, they find themselves a job. Contrary to what was taught for years, they are encouraged to not remain on a job too long. Rather, they should gain experience by working in as many different settings as possible.

It's really strange.

We appreciate skilled pilots and doctors and mechanics. We place a high value on the experience they have picked up through the years. But in our own life the same thing many times isn't true. Unlike the aspiring executive who knows he doesn't have a day to lose if he is going to make it to the top, we feel we can defy the law of gravity and coast

to the top. We fail to realize this world is occupied by a force much more terrible than Hitler's armies. In this battle there will be no inexperienced victors.

Dr. Raia says that when we deal with a situation that is greater than our experience, the results are disastrous.

The defunct Soviet Union today is in total chaos because no one has any experience in what it means to be free. Almost a century of experience has gone down the drain. Any hopes that the floundering republics will suddenly become stable is vain thinking, for experience can be purchased only with time.

Men have lost great sums of money, but then through hard work, recovered their loss. This isn't true of he who squanders time. It is forever lost. The accumulated knowledge that we should have gained through experience is also lost. God can, and does, supply us with crutches when we come to Him in repentance, but for the rest of our life we hobble where we should walk or run.

If we don't want to face a situation that is greater than our experience, we can't afford to squander time, for the results will be disastrous. ▲

Life in Brazil

Fire Departments

One hundred and forty-six years old, with approximately 100 thousand inhabitants, it wasn't until some 10 years ago that Rio Verde got it's first fire department.

Virtually all fire departments in Brazil are operated by the Polícia Militar – Military Police. These bombeiros – firemen, carefully selected out of the ranks, are to be congratulated. They must often with bravery and ingenuity compensate for a chronic shortage of equipment.

Their broad leather belts have a stout metal ring attached, used for rappelling. Daring rescues are made from the upper stories of skyscrapers by firing or tossing a rope from a nearby building (when distance permits), having the victims secure it to something solid, and then rappelling over and bringing them back to safety, one by one.

Recently a man was threatening to take his own life by jumping from an upper floor of a high rise apartment. A bombeiro rappelled down from the floor above and suddenly appeared out of nowhere in front of the man who was in the act of jumping. Clutching him with his outstretched legs, the bombeiro was able to secure him long enough for those inside to rush to his assistance and save the man from certain death.

As can be expected, bombeiros must be robust, muscular men. Most are excellent swimmers. Some of us here on the Colony are acquainted with a man by the name of Beto who for years has been on an elite rescue team in São Paulo. It's interesting to talk to him about accidents we have read about in the paper and find he has been in on the rescue work. A fine, good looking young man, he moves with the grace of a panther.

Large cities like São Paulo obviously have some well-equipped fire departments.

The same can't be said for the majority of smaller Brazilian cities. Some have no fire department and others are equipped with maybe one lumbering old pumper truck, like Rio Verde has.

So what happens when there is a fire with no, or almost no, fire department?

Fortunately, because of the type of construction used here, there are very few fires. Most houses, even in the poorer sections of town, are made of brick or block and plastered. The roofs are usually clay tile or asbestos, which of course doesn't burn. Only the wooden rafters are inflammable. The better houses have these characteristics, plus a cement ceiling. And some, like here on the Colony, even have metal rafters. Consequently an electrical short often results in smoke, but no serious fire.

While a building can be fireproof, the furnishings usually aren't. And that is where the danger is. The fire in the Edifício Joelma in São Paulo a number of years ago is proof of that. (If I'm not mistaken, Reader's Digest carried the story in a condensed book section. Also, I believe that Jake and Ike Loewen happened to be in São Paulo at the time and got in on the excitement.

Rio Verde today has approximately a dozen high rise apartments. Yet their vintage fire truck doesn't so much as carry a 15 foot ladder most of the time. What will happen if one of these building ever catches fire? Trucks will probably be sent from Goiânia – and get here some four hours later. We hope it never happens.

I think that bombeiros, especially in the larger cities, would tell us that getting to the fire is often more difficult than putting it out. In Brazil a siren isn't respected. All too often about the most motorists do is to grudgingly pull over just enough for the emergency equipment to squeeze through. Recently in Goiânia we saw a police car trying to get through a maze of unperturbed drivers. One of the cops in the back seat was half way out of the window, frantically gesturing for people to move over.

Back to Rio Verde. I doubt if it has over a half dozen water hydrants in the whole town. When there is a fire, the bombeiros fight the fire until they run out of water. Then they head to the nearest hydrant and get a refill. Some 20 or 30 minutes later they return. What else can they do?

Even so, I tip my hat to the Brazilian bombeiro. He has learned to do a lot with a little. ▲

Police Departments

Brazil has the Polícia Militar, which we have briefly described, and the Polícia Civil – Civil Police, made up of non-military personnel, akin to your sheriff's department in N America. Our equivalent of a sheriff is the delegado de polícia, or simply delegado.

Neither the military nor the civil police have a good reputation. They are criticized for everything from inefficiency to outright corruption. People on the Colony who travel more frequently can tell one story after another of how they fell into the clutches of unscrupulous officers.

But that's only part of the story. The life of a policeman isn't all glamour. Possibly worse than having to deal with highly dangerous criminals, is the constant criticism they must hear, even after having risked their lives. All this for a wage of only two or three hundred dollars a month.

To make matters worse, they are just as under-equipped as the firemen. Imagine two or three policemen in an old VW bug trying to catch a criminal in a late model stolen car. Even the newer squad cars are cheaper models, not the expensive models that are a modern criminal's trademark.

I have no doubt but what if decent wages were paid, Brazil could have an excellent police force. Even so, the majority of the policemen respond very well to courteous treatment. And even if they don't, we still have a chance to let our light shine. I feel that we who live here in Brazil should be very careful about being openly critical of the police. While there is no excuse for dishonesty, we should still ask ourselves: What would my attitude be if I had to work for several hundred dollars a month and then get criticized for everything I did?

I have heard some impressive experiences here on the Colony on how brethren dealt with less than well intentioned policemen. With patience and principle a real witness was left. Let's keep it up. ▲

Remembering Out Loud

A Genius and a Horse Named Judy

When talking with Sylvia on the phone the other night, she said that Lee Roy Toews, who is on the school board where she teaches in Kentucky, wants me write about a horse named Judy.

But first a few explanations. The first two families to move to Brazil 27 years ago were Denton & Emma Burns and Dick and Frieda Toews, and their children. Lee Roy, just a little fellow back then, spent several years in Brazil with his folks.

When we moved to Brazil, some nine months later, my dad-in-law (Denton) was speaking an impressive hodgepodge of Spanish and Portuguese. Usually he could manage to get his point across. But not always.

Dad-in-law and I hit it off real well. So it's understandable that he would go to considerable pains to introduce me to his Brazilian acquaintances. In his best Spaniguese he would say, "Este é o meu gênio," which he believed to mean, "This is my son-in-law."

After a number of these pleasant little sessions, I one day asked, "Pop, do you know what 'gênio' means?"

He had no doubt. "It means son-in-law."

I said, "Well, it sounds to me like you're telling people I'm your genius and not your son-in-law."

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Being older than I and having lived in Brazil nine months longer than I had, he of course had the final word. And just to clinch the nail, one day when we met dona Ana, the wife of the man from whom we bought the initial tract of land, he asked her, “Charles é meu gênio?” – “Is Charles my genius?” Enthusiastically she bobbed her head yes. Either she: a) didn’t understand his Spaniguese, b) placed a higher premium on diplomacy than honesty, or c) hadn’t known me long enough to be able to make a sound analysis of my mental faculties. Whatever the problem may have been, I was now a confirmed genius.

Why the confusion between genius and son-in-law? Simple. Genius is gênio and son-in-law is genro, which, when pronounced in Portuguese sound somewhat alike. In Spaniguese they sound even more alike.

Pop felt we needed a horse and cart for hauling firewood, sand for building purposes, and even for transportation. So one day – a day that was blissfully slipping into oblivion until board member Lee Roy had to remember – Pop and I went to the town to purchase a horse and a harness and a cart.

Word spreads fast when someone is on the market for a horse, especially when it’s known that the prospective buyers are americanos who pay in cold cash. I don’t remember how many horses we looked over, nor how many horse sellers looked us over.

Finally, and I don’t remember why, we settled on a white mare. Actually, for someone totally unacquainted with horses, she didn’t look half bad. Then we purchased a stiff new leather harness and a brand spanking new cart.

Finally, with the help of others, we hitched up the white mare to the new cart. Proudly Pop announced to the assembled gawking audience, referring to me, of course, “Este é o mais novo charreteiro do Brasil,” – “This is the newest cart driver in Brazil.” Everyone seemed duly impressed.

I boarded the cart and sat down on the seat. I picked up the reins. And that’s where I ran into my first major problem as the newest charreteiro in Brazil. Brazilians don’t say giddap to make a horse go, I suppose mainly because they don’t speak English. Instead they smack their lips in a peculiar way, an art which today, a quarter of a century later, I haven’t mastered.

But that problem was soon surmounted when my audience came to the rescue and produced the necessary smacking noises. We were off.

The instruction in a computer program I once purchased sagaciously informed the buyer, “Remember you are running the computer, and not vice-versa.” It’s too bad that when a person buys a horse there is no one around to say something similar.

As I think back on that scene, I’m quite confident that that horse didn’t share Pop’s generous opinion of his son-in-law’s mental capacities. Some people say animals can talk – their own language, of course. If they can, surely every time we passed within earshot of another of the equine species, that white mare must have solemnly announced, “Este é meu burro.” (Figure that one out for yourself.)

Because of having to occasionally stop at intersections, I developed my own version

of the smacking sound that makes a horse go. In an act of charity, the white mare tolerated my faltering tongue.

We made it out of town and headed out toward camp (because it wasn't a Colony back those days). Trotting along at a steady pace, we left mile after mile behind, when, towards evening, we got to the old rickety Rio Verdinho bridge (where Luiz Duarte used to live). We crossed over and then, just as we were beginning to climb out of the river bottom, that mare decided to do its own version of the line of "Grandfather's Clock" where it says, "But it stopped! Short! Never to go again . . ."

Yep, that mare stopped and wouldn't budge, except to maybe take a few steps backwards. I did my version of the smack with all the variations I knew, but that horse had no ear for any of my strange lingo. Like Grandfather's Clock, she apparently planned on never going again.

There we were, the horse and the cart and I, just over the Rio Verdinho bridge. Soon it would be night.

Enter Dick Toews.

Dick's only means of transportation was an old truck. Fortunately he chose that exact day to go to town. Now, on his way back, he stopped to see what I was doing there. I explained my dilemma. He smiled. He was an old horseman from way back. To him this was no great problem.

His first move was to have a talk with the horse, to get her confidence, I suppose. But you can't talk to a horse if it doesn't have a name, so right there and then he christened the mare Judy. Why he ever chose such a beautiful name for that animal is more than I know.

Dick had a real good talk with Judy. When he thought they were both on the same team, he expertly shook the reins and asked her to move forward. She didn't.

More talk. Same results.

He did more than talk. No go. By now it was dark.

Like I said, Dick was a good horseman. He was a good truckman too. So by combining his talents, he cooked up a way of getting Judy and the cart and me home. He tied one end of a rope around Judy's head and the other around the back bumper of his truck. Now Judy moved.

My memory is hazy. Once we got up on top of the hill I think he stopped and untied her to see if she had gotten the hint. As I remember she hadn't.

Anyway, to shorten up this part of the story, any illusions Pop might have had about his son-in-law being a genius must have been dispelled by the sight of the newest charreteiro in Brasil being towed home by a truck in the middle of the night.

We got a lot of work out of Judy. But there was just one problem. When she decided enough was enough, there was only one solution: unhitch.

However, one day I sort of got my revenge on that white mare. She had decided it was time to stop. I remembered something someone had said, so I tried it. I got a piece of smooth wire and tied it around the base of her ear. Not real tight. Until I took that wire off, Judy was the most obedient horse you ever saw.

We finally sold Judy to Daniel Kramer. She turned out to be a really good saddle horse, a true singlefooter. But folks, I never missed that horse.

OK Lee Roy, anything else you remember about Brazil? ▲

Literature

[The Martyrs Mirror was never intended to be a literary classic. It has a story to tell, which it does without embellishments. And yet, sprinkled throughout its pages, we find beautiful literary jewels. The one below, found on page 328, is the poignant testimony of Franciscus Petrarcha, in which he exalts the calling of the martyr. We have made slight adaptations in the punctuation and arranged the words in verse form to enhance their beauty.]

The Journey

With a few steps we shall make a long journey,
And our course will be not less wonderful than sad.

The places through which we will first travel,
Are the mountains of Lombardy, near Novaria.

In the midst of our journey,
We will come to the cities of

Crema and Steyer,

in Austria,

Zuidenitz,

in Poland,

and Marseilles,

in France.

Then we propose to proceed into Bohemia;

And at last to finish our journey

in the countries on the Baltic Sea.

What will we meet on our way,
dear friends?

Certainly nothing that is pleasing to the flesh;
For fire and flames shall threaten us on our right hand,

And deep waters on our left.

Between them there is nothing but bloody scaffolds,

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gallows,
wheels,
stakes,

And countless horrible instruments of death and torture,
Which cause men to die slowly,
As by a thousand deaths.

The company is composed altogether of bodies . . .
burned,
drowned,
beheaded,

Or otherwise murdered;
So that our footsteps must tread
through the midst of skulls and dead men's bones;
To say nothing of the crimson blood,
Which seems to flow in rivulets,
yea,
Sometimes in large streams,
Along the ways which we must travel.

Nevertheless our heart is full of joy,
And we are delighted with this journey,
And draw life in the valleys of death;
For here is the portal of heaven,
The door of the blissful palace,
Which is indeed strait,
yea,

On the posts of which flesh and blood remain;
But through which is the entrance into the spaciousness of the heavenly halls,
And into the infinite and ever-blooming garden of the blessed paradise.

Here are heard with the ears of faith, as near by,
The glad voices of the holy angels,
To which no singing of nightingales in earthly groves
can be compared;
nay,
The most lovely instruments of music,

When compared with these sound harshly and unpleasantly to the ear.

There are also beheld,
As with unclouded eyes,
The majesty of God,

Jesus,
the Saviour of the world,
And the heavenly societies.

We dare not further speak of it, for human ear hath not heard nor eye seen;
Neither have entered into the heart of man,
The things which God has prepared for them that love Him.

All this is there perceived in the soul,
Though the bodies suffer great distress;
But this is soon over.

Have we no reason, then, to long for this journey?
Certainly!

Hence let us go on.
The Lord guide us and show us the right way,
That we may not only begin well,
But also finish well.

O ye slain and martyred multitudes,
Who have testified with your blood to the name of your and our God,
We have come to behold your martyrdom,
And to make it known,
by writings,
To our fellow brethren;
Not that we intend to make a pilgrimage to the places of your death,
To salute you in the manner of worship,
Or to bring you an oblation,
After the manner of the priests,
by no means!

For this would profit neither you nor us;
But we seek to bring to remembrance your good examples.
With this we will begin.

Language

How We Speech It

Like it or not, our speak here in Brazil is becoming liberally seasoned with Portuguese. Not only do more and more Brazilian words show up in our speak, but we also make literal translations of native expressions.

Let's notice a few:

“To take a decision.” This is a transliteration of tomar uma decisão. So instead of making a decision, we take a decision.

“To make a question.” Fazer uma pergunta. In Portuguese we don't ask questions; we make them. So you may hear someone here say, “I'm going to make you a question.”

“Candidates for baptism.” This comes from candidatos para o batismo. Our church literature talks about “applicants” for baptism, but we here call them candidates. It sounds like politics but it isn't.

“The line fell.” A linha caiu. It's common to hear, “I was talking to so and so on the phone when the line fell.” What happened? A bad wind blew the line down? No, someone simply got cut off.

“To mark a meeting.” Marcar uma reunião. In N America you set or announce a meeting. Here we mark it. We also mark a time to meet in town or to go to Goiânia.

“We're out of energy.” Acabou a energia. You over there say electricity is off when a storm blows the power line down. Here we say we're out of energy.

“Between!” This one is really a little joke. But it works so well. They say a Brazilian who knew a little English was wanting to show off a bit. Expecting a visitor who also knew some English, he went to the dictionary to find out how to say “Come in.” In Portuguese we say Entre (from the verb entrar). But it happens that entre also means “between,” so that is what he told his friend when he knocked on the door, “Between! Between!”

Then, of course, there is always the option of “Englishifying” words. You folks who have lived in Mexico do this too. Someone says, “They prorrogated my loan in the bank.” The verb is prorrogar with an “ed” ending. It means, “I got an extension on my loan.”

We shouldn't do this, but it does make a very descriptive language. ▲

This Month in the News

Proálcool

When the Arabs flexed their muscles, creating a worldwide petroleum crisis some 20 years ago, Brazil was hard hit. At that time much of its petroleum was imported from the Middle East.

In 1975 president Ernesto Giesel instituted a program called Proálcool as a solution

to this problem. Loans were made available to plant sugar cane and to set up distilleries. At the same time the automobile industry began adapting gasoline motors so they would run on alcohol.

By 1985, 98% of all cars produced in Brazil had alcohol motors. That amount slowly began tapering down until today 98% of the cars produced are coming out with gasoline engines.

What went wrong with the próalcool program? Two things. First of all, it is more expensive to produce alcohol than it is to import gasoline. Second, gasoline is now plentiful.

Alcohol motors aren't half bad. When there is a gasoline shortage, they are mighty good. But let's face it, when one can choose, the choice is gasoline.

Brazil today is the number one world alcohol producer, employing nearly a million people between cane fields and distilleries. Unless the trend is reverted and more alcohol cars are produced again, there is going to be mass unemployment. The government is alarmed and should shortly come out with new incentives for vehicles with alcohol motors. It remains to be seen if people will buy. ▲

Leonardo Pareja

Leonardo Pareja is a handsome young man. Well dressed, with his hair neatly combed, he cuts a striking figure.

Leonardo is well educated. He got his schooling in the best private schools in Goiânia. He is an articulate speaker, a gentleman.

Leonardo is 21 years old.

Leonardo is also a criminal.

When he was 12 years old he had his first run-in with the police and was hauled off to jail, where he remained for several hours until his dad came and bailed him out.

At 16 he stole his first car, not for commercial reasons, but simply to have something to run around in. He frequently did this on weekends. Needless to say, he soon realized there was money in stealing cars. Today he is able to talk intelligently on how much receptors in different parts of Brazil pay for different models of cars (a 95 Monza is worth R\$5,000 in Belém, but only R\$3,500 – 4,000 in Mato Grosso).

With the money from these thefts Leonardo would travel all over Brazil and in neighboring countries, staying in five star hotels. Because of his sophisticated manners, he aroused no suspicion. During one of these jaunts he even dated the daughter of a judge.

In 92 Leonardo had a spat with his girlfriend. To show his displeasure, in a 90 minute spree one night he held up 11 gas stations in Goiânia, netting 30 thousand dollars. Then, of course, he went on an extended trip.

It wasn't until several months ago that Leonardo began to make national news. In Salvador (capitol of the state of Bahia) he kidnapped a 13 year old girl and held her hostage for 61 hours. At that time she was substituted for an adult hostage and

they began a thousand kilometer odyssey with 300 cops in hot pursuit. Somewhere he dropped off his hostage (in good health) and then managed to elude his pursuers.

What followed was a comedy of errors – at least for the police. Always several steps ahead of them, he would call radio stations and taunt the police, send postcards informing them of what he was up to. He spent some time in one of the suburbs of Goiânia, a short distance from where our sister Isabel lives. Apparently he visited his mother and girlfriend. He spent some time in a nightclub. Newly “converted” to some evangelical group, he was attending one of their services when three cops showed up. Using others as a human shield, he made his way to the door, firing as he went and accidentally hitting a 13 year old girl in the abdomen (she recovered).

Once again he escaped. This time he headed out to a farm near Santa Helena, a town some 20 miles from Rio Verde.

The police got wind of where he was. Forty heavily armed men with police dogs moved in to capture him. Leonardo was there alright – 50 feet up in a tree with binoculars, calmly watching the police as they moved in. At the last minute he shinnied down and sprinted to a nearby stream, where he lay submerged for six hours with only his face out of the water, camouflaged with brush. When several policemen walked by a mere yard from where he was hiding, he overheard them saying they were anxious to get back home to watch a soccer game.

Again he eluded his pursuers. However, sensing he had played his little game to the limit, he heaped one more insult on the already frustrated police. He called a well-known TV reporter and told her that if she and a judge and two lawyers would meet him at a predetermined spot, he would surrender to the judge. But not to the police.

Today he is in prison. Unfortunately he has become a folk hero. He is swamped with fan mail, which feeds his super ego.

He says he is going to serve his time (which could easily be a good 20 years with all the charges that are being pressed) and then go straight.

I suspect Leonardo will be making more news. ▲

Banks

The Bamerindus bank in Curitiba,

Paraná opened the first drive-thru window in Brazil. That’s old stuff to you folks in N America, but before you say we’re really behind times, read on.

I have written about the huge lines we used to have in our banks. These are getting shorter and shorter, and strangely, so are the tellers. In their place are electronic tellers. In the local Itaú bank there are at least 10 of these electronic tellers. While these tellers can’t do everything, what they can do takes the pressure off of the human tellers.

Also there is the toll-free telephone service for getting ones balance (a recording asks for the agency number, the account number and the secret code). A synthetic voice

announces the balance. It's also possible to establish voice contact and transfer funds from one account to another – all over Brazil within the same bank, plus carry out an assortment of other operations.

Then there is the fax service, which I have already described, in which any time of the day or night one can get a bank statement. And finally, by modem, one can do almost anything at home that can be done with the electronic tellers in the bank.

It will be interesting to watch how the public reacts to drive-thru windows. If they go over, in a short time we'll see them everywhere. ▲

Missions

A Visitor

Several weeks ago while at work I got a phone call from a man with an Italian sounding last name. He wanted to know if he was talking to someone from the Igreja de Deus em Cristo – Menonita. I of course told him he was.

He began asking questions: What are the basic tenants of our faith? Are we Pentecostal orientated? So our sisters wear the devotional head covering? Do we observe feet washing? Are we liberal or conservative Mennonites? Do we have television? Do we swear oaths? Do we have our own schools?...

He went on to explain that he was looking for a church that kept all the doctrines and that while looking through some sort of book on the religions in Brazil, read about the Mennonites.

I offered to send him some literature, but he declined. No, he said, he would soon pay us a visit.

Last Friday Clinton Unruh, from the tract office, brought a stranger into my office. It was Edir Bossoni, the man to whom I had spoken on the phone.

In different conversations, an interesting story began to emerge.

The book in which Edir read about the Mennonites gave the address of the Witmarsun Colony, a large German Mennonite settlement in the state of Paraná. He went to see them, but soon noticed that they definitely would fit into the “liberal” category of Mennonites. So he asked if there were any other Mennonite groups around. Yes, they said, there were. In Paraguay there were a number of Mennonite Colonies (not so very far from where he lives in Londrina, Paraná). And then, almost as an afterthought, they mentioned the Mennonite Colony in Rio Verde, Goiás. It was at this point he called to Rio Verde.

Immediately after getting this information together, he took a bus to Paraguay. Some of you folks who recently visited the Mennonites in Paraguay will be interested in knowing that he visited the Florida and Luz y Esperanza Colonies. He was impressed by what he saw. In fact, he felt that possibly he had found what he was looking for. He told them so.

Then one of those strange things happen that have no human explanation. The Mennonites there strongly encouraged him to visit the group in Rio Verde.

So he decided to take their advice. But there was one problem. He didn't have enough money to pay his bus fare to Rio Verde. But as he was leaving Paraguay, a sacoleiro (one who buys merchandise in Paraguay to be sold in Brazil) asked him if he would carry some merchandise over the bridge for him. Since it was within Edir's legal limit, he did so. In appreciation the man paid him enough money to be able to purchase his bus ticket.

He was so anxious to get to Rio Verde that when the bus got to his hometown of Londrina, he didn't even get off to see his family (which would have meant catching another bus the next day). He was in a hurry.

Edir is in his late twenties. He is married to a Peruvian (see 'This & That') and has three small children. His profession is doing finish work on houses. But I really believe he's one of those fellows who does anything his hands find to do. He has lived in both Peru and Argentina.

It's true that first impressions can be deceiving, but I think everyone had a good first impression of Edir. He tells a clear conversion experience. Several months ago he and his family quit attending other churches and are now worshipping at home. But he feels a deep need for fellowship.

In the same tone of voice that he said I didn't need to send him any literature because he was going to pay us a visit, he has also said that in December he plans on moving to Rio Verde with his family. He wants to live around the church for a while and then return to his people.

Everything indicates that Edir is sincerely seeking for the whole truth. And it also appears that he feels he has found it. Pray for him.

This & That

On September 29 there was a general council meeting in the Rio Verdinho Congregation for everyone who could attend from the church in Brazil. The main issue was approval of a new set of statutes. Brazilian law requires that all churches be registered. Our old statutes were no longer adequate for the different activities and programs of the church. Other issues were also discussed in this meeting.

Folks, now do you agree with me that one day in court brings surer justice than one year?

Eldon & Bonnie Penner, together with their family, went to Brasília to pick up their daughter Wendy in the airport. Wendy spent a number of months in the Acaraú, Ceará mission helping the missionaries.

Do you remember what I wrote last month about how we say "every eight hours" in Portuguese? Well, Sylvia was telling us on the phone the other night that in Kentucky it is so damp that they had to put a dehumidifier in the house. She said something like

this: “It has a container about half the size of our mop bucket [in Brazil] and we have to empty it every eight in eight hours.” That made my day, or night, if you prefer.

The Glenn Hibner family paid the Leo Dirks family a visit on the way back to Rio Verde from their own farm in Mato Grosso.

I often use Min. Reuben Koehn’s articles, chosen out of Select Editorials, in the Mensageiro. After hearing about his death, I looked for an article that would be appropriate, that would transmit his feelings on the subject of death. I found exactly what I was looking for: “The Afterglow” (Selected Editorials). Read it. It’s truly a beautiful article.

Myron Kramer is translating The Mirror of Truth into Portuguese. He is approximately half done. This part has been proofread and was now published under the title, Espelho da Verdade, volume I. Edir Bossoni is anxiously awaiting a copy.

In the Portuguese Brethren’s class which I now teach, we were discussing the lesson “Courage Based on Faith.” The question was: What are some circumstances when a Christian needs to have courage? Adejenes Lima, whom some of you know, gave an answer something like this: “In this country it isn’t custom for people to go back and apologize or ask for forgiveness. So when I have had to go back and clear things up with people from the world, this has taken real courage. The Christian doesn’t only go back and ask for forgiveness, but he also loves that person, even if he has been his enemy.” After Adejenes became a member of the church and became better acquainted with her workings, he would remember deals made years before where he was less than honest. Different times the Spirit told him to go back and straighten things out. He was obedient and this has brought growth. Today he is a pillar in the church.

Three Copeland youth, Tammy Koehn, Jody Dirks and April Koehn were here for a visit between the 9th and the 23rd.

On the 15th of this month we went on daylight saving time here. I understand that you in N America went off of DST. That means that when it’s 8:00 A.M. in Kansas, it’s 12 o’clock noon here in Brazil. Remember that when calling.

October 12th is Children’s Day in Brazil, so the Monte Alegre school board treated the teachers and students to ice cream cones.

An anonymous note that reeks of Patos, Paraíba: To the editor of Brazil News: To say the truth I agree with you in regards to the false economy article in BN 52, under the heading of Brasília. But I would like to know more about the death angel you wrote about. Is that the same egypt that Joseph was governor of at the time of the big famine? Where Moses was found floating among the bulrushes? Yep.

Robson, Valeria Gold’s brother, hit a jaguar with his car the other night. It sort of bunged up the front end of his car. He doesn’t know how badly the onça was bunged up. And since he didn’ have a flashlight, he didn’t get out of the car to find out.

And while we’re talking about Robson (better known as Robin), his wife had a baby on the 25th. The name is Tássia. A nice name. Robin says she’s cute as they come. Or cuter.

Frank Coblentz – Sam & Erma’s son – from the Patos mission is spending some time on the Colony. I think he’ll be helping someone during planting season.

Brazil 17 News

The price of postage has gone up, which is going to cut down even more on the amount of tracts that can be printed and sent out each month.

Do you remember that I once said in an article that Spanish speaking people from neighboring countries never learn Portuguese well? I decided to see what Edir would say about his wife, a Peruvian. So I asked him how her Portuguese was. Real good, he said. Then I told him what I had observed. He sort of blushed and admitted that her Portuguese was also quite tainted with Spanish. I don't believe he was trying to be dishonest with his first answer. He is probably so used to hearing her speak that he doesn't even notice she speaks Spaniguese.

José Cardoso, the printer who worked at Gráfica Girassol for Stan & Mary Schultz, is back from Goiânia, where he plied his trade for a while. The Evangelical Hospital has set up a big shop where he will be working. He and his wife will be members in the Rio Verde congregation.

Luiz & Aparecida Fernandes from Goiânia are moving to Pirenópolis. Luiz, a dentist, has rented an office right in the middle of town in front of the Bradesco bank. I suspect he will do real well there. While he was working in Goiânia, some of the people from the Colony had their dental work done with him. They will be a real asset to the little congregation in Pirenópolis. For any of you folks coming to visit Brazil, I highly recommend you visit the brethren in Pirenópolis. It's inspiring. The same can be said for Goiânia.

The first Sunday in Novemer we will have no ministers and only two deacons in our local congregations here. The rest will be in the general M & D meeting.