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David and Joyce Stockley set out in their land-rover. It was 25 years ago that they set out as agricultural missionaries of the B.M.S. Since that date other agricultural missionaries have gone to serve in India, Africa, and South America. This issue of the "Missionary Herald" records some of the work which is now being done.

New crops and new life are possible

writes B.M.S. missionary David Stockley after farming for 25 years in Bangladesh

TWO thin bullocks yoked together, straining as they try to pull the wooden plough through the dry earth. Behind them the farmer walks, guiding them with stick and voice, his maxi length cloth skirt tucked up like a pair of bathing trunks.

Another farmer near an irrigation source, the same sort of scene, but this time the bullocks are more than ankle deep in mud and water, as they plod round and round the small field—the wooden plough stirring up the mud in preparation for the transplanting of High Yielding Rice seedlings.

Year after year the toil goes on—in burning sunshine and in torrential rain. Often the farmer will rise and go out to plough at first light, thus by 8 a.m. when the sun is hot both man and beast have done a good part of the day's work.

Whilst the procedures of farming are still as they have been for centuries—the use of chemical fertilizers, insecticides and High Yielding Varieties of seeds have vastly altered Bangladesh

agriculture in the last ten years. Governments are responsible for the import and distribution of agricultural inputs. In theory these inputs have been available throughout the country for several years, in practice they have not always been available in time for the seasons. At present, conditions are much improved and fertilizers are on free sale at the correct prices.

High Yielding Varieties of rice originating from the International Rice Research Institute, Manila, and more recently from Bangladesh's own Rice Research Institute, have made it possible for farmers to obtain from three to five times the crop they used to get from the same land. These High Yielding Varieties need more scientific farming methods, which in turn means that teaching and advice is necessary. Provision is made for this by government, but we have found that many extension workers have little practical experience and do not reach the farmer! This is where we as agricultural missionaries have been able to help, by getting out to the fields of farmers, or by weekly co-operative training classes. Leaflets, pamphlets, posters have all been prepared and printed by government, and voluntary agencies. Many of the older farmers are illiterate, but have sons and daughters who can read.

Delayed arrival in Bangladesh of massive grain relief after the 1974 flood, followed by recent good harvests, have lowered the price of rice so much that farmers are having to sell below the cost of production. Storage and

**The Rangunia Thana
Co-operative grain godown**



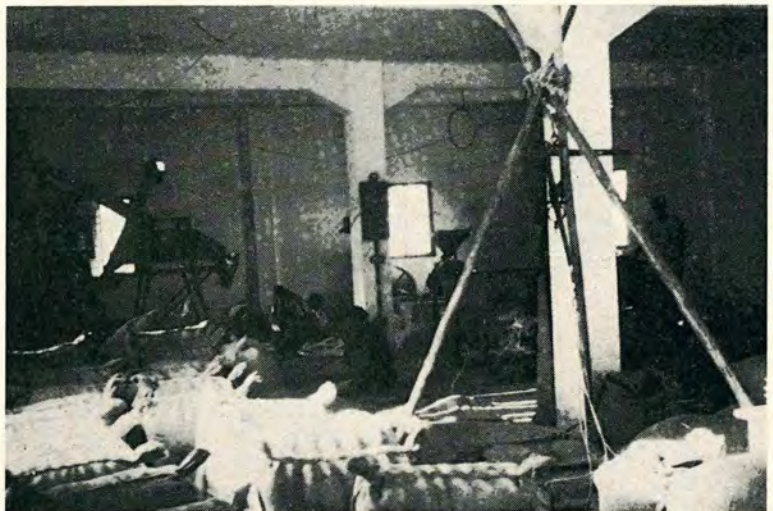
marketing of the rice crop is still an unsolved problem.

In Chittagong District the availability of water through rivers and canals, and low lift diesel pumps rented from the government, means that many fields can be green most of the year. By forming co-operative groups farmers gain access to government loans to finance rice growing in the previously unproductive cold weather.

The staple food of Bengalis is rice, but not all land is suitable for its cultivation outside the monsoon season. Therefore we have been looking to other crops like wheat, potato, maize,

for carbohydrate; sunflower, soyabean, peanuts and sesame for oil and protein. All these can be grown in the cooler weather and require little extra water, therefore they are possible crops for those farmers who have sandy type soils or who are not near enough to a water source to grow irrigated rice. A special promotion programme was launched in the autumn of 1975. Much talking and persuading caused one farmer here and there to agree to take the seed and fertilizer and try one or more of the "new" crops. Some farmers, followed instructions, planted and tended carefully, and have now reaped a rewarding harvest. Others planted but obviously were not really convinced, did not tend and care

Inside the godown seed is stored in sacks. There is also mills and winnowing equipment.
(photos: Alfred Gracey)



for the crops, and consequently their harvest was poor.

Double for thanks

One evening while working in our own vegetable garden, a man came rushing in "I must have 30 lbs of your Mexican wheat seed at once", he said, "your assistant has sent me". The seed was provided and off he went with instructions for planting. Our assistant denied any knowledge of the matter, and we concluded we had lost our seed! However, some four months later, well after dark one evening, there was a great commotion at the front door. On investigation we found our vanished wheat farmer with two baskets full of wheat. He had brought in 60 lbs of his harvest, double the seed taken originally, as was the arrangement. We discovered his address and were able to go and buy the rest of his crop to store as seed for the next season. He was paid a price above the market rate as encouragement. Thus it was clearly demonstrated that where there is a real desire, it is possible to grow good crops even without supervision. Near by, other farmers had accepted the offer, but despite continuous supervision they did not carry out the directions and their wheat crop barely returned the seed. Where there is a will there is a way, is surely true!

Soya beans grow well in the higher and drier ground most of the year. These beans are of high protein and oil content, and can be eaten as green beans, or processed when mature. This crop has been introduced to Bangladesh since liberation by the Mennonite Central Committee's Agricultural Programme. Many problems have been met particularly in obtaining viable seeds, as it was discovered that soya beans rapidly lose their germination capacity during shipping from the United States, or during storage in the hot humid climate here. We are trying for self sufficiency in seed by growing soya beans and keeping them in Chittagong Cold Store till planting time.

Oil—for cooking

No farmer will grow a crop if he cannot use it himself or sell it for cash, therefore the Mennonites have given cooking demonstrations with soya beans in many places around

Bangladesh, and have printed in Bengali a suitable recipe book, which is available for a token price.

The Rangunia Thana Central Co-operative Association has recently opened a mill complex. We have found it possible to extract oil from dried soya beans, the resultant bean flour at 45% protein is ideal for human and animal feeds.

Sunflowers are attractive to grow but their attraction is also a disadvantage when passers by steal the flowers! The seeds can be eaten roasted, or oil may be extracted for cooking, and the residue used in animal feeds. Lever Brothers imported and donated seed from Holland. This has been multiplied and stored for the next winter season. We must remind you that winter in Bangladesh means days with 80°F. and nights of about 56°F. not below the freezing temperatures you expect in Britain.

The British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, on a recent visit to the Co-operative, presented several small butyl-rubber silos, a gift through the Ministry of Overseas Development, to help the Co-op store its various seeds.

New crops and new hope

Perhaps the most encouraging agri-programme we have undertaken recently is with ex-patients of Leprosy, discharged from the Chandraghona Leprosy Hospital. Belonging to nomadic tribes in the Hill Tracts, they have lost touch, or been rejected because they had leprosy. They set up a small community in the nearby hills. They have suffered many hardships with no real occupation or income source. We saw in the unused hilly land around, and in the unused labour force of these ex-patients a chance to demonstrate new crops, soil conservation, add to the crop production, and help the ex-patients to a more self sufficient way of life. Thus over the last nine months 20-24 of these men and women have been working for the small sum of Tk. 4.00 (or about 14½p) per day, clearing the scrub jungle with their choppers, planting cattle fodder grasses on contours to form erosion control barriers around the hill sides. They have planted maize, soya beans, peanuts, etc., and discovered that rabbits appreciate a soya bean plant diet! Now the monsoon is here thirty Hill Rice Varieties have been planted for trial. Maize is ready for

The past is with us

Colin Foulkes writes of the Bangladesh he has found in the last two years

"Back to the Bible," I said to David King one day as we walked up to the language school. He looked at me a little puzzled, perhaps he thought I was about to launch into a discourse on evangelical principles. "Over there," I said, pointing to a man who was walking across a field behind two bullocks, holding the end of a stick which was stirring the soil.

"Back to the Bible" was my first impression of agriculture in Bangladesh. At first I thought this was just a backward farmer who lived in Barisal, and that tractors and steel ploughs operated in most places. But that scene was to be repeated endlessly as we travelled across Bangladesh, as were many other scriptural scenes.

There was the sower, throwing out his seeds and the fields white with harvest. The bands of reapers putting in the sickle (no combines) and the women gleaning behind them. No man having put his hand to the plough looks back because he has too much work keeping the bullocks straight, also the oxen walking round the threshing floor were not muzzled. As if in

(continued from p. 132)

harvest and the people themselves, having been able to eat regularly, have improved in health. They have hope, and believe themselves to be useful members of society again, are saving regularly, and have begun to form their own co-operative.

Because there is something going on in Rangunia, many agencies working in Bangladesh have sent groups of people for one day visits or for training courses of up to a fortnight. We ourselves are often to be found in different parts of the country at the request of groups involved in agricultural development, to see, advise and help them in their programmes.

Following this year's dry and scorching months of April and May the monsoon arrived

Biblical support there are also the fishermen, casting their nets; blind, paralysed and lame beggars; and the religious men in their long robes.

As I try to understand life here and deal with people and problems, I find myself going back to the Bible repeatedly, as there are so many parallels. Passages such as those on unbelievers, idolators, infant churches, ministers and deacons, have been very helpful. These and other familiar passages take on entirely new meanings. As far as learning the language I find assurance in passages on the gifts and enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

In thinking about my future agricultural work here too, I am adopting a Biblical attitude. God has set us all guidelines on how to use the world's resources. In the first place he commands us to dominate plant and animal life, use them for our benefit, and till the soil. He promises regular seasonal weather, but emphasizes the need for hard work in "the sweat of your face", that we may "eat bread".

We are assured by Jesus that our heavenly father knows about our needs and that having done our work we should put away anxious thoughts about them. But it is not so with the majority of Bengali farmers who are unaware of Biblical precepts or of the God who has instituted them. They do not have the promises from a loving God. Their farming is bound up

in early June with full force. Torrential rains with over thirty-five inches in five days has caused severe floods in Rangunia and other districts of the country, with the resultant loss of life, property, crops, livestock, and severing of communications. Locally most of the early rice was harvested, and the mid-crop yet to be planted. Real damage in Rangunia has been to vegetables and fish farming. High water drowned the vegetables, and allowed fish to swim out of the ponds.

The managing directors and staff of the Rangunia Thana Central Co-operative Association, Ltd., where we serve as advisers, are planning a programme of agricultural rehabilitation. We consider it a privilege to serve with such people, who give of their time and energy to help their country and their fellow men.

with ceremony and superstition developed over the centuries and from which they can see no escape.

Against this a few government officials in each area fight to propagate the gospel of modern agricultural science. As very few farms larger than 25 acres exist, the number of farmers who have to be reached sets the government an almost impossible task (most farms being of the two-five acre size). Each family has its plot of land and as families are large much of the land just feeds the villagers, leaving little available for cash crops. Co-operation between farmers to increase efficiency is rare and farmers spend a lot of time carrying their own produce to market and selling it.

Place a Christian farmer in this situation and he has many advantages, and will be the most receptive to new ideas and appeals for harder work. Take a Christian village and you have a potential co-operative farm with real neighbour appeal and Gospel persuasion. The opportunity for them to be freed from the old methods and progress to scientific farming is provided by Christians from overseas who feel called out to teach them.

The majority of Bangladesh's 75 million

people are small farmers who live a hand to mouth existence, supplemented by foreign aid upon which some are beginning to rely. Life is an endless toil. There are no week-ends, entertainments, holidays, few comforts for relaxation or medicines for sickness. Large inputs of agricultural machinery other than that for irrigation or storage would only create unemployment. We have to begin helping by improving the efficiency of existing systems, and introducing new crops and livestock alongside these in a simple way so that diet and production per acre will improve. This brings us to the importance of dietary education, for without knowing the reason farmers will be reluctant to grow legumes regularly, so we must be prepared to show them why we grow certain crops, or keep chickens, as well as how to grow them.

Our basis of operation must be our own farm which we have developed successfully and from which we can distribute seeds, cuttings, livestock, etc., on request, or to which we can bring farmers in order to demonstrate or persuade. We may even have to do some cooking! For them it will mean "they may have life made abundantly", just as Jesus promised would happen when he came. For me it's strange crops, strange climate, different tools, and "Back to the Bible".

Operation Agri

Basil Amey writes about this important scheme of support for agricultural work

THERE is an interesting letter written by William Carey from India, in 1794, in which he refers to conditions of life and asks for seeds and implements to be sent out to him, adding, "it will be of lasting advantage to the country."

In the years that followed other B.M.S. missionaries, in Jamaica, and on the west coast of Africa, were encouraging agricultural development, but the modern period of such work is only celebrating its silver jubilee.

The B.M.S. accepted a farmer for service overseas in 1951 and by 1960 four had been appointed. It was at their Annual General Meeting at Swanwick in March 1961 that the Baptist Men's Movement agreed to accept responsibility for the equipping of the agricultural

missionaries. Operation Agri, as we know it, was born.

In fifteen years it has become one of the finest schemes of support. The men who serve on the committee are men with knowledge and experience of farming, agricultural machinery and allied subjects. They are able to ensure that the correct seeds, livestock and equipment are provided; they know where the right advice can be obtained when the agricultural missionaries seek it. They give, voluntarily, time and effort to ensure that the work overseas is carried on as effectively as possible.

They are supported by many who belong to Farming Partners, and by churches who respond to the annual Harvest Appeal launched jointly by the B.M.S. and Operation Agri/B.M.M. A new leaflet, *Fair waves the golden corn*, and posters, are now available.

Details of Operation Agri can be obtained from Maurice Abbott, B.M.M., 93 Gloucester Place, London, W1H 4AA.

Bob Young, B.M.S. missionary, reports on

The new farm at Dinajpur

I WENT to Bangladesh five years ago with the hope of working in the church as a teacher-evangelist. Now I am attending college with the purpose of going back to run a farm on our compound. Yet when I look back it is not so strange that this is the way the Lord has lead.

Having the two language exams behind us it was good to be going to Dinajpur to start the work to which the Lord had called us. The Lord was blessing the work there and it was good to see people coming to the Lord and wanting to know more about him. Gwyn Lewis had started classes for the new Christians and I was hoping to help in some way in this work.

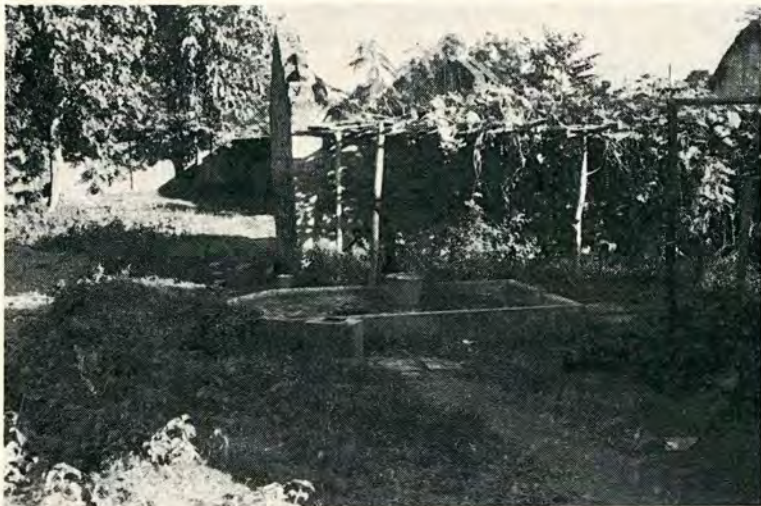
As the classes were started we felt that we had not only to help these people spiritually, but also help with the physical aspect of their lives. After praying about it we decided that I might be used as a social worker and so help in any way I could. David Stockley suggested a seed production project enabling the farmers to buy good seed.

As the majority of people depend on their crops for food, our aim is to provide seed of a good quality. Good seed produces a good crop, of which the excess can be sold and the money



used to buy other essential items. The three main crops we decided on were rice, wheat and potato. We also hope to grow winter vegetable from seed on a smaller scale.

Seed imported from abroad will be number one seed and will be grown on the farm at the compound. On land in the district number two seed will be grown, this is the crop from the compound farm. The crop from number two seed will be sold to the farmers. Operation Agri and Tear Fund are backing this project financially as the initial expenses were costly. A deep tube-well has been sunk and as a result the farm can be irrigated. A farmer, his helper, and some local daily labourers are being supported until the farm is self-sufficient.



(above and left)
Views of the compound at
Dinajpur where Bob Young
will be working

Frank and Peggy Gouthwaite are newly-appointed B.M.S. missionaries. Here they write about the work they hope to do

Plans for Potinga

OUR plot of land in Potinga looks very much like you would expect a section of the Amazon jungle to look, a mass of flourishing vegetation, trailing lianas, ferns, some brightly coloured birds, and the odd snake. Except that the Amazon is some 1,500 miles away, and that when I say "our" plot I refer to a plot bought by the Baptist Convention of Paraná, with money given by the B.M.S., and now being prepared by Walter and Jane Fulbrook. In the meantime, we are sixty miles away in the Paraná state capital, Curitiba, trying to learn Portuguese.

Curitiba is a large modern city, about the size of Birmingham. Birmingham has a few problems that Curitiba does not have, and Curitiba has a few that Birmingham does not have, but the similarities are far greater than the differences. We need to be here to study the



language but otherwise there is no more here to prepare us for life in Potinga than there is in Birmingham. Some of the contrasts between here and Potinga are:

Curitiba has four universities; in Potinga, schooling finishes at the age of ten.

Free medical treatment is available in Curitiba if needed; from Potinga it is thirty miles along a dirt road to the nearest doctor, where the consultation fee may be £5.

Curitiba has all types of shops, supermarkets, corner shops, and street vendors; from Potinga it would again be thirty miles each way to buy a loaf of bread.

Curitiba has all the noise, skyscrapers, car crashes, hustle and bustle, ugliness and loneliness of a city; Potinga is mainly wild forest, beautiful scenery and hard work, tackling the job of cultivation with nothing but a hoe and machete.

The dirt road and daily bus service to Potinga (the road was only opened up six years ago, before, only boats went to the area) provide contact with the outside world. The people know that the price they get from the banana dealers who come through with their lorries is only a fraction of what they would fetch if they could take them to town themselves. They know that

such things as tractors, fertilizers, pesticides, and high yielding varieties of seed exist, and they see the possibility of these innovations raising their own standard of living, if they only knew how!

The vast majority of British farming has come to depend on these developments of modern technology. For the people of Pottinga the first three have the disadvantage of being very expensive. They also use up irreplaceable natural resources, produce pollution, and create dependence on the outside world. In addition:

tractors are very noisy, boring to drive, may damage soil structure, and are produced in factories which may subject workers to inhuman conditions of noise and boredom.

pesticides are particularly dangerous if used by someone with little education, are liable to damage friend as well as foe, and their residues build up in the tissues of birds, fish, beasts, and men. They are therefore of great danger to the environment in general, which is God's creation, to man's food supply, and to man himself.

many "improved" or "high yielding" varieties are found to depend for their high yield on high inputs of artificial fertilizers or pesticides, or both.

We see our task as attempting to help the local



people exercise their God given task of dominion over, and cultivation of His world (Genesis 1: 26, and 2: 15). We see how the wish for reasonable comfort has given way to insatiable greed, and how the God who provides the comfort has been forgotten, following the same path predicted for Israel so long ago:

"Take care not to forget the Lord your God and do not fail to keep his commandments, laws, and statutes which I give you this day. When you have plenty to eat and live in fine houses of your own building, when your herds and flocks increase, and your silver and gold and all your possessions increase too, do not become proud and forget the Lord your God. . . . Nor must you say to yourselves, My own strength and energy have gained me this wealth, but remember the Lord your God; it is he that gives you strength to become prosperous, so fulfilling the covenant guaranteed by oath with your forefathers, as he is doing now." (Deut. 8: 11-18) N.E.B.

We also see how many of the problems of the developing world today have arisen because the advanced nations have manipulated the third world for its own convenience, resulting in a situation of dependence. Brazil is generally thought of as being dependent on its exports of coffee, Sri Lanka on tea, Zambia on copper, etc. For the individual this means that he relies on trade, which brings him the benefits of



modern technology in exchange for virtual slavery to the economic system. He depends on, say, banana, to pay for tractors and for his own food, but keeps having to sell more and more bananas to buy the same tractor. Hence it is of first importance to enable such people to grow food for themselves, without having to depend on the world economic system in order to do it, i.e., without having to buy expensive equipment, fertilizers, or pesticides.

Learn from the locals

With all these things in mind, we look to the Lord as our guide and as our strength. As we see things at the moment, we would like to start by following local methods to grow our own food, possibly experimenting here and there with breeds of pig or chicken or cow unknown to the people at the moment, and likewise with special varieties of maize, for example.

Having broadly copied the local practice and gained a certain amount of confidence from the people, we would consider introducing a horse, or ox, drawn plough, labour saving, within the scope of the people's pockets, cheap to run, unpolluting (even provides manure for the land), doesn't require outside help for maintenance and repairs (though a vet might occasionally be useful) and doesn't use up non-renewable resources. If such means then become popular



it would also provide a good living for a local blacksmith who might otherwise be forced off the land to the sprawling city.

We hope to be able to limit diseases and insect pests through mixed cropping and crop rotations. If these should fail we will have the knowledge to assess whether limited application of non-persistent pesticides will avert disaster. But our aim will be to choose species and varieties of crops that do not suffer from the pests and diseases prevalent in the Potinga area.

Attempts to improve or maintain soil fertility will concentrate on natural methods, including composting and keeping animals, though we will be sensitive to what could be gained by use of artificial fertilizers.

At the same time we hope to be able to help the people to form their own co-operative for the marketing of bananas. This is the crop from which they gain most of their income, and it appears to be generally accepted that effective organization would double the amount they earn from the same number of bananas.

Sharing advice

In all these things we will be working in close conjunction with the government sponsored agricultural station at Morretes, about thirty-five miles away. The government is concerned about the relative backwardness and poverty of the region, and the agricultural station has been established to find out what crops grow best in the region, to advise the people how to grow them, to assist by providing seeds and the like, and possibly to help in procuring loans.

In general the areas of land owned are far too big for the individual family to farm with their present methods, and the people's interest in doing better coincides with the government's interest in increased production. This aspect of our work will be to take the knowledge and expertise at Morretes the final thirty-five miles and put it into the hands of the people.

In connection with the other problems of the area, the Baptist Convention of Paraná is sending a pastor and his wife to the area. She is a nurse and will re-open a long closed dispensary, bringing some kind of free health care to the



Suggestions for further reading.

The Bible—especially Leviticus 25, and 26, on God's structure for society, and Deuteronomy 8, at least.

Barbara Ward and Rene Dubos—Only One Earth—Penguin, 1972. On the care and maintenance of a small planet.

Rachael Carson—Silent Spring—Penguin, 1965. Probably the first popular account of the side effects of pesticides.

The Club of Rome—The Limits to Growth—Pan, 1974. For those who believe it if it's said by a computer.

E. F. Schumacher—Small Is Beautiful—Abacus. Obtainable from Intermediate Technology. Is there a feasible alternative?

people. At the same time Peggy (who is a trained teacher) hopes to be able to help in the school at Potinga, and we wonder about the possibility of putting agriculture on the school timetable, using our plot of land to demonstrate possible improvements to the young and adaptable.

In conclusion, we emphasize that all the above, which will seem very strange to some, are tentative, provisional ideas, based on what we know so far, and not based on living in the actual situation. We know that some ideas will have to be modified in the light of experience, and in the light of further discussion. We pray that we will be open to the Lord's wisdom (which is foolishness to men—1. Cor. 1: 18-31) and offer these thoughts asking you to share in prayer that His will be done.

Pages 136-139: Photographs showing the plot of land at Potinga, the building of the house proceeding, workers who shared in the building programme, and the weekly wash at the river side
(photos: Roy Davies)

Appropriate Technology (Journal) Intermediate Technology Publications, Ltd., 9 King Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2. Describes real improvements possible in the third world.

John Seymour—The Fat of the Land—2nd Ed., Faber and Faber, 1974. On the why and how of self-sufficiency in Britain.

National Geographic Magazine—March 1976. Articles on Indiana, Solar Power, and Sicily. For interest.

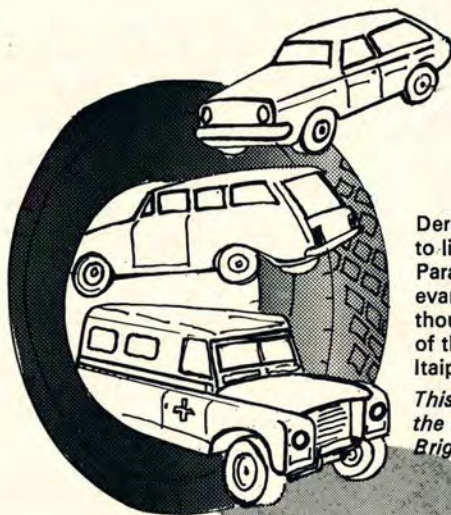
Edith Bond—The State of Tea. War on Want, 1974. Describes one example of dependence on a particular product, and its effects.

Available now

“Let's Celebrate!” A study pack for teachers with material on Christian festivals overseas (including Harvest, Christmas and Easter) and celebrations (e.g. birthdays). This pack has been produced jointly by the B.M.S. and the Methodist Church Overseas Division and is available, price 50p plus p&p, from B.M.S., Young People's Department, 93/97 Gloucester Place, London, W1H 4AA.

KESWICK CONVENTION

The B.M.S. organized a house party at Keswick again this year. Three missionaries on furlough were members of the party and Winnie Hadden, home from Zaire, was invited to speak at the Convention Missionary Meeting.



Derek and Joanna Punchard and their family went to live in Foz do Iguacu, in the far south-west of Paraná, in February 1976. There are tremendous evangelistic opportunities for the church there as thousands of workers are moving in to build one of the world's largest hydro-electric plants, at Itaipu.

This section of the project has been adopted by the Baptist Company Sections of the Boys' Brigade.

the B.M.S. fund raising project for children and young people.

TRANSPORT TARGET



This landrover is vitally important in medical work in the Yakusu area of the Upper River Region, Zaire. Public Health work is carried out in the district and during the course of a year hundreds of patients, especially mothers and young children, are helped.



Rajen Baroi is the General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Bangladesh. He supervises pastors of churches and is responsible for seeing that new churches are visited and inquirers helped. In this work a good deal of travelling is necessary throughout Bangladesh and a car is an essential.

Please encourage the children and young people in your church to support Transport Target. Introductory leaflets, posters (ideal for notice board displays) and further background material can be obtained from

*"Transport Target"
Young People's
Department,
Baptist Missionary Society,
93 Gloucester Place,
London W1H 4AA.*

Keith Hallam went to Zaire for a year's voluntary service with the B.M.S. He worked at Kimpese

Zaire can grow!

MY first thoughts about farming on black alluvial African soil were that my father farms 250 acres on his own, growing 120 acres of wheat per year and only needs help at harvest time. So with a few hardworking Zairians I should be able to put a couple of hundred acres under production. I soon learnt that those thoughts were somewhat wild. You cannot plough much land in a day if raised manioc beds are gaily bouncing you between the tractor seat and its cab roof, while you are trying to avoid age old tree stumps.

The difficulty of preparing land and protecting it from erosion and weeds is one main reason why Zaire lacks in commercial farming enterprises. While cropping is of the same proportions each year, that is the wife grows enough manioc and peanuts to keep the family alive, poultry farming is becoming increasingly popular. Obviously this creates a demand for chicken food, which is growing rapidly. So, maybe, one day the richer Zairians will realize the money there is in commercial farming and begin fighting the problems of the land to produce maize, soya, peanuts, etc., in quantity.

So how do you persuade them? This is the tropical agriculturists problem. If he tries to set an example by building up a fine money making enterprise, he is going to become disillusioned by his failure to make close contact with the individuals he has been called upon to help. On the other hand, extension work in the villages and fields can be equally frustrating. If you try to enlarge people's projects, introduce new crops and change methods you are altering the established national life style, which is not always appreciated.

If these views seem a little pessimistic perhaps the opposite is true, in that the revolution is not far away and if Zaire's economy gets worse it is going to be "back to the land" for many Zairians if they want to live.

In the future, I see Zaire as more than just a gold mine of bananas, which is about the main exported food stuff, but everything will grow, from vegetables to grains and fruits to animals. The big world powers are interested in Zaire's mineral resources. With those, plus the agricultural possibilities, Zaire must be one of the most untapped areas of potential in the world.

Our own project can illustrate this with ease. Ian Pitkethly put a year's hard work into a very varied project and left me to show the profit. And profit is easy, all you have to do is sell more than you buy and let the skyhigh prices do the rest. We have eight Zairian workers and an Angolan who are overoccupied with laying flock of 150 chickens and 900 ducks. The latter will replace Ian's "British" born flock and treble the project size. They are also working on two orange plantations, 150 and 600 grafted trees which produce fruit two years after planting. One *Deliciosa Manderine* went wild and produced 120 manderines in its second year; its poor skinny little branches had to be propped up with sticks.

We have nearly an acre of vegetables which grow prolifically and a fish pond valley which although it makes very little money is something that many villages could easily construct themselves. In fact everything I have mentioned so far is well within reach of every village in Zaire. The only things we do which are not achievable examples are large scale crop cultivations. These we do with tractor and thresher.

There is every hope that with the help of Operation Agri to send out incubators, brooders and machinery for sowing, harvesting and irrigating, etc., we can work with CEDECO to become the cooperative that the Zairians are going to need so badly. The sooner the better because until then, people remain hungry and suffer from malnutrition. Also, they have no money to get medical assistance in hospital because the land is not giving them the right foods in the right amounts and they are not taking enough from the land to make themselves money. The hope must be that people will soon see the value of agriculture, which in its turn will encourage industry and together, agricultural and industrial development will help the economy to balance and corruption and discontent will be overcome.

Back to the Bible

George Oakes reports from Sri Lanka

“How is it that the population of the country is going up and up but the membership of the Christian church isn’t?”

That question was put by a Methodist circuit steward in North Colombo and the simple answer was, “The number of people born is far greater than the number who are born again”. That is true of Sri Lanka, and it is even more true of the vast sub-continent of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh with its population of over 750 million.

The Christian community is small and not always active. Even where it is vigorous in its outreach and experiencing rapid growth, for everyone who is born into the Kingdom of God there are at least ten who will be born and live and die without knowing the Saviour or hearing the Gospel. In some areas the ratio will be much greater; perhaps 100 to 1, or 1,000 or even 10,000 to 1. (That is only a rough estimate but I don’t think it is exaggerated).

This is the setting in which we must place the ministry of Christian broadcasting and “Back to



the Bible”. A team of Christian workers can only reach a limited number of villages each day, radio reaches 10,000 times that number. Governments can prohibit the entry of missionaries but cannot put visa restrictions on radio waves. New converts may be 20 to 50 even 100 miles from the nearest church but can tune in to sound Biblical exposition each day, take correspondence courses to nurture them in the faith and can write to Back to the Bible offices about personal problems and difficulties knowing that they will receive guidance and prayer from the staff.



(above) Elmo at work.
(left) Studio recording.
(opposite page)
John marking a Sinhala
correspondence course.
Richard Abrahams.
The site of the new building
project.
(photos: George Oakes)

The Colombo office produces all Tamil and Sinhala programmes and some English programmes. A Hindi broadcast is produced in Delhi and relayed from Colombo on the external service of the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Company. We are not allowed to broadcast in Sinhala on S.L.B.C. so broadcast from F.E.B.A. (Far East Broadcasting Association) Seychelles.

Elmo does Sinhala gospel messages and Bible studies. Special series of Sinhala talks are given by gifted outside speakers such as Ananda Perera of Campus Crusade and Rev. P. B. Rajasingham the Methodist President. We are praying for someone who will fill the need of full time radio pastor.



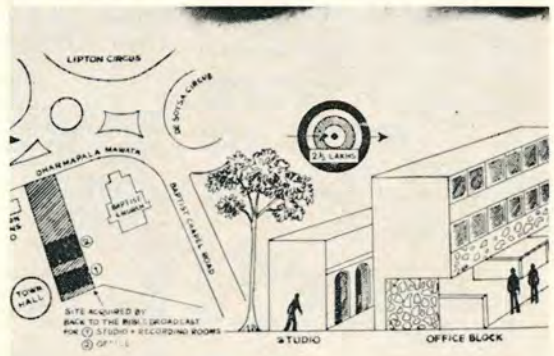
Broadcasting is only part of the Back to the Bible ministry. Another important part is the correspondence courses. Over 100,000 Sinhala students have taken courses and many have come to faith in Christ through these. A lot of these are miles from the nearest church so depend on these courses for their Christian nurture. Back to the Bible also produces monthly magazines in Sinhala and Tamil and have published helpful books in both these languages. Students also receive prayerful counsel from the small but dedicated staff of the correspondence course section.

Richard Abrahams is the Director of the Colombo office. He trained at the London Bible College and worked for several years in England



before God called him to return to his own country and led him into this responsible ministry.

Back to the Bible has purchased a plot of land from the Cinnamon Gardens Baptist Church and are going forward in faith with this new building project. It is a very strategic location with the general hospital, Town Hall, Post Office and 29 bus stops within a 200 yard radius. The opportunity to build completely new, purposely designed and specially equipped studios meets a long felt need. The offices will include chapel, quiet room for counselling and a Christian reading room. There may also be a bookshop that fronts on the main road which hundreds will walk past hourly.



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1977 B.M.S. PRAYER GUIDE

Missionary Record

ARRIVALS

- 6 June. Miss M. Bushill from Delhi, India.
11 June. Miss V. A. Campbell from Dacca, Bangladesh; Miss R. Montacute from Kimpese, and Mr. and Mrs. G. Cato and family from Kinshasa, Zaire.
19 June. Rev. F. J. Grenfell from Kinshasa, Zaire.
30 June. Rev. G. H. and Mrs. Grose from Delhi, India.
2 July. Mr. and Mrs. D. Boydell and Miss B. Fox from Bolobo; Miss A. Couper from Kimpese, and Miss E. Wainwright from Kinshasa; Miss D. Osborne and Mr. P. Chandler from Bolobo; Mrs. C. Sugg and family from Upoto, Zaire.
3 July. Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Mason and family from Kimpese, Zaire.
5 July. Miss J. Greenaway and Miriam from Upoto, and Miss E. Newman from Kinshasa, Zaire.
9 July. Mr. C. Spencer and Mr. C. Sugg from Upoto, Miss R. R. Harris from Kimpese, Zaire.
10 July. Mrs. D. W. F. Jelleyman and family from U.T.C.W.I., Kingston, Jamaica.

DEPARTURES

- 15 June. Rev. J. and Mrs. Furrage and daughter from Pato Branco, Brazil.
20 June. Rev. M. L. R. and Mrs. Wotton and family for Curitiba, Brazil.
7 July. Mrs. P. H. Riches and family for Yakusu, Zaire.

Acknowledgements

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

(8th June-9th July, 1976)

General Work: Anon: £5.00; Anon: £1.50; Anon: £6.50; Anon: £0.50; Anon: £6.00; Anon: (Edinburgh) £6.00; Anon: £47.13; Anon: (Parkinson) £20.00; Anon: £10.00; Anon: £2.00; Anon: (Cymro) £30.00.

Women's Work: Anon: £1.50; Anon: (Prove ME) £5.00.

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Relief Work: Anon: £3.00; Anon: £2.00.

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