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Baptists overseas, including missionaries of the B.M.S. live and work with those of other denominations and other faiths. The extent of the co-operation varies, as the articles in this issue of the "Missionary Herald" indicate

## Christians, Hindus and Muslims can work together in Bangladesh

by Veronica Campbell  
B.M.S. missionary since 1968

IT was barely light when hurried footsteps were heard and someone shouted for the evangelist. There had been an armed robbery during the night at the village of Noanpur, two miles away. A Hindu couple with their month old baby had been attacked and all their belongings had been stolen. The husband had received a very bad cut on his hand with a scythe.

The evangelist and his family were shocked at the news. Folk wondered why dacoits had chosen such a poor family to attack and rob. A young boy was quickly sent to inform the Muslim village chairman. Tea was made. Neighbours gathered to hear what had happened. The chairman arrived and then set off by bicycle, with the evangelist, to the scene of the robbery.

The evangelist's wife busied herself gathering a few vegetables and chilies and measuring out some rice, tying it all into a bundle in a piece of cloth. "They'll have nothing left in the house to eat," she said. "They only live by selling the little they can grow." The bundle ready, we set out to walk to the village of Noanpur.

On arrival we found many Christian and Hindu women in the house with the wife who was pale and shocked, her throat bruised. Her husband sat in the courtyard nursing his injured hand. There seemed to be bloodstained clothes strewn everywhere. At a little distance the Muslim chairman, the evangelist and the local Hindu leader discussed the case. They were no strangers to each other, for each was a prominent member of the local bazaar committee.



A Muslim young man arrived. He was given the grand name of "doctor" having received a few months training from a doctor in a town some distance away. "They're poor," said the evangelist's wife, "but the doctor will treat them anyway. He won't ask for money right away." In the courtyard of that small house people of different faiths, Muslim, Hindu and Christian, were united in their common sympathy and concern for this family.

### Lonely

Here in Bangladesh, people of different faiths rub shoulders all the time, and it matters very much "what" you are. Christians are in a minority, less than 1% of the population, which is reported to be 75 million. The vast majority are Muslim; a smaller proportion are Hindu. Wherever Christians live, wherever they work, the church is face to face with people from different religions and the challenge of life and witness in such a society is ever present.

Regrettably the church has reacted to being such a small minority by withdrawing as much as possible from such challenge and potential conflict. Most Christians prefer to work for a Christian organization or if that is not possible then possibly for a Hindu employer. However, there are some Christians who are in government service in one field or another. A large number



of Christian nurses work in government hospitals and serve faithfully and with great patience, coping with different standards and with being a minority in this situation.

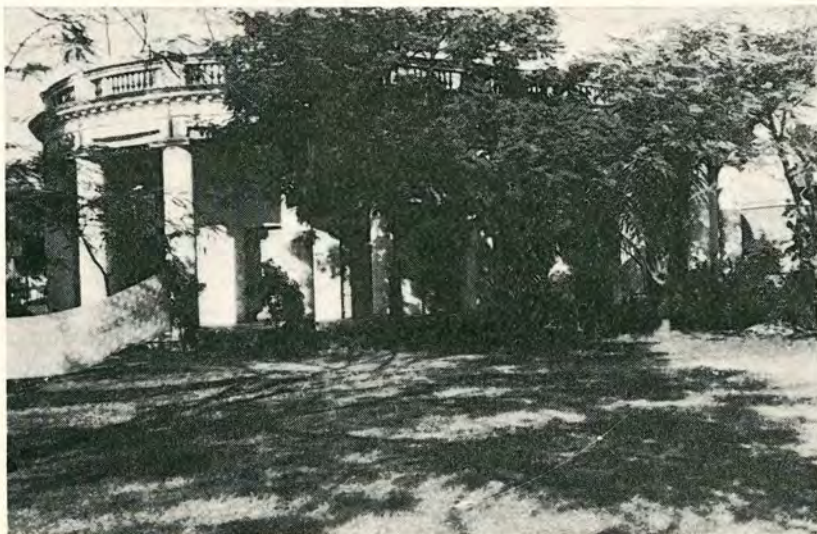
Recently Christine Preston was appointed travelling secretary to the Christian Medical Association, Bangladesh, to keep in contact with these nurses, some of whom work in very isolated conditions, far from a church or other Christians. Together with a Bengali Christian woman, Christine has visited and encouraged the formation of regular groups of nurses to meet for Bible study, prayer, and discussion. These meetings have been welcomed by some matrons, even though their own religious convictions are different, and has been opposed by other matrons. However, this work will be of great value to these nurses in their frontier situation and help them in their relations with their colleagues, and in their Christian life in general.

#### **Working together**

It is well known that millions of people here are desperately poor. Since Independence various relief efforts have been undertaken and most of the relief organizations have been Christian. Task relief, that is working for pay on a daily basis, on roads, bridges and pukurs (ponds for water supply) has helped all sections of the



community. Muslims, Hindus and Christians have worked side by side on such projects which will improve their own village conditions and also provide for their families. Agricultural projects, involving the sinking of tube wells, irrigation schemes, introducing new strains of seeds or new ideas to improve livestock or poultry, have been expressions of the concern of a variety of Christian organizations for the whole person, and have involved the local farmers and leaders of all backgrounds.



**Three churches in Dacca.**  
(top left) **The Anglican St. Thomas Church.**  
(above) **The Armenian Church, that would have been seen by Carey and his colleagues, and (left) the Baptist Church in Sadarghat**  
(Photos: B. W. Amey)



Nevertheless it is a fact of life here that begging is a rather lucrative profession, particularly if the beggar is handicapped. Even desperately poor families, reduced to living by the roadside, are not willing to allow their children to be taken into homes and cared for completely, because their children are a source of income, by their begging. In one instance a widow from a nominal Christian background refused to allow her blind son to return to the blind home where he had been cared for and educated for two years, even though she and her other child had almost nothing to live on and to eat. She preferred to keep him to beg for them because he would "earn" more than they could.

### **Outward looking**

After Independence the Y.W.C.A. in Dacca started a craft centre which employs poorer women to make a variety of jute cloth bags, toys and wall hangings. The majority of the workers are Muslim and the supervisors for the two shifts are also Muslim. The craft centre committee has Muslim and Christian members. In fact the Y.W.C.A. does good work in working with and reaching out to Muslim and Hindu women through their varied programmes: cookery classes, English conversation, nursery school, working girls' hostel and the regular monthly meetings of members.

Blind welfare here is almost entirely Muslim managed. There are government schools for the blind and voluntary societies which are naturally

predominantly Muslim. In the Dacca voluntary society for the blind the small number of Bengali Christian members are very active and held in high regard by the other members. Here there is less of the defensive attitude seen which is often common among sighted Christians outnumbered by people of other religions. Maybe the common handicap they have helps. However, the strong feeling against anyone who becomes a Christian can be very much the same as in sighted society.

Some Christian young men and women have become involved in helping blind people and in becoming friends with them. One helps to tape college text books, others transcribe secular and Christian books and one girl helps to teach Muslim blind girls to read Braille. Many members of one Dacca church take a great deal of interest in the blind boys in a home very near the church. Their pastor played an active part in the opening of the home and several of the church members are now the friends of these boys from different backgrounds.

It is evident in some areas that the church is being encouraged to be more outward looking. In Dacca the "Family to family" project which World Vision is sponsoring through the local churches offers hope that the local church members will become more involved in the community as they visit in the neighbourhood and provide recreational facilities for the children from poorer homes and realize the real needs of these families.

### **Faith in the villages**

*Report by Valerie Hamilton from North Bangladesh*

I WAS invited to take a teacher training course in a village in the Dacca district. What the teachers did not have in schooling themselves, they made up for in enthusiasm. To give you an idea of their keenness, let me tell you that one night we had been asleep for two and a half hours and were awakened by two ladies singing and washing at the tube-well. They told us later that they had sat up to finish their "homework" till 1.30 a.m. This is in a remote village where there is no electricity and where people are nearly always in bed by 9 p.m. or so!

My second visit was in the village area north of Thakurgaon. I went with the Rev. Philip Baroi and his wife, who are based at our sub

station at Ruhea, about 45 miles north of Dinajpur. We went to prepare four men and eleven women for baptism at Ryemohal. They were baptized in a flooded rice field on the Sunday. Please pray for this new group and for another group at near-by Thakahara, who took communion for the first time that evening.

The third visit was made at Christmas time and Miss Hemnalini Baidya and myself visited Raipur and Bakunda to take services. These are fairly new Christians and I was pleased to see how much they had grasped of the Christian faith. I was amazed by their poverty. The widow with whom we stayed, lived in a bamboo hut, which you would have thought was really for cattle. She only possessed the sari she wore, a mat to sleep on and a few cooking pots. Yet she really loved the Lord and trusted him as did many others.



# Trinidad is tolerant

Desmond Gordon, B.M.S. missionary in Trinidad looks at the variety of religious experience



**T**HERE are many forms of religion in Trinidad. This is due partly to the ethnic mixture which makes up the country. There are African, Indian, Chinese, Syrians, and Europeans of English, Spanish, French or Portuguese descent. The largest religious group is the Christian church. Of the various denominations the biggest and most influential is the Catholic Church. Christianity originally came to Trinidad in its Catholic form, as an aspect of the Spanish discovery and conquest of the island.

Every variety of Protestant you know, and many others, are present in Trinidad. Among the Protestant groups the largest is the Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian missionaries were from Scotland in the early days, then from Canada. Most Presbyterians are drawn from the East Indian community. This is due to the fact that the Canadian missionaries concentrated on the Indian labourers who were brought into Trinidad from 1840 onwards.

Baptist are among the smaller groups. There are two groups that use the term "Baptist", but they are not really related. One is the Spiritual Baptists. They may be seen on the street corners ringing bells and preaching, in colourful attire. Although very strong in Trinidad, they are somewhat of a fringe group. Many of their practices derive probably from African customs. We have to be sure we call ourselves London

Baptists, which means more or less what we mean by just "Baptist" in Britain. The term is obviously inappropriate, but you have to use it if you want to be distinguished from the "Spiritual" Baptists.

Two ethnic religions exist in Trinidad. Most East Indians are either Hindus or Muslims, though some of course have become Christians. The Hindus are often distinguished by the coloured flags they fly on bamboo poles outside their houses. These represent vows or prayer they have made. Their "Mandirs", or Temples are everywhere to be seen. Their festival of Divali is celebrated as a public holiday. On Divali night their houses are illuminated most beautifully with small clay oil-lamps called "deyes".

The Muslims are a smaller, though still influential community. They build some very handsome mosques and have a certain amount of missionary outreach of their own. Their presence is also recognized by the Government by a public holiday, the day of Eid-ul-Fitr.

The number of small competing Christian groups, and the presence of three major religions in strength, makes Trinidad a place of easy going tolerance for all beliefs. It is easy to gain a hearing for "religion in general", harder to claim exclusive loyalty to Christ.





## Will there be a flood in Sri Lanka?

by Eric Sutton Smith,  
formerly B.M.S. missionary in China and now in  
Sri Lanka

ONE part of northern Sri Lanka is often very arid and dry. There are two monsoons a year and yet, somehow, that region can easily miss out on any rains that are coming. A place called Talawa has had no rainfall for three years. This is most unusual in wet fertile Lanka.

Recently a new irrigation project has been nearing completion. One of Lanka's great rivers is the Mahaweli Ganga. It rises in the high mountains, flows through the mountain capital of Kandy and then down to the sea on the east coast. For some years two long tunnels through the mountains have been built which will divert part of the water of this great river into the tanks of the dry zone, using some of the existing rivers to do so. Those tunnels are now complete and were opened by Mrs. Bandaranaike a month ago. So the struggling farmers in the dry zone are hoping for a more assured water supply in the near future.

In this dry zone there is one Baptist church at a place called Kekirawa. It has been standing there for at least 50 years and at one time was almost empty. There seemed little response to the Gospel. In the last two years things have changed. Christian families have moved into Kekirawa and that has been a help. But more than that, Buddhists and Hindus are now accepting Christ. At last we are getting a response to the Gospel message. The photograph above is like many photographs which appear in the *Missionary Herald!* Rows of people's faces, they might be anyone but actually this one is part of the Kekirawa congregation. Seated in the centre is Rev. Stephen Welegedera, whom some of you may know. He has visited England more than once. He has oversight of this church as well as his own at Matale, 40 miles away.

### Witnessing to friends

In the photograph there are also two young men who work for the Every Home Crusade, a Christian organization which tries to reach every home in Lanka with the Gospel, no matter how remote it may be. They have also been a great help in the church.

In the village of Galenbindunuwewa, about nine miles away, a group of young men recently accepted Christ. There is no church any nearer



than Kekirawa, in fact none of them would know what a Christian church was. Most of these young men you can see in the back row.

In that back row, third from the left you see an old man. He is a village carpenter. Some years ago he came to accept Christ. Just below him is the smiling face of a young man. The carpenter led this young man to Jesus Christ. He in turn led all his young friends to Christ, and last year they were all baptized by the Rev. Stephen Welegedera in the tank at Kekirawa, and made their witness to a large crowd of Buddhists and Hindus who had come to see what was happening. These young men have now led their friends to the Lord and there is a new group waiting to be baptized this year.

In a neighbouring village there are twenty more people who are wishing to accept Christ and receive baptism. This is entirely due to their own sharing of the Saviour; no minister or missionary has had anything to do with it. Furthermore, in that area they will gain nothing worldly by becoming Christians, they will only gain the glorious privilege of knowing Jesus Christ himself . . . and that is all they want. One villager has given them a mud house with a thatched roof which they intend to convert into a place of worship as they cannot always get to Kekirawa for worship on Sundays. Also, people from the other village will want somewhere to

worship. They are all very young, either farmers or carpenter apprentices. The carpenter acts as a kind of father in Christ to them all. So here is the beginning of a new church. They worship at Kekirawa, nine miles away, when they can. Otherwise they all meet for daily prayers and Bible study on their own.

### Mixed and young

If you come to Kekirawa on a Sunday morning now you will find a lively mixed congregation of Sinhalese and Tamils. They get on very happily together. Worship is in both languages. A rather clumsy arrangement, but they don't want language or race to divide the fellowship. Thank God for that. Also, more than half the congregation are young!

Kekirawa, like many other parts of Lanka has for a long time been a spiritual "Dry Zone". People did not seem open to the Gospel. Thank God a change is now coming. It is a change that can be seen throughout most of Lanka. People are now open to the Gospel as never before. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, building on the foundation of the patient work of the past, which seemed so discouraging to us then.

Please pray for the Christians in Lanka, that they may be live, effective witnesses, to unsatisfied people who are longing for the bread and the water of life.



Dr. H. C. Bowker, A.K.C., F.I.E.E. (Photo: T. Reeve)

### B.M.S. Chairman 1976-1977

FOLLOWING his studies at King's College, London, Henry Bowker entered the electricity supply industry and after a few years in Yorkshire went abroad, first to West Africa and then to Calcutta where he arrived early in 1936. He has worked with the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation Ltd. ever since.

He joined the Carey Baptist Church, Calcutta, of which he was a member for 26 years and for some time acted as secretary and treasurer. While he was secretary of the Calcutta and Suburban Baptist Union he saw something of the work of other Baptist churches in and around Calcutta. During his holidays he was able to visit most of the B.M.S. stations in India and in what is now Bangladesh. He has also visited Nepal. In 1939 he married Mollie Turner, a B.M.S. missionary from Barisal.

Dr. Bowker was elected to the General Committee in 1966.



## Rain brings hope

**A**FTER the severe drought in Sambalpur and parts of Cuttack in 1974 and the near famine conditions which followed, it is good to be able to report a good monsoon and an excellent harvest this year. That farmers and their families in the Diptipur area survived was owing to the relief programme organized by Mr. A. J. Casebow. That they were able to take advantage of the weather was owing to the provision of seeds and crop support scheme organized by Mr. Casebow and for three months, during his furlough, carried on by ex-B.M.S. missionary Mr. J. T. Smith. Much of the value of the work at Diptipur depends on the integrated programme of health care in which both the agricultural programme and the hospital play a part.

(The June *Missionary Herald* will carry a report of this integrated programme written by Marilyn Mills.)

## Commitment Sunday

**I**N the Delhi diocese of North India the Society has four missionaries. The Rev. G. H. and Mrs. Grose work in the Green Park church of which Mr. Grose is minister. The youth work of this well known church continues to be one of its outstanding features. Mr. Grose continues as vice-president of the diocese and served briefly as its secretary. The Free Church, together with many other Church of North India churches, observed Commitment Sunday on 30 November by a week of special meetings and followed it by a meeting, not on church premises, designed especially for non-Christians.

## Nurses train at Pimu, Zaire

**M**ISS R. M. Murley has continued to serve as director of the nursing school, which this year has an enrolment of nineteen first year, sixteen second year and eight third year students. Both doctors and all the B.M.S. nurses have also been involved in teaching in the school.

# TOGE

**T**HE Official Report of the Baptist Missionary Society is, "We are partners working together" (1 Corinthians 12:25). It is very easy to think of Christian work or that, we appoint a secretary to run a programme, we rejoice in our success and ascribe our failure to hum. are only one part of the Kingdom of God, we work together in institution and the creation of God."

"The 'we' of the text is not us only but includes men and women who work, for in the work of the B.M.S. we remember that we are one nations."

A selection of paragraphs from the Report appear on the back cover from the Mission House (see advertisement on the back cover).

## The church is lit up!

**I**N spite of the difficulties in obtaining materials, Mr. P. H. Riches, at Yakusu, has made good progress with the construction of the primary school classrooms for which the colonial government made a grant almost twenty years ago. Work on the hospital water supply has continued, and improvements made to the lighting in the wards and operating theatre. Electricity has been installed in the church and church office. At the beginning of December, Mr. Riches took over the management of the printing works and bookshop.

(Ivy Riches writes about work at Yakusu in the June *Missionary Herald*.)

## A centre of faith and learning

**S**IXTY miles south of Dacca, Bangladesh, is the district town of Barisal, centre for church work among the largest Christian community in Bangladesh, and the location of the Bengali Language School for missionaries of all denominations. In the midst of their first year of language study are Rev. D. W. and Mrs. King, Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Foulkes, Miss P. A. Smart and Miss J. J. Wells. Miss S. Headlam has



# THER

y has just been published. The text on which it is based (as 3: 9). The opening paragraphs expound this theme of in purely human terms. We form a committee to do this regard money as the limiting factor in all our planning, an error. Our text reminds us that we men and women her with God all the time. The church is both a human

and women of many nationalities in the places where we are partners together with men and women of many

se centre pages. The full 48 page Report is now available (over).

completed her short language course and started work in Chandraghona.

Mr. and Mrs. F. B. Mardell are now working full time in the boys' boarding school at Barisal. During the absence of the headmaster, Mr. P. Halder, at Stockholm and subsequently in this country, Mr. Mardell was acting head. Mr. and Mrs. Mardell have turned a room in their house into a Christian reading room, open every Wednesday, and this has considerably increased the sales of Bibles and literature. The girls' school, under the able leadership of Miss P. Nath, continues to provide excellent education for girls of Christian families in that part of Bangladesh and beyond.

## Christians had to move house

REV. K. Hodges reports that the past year at Guarapuava has been one of dramatic success. The faithful work of the past six years, first of Rev. D. and Mrs. Martin and more recently of Mr. and Mrs. Hodges, has now begun to show results.

From the beginning of the year there has been a new hunger for spiritual things and worship has taken on a new meaning for many of the fellowship. Testimony and witness have begun to influence the community and congregations have increased. For one family, their faithfulness

to Christ brought the risk of physical violence from unsympathetic neighbours and they were forced to move house.

(Mr. Hodges writes about his call to Brazil, and the consequences, in the June *Missionary Herald*.)

## Reconciliation and growth

AT the invitation of the Paraná Baptist council, Rev. F. W. J. and Mrs. Clark have moved to Cascavel where, unfortunately, the Baptist church has recently suffered a serious split. Cascavel is a boom town, centrally placed in a flourishing agricultural area, and profiting from its proximity to the falls at Foz do Iguacu and the Itaipu hydro-electric project. The present population of around 80,000 is expected to double in the next five years.

In a town of such a size there is need for more than one Baptist church and Mr. and Mrs. Clark have been working to build up the second church, while at the same time seeking to bring about a reconciliation with the fellowship from which the founding members broke away. Relationships between the two churches have gradually improved and the new work has experienced much blessing. Three candidates were baptized in June and another seven in December and the number of members has increased from 36 to 57.

## Missionaries active in Bolobo church

ALL the missionaries take an active part in the work of the church at Bolobo. Miss G. Mackenzie and Miss D. Osborne have helped with the Sunday school, Miss B. Diaper has served as a deacon and district treasurer and Mr. P. Chandler has run the Scripture Union group in the secondary school. Mr. and Mrs. D. Boydell have worked in Mpunga, one of the six divisions into which the town of Bolobo is divided, and in each of which there is a small prayer chapel.

In addition to the B.M.S. involvement in the countries mentioned on this page, the Report also features the work in Angola, Jamaica, Trinidad, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Hong Kong.



The old Roman Catholic Church (right) and the first Baptist Church (below) in Niteroi, Brazil

(Photos: D. PUNCHARD)

## Brazilian Christians make distinctive witness

by Derek PUNCHARD,  
B.M.S. missionary in Brazil since 1967

**B**RAZIL has no non-Christian religions of any size, but almost every brand of Christianity is represented from the Roman Catholic Church as the majority faith, through all the historical Protestant churches, the more recent Pentecostal churches of every variation and missionary churches, to the pseudo-Christian sects.

From 1500 until the end of the last century the Roman Catholic Church monopolized religious life in Brazil, and even the Indians with whom contact was made, were catechized by their mission, many of which still exist. So it was that the coming of Protestant missionaries, principally from the United States, was resented and opposed by the Roman Catholic Church. Early pioneers suffered greatly at the hands of mobs or ruffians incited by local priests, and Bible-burning ceremonies were held at many places. The "Protestants" or "*Biblios*" as they were called, were despised by the people for many years, and regarded as heretics by the Roman Catholic Church.

With the rapid growth of other churches in Brazil, particularly over twenty years when the



number of communicants of evangelical churches grew from 900,000 to 3,000,000 by 1970, the Roman Catholics have been obliged to revise their attitude and relationships have changed. This is particularly evident since Vatican II.

Apart from what they must regard as these inroads to their domination of the religious scene, they have the serious problems of a shortage of priests, despite the large number of European "missionary" priests, and difficulties in containing spiritism and voodooism, present in many "Catholic" festivals. They have the disadvantage of an historic and traditional church prolonging "old fashioned" religion which many people see as no longer relevant to everyday life. Many Catholics openly criticize their church, or their priests whom they believe to be corrupt or immoral.

### New approach

The Church has been working hard in recent years to put over a new image. The mass is now celebrated in Portuguese and there are sermons to teach the faith to their members. They are making increasing use of television, with regularly televised programmes, of excellent production and quality. In particular there has been the promotion of a mobilization of the laity through the operation of "Concilios", long weekends of an almost brain-washing intensity, aimed primarily at the educated, influential and wealthy who are personally invited.

The Church has attempted to counteract the appeal of the evangelical churches by adopting much of their language and terminology, previously exclusively different from the Catholics



to draw a distinction between the churches. For example, they now announce "worship services" when they will "preach the gospel", to avoid the curiosity of their members to see what is different in the other churches.

Although the Roman Catholic Church is still by far the majority religion, the state is constitutionally secular, though giving to every citizen the right to follow and propagate the religion of his choice and conscience.

The Protestant or evangelical churches have multiplied both in membership and diversity. In any fair sized town in Paraná it is possible to find a variety of churches such as three or four different Presbyterian, two Methodist, a Baptist, a Lutheran, a Brethren, a Missionary Church, a United Missionary Church, two Assemblies of God, a Bible Revival Church, a Seventh Day Adventist, a Promise Adventist Church, an Apostolic Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Spiritists, and others I may have forgotten or not heard of yet!

#### **Avoid the noisy!**

There is often a limited co-operation or fellowship between some of these churches usually promoted by a local Evangelical Pastor's Fraternal, though many of the Pentecostal and "peculiar" churches don't associate. There are occasional evangelistic outreaches through rallies, tract distribution, radio programmes, and a joint rally on Bible day, but this is about the extent of their co-operation. Many Baptist and Presbyterian churches are shy of a too close association with Pentecostal churches, as these are so noisy and extreme with a largely uneducated ministry, and are therefore somewhat

despised by the educated public, to whom we wish to present the Christian faith as an acceptable way of life to all people.

So today between the Catholics and Protestants there is little hostility and no persecution, but rather a competition or rivalry, and for the most part each continue their own work, completely ignoring the other.

Even in areas of social work or relief, each Church will work individually, the Roman Catholics being big enough to organize their work alone, and the Protestants often co-operating among themselves, but not trusting the Catholics.

It will by now be clear that ecumenism is not a word on every lip, and far from every heart. But perhaps this is understandable among Christians who have so recently come out of a nominal or at best superstitious adherence to the Roman Catholic Church. For there to be a distinctive and Biblical presentation of the message of Jesus Christ, there will inevitably be, in an environment almost totally, though quite nominally Christian, an emphasis of differences, and a correction of errors. This is bound to breed a certain intolerance, which we in this country abhor, but we need to remind ourselves that the gospel is intolerant.

The churches in Brazil are vigorously evangelistic and this can only be true when they are intolerant, convinced of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, the one Way of Salvation. This too was the intolerance of the early church, typified in its message by Peter in Acts 4: 12 who said, "There is no salvation in anyone else at all, for there is no other name under heaven granted to men, by which we may receive salvation".

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## The church it took eighteen years to build

*Report and photos by Brian Taylor,  
B.M.S. missionary in Brazil since 1967*

**O**N 26 June, 1957, a Baptist church was formed in Cianorte, Paraná, Brazil. Among the founder members were Rev. A. C. and Mrs. Elder, the first B.M.S. missionaries appointed to work in Brazil.

In the months following its formation the church grew dramatically. Almost daily people were moving from the north into the town of Cianorte, among them many believers. There was also the opportunity for evangelism among people who were still settling into a new area and community.

With Cianorte as the centre pioneering work



was carried out in the area and preaching points were established.

It was in 1961, that the first Brazilian minister was appointed and, about that time, the membership reached 400. After two years the minister was called to another work and, a year later, another Brazilian minister was appointed. The work continued to expand. There were ten congregations linked with Cianorte and in one year one hundred people were baptized.

1966 proved to be a sad year in the life of the church for disagreement was followed by division and a second church was formed in Cianorte.



The First Church decided on an improvement and enlargement scheme but this led to financial difficulties and the Baptist State Board was faced by a church with no pastor and no money.

B.M.S. missionary Avelino Ferreira was invited to become pastor and gradually the situation improved. In December 1968 a Brazilian pastor, Derly Franco de Azivedo, was inducted to the pastorate.

The work has continued to go forward and during the past year the church buildings have been finished.

The photos show the inside of the sanctuary, the communion table, pulpit and raised baptistry and Rev. Derly Franco de Azivedo and his wife.



**The Christians at Tansen worship in their small church. Worship is only one aspect of Christian witness in Nepal as this article by George Tweeddale indicates**



## **Christians share in planned development in Nepal**

by George Tweeddale

**W**HY should someone like myself be called a missionary when he is doing neither evangelistic work, nor medical work, nor social work, nor even teaching of the kind in which it is possible to “slip a bit of the Word in”? Particularly when he is living fairly comfortably and in a reasonably pleasant house.

However, before hearing an answer to that question you may well want to ask “What is he doing anyway?”

My appointment was and is, as a “technical adviser and technical teacher”, seconded by the United Mission to Nepal, to the Institute of Engineering of the Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu. Currently, in Nepal there is only a little teaching of technicians, not much more teaching of engineering craftsmen and no teaching of technologists, but all technical teaching is under the control of the University. “Institute of Engineering” is a rather grandiose title for a university department. On the other hand, bearing in mind the very few years in which Nepal has been trying to develop technically, it represents quite a reasonable achievement.

My first job (with the assistance of a colleague, John Cooley, another Baptist although not from B.M.S.) was to survey the industrial situation with respect to mechanical engineering in Nepal and then to make recommendations on how and when to start a Department of Mechanical Engineering of a standard as near to western as possible but suited to Nepal’s future needs. This we did and submitted in the form of a report, to the Institute. Then . . . silence.

### **Another report**

We, or rather I, had made some rather caustic remarks on certain aspects of the situation so we wondered if the report was being quietly forgotten as so many requests are. But, no. One day we were called into a very warm and friendly meeting with the Dean and other members of the Institute.

Now perhaps we would be able to get down to doing some real teaching and to make contact with the students—although the latter were on strike at the time. Again we were wrong; but, would we please prepare a similar report for all of the engineering in the whole of Nepal?

Our heads swelled a bit on hearing the request, but I know my heart sank well down towards



the floor. Where were we to obtain data and guidance? For internal political reasons we would not be able to contact other government departments (the university is government controlled) which might have information about such things as natural resources and economic development plans. We could hardly refuse to do the job, so the only answer was to go ahead in faith and do it "out of our heads" and this is what we did.

By the time you read this, the second report will be in the hands of the authorities and we hope will be as acceptable as the first. What I will be doing then I just do not know, but I hope it will not be quite as hair-raising or faith-testing as the present task has been.

Can work like this be taken on in faith? I believe it can—our God is Lord of all, the extraordinary as well as the ordinary. If He calls to a task, the necessary grace is given and human inadequacy is overruled.

This still does not answer the question "What use is work like this done by a mission appointee?"

At the very lowest it is a friendly gesture given in love. Technical expertise just does not exist here at a level acceptable to the Nepalese and those nationals who might acquire it lack confidence and authority. Indian help is available and is used to a limited extent; but there is always serious doubt about Indian motives and purposes. The U.M.N. has proved itself trustworthy and cooperative, so goodwill has been created and it is logical for it to extend help into every field in which it is needed and in which it is possible to give it. Unselfish giving can open the way to freedom for the Gospel.

On the other hand there is much more to it. In my view the work is social in the widest sense and, in the long run, could have a greater impact on the life style and prosperity of Nepal than any other form of auxiliary work, including medical, outside evangelization. Nepal's agricultural situation is good and not many people are starving, but malnutrition is widespread and poverty is extreme. It requires hard work, beyond the imagination of the average westerner, just to survive, but the Nepalese do it with a cheerfulness that puts us to shame. The shortages

of food which do occur in certain areas of the foothills are the immediate outcome of bad harvests, but the starvation situation which can (and often does) develop, is due, mainly, to lack of transport and communication. Food is always available elsewhere in the country but how do you get it to where it is needed and how do you know when it is needed? (Incidentally, it is very often U.M.N. field workers in remote areas who trigger off rescue work and get in first aid supplies. The Mission buys grain in bulk, rebags it into loads suitable for porters to carry, has it taken by lorry to the nearest road access point then portered, perhaps for four or five days, into the needy area.) Malnutrition too, in many areas, is due to lack of variety in food because of difficulty in transport and communication.

### Good prospects

Nepal has many potential natural resources of raw materials, but these are not present in sufficient quantities to interest external private enterprise and in any case Nepali law (and sense of self preservation) prevents land being owned by outsiders. These resources could be adequate for Nepal's needs for many years to come if nationals could acquire the know-how and over-all facilities to make use of them. Thus, whilst technical education and training in Nepal does not need to attain full western sophistication, it does need to develop an enterprise and initiative based on sound engineering principles similar to that which characterized British industry in the heyday of the Industrial Revolution.

If we can develop now a soundly based overall technical training system then in 15-20 years time Nepal's economic status and the welfare of its people should be greatly improved, poverty should be greatly reduced and life should be easier and healthier for a great proportion of the people.

This is our vision and the opportunity appears to be there. Our aim of course is not just the well being of the physical man but rather that of the "whole" man. With your prayer backing there is no reason why we cannot go forward in faith that goodwill and mutual trust will create openings for the "Good News" to spread so that the Holy Spirit may bring both salvation and health to a great little nation.



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## Missionary Record

### Arrivals

16 February. Rev. and Mrs. E. G. T. Madge from Asia.

### Departures

21 February. Peter and John Skirrow to Mount Hermon School, Darjeeling.  
22 February. Rev. and Mrs. D. R. A. Punchard and family to Foz do Iguaçu.

### Birth

14 February. At Kimpese to David and Mary Norkett, a daughter, Rebecca Kathleen.

### Deaths

6 February. At Scarborough, Mrs. E. J. Payne (widow of Rev. Henry Payne) aged 97; China Mission 1907-1947.  
18 At Eastbourne, Miss E. C. Wigner, aged 90; Orissa 1910-1947.

## Acknowledgements

The Secretaries acknowledge with grateful thanks the following legacies and gifts sent anonymously or without address.  
(24th January-4th March, 1976)

**General Work:** Anon: £1.00; Anon: (Prove Me) £5.00; Anon: 50p; Anon: £1.00; Anon: £1.00; Anon: £100.00; Anon: £10.00; Anon: £15.00; Anon: (M.K.H. Blaenavon) £3.00; Anon: £13.52; Anon: (R.P.) £2.00; Anon: (D.R.) £33.00; Anon: £20.00; Anon: (W.P.C.) £10.50; Anon: ("In memory of J.K.W.") £5.00.

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