

# *missionary herald*

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Patricia and Boyd Williams with their children Louise, Sarah and John, in Campinas, Brazil.

## All change

Boyd Williams describes how he and his family arrived in Brazil and writes about his first impressions as a B.M.S. missionary preparing to serve in that country.

“All change”. These words seemed to dominate the day we left England for Brazil, 7 January, 1974. Due to leave at 11 p.m. from Gatwick, we set out early from the furlough house in Canterbury because we understood there was a danger of rail strikes on the Southern Region.

We caught a train which travelled a short distance, then stopped because of the dispute. “All change”. Complete with children and luggage it was necessary to catch another train. Again, after some distance, “All change”. Finally, for a third time and possibly then we were on the last train with passengers to arrive at an almost deserted Victoria Station that night.

On the 'plane the pattern was almost repeated, only this time we sat on the 'plane waiting for over an hour, while boxes of live chickens, due for Brazil were taken off the plane, only to be put back on again!

In Brazil the pattern was repeated again, having to change cars because the first had broken down! But these were nothing compared with the greater “All change” we experienced; the cold of England to the sweltering heat of that February in Brazil; a vast new country, that at times seemed depressingly big as we travelled over it by 'plane; a new home; a new language; a new culture; new surroundings; new challenges.

Travelling from Viracopos airport to Campinas we encountered our first real view of some of the poverty there is here in Brazil. People living in tiny houses, the dirt and



apparent lack of hope. To begin with we found it very difficult to adjust to our new surroundings. We feel it important not to minimize the strangeness and uncertainty we felt, particularly during those early days.

Over a year has passed since we arrived in Brazil; a year filled with many new experiences; joys and sorrows, laughter and tears. The greater part of the time has been spent in Campinas for language study. This is a fine city with modern buildings. During that period there arose opportunities for preaching at the Community Church (mainly American) and ministering to a group of English speaking young people. We were aware that through it all God guided and blessed in so many ways.

### Similarities

Now even after only a year here, and having moved to Ponta Grossa a city in the State of Paraná, it is not easy, nor perhaps even possible, to make an adequate assessment of life in Brazil. In some ways it is not so different as it first appears.

In many aspects today there is a growing one world culture. Brazil has been greatly influenced by the United States. On the television it is possible to watch “Hawaii Five O”,

“Tarzan” or “Ironside”. Looking at our shelves at home we have Nestles chocolate powder, Kellogs cornflakes, Knorr soups, Royal jellies, Nescafe, Vim, even the Avon lady calls and if you have money to spare it is possible to go to the supermarket and buy Cadburys chocolate from the imported section.

The Baptist church here, on the surface at least, seems different from England, with greater emphasis on “All Age Sunday School” and the use of many types of published materials. Yet one realizes it has many similarities and is increasingly facing the same problems. It does not seem to be the great growth situation it was ten to fifteen years ago. The last sermon we heard in Campinas was from a Brazilian pastor who had travelled to Canada and the United States. He said how he thought it was possible that church buildings could close here and be used for other purposes, as has happened in these countries and of course has happened in England too. Perhaps one great ministry that English missionaries can exercise here is how one can evangelize and seize opportunities in a more secular society.

### **New explorations**

However, do not misunderstand me, and this is perhaps something of a contradiction, there is still a great openness to the Gospel. Only a few months ago over 200,000 people crowded to hear Dr. Billy Graham in Rio de Janeiro. Churches are still growing, some at a tremendous rate. These however, in the main, are Pentecostal churches, where there seems a greater flexibility, perhaps simplicity of structure and organization; a greater experience of personal evangelism on the part of the church members.

It is difficult after such a short time to comment adequately, yet one senses a need for a deeper movement of the Holy Spirit in our Baptist churches; a greater involvement on the part of the majority of the church members in evangelism.

There are areas of population change and development in Brazil that need to be even more fully explored. Some are geographical, such as Mato Grosso and Amazonas. However, also in the large estates in the growing industrial cities with seemingly ever increasing numbers of children and students in schools and universities,

there are continually new opportunities for evangelism.

### **New developments**

Here in the city of Ponta Grossa new factories have been built and there seems to be development and progress. The present population, something in the region of 150,000 to 200,000 may possibly reach 400,000 in the next decade. The Baptist church with which we are working has one main building in the centre of the town and is responsible for three congregations in suburbs of the city, two of which may in the future be our own particular responsibility for pastoral oversight. The church has other congregations some distance from the city. Among these situations, even though humanly speaking some seem very weak, one sees some of the possibilities for evangelism. There is a project approved by the Junta (committee) of the Paraná Baptist Convention to have a Youth Camp Conference Centre in the Ponta Grossa area. This seems also to have exciting potential and although as yet, a satisfactory site has not been approved, this could well be a means by which the Baptists of Paraná see others, particularly young people, won for Christ.

There is great optimism concerning the future in Brazil. New discoveries are being made showing the ever greater material resources in this great land. It is indeed a land of hope; a country on the move. The church in Brazil has even greater resources in a great God. With Him, Brazil, with all its great potential, can be gained for Christ.

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**Does your future lie  
with the Brazil of the future?**

**If you wish to know more about  
serving with the churches in  
Brazil, write to:**

**Rev. Mrs A. W. Thomas,  
93 Gloucester Place,  
London, W1H 4AA.**



A beggar woman with her child at Bogra, Bangladesh.

## Back to Bogra

Mary White was appointed a B.M.S. missionary in 1951. In 1970 she was seconded to the Churches of God Hospital at Bogra, Bangladesh. Here she writes about her recent furlough in this country and in the United States of America, as she prepared to return to Bogra in April.

**Back to Bogra!** As I pack up ready to go, I look forward to being back in Bangladesh again. At least, I look forward to some things—the warm welcome I know I shall receive from my missionary colleagues and the Bengali nurses and other friends. I look forward to being settled in one place again for a while and being part of the healing ministry at Doyasthan Hospital. (*Doyasthan* means “Place of Mercy”, now officially changed to Christian Hospital, so that patients do not get the idea that treatment is given entirely free of cost!).

While I have been away my work has been shared by the senior Bengali nurses. They will be so anxious to tell me all that has happened while I have been away (even though I have been kept well informed of most things by letter). The Operating Room which was only beginning to be fully used when I left last year has been kept busy. New clinics have been started. The Midwifery course has recently begun again. Rural medical centres have been opened in three of the Christian villages. A new Bible woman has been appointed.

There will be changes to see in the buildings, the new extension to provide additional accommodation required on account of the surgical work and new houses for members of staff.

There will be new people to get to know, a new Bengali doctor, staff nurses, student nurses. No doubt, the folk I already know will be looking rather thinner than I remember them. I shall be feeling over-privileged and over fed compared with most of the people I see.

With the deteriorating economic situation in Bangladesh I dare not hope that there will be no beggars who come and sit on the door-step or who sit coughing under the tree outside my window, sometimes before dawn.

Since I left Bogra last year I have travelled many thousands of miles, (about as far as one and a half times round the world). I have lived for a time in the Old World and the New and now I go back to the Third World again.

When the Lord called me to work with the American Churches of God Mission in their hospital at Bogra, I never imagined that it would be the start of a journey which would take me to the United States.

I had sometimes thought that it would be very interesting to visit America, but never really thought that I would get the opportunity



Mary White holds little Anne Marie and (below) Juthika, a student nurse at Bogra, Bangladesh.

to do so. It was a dream I never thought would come true, but it did when it was arranged that I should spend part of my long furlough visiting the churches who support the work at Bogra.

How wonderfully the Lord had timed this visit for me, so that I was there at the same time as Mary Hershey, previously a missionary in Bangladesh, now working in Haiti. Mary and I were able to travel together in the mission car and I greatly appreciated having the benefit of her help and experience.

During the four months we were together it was summer, autumn and winter, and we enjoyed many beautiful views of the countryside, especially during the fall.

It was a joy to meet so many of the people who had previously been just names to me as we visited over seventy churches in the states of Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Maryland, W. Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Enthusiasm for missionary work was somewhat similar to that in England, with usually the faithful older people turning up for week night meetings, though usually a good cross section of age groups at the Sunday services. In most of the churches we went to the All-Age Sunday School preceding the morning worship service.

There is considerable personal interest in missionaries. This is partly due to the fact that even with recent additions, there are less than twenty missionaries representing the Churches of God, spread out in Haiti, India and Bangladesh.

The missionary magazine, *The Signal*, contains quite a lot of information about the missionaries and is rather formal. There is no separate magazine for children, but a special section for them is included in *The Signal*.

A personalized form of support also encourages this personal interest. Some missionaries are supported entirely by one church, others by several churches. My own salary is provided by a group of thirteen churches in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, as part of their annual missionary project.

Evening meetings were often accompanied by a "Pot-Luck" supper or some other delicious meal. The only problem was trying not to eat too much, partly because we did not want to grow out of our clothes and partly because we knew that in Bangladesh and in many countries there are millions who do not get enough to eat.

At the beginning of 1974, I received a text card which had as its first line, "A land flowing with milk and honey which drinks the rain from heaven". (Deut. 9: 9/11) My thoughts immediately flew to my forthcoming visit to America. It is true that England and America have their



problems of inflation and unseasonable weather, but compared with countries like Bangladesh they are indeed, "lands flowing with milk and honey".

Visiting many beautiful churches, mostly in country districts, and getting to know many of the friends who faithfully support and pray for us was a delightful experience. We were also able to meet a number of friends who had previously been missionaries in Bangladesh. I am glad to be able to go back and tell my Bengali friends in Bogra that I had the privilege of meeting Mrs Viola Cover, the pioneer of the mission work there. At the time of our visit, Mrs Cover, now in her 97th year, was in hospital with a broken leg. Though hard of hearing she understood when I talked of people she knew across the seas.

It was good to meet again the friends who visited us in Bogra in 1973 on the occasion of the Mission's Diamond Jubilee. One couple, the Andrews, met me on my arrival in the States and I spent a few days in their home before setting off on an interesting and eventful journey before the deputation programme began.

Travelling by Greyhound Bus, I visited friends in the Rocky Mountains, Oregon, California, Texas and Illinois. In Chicago I was met by a Bengali friend, a male nurse who had

been a student at Chandraghona when I first went there in 1951.

Ten years ago, he went to the States to do further study and is now head nurse in an Intensive Care Unit in a large hospital. Now married, with two small children, he has kept in touch through the years. It was good to see one of my former students and to recall events of those earlier days.

It is encouraging to know that many of our nursing students from Chandraghona have done well and are occupying positions of responsibility in various hospitals in Bangladesh. Through the Christian Medical Association of Bangladesh I keep in touch with many of them. Many are now working in government hospitals and have very little Christian fellowship. They are beset by many temptations and they value our continuing interest and prayers.

As we continue to train Christian nurses and midwives and help to heal the sick, as we continue to serve with the Bengali Christians and the many others from many different countries, we are being part of the answer to the many problems which face Bangladesh. Some of the problems seem too big to think about, but we look to God to guide us and strengthen our fellowship together and to use us to His glory in His church in Bangladesh.



Part of the congregation attending the Women's World Day of Prayer service at Bogra, Bangladesh.

A group of young people at the Baptist Church, Paranaguá, Brazil.



**Roy Davies, B.M.S. missionary in Brazil since 1971 writes about:**

## Life in the Litoral

**A**NOTHER airliner leaves the city of São Paulo travelling to Curitiba, capital of Paraná. Passengers soon look out on the one side to the vast expanses of the south Atlantic, and on the other side to the densely forested mountains so common on this Brazilian coastline. Flying close to the coast, the miles of golden sanded beaches make a fairly straight demarcation line between sea and land; and as yet these beaches are unexplored by tourists. Having travelled two-thirds of the journey, the coastline changes somewhat, it takes an inward sweep into the shape of two bays. There below are the bays of 'The Orange Trees' and of 'Paranaguá'. At the north east end of the first lies the little town of Guaraqueçaba and at the extreme end of the other the superport of Paranaguá, second largest exporter in Brazil.

In moments the aeroplane passes over the bays and while the network of rivers flowing into them is clearly visible, few passengers will have realized that close to those rivers are the little communities of Serra Negra, Assungui, Tagaçaba and Potinga. Soon, the skyline is broken by the skyscrapers of modern Curitiba, but not before the aeroplane has crossed the extremely high parts of the mountain range called 'Serra do Mar' (sea range) so often shrouded in mist and cloud. We land, and passing quickly along the outskirts of the city are soon on the main road that takes us the fifty miles to that superport. It is there that we live; Paranaguá being a base for our work as we help the Baptist churches in the Association of the Litoral.

### Lively youth

Paranaguá is the place where, some seventy years ago, Paraná's Baptist work began before spreading quickly to the growing interior towns. Today, the local church, with a membership of around six hundred, enjoys a busy life as it seeks to apply the Gospel to local needs. Probably the most active witness is seen through

the activities of the young people. Bank workers, school teachers, shipping office clerks, shop assistants and students make up a group of about eighty. Theirs is an extremely busy life, work all day and studies in the evenings, with the majority of church activities packed into week-ends and holidays. Although time is limited, it is through a strong personal faith in their Saviour that their lives are so motivated. During the past year about fifty people were baptized in the church and some eighteen months ago they organized Paraná's first ever sponsored walk which produced £1,000 to buy a brand new electric organ for the reconstructed church. In addition to five young men at present studying in theological college, others are aware of their need of preparation and this has brought them to enrol as students in the theological course by extension, provided by the state's Baptist Seminary and run locally.

### Preparing to lead

In January and July students come from the various churches in the Association to study for ten days on this course which is aimed at preparing them for work in their home churches. Those who come from the interior are usually farm workers, and in addition we have one who is already a pastor and two evangelists who

look after local churches. The diversity in background makes for rich fellowship as there is a unity of purpose in Christ Jesus. Classes are held in the evenings, thus leaving those who work by day opportunity to study.

Subjects studied include Old and New Testaments, Evangelism, Baptist Principles, Religious Education and Portuguese. Students take exams and are obliged to submit monthly homework during the year. Teachers are drawn from national pastors, missionaries and some church members. One of the most rewarding experiences is to see the students receive their diplomas after three years of study. Some begin with very little schooling, but through dedication these complete the course, revealing both mental as well as spiritual progress.

Brazil is a country undergoing rapid development, but still has areas greatly neglected, both educationally, medically and technically. One such area is the Litoral of Paraná. Leaving, then, the affluence of the superport let us visit the area commonly called 'The Interior' which as yet remains without benefit of the port's commerce.

Travelling for forty-five miles on an asphalt road we pass near the only two towns, Morretes and Antoninia, before reaching a dirt road



Baptismal candidates at Assungui, Brazil.



Part of the congregation watching the baptismal service at Assungui.



which continues a similar distance before terminating at Guaraqueçaba. The journey takes us in a big sweep, like that of a giant horseshoe, from Paranaguá around the two bays to the other extremity. What do we see en route?

#### **Wanted! a nurse**

Having reached the dirt road, we may have to stop because of a few cattle on the road, but after a few miles we enter the mountains and travel through thick forest. Here and there we see small wooden houses, and may be some women washing clothes in a mountain side stream, but little sign of progress and nothing of prosperity. Travelling onwards to the other side of the mountains we see that some of the more enterprising people grow rice, beans, mandioca and sugar cane, but because nearly everyone has to till the soil by hand, the scale is pathetically small and we see thousands of acres still waiting to produce crops in abundance. Normally what dominates the scenery other than the thick undergrowth is bananas. The Litoral, because of its climate, is ideally suited to this fruit. They are grown in abundance, but the economic returns are relatively low.

After some twenty miles on this road we

arrive in Potinga. In a prominent position, just off the road, is the Baptist church and local school, giving only junior standard; secondary education being available only in the distant towns. Pressing on another three or four miles we reach Tagaçaba, past the Baptist church and then by the riverside we see the medical dispensary 'Good Samaritan'. Sadly, for almost two years now, it has been closed because of the lack of a nurse, but people are getting used to the fact that they only have to travel forty miles for medical help which will cost them a small fortune!

Our journey could be continued, crossing Tagaçaba's new concrete bridge, three previous wooden ones having been washed away in the annual floods, to Assungui and Serra Negra and eventually Guaraqueçaba, but we would see much of a sameness in the scenery and people, lots of banana trees, crowded little houses and no shortage of poverty.

#### **Found! a farmer**

So what of the future? An asphalt road for the area has been projected by the state government, and people from outside are beginning to realize the potential of the area and are buying as much land as they can persuade the poor



Angolans return to Angola after fourteen years in Zaire.

### **Baptists plan for their future in Angola**

The first meeting of the Provisional Committee of the Baptist Churches of North Angola was held at São Salvador on 1/2 April, 1975. The committee has agreed with the B.M.S. its main aims and these are:

To receive reports of the work in each of the four church regions in North Angola, i.e., São Salvador, Kibokolo, Bembe and Caipemba.

To plan the work of the Baptist churches in North Angola as a whole.

To prepare quarterly reports for transmission to the B.M.S. in London.

people to sell. Progress is not so far away, but how will the people, many of whom are members of our churches, fare in the wake of what could be ruthless exploitation?

For a number of years now it has been the dream of the leaders of the Association to have a missionary agriculturist who could help organize better methods, using fertilizers, drainage or irrigation as necessary and especially initiate a farm cooperative. This dream is nearing reality with the arrival of Rev. Walter

To be responsible for the requesting and receiving of aid from the B.M.S. and other organizations.

In due course to propose the date and place of the First General Assembly of the churches and to make arrangements for this Assembly, including the drafting of the necessary documents (Constitution, legal instruments, etc.)

At the first meeting the following were elected continuing members of the Committee on the proposition of their respective church regions:

**Rev. Alvaro Rodrigues—President (São Salvador)**

**Rev. João Makondekwa (Kibokolo)**

**Rev. Pedro Lucas (Bembe)**

**Rev. Paulo Dias de Novais (Caipemba)**

**Rev. Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga—Administrative Secretary**

and Mrs Fulbrook to pilot the project, preparing the way for an agriculturist. In addition, we earnestly continue our prayers for a missionary nurse who could practice curative medicine and also teach preventive methods.

How are you going to help us? Remember our people in your prayers; in the town, that they will continue to 'lengthen their cords'; in the interior that we may realize our opportunities, accept the challenge and 'strengthen the stakes' of Christian witness.

**Robert and Miriam Young with their son David.**

**Robert Young is completing his first term as a missionary of the B.M.S. in Bangladesh and he asks**

## **Why be a missionary?**

This is a question which I have asked myself many times since I arrived in Bangladesh. Each time I have come to the same conclusion, I would. Why? Because it is what God has called me to be.

It is not that I am anyone special or that I have any great qualifications, if that was necessary I think I would still be in Scotland doing an ordinary job. It is simply that God has called my wife and I and so He enables us to work for Him in this part of the world.

When we first came to Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) I used to wonder how I would ever manage to cope. Yet looking back it has been amazing just how God does enable one to cope in many situations. Gradually many difficulties, which at one time seemed so vast, have now become common place.

### **Language and gunfire**

One of the first problems we faced was starting to learn Bengali. Many many times I came home from language school and said "I will never understand it; it just does not make sense to me". Yet now, although I do not know the language very well, I know it will come if I am willing to work at it.

When we were preparing to travel to Bangladesh many people thought it was very unwise because in their eyes it was the wrong time to go. The country was in chaos, the freedom fighters were causing havoc and war with India was what everyone predicted. During the first few weeks in the country, many nights we lay and listened to the gun battles as the freedom fighters sought to press their claims for inde-



pendence. Then the war with India came, of which we saw quite a bit. We had thought we were going to spend our first Christmas in East Pakistan but as Bangladesh gained her independence in December 1971 we spent Christmas in Bangladesh!

Coming here at such a time enabled us to share with the national people a little of what they had gone through and we thank God for this. Now we feel it has all helped us to understand the problems and difficulties of the people here.

Language study has taken up most of our time, usually the first two years are spent studying the language but owing to the uncertainty of the first few months we spent two and a half years.

Then the good news of 'exams passed' came and we were posted to Dinajpur in the north of the country. In many ways I feel I am now beginning to learn Bengali as I work among people.

### **Varied Work**

It is said, if a non swimmer is thrown in at the deep end of a pool he will either learn to swim or he'll sink! A few days after our arrival here, Rev. Gwyn Lewis and his wife left for furlough and Miss Valerie Hamilton went to the Lausanne conference, so Miriam and I were thrown in at the deep end and slowly we have learnt to swim. Once again God was faithful and having called us he enabled us to do what was necessary.

During this time we learnt we had to make decisions and take charge of many situations because very few people will take responsibilities.

The work we are involved in here is varied. First of all, the farm land on this compound consists of five acres. This year with the help and advice of others I am trying to start a seed farm. The idea being that from here we should be able to supply farmers with a good quality seed at a reasonable price. The seeds we plan on having available this year are potatoes, corn and rice. I am not a farmer and have had no previous farming experience but it is amazing how quickly one can gain information and learn when it is essential to do so. After having talked with David Stockley and obtained his advice I have more confidence when I look to the future of this work.

We are discovering more and more how important the social aspects of peoples lives are. Rev. Gwyn Lewis and I are both working in the village areas and for the next few months it has been decided that he will concentrate on the spiritual aspect of the work, e.g. problems in the church and teaching and counselling, while I help in the social side, e.g. co-operatives, help concerning land problems, some arising recently because of the floods, and helping in distribution of relief goods, which at the moment takes most of my time.

But through it all we pray that God's love which is revealed in His Son Jesus Christ will be seen and that He will continue to work here as He is doing now.

In recent days a change has been seen among Hindu people in this area; they ask to receive teaching about Christianity. So it has been

exciting to see many of them accept Christ as their Saviour. New churches have been established, and there are still new enquirers each day, so please pray for Gwyn Lewis and the local evangelists and pastors as they try to meet the need of visiting and teaching these people.

Work continues among the older churches, please pray as we go among the 'old' and 'new' churches that we might be what Christ would have us be, not as someone who knows it all but as a fellow worker in the Gospel.

I have spoken mainly about my work. Miriam's is, of course, different. Apart from being a housewife and looking after our two year old son, David, she looks after any of the hostel children when they are sick.

On this compound there are two hostels for boys and girls from village areas to live in. They then attend either the mission primary school or go out to a local school in the town.

I mentioned relief goods; a number of bales of clothing came and before these can be distributed they have to be sorted. Some then, are given to the churches for immediate distribution and others, which are not so suitable, are given to sewing groups and the women then alter and remake the garments. This job fell to Miriam.

I think we should remember the wives of missionaries because very often their husband travels and works away from home and the wives do not get the same opportunities to go to the villages.

Please continue to pray for us, otherwise our work is in vain.

## **"Prepare ye the way"**

**Christine Farrer, B.M.S. missionary in Zaire, interprets a well known text in the light of what she has seen in Zaire.**

*"Prepare ye the way of the Lord". This is one of the phrases of the Bible which has become more real to me since*

being in Zaire. In regions like this, where roads are sandy or muddy tracks hacked out in the jungle, they quickly become uneven, rutted and overgrown. If there is an important visitor coming the roads must be evened out and cleared of grass and weeds.

Send for the local council, you say? But you can't, there

isn't one; at least not one with road making personnel. No, the message goes round that the roads need doing and the local population must go out and do all that is necessary. It is hard work, it takes time and effort. It makes me ask myself, "do I put enough effort into preparing a road for the Lord, in my own life and in my witness to others?"

A view of the South Mizo District, near Serkawn Hospital, Assam, India.



## The struggle in the hills

Joan Smith has been serving as a B.M.S. missionary in the South Mizo District of Assam since 1965. In this article she reflects on some of the tensions between the people of the hills and the people of the plains.

*“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were no people but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy”.*

**A** TREMENDOUS statement of fact or perhaps more correct to say—a statement of tremendous fact. The Christian’s status as declared by the Apostle Peter to the believers in exile. He tells them who they were before they experienced the new birth and also the glorious contrast with whom they have become. Their responsibility is put before them.

Thank God that these verses apply to each one of us who has been born of the Spirit.

Nevertheless whenever I read these verses the church in Mizoram looms large in my mind. That part of the body of Christ within those beautiful hills, formerly known as the Lushai Hills.

Mizoram is the narrow strip of land lying between Bangladesh on the west, Burma on the east and bounded on the north by the Indian State of Assam. Very little of Burma and Bangladesh separate her from the Bay of Bengal on the south.

The land of the Mizos, a people thought to have originated from the Chin Hills in Burma. Certainly they have mongoloid features. Tending to be of quite small stature they are sturdy, generally, and hard-working. They are essentially a happy people, have a good sense of humour and, like so many tribal peoples, very proud.

### Developing trades

Many work on the land simply in an effort to gain the everyday necessities of life. Today many also work in the numerous offices established in Aizawl, the capital in the north, and in Lunglei, the town in the south. Many others are

involved in community development projects, or weaving co-operatives. Others are teachers, medical workers, pastors or evangelists.

Once they were no people but now they are God's people. The Mizo church, indeed, is one of the miracles of God's grace. Still a head-hunting people at the beginning of this century they forsook their animistic religion and embraced Christianity in an amazing way. The early believers experienced persecution, they suffered for the Name. Several, driven out of their own villages on account of their new found faith, gathered in the little village of Sethlun in the Lunglei area in the south. In the midst of persecution the first handful of Christians bore a faithful witness. From hard beginnings this people, who once were no people, became God's people. Throughout this century there have been very definite times when the Holy Spirit has visited this people. At such times there has been revival. Many believers have been led into a deeper commitment and there have been many brought into the Kingdom.

#### **A day to repent**

We must not forget to give thanks always for this church in north-east India. God has done a great work among them and is still working in and through them. In a few months time I hope

to share with you how God is working in this Church.

However, what about the situation in which the people have found themselves in recent years? It was a heart breaking time when, in 1966, the Mizo National Front, a minority group wishing independence from India, rebelled against the Government. Following the onset of this the Church leaders set aside a day for prayer, calling the Church to repent. They believed the Church had sinned, that in some way they had failed the young people who joined this militant group. This call to repentance was good and indeed necessary.

#### **Swift change**

Almost a decade has passed and underground activities continue from time to time in varying degrees. At times life is very normal and one can be tempted to think that all is well in these very beautiful hills. All of a sudden the situation can change and one wonders if and when the volcanic like situation is to erupt.

The militant group continues to desire independence. To a certain extent one can sympathize with them for they have suffered, in different ways. In this situation it seems that again we need to repent. After much prayerful



**Young children of the South Mizo District, Assam, India.**

consideration I believe that our main problem is lack of love for the people of the plains; many such people live in the hills serving as government officials or working as shop keepers. This is the sin which is in our midst. We are no different in our daily living. Few there are amongst us who are free from this sin lack of love.

In the Mizoram situation there are at times far reaching and tragic results. In recent months I have been startled by the frequency of a certain remark from the mouths of Christians and I quote, "We despise the peoples of the plains". I quote also the remark of a Christian friend, "It is strange how Christianity has not touched this part of our lives, our relationship with the peoples of the plains".

### True facts

I share this with you and I trust it does not seem in a critical manner, rather I identify myself as one member of the Mizo Church because I love the Mizo people and the Lord has laid this burden on my heart. Several friends of mine have said, "You must tell your people the true facts about us so that they can pray intelligently for us". Let us pray, therefore, for a spirit of repentance. Where there is lack of love

let us pray that the love of Christ may indeed flow out to the Bengali, to the other non Mizos.

God has a great task for the Mizo Church. There are more than twenty Mizo Baptist evangelist-teachers serving in the neighbouring State of Tripura. They have a share, too, in reaching the Rabha people of the Assam plains for Jesus Christ. Sometimes we are concerned when we see how quickly overseas missionaries in India are on the decrease. We need not be anxious. God has many faithful children there whom He is preparing, Indians who will take the message of salvation to the people of India.

### Prayer fellowship

The Mizo Church needs to be prepared afresh for her great task. They are God's own peculiar people that they may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called them out of darkness into his marvellous light. Like them many of our fellowships in this country are needing to be visited afresh by the Holy Spirit. He only will convict, cleanse and renew, and fill us with power. The Christians in Mizoram are counting on your prayers. Will you pledge your support? How can we do less?

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## Missionary Record

### Arrivals

- 29 March. Miss R. J. Page from Tondo, Zaire.  
1 April. Rev. P. Plant from Barisal, Bangladesh.  
4 April. Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Casebow and family from Diptipur, and Mr. and Mrs. D. J. Hampshire and family from Cuttack, India.

### Departures

- 25 March. Miss V. A. Bothamley for Vellore, India.  
15 April. Miss M. White for Bogra, Bangladesh.  
18 April. Miss D. M. West for Yakusu, Zaire.

### Death

- 10 April. In Buxshalls, Miss Evelyn Annie Allsop, aged 85 (Ceylon Mission 1920-1950).

## Acknowledgements

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously or without address.

(22nd March, 1975 to 22nd April, 1975)

**General Work:** Anon., £1.00; Anon., £2.00; Anon., £1.00; Anon., £5.00; Anon., £10.00; Anon., £6.00; Anon., £20.00; Anon., £6.00; Anon. (Cymro), £25.00; Anon., £5.00; Anon., £10.00; Anon., £8.00.

**Medical:** Anon., £5.00; Anon., £20.00; Anon. (Edinburgh), £3.00.

**Relief Work:** Anon. (E.M.W.), £5.00; Anon. (M.L.), £5.00; Anon., £3.00; Anon., £1.00; Anon. (R.P.), £3.00.

**Chandraghona Appeal:** Anon. (Prove Me) £5.00; Anon. (M.L.S.), £5.00;

**In Memoriam:** (General Work) "With thanksgiving for a wonderful father"—Eric and Phyllis, £25.00.

### LEGACIES

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Miss V. E. Jenkins .. ..	100.00
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Mrs. F. Throssle .. ..	188.60
Miss E. A. Trew .. ..	184.72
Mr. J. Tully .. ..	1,244.50
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**In memory of Rev. R. H. Tebbutt. Gifts totalling £208.30 have been received through the Tilehouse Street Baptist Church, Hitchin, in memory of their late pastor, Rev. R. H. Tebbutt, former Chairman of the B.M.S.**

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